



Amir receives letter from UK PM, addresses ties and region Page 2



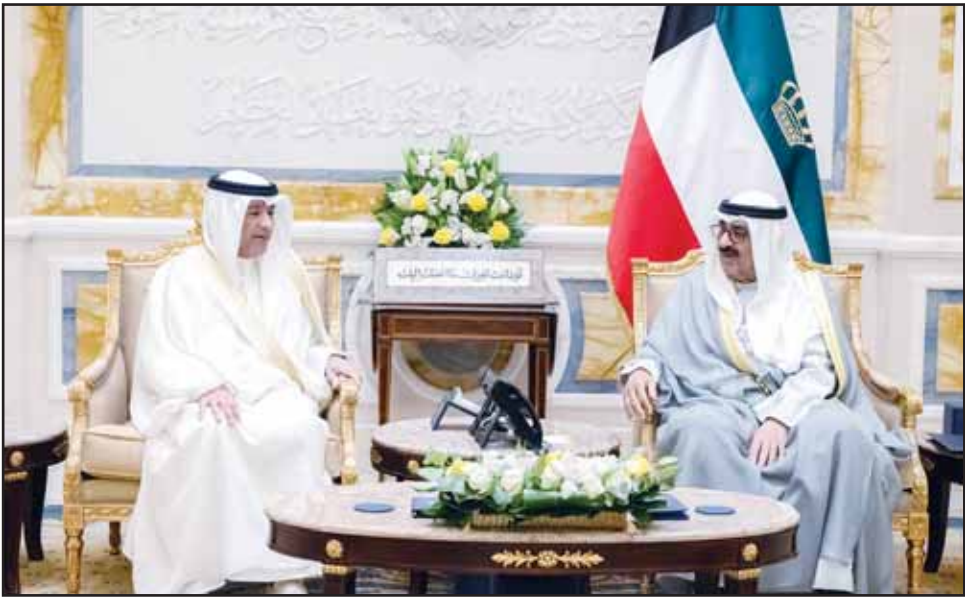
Kuwait Amir, Crown Prince receive GCC Secretary-General

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Tuesday the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Mohammad Al-Budaiwi.

Separately, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Tuesday the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Mohammad Al-Budaiwi.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also received on Tuesday Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Al-Budaiwi.

The meeting, according to a ministry statement, discussed strengthening Gulf cooperation and reviewed regional and international developments.



HH the Amir receives GCC Secretary-General.



HH the Crown Prince receives GCC Secretary-General.



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

The 'confusion' in solving the housing crisis

THE housing issue is not a minor detail in Kuwaiti reality, as it is closer to a problem for which there is currently no theoretical solution.

The issue can be addressed with a completely different approach than that which prevailed over the past decades to rectify the damage caused by parliamentary political practices that turned the problem into a snowball, which grows bigger every year, up to the point that it almost hindered several development projects.

Here, we must acknowledge some facts.

Initially, the old plans were beneficial to both the society and the state. Citizens who received housing assistance lived according to what was allocated to them, because all houses were of a uniform style and there were no unusual preferences.

This situation changed due to

electoral calculations that interfered in everything -- from the smallest violations to appointments and housing.

From here, injustice began to manifest itself in various forms.

However, at the same time, there was no governmental vision to achieve justice. Unfortunately, it often aligned with the decisions of members of parliament or even some voters who stipulated exceptional housing privileges for their candidates.

Continued on Page 5

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Ahmed aljarallah

ahmed@aljarallah.com



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Saudi Cabinet approves PPP cooperation deal with Kuwait

RIYADH, Aug 18, (KUNA): Saudi Arabia's Cabinet on Tuesday gave the thumbs up to a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Kuwait over cooperation on public and private sector partnership projects.

The deal between the two Gulf Arab

neighbors garnered the Saudi cabinet's approval amid its weekly session presided over by King Salman bin Abdulaziz, state-run SPA news agency cited Information Minister Salman Al-Dosari as saying.

Continued on Page 5



Ministry of Health photo

Kuwait doctors tackle tumor, restore child's limb function

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: A multidisciplinary medical team at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital has succeeded in removing a cancerous tumor from the

leg of a child.

The tumor spread throughout the anterior compartment of the leg, so the team performed advanced reconstructive surgery to preserve limb function

Continued on Page 5

Filipino remittances from Kuwait pump \$286 mln home

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: Remittances from Filipino workers in Kuwait rose to \$286 million in the first half of this year, a 3.4 percent increase compared to the same period last year, according to data from the Central Bank of the Philippines, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Remittances from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries increased by 3.5 percent year-on-year during the first half of the year, reaching \$2.93 billion, compared to \$2.83 billion in the first half of 2025.

The UAE recorded the largest growth, with a 4.27 percent increase, while Saudi Arabia received the largest share of remittances among GCC countries, at \$1.08 billion.

Remittances from Filipino workers in the six GCC countries accounted for 96.64 percent of total Filipino remittances from the Middle East in the first half of 2025, amounting to \$3.03 billion.

Across Asia as a whole, Filipino remittances reached \$7.03 billion in the first six months of this year, with 41.65 percent coming from the six GCC countries.

Statistics indicate that remittances from Filipino workers worldwide reached approximately \$17.15 billion in the first six months of 2026, with 17.07 percent coming from the Gulf countries.

Continued on Page 5

Day by Day

A WRONGED person was asked, "Will you forgive the one who wronged you?" He replied, "I will wait for the day of his death to pray for him, saying: O Lord, the one who wronged me is Your guest today, so take my right from him."

Do not spoil your joy with worry, burden your mind with pessimism, or taint your success with arrogance. God does not withhold anything you desire except when it is better for you, even if you may not yet understand why.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Buckle up ... it's pure gold

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: The Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC), specifically the customs inspectors assigned at the Terminal Four (T4) in Kuwait International Airport thwarted two separate smuggling attempts.

Continued on Page 5

The National Bank of Kuwait enhances customers' digital banking experience with new suite of services & features



KfH opens new banking horizons in one of Europe's most prominent markets

Syria reopens Interpol link to pursue fugitives abroad



Shalati (left), Kazbari (center) and Mazen Al-Tarazi (right), linked to Bashar al-Assad's regime.

DAMASCUS, Aug 18: The Syrian government has taken extensive steps toward reactivating its cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization, Interpol, as part of efforts to pursue wanted individuals

and fugitives who are subject to judicial rulings, according to private sources cited by Al-Seyassah/Arab Times.

Continued on Page 5

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Tuesday expressed Kuwait's condemnation of the aggressive drone attack on Iraq's Kurdistan Region, which targeted the office of Kurdistan Region Prime Minister Masrour Barzani and the residence of the head of the region's Security and Intelligence

Agency. (KUNA)

□ □ □

ABU DHABI: The UAE Ministry of Defense said Tuesday that its air defenses detected two ballistic missiles launched from Iran, with one falling outside the country's territorial waters and the other landing within its territorial waters. (KUNA)



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:54 Asr 15:27
Sunrise .. 05:18 Maghrib .. 18:25
Zohr 11:52 Isha 19:49



Amiri Diwan photo
Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah receives the UK Ambassador to Kuwait Qudsi Rasheed.

Amir receives ‘letter’ from UK PM, addresses ties and region

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Tuesday a letter from UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham on the longstanding ties between the two countries and ways to further develop them across various fields.

The letter also addressed several issues of mutual interest and the latest regional and international developments.

UK Ambassador to Kuwait Qudsi Rasheed delivered the message to Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah.

The meeting was attended by Chief of His Highness the Crown Prince’s Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Director of the Office of the Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sami Al-Mulla.



Al-Mashaan



Archbishop

Kuwait Deputy FM meets outgoing Vatican envoy

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18, (KUNA): Kuwait Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan received Tuesday Ambassador of the Vatican to Kuwait Archbishop Eugene Martin Nugent on the end of his tenure as ambassador to Kuwait.

Kuwait among specialists, leaders at Oman conference

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: The State of Kuwait is participating in the 2026 International Social Responsibility Congress (ISRC), which will be hosted by the Sultanate of Oman on Aug 19-20 at the Rotana Resort Salalah, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The conference brings together specialists, experts and leaders in social responsibility from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and several other Arab nations.

United Nations (UN) Ambassador for Community Partnership and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al-Awazem Charitable Foundation Hamad Zaid Saud Al-Bseis affirmed that the participation of Kuwait proves its ongoing commitment to support humanitarian and social responsibility initiatives.

He considers such participation a manifestation of Kuwait’s dedication to exchange expertise and strengthen institutional practices that develop community work and guarantee a sustainable impact.

Al-Bseis stated that the conference is a vital opportunity for exchanging experience and perspectives among the GCC countries, taking into consideration the broad participation of representatives and experts from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman.

He disclosed that the State of Kuwait will participate in the dialogue session, which will address several issues related to the future of corporate social responsibility (CSR), as well as the challenges that institutions face in transitioning from traditional initiatives to more sustainable and innovative models.

Sudan Amb. praises Kuwait for helping refugees return

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: Sudanese Ambassador to Kuwait Awadelkarim Elrayah Balla confirmed that the State of Kuwait contributed to the return of 1,000 Sudanese refugees from Uganda to their homes following an improvement in the security situation and the restoration of stability in several areas.

He praised Kuwait’s ongoing humanitarian role in supporting the Sudanese people since the outbreak of the war on April 15, 2023.

Speaking to Al-Seyassah daily, the ambassador explained that the war had displaced millions of Sudanese to neighboring and other countries as a result of grave violations and the loss of their homes, possessions, and loved ones.

Large numbers of refugees fled to Uganda. Direct instructions from Kuwait’s political leadership, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, contributed to the Direct Aid Society facilitating the return of 1,000 Sudanese refugees from Uganda to their homes.

He said Kuwait operated an air bridge comprising 37 flights carrying aid and was among the first countries to deliver assistance to Sudan. The first Kuwaiti airlift flights arrived on May 4, 2023, less than a month after the outbreak of the war.

Kuwait, Indonesia ties on growth path

Ambassador remembers quake victims at reception

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: Indonesian Ambassador to Kuwait Lena Maryana affirmed that the Indonesian-Kuwaiti relations continue to grow in various fields, marking 58 years since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries on Feb 28, 1968.

Ambassador Maryana made the statement at a reception that the Embassy of Indonesia organized recently to commemorate the 81st Independence Day of the country.

She started her speech by calling for a minute of silence in remembrance of the victims of the recent earthquake in Indonesia, expressing her deepest condolences to the victims, their families and the affected communities.

Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem, several ambassadors, heads of diplomatic missions, dignitaries and other guests attended the event.

According to Maryana, the second session of the Joint Ministerial Committee will be held at the end of November, in addition to finalizing arrangements for the first Indonesian-Kuwaiti Energy Forum in Indonesia.

She expressed her appreciation for Al-Mukhaizeem’s participation in the celebration, emphasizing that his presence reflects the strength of relations between Indonesia and Kuwait, and serves as a motivation to further strengthen cooperation between the two countries.

She explained that the Indonesian government chose “A Sovereign, Just and Prosperous Indonesia” as the theme for the Independence Day celebration this year. She stated that the two countries continue to explore new opportunities for cooperation in various sectors to protect mutual interests. She added that bilateral relations witnessed reciprocal visits by high-level officials, along with the signing of several cooperation agreements, including the agreement to establish a joint committee.

She revealed that both sides agreed to expedite the implementation of the signed memoranda of understanding on different fields, citing an agreement to hold the second session of the Joint Ministerial Committee at the end of November 2026, as well as finalizing plans for the first Indonesian-Kuwaiti Energy Forum in Indonesia.

She confirmed that her country continues to aspire for continuous rise of trade volume between Indonesia and Kuwait -- at least 10 percent annually,

while working towards a more balanced trade relationship.

She expressed hope that negotiations for a free trade agreement between Indonesia and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries will be completed within this year.

She disclosed that Kuwaiti investments in Indonesia’s non-oil and gas sectors reached around \$1.2 million in 2025 -- an increase of \$200,000 compared to \$1 million in 2024.

She added that Kuwaiti foreign direct investment (FDI) in Indonesia rose by 20.26 percent compared to 2024, and Kuwait ranked 87th among sources of FDI in Indonesia in 2024 and 90th in 2025.

She also expressed her country’s appreciation for the Kuwaiti scholarships offered at the undergraduate level and in Arabic language programs, hoping that these scholarships will continue and that the number of beneficiaries will increase. She said four Indonesians are currently studying on full scholarship provided by the Kuwaiti government.

She went on to say that the number of tourists arriving in Indonesia from Kuwait reached 5,166 by the end of 2025, compared to 5,090 in 2024.

She stressed that Kuwait is home to more than 6,000 Indonesian citizens, some of whom have spent most of their lives in the country, working in the health, oil and gas, hospitality, and manufacturing sectors.

She said the Indonesian government encourages the recruitment of skilled and specialized workers from her country.

Kuwait Sports Minister praises Bahrain efforts in developing youth capabilities



MANAMA, Aug 18, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of State for Youth and Sports Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma praised the Kingdom of Bahrain’s role in developing the capabilities of young people and youth, as well as the high-quality programs and experiences it provides in this field.

This came in a press statement on Monday by Minister Al-Jalahma during his visit to the “Gadeha Junior” training camp in Manama, which operates in partnership with the Royal Guard of the Bahrain Defence Force.

Minister Al-Jalahma was accompanied by Bahraini Minister of Youth Affairs Rawan Tawfiqi.

Al-Jalahma stressed the importance of investing in young people and developing



KUNA photos
Top and above: Kuwaiti Minister of State for Youth and Sports Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma during his visit to the “Gadeha Junior” training camp in Manama.

their capabilities from an early age through programs that combine training, challenge,



and practical experience.

During the visit, Minister Al-Jalahma and Minister Tawfiqi viewed the various components of the camp and its comprehensive training experience, which is based on challenge, discipline, teamwork, and the development of life skills.

They also observed the nature of the programs and activities undertaken by the participants, including challenges and practical experiences designed to develop concentration, quick response, and team spirit.

The “Gadeha Junior” camp targets young people aged 10 to 17. Participants undertake a training experience that includes a variety of programs, activities, and challenges designed to develop their skills, values of discipline, initiative, and self-confidence.

Mol advances digital changes to push up security efficiency

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18, (KUNA): Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lt. Gen. Abdulwahab Al-Wuhaib affirmed that the ministry is pursuing a clear development strategy as the foundation for its digital transformation.

Al-Wuhaib made the remarks during a briefing by the Human Resources and Information Technology Sector on its operations, key systems, services, and development projects, which was attended by assistant undersecretaries, sector heads, and security leaders, according to a ministry statement.

The briefing covered the sector’s departments and their services supporting the ministry’s various sectors and meeting their human resources, technical and security needs, as well as efforts to improve the work environment, enhance performance and accelerate and improve the accuracy of transactions.

It also highlighted the latest technological systems used to improve security operations and information exchange, helping expedite the apprehension of wanted persons, support investigations and enhance the handling of security cases with greater efficiency and accuracy.

The presentation further reviewed the ministry’s electronic services available through the unified government services application (Sahel) and plans to expand them, simplifying procedures, accelerating transactions and reducing the need for in-person visits.

Al-Wuhaib praised the efforts of Human Resources and Information Technology personnel, stressing continued modernization and integration of systems and services to enhance the efficiency and readiness of the security apparatus and improve Interior Ministry services.



Al-Wuhaib



KUNA photo
Kuwait’s Ambassador to Argentina Abdulaziz Al-Bisher presents his credentials to Chilean President Jose Antonio Kast, in the presence of Foreign Minister Francisco Macena.

Al-Bisher presents credentials as non-resident envoy to Chile

WASHINGTON, Aug 18, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Ambassador to Argentina Abdulaziz Al-Bisher has submitted his credentials as the country’s non-resident and concurrently accredited ambassador to Chile to Chilean President Jose Antonio Kast, in the presence of Foreign Minister Francisco Macena.

During a ceremony held at the presidential palace, La Moneda, Al-Bisher conveyed to the president the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the political leadership, along with their best wishes for further progress and prosperity to the friendly Republic of Chile, the Embassy of Kuwait to Argentina said in a statement early Tuesday.

In return, the president conveyed his sincere greetings to His Highness the Amir, stressing Chile’s keenness to strengthen the bridges of friendship and support for upgrading relations between the two friendly countries, it added.

During the meeting, both sides also reviewed their 56-year-old bilateral relations and affirmed their commitment to continuing to strengthen cooperation in all fields to serve the interests of the two countries and their friendly peoples, it noted.

KPC: Safety first, new plan to tackle emergencies

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: An official report revealed that Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) laid down a plan to immediately deal with emergency situations, emphasizing that the safety of its workforce is the top priority.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the report, stating that the senior management at KPC declared a state of maximum alert and activated emergency schemes, indicating that the operations and control rooms showed high organizational flexibility that nipped the recent crisis in the bud.

The report confirmed that the Kuwaiti oil sector continues its immediate and decisive response regarding the damage inflicted on some assets. It stated that the technical teams controlled the situation with utmost precision to ensure the continuous operation of vital facilities and the flow of production.

KPC focused on meeting the needs of the local market to maintain stable supplies and enhance the efficiency of field operations despite the pressing challenges.

According to the report, KPC resorted to activating the force majeure clauses within the approved contractual frameworks to fulfill its obligations before continuing to meet its commitments to its customers in international markets by redirecting supplies and developing innovative solutions that enhance the resilience of supply chains.

The report confirmed the bond of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries shone brightly during the crisis, amidst the exceptional challenges posed by the Iranian attacks on vital facilities.

KPC stressed that the Kuwaiti oil sector’s efforts extended beyond securing its own borders and dealing with technical damage, encompassing field and logistic coordination.

This cooperation manifested itself in bridging gaps and providing available petroleum products to support sisterly nations or facilities whose installations were affected.

KPC, through its Risk Management Department and in close coordination with other departments within the corporation and its subsidiaries, activated its business continuity plans. This ensured the sustainability of operations and enhanced preparedness to address potential risks, in accordance with the approved precautionary measures and plans.



Kuwait, Egypt, Jordan, UAE, Oman discuss region scene

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call Monday with his Egyptian counterpart Dr. Badr Abdelatty.

During the phone conversation, both ministers tackled the latest regional developments and diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalating tensions and promoting regional security and stability, said the Foreign Ministry in a press release.

Jordan

Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call Monday with Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Al-Safadi.

During the phone conversation, both ministers tackled the latest regional developments and discussed diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalating tensions and promoting regional security and stability, said the Foreign Ministry in a press release.



Bader Al-Busaldi



Sheikh Abdullah

UAE

Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call Monday with UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

During the phone conversation, both ministers addressed the latest regional developments and discussed diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalating tensions and promoting regional security and stability, said the Foreign Ministry in a press release.

Oman

Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call on Monday with Omani Foreign Minister Bader Al-Busaidi.

The two sides reviewed the latest regional developments and discussed diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalating tensions and promoting security and stability in the region.

‘Expedite hiring Kuwaitis for supply manager post’

Don’t recruit expat if Kuwaiti available: Co-ops Union

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: The Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies issued a circular to the boards of directors of cooperative societies to expedite the Kuwaitization of the supply branch manager position within the support staff, in accordance with the directive of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The union stressed the need to prioritize qualified Kuwaiti nationals for the above-mentioned position in line with the direction of the state towards increasing the number of citizens working in the cooperative sector, qualifying them to fill supervisory and sup-

port positions, and improving institutional performance.

It indicated that the position should not be filled by a non-Kuwaiti as long as there is a qualified Kuwaiti candidate, reiterating that qualified Kuwaiti employees in the cooperatives must be prioritized in the nomination and appointment process.

It added that if a qualified citizen is not available for the position, the cooperative society must inform the ministry about the reasons, so that it can coordinate with the relevant authorities to provide a suitable Kuwaiti candidate.

It set a 30-day deadline, starting from the date of issuing the circular, for taking the necessary measures in this regard and for informing the relevant authorities about the measures taken.

PAMA forum on care handling: The Public Authority for Minors’ Affairs (PAMA) organized a forum for those under its care, in the presence of Acting Director General Alia Fahad Al-Sager, as part of the government’s Family and Child Protection Program, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The forum aimed to strengthen direct communication with those under PAMA’s care, listen to their opinions and suggestions, and identify their needs, contributing to the development of services and improving the level and quality of care provided.

Al-Sager emphasized that the forum reflects PAMA’s commitment to strengthening direct communication with those under its care, listening to their feedback and suggestions, addressing their needs, and improving the services provided to them.

Deadline to submit bids for ‘school complex’ extended

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) extended the deadline for submitting bids for the construction, completion, supply, maintenance and furnishing of Al-Aqila School Complex, which is affiliated with the Ministry of Public Works, until Sept 13, instead of last Sunday.

The bids will be referred to the ministry for review and preparation of a technical recommendation within 30 days. The recommendation will then be referred to CAPT for issuing a final decision to

award the contract to the bidder that best meets the technical requirements.

Al-Aqila School Complex is a significant educational project, as it is dedicated to serving students with disabilities. It will handle six types of disabilities -- autism, Down syndrome, physical disability, intellectual disability, hearing and speech impairments, and visual impairments.

The complex will use the most advanced scientific and technological systems in the provision of educational services and equipment for disabled students.

