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## 1st DEPUTY PM CHECKS ON STABBED CHILDREN, VOWS ACTION

# ‘Family safety is non-negotiable’

Interior hits back at surveillance claims

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15, (Agencies):** The Interior Ministry will not tolerate any acts or crimes that threaten the security of society and the safety of families, said First Deputy Premier Sheikh Fahad Yusef Saud Al-Sabah on Friday.

His remarks came in the backdrop of his visit to two children who were injured after being stabbed with a sharp object by their mother.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, also Minister of Interior, emphasized the importance of strengthening family awareness and the responsibility of parents in protecting their children.

According to a ministry statement, security forces apprehended the mother and took the necessary legal measures against her. The visit was to check on the children's health and follow up on their treatment.

The statement added that during the visit, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef was briefed on the children's condition by the medical team in charge, commending their efforts.

The statement indicated that investigations are underway and necessary legal procedures are on courses regarding the incident.

Separately, the Ministry of Interior has denied the validity of reports circulating on social media claiming that a new system has been introduced to monitor communications, phone calls, and social media activity, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Interior affirmed that the information contained in the circulated post is completely false.

It urged everyone to verify information, refrain from spreading unverified news, and obtain information only from official sources.



Ministry of Interior photo

Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef checks on the condition of two children injured in a stabbing incident.



### Opinion

■ Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

## Educate the Bedouns professionally to benefit from them

PRUDENT planning for the advancement of any nation begins with selecting the elements that contribute to sustainable development, which are considered the cornerstone of social and economic stability. The shortage of labor and expertise forces the state to import workers, perhaps even granting them permanent residency, so they can work comfortably, achieve social stability and contribute to the national economy.

Kuwait relied on expatriate workers for a certain period to train citizens. However, this transformed from a temporary to permanent measure for several reasons like the reluctance of citizens to take some jobs despite the fact that they used to do such works. This situation led to numerous negative consequences in various sectors.

Anyway, the state started implementing the policy of nationalizing jobs years ago, after a number of qualified citizens emerged to work in various sectors.

Nonetheless, this is not enough, because many of the jobs that Kuwait needs are still being done by non-Kuwaitis. We have a wealth of qualified individuals among the Bedouns who have been living here and have been educated in Kuwaiti schools. They are more deserving than others to fill these positions for several reasons, most importantly to provide social stability for this group.

Undoubtedly, many Bedouns, including those whose citizenship was revoked, have the skills that Kuwait needs. It is essential to utilize these individuals as long as there is a plan to nationalize jobs in public institutions, especially since they have been living in Kuwait their entire lives, are familiar with the customs and traditions of the country, and spend their salaries within Kuwait. This helps prevent the outflow of national funds.

Employing Bedouns will reduce the number of expatriate workers in government institutions, thus, helping to correct the demographic imbalance.

It is imperative to take these factors into consideration in planning for the future, provided there is a genuine intention to implement fundamental reforms to address the plethora of problems plaguing Kuwait. Otherwise, we will remain trapped in a vicious cycle.

This step is even more significant as Kuwait is adopting a strategy to transform into a global financial and commercial hub, which necessitates more workforce from among those who have been living in Kuwait their entire lives.

It must be acknowledged that the government took several humanitarian measures for individuals whose citizenship was revoked, such as continuing to pay the salaries of those who were employed and treating them like Kuwaiti citizens in terms of education, healthcare and other benefits. Undoubtedly, these measures alleviated the suffering of this segment of the population.

On the other hand, everyone must recognize that there is a shortage of manpower in fields that the country needs, while many young Bedouns are looking for jobs or ways to make a living.

The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) is responsible for providing training in many professions.

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## Kuwait joins Gulf outcry over Iranian attack on UAE vessel

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15, (KUNA): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Saturday expressed Kuwait's strong condemnation and denunciation of the Iranian attack against a vessel affiliated with the UAE's Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) while transiting the Strait of Hormuz.

The ministry stressed that this attack constitutes a blatant violation of international law and UN Security Council Resolution 2817.

This came in a release, as the ministry stressed that the repeated attacks pose a direct threat to the security and safety of maritime navigation, global energy supplies and international trade.

It renewed its call for an immediate halt to all escalatory actions and adherence to international law governing freedom of navigation.

The ministry reiterated Kuwait's full solidarity with the sisterly United Arab Emirates and its support for all measures taken by the UAE to safeguard its sovereignty and protect its security and interests.

The UAE earlier on Saturday denounced the attack, which targeted an ADNOC-affiliated vessel in the strategic waterway, saying no injuries were reported.

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## Kuwait tightens security net on fugitives and lawbreakers

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: The General Directorate of Emergency Police at the Ministry of Interior conducted a comprehensive security campaign throughout the country, as part of the ongoing efforts of the ministry to maintain security, strictly enforce the law, apprehend wanted individuals and violators and take legal action against them.

The campaign resulted in the execution of 33 arrest warrants, as well as the arrest of 27 individuals with expired residency permits, 12 individuals who failed to present valid identification documents and two individuals involved in criminal and civil cases.

In the traffic field, emergency police recorded 1,300 traffic violations, issued 26 citations for excessive noise, impounded 26 vehicles for various violations, referred one individual to the traffic police station, seized 15 wanted vehicles, and recorded three cases related to drugs, alcohol and bladed weapons.

The ministry affirmed the continuation of security campaigns in various areas to instill security and traffic discipline, pursue wanted individuals and violators, and reduce behaviors that are against the law in order to maintain security and public order, and guarantee the safety of citizens and residents.

### NewsWatch

**KUWAIT CITY:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Saturday expressed Kuwait's condemnation and strong rejection of the escalating attacks by extremist settlers in the occupied West Bank, including systematic violence against innocent civilians.

It stressed that such attacks are a continuation of the Israeli occupation's policies of escalating violence against the brotherly Palestinian people and constitute a blatant violation of international law and international legitimacy resolutions. (KUNA)

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**KUWAIT CITY:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed on Saturday Kuwait's solidarity with the Republic of Indonesia following the earthquake that struck the country, resulting in a number of casualties, including deaths and injuries, as well as significant material damage.

In a statement, the ministry extended Kuwait's sincere condolences and sympathy to the government and people of the Republic of Indonesia and to the families of the victims, wishing the injured a speedy recovery. (KUNA)

— See Also Page 7

**ABU DHABI:** Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan expressed the United Arab Emirates' full solidarity with the State of Kuwait and its support for measures taken by the security authorities to foil a terrorist plot targeting a vital facility, and the arrest of a Kuwaiti citizen who joined the terrorist Daesh organization. (KUNA)



Ambassador of India to Kuwait H.E. Paramita Tripathi reads out the Address to the Nation delivered by the President of India on the eve of Independence Day.

## Indian Embassy in Kuwait marks 80th year of India independence

By John C. Fernandes  
Online Media Manager – Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: The Embassy of India in Kuwait celebrated India's 80th Independence Day on Saturday with patriotic fervor, bringing together members of the Indian community, distinguished guests and friends of India at the embassy premises.

The celebrations began with the Ambassador of India to Kuwait H.E. Paramita Tripathi offering floral tributes at the Shilaphalakam, a commemorative memorial plaque dedicated to Indian freedom fighters, and the bust of Mahatma Gandhi.



Embassy of India photos  
Section of the audience.

The ceremony continued with the mass singing of India's national song, Vande Mataram, commemorating its 150th anniversary. Ambassador Tripathi then hoisted the national

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### Shaheen fuels investment push

## Kuwait 'pivots' from state spending to global capital

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15, (KUNA): Amid Kuwait's efforts to expand investment and economic opportunities, government efforts to attract global companies have generated a tangible flow of foreign investment into the country.

The recent signing by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) of the USD 16 billion Shaheen Project agreement marks a major step in diversifying financing sources and strengthening global investor participation in the national economy.

The project seeks to monetize existing assets through a USD 16 billion sale-and-leaseback model for crude oil pipelines, generating estimated cash proceeds of USD 7.85 billion.

It is Kuwait's largest foreign direct investment to date and a key element of plans to finance capital expenditure and raise crude oil production capacity to four million barrels per day.

The agreement was signed with a consortium of major global infrastructure investors and investment institutions, led by funds managed by Blackstone, Brookfield and KKR.

Oil expert Kamel Al-Harami said the



Al-Harami



Al-Anjeri

project also reflects a comprehensive review of the sector's financing, efficiency, productivity and competitiveness, alongside plans to raise oil production capacity.

"Shaheen" is not merely an alternative form of borrowing, but the beginning of a measured approach to financing and investment based on transparency, governance and sound management, he said.

He added that the project forms part of a broader vision to enhance competitiveness, expand refining capacity, modernize refineries and broaden investment partnerships while preserving oil wealth for future generations.

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4 **Al-Jarallah: Farmers must set up tourism facilities at farms, benefit monetarily**



8 **NREC returns to profitability in Q2 2026**



9 **National Bank of Kuwait wins 17 prestigious Global Finance Awards in recognition of its leadership in digital banking**



Amir congratulates India’s Pres. on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Saturday a cable of congratulations to the President of India Droupadi Murmu, expressing sincere congratulations on the occasion of her country’s Independence Day.

His Highness the Amir wished the President everlasting well-being and for the friendly people of India further progress and prosperity.

**Crown Prince congratulates**  
His Highness the Crown Prince

Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the President of India Droupadi Murmu, expressing his sincere congratulations on her country’s Independence Day and wishing her everlasting well-being.

**Premier congratulates**  
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the President of India Droupadi Murmu, on her country’s Independence Day.

Kuwait, India trade, cultural, political ties continue growth

NEW DELHI, Aug 15, (KUNA): Kuwait Ambassador to India Mishal Alshemali affirmed on Saturday the strength of Kuwaiti-Indian relations during his participation in the annual celebrations held at the Presidential Palace in New Delhi to mark the 80th anniversary of independence.

Ambassador Al-Shemali participated in the Independence Day ceremonies and celebrations at the invitation of Indian President Droupadi Murmu, along with senior Indian government officials, ambassadors, heads of diplomatic missions in New Delhi, and a select group of business leaders and cultural and social figures.

Alshemali extended his warmest congratulations to the leadership and people of India, praising the Indian people’s journey towards freedom, progress, prosperity, and the pluralism that has characterized India over the decades.

The Ambassador also emphasized the strength of the deep-rooted historical relations between Kuwait and India, which extend back to long periods of trade, cultural, and humanitarian exchange, pre-dating the establishment of diplomatic relations in their current form in the early 1960s.

This bright historical trajectory of bilateral relations between Kuwait and India continues in the political, economic, and investment spheres, fostering mutual benefit and shared interests. The Ambassador also commended the positive role played by the Indian community residing in Kuwait, which serves as a vital bridge of communication between the two friendly nations.

Alshemali noted that this year marks the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two friendly countries, affirming Kuwait’s commitment to strengthening existing cooperation and the strategic Kuwaiti-Indian partnership, which has been encouraged by the leadership of both countries.

He stressed the importance of working to deepen and enrich this partnership, propelling it to broader horizons within a framework of mutual respect, in order to achieve the common interests of both countries and their friendly peoples.



Alshemali

Other Voices

Bernays and Freud’s ethics

By Ahmad alsarraf

IN 1928, Edward Bernays published his famous book, Propaganda, which dealt with controlling the collective mind of the masses. In the book, he explained how psychology and public relations could be used to direct the unconscious behavior of the masses by manipulating their desires and subconscious instincts rather than relying on conscious logic.

Bernays asserted that the masses were incapable of making rational decisions and therefore had to be programmed by opinion leaders and the media to serve the interests of the government or the elite. He believed that control could be achieved through indirect influence, using “third parties” such as experts, analysts, and celebrities to justify or suppress messages. This was evident in his famous 1929 campaign to promote smoking among women, linking it to personal freedom and transforming consumption, in its various forms, into a social necessity.

Herein lies the role of the media in transforming news into a propaganda tool to control collective perception without the public’s or the recipient’s knowledge.

Bernays, the nephew of renowned psychologist Sigmund Freud, discovered that Americans ate a light breakfast. He then sought and secured the support of prominent physicians to assert that a hearty breakfast was healthier. He disseminated media stories linking coffee with bacon, significantly increasing the consumption of the products he promoted.

He contributed to the work of the government’s information committee and the “Four Minute Men” program, in which thousands of volunteers delivered short speeches to mobilize public opinion against Germany and promote the sale of war bonds. This resulted in increased donations to help cover the costs of the war.

His propaganda contributed to the overthrow of the Guatemalan government in 1954 through the United Fruit Company, a U.S. monopoly, by discrediting President Arbenz and labeling him a communist. This led to a coup against him, supported by the U.S. government.

Bernays’s work demonstrated the power of political and commercial propaganda, and he successfully transformed his book from a mere public relations guide into a strategic science based on psychology for shaping public opinion and collective behavior.

This contributed to the emergence of the public relations consultant class as an ethical tool for managing complex democratic societies by influencing the subconscious. He introduced the use of surveys and behavioral studies to understand unconscious desires, forming the basis of many modern campaigns, such as digital marketing on social media and the transformation of consumer culture by turning products into social symbols, as seen in his tobacco campaigns.

This is what we see today in the emotional marketing strategies used by brands. His approach to election campaigns, through the use of celebrities and experts, influenced the direction of elections and political propaganda.

The book raised serious concerns about the mass manipulation of people’s opinions and emotions. However, it also established ethical standards in public relations, even though it applied Freud’s concept of the id, which represents basic instincts such as hunger and sex.

He sought to emphasize that the masses are driven by unconscious and irrational desires and must therefore be programmed through emotional symbols rather than logical arguments. He focused primarily on life instincts and libido to market consumer desires and employ emotional manipulation.

Lobbyists, such as AIPAC, have exploited Bernays’ theories for many years to influence American voters.

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| Prayer Timings |       |            |       |
|----------------|-------|------------|-------|
| Fajr .....     | 03:52 | Asr .....  | 15:28 |
| Sunrise ..     | 05:17 | Maghrib .. | 18:28 |
| Zohr .....     | 11:52 | Isha ..... | 19:53 |

Amir congratulates Pakistan on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Friday a congratulatory cable to the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, on his country’s Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished President Zardari good health and wellbeing, and for the friendly country and people more progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a congratulatory cable to the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, on his country’s Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished President Zardari good health and wellbeing, and the people of Pakistan further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah then sent a congratulatory cable to the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, on his country’s Independence Day.

Pakistan Embassy celebrates Independence Day



Top and above: Pictures taken during the celebrations to mark Pakistan’s Independence Day.

Pakistan Embassy photos

‘Pakistan, Kuwait bonds strong, long-lasting’

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: The Embassy of Pakistan commemorated the 80th Independence Day of Pakistan and the 150th birthday of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah with national spirit and patriotic zeal. A large number of Pakistani Community members attended the event and the flag-hoisting ceremony.

The Ambassador in his remarks, paid tribute to the sacrifices of the forefathers and expressed hope for the continued development and prosperity of Pakistan. He highlighted the enduring bonds of brotherhood between Pakistan and Kuwait and appreciated the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir and the Government of Kuwait for their continued friendship and support.

The Ambassador called upon the community to remain steadfast in their continued efforts towards the development of Pakistan and Kuwait.

Documentaries on freedom movement and the life of Quaid-i-Azam were played along with national songs. Pictures depicting Pakistan’s freedom struggle, history and rich cultural heritage were also displayed and attracted keen interest from visitors.

MoSA: Don’t deal with entities outside Kuwait

Ministry reiterates warning to charities

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: The Charitable Societies and Foundations Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs sent a letter to the chairpersons of the boards of directors of charitable societies, reiterating its warning against dealing with entities outside Kuwait that are not accredited within the humanitarian work system of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, say reliable sources.

Sources disclosed that the Ministry of Social Affairs sent the letter in response to the correspondence from its Foreign Affairs counterpart regarding observations that some charitable societies are dealing with unaccredited entities.

Sources said the ministry stressed that the necessary measures will be taken in case of non-compliance.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Social Affairs informed the charitable societies and foundations about the participation requirements for the Seventh Family-Friendly Institutions Award 2026, which will be launched by the Social Affairs Sector and the Department of Family and Childhood in the Arab League with the theme, “Best Initiatives to Promote Family Well-being.”

The ministry revealed that the award is for government and private institutions, and civil society organizations. It indicated that the award aims to highlight pioneering initiatives and innovative practices that improve the quality of life of Arab families, strengthen their ability to deal with challenges, and support family stability and cohesion.

The participation criteria stipulate that the project or idea must provide a solution to a family-related issue and demonstrate a clear and measurable impact on improving the quality of family life. The project must also respect the values, customs and social traditions of Arab families, and must be feasible and easily accessible for all family members.

The criteria require that the project or idea take into account digital security and family privacy, while introducing innovative and unprecedented ideas or practices.

In addition, the project or idea must ensure the optimal use of available resources to enhance efficiency and sustainability. It must be capable of being expanded and implemented at the national level, with the potential for future replication and wider application.

The ministry urged the charitable associations and foundations that meet the award requirements and wish to participate to notify it by Aug 23, clarifying that the award will be presented in the form of a certificate of appreciation.

MPW plans roads maintenance, services in Sabah Al-Salem area

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: The Ministry of Public Works intends to implement a project for the construction, completion and maintenance of roads and related services in Sabah Al-Salem, Block Four, through a tender that will be issued by the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT).

The project is expected to be completed within 18 months and its objectives include the development of infrastructure in the area to serve 58 plots, improve traffic flow, and accommodate traffic increases resulting from urban expansion in neighboring areas.

On the other hand, the ministry announced the continuation of asphalt paving work in several residential areas, including Mubarak Al-Abdullah and Funaitees, as part of the comprehensive maintenance contracts and in accordance with contractual regulations, requirements and quality standards.

The ministry confirmed that the work teams remain on-site to collect samples, conduct the necessary tests, ensure quality and affirm compliance with technical specifications.

PAAAFR app on Sahel to inform sheep breeders feed availability

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) has launched a service to send notifications to livestock breeders regarding the disbursement of subsidized feed through the Sahel application, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Rasha Al-Dhafeeri, Head of the Projects Implementation and Follow-up Department at PAAAFR explained that the launch of the service marks the beginning of a series of digital services currently under development that will be introduced gradually. The initiative is part of a vision to reorganize and simplify procedures, enhance transparency and oversight, and reduce paper-based transactions and human intervention.

Qurtuba’s infrastructure project is 82% ‘complete’

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: The Ministry of Public Works teams continue their field monitoring of the infrastructure project in Qurtuba, which has reached an actual completion rate of 82 percent, under the directives and instructions of Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan.

Dr. Al-Mashaan instructed the relevant teams to maintain continuous on-site monitoring, ensure adherence to the approved timeline and technical specifications, and guarantee the project’s completion within the contractual period.

On Thursday, Director General of the General Department of Sanitary Engineering Affairs Engineer Anwar Al-Balushi conducted a field visit to the Qurtuba area infrastructure project. The project commenced on April 3, 2024, and has a three-year contract period, with completion scheduled for April 2, 2027. According to the approved timeline, the current scheduled completion rate is 75.50 percent.

The actual completion rate has reached 82 percent. The sewage network is 97 percent complete, the stormwater drainage network is 97 percent complete, the telephone network is 99 percent complete, and the street lighting network is 96 percent complete.

The Type 1 and Type 2 asphalt layers are approximately 78.9 percent complete, while the Type 3 asphalt layer has reached approximately 15.2 percent completion.

# Abdali Road ... part of a nation’s ‘sore’ memory

“THE Abdali Road is not merely a road in northern Kuwait used by passing traffic; it is part of a nation’s memory, a silent witness to years of danger, aggression, sacrifice, and resilience,” Kuwaiti lawyer Dr. **Abdullah Mohammad Al-Turajji** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Along this road, chapters of Kuwait’s history were written in the flames of missiles, the scars of war, and the blood of martyrs. In the 1980s, Kuwait came under attack as Iranian missiles rained down on its facilities and oil wells . Then came August 2, 1990, when our nation experienced the most heinous aggression in its modern history - the Iraqi army invaded and occupied Kuwait, destroying its infrastructure and terrorizing its people.



Abdullah Al-Turajji

“The Abdali Road bore witness to a chapter of that tragedy, and later to the day of liberation, the defeat of the occupying army and its retreat, leaving behind a trail of destruction and devastation. On this land, Kuwait lost martyrs, men who gave their lives, leaving behind a sacred trust carried upon our shoulders. The sites that witnessed these events remain enduring reminders of Kuwait’s sacrifices.

“Today, buildings, sites, and monuments still bear the scars of the Kuwait Liberation War, with some having stood for more than three decades as witnesses to what transpired. These are not merely ruins or deteriorating structures; they are part of Kuwait’s collective memory. They are pages of our history, providing physical evidence that words and photographs alone can never replace if these sites disappear. It would be painful to imagine a day when these landmarks vanish, collapse, or are lost, only for us to realize that we have allowed a part of Kuwait’s history that could have been preserved to disappear.

“What is destroyed today cannot always be rebuilt tomorrow, and what is erased may leave future generations with nothing more than a photograph or a story. Therefore, I urge the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters to take the initiative to inventory the historical sites, buildings, and monuments along the Abdali Road and in the surrounding areas, to document and classify them, to protect those that warrant preservation, and to prevent their removal, alteration, or destruction.

“I propose undertaking a study to transform the most prominent of these sites into documented national monuments, with informational plaques that tell the truth about what happened. We want our children and grandchildren, 50 years from now and even 100 years from now, to stand before these monuments, see with their own eyes the traces of the aggression, and understand that the freedom they enjoy did not come without a price. We want these sites to remain witnesses after the eyewitnesses have passed away, to speak when memory falls silent, and to stand as evidence when some attempt to distort or deny history.

“Throughout its modern history, Kuwait has faced various dangers and attacks. Missiles and drones continue to remind us that the security and sovereignty of nations should never be taken for granted. Preserving the remnants of the aggression against Kuwait is not a glorification of war; it is a commemoration of the peace for which we paid a price and a preservation of the nation’s memory. These sites do not belong to us alone, nor should we have the right to simply remove them. They are the right of the martyrs, the right of those who endured the bitterness of occupation, the right of our children and grandchildren, and the right of Kuwait. Preserve what remains of the evidence of those days before the day comes when we search for it and find nothing but an empty place.”

Also:

“Of course, the current generation does not study history and knows little about the Tripartite Aggression of 1956, when Egypt declared the Suez Canal a wholly Egyptian waterway, ending its foreign administration,” Kuwaiti writer **Tariq Idris** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Britain’s reaction was to launch the Tripartite Aggression against Egypt, joined by Israel and France, just four years after the July 23, 1952 Revolution. This confrontation, immortalized in the history of the Arab struggle against Western ambitions - diplomatically, economically, and militarily - ended with Egypt achieving its diplomatic and economic objectives regarding this vital strategic waterway, the Suez Canal.

“Today, the current generation is experiencing the crisis surrounding the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a scenario reminiscent of the Tripartite Aggression of 1956, but with entirely different circumstances and details. The current Tripartite Aggression of 2026 is being led by terrorist militias in collusion with a rogue state. Coincidentally, this aggression comprises the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, the Yemeni Houthi group, and factions of Iraq’s Popular Mobilization Forces, all supported, funded, and financially and logistically organized by Tehran, with the aim of overturning the existing realities and balance of power in the Arabian Gulf region in favor of what it views as Persian ambitions.

“In response to this aggression, the “Mecca Tripartite Declaration” was is-

sued by three of the largest and most powerful Islamic countries in the Middle East in terms of technology, military capabilities, economic strength, and diplomatic influence. This alliance, comprising Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, and Pakistan, provides a deterrent force against the ambitions and political and military blackmail of terrorist organizations and the states that support them, whether covertly or overtly. Indeed, today, seven decades after the 1956 Tripartite Aggression against the Suez Canal, the historical circumstances and balance of power have changed.

