



Scan the QR code to access the Arab Times WhatsApp Channel



Amir receives Crown Prince, Prime Minister & Ministers

LEGAL SHIELD STRENGTHENS AS CRIMES TAKE SHARP DIP



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

The Yemeni people will punish Iran's agents

WHENEVER the Houthi group bombs residential areas in several Yemeni cities, it is digging its own grave, because the people will not remain silent.

If the past period was characterized by patience, it was to give a chance to exhaust political solutions that could preserve the unity of Yemen.

During this time, the Houthis worked hard to deepen the division between the South and North. However, the past years proved that those who abandoned their nation for the sake of the Iranian regime do not understand the language of wisdom.

On this basis, the confrontation today could be the final stage of the suffering of the people who, for almost three decades, have been living under the yoke of agents who exploited the circumstances to consolidate Iranian control and sectarian division.

It has become clear to everyone in Yemen and abroad that getting rid of the Houthi group and ending its control over the North through terrorism have become a necessity. Otherwise, chaos will continue not only in Yemen, but also in Bab Al-Mandab Strait, and will destabilize the Gulf Arab states.

A calm reading of the historical reality is essential. It is necessary to understand when the patient Yemeni people will rise up. The Yemeni people have allowed their inherent wisdom to prevail, hoping it could restore order, but when the situation evolves into massacres, it means patience has run out.

In recent months, the Houthis have broken every agreement and pledge, carrying out the orders of Tehran regarding Bab Al-Mandab Strait, launching aggression against Saudi Arabia and waging war against the legitimate government.

These acts of folly, both regionally and domestically, proved to be the final straw, as the threat was not only directed at neighboring countries, but also at the Yemeni people. The precarious living conditions and security situation could no longer tolerate adventures, especially amidst the international crisis that could alter the balance of power in the region.

Based on this, the legitimate government and the national army were mobilized to repel the Houthi offensive. However, the Houthi response was to perpetrate acts of terrorism and massacres against civilians. This intensified the resentment against the proxies of Iran.

Historically, the Yemeni people have been known for their resistance to foreign domination and their rejection of any proxy group implementing policies in the interest of an enemy keen on dismantling the region along sectarian lines.

Continued on Page 5

Follow me on:

@Ahmedaljarallah

Ahmed aljarallah

ahmed@aljarallah.com



Scan QR code to visit the website: aljarallah.com

Kidnapping cases in Kuwait plunge 45.5%

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Statistics from the Ministry of Justice showed a steep decline in the number of serious crimes related to violation of personal freedom and honor in the first half of this year.

Minister of Justice Nasser Yousef Al-Sumait confirmed that the law prohibits withdrawing a complaint, reconciling with perpetrators or pardoning them in cases of sexual abuse, domestic violence against children, minors or those lacking legal capacity, as well as violence against parents by their own children.

Al-Sumait revealed that the statistics for cases registered in the Public Prosecution revealed the 45.5 percent decrease in kidnapping cases in the first half of 2026, compared to the same period in 2025.

He said the total number of cases decreased from 99 to 54, while crimes against honor and reputation decreased by 28 percent -- from 168 to 121 cases.

He disclosed that the statistics recorded decline of varying rates in the number of serious crimes related to violation of liberty and honor. He said these crimes include indecent assault by force, threat or deception that went down by 50 percent or from 76 to 38 cases.

He indicated that the kidnapping of children by persons without custody rights dropped by 45.3 percent and kidnapping by force with the intent to cause harm decreased by 64.3 percent.

He pointed out that these indicators coincide with the ongoing development of the criminal justice system and the strengthening of legal protection, such as the



Minister of Justice Nasser Yousef Al-Sumait

repeal of Article 182 of the Penal Code. This article allowed the exemption of a kidnapper from punishment if he married the woman he kidnapped and if her guardian requested that he not be punished. The repeal

- New domestic violence law tightens protection
- Kuwait ends kidnapper marriage loophole
- No withdrawal, reconciliation in certain abuse cases

ended such exception and intensified accountability for perpetrators.

According to the minister, the new Domestic Violence Protection Law intensified protection for groups most vulnerable to abuse, as it includes provisions restricting the withdrawal of complaints, reconciliation or pardon in certain cases.

He confirmed that the government continues to implement its national plan to upgrade legislation, and review criminal and procedural laws, in order to solidify protection for rights and freedoms, maintain security, and uphold the rule of law.

New curbs take effect January 1, 2027

Kuwait blows whistle on tobacco, nicotine sales

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi has issued Ministerial Resolution No. 237/2026 regulating the trade of tobacco and nicotine products and nicotine delivery systems in the State of Kuwait.

The resolution establishes comprehensive regulations governing the import, manufacture, trade, sale, display, advertising and use of these products.

The resolution will come into effect on January 1, 2027. It was published in the official gazette, "Kuwait Al-Yaum," in its issue released on Sunday.

According to the resolution, the sale of tobacco

and nicotine products and nicotine delivery systems to individuals under the age of 21 is prohibited. The sale of these products through websites, electronic applications, social media platforms, delivery services and self-service kiosks is also prohibited.

The sale of these products within 200 meters of educational institutions is prohibited.

The sale of nicotine pouches and oral or mucosal nicotine products that are not registered as medicines is also prohibited.

The resolution imposes restrictions on the advertising, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco and nicotine products.

Article 1 of the resolution defines tobacco as the leaves and all other natural parts of the tobacco plant

"Nicotiana", whether raw or processed, including all its derivatives. It defines nicotine as the addictive chemical found in the tobacco plant and its extracts, whether natural, synthetic or manufactured.

Article 1 also defines tobacco products as all products manufactured wholly or partially from tobacco and intended for consumption through smoking, chewing, sucking, inhaling, heating or any other means.

Nicotine products include all products containing nicotine or used to deliver it to the human body, whether or not they contain tobacco, with the exception of pharmaceutical preparations licensed by the Ministry of Health.

Continued on Page 5

Day by Day

THE opinions of experienced people reflect wisdom, and those around them often rely on their judgment with confidence.

An experienced man once said, "A person should raise the level of his speech rather than raise his voice. Rain comes from clouds, not necessarily from thunder."

Another wise man said, "Illusion is half the illness, tranquility is half the cure, and patience is the first step towards recovery."

How beautiful experience is, and how wonderful it is when we are able to connect it to what is relevant. This worldly life is nothing but a fleeting enjoyment.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): An Amiri Decree was issued Sunday transferring oversight of the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) to the Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment.

Kuwait, Bahrain chart new path for youth cooperation

MANAMA, Aug 16, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma discussed with Bahrain's Minister of Youth Affairs Rawan Tawfiqi in Manama on Sunday ways to strengthen youth cooperation between the two countries across various fields.

The meeting was held during Al-Jalahma's visit to Bahrain, reflecting

the two countries' shared commitment to strengthening their fraternal relations and developing cooperation in the youth and sports sectors.

Al-Jalahma expressed appreciation for the warm reception, stressing the depth of the fraternal ties between Kuwait and Bahrain and Kuwait's

Continued on Page 5

Economic Affairs takes CMA helm

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): An Amiri Decree was issued Sunday transferring oversight of the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) to the Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment.

Decree No. 130 of 2026 stipulates that the minister shall assume oversight of the CMA and exercise all powers vested in the competent minister under Law No. 7 of 2010 on establishing the CMA and regulating securities activities.

The Prime Minister and ministers, each within their respective jurisdiction, shall implement this decree, which shall take effect from the date of its issuance and be published in the Official Gazette.



8 Zain backs CITRA's 'Arqami' service via Sahel app

8 ABK wins 4 prestigious awards from Global Finance



9 stc sponsors AI workshop and competition for high school students in collaboration with KISR



KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): Major General Hamad Al-Munaifi, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Public Security Affairs, visited the Private Security Sector, Correctional Institutions and Border Security Sector to review work progress, operational readiness and the tasks assigned to the respective sectors.

Kuwait heightens readiness, focuses on border protection

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): Major General Hamad Al-Munaifi, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Public Security Affairs, visited the Private Security Sector, Correctional Institutions and Border Security Sector to review work progress, operational readiness and the tasks assigned to the respective sectors.

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait raises Iran attacks at GCC-ASEAN meeting

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 16, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ambassador to Indonesia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Khaled Al-Yassin, emphasized the gravity of Iran's reprehensible attacks on Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, which targeted vital civilian infrastructure.

Continued on Page 5



KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ambassador to Indonesia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Khaled Al-Yassin.



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:53 Asr 15:28
Sunrise .. 05:17 Maghrib .. 18:27
Zohr 11:52 Isha 19:52



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince

Amir receives Crown Prince, Prime Minister & Ministers

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir further received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah.

His Highness also received Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah. His Highness the Amir additionally received Minister

of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Crown Prince audiences

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. His Highness also received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah, Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

MoE project to hone gifted students skills

Boys, girls schools to nurture qualified pupils talent

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: The Ministry of Education (MoE) announced the launch of the Gifted Schools Project for the 2026/2027 academic year.

According to a press release issued by the ministry, this project is one of the development projects undertaken by the Gifted Students Office under the auspices of Minister of Education Engineer Jalal Al-Tabtabaei.

It aims to establish a comprehensive national system for identifying, nurturing and developing the abilities of gifted students through advanced educational policies and effective local and international partnerships.

The ministry explained that the project involves establishing specialized, independent schools for boys and girls dedicated to nurturing gifted students and providing them with a supportive learning environment that encourages their development.

The schools will accept qualified students from all educational zones in Kuwait, reflecting the ministry's belief that investing in promising young minds is a cornerstone of building a future that strengthens Kuwait's position as a center of innovation and leadership at both the regional and international levels.

The student nominations for admission to the Gifted Schools will be conducted online through the Ministry of Education's Mawhoob/Gifted platform, subject to a set of criteria.

The conditions include that the student be a Kuwaiti citizen, enrolled in a public school in Kuwait, and achieve a high level of academic performance in core subjects during the first semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. Students must also pass the giftedness assessment tests after obtaining parental consent.

Applications for the first cohort of gifted students for the 2026/2027 academic year will be accepted through the Gifted Students Office website. Parents wishing to register their children are invited to visit <https://mawhoob.moe.edu.kw> to review the requirements and submit the necessary



Al-Tabtabaei

information between Sunday, August 16, 2026, and Saturday, August 29, 2026.

The giftedness assessment tests will be held from Sunday, September 6, 2026, to Thursday, September 17, 2026. Each student will be notified of their test date and the location of the testing center through the Mawhoob platform after completing registration. Students must bring their test card and civil ID.

The Mawhoob platform includes a "Mawhoob Assistant," a smart assistant dedicated to answering parents' inquiries about registration procedures, deadlines, application requirements and test cards.

Students accepted into a gifted school will be transferred, starting Sunday, September 27, 2026, to the Farwaniya Educational Zone in the West Abdullah Al-Mubarak area.

A school for boys and another for girls, both affiliated with the Ministry of Education, have been prepared and their opening announced. Classes will be held during morning hours, according to the schedule adopted by public schools.

The giftedness tests are not intended to measure students' academic achievement, but rather to identify their latent abilities. The tests are designed according to internationally recognized models in gifted education and assess general mental ability, creative thinking, analytical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The results are scored according to standardized criteria that allow students' performance to be compared with their peers in the same age group, ensuring the highest degree of fairness and accuracy in the classification process. Students who pass the entrance exams will then undergo a personal interview as part of a comprehensive assessment of their abilities.

Curricula

Gifted schools will offer scientific and applied curricula developed in line with global best practices in education and supervised by specialists in gifted education.

The philosophy behind these curricula is based on horizontal enrichment, which aims to broaden and deepen students' knowledge while connecting different academic disciplines.

These enrichment programs will be offered alongside, rather than as a replacement for, the official curricula approved by the Ministry of Education.

The schools will organize scheduled activities

and trips throughout the academic year, allowing students to apply their learning in practical ways. They will also organize scientific competitions and provide psychological, guidance and health services.

The gifted schools are equipped with educational facilities, including classrooms, laboratories, workshops, playgrounds and educational resources. Transportation will also be provided for students under the supervision of specialists.

The Gifted Students Office has set August 23 as the start date for online applications on the ministry's official website for those wishing to work in gifted schools, based on precise criteria for selecting qualified candidates.

The criteria for selecting teaching and administrative staff include giving priority to Kuwaiti candidates or those with Kuwaiti mothers, holding a university degree in the required specialization, receiving an excellent performance rating for the past two years and having at least two years of experience. Priority will also be given to those with previous experience working with gifted students, a proven record of outstanding activities in their field of specialization, and proficiency in using computers and relevant applications.

Candidates for teaching and administrative positions must submit a "no criminal record" certificate (police clearance certificate) during the online application process. Their employment records must also be free of administrative penalties, according to reports from the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

Candidates will undergo a test and a personal interview to assess their proficiency in their respective specializations and their ability to work with the educational and psychological needs of gifted students.

Available vacancies include Student Affairs Registrar, Secretary, Storekeeper, Technology Supervisor, Science Technician, Librarian, Social Worker, Psychologist, Service Provider and Student Assistant.

Filling these positions is subject to the same criteria, including giving priority to Kuwaiti candidates, possessing the appropriate qualifications for the position, submitting a criminal record certificate, and having a clean employment record free of administrative penalties.

The ministry indicated that those wishing to apply for the advertised positions can submit their applications online through the Ministry of Education's official website during the vacancy announcement period, along with the required documents.

Minister visits PADA, reviews workflow and files of patients

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah inspected the Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA) to personally look into the workflow and follow up several files and issues related to services provided to people



Dr. Al-Huwailah

with disabilities.

Al-Huwailah reviewed the progress of the automation and digital transformation project, and efforts being exerted to develop the electronic services, streamline procedures and expedite the processing of applications.

She also assessed the readiness of the fitting room at the PADA branch in Sulaibikhat and the necessary preparations for its operation.

She then underscored the need to provide the required equipment and ensure the readiness of facilities and services to better serve the people with disabilities and their families.



Ambassador Alain Perez Torres with the guests.

Cuba committed to dignity, peace & solidarity – envoy

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Cuban Ambassador to Kuwait Alain Perez Torres said the legacy of Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro remains alive even a century after his birth, stressing that his country remains committed to the principles that Castro championed, such as sovereignty, dignity, social justice, international solidarity and peace.

Torres made the statement at a ceremony marking the centenary of the birth of Castro, with several ambassadors, public figures and other guests in attendance.

He pointed out that Castro regarded solidarity as a practical commitment rather than just a slogan, adding that Cuba, under the leadership of Castro, shared its expertise, experience and knowledge with the people in Latin America, Africa and other parts of the world.

He said the centenary of Castro is celebrated at a time Cuba is confronting what he described as a "hostile policy and multifaceted aggression by the American government," while reaffirming the resolution of his country to continue defending its sovereignty, independence and right to determine its own future.

He stressed that the most meaningful way to honor Castro is not simply by remembering him, but by preserving the values he advocated and maintaining faith in the right of all people to freedom and to shape their own destiny, regardless of the challenges they encounter.

He emphasized that even a century after his birth, Castro is still an inseparable part of the history of Cuba and continues to inspire those who believe in the possibility of creating a better world.

The ceremony concluded with the screening of a documentary film highlighting the roles of Castro as a statesman and a diplomat.

Kuwait seeks to reunite Sudan war-separated families

KHARTOUM, Aug 16, (KUNA): The first flights of a voluntary return project for Sudanese refugees in Uganda will depart Entebbe Airport for Khartoum on Sunday, carrying 80 to 100 passengers per flight, with the program completed within six weeks.

The project, implemented by Kuwait-based Direct Aid Society under the supervision of Kuwait Embassy in Sudan, targets more than 1,000 refugees at a total cost of 300,000 Kuwaiti dinars, covering essential return arrangements.

Kuwait Ambassador to Sudan Dr. Fahad Mishari Al-Dhafiri told KUNA the project follows directives from Kuwait's political leadership and cooperation among the embassy, Sudanese Foreign Ministry and Direct Aid Society, further extending Kuwait's humanitarian role.

He said the initiative, the first of its kind, seeks to reunite families separated by war and responds to urgent humanitarian needs arising from harsh refugee conditions in Uganda, where many still remain displaced there.

Al-Dhafiri thanked Direct Aid Society, noting the initiative received strong appreciation from Sudan's government and people, who pledged necessary facilitation, while describing it as a model encouraging other humanitarian organizations to support voluntary return programs.

Direct Aid Society Secretary General Dr. Abdullah Al-Sumait told KUNA continued Kuwaiti government support and donor confidence enabled rapid action, while improving conditions in some Sudanese cities and rising return aspirations strengthened the project's importance.



Dr. Al-Dhafiri



KUNA photos

Registration of refugees underway.

He said the society's support provides integrated financing and operations covering air tickets, logistics, travel documents and coordination with both governments and Kuwait Embassy, ensuring a fully organized process that protects beneficiaries' dignity and safety.

Al-Sumait described the initiative as a first phase complementing the society's wider relief program, urging donors, governments and international partners to increase support because available resources remain insufficient compared with the scale of humanitarian needs.

Sudan's Higher Governmental Committee for Voluntary Return rapporteur Ambassador Onor Ahmad Onor told KUNA the project supports broader governmental efforts for stabil-

ity, recovery and reconstruction, with Uganda currently hosting approximately 95,000 Sudanese refugees there.

He said air travel is the only safe travel option amid unsuitable land routes, adding that returning all refugees could require about 1,000 flights, while beneficiaries are selected through criteria prioritizing children, elderly people, patients and family reunification cases in particular.

Onor stressed voluntary return forms part of recovery and development, calling on humanitarian and international organizations, particularly Kuwaiti entities, to expand humanitarian support programs, while praising Kuwait and host countries, including Uganda, Egypt and Libya.

MPW to float 24 tenders, contracts in fiscal '26/'27

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: The Ministry of Public Works on Sunday announced through the official gazette, 'Kuwait Al-Yaum', that 24 contracts and tenders will be floated in the current fiscal year as part of the sixth phase of its annual plan for supply, contracting and service contracts.

Twenty-one of these contracts and tenders are for the Administrative, Financial and Legal Affairs Sector, six of which are valued at more than KD75,000 for the provision of machinery and equipment, including vehicles for towing testing equipment and supplying the ministry with technical personnel. 11 contracts valued at less than KD75,000 for the supply of batteries and tyres, in addition to four tenders, one of which is for utilizing land owned by the ministry for food product sales services.

Three contracts are for the Sanitary Engineering Sector for conducting design studies and supervising infrastructure improvement projects in several areas.

Meanwhile, the ministry obtained approval from the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) at its meeting last Wednesday to float a tender for connecting South Sabahiyah to the public sewage network. The tender covers the implementation, completion and maintenance of the main sewage lines to connect the area to the public sewage network. The ministry set an 18-month implementation period for this project.

Other Voices

Learn from Taiwan and Ukraine and strengthen our defense

By Ahmad alsarraf

Ukraine covers an area of 306,000 km² and has a population of approximately 40 million. Russia, with an area of 17 million km² and a population of 143 million, is attempting to annex it. Russia is 28 times larger than Ukraine and has a population approximately 3.6 times greater.

Iran, on the other hand, covers an area of 1.65 million km² and has a population of 93.2 million. The United States, with an area of 9.9 million km² - almost six times the size of Iran - and a population of 349 million, is attempting to subjugate it to its will.

Taiwan covers an area of approximately 36,000 km² and has a population of 23 million. China seeks to annex it by force. China covers an area of approximately 10 million km² and has a population of more than 1.413 billion, making it about 265 times larger than Taiwan and approximately 61 times more populous.



alsarraf

The three countries face huge challenges from their respective rivals. Focusing on Taiwan, we find that it has successfully established itself as a formidable power, achieving near parity with its large and powerful neighbor in many respects. Taiwan has reached this equilibrium through decades of logistical, human and military preparations.

Perhaps its most significant strength lies in its vast arsenal of drones, unmanned attack craft and missiles, which are capable of countering an attack from various directions.

Taiwan also possesses valuable intelligence on enemy troop positions and movements, as well as a formidable army capable of rapid deployment before any invading force can reach and occupy the island. Many military analysts believe that the Taiwanese army could repel an invading force with waves of drones, missiles and artillery, making any amphibious assault a highly risky undertaking.

Drawing on the lessons learned from Taiwan and the war in Ukraine, and recognizing the need to understand Iran's strengths and weaknesses - a country that, since its revolution, has not hesitated to challenge us and undermine our security - it is imperative for Kuwait to acquire, manufacture, and train in the use of drones as

quickly as possible, making this weapon the backbone of the Kuwaiti army.

We can learn from the experiences of Ukraine and Taiwan in developing, stockpiling and training in the use of these technologies to make any future aggression against us more difficult and costly.

Some may consider this proposal fanciful, but nothing is impossible in today's world, and even the most consequential decisions begin with a single step.

We have no choice but to rely on ourselves, our own capabilities, and our own strength. Over-reliance on others has become akin to a reckless gamble with uncertain outcomes.

From the outset, we must consider the possibility that Iran could emerge from its war with the United States almost victorious, but severely wounded, psychologically, humanly, and materially. Such an outcome could only increase its appetite for targeting its neighbors and attempting to blackmail them. Therefore, we must be prepared to face such a scenario and deal with any potential danger.

□ □ □

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

3 solutions to eliminate 'ration' goods peddling

"IN less than a week, security authorities managed to uncover and thwart attempts to smuggle food supplies allocated for citizens. This was not the first such incident but hopefully, it will be the last," Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The two smuggled shipments contained large quantities of subsidized food supplies intended for resale. We know that oversight of food supplies is weak, with almost anyone able to enter and leave food distribution centers and warehouses. It is said that the lack of proper oversight can encourage theft and smuggling. The majority of employees and supervisors at food distribution centers and warehouses are expatriates, often of the same nationality and, in some cases, perhaps even from the same city. Even when there are Asian workers among them, the situation is not much different.

"Food supplies in Kuwait are of high quality and packaged specifically for the Kuwaiti market. Yet, I have personally seen street vendors selling them in Asian countries. This means that smuggling has become a global phenomenon. I reiterate that the lack of oversight encourages theft. It seems that there are people among us who steal as though public funds have no owner, or as though they are their own private property.

"A job is a responsibility and a trust that must be upheld. Unfortunately, despite the existence of oversight and regulations, loopholes still exist that thieves exploit. Imams and preachers should emphasize that stealing public funds is forbidden and impermissible, as some may believe otherwise. Friday sermon preachers of all sects, denominations, and languages should be urged to stress the seriousness of this issue.

"There are incentives for smuggling that go beyond the fact that the goods are stolen and therefore free. Items such as powdered milk, rice, oils, and other products are particularly attractive due to their exceptional quality. I believe that smuggling will continue even with stricter oversight. Therefore, I propose canceling the provision of subsidized food items to citizens and closing the warehouses and distribution centers. Instead, the food rations could be replaced with a cash allowance for every Kuwaiti family.

"A second solution would be to stop the current distribution system and place the rationed goods directly on the shelves of cooperative societies. A third suggestion is to export the required food items manufactured locally under a Kuwaiti brand. Kuwait will remain safe as long as its citizens and residents are safe and are prevented from committing any prohibited acts."