MEWRE and MPW HQs repairs tender to SAB

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18 : The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy referred the tender for major maintenance works in its headquarters, as well as the headquarters of the Ministry of Public Works, in South Surra to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) for approval before awarding the contract.

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

It is worth noting that the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy previously obtained CAPT approval to award the contract for KD3.427 million to the bidder that met the technical requirements.



Jahra Governorate photo
Jahra Governor Hamad Jassim Al-Habashi meets Chairman of the Union of Specialized Environmental Institutions and Companies Dr. Ali Mohammad Khuraibet at his office in the headquarters of Jahra Governorate.

Call for mutual cooperation to mitigate pollution effects

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: Jahra Governor Hamad Jassim Al-Habashi met with Chairman of the Union of Specialized Environmental Institutions and Companies Dr. Ali Mohammad Khuraibet at his office in the headquarters of Jahra Governorate on Tuesday.

They discussed a number of environmental topics and issues related to the governorate.

They also talked about the ‘Environmentally Sustainable Government’ initiative, along with ways to coordinate efforts and leverage the capabilities of specialized environmental institutions

and companies to realize the objectives of the initiative.

The Governor stressed the need to strengthen cooperation with specialized entities and institutions to support environmental initiatives, mitigate the negative impacts, and improve the environmental standards throughout the governorate.

On the other hand, Khuraibet expressed his appreciation for the interest of the Governor in environmental issues. He confirmed that the union is always ready to cooperate with the governorate in relevant areas to achieve the shared goals.



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News in Brief

Beware fake messages or links

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: The Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) warned iPhone users about fraudulent messages circulating via iMessage that impersonate shipping and delivery companies and request users to update shipment information or pay fees through suspicious links, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

CITRA urged users, via its X account, to avoid clicking on these links or sharing any personal or financial information, and to check shipment status exclusively through the company’s official website or app.

CITRA also recommended deleting the message and reporting it as spam.

In another development CITRA launched the “My Numbers” service through the Sahel application, in cooperation with telecommunications companies.

In a statement to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Sunday, CITRA explained that the new service allows

citizens and residents to view the phone lines and telecommunications services registered in their names with various telecommunications companies.

The service aims to raise digital awareness and facilitate the verification of personal data, thereby enhancing transparency and contributing to the protection of digital privacy for all segments of society.

CITRA stated that the launch of the “My Numbers” service is part of its commitment to employing advanced technological solutions to provide reliable and secure digital government services.

Water to farms suspended: The Ministry of Public Works announced the suspension of treated water pumping to Al-Wafra farms for three days, from Tuesday, August 18, until Thursday, August 20, 2026, to carry out maintenance and development work, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Exit for traffic traveling from Sixth Ring Road in Jahra towards Kabad opens

Sabah Al-Nasser Bridge project nears completion after 12-year delay

By Mohamed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: The Sabah Al-Nasser Bridge project has reached its final stages after a 12-year delay, with the Ministry of Public Works accelerating construction and opening a section of the bridge to traffic.

Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan inspected the project on Monday to monitor construction progress, coinciding with the opening of a section of the bridge for traffic traveling from the Sixth Ring Road in Salmiya towards Road 604 (Kabad).

An exit for traffic traveling from the Sixth Ring Road in Jahra towards Road 604 (Kabad) was also opened in

cooperation with the General Traffic Department.

Work on the project resumed after a nearly 12-year halt, during which the ministry intensified its efforts to complete the remaining work and accelerate the project's completion.

The project's progress reflects the integrated efforts of the government and the cooperation of various institutions, with the support and directives of the political

leadership aimed at accelerating the implementation of development and strategic projects and strengthening infrastructure.

The Sabah Al-Nasser Bridge is a vital project that will contribute to improving traffic flow on the Sixth Ring Road and Road 604 "Kabad," enhancing the efficiency of the road network and serving residents of the area.

Continued from Page 1

The 'confusion'

Among the violations was the practice of placing married sons in their father's house, only for them to sell or rent out their homes later when the state allocated them houses for financial gain.

Some citizens demanded excessively large houses, resembling palaces, which added further obstacles to addressing the housing problem.

Although other Gulf states adopted the concept of housing welfare from Kuwait, they developed it according to the needs of the society as a whole, not individual desires. Other Gulf states established cities and residential complexes based on the needs of each citizen. Those who wanted to build a palace had to buy the land and shoulder the cost themselves. Those who wanted to renovate or expand their homes had to borrow from commercial banks.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar and some other Arab countries did not abandon their commitment to provide housing welfare. They offered the service through different tiers to suit various citizens and prevent the recurrence of the problem. These countries built integrated cities with all the services and expandable infrastructure.

Between 2003 and 2006, Bader Al-Humaidi served as Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Housing Affairs. He laid down a brilliant plan, which was endorsed by the then Prime Minister, HH the late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, and his Cabinet.

This plan served as the basis of the national economic development plan of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. A huge percentage of Kuwaiti citizens welcomed the plan.

Nonetheless, when the plan was presented, it failed due to the interference of some members of parliament, driven by electoral interests and desires. None of the dissenting MPs offered an alternative plan. Thus, the situation has been unchanged up to this day.

The problem lies not in the plans on paper, but in the implementation and

the construction of advanced cities with infrastructure that will serve the residents of the area for decades.

The provision of adequate housing is the foundation of social, economic and security stability. Unfortunately, some decision-makers, whose decisions affect the interests of citizens, have failed to grasp this fact.

The solutions we see now are like patching up a worn-out garment, as they are ineffective and only increase the financial burden on the state, while threatening the family and economic stability of citizens.

The solution entails returning to previously conducted studies, developing them further, and providing suitable alternatives for citizens who cannot obtain housing assistance.

Decisions that hinder social stability will only exacerbate the problem.

Settle traffic

He affirmed the continuation of traffic campaigns in all governorates and called on motorists to adhere to traffic rules and regulations to avoid the legal and administrative consequences of committing violations.

Also, the Operations Department handled 2,233 traffic reports, while the traffic patrols responded to 764 collisions and 144 accidents resulting in injuries.

Legal action was taken in all cases and those involved were referred to the relevant police stations.

Simultaneously, efforts were exerted to maintain smooth traffic flow.

Meanwhile, the ministry on Tuesday called for the prompt payment of traffic fines, emphasizing the necessity of settling any outstanding dues before the violation is referred to court.

It explained that referring a violation to the traffic court may result in legally prescribed penalties, including fines or imprisonment, as well as other administrative procedures, depending on the nature of the violation and the applicable laws and regulations.

On the security front, five individuals suspected of possessing narcotics

and four individuals in abnormal condition were apprehended and referred to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD).

Moreover, 50 individuals with expired residency permits, 14 individuals without official identification and 40 individuals who committed various violations were arrested, while 25 wanted vehicles were confiscated.

Kuwait doctors

and restore the ability to move.

The case required the removal of the tumor-affected components of the anterior compartment, including the muscles and tissues responsible for foot movement. This could have resulted in the inability to lift the foot and difficulty in walking.

After the tumor removal, the team performed the rapid intraoperative frozen section to ensure the excision margins are free of tumors before proceeding to the functional reconstruction phase of the limb.

The surgery involved transferring the peroneus longus muscle to the anterior compartment of the leg, along with nerve transfer and reconnection to restore movement and function. The extensive soft tissue loss was repaired using a surgical flap with microvascular perforating elements to provide the necessary coverage for the area and reconstruct the damaged tissue.

This procedure affirmed the advanced expertise and capabilities of Kuwaiti medical professionals in performing specialized and delicate surgeries, and keeping pace with the latest medical technologies and practices.

It is part of the ongoing efforts of the Health Ministry to develop healthcare services and localize advanced medical expertise and technologies.

The medical team included Dr. Talal Dashti and Dr. Khaled Al-Tarrah who were in charge of plastic and reconstructive surgery, Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Rifai for anesthesia, Dr. Nuseiba Al-Muhaisen, Dr. Magdi Abdel-Motaal and Dr. Islam Al-Desouki for orthopedic oncology surgery, and Dr. Salama

Saudi Cabinet

The cabinet also condemned Iranian attacks on commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz, saying such actions contravene international laws and principles, while it also hailed the formation of a multinational maritime defense coalition led by Riyadh as instrumental in protecting global shipping and energy supply routes.

Buckle up ...

The total amount of gold seized reached 855 grams of 24-karat gold, found in the possession of two Asian passengers during their departure.

In one incident, the customs inspectors got suspicious of a passenger while the latter was completing departure procedures, prompting them to carry out a thorough search. This led to the discovery of 353 grams of pure gold, cast in the shape of a belt buckle and coated black in an attempt to disguise its true nature.

In the second seizure operation, the customs inspectors found 502 grams of gold in the possession of another traveler, 340 grams of which were cast in the form of a belt buckle and plated black.

Moreover, a bracelet weighing 162 grams was found in the form of rings, which were plated with silver to conceal the true nature of these items and deceive customs officials.

The seizure reports are being prepared to pave the way for referring the suspects and seized items to the relevant authorities for legal action.

Filipino remittances

Remittances are crucial to the Philippines, a major global exporter of

Syria reopens

The reported action focuses particularly on individuals whose names have been linked to cross-border cases involving fraud, embezzlement, robbery, looting, and forgery.

Among the names mentioned are Shalati, Kazbari, Mazen Al-Tarazi, some of their associates, and others. Their records are reportedly connected to allegations of fraud, deception, and the misappropriation of funds, real estate, and other property. Measures involving the seizure of their funds have also been reported.

The development comes after years during which, according to the report, the authority of the judiciary and the standing of state institutions had declined. During that period, groups linked to the regime of ousted President Bashar al-Assad allegedly exercised significant influence at the expense of the rule of law.

The new Syrian authorities now appear to be making a serious attempt to rebuild state institutions and restore the country's legal mechanisms. Renewing cooperation with international law-enforcement agencies, particularly Interpol, is reportedly among the main steps being pursued.

Through this cooperation, the government aims to strengthen efforts to locate and pursue individuals wanted by the Syrian judiciary, especially those accused of committing crimes that extend beyond Syria's borders.

The reported move reflects a broader effort to restore the role of judicial institutions and address cases involving the alleged misappropriation of money, real estate, and property. Further official details regarding the individuals concerned and the measures taken against them have not yet been provided in the information available.

'Water security' tops AL agenda

CAIRO, Aug 18, (KUNA): Arab League (AL) Secretary-General Nabil Fahmy has stressed the importance of enhancing Arab water security amid drought, desertification and rising temperatures facing the region.

The Arab League said in a statement that Fahmy made the remarks during a meeting with Egyptian Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation Hani Sewilam to discuss ways of strengthening Arab cooperation on water security.

Fahmy stressed that addressing water scarcity requires concerted collective action based on enhanced cooperation and leveraging shared interests among Arab countries.

The two sides reviewed preparations for upcoming Arab and international events, including the 17th session of the Arab Water Ministers Council and the seventh Arab Water Conference, scheduled for October.

They also discussed preparations for the UN Water Conference in Abu Dhabi in December and the 11th World Water Forum, scheduled to be held in Riyadh next year.

The two sides agreed to continue coordination and consultation to support Arab efforts to address water challenges and promote sustainable management of water resources.

In other news, Arab League Secretary-General Nabil Fahmy on Tuesday urged the UK to play a more effective political role in stopping Israeli occupation attacks in Gaza and the West Bank, ensuring the delivery of humanitarian aid and supporting the two-state solution.

Fahmy made the remarks during a meeting with UK Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa Stephen Doughty, who is currently visiting Cairo, according to an Arab League statement.

Fahmy welcomed Britain's recognition of the State of Palestine, stressing the importance of building on the step to help halt continued Israeli attacks and violations in Gaza and the West Bank, ensure unimpeded humanitarian aid and enable Palestinian institutions to fulfill their responsibilities.

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Trump’s grip on adopted state tested

Florida holds primaries for governor Congress

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., Aug 18, (AP): A Republican attempting to become Florida’s first Black governor faces a crowded field Tuesday while Democrats wage primary battles for a reduced pool of left-leaning seats under redrawn congressional maps.

US Rep. Byron Donalds is banking on President Donald Trump’s endorsement in hopes of securing the Republican nomination and advance to the fall election. His opponents include Lt. Gov. Jay Collins and political newcomer James Fishback.

Democrats’ leading candidate for governor is David Jolly, a former Republican congressman who switched parties last year.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, a leading conservative figure who has clashed and collaborated with Trump over the years, is barred from running for a third consecutive term.

The primaries are giving final

form to a November ballot whose races will test Trump’s grip on his adopted state and Democrats’ ability to resurrect Florida as a national political battleground. Florida has moved notably to the right since Trump won his first election in 2016, though Democrats hope to regain ground from his slumping popularity ratings.

Two Democrats are battling for nomination in a U.S. Senate special election to complete Marco Rubio’s term after he became Trump’s secretary of state last year. Progressive state lawmaker Angie Nixon matches up against retired Army Lt. Col. Alex Vindman, a former National Security Council official who testified in Trump’s first impeachment case in 2019.

Meanwhile, Sen. Ashley Moody, the DeSantis appointee currently holding the seat, appears in a strong position as she seeks the Republican nomination with Trump’s endorse-

ment for the term’s final two years.

For Congress, Tuesday’s biggest nominating fight involves longtime Democratic US Rep Debbie Wasserman Schultz, former US Rep Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick and others in a redrawn south Florida district.

Wasserman Schultz, who is white, wants voters in the new, plurality Black district to grant her a 12th term. Cherfilus-McCormick is seeking a comeback after resigning earlier this year under a pending federal indictment and threat of House ethics sanctions.

There have been three elected Black governors in US history. Yet the 47-year-old Donalds is more likely to tout his conservative credentials than the possibility of joining that select group.

He promises to push tax cuts, overhaul Florida’s insurance regulations to lower consumer costs and seek greater price transparency from health care providers.



Florida Democratic gubernatorial candidate David Jolly, back center, speaks to voters during a town hall meeting on Aug 8, in Leesburg, Fla. (AP)

‘Govt populated by so many of economic elite presents potential problems’

Trump dwarfs predecessors in number of ultra-rich in second WH: report

WASHINGTON, Aug 18, (AP): Wealth, perhaps second only to loyalty, has been a prized attribute for Donald Trump during his second presidency.

The number of people worth at least \$100 million whom the Republican president has appointed to his administration is more than four times the combined total under the three previous presidents, according to a report from the consumer advocacy group Public Citizen.

It’s the numbers for the Trump administration, in the context of previous administrations, that stand out in Public Citizen’s report, published on Monday. In all, 57 Trump officials are worth at least \$100 million, including 17 ambassadors and the remaining 40 in senior posts across the executive branch.

Look no further than Trump’s Cabinet. Eight of its 23 members fit the category, notably Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and Education Secretary Linda McMahon,

both billionaires.

The president, himself a billionaire, has described his inclination toward appointing the ultrawealthy as deference to financial success. And yet, Trump, who owes his White House comeback to support from middle-income, working Americans drawn to his pledge to lower everyday costs, now faces a midterm election electorate decidedly less keen on his handling of the economy.

Presidents have long sought counsel from the nation’s wealthiest people and tapped some for high-profile administrative leadership roles. Likewise, presidents routinely reward wealthy and influential supporters with ambassadorships.

Among the most notable examples is Andrew Mellon, the aluminum, oil and banking tycoon who was among the handful of the nation’s wealthiest people in the 1920s and served as treasury secretary for three presidents.

The Trump officials worth at least \$100 million include Deputy Sec-



US President Donald Trump talks to reporters after arriving on Air Force One on Aug 11, at Joint Base Andrews, Md. (AP)

retary of Defense Stephen Feinberg and Small Business Administration Administrator Kelly Loeffler, who are also billionaires, and Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and special

envoy Steve Witkoff, both worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

By comparison, Republican George W. Bush’s administration and Democrat Joe Biden’s each in-

cluded five members worth \$100 million or more. Democrat Barack Obama’s included three, the report states.

A government populated by so many of the economic elite presents potential problems, the report’s authors said.

“When the people holding the reins of government are drawn overwhelmingly from the ranks of the ultra-rich, it leads to misplaced incentives and corruption, and begs the question, ‘Whose interests they are truly serving?’” said Lisa Gilbert, Public Citizen’s co-president.

The list does not include Trump, whose net worth Forbes estimates at more than \$6 billion. Nor does it include space and social media giant Elon Musk, who advised Trump last year on an effort to reduce the federal government’s size, scope and workforce and is the world’s wealthiest person, with a net worth Forbes estimates at about \$860 billion.

Trump’s views are well estab-

lished: Financial success is evidence of executive mastery and negotiating strength.

“They have great competence, those people. Incredible competence. Some of the smartest business leaders,” Trump said last year in explaining why he put considerable weight on advice from business executives.

He has also pointed to investments by wealthy people as a signal of future economic growth. To encourage billionaires to deliver, Trump, in his first year back in the White House, pursued policies on artificial intelligence and financial regulation that could benefit wealthy people, along with tax cuts and reduced regulatory burdens for large-scale investments.

Still, last month, only 32% of US adults approved of Trump’s handling of the economy, down from 40% at the beginning of his second term and as his Republican Party faces headwinds in its attempt to hold both majorities in Congress in November.



Aerial view of the village center of Kandersteg, Switzerland on Aug 4. (AP)

Looming rock collapse threatens Swiss village as thawing permafrost destabilizes Alps

KANDERSTEG, Switzerland, Aug 18, (AP): An unstable mountain rock formation looming above the Swiss village of Kandersteg threatens a landslide that could rival the disaster that destroyed nearby Blatten last year, a collapse scientists linked to thawing permafrost and glacier dynamics.

The 1,300 residents of Kandersteg, in Switzerland’s Bern canton, live amid a quintessential Alpine landscape of sharp peaks, white glaciers, steep green valleys and the distant sound of cowbells.

But a catastrophe looms over the quiet village: a mountainside rock formation called Spitze Stei, part of a mountain landscape increasingly affected by thawing permafrost, threatens to collapse into the valley in a massive landslide.

“You are aware that it’s happening, but not afraid,” said Brigitte Jüni, an inhabitant of Kandersteg. She said authorities took all the precautions they could.

“But then it’s nature. It’s nature and you never know,” Jüni added.

As glaciers and permafrost - the frozen soil sediment and rock that acts like a glue holding mountains together - melt due to higher temperatures caused by climate change, the threat of landslides is rising in the Swiss Alps.

In May 2025, a huge mass of rock and ice from a glacier thundered down the mountainside in the nearby Lotschental valley, sending plumes of dust skyward and coating with mud nearly all of Blatten, which had been evacuated earlier as a precaution.

Markus Stoffel, professor for climate change and natural risks at the University of Geneva, said climate change leads to the melting of both glaciers and permafrost.

“In the mountains and in the unconsolidated debris, there is lots of ice,” Stoffel said. “Once this ice is melting, it acts like a cement. These mountain slopes will become increasingly unstable.”

Locals in Kandersteg say their situation is different from Blatten and that preparations made already allow them to live calmly.

“This isn’t the same case as in Blatten. It’s a different situation,” said local resident Rudolf Isler. “We are not afraid of the Spitzstei rock. It’s been many years seeing

stones falling from up there. The problem here is about global warming and rising temperatures.”

If the entire unstable section of the Spitzstei - estimated at roughly 15--20 million cubic meters - were to collapse, it would trigger a massive natural disaster. But the rock is under constant monitoring, evacuation plans are prepared and experts say the rock is more likely to break down gradually than in one huge chunk.

Nathan Solothurnmann, a climate and energy expert for Greenpeace Switzerland, says that climate change means landslides or avalanches will become more common.

“Maybe even one day we will have to abandon certain valleys or certain villages because it’s becoming impossible to live there,” Solothurnmann said. “Or the measure you will need to take to protect infrastructure is so expensive, the efforts are so big, that it’s not worthwhile anymore living there.”

Also:

SOURBRODT, Belgium: One of Belgium’s biggest ever wildfires blazed out of control Monday even as cooler weather and rain in the morning eased conditions for hundreds of firefighters in remote and hilly countryside. In Greece, a fire briefly flared up near the main airport on the outskirts of Athens.

A forest ranger said the fire in Belgium could continue for months underground in peaty soil and sporadically flare up.

Europe is sweltering through one of its hottest and driest summers on record, which a recent study said was fueled by climate change.

Belgium’s **King Philippe** interrupted his summer vacation to visit emergency services fighting the wildfire in the eastern High Fens, about eight kilometers (five miles) from the **German** border, as it spread east after moving into a pine forest on Sunday.

The fire in **Liege** province has burned an estimated 30 square kilometers (about 12 square miles), leaving blackened trees and smoldering ground.

While the fire did not significantly grow, due in part to favorable winds, it remained out of control in areas inaccessible to ground crews, the Wallonia region said in an update.

Ukraine aims drone blitz at Moscow as Russian missiles kill 10 in village

KYIV, Ukraine, Aug 18, (AP): Ukrainian forces staged one of their biggest drone attacks on Russia since Moscow’s invasion more than four years ago, firing almost 800 drones just two days after launching a similar salvo, officials said Tuesday.

Meanwhile, a Russian missile strike on a village in Ukraine’s north-eastern Kharkiv region killed at least 10 people and wounded eight others as the barrage demolished homes, officials said Tuesday.