“The 2026 Mecca Tripartite Agreement was established to deter the ambitions and intentions behind the 2026 Tripartite Aggression, led by rogue militias and, unfortunately, supported by the capital of a treacherous and duplicitous Islamic state. The question remains - When will this chapter come to an end and become part of the historical record for future generations?”

□ □ □

“Throughout history, all prosperous economies have shared one essential and unmistakable characteristic - a highly educated, skilled, and well-informed population,” Kuwaiti writer Dr. **Nasser Hussain Abbas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Education is the link between the skilled worker capable of handling modern technologies, the engineer who designs and builds infrastructure, and the entrepreneur who identifies and seizes opportunities in the market. Education is the true fuel of the economy. The relationship between education and economic development is not merely a theoretical hypothesis; it is one of the most consistent and well-supported findings in modern economic literature. Understanding this relationship helps explain how some nations have managed to rise into the ranks of developed countries within just a few decades, while others continue to struggle to escape the cycle of developmental poverty.

“In modern economic thought, education is no longer viewed as a burden or as consumer expenditure, but rather as a pivotal strategic investment. The Nobel Prize-winning economist Gary Becker developed this concept through his “Human Capital Theory”, emphasizing that the knowledge and skills possessed by individuals are productive assets, no less important than factories or machinery. International figures clearly support this view.

“According to the World Bank, each additional year of schooling can increase an individual’s income by up to 10 percent annually. According to UNESCO, every dollar invested in education can generate cumulative economic growth equivalent to \$10 to \$15. Increasing the average educational attainment of a population by one year can raise per capita GDP growth by approximately 2 to 2.5 percent. While expanding access to education is important, recent research, particularly studies by Stanford economist Eric Hanushek, indicates that the decisive factor for economic growth is not simply the number of years people spend in school, but the quality and effectiveness of the education they receive.

“Cognitive abilities, practical skills in mathematics and science, and critical thinking are the forces that drive innovation and increase overall productivity. This is evident in several prominent international experiences. Finland, for example, has focused on preparing teachers according



Nasser H. Abbas

- transforming the country into an industrial powerhouse and a global competitor. The economic power of education, however, is not limited to stimulating material growth; it also extends to being one of the most effective tools for reducing inequality and providing a social safety net. UNESCO estimates that the global poverty rate could be more than halved if all adults completed secondary education. In this context, the education of girls and women stands out as a crucial economic policy.

“Research by the Brookings Institution indicates that even a one percent increase in the share of women with secondary education can raise a country’s economic growth by 0.3 percent. The World Bank estimates that inadequate access to quality education could cost the global economy between \$15 trillion and \$30 trillion, while student dropout rates threaten to cause permanent losses in national GDP. By 2030, with the accelerating pace of digital transformation and the growing adoption of artificial intelligence and automation, the World Bank projects that approximately 60 percent of the global workforce will require reskilling and upskilling.

“Countries that invest in building flexible, future-oriented, and high-quality education systems will be better positioned to ensure long-term economic stability and achieve higher positions in global competitiveness rankings. Today, nations can no longer rely solely on natural resources; they increasingly depend on the knowledge, skills, and capabilities of their people, which can shape the future.”

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



The Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Lt Gen Khaled Al-Shuraiaan, conferred the rank of Major on a nuclear medicine specialist, in accordance with the Amiri decree appointing him as an officer in the Kuwaiti Army.

## Army Chief grants Major rank to nuke medicine expert

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: The Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraiaan, conferred the rank of Major on a nuclear medicine specialist, in accordance with the Amiri decree appointing him as an officer

in the Kuwaiti Army, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement issued on Thursday, the General Staff said Lieutenant General Al-Shuraiaan congratulated the officer on his promotion, and wished him success in

carrying out his duties and responsibilities.

The ceremony was attended by Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Meshal Al-Sabah and a number of senior officers.

## Syrian dies in fall

Asian bus driver crushed between two buses, dies

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: A Bangladeshi bus driver, born in 1976, died in a tragic accident in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh after becoming trapped between two buses while inspecting his vehicle, reports Al-Anba daily.

The two buses were parked one in front of the other. The driver of the first bus got out and went to the rear of his vehicle to inspect it. At that moment, the second bus moved backward, trapping him between the two buses and causing his death.

The second bus was driven by an Indian man, born in 1981. A case was registered in connection with the accident, and the incident was referred to the relevant authorities for further investigation.

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**Syrian dies in fall:** A Syrian resident died after falling from a height in Wafra residential area, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, the Ministry of Interior’s Operations Room had received a report about a worker falling while working on a building under construction. Upon arrival, security personnel found the deceased’s body in the presence of the person who had reported the incident. A paramedic confirmed his death. Necessary action was taken thereafter.

## Technical fault cause of Fahaheel power outage

By Mohammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy said the main substation in Fahaheel (A) went out of service recently due to a technical malfunction, resulting in power outage in some parts of the area.

The ministry confirmed that the emergency teams rushed to the site and restored power as quickly as possible.

Meanwhile, the ministry referred the tender for major maintenance work on its building and that of the Ministry of Public Works in South Surra to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) for approval of the winning bidder.

The tender includes the maintenance of mechanical, electrical and civil systems, irrigation networks, financial management and central control systems to improve the operational efficiency of these buildings and extend their lifespan.

It is worth noting that the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy previously obtained approval from the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) to award the tender for KD3.427 million to the bidder that met the technical requirements.

## Minister – Kuwaitis must as food supply managers

By Fares Ghaleb  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah has confirmed the nationalization of the food supply branch manager position in 12 cooperative societies, in line with the plan to Kuwaitize such position in all cooperatives.

In a press statement, Al-Huwailah revealed that her ministry is monitoring the implementation of the plan in phases, with the aim of expanding the participation of national talent in the cooperative sector and providing more job opportunities for citizens.

She added that more vacancies in cooperative societies will be announced upon completion of the inventory and regulatory procedures. She affirmed that the ministry continues its policy of empowering citizens to fill supervisory and support positions in the cooperative sector.

She clarified that the nationalization plan is not limited to filling vacancies, as it includes building a national workforce capable of assuming responsibilities and contributing to the development of cooperative work.

# Capital on top in ‘crime rate’

Appeals deals with 5,030 cases

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

**KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: Statistics issued by the Ministry of Justice revealed that the Court of Appeals adjudicated 5,030 out of 5,983 pending cases in June 2026 -- a completion rate of 84.1 percent, while the number of new cases filed in court reached 3,724.**

The statistics showed that the Capital Governorate Court recorded the highest number of new cases with 2,631 or 70.6 percent of the total, followed by Farwaniya with 20.8 percent, Ahmadi with 3.8 percent, Hawally with 3.1 percent, Jahra with 0.9 percent and the Financial Markets Court with 0.7 percent.

The Capital Governorate has 4,359 cases (72.9 percent), followed by Farwaniya with 18.2 percent, Hawally with 4.2 percent, Ahmadi with 3.3 percent, Financial Markets Court with 0.8 percent and Jahra with 0.6 percent.

Regarding the number of cases resolved, the Capital Governorate also led with 3,419 cases or 68 percent of the total, followed by Farwaniya with 22.8 percent,

Ahmadi with 4.6 percent, Hawally with 3.1 percent, Financial Markets Court with 0.9 percent and Jahra with 0.6 percent.

The Ahmadi Court recorded the highest completion rate in June with 116.7 percent, followed by Farwaniya with 105 percent, Financial Markets Court with 92 percent, Jahra with 88.2 percent, Capital with 78.4 percent and Hawally with 62.9 percent.

The statistics showed that the number of new non-criminal cases reached 3,073, compared to 5,094 pending cases and 4,256 resolved cases, resulting in an overall completion rate of 83.5 percent.

Commercial cases topped the list of non-criminal cases, constituting 25.6 percent of new cases, 33.4 percent of pending cases, and 26.7 percent of adjudicated cases.

The administrative and financial market cases recorded low, with 0.3 percent of new cases, 0.2 percent of pending cases and 0.1 percent of adjudicated cases.

In the criminal sector, 651 new cases were filed, 889 cases are pending and 774 cases, achieving were adjudicated with a completion rate of 87.1 percent.

The Capital Governorate Criminal Court led in new criminal cases with 430 or 66.1 percent, followed by the Court of Cassation for Misdemeanors with 29 percent, and municipal misdemeanors and violations with 4.9 percent.



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# Al-Jarallah: Farmers must set up tourism facilities at farms, benefit monetarily

By Adnan Makawi  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: Former board member of the Kuwaiti Farmers Union, Mohammad Ali Al-Mutairi, hosted a luncheon at his farm in Al-Wafra on Saturday in honor of the Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers, Ahmed Al-Jarallah, on the occasion of his return to Kuwait.

The luncheon was attended by the Head of the Kuwaiti Farmers Union Ahmed Al-Adwani, its secretary Ahmed Al-Shabak, Director of the Agricultural Plots and Agricultural Support Committee at the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) Rashid Al-Azmi, and a number of farmers, including Dr. Ahmed Zaid Al-Azmi, Abdullah Fahad Ayed, and Sanitan Al-Zoubi, as well as journalist Saud Al-Farhan.

At the beginning of the gathering, Al-Adwani thanked prominent journalist Ahmed Al-Jarallah for dedicating a weekly page in Al-Seyassah newspaper to highlighting the achievements of Kuwaiti farmers and shedding light on agricultural affairs.

Al-Adwani brought good news to Kuwaiti farmers following the Public Authority for Manpower's (PAM) renewal of the committee tasked with managing the Kuwaiti Farmers Union.

He also announced that the redistribution of subsidized diesel allocations to each farmer, based on the actual needs of their farms, had been approved and would begin within the coming week.

Al-Adwani stressed that the Kuwaiti Farmers Union's doors are open to all farmers to share their views and suggestions on improving the union's services in all agricultural sectors.

He emphasized that the union and its members are committed to ensuring that the organization remains on the right track.

Meanwhile, former Chairman of the Wafra Agricultural Association Dr. Ahmed Zaid Al-Azmi welcomed the Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism, Ahmed Al-Jarallah, and praised the voluntary efforts of the head of the Farmers Union and his colleagues, which have resulted in numerous achievements, most notably an unprecedented surplus in the Kuwaiti Farmers Union's budget in recent years.

He expressed hope that the interim committee managing the union, headed by farmer Ahmed Al-Adwani, would continue to deliver further achievements for Kuwait's agricultural sector.

Al-Azmi commended the prominent role of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah in supporting the Kuwaiti Farmers Union and its members.

Also, farmer Mohammed Al-Mutairi praised the efforts of the committee managing the Kuwaiti Farmers Union, expressing his appreciation for the distribution of subsidized diesel within two days, as well as the disbursement of



Ahmed Al-Jarallah with colleague Saud Al-Farhan.



Mohammad Al-Mutairi welcomes Ahmed Al-Jarallah.



Some of the attendees.



Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers, Ahmed Al-Jarallah photographed with guests at the luncheon.

overdue agricultural cash support.

He also expressed his appreciation for the impact of articles by the Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism, Ahmed Al-Jarallah, which convey the concerns of farmers and agricultural stakeholders to officials. Among the most urgent issues, he noted, is the need to deliver sufficient quantities of treated wastewater to all farms in Al-Wafra and Al-Abdali as quickly as possible.

Al-Mutairi emphasized that delays in delivering treated wastewater would exacerbate the difficulties facing Kuwaiti farmers and increase their production costs, particularly amid the steady rise in prices of agricultural materials and supplies.

Furthermore, farmer Ahmed Al-Adwani, on behalf of himself and all Kuwaiti farmers, expressed his sincere gratitude to First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, highlighting the diligent efforts he is making with members of the Kuwaiti Farmers Union's board of directors to resolve the complex issue of treated wastewater.

He indicated that addressing the issue requires the construction of a large desalination plant in the heart of the Wafra agricultural area, with the resulting brine discharged into the sea through pipelines.

Al-Adwani affirmed that modern science has the capacity to solve every agricultural challenge, but stressed that rapid implementation is essential.

He emphasized that the government and relevant officials are making every effort to meet the demands and needs of Kuwaiti farmers.

In this regard, Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism Ahmed Abdul Aziz Al-Jarallah called on the relevant agricultural authorities and farmers to permit the establishment of tourism facilities on farms, or agritourism projects, particularly on suitable farms located in remote areas.

He highlighted the significant benefits such activities could provide to all residents of Kuwait, both citizens and expatriates, and stressed the need to establish clear regulations and standards to ensure that farm tourism projects serve their intended purpose to the fullest extent.

Al-Jarallah also called for the reinstatement of subsidies for green fodder, which would help strengthen and develop Kuwait's livestock sector.

He explained that restoring generous subsidies for each productive date palm in agricultural areas would contribute to advancing Kuwait's date production, particularly the delicious Barhi variety in the Arab region. The number of productive date palms in Saudi Arabia's Qassim region has reached approximately 12 million, generating an estimated annual value of around four billion riyals, with dates exported to approximately 100 countries worldwide.

Al-Jarallah called on the relevant authorities to grant the

necessary licenses for establishing agricultural processing plants on farms to encourage food manufacturing and value-added agricultural production.

He emphasized the importance of learning from the successful agricultural experiences of many Arab and non-Arab countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and Morocco.

Al-Jarallah highlighted that modern agricultural technologies are capable of enabling Kuwait to achieve outstanding and distinctive levels of agricultural production.

He noted that a number of farmers have already succeeded in producing a wide range of crops, including strawberries, figs, citrus fruits, bananas, grapes, mangoes, potatoes, garlic, zucchini, okra, squash, eggplant, cowpeas, and others.

Al-Jarallah also praised Kuwait's impressive production of broiler and layer chickens, farmed fish, cattle, sheep, and camels.

He indicated that the green fodder cultivation project at Sheikh Salem Hamoud Al-Salem Al-Sabah's farm in Al-Abdali is a source of pride for Kuwait and its people.

Al-Jarallah said the strongest evidence supporting the statement made by the head of the Kuwaiti Farmers Union is that the number of cardboard boxes used for packaging reached 16.4 million in just seven months, in addition to the boxes sold by numerous agricultural companies operating in the Wafra and Al-Abdali farming areas.

He praised the role of Kuwaiti farmers in ensuring the availability of fruits and vegetables in local markets during the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent war.

Al-Jarallah said if Kuwaiti farmers were permitted to export a portion of their produce, they would be encouraged to achieve even greater innovation and development in productive agriculture.

He noted that Kuwait had previously exported roses and other flowers.

Al-Jarallah highlighted that agricultural work in Kuwait, like any other profession, has its successes and failures.

He appealed to the relevant authorities not to treat the majority of dedicated and law-abiding farmers in the same manner as the small minority of violators.

Al-Jarallah urged the authorities not to deprive all farmers of certain benefits because of violations committed by a few.

He emphasized the importance of reconsidering the decision preventing beneficiaries of agricultural plots from disposing of or transferring them to others, whether for agricultural purposes or to introduce new agricultural activities.

Al-Jarallah advocated a three-pronged approach to farming that encompasses plants, livestock, poultry, and even farmed fish.

He also urged the relevant authorities to intensify agricultural extension services for Kuwaiti farmers, with a particular focus on cultivating varieties that require less water, as is the case in Morocco, where Al-Jarallah practiced agricultural production for many years.

# Fields of giving ‘keep growing’

Kuwait diversifies global aid

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15, (KUNA): Kuwaiti humanitarian aid extends beyond borders, carrying diverse forms of humanitarian work from supporting charitable and humanitarian institutions and initiatives in Malaysia to advancing education in Uganda and assisting Sudanese refugees seeking to return home, reflecting the diversity of Kuwait's charitable efforts and the breadth of their impact.

Kuwaiti humanitarian initiatives this week highlight a shift from responding to immediate needs toward building more sustainable pathways that combine empowering people through knowledge, easing the burdens of displacement and strengthening humanitarian partnerships, giving beneficiaries broader opportunities to regain stability and build a better future.

From education in Uganda to the journey of return to Sudan and the bridges of humanitarian cooperation in Malaysia, Kuwait's imprint in the fields of giving continues to grow, carrying a message that the value of humanitarian work is measured not only by the amount provided but also by the stability, hope and ability to begin a safer and more sustainable life that it leaves behind.

Moving beyond the boundaries of relief projects to establish bridges of cooperation between institutions and communities, Kuwaiti entities have continued their activities abroad, drawing on a well-established humanitarian legacy that has made giving an enduring mission whose fields may vary but whose objectives converge on preserving human dignity and improving living conditions.

In Malaysia, Kuwait's humanitarian role was recognized by 15 charitable and humanitarian organizations in appreciation of the State of Kuwait's contribution to leading and supporting humanitarian initiatives and its backing of relief and humanitarian efforts in the country, reflecting the standing Kuwait has earned through its extensive charitable projects and partnerships.

Kuwait's Ambassador to Malaysia Rashed Al-Saleh told KUNA after receiving a shield bearing the slogan "A Touch of Loyalty" that humanitarian work represents a firmly established approach for Kuwait at both official and popular levels. Kuwaiti initiatives and projects in Malaysia and around the world, he added, are an extension of a long-standing tradition of giving and helping those in need.

Al-Saleh said Kuwait's longstanding presence in humanitarian and charitable fields comes with the support of the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh

Mesha Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and reflects the political leadership's continued interest in Kuwaiti humanitarian initiatives at home and abroad.

He underscored the importance of continuing cooperation with humanitarian institutions and associations and strengthening the values of solidarity in ways that broaden the scope of humanitarian work and benefit recipients, expressing appreciation for the sentiments of loyalty and recognition conveyed by the honor in recognition of Kuwait and its humanitarian efforts.

The honoring ceremony was organized by the Malaysian International Organization for Education, Science and Culture (ISCO) and Insan Relief and Development Association, with the participation of humanitarian and charitable institutions and associations operating in Malaysia. It included honoring and bidding farewell to Ambassador Al-Saleh on the occasion of the end of his diplomatic tenure in the country.

Kuwaiti entities, meanwhile, are working with Malaysian institutions to implement humanitarian, educational, relief and development projects for vulnerable groups.

In a track placing education and modern technology at the heart of sustainable development, the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) has taken another step in developing its educational institutions after Al-Laheeb Primary School, affiliated with Al-Laheeb Social Care Center in Uganda, was officially accredited under the global Canva for Education program, which seeks to expand the use of digital tools in education.

IICO Deputy Director General for Projects Ibrahim Al-Bader told KUNA that the accreditation represents another achievement in the development of the organization's educational institutions and reflects its commitment to promoting digital transformation and improving the quality of education.

The program allows the school to benefit from a wide range of digital tools and resources enabling teachers to prepare interactive educational content and design presentations, worksheets and visual materials, while providing an environment that encourages students to be creative, participate and work collectively, Al-Bader noted.

He said Al-Laheeb Primary School, established in 2005, has about 271 male and female students and around 50 teachers, employees and workers. It has a capacity of about 400 students and offers the government curriculum in English and the Islamic curriculum in Arabic.

Investing in digital education and innovation is an important component of the IICO's efforts to equip teachers and students with modern knowledge tools and develop their skills, contributing to building generations better able to innovate and meet future requirements, he affirmed.

On another front of the humanitarian scene, Kuwait-based Direct Aid Association is preparing to implement a project for the voluntary return of Sudanese refugees from Uganda under the supervision of the Embassy of Kuwait in Sudan and in coordination with the Sudanese and Ugandan authorities.



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# UN-Habitat, Turkiye Embassy unite for community greening drive

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15, (KUNA): The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) for Kuwait and GCC states, along with the Embassy of Turkiye in Kuwait kicked off on Thursday greening activities at the Kuwait-Turkiye Friendship Park by planting the first tree there, symbolizing the deep relations between both countries.

The initiative aims to greenify public spaces, promote a culture of volunteering, and involve the community in improving the urban environment to increase awareness of climate challenges, said both sides in a press statement.

They stated that addressing climate impacts requires international, national, and community efforts,



Left: Turkiye's Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Sonmez. Center: Group photo during the greening activities at the Kuwait-Turkiye Friendship Park. Right: Head of the UN-Habitat mission to Kuwait and the GCC countries Dr. Ameera Al-Hassan.

emphasizing the role of residents, especially the youth, in green initiatives, which improves the environment and public spaces.

For her part, Turkiye's Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Sonmez said that planting the first tree represents a symbol of the friendship and strong relations between Kuwait and Turkiye and embodies the cooperation between both countries to turn into practical initiatives for future generations.

In turn, Head of the UN-Habitat mission to Kuwait and the GCC countries Dr. Ameera Al-Hassan said that greening public spaces represents an investment in quality of life and strengthens cities to adapt to environmental and climate challenges.

Continued from Page 1

## Educate the

Why does PAAET not train the Bedoun youths to work in institutions and ministries, instead of bringing in foreign workers?

Every year, many expatriates leave the labor market, particularly from the public sector, while the country needs replacements to fill the resulting vacancies. Therefore, it is important to utilize Bedouns and those with similar circumstances, as they are residents of Kuwait who have known no other homeland. Kuwait is a compassionate towards its citizens and residents, and it treats its inhabitants humanely.

Many Bedouns are unemployed, which sometimes prompt some of them to commit crimes. They could be a valuable asset if they achieve social and financial stability.

To conclude, allow the Bedouns to study at PAAET institutes, since they are not permitted to enroll in public universities.

## Indian Embassy

flag, followed by the singing of the national anthem, Jana Gana Mana.

The Ambassador also read out the Address to the Nation delivered by the President of India on the eve of Independence Day. The address highlighted India's achievements and aspirations, as well as its continued pursuit of inclusive development under the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision.

In her remarks, Tripathi underscored the close and longstanding ties between India and Kuwait, describing them as being rooted in mutual respect,

goodwill and strong people-to-people relations. She also praised the Indian community for its valuable contribution to Kuwait.

The Indian Embassy earlier had organized several community initiatives ahead of Independence Day, including the 'My India, My Story' creative campaign, 'India Through My Lens' photography competition and 'Paint Your Vision of Viksit Bharat 2047' painting competition. Winners were felicitated by the Ambassador and presented with certificates, while selected entries were displayed at the embassy. The Ambassador also felicitated winners of the Independence Day Special Bharat Ko Janiye (BKJ) Quiz.

The celebrations highlighted India's cultural diversity and the shared national identity of the Indian community in Kuwait. The programme concluded with a cleanliness drive at the embassy premises under the 'Swachhata Hi Seva' initiative, reinforcing the importance of cleanliness, civic responsibility, and collective action.

## Kuwait 'pivots'

Meanwhile, Reconnaissance Research Director and CEO Abdulaziz Al-Anjeri said the government's approach in attracting investment through the Direct Investment Promotion Authority and public-private partnership framework reflected an important shift in investment management.

Attracting foreign investors requires genuine opportunities in sectors such as energy, infrastructure and major projects, he said, stressing the

importance of developing the investment environment alongside expanding partnership projects.

Al-Anjeri described the Shaheen Project as an important example of opening the door to local and international capital and expertise to finance and implement projects instead of relying exclusively on direct government capital spending.

He said expanding this approach would strengthen financial sustainability, ease pressure on capital expenditure and create a broader market for local and foreign investors.

It would also develop Kuwaiti capabilities through exposure to global institutions and facilitate the transfer of knowledge and advanced professional practices, he added.

Al-Anjeri stressed that the state is not relinquishing its assets or role, but benefiting from private-sector capital, expertise and operational efficiency under partnership agreements.

The real value lies in attracting investors while simultaneously creating opportunities for investment, he said, describing this as a transformation capable of translating Kuwait Vision 2035 into tangible projects.