Also:

"When we talk about Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the public sector, we are not just talking about systems or algorithms, but about people - a mother trying to enroll her child in school, a retiree waiting for healthcare, a refugee seeking safety in a new country, and a young person with a disability simply striving to be recognized as a person with full rights," Kuwaiti writer Eng. **Yasmeen Al-Rifai** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"If the AI we are building is incapable of understanding these people, it has no place in our public services, because efficiency alone is not enough. AI can speed up procedures, but speed without empathy can become a new source of suffering. Government services exist to serve people, not merely to process requests. A truly intelligent system knows when to stop, when to explain, and when to put people first.

"Today, we are moving towards an era of agentic AI, capable of planning and taking initiatives independently. In the public sector, these capabilities represent a real paradigm shift. Imagine systems that support social workers and accelerate emergency response. But power, however great, can become a source of danger if it is not tempered with responsibility. If AI makes decisions without human oversight, we risk losing one of the most fundamental principles of public administration - human accountability. We need to build systems that enhance human capabilities rather than replace them. Inclusivity is not a feature added at the end of a project; it must be present from the outset.

"Does the system speak your language and understand your dialect? True inclusivity is not about helping those most in need, but about designing a society where no one has to ask for help to feel a sense of belonging. Amid the enthusiasm surrounding AI development, we must not forget that citizens need clarity, respect, and trustworthy answers. Let's use technology to give government employees more time to listen to grievances, not to neglect the human dimension.

"Developed countries have long dominated discussions on the ethics of artificial intelligence, but what about our values in the Gulf States, the Levant, and North Africa? We are not merely users of this technology; we are par-

ticipants in shaping its future. We must build services that reflect our languages and cultures, not imported models. We are not building AI for technological advancement alone, but for humanity. The most advanced systems are not necessarily those with the greatest algorithmic power. Rather, true advancement lies in systems that do not ignore the human beings they were designed to serve."

□ □ □

"The so-called "Believing Youth" movement was founded in 1992 in the Marran Mountains of Saada Governorate as a religious and cultural forum by Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi and his father," columnist **Faisal Al-Harbi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Initially, the forum aimed to teach religious sciences and provide young people with constructive activities during their free time. However, this outwardly religious facade soon gave way to a political and military agenda. The Houthi movement rested on two pillars that directly clashed with the concept of the modern state. The movement promoted a hollow slogan hostile to the West and to American and Western policies.

"Reality proved that this slogan was little more than a tool for mobilizing the masses and inciting emotions. The Houthi movement did not fire a single shot at Western interests; rather, its weapons were ultimately directed at the Yemeni people. The "divine right of succession" is the most dangerous principle setting Yemen back decades. The Houthi movement believes that governance and political power should be confined to a specific lineage. This directly conflicts with the principles of modern democracy, the peaceful transfer of power, and equal citizenship, which guarantees all Yemenis fair political and social rights.

"Why did the late President Ali Abdullah Saleh not confront the Houthi movement immediately after its emergence? At the time, the Yemeni presidency believed that the "Believing Youth" group would remain a limited intellectual movement confined to its local areas. No one expected it to transform into an armed militia that would eventually turn its weapons against the state. The movement quickly spiraled out of control and attempted to impose its authority by force. On June 18, 2004, Hussein al-Houthi refused to surrender to the authorities and defied the state's authority. The Yemeni army launched a large-scale offensive known as the "First War," which ended with the death of the movement's leader.

"At the time, everyone thought the Houthi dream of restoring an imamate had been buried in its infancy. However, the Houthi movement subsequently waged five more wars, draining the army's resources and consolidating its position as a state within a state. No sooner had the wounds of the six wars begun to heal than the Houthi dream of ruling was rekindled following the events of 2011 and the fall of Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime.



Faisal Al-Harbi

"The militia exploited political divisions, institutional weaknesses, and chaos to transform itself from a rebel group on the outskirts of Saada into an armed force sweeping through cities and provinces. In September 2014, the movement staged a coup by storming the capital, Sana'a. The Houthis seized army camps, sovereign state institutions, and the Central Bank. Since then, the Yemeni people have endured immense suffering at the hands of this oppressive group, which has carried out systematic repression. Women have been arrested, children killed, the homes of opponents bombed, and the country's wealth plundered to finance the coup faction's war effort. Yemen has been plunged into one of the worst humanitarian crises the modern world has witnessed.

"Amid this profound darkness and the collapse of the Yemeni state, the Arab Coalition, led by Saudi Arabia, intervened to support the legitimate government. The intervention was not limited to military efforts to curb Houthi expansion and prevent the group from gaining complete control of the country, but also extended to providing a comprehensive humanitarian and developmental lifeline.

"Through the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center and the Saudi Program for the Development and Reconstruction of Yemen, unlimited humanitarian support was provided, including the construction and rehabilitation of hospitals and medical centers to save the lives of thousands of Yemenis. Schools and educational facilities were built to protect future generations from imported sectarian ideology. Direct economic support was also provided, including deposits in the Central Bank and contributions to salary subsidies to alleviate the hardships faced by Yemeni citizens. A national Yemeni army was also re-established and rebuilt on professional foundations, with loyalty to God and then to the nation."

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



Farwaniya Governorate photo

Farwaniya Governor and acting Capital Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah meets Eng. Sarah Faisal Al-Kharji from the Public Authority for Sports (PAS).

Bid to improve sports activities, programs in 'Farwaniya region'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Farwaniya Governor and acting Capital Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah met with Eng. Sarah Faisal Al-Kharji from the Public Authority for Sports (PAS).

During the meeting, they discussed ways to improve sports activities and programs in the governorate, and the importance of coordinating efforts to

support sports initiatives and encourage participation from all segments of society.

The Governor affirmed the significance of supporting sports activities and providing a suitable environment.

He also praised the efforts of PAS and its role in serving the youths and the community.

Asian tailor, fluent in local lingo, deceiving women in officer garb

Police launch probe as young man set on fire

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: The General Department of Residence Affairs Investigations arrested a 45-year-old Pakistani expatriate for impersonating a Ministry of Interior officer and defrauding women of Arab and Asian nationalities, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to security sources, a military uniform, a colonel's rank insignia and a badge indicating employment with the General Department of Control and Inspection were found at the suspect's residence.

Detectives received information that an Asian expatriate working as a tailor was deceiving women by claiming to be a Ministry of Interior officer and offering to expedite their transactions. Investigations revealed that the suspect was sometimes seen wearing a military uniform and had used his fluency in the local dialect to gain the victims' trust.

A warrant was obtained from the Public Prosecution, after which the suspect was apprehended. He confessed to using his work as a tailor to have a military uniform made, along with a badge bearing the rank of Colonel.

Legal procedures were underway to determine the full extent of the fraudulent activities allegedly carried out using his false

identity.

□ □ □

Man set on fire, probe on: A 24-year-old man was admitted to the intensive care unit at Farwaniya Hospital in critical condition after suffering first- and second-degree burns to his feet and chest, reports Al-Anba daily.

The investigator at the Ardiya Industrial Police Station ordered a search for the perpetrators of the incident, which occurred behind a gas station, and registered the case as attempted murder.

Security sources said the arrest of the suspects or the young man's recovery could help shed light on the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Court overturns PAHW decision to terminate lease

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: In a first-of-its-kind ruling, the Administrative Court overturned the decision of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) to terminate the lease of a Kuwaiti residing in East Taima, thus, upholding the validity of the existing lease agreement.

The court ordered the immediate enforcement of the ruling after canceling the eviction order scheduled for Sept 1, 2026.

Attorney Hamoud Fahd Al-Hajri, lawyer of the citizen, filed the case against PAHW.

Case files indicate that the citizen was surprised when he received a notification from PAHW through the Sahel application, informing him about the termination of his lease and his eviction from the rented house in East Taima -- Block 9, House No. 142 -- effective Sept 1, 2026.

Al-Hajri argued that the decision is flawed and unjust, considering the eviction order could leave a Kuwaiti family homeless due to what he described as "abuse of power".

He explained that PAHW based its decision on the cancellation of Article 29bis, which is a misapplication of the law retroactively. He stressed that the rights and legal status ac-

quired by the citizen as per Law No. 2/2015 are established and cannot be infringed as per Article 179 of the Constitution, which stipulates that laws cannot be applied retroactively except through a certain provision.

He added that the decision contradicts Article Nine of the Constitution, which states that "the family is the foundation of society, and the law preserves its structure and strengthens its bond."

He also argued that providing suitable housing is the fundamental pillar for maintaining the stability of Kuwaiti families, and that his client did not violate any of the conditions set by PAHW.



KFF photo

Firemen trying to extinguish an earlier fire in another location.

Probe launched as 'fire' erupts in Firdous house

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Fire broke out in a house in Firdous on Saturday evening, reports Al-Anba daily.

Firefighters from the Al-Ardiya and Al-Qairawan fire stations rushed to the location and extinguished the fire. No injuries were reported. Investigations were launched to determine the cause of the fire.

Total closure of 3rd Ring Road bridge until Aug 28

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: The General Traffic Department announced the complete closure of the Third Ring Road over the bridge at the intersection of the Third Ring Road and Damascus Street in both directions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The closure began on Friday and will remain in effect until the completion of road maintenance on Friday, August 28, 2026.

The department explained that the closure will extend from the intersection of King Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud Road (Morocco Road) to the intersection of King Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud Road (Riyadh Road). The intersections will remain open, including the intersection of Damascus Street with the Third Ring Road.

3 years for joining ISIS

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: The Court of Cassation, chaired by Judge Sultan Boursesli, rejected the appeal filed by a citizen and upheld the three-year prison sentence imposed on him for joining the ISIS terrorist organization, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Criminal Court initially sentenced the defendant to five years in prison, then the Court of Appeals reduced the prison sentence to three years.

Unknown perishes in Jleeb building inferno

By Munif Nayer

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: An unidentified person died when fire broke out in a building in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh on Sunday.

According to a security source, the Operations Unit at the Ministry of Interior received a report about the fire incident. Security, ambulance and fire personnel rushed to the scene, where the firefighters extinguished the fire.

The source added that during the firefighting operation, an unidentified dead person was discovered. His corpse was referred to the Forensic Department for identification.

The concerned authorities have started investigations to determine the cause of fire.

□ □ □

Police nab 5 speeders: The recent traffic campaigns resulted in the arrest of five individuals who committed serious speeding violations.

All those arrested were taken to the traffic police station and their vehicles were impounded.

A security source disclosed that the Jahra traffic officers apprehended two individuals driving on Jahra Road at a speed of 190 km/h.

The source added that highway patrol officers apprehended three other individuals for driving at a speed of 150 km/h.

□ □ □

Patrol cops put out fire: The swift intervention of patrol officers prevented the fire in a vehicle being towed on a crane along the highway, after smoke suddenly started billowing from it.

Two patrol officers noticed the vehicle that broke down on the side of the road. They immediately offered assistance to the driver and called for a crane to tow it.

Special Buffet

LARGEST SPREAD IN TOWN

Child Buffet	Adult Buffet
KD 3.450	KD 5.950
EVERY THURSDAY DINNER ONLY 6 PM TO 11 PM	EVERY FRIDAY LUNCH & DINNER 12:30 PM TO 4:30 PM & 6 PM TO 11 PM
	HAWALLY ONLY EVERY SATURDAY LUNCH ONLY 12:30 PM TO 4:30 PM

AVAILABLE AT HAWALLY BRANCH BEIRUT ST, LULU AL WATAN COMPLEX, OPPOSITE CBK 22626782 ☎ 22626783	AVAILABLE AT FAHAHEEL BRANCH 1ST FLOOR, AL HOOR BUILDING BLOCK NO.II, BEHIND TO CENTERPOINT 23911175 ☎ 23911174
---	--

Valuable addition for kidney cure

Sheikh Jaber heirs donate dialysis center for Ahmadi region

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Some charitable works remain a testament of their benefactors even after their passing and healthcare facilities are among such works.

This is exemplified by the story of the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Kidney Dialysis Center in Ahmadi Health District, which was inaugurated last week, thanks to the generous donation of the heirs of HH the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

The center is a valuable addition to the kidney patient treatment system in Kuwait and conveys a humanitarian message that extends far beyond the walls and medical equipment in the building.

Once fully operational, the center will cater to about 500 hemodialysis patients and 100 peritoneal dialysis patients.

The opening of this new center is a continuation of the contributions of the family of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad to the healthcare sector.

The heirs of HH late Amir previously donated a kidney dialysis center to Al-Jahra Hospital during the tenure of former Minister of Health Mohammad Barak Al-Haifi in 2013.

In April 2013, the Jaber Al-Ahmad Kidney Dialysis Center was inaugurated at Al-Jahra Hospital, and at the time, it was one of the largest kidney dialysis centers affiliated with the Ministry of Health.

A representative of HH the late Amir's heirs confirmed that the center was established to provide some of the healthcare services needed by the community and to assist those requiring this type of treatment.

Dialysis was chosen as the focus of the donation, because patients requiring dialysis need frequent and continuous treatment.

More than 13 years later, the name of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad is being revived with a new healthcare project in Ahmadi, but on a larger scale and with greater capacity.

The new Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Center in East Ahmadi includes 83 dialysis units, 11 of which are isolation rooms, in addition to four peritoneal dialysis rooms, a biochemistry laboratory, blood collection rooms, and rooms for procedures, emergencies, patient examinations



Jaber Al-Ahmad Kidney Dialysis Center



Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Humoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Minister of Health Dr Ahmad Abdulwahhab Al-Awadhi and other guests during their visit to the new kidney dialysis center in Al-Ahmadi Governorate.



and preparation. It also houses a central pharmacy, nutrition clinics, social services, administrative facilities and support services. It is situated on land measuring 2,650 square meters,

while the total building area is 10,250 square meters. It consists of a basement, a ground floor and three upper floors.

The importance of the center is underscored

A patient entering the dialysis center does not visit a healthcare facility once and then leave as he must commit to repeated treatment sessions, making the center an integral part of his daily or weekly life.

Every dialysis machine, every bed and every treatment room can mean fewer hours of waiting for the patient, a shorter distance to reach treatment, and greater comfort for him and his family.

During the inauguration of the center, Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi emphasized the concept of accessibility to healthcare services, clarifying that the quality of care is not dependent on the availability of treatment, but also on the ability of the patient to access it at the right time and place.

The new center is part of the plan of the Health Ministry to develop kidney services in the region and it is the culmination of the gradual expansion that started with the Mohammad Al-Khuzam Dialysis Center at Al-Adan Hospital, which opened in 2009 and currently serves around 460 dialysis patients.

In May 2024, the ministry opened a dialysis unit at the Ali Sabah Al-Salem Center, with a capacity of 10 beds and it is currently serving 17 hemodialysis patients.

In July 2024, the ministry opened a dialysis unit at the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center-Sector E, with a capacity of 20 beds and it is currently serving 32 hemodialysis patients.

In February 2026, a dialysis unit at the new Maternity and Child Hospital opened. It is equipped with 12 beds and it is currently serving 10 female hemodialysis patients.

Speaking at the opening of the new center, Sheikh Fahad Al-Jaber, representative of the donor, stated that the center embodies the values of compassion and humanity, and is a means of seeking reward from God. He asserted that one of the most beautiful acts of charity is for a person to contribute to alleviating the suffering of another and instilling hope in his heart.

One of the most prominent examples of similar charitable initiatives is the Hamad Abdullah Al-Sager Specialized Health Center in Adailiya, which opened in 2000 through the donation of Abdulaziz Hamad Al-Sager and his brother Jassim Hamad Al-Sager at a cost KD2 million at the time.

The center offers a wide range of services, including general medicine, pediatrics, diabetes, emergency care, radiology, laboratories, dentistry, preventive health, ENT, surgery, orthopedics, school health and an oncology clinic.

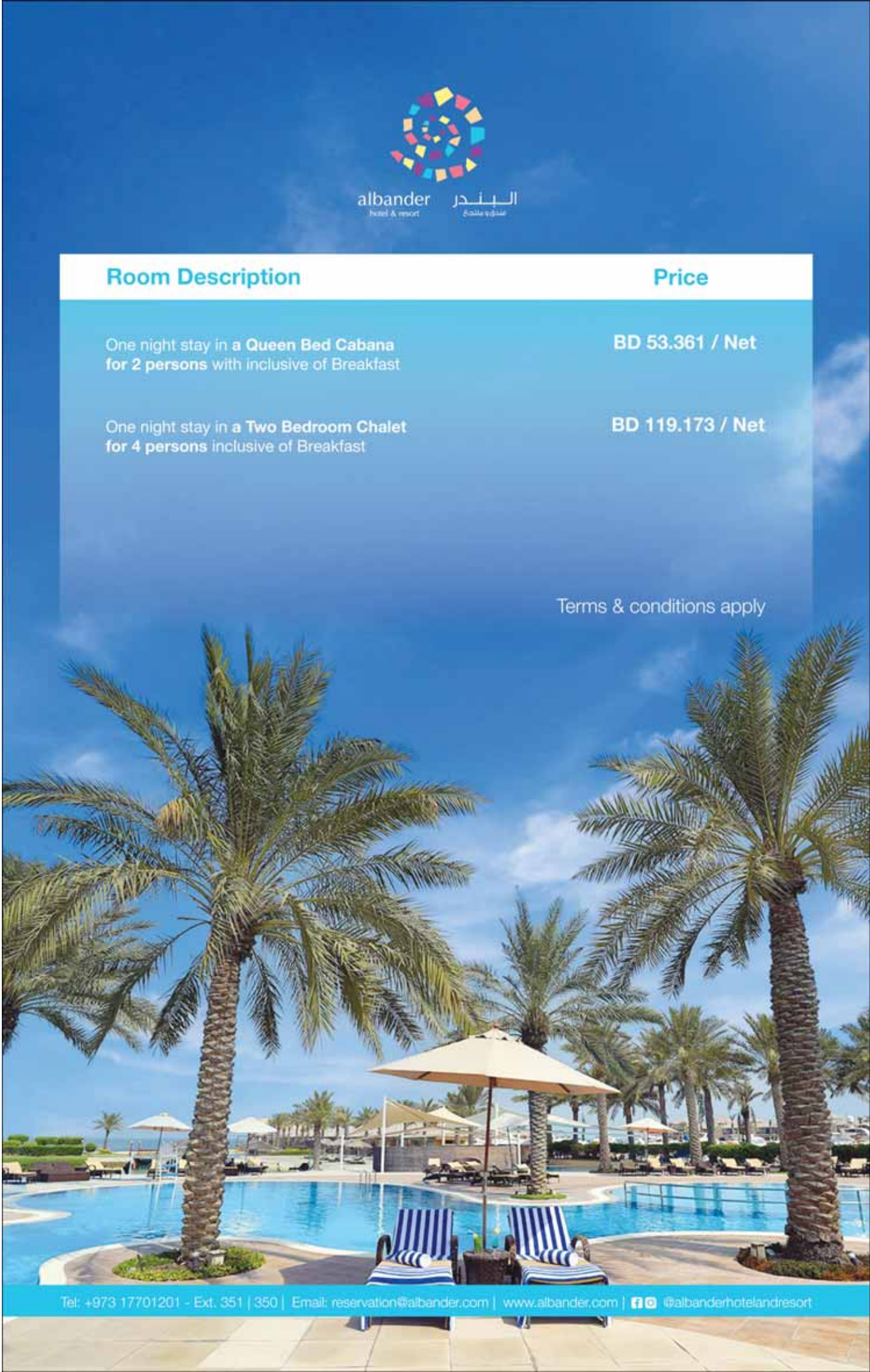


Room Description

Price

One night stay in a Queen Bed Cabana for 2 persons with inclusive of Breakfast	BD 53.361 / Net
One night stay in a Two Bedroom Chalet for 4 persons inclusive of Breakfast	BD 119.173 / Net

Terms & conditions apply



Tel: +973 17701201 - Ext. 351 | 350 | Email: reservation@albander.com | www.albander.com |  @albanderhotelandresort

Kuwaitis ‘priority’ in CBK’s cybersecurity experts hunt

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) Basel Al-Haroon, announced on Sunday the launch of the sixth edition of the Cybersecurity Leaders Program, targeting Kuwaitis interested in specializing in this field.

Al-Haroon, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS), said in a press statement that the program provides participants with the opportunity to refine their skills and enhance their capabilities with the aim of creating a generation of professional technical specialists capable of developing appropriate solutions to protect information systems in Kuwait’s banking and financial sector in accordance with international best practices in information security.

He added that the program comes within the framework of the CBK’s strategy to develop national talent in the banking sector and the national economy, and to build technical capabilities in the field of cybersecurity.

It strengthens the resilience of the financial and banking sector against the risks arising from the rapid evolution of modern technologies used in banking information systems while ensuring the adoption of the latest technologies and mitigating their associated risks.

He further explained that the pro-



Al-Haroon

gram is part of the (Kafa’a initiative) launched by the CBK in cooperation with Kuwaiti banks and managed by the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies, noting that it builds on the fruitful cooperation between CBK, Kuwaiti banks and KIBS through an integrated set of initiatives aimed at developing and qualifying national cadres to lead this field.

Al-Haroon stated that the Cybersecurity Leaders Program will be implemented in cooperation with the (SANS Institute), one of the world’s leading cybersecurity training organizations specializing in professional training and accredited certifications in this field, over a period of three months.

Furthermore, the Governor noted that the program will conclude with a training workshop in cooperation with the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), building on the progress and successes achieved by the program in previous years with the same partners, in a manner that supports the enhancement of cyber resilience in the banking and financial sector in particular, as well as across all participating vital sectors.

He also pointed out that applicants will be selected according to objective criteria and will be required to pass the prescribed tests and personal interviews.

He added that those wishing to apply may review the program details and submit their applications starting today until Thursday, September 24, 2026, through the program’s website at www.Kafaakw.org.

7,989 students accepted into internal scholarship program

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: The General Secretariat of the Council of Private Universities announced the names of students accepted into the internal scholarship program for bachelor’s and diploma degrees for the 2026/2027 academic year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

A total of 7,989 students holding a high school diploma or its equivalent were accepted.

Dr. Jassim Al-Ali, Secretary-General of the Council of Private Universities, congratulated the accepted students and wished them success, emphasizing that admissions were conducted in accordance with established regulations and standards, and that the program is designed to meet the country’s current and future needs.

Dr. Al-Ali explained that this year’s plan has expanded to include fields of growing importance, particularly technological and digital specializations and programs related to priority sectors. This expansion is accompanied by a reduction in admissions to certain

programs where indicators suggest declining employment prospects. The allocation of seats was based on maximizing the use of available capacity at private universities and colleges, allowing more high school graduates to be accommodated and expanding their educational options.

Dr. Al-Ali stated that the council will continue to periodically review the specialization map and the number of accepted students based on data, indicators and coordination with relevant authorities, ensuring that the plan remains flexible.

He urged accepted students to visit the universities and colleges to which they were assigned according to the specified schedules to complete registration procedures and submit their original high school diplomas.

Al-Ali also encouraged students to check the list of accepted students on the official website of the General Secretariat of the Council of Private Universities.

In this context, both sides emphasized the importance of strengthening coordination in combating terrorism, transnational crime, and cybersecurity, thereby supporting security cooperation between the GCC and Southeast Asian nations.

Hala Industrial Co.

شركة هلا الصناعية

Decoration works, wood products and cupboards are available

You can get all what you need at Hala Industrial

Contact us now

Subhan Industrial - Block 10 - Street 5 - Plot 151 - Tel: 60660817 - 66448545 - 50446599

Hala_Industrial

hala@halakw.com

America

Indiana severe weather kills 5: Indiana authorities said at least five people have died as a result of severe storms and flooding across the state this week, as first responders used boats to rescue more people Saturday from rising waters in neighborhoods along the White River in Indianapolis.