The warring countries are locked in an escalating duel of long-range aerial strikes. Fighting on the roughly 1,250-kilometer (780-mile) front line in eastern and southern Ukraine is restricted by large numbers of drones and ground robots threatening troop movements, and neither side is making significant battlefield progress, analysts say.

Over the past year Ukraine has devised and deployed domestically produced long-range drones for strikes deep inside Russia. Its drone technology has impressed governments and defense manufacturers around the world.

Kyiv officials aim to make the Russian public feel the war’s consequences and pressure Russian President Vladimir Putin into negotiating a peace settlement. Putin has so far shown no sign he intends to stop the invasion.

“Putin continues to drag out the war instead of accepting Ukraine’s realistic ceasefire proposals and ending the bloodshed,” Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said in a post on X.

Russian air defenses overnight intercepted 791 Ukrainian drones over a number of Russian regions, as well



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, fire is seen on the site of a Russian air attack in Pecheniy, Kharkiv region, Ukraine on Aug 18. (AP)

as annexed Crimea and the Black and the Azov seas, the Defense Ministry in Moscow said, in what was the second-largest drone attack since January 2025, according to an Associated Press tally.

More than 600 Ukrainian drones flew toward the Moscow region, where 180 were shot down, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyannin said. He didn’t provide further details.

Officials reported no deaths or major damage. Ukraine has increasingly launched swarms of hundreds of drones in an attempt to overwhelm Russian air defenses.

In the Moscow region that surrounds but doesn’t include the Russian capital, three people were wounded, Gov. Andrei Vorobyov said.

Three people were also wounded in the Ryazan region adjacent to the Moscow region where three private houses were damaged by the attack, Gov. Pavel Malkov said.

The overnight attack started a fire at a warehouse of Wildberries, Russia’s biggest online retailer, in an industrial zone. Ukraine has repeatedly targeted the company’s depots, which it says help supply the Russian military.

Wildberries said its facility sustained “insignificant damage.”

Coverage of the attack in state and Kremlin-backed Russian media was mostly muted, as is often the case.

Russia’s main television channels - state-run Russia 1 and Channel One - did not mention the attack at all in their morning news bulletins.

Europe

King Harald of Norway hospitalized: King Harald of Norway has been admitted to a hospital for treatment in connection with a blood disease, the royal palace said.

Harald, who is 89, was admitted to the National Hospital on Monday afternoon, the royal palace said in a statement.

“The King has been treated with cortisone for the blood disease hemolytic anemia in recent weeks,” the palace said in a statement. “This has led to fluid accumulation in the body that requires treatment in hospital.”

The statement pointed out that the king has been on sick leave for two weeks.

“His royal highness the crown prince is regent during this period,” said the statement, referring to Harald’s son, Haakon.

Harald has been in and out of the hospital several times in recent years. (AP)

US tourist dies by lighting on Mt Etna: An American tourist was killed by a lightning strike on Sicily’s



King Harald

Mount Etna while hiking Europe’s largest volcano following a period of intense activity, Italian firefighters said Monday.

The 29-year-old man from Kansas was rescued by helicopter after being struck Sunday evening in an exposed, barren area. He was later declared dead by medical personnel. His name was not released.

The man was found at about 1,400 meters (nearly 4,600 feet) in the Rocca Capra area.

Authorities have closed areas of the volcano’s slope to hikers due to the volcano’s prolonged activity - which forced the closure of the airport in nearby Catania for most of last week - but it was unclear if he was in such an area.

Officials said that more people have died on Etna from lightning strikes over recent decades than from volcanic activity. The last eruption-related fatalities were in 1987. (AP)

Greece helicopter crash kills 3: A private helicopter crashed Monday on the popular Greek tourist island of Sifnos, killing three people, Greek authorities said.

The helicopter crashed and sparked a fire in the Tholos part of Sifnos, the fire department said. The bodies of three people were recovered from the site, it added.

The identities of those on board and the cause of the crash were not immediately clear. (AP)

Situation under control

Student shooter kills classmate and himself at Philippine school: mayor

MANILA, Philippines, Aug 18, (AP): A high school student carrying two firearms shot to death a fellow student before killing himself Tuesday in a high school in a university campus in the southern Philippines where hundreds of students were evacuated to safety, officials said.

Zamboanga city Mayor Khymer Adan Olaso said the suspect apparently wore a body camera to livestream the attack at the high school on the Ateneo de Zamboanga university campus in his city. Two other people were injured, he said.

The suspect initially fired at a teacher but it was not clear if the teacher was hit. He then shot a fellow student, who died, before shooting himself, Olaso told DZBB

radio network.

Hundreds of students were evacuated to safety after the gunshots rang out in the high school building, which is in a secured campus, separate from a larger campus of the Catholic university, where its colleges and professional schools are located in the port city of Zamboanga.

A few hours after the shooting, police said the situation was under control. They asked parents and guardians of students to remain calm and follow the high school's advice and arrangements to pick up their children.

"Authorities are currently establishing the circumstances surrounding the incident," national police chief Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. said. The police "will provide



A guard secures an area at the junior high school building on the Ateneo de Zamboanga University campus following a shooting incident in Zamboanga, southern Philippines on Aug 18. (AP)

verified information as appropriate and appeals to the public to refrain from sharing unconfirmed reports, photos, or videos that may cause unnecessary concern."

The national police "assure the public that the safety and well-being of the school community remain a priority. We thank the school administration, parents, guardians, and the community for their patience, cooperation and understanding as authorities continue to manage the situation," Nartatez said.

The shooting happened despite police assurances that security in schools across the country would be strengthened after a shooting in June in which three high school students were killed and at least 20 others were wounded in central Tacloban city. Police arrested two

students, ages 14 and 15, accused of carrying out that shooting.

Crimes involving the use of firearms are prevalent in the Philippines, partly due to the proliferation of unlicensed firearms, but school shootings are relatively rare.

The shooting in the Philippines also occurred less than two weeks after a school shooting in Thailand.

Thailand's Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul took steps to restrict guns in the Southeast Asian country after a 14-year-old boy killed his grandparents, five school staff members and a 12-year-old girl in Nonthaburi province outside Bangkok.

Thailand's high rate of gun ownership is second only to Pakistan in Asia, and far surpasses its Southeast Asian neighbors.

South Korea president stresses US alliance as many baffled by Trump order to cut exercises

SEOUL, South Korea, Aug 18, (AP): South Korea's president said Tuesday a solid alliance with the United States underpins national security, after U.S. President Donald Trump's abrupt order to "substantially reduce" joint military exercises left many many South Koreans baffled and concerned.

Trump made the surprise announcement in a social media post just before US and South Korean soldiers began Monday's annual Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises, which are largely designed to sharpen readiness against North Korean threats.

Trump cited what he said was a good relationship with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and South Korea's refusal to join the U.S. war against Iran.

Trump's move was apparently taken without consultations with South Korea and meant to reach out to Kim, deepening concerns about the reliability of the U.S.-South Korean alliance forged in the turmoil of the 1950-53 Korean War.

A weakening of the US defense commitment could shake South Korea's national security as it has no nuclear weapons and is under the US



South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, (center), speaks during a cabinet meeting at the presidential office in Seoul, South Korea on Aug 18. (AP)

"nuclear umbrella" protection, which guarantees a devastating American response in the event of an attack on its ally by nuclear-armed North Korea. The US has about 28,500 troops in South Korea.

Confidence in the US has already eroded among many South Koreans because of Trump's tariff war and last year's immigration raid in the US state

of Georgia that led to the detention of hundreds of South Korean workers.

Trump's announcement "reveals the stark reality of a faltering Korea-U.S. alliance, fueling public anxiety," South Korea's Hankook Ilbo newspaper said in an editorial Tuesday. "It's absurd that the U.S. appears to treat North Korea more respectfully than its ally South Korea."

In a regular Cabinet meeting, South Korean President Lee Jae Myung stressed the importance of a firm military alliance with the US, saying that "national security will be further strengthened when the alliance is solid."

"When we build up our strengths, our value and importance as an ally will further grow," said Lee, a liberal who has called for a stronger, self-reliant defense posture.

It was unclear which parts of the 11-day South Korea-US exercises were being downsized. The South Korean and US militaries earlier said their drills this year would be similar in scale to previous years and incorporate lessons from recent conflicts such as North Korea's battlefield experiences on the Russia-Ukraine front. They also said the drills are defensive in nature.

North Korea's Foreign Ministry accused South Korea and the US of plotting more provocative drills this year and vowed to respond with "a new level of a deterrent."

Kim has shunned any talks with the US and South Korea since his earlier high-profile diplomacy with Trump fell apart in 2019.

Fear grips children after Indonesia quake leaves thousands displaced

LAMBA LEDA, Indonesia, Aug 18, (AP): Thousands of people remained displaced on the Indonesian island of Flores on Tuesday, three days after a powerful earthquake killed at least 68 people, injured more than 200 others and damaged thousands of homes. The disaster left many children struggling with fear and trauma.

More than 19,000 people were sheltering in tents, evacuation centers and makeshift camps after the earthquake struck off Flores early Saturday, damaging at least 4,500 homes, according to the National Disaster Management Agency. The quake injured at least 213 people and caused widespread destruction across the island, damaging 122 health facilities, 252 schools and 84 places of worship, the agency said.

The quake occurred at a depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles) shortly before 6 a.m. Saturday, according to the U.S. Geological Survey, and residents fled in panic as tsunami warnings were issued but later lifted. Authorities have since recorded more



Earthquake survivors carry relief goods in North Lamba Leda, East Nusa Tenggara province, Indonesia on Aug 18. (AP)

than 2,100 aftershocks into Tuesday, though only 70 were felt by residents.

An aftershock that struck during an interview Tuesday prompted Vincentius Rano and his wife to instinctively duck and cover their heads. Nearby, their daughter began crying, a reminder of the fear that continues to haunt many survivors.



Afghan Minister of Information and Culture Molvi Sher Ahmad Haqqani addresses delegates during a meeting opening celebrations marking the fifth anniversary of the US withdrawal and the Taliban's return to power, at Loya Jirga Hall in Kabul, Afghanistan on Aug 15. (AP)

Grenade attack near school in Afghan capital wounds numerous kids: authorities

KABUL, Afghanistan, Aug 18, (Agencies): A hand grenade attack near a school in the Afghan capital Kabul on Monday afternoon wounded multiple children, authorities said.

Kabul police spokesman Khalid Zadrán said late Monday that "a number of children" had been wounded, and said an investigation was underway. He did not provide further details.

Richard Bennett, the United Nations' special rapporteur for Afghanistan, on Tuesday condemned "the heinous attack harming numerous children near a school" the previous day.

Afghan media said around 50 children were hurt in the blast, which occurred in a part of the capital populated mainly by the Hazara ethnic minority. Hazaras, who make up around 9% of the Afghan population, have long suffered attacks and persecution in Afghanistan. Most are Shiite Muslims, and they have been targeted repeatedly in the past by Sunni Muslim radicals like the Islamic State group, while they have also faced discrimination in the Sunni majority country.

In May 2021, a few months before the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in the wake of a chaotic withdrawal of US-led troops, three bombings at a school in Kabul killed dozens of people, all of them from the Hazara community and most of them young girls leaving class.

That school, like the one where the explosion occurred Monday, was in Kabul's Dasht-e-Barchi neighborhood, the main Hazara district in the Afghan capital.

In a social media post on X, Bennett said an independent investigation to bring those responsible to justice was essential. "Once again this mainly Hazara part of Kabul has been targeted. Deplorable!" he wrote.

Meanwhile, Taleban rulers and other officials gathered at Afghanistan's traditional Loya Jirga assembly hall on Saturday to celebrate the fifth anniversary of their return to power, touting what they described as restored stability and an end to decades of conflict.

A top United Nations official, however, warned of a grave human rights crisis in Afghanistan, where girls over

age 12 are barred from attending school.

The Taliban seized power on Aug. 15, 2021, as the US and other NATO troops withdrew following a costly two-decade war. The US withdrawal led to chaos at Kabul airport as crowds of people tried to flee the country in desperation.

Soon after taking power, the Taleban administration imposed a ban on girls' education beyond the sixth grade and later banned higher education for women, despite having pledged before the takeover that women would be allowed access to education, employment and public participation.

Women have also been banned from public spaces such as gyms and parks, from taking part in sports and traveling to distant locations without a male guardian.

At the Loya Jirga, high-ranking officials were joined by some foreign representatives and thousands of ordinary citizens for speeches marking what they said was Afghanistan's liberation from American forces.

"We pray to Almighty God to forever protect our homeland from occupation, aggression, wars, and insecurity, and to enable our people to enjoy peace, tranquility, and prosperity under the auspices of the Sharia-based government," the Taleban government's deputy spokesman, Hamdullah Fitrat, said during the ceremony.

Abdul Salam Hanafi, the deputy prime minister in charge of administrative affairs, said the Taliban rule ended an era of external interventions and internal strife in Afghanistan "over the past half-century," restoring security.

"At least 300 Afghan youth were martyred or killed every day," Hanafi said. "Three hundred sisters would become widows, several children would become orphans and 300 mothers would be grieving. Praise be to God, with the rule of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, this tragedy was removed from the Afghan nation."

There were no women present at the ceremony.

Five years on, the Taleban government remains isolated internationally, with Russia being the only country to have recognized it formally.

Zambia President Hakainde Hichilema reelected for second five-year term

LUSAKA, Zambia, Aug 18, (AP): Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema has been reelected for a second five-year term, the Electoral Commission of Zambia announced early Tuesday.

He was declared the outright winner of last Thursday's presidential election without the need for a run-off, having secured 61.4% of the 5 million votes cast.

According to the commission, Hichilema won with 2,965,326 votes and his closest competitor was opposition leader Brian Mundubile, who won 1,856,217 votes.

"I therefore declare, Hichilema Hakainde S, to be president-elect of the Republic of Zambia this 18th day of August, 2026," commission chairperson Mwangala Zaloumis said.

Hichilema's victory follows a closely watched election which saw the vote counting suspended last Friday and then restarted hours later under heightened security after the commission said there had been attacks against some polling station officials and some ballot papers had been stolen.

The government also confirmed that several leading opposition figures were arrested on the night of the elections, with the police accusing them of posing a threat to state security.

Mundubile said his home was raided by the police in what he called an



Zambia's President Hakainde Hichilema shares a light moment with journalists after casting his vote at a polling station in Lusaka, Zambia, on Aug 13. (AP)

attack on his life.

Thursday's election was seen as a test of Hichilema's economic recovery plan after the copper-rich nation was plunged into a debt crisis in 2020. Hichilema was elected in 2021 and oversaw the restructuring of Zambia's sovereign debt while reigning in inflation and stabilizing the currency.

International observers, including the European Union, said the election was largely peaceful, but said the "broader electoral process took place in an environment that limited

fundamental freedoms."

"Late legal changes, legal uncertainty, and unequal campaign conditions distorted the playing field," said Michael McNamara, chief of the EU observation mission.

In a pastoral statement, the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops expressed concern over the deployment of the army during the vote counting.

"The maintenance of order during elections is constitutionally and statutorily the responsibility of the Zambia Police Service," the bishops said.

Lat/Am

Obrador's son US visa revoked: Mexican politician Andrés Manuel López Beltrán, the son of former president Andrés Manuel López Obrador, said the United States revoked his visa, prompting an appeal to US President Donald Trump and criticism Friday



López Beltrán

from Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum, who called the decision "essentially political in nature."

López Beltrán announced the visa revocation in a letter to Trump posted on Instagram, saying US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Under Secretary Christopher Landau "ordered the withdrawal of my permission to enter the United States," despite having "no evidence against me regarding any immoral or criminal act."

The US government has not publicly disclosed the reason for the visa revocation, and it was not clear from López Beltrán's post what kind of a visa was revoked.

A US Embassy spokesperson in Mexico, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the case publicly, told The Associated Press on Friday that visa records are confidential under US law and declined to comment on the individual case.

Washington's decision comes less than four months after another setback for Mexico's ruling party, Morena, when federal prosecutors in New York brought a case against 10 current and former Mexican officials, including Sinaloa Gov. Rubén Rocha Moya of the ruling party, over alleged links to drug trafficking. (AP)

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Dominican Republic's decision slammed: Cuba condemned the Dominican Republic's decision to expel 10 Cuban diplomats and their families, calling it an act of subservience to Washington and its anti-Cuban policy.

The Cuban Foreign Ministry said there is no justification for the expulsion as the Cuban envoys had abided by the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the laws of the Dominican Republic.

It appears the Dominican Republic caved to pressure from the US government, which is working to isolate Cuba by undermining its diplomatic ties with countries in the region, the ministry said in a statement.

This is not the first time Dominican authorities have aligned themselves with Washington's stance against Cuba, said the ministry, adding that the measure would significantly impact Cuban-Dominican relations.

Despite the expulsion, the ministry noted that the historical ties between the Cuban and Dominican peoples, built on their shared struggle for independence, would not be undermined. (Xinhua)

Oil price up 14 cents to \$82.81 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18, (KUNA): Kuwait oil price went up 14 cents to reach USD 82.81 per barrel (pb) in Monday’s trading, compared with USD 82.67 in Friday’s trading, according to the Kuwait Petroleum Cor-

poration (KPC) on Tuesday. In global markets, Brent crude rose by USD 2.35 to reach USD 90.87 pb, and US West Texas Intermediate crude also increased US 2.10 to stand at USD 84.50 pb.

Business

Via the mobile banking app

The National Bank of Kuwait enhances customers’ digital banking experience with new suite of services & features

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: As part of its continued commitment to developing an integrated digital banking experience, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has introduced a range of new services and features through the NBK Mobile Banking App, enabling customers to carry out their financial transactions with ease, flexibility and security, anytime and anywhere, without the need to visit a branch. This step forms part of the Bank’s strategy to further strengthen its leadership in digital banking by delivering innovative, customer-centric solutions that provide a smoother and more efficient banking experience within an integrated digital ecosystem.

NBK continues to invest in technology and innovation to deliver advanced and secure banking services in accordance with the highest standards of cybersecurity and data protection, further reinforcing its leading position in digital banking across Kuwait and the region.

Kuwait’s First Fully Integrated Digital Loan Journey

NBK has launched Digital Loans, becoming the first bank in Kuwait to offer a fully integrated digital journey for applying for loans and completing the required procedures through the NBK Mobile Banking App. The service enables customers to apply for housing, consumer and auto loans with complete ease, anytime and anywhere.

Through this integrated digital financing experience, customers can complete their loan application procedures electronically, including uploading the required documents directly from their smart devices and using the digital signature feature. This allows transactions to be completed quickly and efficiently without the need for conventional paper-based procedures or documentation.

The service reflects NBK’s commitment to accelerating digital transformation and delivering innovative banking solutions that combine speed, efficiency and security, ensuring a seamless and integrated financing journey from the start of the application through to completion, while providing customers with greater convenience and easier access to financing solutions tailored to their diverse needs.

Kuwait’s First Fully Digital Zeina Account Opening Journey

In a further demonstration of its



Mohammad Al-Dakhil



Al-Dakhil:

- We place customer experience at the forefront of our priorities when developing any new service or product
- With Digital Loans, NBK becomes the first bank in Kuwait to offer customers a loan application journey completed entirely through digital channels
- NBK Introduces Kuwait’s First Fully Digital Zeina Account Onboarding Journey

commitment to developing innovative digital banking solutions for diverse customer segments, NBK has introduced the ability to open a Zeina Account through the NBK Mobile Banking App. The service enables eligible NBK fathers to open accounts for their children quickly, conveniently and securely, without visiting a branch.

The service delivers a seamless digital experience that enables customers to complete the account-opening process in just a few minutes while maintaining the highest standards of security and reliability. By eliminating conventional paper documentation, the fully digital process aligns with customers’ increasingly digital lifestyles and enhances access to banking services.

The initiative also reflects NBK’s commitment to empowering families to lay the foundations for a stronger financial future for their children from an early age. By promoting saving, financial awareness and fiscal responsibility, while instilling a culture of forward planning, it helps nurture a generation with a deeper understanding of sound financial management.

Enhanced Contact US Service

Customers can now access the enhanced “Contact Us” service directly from the home screen of the NBK Mobile Banking App, enabling them to connect instantly

with the customer service team quickly and easily, without the need to contact the NBK Call Center.

The enhanced feature provides customers with easier access to support and faster, more efficient responses to their inquiries, enriching their digital banking experience while offering a convenient and direct communication channel through the app.

Commenting on the launch of this new suite of benefits and enhancements, Mohammad Al-Dakhil, VP – Head of Digital Banking Channels at NBK, said: “This range of services and benefits reflects our vision of delivering a comprehensive digital banking experience that puts all customer needs at their fingertips through a single platform. These initiatives focus on simplifying the way customers conduct their banking transactions and access a wide range of banking services and solutions with ease, speed and security, all within a seamless and reliable digital experience.”

Al-Dakhil added: “Today, we are witnessing a rapid shift in customer expectations and digital behavior, driving us to continue investing in the latest solutions and technologies to redefine the banking experience and deliver services that are simpler, faster and more flexible. The NBK Mobile Banking App is the cornerstone of our

digital strategy, and we continue to enhance it with advanced features that give customers greater control, clarity and convenience in managing their finances.”