Foreign direct investment inflows into Kuwait reached KD 126.4 million in 2025, equivalent to about USD 412.4 million.

The Central Bank of Kuwait said the stock of foreign direct investment reached approximately KD 5.4 billion at the end of 2025, or USD 17.6 billion, reflecting continued investment accumulation and Kuwait's attractiveness as a destination.

The bank said foreign direct investment covers investments giving foreign investors an influential stake of at least 10 percent in an enterprise.

When all financial instruments are included, total inward investment flows rise to approximately KD 11.8 billion, equivalent to USD 38.5 billion.

Kuwait ranked fifth among Arab countries and 52nd globally in the DHAMAN Investment Climate Index 2025, advancing two places from the previous year.

According to the Arab Investment and Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (DHAMAN), foreign direct investment inflows into Kuwait reached USD 497 million.

The strategy of attracting global investment produced further results in July, when Blackstone announced plans to open an office in Kuwait through the Direct Investment Promotion Authority.

Blackstone President and Chief Operating Officer Jonathan Gray said Kuwait possessed the resources, vision and leadership to become an important regional commercial and financial center.

Global asset manager Franklin Templeton officially began operations in Kuwait in late June, further strengthening the country's position as a strategic investment hub.

The company, which manages more than USD 1.64 trillion in assets, plans to support Kuwait Vision 2035 by strengthening specialized financial services, supporting economic diversification and developing human capital.

It also seeks to encourage modern financial technologies within Kuwait's investment ecosystem.

Franklin Templeton's entry follows the opening of a BlackRock office in Kuwait last year. BlackRock said its presence supported Kuwait's financial

ambitions and contributed to developing the local investment landscape.

In October 2025, the Direct Investment Promotion Authority announced the opening of a Goldman Sachs office in Kuwait, supporting a strategic partnership spanning 50 years.

Goldman Sachs said Kuwait was undergoing rapid transformation aimed at achieving economic growth and creating opportunities for its citizens.

Kuwait continues discussions with global companies to strengthen cooperation, remove barriers and facilitate investment flows.

The government has repeatedly expressed openness to attracting more international companies to establish regional headquarters in Kuwait.

It has also prioritized measures to stimulate economic activity, including capital spending on development projects, stronger private-sector partnerships and reforms to the framework governing private-sector activity.

These efforts are complemented by legislative reforms supporting economic transformation and strengthening the flow of quality investments.

## Kuwait joins

The UAE Foreign Ministry said the assault contravened Resolution 2817, which underlines freedom of navigation and rejects attacks on commercial vessels or disruption of international shipping lanes.

Abu Dhabi warned that targeting commercial navigation and using the Strait of Hormuz as a tool of pressure or economic blackmail amounts to acts of piracy by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), pos-

ing a direct threat to regional stability and global energy security. It called on Tehran to halt such aggressive actions, comply fully with a cessation of hostilities and reopen the strait unconditionally in a manner that ensures regional security and safeguards global trade.

Saudi Arabia also strongly condemned the targeting of two ADNOC tankers in the Strait of Hormuz, describing the incidents as part of a pattern of unacceptable Iranian attacks on commercial vessels. The Saudi Foreign Ministry said the repeated assaults represent a dangerous escalation and a grave violation of international laws and norms, as well as a blatant challenge to Resolution 2817.

Riyadh held Iran fully responsible for the consequences of its continued attacks and called on Tehran to immediately cease such violations and comply with relevant international laws. It stressed that regional security and the safety of international maritime navigation are a shared responsibility, and that such attacks cannot be tolerated. The Kingdom reaffirmed its full solidarity with the UAE and its support for all measures taken to protect its sovereignty, security and resources.

GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi likewise condemned the Iranian attack on the two Emirati tankers, calling it a dangerous and unacceptable escalation that threatens safe navigation in line with UN Security Council resolutions. He rejected attempts to turn the Strait of Hormuz into a tool of threat and urged the international community to take serious action to resolve the issue, reiterating the GCC's full support for the UAE and any steps it takes to protect its interests.

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Fry endorses Graham in S.Carolina Republican Senate runoff

# Dems’ 2028 primary calendar set to prioritize Latino voters, organized labor

AUSTIN, Texas, Aug 15, (AP): Democrats’ process for picking a 2028 presidential nominee will likely kick off in states where candidates will need to appeal to key supporters such as Black and Latino voters and union members.

It also may require fewer parkas for the winters in Iowa, which is out of the top spot of the proposed calendar, and learning to pronounce Nevada the way the locals do (it’s Ne-VAD-ah).

The Democratic National Committee is scheduled to approve the calendar Saturday at a meeting in Texas.

South Carolina’s primary would be first on Jan. 22, followed by Nevada on Feb. 1. New Hampshire, New Mexico, Michigan and Virginia would round out the early states, throughout February.

“It shouldn’t surprise anyone as a result of it being the largest and most diverse committee that we got the most diverse calendar in our party’s history,” DNC Chairman Ken Martin, who has championed the calen-

dar, told a gathering of the party’s Black Caucus this week.

Democrats’ 2028 presidential primary is expected to draw a large group of candidates. Already, some potential candidates have been making stops in states expected to vote early, such as South Carolina. Party leaders have widely praised the plan as giving its candidates the best shot at replacing President Donald Trump.

“They have to show that they can go to the South and talk to Black voters and rural voters, as well as out west, talking ranching and mining issues,” said party strategist Karen Finney, who has worked on multiple winning and losing presidential campaigns. “Whoever survives will be battle tested.”

Former presidential candidate Howard Dean recalled his time as national party chairman, when Democrats solidified Nevada and South Carolina as early states behind Iowa and New Hampshire. The latest change is even better, he



Democratic National Committee member Donna Brazile attends a Black Caucus meeting as part of the DNC Summer Meeting on Aug 13, in Austin, Texas. (AP)

said.

As the first-in-the-South primary, South Carolina was more decisive than Iowa and New Hampshire for nominees Barack Obama in 2008, Hillary Clinton in 2016 and Joe

following, that will likely require that candidates also court more Latino voters long before voting starts.

Shifting from Iowa and New Hampshire does not mean little-known candidates can’t catch fire like Pete Buttigieg did in Iowa and New Hampshire in 2020, when he was a 37-year-old former mayor. They just won’t be able to do it with an almost entirely white audience.

There’s disagreement over how Democrats’ split between progressives and mainstream liberals may - or may not - surface in the calendar.

Nina Smith, a former Buttigieg adviser who now works closely with progressive causes, disagreed. Smith agreed that Black South Carolinians, especially, have gravitated to more moderate candidates - twice rejecting Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders in favor of Clinton and Biden.

But, she said, “Southern Black voters are more progressive than they’ve given credit for” on policy but also “realists” about what’s possible.

Smith said that South Carolina leading off - with many Southern states following on Super Tuesday soon after the early slate concludes - means that progressives will have to take the time to listen and then tailor their messages.

**Also:**

**COLUMBIA, SC:** US Rep **Russell Fry** endorsed Sen **Darline Graham** in South Carolina’s Republican Senate primary runoff, saying on Friday that she should replace her late brother on general election ballots because of her ability to advance President **Donald Trump’s** agenda and her understanding of everyday people’s struggles.

Fry finished third in a special primary held Tuesday, when Graham and US Rep **Ralph Norman** advanced to the Aug 25 runoff. His backing follows that of other powerful Republicans who have supported Graham, including Sen **Tim Scott** of South Carolina and Trump, whose early endorsement helped propel his own congressional career.

## WW II Memorial in Washington vandalized, suspect arrested

WASHINGTON, Aug 15, (AP): A person has been arrested in connection with vandalism at The World War II Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., US Attorney for the District of Columbia Jeanine Pirro announced Friday.

Pirro announced on X that her office was filing two felony charges against **Melissa L. Farris**. Pirro said the felony charges are “Depredation Against Property of the United States and Destruction of Veterans’ Memorials.” The offenses carry penalties of up to 10 years in prison.

On Thursday, the words “Clean hands dirty \$” were found painted on the monument and bubbles filled a fountain.

“Vandalizing our World War II Memorial is a despicable attack on a sacred monument honoring the Americans who fought and died for our freedom. Those Americans include my father



Pirro

and grandfather,” Pirro wrote.

A woman identified on her Facebook page as Melissa Lovewell posted a video Thursday in which she is seen taking cans of spray paint from her bag and then painting the monument.

“I will wait here to be arrested for spraying our veterans’ fountain,” she says. “It was me, I’m doing it, it’s on camera.”

In a video posted Friday, the woman, who in a separate post said she had been in Washington for three weeks, said she was turning herself in.

The arrest warrant filed in the case indicated that witnesses took pictures of the vandalism occurring, which were circulated among U.S. Park Police officers.

One officer recognized the suspect as someone they arrested Aug. 10 “for unlawfully camping on federal property” just blocks away. She livestreamed that arrest, the warrant said.

The suspect was identified by her Kentucky driver’s license as Melissa L. Farris, of Elizabethtown, Kentucky.

Farris was expected to be arraigned Friday. The Public Defender’s office said she was not yet listed in the system and had not been assigned an attorney.

# Hawaii’s Big Island under hurricane landfall threat as Tropical Storm Lala strengthens

HONOLULU, Aug 15, (AP): Tropical Storm Lala is expected to strengthen to a hurricane before reaching Hawaii’s Big Island this weekend, forecasters said Friday, bringing heavy rains that can cause destructive flooding and strong winds that can fuel wildfires.

The National Hurricane Center said Lala should be at hurricane strength by the time it approaches the Big Island Saturday.

If it makes landfall there, it would be the first to hit the island since 1871. Back then, according to a University of Hawaii atmospheric scientist’s research of newspaper accounts, a Category 3 hurricane hit the northeast corner of the island, said Vanessa Almanza, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Honolulu.

“First time since satellites,” Almanza said. “The latest forecast has it very close to the southern tip of the Big Island.”

A hurricane warning was issued for the Big Island, and a tropical storm warning was in effect for Maui County, which includes the islands of Maui, Molokai, Lanai and Kahoolawe.

Officials and residents braced for Lala regardless of whether Hawaii takes a direct hit. Shelters were



Shaheer Faltas, (left), and his father-in-law, Joe Brosnan, fill sandbags in preparation for the arrival of Tropical Storm Lala in Captain Cook, Hawaii on Aug. 14. (AP)

scheduled to open, and various events were canceled.

“It doesn’t take landfall to create destruction,” Almanza said. “A lot of the impacts are felt outside of the hurricane.”

The National Hurricane Center predicted 8 to 12 inches (20.3 to 30.5 centimeters) of rainfall totals across Maui and the Big Island, with

maximum totals as high as 25 inches (63.5 centimeters) in some spots on the Big Island. Four to 6 inches (10.2 to 15.2 centimeters) were expected across the island chain.

The center also warned that the storm could cause “life-threatening flooding and mudslides, especially in areas of steep terrain,” along with a dangerous storm surge and ocean

swells “likely to cause life-threatening surf and rip current conditions.”

“Suffice it to say, this is an enormous storm,” Gov. Josh Green said.

State Rep. Jeanné Kapela, who represents communities that are in the storm’s possible track, traveled to the Big Island from Honolulu on Friday morning and called for people to be on alert.

The southern end of the island is remote and rural but growing in population because of its affordability. Kapela said she was especially worried about people who live off the grid in unpermitted structures. The area’s agriculture includes coffee and cattle.

“We’re encouraging residents to take this storm seriously, remain vigilant, and get somewhere safe before conditions deteriorate,” she said in a text message to The Associated Press as her flight took off. “We’re hopeful the storm moves through quickly, but we’re preparing for whatever comes.”

Green urged residents to be ready: “If you feel now that your house doesn’t have a great roof or might not be able to withstand hurricane force winds, then first things first you go to a family or friend’s house and you kind of hunker down there.”

# Reform UK’s Farage wins special election against Count Binface

CLACTON-ON-SEA, England, Aug 15, (AP): Nigel Farage regained his seat in Parliament on Friday, beating a field of fringe candidates led by trash-can-wearing comic Count Binface in a special election boycotted by mainstream parties that called it a farce.

Farage, leader of the anti-immigration Reform UK party who some see as a possible next prime minister, abruptly quit his seat in July amid an investigation into whether he failed to report a 5 million pound (\$6.7 million) gift from an overseas crypto billionaire.

He denied wrongdoing and ran again for the seat to prove he had voters’ support, regaining it with 63% of Thursday’s vote in an unusual election on the hottest day of the year. Binface, a serial candidate who has challenged prime ministers past and present, represented a protest vote and finished second in a field of 34 candidates - many of them also jokers - with about 27%, according to the results announced Friday.



Britain’s Reform UK party leader Nigel Farage arrives at a polling station in Walton on the Naze on Aug 13 to cast his vote for the Clacton on Sea by-election. (AP)

Farage hailed the result as an “overwhelming win” that increased his vote share over the last election,

but it’s hard to draw broad conclusions from the election given the lack of genuine rivals and the fact that Farage has long been popular in the conservative constituency on the east coast of England.

“Today the voters in Clacton have stuck up two fingers to the entire political establishment,” Farage said, referring to the British equivalent of a crude gesture that employs the middle finger in other cultures.

The result will send him back to the House of Commons, but an investigation by a parliamentary watchdog that was suspended when he stepped down was resumed hours after the result was announced. That means Farage could be forced out of Parliament - and face yet another election.

Farage, the chief cheerleader in getting Britain to vote to leave the European Union a decade ago, has shattered the country’s longstanding two-party system by positioning himself to the right of the Conservative Party.

# European countries battle multiple wildfires as record heat grips continent

PARIS, Aug 15, (AP): Firefighters across Europe struggled against multiple fires Friday as a new wave of record-breaking heat baked a swath of the continent, their task further complicated by exceptionally parched landscapes.

The historic temperatures are linked to human-caused climate change, and are hitting countries more used to long cold seasons and ill-equipped for this sort of heat, with limited air conditioning.

With France experiencing its driest year ever, a new fire raced through woodlands overnight in the Landes region on the southwest coast. The blaze forced more than 500 people to evacuate their homes in the town of Luglon as hundreds of firefighters deployed to the area, the regional administration said Friday.

It’s one of several fires scorching forests around France this week, including in normally cooler and wetter regions in the north and Brittany. A historic fire devoured forests near Bor-



Smoke from a forest fire rises above the Hürtgenwald, in Düren, Germany on Aug 14. (AP)

deaux last month and pushed a quarter of a million people from their homes.

France also has shut down six nuclear reactors in recent days because of extreme heat and drought - and because a mass of jellyfish washed up

outside one power plant on the English Channel coast, utility company EDF said. Large numbers of jellyfish are appearing on many French beaches in connection with unusually warm sea temperatures.



Eruptive activity continues on Mount Etna, where lava flows continue to descend on the slopes of the volcano, as seen from Mareneve near Catania, Italy on Aug 13. (AP)

## Mt Etna ash shuts Sicily’s busiest airport

Ash spewing from Sicily’s Mount Etna has forced the closure of the Italian island’s largest airport for the fifth consecutive day, stranding hundreds of summer holiday travelers during the busiest travel week of the year.

Catania’s airport will remain closed until Saturday afternoon, which falls on the Ferragosto holi-

day that marks the height of the Italian summer holiday season when millions flock to the sea and mountains, deserting Italian cities.

While Etna’s activity often interrupts flights at the airport, located 30 kilometers (20 miles) south of the volcano, this is the longest emergency since 2002.

“Volcanic ash can be a great risk for aircraft,” said Boris Behncke, a researcher at the National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology’s Etna Observatory. “It can be sucked into the motors, and force them to stall. This is why everyone is so very cautious with aircraft when there is a volcanic ash emission.” (AP)

## Ukraine attacks Russia’s Samara industrial site

KYIV, Aug 15, (AP): A large-scale Ukrainian attack struck industrial infrastructure in Russia’s southwestern Samara region Saturday, a Russian official said.

Ivan Noskov, head of the region’s capital, Samara, said air defense forces had repelled a “massive” missile attack, with “localized damage” to the city’s industrial sites. He also said that medical assistance has been provided to those injured in the attack, but did not give further details.

Ukraine has stepped up its long-range aerial attacks on Russian military industries and energy facilities, aiming to cut Moscow’s revenue for the war and make Russians feel the consequences of the invasion, now in its fifth year.

Writing on social media, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Kyiv’s forces had carried out a strike against Samara’s Progress Center, which operates under Russian space agency Roscosmos and is involved in producing rocket technology and electronics.

He said that the strike used Ukraine’s domestically produced Flamingo missiles to hit the site, which is approximately 900 kilometers (560 miles) from the Ukrainian border.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, firefighters put out a fire following a Russian air attack in Kramatorsk, Ukraine on Aug 10. (AP)

Record-breaking rains flood Chiba east of Tokyo, killing at least 5

Japan’s PM skips Yasukuni Shrine visit on war anniversary

TOKYO, Aug 15, (AP): Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi avoided Tokyo’s controversial Yasukuni Shrine, apparently to prioritize diplomatic relations with China and South Korea, as Japan marked on Saturday the 81st anniversary of its surrender in World War II.

However, she did not mention her country’s wartime past in Asia or show remorse over it in her address.

The Yasukuni Shrine, which commemorates over 2.4 million people who died in wars, became controversial after including 14 convicted World War II Japanese war criminals. China and South Korea say visits by Japanese officials to the shrine show a lack of remorse over Japan’s wartime atrocities.

Takaichi mourned the victims of major devastation in Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Okinawa, as well as those who perished in overseas battlefronts, and thanked them for their sacrifice as the “foundation of Japan’s peace and prosperity today.”

“Japan, since the end of the war, has consistently contributed to global peace and prosperity. We will never let the tragedy of the war be repeated,” she said in her address at Budokan Hall, a walking distance from Yasukuni.



Cars make their way through flooded road after heavy rains in Oamishirasato, Chiba prefecture, Japan on Aug 14. (AP)

Takaichi also said Japan can play a key role in addressing global challenges as “a dependable nation” in the region.

Japanese Defense Minister Shinjiro Koizumi, three other Cabinet ministers and three executives from Takaichi’s governing party showed up at the shrine earlier Saturday. A nonpartisan group of dozens of lawmakers also prayed there.

China’s Foreign Ministry protested to Japan over the visits, saying that Japanese politicians’ true intentions were to “change the verdict on the war criminals, cover up Japan’s war crimes, distort the historical facts and pave the way for accelerating militarization.” It urged Japan to do “serious soul searching” on history and make a clean break with militarism.

Tensions between Japan and

China escalated in November when Takaichi said a Chinese attack on Taiwan could constitute “a survival-threatening situation” for Japan requiring the use of force. The comments enraged Beijing.

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, in a statement Saturday, said that his administration used “pragmatic diplomacy centered on national interests” and will broaden cooperation in shared interests to resolve common challenges. “Korea-Japan cooperation is now more important than ever.”

Also:

TOKYO: Record-breaking rainfall flooded cities east of Tokyo overnight, killing at least five people, injuring over two dozen others and stranding thousands, authorities said Friday.

As the deluge subsided, the Japan Meteorological Agency downgraded its most severe heavy-rain warning in more than a dozen municipalities in the prefecture of Chiba while forecasting more rain later Friday.

The prefecture saw unprecedented rainfall levels Thursday, with 1.5 centimeters (4.5 inches) in just one hour in Chiba City and 9.7 centimeters (3.8 inches) fell in one hour in the city of Sakura, JMA said.

US special forces ready to step up combat drills in Philippines

MANILA, Philippines, Aug 15, (AP): American special operations forces are ready to step up warfighting-readiness exercises with counterparts in the Philippines and other countries in Asia to further strengthen a security alliance and help deter a major conflict in the region, a US military official said.

Adm. Frank Bradley, commander of the US Special Operations Command, is in the Philippines after a trip to South Korea. He will then head to Japan for talks with military officials.

He is the latest American military top brass to visit key Asian allies in recent weeks to reassure them of Washington’s commitment to the region given the US preoccupation with the war in Iran.

Bradley’s command, which



Bradley

has about 80,000 personnel and is based at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida, undertakes the US military’s most sensitive and dangerous covert operations. The majority of his forces are deployed in more than 80 countries worldwide, Bradley said.

He discussed with Filipino counterparts the Philippine military’s continuing effort to modernize, intensify combat exercises with the US and other allies and broaden an arc of security alliances to deter China’s increasingly hostile actions in the South China Sea.

China and smaller rival claimant states, including the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan, have been locked in tense territorial stand-offs for decades in the disputed waters but confrontations have particularly flared between Chinese and Philippine forces.

Washington has repeatedly warned of its obligation to defend the Philippines, its oldest treaty ally in Asia, if Filipino forces come under an armed attack.

Authorities issue tsunami warning

Powerful 7.7 magnitude quake kills 40 and topples buildings in Indonesia

MAUMERE, Indonesia, Aug 15, (AP): A powerful magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck off the coast of Indonesia early Saturday, killing at least 40 people, collapsing buildings and homes as well as causing panic in a region prone to deadly quakes. Authorities said more than a dozen residents were injured.

Authorities issued a tsunami warning and urged coastal residents to move to higher ground, but later lifted the warning when Indonesia’s Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency said monitoring showed no significant sea-level changes that would pose a threat to coastal communities.

The US Geological Survey said the quake hit Indonesia’s Flores region with a depth of 10 kilometers (six miles) at 5:58 a.m. local time. Its epicenter was 68 km (42 miles) north-northwest of the city of Ende in East Nusa Tenggara province. The initial quake was followed by several aftershocks.

The head of the National Disaster Management Agency, Suharyanto, said rescuers have recovered at least 38 bodies, mostly in the three devastated regencies of Sikka, Manggarai and East Manggarai, including 16 bodies that were pulled from a landslide in the village of Reok in Manggarai. At least 13 people were rushed to nearby hospitals, including two with serious injuries.

Suharyanto, who like many Indonesians uses a single name, said three helicopters and a rescue vessel were deployed to assist with logistics and support emergency response operations, including possible evacuations if needed, given East Nusa Tenggara’s geography, which consists of numerous islands and presents significant transportation and access challenges.

He said about 2,000 villagers in Nagekeo regency fled their homes to temporary shelters.

East Nusa Tenggara Police Chief Rudi Darmoko said the earthquake caused severe damage and collapsed buildings. He said power outages in cities and villages have hampered the flow of information and complicated search and rescue efforts.



In this photo released by the Indonesian National Search and Rescue Agency (BASARNAS), rescuers attempt to clear debris at building damaged by an earthquake in Maumere, East Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia on Aug 15. (AP)

“We are continuing to collect reports of damage and casualties, but there are communication disruptions,” Darmoko said. He said that landslides in Ende regency triggered by the earthquake also cut off the Trans-Flores highway, a roughly 700-kilometer (435-mile) paved mountain road spanning Flores Island, from Labuan Bajo to Larantuka.

Footage on local television showed patients at several hospitals being

evacuated from buildings as a precaution following the quake. Hospital staff moved equipment outdoors, including beds, IV stands and oxygen cylinders, and set up temporary treatment areas to adapt to emergency conditions.

The quake was felt across much of Flores island with initial reports indicating heavy damage.

Yohanna Embu, a resident of Sikka regency, said a number of buildings were damaged by the strong shaking and panicked people ran to higher ground.

“Many buildings here were damaged ... I saw that the waiting room at the port terminal in Maumere had collapsed,” she said.

Students at St. Peter Major Seminary in Sikka who were attending morning Mass fled in panic when the roof of an assembly hall collapsed, said the Rev. Guidelbertus Tanga, rector of the seminary, which is known locally as Rita-piret Seminary on the predominantly Catholic island of Flores.

