



Amir receives Crown Prince, Prime Minister & ministers

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New Interior officials presented to Amir, Crown Prince

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah and newly appointed assistant undersecretaries.

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Decree-law reinforces citizenship safeguards

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): A decree-law was issued on Sunday, amending certain provisions of Amiri Decree No. (15) of 1959 regarding the Kuwaiti Nationality Law.

As per the decree law, if a person purposely adds to his own nationality file - or to the file of another - any individual who is not among their children or descendants, as proved by the Supreme Committee for Investigating Kuwaiti Nationality or by a final court ruling, then the nationality of any of their children or descendants may be rescinded.

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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Our country needs to nurture young entrepreneurs in the private sector

THE number of graduates from Kuwaiti universities ranges from 4,000 to 6,000 annually. This has been the norm in Kuwait for decades. This leads to an increase in the funds allocated for salaries in the state budget each year and the figure continues to rise annually.

It should be noted that the National Fund for Supporting Small and Medium Enterprises was established to support and encourage young Kuwaitis to work in various sectors outside the government institutions. This is an important step towards diversifying income sources, especially since a large number of young people have established unprecedented enterprises, while a certain percentage of beneficiaries have opted for traditional jobs.

The youths who benefited from this support faced many obstacles, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced many of them to cease operations. Some young business owners ended up behind bars, while others relocated their businesses to neighboring countries as a result of restrictions imposed on their activities.

A segment of young Kuwaitis turned to self-employment, foregoing the assistance provided by the National Fund for Supporting Small and Medium Enterprises, as well as the subsidy for Kuwaitis working in the private sector.

Former Minister Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi stated in his article published by Al-Seyassah daily recently that these youths faced many difficulties due to the issuance of decisions, which not support the development of their enterprises. In fact, some of them were even left at a disadvantage due to such decisions.

Is the government capable of employing all graduates in the public sector, especially with the increasing reliance on technology?

Many countries have started exploring alternative ways to absorb fresh graduates and reduce the number of government employees. Do state institutions really need such a huge number of employ-

ees? This leads us to a more serious discussion.

In recent years, many opportunities have emerged for young citizens, yet they did not receive support from the government. Neighboring countries, especially those whose economic and social structures are similar ours supported individual initiatives and facilitated every avenue for young people to succeed in the fields of technological innovation or entrepreneurship. Government support went beyond financial assistance to include guidance and mentorship.

Some countries even granted these young people access to state-owned properties, free of charge. For example, Saudi Arabia allowed entrepreneurs, and even established investors, to benefit from the free use of state properties for five years.

In Kuwait, there are several steps that can be built upon, such as the Anti-Commercial Concealment Law, which guarantees the right of citizens to work in their own establishments and for their own benefit, and prohibits subletting licenses to expatriates who might exploit them as they please in exchange for an annual fee paid to the citizens.

This is a positive step, but several ministerial decrees were issued, restricting the movement of Kuwaiti business owners, although they initiated self-employment and did not cost the state anything. These individuals are suffering a lot today.

We should have learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative consequences, particularly the strict policies of banks toward young entrepreneurs, even if their financial difficulties were beyond their control.

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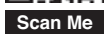
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Theft takes 43% tumble in Kuwait

Crime on the decline

By Jaber Al-Hamoud and Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait announced that the Ministry of Justice statistics on cases registered at the Public Prosecution showed a 43.4 percent decrease in theft cases in the first half of 2026, compared to the same period in 2025, indicating that the total number of such cases declined from 781 to 442.

Al-Sumait said robbery cases decreased by 66.4 percent -- from 107 to 36, while theft cases involving breaking, trespassing or using unusual methods decreased by 48.5 percent -- from 334 to 172 cases, as well as 36.2 percent decrease in other types of theft, from 287 to 183.

He stated that these indicators reflect the general trend of declining serious crimes, as the government continues to develop the penal system, in addition to the ongoing security and awareness efforts to prevent crimes.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior disclosed that the Farwaniya Governorate Security Directorate, which is under the Security Directorates Affairs Sector, conducted a security campaign in Al-Riggae, with the participation of 168 security personnel and 50 patrol vehicles.

This campaign resulted in the arrest of 36 individuals, including 13 people with outstanding arrest warrants for holding expired residency permits, 12 who are wanted by law for absconding, four with expired residency permits, three who are wanted by law in connection with civil cases, and three others involved in drug cases.



Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait

Farwaniya-Khaitan sweep nets 64

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The Traffic and Operations Sector at the Interior Ministry supervised an intensive security campaign in Farwaniya and Khaitan, spearheaded

by the General Directorate of Emergency Police.

The campaign was under the direct supervision of Traffic and Operations Sector Director Brigadier General Ahmed Al-Azmi. It was led by Director General of the General

Directorate of Emergency Police Brigadier General Hamlan Al-Hamlan, while Assistant Director General of the general directorate Colonel Sabah Ali Al-Sabah followed up the campaign.

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MoH debunks viral Farwaniya Hospital assault claim

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The Ministry of Health confirmed that a video circulating on social media, accompanied by captions claiming that a member of the medical staff at Farwaniya Hospi-

tal had been assaulted, has no connection to any of the ministry's facilities.

The ministry clarified that the video was not filmed at Farwaniya Hospital or at any other hospital, medical center, or health facility affiliated with the Ministry of Health in Kuwait.

The ministry urged the public to verify the

accuracy of information before sharing videos or reports and attributing them to ministry facilities.

It stressed the importance of obtaining information from official sources and expressed its appreciation for the public's concern and attention to the safety of healthcare workers.

KNG 'Banner 2' drill puts crisis readiness to the test

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): Undersecretary of the Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas affirmed on Sunday that the "Nation's Banner 2" exercise

enhances integration between military and security agencies and unifies the training concepts and plans.

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Undersecretary of the Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas during the second phase of the 'Nation's Banner 2' exercise.

Strategic stockpile on agenda

Kuwait and India step up food security cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Boodai discussed Sunday with Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Paramita Tripathi opportunities for cooperation in food security and ways to strengthen the strategic stockpile.

The Commerce and Industry Ministry said the meeting also addressed developing bilateral relations in trade, economic, industrial and investment fields to enhance mutual interests and support cooperation between the two friendly countries.

The two sides exchanged views on issues of common interest and explored opportunities to develop bilateral cooperation, contributing



Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Boodai with Ambassador of India to Kuwait Paramita Tripathi.

to stronger Kuwait-India relations across various priority areas.

Ukraine offers Kuwait drones, strategic defense partnership

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: Ukrainian Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Maksym Subkh affirmed that his country is ready to supply Kuwait with drones and contribute to building its integrated defense system.

Subkh made the announcement at a press conference on the occasion of the 35th Independence Day of Ukraine and the 33rd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Kuwait and Kyiv.

According to Subkh, the execution of the military cooperation agreement between the two countries opens the door to a qualitative partnership that includes training personnel, implementing joint defense projects, and providing the necessary expertise and consultations to enhance the capabilities of the Kuwaiti Army. He stressed that his country is happy over the enforcement of the military cooperation agreement, which was signed in 2018.

He expressed his gratitude to the Kuwaiti government for completing the required legal procedures, indicating that the two sides have started their military and defense cooperation. He pointed out that the concept of defense cooperation is broader than military cooperation, and that the agreement covers several important areas, thereby, forming a legal



KUNA photo
Ukrainian Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Maksym Subkh

framework that allows Kuwait and Ukraine to move towards a qualitative partnership from which both countries will benefit.

He emphasized that the goal of cooperation is not just marketing or selling his country's military equipment, including drones. He said the aim is to establish a comprehensive defense cooperation framework, covering personnel training, joint military and defense exercises, joint planning, and coordination between the general staffs of both countries.

He reiterated that Ukraine is ready to sign additional agreements and protocols with Kuwait in order to clearly define the areas of defense and military cooperation, and enable the transformation of agreements into concrete and practical projects in the near future.

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Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:58	Asr	15:25
Sunrise ..	05:21	Maghrib ..	18:20
Zohr	11:50	Isha	19:43



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince

Amir receives Crown Prince, Prime Minister & ministers

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness also received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah, and Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah.

Salem Al-Sabah.

Crown Prince audiences

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince also received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, as well as Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah.



PM Diwan photo

HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah photographed with the First Deputy PM and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah and newly appointed assistant undersecretaries.

PM receives 1st Deputy PM, new Assistant Undersecretaries

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Sunday First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-

Sabah and newly appointed assistant undersecretaries.

During the meeting, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef presented to His Highness the Prime Minister Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security

Affairs Major General Hamad Ahmad Al-Munaifi and Assistant Undersecretary for Supporting Security Services Affairs Major General Fawaz Nasser Al-Roumi following their appointment to their new positions.

Kuwait, Indonesia bonds deep-rooted, says envoy

Blood donation drive conveys solidarity, love: Maryana

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The Indonesian Embassy, in cooperation with the Indonesian Nurses Society in Kuwait, organized a blood donation drive last Wednesday as part of its humanitarian and community initiatives.

Members of the Indonesian community and nurses participated in the campaign.

In a press statement, Indonesian Ambassador to Kuwait Lena Maryana pointed out that the campaign, which was held at the Late Sheikha Salwa Al-Sabah Stem Cell and Umbilical Cord Center, conveyed a message of solidarity and affection from Indonesia and its community to Kuwait and its people. She said the campaign is a manifestation of the deep-rooted relations between the two countries and

the commitment of the Indonesian community to be an active part of the Kuwaiti society.

According to Maryana, the blood donation drive is held annually and this year it coincides with Indonesia's 81st Independence Day celebrations. She revealed that this is the fifth blood donation campaign since her arrival in Kuwait five years ago.

She explained that blood donation is an important humanitarian act, because it helps those in dire need of blood. She said around 100 members of the Indonesian community participated in the campaign, which is significant not only in terms of the number of participants, but also the humanitarian and solidarity message it conveys.



Maryana

She pointed out that blood donation is part of the soft diplomacy of Indonesia, indicating that the goal is to express the solidarity of the Indonesian government and people with Kuwait and its people. She confirmed that Indonesia is keen on standing by Kuwait through initiatives that provide benefits to the community.

She also announced the arrival of new groups of Indonesian nurses in Kuwait, indicating that around 250 nurses joined the local healthcare sector recently. She said the total number of Indonesian nurses in Kuwait is around 500, while the number of Indonesian workers is around 6,000. She expects the arrival of more Indonesian personnel in Kuwait in the coming period.

She praised the role played by Indonesian nurses in Kuwait, stressing that their participation in the blood donation campaign is another aspect of their contributions to society, in addition to their professional role in the health sector.

Kuwait slams attacks on security forces, civilians

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): Kuwait on Sunday condemned and denounced the attack on a bus belonging to Syria's Internal Security Forces in Damascus countryside, which injured several security personnel, reaffirming its rejection of violence and terrorism.

The Foreign Ministry reiterated Kuwait's support for Syria and all measures it takes to maintain security and stability, expressing wishes for a speedy recovery to all those injured in the attack.

Kuwait also condemned and denounced an attack targeting a civilian vehicle in western rural Damascus with a drone belonging to the Israeli occupation forces, which injured several civilians.

Kuwait Foreign Ministry, in a statement, renewed Kuwait's call on the international community and the UN Security Council to assume their responsibilities in stopping the Israeli occupation's repeated attacks on Syrian territory and ensuring respect for international law and the UN Charter.

It also reaffirmed Kuwait's firm position supporting the sovereignty, territorial integrity, security and stability of Syria.

Kuwait panel mulls over plan to curb home strife

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): Kuwait's National Committee for Protection against Domestic Violence convened on Sunday to discuss an integrated national strategy to prevent domestic violence nationwide.

The meeting was chaired by Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah.

Speaking to reporters following the meeting, she said that the committee discussed ways to implement the provisions of Decree-Law No. (11) of 2026 regarding protection against domestic violence.

The meeting also considered mechanisms of rapid response to grievances and complaints in collaboration with relevant bodies in a bid to ensure clear-cut and effective procedures to protect victims and unify legal and social response, the minister added.



KUNA photo

Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah chairs the meeting.

Other Voices

Beware ... Iran attack expected

By Ahmad alsarraf

American writer Thomas Friedman says, "The American-Israeli war with Iran proved that the small can act like the big, with great power, high precision, and at a low cost."

The security situation in the region may deteriorate further, and in Iran's eyes, we could become the most tempting target.

Even if war does not break out, the Iranian regime will continue to harbor hostility toward us. Conceding to any of the regime's demands could inevitably lead to further blackmail in the future.

The entire situation is unsettling, particularly after the American administration declared, albeit indirectly, that it is no longer concerned with the security and safety of its allies in the region, now that its military bases there have become a burden for both the administration and the host countries.

This is something that would have been unimaginable over the past four decades. It is also clear that American frustration with the situation in Iran has reached its peak. The next major step by the US administration, which is already burdened with significant responsibilities, remains uncertain.

It is alarming that Iraqi militia leaders, who are strongly and openly supported by Iran, have issued a series of statements rejecting the Iraqi government's plans to disarm them. The Iraqi government announced yesterday that it would not use force to impose its authority over these Iranian-backed militias.

Several senior Iranian officials have recently visited Iraq, meeting with leaders of these factions and reaffirming their material, political, and military support.

Reports have emerged indicating Iran's readiness to conduct military operations within the territories of its adversaries and to expand the role of Iraqi militias in this regard. This is of particular concern to us, as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are geographically closest to Iran, increasing the possibility of ground movements or provocations along our northern borders, which appear to be outside the Iraqi government's complete control.

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have already



alsarraf

experienced attacks involving missiles and drones launched from Iraq by pro-Iranian militias.

When a regime feels that its survival is threatened, it will often seek to shift the threat to other fronts, following the principle of "me against my enemies."

Therefore, the possibility of war breaking out and escalating is real. Even if war does not occur, that possibility should not deter us from preparing thoroughly and seriously, using all our human, military, and technological resources, as well as our regional and international relationships.

We must act swiftly and on multiple fronts simultaneously. We do not have enough time. We must strengthen the home front, mobilize civilians, and provide military training to all capable and qualified individuals so they can carry out various tasks and provide additional support to the army, police, and National Guard.

The best defenders of the homeland are its citizens, provided they have the necessary resources and proper training.

Our military forces have already proven their reliability by successfully intercepting almost 100 percent of the missiles and drones launched by Iran against us.

Kuwaiti youth also demonstrated their capacity for fierce resistance during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. We have experts and specialists who can be utilized to monitor borders, ports, coastlines, oil wells, desalination plants, and vital industries.

All of these measures are necessary and would not cause harm even if Kuwait faces no future security threats. We must also strive to build alliances with several major powers and seek to join the tripartite alliance between Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Türkiye. We should also consider bringing in military and technical experts from Taiwan and Ukraine. Despite Ukraine's ongoing war with Russia, it is prepared to provide Kuwait with technical and logistical support in the field of drones, particularly given its adversarial relationship with Iran due to Russia's support for Tehran.

With regard to artificial intelligence applications, cybersecurity, and supercomputing, we must avoid putting all our eggs in one basket, whether that basket is the United States or any other country. It is essential to diversify our sources of expertise and technology, particularly from China.



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Dr. Hamed Al-Balushi from the Sultanate of Oman (left) and Counselor Hamad Zaid Al-Bseis from the State of Kuwait will represent the network at the forum.

Sao Paulo to host Arab-Brazil Economic Forum on Aug 25

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: An official delegation from the Regional Network for Social Responsibility (RNSR) will participate in the Arab-Brazilian Economic Forum, which will be organized by the Arab-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with the Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce, in São Paulo, Brazil on Aug 25, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The forum is under the patronage of President of the Federative Republic of Brazil Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who will also attend the event.

Ambassadors of the Regional Network

for Social Responsibility Dr. Hamed Al-Balushi from the Sultanate of Oman and Counselor Hamad Zaid Al-Bseis from the State of Kuwait will represent the network at the forum.

This forum is considered the most strategic platform that brings together senior officials, ministers and business leaders from Brazil and the Arab countries.

The participation of the Regional Network for Social Responsibility is at the official invitation of the Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce, with whom the network enjoys a long-standing and distinguished partnership.



KUNA photo

The Kuwaiti delegation participating in the UNCCD COP17 in Mongolia conference.

Kuwait partakes in 'Restore land, restore hope' confab

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait participated on Sunday in the 17th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP17), hosted by the Mongolian capital Ulaanbaatar from August 17 to 28.

The Conference is held under the theme "Restore land, restore hope," with broad international and regional participation.

Kuwait's participation in the conference reaffirms its commitment to supporting international efforts to combat desertification, land degradation and drought, and to promote sustainable management of natural resources, in line with its obligations under the UN convention and its national priorities for environmental protection and addressing climate and environmental challenges.

Kuwait's delegation is headed by its Ambassador to Mongolia Mutlaq Al-Thuwaimer, as he told KUNA that Kuwait's participation represents an extension of its national efforts to promote sustainable land management, combat desertification and support joint international action to address land degradation and drought, contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of Kuwait Vision 2035, while enhancing the resilience of ecosystems and preserving natural resources for present and future

generations.

The Environment Public Authority (EPA) and relevant national bodies are seeking through their participation to strengthen Kuwait's presence in international forums, follow up on issues related to combating desertification, land degradation, and sand and dust storms, and exchange scientific and technical expertise with specialized countries and organizations, given Kuwait's desert and arid environment.

Over two weeks, the conference is discussing issues related to restoring degraded land, strengthening resilience to drought, sustainable management of land and range lands, the inter-linkages between land and water, developing scientific and technological tools and financing mechanisms, in addition to reviewing progress in implementing the UN Convention to Combat Desertification Strategic Framework (2018-2030).

The Kuwaiti delegation participating in the conference, negotiation meetings and technical committees includes representatives of the EPA, headed by Acting Director General Nouf Ali Behbahani, as well as representatives of the Public Authority for Agriculture and Fisheries, Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and Kuwait University.

‘Gov’t must encourage young entrepreneurs’

“NO one in Kuwait opposes economic regulation or encouraging young entrepreneurs to become self-reliant and innovative by establishing small businesses rather than waiting for government jobs,” columnist Eng. Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

“Kuwaiti society was originally built on individual initiative, which formed the foundation of the country’s pre-oil economy. Therefore, when the government began regulating small businesses and established a fund to support them, the initiative was met with widespread approval from citizens and provided numerous benefits to the private sector. However, some young men and women who chose to rely on their own efforts did not turn to the fund. Instead, they worked diligently, invested their own money and established businesses independently.

“Initially, they received encouragement and support. In recent years, however, many have encountered obstacles that have caused some to lose their investments and others to end up in prison. These young people sought to contribute to the national economy in their own way, only to find that certain decisions and regulations had closed doors in their faces. Such circumstances led to discouraging young people from pursuing entrepreneurship and pushing them towards seeking employment in government institutions, further increasing the burden on the state’s general budget.

“The decisions made in this regard do not appear to be based on sound scientific principles. Instead, they seem to be driven more by narrow interests and personal preferences than by a genuine pursuit of sustainable development. I have followed this issue closely through my interactions on social media with several young people who have been adversely affected by these decisions and laws. Many of them lost their investments after their businesses had successfully operated and expanded for years, only to be disrupted by the introduction of new regulations. Some of these businesses were owned by individuals, while others were partnerships between two people.

“It is true that markets periodically correct themselves and that competition determines which businesses succeed. However, some regulatory decisions have become obstacles that discourage individual initiative because of their short-sightedness. This inevitably leaves the state dependent on a single source of income and keeps us trapped in a vicious cycle. Economically successful countries do everything possible to encourage individual initiative and support entrepreneurs through enabling policies and practical facilities. Some countries even purchase products and services produced by projects established by young entrepreneurs.

“Last Ramadan, as well as the Ramadan before it, numerous individual initiatives emerged in parks across Kuwait, led by young Kuwaiti men and women. Suddenly, a decision was issued prohibiting these activities, and the parks were closed, while shops on the other side of the same street continued to operate. As a result, these young entrepreneurs lost the businesses they had worked to establish. This is a clear example of decisions that stifle individual initiative, at a time when the country faces an increasing number of graduates each year, further exacerbating disguised unemployment in the public sector.

“How can the government encourage the private sector while simultaneously preventing individuals from taking the initiative? How can young people be given the freedom to pursue their ideas while being prevented from making use of state-owned land, despite the existence of vast areas of undeveloped land? These questions, among others, are directed to all ministers and to His Highness the Prime Minister. Everyone must listen to these young entrepreneurs and address the problems they raise in the media and on social media.

“These young entrepreneurs are the backbone of the national economy and an essential part of Kuwait’s future. The government should encourage and support them, not obstruct their efforts or prevent them from pursuing their ideas and creativity.”

Also:

“The signing of the “Makkah Agreement for Joint Defense” between Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, and Pakistan can be seen as a pivotal moment in reshaping the map of regional and global security alliances.” President of the International Diplomatic Union **Dr. Faisal Al-Mutairi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“The impact of this strategic bloc is not limited to the geographical boundaries of the three countries. Rather, it represents a new security architecture that is asserting itself forcefully within



Adel Al-Kharafi

international equations at a time when global power balances are being reshaped. The agreement’s provision that an armed attack against any one of the three countries will be considered an attack against all three establishes a strong deterrent, similar to major collective defense treaties within the international system. This military interdependence raises the cost of any hostile action in such a sensitive and highly tense region.

“The agreement brings together three major strategic pillars - the economic and spiritual weight of Saudi Arabia, the military and geopolitical power of Türkiye, strengthened by its Eurasian and Atlantic depth and nuclear capabilities, and Pakistan’s population size. This integration creates a regional and global force for stability that cannot be ignored. The agreement reflects a growing international strategic trend toward building regional security systems capable of protecting national interests without relying entirely on traditional security umbrellas. This approach, according to the vision of the countries involved, can contribute to more sustainable regional stability.

“From a European diplomatic and strategic perspective, this development represents a significant success for the de facto architect of the agreement, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman. Through this achievement, the Crown Prince has demonstrated considerable skill in quiet and patient diplomacy, successfully building bridges of trust between capitals of varying strategic importance and guiding them toward a shared security objective that contributes to regional and global peace. Prince Mohammad bin Salman has demonstrated a high degree of political pragmatism, enabling him to translate historical and fraternal ties into binding institutional and legal frameworks for joint defense.