Moreover, Al-Dakhil highlighted that the new services embody NBK’s commitment to redesigning customers’ banking processes to make them more integrated and efficient, from opening accounts digitally and obtaining loans through fully integrated digital processes to accessing instant support services and managing transactions and electronic payments.

Al-Dakhil also noted that NBK places customer experience at the forefront of its priorities when developing any new service or product, explaining that these initiatives were introduced in response to changing customer behavior and the growing reliance on digital channels for everyday transactions.

Finally, Al-Dakhil emphasized that NBK will continue to invest in digital innovation and strengthen its technological capabilities, further consolidating its position as a leading banking institution in digital transformation. Healso reaffirmed the Bank’s commitment to delivering smart and secure banking solutions that keep pace with customers’ aspirations and meet their future needs, while maintaining the highest standards of security and reliability.

The Conversation

AI agent spent your money – can anyone prove you authorized it?

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

By Aashis Luitel

University of the Cumberlands

You tell an artificial intelligence agent, an AI capable of autonomous reasoning and multi-step actions, “Find me a shirt for less than \$30, but do not buy it.” The agent finds one - and places the order anyway.

You challenge the charge. The retailer shows the order came through your account. The AI agent provider shows your instruction not to buy. The payment service shows the charge. Each record may be accurate. But nothing in those records links the charge to the task you gave the agent to find - but not buy - a shirt.

A conventional chatbot suggests a shirt and waits. An agent can use your account, contact other services and complete the transaction. One sentence sets off a string of actions across systems run by different companies. Each company can verify only the part it sees. Settling the dispute takes an answer that spans all three: Did this agent, acting for this person, take this action within the limits of this task?

A Senate bill points toward the problem. Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.) introduced the AI AGENT Act, S. 5051 on July 21, 2026. It defines a “custodial user agent” as one authorized to act for a user in a transparent, documented, limited and revocable manner, and generally requires such agents to keep real-time records of actions taken for users. It also directs the National Institute of Standards and Technology, known as NIST, to identify protocols or develop technical standards for verifying that a user delegated authority to an agent and for keeping auditable records of the actions an agent takes.

But the bill would not expressly require a verifiable evidence chain across the different systems involved, from when a user initiates a task to the final outcome. In the shirt scenario, such a chain would link the user’s instructions to the agent, the agent’s actions and the records held by the retailer and the payment service.

A look at how a verification system could be designed offers some insight into some of the technical challenges AI agents are poised to introduce.

My doctoral research used years of data breach records to follow organizations over time. It depended on stable identifiers, which are labels or numbers that point to the same organization or event across different records. When the identifiers changed or failed to match, one history fractured into several incomplete ones.

An agent purchase has the same weakness: The retailer may recognize the AI agent provider without identifying the particular agent, and the payment service may label the same customer differently. Matching the user, provider and particular agent across those records gets investigators to the transaction - but they still need something to show that the user granted authority for that task.

In technical systems, a credential is data that a system accepts as evidence of identity or authority. Many websites use OAuth, an industry-standard security protocol for delegating authorization to access online services in a way that protects users’ credentials such as passwords. It generates an access token that an application presents to gain access to a protected service.

That standing authorization may have been approved weeks earlier. The application may still obtain or present a valid access token that permits checkout today, even when the current instruction says to search but not buy. The retailer sees a usable token and carries out the transaction. In that arrangement, the task-specific restriction against buying remains inside the AI agent provider.

For this kind of accountability to work, five things would have to be in place: a verifiable binding among the user’s account, the agent at a specific time and the task; limits specific to that task; verifiable linkage across the transaction; a check before each action; and records whose later alteration can be detected. Payment systems have begun assembling those pieces.

The first record identifies the authenticated user account that approved the task and the agent that received the authority. The retailer cannot rely only on the AI agent provider’s name. The provider binds the account, agent and task in an authorization record and digitally signs it, allowing the retailer and payment service to verify who issued it and whether it has been altered.

The AI agent provider also preserves the original request and converts it into limits that other systems can enforce. For the shirt task: search for 15 minutes, no purchase, no passing purchasing power to another agent. Before the agent begins, the user sees and approves that structured version. If the translation is wrong, investigators can compare the rule against the words behind it.

One way to create that linkage is for a task reference to travel with each request. It is unique to one job, encodes no name, account number or other direct identifier, and appears in every participating company’s record. Engineers already use a related device, a trace identifier, to correlate events from one operation as it moves between services.

The task reference links scattered records to one job. It does not itself confer authority. The task reference must therefore be bound to the user’s approved rule in the agent provider’s digitally signed authorization record. Because even a random identifier can link activity across services, it should be short-lived and visible only to companies participating in the task.

Someone then has to check the rule where the money moves. At checkout, the retailer validates the signed authorization record and evaluates the proposed purchase against it. A prohibition on buying stops the transaction even when the application has broader account access. A bank transfer or release of medical records could trigger fresh confirmation. Any authority passed to another agent must retain the same task reference and remain within the original limit.

After the decision, the retailer’s system records the agent, task reference, rule evaluated, time, decision and outcome. The payment service retains the same reference, and the provider keeps the instruction and approved rule. Each company keeps a tamper-evident record, so later changes can be detected. The user gets a plain-language receipt: “Your agent searched three stores and attempted checkout. The purchase was blocked because buying was not authorized.”

Google’s Agent Payments Protocol, or AP2, meets some of these requirements. It creates records that can show the user’s approved limits and the information presented to each participant when a transaction is disputed. AP2 shows how the evidence could travel. It does not decide who bears the loss or specify how long each company must keep that evidence and how it can be retrieved later.

NIST is reviewing comments on its February 2026 draft concept paper about agent identity and permission. It asks how an agent can prove its authority, connect that authority to a person and produce verifiable records.

Its proposed initial effort covers agents operating inside organizations, where greater control and visibility can be maintained over the agents and the systems they access. The paper excludes agents arriving from untrusted outside sources from this initial effort, though it says public-facing or individual agents could be addressed later.

Consumer agents crossing company boundaries represent the case NIST deferred. Each company keeps its own identifiers, authorization language and retention rules. A dispute can stay unresolved even when each company produces its records exactly as stored.

A dispute over a \$30 shirt might be easy to wave off, but the records can fail in the same way when an agent moves \$40,000, submits a benefits appeal or requests a prescription refill in your name. In those disputes, it might not be difficult to prove that the agent was allowed into the service. It’s another matter to prove whether you did or did not authorize the agent to do what it did on your behalf. (AP)

Boursa Kuwait closes higher, general index up 0.13%

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Tuesday’s session in positive territory, with the General Index gaining 11.77 points (0.13%) to close at 8,774.14. Total turnover reached 384.1 million shares across 23,681 cash trades, valued at KD 98.7 million (about USD 319.6 million).

The Main Market Index advanced 85.96 points (0.98%) to 8,861.92, with trading activity totaling 201.8 million shares in 12,946 transactions worth KD 41.5 million (USD 134.3 million). The Premier Market Index edged down 3.42 points (0.04%) to

9,210.86, as volume stood at 182.2 million shares via 10,735 deals valued at KD 57.2 million (USD 185.2 million). Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index climbed 121.15 points (1.16%) to 10,560.59, with 138 million shares changing hands in 9,021 transactions amounting to KD 31.8 million (USD 102.9 million).

The session reflected broad-based gains, led by the Main 50, while the Premier Market saw a modest decline amid active trading across both segments.

Grant Thornton assesses compliance with IIA standards

Warba achieves ‘Generally Conforms’ rating in external quality assessment for internal audit

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: Warba Bank announced that its Internal Audit Group has achieved a “Generally Conforms” rating following an independent external quality assessment conducted by Grant Thornton. The assessment evaluated the group’s conformance with The Institute of Internal Auditors’ Global Internal Audit Standards.

The rating reflects the maturity of Warba Bank’s internal audit framework and its alignment with professional practices, supporting corporate governance, risk management, and internal controls across the bank.

Key Assessment Highlights:

- Conformance Rating: “Generally Conforms” indicates that the internal audit function generally conforms with the applicable IIA professional standards.
- Independent External Assessment: Conducted by Grant Thornton, the review examined audit methodologies, organizational independence, quality assurance, and internal audit practices.
- Governance Role: The assess-



Warba Bank Internal Audit Team.

ment supports the Internal Audit Group’s role in safeguarding assets, strengthening internal controls, and supporting effective governance.

Executive Commentary:

Hanan Ghanem Hamadah, Chief Internal Audit Officer at Warba Bank, stated:

“Achieving the ‘Generally Conforms’ rating reflects Warba Bank’s dedication to international best practices in internal auditing. This outcome underscores the ongoing

support of the Board of Directors, the Audit Committee, and executive management, reinforcing the function’s independence and advisory role.”

Hamadah added: “Institutional excellence is an ongoing journey. We remain committed to investing in talent development, enhancing our audit methodologies, adopting advanced audit tools, and continuing to align with international professional practices

while delivering value to stakeholders.”

About Warba Bank:

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

Al-Musallam: Opening a digital bank account in Germany is now available via KT Bank AG app

KFH opens new banking horizons in one of Europe’s most prominent markets



Nehal Al-Musallam

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched a new service enabling customers to open a bank account in Germany via the KT Bank AG app. This move reflects the bank’s commitment to advancing digital product offerings, maximizing value for customers across its Group network, and expanding engagement with a broader client base. Commenting on the initiative, KFH Deputy General Manager Products, Nehal Al-Musallam revealed that the new service enables customers to access all banking services provided by KT Bank AG entirely through the bank’s app. “Users can begin banking immediately following a fully digital account opening and activation process, eliminating the need to travel to Germany or visit any of the three KFH Group Service Centers in Mishref, Al-Khalidiya, or Al-Qairawan. This saves customers time and effort while delivering a seamless, hassle-free, and fee-free digital experience,” she said. Al-Musallam added that the new service opens vast new horizons for varied financial solu-

tions in one of Europe’s most prominent financial markets. After opening an account, customers can benefit from fee-free transfers across Europe and request a debit card directly through the app, alongside a diverse range of other distinguished banking and investment services provided by KT Bank AG. She noted that this service aligns with KFH Group’s strategy to drive integration across its subsidiaries and reinforce a unified vision, offering customers a more seamless and flexible banking experience. It also builds on the Group’s expansion by delivering premium services in collaboration with KFH-Turkey, KFH-Egypt, and KT Bank AG. Service Centers It is worth noting that KFH recently opened three Group Service Centers at its Mishref, Al-Khalidiya, and Al-Qairawan branches. Serving both KT Bank AG and KFH-Egypt customers, these centers advance KFH’s goal of integrating its group units to deliver seamless banking services within Kuwait.

The Conversation

Why Trump’s tariffs are here to stay & who pays

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

By Kent Jones Babson College

President Donald Trump’s tariff announcements no longer cause the market gyrations that they did in 2025. But their sticker shock for American consumers is becoming increasingly clear - just as economic sentiment is souring ahead of the November 2026 midterm elections. Many business groups had hoped that the tariff wars would end in February, when the Supreme Court overturned Trump’s emergency tariffs. They got a rude awakening five months later, however, when Trump announced a raft of new import taxes to replace the levies that were struck down.

Covering nearly all U.S. imports, the advantage of these tariffs in the Trump administration’s view is that they’re more firmly based on existing U.S. trade law, beyond the reach of the Supreme Court’s review. And Trump has said he envisions enacting many more of these so-called trade law tariffs.

As a trade economist who has been following the tariff wars, I believe that the longer these import taxes are in place, the more the consumers will bear their burden. The 2025 “Liberation Day” tariffs that the Supreme Court struck down, as well as other levies Trump announced after the February ruling, turned out to be temporary. But the bulk of the new levies are designed to be permanent.

That means that for consumers, the total cost burden is likely to increase even if the tariff rates don’t change - because the new tariffs will be stacked on older ones.

On one level, Trump’s tariff fixation is a mystery. Tariffs continue to be unpopular, and it’s unclear why Trump would double down on them before midterm elections when his approval ratings, including on the economy, are so low.

But on another level, Trump’s embrace of tariffs can be understood as an instrument of personal power. He has long viewed them as tools for negotiating leverage, and he recently declared that U.S. tariffs “aren’t high enough.” The president also has deflected criticism of their impact on consumer prices by claiming erroneously that foreigners pay for them.

The simple fact is that U.S. tariff invoices issued by the Treasury Department are sent to the U.S. businesses that import the foreign products. These companies may try to absorb some of the cost to protect their market share and work through existing inventory. But eventually, the squeeze will compel them to pass most of that extra tax onto U.S. consumers - no matter which foreign countries are targeted.

And now that tariffs have had time to work through the economy, researchers have found an impact on prices. The Dallas Federal Reserve recently estimated that the Fed’s preferred inflation measure would have risen without tariffs at an annual rate of 2.3% in March, instead of its actual 3.2%. Meanwhile, an analysis by the Yale Budget Lab concluded that consumers are paying anywhere from half to the entire cost of the levies through higher prices, depending on the goods.

Trump based his July tariff announcements on three different legal justifications: a country’s unfair trade practices, like forced labor, which is known as Section 301; national security protection, or Section 232; and discrimination against U.S.

imports, or Section 338. The last is a trade war tariff dating to the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930. The new Section 301 tariff rates, which are global, currently range from 10% to 12.5%, but they could go up at the president’s discretion.

Section 301 has also opened the door to new country-specific tariffs targeted at Brazil, at 25%, while Section 338 was cited to slap an extra 50% import tax on certain Canadian goods. In addition, Trump has imposed levies ranging from 25% to 50% for specific products, covering steel, aluminum, automobiles, copper, timber, lumber and pharmaceuticals.

Yet more new tariffs are planned for wind turbines, personal protective and medical equipment, robotics, machinery and coal, as well as to combat foreign excess production capacity and support U.S. production of foreign generic prescription drugs.

With so many tariffs in the mix, consumers will be even more squeezed because many of these taxes will be stacked on top of one another. For example, Section 301 tariffs will be applied on top of the older legacy tariffs that date back to World Trade Organization rules setting a baseline Most Favored Nation rate, as well as on top of each other.

So if a country ends up facing tariffs based on forced labor violations as well as excess capacity, each at 10%, on top of a uniform Most Favored Nation rate of 3%, the total rate on all products from that supplying country would be 23%. And this levy will be paid by U.S. consumers, not foreigners.

Trump is especially interested in Section 301, which is meant to remedy foreign trade practices that are discriminatory, unfair or unreasonable, and that burden U.S. commerce. It sets no limit on tariff rates and lets the president discriminate among exporting countries. Furthermore, federal courts have typically given the president broad discretion in implementing the statute.

Trump chose to use this measure to punish virtually all U.S. trading partners on grounds that they failed to prevent imports into their markets that were made with forced labor. His administration based the decision on its own investigation that determined the U.S. is the only country that prevents forced labor imports.

These tariffs were set at 12.5% for countries without any formal prohibition on forced labor imports, and 10% for all other countries with such a prohibition. These tariffs are similar in scope and impact to the earlier Liberation Day tariffs.

Twenty-five U.S. states then challenged these levies at the U.S. Court of International Trade, using similar reasoning as the Supreme Court when it struck down the emergency tariffs on grounds that they were an unconstitutional tax on U.S. consumers. Citing the affordability burden, the lawsuit claims that the Section 301 tariffs do the same thing. Nor did the administration offer any indication of how the tariffs were calculated and when, if ever, they would be removed.

The lawsuit further alleges that the new tariffs go far beyond the original purpose of Section 301, which is to open specific markets to U.S. exports through negotiated policy reforms, not to impose global tariffs with no clear goal in sight.

Whether this legal challenge will succeed depends in part on whether judges will continue to defer to the president on these particular levies, no matter how much they deviate from previous practice. And I believe Trump is counting on it. (AP)

US and Canada hold last-minute talks to stop Trump’s 50% tariffs

Section 338 tariffs: A depression-era weapon revived

WASHINGTON, Aug 18, (AP): The U.S. and Canada are negotiating in an effort to reach a truce on tariffs before a 12:01 a.m. Wednesday deadline set by U.S. President Donald Trump.

If no deal is reached, Trump has threatened to impose 50% tariffs on \$20 billion worth of Canadian products, ranging from hockey sticks to tongue depressors.

“We are negotiating,” Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney told reporters Monday, speaking in French. “The negotiations are very intense and delicate. This is not the time to talk about negotiations in public.”

Carney and Trump spoke by phone Monday afternoon about the ongoing trade negotiations, Carney’s office said, underscoring the last-minute push to reach a deal before Wednesday’s deadline.

The two countries have wrangled for decades over trade, poking each other over sore spots like Canadian softwood lumber imports and U.S. access to Canada’s protected dairy market.

Somehow they still managed to remain friends, allies and trading partners. Canadian soldiers fought alongside Americans in Afghanistan after 9/11. The 5,525-mile U.S.-Canada border is undefended, and nearly 330,000 people and \$2 billion worth of goods cross it every day; 800,000 Canadians live in the United States.

Trump’s belligerent approach to dealing with Canada marks an extraordinary departure from the traditionally cooperative relationship between the two countries. Trump has hit Canadian goods with tariffs - in a push to bring manufacturing back to the United States - and has repeatedly made inflammatory comments about turning Canada into America’s 51st state.

The Canadian public is fed up. A petition to expel the U.S. ambassador, a Trump ally, has collected nearly 218,000 signatures since July 21. It accuses Ambassador Pete Hoekstra of having “normalized” Trump’s talk of annexing Canada, among other things.

Nearly 72% of Canada’s goods exports last year went to the United States. And the Trump administration might be wary of imposing a hefty new tariff - paid by U.S. importers who try to pass along the cost to consumers via higher prices - ahead of November’s midterm elections. American voters are already frustrated with the high cost of living.

“I don’t think either side really wants these tariffs to come into effect,” said Ryan Majerus, a partner at King & Spalding and a former U.S. trade official. “There’s a pretty strong push on both sides to find an off ramp here.”

Majerus said the United States is aiming to get Canada to buy more U.S. military equipment, including F-35 fighters; to take part in Trump’s “Golden Dome” missile defense; and to give the United States more access to critical minerals, thereby reducing America’s reliance on tenuous supplies from its geopolitical rival, China.

The Canadians would like relief from U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminum as well as softwood lumber, which America says receives unfair government subsidies.

Trump has made tariffs the centerpiece of his second-term economic agenda. Last year, he imposed double-digit import taxes on almost every country on earth, justifying them by declaring the longstanding U.S. trade deficit a na-



Canada Prime Minister Mark Carney and President Donald Trump hold a press conference at the White House in Washington, D.C., Oct. 7, 2025. (Adrian Wyld/The Canadian Press via AP, File)

tional emergency. The Supreme Court in February ruled that he’d overstepped his authority, striking down those tariffs and setting the stage for the federal government to pay refunds to importers.

Trump immediately looked for other ways to rebuild his tariff wall. Last month, he imposed import taxes of 10% to 12.5% on 59 countries and the European Union - which together account for 99% of U.S. imports - for allegedly failing to have or to enforce restrictions on imports made from forced labor.

Then he reached back to the Great Depression to find a cudgel with which to whack Canada, one of his favorite targets.

Trump invoked Section 338 of the Tariff Act of 1930 to impose 50% tariffs on products that account for about 5% of Canadian exports to the United States.

Nearly a century ago, with the U.S. and world economies in collapse, Congress passed the 1930 tariff law, imposing hefty taxes on imports from around the world. Known as the Smoot-Hawley tariffs, named for their congressional sponsors, they are notorious among economists and historians for limiting world commerce and making the Great Depression worse.

Section 338 tariffs have never been used before. U.S. trade negotiators traditionally have favored another tool, Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 - the provision Trump invoked to impose last month’s forced-labor tariffs.

Section 338 authorizes the president to impose tariffs of up to 50% on imports from countries that have discriminated against U.S. businesses. Unlike Section 301 sanctions, no investigation is required. Nor is there any limit on how long the tariffs can stay in place.

In announcing the Section 338 tariffs, Trump claimed that Canada discriminates against American exports of autos, alcohol and cheese. Trump is angry because Canada and China were

the only countries that punched back with retaliatory tariffs of their own when he slapped levies on their products last year.

“If a country retaliates against us, we’re obviously not going to tolerate that,” U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer told reporters Friday at the Iowa State Fair. “We’ll take action. My sense is the Canadians, they want to have a more conciliatory approach, but we’ll see.”

The U.S. is renegotiating a North American trade pact - the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement - that Trump strong-armed America’s neighbors into accepting in his first term. The threat of Section 338 tariffs gives the United States leverage to seek fresh concessions from Ottawa.

“From Carney’s perspective, you need (USMCA) to be renegotiated,” said Christopher Gundermann, a fellow in the economics program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. “You can’t renegotiate it with a massive trade war going on.”

But the Canadian public’s furor over Trump’s policies may limit Carney’s ability to cut a deal. Canada could retaliate again if the new 50% tariffs take effect, potentially aggravating a trade fight.

Canada’s government “cannot look like it is simply caving to the Trump administration’s demands,” said Daniel Béland, a political science professor at McGill University in Montreal. “Making further concessions without getting something meaningful in exchange would probably lead to a strong backlash ... The risk is for the Carney government to make Canada look weak and, therefore, even more vulnerable to future trade and geopolitical bullying on the part of the Trump administration.”