The state has been hammered over the past week by heavy rains, resulting in rivers reaching record levels and sending residents in search of higher ground. More than a dozen counties have declared local disasters, with much of the latest damage concentrated along river corridors from Hamilton County heading into the northern Indianapolis suburbs.

President Donald Trump approved an emergency declaration for Indiana, and federal disaster assistance is available to the state, the Federal Emergency Management Agency said Saturday. (AP)

□ □ □

Hurricane Lala skirts Hawaii's Big Island: Hurricane Lala skirted Hawaii's Big Island Saturday without making landfall and is expected to gradually weaken after lashing the region with strong winds and drenching rain that flooded roads and turned rivers into raging torrents.

The possibility the island could witness its first direct hit from a hurricane in 155 years faded as the eye of the storm passed the island's southern tip. Landfall

is not expected at this point, said National Weather Service meteorologist Joseph Clark.

However, hurricane-force winds are expected to continue into the overnight hours, with the strongest wind gusts likely in areas of higher terrain, the National Hurricane Center said. Heavy rainfall into Sunday could produce flooding and mudslides, while powerful waves pound the coast, the agency said. (AP)

□ □ □

19-year-old arrested in Virginia shooting: Police arrested a 19-year-old found hiding in a dormitory closet at Virginia State University on Saturday in connection with an overnight shooting on campus that left five people wounded, including one with critical injuries.

Camron Harris of Henrico, Virginia, is not a student on campus nor were four of the people injured, Chesterfield County Police said in a statement. They ranged in age from 17 to 23. One of the injured, a 20 year old, is a student and has now been released from the hospital, authorities said. The victims' names have not been released.

Authorities have given no information about a possible motive. Police obtained eight felony warrants for Harris, including for malicious wounding and the use of a firearm in the commission of a felony. It wasn't immediately clear if he had an attorney who could speak on his behalf. Efforts to reach Harris' family by phone were unsuccessful. (AP)



This aerial photo provided by the Indianapolis Fire Department shows flooding in northern Indianapolis, Indiana on Aug 15. (AP)

‘Voting is a lot of habit-forming’

Democratic primary turnout soars in some states, can it carry over to November?

WASHINGTON, Aug 16, (AP): Democratic voters are showing up for this year's primaries in numbers not seen in decades, a pattern emerging across several states that has the party optimistic about its prospects in November when control of Congress will be at stake.

In Tuesday's primary, Wisconsin Democrats cast nearly 800,000 ballots, their highest total for a midterm in more than 20 years. That followed 1.5 million Democratic voters in Michigan the week before, a midterm record for the state.

The enthusiasm extends beyond the Midwest. Democratic turnout also surged earlier this year in Texas and Georgia, states that will have competitive Senate races in the fall. It is giving Democrats a string of strong showings heading into the midterms, when the president's party is normally at a disadvantage. That is compounded this year by President Donald Trump's weak approval ratings, persistent inflation and an unpopular war with Iran.

"The big news is that Democrats are getting huge turnouts," said David Axelrod, who was a top adviser

to Democratic President Barack Obama. "That's been a steady story throughout this period."

Competitive Democratic primaries have helped drive the surge, giving the party's voters more reason to participate. Republican primary turnout remained closer to historic norms in Michigan, even with a competitive statewide contest.

Voter turnout in primary elections is an imperfect predictor of general election results, especially when one party has the more compelling early contests. Republicans say they are responding with a major effort to turn out their voters in the fall.

GOP leaders say they can energize voters by tapping into a major fundraising advantage over Democrats and sending Trump back out campaigning, including during a midterm convention in Texas next month.

"Primary turnout doesn't win general elections," said Mike Marinella, spokesman for the National Republican Congressional Committee. "House Republicans are entering November with the money, momentum, stronger candidates and



Supporters cheer at a Democratic General Election Kickoff Rally at Renaissance High School on Aug 7, in Detroit. (AP)

a battle-tested operation built to turn out voters when it actually counts."

Democratic turnout in some states is the highest in two decades

The scale of the Democratic turnout advantage varied across states, but the pattern extended across much of this year's competitive landscape

for House, Senate or governor's races.

In Wisconsin, more than 790,000 people voted in the Democratic primary for governor, putting turnout at about 22% of registered voters. More than 1.5 million people voted in Michigan's recent Democratic

Senate primary, which accounted for a little more than 18% of registered voters. It was the state's highest midterm turnout rate in a Democratic primary since at least 2002 — the same as in Wisconsin, according to an analysis of Associated Press election data.

In Minnesota, Democratic primary turnout was on par with the 2018 midterm election, with both years marking the state's highest Democratic primary turnout in a midterm year so far this century.

For Republicans in Wisconsin and Michigan, turnout in last week's primary was in line with previous GOP midterm primaries in each state. In Michigan, turnout for the Republican governor's race was about 11%. In Wisconsin's Republican primary for governor, it is expected to be about 14%.

"Republicans in Michigan will close the enthusiasm gap by highlighting the massive differences between our nominees and the extreme, out-of-touch politicians the Democrats have nominated," said Ted Goodman, a spokesperson for the Michigan GOP. "It's one thing to

lead in enthusiasm before we know who is running. Now, the differences are clear."

Other states that held elections earlier this year also saw significant Democratic primary turnout. In Georgia and Texas, the midterm turnout rate in the Democratic primaries was higher than it's been since at least 2002. In Georgia, just over 1 million people voted in May in the Democratic governor's race, a little more than 13% of registered voters. In Texas, about 2.3 million people voted in March in the Democratic Senate primary, a little more than 12%.

The robust primary turnout has been a "good sign for Democrats," said Corwin Smidt, a political science professor at Michigan State University. But he cautioned that it is "not a very solid predictor" of how voters will break in November.

Smidt pointed to several factors behind the numbers, including high turnout in recent elections, which has created a larger pool of regular voters.

"Voting is a lot of habit-forming," he said.



Emergency services attend the scene after a passenger bus went off the road and overturned in a ditch along a highway between Mezokeresztes and Mezonagyimihaly in Hungary on Aug 16. (AP)

Bus crash in Hungary kills 12, injures 10

A passenger bus traveling on a highway in Hungary early Sunday went off the road and into a ditch where it overturned, killing 12 and injuring others, police said.

The bus, which was carrying a group of Polish tourists, was traveling on eastbound lanes near the town of Mezokeresztes when it overturned on the M3 motorway

around 140 kilometers (87 miles) east of Hungary's capital, Budapest, at around 1 a.m. on Sunday.

In a statement, police said it was likely that the driver fell asleep, causing the accident, and that the driver had been taken into custody.

Hungary's National Directorate for Disaster Management said in a statement that 57 passengers

and two drivers were traveling on the bus at the time of the accident, and that several of the passengers had been trapped under the vehicle when it overturned.

Polish Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maciej Wewi r told Polish news agency PAP on Sunday that all of the people on the bus were Polish citizens. (AP)

Firefighters battle Belgian wildfire and forcing hundreds to evacuate

BAELEN, Belgium, Aug 16, (AP): Firefighters battled a massive wildfire in eastern Belgium on Sunday that has burned more than 27 square kilometers (10 square miles) in the High Fens, a large nature reserve, in one of the country's worst wildfires in recent history.

About 600 residents in nearby municipalities in Waimes and B tgenbach, in Li ge province near the German border, were told to evacuate Saturday as winds shifted and smoke spread through the area. Authorities also advised tourists to leave, while a nearby gymnasium was opened to receive evacuees.

Li ge provincial governor Herv  Jamar said in a statement Sunday that more than 250 emergency personnel have been deployed, including over 100 Belgian and German firefighters, police and military officers and civil protection staff, helped by firefighting helicopters operated by Belgium's federal police and the Netherlands.

Authorities said no homes had been affected as of Sunday morning, though the fire remained close to residential areas and heavy smoke



Three firefighters stand near an emergency car after they return from fighting wildfires at the Hautes Fagnes near Eupen in Belgium on Aug 16. (AP)

persisted. They urged people to stay away from the fire zone, warning that unnecessary traffic could obstruct emergency vehicles and complicate firefighting operations.

Belgium activated the European Union's civil protection mechanism to receive assistance from other countries, EU Commissioner Hadja

Lahbib, who is in charge of crisis management, said on X.

"The High Fens are burning. Belgium is not facing it alone," Lahbib said. Sweden sent two water-bombing aircraft, while three helicopters - two from the Netherlands and one from the Czech Republic - were also being deployed.

Ukraine launches one of the largest aerial attacks of war, killing six in Russia

KYIV, Aug 16, (AP): Ukraine launched hundreds of drones across Russia Sunday, killing at least six people in one of Kyiv's largest aerial attacks of the war.

Kyiv has stepped up its attacks on Russia this year, with long-range missiles and swarms of drones increasingly targeting military industries and energy facilities. It has also increasingly pummeled giant Wildberries depots, burning billions of dollars' worth of merchandise belonging to the Russian online retail giant and bringing the war home to the Russian public nearly 4½ years into Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Russia's Ministry of Defense said that it had destroyed 822 Ukrainian drones overnight. Some 600 drones were detected headed toward the Russian capital, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said, with a third of those destroyed over the Moscow region itself.

An 83-year-old man was killed after a Ukrainian drone hit a private home in the Moscow region, local Gov. Andrey Vorobyov said. He also confirmed that a Ukrainian attack had sparked a blaze at a Wildberries warehouse in the town of Podolsk.



Firefighters try to put out a fire at a city book market following a Russian missile attack in Kyiv, Ukraine on Aug 16. (AP)

A drone attack targeted three towns in Russia's southwestern Rostov region, killing five people, local Gov. Yuriy Slyusar said. The attack, with more than 150 drones, damaged several homes and a railway station and sparked a forest fire.

A Russian missile attack on Ukraine's Kryvyi Rih killed two people and wounded 14 others, Ukrainian

an President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wrote on social media Sunday. He also said that one more person had been killed in the city of Sumy.

Elsewhere, a man and a woman both died when their home was hit by a Russian strike in Ukraine's southern Zaporizhzhia region, said Ivan Fedorov, the head of the local military administration.

Europe

Fire in Berlin high-rise injures 5: A fire in a 21-story Berlin high-rise injured an estimated five people and made some residents consider jumping to escape the flames before it was brought under control Friday morning, local media reported.

The severity of the injuries was not immediately known, German news agency dpa reported. All of the building's residents were evacuated.

One person was forced to jump into a firetruck's aerial basket, dpa reported. A fire department spokesperson described the rescue operation as "dramatic."

It wasn't immediately known how far the person jumped.

The blaze broke out around 6:30 a.m. Friday in the Friedrichshain neighborhood near the Ostbahnhof train station. It was brought under control in under three hours, dpa reported. (AP)

□ □ □

England train derails, 11 wounded: A passenger train derailed in southern England, seriously injuring two people and causing minor injuries for nine others after three carriages overturned, the British Transport Police said.

The Southern Rail train from Victoria station in London to Eastbourne was carrying about 150 people when it went off the tracks outside the tourist town of Lewes.

Passenger Rob Bradley said the train began rock-

ing as it picked up speed and the carriage he was riding in with his 6-year-old daughter jumped upward and the brakes immediately engaged.

He could then see the car behind had flipped on its side and slid down an embankment into a lower field.

Bradley said he and his daughter were uninjured but he could see other passengers from one of the flipped cars with blood on their heads and clothing. Another passenger told him they had been cut when a window shattered. (AP)

□ □ □

Huge explosion at Rome ammunition factory: An explosion sparked by a fire at an ammunition factory sent up a towering plume of smoke in the town of Colleferro near Rome but no injuries were reported, local officials said.

The blast took place at a plant owned by KNDS Ammo Italy, which produces ammunition and other defense-related products, and it appeared to have originated in the powder-pressing department, officials said.

Residents in the area reported a loud blast, and images and videos circulating widely on social media showed what looked like a giant mushroom cloud above the facility.

"We initially thought it was an earthquake," resident Annarita Quattrino said, adding that she was taking a nap at home in the early afternoon when she heard a loud boom that shook the entire building. (AP)

Massive warships will need maintenance

US pulls last aircraft carrier in Asia as Trump focuses on Iran, Western Hemisphere

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16, (AP): US President Donald Trump’s war against Iran is stretching the limits of US aircraft carriers and leaving the western Pacific without one of the key American warships as China shows more signs of aggression.

The USS George Washington is departing the Pacific and expected to replace the USS Abraham Lincoln in the Middle East amid growing concerns about mental health and supply issues aboard the long-deployed carrier. The Lincoln has had its time at sea extended from its original May return date to support operations against Iran.

The lack of a US carrier in the Pacific may be short-lived if the Navy deploys another in the next couple of months. But it shows how the open-ended operations with Iran are running some American sailors ragged, analysts say, while the Trump administration further retreats from the Asia-Pacific region and focuses on the Western Hemisphere.

“The administration says that the Pacific is supposed to be the most important behind the Western Hemisphere,” said Greg Poling, director

of the Southeast Asia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Instead, the US is “doing the exact opposite” of its previously expressed goal of pulling out of the Middle East.

American allies in the Pacific are unsettled over the unpredictability of the Republican administration, Poling said, while Beijing “is quite happy with US distraction, with the frustration of US allies and partners.”

Beijing sees the US military presence in the region as a threat to China’s rise and an obstacle to its ambition to seize Taiwan, the self-governing island it claims as its own. But the United States has argued that the Pacific region is too important economically to lose.

No one expects China to invade Taiwan because an American aircraft carrier has left the region. But the carrier’s absence gives the Chinese another opportunity to show its strength, said Bryan Clark, a former Navy submariner who is a defense analyst at the Hudson Institute.

“They’re using this as part of the narrative to demonstrate to the Phil-



The USS Gerald R. Ford aircraft carrier is docked at Souda Naval Base near Chania on the island of Crete on March 23. (AP)

ippines, to Japan, to Indonesia and others that the US is not the big dog in the western Pacific anymore,” Clark said. “They would just prefer that countries in the region decide that China is the bigger power and the US is not able to guarantee their security anymore.”

China conducted naval exercises this week with Indonesia and recently has shown signs of aggression toward Japan and the Philippines, two key US allies that also have territorial disputes with Beijing.

China carried out military drills this month near the Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea. Both China and the Philippines have claims over the shoal. Last month, a Chinese guided-missile destroyer conducted a live-fire exercise off Japan’s southernmost island of Okinotori.

Adm. Frank Bradley, head of the US Special Operations Command, has been trying to reassure regional allies of Washington’s commitment. He was in Manila on Thursday, telling his Filipino counterparts that US special operations forces are ready to step up joint exercises to strengthen the countries’ alliance. He also is expected to travel to Japan.

“We have the ability to project force, the United States, anywhere on the globe,” Bradley told The Associated Press. “And when the threat in the region of the Middle East has been attended to, we will redeploy and reorient and be able to project that force wherever else it might be required.”

“I also feel very confident in the Armed Forces of the Philippines’ ability to protect their sovereignty here and for us to remain close with them,” he said.

Evan Sankey, a policy analyst at the Cato Institute who focuses on US policy toward China, said aircraft carriers provide psychological assurance to U.S. allies. The absence of carriers in the region, he said, “adds to the general sense that the US is distracted by events in the Middle East.”

Trump has relied heavily on aircraft carriers to support military operations during his second term. For example, the USS Gerald R. Ford returned home in mid-May after an 11-month deployment, the longest since the Vietnam War, during which it supported the US fight against Iran and the capture of Venezuela’s then-leader, Nicolás Maduro.

The Ford had experienced a fire in a laundry space that forced the carrier to turn around and return to the Mediterranean Sea for repairs and left hundreds of sailors without places to sleep. Meanwhile, the Lincoln has spent a record uninterrupted time at sea of more than 240 days. Democratic lawmakers have been calling for investigations and greater visibility into conditions aboard the ship.



Patients are treated in the hallway of a hospital following an earthquake in Labuan Bajo, East Nusa Tenggara province, Indonesia on Aug 15. (AP)

Rescuers dig thru rubble, landslides after Indonesia quake kills 53: officials

RUTENG, Indonesia, Aug 16, (AP): Rescue teams in eastern Indonesia recovered four more bodies Sunday after a magnitude-7.7 earthquake struck the day before, bringing the death toll to 53, authorities said. Thousands have been displaced.

The US Geological Survey said the powerful earthquake hit eastern Indonesia’s Flores region at a depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles) at 5:58 a.m. local time. Residents fled in panic as tsunami warnings were issued and later lifted. At least 235 aftershocks followed, according to Indonesia’s meteorological agency.

Rescuers on Sunday dug through debris looking for people feared buried beneath landslides triggered by the quake across six regencies on Flores, a predominantly Catholic island in Muslim-majority Indonesia. They focused on three regencies that remained inaccessible after the earthquake: the hardest-hit Manggarai, East Manggarai and Nagekeo.

“We have cleared most landslides and reopened roads to previously isolated villages, although communication disruptions and power outages continue to hamper search efforts,” said Fathur Rahman, head of the Search and Rescue Office in Maumere, the capital of Sikka regency.

The National Search and Rescue Agency said 101 people were injured. More than 900 homes were destroyed and 450 more damaged, forcing about 5,000 people into

temporary shelters.

Thousands at Labuan Bajo, the gateway to Komodo National Park, one of Indonesia’s best-known tourist destinations, spent the night outdoors, fearing strong aftershocks.

“The shaking was terrifying, so intense that my house nearly collapsed,” said Anastasia Imad, a farmer, speaking from a makeshift green tent beside her damaged home. “We feared the aftershocks would bring it down on us while we slept.”

Landslides blocked sections of the Trans-Flores Highway, a roughly 700-kilometer (435-mile) road linking communities across the mountainous island.

Meanwhile, relief workers distributed rice, ready-to-eat meals, drinking water, blankets and medicine, while emergency shelters were being set up for displaced residents. Authorities said restoring electricity and communications, as well as delivering aid to remote villages isolated by landslides, remained among the biggest challenges.

Indonesia, an archipelago of more than 17,000 islands, is prone to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions because of its location on the Pacific “Ring of Fire,” a horseshoe-shaped arc of seismic faults and volcanoes.

Flores has experienced some of the country’s deadliest disasters. A powerful earthquake and tsunami in 1992 killed about 2,500 people on the island.

Chile moves hundreds of inmates to sprawling new prison as President Kast ramps up security push

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, Aug 16, (AP): The Chilean government transferred nearly 300 high-risk inmates from around the country to a sprawling new prison, as hard-line President José Antonio Kast seeks to regain momentum on his core campaign pledge to combat organized crime.

Kast traveled to the recently opened La Laguna Prison, among Chile’s biggest, about 250 kilometers (155 miles) south of Chile’s capital of Santiago, to oversee the transfer, which his government described as an effort to ease overcrowding in prisons and prevent incarcerated gang leaders from remotely running their criminal enterprises behind bars.

Footage released by the government showed inmates packed into rows with bowed heads and shackled feet, recalling images from El Salvador, where President Nayib Bukele

has made a point of broadcasting his security crackdown on social media.

Bukele’s mass incarceration campaign has sharply reduced violence but drawn allegations from human rights groups of arbitrary detention, abuse and the erosion of civil liberties.

Like other right-wing presidential contenders across Latin America, most recently in Colombia and Peru, Kast has invoked Bukele as a model for his own promises to fight organized crime.

While campaigning last year, Kast visited El Salvador to study Bukele’s security policies and tour the country’s notorious mega-prison where visitation, recreation and education are not allowed.

“It’s a way of sending criminals a clear message that things have changed: We are going to come after you, we are going to find you, you

will be prosecuted and we are going to lock you up,” Kast said in a press conference about the transfer.

Kast’s office said 298 maximum-security prisoners were moved early Thursday to La Laguna from facilities around the country, including 40 alleged members of criminal organizations, nine of them gang leaders.

Hundreds more prisoners are slated to arrive at La Laguna in stages as the government moves to fill the facility to its expected capacity of 2,097 inmates across over a dozen units, including maximum-security wings. It’s equipped with 1,500 surveillance cameras, body scanners and technology designed to block cell-phone signals.

The prison, billed as Chile’s most modern and secure facility, opened last year under Kast’s predecessor, left-wing President Gabriel Boric, and began receiving inmates months

before Kast, an ally of U.S. President Donald Trump, took office.

Kast’s bid to publicize the move comes as he seeks to make good on his flagship security pledges after a bumpy start.

“If there is one issue on which the public is demanding action from all of us, it is greater security,” Kast said Thursday. “And that is what we are delivering now: a secure transfer and a clear message to organized crime and terrorism.”

He fired his first security minister just over two months into his administration and has struggled to implement his core campaign pledge of rapidly deporting immigrants. So far, his government has deported about 878 of the estimated 300,000 immigrants in Chile without permission to be in the country. Another 7,501 immigrants left voluntarily during the first seven months of 2026.



Chilean President José Antonio Kast visits with police officers after announcing a new security agenda and stricter immigration enforcement, at the Plaza de Armas in Santiago, Chile on Aug 6. (AP)

Hope reborn in Colombia as signs of life emerge under earthquake debris

CALI, Colombia, Aug 16, (AP): Rescuers reported apparent signs of life under the rubble in two of the Colombian cities hit hardest by a massive earthquake, rekindling hopes Friday that more people could be found alive.

Search and rescue teams from Venezuela, Argentina and Israel joined the search for survivors following the 7.4 magnitude quake that struck the South American nation on Monday, killing at least 287 people. At 96 hours since the tremor hit, the window for survival was narrowing Friday afternoon.

The mayor of Pereira, Mauricio Salazar, told radio station FM on Friday that “contact was made with a woman who was asking for help amid the rubble” of a collapsed hotel at around 4 a.m. He suggested other people may have survived but were still trapped.

Authorities in Cali also reported apparent signs of life, saying at least three people were trapped under collapsed buildings. The search and rescue effort has been extended through Saturday.

With the overall search for survivors winding down, Colombia faced another challenge: rebuilding a nation shattered by a disaster that affected more than 100,000 people.

Tens of thousands of houses were damaged or destroyed, according to the government. Authorities have also reported damage to thousands of schools, medical facilities and community centers in more than 400 cities.



People hold candles at a vigil for earthquake victims in Cali, Colombia on Aug 15. (AP)

Morales is one of the 102,263 people whose lives were upended by the quake. The government says nearly 4,000 people were injured and hundreds remain missing. Private groups estimate the number of missing is in the thousands.

Morales said he, his wife and four children are trying to rebuild from scratch.

“The earthquake destroyed several neighborhoods in the city. Many houses were damaged, and buildings collapsed,” he said. “We are going to stay here until the government gives us some help, some support.”

The devastation has tested Colombia’s President Abelardo de la

Esperiella, who was inaugurated just days before the earthquake shook the country’s west. De la Esperiella acknowledged Thursday night that “the situation is complex” and announced a plan to partner with private companies to rebuild, as well as subsidies for families who are homeless.

“We will not overcome this tragedy alone as a government,” he said. “We need the private sector to rebuild Colombia together.”

Monday’s earthquake was the most powerful to hit Colombia this century. Government aid has yet to arrive in some areas, where many people are relying on volunteers and neighbors for help.

Africa

26 bodies found in Zimbabwe ferry disaster: Eighteen children were among more than 70 people killed when an overloaded ferry capsized on Lake Kariba in Zimbabwe this week, police said Saturday after rescuers recovered more bodies.

The ferry capsized in strong waves on Tuesday. Police said that 26 more bodies had been recovered since then, bringing the death toll to 72.