“He has also demonstrated an ability to make proactive decisions based on a strategic vision aimed at establishing effective deterrence mechanisms to protect the region and the world from successive upheavals. The Makkah Agreement for Joint Defense is not merely a traditional military treaty; it is a strategic international document that heralds the emergence of a new axis of stability and contributes to redefining the concepts of regional and international security. The agreement underscores Riyadh’s growing role as a center for shaping major strategic decisions that influence the future of security and peace in the region, with global ramifications and impact.”

□ □ □

“The strength of nations is not only measured by their natural resources or financial capabilities, but more importantly, by the ability of their institutions to efficiently fulfill their missions, guarantee justice, and build trust between the state and society,” **Mohammad Nasser Al-Aleem** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Strong institutions are not towering buildings or complex organizational structures, but a system of work based on efficiency, governance, accountability and the sustainability of achievements. Global experience has proven that the secret to the success of countries that dealt with economic crises, natural disasters and security challenges is not the abundant resources, but the strength of their institutions, their rapid response, clarity of their procedures, and their ability to make decisions.

“Conversely, weak institutions negatively affect the lives of people, services are delayed, projects are stalled, bureaucracy increases, public trust declines, and achievement is the exception rather than the rule.

“Undoubtedly, Kuwait has a wealth of national talent and institutional expertise it accumulated over decades. However, the demands of the current stage necessitate accelerating development and shifting from managing daily tasks to making successful conclusions, and from merely implementing procedures to focusing on the quality of outputs.

“Building strong institutions begins with selecting senior officials based on competence, integrity and the ability to deliver results. It then involves empowering national talent, streamlining procedures, leveraging digital transformation, enhancing governance and transparency, and linking performance to clear and measurable indicators. Accountability must be a tool for improvement, not a means of punishment.

“The success of any institution cannot be achieved in the absence of collaboration with other institutions. Integration among government entities, partnership with the private sector and listening to the feedback of citizens create a more efficient work environment, save time and effort, and improve the quality of services.”

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

What caused fire that engulfed many cars?

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) has launched an investigation into the cause of a fire that engulfed several vehicles in Khaitan recently, reports Al-Anba daily.

Firefighters from the Farwaniya station responded to the incident a few days ago, and the fire was extinguished without any casualties.

According to sources from KFF, the investigation will determine the cause of the fire and examine whether any factors contributed to its spread from one vehicle to another.

They warned of the dangers posed by high summer temperatures to vehicles, particularly those parked for extended periods in direct sunlight or open areas.

The sources stressed the importance of ensuring the safety of electrical systems, checking for fuel or oil leaks, and avoiding leaving flammable materials inside vehicles.

They also emphasized the need for regular vehicle maintenance, prompt repairs of electrical or mechanical faults, and avoiding leaving electrical devices or accessories operating, particularly during periods of high temperatures.

The sources confirmed that while high temperatures are not necessarily a direct cause of vehicle fires, they can increase the risk of ignition and contribute to the rapid spread of flames.

Deportation for two Asians in verbal spat with Kuwaiti man

Hunt for gang of five in assault, stabbing of youth

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: Jahra security officers referred two Asian expatriates to the deportation department following an altercation with a Kuwaiti citizen inside a vegetable market, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the citizen reported to the Ministry of Interior’s operations room that he had a verbal altercation with a vendor over high prices while purchasing fruits and vegetables at the market. The vendor and another individual then allegedly assaulted him.

Security personnel arrived at the scene, apprehended the two expatriates, and instructed the complainant to report to the police station.

During the investigation, the two expatriates claimed that they had been assaulted by the Kuwaiti citizen. However, the investigation found their claim to be false. Legal procedures were initiated, and the two men were referred to the deportation department.

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Young man stabbed: Ahmadi detectives have launched a search for five unidentified individuals accused by a man in his twenties of assaulting and stabbing him after he finished Isha prayers near a mosque in Al-Riqqa, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to the victim, one of the suspects initially engaged him in a verbal altercation. The others then restrained and assaulted him before one of them stabbed him, after which the suspects fled the scene.

The victim submitted a medical report, which was included in the case file, documenting multiple stab wounds to his left and right hands, as well as a fracture to the eighth rib on the right side of his back. The man underwent surgery to stop bleeding caused by his injuries.

A criminal case has been registered and referred to the Public Prosecution.

□ □ □

DG abused, insulted: The Ministry of Interior investigated a report about an individual who was accused of assaulting a public official at his workplace, reports Al-Anba daily.

The alleged victim refused any settlement or administrative investigation and insisted on pursuing legal action against the accused.

According to a security source, a director general at a government agency filed a report stating that a supervisor from the same department entered his office after being summoned to discuss a work-related matter. However, the discussion escalated, with the supervisor allegedly using inappropriate language and attempting to physically assault the director general.

Security personnel summoned the supervisor for questioning. He denied insulting the director general, maintaining that their conversation did not involve any insults or abusive language.

Iraqi woman gets gun-toting husband arrested

Egyptian dies in fall; Nepalese perishes in accident

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: Security authorities registered two cases following separate incidents that resulted in the deaths of two expatriates, reports Al-Anba daily.

The first incident occurred in Al-Qusour, where an Egyptian construction worker died after falling from a height. A security patrol was dispatched to the scene after the Ministry of Interior’s operations room received a report of the accident. Paramedics confirmed his death, and the investigator ordered forensic evidence to be collected from the body. A case was subsequently registered.

In a separate incident, a Nepalese resident died and an Indian expatriate sustained various injuries in a three-vehicle collision on Highway 7 towards Fintas.

The accident involved a truck driven by a Nepalese expatriate and a minibus driven by an Egyptian expatriate. A case was registered to determine the cause of the collision and identify those responsible.

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Wife reports husband: An Iraqi woman reported her husband to police after discovering that he was keeping unlicensed firearms at their home, saying she wanted to protect him from the legal consequences of possessing the weapons, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, Jahra police officers responded to the report and met the woman at the location. She handed over a 9mm pistol and told officers that her husband had additional weapons inside the house.

The officers contacted the Deputy Public Prosecutor, who ordered the necessary legal procedures to seize any other weapons found at the residence and arrest the husband.

A subsequent search of the house led to the discovery of two air rifles. The husband was arrested when he returned home and was referred for the necessary legal procedures.

PACI deletes residential addresses of 441 persons

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) on Sunday announced through the official gazette, ‘Kuwait Al-Youm’, that the residential addresses of 441 individuals have been removed from the registry based on the declaration of the homeowners or due to the demolition of the building.

PACI urged these individuals to register their new address at its offices or through the

Shops selling adulterated food items in Jleeb closed

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) announced that its inspectors in Farwaniya Governorate carried out two closure orders at Jleeb Market due to violations involving the sale of adulterated and unidentified food products, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

PAFN confirmed that the necessary legal measures have been taken against the violating establishments.

It added that inspection campaigns will continue and oversight of food establishments will be intensified, with legal action taken against violators.

Court obligates company to settle remaining dues

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The Court of Cassation issued a final ruling, obligating a contracting company to pay KD264.253.939 to another contracting company to settle outstanding payments related to subcontracting works, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Court of Cassation upheld the ruling of a lower court, but amended it by adding legal interest of seven percent per annum, calculated from the due date -- March 1, 2020, until full payment.

Attorney Abdullah Al-Furaih stated that the ruling reinforces the principles of respecting contractual obligations and protecting the rights of subcontracting companies.

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Real estate stats: Statistics released by the Real Estate Registration and Documentation Department at the Ministry of Justice revealed that 154 real estate contracts were traded on Aug 9-13, with a total value of KD92.2 million, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

These statistics indicate that the private real estate sector recorded the highest number of transactions with 101 contracts valued at KD36.2 million, while the investment real estate sector came in second with 52 contracts valued at KD 36 million. The commercial sector recorded one contract valued at KD20 million.

As for the ranking of the governorates, Ahmadi topped the list with 78 contracts (39 private and 39 investment), Hawally with 28 contracts (19 private and 9 investment), Farwaniya with 14 contracts (11 private and 3 investment), Capital with 13 contracts (11 private, 1 investment and 1 commercial), Jahra with 13 contracts (all are for private real estate) and Mubarak Al-Kabeer with eight contracts (all are for private real estate).

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Other Voices

Global Capability Centres (GCC) in India: Where companies can build their global future

Mrs. Paramita Tripathi
Ambassador of India to Kuwait

When people in Kuwait and in the Gulf Region think about doing business in India, the first images that may come to mind are a vast and growing consumer market, Indian professionals working across the Gulf, major infrastructure projects, pharmaceuticals, automobiles, textiles and technology. Beyond these, another India is emerging, less visible to the casual visitor and increasingly important to global business.

Across Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Chennai, Pune, Delhi-NCR and a growing number of smaller Indian cities, teams of Indian engineers, scientists, accountants, designers, software developers and business professionals are working every day on products and services used around the world.

These are India's Global Capability Centres, or GCCs, which could become an important new bridge between India and Kuwait and the Gulf Region.

A GCC is no longer simply a low-cost back office. The best centres today work on artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, financial analytics, semiconductor technology, engineering, product design, digital platforms, research and global business strategy. India has more than 1,700 such centres, employing almost 2 million professionals.

For Kuwaiti or Gulf companies looking to become more international, this offers an interesting proposition: India can become the place where they build the capabilities needed for their next stage of growth.

The mega-cities and beyond

India's strength lies partly in the extraordinary variety of its cities.

Bengaluru is perhaps the best-known example. It has become a global centre for software, AI, engineering and deep technology.

Hyderabad has developed strong capabilities in technology, pharmaceuticals, healthcare and aerospace.

Mumbai is India's financial capital and naturally suited to banking, investment, insurance and financial analytics.

Pune brings together engineering, manufacturing, automobiles and technology. Chennai has deep expertise in automobiles, electronics, industrial engineering and digital services.

Delhi-NCR combines technology and professional services with proximity to India's government and regulatory institutions.

And then there is the next layer of India.

Cities such as Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, Coimbatore, Kolkata, and Indore are increasingly attracting technology and business operations. For a company, this means that India is not one talent market but many, each with different skills, costs, cultures, and areas of expertise.

This is particularly useful for a Kuwaiti or a Gulf company. It could, for instance, have financial analytics in Mumbai, engineering in Pune, technology in Bengaluru, and specialised operations in Ahmedabad, Kochi, or Jaipur.

Close familiarity between Kuwait/Gulf and India

Kuwaiti traders and businesses have been investing and operating in India for centuries. Companies such as Alghanim Industries, Alshaya Group, Asiya Investments and Agility Logistics have established a presence in the Indian economy. Alghanim Industries' Kirby India, for example, has manufacturing facilities in Hyderabad, Haridwar and Halol.

There are examples also from the wider Gulf Region. UAE-based DAMAC Group established a shared services and capability centre in Noida, supporting functions such as finance, human resources, sales operations, commercial activities and digital initiatives. It is developing another centre in Pune.

What is changing in India is the nature of the opportunity. A Kuwaiti company operating in India traditionally needed factories, shops, hotels, warehouses or investment assets. Today, it can also build a team that works for the company globally.

The significance of such a move goes beyond the number of employees in the centre. It represents a change in thinking: India is now not merely a market, but an attractive place from which to run and grow an international business.

What India offers that is difficult to replicate

Perhaps India's greatest advantage is its people.

Every year, millions of young Indians enter the workforce. Among them are engineers, scientists, doctors, finance professionals, software developers, designers, and management graduates. Many have studied or worked internationally and are comfortable operating across cultures and time zones.

But numbers alone do not explain India's attraction.

Over several decades, India has developed an ecosystem around this talented workforce, investing in universities, technology companies, start-ups, professional services firms, research institutions, tech parks, and increasingly sophisticated digital infrastructure.

This makes it possible for a company to start small and grow quickly.

As an example, a Kuwaiti business might begin with 50 specialists in India. With expansion in international operations, that team can grow from 500 to 5,000. It can move from accounting and customer support to data science, product development, engineering, and research. The Alshaya Group's GCC in Bengaluru is an excellent example.

That journey, from support function to strategic capability, is one of the defining features of India's GCC story.

A natural fit for Kuwaiti companies

Kuwaiti companies have strong expertise in sectors

such as energy, banking, investment, logistics, retail, real estate, and hospitality. India offers complementary strengths in technology, engineering, analytics, pharmaceuticals, digital services, and a large pool of skilled professionals.

Imagine a Kuwaiti bank using India for cybersecurity, digital services, and AI. A logistics company developing its global digital platform from Bengaluru. An energy company using Indian engineers and data scientists to improve operational efficiency. A Kuwaiti investment company building a research and analytics team in Mumbai or GIFT City. These are not distant possibilities. The building blocks already exist.

There is also an important financial connection emerging through GIFT City in Gujarat, India's international financial centre, which is developing capabilities in international banking, capital markets, insurance and financial technology. India and Kuwait have already established institutional cooperation between Kuwait's Capital Markets Authority and India's International Financial Services Centres Authority in April 2024.

A relationship entering its next chapter

India and Kuwait have a relationship that is much older than today's business statistics, built through trade, seafaring, pearls, dates, textiles and, above all, people. Generations of Indians have lived and worked in Kuwait, while Kuwaiti businesses have developed relationships in India.

The next chapter of that relationship can be built around something new: knowledge and capability.

For Kuwait, establishing a GCC in India need not mean moving jobs away from Kuwait. It can mean creating an additional arm of a Kuwaiti enterprise, one that draws on India's talent while supporting the company's operations in Kuwait and other international markets.

And for India, Gulf investment brings something equally valuable: international capital, entrepreneurial experience and access to markets where Indian talent and technology can create new value.

The most interesting question, therefore, is not whether India can provide skilled people at competitive cost. That question has largely been answered.

The more important question is: What could a Kuwaiti company build in India that it could not build as easily anywhere else?

The answer could range from a technology centre to a global research team, from an investment-analytics platform to an engineering hub.

India's GCC story is ultimately a story about people.



Mrs. Paramita Tripathi

ple. It is about talented young Indians working on global challenges, and about international companies discovering that the capabilities they need for tomorrow can be built in Indian cities today.

For Kuwait and the wider Gulf, that makes India more than an investment destination. It makes India a potential partner in building the future.

For any clarification or further information, please send an email to amb.kuwait@mea.gov.in GCCs in India.

Why India?

World's leading GCC destination, supported by a large pool of skilled professionals, tech ecosystem, competitive costs and growing capabilities in AI, digital technology and engineering.

Scale

More than 1,700 GCCs (over half of the world's GCCs), over 2,000 centres projected by 2030. Nearly 2 million professionals, expanding beyond traditional IT services to advanced research, product development, and innovation. Generating close to \$100 billion in revenue.

Why Kuwait?

Offer another model for building technology and specialised capabilities in India, and support operations across the Middle East in areas such as AI, software development, cybersecurity, finance, analytics and engineering.

The bigger shift

India's GCC story is moving from "low-cost outsourcing" to "global innovation and technology hub". Multinationals are increasingly using their Indian centres to design products, develop technology and drive innovation for worldwide markets.

GCCs in India (Indicative)		
Location	Approx. number of GCCs	Companies
Bengaluru	487+	JPMorgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, Microsoft, Google, Walmart
Hyderabad	270+	Wells Fargo, Goldman Sachs, Charles Schwab, Microsoft
Delhi NCR (Gurugram, Noida, Ghaziabad, etc.)	270+	American Express, Barclays, BlackRock
Mumbai	200+	Citi, JPMorgan Chase, Morgan Stanley
Pune	175+	Deutsche Bank, Barclays, BNY Mellon
Chennai	160+	Citi, HSBC, Standard Chartered, Wells Fargo

MoSA dissolves 6 associations

‘Don’t dispose off funds’

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The Minister of Social, Family and Childhood, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, issued decrees dissolving six public benefit associations, which were published in the official gazette, “Kuwait Al-yum,” on Sunday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Decrees Nos. 278/2026, 279/2026, 280/2026, 281/2026, 282/2026, and 283/2026 dissolved the Kuwait Interior Design Association, the Kuwait Diving Association, the Kuwait Insurance Association, the Kuwait Sports Science Association, the Kuwait Municipal Work Association, and the Life Skills Association.

The decrees obligated the boards of directors and employees of the concerned associations to refrain from disposing off of their funds or documents and to hand over

any items in their possession to individuals appointed by the ministry to carry out the dissolution procedures.

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MPW rejects ‘pothole’ clip: The Ministry of Public Works denied the authenticity of a video circulating on social media showing a pothole on a public road near a border crossing, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry clarified that the video dates back several years and urged social media users to verify information before publishing or sharing it, particularly content that could have a negative impact on society. It also affirmed its right to take legal action against those who spread false information.

The ministry called on the public to rely on official sources for information and to follow its official website for reliable updates and answers to any questions or inquiries.

Call to upgrade health arena ties

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi met with Lebanese Ambassador to Kuwait Ghadi Khoury at the headquarters of the Health Ministry to discuss ways to strengthen health cooperation and develop areas of joint work between the two countries.

Assistant Undersecretary for External Health Services Dr. Hisham Kalender also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, Al-Awadhi confirmed the commitment of the ministry to strengthen cooperation with Lebanon and benefit from its medical expertise and experience in order to develop local health services.



Al-Awadhi

The two sides talked about the opportunities for cooperation in medical training, exchange of expertise, support for scientific research, development of health infrastructure, and utilizing the latest technologies and medical services.

Both sides stressed the importance of improving communication and coordination channels to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and benefit from the latest developments in the medical and health fields.

On the other hand, Ambassador Khoury affirmed that his country is ready to expand cooperation with the ministry, as well as exchange expertise, technologies and medical services to support the development of the health sector in Kuwait.

Panel blocks grounding system removal tender at substations

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23 : The Board of Directors of the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) asked the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to halt the tender process for the replacement of the grounding system at 150 main substations, as per the request of the Grievance Committee.

CAPT asked the ministry to provide the committee with copies of all documents and information related to one of the grievances.

The ministry requested CAPT, during its meeting on Aug 5, to settle the tender for a total amount of KD3.8 million,

but the CAPT Board of Directors did not approve the recommendation.

Meanwhile, CAPT recently opened the bids for the supply, installation and extension of two cables to feed two main substations in Amghara Industrial Area and strengthen the electrical grid. Five competing bids were accepted. CAPT will forward these five bids to the ministry to conduct a technical study and present its recommendation within 30 days.

The bids will then be returned to CAPT to award the contract to the bidder that best meets the technical requirements.

This tender is part of the ongoing efforts of the ministry to supply the electricity needed for the expansion of high and ultra-high voltage electrical networks in the industrial and other sectors, especially in Amghara Industrial Area.

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Continued from Page 1

Our country

Financial institutions could have used many financial alternatives to help young people and business owners, instead of prosecuting them and throwing them in jail.

These young people desperately need simplified procedures and facilities, so that the country does not face the disguised unemployment problem due to the bloated public sector workforce.

According to recently published financial reports, the budget for public sector salaries is expected to reach KD34 billion in 2035.

It is worth noting that young people constitute around 60 percent of the Kuwaiti society.

New Interior

During the meeting, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef presented to His Highness the Amir Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security Affairs Major General Hamad Ahmad Al-Munaifi and Assistant Undersecretary for Supporting Security Services Affairs Major General Fawaz Nasser Al-Roumi following their appointment to their new positions.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al- Yousef and newly appointed assistant undersecretaries.

During the meeting, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef presented to His Highness the Crown Prince Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security Affairs Major General Hamad Ahmad Al-Munaifi and Assistant Undersecretary for Supporting Security Services Affairs Major General Fawaz Nasser Al-Roumi following their appointment to their new positions.

Farwaniya-Khaitan

The emergency police teams were deployed along the main routes in the two abovementioned areas, and they were able to cover the security and traffic aspects of the campaign.

The efforts of emergency police resulted in the arrest of 64 individuals wanted by law for involvement in criminal cases, absconding and other offenses.

The necessary legal measures were taken against these individuals, who were referred to the concerned authorities.

In addition, 47 expired residency permit violations were recorded, four individuals were apprehended for failure to present valid identification documents, a wanted vehicle was seized, and 407 traf-

fic violation citations were issued.

Legal action was taken regarding all the violations uncovered during the campaign.

Decree-law

It also states that the Minister of Interior shall grant every Kuwaiti a Kuwaiti nationality certificate after verification pursuant to the provisions of this Law. This certificate shall be issued in electronic form.

The minister shall issue a decision involving relevant technical and technological controls and requirements for the issuance, saving and use of the electronic certificate, as well as the procedures for verifying, revoking or suspending it.

Furthermore, a person who has acquired Kuwaiti nationality by naturalization shall not have the right to vote, stand for election, or be appointed to any representative body.

KNG 'Banner 2'

He made the statement following his attendance in the second phase of the "Nation's Banner 2" exercise at the Operations, Security System, and Crisis Management Center of the KNG headquarters, in cooperation with the Ministries of Defense and Interior, and the General Fire Force, according to a KNG release.

He added that the exercise provides an opportunity to train the KNG staff on managing operations and making timely decisions and tasks that they may face in emergency situations.

Al-Barjas commended the efforts of the participants in carrying out the exercise.

Ukraine offers

He indicated that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has been reaffirming the full solidarity of Ukraine with Kuwait and other Gulf states, as Kyiv believes that the security challenges that the region is facing necessitate stronger coordination.

He added that President Zelenskyy previously highlighted the role of Iran in supporting Russia with drones and their production and manufacturing technology since the beginning of the war, stressing that Ukraine and the Gulf states face similar challenges, which require coordinated action to overcome these challenges efficiently.

He also confirmed that the holders of Kuwaiti passports, regardless of the categories, are exempted from entry visa to Ukraine. He said the visa issuance procedures for the residents of Kuwait take a maximum of one month.

On the accession of Ukraine to the European Union (EU), he pointed out

that Ukrainians enjoy visa-free entry to EU countries and this is a significant step in terms of the rapprochement between the two sides.