Dominic LeBlanc, Canada’s minister for U.S. trade, met with Greer on Monday. He was tight-lipped afterward.

“The work is continuing,” he said. “We continue to do our job.”

Home Depot sales lifted by customers focusing on smaller projects, but sticks with previous outlook

WASHINGTON, Aug 18, (AP): Home Depot’s sales improved during its fiscal second quarter as customers focused on smaller projects during the summer months with the U.S. housing sector still mired in a slump.

Revenue increased to \$47.86 billion from \$45.28 billion, edging out the \$47.24 billion that Wall Street had expected, according to a survey by FactSet.

Globally, sales at stores open at least a year, a key indicator of a retailer’s health, climbed 1.7%. In the U.S., comparable store sales rose 1.3%.

“Our second quarter results exceeded our expectations,” Chief Financial Officer Richard McPhail said Tuesday. “We saw broad based demand across the business as customers continued to engage in smaller projects.”

Customer transactions slipped 1% in the quarter, but the amount shoppers spent rose to \$92.50 per average receipt from \$90.01 a year earlier.

Home Depot also announced on Tuesday that it is launching express delivery nationwide. The service will get orders to customers within three hours or less. It will be available

for a small flat fee in the U.S., with no subscription or membership required.

For the three months ended Aug. 2, Home Depot earned \$4.77 billion, or \$4.79 per share. A year earlier the home improvement retailer earned \$4.55 billion, or \$4.58 per share.

Excluding one-time items, earnings were \$4.92 per share. That’s much better than the \$4.73 per share that Wall Street predicted.

The Atlanta company has posted solid back-to-back quarterly performances this year though many Americans have struggled to buy a home. Despite the solid performance, Home Depot stuck with its earlier sales growth guidance for fiscal 2026 of between 2.5% and 4.5%. It also left unchanged its expectations that comparable sales will be flat to up 2%.

Home Depot said that its outlook includes tariff refunds, which are expected to partially offset higher fuel, energy, and other product input costs throughout the year. Last year, the company said that it didn’t expect to raise prices because of tariffs, but executive Billy Basteck said at the time that some products that were on Home Depot shelves may disap-

pear. The U.S. housing market has been in a slump dating back to 2022, the year mortgage rates began climbing from historic lows that fueled a homebuying frenzy at the start of this decade.

While the average long-term U.S. mortgage rate fell slightly for the first time in six weeks last week, it is still up from last year and borrowing costs remain steeper than they were a year ago.

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 last week.

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.

The company’s stock rose more than 2% before the market open.

What's On

SPOTLIGHT

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Bringing gaming and competition together for Kuwait's youth

stc hosts Fouz PlayStation tournament with 100 participants

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, organized the “Fouz” PlayStation tournament at its headquarters, bringing together 100 participants across 32 teams. The initiative comes as part of stc’s comprehensive corporate social responsibility (CSR) framework, which recognizes youth empowerment as one of its key pillars and focuses on creating unique opportunities to engage with younger generations.

The PlayStation tournament hosted by stc offered young gaming enthusiasts an opportunity to compete in an engaging environment designed around entertainment and social interaction. The tournament featured competitive matches across various games that brought participants together around their shared interest in gaming, while giving them an opportunity to test their skills and sportsmanship. The event was designed to encourage interaction between participants while maintaining the excitement and competitive spirit of the tournament.

Activities extended beyond the PlayStation tournament, with participants and attendees taking part in interactive games and different challenges held throughout the initiative. Competitions offered additional opportunities for attendees to participate, with prizes presented to winners and participants across the various activities.

Hosting the tournament also provided stc with an opportunity to highlight ‘Fouz’ through a direct and excit-



“Fouz” PlayStation tournament winners.



ing experience tailored to younger audiences. Participants were able to learn more about ‘Fouz’ and the services it provides while enjoying an event designed around one of the most popular interests among younger generations,

especially gamers. The event combined the digital experience with direct engagement, further strengthening ‘Fouz’ as part of the experiences stc provides to its customers.

The tournament also reflects stc’s approach to creating interactive experiences that keep pace with the evolving interests of younger generations. Digital platforms and gaming provide new ways for the Company to engage with the youth and create communities around shared interests.

In a statement, stc indicated that it aims to provide experiences that go beyond traditional forms of engagement with younger audiences by creating interactive spaces that reflect their interests and allow them to participate, enjoy and connect with others. The ‘Fouz’ PlayStation tournament represents one of these experiences, bringing together entertainment and competition while giving young people an opportunity to enjoy their passion for gaming in an environment that connects them with others who share their interests.

stc also highlighted that the gaming sector continues to grow rapidly and has become an important part of the interests and culture of younger generations. The Company will therefore continue to develop innovative initiatives and experiences that keep pace with these evolving interests, allowing stc to engage with the youth in ways that are more closely connected to their interests and everyday experiences.

stc continues its efforts to support and empower youth through programs, initiatives and experiences aimed at strengthening their participation, developing their skills and creating new opportunities for engagement. These efforts reflect the Company’s commitment to its role as an active partner in the community and its continued focus on creating a positive and sustainable impact.

Supporting Kuwait’s healthcare sector & community giving

‘talabat’ hosts employee blood donation drive in partnership with Kuwait Central Blood Bank

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: As part of its ongoing commitment to supporting the community and fostering a culture of giving among its employees, talabat, the leading everyday app in Middle East & North Africa (MENA), organized a blood donation drive for its employees in partnership with Kuwait Central Blood Bank. The initiative, which took place at the company’s headquarters, formed part of talabat’s broader corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts.

Commenting on the initiative, Salma Hassan, Manager – People Operations at talabat Kuwait, said: “At talabat, we believe that creating a positive impact begins from within the company, with our employees, and extends to the commu-



talabat Blood Drive

nity we serve. We were pleased to see the strong response to the blood donation drive, which reflects the spirit of giving and responsibility that we are committed to embedding as an integral part of our corporate culture.”

The blood drive saw the participation of a large number of employees, who came together to donate blood in support of hospitals and patients across Kuwait.

Through efforts like these, talabat continues to foster social responsibility across its workforce while strengthening its collaboration with trusted national institutions to champion humanitarian initiatives. This reflects the company’s broader vision of contributing to society through purposeful action.

IMA Kuwait conducts AI training workshop

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: Indian Muslim Association (IMA), under the patronage of Ministry of Islamic Affairs (Foreign Relations Department), Kuwait, through its Human Resources Development Department (HRD), successfully conducted an AI Training Workshop on Friday, 14 August 2026 at Masjid Al Kabir, Kuwait.

Theme

“Master AI for Productivity, Media & Islamic Knowledge”

The workshop provided participants with a practical and balanced understanding of Artificial Intelligence through four key sessions:

AI, Ethics & Society

Mr. Mohammed Umar Falahi – President, IMA Kuwait

Exploring AI from an Islamic ethical perspective, including human dignity, privacy, accountability, and social responsibility.

AI for Productivity & Work Efficiency

Mr. Waleed Umari – General Secretary, IMA Kuwait

Practical applications of Generative AI, prompt engineering, research, writing, planning, summarization, and workplace productivity.

AI in Media & Content Creation

Mr. Jafar Sadik – Ex General Secretary, IMA Kuwait

Exploring AI tools for graphics, presentations, videos, audio, social media, and digital communication.

Islamic Knowledge & AI

Mr. Saleh – NAF President

Understanding the role of AI in Qur’an, Hadith and Fiqh research, with emphasis on verification, authentic sources, and the guidance of

qualified Ulama.

Key Message

The workshop emphasized that AI should be used as a powerful supportive tool – not as a replacement for human responsibility, creativity, or authentic Islamic scholarship.

The program encouraged participants to Learn • Apply • Create • Explore • Empower through the responsible and ethical use of emerging technologies.

IMA Kuwait extends its sincere appreciation to the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, resource persons, organizers, volunteers, coordinators, and all participants for their valuable contribution to the success of the workshop.

Organized by:

HRD – IMA Kuwait
Organizer: Mr. AbulEfhām– South Zone Coordinator, HRD
Convenor: Mr. DawoodAbsami– North Zone Coordinator, HRD

IMA Kuwait, an Indian socio-religious organization, operates under the patronage of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs Kuwait. It focuses on providing a platform for the spiritual and social enhancement of expatriates living in Kuwait through various programs and social gatherings. It looks forward to organizing more beneficial programs in the future, catering to the needs of the expatriate community, especially the Indian diaspora.

For more information, please contact:

66466479 | 60001424
pr@imakuwait.org
www.imakuwait.org
Instagram: @ima.kuwait | YouTube: IMA Kuwait TV

Over 160 donors answer PAK Donors’ call in Kuwait

PAK Donors organizes 34th Blood Drive in Jabriya

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: PAK Donors successfully organized its 34th Blood Donation Drive at the Central Blood Bank, Jabriya, continuing its longstanding commitment to serving humanity through voluntary blood donation.

The drive received an overwhelming response from the community,

with more than 160 donors registering to donate blood, once again demonstrating the spirit of compassion, unity, and social responsibility that has remained at the heart of PAK Donors’ mission.

The event was honored by the distinguished presence of Mr. Khalid Al-Rashidi, Director of Public Rela-

tions at the Farwaniya Governor’s Office; Mr. Hamza Touqir from the Embassy of Pakistan; and Eng. Mahmood Razouk, Managing Director of Al Ahlia Integrated. Their presence added great honor and significance to this noble humanitarian initiative.

The distinguished guests were warmly welcomed by the PAK Do-

nors Executive Committee (EC) team, who expressed their gratitude for the continued encouragement and support extended to voluntary blood donation initiatives in Kuwait.

Representing the female wing of PAK Donors, Female In-charge Miss Shaista Zahid warmly welcomed Madam Sadia Sultan from the Embassy of Pakistan and thanked her for joining and supporting the humanitarian cause.

Speaking on the occasion, Camp In-charge Mr. Hafeez Ullah Khan expressed his appreciation for the tremendous response from the community.

“The success of this camp reflects the generosity and humanitarian spirit of our community. Every person who came forward to donate blood contributed to saving lives. We are deeply grateful to our guests, volunteers, supporters and, above all, our blood donors who made the 34th Blood Donation Drive another memorable milestone for PAK Donors.”

In-charge Coordinator Mr. Abdul Waheed Jaber extended his sincere appreciation to all the distinguished guests, representatives of the Embassy of Pakistan, community leaders, media representatives, supporters and volunteers whose cooperation contributed to the successful organization of the drive.

He reserved special appreciation for the donors, describing them as the “Heroes of the Day.”

“Our heartfelt thanks go to every guest, media representative and volunteer who stood with us. Above all, our special gratitude goes to the real heroes of the day – our blood donors. Their selfless act of giving blood is a gift of life to people they may never meet, and it is their generosity that gives true meaning to our mission.”

PAK Donors also acknowledged the dedication of its Executive Committee, volunteers and female wing, whose collective efforts helped ensure the smooth and successful conduct of the drive.

The organization reaffirmed its commitment to promoting voluntary blood donation and strengthening the culture of humanitarian service among different communities in Kuwait. PAK Donors believes that every blood donor is a life saver, and every donation is a powerful expression of humanity.

“In Times of Need, We Stand Together Indeed – Pledging Our Support for Kuwait.”



Photos during the campaign.



Photos during the event.

Wearable whispers of Sadu



A participant carefully shapes a medal at Bait Al-Sadu, weaving traditional Sadu motifs into a contemporary design during the "Making Medals and Brooches in Traditional Styles" workshop, part of NCCAL's Summer Cultural Festival 18.

NCCAL workshop blends Kuwaiti tradition with modern design in medal-making

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18, (KUNA): With creativity and passion, participants in an art workshop held at Bait Al-Sadu (Sadu House) used traditional symbols and motifs to create medals and brooches with contemporary artistic touches.

The activities were part of the "Making Medals and Brooches in Traditional Styles" workshop, held as part of the "Summer Cultural Festival 18," organized by the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL).

The workshop was presented by Iman Al-Kandari and Dima Al-Merri. Participants learned the fundamentals of designing and creating medals and brooches inspired by heritage elements, using a variety of materials and artistic techniques to transform them into contemporary and functional works of art.

In a statement to KUNA, workshop presenter Iman Al-Kandari explained that the "Making Medals and Brooches in Traditional Styles" workshop is one of the workshops organized by NCCAL during the summer. The workshop aims to enrich the knowledge of enthusiasts of these arts and provide them with an opportunity to develop their craft and creative skills.



KUNA photos

Participants craft medals and brooches at Bait Al-Sadu, blending traditional Sadu motifs with contemporary artistic touches during the NCCAL summer workshop.

Al-Kandari said craft skills play an important role in developing practitioners' personalities, stressing that manual work has a

profoundly positive impact on the soul, especially amid the accelerating pace of life and the growing dominance of technology.

It is worth mentioning that NCCAL pays special attention to Kuwaiti heritage and is keen to promote its various components

through workshops and craft activities that use interactive methods combining learning and practice. This interest stems from NCCAL's

commitment to presenting cultural heritage in a simplified manner and transforming it into contemporary works of art.

'Niulai' defies odds: Scathing reviews fuel box office boom

The new sensation among some Chinese moviegoers is an animated film whose characters appear to have been created with rudimentary 3D animation and have been described as "ugly" and "eerie."

But it is the scathing online reviews that seem to have prompted interest in "Niulai," an animated film about a calf who had a dream about himself growing up with the help of his family, driving a surprising surge at the box office.

The film earned only about 10,000 yuan (\$1,480) at the box office in the first 10 days after its Aug. 5 release. On some days, the film took in as little as 200 yuan (\$30) at the box office, according to Maoyan, a movie-tracking platform. The figure was exceptionally low, particularly during the competitive summer movie season.

But its box office surged to 8.2 million yuan (\$1.2 million) Monday, with nearly 300,000 admissions, according to Maoyan. Its total box office has reached 17.1 million yuan (\$2.5 million).

Red Star News, a local news website in Chengdu, reported that the film was made over five years by just two people - director Xin Yumeng and his mother, Sun Lifan. The Associated Press was unable to reach Xin and could not independently verify this.

Posters seen at movie theaters featured a calf, hand-drawn in pen without color, alongside handwritten slogans: "Come on over if you're into the bizarre" and "No refunds."

On Douban, a popular Chinese movie-review platform, viewers piled on with mocking and bewildered comments.

Among the most popular: "unbelievably terrible



A child looks at a drawing poster promoting a Chinese animated film "Niulai" on display with other movie posters at a cinema in Beijing, Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2026. (AP)

and eye-opening," "a symbol of the new internet troll culture," and "a must-watch for Chinese stock market investors." The last is a play on the film's name, "Niulai," which literally means "the bull is coming" in Chinese - a wish for a bull market.

Comments such as "over nine out of ten," and "awesome and highly recommended" are also among the sarcastic reactions.

"My initial intention has always been to play pranks on my friends," said Du Mingxi, a 19-year-old college student in Shanghai.

"If a friend asks me what I think about the movie, I'd say good and recommend them to watch," he said, adding that he successfully tricked two friends to watch the movie with him. Both found it fun, but one fell asleep during the viewing.

Du compared young people going to the movies to see this kind of film to the mysterious "six-seven" craze in the U.S., saying that some are just drawn to things they find weird or funny, with many jumping on a trend whether they get it or not.

"They are just the same, it is funny but hard to describe what's funny about it, and young people just love spreading these memes virally," said Du.

Despite the flood of criticism and memes, some viewers didn't mind the rudimentary production.

Zhong Jiaming, a vocational schoolteacher in Guangzhou, called it a rare find in an era when movies are often "visually exquisite and polished, but their stories can fail to engage."

"This is a movie for the young at heart," said Zhong. "It is simple and honest, like a bedtime story for children." (AP)

Gardening

Facebook post blossomed into nine plots and a thriving shop

Gardener turns neighbors’ unused yards into a growing flower business

NEW YORK, Aug 18. (AP): When Marisa Mender-Franklin walks through any of the nine flower farms she runs in Memphis, Tennessee, her first thoughts are of gratitude. Partly for the flowers and the bees, but mostly for the support of her neighbors.

That’s because members of her local Facebook Buy Nothing group shared their unused yards and gardens with her, allowing her to achieve her dream of owning a flower shop and working as an urban flower farmer.

“None of this would be possible without an immensely supportive community,” she said.

In 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mender-Franklin was a teacher planning her wedding. “I thought it would be fun to grow and design my own wedding flowers,” she said. So, the lifelong gardener planted “every square inch” of the tiny yard in front of her rental home with seeds and added pots along the walkway and on the porch.

The experience fortified her life-long dream of working with flowers, she said, “but I didn’t own land or have a path to owning land.”

As a member of the Buy Nothing group, she had noticed members of



Left: Marisa Mender-Franklin arranges a bouquet on Thursday, July 23, 2026, in her florist shop, Midtown Bramble & Bloom, in Memphis, Tenn. Right: Midtown Bramble & Bloom staff, from left, Courtney Sanderson, Chase Baltz, Marisa Mender-Franklin and Mary Carnes pose with flowers gathered at a crowdsourced garden plot on Thursday, July 23, 2026 in Memphis, Tenn. (AP)

fering unwanted furniture, household goods and other items free to people who needed them.

“Somebody once posted looking for a French horn for their kid, and within six hours, they had one,” she said. “If the group can do that,” she reasoned, “then certainly there’s

someone who has a garden they can’t use and would let me grow flowers there.”

In her post, she expressed her desire to grow and sell flowers, and promised to be a good tenant and provide the owner with weekly bouquets. “Within 5 minutes, my phone



started pinging like crazy,” she said. Within a week, she had received 40 offers of free places to grow flowers.

That first year, 2021, Mender-Franklin selected four plots. Members of the online group began dropping off cardboard and vases on her porch.

“People even volunteered to help

weed or plant,” she said.

Today, she runs her flower business full-time. She owns the Midtown Bramble and Bloom flower shop, oversees the nine farm plots of various sizes and employs 10 people. Last year, the business held 57 workshops, and provided flower

arrangements for 44 weddings and large events.

Mender-Franklin said she knows of similar land-share situations in other cities. She was inspired by the example of Sarah Nixon, who, from 2001 to 2021, planted flowers in neighbors’ yards in Toronto and sold weekly flower-bucket and arrangement subscriptions. Nixon also sold flowers at farmers’ markets and a specialty grocery store, and provided flowers for weddings.

She started her business, My Luscious Backyard, the analog way, by leaving letters of introduction in neighbor’s mailboxes that proposed the barter of land use in exchange for upkeep of their gardens.

“I was obsessed with growing flowers for my own enjoyment, and my own backyard was full,” said Nixon. “But I noticed some of my neighbors begrudgingly mowing their lawns and not seeming to use their properties.”

In Memphis, Mender-Franklin’s team transformed the lawns and neglected gardens into beds and rows of flowers. Along with the bouquets and other perks, the homeowners are able to enjoy flower gardens without the responsibility of maintaining them.

Album charts Carly’s emotional shift from defiance to resolve

Simon turns old demons into new songs

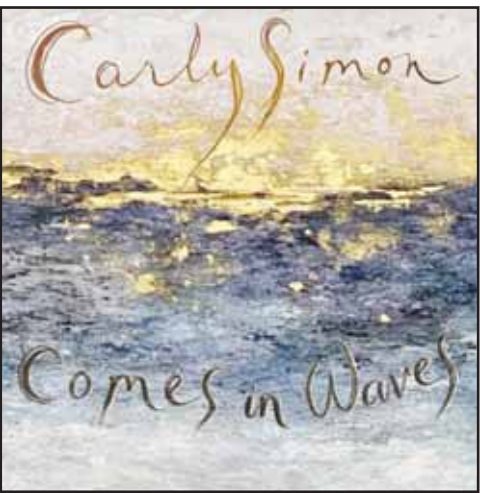
LOS ANGELES, Aug 18, (AP): On her first album with original songs in nearly 20 years, Carly Simon is still working on some old demons and still determined to outlast them.

“Maybe I never loved you / But anyway, I thought I did / I married you, we had a kid,” she sings in a ballad you could imagine Simon addressing to her ex-husband, James Taylor. “And maybe you never loved me / Although God knows you said you did.”

Simon announced last month that she had been diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease while recording “Comes in Waves,” and that she also had surgery to remove a cancerous skin growth. But this album feels less like an ending than a continuation of themes and events that have inspired and defined her from early in her career - yearning, discontent, desire, uncertainty, her marriage to Taylor and the loss of her father, the publisher Richard Simon, who died when Carly was in her teens.

“Howl” is the album’s lead track, first single and table setter - a midtempo rocker addressed to a heartbroken friend (or to herself?) whom Simon urges to “Get it out of your system / Bang your fists and beat your brow.”

The other songs unfold as if to dramatize the album’s title, as Simon’s mood shifts from defiance to regret to melancholy to resolve and a willingness to try again, a cycle cushioned (to a fault) by



This album cover image released by Iris Records shows “Comes In Waves” by Carly Simon. (AP)

the literal-minded production and arrangements of David Spencer, Frank Filipetti and son Ben Taylor among others.