The aging ferry was traveling from the town of Kariba to rural and fishing communities in the country’s northwest, where roads are damaged and public transportation is scarce. Authorities have not said how many people were aboard or how many remain missing.

Estimates have put the number of passengers as high as 153, while authorities say the ferry’s capacity is 90. Zimbabwe’s disaster management agency has said 77 people were rescued.

Authorities initially said the number of children aboard was unknown because those below ticketing age were not included in passenger estimates. A police list released later showed that 16 of the child victims were aged 10 or younger, with the youngest just 1.

Kariba is the world’s largest human-made lake by volume, created by damming the mighty Zambezi River in the late 1950s and early 1960s. It stretches more than 200 kilometers (124 miles) and is up to 40 kilometers (25 miles) wide in places.

Zimbabwe and Zambia share the lake, with their border running through its middle. (AP)

□ □ □

‘Vote counting suspended then restarted’: Vote counting in Zambia’s presidential election was suspended Friday and then restarted hours later under heightened security after the electoral commission said there had been attacks against some polling station officials and some ballot papers had been stolen.

While the counting was suspended, riot police and army vehicles deployed to parts of the capital, Lusaka, including the main vote tallying center, though there were no immediate reports of any major unrest.

It was an unusual development for the southern



A view of Kariba Port, where a ferry capsized on Tuesday, in Kariba, Zimbabwe on Aug 13. (AP)

African country of 22 million people, which has held largely peaceful elections since it returned to multi-party democracy in 1991.

“The violence is targeted at poll staff and in some instances has resulted in the theft of marked ballot papers in ballot boxes,” the Electoral Commission of Zambia said in a statement announcing vote counting had been halted.

It did not say who was responsible for the violence or the alleged theft of ballot papers.

Electoral commission head Mwangala Zaloumis later announced counting would start again and said the violence affected a small number of polling stations in Lusaka.

“Following a review of the security situation and consultations with the relevant law enforcement agencies, I’m pleased to inform you and to inform the nation that the security threat to the electoral process has been contained,” she said at a press briefing.

The main opposition candidate said his alliance of parties had “received deeply troubling reports from several parts of the country” and called into question the credibility of the vote.

Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema, who ran for a second five-year term, called for Zambians to “remain peaceful, patient and patriotic as we await the official outcome from those entrusted with managing the vote” in a statement on X. (AP)

Zain backs CITRA’s ‘Arqami’ service via Sahel app

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Zain Kuwait has collaborated with the Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) to support the launch of the ‘Arqami’ service through Sahel, Kuwait’s unified government app for e-services. The initiative forms part of ongoing national efforts to advance digital services, strengthen transparency, and safeguard the rights of telecommunications users across Kuwait.

The new service enables citizens and residents to easily view all mobile lines and telecommunications services registered under their names across different telecom operators, helping them verify the accuracy of their information and take the necessary action if they identify any unknown or unused lines.

Zain’s support for the initiative reflects its continued efforts to protect customer privacy, strengthen data



Zain x CITRA

- New service enables users to view all telecom lines registered under their names
- Collaboration supports digital transformation goals, strengthens privacy and transparency

security, and deliver a more transparent and trusted digital experience. It also contributes to raising awareness of the importance of regularly reviewing services registered under personal information and ensuring the accuracy and security of customer data.

Zain believes that greater collaboration between the public and private sectors is essential to accelerating Kuwait’s digital transformation and supporting the country’s development goals. This includes leveraging technology to deliver secure, accessible government services and further strengthen users’ trust in the digital ecosystem.

Zain encourages customers to use the new ‘Arqami’ service through the Sahel app to check the lines registered under their names, ensure their information is accurate, and protect their digital privacy.

The Conversation

Oil firms hoard cash as war uncertainty clouds spending

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

□ □ □

By Tibor Besedeš

Georgia Institute of Technology

When Chevron reported its highest quarterly profit in six years on July 31, 2026, it was just one detail in a larger picture: Analyst firm Wood Mackenzie estimates the global oil and gas industry is on course for a cash windfall of US\$495 billion in 2026. That’s profit above and beyond what the industry expected before the U.S.-Israel war with Iran began.

Three separate bills seeking to tax those profits are now in Congress, and President Donald Trump has even said the oil companies are “making too much money.”

As an applied microeconomist, I am often asked how taxes affect economic activity. Economists have long held a more nuanced view of windfall taxes than either side of the current debate suggests. Advocates often make overly optimistic revenue projections, and opponents often overstate how much such a tax might discourage investment. A 1980s U.S. windfall-tax experiment is instructive on both counts.

In the U.K., a windfall tax on North Sea oil and gas - layered on top of existing levies to produce a combined rate of 78% on profits - is on course to generate an estimated 8 billion pounds in 2026 (about \$10.8 billion), roughly double its 2024-25 revenue.

A similar European Union-wide tax imposed as a one-time measure after Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine raised 26.15 billion euros (\$30 billion). Five EU countries are now calling for a second one in response to the Iran war.

Many taxes are deliberately designed to change behavior. But a windfall tax is different: It goes after money that results from a company making the same production decision it was already planning to make before prices rose. The oil was going to be pumped regardless; the war just made each barrel worth more.

A textbook windfall tax would not fall on all profits, but only on the amount exceeding a baseline level. Australia’s Petroleum Resource Rent Tax and Norway’s special petroleum tax are the closest working examples. Under those, companies deduct all costs - including exploration and investment - plus a normal rate of return, before any windfall tax is owed.

In the U.S., the Crude Oil Windfall Profit Tax, enacted in 1980, was projected to raise \$393 billion over its planned 10-year life. It raised about \$80 billion before being repealed in 1988 - roughly a fifth of the projection. Prices collapsed after 1986, domestic production was increasingly exempted, and the tax was generating almost nothing by the time it was repealed.

The bills currently in Congress are structured very differently from the textbook design - and from each other.

A proposal by Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island and Rep. Ro Khanna of California, both Democrats would levy a 50% excise tax per barrel on the difference between the current average Brent crude price and the 2025 average of \$69. With a July 2026 average of \$84, a company would owe \$7.50 per barrel - regardless of production costs or profitability.

A second bill, the Iran War

Oil Crisis Windfall Profits Tax Act by Democratic Rep. Brad Sherman of California, is more aggressive: a 100% tax on the amount by which crude prices exceed \$75 per barrel. At the July 2026 average of \$84, companies would owe \$9 per barrel. That tax would be in effect only until hostilities end and prices fall below that threshold.

Both are triggered by prices, not by any measure of underlying profit. A third proposal, the Taxing Buybacks from Big Oil Windfalls Act by Democratic Sens. Ron Wyden, Chuck Schumer, and Michael Bennet, takes a different approach: raising the excise tax on stock buybacks from 1% to 25% for large oil and gas companies, targeting not the windfall itself but what companies do with it.

The American Petroleum Institute has argued that proposals like these “erode the certainty needed to make investment” decisions. The Tax Foundation has warned that “taxing producers is the opposite of a solution to a supply crisis.” Neither side, however, has put a specific dollar figure on how much investment would actually be deterred.

The data tells a different story. According to Wood Mackenzie, the 49 largest oil and gas companies will pocket about \$272 billion of the sector’s windfall - roughly equal to 70% of their combined annual investment budgets. Yet investment spending has barely moved, stock buybacks are on course to fall, and dividends have stayed flat. The cash is simply accumulating on balance sheets.

This is exactly what economic research predicts: When a windfall doesn’t change a firm’s underlying investment opportunities, managers hold the cash and wait. In 2026, the industry is waiting for clarity on how long the war lasts, whether prices have peaked and whether Congress will pass a windfall tax. The argument that such a tax would prevent important economic activity weakens by the day.

For oil companies, the direct effect is straightforward: Every dollar paid in tax is a dollar less in earnings. The indirect effect - discouraging investment - is likely weaker than usual because the windfall isn’t being invested now anyway.

For government revenue, the 1980 experience is a cautionary tale: Projections built on current prices tend to overstate what a tax will collect.

For consumers, a tax only on domestic production is largely borne by producers, while a tax that touches imports can raise pump prices.

But the use of the revenue matters too. Both the Whitehouse-Khanna and Sherman bills rebate proceeds directly to households. The Whitehouse-Khanna proposal could give an estimated \$216 a year to a single taxpayer at \$100-per-barrel oil - helping offset pump prices particularly for lower-income families, who spend a larger share of their budgets on fuel.

Whether the trade-off between taxing companies’ war-driven windfall profits and the risks of market intervention is worth making depends on human values as much as on financial estimates. People differ on how fair it is to let companies keep profits that result from a war, and on the reliability of projections about revenue raised and investment lost. Those are not questions economists alone can settle. (AP)

Recognized for top mobile, UX and bill-payment from Global Finance

ABK wins 4 prestigious awards from Global Finance

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) has won four prestigious awards from Global Finance, the renowned international financial and banking publication, in recognition of its digital excellence and continued commitment to innovation across the banking solutions it provides to customers.

ABK received three awards at the Kuwait level, in addition to a prominent regional award covering the Middle East. The Bank was named Best Mobile Banking App in the Middle East Region, Best Mobile Banking App in Kuwait, Best User Experience (UX) Design in Kuwait, and Best Bill Payment & Presentment in Kuwait.

The awards were based on a comprehensive assessment conducted by a panel of independent experts at Global Finance, using rigorous criteria including the strength of digital strategies, growth in the mobile banking user base, innovation in design and customer-facing features, as well as the ease and security of managing everyday financial transactions.

These consecutive recognitions, now for the third year, reflect ABK’s continued success in implementing its digital transformation plans and developing its digital platforms in line with the highest international standards, ensuring a seamless and innovative banking experience that meets customers’ evolving needs.

Winning the Best Mobile Banking App in the Middle East and Kuwait awards represents a significant milestone that reinforces ABK’s leading position across the region.



ABK headquarters

Meanwhile, the awards for User Experience (UX) and Bill Payment & Presentment highlight the Bank’s continued focus on the finer details that enhance convenience and enable to complete their daily transactions easily, quickly, and efficiently.

The recognition also underscores the strength of ABK’s digital infrastructure and its continuous focus on innovation, convenience, and security across every transaction and service offered to its diverse customer segments.

Receiving these prestigious awards

from an internationally renowned institution such as Global Finance attests to the continuous efforts of ABK’s team to redefine the digital banking experience. It also validates the Bank’s vision of investing in advanced technology and its commitment to continuously enhancing its mobile banking application to provide customers with a safer and more seamless way to meet their financial needs.

The four awards serve as an international endorsement of the strong relationship of trust between ABK and its customers, while highlighting the



Bank’s ability to develop smart, comprehensive digital solutions. ABK continues to enhance its digital infrastructure to ensure banking services that combine convenience, security, and an exceptional user experience across the region.

These prestigious awards provide further motivation for ABK to continue pursuing excellence and strengthening its position as a leading destination for banking innovation in the region. The development of the Bank’s digital services and mobile banking application is not merely focused on keeping pace with the latest technologies, but is primarily driven by a deep understanding of customer behavior and the goal of simplifying customers’ everyday banking journeys while maintaining the highest levels of security and flexibility.

Winning these latest awards further demonstrates ABK’s tangible commitment to anticipating digital transformation trends within the banking sector and shaping a new standard for innovative banking services. It also provides clear evidence of the success of the Bank’s strategy, which places investment in user interface development and transaction speed at the heart of its future vision, with the aim of remaining customers’ first and most trusted banking choice.

335.6 mln shares traded on Boursa Kuwait

Boursa Kuwait edges up 0.03% to 8,841.7

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Sunday’s session with modest gains as the general index edged up 2.76 points, or 0.03%, to close at 8,841.71. Total turnover reached 335.6 million shares across 18,921 cash trades, valued at KD 86 million (about USD 280.5 million).

The Main Market led the advance, climbing 31.01 points, or 0.35%, to 8,869.31. Activity on the Main Market totaled 206.3 million shares in 12,627 transactions, worth KD 41.4 million



Boursa Kuwait

(roughly USD 133.3 million).

By contrast, the Premier Market slipped 3.11 points, or 0.03%, to 9,294.75. Trading volume on the Premier Market stood at 129.3 million shares across 6,294 deals, valued at KD 44.6 million (around USD 145.4 million).

The Main 50 Index outperformed, rising 87.49 points, or 0.84%, to 10,512.01. The index saw 161.3 million shares change hands in 9,065 transactions, with a total value of KD 33.1 million (approximately USD 107.9 million).

ESG share in new investment pipeline

Gulf to attract \$28.59 bln in European investments

PARIS, Aug 16, (KUNA): The Global Investment Summit 2026, scheduled to take place in Paris on September 1st 2nd, predicts a rise in total investments across the Gulf states, namely in the water and circular economy sectors, as well as in logistics and smart transport.

Sources from the summit said, “investments are expected to grow from USD 13.15 billion in 2023 to USD 20.27 billion by 2030, marking an increase of USD 7.12 billion and growth exceeding 54 percent.”

The data indicates that investments in the water and circular economy sectors are poised to rise from USD 5.28 billion in 2023 to USD 8.43 billion in 2030, an increase of USD 3.15 billion.

This growth is driven by the growing need to enhance resource management efficiency, develop reuse and recycling projects, minimize waste, and expand investments in water infrastructure and sustainability-related solutions.

The findings also highlight that Gulf states are witnessing an expansion of projects aimed at improving resource efficiency and converting resources into economic value.

This trend runs parallel to rising demand for sustainable water solutions, driven by population growth, urbanization, and increased economic activity.

In the logistics and smart transport sector, data from the summit projects an increase in investment volume from USD 7.87 billion in 2023 to USD 11.84 billion by 2030, a rise of USD 3.97 billion.

This growth is driven by the expansion of ports, airports, transport networks, and logistics hubs, alongside an increased reliance on digital technologies and smart systems for supply chain management, improved cargo movement efficiency, and enhanced connectivity between regional and international markets.

The 2026 Global Investment Summit aims to direct 25 percent of investments toward modern technologies and incorporate Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) standards into 55 percent of targeted projects, thereby fostering initiatives that are more efficient, sustainable, and capable of delivering long-term economic impact.

Summit data also indicates projected European investment inflows into Gulf states totaling USD 28.59 billion, alongside plans to develop 15 joint ventures and establish 8 strategic partnerships during the first year.

The summit focuses on strengthening investment ties between Gulf nations and European markets, linking capital with opportunities and projects across various sectors, including digital infrastructure, energy, advanced industries, tourism, real estate, logistics, water, and the circular economy.

drocarbon resources.

The sector greatly contributes to the expansion of the base of petroleum industries, attracting investments, transferring technology, and enhancing the global competitiveness of Kuwaiti industries in such a field.

PIC continues to seize promising investment opportunities and strengthen its strategic partnerships through the acquisition of existing enterprises or the establishment of new enterprises in and outside Kuwait.

The company acquired a 25 percent stake in a petrochemical venture that belongs to Wanhua Chemical in China. This move is considered a breakthrough into one of the fastest-growing and most influential markets in global supply chains. The alliance with global partner Wanhua Chemical gives the company access to advanced manufacturing technologies and wide customer base in the heart of Asia.

This acquisition enables the company to enhance its ability to balance its investment portfolio between domestic production and international expansion, hence, reducing operational risks and increasing cash flow flexibility.

The company also obtained board approval to commence due diligence studies for the acquisition of another petrochemical plant complex in China, proving the commitment of the company to expand its international asset base in line with a clear vision.

These moves are an integral part of the 2040 Vision of KPC, which aims to intensify its presence in the petrochemical sector.

Moreover, in line with its commitment to comply with health, safety, security and environmental standards, the company completed around 15.36 million work hours without lost-time incidents as at the end of March 2026. The company has been maintaining its zero-environmental incident record since 2012.

PIC posts KD 23.8 mln net profit for FY2025/26 despite market headwinds

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: The Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC) earned net profits of KD23.8 million in fiscal 2025/2026, which ended on March 31, according to official data obtained by the newspaper.

The data confirmed that the company made this achievement despite the severe market pressure and fluctuation of petrochemical and energy prices caused by the current geopolitical situation that affected global markets.

According to the data, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) is focusing on the petrochemicals sector, in which petroleum products are converted into chemicals, because these products are used in multiple industries like plastics, fertilizers and other industrial materials, thus, adding economic value to hy-

US inflation cools to 3.4 pct as Iran-war fuel spike fades

NEW YORK, Aug 16, (AP): The economy, inflation and how those forces could impact the lives of Americans were front and center over the past week. Trips to the grocery store and gas station are more painful than they were last year, and rising costs are impacting the decisions of both households and businesses.

Here’s a snapshot of prominent economic data and news that occurred over the past week and what it potentially means for you.

U.S. inflation slowed last month and a measure of underlying price pressures also cooled, suggesting higher oil and gas prices from the Iran war are only having a limited impact on broader costs in the economy.

Consumer prices rose 3.4% in July from a year ago, down slightly from 3.5% in June, the Labor Department said Wednesday. But inflation is still higher than before the Iran war began in February, when it was 2.4%. On a monthly basis, prices rose just 0.1% from June to July.

Wednesday’s report comes as the Federal Reserve is sharply divided over whether it should hike its key interest rate to combat inflation. The Fed kept its rate unchanged, at about 3.6%, at a meeting late last month. But the vote was 9-3, with three dissenters favoring a rate hike.

Americans unexpectedly cut their spending in July as a boost from government tax refunds faded.

Retail sales slipped 0.6% last month, the biggest drop since May 2025, from a revised gain of 0.2% in June, according to Commerce Department data released Friday.

There was a notable bump in spending in both April and May as Americans dipped into their tax refunds. That affect may have faded last month.

Excluding sales at gas stations and at auto dealers, retail sales in July fell 0.2%. Gas prices bounced back in recent weeks in what appears to be a stalemate in the Strait of Hormuz.

Sales of previously occupied U.S. homes slowed again in July as record prices and the highest mortgage rates in a year prove to be an insurmountable hurdle for many prospective buyers.

Existing home sales fell 1.7% last month from June to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.06 million units, the National Association of Realtors said Tuesday. That’s slightly above the 4.05 million pace economists were expecting, according to FactSet, and up 0.7% compared with last year.

Home prices continued to rise, hitting unprecedented levels for the month of July, NAR said. The U.S. median sales price increased 2% from a year earlier, to \$434,100.

Wholesale inflation dropped last month as gas prices reversed some of their Iran war spike and other costs also cooled, a sign that consumer inflation could grind lower in the months ahead.

The Labor Department’s producer price index - which captures inflation before it reaches consumers - rose 4.7% in July from a year ago, down from a much larger 5.5% increase in June. On a monthly basis, wholesale prices were unchanged from June to July, after they ticked down 0.1% the previous month.

The figures follows the government’s consumer price inflation report, released Wednesday,

which also showed a modest cooling last month. Still, consumer prices have risen faster than wages for the past four months, underscoring the challenges many Americans have affording necessities such as rent and utilities. If prices continue to outpace wages, many consumers may be forced to dial back their spending in the coming months.

U.S. applications for unemployment benefits rose last week, but layoffs remain at historically healthy levels.

The Labor Department reported Thursday that 209,000 people filed jobless claims last week, up from a revised 200,000 the week before and higher than the 205,000 forecasters had expected. The four-week average of applications, which smooths out week-to-week-volatility, was unchanged at 199,000.

The overall number of people collecting employment benefits the week that ended Aug. 1 dropped by 22,000 to 1.78 million.

Claims for jobless benefits are a proxy for layoffs, and they’ve been at a historically low range of around 200,000 to 230,000 a week for the past year, suggesting that Americans who have jobs enjoy unusual job security. The U.S. unemployment rate is low at 4.1%, as the economy has proved resilient despite a spike in energy prices caused by the fighting with Iran.

The average long-term U.S. mortgage rate fell slightly for the first time in six weeks on Thursday, marking a glimpse of relief for prospective homebuyers - although borrowing costs remain steeper than they were a year ago.

The benchmark 30-year fixed rate mortgage rate tumbled to 6.67%, mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday, down from 6.69% reported last week. Still, by comparison, the average rate was 6.58% at this time in 2025.

Higher mortgage rates can add hundreds of dollars a month in costs for borrowers, limiting homebuyers’ purchasing power. And that can led prospective home shoppers to delay buying, as seen while rates rose over prior weeks. U.S. sales of previously-occupied homes again slowed in July.

Borrowing costs on 15-year fixed-rate mortgages - which are often sought by borrowers looking to refinance a home loan - also fell slightly this week. That rate averaged at 5.96%, down from 6.01% last week. But that’s still higher than a year ago, when Freddie Mac said 15-year fixed-rate mortgages averaged at 5.71%.

U.S. stocks traded near record highs despite weak economic data about how much shoppers are spending at retailers. A pull-back in spending could keep the Federal Reserve from raising interest rates, which is something Wall Street loves, but it comes with the risk of slow growth and stubborn inflation.

The S&P 500 was virtually unchanged, coming off its all-time high set the day before. The Dow Jones Industrial Average and the Nasdaq composite were both slightly lower.

Treasury yields were mixed in the bond market after a report showed shoppers spent less at U.S. retailers last month than the month before. That surprised economists, who were forecasting another month of growth.

Equipping students with future-ready AI skills through practical learning

stc sponsors AI workshop and competition for high school students in collaboration with KISR



stc sponsors AI workshop for students in collaboration with KISR.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, sponsored a specialized artificial intelligence (AI) workshop and competition for high school students in collaboration with the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR). Organized as part of KISR’s Summer Training Program, the initiative reflects stc’s continued commitment to supporting education and empowering young talent through its educational upgrade initiative.

The workshop introduced students to the fundamentals of artificial intelligence through a combination of interactive sessions and practical applications. Led by AI specialist, Husain Alsaffar, with the participation of researchers and scientists from KISR, the program provided participants with valuable insights into AI technologies, their practical applications, and their growing role across different industries. Considering the growing exposure and dependency on AI platforms and capabilities, the workshop she light on various use cases that can assist students in streamlining various activities.

Participants also learned how to write effective prompts to maximize the capabilities of AI tools and achieve their desired outcome when using the various AI platforms. Additionally, they explored the unique methods of transforming their creative thoughts and

ideas to actual designs and digital content. The workshop also included different exercises that allowed students to utilize AI in developing innovative projects, while enhancing their skills in understanding how AI platforms operate and response to different tasks.

As part of its sponsorship, stc also supported the competition held alongside the workshop, which challenged students to produce the best AI-generated design or image using the knowledge and skills they had acquired throughout the program. stc participated in judging the final stage of the competition through a specialized committee comprising representatives from its AI and Digital Transformation Department, alongside experienced professional photographers, who evaluated the submissions based on creativity, innovation, and artistic quality. The workshop concluded with stc recognizing the top male and female participants, celebrating their creativity and outstanding performance.

In a statement, stc indicated that its sponsorship of the workshop reflects the Company’s commitment to supporting education and empowering young people with the skills needed to navigate an increasingly digital world. Through its educational upgrade initiative, stc continues to support learning opportunities that introduce students to emerging technologies while encouraging them to explore their potential through

practical experiences.

The Company’s collaboration with the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research also reflects stc’s commitment to strengthening partnerships with leading national institutions and supporting the development of young national talent. Providing students with opportunities to learn more about using AI and understand its practical applications forms part of stc’s efforts to foster a wider culture of innovation and help prepare the next generation to play an active role in Kuwait’s digital future. The Company will continue to participate in initiatives and educational programs that aim to empower students and provide them with the knowledge they need to excel in their careers and personal lives.