He cited other important steps, such as the signing of the Deep and Comprehensive Partnership Agreement and establishment of a free trade area between Ukraine and the EU. He revealed that the EU is providing assistance to expedite the accession process for his country. He explained that the Ukrainian government must implement a set of internal reforms and measures, foremost of which is aligning Ukrainian legislation and laws with European laws and standards.

He went on to say that Aug 24 embodies the aspirations of the Ukrainian people for freedom, sovereignty and the right to self-determination, which spanned centuries.

He clarified that the independence of Ukraine in 1991 was not the beginning of the history of the Ukrainian state, but rather the restoration of independence, indicating that the roots of the Ukrainian state and identity extend back many centuries. He said the Ukrainian people have waged a long struggle for generations to preserve their language, culture, identity and right to establish their independent state.

He indicated that the Ukrainians and Kuwaitis share a special and deep understanding of the meaning of independence and sovereignty, as Kuwait itself suffered a painful experience when it was invaded and occupied in 1990.

He disclosed that official diplomatic relations between Ukraine and Kuwait date back to April 18, 1993, and these relations have since developed on the basis of mutual respect, friendship, and commitment to adhere to the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in internal affairs.

He pointed out that such relations have witnessed significant exchange of high-level visits over the past decades, with the Ukrainian president visiting Kuwait in 2003 and 2018, and Ukrainian prime minister visiting Kuwait in 1993, as well as the regular visits and communications between the foreign ministers and senior officials of the two countries, and political consultations between the two foreign ministries.

He expressed his country's deep appreciation for the supportive stance of Kuwait on the sovereignty, territorial integrity and international law of Ukraine, as well as the humanitarian aid that Kuwait has been providing to the Ukrainian people since the beginning of the war. He said the Kuwaiti government allocated \$1 million in 2023 to purchase generators for Ukraine while the Ukrainian energy facilities were being targeted.

He stressed that the continuous attempt to destroy the energy infrastructure of his country entails the need for strong and urgent international cooperation to support the Ukrainian energy sector.



KNPC CEO Wadha Al-Khatib, award recipients and attendees pose for a group photo during the 17th annual CEO's HSE Award ceremony.

HSE remains KNPC's top priority, says CEO

Al-Khatib presents 17th annual HSE Awards

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) CEO Wadha Al-Khatib affirmed that health, safety, and environment (HSE) are top priorities for the Company's management, serving as the regulatory framework for its operations and the fundamental basis for ensuring the necessary protection and safety of its employees and contractors.

In a press release on Saturday, KNPC noted that Al-Khatib's remarks came during a ceremony held to present the 17th annual CEO's HSE Awards.

Al-Khatib pointed that recent regional developments have underscored this vital aspect, the impact and effectiveness of which have been evident in the country's efforts to address the repercussions of the heinous attacks it suffered.

She added that the award has solidified its significance and standing over the years, reflecting the Company's deep commitment to the health and safety of its workforce, its dedication to protecting its vital facilities and installations, and its genuine commitment to fulfilling its environmental responsibilities and preserving the environment.

During the ceremony, several of the company's HSE success indicators during the past fiscal year were reviewed. This included conducting more than 3,000 training sessions, benefiting over 60,000 trainees.

The Company also received eight international safety awards, 146 professional accreditations, and re-



KNPC photos
Wadha Al-Khatib, Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) CEO, addresses the attendees.

newed its ISO quality certifications for the next three years. Furthermore, it achieved a 94-percent implementation rate for its campaigns and events plan and secured second place in blood donation campaigns across Kuwait.

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US judge strikes down policy suspending immigrant visa processing for 75 nations

WASHINGTON, Aug 23, (AP): A federal judge in New York has vacated a Trump administration policy that suspended the processing of visas from 75 countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, Russia and Somalia, whose nationals the Trump administration deemed likely to require public assistance in the United States.

US District Judge Jeannette Vargas, an appointee of former President Joe Biden, set aside the policy Friday as “contrary to law and in excess of statutory authority.”

Secretary of State Marco Rubio exceeded his authority by issuing the policy, which “runs afoul” of the Immigration and Nationality Act by mandating “the refusal of visas to eligible applicants without any basis in law,” the judge ruled.

Vargas said the policy also undermines the congressional requirement that puts consular officers at the forefront of any visa decision.

“Congress imbued these officers with exclusive authority and discretion to determine if an immigrant is eligible for a visa based upon review of specific and detailed criteria set forth in the statute,” she wrote. “The Policy, which categorically prohibits the issuance of immigrant visas based upon the nationality of the applicant, represents a direct abrogation of this statutory scheme.”

The policy was challenged by two nonprofit organizations along with 11 individuals, including six whose family members had been refused visas. The remaining five are outside the country and had filed “employment-based petitions” to come to the United States.

“We welcome this ruling because, at its heart, this case is about keeping families together,” said Anna Gallagher, the executive director of CLINIC, a national nonprofit that provides training, resources, and support to a network of immigration legal service providers and was one of the plaintiffs.

“Catholic social teaching calls us to uphold the dignity of every person and recognize the family as the foundation of society,” she said in a statement. “This decision affirms both those values and the rule of law, allowing families to once again move forward toward reunification.”

Another plaintiff is African Communities Together, a Harlem-based nonprofit. One of its leaders called the ruling “a tremendous victory for the rule of law.”

These countries received some form of public assistance.

A separate notice sent to all US embassies and consulates said that non-immigrant visa applicants also should be “fully vetted and screened” for the possibility that they might seek public benefits in the United States.

The cable, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press, noted several times that the applicant must prove they won’t apply for public benefits while in the U.S., and that consular officers who suspect the applicant might apply should require them to fill out a form proving their financial bona fides.

The ruling is the latest example of the courts upending Trump’s immigration agenda. In June, a federal judge struck down a Trump administration policy that made it harder for immigrants from dozens of countries to enter and stay in America - affecting elements like asylum, work permits, green cards, and citizenship applications. That judge said the policy threw countless immigrants’ lives “into indeterminate legal limbo,” and accused the US Citizenship and Immigration Services of ignoring the law.



Cubans line up for appointments at the US embassy in Havana, Cuba on Jan 8. (AP)

Can Democrats win here?

Rare Nebraska district backs Harris but sends Republican to Congress

OMAHA, Neb., Aug 23, (AP): “Do they still like Trump in Nebraska? I think so,” the president said during a recent event in Washington.

Given that the state easily backed Republican Donald Trump three times and hasn’t supported a Democrat for the White House since Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964, the answer may seem obvious.

But in Nebraska’s largest city, it’s an open question and could decide one of the country’s most-watched congressional races. Retiring Rep. Don Bacon’s open seat pits fellow Republican and Omaha City Councilmember Brinker Harding against Democratic activist Denise Powell.

The district encompasses an increasingly Democratic-leaning Omaha metro area of 1 million-plus and its more conservative suburbs - famous for steaks and the Reuben sandwich’s birthplace, though New York disputes that.

It’s one of just eight districts nationwide that elected Republicans in House races while supporting Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris over Trump two years ago.

Harding and Powell have been making the rounds at parades and festivals where meat raffles offer oversized sausages as prizes. However, those on-the-ground appeals could be drowned out by Trump who, like most things in politics, has moved to shape November’s mid-term elections in his own image.

The president is organizing a Republican midterm convention in Dallas next month that will serve as much a two-day rally for him as a boon to party candidates nationwide. Trump is also frequently visiting tightly contested districts, despite his low approval ratings and the unpopular war in Iran.

While Trump centers himself, Democrats are happy to oblige.

When Powell knocks on doors to talk to voters, she asks, “What’s keeping you up at night?” On a sweaty Saturday afternoon, John Rosseter responded without hesitation. “Well, Trump.”

“I want to see the history books written years from now,” said Rosseter, 67, who owns a carpentry business. “They won’t be pretty.”

Nebraska splits its presidential electoral votes, and the 2nd Congressional District’s delegate has gone to Democrats three out of five times since 2008, making it a “blue dot” in an otherwise Republican red state. But a Democrat has won the House seat just once since 1994.



Denise Powell, (left center), the Democratic candidate for the House of Representatives in Nebraska’s second congressional district, chats with Lilia Franciscony during an event celebrating Powell’s new campaign office in Omaha, Neb on Aug 15. (AP)

Harding plays up Trump’s primary endorsement, and House Speaker Mike Johnson and Majority Leader Steve Scalise campaigned for him. Harding said he has “the full confidence of, not only the White House, but leadership in the Congress.”

He has also tried to appeal to swing voters and says he knows the district better than does Powell, co-founder of Women Who Run Nebraska, which supports female candidates.

Two possible Democratic 2028 presidential candidates - ex-Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and Rahm Emanuel, an ex-Chicago mayor who was President Barack

Obama’s first White House chief of staff - have campaigned with Powell.

She talks about how Medicare cuts have increased anxiety about affordability. Powell also points to Trump and his family’s business dealings as an example of “the choices that they have made while people on the ground are struggling” and she says that resonates with Republicans.

“Even the ones who aren’t necessarily anti-Trump,” Powell said, “understand the need for checks and balances.”

Jason Brown and his wife, Ruth Huebner-Brown, caused a sensation in 2024 by spray painting about 50 reused lawn signs with blue dots and distributing them around Omaha’s Dundee neighborhood. The couple has since expanded to professionally produce signs promoting a “Blue Dot Wave.”

Brown said the Republican-controlled Congress has capitulated on “every Trump nominee, every Trump policy, all the way down to putting gilding gold on statues.”

Supporters of Harding have countered with red “Brinker Dot” signs.

“We need to make sure that we keep this country on the track to being even better,” Harding said.

Jack Hosking, the 90-year-old retired former head of a title insurance company, organizes a weekly coffee to discuss political and community issues. He estimated that about 70% of attendees are Trump voters and “maybe even more so lately, because of the crap that the New York mayor started,” referring to Zohran Mamdani’s efforts at pushing the Democratic Party to the left.

Both Powell and Harding have addressed Hosking’s group, though, and he predicted that as much as half will support the Democrat.

“She spoke well enough that, my sense is, a lot of them will cross over,” Hosking said, noting that when it came to campaigning, “Brinker’s not doing much.”

The Republican National Committee views Trump as a national asset, betting he can prevent complacency in a year without a presidential race, when enthusiasm for the party in power typically wanes.

The committee rebranded its “Young Guns” program for key candidates to “MAGA Majority” in deference to Trump’s “Make America Great Again” movement, and many congressional candidates will be at the Dallas convention with Trump.



Police officers at the scene of a fatal crash involving a police car and a Volkswagen Passat on the A66 in South Bank, near Middlesbrough, England on Aug 22. (AP)

Head-on collision in northeast England kills 7

Seven people, including two police officers, were killed early Saturday in a head-on collision in northeast England following a pursuit.

Cleveland Police said that a Volkswagen Passat carrying five people was traveling the wrong way down the A66 highway near Middlesbrough and collided with a police vehicle on the same road going in the right direction.

The seven people were pronounced dead at the scene after the crash at 3:39 a.m.

The two officers were identified as Matthew Blades and Tom Clough, Cleveland Police Chief Constable Victoria Fuller said.

Police were still working to formally identify other victims. The families of those already identified have been informed and were offered specialist support, police said.

Cleveland Police were investigating the crash, alongside the Independent Office for Police Conduct, which is always involved when such incidents take place. (AP)



Pope Leo XIV arrives to celebrate Mass at Rimini’s harbor on Aug 22. (AP)

Pope Leo XIV calls for dialogue over conflict

SAN MARINO, Aug 23, (AP): Pope Leo XIV used a visit to the tiny landlocked San Marino and a major Catholic gathering in the Italian city of Rimini on Saturday to issue one of his strongest appeals yet against war, polarization and social division, urging believers to foster dialogue and friendship in a fractured world.

Speaking to tens of thousands in Rimini, Leo warned against a culture that “rearms minds, words and nations” and argued that Christians must respond with mercy, encounter and a commitment to peace.

He also delivered a message of encouragement to young Catholics, telling them they are “a sign that the future is promising, and not a threat!”

Earlier, in San Marino, Leo addressed local authorities of the world’s oldest surviving republic and reflected on the legacy of Saints Marino and Leone, whom he credited with helping create a society rooted in freedom, mutual respect and community.

Army to shut down unit in Europe focused on learning drone warfare

WASHINGTON, Aug 23, (AP): An Army unit based in Europe that was specializing in drone warfare has been directed to end its efforts to learn and use the battlefield technology and return to being a traditional infantry battalion, officials said.

For nearly a year, soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade have been experimenting and building their own drones, as well as participating in drills on waging unmanned warfare after Ukraine pioneered such tactics in its years-long conflict with Russia. Last November, 600 soldiers formed a battalion that specialized in drone warfare and was set up to be used as a dedicated unit that could deploy anywhere drones were required.

Gen. Christopher LaNeve, the Army’s acting chief of staff, has ordered the battalion to refocus on its core mission of being an airborne infantry unit, according to two U.S. officials who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal Army deliberations. The Wall Street Journal earlier reported the change.

The move comes amid a broader reshuffling of the Army under LaNeve, who has been its top uniformed leader since Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth suddenly ousted Gen. Randy George in April.



Gen. Christopher LaNeve, vice chief of staff of the Army, testifies at the Capitol in Washington on May 19. (AP)

‘Some actions misguided’

Zelenskyy details rift with defense minister

KYIV, Ukraine, Aug 23, (AP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he believes actions taken by dismissed Defense Minister Mykhailo Fedorov, including his involvement in mass protests and calls for elections, were misguided, as he publicly detailed their dispute for the first time.

Zelenskyy also alluded to problematic decisions over defense spending and said inaccurate information provided by the Defense Ministry contributed to an awkward encounter with U.S. President Donald Trump over the use of Starlink in Russia.

Zelenskyy disclosed figures showing Ukraine’s growing shortage of Patriot air-defense missiles needed to counter Russian ballistic attacks, with deliveries from Western allies declining in the past three years even as Russian missile strikes intensified.

He highlighted battlefield gains, however, saying Ukrainian forces have almost completely recaptured the Dnipropetrovsk region, with only about 10 square kilometers remaining under Russian control.

He made the remarks during a two-hour off-the-record meeting with reporters on Saturday, with a transcript released publicly on Sunday.

His comments ranged widely, covering the latest battlefield developments, efforts to counter Russian ballistic attacks, the state of peace negotiations, Ukraine’s budgetary challenges and the political turmoil surrounding Fedorov’s dismissal.

“I really had and still have a very positive attitude toward Mykhailo. We have been through a lot together. But I believe that he himself goes, or is pushed, into the wrong things,” he said.

Fedorov, a popular minister credited with modernizing Ukraine’s armed forces and accelerating the military’s embrace of technology and drone warfare, was dismissed last month after reportedly falling out with the country’s top military commander.



A Ukrainian flag waves during the flag-raising ceremony to mark the National Flag Day at the WWII memorial in Kyiv, Ukraine on Aug 23. (AP)

PM eyes cabinet, LDP executive reshuffle in late Sept: media

Moderate earthquake rattles eastern Japan, injuring more than 30

TOKYO, Aug 23, (Agencies): A moderate earthquake rattled eastern Japan, including the Tokyo area, early Sunday, injuring more than 30 people, most of them lightly, officials said. There was no danger of a tsunami.

According to the Japan Meteorological Agency, the quake had a preliminary magnitude of 5.9 and its epicenter was in the southern Ibaraki prefecture with a depth of 70 kilometers (42 miles). The U.S. Geological Survey recorded a magnitude of 5.8.

At least 37 people were injured in five prefectures in the region - 15 in Tokyo, nine in Saitama, eight in Kanagawa, four in Chiba and one in Ibaraki - according to prefectural officials and the Fire and Disaster Management Agency.

Most of the injured were hurt when they fell down or hit themselves against furniture or doors as they were caught off guard by the quake while sleeping and got out of bed in a panic, officials said. Among them was a woman in her 80s who fell off the bed and suffered a serious hip injury in Yokohama, in the Kanagawa prefecture, the Yomiuri newspaper reported.

A 23-year-old man told the Asahi newspaper that he felt a vertical jolt seconds after his earthquake alert went off when he was shopping in Tokyo's eastern district of Taito. He said he feared getting hit by merchandise that fell from shelves as the building shook.

The quake caused delays to express trains serving Tokyo and Narita Airport and other local trains serving northeastern regions, but Shinkansen bullet trains were running normally, their operator East Japan Railway Co. said.

The government set up a task force to assess the extent of possible damage, Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said on X.

The Japan Meteorological Agency urged the residents in the area to use caution against another possible moderate earthquake for about a week.

The tremor set off emergency quake alerts on mobile phones and also significantly shook Tokyo. NHK public television showed traffic on roads in nearby cities, including Mito and Saitama, seemingly normal.

An underground water pipe ruptured in Tokyo's eastern ward of Koto, with water pouring onto the road, NHK footage showed. The pipe has been repaired and the leak stopped.

There were no reports of anomalies from about a dozen nuclear power plants and other facilities that handle nuclear materials, the Nuclear Regulation Authority said.



First responders from the Tokyo Fire Department stand on a street partially flooded in the early hours of Aug 23, following the rupture of a water pipe after an earthquake that struck the area and neighboring prefectures. (AP)

Last month, a magnitude 7.1 quake struck the Kumamoto area on Japan's southernmost island of Kyushu, killing 38 people and injuring 364.

Also:
TOKYO: Japanese Prime Minister **Sanae Takaichi** is likely to carry out a cabinet reshuffle and revamp the executive lineup of her ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in the latter half of September, Kyodo News reported Friday, citing sources

close to the matter.

A previous Kyodo News report said the reshuffle could bring a major overhaul of ministers and is aimed at refreshing the Takaichi cabinet's image amid declining approval ratings in recent opinion polls.

A lawmaker from the Japan Innovation Party, the junior coalition partner of the ruling LDP, is widely believed to take a ministerial position in the new cabinet.

Also drawing attention is whether Takaichi will retain her rivals from last year's LDP leadership race, including Defense Minister **Shinjiro Koizumi**, Foreign Minister **Toshimitsu Motegi**, and LDP policy chief **Takayuki Kobayashi**.

It would be the first major reorganization of the LDP leadership and the cabinet since Takaichi became the party chief and was elected prime minister last October.

... were forced to live with long-term effects."

"As justice minister, I have ordered an execution after careful and thorough considerations," he said.

Takami was convicted of murder, attempted murder and arson and sentenced to death in a 2011 Osaka District Court ruling. His appeals up to the top court were rejected in 2016 by a Supreme Court decision upholding the death penalty.

Japan now has 100 people on death row, including 43 seeking retrials, Hiraguchi said.

Japan has faced growing criticism over its use of the death penalty, as a majority of the international community has abolished capital punishment. Japan and the U.S. are the only two countries in the Group of Seven leading industrialized nations that put people to death.

Calls to abolish capital punishment or increase transparency have grown after the 2024 acquittal of the world's longest-serving death-row inmate, Iwao Hakamada.

Executions are carried out in secrecy in Japan, where prisoners are not informed of their fate until the morning of their hanging.

Since 2007, Japan has begun disclosing the names of those executed and some details of their crimes, but disclosures are still limited.

Subcontinent

2 rescued off India's eastern coast: A search and rescue operation was underway Sunday off India's eastern coast after a distress alert and loss of contact with a Panama-flagged vessel carrying 24 crew.

Two crew members from the cargo ship MV Ocean Winner were rescued late Saturday while three ships were deployed to conduct surface searches for the remaining crew members in a joint operation by the Indian Coast Guard and Indian Navy.

The two crew members were undergoing medical treatment while their ranks and identities were being verified, said **Sarbananda Sonowal**, India's Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. (AP)



Sonowal

3 engineers dead in India plant blast: Three engineers were killed and a worker was critically injured in a massive fire that broke out following a powerful explosion inside a cement and steel plant in the eastern Indian state of Jharkhand, police said Saturday.

The incident took place late Friday in the Hehal area of Ramgarh district, about 55 km north of Ranchi, the capital city of Jharkhand.

Following the incident, police and fire brigade officials reached the site to contain the blaze and carry out rescue efforts.

Police have ordered an investigation to ascertain the

exact cause of the blast and subsequent fire. (Xinhua)

Nepal vehicle explosion kills 2: Two people were killed after a passenger bus collided with a motorcycle in Nepal's central Chitwan district on Saturday, police said.

The accident occurred at around 12:23 p.m. along the East-West Highway when a bus traveling from Narayanghat in Chitwan district to Bardibas in Mahottari district collided with a motorcycle coming from the opposite direction, according to a statement issued by the district police.

The motorcycle rider and a woman traveling with him were seriously injured in the crash and rushed to a hospital, where both died while undergoing treatment. The bus driver has been taken into custody.

Further investigation into the accident is underway, police said. (Xinhua)

49 terrorists killed in Pakistan: Pakistani security forces, in coordination with police, have killed 49 terrorists in a series of intelligence-based operations in the country over the past few days, the military said Friday.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), a total of 12 terrorists were killed in operations in various districts of the country's north-west Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, while 37 others were eliminated in 10 operations in southwest Balochistan.

The ISPR said weapons, ammunition, explosives, improvised explosive device components, remote detonators and motorcycles were recovered during the operations. (Xinhua)

Bid to strengthen president's grip on power

Kazakhstan votes in parliamentary election

TALLINN, Estonia, Aug 23, (AP): Kazakhstan was voting Sunday in a parliamentary election that is expected to further strengthen President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's grip on power in Central Asia's largest nation.

The pro-presidential Adilet party is widely predicted to win an overwhelming majority, with several smaller parties loyal to Tokayev also anticipated to enter parliament. The vote is the country's first election to a new, single-chamber parliament called the Kurultai.

The 73-year-old Tokayev, a former Soviet official and Kazakh diplomat who previously worked at the United Nations, has been in office since 2019.

Sunday's vote is the culmination of a constitutional overhaul that Tokayev initiated in March, when 87% of voters supported a referendum to merge the two chambers of parliament into one and grant the president authority to appoint key officials, subject to parliamentary approval, including reestablishing the vice presidency.



Voters gather to collect their ballots at a polling station during early parliamentary elections in Almaty, Kazakhstan on Aug 23. (AP)

Tokayev, who has sought to maintain a delicate balance between Moscow and the West since sanctions were imposed on Russia over the war in Ukraine, has justified the changes by citing the need for rapid decision-making in a fast-changing world.