“Comes in Waves” includes a remaster of Simon’s decades-old political song “Share the End,” and elsewhere echoes moments from her previous records. “Maybe I Never Loved You,” inspired by the late playwright Tim Mayer, feels like Simon’s

version of “I Get Along Without You Very Well (Except Sometimes),” the Hoagy Carmichael standard she covered on her 1981 “Torch” album. “The Father-Daughter Dance” suggests the pain of a ballad about her father from the early 1970s, “Embrace Me, You Child.”

Simon also teases courtship (“Peaches”); celebrates parenthood (“Mother of Pearl,” a tribute to daughter and “child of divorce” Sally Taylor); and savors life’s “wild ride” (“Love the Way I Do”).

The catchiest song is by a departed friend, the late Judy Belushi, widow of comedian John Belushi: “Four in the Morning” has a close-up, tip-toeing pace fitting for lyrics about an unhappy wife who slips away from her snoring husband.

Simon, who turned 83 this year, doesn’t hit all the notes of her best known records, but she has lost none of her gifts for taking hold of a melody, and putting her whole self into the words. Her musical journey has always been personal, and longtime Simon fans are the most likely to enjoy catching up with her. Others may feel like they had to be there.

“Comes in Waves,” by Carly Simon

Three stars out of five

On repeat: “Love the Way I Do,” “Four in the Morning”

Skip it: “Share the End”

For fans of: Carly Simon, most of all, and of pop torch singers in general.

Books

Homage to humanness

Gandhi’s new memoir reveals a life of love, tragedy and politics

NEW YORK, Aug 18, (AP): Sonia Gandhi has a memoir coming out this fall in which she will reflect on the promise and the tragedy of marrying into India’s Nehru-Gandhi political dynasty and on her own career in government.

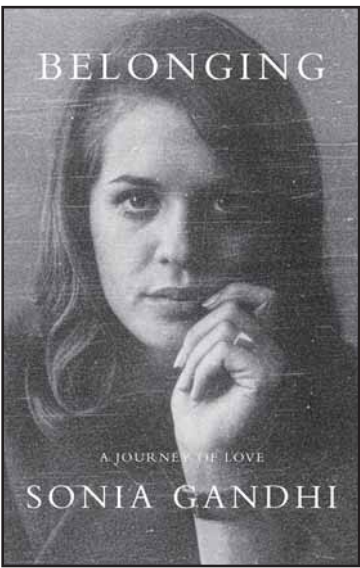
Alfred A. Knopf announced Tuesday that Gandhi’s “Belonging: A Journey of Love” will be published Nov. 10.

“Much has been written about my family, but few narratives were able to reach into the truth of their motivations, their actions and even their very human failings,” Sonia Gandhi said in a statement issued through Knopf. “In many ways, this book is a homage to their humanness. My story also offers readers a unique perspective of the social and political changes I have witnessed for six decades in the beautiful country of my belonging.”

Gandhi, 79, is a native of Italy who was studying in Cambridge, England, when she met fellow student and future husband Rajiv Gandhi, grandson of India’s first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, and son of India’s first female prime minister, Indira Gandhi.

In “Belonging,” she writes of her life being upended when her mother-in-law is assassinated in 1984 and succeeded by Rajiv Gandhi, who seven years later was also murdered. She too would eventually enter politics and become the longest-serving president of the Indian National Congress Party while also turning down her party’s offer to become prime minister. Her party lost power to current Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Hindu nationalist party in 2014.

“It was heartbreak and loss that threw me into the public world of politics. Up till then I had guarded my privacy fiercely,” she said in her statement.



This book cover image released by Alfred A. Knopf shows “Belonging: A Journey of Love” by Sonia Gandhi. (AP)

“Writing about my life did not come easily to me. It meant opening myself up, sharing moments and experiences I had always held deep inside,” she said. “Yet as I gradually removed myself from the political sphere and looked back at all I had seen, the thread of love and loyalty that wove through my story began to define itself, from the simplicity of my childhood in small-town Italy, to the complexity of my years in India as the wife of Rajiv Gandhi and the daughter-in-law of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.”

The Nehru-Gandhi dynasty remains active in politics. Both of Sonia Gandhi’s children, opposition leader Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, are members of India’s lower house parliament from the Congress party.

Mariama Ba challenges tradition

Senegal school gives girls path to leadership

GOREE ISLAND, Senegal, Aug 18, (AP): As a child, Ndeye Awa Diop was so shy she couldn’t look people in the eye.

Raised in rural Senegal, she learned to embrace what was traditionally expected of girls across the predominately Muslim West African nation. They should be seen but not heard. They should obey their elders.

But her life turned upside down when as a 12-year-old she was accepted into the country’s first elite boarding school for girls, on Goree Island off Dakar, the capital.

“So, here I am, coming here completely shy. I didn’t even dare raise my hand in class,” said Diop. She was homesick, crying. Over the years, the sisterhood of classmates helped. Now she is 19 and president of the student council, and about to graduate.

“I learned to be a leader,” she said.

Women in Senegal have to navigate a complex social landscape. Patriarchal norms are increasingly challenged by women empowered by progressive legislation that requires half of political parties’ candidates to be women and, at least on paper, guarantees women’s access to land ownership.

Senegal also has made enormous progress in girls’ education. The vast majority of girls are enrolled in primary education, at a rate higher than for boys.

But girls are more likely to drop out. Less than 20% make it through high school. As a result, for every 100 boys who can read and write, just 84 girls can.

“The current challenge isn’t access to school for girls, but rather the completion of schooling up to secondary level and, of course, the transition to the job market,” said Maissa Abdellaoui, a girls’ education specialist with UNICEF.

If money is tight, families tend to prioritize keeping boys in school, even if girls show more promise, experts say. Girls tend to skip school when they start menstruating. They are also more likely to get married and have children as teenagers.

Senegal’s founding president, Leopold Sedar Senghor, named the boarding school on Goree Island in 1985 after Mariama Ba, the country’s most famous female author.

Ba’s novels explored women caught between traditional upbringing and modern aspirations, criticizing polygamy, widespread in the country, and patriarchy.

She resisted the label of feminist, which she saw as a Western invention, despite being a lifelong advocate of gender equality and a three-time divorcee, which was unheard of at the time.

The school, which has a 100% completion rate, occupies a former French military barracks on an island with a painful past. As the western-most point of Africa, it was the largest center of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Today it is serene, with no cars

allowed on its cobblestone streets.

Only 35 girls are admitted to the school every year out of 150 who are invited to participate in an entrance exam on the basis of their grades. Tuition and boarding are fully funded by the state.

Through six years of middle and high school, girls undergo rigorous academic training. They also study art, play sports and attend talks with successful female writers, politicians and doctors - many of them graduates.

On a recent morning, dozens of girls in crisp uniforms rushed through the courtyards filled with bougainvillea, baobabs and palm

trees to the sounds of birds and ocean waves.

Their days unfold with precision: Wake, shower, prayer, breakfast, classes, lunch, more classes and back to the study hall before dinner.

This discipline is necessary to empower them to be “the female elite on which Senegal is counting heavily,” headmistress Ramatoulaye Diagne Sarr said.

In one classroom, 15-year-olds hotly debated a topic which, given the school’s location, felt anything but remote: the history of slavery. Their teacher, Paul Felix Thiao, guided the discussion with a satisfied smile.

“Often in society, we see that men tend to dominate women,” he said. But places like the school show that “if we give them more freedom, if we give them more opportunities, they can go far.”

Yet female empowerment in Senegal remains challenging.

Women own only 2% of agricultural land, according to the United Nations, and make up the majority of people without formal work arrangements. Under Senegalese law, only men can be heads of households.

“In Senegal, people’s mentality remains very, very strict regarding women’s independence,” said student Marie Diop, 18. “In fact, each day you are fighting a battle to make people understand that ... women have the capacity to manage, to be in charge.”

The headmistress said the school serves a model for girls “who are hesitating, who think it’s impossible to climb the ladder.” Yet, she said, despite the fact that all headmistresses in the school’s history have been women, the majority of teachers are male.

The alumni association plays an important role as mentors.

Matel Sow, the 27-year-old head of the association, came from a village in eastern Senegal and said attending the school was “a radical change.”

It took some convincing for her father to let her go, she said. Today, she is a graduate of the prestigious Cheikh Anta Diop university in Dakar and the University of Texas, and she works as an associate at the nonprofit International Budget Partnership.



Marie Diop, center, sits with classmates during a study period at the Mariama Ba School in Goree Island, Senegal, Thursday, March 12, 2026. (AP)



Ndeye Awa Diop browses the shelves of the Mariama Ba school library in Goree Island, Senegal, Thursday, March 12, 2026. (AP)

Variety

Oakland, Calif.: Opening arguments are set to kick off Tuesday in a pivotal trial for Meta Platforms in a California federal court.

Attorneys general from California, Colorado, Kentucky and New Jersey are seeking extensive financial damages plus changes to how the company operates Facebook and Instagram. Twenty-nine states sued the tech giant in 2023 over child safety and privacy - the other 25 will go to trial later. The company also faces lawsuits in state courts.

The lawsuit accuses the social media giant of contributing to the youth mental health crisis by knowingly and deliberately designing features that get children addicted to its platforms. It also argues that Meta routinely collects data on children under 13 without their parents’ consent, in violation of federal law.

“This week, we’re in court with the largest consumer protection lawsuit in American history. We’ll show a jury that Meta concealed what it knew about the harm its products cause young people because looking away was more profitable,” said Kentucky Attorney General Russell Coleman in a statement.

Meta said it believes it has a strong case. (AP)

□ □ □

RIO DE JANEIRO: Discord, the popular platform for gamers to communicate online, said on Monday it suspended its livestreams in Brazil after criticism that it failed to protect children and adolescents. The move takes place in the wake of a suicide case.

Brazil’s government under President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and the country’s Supreme Court have tried to regulate the use of the internet by minors, with mixed results so far, at a moment when countries, including Australia, Canada and Indonesia, are undertaking similar efforts.

The decision comes after Brazil’s national agency of data protection ordered the suspension last week. The U.S.-based company added it is in conversations “to seek a solution that allows us to reestablish those resources for our users in Brazil.”

“We remain committed to working with public policymakers in Brazil to help create an online experience that is safer for all, on Discord and across the internet,” said the platform.

In July, an underage girl in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul was allegedly coerced by other users into committing suicide during a livestream on the platform, putting the company under increased scrutiny.

Brazil’s first lady Rosângela Lula da Silva, known as Janja, said on Aug. 6 that the platform should be taken offline, citing the case. (AP)

Congo’s fast-moving Ebola outbreak becomes country’s worst with over 2,300 dead – govt

BUNIA, Congo, Aug 18, (AP): Congo’s fast-moving Ebola outbreak has now killed over 2,300 people and become the deadliest outbreak of the disease on record in the Central African nation.

The outbreak unfolding in one of Congo’s most vulnerable regions is the fastest-growing Ebola outbreak ever, with 4,945 cases including 2,325 deaths, according to government data released overnight into Monday.

It’s Congo’s 17th outbreak, with a toll that has eclipsed that of the country’s 2018-2020 outbreak when 2,299 deaths out of 3,481 cases were recorded.

The latest data shows 101 new cases and 33 deaths reported in the previous 24 hours. Over 1,000 people have recovered, while 730 remain in hospitals or isolation.

The outbreak has infected and killed more people at a greater speed than any other outbreak in history. The World Health Organization has said it is on track to surpass the 2014-16 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, the deadliest on record with more than 11,000 deaths.

Trish Newport, emergency coordinator with Doctors Without Borders, known by its French acronym MSF, said the limited community engagement in the outbreak remains a key challenge.

“The community needs to be aware about the outbreak,” she told The Associated Press, adding that people “need to be involved in the response, and they need to know what the signs and symptoms are and what to do if they get sick. And this today is not happening in every single place where there are Ebola cases.”

Starting from the first confirmed case, the outbreak reached the 2,000 death toll almost three times faster than in the 2014-16 outbreak.

Some families have lost up to 15 of their relatives in the epicenter, the Ituri province, said Newport.

“We rapidly need to scale up to be able to prevent more deaths from happening, more families and communities from being impacted,” she added.

There are no approved vaccines or treatments for the rare Bundibugyo virus responsible for the current outbreak across six provinces in Congo’s east. Trials for those are ongoing in Ituri.

Most new cases and deaths are being reported outside of the people being monitored. Challenges facing medical teams dealing with the outbreak also include strikes by some unpaid health workers, threats by rebel groups, anger from long-traumatized communities, bad roads making it difficult to reach all the affected territories, and misinformation claiming that Ebola isn’t real.

WHO warned over the weekend that the outbreak is still moving at an “exceptional pace” ahead of efforts to track it, noting that it reached a weekly record of 579 cases and 304 deaths in the previous week.

“A substantial scaling up of response activities is underway to get ahead of the outbreak,” the U.N. health agency said.

Experts believe the virus was spreading in the mining town of Mongbwalu as early as February - months before authorities declared the outbreak on May 15.

On Friday, U.N. humanitarian chief Tom Fletcher announced the allocation of an additional \$30.5 million and the deployment of 20 more staff to aid the response on the frontlines.

“This is a wake-up call,” Fletcher said. “We need speed, scale and solidarity before this virus gets even further ahead of us.”



Relatives of Angèle Muyumba Nsimire, a university student who died of Ebola, react at the Citadelle Clinic as health workers prepare her body for burial in Bunia, Congo, on June 12. (AP)

Health officials encourage parents to get children vaccinated

US school vaccination rates inch down yet again as exemptions reach record high

NEW YORK, Aug 18, (AP): US kindergarten vaccination rates inched down again last year and the share of children with exemptions rose to an all-time high, according to federal data posted Monday.

The fraction of kids exempted from vaccine requirements rose to 4.2%, up from 3.6% the year before. That’s an estimated 155,000 children nationally during the 2025-2026 school year.

It’s the fourth consecutive year that the national average exemption rate has reached a record, and the vast majority are parents withholding shots for nonmedical reasons. Exemptions increased in 41 states and the District of Columbia.

Experts point to turmoil caused by federal health officials.

US Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr was a leading voice in the anti-vaccine movement before President Donald Trump put him in charge of federal health agencies. In the last 18 months, Kennedy and other federal officials have repeatedly tried to revise and reduce childhood vaccination guidance. Earlier this month, Trump called for revamped childhood vaccination recommendations that promote his discredited theory that childhood shots should be spaced out into separate medical visits.

“The root cause of this is primarily because there’s so much chaos and confusion in vaccination recommendation systems in the last year or so,” said Dr. James Campbell, of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The CDC reported that 92.4% of 2025-26 kindergartners got their required measles-mumps-rubella shots, down slightly from the previous year. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the vaccination rate was 95% - the level that makes it unlikely that a single infection will spark a disease cluster or outbreak.

Vaccination rates also fell for polio, for the combination shot against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis, and for the first dose of the vaccine against chickenpox.

The rate held steady for protection against hepatitis B. But that’s a vaccine given shortly after birth, and it will take a few years before recent federal efforts to upend infant hepatitis B vaccine recommendations would appear in the vaccination rates of kindergartners, Campbell said.



Dr. Jessica Early holds a vial of the combination measles, mumps and rubella vaccine at Prisma Health Pediatrics in Greer, SC on March 18. (AP)

The vaccination numbers were posted as the US experiences its worst year for measles since 1991.

The numbers indicate that more than a quarter of a million children entering kindergarten are susceptible to measles, said Campbell, a University of Maryland researcher who is chair of the AAP’s infectious diseases committee.

Those at-risk kids are not evenly distributed - concentrations of unvaccinated children are higher in some places than others, which helps explain why measles waves vary in intensity.

The CDC data is coming out as school and health officials across the coun-

try are encouraging parents to get their children vaccinated as the school year starts.

“Back-to-school season is an important reminder that protecting our children’s health is both a shared responsibility and a shared goal,” North Carolina Health and Human Services Secretary Dev Sangvai said in a statement. “Vaccines help keep our children and teens healthy and in the classroom.”

In the past, the CDC has released the vaccination coverage data in its flagship publication, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. CDC officials usually speak to the trends and stress the importance of vaccinations.

But since the Trump administration took office early last year, the agency has posted the data online. This year, the agency issued a three-sentence statement that noted a small decline in vaccination coverage among children entering kindergarten and said: “CDC continues to encourage parents to discuss vaccination options with their doctors.”

Public health officials focus on vaccination rates for kindergartners because schools can be cauldrons for germs and launching pads for community outbreaks.

For years, those rates were high, thanks largely to school attendance mandates that required key vaccinations. All U.S. states and territories require that children attending childcare centers and schools be vaccinated against a number of diseases, including measles, mumps, polio, tetanus, whooping cough and chickenpox.

All states allow exemptions for children with medical conditions that prevent them from receiving certain vaccines. And most also permit exemptions for religious or other nonmedical reasons.

In the last decade, the percentage of kindergartners with medical exemptions has held steady, at about 0.2%. But the percentage with nonmedical exemptions has risen.

According to the CDC data, 17.5% of kindergartners had an exemption to one or more vaccines in Idaho in the last school year. But fewer than 0.5% did in Connecticut.

What is emotional regulation? A child psychologist explains

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

By Jessica Griffin
UMass Chan Medical School

If you’ve followed mental health topics on TikTok or Instagram lately, you have probably heard the term emotional regulation. But emotional regulation isn’t just a trendy buzzword. It’s a nuanced concept that psychologists like me have been studying for decades.

At its core, emotional regulation is how well someone can manage their emotions - whether positive ones like excitement and joy, or negative or more uncomfortable ones like jealousy and anger.

I study emotional regulation - which scientists refer to as simply “emotion regulation” - within the context of relationships, including understanding how children learn to regulate their own emotions. The goal of healthy emotional regulation is not to erase difficult feelings, but to be able to manage those feeling more effectively so they do not become overwhelming.

People often confuse emotional regulation with temperament, which is your natural, inborn style for how you approach or react to the world. Psychologists describe three different types of temperament that a person can have: easy and flexible; active, outgoing and excitable; or cautious and quiet. Temperament is genetically and biologically driven - in other words, it is something you are born with.

Emotional regulation, on the other hand, isn’t something people either have or don’t have. It is a set of skills that develops over time, beginning in childhood as children learn from and interact with the people around them. And like other skills, emotional regulation can be strengthened with instruction and practice.

There are two types of emotional regulation: self-regulation, or managing your own emotions, and co-regulation, which involves helping others manage their emotions. Both are important in romantic relationships, at work and in parenting.

Co-regulation is especially important as a way to help kids respond to intense feelings.

Emotions don’t exist on their own. They are part of an ongoing conversation between your mind, your body and your behavior. The way you think affects how your body responds, your body’s reactions influence how you feel, and your feelings shape what you do.

For example, imagine someone cuts you off in traffic. Within moments, several things happen at once. You may feel a surge of rage as your heart starts racing, your palms begin to sweat, and thoughts like “What a #\$% jerk!” flash through your mind. Those reactions may lead you to respond by rolling your eyes, swearing at the steering wheel or flipping off the driver.

Each of these reactions influences the others, creating an emotional cycle that can escalate or de-escalate, depending on how you respond. Understanding this cycle is important because changing just one part of it can shift the entire emotional experience.

Everyone engages in emotional regulation throughout the day - whether consciously or not. Healthy emotional regulation allows people to use their emotions as valuable sources of information rather than letting them take over their lives or ruin their day.

Emotions can signal that something feels threatening, unfair, exciting, disappointing or important, prompting you to pause and consider what might have triggered the reaction.

In the traffic example above, anger may be a clue that you perceived the other driver’s behavior as dangerous or disrespectful. Your emotion doesn’t mean your interpretation is wrong or right, but it does provide useful information about how you are experiencing the situation, which can help you decide how to respond.

Many people use emotional regulation strategies intentionally during the day to deal with uncomfortable or intense emotions. These include taking a walk, venting to a friend or shooting hoops. Or they might include less healthy options, such as doom-scrolling, being irritable with loved ones or pouring that third glass of wine.

Multiple factors, such as life stressors - even sleep quality - can make it harder for people to regulate or contain tough emotions, increasing the risk of less-than-healthy coping strategies.

We psychologists can’t talk about emotional regulation without talking about its opposite state - emotional dysregulation. That’s when you are not able to successfully use coping skills to deal with tough feelings, and those feelings then interfere with your ability to function. (AP)

USAID fallout: In Nepal, when aid workers stopped coming, women and babies started dying

GAUR, Nepal, Aug 18, (AP): The young mother’s breath had grown ragged. Inside her mud home in rural Nepal, she hunched over in agony, pain pummeling her pregnant belly, her swollen legs scarcely able to support her.

Kabita Mukhiya was in the midst of an emergency, but didn’t know it. For weeks, she’d suffered at home, because there was nobody around to tell her to rush to a hospital. The aid workers who once regularly visited her village to help pregnant women had stopped coming, after foreign aid cuts by the United States shuttered a program aimed at saving mothers’ and babies’ lives.

Kabita was uneducated and impoverished, and she did not know what was happening to her body. In desperation, she turned at last to her aunt for help, who hauled her off to the hospital, where both women wept as the doctors said things neither could understand.

Which is why Kabita - confused and confined to her hospital bed - turned to something she could understand: prayer.

“Please save the baby,” she begged God through her tears. “Please save me.”

Then, through the chaos, came the words that Kabita finally grasped, but could not bear: It was too late. Her baby was dead.