At the conclusion of the Summer Training Program, stc participated in the closing ceremony organized by KISR, which recognized students who took part in the program and announced the winners of the accompanying competition. During the ceremony, stc was recognized for its sponsorship and support of the program, reflecting the importance of collaboration between the private sector and government institutions in supporting the younger generation and developing their skills. stc also recognized the best male and female students in the Summer Training Program for their outstanding performance and active participation throughout the program.

State must repay Apple, Google, Peacock after ad tax voided

Maryland court strikes down first-in-nation digital ad tax

ANNAPOLIS, Aug 16, (AP): A Maryland state tax court has struck down the state’s first-in-the-nation tax on digital advertising and ordered state officials to repay the tax money already collected from big tech firms.

The Maryland Tax Court said the tax violates the federal Internet Tax Freedom Act as well as the First Amendment and the commerce and due process clauses of the U.S. Constitution.

The legal fight has been watched by other states that are considering taxes for online ads. Maryland estimated the tax, approved in 2021, could raise about \$250 million a year to help pay for a sweeping K-12 education measure.

In Friday’s decision, the tax court ordered the state to repay the tax money already collected by Apple, Google and Peacock TV.

The law taxed revenue that large companies make on digital advertisements shown in Maryland. Companies making more than \$100 million

in global annual gross revenues were taxed at a 2.5% rate. The rate increased for companies with larger revenues, topping out at a 10% rate for companies making \$15 billion or more in global gross annual revenues.

Supporters of the law contended that Maryland needed to overhaul its tax methods in response to significant changes in how businesses advertise. But attorneys representing Big Tech companies including Meta and Amazon challenged the law in multiple legal venues, arguing in part that they were unfairly targeted.

Last year, 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled part of the law violated the Constitution because it blocked Big Tech companies from telling customers about the tax. That, Judge Julius Richardson said, violated the right to free speech.

Maryland Senate President Bill Ferguson and House Speaker Joseline Pena-Melnyk, both Democrats, issued a statement saying they “respectful-

ly disagree” with the tax court ruling and expect the legal process to continue.

They said the tax was enacted to keep the state’s tax system in pace with a changing economy.

“We remain committed to ensuring that Maryland’s tax system is fair, sustainable, and reflects today’s economy,” they said. “We will continue working with the Attorney General and Comptroller as this matter proceeds through the courts.”

The tax court said Congress - not the state legislature - is tasked with regulating interstate commerce, and that the tax law was inappropriately based on global revenue rather than revenue from in-state advertising.

The federal Internet Tax Freedom Act bars the taxation of e-commerce if similar services are not taxed. At least for now, the tax court found, there isn’t much of a difference between digital advertising and print or billboard ads, which means the bar on taxation applies.

Berkshire Hathaway boosts stake in Alphabet, homebuilders

NEW YORK, Aug 16, (AP): Berkshire Hathaway is increasing the size of its stake in Google’s parent company and beefing up its holdings in homebuilders, according to the conglomerate’s latest snapshot of its investment portfolio.

The Omaha, Nebraska-based company also continued to pare its stake in financial companies and a number of other stocks in the April-June quarter, according to a regulatory filing filed late Friday.

CEO Greg Abel, who took over from Warren Buffett at the start of the year, agreed in June to make a \$10 billion stock investment in Alphabet, expanding on the stake that Berkshire started to build last fall.

In the second quarter, Berkshire picked up roughly 48.1 million shares in Alphabet, bringing its total shares in the tech giant to roughly 106 million. That stake was valued at about \$37.76 billion as of June 30, according to the filing. As recently as the end of December, Berkshire held only 17.8

million Alphabet shares worth \$5.6 billion.

Alphabet has said it plans to raise \$80 billion to pay for the computing infrastructure needed to power its AI offerings.

Beyond tech, Berkshire continued to boost its investments in the U.S. homebuilding sector. Its stake in homebuilder Lennar increased nearly 30% in the second quarter. Berkshire also established a small new stake in D.R. Horton that was worth \$580,504 at the end of June.

In July, Berkshire completed a \$6.8 billion acquisition of homebuilder Taylor Morrison.

Berkshire also sharply increased its shares in Delta Air Lines and Macy’s in the second quarter. The stakes were worth about \$5.37 billion and \$173 million, respectively, as of June 30.

Berkshire also pruned its investment portfolio in the second quarter, reducing its stake in several companies relative to where they stood in the first quarter, including supermarket operator Kroger,

steel manufacturer Nucor and dialysis giant DaVita.

The company also dumped all its holdings - 632,890 shares - in beverage company Constellation Brands.

Berkshire also pared its shares in several financial companies. Its stakes in Bank of America and Ally Financial declined by around 6% and 6.9%, respectively, and it slashed its shares in Capital One Financial by 58%.

Many investors have followed Berkshire’s portfolio closely over the years because they liked to copy Buffett’s moves. He remains the company’s chairman and largest shareholder.

But Berkshire, which owns dozens of businesses including major insurers like Geico and BNSF railroad, never comments on the moves it makes to its stock portfolio from quarter to quarter because it doesn’t want to discuss what it is buying and selling.

US lifts security alert, Mexican avocado exports to resume

SANTA ANA ZIROSTO, Aug 16, (AP): It didn’t take long for Mexican avocado picker Francisco Isidro to get back to work after authorities announced the lifting of a U.S. security alert that temporarily halted avocado exports.

Back on the job the morning after the alert was lifted, Isidro threw a rope over an avocado tree about 20 feet (6 meters) high and climbed up. Fifteen minutes later, he had filled a box with avocados bound for the United States.

“Thank God ... and now we’re getting paid!” he shouted happily after several days without work.

Eight days after the alert affecting Michoacán state and the deployment of more Mexican troops in the region, U.S. authorities fully lifted the restrictions that spurred producers to shut down operations, and exports resumed. Michoacán is Mexico’s main avocado-producing state and a region where four cartels designated by the Trump administration as terrorist organizations operate.

By the weekend, orchards were operating again, packing plants were running at full speed and U.S. Department of Agriculture inspectors had returned to certify the fruit and ensure it was free of pests before entering the United States.

The workers were happy to get their daily wages back. Some producers hoped the increased security would reduce violence and extortion. Others feared the calm would not last long.

“We’ll be safe for a while, we’ll see what happens next,” said Valentín Rodríguez, a longtime avocado industry businessperson.

The U.S. alert caught Isidro high in a tree in an orchard in Santa Ana Zirosto, an area of green, low hills in western Michoacán where criminal groups are very active. There were no explanations, just the foreman’s shout to stop cutting.

Isidro, 39 years old and with two decades of experience as a harvester, knew that this meant either starting to look for another job until the situation returned to normal - since they’re paid by the day - or supporting his family solely on what his wife earned from a small store.

More than 90 miles (145 kilometers) away, in the town of Tacámbaro, an engineer at an avocado packing plant received the alert in the early hours of the morning: The facility should be kept sealed and under quarantine.

Some 200,000 people employed by Michoacán’s avocado industry were left in limbo.

Authorities did not say what threat triggered the alert. But in a state where numerous local cartels make money not only from drugs but also from extortion, there are plenty of possibilities.

Some growers have come to consider extortion an unavoidable production cost. A producer from Michoacán told The Associated Press recently that he pays 1 peso per kilo exported in extortion fees and exports about 90 metric tons a day, which amounts to more than \$5,000 in daily payments.

In March alone, Mexico shipped nearly 4,800 tons of avocados a day to the United States.

Trucks loaded with avocados are also sometimes robbed on roads in western Michoacán. And some farmworkers have been stopped and beaten by armed men near the border with Jalisco without being told why, according to one worker who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation.

U.S. inspectors have been assaulted and temporarily detained in the past, triggering similar export suspensions. On some occasions, threats arose after inspectors detected pests and were pressured not to report them, said an official familiar with their work who spoke on condition of anonymity for security reasons. The U.S. Embassy does not usually provide details about the incidents.

Inspectors now have less of a presence in the orchards, which are located in isolated hills where armed groups operate with little interference, and concentrate on packing plants.

“If the United States says that it is suspending technical services for security reasons, it’s impossible to export. If it’s for a plant health, it’s the same,” said Rodríguez, who grows, packs and sells avocados. “We are at the mercy of whatever the U.S. market and government decide to do with the industry.”

There is also a political dimension, he said, adding that Mexico didn’t export avocados to the United States for eight decades after a worm was found in an avocado pit in 1914. The U.S. ban was lifted in 1997 as domestic production could no longer meet growing demand.

More than 80% of Mexican avocados are sold to the U.S. Thousands of tons of avocados travel daily to the United States, especially at the beginning of the

year, when demand for guacamole surges ahead of the Super Bowl. To keep that volume moving, certification is key.

Isidro is a “certified” picker. He knows how to disinfect cutting tools before using them, handle the fruit quickly and carefully, and report any spots or damage. The orchards where he works are also certified, providing dining and bathroom facilities for workers.

Jesús Méndez, his supervisor, inspected the boxes before they were loaded onto a truck with the tracking details. The trucks wait until all those in the area are ready before traveling in convoys to packing plants, accompanied by police patrols to prevent robberies.

At the packing plants, inspections continue, checking quality, the fruit’s flesh and possible pests. The avocados then move along mechanical lines that sort them by size before workers place them into boxes.

Once labeled and sealed, the trailers head for the U.S. border. At the slightest security alert, every point along the route can be brought to a standstill.

The deployment of more than 1,500 soldiers to protect Michoacán’s avocado-growing region and recent arrests of people allegedly involved in extortion have eased concerns, but only partially.

Luis Manuel Soto, a 36-year-old grower and packer from western Michoacán, hopes the increased security will bring improvements. So far, he says, he has not felt them.

In 2024, he said, armed men pulled him from his vehicle and threatened to kill him unless he paid them and withdrew a complaint over extortion and an attempt to seize his orchards. The threats returned last July, even though one person involved in the earlier case has been convicted.

“They left me a funeral cross and ... a written message saying I had only days left,” Soto said from a town near Morelia, Michoacán’s capital.

The threats have continued by phone. Now he divides his time between occasional visits to his orchards, managing his businesses and social projects remotely, and going to prosecutors’ offices to request protection.

In Santa Ana Zirosto and surrounding communities, residents welcome the military presence.

“It gives us some peace, but it also scares us a little because it could lead to confrontations with some of the groups,” said Méndez.

What's On

SPOTLIGHT



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

'Protecting coral reefs is a shared national responsibility'

NBK announces strategic partnership with Kuwait Dive Team to advance coral reef protection in Kuwaiti waters

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has entered into a strategic environmental partnership with the Kuwait Dive Team, affiliated with the Environmental Voluntary Foundation, as part of its continued commitment to social responsibility and its support for initiatives that promote sustainable environmental development and the protection of Kuwait's natural resources.

The partnership aims to support and advance the Marine Moorings Project, one of Kuwait's key environmental initiatives dedicated to protecting coral reefs within the country's territorial waters. The project focuses particularly on environmentally sensitive marine areas that host natural coral colonies, including the islands of Qaruh, Umm Al-Maradim and Kubbar, as well as a number of coastal locations in Al-Khiran and Al-Zour.

Supporting National Efforts to Protect the Marine Environment

The partnership builds on the Kuwait Dive Team's longstanding efforts to preserve the marine environment through a range of programs and initiatives, including the maintenance and installation of environmentally



Talal Al-Turki

friendly mooring buoys. These buoys help minimize damage to coral reefs caused by anchors dropped by vessels, yachts and recreational boats in areas where coral formations naturally occur.

The Marine Moorings Project seeks to provide safe and sustainable alternatives for boat mooring, helping protect marine ecosystems and preserve the rich biodiversity of Kuwait's waters.

Marine Moorings Built to International Standards

The marine moorings deployed under the project are designed and installed in accordance with stringent internationally recognized technical standards. They are securely an-



Kuwait Dive Team

chored to the seabed in a manner that avoids damage to coral reefs and surrounding marine habitats. The moorings are also engineered to withstand varying marine conditions and absorb the impact of boat movement and waves, helping reduce the risk of coral reefs being dislodged or damaged.

The moorings are manufactured from environmentally

friendly, durable materials with a long service life and are designed not to release harmful substances or pollutants into the marine environment. This approach is aligned with international best practices for the protection of coastal and marine ecosystems.

Commenting on the partnership, Mr. Talal Al-Turki, VP - Head of Public Relations and

Event Management at NBK, said: "We are proud of this strategic partnership with the Kuwait Dive Team, a leading national example of environmental volunteerism and marine conservation in Kuwait. Our support for the Marine Moorings Project reflects our strong belief in the importance of preserving natural resources and protecting sensitive ecosystems, foremost

among them coral reefs, which play a vital role in sustaining marine life and biodiversity."

"Through this initiative, NBK reaffirms its commitment to supporting environmental projects that deliver lasting impact and to strengthening collaboration with effective national organizations in pursuit of sustainable development goals and the protection of natural resources for current and future generations," Al-Turki added.

Promoting Responsible Marine Practices

NBK is calling on sea-goers, fishing enthusiasts, and owners of boats and yachts to use designated floating moorings when visiting islands and marine areas with coral reefs, and to refrain from anchoring directly over reef formations. These responsible practices are essential to preserving these valuable natural assets and safeguarding their long-term sustainability.

The Bank emphasized that protecting coral reefs and the marine life they support is a shared responsibility that requires coordinated efforts from institutions and individuals alike, given the vital role these ecosystems play in preserving ecological balance and sustaining marine biodiversity in Kuwait.

Preparing for parents' financial & care needs

One of the toughest things to go through as an adult is helping your parents as they get older. Life is finite, and both you and your parents might be reluctant to talk about what type of support they might need. But as difficult as these conversations can be, it's important to make time for them. Eldercare attorney Harry Margolis recommends age 75 as the best time to start talking to your parents about finances and caregiving issues.

From my personal experience as well as discussions with aging experts, here's what I suggest adult children talk with their parents about and how to help them. I've included insights from several guests on episodes of Morningstar's The Long View podcast.

"If I had to do it all over again, I would have had conversations with (my mom) sooner about her finances," author and journalist Cameron Huddleston told us on The Long View.

Our parents don't want to be a burden, and it may seem like everything is fine, but appearances can be deceiving. Gently ask how they're managing their bills: Are they paying on time, do they have enough money?

Then keep going with questions about income. Are they getting distributions from retirement funds or relying on Social Security and a pension? Do they have investments? They may not want to share all the paperwork, but you can ask them to put it someplace safe for you to access in case of emergency.

What you can do:

"If you die without a will, state law is going to determine who gets your assets. ... (Or) family members get into fighting over who gets what," Huddleston says.

That's why a will and a durable power of attor-

ney are important. Even if there's a will, though, beneficiary designations on various accounts can override it. If those are out of date, money could go to a place the parent didn't ultimately intend.

Don't overlook a healthcare power of attorney (aka healthcare surrogate or healthcare proxy), which is someone who can make medical decisions if your parent can't. An advance directive (often called a living will) specifies what sort of end-of-life care they want. Then "family knows what your wishes are so they don't end up in court fighting over whether to keep you on life support," Huddleston says.

And finally, ask about your parents' wishes for a burial, cremation, or memorial service, and whether they may have already bought a cemetery plot.

What you can do:

Here's what this all boils down to, attorney Hurme says, "Your family really can't carry out your wishes if they don't know what they are. They want to do the right thing. So don't make them guess about it."

A 2024 survey from AARP shows that the majority of older adults want to stay in their homes as long as possible. As people age, though, it can be difficult, especially if they're far from the rest of the family. Can your parents still climb the stairs? Can they safely maintain a big yard? Let them know there are benefits for both of you: They could help you by handling the occasional school pickup, and they might get a health boost from interacting with grandkids.

What you can do:

Your loved ones may not be open to these tricky conversations the first time around, but raise the issue gently again, making sure they know how much you care. (AP)

Cementing its status as Kuwait's premier hospitality destination

Waldorf Astoria Kuwait celebrates triple triumph at the 2026 Haute Grandeur Global Excellence Awards

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Waldorf Astoria Kuwait has achieved a remarkable triple victory at the 2026 Haute Grandeur Global Excellence Awards, reaffirming its position as one of Kuwait's leading luxury hospitality destinations.

The hotel was named "Best Activity Hotel" globally, while also earning the titles of "Best All Suite Hotel in Kuwait" and "Best City Hotel in Kuwait". To mark this exceptional accomplishment, the property was presented with the prestigious Iconic Multi-Award Winner Plaque, a rare distinction reserved for properties that excel across multiple categories within the same year.

Directly connected to The Avenues, Kuwait's premier retail and lifestyle destination, Waldorf Astoria Kuwait is part of Mabanee's vision to create worldclass destinations that seamlessly integrate hospitality, retail, and entertainment. As the developer behind both The Avenues and Waldorf Astoria Kuwait, Mabanee has redefined Kuwait's urban landscape by delivering destinations that combine international standards with local excellence. Today, the hotel stands as a natural extension of that vision, offering discerning travelers an elevated luxury experience defined by spacious suites, refined service, and exceptional dining.

Commenting on the achievement, Saleh Al-Bataineh, General Manager of Waldorf Astoria Kuwait, said: "We are incredibly proud to receive this recognition from Haute Grandeur. Knowing that these awards are based entirely on genuine guest feedback makes this milestone especially meaningful and reflects our team's unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional experiences. Earning a global title alongside two national distinctions motivates us to continue raising the bar for luxury hospitality in the region".

The Haute Grandeur Global Excellence Awards are recognized as one of the hospitality industry's most respected benchmarks. Winners are determined solely through authentic guest feedback rather than public voting or panel judging. This transparent evaluation process makes Waldorf Astoria Kuwait's success a powerful reflection of the consistent, high-quality experiences delivered by the hotel's dedicated team.



Saleh Al-Bataineh



Peacock Alley Cafe



Ikeros Prestige One Bedroom Living Room



ALJoory Meeting Room Cabaret



Bridal Suite



SPA Salt Room



SPA VIP Changing Room

‘Little Storyteller’ blends tales, health lessons at summer festival

Once upon a healthy habit

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16, (KUNA): Children participating in “Little Storyteller” workshop embarked on an interactive journey combining storytelling with awareness of healthy habits as part of the activities of the 18th cultural summer festival, organized by National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL).

The workshop, led by certified trainer Inam Al-Hindal for children aged four to eight, used storytelling to convey simple health messages and encourage children to listen to their parents’ advice and make healthy food choices.

Al-Hindal told KUNA that the storytelling approach presents health concepts in a simple and engaging way, highlighting the importance of healthy nutrition and dental care while helping children turn these lessons into daily habits.

The workshop featured activities including sorting healthy and unhealthy foods, as well as exercises designed to develop children’s recall, interaction and learning skills through an enjoyable and educational approach.

The workshop reflects the Council’s efforts to provide cultural and educational activities that combine reading, learning and interaction, while fostering children’s love of books and encouraging them to make productive use of their holiday time.

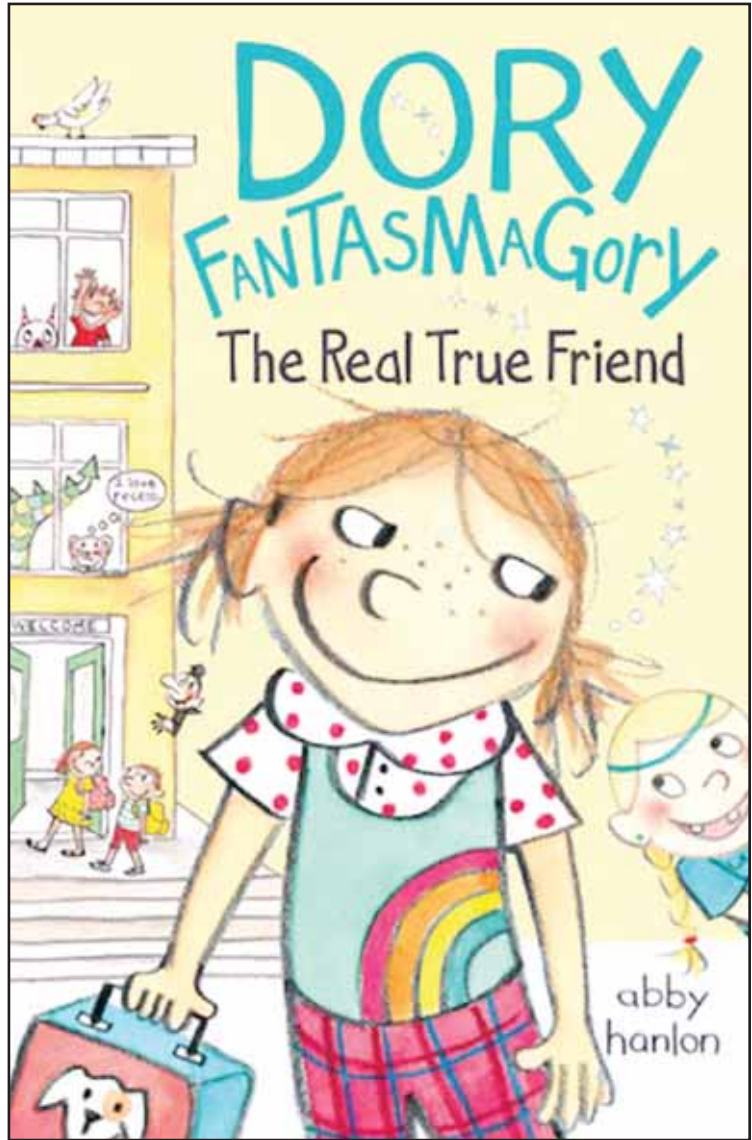


Photos show activities during the “Little Storyteller” workshop, organized by National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL).

KUNA photos

The Conversation

Five books encourage kids to dream, hope and be themselves



‘Dory Fantasmagory: The Real True Friend’ is the second of a seven-part series from Penguin Random House. (AP)

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

□ □ □

By Liz Rosenberg

Binghamton University, State University of New York

What does a child need to prepare themselves for kindergarten? I’m not talking about a new water bottle and a backpack, though certainly those come in handy.

I mean what it takes to try to make new friends, be brave, resilient, inventive and hopeful - no small tasks for anyone.

I am a children’s book writer and have been a professor of children’s literature and creative writing for more than 40 years. So you can guess that my answer to this question about school readiness involves books.

Reading lets children test out challenging, or frightening, situations in their imaginations.

It offers a path out of anxiety and into joy and adventure.

C. S. Lewis, author of the 1950 children’s book “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,” reminds people that a reader “does not despise real woods because he has read of enchanted woods: the reading makes all real woods a little enchanted.”

Kindergarten is often an enchanted place, one which many children vividly remember all their lives. But it can seem scary to some children, simply because it is so new.

Here are a few important ideas that can fortify children who are entering this unknown land - as told through five engaging books that may help new students prepare for their journey ahead.

Some of the happiest children are those who maintain a sense of hopefulness and possibility.

Children see these traits at play in Ruth Krauss’ 1945 classic picture book, “The Carrot Seed.” In it, an unnamed little boy plants, weeds, waters and then patiently watches over his carrot seed for a very, very long time. Doubters surround him.

His mother said, ‘I’m afraid it won’t come up.’ And his big brother says, ‘It won’t come up.’

What happens in the end will astonish and delight all readers - though it doesn’t faze the boy who always believed.

If you don’t think heading off to school for the first time is a wild adventure, you’re forgetting something.