“Our students and nuns ran out in panic beneath a collapsing roof,” Tanga said. “At least one priest suffered a broken leg after jumping from the second floor of a building during the quake.”

The quake also reportedly caused panic in Labuan Bajo, a gateway town to eastern Indonesia’s Komodo National Park, one of the country’s best-known attractions. Damage was also reported in Bima, a city in neighboring West Nusa Tenggara province, and in some parts of southern Sulawesi island.

Indonesian authorities initially issued a tsunami warning for parts of East Nusa Tenggara, West Nusa Tenggara, South Sulawesi and Southeast Sulawesi provinces, and urged residents to stay away from beaches and riverbanks. The agency located the shallow undersea quake near Flores island.

Indonesia, a vast archipelago of more than 17,000 islands, is prone to earthquakes and volcanic activity because of its location on the “Ring of Fire,” an arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Basin.

A powerful earthquake caused a tsunami in 1992 that killed about 2,500 people on Flores, part of a group of islands in the eastern half of Indonesia.

Fireworks light skies over Pakistan’s capital as crowds celebrate Independence Day

ISLAMABAD, Aug 15, (AP): Fireworks burst over Pakistan’s capital at midnight as jubilant crowds poured into streets across the country to mark the 79th anniversary of independence, waving national flags and chanting “Long Live Pakistan.”

Women and children joined the late-night celebrations as roads and public spaces filled with people dressed in green and white. In Islamabad, crowds gathered along major roads as fireworks illuminated the night sky.

Pakistan emerged as an independent state on Aug. 14, 1947, following the end of British colonial rule and the partition of the Indian subcontinent. Official celebrations were set to continue Friday with flag-raising ceremonies and other events.

This year’s celebrations included the inauguration in Islamabad of the “Yadgar-e-Fatah,” or Monument of Victory, commemorating what Pakistan calls the “Battle of Truth” against India last year.

In a televised speech, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan wants peace, not war, but warned that its desire for peace should not be



People gather to watch fireworks light the sky marking Independence Day, in Karachi, Pakistan on Aug 14. (AP)

seen as weakness. He said threats to Pakistan’s sovereignty would draw a strong response, referring to a four-day conflict with India in May 2025.

The fighting erupted after gunmen killed 26 people in Indian-controlled Kashmir. India blamed Pakistan-backed militants, an allegation Islamabad denied. The nuclear-armed

rivals exchanged missile, drone and other strikes before a ceasefire halted the fighting.

Sharif also criticized India for suspending a water sharing treaty after the conflict, the World Bank-brokered decades-old agreement governing the sharing of waters from the Indus River system.

Tunnel collapse at hydropower project kills 7

India’s PM says armed Maoists fading

NEW DELHI, Aug 15, (AP): Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday that India’s decades-long Maoist insurgency was nearing its end but warned that the country now faced a new battle against what he called “dimagi Naxals,” or people who align with the movement’s ideology.

In his address to the nation on India’s 79th Independence Day from the ramparts of New Delhi’s 17th-century Mughal-era Red Fort, Modi said Maoist violence was “breathing its last” after years of security operations against the insurgency, once described by Indian authorities as the country’s biggest internal security threat.

Also known as the Naxalite movement, it challenged state authority across large swathes of central and eastern India for decades, leaving thousands of civilians, rebels and security personnel dead.

“We have succeeded in getting rid of armed Naxals in the jungles, but ‘dimagi Naxals’ (intellectual Naxals) are looking for opportunities to create violence and unrest,” Modi said. “They have to be identified and isolated.”

Modi also unveiled a series of measures aimed at boosting self-reliance in



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi receives a ceremonial guard of honor as he arrives to address the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort during the country’s Independence Day celebrations in New Delhi, India on Aug 15. (AP)

sectors ranging from defense to agriculture, with a strong focus on youth.

Also:

LUCKNOW, India: A tunnel under construction at a hydropower project in India’s northern hill state of Uttarakhand collapsed overnight, leaving

at least seven workers dead, officials said Friday.

A rescue operation was launched after a sudden rush of water and debris entered the tunnel at the Vishnugad-Pipalkoti hydroelectric project in Chamoli district later Thursday night, said top district official Gaurav Kumar.

Bangladesh toxic gas leak kills 8

DHAKA, Bangladesh, Aug 15, (AP): A suspected gas leak at a shipbreaking yard in southeastern Bangladesh killed at least eight people on Friday during the dismantling of a decommissioned ship, police said.

Several others were injured at the Ferrous Steel Ship Breaking Yard in the Sitakunda area, police inspector Mohammed Alamgir said. The initial death toll was six, he said, but two others died after being transported from the scene.

The company didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment.

Senior government factory inspection official Mahbubul Hasan said the workers died due to toxic gas emissions from the ship, according to the official news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha.

Bangladesh’s shipbreaking industry is a multi-billion dollar global giant concentrated along a 20-kilometer stretch of the Sitakunda coast in Chattogram.

Africa

82 soldiers released in Mali: Separatists in northern Mali have released 82 soldiers, including some taken captive during a nationwide attack on government forces in April, the Malian military and a rebel spokesperson said Thursday.

A statement from the Malian Armed Forces said that the “freed soldiers are now safe and being cared for by the relevant authorities.” Mohamed Elmaouloud Ramadan, a spokesperson for the separatist Azawad Liberation Front, confirmed the release.

Mali has been plagued for over a decade by insurgencies by militants affiliated with al-Qaida and the Islamic State group, including JNIM, as well as a Tuareg-led separatist rebellion in the north.

Violence escalated in recent months after an alliance of JNIM and Tuareg separatists carried out coordinated attacks on April 25, targeting the airport of the country’s capital, Bamako, the nearby garrison town of Kati, and several northern and central cities. (AP)

US missionary in Niger freed: An American missionary who was kidnapped in Niger in October has been released, his organization said Friday.

Kevin Rideout “is in good health in the care of US officials,” SIM International, an Evangelical mission organization, said in a statement.

He will soon be reunited with his extended family, the statement added. Rideout was back in US custody on Friday, the country’s President Donald Trump said in a post on social media.

“Kevin, the United States of America looks forward to welcoming you HOME. Glad to have helped!” Trump wrote.

Rideout was kidnapped in the West African country’s capital, Niamey, on Oct. 21 by three armed individuals and was probably driven out of town, according to information provided by a security official at the time.

No armed group claimed responsibility for the abduction. (AP)

Afghanistan marks 5 years under Taleban with safer streets but pleas for education

KABUL, Afghanistan, Aug 15, (AP): As Afghanistan’s Taleban rulers mark five years since sweeping back to power, some Kabul residents say they feel safer after decades of conflict and upheaval but stress the leaders should now focus on creating jobs and expanding access to schools in the country where girls above the age of 12 are banned from education.

The Taliban regained control of Afghanistan on Aug 15, 2021, after it launched an offensive as the US and other NATO troops withdrew from the country after two decades of war. The withdrawal led to chaotic scenes at and around Kabul’s airport with thousands wanting to leave.

“Thank God, the past five years have passed in safety,” said Mohammad Qasim, 30, reflecting on the anniversary that comes against a backdrop of economic hardship in a conflict-stricken country. “Our wish and hope from the government is to create job opportunities for the youth.”

“We, along with the entire nation, call upon the government to create employment opportunities for the youth and to encourage them to pursue education,” he added.

Before the takeover, the Taleban stated that, upon assuming power, it would allow women access to education, em-

ployment and public participation, albeit in accordance with its interpretation of Islamic principles.

Soon after it seized power, the Taliban imposed an indefinite ban on girls’ education beyond the sixth grade and, a few months later, also banned higher education for women until “further notice.”

Women also were banned from entering gyms, parks and public baths, from taking part in sports and traveling to distant locations without a “mahram,” or male guardian.

Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid has repeatedly said the administration is working to establish conditions under which girls and women can attend classrooms or university campuses in line with Islamic Sharia laws. The restrictions, nevertheless, remain in force.

While the United Nations has acknowledged that the country has become more stable since the takeover, it has warned that lasting stability cannot be possible unless the Taliban rulers - who remain isolated internationally - lift restrictions on women and girls, protect basic rights and restrict terrorism concerns.

“A reduction in conflict has brought tangible benefits for many Afghans and created opportunities to focus on recovery, development and regional economic cooperation,” the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, or UNAMA, said in a statement ahead of the anniversary. It added, however, that the restrictions on women and girls impede Afghanistan’s recovery and its reintegration with the international community.



Mujahid

The Company held its earnings webcast for the first half of 2026

Action Energy: Strong market fundamentals and record backlog underpin growth

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: Action Energy Company K.S.C.P. (AEC) (Premier Market Boursa Kuwait: ALFTAQA), Kuwait's leading local partner for integrated upstream services, owner and operator of one of the youngest rig fleets in the region, held its earnings webcast to discuss its financial results for the first half of 2026.

During the conference, senior management reviewed the Company's key financial and operational performance, the market fundamentals underpinning its business, and its outlook for the period ahead. The Company remains focused on strengthening its core drilling business in Kuwait, expanding into higher-value oilfield services, pursuing selective regional growth opportunities, and maintaining a strong financial position.

Market Fundamentals

Action Energy highlighted the strong fundamentals of the onshore drilling sector across Kuwait and the wider GCC. Kuwait benefits from one of the world's longest reserve lives at approximately 276 years, one of the industry's lowest lifting costs at around USD 8.5 per barrel, and among the lowest carbon intensities at approximately 8.5 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub> per barrel. At the same time, national oil companies across the GCC continue to demonstrate resilience and a long-term commitment to expanding production capacity, supporting sustained rig demand through 2030.

The Company emphasized the Gulf's critical role in global energy security, underpinned by production strategies that extend beyond commodity price cycles. Most notably, Kuwait's ambition to increase crude oil production capacity to 4.0 million barrels per day by 2035. Against this backdrop, Action Energy reaffirmed its readiness to support the next phase of growth as Kuwait's leading local integrated upstream services provider and the owner and operator of one of the region's youngest drilling fleets. With an average fleet age of just 3.07 years, compared with approximately 15.9 years in Kuwait and higher averages across the GCC and wider MENA region.



Eng. Rawaf Bourisli, Vice Chairman



Ivan Chikunov, General Manager, Services & Business Development



Jainuddin Jhabuawala, General Manager, Finance

regional challenges, our operations continued uninterrupted, reflecting the resilience of our business model and our ability to support the delivery of Kuwait's long-term energy objectives."

Ivan Chikunov, General Manager, Services & Business Development, said: "The Company's next phase of growth is built on three strategic pillars. First, reinforcing its leadership in Kuwait by supporting Kuwait's national plans to increase crude oil production capacity to 4.0 million barrels per day by 2035. Second, expanding and diversifying AEC oilfield services offering by leveraging the prequalifications already secured in electric submersible pumps (ESP), slickline, inspection (NDT), and once-through steam generator (OTSG) services, enabling the Company to execute these services independently. Third, pursuing selective expansion across GCC markets while evaluating merger and acquisition opportunities to capture the expected growth in drilling demand through 2030, supported by disciplined capital allocation and a conservative balance sheet."

Jainuddin Jhabuawala, General Manager, Finance, said: "The key message is that we are delivering high-quality growth. Strong revenue momentum is translating into robust earnings and cash flow, while the IPO has strengthened our financial position and enhanced our capacity to create long-term shareholder value. Overall, Action Energy has maintained a de-risked, flexible balance sheet capable of funding future growth while preserving a strong and conservative financial profile."

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%.

Other Voices

Is oil stable despite the loss of 18 Russian refining capacities?

By Kamel Al-Harami  
Independent Oil Analyst

How can Europe cope with the loss of more than 18 refining capacities? Will U.S. supplies and exports of refined products to Europe be sufficient, while the United States itself is importing crude oil from Venezuela?

Are we witnessing a kind of restructuring, with a change in the location and points of supply, forcing Europe to alter its traditional sources of supply?

With regular Ukrainian attacks targeting Russian oil installations, Russia is losing its grip on supplying products to Europe, or at least losing its importance as a reliable supplier. This is forcing Europe to look for alternative suppliers, mainly from the Arabian Gulf, only to face the disruptions in the Gulf. These disruptions will be overcome in any event; otherwise, the world could face critical supply shortages.

The Arabian Gulf is the safe passage for more than 20 million barrels of oil per day to the world, roughly comparable to U.S. crude oil production. With U.S. daily consumption at around 21 million barrels, the country continues to look for additional sources of oil supply. This leaves the Arabian Gulf as a very important and essential source of supply for the future, and perhaps forever.

The question of replacing oil remains largely theoretical. BP was the last major oil company to move away from the idea of replacing oil, joining other international oil companies in confronting the reality of glob-

al oil markets.

This is why we are witnessing the USA openly taking over Venezuela's oil fields and inviting international oil companies to return in search of new agreements. They would operate under the full protection of the U.S. government, drilling and exploring with confidence while fully benefiting from such protection. At the same time, the USA continues to rely on imported oil by all means.

Such a stable oil situation will certainly require stronger demand and economic growth, with oil prices settling at more comfortable levels and potentially returning to their traditional range of \$75-\$80 a barrel.

The real challenge is to see how global markets will react to any future crisis or disruption in oil supplies. Oil is likely to remain in good health, allowing leading oil suppliers to recover from the damage caused by any closures in the Arabian Gulf. Leading importers will also seek to replenish their partially depleted stocks and strengthen their strategic oil reserves.

Oil prices may recover slightly, but certainly not to the current range of \$85 to above \$103 for Russian oil, which will most likely come down soon. At the same time, oil markets will have to contend with the loss of Russian refining capacity and petroleum products, while the Arabian Gulf remains closed, or until it is reopened soon.

Otherwise, oil prices could rise again as the winter months approach and the need to build stocks increases, putting renewed upward pressure on prices.

Alas, this is the reality of oil markets, which are extremely difficult to predict.



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Al-Harami

Advances strategic restructuring

NREC returns to profitability in Q2 2026

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: National Real Estate Company (NREC) today reported a net profit of KD 11.7 million for Q2 2026, compared to a net loss of KD 66.5 million in Q2 2025. EPS for Q2 2026 stood at 5.9 fils, versus a loss per share of 33.4 fils in the prior year, while operating revenue reached KD 0.8 million. Q2 2026 marks the first full quarter following the provisions and write-offs previously recognized by the Company, providing a clearer reflection of NREC's underlying performance following those one-off adjustments. For H1 2026, the Company reported a net loss of KD 42.2 million, with LPS of 21.2 fils and total assets of KD 468 million as of 30 June 2026.

Alongside its portfolio optimization efforts, NREC continued to advance its internal restructuring initiatives during the first half of 2026, with a focus on streamlining operations, enhancing organizational efficiency, and strengthening cost discipline across the business. These measures are aimed at creating a leaner, more agile operating structure, improving decision-making and resource allocation, and positioning the Company to execute its strategic priorities and support sustainable long-term growth.

"Q2 2026 marks an important step forward for NREC. As the first full quarter following the provisions and write-offs previously recognized by the Company, the return to profitability provides a clearer reflection of our underlying performance and the progress we are making in improving operational efficiency and strengthening cost discipline. We remain focused on building a leaner, more agile business while continuing to optimize our portfolio and allocate capital toward higher-return opportunities," said Faisal Jamil Sultan Al-Essa, NREC Vice Chairman



Faisal Jamil Sultan Al-Essa, NREC Vice Chairman and CEO

and Chief Executive Officer.

Strategic Asset Restructuring and Portfolio Optimization

NREC continued to actively manage its regional portfolio through a series of strategic transactions aimed at unlocking asset value, enhancing financial flexibility, and redeploying capital toward higher-return opportunities.

The Company completed the transfer of its stake in Mediterranean Investments Holding plc for EUR 74 million (~KD 26.5 million), resulting in the recognition of ~KD 6.2 million in the income statement through the reclassification of reserves from Other Comprehensive Income, with no impact on total equity.

In the UAE, the Company completed the sale of a 1,994 sqm Al Reem Island land plot for AED 52 million (~KD 4.4 million), generating approximately KD 1 million in profit. It also entered into an MoU for the sale of two further plots totaling ~13,001 sqm for AED 400 million (~KD 33.5 million), expected to generate ~KD 8.9 million in profit

- Completed transfer of Mediterranean Investments Holding plc stake for EUR 74 million (~KD 26.5 million)
- Completed sale of Al Reem Island land plot in Abu Dhabi for AED 52 million (~KD 4.4 million), generating ~KD 1 million profit
- Signed MoU for sale of two further Al Reem Island land plots for AED 400 million (~KD 33.5 million), expected to generate ~KD 8.9 million in profit
- Entered new development partnership on 243,474 sqm in 6th of October City, Egypt

upon completion.

"We have moved decisively to monetize non-core assets, most notably through the Al Reem Island transactions and the sale of our stake in Mediterranean Investments Holding, and we are redirecting that capital to reduce debt and financial risk, return capital to shareholders, and pursue opportunities with high return prospects. This restructuring is central to how we are building a leaner, higher-quality asset base for the future," Al-Essa added.

Repositioning Capital for Long-Term Growth

In Egypt, NREC's subsidiary, Kuwait Wadi El Nile Urban Development Company, entered into a partnership to develop a real estate project in 6th of October City on approximately 243,474 sqm. With an estimated development cost of KD 35.5 million and projected revenues of ~KD 42 million, the project is expected to generate ~KD 6.4 million in profit at the subsidiary level, of which NREC's share is ~KD 5.1 million based on its ownership interest.

The project reinforces the Company's strategy of optimizing its asset base while pursuing development opportunities that support sustainable long-term value creation.

Advancing Sustainability for a Stronger Tomorrow

Sustainability remains central to NREC's growth strategy. The Company continues to embed responsible practices across its operations, from reducing environmental impact to fostering social inclusion and upholding robust governance, with its ESG initiatives aimed at creating lasting, positive impact in the communities it serves while delivering resilient, long-term value for its stakeholders.

About NREC

Established in 1973 and listed on Boursa Kuwait, National Real Estate Company (NREC) is a real estate investment, development, and property management company operating across the Middle East and North Africa. The Company's portfolio comprises a diversified mix of retail, commercial, and residential properties across the region.

Q2 2026 Financial Highlights

| Item (KD Million)          | Q2 2026 | Q2 2025 | Variance (%) | H1 2026 | H1 2025 | Variance (%) |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|--------------|---------|---------|--------------|
| Revenue                    | 0.84    | 0.81    | 3.8%         | 1.7     | 1.6     | 2.5%         |
| Net Revenue                | 0.5     | 0.6     | -4.7%        | 1.13    | 1.15    | -2.0%        |
| EBITDA / (Negative EBITDA) | 13.5    | (64.1)  | 121.1%       | (38.1)  | (60.6)  | 37.1%        |
| Net Profit / (Loss)        | 11.7    | (66.5)  | 117.6%       | (42.2)  | (65.3)  | 35.4%        |
| EPS (fils)                 | 5.9     | (33.4)  | 117.6%       | (21.2)  | (32.7)  | 35.2%        |

EBITDA rises 66.5%

Makhazen posts strong Q2 earnings following strategic balance sheet reset

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: Makhazen, the new operating brand of Agility Public Warehousing Company KSCP, today announced its financial results for the second quarter and six-month period ended 30 June 2026.

For the second quarter of 2026, Makhazen reported revenues of KD 35.6 million almost flat with Q2 2025, EBITDA of KD 27 million representing a 66.5% YoY growth, and profit attributable to shareholders was KD 18.6 million compared to KD 8.7 million in Q22025 representing a 114.2% YoY growth.

For the first half of 2026, Makhazen reported revenues of KD 71.5 million



Faisal Jamil Sultan, Chairman of Makhazen

and EBITDA of negative KD 189.3 million reflecting the one-off non-cash charge recognized in the first quarter. The loss from continuing operations attributable to shareholders of KD 206.8 million resulted from these non-recurring items, which relate to fair value adjustments on certain investment

properties in the first quarter.

Q2 2026 Performance

During the quarter, Makhazen remained focused on strengthening its operating platform, optimizing its asset base, and advancing projects that support Kuwait's long-term economic and development priorities.

Makhazen's operations delivered a balanced underlying performance for the quarter, led by strong contributions from its trade facilitation and infrastructure business and its investment portfolio, and supported by continued operating discipline across the platform. The company's balance sheet remains healthy.

Business segments

Makhazen's operating entities continued to make steady operational progress despite regional disruptions. As for the investment portfolio which is anchored mainly by the 25% ownership in Agility Global which continues to achieve strong performance across its portfolio companies.

Chairman's Statement

Faisal Jamil Sultan, Chair-

man of Makhazen:

"The second quarter of 2026 marked a return to reported profitability, with net profit attributable to shareholders of KD 18.6 million and resilient underlying performance across our core businesses. With the strategic balance sheet reset now complete, Makhazen moves forward from a clean and transparent baseline.

Under the Makhazen brand, our focus remains

on strengthening the business, optimizing our asset base, and positioning the company for sustainable long-term growth. We maintain financial discipline in executing our strategic priorities. With a healthy balance sheet and a solid operating platform, we are confident in the company's ability to create long-term value for shareholders.

Financial Summary (Continuing Operations)

| Million Kuwaiti Dinar | Q2 2026 | Q2 2025 | Variance (%) |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|--------------|
| Revenue               | 35.6    | 36.1    | -1%          |
| EBITDA                | 27.0    | 16.2    | +67%         |
| Net Profit            | 18.6    | 8.7     | +114%        |

Across consumer and corporate digital banking in Kuwait and the region

# National Bank of Kuwait wins 17 prestigious Global Finance Awards in recognition of its leadership in digital banking

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has once again reaffirmed its leadership in the banking sector after securing a distinguished set of accolades in Global Finance’s 2026 World’s Best Digital Bank Awards. NBK won 17 awards at the country and regional levels, recognizing its excellence in delivering innovative digital solutions and services and enhancing the customer experience across both consumer and corporate banking, in line with the highest standards of security and efficiency.

At the country level in Kuwait, NBK secured 13 awards, including “Overall Best Consumer Digital Bank,” “Best Online Product Offerings,” “Best in Transformation,” “Best Online Payments Solution,” “Best Information Security & Fraud Management,” “Best in Social Media Marketing & Services,” “Best Integrated Corporate Banking Program,” “Best Corporate Digital Bank in Kuwait,” “Best Online/User Experience (UX) Portal,” “Best Online Treasury & Cash Management Services,” and “Best Digital Payments Strategy.” Weyay also received the “Best in Precision Credit & Lending Award” and “The Social & Community Banking Award.”

This achievement underscores the success of NBK Group’s digital strategy and its ability to develop an integrated ecosystem of banking services that meets evolving customer expectations and keeps pace with the rapid transformation of the financial sector.

NBK further strengthened its digital leadership at the re-



gional level by securing four prestigious awards across the Middle East: “Best Information Security & Fraud Management,” “Best Integrated Corporate Banking Program,” “Best Online Treasury & Cash Management Services,” in addition to “The Social & Community Banking Award” for Weyay. These accolades recognize the Group’s efforts to provide a secure digital banking environment, while advancing financial inclusion and reinforcing community-focused banking solutions tailored to young customers.

These awards reflect NBK’s leading position in digital transformation and the continued success of its investments in financial technology and innovation, enabling the Bank to deliver advanced, secure and seamless banking services that meet customers’ evolving needs and complement their increasingly digital lifestyles.

The Bank continues to enhance its digital banking channels and leverage the latest technologies to elevate the customer experience, with a strong focus on innovation, cybersecurity and expanding its range of digital solutions. These efforts support the



NBK headquarters

Bank’s vision of delivering the best banking experience in Kuwait and across the region.