And her own life was now hanging by a thread.

One baby at a time, the world is marching toward a grim milestone: Because of global cuts to foreign aid, the Gates Foundation has predicted that 2025 will be the first year this century where child deaths will increase.

For many experts, the health of a country is measured by the health of its smallest: Children under the age of 5. And while global child mortality data for 2025 won’t be available for several months, health officials are already bracing for a surge in deaths among the world’s youngest and most vulnerable.

The decision by US President Donald Trump’s administration to dissolve the United States Agency for International Development - once the world’s largest humanitarian donor - gutted maternal and neonatal care, decimated nutrition programs for millions of pregnant women and children and left scores of birthing centers devoid of equipment, medicine and staff. The U.S. cuts, followed by foreign aid cuts from several other countries, forced 60% of women’s organizations to reduce their services, according to the World Health Organization.

The US government has repeatedly insisted that no one - and, particularly, no children - have died



Sonam Mukhiya, left, lies next to her 3-year-old brother, Yubraj Mukhiya, and their grandmother in their home in Gaur, Nepal, on May 19. Their mother, Kabita Mukhiya, died in December while 28-weeks pregnant amid disruptions to nutrition programs and reproductive outreach services following last year’s foreign aid cuts by the United States. (AP)



Pregnant women wait for an ultrasound inside a clinic in Gaur, Nepal, on May 20, 2026. (AP)

to navigate a medical system they struggle to trust or understand, Sherpa says.

The consequences can be found in the dusty, sun-scorched villages of Nepal’s Rautahat district, home to Kabita’s family and one of the poorest and least-literate parts of the country. At a birthing center in Rautahat’s municipality of Dewahi Gonahi, the number of women coming for prenatal checks has halved since the funding cuts, says the officer in charge, Kishori Shah. Because of that, women aren’t identifying complications fast enough, he says, leading to emergencies.

“There would have been a decrease in complications if the US-AID program was still running,” he says.

In the village of Prempur Gonahi, it took just 10 months - a touch longer than a typical pregnancy - for newborns to begin dying again after the U.S. cuts, says the officer in charge, Sadho Baitha.

Before CARE’s program launched in Rautahat in December 2022, Baitha says, the village averaged 10 to 15 neonatal deaths per year. By 2024, records show, there were zero. But since the program’s cancellation, newborns have begun dying again; the first was in December, and four more followed by March.

Yet many deaths linked to the funding cuts will remain invisible, in part because the cuts themselves left scores of mortality data collectors jobless. In some places, there is simply no one left to count those who died.

This is the case in Dewahi Gonahi, where mortality reporting and recording services have collapsed, says Shatrudhan Singh, executive director of Campaign Nepal, CARE’s partner. Which is why, he says, the government record shows just two infant deaths in the municipality since the funding cuts, despite his group knowing of eight.

Defending champion Iga Swiatek rallies past Sakkari

Serena and Venus return to doubles, fall in close Cincinnati match

CINCINNATI, Aug 18, (AP): Serena and Venus Williams played their first doubles match together since the 2022 U.S. Open and lost a thriller, 2-6, 6-1 (10-8) to Marta Kostyuk and Peyton Stearns on Monday night at the Cincinnati Open.

The sisters nearly recovered from a 6-0 deficit in the match tiebreaker before a double-fault by Venus Williams ended their first doubles appearance in a non-Grand Slam event since the Italian Open in 2016. They entered as a wild card.

Serena had been off the tour since 2022 before returning this summer at age 44. The sisters planned to play together at Wimbledon but had to withdraw after Serena injured her knee while losing her singles match.

“Eventually we would find our way to each other,” the 46-year-old Venus said about the decision to play doubles again. “It’s our first time playing together in forever. It was great for us to get out there and do it.”

Kostyuk and Stearns, both 24, are playing in their first tournament together. Stearns is a Cincinnati native and Kostyuk is from Ukraine.

After dropping the first set, the Williams sisters rolled in the second to force a match tiebreak.

Kostyuk and Stearns went ahead 6-0, but consecutive double-faults by Kostyuk helped the Williamses get within 8-7. It was 9-8 after Serena powerfully put away an overhead before Venus double-faulted.

Venus and Serena have won 14 Grand Slam doubles titles and 22 total. Serena won one with Alexandra Stevenson in 2002 at Leipzig. All of Venus’ doubles titles have been with her sister. They also have won three Olympic gold medals together.

Serena has won 23 singles Grand Slam titles. Venus has won seven.

In other results , defending Cincinnati champion Iga Swiatek rallied from a set down to win her eighth consecutive match, beating Maria Sakkari, 4-6, 6-1, 6-1.



Serena Williams, left, and Venus Williams, right, both of the United States, wave to the crowd at the end of a women’s doubles match against Marta Kostyuk, of Ukraine, and Peyton Stearns, also of the United States, at the Cincinnati Open tennis tournament in Mason, Ohio. (AP)

No. 2 seed Elena Rybakina beat Magdalena Frech, 6-4, 7-6. Third-ranked Jessica Pegula beat fellow American Emma Navarro, 7-5, 6-2.

World No. 3 and top seed Alexander Zverev won his ATP-tour leading 46th match this season, outlasting Terence Atmane, 7-6 (4), 7-6 (6).

Rising women’s star Alex Eala and Felix Auger-Aliassime, spouses Elina Svitolina and Gael Monfils, and two-time defending champions

Sara Errani and Andrea Vavassori have been given wild cards into the U.S. Open mixed doubles tournament.

The U.S. Tennis Association on Monday set 11 of the 16 teams that will be in the championship, with six teams qualifying directly because of their combined rankings and five being given wild cards.

Topping the field is the team of No. 1-ranked Aryna Sabalenka and 24-time men’s Grand Slam singles champion Novak Djokovic, who have the lowest combined singles ranking of any team that entered.

Also qualifying directly, in order of their rankings: Elena Rybakina and Taylor Fritz, Diana Shnaider and Daniil Medvedev, Iga Swiatek and Casper Ruud - the runner-up team last year - Belinda Bencic and Flavio Cobolli, and Amanda Anisimova and Learner Tien.

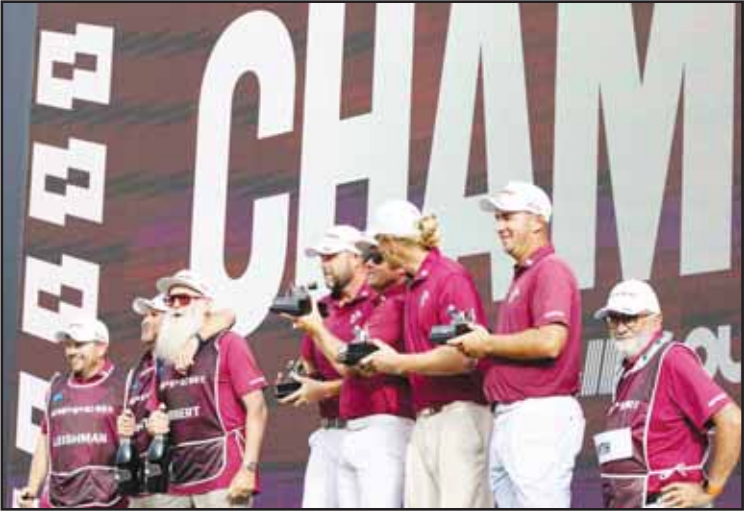
The remaining wild cards given Monday went to the teams of Leylah Fernandez and Frances Tiafoe, and Taylor Townsend and Alexander Zverev.

The first round and quarterfinals will be played Aug. 25, with the semifinals and final set for Aug. 26. All of the matches will be played either in Arthur Ashe Stadium or Louis Armstrong Stadium, the two biggest venues.

Three remaining wild-card spots are still to be announced, and the final two teams in the two-day main draw will earn their way in through an eight-team qualifying tournament to be played Aug. 24.

The teams given spots in the qualifying tournament Monday: Katerina Siniakova and Henry Patten, Gabriela Dabrowski and Harri Heliövaara, Luisa Stefani and Neal Skupski, Aleksandra Krunic and Mate Pavic, Jelena Ostapenko and Marcelo Arevalo, and Erin Routliffe and Lloyd Glasspool.

Two more teams will be given wild cards into the qualifying tournament.



Team champions captain Cameron Smith, Marc Leishman, Lucas Herbert and Travis Smyth, of Ripper GC, and their caddies celebrate on stage after their first-place win following the final round of the LIV Golf United Kingdom golf tournament in Rocester, England. (AP)

Focus on what’s next: O’Neil

LIV Golf ends season early & cancels Michigan team event

WASHINGTON, Aug 18, (AP): LIV Golf is ending its season one week earlier than planned, announcing Monday it will not hold the team championship in Michigan next week and instead crown the team champion this week 20 miles north of Indianapolis.

The 12 events this year - New Orleans was previously postponed - is the smallest schedule for LIV since it was launched with massive Saudi Arabia funding in 2022 and featured eight tournaments.

Jon Rahm already has clinched the individual season title for the third straight year. LIV Golf Indianapolis, which starts Thursday at The Club at Chatham Hills, will determine who finishes second and third among the players, and the top team.

The Public Investment Fund of Saudi Arabia, the financial muscle of the rival league from the start, decided in March this would be the final year of funding. LIV Golf announced earlier this month it has an agreement with a lead investor that would sustain a new version of the league for 2027.

“By concluding the season now, we can put our full resources behind what comes next and maintain the operational rigor this transition demands,” LIV CEO Scott O’Neil said in a statement.

“We are reimagining LIV Golf as a fundamentally new league owned by the players and anchored in a sustainable business model, with an evolved fan experience built for the markets where the game is growing fastest across the globe and the support of world-class partners.”

The cancellation of LIV Golf Michigan was not surprising. There have been reports in recent weeks the tournament had not even started preparing with grandstands and other amenities. LIV Golf said ticket holders would get refunds.

In another cost-cutting move LIV attributed to “unavoidable changes in the entertainment program,” the league informed Thomas Rhett and Disco Lines their live performances would not take place at LIV Golf Indianapolis.

The final event with a \$20 million purse that pays \$4 million to the winner could be the last big payoff for LIV and its 57 players. LIV did not identify the lead investor or how much of a cash infusion was involved, or say whether it was an investment or a loan.

O’Neil has said the LIV 2.0 version for 2027 and onward would involve making players equity owners. He referred to it as a “second bite at the apple” being equity instead of cash.

But this likely is the end of \$20 million purses for individual outcomes, and there already has been cutbacks. Rahm earned \$6 million for winning the points title, down from \$18 million the previous two years.

“As we concentrate on finishing the season strong and building the next chapter of LIV Golf, we’ll carry the energy and enthusiasm our fans have shown us into what comes next,” O’Neil said.

The format for the 2027 season and the rosters also remain unclear. Still to be determined is whether Rahm and Bryson DeChambeau - the two biggest names - and other players who joined the league for its exorbitant prize money will want to stay for LIV 2.0.

As for the final event, Joaquin Niemann, Lucas Herbert and Tyrrell Hatton are in the mix for third place, which pays a \$1 million bonus. DeChambeau is comfortably in second, which pays \$3 million.

Valkyries clinch 2nd straight playoff with win over Dallas

Taurasi joins Mercury Ring of Honor

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug 18, (AP): Gabby Williams had 23 points and seven rebounds, Veronica Burton added 16 points and five assists, and the Golden State Valkyries clinched a playoff berth by beating the Dallas Wings 78-70 for their sixth straight victory.



The Golden State Valkyries celebrate following a WNBA basketball game against the Dallas Wings in San Francisco. (AP)

Golden State (25-9) has already surpassed its win total from last season by two and will get another chance on the postseason stage after becoming the first expansion franchise to reach the playoffs in its inaugural season of 2025. The Valkyries lost to the top-seeded Minnesota Lynx by one point in Game 2 of their first-round matchup.

Golden State center Kiah Stokes played 23 minutes in her return from the concussion protocol after she missed last Wednesday’s home win against Chicago.

Another sellout crowd at Chase Center cheered the team to its 15th win in the last 17 games overall - among those fans Warriors star Stephen Curry, son Canon, and some teammates.

The Valkyries took off in the second quarter after another slow start, ending the first half on an 11-0 run on the way to a 44-28 lead at the break. Golden State began 3 for 13 while Dallas made seven of its first 10 shots to go ahead 15-8.

Valkyries reserve guard Tiffany Hayes hit a buzzer-beating 3-pointer from just inside half court to end the first quarter and put her team ahead 20-19. Hayes finished with 10 points and a pair of 3s as the Valkyries shot 12 for 36 from long range. Janelle Salaun also scored 10 points off the bench.

Paige Bueckers scored 21 points and brought the Wings back down the stretch. Arike Ogunbowale added 17 while Alanna Smith had 13 and five rebounds for the Wings, who lost for the fifth time in six games.

Meanwhile, there’s certainly a good case to be made that Diana Taurasi is the best player in WNBA history.

For Phoenix Mercury fans, that case is already closed: She’s undeniably the G.O.A.T.

Taurasi was inducted into the Mercury Ring of Honor on Sunday at halftime of a game between the

Mercury and Portland Fire, with the franchise retiring her No. 3 jersey and celebrating a superstar who has become synonymous with basketball in Arizona for more than two decades.

“This place has made me who I am,” Taurasi said just before her banner was unveiled in the arena’s rafters. “You guys let me grow, you let me fall, you let me get back up and gave me the space to become who I am today. Through the championships, all the good times and all the bad times, the loyalty you have given me is something I will take with me forever.”

Taurasi, 44, played for the Mercury from 2004 to 2024 and won just about every championship and award that is possible for a player.

She’s the WNBA’s career scoring leader (by more than 2,000 points), an 11-time All-Star, a six-time Olympic gold medalist, a five-time scoring champion, a three-time WNBA champion, a two-time WNBA Finals MVP, the 2009 regular-season MVP and the 2004 Rookie of the Year.

She said Sunday’s honor ranks up there with her biggest accomplishments.

“Today’s a big one,” Taurasi said before the game. “Today feels different. When your number goes up there, you can’t use it anymore, it’s done. So if there was any little competitiveness still in me, I think today it goes up in the rafters with the number and it feels really good.”

More than the sheer numbers, she’s remembered for her fierce per-

sonality that resonated in Arizona, helping turn the Mercury into one of the WNBA’s premier franchises. Taurasi was surrounded on Sunday by friends and family, including her wife, Penny Taylor, and their two children.

She said she’s lucky to have 20 years of friendships to celebrate - including her long relationship with the “X-Factor,” which is the nickname for the team’s loyal fan base.

“When I walk into (the arena), I don’t see strangers, I don’t see employees,” Taurasi said. “I see friends, I see people I go to dinner with, I see people I text regularly with. This isn’t just something where I showed up and said, ‘Well, let’s see what we can do here and then leave.’”

“I treated this like my extended family. I think that’s why walking in today - I’m really emotional.”

Hundreds of fans had gathered in downtown Phoenix more than two hours before the game - many wearing the No. 3 jersey Taurasi donned for two decades - even on an August afternoon with temperatures topping 105 degrees. Some took pictures in front of a mural featuring Taurasi on the side of the arena.



Retired WNBA Phoenix Mercury basketball player Diana Taurasi is honored during a halftime Ring of Honor ceremony Sunday, Aug. 16, 2026, in Phoenix. (AP)

Dispute marks another chapter in the family feud

Buss challenges siblings’ Lakers stake sale

Springboks coach challenges All Blacks’ slow-game claims

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 18, (AP): It couldn’t be South Africa vs. New Zealand without a phony war.

Building to their first test at Ellis Park on Saturday, the touring All Blacks have been pushing the narrative that South African teams including the Springboks deliberately slow down the game to undermine New Zealand attempts to speed it up.

Coach Dave Rennie, assistant Tana Umaga and senior player Codie Taylor have all made the claim while scoring 142 points and conceding 40 against three clubs.

Springboks coach Rassie Erasmus disagreed with the assertion on Monday and noted the last two test fixtures between them last September; New Zealand won 24-17 in Auckland and a week later South Africa won 43-10 in Wellington.

“Were those slow games?” was Erasmus’ rhetorical question to the media.

Beside Erasmus was technical adviser Jaco Peyper, who refereed 67 tests, many involving the All Blacks. Peyper emphasized that teams have 30 seconds to form a set-piece once the referee marks the spot with his foot.

“We have to adhere to that and we train for it,” Peyper said. “You can do whatever you want inside those 30 seconds. There’s nothing in the law that says you can’t idle before the mark is given.”

Erasmus added: “If in those 30 seconds you want to go down and pray, that is your right.”

But the coach understood and sympathized with the All Blacks’ mind games. Erasmus believed it was born out of World Rugby changing the protocol around pre-match meetings between the coach and the ref. Coaches can no longer meet the ref separately. And if one coach doesn’t want to meet the ref then they both can’t.

Rennie said on Monday that Erasmus “felt there wasn’t any need to meet” this weekend’s referee Matthew Carley. “I feel the same way to be honest.”

LOS ANGELES, Aug 18, (AP): Los Angeles Lakers governor Jeanie Buss is legally contesting her siblings’ plan to sell the family’s remaining 17.8% minority ownership stake in the team to Josh Kushner and Bob Iger, according to a letter obtained Monday by The Associated Press.

ESPN and The Athletic first reported that the siblings had voted to sell the family trust’s remaining interest in the 17-time NBA champion team purchased by their father, Jerry Buss, in 1979. The decision would end Jeanie Buss’ tenure as the Lak-



In this file photo, Los Angeles Lakers owner Jeanie Buss attends the team’s NBA preseason basketball game against the Minnesota Timberwolves in Los Angeles. (AP)

ers’ governor because that job requires at least 15% ownership of the team.

Jeanie Buss’ attorney, Adam Streisand, wrote to representatives for her five siblings to state that any decision to sell the family trust’s ownership stake could not be “effectuated without approval of the current co-trustees, Jeanie, Janie and Joey Buss.”

The letter further states that the co-trustees “are bound to vote the Los Angeles Lakers, Inc. shares to ensure that the minimum 15% ownership requirement is maintained in order to ensure that Jeanie Buss may remain Controlling Owner. Any attempt by the co-trustees to do otherwise, and any attempt to aid or abet the co-trustees as such, would constitute a breach of trust, breach of fiduciary duty and be in contempt of court.”

Jeanie Buss has been the Lakers’ governor since Jerry Buss’ death in 2013, and she led the family’s decision to sell a controlling stake in the Lakers to Dodgers owner Mark Walter last year at a valuation of \$10 billion. Walter, who is under federal investigation for tax issues, abruptly reached a deal earlier this month to flip the Lakers to Kushner and Iger at a valuation of \$12.5 billion, another record for a pro sports team.

Venture capitalist Kushner and former Disney CEO Iger are reportedly buying about 65% of the team from Walter. They would own about 83% if they reach a deal with the Buss siblings - and Jeanie

Buss would lose the governor role that she had been slated to keep at least through 2030 under the deal with Walter.

The Buss siblings have been in frequent conflict since their father’s death, with Jeanie firing Jim from his job as the Lakers’ head of basketball operations in 2017, followed a week later by a lawsuit against her brothers amid an attempt by Jim and Johnny to oust Jeanie from her role as the Lakers’ controlling owner.

Not all of the six Buss siblings were in favor of the sale to Walter, and Joey and Jesse were fired from their front-office jobs with the team last November.

The siblings say they voted this month to sell their family’s remaining interest in the Lakers, but Jeanie Buss claims any vote is void. ESPN reported that Jeanie Buss was the only sibling who didn’t support the final sale.

“We have decided as a family to sell the remaining Buss Family Trust shares to the Bob Iger group as part of the ongoing transaction,” the Buss family said in a statement. “We love the Lakers, Laker fans and will continue to support Los Angeles, but it is time to use this opportunity to move on and exit gracefully while we still can.”

In his letter, Streisand said Joey and Jesse Buss have leaked information to ESPN for many years “for the malicious purpose of doing harm to the Los Angeles Lakers so long as Dr. Buss’s chosen successor, Jeanie Buss, carries out her father’s wishes.”

Marseille opens campaign at home to Strasbourg

PSG favorite for 6th straight title as spending power towers over rivals

PARIS, Aug 18, (AP): Paris Saint-Germain hardly needed to bolster a squad good enough to win five consecutive Ligue 1 crowns and two straight Champions League titles.

Yet that’s exactly what coach Luis Enrique did this offseason and it remains to be seen whether it was a wise move.

“Strengthening the squad does not mean we lack confidence in the current players,” he said. “Bringing in new players provides a different energy and mentality.”

Spain’s World Cup forward Ferran Torres joined wingers Maghnes Akliouche and Mika Godts in garnishing an already prolific PSG attack.

PSG will be odds-on to secure a record-extending 15th Ligue 1 title, starting with a home game against Rennes on Sunday.

It will give a first indication of how Luis Enrique plans to manage a top-heavy front line and, in the longer term, how established players react to not being picked.

Take Torres, for example.

He scored Spain’s winning goal in the World Cup final and offers great movement, speed and skill across the front line.

“He can adapt to how we want to play,” Luis Enrique said. “He can play anywhere in attack.”

But PSG already has two players who do precisely that: Ballon d’Or winner Ousmane Dembélé, who scored six goals for France at the World Cup, and Désiré Doué.