Last month, Kazakhstan's Constitutional Court ruled that the amendments effectively reset the clock on Tokayev's previous terms in office, opening the door for him to run for another seven-year term.

First group of deportees arrives in Haiti after US ends Temporary Protected Status program

CAP-HAITIEN, Haiti, Aug 23, (AP): The US deported more than 160 people to Haiti for the first time since the Trump administration won a legal battle to end Temporary Protected Status for some 350,000 Haitians.

The plane landed in the northern Haitian city of Cap-Haitien because the main international airport in Port-au-Prince is considered too dangerous. The US government currently has a ban on US commercial flights to Haiti's capital through early September because of ongoing gang violence.

The deportees were clad in white, and many covered their faces out of safety as journalists filmed their arrival. Nearly all declined to talk, with some fearing being targeted by gangs that control an estimated 70% of Port-au-Prince and swaths of land beyond.

The deportees included TPS holders and Haitians who had served prison sentences, said Jean Négot Bonheur Delva, director general of Haiti's National Office of Migration.

"It is not the Haitian state that asks for them to be sent back," he said. "Our mission is to welcome migrants of forced return. ... We welcome them with the aim of accompanying them to their home."

Delva noted that some of the deportees were not born in Haiti, although they are of Haitian descent.

He said that several deportees planned to travel to Haiti's southern region, a dangerous journey because gangs control the main routes leading to that area and are known to randomly open fire on vehicles passing through.

Others are going to Haiti's western region, he said.

"There is one migrant who knows nothing about Haiti because he said he was coming from the Dominican Republic; that's where he was born," Delva said.

He said the government would attempt to reunify him with any potential relatives in Haiti or the Dominican Republic, where his mother and father live.

Immigration officials in Haiti offered deportees a maximum of \$65 and something to drink and eat. "Those who cannot reach their homes today, we will host them in secure spaces and the next day the process will continue until all migrants return home as they should," Delva said.

Delva did not say how many of the 161 deportees were TPS holders who had been living and working legally in the U.S. since 2010.

In late June, the US Supreme Court allowed the TPS program to end, affecting some 1 million people from more than a dozen countries.

The cases went back to the lower courts, but by late July, the government had not extended work

permits for Haitians.

On Aug 5, a federal judge in Washington, D.C., lifted an order preventing deportations of Haitians on Temporary Protected Status, which was effectively a formality after the Supreme Court ruling in June.

Activists have warned that Haiti is currently too dangerous and doesn't have enough resources to help those being deported to a country of nearly 12 million people, of which more than half need humanitarian assistance because of surging gang violence and deepening poverty, hunger and violence.

Gang violence already has displaced a record 1.5 million people across Haiti, where more than 3,100 people were reported killed from January to June and another 1,189 injured, according to U.N. statistics.

One deportee briefly spoke to The Associated Press as he arrived in Cap-Haitien. He identified himself as Jean Diane Louis and said he left Haiti when he was 5 years old. He said his family lives in New York City and that he was sentenced to 19 years in prison for an unspecified crime he asserted he did not commit.

"Then ICE came and took me without questioning me," Louis said. "They just sent me here."

As gang violence persists, Haitian migrants in the U.S. continue to be arrested and deported.



A man carries a bucket of water where families displaced by gang violence are living in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on Aug 12. (AP)



People attend a funeral for those who died when a boat capsized, in Sokoto, northwestern Nigeria on Aug 20. (AP)

Africa

CAR shuts down collapsed gold mining site: The Central African Republic's government Saturday closed down a gold mining site that killed more than 100 people when it collapsed earlier this week, citing non-compliance with regulatory procedures.

Ruffin Benam Beloungou, the minister of mines and geology, announced the closure of the Zamboye site in the western part of the country. He cited "non-compliance with mining standards and non-compliance with administrative directives," as an investigation into the collapse of the gold mine continues.

Several other people were injured in the collapse.

The gold mine collapse was the latest mining disaster in the mineral-rich Central African nation. Disasters such as this are common where a significant part of the population depends on small-scale extraction mining for livelihood. They are exposed to high risk because miners don't have enough protection. Regulation of the mines is weak, regularly leading to deadly outcomes.

A search for survivors by local workers was hampered by a lack of expertise and equipment for the scale of the disaster. The Zamboye site was already closed before the accident, but illegal miners still worked there. (AP)

Groups attack multiple villages in Nigeria: A number of people were kidnapped from a mosque in a spree of abductions at several villages in Nigeria's north-central Niger state, police said Saturday.

The assailants attacked a mosque in Kpenya village after attacks in a string of villages in the remote Borgu Local Government Area of Niger state Friday, police spokesperson Wasiu Abiodun said.

Such attacks are common in Nigeria, where multiple armed groups operate, killing and kidnapping people for ransom. The groups sometimes clash in competition with each other. No group has claimed responsibility for the Friday attacks. (AP)

Nigeria orders probe into fake gov agency: Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu on Friday ordered an investigation into a man accused of creating and running a fake government agency, the second such agency uncovered in the country in recent weeks.

Musa Adamu Aliyu, the head of the country's corruption watchdog, announced the investigation after briefing the president in the capital, Abuja.

The latest bogus agency, called the National Brands Development and Made in Nigeria Special Project Office, was operating illegally from a government office and was headed by George Buchi Nwabueze, authorities said. (AP)

ETFs to boost market depth

CMA, KES host ‘ETF’ awareness workshop

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The Capital Markets Authority (CMA), in coordination with the Kuwait Economic Society (KES), organized an awareness workshop titled, “Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs)” on Aug 19, 2026, at the headquarters of KES, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the authority disclosed that the representatives of listed companies, experts, and those interested in capital markets and investments attended the workshop, which follows the issuance of CMA Resolution No. 80/2026, amending certain provisions of the executive regulations of Exchange Traded Funds Law No. 7/2010 and its amendments.

The representatives of CMA, Director of the Markets Regulation Department Abdulrahman Al-Failakawi and Director of the Collective Investment Schemes Regulation Department Ahmed Al-Khaled, conducted the workshop.

During the workshop, Al-Failakawi and Al-Khaled discussed the main features of the regulatory framework for ETFs, nature of these funds, their operational mechanisms, and the regulations governing them.

The workshop affirmed the importance of ETFs in market development and financial product offerings project, as well as their role in expanding the range of investment instruments and options available in the local market.

It analyzed the major advantages that ETFs can offer to the market and investors, particularly the provision of cash flow, raising pricing efficiency, attracting new investor segments, supporting financial inclusion, and offering diverse and competitively priced investment options.

It also highlighted the main characteristics of ETFs as open-ended publicly traded funds that support the development of the Kuwaiti market.

This is in line with the efforts of CMA to develop the market, diversify the available investment products and instruments, and complement the development of current investment regulations and organization of multi-asset funds to raise market efficiency, strengthen governance, transparency and disclosure, protect investors, and create a robust and sustainable investment environment for funds in the Kuwaiti market.

The workshop concluded with an open forum to respond to the queries of participants.



Photos during the workshop.

KPC propane, butane exports fall 4.5% in FY ending March 31

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) exports of propane and butane declined by 4.5 percent during the fiscal year ending March 31.

Shipments to foreign markets fell to 5,923 metric tons, compared with 6,200 metric tons exported during the previous fiscal year, according to an official government report obtained by the daily.

An oil expert attributed the decline in propane and butane exports to two strategic factors. The first was logistical challenges resulting from heightened maritime traffic disruptions and military operations in vital energy supply routes during the final quarter of the 2025/2026 fiscal year.

The heightened geopolitical risks forced Kuwait's oil sector to declare force majeure and temporarily suspend some export operations.

The second factor, according to the expert, was KPC's decision to reprioritize domestic energy consumption. The company directed larger quantities of butane and propane to the local market amid the escalation of the regional security crisis in order to ensure sufficient supplies for local needs.

The expert emphasized the importance of propane and butane as two important components of Kuwait's oil export portfolio, noting that they are essential to numerous manufacturing industries and a wide range of everyday uses, both locally and globally.

They explained that the applications of these two gases vary according to their distinct physical and chemical properties, making them highly valuable in multiple sectors.

Propane is considered one of the most versatile and efficient energy sources and is particularly well suited to cold climates due to its very low boiling point, which allows it to evaporate and flow smoothly. This makes it an ideal fuel for central heating systems in cold countries. It is also a key component in the petrochemical industry and is used in the production of plastics, synthetic fibers, and advanced materials. Propane is further used as a highly efficient and environmentally friendly refrigerant in large facilities and factories, where it can help reduce carbon emissions compared with traditional fuels.

Butane is of considerable importance for both domestic and commercial applications due to its ease of handling, as it can be readily liquefied and compressed at moderate temperatures. It is a primary and safe component of domestic gas cylinders and portable stoves used for camping and outdoor activities. Butane is also used as a release agent in light industries and as a key component in the production of synthetic rubber and advanced chemical solvents. In addition, it serves as a safe propellant in aerosol cans and a variety of cosmetic and personal care products.

General index up 0.85%

Boursa closes higher

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Sunday's session in the green, with the general index climbing 74.63 points (0.85%) to 8,892.89. Total turnover reached 389.6 million shares across 23,209 cash trades, valued at KD 105 million (about \$340.5 million).

The main market index outperformed, gaining 119.98 points (1.33%) to 9,108.40 on 190.6 million shares in 12,654 transactions worth KD 39.1 million (\$126.8 million). The premier market index added 68.85 points (0.75%) to 9,308.57, with 198.9 million shares changing hands in 10,555 deals valued at KD 65.9 million (\$213.7 million).

The Main 50 Index rose 90.10 points (0.85%) to 10,722.35, as 126.1 million shares were traded in 7,886 transactions totaling KD 29.2 million (\$94.6 million).

Infrastructure investing: Building resilience across market cycles



By NBK Wealth

Infrastructure typically behaves like a hybrid between physical real estate and fixed-income investments. The core appeal is straightforward: these assets provide essential services that generate stable revenue and resilient earnings regardless of the economic cycle, offering portfolio diversification rather than acting purely as a standalone income or growth strategy.

Infrastructure represents the essential physical assets such as transport, power grids, and digital networks that support fundamental economic activity. Due to the constant demand for these foundational services, the asset class exhibits defensive characteristics and maintains resilience during economic downturns. These assets typically operate under regulated frameworks or long-term contracts, thereby generating highly predictable, consistent income. Additionally, infrastructure provides effective inflation protection, as contractual frameworks often permit fee adjustments aligned with rising price indices. As a result, while risk profiles vary by subsector, investors utilize this asset class primarily for stable returns and reliable yield.

Infrastructure as an Asset Class & Subsector Comparison

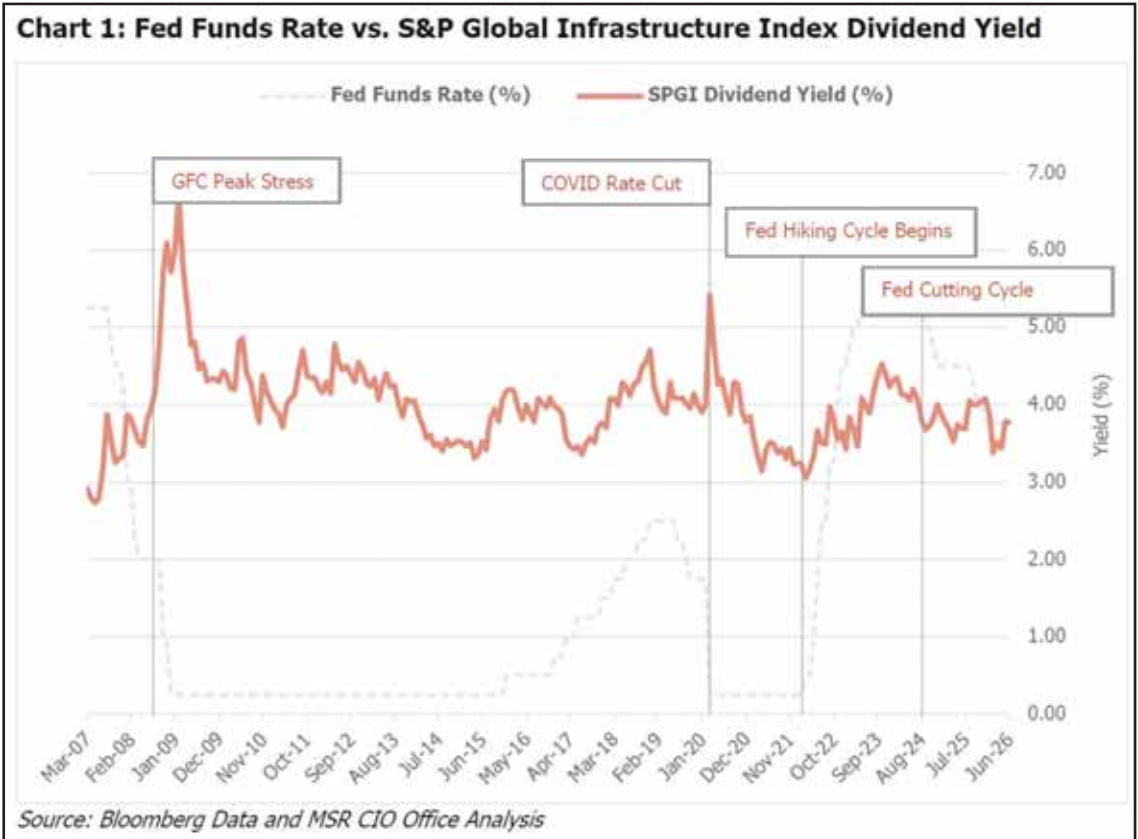
Historically focused on economic assets, the modern infrastructure market now includes six subsectors: regulated utilities, transport concessions, digital networks, energy logistics, social programs, and environmental utilities. These vary by contract, market exposure, and regulation. Investors assess each based on cash flow predictability, inflation protection, and interest rate sensitivity. Asset risk dictates stability. Defensive sectors such as regulated utilities, social projects, and environmental assets rely on government backing or long-term availability payments, eliminating demand risk. Conversely, economic sectors such as transport, digital, and energy depend directly on commercial volumes, public utilization, and commodity pricing.

Key Investment Drivers & Attributes

- 1. Stable Cash Flows**
Infrastructure investments offer predictable revenue streams via long-term contracts, regulations, or monopolies, supporting consistent income and capital preservation. Recurring revenues derive from user fees, availability payments, regulated tariffs, or contracted capacity. Since these services remain essential, they provide strong revenue visibility. However, demand shifts, utilization patterns, contract renewals, and operating costs introduce volatility. Income quality varies by subsector. Mature regulated utilities display more resilient revenue patterns than development-stage or demand-sensitive assets.
- 2. Inflation Protection**
Infrastructure provides robust inflation protection, outperforming traditional fixed-income assets through CPI-linked tariffs, periodic rate resets, or contractual cost pass-throughs. Rising construction costs also create a replacement-cost effect that lifts underlying asset values. However, protection varies based on regulation, contract terms, and price sensitivity. Aggressive interest rate hikes pose a major risk. For highly leveraged assets, soaring financing costs can offset inflation-linked revenues, while compressed valuation multiples reduce total returns. Therefore, asset-level inflation linkage fails to provide a full hedge against duration or refinancing risk.
- 3. Market Cycle Resilience**
Infrastructure assets deliver strong resilience during macroeconomic downturns due to inelastic demand for essential services. Lacking exposure to discretionary spending, they show lower drawdown sensitivity during market declines. For portfolio construction, this profile generates risk-adjusted alpha, stable cash yield, and a muted correlation to public equities, making these diversification attributes as critical as headline returns. However, volume-driven transport concessions, merchant energy projects, and development-stage investments remain sensitive to economic cycles, capital markets, and regulatory changes. Downside protection depends entirely on each asset's operating model and contract structure.
- 4. Capital Appreciation and Secular Demand**
Private infrastructure pairs equity-like growth with fixed-income defensiveness via predictable cash flows, inflation protection, and low economic sensitivity. Over the past decade, the asset class outperformed most major categories except private equity, delivering positive returns through two major recessions. Long-term secular megatrends including the energy transition, digital expansion, and social infrastructure modernization, represent key growth drivers that could potentially sustain structural market demand over the coming years.

Table 1: Infrastructure Subsector Risk & Profile Matrix				
Subsector	Cash flow visibility	Inflation Protection	Rate sensitivity	Typical risk note
Regulated utilities	High	High	Moderate	Regulatory reset risk
Transport concessions	Medium to high	Medium	Medium	Volume risk and concession expiry
Digital networks	Medium to high	Medium	Moderate	Rapid technology change and capex needs
Energy logistics	Medium	Medium to high	High	Commodity and policy sensitivity
Social programs	High	High	High	Government counterparty and contract risk
Environmental utilities	High	High	Moderate	Operational uptime and regulatory oversight

Table 2: Infrastructure Structural Comparison		
Metric	Public Listed	Private Unlisted
Liquidity	Daily trading on public exchanges	Highly illiquid; multi-year fund lock-ups
Market Correlation	High short-term correlation to public equities	Muted public market correlation; low beta
Volatility Profile	Higher volatility driven by broader market sentiment	Smoothed volatility due to appraisal-based valuations
Inflation Pass-Through	Indirect; subject to equity market adjustments	Direct via contractual or regulated tariff mechanisms
Fee Structure	Low expense ratios; standard equity fund pricing	Private equity model (management & performance fees)
Control & Governance	Minimal; minority shareholder governance	High; active board representation and operating control



Investors must assess how their choice of vehicle modifies the defensive profile of infrastructure by analyzing the following specific risk categories :

- Private Market Risks:**
 - Illiquidity Risk: Capital is locked into multi-year holding periods with no immediate secondary market exit options.
 - Valuation Lag: Infrequent appraisals artificially smooth volatility, delaying real-time market pricing.
 - Refinancing Risk: Heavy reliance on private project finance creates vulnerability when renewing debt during high-interest-rate cycles.
- Public Market Risks:**
 - Market Sentiment Risk: Listed equities experience price volatility driven by broader stock market movements, independent of underlying asset performance.
 - Shared Structural Risks:**
 - Financial Leverage: High debt levels can enhance returns, but they also increase vulnerability to economic slowdowns and cash flow shortfalls.
 - Regulatory Risk: Cash flows depend on government contracts, making assets vulnerable to policy shifts and regulatory rate resets.
 - Subsector Risk: Risk profiles diverge significantly between cash-generative operational assets (brownfield) and high-execution-risk developments (greenfield).

Gold hits \$4,661 as dollar weakens

Bitcoin, gold surge on bond market jolt

NEW YORK, Aug 23, (AP): Bitcoin and gold shot higher this week, with both getting a boost from some frantic action surrounding the bond market, and the cryptocurrency also benefiting from activity in Washington.

Bitcoin had dropped from a January high of around \$95,000 to below \$60,000 at the end of June. Investors shied away from speculative assets earlier in the year and crypto supporters were concerned about the lack of movement on proposed regulation of the industry. On Friday, bitcoin rose above \$77,000.

Gold hit a high above \$5,300 in January but dropped to around \$4,000 in June as rising rates made interest-bearing investments more attractive. Gold rose to \$4,661 on Friday.

The first jolt arrived Wednesday when the Treasury Department announced plans to significantly increase its buybacks of long-term Treasuries, or government debt. On the same day, President Donald Trump, who made about \$1.2 billion last year from various crypto holdings, urged Congress to move quickly on crypto legislation.

There was an almost immediate reaction, which included a dollar sell-off and a jump in the value of gold and bitcoin as investors moved toward alternative assets.

How these two investments caught fire can be understood in the context of several developments this week.

In a surprise announcement Wednesday, the U.S. Treasury Department said that it would at least double the size of its planned purchases of longer-term government debt. The maneuver was intended to calm bond markets after a sustained sell-off, meaning investors were asking for higher yields to lend money to the U.S., which investors suddenly viewed as riskier

That's because while the Treasury intervention worked, at least for a short period, it also raised questions about whether the government is trying to push borrowing costs lower despite inflationary pressures. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent is attempting to lower long-term borrowing costs, a move that can put upward pressure on inflation at a time when inflation is already elevated. Bessent's maneuver could handoff the Federal Reserve, which fights inflation by raising interest rates.

Then there's the national debt, which surpassed a record \$40 trillion on the same day that the Treasury's actions unfolded. The milestone figure was recorded just five months after the U.S. hit a record \$39 trillion debt in March. It reached \$38 trillion five months before that, in October.

There is already a lot of anxiety over inflation, particularly because of the conflict in Iran and soaring energy prices. If yields on U.S. bonds are not truly reflecting risk, you can often see that play out in the value of the U.S. currency, which took a significant downward swoop Wednesday.

So where does the money that was invested in the dollar or Treasuries go? This week, it appears to have been funneled into what is known as the "debasement trade," when investors flood into alternative assets such as gold, which rose more than 2% Wednesday. The debasement trade now includes bitcoin. Bitcoin jumped more than 20% this week.

On Wednesday, President Donald Trump, who banked nearly \$1.2 billion from his crypto businesses last year, held a crypto currency conference at the White House where he called on Congress to pass the crypto-friendly Clarity Act, saying that it would "keep us ahead of China, keep us ahead of everyone else."

AI-powered monitoring raises worker concerns

NEW YORK, Aug 23, (AP): College administrators read an adjunct professor’s comments to students on personal essays. Managers told a pharmacist to spend less time with patients after tracking the number and length of her appointments. Scanners on a warehouse conveyor belt monitored the pace of workers to ensure they inspected hundreds of items per hour.

Thousands of employers are keeping tabs on the whereabouts, productivity and communications of workers with technology that was adopted widely during the coronavirus pandemic. A vast array of digital tools still are being used to track locations, collect data on task completion rates, and access work-issued smartphone and laptop cameras, raising concerns about how much privacy employees have relinquished, even in their own homes.

Employers have always monitored workers, but recent advances in artificial intelligence and data science enable them to create extensive data sets or “dossiers” that can be used to punish workers or attempt to predict employee behavior, said Wilneida Negrón, director of research and policy at Coworker, a nonprofit that helps workers organize to improve working conditions.