NBK was selected for these prestigious awards following a comprehensive evaluation process conducted by Global Finance in collaboration with a specialized judging panel. The assessment was based on key criteria including the strength of the Bank’s strategy for attracting and servicing digital customers, success in driving customer adoption of digital offerings, growth in its digital customer base, breadth of digital products and services, evidence of tangible benefits generated by digital initiatives, and the design and functionality of its web and mobile platforms. Sub-category winners were selected based on the relative strength and success of their digital products and services.

Global Finance’s awards are among the world’s most prestigious accolades in the financial and banking sector. The evaluation process is based on a range of crite-

ria, including the strength of digital strategy, level of innovation, growth in the digital customer base, efficiency of services, as well as security, user experience and the quality of technology solutions.

For more information about Global Finance’s 2026 World’s Best Digital Bank Awards, please visit:

PRESS RELEASE: Global Finance Names The 2026 Best Consumer Digital Banks In Africa And The Middle East, In Partnership With Infossys | Round I | Global Finance Magazine

PRESS RELEASE: Global Finance Names The 2026 Best Corporate Digital Banks In Africa And The Middle East, In Partnership With Infossys | Round I | Global Finance Magazine

## Weyay wins 3 prestigious awards across Kuwait and the region

Weyay Bank, Kuwait’s first digital bank, has been recognized with three prestigious banking awards, underscoring its leadership in digital innovation and its commitment to delivering customer-centric banking experiences.

**Weyay Bank received the following awards:**

- The Social and Community Banking Award in Kuwait
- The Social and Community Banking Award in the region
- Best in Precision Credit and Lending Award in Kuwait

These accolades highlight Weyay’s success in re-defining digital banking through innovative solutions, seamless user experiences, and meaningful engagement with the communities it serves.

Since its launch, Weyay has transformed the banking experience for the digital generation by offering a fully integrated suite of banking services through a state-of-the-art mobile platform designed to meet the evolving needs of customers with simplicity, convenience, and flexibility.

The recognition for Social and Community Banking at both the national and regional levels reflect the bank’s commitment to creating value beyond traditional banking services. Through initiatives that promote financial inclusion, support community development, encourage environmentally responsible practices, and drive the adoption of sustainable digital solutions, Weyay continues to make a positive impact on society. The bank also remains dedicated to empowering young people through purpose-driven initiatives, strategic partnerships, and programs focused on innovation, sustainability, and personal development, equipping them with the skills and opportunities needed to thrive in an increasingly digital world.

Meanwhile, the Best in Precision Credit and Lending Award recognizes Weyay’s pioneering approach to digital financing. By leveraging advanced technology, the bank enables eligible salaried customers to access credit solutions through a fully digital and streamlined journey.

## Knetco, Skyports partner on Kuwait’s AAM infrastructure

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: Knetco and Skyports Infrastructure (Skyports) have signed a Strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work together on the development of Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) infrastructure and support the growth of the emerging AAM ecosystem in Kuwait.

Under the agreement, Skyports will become Knetco’s partner in Kuwait for vertiport infrastructure development, joint market development, stakeholder engagement, and the exploration of future commercial opportunities.

The partnership brings together Knetco’s long-standing experience in critical infrastructure and telecommunications with Skyports’ global expertise in infrastructure for Advanced Air Mobility.

The two companies share a common view that the future of Advanced Air Mobility goes beyond aircraft. A successful AAM market requires infrastructure, connectivity, digital integration, operational planning, and collaboration between governments, investors, technology companies, operators and infrastructure providers.

Through this partnership, Knetcoand Skyports aim to take practical steps toward building the foundations required for Kuwait’s future Advanced Air Mobility ecosystem.

**Riham Al-Ghanim, Chairwoman of Knetco**

“Innovation is not only about responding to today’s market. It is also about preparing for the industries and infrastructure that will shape tomorrow’s economy.

This partnership reflects Knetco’s commitment to future infrastructure and our confidence in the opportunities that emerging industries can create as well as supporting long-term economic development. We also recognize that developing a new mobility ecosystem requires close collaboration with the relevant government stakeholders, and we look forward to working alongside them as this sector develops.

We are pleased to work with Skyports and look forward to building a strong and long-term partnership.

Today’s agreement represents more than a partnership. It represents the beginning of a new chapter in infrastructure development.”

Stuart Summers, Chargé d’affaires, British Embassy Kuwait

“The United Kingdom and Kuwait

have a long-standing relationship built on cooperation, innovation, and mutual trust.

The partnership between Skyports and Knetcois another example of how British expertise and Kuwaiti capability can come together to explore new industries and future opportunities.

Advanced Air Mobility is an exciting emerging sector, and we welcome partnerships that support innovation, knowledge exchange, and long-term cooperation.”

**Daniel O’Neill, ME General Manager, Skyports, said:**

“Kuwait has the ambition, strategic location, and forward-looking vision to become an important market for Advanced Air Mobility. Through this strategic partnership with Knetco, we are bringing together complementary expertise to help lay the foundations for a safe, connected, and commercially viable AAM ecosystem in Kuwait.

With our vertiport network in Dubai well under construction, and with our core vertiport VDX already completed, we look forward to applying our industry leading skills and knowledge to Kuwait’s AAM future.

**Khaled Samy Hall, CEO of Knetco**

“Many people look at Advanced Air Mobility and see aircraft. But we know that every new industry begins with the infrastructure that makes it possible. True leadership is not about seeing what exists today; it is about building the foundations the future will depend on. At Knetco, we have spent decades contributing to telecommunications infrastructure. Today, we are taking that experience into future infrastructure.

The vertiports, connectivity, digital platforms, operations, regulations, investors, and partnerships must all come together before a new mobility ecosystem can truly grow. This cannot happen without close collaboration with the relevant government stakeholders, and our role is to bring the right expertise, infrastructure capabilities, and global partners to the table.

This agreement is our first practical step. Our ambition is not simply to build vertiports. It is to help create the infrastructure ecosystem that allows Advanced Air Mobility to develop and grow.

I genuinely believe that Knetcois shaping the infrastructure ecosystems of the future.”

### Three new millionaires yearly, plus exceptional weekly and monthly prizes

NBK Al-Jawhara Account reinforces its position as Kuwait’s largest banking prize draw program, with annual prize pool of KD 5 million

- Al-Jawhara Junior rewards customers under 21 with monthly prizes and a KD 10,000 prize three times a year
- Al-Jawhara savings combines long-term savings growth with opportunities to win major prizes
- Upholding the highest standards of integrity and transparency while ensuring equal opportunities for all customers
- Seamless digital onboarding through the NBK Mobile Banking App

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: National Bank of Kuwait’s (NBK) Al-Jawhara Account continues to reinforce its position as Kuwait’s leading banking prize draw program, with an annual prize pool of KD 5 million. The program combines valuable weekly and monthly cash prizes with three flagship grand prizes of KD 1 million each, offering customers exceptional opportunities to win throughout the year.

More than just a bank account, Al-Jawhara combines exceptional rewards with flexible savings solutions and an advanced digital experience, catering to the needs of a broad range of customers while encouraging a stronger culture of saving and long-term financial planning.

The program stands out for offering the largest and most diverse prize structure in the Kuwaiti market, giving customers the opportunity to win a weekly prize of KD 20,000 and a monthly prize of KD 125,000, in addition to the KD 1 million grand prize, awarded three times a year.

During 2026, two winners have already been announced for the KD 1 million grand prize in the January and May draws, with the third millionaire set to be revealed this coming September.

NBK also gives customers under the age of 21 the opportunity to win through the Al-Jawhara Junior draw, with entry into a monthly draw featuring seven cash prizes: three prizes of KD 1,000 each and four prizes of KD 500 each. Customers also have the chance to win a KD 10,000 cash prize alongside each of Al-Jawhara’s grand prize draws in addition to entering all Al-Jawhara draws.

For customers looking to grow their savings while benefiting from the program’s rewards, the Al-Jawhara Savings Account offers returns of up to 1.5% during the first year, together with eligibility for Al-Jawhara’s monthly and grand prize draws, subject to the account’s terms and conditions.

Al-Jawhara Savings brings together the benefits of saving, competitive returns and opportunities to win major cash prizes, delivering added value to customers while helping them work toward their future financial goals.

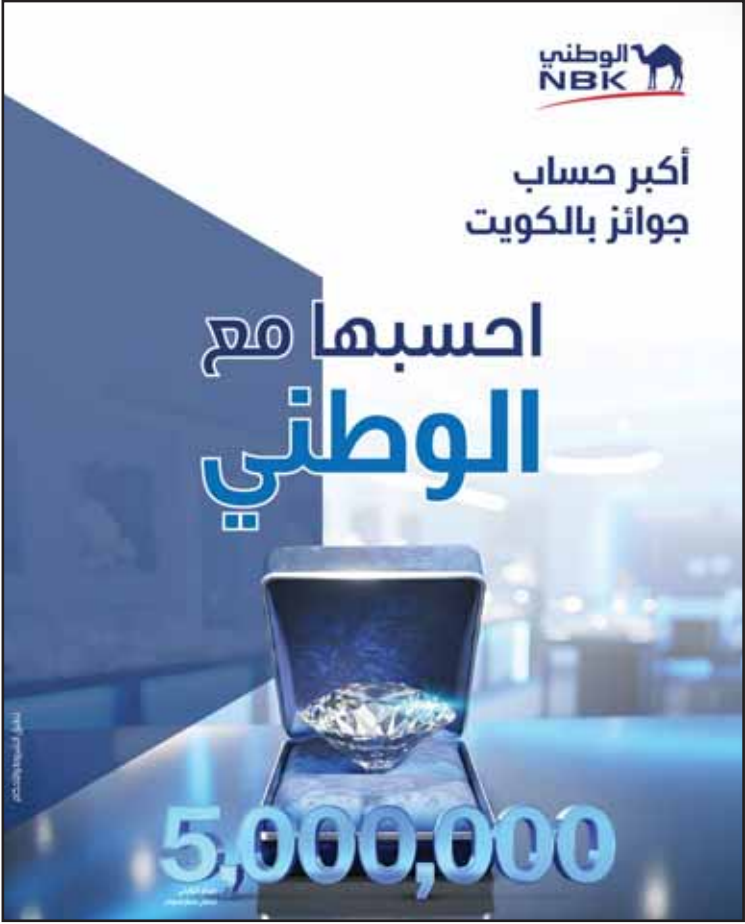
A Fully Integrated Digital Experience

As part of NBK’s commitment to delivering a seamless and advanced banking experience, customers can open an Al-Jawharaor Al-Jawhara Savings Account entirely digitally through the NBK Mobile Banking App.

The digital journey is also available to non-NBK customers, who can open an Al-Jawhara Account directly through the app and gain access to the program’s full range of benefits and prizes. This reflects NBK’s continued focus on making banking services simpler, more flexible and increasingly accessible through its digital channels.

Transparency and Integrity

NBK places the highest priority on upholding rigorous standards of integrity and transparency across



all Al-Jawhara and Al-Jawhara Junior draws. The draws are conducted in the presence of, and under the supervision and oversight of, representatives from the global audit firms Deloitte and Grant Thornton, ensuring that the highest standards of governance and fairness are maintained throughout every stage of the draw process.

NBK also provides customers with the opportunity to follow all Al-Jawhara and Al-Jawhara Junior draws through its official social media channels, reflecting the Bank’s commitment to keeping customers fully informed of draw proceedings and winner announcements as they take place.

The Bank is equally committed to reinforcing the principle of equal opportunity among customers. Any customer who wins a prize is excluded from participating in subsequent draws for 90 business days from the date of winning. In addition, any customer who wins

a single prize, or a combination of prizes totaling KD 50,000 or more, is excluded from further draws for one full year from the date of their most recent win. These measures are designed to broaden participation and give the greatest possible number of customers the opportunity to win.

Al-Jawhara continues to deliver an integrated banking proposition that combines the benefits of saving with exceptional opportunities to win throughout the year, backed by Kuwait’s largest banking prize draw program and the highest annual prize pool in the banking sector. The program also reflects NBK’s commitment to delivering innovative solutions tailored to the evolving needs of different customer segments, combining an advanced digital banking experience with compelling benefits that have established Al-Jawhara as one of Kuwait’s leading savings and rewards programs.



# Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait launches its Customers’ Protection Manual

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) launched its Customers’ Protection Manual as part of its ongoing commitment to the relationship between the Bank and its customers, ensuring the highest levels of transparency across banking transactions.

The Manual is aligned with international best practices in the banking industry and seeks to further strengthen the protection of customer rights, promote banking awareness, and advance financial inclusion across all segments of the Kuwaiti market.

Recently issued by ABK in both Arabic and English, the Manual is available to view and download in PDF format through the Bank’s website. Customers may also obtain a copy from ABK branches across all governorates of Kuwait.

The Manual sets out a number of key principles, most notably the clear and straightforward presentation of terms, conditions and fees, the adoption of the latest technologies to safeguard customer data and accounts, the provision of multiple direct channels to address customer feedback promptly and effectively, the fair treatment of all customers, and the provision of the financial knowledge they need.

It further reflects the Bank’s firm commitment to placing customers as one of the top priorities by clearly defining the frameworks required to ensure fair treatment and enhance awareness of banking products and financial services, while accelerating complaint resolution, protecting personal and financial data, and addressing services for customers with special needs, among other areas.

The Manual serves as a mandatory reference document designed to regulate the relationship between the Bank and its customers and ensure the highest standards of transparency and fair treatment across all financial services. The initiative also

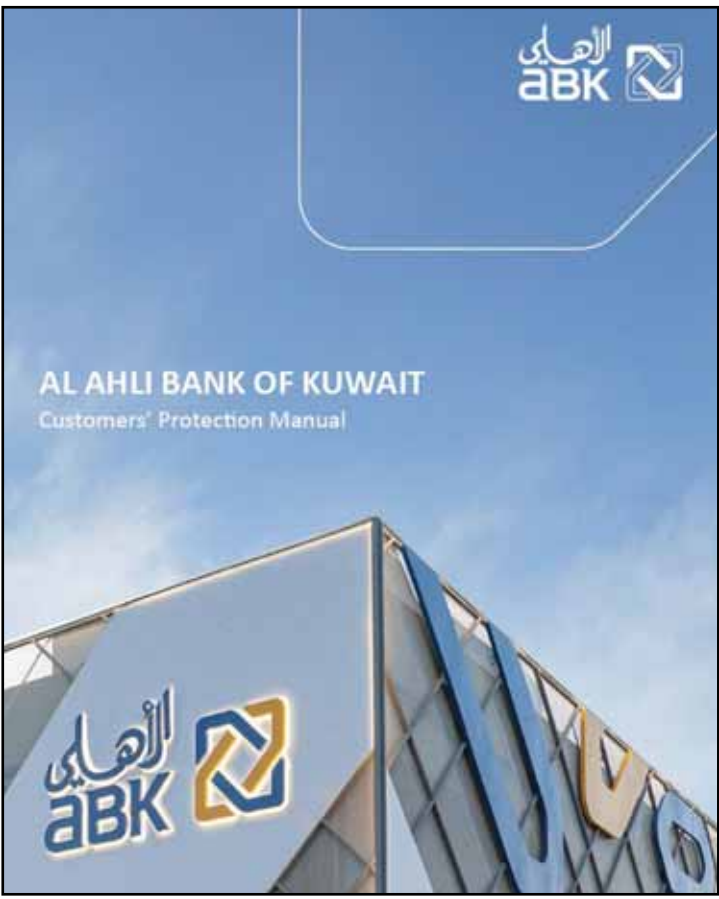
reflects ABK’s commitment to creating a banking environment that empowers customers to make informed decisions, further reinforcing its position as a leading and responsible financial institution in Kuwait’s banking sector.

The launch of the Customers’ Protection Manual represents a key milestone in enhancing the banking experience for ABK customers and serves as a fundamental pillar in building long-term trust, while strengthening the Bank’s position as a preferred and safer banking choice for customers across the market.

It also represents a practical step towards reinforcing the principles of responsible banking. Through it, ABK seeks to define its relationship with customers as one founded on genuine partnership, thereby strengthening its competitive position and supporting its long-term stability.

Customer protection represents a first line of defense for the Bank. Accordingly, the Manual is designed to protect both the Bank and its customers by fostering sustainable relationships founded on transparency, reducing the potential for disputes, and providing customers with complete confidence that their transactions are handled with the highest standards of confidentiality, security and transparency. This, in turn, contributes to higher levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty to ABK.

The Customers’ Protection Manual also contributes to ensuring the quality of operational processes and reflects the efficiency of the Bank’s team. It demonstrates that ABK’s role extends beyond providing banking services to build a community that is well-informed about its rights and further strengthening the Bank’s reputation as a trusted name in the banking sector ensuring that a safe and trusted customer experience remains at the heart of all its initiatives and plans.



## Uber, Lyft workers lead SNAP recipients

# Gig economy workers struggle without benefits

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

□ □ □

By Jacob Lederman  
University of Michigan Flint

The next time you call an Uber ride or order food delivery with an app, there’s a good chance that the gig worker you meet is getting government benefits.

In 2025, companies such as DoorDash, Lyft and Uber had the most workers receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits among all major employers, according to a new Government Accountability Office report. This marks a major shift from 2020, when an earlier GAO survey found that Walmart and McDonald’s took the top spots for SNAP recipients.

That finding may appear surprising to most Americans, who usually see platform-based work as a side hustle to earn extra cash. In fact, these jobs are becoming more essential as a primary source of income, even as they fail to cover basic food and medical expenses for gig workers.

As a scholar of urban politics, I consider this finding an important part of the broader picture revealed in a survey of more than 1,000 Michigan residents that my institute conducted with the Michigan Metro Area Communities Study.

Roughly 22% of total respondents had engaged in gig work, and about half of those said gig work was essential or important to meeting their basic needs.

At the same time, safety net programs - paid for by taxpayers - are filling the gap when platform companies hire low-wage workers without offering traditional benefits.

Major gig-work platforms, including Uber and Lyft, often describe their jobs as an opportunity for workers to earn income on their own terms and hours.

In this respect, they’re right. In our survey, 9 in 10 workers said they valued the flexibility, and more than two-thirds reported positive experiences overall.

But gig workers also named pressing concerns, especially about transparency, pay and benefits.

The issue, then, isn’t whether workers want flexibility, but whether flexibility allows them to get by in today’s economy.

In fact, gig work may be supplemental, but it isn’t always optional. With nearly half of all Americans saying they struggle to make ends meet, gig work is likely to increase as a source of financial survival.

At the same time, these platforms aren’t substituting for traditional employment. We found that relatively few gig workers - only 6% - reduced hours or left another job to pursue other gig work.

And when gig work becomes a necessary source of income, the lack of benefits - from health insurance to disability insurance to workers’ compensation - reflects a shift in who is turning to the safety net. If major platforms won’t pay a living wage or provide adequate benefits on the grounds that it’s the price of “flexibility,” government programs often fill the gap.

In other words, taxpayers are helping foot the bill to compensate gig workers.

The Government Accountability Office report also showed that gig platforms are collectively now the third-biggest U.S. employer with workers on Medicaid, the public health insurance program for low-income and disabled Americans. By contrast, in 2020 they didn’t make the top five.

What’s more, recent changes to Medicaid are likely to exacerbate conditions for gig workers. President

Donald Trump’s sweeping tax and immigration bill passed in 2025 included provisions for the many states that had expanded Medicaid over the past 15 years. Under the new rules, Medicaid recipients face new and tougher work requirements that demand 80 hours of work or school per month to maintain coverage.

Gig work counts toward the requirement, but gig workers who work for multiple platforms may have trouble proving eligibility. For example, app interfaces have different formats for reporting hours, and gig workers don’t receive a standard pay stub with total hours worked.

They also lack a traditional employer contact or a supervisor who would allow for easy verification. And their total hours worked don’t always account for wait times, while fluctuations in user demand can make income unpredictable.

As is the case for Medicaid recipients more generally, the complexity and paperwork of the new work requirement may deny them coverage, regardless of whether they work 80 hours per month. These extra hurdles are likely to push more Medicaid recipients off the rolls and toward other social programs as medical bills surge and their overall finances become even more strapped.

This loss of coverage may also lead to even more dire consequences, such as increased hospitalizations that can result when uninsured people forgo basic or preventive care.

In some states, lawmakers are starting to address the growing trend of gig platforms using government benefits to outsource benefit costs. Portable benefits offer one promising response.

Under this model, platform companies or users of gig apps contribute to worker-owned benefit accounts that follow workers across platforms. In our survey, 61% of gig workers supported this idea, as did more than half of other kinds of workers.

Two states already provide some important lessons from existing models.

In New York state, the Black Car Fund, initially established for taxi and limo drivers, has covered gig drivers since 2014. It’s a nonprofit, state-authorized benefits fund that’s managed by a board consisting of industry representatives, including drivers.

Enrollment in that program is automatic for all gig workers and taxi drivers, with benefits paid for through a passenger surcharge collected instantly via fares. It made headlines in 2023, when the state secured a US\$328 million settlement after Uber and Lyft withheld pay and benefits from workers. That settlement included mandatory paid sick leave, minimum pay and other benefits.

This model has effectively shifted some of the burdens of lower-wage gig work from taxpayers to users. A centralized pool of cash gives the Black Car Fund significant purchasing power, allowing it to offer drivers full workers’ compensation as well as varying levels of health, dental and disability coverage that drivers can choose from.

Platform companies don’t contribute money at present, but if they did, they could make these benefits even more generous.

As a contrasting example, California shows how much policy design matters.

The state opted to work with tech companies when it crafted Proposition 22, which sought to provide delivery and ride-share drivers limited benefits while preserving their independent contractor status. Passed in 2020, it left implementation to the platform companies and offered a narrower set of benefits that aren’t fully portable across platforms. (AP)

# White House says tariff evasion costs US up to \$26 billion a year

China is routing exports through more than 40 countries

WASHINGTON, Aug 15, (AP): The Trump White House said in a new report on Thursday that countries are routing their exports through third countries to avoid U.S. tariffs, estimating that there are tax revenue losses of \$19 billion to \$26 billion annually.

The report specifically highlights that China responded to new tariffs in 2018 by sending their goods to other nations ranging from Mexico to Malaysia for packaging and limited assembly - a practice known as transshipping. That pattern made it look like U.S. imports from China had dropped, but enabled Beijing to continue growing its manufacturing sector in ways that could challenge U.S. factories and employment.

Peter Navarro, the White House trade adviser, told reporters on a conference call that China is laundering its exports through more than 40 countries, though he claimed that the issues raised in the report were really more about other nations en-

abling the avoidance of tariffs.

“For years, the great transshipment scam has let communist China launder its exports,” Navarro said.

The report comes ahead of a planned September visit by Chinese Leader Xi Jinping, who President Donald Trump described in flattering terms during his own visit to Beijing in May.

The Chinese government has described its relationship with the U.S. as one of “strategic stability,” yet its government policies that support exports of manufactured goods have destabilized the auto, metals and electronics sectors in America, Europe, Japan and elsewhere.

Navarro said that other nations such as India could also transship to avoid new tariffs and said that new trade frameworks pursued by the Trump administration are going to contain provisions that ensure trade partners that engage in the practice will be penalized.

The Trump administration has levied high tariffs on much of the world in hopes of protecting U.S. manufacturers, hitting allies and rivals alike with import taxes. At the same time, those tariffs have

created new inflationary pressures at home.

The report includes a range of estimates for the scale of transshipments to avoid tariffs, citing government and private sector numbers to estimate roughly \$34.2 billion to \$303 billion of goods transshipped each year. It used a central figure of \$75 billion worth of goods being transshipped to estimate how much in tax revenues have been lost.

To address the challenge, Navarro said that U.S. Customs and Border Protection has started to use artificial intelligence in a prototype program to stop transshipments. Navarro said that when an importer has been found to have falsified the origins of a good, its imports can be retroactively tariffed going back roughly a year.