The vivid 1963 children’s book “Where the Wild Things Are,” written by Maurice Sendak, brings readers into an unruly night where young Max puts on his wolf suit “and makes mischief of one kind and another” until his exhausted mother orders him to bed without his dinner.

Max imagines a world of tangled forests, a choppy sea and a “private boat for Max.” He sails off through “days and weeks and in and out of years” before he reaches a tropical island where the wild things live.

There, Max discovers his own power to command the wild things, and a “wild rumpus,” or a party with his new friends, begins. The book offers the tempting possibility that children have wonderful, exciting things in store for them in unknown experiences.

The wild things - fictional monsters Sendak has said were based on his own family members - roll their terrible eyes, gnash their teeth and show their terrible claws. But Max stands his ground and becomes king of them all. At the story’s end, Max makes it home just in time to discover that his dinner is still warm, and waiting for him in his room.

The book also offers comfort both for young children and parents who might be anxious about those first few morning drop-offs. At the end of the school day, our children do return, happy to be where someone loves them “best of all.”

After raising a son and a daughter 14 years apart, I realized that every child is uniquely themselves. I raised one “wild thing” who play-acted and roared his way through obstacles. And one “Brave Irene,” who quietly and calmly got the job done.

Author and illustrator William Steig’s 1986 book brings us into the humble cottage of Irene and her seamstress mother, who has finally finished a hand-sewn ballgown for a duchess to wear at an upcoming ball. But Irene’s mom suddenly becomes sick and can’t deliver the dress herself.

Irene doesn’t let a raging snowstorm stop her from bringing the duchess her new gown.

She trudges sideways, backward, into deep snowdrifts and a howling wind that rips the box open.

The ball gown flounced out and went waltzing through the powdered air with tissue-paper attendants.

Brave Irene wrestles the dress and rides the box downhill like a sled in order to reach the duchess, who is anxiously waiting for her gown.

Irene can do the hard things and get through whatever tribulations get thrown her way. She also offers young readers a reminder that true bravery is trying your best to help people you love when they need it.

All children deal with anger. A favorite toy breaks - or worse yet, gets broken by somebody else. And since those moments are inevitable, most people learn how to cope as they grow.

In Cori Doerrfeld’s 2018 children’s book “The Rabbit Listened,” a bird knocks down the building-block masterpiece that the young protagonist Taylor created.

Taylor is furious and sad.

Well-meaning friends stop by and try to help. A bear suggests that Taylor get angry and shout about the destroyed blocks. An ostrich recommends that Taylor hide and pretend nothing happened.

Finally, a rabbit comes along, sits and simply listens. It’s just what Taylor needs - to be heard. And children, no matter how small, are not too young to be good listeners and good friends.

Abby Hanlon’s “Dory Fantasmagory” series, the first book published in 2014, brings readers into the otherworldly imagination of young Dory.

Dory, who is often called Rascal by her family and friends, is a new-age “Ramona the Pest,” the classic chapter-book kindergarten heroine. The Dory series is about surviving the ups and downs of childhood, on steroids. Dory, who is the baby of her three-kid family, invents friends, villains and a bearded fairy godmother for company.

Hanlon’s whimsical illustrations are drawn as a brilliant child might create them. Many of Hanlon’s best jokes are visual, providing hilarious reading for lap-sitters and early readers. (AP)

How to make the most of parent-teacher conferences during back-to-school and beyond

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz., Aug 16, (AP): Parent-teacher conferences can conjure a familiar scene: adults crammed into child-size chairs, listening to teachers run through a list of students’ achievements and struggles.

For many families, they can also mean frustration. Today’s school conferences are sometimes 15 to 20 minutes, with little time for parents to ask their own questions. Adults may arrive with their own baggage about being judged or dreading what a teacher may say about their child.

For teachers, conferences can mean pressure to give a snapshot of a child’s progress, with the next opportunity to connect months away - if at all.

The conference may be brief, but it can set the tone for a family’s relationship and partnership with the teacher. Parents, teachers and school administrators have these tips to make the confer-

ence productive and help build a stronger connection between home and school.

Schools typically offer several early opportunities for parents and teachers to connect, from meet-the-teacher events and back-to-school nights to open houses. By the time conferences are on the calendar, parents and teachers should already be communicating.

But sometimes it can take weeks, or even months, to hear from your child’s teacher, who must establish relationships with dozens of families. Don’t wait, say parents and teachers alike. Take the initiative and reach out yourself.

“Do you want to set your child up for success? It’s a yes or no. And if it’s a yes, then you have to be very involved,” said Bell White, a Houston mother of two.

When her son Lennox, now 8, was in preschool, four teachers came and went during the school

year. White quickly learned how important it was to stay engaged with the school.

Since then, she has introduced herself to each of her son’s teachers at the first opportunity, even if virtually. She tells them how she prefers to communicate - whether over email, phone or via a school app - and when she’s most reachable.

Technology can make it easier for parents with multiple children or busy schedules to stay connected and for teachers to send quick messages or reminders. But with schools using multiple platforms, some parents say it helps to establish a preferred way to communicate.

Early in the relationship, parents and teachers should focus on building trust, said J.B. Robinson, a clinical psychologist and dean of students at National University in San Diego. Positive interactions are like putting money into a relationship bank that can be drawn on when challenges arise, he said.



An elementary classroom is stocked with school supplies at BASIS Flagstaff on Thursday, Aug. 6, 2026, in Flagstaff, Ariz. (AP)

Film

Forte, director Green and the cast never expected film to return

‘Coyote vs. Acme,’ once canceled by Warner Bros., will finally hit theaters

NEW YORK, Aug 16, (AP): Before it was dubbed “the funeral screening,” it was just when Will Forte was going to see the movie.

“Coyote vs. Acme” was finished. Director Dave Green, inspired by “Who Framed Roger Rabbit?” had completed the editing on the Looney Tunes blend of cartoon and live action. The whole project, which takes an Ian Frazier “Shouts and Murmurs” column from The New Yorker as its source material, was an audacious comic gambit that seemed to be paying off.

Hopes were high. Audience test scores were good. But days before Forte, who stars as Wile E. Coyote’s attorney, could see “Coyote vs. Acme,” Warner Bros. canceled it. Not just the screening - the movie. The studio hadn’t delayed it or sent it to streaming. They were canning it altogether.

“I just thought: ‘Well, they’re canceling the movie. It’s gotta be bad,’” Forte recalls.

Forte and his wife, suspecting the movie must have turned out poorly, joined the cast and crew to say goodbye to the film no one else was going to see.

“That was when the real emotions started,” Forte says. “It was everything I wished the movie could have been and more. It was so special, which made it so frustrating and so devastating. The confusion was

amped up, then frustration, then just searing anger.

“Then it made even less sense,” he adds. “We all looked around, like, ‘What’s happening here?’”

The abrupt termination of “Coyote vs. Acme” sent shockwaves through Hollywood. Everyone in the movie business is accustomed to sudden, painful twists of fate. But the wholesale elimination of a finished film faster than you can say “Meep! Meep!” was something new.

David Zaslav, chief executive of Warner Bros., was intent on pivoting away from the straight-to-HBO Max projects of his predecessor. The expected marketing spend - roughly \$30-40 million - for releasing “Coyote vs. Acme” wasn’t worth it to the studio. It was better, the studio said, to take a tax write-off on the \$70 million production. Along with two other releases - “Batgirl” and “Scoob! Holiday Haunt” - “Coyote vs. Acme” was put in mothballs.

But nearly three years after that “funeral screening,” the movie is, like its ever-undaunted protagonist, back from the dead. After an outcry, Warner Bros. put “Coyote vs. Acme” up for sale. Ketchup Entertainment, an independent distributor that last year released the Looney Tunes movie “The Day the Earth Blew Up,” picked it up for about \$50 million. On Aug. 28, “Coyote vs. Acme” will finally see the light of day.



Director Dave Green, center, poses for a portrait with Will Forte, left, and Eric Bauza to promote the film “Coyote vs. Acme” on Tuesday, June 9, 2026, in Los Angeles. (AP)

It’s been a dizzying turn of events for everyone involved. Eric Bauza, who voices Daffy Duck, Bugs Bunny and others in the film, didn’t really believe it until he saw “Obsession” at his local cinema.

“Upon exiting the theater, there in a little marquee box was the poster for ‘Coyote vs. Acme,’” Bauza says. “It hit me: This is going to be seen by people.”

In a recent interview, Green was still in disbelief.

“I must be dreaming,” said Green. “It’s a total surprise I’m sitting here

talking to you today.”

The filmmakers and their new distributor have leaned into the project’s tortured history, promoting it as “the film ACME didn’t want you to see.” More than that, “Coyote vs. Acme” now has a newfound meta quality. The premise of the film is that Coyote, after suffering years of defective products, takes Acme to court. Like the drama surrounding the film, it’s an underdog victimized by a big corporation.

“I couldn’t help but look at the movie in a completely new way be-

cause there are meta crossovers between the story and what the movie had come to represent,” Green says. “It almost felt like we had written the movie after the news had broken.”

When “Coyote vs. Acme” was canceled, its fate became a rallying cry. Filmmakers like Christopher Miller, Phil Lord, Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert championed it as too good to disappear. Even politicians, like Democratic Rep. Joaquin Castro of Texas, urged the Justice Department to investigate Warner Bros.’s decision.

Bauza, a veteran voice actor, pushed the hashtag #ReleaseCoyoteVsACME on social media. His most dramatic effort, though, was at the Annie Awards in 2024. There, he drew hearty applause for making that case from the podium - in the voice of Daffy Duck.

“He’s the go-to cartoon character above anyone else when it comes to begging and pleading,” Bauza says. “It seemed appropriate.”

So many people came out fighting for the film that Green never felt alone throughout the ordeal.

“I would open my phone one day and see someone dressed in a Wile E. Coyote costume outside of the studio protesting with a sign in the rain - these kinds of things you couldn’t believe,” says Green.

At the same time, the entire episode suggested a dark new chapter in

the movie business that has left many involved with “Coyote vs. Acme” shaky. This wasn’t a young filmmaker getting turned down on their first film. It was two years of work on one of Warner Bros.’ most iconic franchises - a movie even produced by DC Studios chief James Gunn.

“I don’t know what their judgment was,” says Bauza. “Did they even know or were they just looking at numbers? It’s tough looking in from the outside, thinking: ‘If that’s how the Looney Tunes are being treated, what about my story?’”

“Coyote vs. Acme” was greenlit when studios were trying to find their way through the pandemic and theaters were struggling to stay afloat. But Green’s film now arrives at a much different point in time. Theatrical is thriving thanks in large part to the visions of filmmakers, from Christopher Nolan to Curry Barker.

For Green, that “Coyote vs. Acme” is finally having its day in the court of public opinion is a sign of Hollywood returning to its foundations.

“The film business, as much as it might not feel that way, is led and dictated by artists and filmmakers and actors and writers wanting to create,” says Green. “There will be nothing able to take that want away from creators. As long as we keep creating, there will be a movie business.”

ASU launches content creation degree for creators

Influencer dreams meet college reality

NEW YORK, Aug 16, (AP): Ask a teen what they want to be when they grow up, and there’s a fair chance being an influencer is on their list.

Digital media and the people who star in it have been cultural mainstays for teens’ entire lives, so creating social media, video or podcast content seems a natural, albeit non-traditional, career path. And now they can earn a college degree in that very field.

Arizona State University recently launched a new bachelor’s degree in content creation, offered through its Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication. The curriculum overlaps with that of ASU’s mass communication and media studies degree, with the major departure being a slate of specialized electives on podcasting, studio production and on-camera presence.

ASU’s announcement was met with swift criticism from many sides - from people who feel content creation is not a legitimate profession to those who question the value of a college degree in launching a social media career.

But the ASU program is not the first of its kind.

And the university, which declined an interview request about the new program, is not the first to offer content creation courses.

Universities, eager to compete for a shrinking student population, are rolling out new majors intended to prepare students for today’s careers. Whether they lead to jobs can be up for debate.

Many higher education institutions have started offering classes focused on the burgeoning content creation industry over the past couple years, and several have certificate or minor programs. Syracuse University, Quinnipiac University and Colorado State University offer minors, and St. Bonaventure University announced a content creation major last winter.

To Brooke Erin Duffy, a communication professor at Cornell University, these college programs represent an inflection point. During the past year, Duffy said, institutions in education and beyond



Phoenix-based content creator Aiesha Beasley films during the grand opening of Padeland, a venue for the racket sport padel in Chandler, Ariz., Thursday, Aug. 13, 2026. (AP)

have been acknowledging content creation as a viable career path - even if the term “influencer” itself hits a nerve.

On social media, influencers are everywhere, sharing shopping recommendations and lifestyle content or promoting beliefs about health or politics. Because even influencers with relatively small followings have loyal audiences, brands also often pay them to talk about products.

The image of a prototypical influencer, Duffy said, is usually a “young girl who is snapping selfies and just reaping in tremendous rewards for seemingly not doing anything.”

But that’s not the reality for many content creators, who are working on media production, audience retention strategies, brand partnerships and business relationships associated with their online presence.

“It is a time-consuming, labor-intensive job that often doesn’t pay well - at least in the beginning,” Duffy said. “But a lot of that gets concealed behind ... this assumption that it’s a dream job.”

Even if someone has the skills to make it in content creation, it isn’t easy to break in.

Social media is already a crowded field, and it’s going to get even more competitive in the coming years, said Max Willens, a principal analyst at Emarketer who cov-

ers the creator economy.

Emarketer forecasts that social media creator revenue in the U.S. will climb above \$20 billion this year, but Willens said it’s important to contextualize what that means for individual creators.

“The overwhelming majority of that money is not going into creators’ pockets,” he said, even though their content and their followers form the foundation of the lucrative field.

Influencers can earn money from social media platforms, which reward high engagement, and some earn commission if people buy a product they’re promoting. But the largest share of influencers’ earnings comes from sponsored content - getting paid to talk about a brand or product. Willens said he expects the amount brands spend distributing and amplifying creator content will eventually surpass the amount creators earn making it.

The idea that a specialized college degree will “suddenly turn people into viral content machines deserves a bit of a reality check,” Willens said.

Duffy noted that becoming an influencer often is perceived, incorrectly, as a path to get rich quick. Colleges that introduce content creation degrees may be hoping to attract new students - and their parents - who are looking for “a job that will pay off,” Duffy said.

“Whether or not it does is another story.”

A degree’s price is also a factor: At ASU, base tuition for Arizona residents is about \$12,000 per academic year, excluding scholarships, but the total cost of attendance can exceed \$37,000 after factoring in room, board and other fees. For students from outside of Arizona, tuition is more than \$35,000 and the total cost of attendance is around \$60,000 before scholarships.

While many content creation students may be hoping to become viral sensations, Phoenix-based creator Aiesha Beasley said she could see programs like ASU’s being valuable even to those without that dream.

“Having a digital presence and a personal brand is very important nowadays,” Beasley said. Building a platform and sharing that personal brand online can help a person network and gain entry to settings they may not have had access to otherwise, she said.

Beasley, who has been a full-time content creator for three years after more than a decade posting online, works with small businesses to help optimize their social media presence. She noted that ASU’s courses would teach several transferable skills in fields such as communications and marketing.

Content creator and actor Sammy Cristerna graduated from Arizona State University this spring with a degree in sociology and political science, but said he “absolutely” would have taken classes in the content creation program and considered the major if it had been available.

The courses, Cristerna said, would have been useful in learning how to negotiate brand deals, maximize monetization opportunities and cultivate and keep an audience. Some of those skills can be self-taught through experience, he added. Still, “it’s nice to have that formal education.”

The one thing Cristerna said he isn’t sure will translate in the classroom is personality.

To connect on camera, a person needs to have “good energy,” he said. “That’s hard to teach.”

Innovation became symbol of speed

Drive-thru window that put America’s meals in fast lane



A drive-thru coffee and donut shop the Donut Hole is seen in Los Angeles in November 1970. (AP)

WASHINGTON, Aug 16, (AP): Full disclosure: This should really be two tales. How better to pay tribute to the natural and perhaps inevitable combination of two distinctly American icons: fast food and cars?

Those two massive sociological forces had already joined up, Voltron-style, early in the 20th century with the development of the drive-in restaurant - that classic scene evocative of “Happy Days” where customers sat in their cars while servers (ideally on skates) brought out food that was consumed on site from window trays.

But the real innovation dates to the late 1940s and is the brainchild of either (depending on which source you trust) an In-N-Out Burger in California in 1948 or Red’s Giant Hamburg in Springfield, Missouri in 1947. (In comparison, the first reported drive-thru in Europe didn’t open until 1985 in Dublin.)

By the mid 1960s, this had mushroomed into a robust American market, spawning imitators and innovators. Jack in the Box pioneered the drive-thru exclusive restaurant with no indoor seats and no parking - and a talking mechanical clown to take your order. In Western states, residents of a certain age will recall the Wienerschnitzel chain with its distinctive A-frame structures specially built with a

tunnel down the middle for cars.

The innovation sparked unexpected knock-on developments. Restaurant menus shifted heavily toward sandwiches, fries, chicken strips and other portables that could be consumed on the go. The cars themselves adjusted over the years to accommodate larger and larger drink holders. What sociological (and nutritional) impact this has all had on the actual consumers would be the subject of a much longer essay.

The innovation hasn’t stopped. Modern drive-thrus have evolved into tightly coordinated multi-lane affairs. At Chick-fil-As around the country, actual humans with electronic tablets now stand - breathing in exhaust fumes all day - to ensure a seamless ordering process with no mechanical speaker garbles.

The drive-thru, with its distinctly American creative spelling, has become woven into the fabric of the culture. It has been enshrined in the Smithsonian Museum of American History and has played a memorable role in recent and successful Presidential campaigns.

As one historian put it, somewhat pointedly: “The drive-in was less a pure novelty than an expression of great American passions that go hand in hand: speed, efficiency and, sometimes, laziness.”

‘Outer Banks,’ Hopkins & ‘Mother Mary’: top picks for your streaming queue

NEW YORK, Aug 16, (AP): The final season of “Outer Banks” and a new album from Anthony Hopkins (yes, Sir Anthony Hopkins) are some of the new television, films, music and games headed to a device near you.

Also among the streaming offerings worth your time this week, as selected by The Associated Press’ entertainment journalists: Weezer’s 20th album, the survival horror game “The Sinking City 2” and “Mother Mary,” which kicked off Anne Hathaway’s incredibly prolific year in theaters.

■ Anne Hathaway’s epic year at the movies (which is still going at full throttle with “The End of Oak Street” and the upcoming “Verity”) didn’t start with “The Devil Wears Prada 2” or “The Odyssey,” but with “Mother Mary,” David Lowery’s experimental film about a pop star (Hathaway) and her estranged designer (Michaela Coel). In his review for the AP, Film Writer Jake Coyle called it “a fitfully spellbinding chamber drama that grows more operatic with every stitch,” adding that “Hathaway makes not just a believable pop star but an indelible portrait of an artist’s ego in extremes.” But, Coyle wrote, “the movie belongs to Coel ... ‘Mother Mary’ is the story of an exorcism, and she’s the exorcist.” It debuts on HBO Max on Friday.

■ Coel also stars in one of the year’s best two-handers, “The Christophers,” which arrives on Hulu on Saturday. Written by Ed Solomon and directed by Steven Soderbergh, the film is a kind of heist movie in disguise, in which a pair of wannabe heirs (James Corden and Jessica Gunning) hire a restoration specialist and sometimes forger (Coel) to covertly finish a series of paintings by their famous father Julian Sklar (Ian McKellen). In my review, I wrote that it was “a meditation on art, legacy, creativity and the oh-so-touchy subject of who has the right to critique,” with sharp performances from all.

■ And finally, it’s a Zahn family affair in “She Dances,” starring Steve Zahn and his daughter Audrey as a father and daughter reconnecting after tragedy on the way to a dance competition. It’s also a “Reality Bites” reunion with Ethan Hawke. Directed by Rick Gomez, the film received warm reviews out of the Tribeca Film Festival and is set to debut on Peacock on Friday.

■ AP Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

■ Academy Award winner Anthony Hopkins will release his debut album, “Life Is a Dream,” Friday via Decca Records. Conducted by Gustavo Dudamel, performed by the Philharmonia Orchestra and recorded at London’s Alexandra Palace in April, the album is a 12-track collection of classical compositions crafted over six decades. “My first love, or vocation really, is music,” the 88-year-old actor told the AP earlier this month. The generational talent picked up piano at 4 and wrote his first piece, a waltz, in 1960. He was 22 at the time. “Life Is a Dream” reflects his life and childhood in Wales - possessing what he describes as a “melancholy and sadness,” but ultimately, beauty.

■ Power pop-punk band Weezer will release their landmark 20th album on Friday. It’s self-titled, but no doubt fans will refer to it as “the Gold Album,” continuing in their tradition of color-identified records. The single “We Might as Well Be Strangers” is a standout, featuring the idiosyncratic vocals of Karly Hartzman, lead singer of the indie rock group Wednesday.

■ Also on Friday: English singer-songwriter Sam Smith will release their fifth album, “Hazel Eyes.” It’s a follow-up to 2023’s “Gloria” - which features the sexy and sacrilegious “Unholy” collaboration with Kim Petras, the track that gave Smith their most recent Grammy win. This time around, Smith

offers warm love songs. It’s a welcome change of pace from their previous heartbreak material.

■ AP Music Writer Maria Sherman

■ The first two episodes of Season 2 of “Average Joe” drop Wednesday on Paramount+. The action-comedy stars Deon Cole as a plumber in Pittsburgh whose life becomes complicated - and dangerous - when he learns that his dad, who recently died, owes \$10 million and a car to the Russian mob. Joe can’t catch a break in the new season either. Now in Cape Town, Joe once again finds himself over his head.

■ “Outer Banks” kicks off its fifth and final season Thursday on Netflix. The show follows a group of friends from working-class families in the Outer Banks of North Carolina. They call themselves “Pogues,” a nod to the pogy, a small baitfish at the bottom of the food chain with strong survival instincts. We begin the season with the Pogues grieving the death of one of their own. They set out on both a treasure hunt and a quest for revenge.

■ AP Writer Alicia Rancilio

■ It has taken longer than expected for “The Sinking City 2” to make it out of development. Then again, it comes from Ukraine’s Frogwares studio, and it isn’t easy to get a game out the door with a war going on. The new survival horror game is based on H.P. Lovecraft’s fiction, so be prepared to fight plenty of sealy, squishy, many-tentacled monsters as you explore a flooded Massachusetts town in the 1920s. Frogwares found a cult audience with 2019’s “The Sinking City” after building a reputation for more cerebral challenges with its Sherlock Holmes games. If you like your horror cosmic, the portal opens Tuesday on PlayStation 5, Xbox X/S and PC.

■ Lou Kesten



Charlotte Touzalin stands with her mother, Anne Schultz on July 10 in Elizabeth, Colo. (AP)

Obesity drugs show early promise against hormonal disorder PMOS, giving a suffering family hope

WASHINGTON, Aug 16, (AP): Charlotte Touzalin was still a young teenager when she began struggling with weight gain, abnormal periods and unwanted facial hair - the same puzzling symptoms that plagued her mom for decades and that no doctor could piece together.

“I’d go home and I’d cry,” said Touzalin, an 18-year-old college student from Colorado. “I didn’t understand why all this weight was coming back or why my friends didn’t have to shave their faces and I had to.”