“Oftentimes, the workers with the least amount of power in the labor markets tend to be testing grounds for some of the more intrusive forms of data collection,” Negrón said.

Some of the most common workplace monitoring programs have shared names, email addresses and other personal worker data with hundreds of outside data brokers and technology companies without clearly disclosing the practice, according to an investigation by Vanderbilt University, Northeastern University and the University of California at Berkeley.

Data privacy experts and workers who say they’ve been closely monitored spoke with The Associated Press about what they see as the risks of employer surveillance and the steps employees can take to protect their personal information.

Pharmacist Lannie Duong’s job at a medical clinic involved meeting with patients who had chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension and heart disease. She reviewed their medical histories, blood work and symptoms, and adjusted their medications. She frequently enlisted interpreters to help her communicate with patients who had limited English language skills.

Duong said her employer tracked the length of her phone calls and appointments, and in performance evaluations questioned why she took so long with each patient.

“Everything was counted. How many minutes you’re on the phone. The minutiae of it was ridiculous,” Duong said. “We’re just tasked to do what feels like the impossible.”

Under what she described as unrelenting pressure, Duong felt “not trusted, not appreciated, almost completely hopeless. It was so depressing.” She eventually went on medical leave and began volunteering with other pharmacists to organize a union.

“I spoke up, hoping others would voice their concerns as well, but that didn’t really pan out,” Duong said. She says her employment was terminated after the medical leave.

Many of the employers using surveillance tools do so transparently and engage employee boards in reviewing how the tools are used, Negrón said. But there are also employers tracking, ranking and scoring employees in ways that are not transparent to workers, she said.

“Workers are going to have to come together because the forces of centralizing this kind of tracking and monitoring are moving too fast,” Negrón said.

As awareness about surveillance tools grows, some workers are pushing back on tools that track how long it takes to fulfill tasks, saying such monitoring contributes to injuries, and questioning what personal information is being collected and how it’s being used, said Hayley Tsukayama, director of state affairs at the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a nonprofit that focuses on digital privacy.

“Unfortunately, if you are on a machine that’s been issued by your workplace, you should expect that there’s some type of monitoring,” Tsukayama said.

Researching data collection and surveillance trends in your industry is a good idea, according to Negrón. Without that knowledge, workers may find themselves unprepared when confronted with information unearthed during surveillance.

While teaching a college writing class, Arianna Anaya discovered that an administrator was reading the papers her students uploaded to the school’s learning management software and the comments Anaya made on the work. The students often wrote about intimate topics, including abuse, eating disorders and family trauma.

“The school essentially used the online learning system to allow administrators and staff to read student work that was often immensely private and personal, something we were specifically told students should not know about,” Anaya said.

A colleague who printed out the comments criticized the casual tone Anaya used with students and accused her of not sticking to the course syllabus. A few months later, Anaya’s teaching contract wasn’t renewed, although she doesn’t know the exact reason.

“It made me quite paranoid,” Anaya said. “It made me feel less safe in the world.”

Some states, including New York, Connecticut, Delaware and Maine, require employers to notify workers if they’re being monitored. Maine’s law goes further, prohibiting visual monitoring in employees’ homes or personal vehicles unless that kind of observation is required for the duties of the job, said Edward Halle, a privacy and AI compliance manager.

“The question becomes, what does the law mean by ‘the duties of the job’?” Halle said. “A telehealth nurse needs a camera; the camera is the job. A productivity webcam bolted onto ordinary desk work almost certainly isn’t. Where that line falls is the first thing the Department of Labor will be asked to sort out.”

If you work in a state without a notification requirement, it’s difficult to find out if an employer is using technology to monitor your performance.

To raise the issue with managers, Tsukayama suggests coordinating with a union. If that’s not an option and you’re asking managers individually, approach the topic cautiously and take a curious tone, she advised. You could say you’ve noticed something on the computer and have questions, such as “How is this information being used within the company? How might it get out of the company?” Tsukayama said.

One place to start is asking what specific employee data your organization collects, said Aiha Nguyen, director of the Labor Futures Initiative at Data & Society, a nonprofit institute studying the impacts of technology. If your manager doesn’t know, the information technology department may have answers, since the people working there often are the ones turning on the features, Nguyen said.

Some common software programs such as Microsoft Office and Zoom have tools that can be used for tracking worker productivity, but the tracking features aren’t always activated. Knowing whether those tracking features are turned on can be difficult, because they’re built into the programs, Nguyen said.

“It’s automatic. It’s considered something that employers have been able to say, ‘This is necessary for work. You have to use these tools,’” she said.

To help safeguard personal information, don’t use work devices to handle family matters or sensitive personal information such as medical conditions, experts advise.

“I think most people know that,” Nguyen said. “But it can become tedious to switch between phones, or people don’t really think it’s that harmful. ... You don’t want to potentially put yourself at risk.”

‘Unleashing American energy’

US reaches record oil & gas output, Wright says

WASHINGTON, Aug 23, (KUNA): US Energy Secretary Chris Wright announced that his country has raised its oil production to “record highs,” making it the world’s largest energy producer.

Wright stated in a post on his X platform that “American oil and gas workers have driven production to an all-time high, making the US the world’s largest producer of oil and natural gas. Thanks to President Donald Trump’s agenda, we’re building on that success, unleashing American en-

ergy, strengthening our economy, and lowering costs”.

These statements come as the United States intensifies efforts to secure safe passage for shipping in the Strait of Hormuz, ensuring the continued flow of energy supplies to global markets.

The US Energy Secretary announced last Monday that he would discuss with US refineries ways to increase fuel production to reduce gasoline prices, which remain significantly high following the US-Israeli war on Iran.

Deficit nears \$2 trillion

US national debt surpasses \$40 trillion

By Hassan F. Beidas

The U.S. national debt has entered a new and historic phase, surpassing \$40 trillion for the first time ever. The milestone highlights the growing challenges facing America’s public finances as the fiscal deficit continues to widen and borrowing costs rise amid persistently elevated Treasury yields.

According to data from the U.S. Treasury Department, total federal debt reached approximately \$40 trillion at the close of trading last Tuesday, up by roughly one-third in less than five years, after surpassing the \$30 trillion mark in January 2022.

While the size of the number is difficult to comprehend, the real concern is not simply how large the debt has become, but a more important question: How much is this debt costing the U.S. government every year?

Decades of Crises Have Fueled the Debt

The explosion in U.S. debt did not happen overnight. It is the result of fiscal policies that have accumulated over several decades, accelerating sharply in the aftermath of major economic crises.

During the global financial crisis and later the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. government deployed massive spending programs to support the economy, businesses and American households, at a time when tax revenues weakened or failed to keep pace with government spending.

Successful fiscal policies have also contributed to the rising debt burden, including tax cuts, government spending programs and war-related expenditures. More recently, changes in U.S. tariff policies have also added to the fiscal strain, with the government having to return more than \$160 billion in tariff payments to companies.

The United States therefore finds itself facing a difficult equation: a massive economy that continues to require government spending to support growth, and a government increasingly reliant on borrowing to finance that spending.

Interest Costs: A Growing Burden

The bigger concern today, however, is not simply the size of the debt, but the cost of financing it.

As Treasury yields have risen, the U.S. government has had to pay more to finance its debt and refinance maturing bonds. Over time, higher interest rates translate directly into a heavier burden on the federal budget.

With roughly two months remaining in the fiscal year, federal interest costs in 2026 per the official statistics have reached approximately \$1.17 trillion, an increase of around 15% from the same period a year earlier.

Interest payments have consequently become the third-largest item in the federal budget, behind healthcare and Social Security. simply, an increasing share of



Hassan Beidas

ALSAYER employees partner for blood donation campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: As part of its ongoing commitment to corporate social responsibility, and community wellbeing, ALSAYER Group successfully organized its annual blood donation campaign in collaboration with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank (KCBB) on 10 and 13 August 2026. The campaign was held at the headquarters and ALSAYER Car World in Shuwaikh, bringing together employees in a collective effort to support a lifesaving cause.

Mr. Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer CEO noted that, “the initiative reflects ALSAYER Group’s long-standing dedication to creating a positive social impact and supporting national healthcare efforts, all contributing to the future wellbeing of our community.”

Through this partnership with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank, ALSAYER Group continues to strengthen blood reserves while simultaneously raising awareness about the vital role that regular blood donations play in supporting patients in need. The campaign aligns with the Group’s broader sustainability strategy, which focuses on creating lasting value for society through meaningful community engagement and responsible corporate citizenship.

Commenting on the initiative, Eng. Nehad Al Haj Ali, Group Manager of ALSAYER Group’s Corporate Excellence Department, said “the blood donation campaign demonstrates ALSAYER’s lasting commitment to the community and to its Corporate Social Responsibility Programs. Moreover, we are contributing to the objective of en-



Photos during the event.

hancing blood bank stocks and raising awareness of the importance and benefits of blood donations in the community.”

ALSAYER Group’s dedication to public health and community welfare has been evident through its continued support of awareness and wellness initiatives over the years.

Such initiatives highlight the essential role donors play in supporting healthcare systems and improving the lives of others. The successful 2026 blood donation campaign further strengthens ALSAYER Group’s position as a responsible corporate citizen committed to fostering a healthier and more resilient

society. By encouraging employees to participate in initiatives that make a tangible difference, The Group continues to demonstrate that sustainable business practices extend beyond operations to include meaningful contributions that positively impact communities and future generations.

Featuring the new Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra, Galaxy Z Fold8 & Galaxy Z Flip8

stc & Samsung bring latest Galaxy Z series experience

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, is collaborating with Samsung to showcase the newly launched Galaxy Z series through a series of activations across leading malls in Kuwait. Took place at The Avenues, the activations gave visitors the opportunity to experience the Galaxy Z series firsthand while also discovering stc’s latest offers and promotions complementing the launch.

The activations build on the long-standing partnership between stc and Samsung, creating experiences that connect customers directly with the latest developments in smartphone technology. Visitors will have the opportunity to interact with the new devices and explore their foldable designs, enhanced displays and integrated Galaxy AI capabilities in an engaging setting. The experience will also provide customers with a better understanding of the different devices available across the new lineup and how their features can complement their increasingly connected lifestyles. Customers can also explore stc’s available offers and plans for the new Galaxy Z series, with eligible customers having the option to add their preferred device to their existing plan.

Samsung’s eighth-generation Galaxy Z series introduces three distinct foldable experiences designed around different user preferences. The Galaxy Z Fold8 Ultra brings Samsung’s Ultra experience to its foldable portfolio for the first time, combining an expansive 8-inch main display with AI-powered multitasking capabilities. Its thin profile and



stc pavilion



During the testing of the latest Samsung devices.

lightweight design provide greater portability while maintaining the larger workspace associated with the Fold experience.

The Galaxy Z Fold8 introduces a redesigned form factor that provides customers with a more versatile viewing experience. Its 7.6-inch main display adapts naturally to different types of content, while the device’s lightweight design makes it more comfortable for everyday use. The Galaxy Z Flip8 offers a different experience through its compact foldable format and enhanced FlexWindow, allowing users to access more information and features without unfolding the device. Galaxy AI further enhances the experience by providing personalized information and intelligent features directly through the

FlexWindow.

Taking the experience to some of Kuwait’s most popular shopping destinations enables stc and Samsung to bring the latest smartphone innovations closer to customers in locations they regularly visit. The activations have been designed to encourage direct interaction with the devices, giving visitors the opportunity to explore the different devices and experience Samsung’s latest foldable technology before selecting the one that best suits their needs.

In a statement, stc indicated that the activations reflect the Company’s approach to engaging with customers beyond its traditional channels and creating opportunities for them to experience newly launched technologies firsthand. As

smartphones continue to evolve and introduce new ways for customers to interact with technology, stc believes that providing hands-on experiences can help customers better understand the capabilities available to them and make more informed decisions based on their individual needs.

The Company added that its ongoing partnership with Samsung continues to play an important role in bringing the latest smartphone technologies and devices closer to customers in Kuwait. stc will continue collaborating with leading global technology companies to provide customers with access to new digital experiences that align with their evolving needs, while strengthening the Company’s position as a key digital enabler in the Kuwaiti market.

What's On

SPOTLIGHT



Got a birthday or event?

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Aysha Jamil tops A-Levels with four A*, Zeeshan leads IGCSE with seven A* at ICSK Khaitan

ICSK Khaitan records excellent international examination results

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The International Education Section of Indian Community School Kuwait (ICSK) – Khaitan has once again achieved remarkable academic success, with students securing outstanding results in the June 2026 Cambridge, Pearson Edexcel and Oxford AQA examinations across IGCSE, AS Level and A Level programmes.

The results mark a particularly significant milestone for the school as the first batch of Cambridge A- Level students from the International Education Section has successfully completed its A Level programme, while the school's third batch of IGCSE students has also produced an impressive set of results. The section has further added to its achievements with excellent results from Oxford AQA, demonstrating the growing strength and diversity of its international academic programmes.

The achievement is even more remarkable considering the unprecedented uncertainties and challenges faced across the Middle East during the months leading up to the examinations. Despite disruptions and difficult circumstances during March, April, May and June, the students remained focused, resilient and determined to achieve their academic goals.

Among the outstanding performers in the CIE, A Level examinations, Ms Aysha Jamil emerged as a remarkable achiever, securing A* in all four of her Cambridge A Level subjects. Her exceptional performance stands as a testament to her dedication, perseverance and academic excellence. Master Bashshar Ahmed Basheer secured A grades in his two subjects, while Ms Akshatha Rajesh scored an A grade in Accounting.

The International Education Section also celebrated excellent achievements in the AS Level examinations. Master Sai Karthik Mannava secured 'a' grades in all four of his subjects, while Master Ram Putra Kumar and Master Kesler Tom Vijay achieved 'a' grades in all three of their subjects. In Pearson Edexcel, Ms Joanna Bobben-Erakathil, Ms Kesiah Praveen, Ms Lisa Anne D Cunha and Master Jaden Julian D Souza scored 'a' grades in both of their subjects. Master Jacob Jose Koratti also secured an 'a' grade in Business.

Adding further distinction to the celebrations, the third batch of Cambridge IGCSE students achieved excellent results in the May/June 2026 examination session. Master Mohammed Zeeshan emerged as the top performer, securing an outstanding seven A*, making the school community immensely proud of his exceptional achievement. Ms Sarah followed with an impressive five A*.

Ms Aisha, Master Ayaankhan, Ms Hafsa, Ms Rehanna and Ms Jannatul each secured four A*, while Ms Shafiya achieved three A* and Master Sohaib secured two A*. In addition, nearly eight other students achieved A* and A grades in one or more subjects, further highlighting the strong academic performance of the cohort.

The International Education Section also recorded an excellent achievement in the Oxford AQA examination series, Master Mustafa and Master Muzammil secured the outstanding grade of 9 in Accounting. This exceptional result adds another notable achievement to the school's growing record of success across internationally recognised examination boards.

These results are particularly encouraging achievements for the International Education Section, demonstrating the continued development of its academic foundation and the growing confidence of its students in internationally recognised curricula. The consistent performance across IGCSE, AS Level, A Level examinations reflects the section's commitment to nurturing students towards higher academic achievement and future global opportunities.

Established in 2022, the International Education Section at ICSK Khaitan was envisioned to provide students



IGCSE Result

with access to internationally recognised curricula and diverse pathways for higher education. The section offers internationally recognised programmes through boards including Cambridge, Pearson Edexcel and Oxford AQA, enabling students to choose pathways suited to their academic aspirations.

The successful completion of the A Level programme by the first batch, together with the impressive performance of the AS & IGCSE students, represents a golden chapter in the history of ICSK Khaitan's International Education Section. From its establishment to witnessing its first cohort successfully complete A Levels and see-



Cambridge GCE Result



Edexcel IAL Result

ing successive AS & IGCSE cohorts achieve excellent results, the section has grown steadily through the collective efforts of students, parents, teachers, school leadership and management.

The dedicated teaching faculty also played an invaluable role, particularly during the challenging examination period. Teachers worked tirelessly to support students, conduct the required academic activities, coordinate the Portfolio of Evidence (POE) processes where applicable, compile and authenticate evidence, and ensure timely and accurate submission to the respective examination boards.

Their commitment extended well beyond regular classroom responsibilities, reflecting the spirit of teamwork and professionalism that contributed significantly to the success of the students.

The Management of the Indian Community School Kuwait congratulated all the achievers, their parents and teachers for their dedication, perseverance and contribution to the excellent examination results. The achievements of the students stand as a source of immense pride for the entire ICSK Khaitan community and reaffirm the International Education Section's commitment to academic excellence and the preparation of students for successful futures in an increasingly globalised world.



Photos during the event.

Lulu brings Kerala's festive spirit to Kuwait with 'Onam Evidayanu'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The vibrant spirit of Kerala came alive in Kuwait as Lulu Hypermarket launched its special Onam promotion, "Onam Evidayanu," across all its outlets. Bringing together tradition, taste, culture and festive shopping, the promotion offers families and shoppers an opportunity to experience the colours, flavours and timeless traditions of Onam.

The traditional lamp was lit at Lulu Al Rai outlet on August 22 by Lulu Kuwait Director Mr. Sreejith K.S., marking the inauguration of the 'Onam Evidayanu' celebrations. Regional Director Mr. Sakir Hussain, senior management officials, well-wishers and distinguished guests were present on the occasion.

A major highlight of the celebration was the colourful Pookalam competition sponsored by Eastern, with 25 teams participating. The beautifully designed floral arrangements transformed the Lulu floor with the traditional charm of Kerala, creating a lively atmosphere filled with Onam happiness,

creativity and togetherness.

Adding sweetness to the festivities, Payasamela, a special payasam-making contest, saw more than 50 participants showcasing the rich and authentic flavours of Kerala's favourite festive dessert. The celebrations were further enriched by cultural programmes and traditional dance performances, bringing the heritage and festive energy of Kerala to life.

As part of the Onam promotion, Lulu offers customers an authentic culinary experience with a traditional Onam Sadya featuring 23 delicious items at an affordable price. For payasam lovers, more than 14 varieties of payasam are available, offering a delightful selection of Kerala's traditional sweet delicacies. Bulk orders and advance bookings are also available, making it convenient for families, organisations and groups to enjoy the traditional flavours of Onam together.

The festive offers extend beyond food, with special promotions on Indian vegetables and essential Onam grocer-

ies, making it convenient for families to prepare their traditional celebrations. Lulu also offers a flat 25% off on sarees, churidars, and kurtis, along with a wide selection of traditional Onam fashions for men, women, and children, helping shoppers embrace the festive spirit in traditional style.

Special deals on electronics, home appliances and a wide range of other products add further excitement to the Onam shopping experience. Lulu Shopping Gift Cards are also available across all outlets, offering a convenient gifting option for the festive season.

With its unique combination of tradition, culture, authentic flavours and attractive offers, "Onam Evidayanu" brings the rich heritage and timeless traditions of Kerala to everyone in Kuwait, offering a true taste and experience of Kerala's festive spirit.

This Onam, visit Lulu, enjoy great festive offers, savour the authentic taste of Kerala and celebrate the spirit of togetherness.

The Kerala Press Club Kuwait organises 'Onam Celebration 2026' with grandeur

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The Kerala Press Club Kuwait (KPC), a collective of media professionals in Kuwait, organised 'Onam Celebration 2026' with a wide range of cultural and entertainment programmes. Members of the Press Club and their families participated in the celebrations held at the Kohinoor Auditorium, Fahaheel.

KPC President T. V. Hikmath presided over the function, which was inaugurated by Ravi Ayanoli, Principal of Delhi Public School (DPS), Fahaheel, by lighting the traditional ceremonial lamp. In his inaugural address, Ravi Ayanoli highlighted the important role such community gatherings play in preserving the love, traditions and cultural heritage of Kerala among the expatriate community.

He observed that the present generation is living in an era where even traditional legends and narratives are

changing. Instead of learning about their heritage from parents and elders, the younger generation increasingly turns to modern technologies such as artificial intelligence. He stressed the need to preserve and strengthen traditions such as Onam, which help the younger generation remain connected to their cultural roots.

Programme Convener Johnny Thundiyil delivered felicitations. KPC General Secretary Anil P. Alex presented a memento to the chief guest, Ravi Ayanoli.

The venue was transformed into a vibrant celebration of Kerala's cultural traditions, with a distinctly Malayali Onam ambience. The festivities commenced with the ceremonial arrival of Maveli, symbolising the spirit of Onam.

Following the inauguration, a classical dance performance by Brinda Krishnan and a musical programme

featuring popular singers Rafi Kallayi and Merin added energy and colour to the celebrations. Various competitions were organised for both adults and children, followed by a sumptuous traditional Onam Sadya.

A special highlight of the programme was Krishnan Kadalundi's humorous presentation of Kunchan Nambiar's 'Muktakam', creatively presented through the use of literal and contrasting meanings of words, which provided a unique and entertaining experience for the audience.

The singers were also presented with mementos from the Kerala Press Club Kuwait. Programme Joint Conveners NijasKasim and Sreejith coordinated the various activities.

A traditional and elaborate Onam Sadya was also arranged as part of the celebrations, adding to the festive spirit of the occasion.



Photos during the event.

Kuwait's folk soul takes on new beat



KUNA photos

Original Folk Arts Band presents a musical evening at The Avenues Mall.

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23, (KUNA): As part of the 18th Summer Cultural Festival, the Original Folk Arts Band presented a musical evening at The Avenues Mall, showcasing a selection of folk and traditional performances that reflect the richness of Kuwaiti cultural heritage.

The Original Folk Arts Band is one of the Kuwaiti folk groups registered

with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters.

Founded in 2012 and officially recognized in 2022, the troupe performs various forms of Kuwaiti folk arts, including Al-Ardha, maritime arts, Al-Sawt, Al-Samri, Al-Liwa, and Al-Tanboura. Led by Mubarak Al-Shatti, the band has participated in numerous events and festivals both inside and

outside Kuwait.

The band continues its efforts to preserve Kuwaiti folk heritage, deepen younger generations' understanding of it, and encourage youth participation in preserving the country's cultural identity and passing this heritage on to future generations.