The president’s tariffs during his second term have faced an array of legal challenges, with the Supreme Court overturning some of them in February. America continues to import more than it exports to the rest of the world, but the trade imbalance so far this year at \$371 billion is running about \$189 billion lower that it did during the same period last year.

# President Lula triggers reciprocity process against US tariffs in effort to show strength

SAO PAULO, Aug 15, (AP): Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva said Friday his government has triggered an economic reciprocity law mechanism against U.S.-imposed tariffs, saying the move was intended to show his nation must be respected.

In July, U.S. President Donald Trump imposed tariffs on hundreds of Brazilian exports, with duties reaching up to 37.5% in some products. The Trump administration has accused Brazil of unfair trade practices, but Lula has denied the accusations, insisting they are politically motivated ahead of the October election.

Lula is seeking reelection against Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro, a Trump ally who met with U.S. officials, including Trump, in Washington weeks

before the administration proposed higher tariffs on Brazilian goods.

“Yesterday, we invoked the reciprocity law to show that we are not to be taken lightly,” Lula said in an interview with Brazilian podcasters. “We respect ourselves. I am very calm knowing what could happen, and I am prepared to debate the defense of Brazil anywhere in the world.”

Brazil’s Foreign Ministry said in a statement late Thursday it is requesting diplomatic consultations with its U.S. counterparts on the issue, as a sign of Lula’s aim “to privilege dialogue and negotiation in its international relations.”

The beginning of the proceedings does not necessarily mean Brazil will retaliate against U.S. tariffs.

“I don’t want any fight with the

United States,” Lula said Friday. “Unfortunately, they are spreading falsehoods.”

Earlier this month, the U.S. State Department revoked the visa of Brazil’s ambassador to Washington in retaliation for Brazil’s denial of visas last month for two American diplomats who sought to visit ahead of the October election.

The U.S. government also has accused Brazil of stalling approval of Trump’s nominee for ambassador in Brasilia, while Brazilian officials say the U.S. should have first sought the government’s approval before submitting the nomination to Congress, as diplomatic protocol requires.

Since U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio revoked the Brazilian ambassador’s visa in response to Lula’s actions but did not order her

expelled, U.S. officials have said the Trump administration does not want the dispute to escalate.

These officials, who have spoken on condition of anonymity to discuss internal administration deliberations, have said on multiple occasions that Rubio’s limited response was intentionally designed to give Lula time and space to back down.

At the same time, they have said that the U.S. will respond quickly should Lula’s government choose to escalate the matter and that declaring the Brazilian ambassador “persona non grata” and expelling her from the U.S. would be a logical next step.

Lula said once again Trump has treated him well, but warned any foreign governments “who come here to meddle in the election, will lose.”

Biggest drop in 14 months

# US retail sales weaken amid consumer fatigue

NEW YORK, Aug 15, (AP): After splurging on the World Cup and Amazon Prime Day sales, Americans unexpectedly cut their spending in July by the biggest amount in more than a year.

Retail sales fell 0.6% last month, marking the biggest decrease since May 2025, compared with a revised gain of 0.2% in June, according to the Commerce Department data released Friday. Economists were projecting a small increase.

The decline followed a notable bump in spending in both April and May as Americans dipped into their government tax refunds.

The drop in spending for July, however, raised concern among some economists about the resiliency of consumers who have powered the economy forward despite nagging inflation and soaring gasoline prices. Yet, it may be too early to declare a retreat by one of the strongest and most consistent forces in the U.S. economy of late.

Still, the weak sales report follows unexpectedly sluggish jobs figures last week, and both suggest the econ-

omy could be slowing after strong consumer and business spending in the first half of the year.

Separately, consumers turned more pessimistic about the economy this month, likely driven by stubbornly high prices, according to the University of Michigan’s consumer sentiment index, released Friday.

While most economists still expect solid economic growth in the July-September quarter, many have lowered their forecasts in the wake of the retail sales report.

Prices in July, which were not adjusted for inflation, were impacted by falling sales at gas stations. Fuel prices remained low until later in the month when evidence of a stalemate between the U.S. and Iran in the Strait of Hormuz began to grow. Business at gas stations fell 0.9% last month, according to the report.

Gas prices have been rising since the final week of July and ticked higher again overnight to \$4.08 per gallon, up from \$3.85 a month ago, according to motor club AAA. That’s 92 cents more per gallon than

Americans were paying last year at this time.

Gas prices typically begin to recede in August as the driving season comes to a close and the AAA said this week that the high cost of fuel for Americans this late in the year is unprecedented.

Excluding sales at gas stations and auto dealers, retail sales in July fell 0.2%.

Business at motor vehicle and parts dealers saw a 1.8% drop from a 1.9% increase in June, which was helped by auto makers’ promotion incentives.

Electronics and appliance sales declined 0.5%. Online sales fell 2.2% from June when they were fueled by spending surrounding Amazon’s four-day Prime Day event that began in late June, earlier than previous years.

The drop in online sales weighed heavily on the so-called control group-which excludes food services, autos, building materials and gas station sales and is used to calculate economic growth. That figure fell 0.4% last month.

Puppets bring pre-oil Kuwait to life at AmeriCan Center

## Strings that stitch Kuwait's heritage



Play's author Huda Al-Shawa



Jammoul

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15, (KUNA): The AmeriCan Cultural Center hosted on Friday a performance of the children's and family puppet play "Jammoul, Guardian of the Wall" as part of the 18th Cultural Summer Festival, organized by Kuwait's National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL).

The play revisits aspects of life in Kuwait before the discovery of oil, when Kuwait City was a coastal commercial center and a major hub for maritime and overland trade, and the camel caravans were a vital part of the movement of trade and transportation of goods.

The play's author Huda Al-Shawa said in a press statement that using puppets to tell children about social history transforms historical events, facts, and information about life in old Kuwait into an enjoyable visual experience.

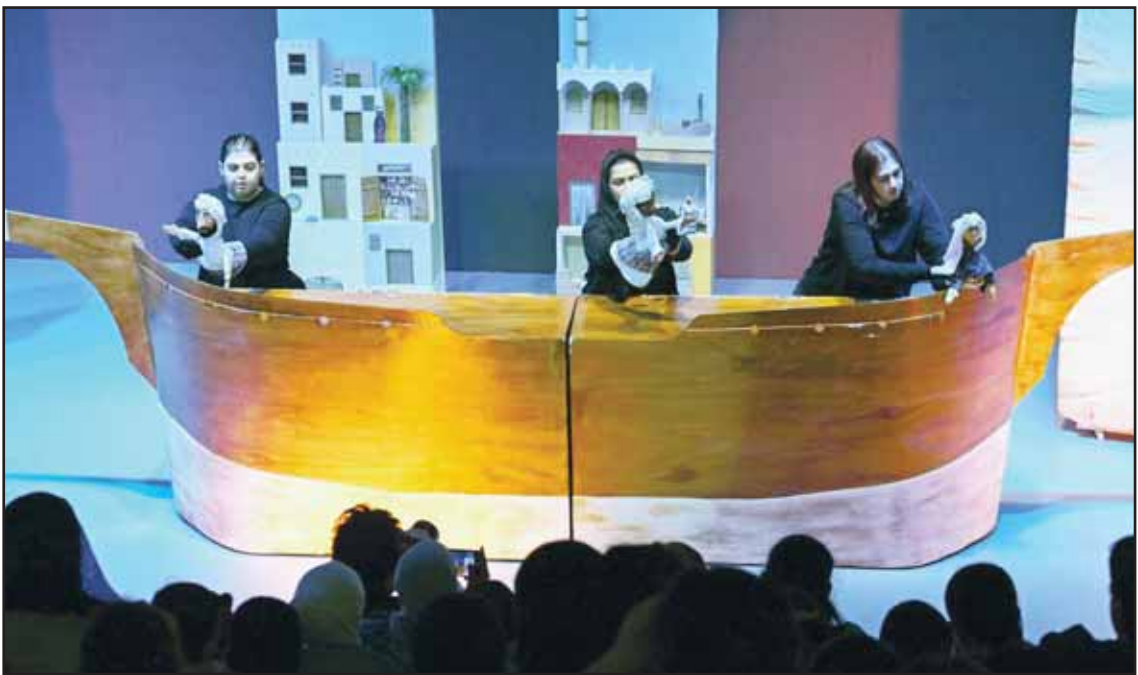
Children tend to connect with puppet characters, empathize with them, and absorb the human values conveyed through their dialogue and the events, she said.

Such theatrical performance helps them connect with their roots and their past and understand life in the present, she added.

The performance also explores the role of Kuwait's city wall and its gates in protecting the city and its people.

The story centers on young Jammoul, who finds himself facing a new responsibility of carrying and protecting

goods during a journey with his parents, accompanied by a camel driver, in Kuwait City.



KUNA photos

Top left and above: Scenes from the 'Jammoul, Guardian of the Wall' puppet show.

## Kuwait joins global falcon elite at Riyadh's auction

Photo feature by Khaled Al-Shammari

RIYADH, Aug 15, (KUNA): Amid wings displaying elite falcons and selected breeds from local and international

farms, visitors to the International Falcon Breeders Auction in Malham, north of Riyadh, experience an atmosphere blending passion, competition and distinguished Kuwaiti participation.

The auction, continuing until August 25, serves as an international gathering annually for falcon breeding farms, providing a platform to showcase their production, introduce various breeds,

and enable falconers to view and bid on them.

The auction also offers an opportunity for producers to exchange expertise and experiences, contributing to devel-

opment of the falcon breeding sector, preserving heritage, safeguarding it and passing it between generations, while highlighting distinguished Kuwaiti participation.



Photos during the International Falcon Breeders Auction held in Malham, north of Riyadh.

KUNA photos

### Variety

**WELLINGTON:** New Zealand recorded 3.67 million overseas visitor arrivals in the year to June 2026, up 9 percent from 3.38 million a year earlier, official data showed on Friday.

Foreign arrivals increased by almost 300,000, with Australia and China accounting for more than

two-thirds of the growth, Stats NZ said in a statement.

Arrivals from Australia rose by 144,400, while those from China increased by 67,000 during the period, said the statistics department.

Australia was the largest source of visitors with 1.59 million arrivals, a record for any annual period from the country, followed by the United States, China and Britain,

the department noted. (Xinhua)

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**LOS ANGELES:** Actors Colman Domingo, Charlize Theron and filmmaker John Carpenter are set to be honored at the Academy Museum Gala this fall. The red carpet for the annual fundraising event, now in its sixth year, has become a reliably starry and glamorous affair - a West Coast rival to New York's

Met Gala. This year's edition will take place on the evening of Oct. 17 in Los Angeles.

Academy museum director and president Amy Homma said in a statement that the honorees, "extraordinary careers exemplify the creativity, innovation, and excellence that continues to move the industry forward."

The event's host committee in-

cludes Questlove, Judd Apatow, Teyana Taylor, Ludwig Göransson, Seth Rogen and Demi Moore. Co-chairs are Robert Rodriguez, Steven Spielberg and Kate Capshaw.

The gala raises money to support the museum, from its exhibitions to its public screenings. Theron and Carpenter will be participating in several of those public programs - Theron for a conversation

with the museum's teen council and a screening of "Mad Max: Fury Road," and Carpenter for three nights of screenings of his films, including "Halloween," which ties in to the museum's new exhibition entitled The Horror Show.

Last year's edition honoring Bruce Springsteen, Penélope Cruz, Bowen Yang and filmmaker Walter Salles raised over \$12 million. (AP)

Film



Mohamed Obsidye, left, of Columbus, Ohio, dressed as his own superhero character "Afro-Pool," leads a dance outside the entrance to D23: The Ultimate Disney Fan Event on Friday, Aug. 14, 2026, at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, Calif. (AP)



Marvel Universe cosplayers take part in a photo op outside the entrance to D23: The Ultimate Disney Fan Event on Friday, Aug. 14, 2026, at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, Calif. (AP)



Rachel Ibarra of San Dimas, Calif., dressed as Queen Amidala from the "Star Wars" franchise, poses during D23: The Ultimate Disney Fan Event at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, Calif., Friday, Aug. 14, 2026. (AP)

Marvel unveils new mutants for 2028, plus first looks at Doomsday and Starfighter

Driver goes full villain as Mister Sinister in Marvel’s ‘X-Men’ reboot

ANAHEIM, Calif., Aug 15, (AP): Adam Driver will make a long-anticipated entrance into the Marvel Cinematic Universe to play super villain Mister Sinister, and "Obsession" breakout star Inde Navarett will play Rogue in Disney's forthcoming film reboot of "X-Men."

Driver and Navarett were among the new cast members announced Friday night at Disney's D23 convention by Marvel Studios President Kevin Feige, along with Driver's "Girls" costmate Christopher Abbott as Professor Charles Xavier and Maya Boyd as Storm. The film is slated for release in May 2028.

The announcements were the biggest news to emerge from Disney Entertainment's D23 presentation that also brought updates on its forthcoming "Star Wars" titles and a song-and-dance that went sideways from the stars of "Frozen 3."

Driver's name was often rumored and often dismissed as an "X-Men" possibility. Many thought he'd be playing the antihero Magneto. The rest of the cast appeared on stage at the Honda Center arena in Anaheim, California, while Driver appeared on a big screen.

"Kevin and I had been talking for years about my joining the Marvel Cinematic Universe, and I think we finally found the perfect film," Driver told the crowd of 12,000 via video. "So I'm very excited to be playing the role of Maaagneto!" he said before pausing, taking it back and saying, "even better, Nathaniel Millbury," an alias for Mister Sinister.

Also on stage were previously announced cast members

Samara Weaving, who is playing Emma Frost; Kit Connor, who is playing Scott "Cyclops" Summers; and Sadie Sink, whose role as Jean Grey was revealed by her appearance in this summer's Marvel megahit "Spider-Man: Brand New Day."

The castmates were as new to each other as they were to the fans. "They've just met backstage for the very first time," Feige said.

Navarett had also been heavily rumored to have a role after fast becoming one of Hollywood's most sought-after actors for her striking performance as a spellbound girlfriend in the indie horror hit "Obsessed" earlier this year.

The "X-Men" joining the MCU became possible with Disney's 2019 acquisition of Fox's film studio.

Director Jake Schreier is heading the reboot, and two writers from prestige TV - "Beef" creator Lee Sung Jin and "The Bear" co-showrunner Joanna Calo - are working on the script.

Ryan Gosling and director Shawn Levy headlined the "Star Wars" part of the night with a presentation on their film "Star Wars: Starfighter," which is getting a May, 2027 release.

Gosling's appearance on stage was preceded by clips of him as a child cast member of "The Mickey Mouse Club."



Adam Driver

Obituary

Actor-turned-director worked with Hollywood legends & earned 3 Oscar nominations

‘On Golden Pond’ director Rydell dies at 97

LOS ANGELES, Aug 15, (AP): Mark Rydell, the Oscar-nominated director of the sentimental blockbuster "On Golden Pond" who worked with such Hollywood heavyweights as Henry Fonda, Katharine Hepburn, Steve McQueen and John Wayne, has died. He was 97.

His daughter, Amy Rydell, told The Hollywood Reporter that her father died Thursday of natural causes at a retirement community for the entertainment industry in the Woodland Hills section of Los Angeles.

"Hard to put into words how much I loved my dad," she posted Friday on her Instagram account. "He was truly one of a kind. Funniest and most talented person I've ever known."

"On Golden Pond," which teamed Fonda with Hepburn and his daughter, Jane Fonda, was nominated for 10 Oscars. Henry Fonda and Hepburn won leading acting honors and the film won for screenplay, which Ernest Thompson adapted from his play of the same name. Rydell was nominated for directing but lost to Warren Beatty for "Reds."

It earned over \$119 million at the box office, making it the second-highest grossing film of 1981 behind "Raiders of the Lost Ark."

"On Golden Pond" was Henry Fonda's final



Directors Mark Rydell, left, and Steven Spielberg are seen together during a break at the 1981, Nominees Luncheon hosted by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills, Calif. on Tues. March 10, 1982. (AP)

movie role. He starred as Norman Thayer, an emotionally brittle and distant father who becomes more accessible at the end of his life after his teenage grandson spends the summer with him and his wife, Ethel (played by Hepburn), at their cottage in New England. The film's story resembled Fonda's real-life relationship with

daughter Jane, who said working on the movie together helped resolve some of their issues. The elder Fonda died at age 77 months after winning his only Oscar.

Rydell's other Oscar-nominated films were "The Fox" in 1967, "The Reivers" with McQueen in 1969, "Cinderella Liberty" with James Caan and Marsha Mason in 1973, "The Rose" with Bette Midler in 1979, and "The River" with Mel Gibson and Sissy Spacek in 1984.

Born Mortimer Harold Rydell on March 23, 1929, in New York City, he studied with jazz pianist Teddy Wilson at the Juilliard School of Music. During a stint in the Army, he spent two years in Japan developing entertainment for military personnel. He majored in English and philosophy at New York University.

He turned to acting when he won a scholarship to the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York. Among his early roles were on the CBS soap operas "The Edge of Night" and "As the World Turns."

Rydell made his Broadway debut in "Seagulls Over Sorrento" with Rod Steiger. In 1956, he made his movie acting debut opposite John Cassavetes and Sal Mineo in Don Siegel's "Crime In The Streets."



Art dealer Bill DeLind shows a picture of a Pablo Picasso sketch (upper left) stolen from his shop DeLind Fine Art Appraisals in 2018 in Milwaukee on Aug. 14, 2026. The sketch was recently found in town. (AP)

Recognized by antique dealer

Picasso artwork stolen in 2018 found in Milwaukee apartment

MADISON, Wis., Aug 15, (AP): Bill DeLind thought the Picasso print that was stolen from his Milwaukee gallery in 2018 was gone forever. But then police called last week and asked him to look an artwork that a local landlord found while cleaning out a vacant apartment. DeLind immediately recognized the stolen "Torero" print, one of 30 known to exist signed by Picasso.

"I was overwhelmed," DeLind said Friday. "I was at a loss for words. It was an overwhelming moment for me."

The sticker from his DeLind Fine Art Appraisals was still on the back of the framed print, just as it had been placed there in 2018.

"It was indeed mine," DeLind said. "It came back full circle."

Milwaukee landlord Tim Dertz told WISN-TV that he found the print while cleaning out an apartment of someone who had been evicted.

"It was kind of in a weird spot hanging on a wall," Tim Dertz told the station. "It looked like it had been there for a long, long time because it had tons of dust across the top of it."

Dertz said he showed it to an antique dealer friend who recognized it as a Picasso and said it appeared to

be the one DeLind reported stolen in 2018. Dertz handed it over to police, who then contacted DeLind.

"When they called me, I was in disbelief," DeLind said.

The Milwaukee Police Department said in an email Friday that the statute of limitations for theft and property crimes is generally six years but the case remains under investigation. Caroline Clancy, a spokesperson for the FBI in Milwaukee, declined to comment.

The year it was stolen the piece was appraised at between \$35,000 and \$50,000, DeLind said. He guessed that the value hasn't changed much since then, but now given its story it may be worth closer to \$50,000.

The artwork remains in possession of Milwaukee police while the client who had commissioned it for sale with his art gallery works it out with his insurance company, DeLind said.

DeLind said his former business partner, who died in February, was distraught over the theft in 2018 and called police every year on the anniversary of the crime asking that they publicize it again in the hope the Picasso could be found.

"He would have been over the moon about this," DeLind said. "It was special to him."

Carabinieri recover stolen Renoir, Cézanne & Matisse artworks

MILAN, Aug 15, (AP): Italian authorities recovered three artworks by Renoir, Cézanne and Matisse worth millions of euros that were stolen earlier this year from a private museum near the northern city of Parma, police said Friday. Five people were detained.

A statement from the Italian Carabinieri's art recovery squad said the artworks were discovered in the possession of one of the suspects during searches ordered by prosecutors in the Parma province and neighboring provinces. The five suspects detained are believed to belong to an organized crime group responsible for numerous thefts of homes, businesses and other properties. Police also recovered stolen goods worth tens of thousands of euros.

Meanwhile, Brazilian police said late Thursday they located eight stolen works by Matisse following an apartment raid outside Sao Paulo. There were no apparent links between the two thefts.

The three artworks recovered in Italy are "Fish," a painting by Auguste Renoir,

"Still Life with Cherries," a pencil and watercolor by Paul Cézanne, and "Odalisque on the Terrace," a color aquatint by Henri Matisse. Authorities said the Cézanne was valued at 6 million euros (\$7 million), the Renoir at 3 million euros (\$3.5 million), and the Matisse at 20,000 euros (\$23,000).

The heist at the Magnani Rocca Foundation, about 20 kilometers (12 miles) from Parma, took place on the night of March 22-23, police said. Video distributed by authorities showed the thieves entering through a broken door window and then taking the three artworks down from adjacent walls before exiting and escaping through the gardens in a matter of minutes.

Investigators said they retrieved important evidence at the scene, including a pickaxe and fire extinguisher with their serial numbers removed. Forensic officers were able to reconstruct the serial numbers, which linked them to an apartment building accessible to one of the alleged members of the criminal gang.



In this picture made available by the Italian Carabinieri in Parma, northern Italy, Friday, Aug. 14, 2026, Carabinieri pose near three artworks recovered following a police operation: "Tasse et plat de cerises" (Still Life with Cherries) a pencil and watercolor by Paul Cézanne, left, "Odalisque Sur La Terrasse" (Odalisque on the Terrace) a color aquatint by Henri Matisse, center, and "Les Poissons" (Fish) a painting by Pierre Auguste Renoir, right. (AP)



Pug rescue Jinny Lu celebrates winning first place in the World's Ugliest Dog Contest at the Sonoma County Fair in Santa Rosa, Calif., on Friday, Aug. 14, 2026. (AP)



Pinky, an albino Pomeranian-Chihuahua mix, celebrates winning second place in the World's Ugliest Dog Contest at the Sonoma County Fair in Santa Rosa, Calif., on Friday, Aug. 14, 2026. (AP)



Chihuahua mix Otto prepares to compete in the World's Ugliest Dog Contest at the Sonoma County Fair in Santa Rosa, Calif., on Friday, Aug. 14, 2026. Otto went on to win third place. (AP)

‘We are chasing the virus; the virus is ahead of us’

Exhausted health workers in Congo struggle to keep up as Ebola outpaces contact tracing

NIZI, Congo, Aug 15, (AP): Every day, community health worker Gédéon Banga Ngbape and his team fan out across communities in eastern Congo looking for people who may have crossed paths with the country’s fastest-growing Ebola outbreak in history.

The workers investigate dozens of alerts, search for those exposed to suspected or confirmed cases and try to get anyone showing symptoms into care before the virus spreads further.

But the surveillance system is increasingly failing to keep pace with the virus. Between 60% and 70% of new Ebola cases are being detected among people who were not already being monitored as contacts, meaning health workers may only discover infections after patients become sick and have had opportunities to expose others.

“If surveillance does not work well, the entire response suffers,” Ngbape said. “Surveillance is the engine of a response.”

The outbreak has killed over 2,200 people out of more than 4,700 cases, according to the latest government figures. This death toll has been reached almost three times faster than in the 2014-16 Ebola outbreak in West Africa - the worst in history. That outbreak claimed over 11,000 lives.

“We are chasing the virus; the virus is ahead of us,” said WHO regional director for Africa, Dr. Mohamed Yakub Janabi, this week.

UN humanitarian chief Tom Fletcher on Friday announced an additional \$30.5 million in emergency funding to help tackle the Ebola outbreak.