So there’s no certainty Torres will start in a side which also contains France forward Bradley Barcola and Georgia winger Khvicha Kvaratskhelia.

Akliouche caused PSG problems when Monaco narrowly lost a Champions League playoff 5-4 on aggregate last season, and tormented the capital club’s defence in a league win.

But how does he dislodge either Barcola, who scored three times at the World Cup, or Kvaratskhelia, arguably the world’s best winger?

Godts is a 21-year-old with big promise and comes with a hefty price tag of



55 million euros (\$64 million). Yet unless Barcola leaves to join Liverpool - as has been widely touted - he can expect to be third choice.

However, most observers would say PSG is spoilt for choice, which is not the case for its Ligue 1 rivals.

Marseille opens its campaign at home to Strasbourg on Friday.

Here’s a look at PSG’s potential challengers:

The northern side, formerly a mining town, has a passionate fanbase which

helped push the team last season.

For the first time in several seasons, PSG had a genuine title challenger until the players ran out of steam toward the end. Lens finished an impressive second and won the French Cup under coach Pierre Sage, who has since joined Crystal Palace.

Lens hired Dino Toppmöller, a fluent French-speaking German who likes to play attacking soccer, and managed to keep Florian Thauvin, the club’s inspirational goal-scoring winger.

With new France coach Zinedine Zidane watching, Thauvin scored as Toppmöller’s first game in charge ended with a 1-0 win against PSG on Sunday in the Trophée des Champions.

Lens is at home to Auxerre on Saturday.

Experienced coach Bruno Genesio was hired to bring stability to a club again in turmoil last season.

Marseille had two coaches, Roberto De Zerbi and Habib Beye, failed to get past the Champions League group stage and finished sixth in Ligue 1, including a 5-0 loss to PSG.

Former striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, who left after a second spell, said the atmosphere was unhealthy as too many outside factors disturbed the squad.

Last season began with a dressing-room fight between two players, and tensions have already surfaced this time after Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg was stripped of the captaincy - against Genesio’s wishes. The midfielder reportedly turned down a move to Newcastle, with Marseille trying to balance the books.

“It’s a decision that was dictated to me by the club’s management,” Genesio said. “It’s not a decision I agree with. But I am an employee and must abide by certain obligations.”

Hardly the ideal atmosphere to start rebuilding a team which last won the league in 2010.

Without Aubameyang and Mason Greenwood, Genesio’s side could be short on goals.

India on brink of victory in Galle

Sri Lanka struggles

GALLE, Sri Lanka, Aug 18, (AP): India was heading towards a win over Sri Lanka with six more wickets needed after four days of the first test at Galle International Stadium on Tuesday.

India was all out for 193 in its second innings about midway through the day, setting Sri Lanka an improbable winning target of 372 in four-plus sessions.

By stumps, Sri Lanka was 84-4, trailing by 287 runs. Sonal Dinusha and captain Dhananjaya de Silva thwarted India’s charge by safely reaching stumps.

First innings centurion Dinusha was 25 not out off 36 balls and de Silva was on 31 from 73 balls.

In the morning session, India lost four wickets to reach 116-4 at lunch. It kept an eye on quick scoring and possible bad weather in order to force a win.

Rishabh Pant led the way for India on either side of lunch. He hit 50 off 53 balls including eight fours and two sixes. Pant was out



for 66 off 69.

Devdutt Padikkal added 44 off 75 and Lokesh Rahul 35 off 47 before India was all out for 193 in 48.5 overs.

Early in the day, Sri Lanka’s Dinesh Chandimal injured his right shoulder while fielding on the boundary. He dived and

Left-arm spinner Prabath Jayasuriya picked two wickets before lunch, including trapping Shubman Gill on 8, while pacer Asitha Fernando took 4-31.

Pant and Ravindra Jadeja (9) combined for 54 off 60 balls until Pant was sent back in the 41st over by Lahiru Kumara. India lost its last four wickets for just 19 runs.

Sri Lanka’s second innings was delayed due to a passing shower, but it didn’t get a good start after play resumed.

Mohammed Siraj bounced out opener Nishan Madushka for 6 and Manav Suthar struck twice. Lahiru Udara was caught on 16 and Suthar trapped debutant Sooriyabandara for a golden duck.

Sri Lanka was 21-3 in the 11th over then 47-4 in the 22nd when Kamindu Mendis was caught on 2 at slip off Prasidh Krishna.

De Silva and Dinusha dug deep to bat out the last hour when bad light was called. They face six more hours on the final day on Wednesday, when there’s a threat of rain.



A file photo of players in action.

Kuwait Club continues squad building with Al-Salman signing

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: Kuwait Club has strengthened its volleyball squad ahead of the 2026-2027 season with the signing of Talal Al-Salman, the club announced on its social media platforms.

The move is part of the “White” team’s preparations for the new season as the club seeks to build a competitive squad capable of challenging for domestic titles and performing strongly in upcoming competitions.

Al-Salman becomes the latest addition to a Kuwait Club side that is undergoing a reshuffle as the management works with the coaching staff to complete the squad and ensure it is fully prepared for the new campaign.

Kuwait Club has already appointed Argentine coach Ruben Luchin as head coach and signed Brazilian outside hitter Marcos Junior.

Luchin is due to arrive in Kuwait on August 23, while Marcos Junior is expected on August 20. Both will join the team as preparations intensify for the new season.

The Argentine coach brings considerable international experience, having previously managed the national teams of Bahrain, Pakistan and Venezuela, in addition to coaching clubs in Germany and Hungary.

Marcos Junior also arrives with extensive experience in Arab volleyball, having represented Al Rayyan in Qatar, Al Nasr in the UAE and Al Ahly in Libya. Kuwait Club is counting on the Brazilian to make an immediate impact.

The club has also strengthened its local options with the signing of Abdulaziz Shaker, who joins from Kazma on a free transfer.

Kuwait Club began its preseason training earlier this month and will continue preparations with the aim of challenging for all available trophies and maintaining its position among Kuwait’s leading volleyball teams.

Best of the Rest

Senegal hires Patrick Vieira as coach: Senegal hired Patrick Vieira as its new coach on Tuesday to replace Pape Thiaw, who was fired after the team was eliminated from the World Cup in the round of 32.

Senegal announced the news in a post on Instagram, without giving any details of the length of the 50-year-old Vieira’s contract.

Vieira won the World Cup with France as a player during a glittering club career with Inter and AC Milan, Arsenal and Manchester City.

His coaching career has not been anywhere near as successful, however. (AP)

Al-Qadsiah cruises past Al-Tai 5-0

Al-Hilal begins title defense with comfortable win

RIYADH, Aug 18: Al-Hilal opened its King’s Cup title defense with a 2-0 victory over first-division side Al-Raed, booking its place in the round of 16.

Ruben Neves was the star of the match, scoring once in each half to send the defending champions through without conceding.

Elsewhere, Al-Fayha defeated Al-Adalah 2-0 thanks to a brace from Hugo Mora, while Al-Ahli edged Al-Anwar 2-1. Al-Qadsiah cruised past Al-Tai 5-0, and Al-Riyadh secured a 2-0 win over Al-Zulfi.

Al-Hilal goalkeeper Mohammed Al-Owais has meanwhile revealed the club’s lofty ambitions for the season, describing the Saudi giants as the ultimate destination for players competing in Asia.

Speaking to Thmanyah after the game, Al-Owais highlighted Al-Hilal’s demanding schedule, noting that the club could play



Al Hilal player scores from the spot.

around 60 matches in a season compared with roughly 30 for many other teams.

He said the packed calendar and changes to the fixture schedule have increased his chances of getting regular playing time, even as the team’s second-choice goalkeeper.

“I believe Al-Hilal is the biggest destination for any Saudi or foreign player in Asia and the world,” Al-Owais said.

The goalkeeper also stressed that Al-Hilal’s ambitions extend beyond domestic and continental success, with the club targeting the biggest prize on the international stage.

“Al-Hilal does not represent itself only domestically. We are present at the Club World Cup and international competitions. I believe our ambition today is to win the Club World Cup, and that goal is achievable,” he said.

11-year-old Bodhana Sivanandan makes British chess history

LONDON, Aug 18: Eleven-year-old Bodhana Sivanandan has made history after becoming the youngest-ever winner of the British Women’s Chess Championship.

The English chess prodigy secured the 2026 title at the British Chess Championship, which concluded on August 9 at the University of Warwick in Coventry, after beating Trisha Kanyamarala in a rapid playoff.

Sivanandan’s triumph marked a major milestone in her rapidly rising career while also rewriting the record books of a championship that dates back more than 100 years.

At just 11, she became the



11-year-old Bodhana Sivanandan

youngest player to win the British women’s title outright. The previous

record was held by Eileen Pritchard, who won in 1939 at 13.

Akshaya Kalaialahan had shared the title in 2013 just days before her 12th birthday.

Sivanandan faced a strong field of older and more experienced competitors throughout the tournament. She suffered only one defeat, against Shreyas Royal, who later captured the open British title.

Among her standout performances was a victory over Grandmaster Amit Ghasi, further highlighting the teenager’s exceptional potential.

The historic title adds another achievement to Sivanandan’s remarkable rise and establishes her as one of the brightest young talents in British chess.

Real officially presents José in a closed-door ceremony

MADRID, Aug 18, (AP): In an unusual ceremony closed to the media and fans, Real Madrid officially presented coach José Mourinho on Tuesday.

The event took place at the club’s headquarters in Madrid, with president Florentino Pérez welcoming the coach.

The only images of the presentation were provided by Real Madrid TV and the club’s website and social media accounts.

“I’m one of you,” Mourinho said in a message to fans in a video released by the club. “And not just today, but since I arrived in 2010 and after I left in 2013, always with you. ... To return to Real Madrid is to return home.”

Juventus signs Vicario on loan from Spurs

TURIN, Italy, Aug 18, (AP): Juventus completed the loan signing of Guglielmo Vicario from Tottenham on Tuesday, bringing to an end a goalkeeper search that dragged on for most of the offseason.

Vicario arrives on a free loan from Tottenham until June 30, 2027. Juventus has the obligation-free option to buy him for 8 million euros (\$9.3 million) plus up to 2 million euros (\$2.3 million) in add-ons “upon the achievement of specific objectives.”

Vicario came through the ranks at Udinese, before spells with Venezia, Perugia, Cagliari and Empoli.

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NEWS



In this file photo, Genoa's coach Patrick Vieira reacts during the Serie A soccer match between AC Milan and Genoa at the San Siro stadium, in Milan, Italy. Senegal hired Patrick Vieira as coach to replace fired Pape Thiaw. (AP)

Sports

Kuwait Club handed balanced Champions League 2 draw

Saudi giants face Elite test

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 18: Kuwait Club has been handed a balanced draw in the AFC Champions League Two, while Saudi Arabia's representatives face a series of challenging fixtures in the AFC Champions League Elite.

The AFC Champions League Two draw in Kuala Lumpur placed Kuwait Club in Group A alongside UAE side Al-Wahda, Uzbekistan's Nasaf and Bahrain's Al-Khaldiya.

Kuwait Club former captain Saad Al-Houti represented the club during the draw ceremony, which attracted a large gathering of football officials from across Asia.

The Whites open their group campaign on September 15 against Nasaf. The group stage will be played on a home-and-away basis.

UAE's Al-Jazeera, Iran's Gol Gohar Sirjan, Bahrain's Al-Muharraq and Turkmenistan's Arkadag make up Group B.

Group C features Saudi Arabia's Al-Taawoun, Qatar's Al-Rayyan, Jordan's Al-Faisaly and Oman's Al-Nahda, while Group D brings together Jordan's Al-Hussein, Iraq's Al-Shorta, Oman's Al-Seeb and India's East Bengal.



In this file photo, Kuwait Club player controls the ball as opponents look on.

South Korea's Seoul, Australia's Melbourne Victory, Vietnam's The Cong-Vietel and the winner of the preliminary-round tie between Indonesia's Persib Bandung and the Philippines' Manila Diggers comprise Group E.

Group F includes Adelaide United of Australia, Thailand's Pathum United, Singapore's Lion City Sailors and Hong Kong, China's Tai Po.

Japan's Machida Zelvia, China's Shanghai Shenhua, Cambodia's Preah Khan Reach Svay Rieng and Singapore's Tampines Rovers were drawn in Group G, while Group H consists of South Korea's Gangwon, Malaysia's Kuching City, Hong Kong's Kitchee and Cambodia's Phnom Penh Crown.

The group stage will conclude on December 9, with the round of 16 scheduled for February 9-18, 2027. The quarterfinals will take place from March 2-18, followed by the semifinals from April 6-14. The final is scheduled for May 15, 2027.

Meanwhile, the AFC Champion League Elite draw handed Saudi Arabia's five clubs a demanding schedule.

Defending champion Al-Ahli, along with Al-Hilal, Al-Nassr, Al-Ittihad and Al-Qadsiah, will each face eight opponents from the UAE, Qatar and Uzbekistan.

The Saudi clubs will meet UAE sides Al-Ain, Shabab Al-Ahli and Al-Wasl, Qatar's Al-Sadd, Al-Gharafa and Al-Shamal, and Uzbekistan's Neftchi and Pakhtakor.

Al-Ahli will begin the campaign seeking to retain the continental crown and become the first club to win the title three times in a row.

The new edition will feature an expanded 32-team field, the first such expansion since the competition adopted its current AFC Champions League Elite name in the 2024-25 season.

Tournament doubles as a qualifier for World Championship

Kuwait completes final training ahead of Asian Junior Handball Championship



Kuwait players set for 11th Asian Junior Handball Championship.

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

AMMAN, Aug 18: Kuwait completed its final training session in Jordan as preparations concluded for the 11th Asian Junior Handball Championship, which doubles as a qualifier for the 2027 World Championship.

The competition begins tomorrow at Princess Sumaya Hall in Amman and runs until August 31, with 10 teams competing: Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Syria, Jordan, Iran, South Korea, India and Uzbekistan.

Kuwait Handball Federation National Teams Director Faisal Sayeoun described Kuwait's group as highly competitive, pointing to the rapid development of handball across Asia and the strength of

the teams taking part.

Following the revised draw held last Thursday after Japan and Chinese Taipei withdrew because of the security situation in the region, Kuwait was placed in Group B alongside Saudi Arabia, Iran, Qatar and Syria. Group A features South Korea, Bahrain, Jordan, India and Uzbekistan.

Sayeoun said the Kuwait players are targeting one of the tournament's four World Championship qualification spots and expressed confidence in their ability to achieve that objective.

He stressed that the entire delegation has been working hard to ensure the team enters the tournament in the best possible condition and delivers a performance that reflects the reputation of Kuwaiti handball on the continental stage.

The delegation is headed by Federation Treasurer Khaled Taleb and includes Media Committee Chairman Mishal Al-Qabandi, National Teams Director Faisal Sayeoun and Team Manager Shaker Arti. The coaching staff comprises Icelandic head coach Stefan Arnason, national coach Khaled Al-Mulla, goalkeeper coach Marwan Maqayez and physiotherapist Hani Al-Dawas.

Kuwait completed an overseas training camp in Slovenia, where the team played several friendly matches, before returning home for an intensive domestic camp focused on tactical and physical preparation.

The Blues will open Asian Championship campaign tomorrow against Syria, with qualification for the 2027 World Championship firmly in its sights.

Lise praises Lamour

Klaveness slams FIFA for firing top executive in 'management by fear'

GENEVA, Aug 18, (AP): FIFA's removal of the senior official who said Gianni Infantino deceived staff with his World Cup sell-off plan was unacceptable, Norway soccer president Lise Klaveness said on Tuesday while urging other leaders at the governing body to resist potentially damaging orders.

The firing of FIFA chief operating officer Kevin Lamour late Monday came 17 days after his statement to the Associated Press criticizing Infantino's \$20 billion private equity project that helped to end it hours later.

"Now he is thrown out and we are supposed to move on. It's unacceptable, it's management by fear," Klaveness told the AP in a telephone interview, describing Lamour as "the best football administrator I have ever met."

"Now we also have to call upon FIFA leadership and the administration to not submit to orders you know are not in the interests of football," Klaveness added, especially targeting FIFA secretary general Matthias Grafström.

She is a former Norway international player, a judge in Oslo and an elected executive committee member at European soccer body UEFA who has built on her country's long-held reputation as a champion of good governance in soccer.

Lamour was a long-time colleague of Infantino, first as senior officials at UEFA from 2007-15, on his campaign team to be elected FIFA president in 2016, then moving two years ago from UEFA to oversee much of FIFA's operations in Zurich.

With a reputation among the most trusted executives in the often murky world of global soccer politics, Lamour's pointed criticisms of Infantino's leadership intensified a crisis for the FIFA president.

A backlash by UEFA, the Asian Football Confederation and north American soccer body CONCACAF was provoked by a secretive plan to sell future World Cup profits to investors led by Joshua Kushner.

A \$4.2 billion investment to take a 20% stake in a FIFA commercial spin-off was to fund offers of \$20 million to each of its 211 national member federa-

tions. They already effectively own the non-profit soccer body, which has multibillion dollar reserves, and would have had a mid-September deadline to accept.

Lamour's statement on July 31 spoke of FIFA staff being "deceived" by Infantino's lack of openness over the now-failed sale and how they "deserve better than contempt and intimidation."

The French executive called on soccer leaders worldwide

"to make the right decisions" and signed off: "If that means I lose my job, then so be it. I will understand and respect that decision. At least I'll sleep well tonight."

"This is a firing situation, it's not a resignation," Klaveness said of Lamour's exit, suggesting it was done by Grafström "obviously being pressured by the president."

In a statement, FIFA said it "thanks Kevin for his two years of service and wishes him the best of luck for the future."

"His statement was necessary to kill the project," Klaveness said of Lamour's intervention. "He said something that was obvious, that was very important that someone within the staff told us the story so that we knew it was not FIFA, as such, but one person."

Infantino called a meeting with senior management minus Lamour in Rabat, Morocco. After that Aug. 5 meeting, a FIFA statement apologized for errors and said those managers who attended "reaffirmed their full support" of Infantino's presidency.

"We all got reports in Morocco, we know it's a management of fear," Klaveness said. "It's not in football's best interests."

Until the uproar over Infantino's "FIFA Forward Enterprise" proposal, he seemed sure to be reelected unopposed next year in Morocco. The deadline is Nov. 18 for challengers to enter the contest.



Lamour

Battle for second spot goes down to wire

Al-Sahel secures Premier League promotion

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 18: Al-Sahel has secured promotion to the Premier League after playing out a goalless draw with Al-Sulaibikhat at Nasser Al-Osaimi Stadium in the 20th and penultimate round of the First Division League.

The result took Al-Sahel's tally to 44 points, leaving them at the top of the standings. They will meet Al-Yarmouk tomorrow in their final game, with victory enough to seal the First Division title and maintain their position at the summit.

The race for the second promotion spot, however, remains wide open, with Al-Sulaibikhat, Al-Yarmouk and Al-Jazeera all still in contention.

Al-Sulaibikhat sits second on 41 points and can secure promotion by beating Al-Jazeera tomorrow. A draw would also be sufficient if Al-Yarmouk fail to beat Al-Sahel.

Al-Jazeera kept its hopes alive with an impressive 2-0 win over Al-Yarmouk at Jaber Al-Mubarak Stadium. The victory moved the newcomer to 38 points, four behind second-placed Al-Sulaibikhat.

Al-Jazeera now needs to defeat Al-Sulaibikhat and hope Al-Yarmouk loses to Al-Sahel to claim the second promotion ticket. Al-Yarmouk, meanwhile, must win its final game and hope Al-Sulaibikhat drop points against Al-Jazeera.

In the other two matches, Khaitan cruised to a 5-0 victory over Sporty, while Burgan defeated Al-Shamiya 4-1.



Al-Sahel players celebrate after sealing qualification.

Pakistan hit by a blow as Azam ruled out of 1st test vs England

LEEDS, England, Aug 18, (AP): Pakistan captain Babar Azam was ruled out of the first test against England starting on Wednesday because of a hand injury.

Babar was struck on the middle finger of his right hand while battling against the West Indies this month, and hit again in a warmup game last week in Beckenham.

"Pakistan captain Babar Azam is unavailable for the first test match," Pakistan coach Sarfaraz Ahmed said on Tuesday. "Salman Agha will be the captain for the first test."

Ahmed said the finger was not broken and he hoped the pain will reduce so Babar could play in the second test at Lord's starting on Aug. 27.

But his absence was a blow to Pakistan. Babar had just been reappointed captain and led the scoring in the West Indies.

Agha will captain the test team for

the first time. He's the skipper of the Twenty20 side.

Shan Masood, whom Babar replaced as captain, was recovered from his own broken finger during the first test in the West Indies. He missed the second test and warmup game but he'll return to the top order at Headingley.

"Our practice match gave us a lot of confidence," Ahmed said. "Whatever bases we needed to cover with bat and ball, we did. We believe we'll do very well here."

Pakistan is touring England for the first time since 2020 and the host appears vulnerable after losing the home series against New Zealand in June. Captain Ben Stokes retired and coach Brendon McCullum was fired and replaced by fellow New Zealander Stephen Fleming. However, Fleming will miss the Pakistan series and Marcus Trescothick will be in interim charge.