America's most familiar ride disappearing one route at a time

CHICAGO, Aug 23, (AP): They arrived in a kaleidoscope of colors, but one won. For decades, the American school bus has maintained such a standard look that "school bus yellow" is national shorthand for their deep, glossy hue.

No act of Congress mandated the color, with its slight orange tint. Rather, a 1939 conference of transportation officials from all U.S. states (then 48) chose the shade for its visibility as one of the first safety standards. At their peak in the 1980s, the yellow buses took more than 60% of U.S. students to school.

The metal-bodied school bus got its start in rural America. Georgia car dealer Albert Luce designed it to carry cement workers, then marketed it to schools when the company turned it down.

It was impeccable timing as school districts replaced one-room neighborhood schoolhouses with larger ones much farther apart. That consolidation gave rise to the school bus.

"I don't think you could've had one without the other," says Matt Anderson, head transportation curator at the Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation in Dearborn, Michigan, which houses Luce's 1927 bus.

Decades later, buses helped de-segregate schools, hauling Black and white children across the country's



A school bus passes a pile of milo at a grain storage facility near Canton, Kan., Nov. 10, 2015. (AP)

racial divide. The controversial practice has mostly ended, and in much

of the United States, schools have grown more segregated, not less.

Carl Fisher drove a metal school bus for two-thirds of its nearly 100-

year history. With 66 years behind the wheel, Fisher retired in 2012

as the longest-working driver, according to the Guinness Book of World Records. His first model was a Dodge truck that his dad's friend converted, adding benches and small stools to haul 20 children in Pleasant Hope, Missouri.

"He put windows in it and everything, really made it nice," Fisher says.

The basics became industry standard and more safety upgrades followed, including padded seats and a flip-out stop sign.

"It's the safest form of on-road transportation per passenger, per mile, bar none - without seat belts," says Brad Beauchamp, who is with the electric vehicles team at Blue Bird, the yellow school bus maker Luce reputedly named after the bird his wife spotted on a fence post.

Due to driver shortages and other factors, a yellow school bus is no longer available to take many students to school, putting pressure on families to figure out transportation.

Jim Oppegard, who drove kids for more than two decades in the Minneapolis suburb of Brooklyn Park, retired at 94 as the oldest school bus driver on record. It's rewarding work, he says.

"You're helping the kids and helping the overall society," he says. "You're doing an important job."

Technology

‘If you ever want kids not to overtrust these tools, try the map demo’

Schools embrace AI literacy as chatbots enter classrooms

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C., Aug 23, (AP): Artificial intelligence chatbots have become the bane of teachers everywhere, but to prepare for the new school year, a group of educators in Charleston, South Carolina, packed into a high school auditorium and talked about inviting AI into the classroom.

The teachers and principals watched as an instructor prompted an AI tool to “create a map of the world.”

The result drew gasps of disbelief and laughter. Projected on a large screen was a map riddled with bizarre errors. Mali was spelled “Mail.” Egypt was identified as “Soph.” In place of Libya was something simply called “Africa.” Dozens of other countries’ names were misspelled or written in pure gibberish.

“If you ever want kids not to over trust these tools, try the map demo,” said the instructor, Amanda Bickerstaff, founder and CEO of AI For Education, an organization that helps schools draft AI policies and train teachers and students in what she calls safe, ethical and effective use of the technology.

After initially trying to ban AI use, a growing number of U.S. public schools are trying a new strategy: encouraging classroom experimentation, partly so students can see its shortcomings, including generative AI’s notorious tendency to “hallucinate,” or fabricate information.

AI literacy has become a buzzword of this back-to-school season as educators try to strike a balance between equipping students with the skills they need for an AI-driven future while preventing them from outsourcing their thinking to chatbots.

There is no single definition of what



Amanda Bickerstaff, CEO of AI for Education, speaks at Academic Magnet High School during the Charleston County School District Charleston Educator Symposium Wednesday, July 22, 2026 in North Charleston, S.C. (AP)

AI literacy means, or how it should be taught. Tech giants like OpenAI, Google and Anthropic offer schools training sessions in how to use their AI tools. But for educators, there is a growing consensus that AI literacy is about more than learning how to use generative AI and write good prompts.

“Good AI literacy,” said Rebecca Winthrop, director of the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution, “includes knowing when not to use it.”

Thirty-seven states have now published official AI guidance that schools can use as a blueprint. South Carolina is not one of them.

So the state’s second-largest school

district set out to do it on its own, said Lucas Clamp, deputy superintendent of the 50,000-student Charleston County School District. “It has been a huge endeavor.”

A year ago, the district contacted AI for Education, which helped draft guidance for Chicago Public Schools, Houston and dozens of other districts.

Phase 1 was laying the foundation. The district developed an AI policy, seeking input from teachers, students and parents.

The district organized student focus groups and learned that student AI use was ubiquitous but unguided. Teachers and students said they were navigating the technology on their own and wanted



Teachers work with AI on their laptops during the Charleston County School District Charleston Educator Symposium Wednesday, July 22, 2026, in North Charleston, S.C. (AP)

clear rules and instruction.

Studies show a majority of teenagers and teachers nationwide are using AI for schoolwork, but they’re teaching themselves how to use it; very few say they have a technical understanding or have received formal training on how it works.

Schools and parents are eager to avoid mistakes made with social media, where kids were left to explore the online world without learning about addictive algorithms, comparison culture and other downsides that have been linked to a youth mental health crisis and dwindling attention spans.

As the school year begins in Charleston, Phase 2 kicks in: training. Teachers and middle and high schoolers will get a

mix of online and in-person instruction on how AI tools work and how to use them effectively.

The student course walks through familiar scenarios - like asking a chatbot to help with a research paper - to show that generative AI might deliver wildly inaccurate information, including made-up studies, with unflinching authority. “Always verify any factual information you get from GenAI, especially for your classwork,” the course advises.

A section on data privacy cautions against sharing personal information with AI tools because conversations can be stored, used for data training and potentially leaked.

High school teacher Ray Knauer at-

tended the summer training and left with “teachable moments” for his AP Research class. He plans to show examples of AI bias and hallucinations to fuel student discussions.

“We’re all trying to figure this out right now: What’s the right balance so we don’t scare students away from AI but don’t encourage them to run to it,” Knauer said. “We have to teach students: You can’t just get an answer and move on. You have to use analytical skills and dig deeper.”

Utah was an early pioneer in taking a statewide approach to AI in education.

In 2024, the board of education named Matt Winters as its AI education specialist, making Utah the first state to create a full-time position overseeing the technology in schools.

Over the past year, Winters led AI training for over 7,000 teachers, almost a third of Utah’s public school instructors. He is helping districts shape AI policies, which they are required by state law to have in place by July 2027.

“There is a clear method from the top in Utah,” said Chris Agnew, director of the Generative AI for Education Hub at Stanford University. “When you’re tackling big change, it’s easier to have coherence if everyone is singing from the same hymn book.”

A handful of other states have since replicated Winters’ post, including Maine, West Virginia and Georgia.

In other states, a patchwork of AI approaches has emerged, with variance from one school district to another. Extensive AI literacy training requires steep investment, raising concerns that kids in under-resourced districts might not get the same attention.

Travel

Cooler spots fuel growth

China taps summer inbound travel surge with niche draws

BEIJING, Aug. 23, (Xinhua): At more than 1,500 meters above sea level, Tianmen Mountain in central China’s Zhangjiajie offers summer temperatures of just 22 to 26 degrees Celsius, drawing a steady stream of visitors.

Among them are growing numbers of European travelers, like Italian Giancarlo Marino. Escaping the relentless summer heat in his hometown, he traveled to China with friends in search of cooler weather.

“Here you can feel the breeze, and while you’re resting up on the mountain, you can even buy ice-cold drinks from the many vendors. It’s thoughtful and relaxing,” he said.

As extremely high temperatures grip many parts of the world this summer, China is emerging as an unexpected destination to avoid the soaring temperatures. With more convenient entry policies and a host of tourism-friendly measures, the country is drawing international visitors in surprising new ways.

Niche Attractions

Jizhou District in north China’s Tianjin Municipality is usually known among Beijing residents as a weekend escape. Few would expect to encounter overseas tourists there, let alone visitors from Argentina.

Argentine traveler Michael visited Jizhou during his trip to China to enjoy the mountain scenery around the Huangyaguan section of the Great Wall.

For him, the “coolness” of Jizhou was not just about the pleasant temperature, but also about immersing himself in nature and experiencing rural life.

“The environment here is beautiful, and you can even see the Great Wall from the guesthouse,” he said.

Local guesthouse owner Zhang Wei has noticed a growing number of foreign visitors seeking a deeper understanding of local life instead of simply checking off famous attractions.

“We’ve lately seen a clear increase in overseas guests. Many like to combine countryside experiences with natural scenery, allowing them to experience

China in a more in-depth way,” Zhang said.

Dutch tourist Noa is another traveler seeking out niche experiences. On a recent independent trip to Nanjing in east China’s Jiangsu Province, Noa and friends made a point of visiting local produce markets and public parks, including match-making corners where parents gather to find partners for their children, to observe daily life up close.

“Many of the vegetables here are things I’ve never seen back home. It’s really interesting,” Noa said.

China’s rapid economic and social development is also reshaping inbound tourism. Slovenian tourist Rainer Grega, visiting China for the first time, said he hopes to tour major Chinese technology companies.

“Many Chinese companies and brands are well-known overseas, so I’m really looking forward to visiting the headquarters of some of them. It would be fascinating to tour an electric-vehicle factory or see how those advanced robots are manufactured,” he said.

According to a representative of a Suzhou-based international travel agency, foreign visitors are increasingly planning multi-city itineraries, while younger independent travelers, trips to smaller cities and rural areas, and longer stays have all become notable trends.

“Nowadays, many foreign visitors venture into city neighborhoods and rural villages to experience authentic Chinese life. From vibrant urban nightlife to rural revitalization, a vivid, multi-dimensional China is being increasingly shared with the world,” said Wu Guoping, president of the Wuxi Tourism Association.

More Open Stance

For many overseas visitors, China’s increasingly convenient entry policies have provided an important guarantee for more flexible and in-depth travel.

China currently offers unilateral visa-free entry to nationals of 50 countries, including Slovenia and Italy.



Tourists from Egypt take selfies in front of the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests at the Temple of Heaven Park in Beijing, capital of China, July 28, 2026. (Xinhua)

Chinese robot runs 100 meters in 9.39 seconds

Humanoid robot breaks world record



Robots compete at the Free Combat event of the World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing, Sunday, Aug. 23, 2026. (AP)



A robot competes in the 400m during the World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing, Sunday, Aug. 23, 2026. (AP)

BEIJING, Aug 23, (AP): Chinese humanoid robots broke records set by humans, including beating Usain Bolt’s 100-meter sprint world record, on the opening day of the Olympics-like World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing.

More than 2,000 humanoid robots were participating in the event, the organizer said.

The five-day games, now in its second year, are a spectacle demonstrating China’s rapid progress in advanced robotics as the technology race with the U.S. heats up, with 51 events and more than 1,000 competitions taking place including running, table tennis and soccer.

The games, which are taking place in the National Speed Skating Oval built for the 2022 Winter Olympics, opened the same week as Beijing held the 2026 World Robot Conference, where companies showcased around 3,000 products, including humanoid robots.

China makes the majority of the



Robots compete in the 100m race during the opening ceremony of the World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing, Saturday, Aug. 22, 2026. (AP)

world’s humanoid robots. The U.S. has stepped up scrutiny of robots from the country.

Last month, the U.S. Federal Communications Commission announced a ban on imports of new foreign-made humanoid robots. The FCC cited national security reasons in a move that targeted China. The Pentagon recently also added Unitree, one of China’s leading humanoid robot makers, to its list of companies that it deemed have ties with the Chinese military. Beijing has hit back at the accusations.

At Saturday’s opening of the robot games, the organizer and robot makers said that Chinese humanoid robots defeated human world records, as hundreds of humanoid robots marched in formation onto the field in a massive display of synchronized coordination.

At a 100-meter sprint, a humanoid robot achieved a result of 9.39 seconds, beating the human record of 9.58 seconds set by Jamaican athlete

Bolt in 2009.

In a standing high jump, a humanoid robot was able to reach 2.88 meters, well above the 0.95 meters best result by a humanoid in last year’s first edition of the games. It surpassed the human high jump record of 2.45 meters set by Cuba’s Javier Sotomayor in 1993.

Both robots were from Beijing-based X-Humanoid.

Before the opening, a humanoid robot from Chinese smartphone company Honor completed a 100-meter sprint in a record of 9.32 seconds during a trial of the games, the company said, at a peak speed of 14.5 meters per second.

Still, experts say humanoid robots are still mostly used for demonstrations, performances and research - at least for now - and it will still take time to achieve mass real-world deployment.

Some spectators at the robot games said they were excited about the humanoid robots’ quickly im-

proving abilities.

Humanoid robots are “evolving rapidly,” said Li Yanfeng, an education worker and a Beijing resident.

“At first, I wasn’t very accepting of artificial intelligence. I was even a bit resistant to it, because of the possibility that it might replace or displace humans,” she said. “But now that I see this development is unstoppable, I decided to come and take a look.”

“These sports are perfectly normal for humans, but now robots can do them. I find it amazing,” said Yang Shangzheng, another spectator.

Liu Tao, who was watching the games with his son, said that he was hoping to see “the best robots China currently has to offer.”

This year’s robot games - which the organizer said has 16 countries participating, among them Germany, Japan and the U.S. - also include other events such as weightlifting and tug of war.

The importance of teaching students what AI can’t do

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

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Billy J. Stratton
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It’s disconcerting to envision human thought becoming redundant or deemed inferior due to advancements in artificial intelligence. But for all its ills, AI cannot be ignored or wished away. It’s here to stay, and I want my students to understand the stakes of becoming too reliant on this technology.

I can’t blame them for wondering why they should dedicate so much time and effort to honing their writing and critical thinking skills if large language models appear to do a passable job.

Yet this situation has major implications for culture and societies.

It’s easy to envision a future where AI dependency leads to intellectual conformity and the erosion of critical thinking. Researchers are already documenting these effects, which threaten to render the hard work of wrestling with ideas a lost art.

This is why I think it’s critical for educators to confront AI head-on. The key, I believe, is teaching students to distinguish AI’s pattern recognition skills from its inability to daydream, inhabit human perspectives and authentically express itself.

In a course I recently taught on Southern Gothic literature, I gave my students an exercise. They were tasked with prompting AI to analyze the “emotional atmosphere” of a scene from Carson McCullers’ 1940 novel “The Heart is a Lonely Hunter.”

Many of the characters readers meet in Southern Gothic works like McCullers’ are freakish and brutal. Rendered from a distorted, unnatural lens, they speak in odd dialects and conjure what Flannery O’Connor called the “grotesque.” They live in isolated places that are stuck in the past and, to use another term of O’Connor’s, are “Christ-haunted.”

Many readers have difficulty synthesizing the strange worlds of these characters. AI has an even harder time generalizing the complex tensions between faith and unbelief,

or good and evil, that animate these stories.

To limit the range of responses and allow useful comparisons, I provided students with scenes involving the main characters of the novel. One of them was the heartrending sequence in which Spiros Antonapoulos, a deaf character, is sent away to a state insane asylum, leaving his only friend, John Singer, behind.

The scene carries a palpable sense of dread and sadness. Further, it invokes righteous anger toward Antonapoulos’ cousin for sending him away - a decision driven by convenience and based on a misunderstanding of Spiros’ struggles as deviant, antisocial behavior. That he is from an immigrant background living in small-town Georgia gives the scene an even sharper edge.

ChatGPT, however, rendered the scene using sterile, abstract terminology. To pull a representative response that one of my students shared: “The atmosphere is devastatingly lonely and suspended in time. The scene feels quiet, helpless and emotionally one-sided. There is no dramatic farewell; instead, the moment is marked by Singer’s silent an-

guish. The train’s departure symbolizes irreversible separation.”

The assessment is clinical and cold. It fails to capture the weight of deep sadness that exudes from the separation of two friends who have only each other. It included a factual mistake, too: It’s a bus, not a train, that pulls away.

Also missing is any clear acknowledgment of Singer’s fear for the horrors in store for Antonapoulos, and the dramatic irony created by Antonapoulos’ own seeming obliviousness to how his life is being upended. AI simply lacks the lived experience to become contextually aware in ways that allow it to truly understand McCullers’ haunting novel.

Because AI largely functions as an optimization engine - relying on synthesizing vast amounts of online data and summarizing the results - its analyses of this scene and others were consistently shallow; they “lacked depth” and were filled with “vague platitudes,” as two students put it.

Next, I asked my students to have AI generate “a new scene involving at least three characters” of their choosing. (AP)

Spread slowing down in some places

Congo’s Ebola cases top 5,300 as UN warns outbreak ‘growing exponentially’

KINSHASA, Aug. 23, (Xinhua): The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has surpassed 5,300 confirmed cases and 2,550 deaths, as a senior United Nations official warned that the country’s deadliest-ever Ebola epidemic is “growing exponentially” and outpacing the response.

The DRC has recorded 5,375 confirmed cases and 2,557 deaths across six provinces as of Thursday, according to the latest figures released Saturday by the country’s public health authorities. The overall case fatality rate stood at 47.6 percent.

A total of 1,167 patients have recovered.

Briefing reporters Friday from Bunia, capital of Ituri province, UN Senior Ebola Coordinator Julien Harneis warned that the outbreak was “growing exponentially,” with half of all deaths recorded in just the previous 20 days.

“The epidemic is spreading to an area that is bigger than France,” Harneis said, warning that the outbreak was “growing faster and wider than the Ebola response.”

The epidemic, declared by the DRC government on May 15, has already become the deadliest Ebola outbreak in the country’s history and the second-largest on record globally, behind only the 2014-2016 West Africa epidemic.

Harneis said responders were op-

erating under “brutal” conditions, citing insecurity, poor roads, attacks on frontline workers and health facilities, as well as weak basic services and difficulties in moving funds into affected areas.

Three months into the outbreak, 160 healthcare workers have contracted Ebola and 43 have died, he said. Ambulances have been burned or stoned and healthcare facilities attacked in some affected communities.

Funding shortages have also emerged as a major concern. “We’re only covered for the next weeks, and very soon funding will run out,” Harneis said, calling for immediate international support.

“Every delay in funding and implementation makes this epidemic more deadly, more difficult to stop and more expensive,” he warned.

Harneis said humanitarian organizations operating in the region had lost more than 30 percent of their capacity amid cuts to aid funding over the past two years, although UN agencies, the DRC authorities and humanitarian partners continue to scale up disease surveillance, treatment, safe burials and community engagement.

The latest warning comes as international partners move to reinforce the response. The World Health Organization said earlier this week that 70,000 doses of the Ervebo Ebola



Family and friends gather for a burial service for 3-year-old Mave Mercienne, who died of Ebola, in Bunia, Ituri province, eastern Congo on Aug 18. (AP)

vaccine had been approved for immediate release to the DRC, including 20,000 doses for a Phase 3 clinical trial and 50,000 for frontline and health workers.

A first batch of 16,520 doses of the Ervebo vaccine arrived late Friday in the capital Kinshasa.

Less than 10% of cases are currently coming from known contacts, far below the 90-95% rate when the outbreak can be said to be under control, according to Yap Boum, head of emergency preparedness and re-

sponse at the Africa CDC.

Boum told reporters Thursday that under current estimates only 30% to 40% of cases have been detected.

Here’s what the data shows about the outbreak:

Compared to the 2014-2016 West Africa Ebola outbreak that ended with over 28,000 cases, including more than 11,000 deaths, this outbreak has recorded ten times more cases and seven times more deaths by the 13th week from when it was declared, data from the Africa CDC

shows.

Congo’s deadliest Ebola outbreak before now had been that of 2018-2020 with 3,400 cases and more than 2,200 deaths. This is moving 18 times faster in terms of the confirmed cases and 13 times faster regarding the deaths.

One key source of concern is that experts believe the outbreak began spreading from the mining town of Mongbwalu as early as February, months before authorities declared the outbreak on May 15.

Africa CDC data from the past three weeks shows the contact tracing rate of those exposed to patients is 82% out of 19,630 contacts in total.

But that doesn’t give the full picture. The agency said with an average of 60 contacts per confirmed case, it was expecting 99,780 contacts to be recorded for the 1,663 cases it said it confirmed in that three-week period.

However, many of those contacts are not known, and therefore cannot be contacted for follow-up. Therefore, the “actual contact tracing rate is only 16% of the expected,” the Africa CDC said in its update.

It is caused by Bundibugyo virus, which has no approved vaccines or treatments, unlike the most common Ebola virus type. Its symptoms also are milder, which could mean that many patients feel less immediate need to alert responders or seek treatment.

The health zones affected in the outbreak have grown from three at the onset to 56 across six provinces.

In the previously unaffected Bas-Uele province, two cases have been reported over the past week and a half in two separate parts of the province, data from Congo’s government has shown.

However, the spread is slowing down in some places, such as in South Kivu province, which has not recorded any case for 79 days.

Deaths in the community - that is outside Ebola treatment centers - have been on a steady rise in recent days, and constituted an overwhelming 97% of the deaths reported on August 17th, the Africa CDC data shows.

Despite this, only 20% of health alerts are coming from within the community, underscoring the need to engage more communities.

And although the overall case fatality rate is 46.7%, it is quite high in some places such as North Kivu, one of the country’s most populous, where the rate is 68.2%.

The data suggests most people are still not reporting symptoms early or at all for various reasons: misinformation that the outbreak isn’t real, initial preference for traditional medicine, fear of being kept in isolation especially in the event that initial symptoms are of something else, or the lack of severe symptoms.



An airplane flies high in the sky with the moon in the background in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany on Jan 1, 2023. (AP)

UK, Google test changes to flight paths to tackle aviation’s climate impact

LONDON, Aug 23, (AP): Hundreds of commercial flights will be told to change their paths over the northeastern Atlantic Ocean during the next two winters to show how minor altitude adjustments can reduce aviation’s climate impact.