Touzalin and her mom, Anne Schultz, were finally diagnosed with polyendocrine metabolic ovarian syndrome, a hormonal condition affecting 1 in 8 women worldwide. But unlike her mom, Touzalin is beginning young adulthood with new hope after taking part in a study testing blockbuster GLP-1 drugs as a treatment.

A small but growing body of research shows that these obesity medications may also work for the disorder known as PMOS - not only

by promoting weight loss but also by improving insulin resistance, hormone balance and ovulation. These things are key to the disease, which used to be called polycystic ovary syndrome but was renamed earlier this year to shift the focus away from ovaries and cysts.

Touzalin and her mom’s long, frustrating journey with PMOS is common.

Diagnosis often takes years because symptoms overlap with other conditions, vary widely and may be dismissed by doctors. The disorder tends to run in families, and many but not all women affected carry excess weight. But there’s no known cause or specific treatment, just symptom management such as taking birth control pills to regulate periods and keeping weight in check with diet and exercise.

Two hormones are key drivers of PMOS: insulin, which acts like a key to let blood sugar into cells, and testosterone, which among other things



GLP-1 medication used in the polyendocrine metabolic ovarian syndrome trial on July 10, in Aurora, Colo. (AP)

helps maintain sexual desire, bone density and muscle mass.

Most women with PMOS, regardless of their body size, have insulin resistance, which means this hormone doesn’t work as well as it should, said Cree, PMOS clinic di-

rector at Children’s Hospital Colorado. In many women, the high insulin can go directly to the ovaries, spurring them to make more testosterone and leading to problems like skipped periods, severe acne and even beard growth.

Environmental factors may get in the way

Have trouble sleeping in new place? Most do because of first-night effect

WASHINGTON, Aug 16, (AP): The first night in a new place is always the same for Robinson Leoni: He takes longer to fall asleep, wakes up more often during the night and gets less sleep overall.

At home he averages seven hours. The first night away - with or without earplugs and regardless of the bed’s quality - his smartwatch tells him he gets about five.

“I feel normal, you know, no stress, nothing, but it’s just I notice I wake up continuously,” said Leoni, a sales director for a tech company who travels once or twice a month for work.

He is a victim of what sleep specialists call the first-night effect. The phenomenon has been confirmed by dozens of studies and is believed to have evolutionary roots, said Anna Wick, a senior sleep researcher at the University of Freiburg in Switzerland.

“It’s assumed to be an adaptation response that the sleeping brain remains vigilant in this unfamiliar environment,” Wick said.

Ahmad Mayeli, a psychiatry professor and sleep researcher at the

University of Pittsburgh, said most people experience it, and even those who may not notice it probably do on a small level. On average, people sleep about 20 to 30 minutes less in a new environment.

His research found that the frontal lobe, an area associated with the deepest stage of sleep, was more active, indicating a sense of alertness. In other words, not only do people sleep less, but also less deeply.

“They are saying that, like in dolphins, part of the brain is awake when you are sleeping,” Mayeli said. “It’s not exactly like dolphins, but still, studies show part of the brain is sleeping less.”

He noted that age makes a difference. The effect is more pronounced in children, adolescents and older adults, and it typically worsens with age. Those in their 20s are the least affected.

“Maybe it’s the sweet spot,” he said.

Mayeli suspects that the brain may be wired to be wary of new places because, historically, they were the most dangerous to rest.

“It doesn’t matter if it’s a Marriott



hotel or it’s the savannah,” he said. “Your brain hasn’t gotten the memo that this place is completely safe.”

Wick said evidence suggests the effect fades after the first night.

Lisa Strauss, a psychologist specializing in cognitive behavioral treatment of sleep disorders, said several factors can impact sleep in a new place beyond evolutionary vigilance.

el or if the location provides a sense of disconnection from daily stressors. And people who have trouble sleeping at home might fare better because they don’t associate the new place with a history of difficulty sleeping.

While anyone can experience the first-night effect, Strauss said those who are more anxious at baseline are especially vulnerable. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy - the worry about whether they can sleep is what keeps them awake.

Leoni acknowledged there are times he goes into the first night thinking about how he’ll sleep.

“Sometimes the thoughts come automatically,” he said. “You talk with your colleague, and you say, ‘I’m going back to the room, but I’m not going to sleep anyway.’”

Strauss recommends general sleep hygiene practices such as going to sleep in a cool, dark room at the same time every night, following a nighttime routine and turning off screens well before going to bed. Those are especially helpful if you start (or restart) doing them in the days or weeks before an important

trip.

She suggested people try to make the environment their own by spending a little extra time in the new bed. They could read or do another peaceful, familiar activity to make the experience less novel. They could also bring familiar objects, like a favorite pillow or blanket.

For someone who is particularly anxious, Strauss recommended they visualize themselves in a safe, familiar environment out in nature, such as on a favorite hike or beach. They should notice the anxiety they’re feeling, then repeat positive phrases to help lower feelings of hypervigilance. Her suggestion: “May you know that you are safe. May you know that you are loved. May you be at peace.”

Mayeli said the first-night effect is not really anything to worry about, and people can easily make up for missing an hour or two of sleep for one night. But he recommends arriving a day early to acclimate if you have an important meeting or event.

“If tomorrow matters, get there a night early,” he said, “so you’ll sleep like yourself when it counts.”

Bedbugs can cause people to lose sleep and blood. Here’s what to do about them

NEW YORK, Aug 16, (AP): Bedbugs are sometimes called the vampires of the insect world - hiding during the day and coming out at night to feast on human blood. Generations of children have been told: “Sleep tight. Don’t let the bedbugs bite.”

Well, bad news: Bedbug infestations are increasing. This is the time of year when they tend to be at their worst. And some scientists think the reviled pests might be capable of spreading an antibiotic-resistant infection called MRSA.

For centuries, the bugs have horrified homeowners and occasionally panicked the public. That happened in New York City in 2018, when at least a half dozen city buses were taken out of service after reports of bedbugs crawling on seats. It happened again in Paris in 2023, when reports of bedbugs at a movie theater, on trains and on buses popped up in the lead-up to the 2024 Olympics.

“They certainly are out there,” said Christopher Hayes, a North Carolina State University assistant professor who has been bitten by bedbugs more than 50 times in the course of research. “And if you’re unaware, it’s easy to bring them into your home.”

Bedbugs are reddish-brown bloodsuckers about the size of an apple seed. Some researchers estimate they date back to the time of the dinosaurs, but they are best known for their unfortunate ability to live with - and prey on - humans.

They can hide in narrow crevices in furniture and lurk in clothes, linens and mattresses. They are hard to see but can be detected through the small dark excrement stains they leave.

The pests can be year-round problems but they have traditionally thrived in the summer. They tend to emerge at night, crawling onto people and using a beaklike body part to pierce human skin and suck blood for several minutes.

The bite itself is painless. Some people develop itchy red welts a day or so later, but others have no reaction.

That’s a problem, because people unaware that they are repeatedly being bitten can quickly find themselves victims of an infestation.

One of the more gruesome stories about bedbugs and human health was detailed in a 2020 medical journal case report from France.

It told of a 70-year-old man who lived by himself in an apartment and fainted on the street one day. He was brought to a hospital emergency department in a Paris suburb where he was diagnosed with dementia - and with anemia caused by a longstanding loss of blood.

He also had bedbugs feeding on his neck, head and shoulder. An investigation of his apartment detected thousands of them in his bed and on the floor, walls and curtains of his home.

Some good news about bedbugs is there hasn’t been clear evidence that they have spread diseases from one person to another. The bugs’ digestion and anatomy seem to prevent germs from being passed on efficiently, said Chow-Yang Lee, an entomologist at the University of California at Riverside.

But University of South Dakota researchers in 2023 published the results of an experiment - using blood capsules with an artificial skin - that demonstrated bedbugs could acquire MRSA during one feeding and spread it during a later one.

Follow-up research is needed to really prove bedbugs actually are spreading MRSA to people, said one of the study’s authors, Jose Pietri, who is now at Purdue University. But “it changes the perspective of what bedbugs do, in terms of public health,” Pietri said.

Bedbug populations in developed countries were decimated after World War II due to the widespread use of the pesticide DDT. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency banned the pesticide for most uses in 1972, citing evidence that it was harming animals and was a potential risk to people.

Bedbugs had already started to develop resistance to DDT by then, and they have only been getting stronger and more common, said Lee, noting that insecticide resistance has driven a continued resurgence in bedbugs in

recent decades.

Exactly how much more common isn’t clear. Pest control companies generate annual rankings of U.S. cities with the worst bedbug problems. (Orkin currently ranks Chicago at No. 1, while Terminix says Philadelphia has the biggest problem.) But those lists are based on how many calls each company receives in a year, not a rigorous survey.

Many bedbug infestations happen in low-income or public housing, which may not hire the big companies that compile those rankings, Lee said in an email. The best thing you can do is never get them in the first place, experts say. That means not bringing them into your home.

Travelers can pick them up in hotel rooms. So before you unpack for your stay, check the room for signs of bedbugs by pulling back the covers and bedsheets to look for bugs or fecal spots.

Do not place luggage on beds or on the floor near beds, and consider placing your bags in a light-colored trash bag or even in the bathtub. When you get home, open the luggage outside and take laundry right to the washing machine and dryer.

Sometimes, bedbugs enter homes by hitching a ride on secondhand furniture or other products. Visually inspect those items and treat them before you take them into your home, Hayes advised. Some experts advise vacuuming, steaming or heating furniture, and quarantining it in a garage or storage unit for a few days before bringing it inside the house.



Assistant Professor Christopher Hayes uses a probe to turn over anaesthetized bedbugs in his Structural Pest Research Lab at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC, on Aug 3. (AP)



Participants prepare for the start of the Los Angeles Marathon on March 16, 2025, in Los Angeles. (AP)

Warming climate forcing marathons to consider changes to keep runners cool

DES MOINES, Iowa, Aug 16, (AP): Paul Grinvalds has completed 114 marathons in all 50 states, but he still wilts when he races in temperatures beyond 60 degrees Fahrenheit (15.5 Celsius).

It’s the same for most runners, as the body can’t cool down during exertion, and heat makes that even harder.

“One thing about marathoners is typically we’re kind of stubborn,” said Grinvalds, 68, from West Des Moines, Iowa, who finds even temperatures in the 50s F (10 C) a bit warm. “So if we have a goal and it’s hot, a lot of times we’re still going to try to do that goal, which is just stupid because you’re almost guaranteed to have a very painful experience.”

Such an experience can also be dangerous, a reality that marathon organizers are having to confront as climate change, caused mostly by the burning of fuels like coal and gasoline, pushes temperatures up. To improve the chances of having the 26.2-mile (42-kilometer) race in cooler weather, organizers are shifting race dates, starting earlier and even giving options for participants to cut their runs short.

Starting in 2027, the Twin Cities Marathon in Minneapolis-St. Paul will shift its more than 40-year tradition of holding the race on the first Sunday in October to later in the month. That decision comes after

cancellation of the marathon in 2023 because of record heat and humidity, and starting temperatures near 70 F (21 C) for the 2025 race.

Organizers of the Sioux Falls, South Dakota, marathon last year similarly moved their annual race from August to September after canceling the 2024 race due to hot conditions. And other races, including the Air Force Marathon in Dayton, Ohio, the Little Rock Marathon in Arkansas, and the Long Beach Marathon in Southern California, all moved their start times to earlier in the morning in search of cooler temperatures.

In Los Angeles in March, warm conditions prompted race organizers to give runners the option of stopping after 18 miles and still receiving a finishers medal. Less than 5% of participants opted for the shorter finish and only 14 of roughly 27,000 runners were treated at a hospital, with all released the same day. Still, the move led to some online derision.

“We welcome the feedback and it’s certainly something that caused a lot of discussion, but when we’re grading ourselves on it, it has to do with how safe our runners were on the day of the event and we’re very happy with the outcome,” said Meg Treat, a spokesperson for the marathon.

At the Twin Cities Marathon, race director Ed Whetham called the decision to cancel the 2023 marathon “devastating” for runners and the or-

ganization. Whetham said it prompted an extensive analysis of weather patterns that resulted in the decision to permanently delay the race by a couple weeks.

That analysis showed that by holding the race later in October, runners would have a far greater chance of optimal conditions. Given that snow sometimes falls in the Twin Cities in late October, there is a greater chance of chilly conditions, but Whetham said, “We’ll take a 39-degree (4 C) start over a 70-degree (21 C) start.”

The contiguous U.S. just had its warmest July ever recorded, and the Earth had its hottest year on record in 2024. The World Meteorological Organization forecasts that between 2025 and 2030 the Earth’s average global temperature will likely rise by more than 1.5 degrees C (2.7 degrees F) compared to the 1800s.

The warming is already making conditions worse for most marathons, according to a study of 221 races by the climate research group Climate Central. By 2045, optimal conditions for recreational runners - in the low 40s (6 or 7 degrees C) - would be less likely at 46 of the 51 U.S. marathons analyzed.

“The ability to go outside, to exercise, to take advantage of your human body and being healthy, that’s something that’s getting challenged by climate change,” said Andy Pershing, who led the Climate Central research.

Miles, Collier shine as Lynx beats Aces

Jones scores 23 as Liberty beat Sun without Ionescu

UNCASVILLE, Conn., Aug 16, (AP): Jonquel Jones scored 23 points and Marine Johannes keyed a fourth-quarter run to help the New York Liberty beat the Connecticut Sun 82-75 on Saturday.

New York (22-14) played without Sabrina Ionescu, who tweaked her left ankle in a 85-81 win over Los Angeles on Thursday. Liberty Coach Chris DeMarco said before Saturday's game that Ionescu was day to day and they were being precautionary with her.

The Liberty, who have won nine of their past 11 games, got off to a slow start without Ionescu. The Sun led 27-19 after one quarter. This came after the Liberty gave up 40 points to the Sparks in the fourth quarter of Thursday's game. Jones then got going, scoring 19 points in the first half as New York rallied to take a 46-37 lead at the break.

Connecticut (8-25) hung around and trailed 63-62 early in the fourth quarter. With New York reeling and the shot clock set to expire, Johannes hit a one-legged off-balance 3-pointer to make it 66-62.

That started a 10-2 run by New York to seal the win. Johannes, who finished with 17 points, hit another 3 to close the burst.

This was Jones' last time playing in Connecticut; the Sun are moving to Houston next year. Jones spent six years with the Sun before coming to New York in 2023. The Sun retired her No. 35 jersey in June during the Liberty's previous trip to Connecticut. The 2021 WNBA MVP was a late scratch for that game because she wasn't feeling well.

Breanna Stewart struggled early on, missing her first seven shots before scoring with 2:32 left in the second quarter. She finished with 11 points.

Connecticut also was shorthanded. Brittney Griner missed the game with a left knee issue and Aaliyah Edwards was out with a left ankle injury she suffered on Thursday against Atlanta.

Olivia Nelson-Ododa had 21 points and 10 rebounds to lead the Sun.

Lynx 92, Aces 87

In Las Vegas, Olivia Miles had 23 points and eight assists, Napheesa Collier added 19 points and the WNBA-leading Minnesota Lynx beat the Las Vegas Aces.

Natasha Howard added 13 points and 11 rebounds for Minnesota (29-7). Kayla McBride scored 13 points and Courtney Williams and Nia Coffey each had 12.

Collier's deep 3-pointer gave the Lynx a seven-point lead with a little less



Minnesota Lynx forward Napheesa Collier (24) makes a rebound as Las Vegas Aces guard Jewell Loyd (24) looks on during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Las Vegas. (AP)

than seven minutes remaining in the fourth quarter and Minnesota led by at least five points until Jewell Loyd's 3-pointer cut it to 86-82 with under three minutes remaining.

The margin was four points once again after the Aces' A'ja Wilson made two free throws with 1:09 to go. Williams and Collier made two free throws each in the final minute to seal Minnesota's franchise-best 15th road win of the season.

Wilson scored 32 points, made 11 of 12 free throws and grabbed seven rebounds. NaLyssa Smith had 17 points and 12 rebounds. Chelsea Gray had 12 points and nine assists for the Aces (24-12).

The Aces ran off eight quick points on a banked 3-pointer by Japan's

Mai Yamamoto, a fast-break layup from Wilson and a 3-pointer by Jackie Young to take a 33-31 lead four minutes into the second quarter. The score was tied seven times over the final six minutes of the half, the last tie coming on Wilson's midrange jumper with 34 seconds left for a 48-48 halftime score.

Las Vegas dominated in the paint in the first half, with Wilson scoring 19 points and Smith adding nine points and six rebounds. Combined, they made 13 of 18 shots.

Three free throws by McBride started an 8-0 run that gave the Lynx a 62-52 lead in the third quarter and they led for the remainder of the game.

Mystics 80, Sparks 70

In Washington, Sonia Citron scored 21 points, Shakira Austin had 17 points and 11 rebounds, and the Washington Mystics rallied in the fourth quarter to defeat the Los Angeles Sparks.

Kiki Iriafen added 19 points and eight rebounds for Washington (20-14), which was coming off two straight losses at Las Vegas. Citron had eight assists and six rebounds.

Austin's layup with six minutes left in the fourth quarter gave Washington a 65-64 lead, its first advantage since it was 41-39 at halftime. With three minutes left, Citron hit a 3-pointer for a 74-69 lead and the Mystics closed it out with a 9-1 run.

Washington outscored Los Angeles 25-12 in the fourth quarter.

Rae Burrell scored 20 points, Nneka Ogwumike had 15 and Dearica Hamby added 11 for the Sparks (12-22).

Los Angeles led 26-24 one minute into the second quarter before Washington went on an 11-2 run in the next three minutes to lead 35-26. Two 3-pointers from Burrell and one from Erica Wheeler got the Sparks within 41-39 at halftime.

Wheeler and Burrell opened the second half with back-to-back 3s and the Sparks led 52-43 three minutes into the third quarter. The Mystics scored the next eight points and the Sparks held a 58-55 lead heading to the fourth.

The Mystics had won seven straight before their back-to-back losses to the Aces.

The Sparks have lost four straight and 11 of 13. Cameron Brink (ribs) did not play, two days after she took a shoulder to the midsection from New York's Breanna Stewart.



Islam Makhachev, right, punches Ian Machado Garry in a welterweight title fight at the UFC 330 mixed martial arts event in Philadelphia. (AP)

Unanimous decision seals milestone

Makhachev sets record with 17th straight win at UFC 330

PHILADELPHIA, Aug 16, (AP): The bridge of Islam Makhachev's nose, right cheek and forehead were scraped or sliced open and his left cheek sported a baseball-sized bruise after taking a few too many brutal blows to the face.

He may not have looked the part, yet Makhachev was again a winner - all while toppling one of UFC's most enduring records.

Makhachev set the UFC record with his 17th straight victory, reaching the milestone with a unanimous decision over Ian Machado Garry to successfully defend his 170-pound championship in the main event of UFC 330.

Makhachev won 49-46 on two scorecards and 48-47 on the third in a competitive five-round fight that never rose to the level of greatness.

"He gave me a hard time," Makhachev said, "but I still prove it every fight."

Makhachev (29-1) was tied with UFC Hall of Famer Anderson Silva with 16 straight victories and has not lost since UFC 192 in 2015. Makhachev won the welterweight crown in his first attempt when he beat Jack Della Maddalena at UFC 322 in November 2025.

He took his share of head kicks in his first title defense, notably in the third round that did most of the cosmetic damage, yet bested a record set by Silva that had stood for 13 years.

"If he keeps going like he says he's going to keep going, it might never be beaten," UFC CEO Dana White said.

The 34-year-old Makhachev nearly ended the fight in the second when he threw his left foot and caught Machado Garry flush with a headkick that dropped the challenger to his rear end. Makhachev pounced with a series of punches that had the sellout crowd of 19,238 fans roaring in anticipation of a quick finish, only for Machado Garry - serenaded throughout with obscenity-laced chants - to hold on and finish the round.

Machado Garry (17-2) won the third round on all three scorecards and rallied in the fifth round with seven significant strikes landed to none for Makhachev.

Yet it wasn't enough to topple one of UFC's great fighters.

"I believed in my heart and soul I was better than him tonight, and he won," Machado Garry said. "No complaints, no excuses. I'm 28, I have a decade of domination already. This man won tonight."

Makhachev - who held the lightweight championship and has seven total wins in title fights - continues to dominate no matter the weight class.

Mackenzie Dern successfully defended the 115-pound championship in her first title defense with a unanimous decision victory over Gillian Robertson that could set her up for a fight with division great Zhang Weili.

Dern (17-5) won the vacant straw-weight belt in her last fight at UFC 321 and won a lopsided and lackluster first defense against Robertson.

Dern won 49-46 on two scorecards and 48-47 on the third in the five-round fight.

"I wanted to get the submission with Gillian," Dern said. "I definitely wanted to submit her. That was the goal."

Dern nearly made Robertson (17-9) tap in the first round with a choke hold that about turned the challenger's face as pinkish-red as her braided hair. Dern might have won the bout had it stretched even another 30 seconds, but Robertson was saved by the bell.

Too bad the fight didn't end there.

The next four rounds were relatively uneventful, and the title match slowed to a near complete stop as they mostly locked up on the canvas with barely a strike thrown.

Dern's 7-year-old daughter peered her head over the barricade from her front row seat and shouted encouragement each time mom got close to her side of the cage. The little girl could be heard well over a rowdy crowd that had about been lulled into passiveness - and eventually, boos in the fifth round - in the humdrum title fight.

Edson Barboza left his fight gloves on the mat and choked back tears as he retired following a lightweight loss on the main card to Esteven Ribovics.

IRVINE, Calif., Aug 16, (AP): Lani Pallister of Australia stunned Katie Ledecky with her first international loss in the 800-meter freestyle at the Pan Pacific Championships.

Pallister was under world-record pace for much of the race and touched in 8 minutes, 6.10 seconds to erase Ledecky's championship record from 2018.

"I was just so locked in and I've been really focused on what I want," Pallister said. "The 800 is my favorite event."

LedECKy took silver in a season-best 8:07.26.

"That was definitely my best swim of the week, so I'm actually pretty happy with it," she said. "If I was going to get second tonight, I wanted to make it a good one. Just wanted to make it hard for Lani."

LedECKy is the four-time Olympic champion in her signature event. The American's lone previous defeat in an 800 free final since 2010 came in a small domestic meet in February 2024 against Summer McIntosh of Canada.

"Katie's such a dominant force," a breathless Pallister said after the race.

Kate Douglass lowered her own world record in the 50 free for the second time Saturday, winning the final in 23.19 - one of three events on the final night.

"I was doubting myself, questioning my ability to do the triple," she said. "My coaches and my teammates just really had a lot of faith in me and they really gave me a lot of energy."

In the morning preliminaries, the 24-year-old American swam 23.49 to take the mark away from teammate Gretchen Walsh, who finished second in the evening final in 23.74.

Douglass returned 25 minutes later to finish second in the 200 breaststroke. She rallied from third down the stretch but couldn't catch Alexanne Lepage of Canada, who led the entire race and touched in a lifetime best of 2:21.73. Douglass finished in 2:22.57.

"I feel like I'm just a little bit

Pallister dethrones Ledecky as Douglass breaks world record

Australia's Short wins 1,500m freestyle



Kate Douglass, of the United States, competes in the women's 200 meters breaststroke final at the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships in Irvine, Calif. (AP)

shocked," Lepage said.

Walsh had owned the 50 free record of 23.55 since setting it in June at an international meet in Rome.