In Nizi, Ngbape’s surveillance teams say they receive an average of 60 to 70 alerts a day. They move through communities to investigate suspected infections, follow people who have been in contact with suspected or confirmed cases and direct those showing possible symptoms to health facilities.

The work can stretch deep into the night.

“I leave in the morning at 8 and return around 11 p.m., sometimes midnight,” Ngbape said. “I still have to follow up and plan the next activities. I feel really tired, but what matters to me is always being of service to the community.”

He did not say how many days a week he works or how often he is able to take time off.

Community health workers who go door to door face risks of their own. Ana Ndroy Kasime, a community health worker in Nizi, said she visits homes to educate residents about Ebola and reports suspected cases to health officials. But she said workers like her lack basic protective supplies.

“When we go door to door, we don’t have protective equipment, like boots, disinfectant and other supplies, even though we are at risk,” Kasime said. “We buy disinfectant with our own money.”

The current outbreak, caused by the rare Bundibugyo Ebola virus, is unfolding in some of the most challenging conditions imaginable. There are no



Gédéon Banga Ngbape, (right), an Ebola surveillance officer, arrives at his office in Nizi, Ituri province, eastern Congo on Aug 14. (AP)

approved vaccines or treatments for the Bundibugyo virus, though trials are underway. Strikes by some unpaid health workers, threats by rebel groups, anger from long-traumatized communities and misinformation asserting that Ebola isn’t real have significantly hindered the response.

The gaps are especially consequential in Nizi, one of the most affected health zones in Ituri province, which accounts for about 90% of Congo’s Ebola cases and 80% of its deaths.

“We started surveillance with fewer workers,” Ngbape said. “The challenges are enormous,” he added.

On Thursday, health workers at the Nizi Treatment Center went on strike and the facility temporarily closed. Ngbape said the health workers have not been paid in over three months.

The head of Africa CDC, Jean Kaseya, on Thursday called on Congo’s government to pay the outstanding salaries, saying money was available and that paying workers was the government’s responsibility.

The government says payments are delayed because it’s verifying worker payroll lists after finding unrelated names had been added and while it shifts payments from cash to mobile money.

Kasime said community health workers like her have received their payments, but at about \$50 a month, she considers the amount inadequate for the work and risks involved. She said other Ebola response workers should be paid quickly.

“They are making sacrifices and taking risks,” Kasime said. “If these workers decide to stop working, the epidemic will spread further into the population.”

Surveillance workers in Nizi often struggle to get around, making it harder to investigate alerts and follow contacts across the health zone, Ngbape said. Frequent population movements linked to mining and people fleeing armed conflict add another complication, as people can move before surveillance teams are able to follow up with them.

Poor and sometimes impassable roads can also make remote areas difficult to reach, while insecurity restricts where health workers can safely operate. It remains unclear how many communities in the province are currently inaccessible to surveillance teams.

Dozens of rebel and militia groups operate across eastern Congo. The Allied Democratic Forces, which is tied to the Islamic State group, is among those active in Ituri. The insecurity has forced some health and aid workers to leave remote Ebola hot spots for the relative safety of the provincial capital, Bunia.

Violence affecting the Ebola response has also come from residents. At least a dozen attacks on health facilities and workers were recorded as of mid-July, according to local health authorities. In one incident, residents attacked a hospital in Nyakunde and entered a nearby Ebola treatment center, forcing patients and staff to flee before operations resumed the following day.

Many residents’ anger is caused by misinformation about the virus and bans on traditional burials - when families prepare the bodies and people gather for a funeral, which can lead to further infections.

Ngbape, however, said his surveillance teams in Nizi have not been attacked.

He said cooperation has improved as residents have become more familiar with the surveillance teams and their work. Ngbape also said he does not believe people in Nizi are widely concealing suspected infections, though population movements and limited transportation can still make contacts difficult to follow.

For Ngbape, maintaining that surveillance is critical to preventing individual infections from developing into wider chains of transmission. The long hours and limited resources have left him exhausted, he said, but not ready to stop.

“I am here to save the lives of the population,” he said.



A beluga whale is transported by a group of experts from Marineland and U.S. aquariums onto a truck via a sling at Marineland in Niagara Falls, Ontario on Aug. 12. (AP)

Lions and tigers begin a long-awaited rescue from notorious Argentine zoo

LUJAN, Argentina, Aug 15, (AP): Thirty lions and tigers that were kept alive - barely - for years in cramped concrete cages at a shuttered Argentine zoo began entering jumbo-size transport crates Friday as they embarked on ambitious journeys to wildlife sanctuaries halfway across the world in South Africa and the United States.

The cats are being rescued from the former Luján Zoo, about 70 kilometers (43 miles) northwest of Argentina’s capital of Buenos Aires, after years of uncertainty over their fate. Four Paws, the international animal-welfare organization overseeing the transfer, described it as one of the largest relocations of captive big cats in the world.

“We are putting everything into making this go as smoothly as possible so we can celebrate that 30 lives have improved because of this effort,” said Luciana D’Abramo, program director for Four Paws.

Once loaded into their crates and placed aboard cargo and passenger jets, nine tigers and six lions will be flown to Lionsrock, a Four Paws sanctuary in South Africa that houses more than 80 big cats across natural enclosures sprawling 60 hectares (148 acres). The remaining eight tigers and seven lions will travel to The Wild Animal Sanctu-

ary in Colorado, a vast refuge on the grasslands northeast of Denver where rescued lions, tigers and other animals roam expansive habitats.

But getting there is no easy feat: The big cats bound for Colorado will fly through Chile, while the others will travel to Johannesburg via Frankfurt or Amsterdam before a four-hour drive to Lionsrock.

The Four Paws handlers trained many of the lions and tigers to enter the crates voluntarily. But some of the big cats required sedation, including two tigers that veterinarians hoisted in canvas slings Friday and carried by hand to their transport crates.

Argentine authorities shut down the Lujan Zoo - famous for letting visitors handle and pose for pictures with tigers and lions - over safety and animal welfare concerns in 2020. D’Abramo said about 200 big cats were living there when it closed. Only 112 remained when Four Paws first arrived in 2023 seeking a solution.

By the time the organization was allowed to take over the site two years later, that number had fallen to 62. Some of the captive animals can barely walk because of obesity, muscle loss or poor nutrition. Others suffer from dental and kidney disease, complications

from declawing and injuries that never healed properly.

“That alone shows the level of overcrowding and the conditions in which these animals have endured,” D’Abramo said.

The organization retrained longtime zoo employees in modern animal-welfare practices and began improving the cats’ diets and medical care. This transfer leaves more than 20 lions and tigers at Luján while Four Paws searches for their long-term homes.

Also:

**CHICAGO:** Four more belugas have arrived at a Chicago aquarium as part of a plan to move **Canada’s** last remaining captive whales from a shuttered theme park to aquariums in the **United States and Spain**.

The four whales, named Caspian, Peekachu, Rain and Secord, were the second group of belugas sent to Chicago’s Shedd Aquarium from **Marineland**, in **Ontario** near Niagara Falls, after an initial four arrived in July.

They are among a total of 30 whales and four dolphins that will be transported from Marineland after the Canadian government approved of the rescue plan, which might have saved them from mass euthanasia.

Cyclospora spreads through human waste – so how did it get on food?

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



By Joan Rose  
Michigan State University

The nationwide cyclospora outbreak is very likely a result of sewage contamination in the food supply, according to scientific researchers and public health officials.

The parasite’s spread can become a self-perpetuating cycle. Cyclospora is found only in humans, where it replicates in the intestinal tract, causing severe diarrhea. The organism reproduces by releasing oocysts, which are excreted in those human feces. In the U.S., feces usually end up in sewage systems.

In many states, sewage water is treated - though not always in ways that remove or kill the oocysts - and then released into waterways and can be used to irrigate crops. The oocysts mature in the environment with warm temperatures in about a week. Then a human comes along and eats the irrigated food or drinks the water and gets sick, releasing more oocysts into sewage systems.

I am a public health water microbiologist who collects sewage water and tests it for evidence of harmful pathogens, such as cyclospora. The first time I studied cyclospora was in the first outbreak ever documented in the U.S., a small, 45-case outbreak in Florida in 1995.

The cause was initially suspected to be strawberries grown in California, but later it was determined it was more likely due to imported contaminated raspberries from Guatemala. That country’s raspberries were also associated with much larger outbreaks in 1996 and 1997. At the time, little was known about this single-celled protozoan pathogen.

More than 30 years later, the largest outbreak ever recorded in the US has sickened more than 22,000 people, and contributed to the deaths of two in Michigan, where I live and work. Using treated sewage to irrigate crops is common in many places, especially where groundwater and surface water are in short supply.

There are two reasons researchers like me collect sewage and monitor what’s in it.

The first is to evaluate levels of disease in a community. Measuring viruses such as SARS-CoV-2 in untreated sewage helped paint a picture of the spread of COVID-19 and the emergence of variants as the pandemic continued.

The second reason is to determine whether and how sewage treatment removes, inactivates or kills pathogens.

It is not easy to measure cyclospora oocysts in sewage, contaminated water or food. Even modern laboratory methods have trouble reliably detecting low levels of oocysts, which can still cause disease.

Cyclospora oocysts have been found in sewage around the world. A range of studies across the world shows that they can be detected in up to 25% of sewage samples -

but not all studies report how high or low the concentrations of the oocysts were. So it can be hard to say exactly how widespread it is.

A person who is infected with cyclospora excretes somewhere between 100 and 10,000 oocysts per gram of feces for as long as 60 days. Based on what is known about other fecal pathogen excretions from patients, related to the concentrations of those pathogens in sewage, I estimate that there could be anywhere from 1 to 100 oocysts per liter in sewage.

Our laboratory at Michigan State University is developing a method to more accurately detect this parasite even at lower levels in sewage. This type of wastewater surveillance may help determine when an outbreak is beginning to subside and where larger numbers of people are still affected. In addition, this information could allow sewage treatment plant managers to regularly monitor their discharges.

There isn’t clear data on how well standard sewage treatment processes reduce the numbers of cyclospora oocysts. But there is information on two other similar protozoa that also cause significant diarrhea in humans: Cryptosporidium produces an oocyst about half the size of cyclospora, and giardia produces a cyst that is similar in size to cyclospora.

From 2001 to 2003, my laboratory studied the occurrence of those protozoa at six sewage treatment plants - one each in Arizona and California and four in Florida. All had been approved by their respective state regulators for nonpotable reuse, including irrigation of landscapes and, in some cases, crops.

In that study, we found these protozoa in all the untreated sewage we tested, indicating there is some portion of the population that is infected and excreting their cysts or oocysts.

The five treatment plants whose processes included disinfection with chlorine were able to get rid of a high percentage - but not all - of the protozoa in their discharged wastewater. Some cysts and oocysts remained intact, with the potential to cause disease, even in water that had gone through the entire treatment process, as it is known that wastewater chlorination does not kill these protozoa.

From that data, it seems reasonable to assume that at least some small proportion of cyclospora oocysts also survive sewage treatment processes and are released back into the environment, where they can survive for months.

Across the US, 200 billion gallons of treated sewage wastewater are used for irrigation of agricultural lands each year.

Some of that wastewater undergoes additional filtration and disinfection for reuse before being spread directly on landscapes or crops. The volumes, however, are not readily known. And other treated sewage, which undergoes only standard secondary treatment, is discharged into rivers, streams and reservoirs that could provide irrigation water. (AP)



A group of kids ride e-bikes during an e-bike safety and training class on Aug 8 in San Diego. (AP)

Should parents be held responsible?

Kids keep getting hurt, killed on e-bikes

NEW YORK, Aug 15, (AP): As traumatic injuries and deaths surge among children involved in crashes on e-bikes and other electrified vehicles, one California prosecutor is cracking down by pursuing criminal charges against some of the young riders’ parents.

It is just one way officials across the country are trying to tackle the growing issue, while families navigate a patchwork of local laws and guidance on what kind of souped-up cycles and scooters are safe or even legal for their kids to ride.

New York City’s mayor recently sent cease-and-desist notices to dozens of online retailers for selling products marketed as “e-bikes” that aren’t street legal after a 17-year-old died in a crash on an illicit vehicle. In neighboring New Jersey, new regulations require e-bike riders to be at least 15 and obtain a license and vehicle registration.

But do the measures hit the mark? Cycling advocates worry regulations might be too broad - demonizing low-powered e-bikes instead of speedier motos - while some parents question whether localized, piecemeal strategies are enough.

Monica Stafford, a San Francisco-area mother whose teen daughter fractured her skull falling off an e-bike, said officials are “missing the mark” if

they’re seeking to lay the blame solely on parents. The San Rafael resident said a unified, national set of rules is needed.

“We’re in a total Wild West of laws,” Stafford said. “Being for common sense laws doesn’t mean that you’re against e-bikes, just like you can be for cars but not think that it’s safe to put keys in the hands of a 10-year-old.”

The two-wheeled machines have become nearly ubiquitous in recent years, from packs of teens zipping around California beach towns to the army of delivery drivers dodging traffic on the congested streets of Manhattan.

Hospital visits for injuries from e-bike, e-scooter and other motorized rides have, as expected, soared as they have grown in popularity, study after study has shown. But researchers stress that the more concerning trends are the severity of the injuries and the fact that they’re especially pronounced among children.

“The big takeaway is that people are generally more severely injured than they would be if they were on a traditional, pedal bicycle,” said Dr. John Austin, a doctor at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine who led a recently published statewide study. “Overall, these patients tend to be younger, they tend to be unhelmeted and, in turn, be more severely injured.”

Most e-bikes are classified as non-motorized vehicles akin to traditional bicycles under federal law, meaning riders don’t need a license, insurance or to even wear a helmet. Most states, though, have enacted additional requirements for higher powered machines, including minimum age and helmet requirements.

In New York City, the death of the 17-year-old just steps from City Hall has spurred renewed debate about the bikes. Gabriel Nacato had been riding a vehicle advertised as an “e-bike” but wasn’t legal on city streets.

Earlier this month, Mayor Zohran Mamdani warned more than 40 online retailers, including Amazon, Walmart and Target, that they could face fines of up to \$2,000 for each sale of an e-bike that exceeds city regulations.

New York state requires riders of all forms of e-bikes to be at least 16, and New York City imposes additional restrictions, including a 15 mph (24 kph) speed limit. California, in contrast, has no statewide minimum age for lower-powered bikes, though riders must be at least 16 to use e-bikes that can go up to 28 mph (45 kph).

New Jersey and Illinois are among the states that have enacted statewide regulations recently, and Massachusetts is weighing measures.

## SPORTS

# Pallister beats Ledeccky as US sweeps relays

McIntosh shockingly misses 400m freestyle final at Pan Pacs

IRVINE, Calif., Aug. 15, (AP): Lani Pallister of Australia defeated Katie Ledeccky to win the 400-meter freestyle at the Pan Pacific Championships on Friday night in a final that lacked some luster without world record holder Summer McIntosh.

Pallister was under world-record pace through 150 meters before touching in 3 minutes, 58.42 seconds. Ledeccky had over a second to make up on the final lap and took silver in 4:00.15.

"I could see Katie catching me on the last 150 and that's a very nerve-racking feeling," Pallister said.

Erika Fairweather of New Zealand was third.

"It was OK, not super happy with it," Ledeccky said. "I never like being over 4 minutes in an international final, but I put together the best race I could. I thought I had a good back half, just wasn't out quick enough."

The United States swept the 4 x 100 freestyle relays, beating Australia in both the men's and women's races. The women hadn't defeated the Aussies in the event since 2017.

The team of Chris Guiliano, Patrick Sammon, Destin Lasco and Jack Alexy held off the hard-charging Aussies with a championship-record time of 3:09.01. They finished eight-tenths off the world record of 3:08.24 set by the Americans at the 2008 Beijing Olympics in one of the most thrilling relay races in history.

Jason Lezak swam the fastest relay split in history to overtake France and keep Michael Phelps' historic quest for eight gold medals alive.

"That record has been in a lot of people's eyes for a long time," anchor Alexy said. "I'm really confident we'll get that record."

In the women's relay, Kate Douglass, Gretchen Walsh, Torri Huske



Ben Armbruster, of Australia, competes in the 100 meters butterfly final at the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships Friday, Aug. 14, 2026 in Irvine, Calif. (AP)

and Simone Manuel won in a championship and American record time of 3:29.32. Douglass' 100 leadoff split of 51.69 was the second-fastest in history.

"My goal was to break the world record and it hurts to be so close to it and not get it," Douglass said.

Pallister has firmly established herself as one of Ledeccky's top ri-

vals two years out from the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. The 24-year-old Aussie who cites the 29-year-old American as her inspiration has been piling up international medals in freestyle events ranging from 200 to 1,500 meters.

Pallister won the 200 free over McIntosh and Fairweather on Wednesday.

"It's been an incredible week," Pallister said. "Chasing my goals, chasing dreams and having fun doing it."

Ledeccky didn't compete in the 200 free this week. She topped Pallister in the 1,500 free on Wednesday.

"I've never taken my competition for granted, even when I was winning by big margins," Ledeccky said.

"I just have a lot of great competition from all over the world right now."

McIntosh surprisingly failed to advance to the evening final. The 19-year-old Canadian's time of 4:08.56 was ninth-fastest in the preliminaries and more than 14 seconds slower than her world-record time.

"I take full responsibility for my misjudgment in this morning's

heats," McIntosh posted on her Instagram account.

McIntosh led all the way in winning the 'B' final in 4:00.58, which would have earned her the bronze in the final.

She's had mixed results in Irvine. She was second in the 200 freestyle and then won the 400 individual medley with a time that was about 3 1/2 seconds slower than her fastest time.

Sam Short gave Australia a sweep in the 400 free, winning the men's final in 3:40.52, breaking the 27-year-old championship record of 3:41.03 set by his countryman Ian Thorpe.

"I had so much left at the end," Short said.

Zhang Zhanshuo of China took silver.

The Aussies went 1-2 in the men's 100 butterfly. Matthew Temple won gold and teammate Ben Armbruster earned silver. Walsh won the women's race in 55.15 seconds. Taylor Ruck of Canada took silver in 56.71.

Regan Smith led a 1-2 U.S. finish in the 200 backstroke. She was under world-record pace after 100 meters and touched in 2:05.57. Teammate Claire Curzan earned silver in 2:06.44.

Japan's Yumeki Kojima won the men's 200 backstroke in 1:55.38.

China's Tang Qianting won the women's 50 breaststroke in 29.67. U.S. teammates McKenzie Siroky and Skyler Smith took silver and bronze.

Australia's Sam Williamson won the men's 50 breast in a championship-record time of 26.36. American Van Mathias and Michael Houlie of South Africa tied for silver in 26.42.

Mathias earned his fourth medal this week. He won the 100 breast and was part of the world record-setting U.S. win in the mixed 4 x 100 medley relay to go with a silver in the 50 fly.

"Everyone's been calling it Van Pacs," Williamson said, "but after tonight we might have to call it Sam Pacs."

## Fire edges Storm

# Clark, Boston power Fever past Wings

INDIANAPOLIS, Aug. 15, (AP): Caitlin Clark scored 16 of her 29 points in the third quarter, and Aliyah Boston scored 10 of her 16 points in the fourth to help the Indiana Fever get past the Dallas Wings 98-87 in a key game for playoff position.

Clark also had 10 assists while Boston had 12 rebounds. Kelsey Mitchell added 23 points, and Tyasha Harris - who hadn't made a field goal in the previous six games - was 5-of-5 shooting, all 3-pointers, to finish with 15 points.

Clark had her 20th career game with at least 20 points and 10 assists, the most in league history.

Mitchell scored at least 20 points for the 18th consecutive game to extend her WNBA single-season record, the second-longest streak in WNBA history (A'ja Wilson, 20 games).

The Fever won for the eighth time in 10 games and now hold a half-game lead over the Atlanta Dream for the No. 4 spot in the eight-team post-season field.

Paige Bueckers had 29 points, six rebounds and six assists to lead the Wings, who have lost seven of 10. Arike Ogunbowale added 20 points.

The Wings slipped into a tie for seventh with the Washington Mystics and will meet the Fever for the final time this season Thursday in Dallas.



Indiana Fever guard Caitlin Clark, left, drives against Dallas Wings guard Paige Bueckers (5) in the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Indianapolis. (AP)

And for a change, the only drama Friday happened on the court.

Bueckers and Clark traded baskets throughout a classic third quarter in which neither team could pull away.

Indiana opened the fourth on a 15-2 run, capped by Clark's second 3 of the game to turn a three-point deficit into a 78-68 lead. Dallas closed the deficit to 78-73, but Indiana scored four

straight to retake an 82-73 lead with 4:37 left and Dallas never recovered as Harris' late 3s sealed the victory.

**Fire 84, Storm 82**

In Seattle, Holly Winterburn scored 18 of her career-high 20 points in the first half. Bridget Carleton had 14 points and nine rebounds, and the Portland Fire beat the Seattle Storm to secure a four-game season sweep.

Winterburn, who went into the game with 49 career points in the WNBA, made 8 of 14 from the field and finished with

Karlise Samuelson made Portland's 12th and final 3-pointer with 5:20 remaining for a 79-66 lead. But the Fire did not make another field goal until Emily Engstler's driving layup with 2:07 left made it 82-75 and Carla Leite, an 89% free-throw shooter, went 2 of 4 at the stripe in the final 15 seconds.

Natasha Hiedeman sank a 3-pointer with 6.2 seconds left to cut the deficit to 83-82, but her 3-point attempt at the buzzer hit hard off the backboard.

Leite and Megan DiLeo each scored 14 points for Portland (14-20). Winterburn, who missed last season due to injury, made 8 of 14 from the field and finished with seven rebounds, five assists and three steals in about 21 minutes off the bench. Winterburn went into the game with 49 career points in the WNBA.

Rookie Awa Fam led Seattle (7-29) with 20 points and nine rebounds off the bench. Ezi Magbegor added 13 points. Jordan Horston had 12 points and 11 rebounds, and Jade Melbourne also scored 12. Dominique Malonga, Seattle's leading scorer at 17.4 points per game, scored nine points on 3-of-15 shooting and grabbed 12 rebounds.



Australia's Massimo De Lutiis celebrates after scoring a try during a rugby international between Japan and Australia in Townsville, Australia. (AP)

## Lutiis marks 1,000th Wallabies cap as Australia crushes Japan

TOWNSVILLE, Australia, Aug. 15, (AP): Massimo De Lutiis went on as a second-half replacement to become the 1,000th player capped for the Wallabies, and marked the milestone with a try as Australia beat Japan 56-17 on Saturday to sweep the two-test rugby series.

The 22-year-old De Lutiis went on in the 50th minute to replace veteran prop Taniela Tupou, who barged over for two first-half tries, and was on the shoulder of Angus Bell a minute later as his fellow frontrower scored to give Australia a 26-17 lead.

De Lutiis scored himself in the 58th, backing up in support at the perfect time after an Australian attacking raid that started with flyhalf Carter Gordon breaking the defensive line and running 30 meters toward the right corner flag.

That try and a conversion from scrumhalf Ryan Lonergan, his fifth, gave Australia an 18-point cushion with 20 minutes remaining after a tightly-contested first half where Japan's surprising line speed in defense and enterprising, relentless attack unsettled the Wallabies.

Wallabies captain Harry Wilson said the players were challenged by new coach Les Kiss at halftime after having to come back from a try down in the opening 40 minutes, and they responded with "a lot more spark" in the second half.

"A team like Japan, if you're not up for it, they're really going to make you pay," Wilson said. De Lutiis' injection into the game added some extra energy.

"It's really special - 1000 Wallabies, incredible," Wilson said. "Someone like Massimo, he's a proud Australian. Really special moment."