The British government is backing the landmark airspace-scale trial, launched Tuesday, to avoid creating condensation trails, or contrails. Google UK is contributing its artificial intelligence-powered forecasts to identify the contrail regions.

When airplanes fly through cold and humid areas, ice crystals can form around the soot particles emitted from the engine, creating clouds that trap heat and warm the planet. The Shanwick Oceanic Control Area in the eastern half of the North Atlantic corridor, the location of the trial, is a busy gateway for air traffic between Europe and North America. It’s also a hot spot for where contrails form.

The 30-month research program known as Operation Blue Skies includes test periods this winter and

next, when air traffic controllers will tell some flights to deviate up to 2,000 feet (610 meters) to avoid areas where contrails are likely to form. These will be minor altitude adjustments within standard flight operations, coordinated through established air traffic control communication channels, according to the British government.

There will be about 20 to 40 test days per winter, when there is less air traffic. Around 10,000 flights are expected to pass through the Shanwick airspace during the testing. Hundreds of those flights would deviate their routes. That 1 % to 5% would be enough to demonstrate a statistically significant reduction in contrail formation on an airspace-scale, said Paul Hodgson, Google’s technical lead for Operation Blue Skies.

Individual airlines have tested shifting altitudes to avoid contrail regions. Earlier this year, Google and American Airlines announced that the airline significantly reduced the climate impact of some flights using

Google’s AI-based forecasting tool to help prevent contrails.

This new effort expands on individual airline trials to try mitigating contrails across an entire flight corridor.

The thin, white lines that form behind airplanes are responsible for a surprising amount of Earth’s warming - 1% to 2%, according to Contrails.org, a nonprofit research organization dedicated to reducing aviation’s climate impact through contrail management, as part of the Breakthrough Energy group founded by Bill Gates. Modeling shows that the Shanwick airspace accounts for about 5% of the total contributed by contrails, with a significant amount occurring during winter.

Keir Mather, the UK minister responsible for aviation, said the government is partnering with Google to back British experts and innovators to find practical ways to make flying cleaner. The government is paying for more than half of the 5 million pound (\$6.76 million) study.

Somalia faces another hunger crisis, WFP says it has far less funds to help

MOGADISHU, Somalia, Aug 23, (AP): Six million people in Somalia are facing acute food insecurity while the World Food Program has only a tenth of the resources it had in 2022 when it helped avert famine in the drought- and conflict-stricken East African nation, the head of the UN agency told The Associated Press.

“We can only do the bare minimum,” WFP acting executive director Carl Skau said Wednesday during a visit to a nutrition center on the outskirts of the capital, Mogadishu. “We’re only providing these nutrition supplies to the children that are really the worst hit.”

The reduced funds, because of cuts in international aid by donors and the redirection of resources to other humanitarian crises, meant that the WFP is unable to expand its assistance in Somalia, Skau said.

The WFP projects that 1.9 million children under age 5 in the country will suffer acute malnutrition this year, including nearly 500,000 who will require urgent treatment for severe acute malnutrition. Overall, around 30% of the population faces critical levels of food insecurity, the UN has said.

“We had 10 times more resources than now,” Skau said of the 2022 hunger emergency that was caused by a prolonged drought. “We were able to step in, and we prevented a famine here in Somalia.”

“We know what’s going on, we have the capacity, we have the experience of dealing with this. We just need the resources now to do it.”

The consequences of the current food shortage, which is also a result of drought, conflict and the displacement of people, are seen at the Feynuus Health Center in Mogadishu’s Kahda district. Dozens of women carrying babies waited beneath a large tree or crowded along the veranda of the corrugated-metal facility seeking help.

Inside, health workers placed children in a blue weighing sling, screened them for malnutrition, and distributed therapeutic food.

Halima Mohamed Hassan, a mother of six, had walked nearly 3 kilometers (2 miles) carrying her malnourished 4-year-old child. She is pregnant, but said she hadn’t eaten for two days. Her last meal was plain rice.

Health workers treated the child

she brought with a special nutrient-dense food, while Hassan said that her other children were also malnourished, but she wasn’t able to bring them to the center.

“I could not carry all of them,” she said.

Hassan fled the Lower Shabelle region four months ago after her husband died of malnutrition, she said. Food and water became scarce, and conflict made it increasingly dangerous for the family to stay.

She and her children walked for four nights before reaching a camp for internally displaced people on Mogadishu’s outskirts.

Hassan now shares a makeshift shelter with her widowed mother and her mother’s four other children. The two women look for occasional work washing clothes in nearby neighborhoods to feed their household of 12.

The Feynuus center receives between 250 and 350 patients daily, mainly displaced women and children from regions outside Mogadishu, said Abdirahman Barkhad, program director of Youth Link Somalia, which operates the center.

Barkhad said that about 10 nearby health and nutrition centers had closed because of a reduction in humanitarian funding, increasing pressure on those that remain.

“We have witnessed children collapsing, because their families do not have enough food,” he said.

Mohamud Moallim Abdulle, commissioner of the Somali Disaster Management Agency, described the country’s food situation as “extremely alarming.”

He said that an estimated 1.85 million children are malnourished, while around 6 million people are affected by drought, and 2 million urgently need assistance.

Skau said that mothers he met this week in the town of Burhakaba described drought, insecurity, and also rising food prices as the main drivers of the crisis. Some had lost their crops and fled their homes. Others walked for three or four hours to reach health facilities, because aid workers couldn’t reach them.

“I spoke to women with eight to 10 children,” Skau said. “They don’t know where the next meal is going to come from.”



Somali women displaced by drought sit at Feynuus Nutrition Centre on the outskirts of the capital, Mogadishu, Somalia on Aug 19. (AP)

Why millions of people around the world will contract measles in 2026

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

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By Kathryn H. Jacobsen
University of Richmond

The World Health Organization estimates that in 2026 nearly 11 million people will contract the virus that causes measles. Most of these cases will occur in Africa and Asia, but many countries in the Americas and Europe are reporting outbreaks affecting hundreds or thousands of people.

There is no treatment for measles, but vaccines have been proven to be safe and effective at preventing the disease. Unvaccinated people who get sick with measles are at risk of serious complications that can lead to deafness, blindness and death. The risk of a bad outcome is higher for people who are undernourished and unable to access supportive medical care.

As an infectious disease epidemiologist, I study the reasons for changes in population health risks around the world. The specific factors leading to measles epidemics vary by country, but the underlying cause everywhere is decreased vaccination rates.

The vast majority of parents around the world want to protect their children from preventable infectious diseases through vaccination. In many lower-income countries, the supply of vaccines remains insufficient to meet the demand for them.

Because measles is highly contagious, the vaccination rate needs to be above 95% to protect a community from outbreaks, creating what is known as “herd immunity.” One dose of measles vaccine protects most people from the disease, but two doses are recommended to improve effectiveness.

Most high-income countries have measles vaccine rates near the 95% target. In Europe, the average one-dose vaccination rate is about 94%, and the two-dose rate is about 88%. In the U.S., more than 90% of 2-year-olds have received at least one dose of measles vaccine and more than 92% of kindergartners have received two doses. The vaccine coverage

rate is above 95% in many communities, though it is much lower in some school districts.

In contrast, only about 80% of young children in low- and middle-income countries have received at least one dose of measles vaccine, and only about 70% have received two doses.

Almost every country had reduced access to vaccines during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, when supply chains and clinic access were severely disrupted. Most young children in high-income countries were able to catch up on missed doses before they reached school age. But in lower-income countries, millions of kids who missed routine vaccinations during the pandemic are still classified as “zero-dose children” who have not received any of the vaccines their countries recommend.

Only a tiny fraction of the cases of measles diagnosed in lower-income countries are confirmed with laboratory tests and reported to public health authorities, so it’s impossible to get an exact case count. But healthcare workers have reported observing higher than typical numbers of cases in many countries during the past year.

In 2026, measles epidemics have been reported in countries experiencing armed conflict or housing refugees displaced by war, such as Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.

Outbreaks have also been reported in peaceful countries, including Maldives and Zambia, and cases are surging in India. Dozens of other countries are also experiencing epidemics. All of these situations are linked to undervaccination.

Bangladesh has reported more measles cases this year than any other country, and more than 900 people have died from the infection.

While Bangladesh faces many of the same challenges as other low- and middle-income countries, the past few years have presented some unique difficulties.

In 2024, the country’s longtime government collapsed and an interim government was installed. During this time of political instability the government ordered too few vaccine doses.

In 2025 vaccine shortages worsened when the interim government decided to stop procuring its vac-

cines through UNICEF and instead tried to purchase them through a competitive bidding process before new supply chains had been established.

Bangladesh has now resumed working with UNICEF to acquire vaccines. Unfortunately, it has returned to UNICEF at a time when its partner organization Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, is facing funding cuts.

Under Gavi’s cofinancing model, low- and middle-income countries’ initial vaccine purchases are subsidized by contributions from high-income countries and other investors. Over time, countries pay an increasing portion of their own vaccine costs.

Because Gavi pools orders from all over the world, it is able to shape markets and negotiate with vaccine manufacturers for lower costs per dose. The major limitation of this system is that reduced funding for global health shrinks the budget for subsidizing vaccine purchases.

But since 2025, France, Germany, the U.K., the U.S. and several other high-income countries have significantly reduced their budgets for development assistance, leaving Gavi with a substantial budget shortfall.

As Bangladesh has grown its economy, it is paying a greater share of the costs of the vaccines it purchases through Gavi. However, it does not yet have the means to fully self-finance its vaccine program. For now, if Gavi’s budget is not fully replenished, countries like Bangladesh will not have enough money to buy all of the vaccines they need.

Even though a mass vaccination campaign in early 2026 saw more than 1 million Bangladeshi children vaccinated against measles, the percentage of children who have been vaccinated remains far below the 95% threshold required to prevent widespread epidemics.

Two years ago the entire region of the Americas - North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean - was classified as a measles-free zone.

Canada officially lost its measles elimination status in November 2025 after more than a year of sustained transmission. Mexico and the U.S. have met the criteria to lose their measles-free status when the Pan American Health Organization’s measles elimination committee meets again in November 2026. (AP)



In this image provided by Benoit Photo, Godolphin LLC's Knightsbridge and jockey Junior Alvarado win the Grade I \$1,000,000 Pacific Classic at Del Mar Thoroughbred Club, Del Mar, Calif. (AP)

Nashville SC extends streak

Miami falls to Toronto as Messi scores 14th goal

MIAMI, Aug 23, (AP): Josh Sargent and Derrick Etienne Jr. scored second-half goals three minutes apart and Toronto FC held on for a 2-1 victory over Inter Miami.

Neither team found the net until the rookie Sargent scored in the 59th minute to give Toronto the lead. Dániel Sallói and Etienne had assists on Sargent's fourth goal. Sallói's helper was his seventh and Etienne collected his third.

Etienne scored for the third this season - unassisted three minutes later for a two-goal lead that helped Toronto win in Miami for the first time

Lionel Messi cut it to 2-1 in the 82nd minute with his 14th goal this season and his 64th in 71 career appearances. Rodrigo De Paul and Maximiliano Falcón had assists.

Luka Gavran saved two shots for Toronto (5-7-9).

Reed Baker-Whiting and Andy Najar scored stoppage-time goals, Hany Mukhtar added a goal and an assist, and Nashville SC beat the Columbus Crew 3-2 for their third consecutive win.

Nashville (15-2-4), the points leader in all of MLS with 49, is off to the best 21-game start in MLS history.

The Crew (5-11-5) have lost three straight and are winless in their last four.

Baker-Whiting scored his first career goal when headed home a corner kick played in to the back post by Mukhtar to make it 2-2 in the third minute of stoppage time and Najar rolled a shot from the right side of the area that slipped inside the back post about two minutes later to cap the scoring.

Mukhtar scored to give Nashville a 1-0 lead in the 27th minute. Daniel Lovitz chipped an entry pass to the left side of the area, where Mukhtar patiently shielded off a defender and then blasted a rising half-volley inside the near post.

Mohamed Farsi put away a first-touch shot from the right side, his first goal this season, to make it 1-1 in the 58th.

Antoine Griezmann scored two second-half goals to help Orlando City beat Real Salt Lake 2-1 to extend their winless streak to seven games.

Maxime Crépeau had three saves for Orlando City (7-11-3), which snapped a three-game winless skid.

Griezmann back-heeled a shot that was deflected and then tapped in the loose ball to give Orlando City a 2-1 lead in the 81st. The 35-year-old, who signed with the club in July, had his first career multi-goal game in MLS and his five goal contributions (three goals, two assists) in six games.

Dominik Marczuk scored his first goal this season to give Real Salt Lake (8-8-4) a 1-0 lead in the 36th. Sam Junqua played an arcing first-touch cross from 35 yards out on the left side to the back post and Marczuk gently rolled in the volley.

Griezmann made it 1-1 in the 53rd minute. On the counter-attack, Daryl Dike's shot from the top of the 6-yard box was knocked away by goalkeeper Mason Stajduhar but Griezmann tapped the putback into a wide-open net.

Denis Bouanga scored late in the second half and Los Angeles FC escaped with a 1-1 draw after trailing the Portland Timbers for 75 minutes on Saturday night.

David Da Costa took a pass from Kristoffer Velde in the 4th minute and scored his third goal this season to give Portland a 1-0 lead that it carried into the 79th minute.



Toronto FC defender Benjamin Kuscevic (13) jumps for the ball against Inter Miami forward Germán Berterame (19) during the first half of an MLS soccer game in Miami. (AP)

Sheikh Al Maktoun-founded race draws top horses

Knightsbridge pulls away to win \$1M Pacific Classic by 6 1/4 lengths at Del Mar

DEL MAR, Calif., Aug 23, (AP): Knightsbridge withstood a fierce battle on the lead in the early going before pulling away to win the \$1 million Pacific Classic by 6 1/4 lengths at Del Mar on Saturday.

Ridden by Junior Alvarado, Knightsbridge ran 1 1/4 miles in 2:01.79. The 5-year-old horse had shipped to the seaside track north of San Diego from the East Coast after a win in the Monmouth Cup five weeks ago in New Jersey.

"He was kind of skipping over the ground," Alvarado said. "I had my hopes that when I asked him he would give me his best right when we turned for home. It was all heart there. He's a horse that has a lot of talent."

Knightsbridge was challenged over the opening mile by the speedy Full Serrano before shaking him

off at the head of the stretch. The winner paid \$4.20 as the wagering favorite.

Original Sin finished second. Full Serrano was another 1 1/2 lengths back in third in the West Coast's richest race.

The victory, worth \$600,000, increased Knightsbridge's career earnings to \$1,523,155, with eight wins in 12 starts. He earned a berth in the \$7 million Breeders' Cup Classic at Keeneland in October.

It was Hall of Fame trainer Bill Mott's second Pacific Classic win, having taken the 2008 edition with Go Between.

Knightsbridge is owned and bred by Godolphin, founded by Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoun.

All Blacks stun South Africa, end 12-test winning streak

Springboks rue missed chances



New Zealand's Tupou Vaa'i, left, is tackled by South Africa's Eben Etzebeth during a Test rugby match between South Africa and New Zealand, in Johannesburg, South Africa. (AP)

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 23, (AP): New Zealand stunned South Africa 33-16 with an epic second-half fightback at Ellis Park on Saturday and drew first blood in their historic four-test series.

After surviving a ferocious first half to trail only 13-12, the All Blacks' resolve hardened by new coach Dave Rennie and age-old ability to produce something from nothing turned a tense contest into a rout by five tries to South Africa's one.

An All Blacks scrum that was blown away in the first half eventually held firm in the second half and was the platform for their two last converted tries in the last quarter that gave them their biggest win in South Africa's cathedral of rugby.

"We were under the pump for a big chunk of that game," Rennie said. "That (defensive) mindset was important, then we were clinical. The set-piece was massive in the end, the scrum came good and was a big part of our success."

South Africa paid for failing to take its many chances when it had New Zealand on the ropes in the first half. To a crashing halt came South Africa's 12-test winning streak that began 11 months ago by handing New Zealand its heaviest ever defeat, 43-10, in Wellington.

The Springboks' scrum was better than advertised until props Ox Nché and Wilco Louw were substituted. An overconfidence in the set-piece made South Africa waive off numerous kickable penalties at altitude to try and bury the All Blacks with

tries. But a backline that struggled to string any passes was easily corralled, and asked too much of the likes of forwards Jasper Wiese, Malcolm Marx and Paul de Villiers.

When New Zealand returned the pressure in the second half, South Africa gave away two yellow cards in the span of a minute and finished with 13 men. The tension in a packed Ellis Park deflated in the last 10 minutes as Springbok supporters realized a comeback wasn't possible.

"We shot ourselves in the foot,"

Boks captain Pieter-Steph du Toit said. "Unfortunately, in a game like this, small errors count."

The series moves to sea level in Cape Town next Saturday and New Zealand is the surprising front-runner in the first full series between the teams in 30 years.

The turning point was just before the hour. Cheslin Kolbe had converted another Boks scrum penalty into a 16-12 lead but, from the restart, New Zealand lock Fabian Holland charged down scrumhalf Grant Williams for a converted try and 19-16.

Two more scrum penalties pinned New Zealand in its 22 and flyhalf Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu was held up over the tryline. The Boks had a five-meter attacking scrum but, for the first time in the match, they were penalized for wheeling against New Zealand's replacement front row of George Bower, Asafo Aumua and Fletcher Newell.

"The reserve front row that came on, I think we probably owe them a beer," All Blacks scrumhalf Cam Roigard said. "We got a lot of energy from that."

Nordic associations lose faith in Infantino

STOCKHOLM, Aug 23, (AP): Six Nordic national soccer associations piled more pressure on embattled FIFA President Gianni Infantino on Sunday by saying they had "lost confidence" in his leadership.

The associations from Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland and the Faeroe Islands issued a joint statement to say they "view the organization's governance and decision-making at the highest level with great concern."

The associations said they stand united with

European soccer governing body UEFA and support the measures it has already proposed.

"We expect FIFA to provide binding guarantees that the organization's governance or competitions will never again be opened up to private ownership," the associations said.

Infantino faces pressure to resign after his plans to sell future World Cup profits to private investors triggered a backlash and criticism from UEFA, the Asian Football Confederation and CONCACAF, the governing body for North and Central Ameri-

can and Caribbean soccer.

"We also support the call by AFC, CONCACAF and UEFA for a fully independent external investigation into the events surrounding the FIFA Forward Enterprise proposal," the Nordic associations said.

The statement called for FIFA to "initiate a comprehensive and independent review of its governance framework" to see whether it is adhering to the "independence, checks and balances, transparency and accountability that were intended when FIFA adopted its reform program in 2016."

Liberty rallies late to beat Fever as Fiebich makes impactful return

Dream clinches playoff spot behind Reese's career-high

PHOENIX, Aug 23, (AP): Angel Reese scored a career-high 31 points and grabbed 14 rebounds for her 25th double-double of the season and the Atlanta Dream clinched a playoff berth with a 99-89 win over the Phoenix Mercury.

Rhyné Howard added 20 points, Allisha Gray had 17 and Jordin Canada 12 for the Dream (24-13), who have won five of their last six games. They moved a half-game ahead of Indiana, which lost earlier in night, for the fourth seed, with seven games to go for Atlanta.

Kahleah Copper had 38 points for the Mercury (13-24), who were in the WNBA Finals last season, but were eliminated from the play-off chase with the loss.

Alyssa Thomas had her 22nd regular-season triple-double with 11 points, 16 rebounds and 10 assists. Thomas also has six triple-doubles in the playoffs. DeWanna Bonner added 12 points.

Reese, a 43% shooter for the season, was 14 of 21 from the field after going 9 of 21 the previous game. Her previous career high for points was 27 in 2024 when she was a rookie with Chicago. She has set the Atlanta single-season record for double-doubles and is three shy of the league record.

Howard hit four 3-pointers as the Dream led 14-3 less than four

minutes into the game. Atlanta led 29-18 after one quarter and 50-35 at the half.

With Copper scoring 17 points in the third quarter the Mercury got within one point before the Dream took a 73-68 lead into the fourth quarter. Phoenix made 13 of 22 shots in the third quarter after making just 10 of 29 in the first half.

Sparks 77, Sun 68

In Los Angeles, Rae Burrell scored 20 points and the Los Angeles Sparks ended a six-game losing streak with win over the Connecticut Sun.

Nneka Ogwumike, who announced her retirement on Wednesday, had 11 points and 11 rebounds for the Sparks (13-24), her 131st career double-double. Erica Wheeler also had 11 points and Dearica Hamby had 10.

Saniya Rivers scored 14 points off the bench to lead the Sun (9-27), who were without Brittney Griner (knee) and Aaliyah Edwards (ankle). Leila Lacan added 13 points and Kennedy Burke 10.

Los Angeles, which allows 93.6 points a game, held the league's worst offense to 11 points below its average after giving up 124 points to Atlanta on Thursday. The Sparks did that despite giving up 30 points on 25 turnovers.

A 3-pointer from Wheeler at 6:12

of the fourth quarter produced a 77-55 lead but the Sun reeled off 13 straight for a single-digit deficit with less than two minutes to go but missed their last five shots.

The Sparks led 44-36 at halftime.

Connecticut hit 4 of 16 shots while Los Angeles rebounded to make 9 of 12 shots in the third quarter to boost the lead to 66-46.



New York Liberty guard Sabrina Ionescu (20) dribbles toward the basket during the first half of a WNBA basketball game against the Indiana Fever in New York. (AP)

Hamby was ejected early in the fourth quarter when she flung her right hand back while boxing out Raegan Beers and smacked her in the jaw. No foul was called as Beers went down but as she went to the locker room the play was reviewed. Beers was given a loose ball foul while Hamby received a flagrant 2 foul for unnecessary and excessive

contact.

Liberty 109, Fever 102

In New York, Breanna Stewart scored 22 points and Leonie Fiebich, playing her first game since July 3, added 20 to help the New York Liberty beat the Indiana Fever.

Jonquel Jones added 19 points and 10 rebounds for New York (23-15) in an entertaining game.

With the game tied at 100, Stewart made one of two free throws and then after Indiana missed, Fiebich had a basket and was fouled with 57.5 seconds. She missed the ensuing foul shot.