It's the third time Douglass has lowered the world mark in the sprint race. She first did it on June 19 at the TYR Pro Swim Series meet in Indianapolis, posting a time of 23.59. Nine days later, Walsh lowered it again.

Fourteen minutes after climbing out of the pool, Douglass appeared on the medals podium in her cap and goggles to accept her gold. The other medalists were dressed in their usual team sweats. Eleven minutes after that, Douglass dived in for the 200 breast final.

Douglass capped a busy night by anchoring the U.S. women to a dominant victory in the 4 x 100 medley relay. Their time of 3:50.43 was a championship record. Australia was second in 3:55.09.

Douglass is a five-time Olympic medalist. She earned silver in the

50 free at the 2024 world championships but didn't compete in the event at the 2024 Paris Games.



Lani Pallister, of Australia, celebrates after winning the women's 800 meters freestyle final at the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships in Irvine, Calif. (AP)

Her 50 free was the second individual world record set at the meet that includes swimmers from the U.S., Australia, Canada, Japan and China, among others.

The U.S. men also topped Australia in the 4 x 100 medley relay. Will Modglin, Van Mathias, Luca Urlando and anchor Jack Alexy swam a championship-record time of 3:29.06.

Sam Short of Australia won the 1,500 free to go with his earlier titles in the 400 and 800 free events. His time of 14:33.97 was the sixth-fastest in history and broke Grant Hackett's 24-year-old championship record.

"That was actually so much fun," Short said.

Kazushi Imafuku of Japan took silver in 14:42.59 and two-time defending Olympic champion Bobby Finke earned bronze in 14:44.26 on the same day he lost his world record to Johannes Liebmann of Germany at the European championships.

New Zealand dominates Bulls ahead of SA tests

PRETORIA, South Africa, Aug 16, (AP): New Zealand passed its last examination before the eagerly awaited test series against world champion South Africa when the Bulls were dispatched 50-19 at Loftus Versfeld.

The All Blacks dominated to lead 24-0 at halftime and perhaps their first match at altitude contributed to a closer, more back and forth second half.

They still racked up eight tries, with doubles for wingers Josh Moorby and Leroy Carter and captain Codie Taylor, while conceding their first

points in more than two hours across the tour matches against the Stormers, Sharks and Bulls.

"No disrespect to the Bulls but they (the Springboks) will lift the tempo and physicality," Taylor told broadcaster SuperSport. "That's what test match footy is all about. It's an exciting week ahead."

Only a few of the New Zealand side were expected to line up in the first test next Saturday in Johannesburg, but valuable experience was gained by the wider squad whose depth will be plumbed

during the grueling run of four tests on four straight weekends.

The likes of flanker Anton Segner, the returning Taylor and center Rieko Ioane impressed for New Zealand in an expansive, entertaining affair.

While the Bulls were the best provincial side the All Blacks will face on tour, like the first two opponents they were a shadow of their true selves. They were not match fit, had not played since June 19 in their third consecutive United Rugby Championship final, and had to cut short their offseason break.

Change Name

I, Carmel Daisy Albert Chettiar holder of Indian Passport No. U0187819, currently residing in Kuwait with Civil ID No. 282102206307, hereby declare that henceforth my name will be read as follows: Given Name: Carmel Daisy Surname: Joseph

Nashville SC beats Inter Miami, Messi as Mukhtar scores 2 in the second half

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug 16, (AP): Hany Mukhtar scored a pair of second-half goals and Nashville SC beat Lionel Messi and Inter Miami 4-1 on Saturday night in a match featuring the top two teams in the Eastern Conference to remain atop the MLS standings.

Messi started his first game

since the death of his father, Jorge, on Aug. 8 at age 68. He played in the second half of Inter Miami's 3-2 loss to Club León on Aug. 12, but did not start the game.

The Inter Miami captain had a major scoring chance in the 23rd minute, but his penalty kick was saved by

Nashville goalkeeper Brian Schwake. The rebound was put into the net by Sergio Reguilón, but the goal was disallowed after it was determined that Reguilón had entered the penalty area early.

Andy Najar scored his first goal of the season, heading in a pass from Elias Saad along

the left post in the 16th minute.

Inter Miami evened the game in the 48th minute off a spin-move goal from Telasco Segovia.

Mukhtar scored in the 48th minute off a pass from Saad. Sam Surridge followed eight minutes later, netting

his team's leading 12th goal of the season, scoring off his back heel and putting Nashville up 3-1.

In the 62nd minute, Miami goalkeeper Rocco Rios-Novoa misread a goal kick from Schwake and fell over, which allowed Mukhtar to gain control of the loose ball and ex-

tend Nashville's lead to 4-1.

The result was just Nashville's second win over Inter Miami since Messi had joined.

Nashville travels to Red Bull New York on Wednesday. Inter Miami travels to the Philadelphia Union on Wednesday.

ARKHAM KNIGHTS secure championship title

PBFPK organizes Independence Day Padel Tournament 2026 in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: The Executive Committee of the Pakistani Banking & Finance Professionals in Kuwait (PBFPK) organized the PB-FPK Independence Day Padel Tournament 2026 on 14th August 2026 as part of its efforts to bring Pakistani banking and finance professionals together through sports, networking and community engagement.

The tournament brought together PBFPK members for an evening of competitive padel, teamwork, sportsmanship and camaraderie, while providing an opportunity to celebrate Pakistan's Independence Day in a positive and engaging environment.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from players as well as strong support from members and guests who attended to encourage the teams and share in the celebrations. The tournament provided an excellent platform for members to strengthen professional and social connections beyond the workplace.

Tournament Results

Champions: ARKHAM KNIGHTS

Runners-Up: PADEL QALANDAR

The President of PBFPK, Ahsan Ashraf, extended his warmest congratulations to ARKHAM KNIGHTS for securing the championship title and to PADEL QALANDAR for finishing as runners-up. Both teams demonstrated excellent



Independence Day Padel Tournament participants pose for a group photo.

skill, determination and sportsmanship throughout the tournament.

The President and Executive Committee of PBFPK also expressed their appreciation to all participating players, supporters and members whose enthusiasm and presence contributed to the success of the event.

The tournament reflects PBFPK's broader objective of fostering a strong and connected community of Pakistani banking and finance professionals in Kuwait, while creating opportunities for members to interact, network and participate in meaningful social and sporting activities.

"Events such as these provide an opportunity for our members to connect beyond their professional roles and celebrate together as a community. We are grateful to everyone who participated and supported the tournament and helped make it a memorable Independence Day celebration."

Kuwait launches new push for digital sports transformation

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Fatima Abdulmohsen Al-Bannai, Executive Director of the Blue Shirt platform, has highlighted the importance of national support for innovation and digital transformation in Kuwait's sports sector.

Blue Shirt is a national project focused on sports intelligence, developing a comprehensive national sports knowledge base and using data to support decision-making and improve the performance of Kuwaiti sports.

Al-Bannai expressed her appreciation to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma for their support of young people, national initiatives and efforts to create an environment that encourages innovation and em-



Public Authority for Sports Director General Bashar Abdullah welcomes Blue Shirt members.

powers national talent.

She said the government's support provides strong motivation for the development of national projects, adding that Blue Shirt reflects Kuwait's vision of building a modern sports system based on data and artificial intelligence.

Al-Bannai described the signing of a cooperation agreement with the Public Authority for Youth and Sports, represented by Director General Bashar Abdullah, as a key milestone for the platform and an important step toward accelerating digital transformation in the sports sector.

The agreement is designed to strengthen institutional work based on reliable data and support Kuwait's broader move toward a knowledge-based economy and society.

Following the signing ceremony, officials from both sides held a joint meeting to discuss the agreement's implementation and explore future areas of cooperation.

The partnership will focus on documenting sports data, developing knowledge bases, improving the quality and reliability of sports information, and providing accurate data to athletes, sports organizations, researchers and decision-makers.

Britain sweeps relay medals

High jump champ delivers for Ukraine

BIRMINGHAM, England, Aug 16, (AP): Amy Hunt earned her third gold medal as Britain extended its sprint dominance at the European championships by winning both the men's and women's 4x100 relay at Alexander Stadium.

Romell Glave, the men's 100-meter champion, ran the anchor leg to clinch victory for the men's quartet in 38.45 seconds.

"We've won nearly all the medals, I think," Hunt told the BBC.

Dina Asher-Smith, who earned her seventh career gold at the European championships, ran the first leg. Hunt handed off to Success Eduan, who brought a big lead to Imani Lansiquot.

"These girls are so phenomenal," Lansiquot told the broadcaster. "They put me in the best possible position where I could just be free and enjoy it. That will be a memory for life."

Olympic champion and world record holder Yaroslava Mahuchikh cleared 1.97 meters to win her third consecutive high



Britain's Zharnel Hughes, Jeremiah Azu, Louie Hinchcliffe and Romell Glave celebrate after winning the gold medal in the men's 4 X 100 meters relay final at the European Athletics Championships in Birmingham, England. (AP)

jump title at the European championships. It's the first gold for Ukraine this week.

Mahuchikh is from Dnipro, a city located not far from the front lines of the ongoing war with Russia.

Ireland's Kate O'Connor clinched gold in the women's heptathlon after finishing the final event - 800 meters - in third place. She ran it in 2 minutes, 11.74 seconds.

O'Connor, the silver medalist at last year's world championships, also won the heptathlon at the recent Commonwealth Games while competing for Northern

Ireland.

It was Ireland's second gold this week. Mark English won the men's 800 on Thursday.

Race walk world records were set in the inaugural women's half-marathon and marathon events.

Spain's María Pérez took gold in the half-marathon by finishing in 1 hour, 30 minutes, 6 seconds. About two hours later, 21-year-old Sofia Fiorini of Italy won the marathon title when she crossed the line in 3:15.11.

Both marks constitute world records for disciplines that became official distances only in January, governing body World Athletics said.

"World Athletics set 1:30:30 as the performance standard required for the inaugural women's half marathon world record and 3:17:00 for the women's marathon world record," the governing body explained.

"Pérez surpassed the former by 24 seconds and Fiorini the latter by 1:49, making them the inaugural official world record-holders for the two distances."

Both world records are subject to the usual ratifications.

The 30-year-old Pérez also holds the world record for the 35-kilometer race walk.

India reaches 447-8 against Sri Lanka at stumps

GALLE, Sri Lanka, Aug 16, (AP): Devdutt Padikkal's career-best 167 put India in command of the first test against Sri Lanka as it reached 447-8 (113 overs) in its first innings on day two Sunday.

Padikkal's maiden test century was again central to India's innings, with Lokesh Rahul also scoring 82 and Dhruv Jurel contributing 51 runs.

Left-arm spinner Prabath Jayasuriya took 4-109, while debutant off-spinner Keshara Nuwantha took 3-175.

Rain postponed the start of play, washing out the entire morning session and much of

the second. The weather relented in the afternoon with just over three hours of play possible on the second day.

India had reached 288-2 on day one, after it won the toss and opted to bat in the 50th test at Galle.

When play resumed after the long delay, Rishabh Pant (39) attacked the bowling but only managed to throw away his wicket. He became Nuwantha's first test wicket.

His dismissal brought out Rahul who had retired hurt on day one owing to cramps. In the meantime, Padikkal crossed 150 off 215 balls.

Rahul had scored 77 on day one, but couldn't manage much longer and was out caught at short leg off Nuwantha again.

He also trapped Ravindra Jadeja lbw for 13, while Jayasuriya sent back Padikkal - out stumped - in the 92nd over as India slipped to 377-7. It lost four wickets for 70 runs since play restarted, losing two wickets on either side of the tea break.

Jurel and Manav Suthar steadied the innings again, adding 55 off 66 balls as India crossed 400 in the final session, though Jayasuriya dismissed Jurel after he scored 50 off 66 balls.

Zverev avoids third straight loss

Nole ousted from Cincinnati Open in first match since Wimbledon

MASON, Ohio, Aug 16, (AP): Novak Djokovic's stay at the Cincinnati Open was a short one. It also might be his last.

The 24-time major champion fell to Thiago Agustín Tirante 2-6, 6-4, 6-4 in a match that took 2 hours, 44 minutes in hot and humid conditions.

A 25-year-old from Argentina, Tirante is ranked No. 50 in the world.

Djokovic - a three-time Cincinnati champion and No. 5 in the rankings - was playing for the first time since his loss to top-ranked Jannik Sinner in the semifinals at Wimbledon.

Up next for Djokovic is the U.S. Open, which starts Aug. 30 in New York.

Djokovic appeared to struggle physically in the heat and had his 10-match winning streak in Cincinnati snapped. The 39-year-old told reporters that an unspecified health condition made it difficult for him to play in hot and humid weather.

"It's just a condition that I have, health-wise, that has been bothering me for the past couple of years," Djokovic said. "A lot of issues, especially when it is humid and it is hot. I did anticipate it (would be humid), but there are all these things, like nerves and everything involved that make it worse, and that's what happened."



Djokovic

Djokovic has had plenty of success in Cincinnati, with a 45-13 record and titles in 2018, 2020 and 2023. But he wasn't sure he would return.

"I certainly hope so, but it looks more likely not, unfortunately," Djokovic said. "But let's see what the future brings."

Djokovic saved 13 of the 15 break points he faced. Tirante broke Djokovic's serve in the ninth game of the final set and then served it out.

"I think this is the best win of my career," Tirante said. "I think I really did a good job inside the court. I managed very well the nerves of playing against a legend like Novak."

In a rain-delayed match that ended at 2:15 a.m. Sunday, top-seeded Alexander Zverev rallied to avoid a third straight loss, beating Cameron Norrie 3-6, 6-3, 6-3. After losing to Jannik Sinner in the Wimbledon final, Zverev - the French Open champion - returned to play in Montreal and fell to Tallon Griekspoor in his opener Aug. 5.

On the women's side, Alexandra Eala of the Philippines continued her run of strong play with a victory over Elena-Gabriela Ruse, who lost the first set and stopped playing in the second with an ankle injury. Eala - who is No. 20 in the rankings - won her first WTA singles title in Washington earlier this month and has won eight of her last nine matches.

American Jessica Pegula beat Simona Waltert 6-3, 6-2, improving her record to 25-6 on hard courts in 2026. The third-ranked Pegula won the title in Cincinnati in 2024.

Best of the Rest

PSG strengthens attack further: Champions League titleholder Paris Saint-Germain strengthened its attack even further by signing left winger Mika Godts from Dutch club Ajax on a five-year deal.

PSG announced the transfer late on Saturday without giving any financial details. Sports daily L'Equipe estimated the fee to be 55 million euros (\$64 million) including bonuses.

It was the second signing of the day after Spain's World Cup-winning forward Ferran Torres joined from Barcelona for a reported fee of 50 million euros. (AP)

ARAB TIMES

Kuwait's No.1 English Newspaper

For Subscriptions and Complaints

Please Call

51508991

51526559

NEWS



Manchester City's Erling Haaland, left, and Arsenal's Cristhian Mosquera challenge for the ball at the final soccer match between Arsenal and Manchester City in Cardiff, Wales. (AP)

Sports

Kuwait wins bronze at Arab U-17 Volleyball Championship



Players celebrate with officials after winning bronze at the Arab U-17 Volleyball Championship.

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

MANAMA, Aug 16: Kuwait secured the bronze medal at the second Arab U-17 Volleyball Championship in Bahrain, beating Algeria 3-0 in their final match.

The result capped a strong tournament for the young Blue Volleyball squad, which produced encouraging performances throughout the competition and demonstrated the growing strength of Kuwait's youth volleyball program.

Kuwait Volleyball Federation board member and head of delegation Naif Al-Failakawi described the bronze medal as an important achievement, particularly given the progress being made by Kuwait's national teams.

He said the team benefited from a comprehensive preparation program that included domestic training in Kuwait and an overseas camp in Cairo, where the players played several friendly matches to improve their match fitness and gain valuable experience.

Al-Failakawi congratulated the federation's board, coaching and administrative staff, players and Ku-

waiti supporters, expressing hope that the team would continue to develop and achieve better results in future competitions.

Team manager Abdullah Al-Rais said the bronze medal represents the first reward for the team's preparations and expressed confidence that the squad can become an important source of talent for Kuwait's senior national team.

"The third-place finish is the beginning of the achievements we expect this team to accomplish in the near future," Al-Rais said.

Kuwait U-17 handball team heads to Jordan for Asian Championship



Player vie for the ball during Kuwait friendly match against Bahrain.

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 16: Kuwait's U-17 team will leave today for Amman to take part in the 11th Asian Men's Youth Handball Championship, scheduled to run in Jordan from August 20 to 31.

Kuwait was drawn into Group B alongside Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran and Syria after the draw was conducted again following the withdrawal of Japan and Taiwan due to the ongoing security situation in the region. Group A features hosts Jordan, South Korea, Bahrain, India and Uzbekistan.

The delegation is headed by Kuwait Handball Federation Treasurer Khaled Taleb, with board member and Media Committee Chairman Mishal Al-Qabandi, National Teams Director Faisal Saiwan and team manager Shaker Arti also part of the delegation.

New Icelandic coach Stefan Arnason will lead the technical staff, assisted by national coach Khaled Al-Mulla. Goalkeeping coach Marwan Maqayez and physiotherapist Hani Al-Dawas are also included, along with 18 players.

Kuwait began its preparations at home under Croatian coach Ivan, who later stepped down because of the security situation in the region. The team subsequently held a training camp in Slovenia, playing several friendly matches before returning to Kuwait for a final camp at Arena Mall.

The Blues will begin their Asian campaign against Syria on August 20 at Princess Sumaya Hall in Amman.

Team manager Faisal Saiwan acknowledged the difficulty of Kuwait's group, pointing to the rapid development of teams across Asia and the region.

Despite the challenges facing handball domestically, Saiwan said the team is working hard to deliver a strong performance and represent Kuwait in the best possible way.

Arsenal outclasses City to win Community Shield

Nightmarish start for Maresca

LONDON, Aug 16, (AP): Enzo Maresca endured a nightmarish first competitive match in charge of Manchester City as Arsenal scored inside 24 seconds before powering to a 3-0 victory in the Community Shield.

English soccer's annual season curtain-raiser between the reigning Premier League (Arsenal) and FA Cup (City) champions offered a chance for an early assessment of the two teams most likely to challenge for the big trophies this campaign.

While Arsenal delivered a statement performance - not least by scoring after 23 seconds through Riccardo Calafiori - at Cardiff's Principality Stadium, there might be some early concerns for City and Maresca at the start of the post-Pep Guardiola era.

Kai Havertz headed home the



Arsenal players celebrate as they win the FA Community Shield final soccer match between Arsenal and Manchester City in Cardiff, Wales. (AP)

second goal in the 28th through the grasp of City goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma and Martin Odegaard ran unchallenged into City's area, before sitting down Donnarumma with an outrageous dum-

my and slotting a finish into an unguarded net in the 48th.

Playful chants of "You're getting sacked in the morning" came from Arsenal's jubilant supporters toward Maresca for part of the game in which City rarely threatened opposition goalkeeper David Raya. Erling Haaland - only just back in training after the World Cup - was substituted in the 53rd minute after having just seven touches.

It was the perfect preparation for Arsenal ahead of the beginning of its Premier League title defense - at home to Coventry on Friday.

"I think we showed our level today - that we are ready," Odegaard, Arsenal's captain, said. "We are serious and we want to do it again."

City launches its league campaign two days later at home to Bournemouth and it remains to be seen if Maresca reacts to this defeat by changing his team around.

Calafiori ran on to Myles Lewis-Skelly's threaded throughball to give Arsenal an explosive start and score the first goal in the opening minute of the Community Shield since 1968.

On that occasion, Bobby Owen netted for City against West Bromwich Albion.

Rodri, Spain's World Cup-winning captain, wasn't with the City squad in Cardiff as he continues his recovery from minor back surgery to the backdrop of a potential move to Barcelona.

His absence leaves a huge hole in Maresca's midfield that might only have been partially filled by Elliot Anderson following his \$155 million move from Nottingham Forest.

One interesting selection by City's new manager was Jack Grealish, who came on at the start of the second half. Does it suggest his career at City could be reignited after he was sent on loan to Everton last season?

Hasan Miraz takes five wickets for the tourists

Bangladesh claims historic victory in Australia

DARWIN, Australia, Aug 16, (AP): Bangladesh completed a stunning nine-wicket victory over Australia in the first test on Sunday, securing its first win on Australian soil and only its second victory over top-ranked Australia.

After making a vital half-century with the bat, Mehidy Hasan Miraz took five wickets for Bangladesh in the second innings to restrict Australia to a lead of just 56 runs, as the hosts were bowled out for 284 midway through the afternoon session at Darwin's Marrara Oval.

Bangladesh suffered some early nerves in its chase when Josh Hazlewood (1-5) dismissed first-innings centurion Tazim Hasan for a duck, but Shadman Islam (25 not out) and Mominul Haque (30 not out) held their composure to reach the target in 14.2 overs sparking wild celebrations within the contingent of Bangladesh fans seated behind the team's dugout on the boundary.

"This is the biggest win so far for Bangladesh in any format," Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto said. "We will do something special

in the future."

The victory was celebrated back home, too, with Shanto taking a congratulatory video call from Bangla-



Mehidy Hasan Miraz of Bangladesh celebrates after dismissing Beau Webster of Australia during play on day four of the first cricket test in Darwin, Australia. (AP)

desh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman in the dressing room.

"These are special moments for us, as I believe everyone back home is enjoying our success," Shanto said in comments on the espnricinfo website. "We get these moments very few times in our life, so we should spend the whole day in celebrating this win."

Cameron Green scored his third test century, and his first in Australia, making a composed 104 from 201 balls to lead Australia's resistance.

It was a thoroughly deserved result for Bangladesh, which had outplayed Australia for much of the test after home captain Pat Cummins won the toss and elected to bat.

Australia managed just 198 in its first innings, with man-of-the-match Hasan Mahmud taking 6-55, before Bangladesh capitalized as the pitch flattened to post 426 and take a commanding 228-run lead.

Díaz stars as Alavés 'dominates' 10-man Getafe in La Liga opener

MADRID, Aug 16, (AP): Europe's top domestic leagues kicked off with Alaves defeating 10-man Getafe 3-0 in Spain.

Mariano Díaz scored a goal and had two assists against a Getafe squad that played a man down from the 42nd minute.

The Spanish league was the first of the main five in Europe to start, less than a month after its national team won the World Cup.

Defending champion Barcelona and José Mourinho's Real Madrid won't start their campaigns until next weekend because they had players return late from the World Cup.

Barcelona, chasing a third straight Spanish league crown, visits Elche on Aug. 23. Madrid, revamped under Mourinho after a second consecutive season without a major title, starts at Espanyol on Aug. 22.

Sevilla hosts Rayo Vallecano in the second game on Saturday.

The European season officially started on Wednesday when Paris Saint-Germain defeated Aston Villa 2-1 in the UEFA Super Cup.

The Premier League, the Italian league and the French league start next weekend. The German league will get going the following week.

Díaz, the former Real Madrid forward, gave the pass for Nahuel Tenaglia's header in the 73rd before claiming Alaves' second goal with a well-placed shot into the top corner in stoppage time and then setting up Mikel Rodriguez's final score in the final minutes.

Getafe's Kiko Femenia was sent off for a dangerous foul just before half-time. His initial yellow card was changed into a red after video review.

Alaves' Ángel Pérez was reprimanded by coach Quique Sánchez Flores after being substituted and punching the bench several times.

Alaves was 14th in the league last season, one point above the relegation zone.