Three late tries helped the Wallabies turn a 21-17 halftime lead into a 39-point victory, giving the Australians a three-match winning streak for the first time since 2024.

The Wallabies beat Italy last month in the Nations Championship in Joe Schmidt's last match as head coach and then had a 35-32 win over Japan in Osaka last weekend in Kiss's first as head coach.

## Trump ally defends Infantino, blames critics on 'jealousy'

WASHINGTON, Aug. 15: Andrew Giuliani, a former aide to US President Donald Trump and former executive director of the White House task force for the 2026 World Cup, has strongly defended FIFA President Gianni Infantino, saying those seeking his removal need to "have their heads examined."

Giuliani, who worked closely with Infantino before and during this summer's World Cup, defended the FIFA president amid the backlash over the collapse of the FIFA Forward Enterprise proposal.

The plan would have allowed FIFA to offer stakes linked to the World Cup to private investors. Its withdrawal has reportedly intensified calls from UEFA, CONCACAF and the Asian Football Confederation for Infantino to

step down.

Giuliani dismissed the criticism as politically motivated and driven by jealousy.

"People get jealous when others achieve great things," Giuliani said, arguing that Infantino has transformed FIFA and taken the organization to a level many never thought possible.

He also pointed to the 2026 World Cup as Infantino's first tournament secured during his presidency, noting that he inherited the 2018 World Cup in Russia and the 2022 tournament in Qatar.

"This is the first one. It's his own vision," Giuliani said.

Williams' losing streak reaches 13

## Zhang/Siniakova win Toronto doubles for third team title

TORONTO, Aug. 15, (Xinhua): Top seeds Zhang Shuai of China and Katerina Siniakova of the Czech Republic won the women's doubles title at the WTA 1000 event in Toronto on Thursday, beating third-seeded Sara Errani and Nicole Melichar-Martinez 6-3, 6-4 in the final.

The title was Zhang's fourth doubles trophy on tour this year and the 19th of her career. It was also the third title Zhang and Siniakova have won together and their second championship as a pair this year.

They were in control throughout the final, playing steadily and converting their opportunities to finish the tournament without los-

ing a set.

"I feel very happy. I finally realized my wish here in Toronto, winning the championship and getting this beautiful trophy," Zhang said. "Last year I was only two points away from the trophy. This time I finally got the big one."

Zhang and Siniakova have played together only twice this year, but have won both tournaments, having also emerged victorious in Adelaide.

"Although we can say we only team up once every six months, we have very good chemistry," Zhang said. "We played very well and at a very high level, and we were very stable."

The pair went through

the Toronto tournament without dropping a set, defeating several strong teams on the way, including Coco Gauff and Caty McNally as well as Sorana Cirstea and Mirra Andreeva.

"We played many strong opponents, including Grand Slam champions, whether in singles, doubles or mixed doubles," Zhang said. "But we played very well, at a very high level, and very consistently. Every match was 2-0."

Zhang credited Siniakova for helping her produce her best tennis throughout the tournament.

"Of course, I have to say that my partner really helped me a lot, and that's how we were able to have

such a good performance and result," Zhang said. "I'm really grateful to my partner for playing with me. We are improving every day, and that makes both of us very happy."

Venus Williams' losing streak in singles play has reached 13 matches.

The seven-time major champion was defeated 6-2, 6-2 by Emiliana Arango on Friday in the first round of the Cincinnati Open.

The 46-year-old Williams received a wild-card entry to the WTA 1000 event. She has not won a singles match since July 2025.

Arango, a 25-year-old qualifier from Colombia ranked 95th, needed 1 hour, 5 minutes to defeat Wil-

liams on the grandstand court at Lindner Tennis Center.

Williams had her serve broken in the first game of the match and faced an uphill battle the rest of the way.

Arango was 4 of 5 on converting break points and won 71% of her first-serve points.

Williams was unable to convert on her lone break opportunity and was only 41% on first-serve points.

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Deal reportedly values 20-time English champion at around \$6 billion

Bezos and Saverin join consortium buying minority stake in Liverpool

LIVERPOOL, England, Aug 15, (AP): A consortium containing Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and Facebook co-founder Eduardo Saverin is buying a minority stake in Premier League club Liverpool, the English soccer giant said.

Club owner Fenway Sports Group (FSG) said in a statement it entered into a “definitive agreement” for the sale to 1892 Holdings.

The investor group is led by Amit Bhatia, who is married to a daughter of Indian steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal, and has taken a stake of more than 30% in the 20-time English champion, according to Sky News. The deal reportedly values Liverpool at around \$6 billion.

Boston-based FSG paid 300 million pounds (\$400 million) to take over Liverpool in 2010 and also owns the Boston Red Sox. FSG said in July that it had been approached by the Bhatia-led consortium regarding a “strategic minority investment” in the club.

“As we considered this opportunity, it became clear that Amit and the consortium shared our long-term philosophy and appreciation for what makes Liverpool spe-

cial,” FSG president Mike Gordon said in the statement.

It marks the first foray into soccer by Bezos, who, according to Forbes, is the fourth richest person in the world with a net worth of around \$280 billion. He founded Amazon in 1994 and has been executive chairman since 2021.

Saverin is a Brazilian businessman worth around \$36 billion, according to Forbes.

Bhatia, a British-Indian entrepreneur, was the co-owner of second-tier English team Queens Park Rangers for 18 years before stepping down recently.

“We are making this investment because we believe deeply in Liverpool and its leadership, and we look forward to supporting the club’s continued success for years to come,” Bhatia said in the statement.

Under the leadership of FSG and its principal owner John Henry, Liverpool ended a 30-year wait to be English champion in 2020 and added another Premier League title last year. That tied Manchester United on 20 English top-flight league championships.

The club was European champion for a sixth time - a

record for an English team - in 2019.

The Premier League is one of the biggest competitions in sports, with its teams now largely owned by oil-rich gulf states or private equity.

Liverpool now has three of the richest people in the world as minority owners.

That doesn’t mean, however, that the club can simply start spending recklessly in the transfer market on new players.

That’s because the Premier League has financial rules in place to protect the competitive balance of the competition and ensure the financial sustainability of clubs.

In broad terms, a club’s on-pitch spending is related to 85% of its “football-related revenue and net profit/loss from player sales,” the Premier League says.

Instead, the difference will come in how Liverpool - already one of the top teams in world soccer - is marketed more around the world under Bezos and Saverin, especially.

The deal is likely to bring more commercial revenue into the club, thereby improving its profits.



In this file photo, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos speaks at the Vivotech fair in Paris. (AP)

Romero joins Atletico from Tottenham

PSG signs World Cup winner Torres

PARIS, Aug 15, (AP): Champions League titleholder Paris Saint-Germain bolstered its star-studded attack by signing World Cup hero Ferran Torres from Barcelona on a five-year contract Saturday.

PSG announced the signing in a statement without giving financial details. Sports Daily L’Equipe said the club was paying the Spanish champion 50 million euros (\$58 million) for Torres. The French team said he will wear the No. 9 jersey.

The 26-year-old Torres scored Spain’s winning goal during extra time of the World Cup final against a robust and physical Argentina side. Brought on as a second-half substitute, he pounced on a bouncing ball and drove a left-foot shot under the crossbar.

It was his only goal of the competition and he said it was “scored by 47 million people,” referring to Spain’s population.

The transfer to PSG is his second big move. Barcelona signed Torres from Manchester City during the January 2022 transfer window for a reported fee of 55 million euros. Before joining City in 2020, he played for Valencia.

More of a roaming forward than a prolific scorer he netted 65 goals in 207 games for Barcelona, including a career-high 21 in all competitions last season. But his contract was set to expire next year and Barcelona reportedly had to pay a fee to City if he was to extend it.

Torres had played briefly alongside PSG forward Ousmane Dembélé when the France star was at Barça.

The move reunites Torres with Spanish coach Luis Enrique, who gave the player his international debut in 2020 when he was in charge of Spain. Luis Enrique took over at PSG in 2023 and has led the team to back-to-back Champions League titles as well as the French league title in each of his three seasons in charge.

Luis Enrique has multiple options in attack, with Ballon d’Or winner Dembélé, Désiré Doué, Bradley Barcola - who has been linked with a summer move to Liverpool - Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and new signing Maghnes Aklouché.

Dembélé set up Doué for PSG’s winner against Aston Villa in the UEFA Super Cup on Wednesday after Kvaratskhelia had given PSG the lead in a 2-1 victory.

It’s the first of a possible six trophies this season for PSG, which became the first team to win back-to-back Super Cup titles since Real Madrid (2016 and ’17).

PSG faces French Cup winner Lens on Sunday in the Trophée des Champions, which is a match between last season’s league and cup winners.

Spanish club said.

Romero played for the Argentina team that lost the World Cup final to Spain, and he was a member of the side that won the tournament in 2022. He has played 58 games for Argentina.

Romero captained Spurs last season, making 32 appearances to take his tally to 156 since he joined the club from Atlanta in 2021, Tottenham said. He arrived on loan initially, then in a permanent deal a year later.

However, he was criticized for his disciplinary record - four red cards in five Premier League seasons - while injuries also took their toll.

Atlético described Romero as “an experienced defender who is highly physical, quick to anticipate danger and decisive in the tackle, with considerable authority and leadership on the pitch.”

He also previously had spells at Genoa and Juventus after leaving hometown club Belgrano in 2018.



Ferran Torres

Padikkal hits maiden test ton as India dominates Sri Lanka



India’s Rishabh Pant plays a shot during the day one of the first cricket test match between Sri Lanka and India in Galle, Sri Lanka. (AP)

Men in Blue reach 288-2 at stumps

GALLE, Sri Lanka, Aug 15, (AP): Devdutt Padikkal scored his maiden test hundred as India dominated Day 1 of the first test against Sri Lanka, reaching 288-2 at stumps on Saturday.

Padikkal reached 131 not out off 178 balls, hitting 12 fours and a six in only his third test as he dominated the Sri Lankan bowling on a rain-affected day.

He held anchor for India’s first innings, despite two rain disruptions in the second and third sessions. Opener Lokesh Rahul scored 77 off 162 balls, before he was retired hurt.

At stumps, Rishabh Pant (27 not out) was the other unbeaten batter.

This was after India had won the toss and opted to bat, with both sides fielding spin-heavy attacks in Galle’s 50th test.

India had reached 101-1 at lunch, with openers Yashasvi Jaiswal and Rahul adding 47 for the first wicket. Jaiswal scored 32 off 37 balls, with five fours, before he was run-out because



India’s Devdutt Padikkal celebrates his century during the day one of the first cricket test match between Sri Lanka and India in Galle, Sri Lanka. (AP)

of a mix-up with his partner.

The second session was delayed for nearly two hours due to an intense rain shower during the lunch break. Playing time was extended until 6 p.m. local time with further extension depending on light.

In the second session, Padikkal and Rahul

dominated the bowling and didn’t offer any chances. They put on 150 runs off 252 balls for the second wicket as India went to tea at 197-1.

Padikkal scored 50 off 81 balls, with Rahul reaching 50 off 127 balls. Rahul was unable to continue batting in the final session owing to cramps in humid conditions.

Play was further delayed in the final session due to another shower and a wet outfield.

In the final session, Sri Lanka finally managed to get a wicket. Skipper Shubman Gill was out caught off Prabath Jayasuriya, after scoring 16 runs.

Padikkal continued on to his maiden hundred in India’s 600th test, reaching the milestone off 134 balls.

He had Pant for company in the closing stages who attacked the spinners with three fours and a six before bad light cut short the day’s play.

Both teams are eyeing crucial points across the two-test series for staying in contention for the 2027 World Test Championship final. India is currently in fifth place, while hosts Sri Lanka are sixth.

‘Strong working relationships are essential’

Coe warns on interference in sport: Keep politicians on bus but out of driver’s seat

BIRMINGHAM, England, Aug 15, (AP): Sebastian Coe has a simple approach to avoiding political interference in global sport.

“The balance is keeping the politicians on the bus but not letting them anywhere near the steering wheel,” Coe said at the European championships.

The World Athletics president was responding to a question about avoiding political turmoil at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics while speaking to journalists. Other topics included track and field’s ban on Russian athletes, private equity in sports and FIFA’s credibility crisis following a controversy overturned red card at the World Cup.

FIFA was criticized after U.S. President Donald Trump made a phone call to FIFA president Gianni Infantino urging that U.S. forward Folarin Balogun’s red-card suspension be overturned. World soccer’s governing body lifted the suspension. Trump will be nearing the end of his second term when the LA Games take place.

The 69-year-old Coe, a two-time Olympic gold medalist, led

the 2012 London Olympics bidding and organizing committees.

“I ran the London Games. I know it’s really important that you have really good working relationships with government, prime ministers,” said Coe, a former elected member of the British parliament. “The delivery of the Games is in large part predicated on those relationships - with Treasury, Defense, Homeland Security, in our terms the Home Office.”

But with phone calls to influence a sporting matter, it’s “entirely down to the resilience of a sporting organization to say, ‘I hear what you say, but thank you and goodnight,’” Coe said, noting about keeping politicians out of the driver’s seat.

“I think I probably achieved that quite well in London. But not having those relationships is dangerous. Of course, there’s a balance.”

Infantino’s failed plan to sell World Cup profits to private equity investors has landed the FIFA president in a battle to retain his post.

Coe said the idea was “not as

unfamiliar territory as people tend to think.”

“For the last decade, private equity or sovereign wealth funds have been investing in sports,” he said.

The ambitions of each member federation, he added, are tied to their ability to raise revenues.

“Private equity is a big play in many sports. There are individual athletics federations at this very moment I know are discussing partnerships with external sources of revenue including private equity,” Coe said. “That’s the way it should be, and that’s what I’ve encouraged our federations to look at.”

Infantino has acknowledged his FIFA proposal lacked transparency.

“What you want to absolutely make sure,” Coe said of private investors, “is when that does take place that your sport has the kinds of governance and checks and balance and the type of consultation that allows people to understand the rationale, the ambition and what the execution looks like. That is critical.”

Coe noted that World Athletics has broadcast and sponsorship deals expiring in 2029, so seeking external sources of revenue is “an absolutely critical conversation to have. ... That debate has been taking place for two or three years, particularly at executive board level.”

Coe plans to be on hand at the Court of Arbitration for Sport to defend World Athletics’ ban on Russian athletes.

In July, the International Olympic Committee lifted a suspension of the Russian Olympic Committee and advised Olympic sports bodies they no longer need to vet Russian athletes for permission to compete as neutrals.

But World Athletics said it will maintain the ban it imposed shortly after Russian forces invaded Ukraine more than four years ago.

Russian Athletics has asked Switzerland-based CAS to overturn the sanctions.

“I will be in the Court of Arbitration (for Sport) defending our position,” said Coe, who lost a bid last year to become IOC president.

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NEWS



Chelsea's Marco Palestra, right, and Real Sociedad's Jon Mikel Aramburu battle for the ball during the pre-season match between FC Chelsea and Real Sociedad in London, England. Chelsea won 3-1. (AP)

# Sports

## Lebanon sweeps beach volleyball titles

## Kuwait earns first Arab Junior Volleyball Championship win

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

MANAMA, Aug 15: Kuwait recorded its first victory at the second Arab Junior Volleyball Championship in Manama, Bahrain, beating Jordan 3-0 in the fourth round.

The Blues dominated the match, winning 25-15, 25-12 and 25-20 to secure a convincing victory after previously suffering defeats against Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Kuwait played its final tournament match against Algeria late yesterday as the competition moved toward its conclusion.

Elsewhere, Egypt defeated Algeria 3-0, while Bahrain secured a 3-0



Players in action during Kuwait and Jordan match.

victory over Saudi Arabia.

The title was set to be decided today when hosts Bahrain face Egypt. Both teams had eight points from four consecutive victories going into the decisive encounter.

Meanwhile, Lebanon swept the titles at the second and final round of the West Asia Beach Volleyball Championship in Batroun. Mirna Al-Sheikho and Lara Al-Nahi won the women's title, while Jad Abi Karam and Hadi Shbieb captured the men's crown.

Kuwait also took part in the beach volleyball competition, with its players delivering encouraging performances and gaining valuable experience ahead of future regional events.

## Kuwait shines with West Asia table tennis title



Kuwait winning team.

AMMAN, Aug 15: Kuwait's girls' U-11 table tennis team secured the West Asia Championship title in Jordan after defeating Iraq 3-0.

The victory earned Kuwait first place in the girls' U-11 category and marked a notable achievement for the country's table tennis program.

Kuwait Table Tennis Federation board member Nader Behbehani praised the players for their impressive performance, highlighting their technical quality and competitive spirit. He also commended the technical and administrative staff for their role in the team's success.

Behbehani said the title would provide a valuable boost to Kuwait's other national teams competing in the championship, which runs until next Thursday.

Kuwait is represented across boys' and girls' age groups at the tournament, including U-19, U-17, U-15, U-13 and U-11.

# Werro edges Hodgkinson to win 800m at European championships



Audrey Werro of Switzerland poses with her gold medal after winning the women's 800 meters final at the European Athletics Championships in Birmingham, England. (AP)

## Tamberi clinches fourth high jump title, third straight

**BIRMINGHAM, England, Aug 15, (AP): Audrey Werro stormed to the 800-meter title by holding off Olympic champion Keely Hodgkinson down the home straight at the European championships .**

The Swiss star, who was given a spot in the final after falling in the semifinal a day earlier, finished in 1 minute, 54.81 seconds at Alexander Stadium.

Hodgkinson closed the gap down the stretch but Werro willed herself across the line for gold ahead of her British rival. Dutch star Femke Broeders-Bol took bronze.

"I was coming for the gold medal. It truly means a lot. I'm so happy with the finish of the race," said Werro, who did her trademark lion's roar after winning.

Werro, sporting a small bandage on her right hip, took the lead in the first lap and never let up. Werro in late June ran the third-fastest women's time ever: 1:53.80.

In one of semifinal heats, Anais Bourgoignie's left hand made contact with Werro's right foot and Werro tumbled on the last bend.

"It was not the best scenario to qualify like that," Werro said. "It was just a little bit hard for me at this point as that fall was very dramatic in the semis. But I tried to convince myself that I have the second chance and I have to take it and do something great. I'm glad I had a second chance and I just took it."

Hodgkinson had won the past two 800 titles at the European championships.

"Going into that last 100m I really thought I could catch her but sometimes you just don't have enough and

that was the case today," Hodgkinson said. "Of course, I am very disappointed but it was a fantastic race."

Werro broke the European championships record of 1:55.41 set in 1982 by Olga Mineyeva, European Athletics said.

It's back-to-back doubles for Italy's Nadia Battocletti, who defended her 10,000-meter title three nights after retaining her 5,000-meter crown.

Battocletti, the silver medalist in the 10,000 at the Paris Olympics, made her move with 200 meters remaining and Maureen Kosters of the Netherlands and Belgium's Jana van Lent couldn't keep up.

Battocletti crossed the line in 31 minutes, 41.17 seconds. Kosters took silver, and Van Lent won bronze.

In the high jump, Gianmarco Tamberi won his fourth European championships title - and third in a row - after clearing 2.32 meters.

The charismatic Tamberi, who famously shared gold with his good

friend Mutaz Barshim at the 2020 Tokyo Games, pulled off his jersey and thumped his bare chest in celebration Friday.

Ukraine's Oleh Doroshchuk (2.30) took silver, and Tamberi teammate Matteo Sisti (2.27) won bronze.

Norway star Karsten Warholm lowered his own European championships record in the 400-meter hurdles by winning in 46.63 seconds for his fourth consecutive title in the discipline.

"It's not as easy as it looks out there, I don't take any medal for granted but today was extra special for me as nobody has ever won four in a row," the 30-year-old Warholm said. "I was so locked in today."

Germany's Emil Agyekum took bronze, and Ismail Nezir of Turkey was third. Swedish pole vaulter Armand "Mondo" Duplantis is hoping to break the world record - as a married man.

Duplantis, who tied the knot with Desiré Inglander in June, needed just

one successful attempt at 5.60 meters to qualify for Sunday night's final.

The world record is 6.31, which the Louisiana-born Duplantis vaulted in March. That was his 15th world record. He first broke it in 2020 and has eclipsed his mark by 1 centimeter every time since.

The two-time reigning Olympic champion looked fully recovered from a thigh issue that forced him to stop competing at the London Diamond League meet one month ago.

"I've worked really hard the past few weeks to try and make sure I am ready for this competition, so I feel good out there. I feel hopeful and confident for Sunday," he said. "The jump was clean, good. Nothing too out of the ordinary. Now it's just about going up there and doing what I normally do in the final on Sunday."

The world record holder signed autographs and shook hands with fans. Organizers sold special 'Mondo' children's tickets priced at 6.31 pounds - the figure representing his latest world record height - for Friday morning's session.

Duplantis also revealed on Friday he usually keeps his wedding band "in between my laces (of) my spikes" while he competes.

He said his marriage proposal and wedding day were more nerve-racking than vaulting himself into rarefied air going for a world record.

"When I attempt a world record, it's just like the cherry on top," he said. "I don't really even get that nervous, it's more like I won the competition and whatever happens after that is really nice."

Duplantis competes for his mother's native Sweden and has won the past three European championship titles.



Gianmarco Tamberi of Italy makes an attempt in the men's high jump final at the European Athletics Championships in Birmingham, England. (AP)

## Kuwait Club launches preseason after trophy-laden campaign

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 15: Kuwait Club's first-team handball squad begins its preparations for the 2026-27 season today, with the White starting training at the club's indoor hall under Brazilian head coach Marcos Oliveira.

The team enters the new campaign determined to build on last season's success, having secured the league, Federation Cup and Super Cup titles. The coaching staff will focus on maintaining the team's winning momentum while completing preparations for the new season.

Kuwait Club has strengthened their squad by renewing the contract of Montenegrin international Vladan Lipovina and signing Bahraini player Mohammed Habib.

The club has also brought back Mohammed Bayas, Mohammed Ghanafour and Hussam Matouq after their loan spells with Burgan. Haider Dashti has joined from Al-Salmiya to further bolster the squad.

At the same time, several players have departed. Qatar's Frankis Marzo and Portugal's Victor Iturriza have left, along with Kuwaiti players Mohammed Amer, Mishari Sawan, Yaqoub Al-Asiri, Mohammed Al-Boushi, Fahad Abdulhadi, Mishal Taha and Ali Safar. While some have found new clubs, others are yet to decide their next destinations.

The team manager Sameh Al-Hajri said the club's management and handball department, together with the technical and administrative staff and players, are committed to ensuring the team enjoys an ideal preseason.

He said preparations would cover all technical, physical and administrative aspects, with everyone determined to maximize the benefit of the training period and reach the required level of readiness before the season begins.

Al-Hajri emphasized that Kuwait's handball team aims to remain a strong contender for every domestic and international trophy, reflecting the ambitions of the club's management and supporters.

"Everyone is working with one spirit and a shared commitment to achieve our goals in the coming season," he said.



Players gear up for the new season.

## Best of the Rest

**'United needs more signings':** Manchester United manager Michael Carrick has called for more signings in a summer when the club's spending on new players has been below all of its main Premier League rivals.

United has spent around 85 million pounds (\$115 million) combined on three players - midfielders Andrey Santos and Youri Tielemans and goalkeeper Karl Darlow - during the offseason, while also welcoming back Marcus Rashford from his loan spell at Barcelona. (AP)

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**Maresca discusses Rodri:** Manchester City manager Enzo Maresca offered no assurances Friday about the future of Rodri at the club and said fellow midfielder Tijjani Reijnders was set to leave after just one season.

Rodri was welcomed with what Maresca said was a "big hug" when he returned to City on Friday following an extended break after helping Spain win the World Cup last month and then undergoing minor back surgery. (AP)