Caitlin Clark drove, but missed a running layup and Fiebich grabbed the rebound. Pauline Astier was fouled with 29.0 seconds left and hit both free throws to make it a five-point game.

Indiana (24-14) couldn't recover.

Both teams knew how important this game was with playoff positioning at stake as the standings are so tight for the third through eighth spots. New York led by four at the half and then Sabrina Ionescu and Fiebich got going. The pair combined for 19 of the Liberty's 31 points in the period as New York extended its lead to 85-78 heading into the fourth.

Indiana rallied to tie it on Kelsey Mitchell's 3-pointer with 1:44 left.

Mitchell finished with 25 points. Aliyah Boston had 22 and Clark 21.

New York finally had its full lineup healthy for the first time in nearly six weeks as Fiebich played her first game since suffering a foot injury. Jones was back after missing most of the Liberty's last game against Chicago on Tuesday with a tweaked left ankle.

With Indiana visiting, there were rallies outside the arena before the game both for and against transgender women in sports. Fever reserve Sophie Cunningham had said in an ESPN profile published last month that she was opposed to transgender girls and women competing in girls' and women's sports. Cunningham was met with a mixture of boos and cheers from the sellout crowd.

Jones got going early, as she's done ever since the All-Star break. The Liberty's 6-foot-6 center had 17 points and seven rebounds at the half as New York held a 53-49 advantage.

The Fever are in the middle of a brutal stretch of five road games in eight days. They have gone 2-2 so far.

Myisha Hines-Allen left the game in the final minute after getting injured. She was still being evaluated after the game according to the Fever.

Kuwait Volleyball Federation to honor team for Arab Championship bronze

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: The Kuwait Volleyball Federation will honor the national U-17 team this evening at a ceremony at its headquarters in the Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Sports Complex, celebrating the team's third-place finish and bronze medal at the Arab U-17 Championship in Bahrain.

The federation's board will join the players in celebrating their achievement and recognize their efforts throughout the tournament, where they produced impressive performances that highlighted the progress of Kuwaiti volleyball at the youth level.

The ceremony reflects the federation's continued focus on developing national teams and encouraging young players to maintain their commitment and pro-

gress. Age-group teams are regarded as the foundation for the future of Kuwaiti volleyball and an important source of talent for upcoming Gulf, Arab and Asian competitions.

Kuwait's U-17 side enjoyed a strong campaign in Bahrain, securing a place on the podium after a series of solid displays. The bronze medal also rewards the efforts of the coaching and administrative teams, as well as the players' dedication during preparations and throughout the competition.

Federation officials emphasized the need to build on the achievement by continuing to develop the players' technical and physical skills. The long-term goal is to produce a new generation capable of representing Kuwait at major international competitions and contributing to the national teams in the years ahead.



The Under 17 players receive their bronze medals.

Bayern wins German Supercup



Bayern's players celebrate with the trophy after winning the Franz Beckenbauer German Supercup soccer match against Borussia Dortmund in Dortmund, Germany. (AP)

Bensebaini red card deals blow to Dortmund comeback hopes

MUNICH, Aug 23, (Agencies): Bayern Munich began the new season with silverware, beating Borussia Dortmund 2-1 to win the German Supercup for a record 12th time.

The Bavarian side took control in the first half, with Nathaniel Brown opening the scoring in the 28th minute before Michael Olise doubled the advantage in stoppage time.

Dortmund responded after the break and reduced the deficit through Fabio Silva, who scored with around 15 minutes remaining. However, Bayern held firm to secure the trophy.

Dortmund's hopes of completing a comeback were further damaged when Algerian defender Ramy Bensebaini was shown a straight red card for a strong challenge on Bayern's Ismail Si-bari.

Despite the victory, Bayern captain Joshua Kimmich admitted that his team still has plenty of room for improvement. He said the players were pleased with the result but dissatisfied with aspects of their performance.

Kimmich felt Bayern were not active enough in possession and did not provide enough support for one another. He also criticized the team for allowing too many opportunities from crosses.

The Germany midfielder added that Bayern struggled to control the tempo after halftime

and were unable to calm the game down as effectively as they would have liked.

"We are happy with the result, but not necessarily with the way we played," Kimmich said, emphasizing that Bayern still has considerable work to do despite lifting the first trophy of the season.

Bayern Munich's Kane and Giulia Gwinn have won Germany's player of the year awards for 2026.

Bayern's Vincent Kompany won the coach's accolade, Kicker magazine announced Sunday, according to the results of its yearly polls of members of the Association of German Sports Journalists (VDS).

Kane scored 61 goals across all competitions, including the German Supercup for Bayern last season, helping the men's team defend its Bundesliga title and win the German Cup. He scored a hat trick in the cup final.

Kane also helped Bayern win the new season's German Supercup with a 2-1 win at Borussia Dortmund on Saturday, though he didn't score in that game.

This time Gwinn doesn't need to share it.

Last year, the 27-year-old Gwinn and Germany teammate Ann-Katrin Berger received the same number of votes for the award.

Kicker said Sunday that Gwinn received 106 votes to finish ahead of Bayern teammate Klara Buhl and Julie Brand of French champion OL

Lyonnes.

Gwinn and Buhl helped Bayern to a Bundesliga and German Cup double for the second year in a row last season. Bayern's Bundesliga title was its fourth straight and its fifth from six years as the Bavarian powerhouse's women's team proves as dominant as its men.

Bayern reached the semifinals of the Women's Champions League last season.

The women's player of the year award has been awarded since 1996. Three-time world player of the year Birgit Prinz, who played for FFC Frankfurt (now called Eintracht Frankfurt), won the award eight times between 2001-08.

Kane gathered more votes (272) than teammate Michael Olise (203), Kicker said.

Stuttgart forward Deniz Undav received 61 votes, followed by Bayern's Joshua Kimmich (21) and Hoffenheim goalkeeper Oliver Baumann (14). There were three invalid votes.

Kompany received nearly half the votes for the coach's award, more than Freiburg's Julian Schuster, who won it last year.

Florian Wirtz won the men's player's award last year.

The men's player of the year accolade has been awarded since 1960, with the coaches honored since 2002. Franz Beckenbauer leads the player category with four wins, while Jürgen Klopp and Felix Magath both won the coach's award three times.

Bangladesh batters struggle

Starc takes center stage as Australia levels series

MACKAY, Australia, Aug 23, (AP): Mitchell Starc's 10-wicket match haul lifted Australia to a morale boosting victory by an innings and 51 run in the second cricket test as it leveled the two-match series against Bangladesh inside two days.

Starc returned match figures of 10-51, after taking four wickets Sunday to go with his incredible 6-12 on a wild Day 1 which saw Bangladesh bundled out for 64 before the hosts also had its struggles on a spicy pitch at Mackay, in northern Queensland state.

It was the evergreen left-arm swing bowler's fourth ten-wicket haul in tests and also saw him move past South Africa pace great Dale Steyn into 10th on the all-time list with 445 wickets, with Starc having no thoughts of finishing up yet.

(The body's) still hanging together, I thoroughly enjoy being a part of this group," said Starc, named player-of-the-series for his 12 wickets across the two matches. "Test cricket, I've said it before, it will always be the pinnacle for me. I'd like to milk my body for all I can for test cricket, and that's how it'll remain."

Pat Cummins and Nathan Lyon (3-25) each took three wickets to support Starc as Bangladesh could only manage 95 in its second innings to hand Australia a comprehensive win after its shock loss in last week's first test at Darwin.

Captain Najmul Hossain Shanto top scored for the visitors with 31, while Mushfiquir Rahim had an un-

beaten 29, but the pair had very little help from the remaining tourist batters with only two scoring above double digits.

I think this is a different condition (to the first test in Darwin) and there's a little bit more extra bounce and swing in the air," Shanto said. "So it's challenging for us, but as a team if we want to go forward we need to adjust and I hope this experience will help going forward."

Earlier Sunday, Australia resumed at 165-8 with Cameron Green and Nathan Lyon adding another 28 useful runs Sunday for the ninth wicket.

After also taking six wickets on Day 1, Shoriful Islam soon

picked up his seventh with a searing inswinging yorker which struck Green on the front foot and was given out leg before wicket on review.

Shoriful's 7-48 was the best bowling figures for a Bangladesh player away from home.

Green's 67 off 105 balls with 10 boundaries was the top score of the match so far and follows his breakthrough home century in the first test at Darwin to lock down his place in Australia's middle order.

"We've got 20 tests coming up this year, so yeah, you want to get off to a good start, and I felt like I have done that, Green said. "So now it's just building on that and finding

something that works and just continue with it.

Lyon (32 not out) and Josh Hazlewood then pushed Australia's score past 200 before Hazelwood (6) skied a catch off Taijul Islam (1-17) to end the innings at 210, and a significant first innings lead of 146 runs on a bowlers' wicket.

Fresh from taking 6-12 in the first innings, Starc again tormented Bangladesh's top order in the second innings taking another two wickets in consecutive balls to have the visitors' reeling early in its chase.

After surviving Starc's first over of the second innings, Bangladesh were not as fortunate in the Aussie's next over as Shadman Islam (1) edged a catch to Marnus Labuschagne, before Mominul Haque (0) shouldered arms and had his off stump rattled with Starc's next delivery.

Starc (4-39) returned after lunch to remove the luckless Litton Das for another duck. The wicketkeeper batter faced 27 balls across three innings in the series for no runs.

Cummins (3-10) made a double breakthrough after lunch with Mehidy Hasan Miraz edging behind to Alex Carey, before Hasan Mahmud popped up a catch to short leg, to go with removing Tanzid Hasan (9) caught on the boundary earlier in the day.

Starc got his fourth ten-wicket haul in his 107th test with a characteristic delivery that went through the gate of bat and pad and bowled Taijul Islam for seven just before tea.



Members of the Bangladesh team pose for a photo during the presentation ceremony at the end of their second cricket test match against Australia in Mackay, Australia. (AP)

Al-Farhan joins Al-Sulaibikhat

Kuwait aims to revive last four hopes

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

AMMAN, Jordan, Aug 23: Kuwait will take on Iran at 4 p.m. today in a crucial Group B encounter at the 11th Asian Junior Handball Championship in Amman, Jordan, which serves as a qualifier for the 2027 World Championship.

The Blues will be looking to bounce back from their second-round defeat to Qatar and strengthen their hopes of reaching the semifinals. Kuwait opened its campaign with a convincing win over Syria.

With both teams needing points, a closely contested match is expected. Kuwait's coaching staff has focused on correcting the errors from the Qatar game while improving the players' physical and technical readiness.

Kuwait will also rely on the determination of its players after an intensive preparation program that included training camps in Slovenia and Croatia, along with several friendly matches.

Victory over Iran would give Kuwait its second win of the tournament and put the team in a stronger position ahead of its remaining group matches. Reaching the semifinals would also secure one of the four Asian qualification places for the 2027 World Junior Handball Championship.

Meanwhile, international goalkeeper



Al-Sulaibikhat presents goalkeeper Ahmed Al-Farhan.

Ahmed Al-Farhan has joined Al-Sulaibikhat's senior handball team ahead of the 2026-27 season.

The move is part of Al-Sulaibikhat's efforts to strengthen its squad with experienced players. The club has also been working on several local and foreign signings under national coach Hussein Habib.

Al-Farhan is expected to strengthen the team's goalkeeping department with his considerable experience in Kuwaiti handball.

Norris wins Dutch Grand Prix

ZANDVOORT, Netherlands, Aug 23, (AP): McLaren's Lando Norris passed Kimi Antonelli and Lewis Hamilton in the space of a single lap before holding on to win the Dutch Grand Prix for back-to-back Formula 1 victories.

Norris started on pole but was overtaken by Antonelli's Mercedes at a restart after the race was stopped for a heavy crash by home hero Max Verstappen, who was unhurt, shortly after the start.

Norris reeled in Antonelli before passing him around the outside of the first corner in a daring move on lap 54 of 72, then took the lead from Ferrari's Hamilton before the lap was over.

The defending champion held on with old tires to take the win. "This fight is still on," he said over team radio.

"The move (to pass Antonelli) was good. I knew I was not going to get many chances. Every lap I spent behind him my chances got lower and lower," Norris said. "Well played from my part...I probably had one chance."

Antonelli was second after his Mercedes teammate George Russell was ordered to move out of his way, following a failed gamble on a tire change by Antonelli. Russell clung on to finish third ahead of Hamilton.

There was tension at Mercedes as both Antonelli and Russell criticized the team's decisions over the radio.



McLaren driver Lando Norris of Britain lifts the trophy after winning the Formula One Dutch Grand Prix in Zandvoort, Netherlands. (AP)

Antonelli called his team's strategy "too risky" when the team congratulated him on second place, while Russell earlier seemed to object to being asked to give way to his teammate.

"Is he fighting for the win? Or is he planning to catch Norris?" Russell questioned, at a point where Norris was far ahead of both.

Russell relented after the race and said he felt Mercedes had made the right decision to avoid the two battling for position as Hamilton closed in behind.

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Mercedes driver Andrea Kimi Antonelli of Italy, left, and McLaren driver Lando Norris of Britain lead at the second start during the Formula One Dutch Grand Prix in Zandvoort, Netherlands. (AP) — See Page 15

Sports

Salmiya secures services of Syrian midfielder Al-Aswad

Iwuala doubtful for Al-Arabi's league opener against Kuwait Club

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Aug 23: Al-Arabi could be without Nigerian forward Anayo Iwuala when they face Kuwait Club tomorrow in the opening round of the Zain Premier League.
Iwuala picked up an injury during Al-Arabi's 4-1 AFC Champions League Two playoff defeat against East Bengal on August 12. The injury forced him to leave the match, and he has since missed the team's recent training sessions while receiving treatment from the

club's medical staff.

Meanwhile, Al-Salmiya has secured the services of Syrian midfielder Mahmoud Al-Aswad for another two seasons. The player joined the club last season and produced convincing performances that earned him a contract extension.

Al-Salmiya now has five foreign players in their squad: Gabonese David Sambissa, Congolese Tresor Tshibwabwa, Uzbek Shahzod Azmuddinov, Bahraini Abdullah Yusuf and Al-Aswad.

The "Samawi" will start their league campaign against Al-Nasr on Wednesday.

Elsewhere, Kazma is waiting for today's Gulf Champions League draw, which will take place at the Gulf Football Federation headquarters in Doha.

The upcoming edition will feature a record 12 clubs, compared with eight in each of the previous two tournaments. The group stage is scheduled to begin on October 13 and will be played over home-and-away fixtures.

The participating clubs have been placed into four pots of three teams based on the AFC's 2026-27 club rankings. Pot 1 includes Saudi Arabia's Al-Ettifaq and Neom and

UAE side Al-Nasr. Pot 2 features Ajman of the UAE and Qatar's Al-Duhail and Qatar SC.

Iraqi clubs Erbil and Al-Zawraa and Oman's Al-Shabab are in Pot 3, while Pot 4 contains Bahrain's Al-Riffa, Kuwait's Kazma and Yemen's Shaab Hadramout.

The draw will produce three groups of four teams, with clubs from the same country kept apart. The top two teams in each group will qualify for the quarterfinals, along with the two best third-placed sides.

The quarterfinals will be played over two legs.



Anayo Iwuala controls the ball as East Bengal player looks on.

Mohammed leads delegation

Kuwait arrives in Dubai ahead of Asia Cup qualifiers



Kuwait handball delegation arrives in Dubai.

DUBAI, Aug 23: Kuwait arrived in Dubai ahead of the first window of the Asian qualifiers for the 2029 FIBA Asia Cup, which begins on August 25 and runs until August 31.

The Blue are drawn alongside the UAE, Bahrain, Oman and Nepal. Kuwait will begin its campaign against Oman before taking on the UAE the following day. The team will then face Nepal on August 29 and wrap up the group stage against Bahrain on August 31.

The delegation is led by National Teams Director Mishal Mohammed, with Assistant Secretary-General Owaid Al-Anzi and board member Mohsen Al-

Anzi also part of the delegation.

Greek coach Vassilios Bratsiakos, who was recently appointed to lead Kuwait, has named a 12-player squad for the qualifying window: Abdulrahman Al-Jumah, Abdulaziz Al-Hamidi, Hamad Adnan, Ahmed Al-Bloushi, Abdulmohsen Al-Mousawi, Imran Johar, Ali Al-Hadhoud, Turki Al-Shammari, Yousef Naseeb, Khalifa Al-Omani, Abdul Latif Al-Faraj and Faisal Al-Husseini.

Kuwait concluded its preparations with a training camp in Cairo, where the team played several friendly matches aimed at improving the players' technical and physical condition before the start of the Asian qualifiers.

Last season's runner-up Lens routs Auxerre

Mourinho has winning start at Madrid, Inter cruises

MILAN, Aug 23, (AP): José Mourinho's second stint in charge of Real Madrid got off to a winning start as his team snatched a 2-1 victory at Espanyol.

In Italy, Inter Milan kicked off its title defense with a dominant 4-1 win over newly-promoted Monza in Serie A.

Elsewhere in Europe, France, last season's runner-up Lens comfortably beat Auxerre 5-2.

Carlos Espí came off the bench to score a late winner for Madrid on his debut for the Spanish giant.

The 21-year-old Espí was one of the standouts of La Liga last season and Madrid reportedly paid Levante 25 million euros (\$28 million) for him.

Espí was brought on in the 79th minute and scored 11 minutes later, pouncing after Kylian Mbappé had been knocked off the ball and firing past Marko Dmitrovic.

Jude Bellingham headed in a free kick in the ninth minute and almost scored in similar fashion early in the second half but saw his header fingertipped onto the crossbar by Dmitrovic.

Álex Calatrava had scored a deserved equalizer for the Espanyol in the 30th minute, sweeping the ball past Thibaut Courtois for his

first La Liga goal.

Mourinho was hired in June and officially took over in July at the start of the preseason.

He is back for a second stint with Madrid some 13 years after he left the club. He was in charge from 2010-13, winning a Spanish league and a Copa del Rey.

It was Madrid's first match of the season as they and defending champion Barcelona sat out the first weekend because they had players

return later from the World Cup.

Inter forward Pio Esposito had a breakout season last campaign and the 21-year-old started right where he left off for the Nerazzurri.

An impressive backheel flick from Esposito put the hosts 3-1 up in early in the second half, either side of Inter goals from Piotr Zieliński and Yann Bisseck.

Inter - which dominated Italian soccer last season, winning both the league and the cup in Cristian



Real Madrid's Yan Diomande, left, vies for the ball with Espanyol's Unai Nunez during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Espanyol and Real Madrid in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

Chivu's first year in charge - got off to a great start when a fierce long-range shot from Hakan Çalhanoğlu gave it the lead in the sixth minute.

But sloppy defending for Monza's equalizer showed just why Inter signed England defenders Djed Spence and John Stones in the off-season.

Stones came on late on while Spence was in the stands along with England teammate Curtis Jones, who completed his move to Inter on Friday.

Last year's runner-up, Napoli, won 2-0 at Genoa thanks to two late goals, from Kevin De Bruyne and Antonio Vergara.

Como - which surprised with a fourth-place finish last season - was held to a 1-1 draw at Udinese.

Auxerre gave away two penalties and also played most of the match with 10 men after defender Christ Makosso was shown a straight red card for a foul on Abadallah Sima in the 35th minute.

Florian Thauvin converted both penalties - the second one at the second time of asking after Auxerre goalkeeper Mamadou Diop saved the initial attempt but was off his line.

All of Lens goals, apart from Thauvin's first 12th-minute penalty, came in the second half.

City rallies late for win

Brighton routs Villa

LONDON, Aug 23, (AP): Manchester City marked Enzo Maresca's first Premier League game in charge with a stirring late rally, scoring twice in the final 10 minutes to grab a 2-1 victory at home to Bournemouth on Sunday.

Josko Gvardiol placed a finish into the bottom corner in the first minute of stoppage time for the winner, which was initially given offside before being awarded following a video review, after Marc Guehi had equalized with a 84th-minute header from a corner.

Maresca punched the air when Gvardiol's goal was awarded and hugged his players on the field after the final whistle. A huge banner, reading "Welcome back Enzo," had been held aloft by City fans as the Italian - Pep Guardiola's assistant in City's treble-winning 2022-23 season - emerged from the tunnel for his first home game as manager.

Wearing a sharp, black suit, Maresca certainly looked the part on the touchline but the slickness synonymous with City's play under Guardiola down the years wasn't quite there until the late comeback sparked by substitute Rayan Cherki, who set up both goals.

"It is the perfect day, to be honest," Maresca said. "I was very pleased when the game started, to see the banner on the other side. And I was pleased because we give them the joy of the three points."

"It was quite emotional and the perfect day."

Maresca began his time as Guardiola's replacement with a 3-0 loss to Arsenal in the Community Shield last weekend and has had to deal with the departure of star midfielder Rodri to Barcelona.



Manchester City's Ruben Dias in action during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester City and Bournemouth in Manchester, England. (AP)

City might have found a long-term replacement for Rodri in 18-year-old Morocco international Ayyoub Bouaddi, who is set to join from Lille for 100 million euros (\$117 million) according to French media, but for the Bournemouth game Maresca opted to deploy Guehi - a center back - as a midfielder instead.

It was a contentious decision given there were other midfield options on the bench, and it might prove to be a one-off, but Guehi grew into the role.

City striker Erling Haaland wasn't on the scoresheet in the first league game of the season for the first time since joining the club in 2022. He sported a new hairstyle - a buzz cut that went viral on social media ahead of kickoff - and wasted a couple of great chances to score with it.

Brighton scored four goals in the opening 31 minutes and also missed a slew of great chances in a 4-0 hammering of Aston Villa in the other early game.

Sheikh Jaber claims second consecutive F4 victory in UK

LONDON, Aug 23, (KUNA): Kuwaiti racer Sheikh Jaber Athbi Al-Sabah secured his second consecutive Formula 4 victory after winning Race 19 of the seventh round of the season at Donington Park in the United Kingdom.

Starting from second on the grid, Sheikh Jaber quickly moved into the lead and maintained his advantage through the race. He also posted the fastest lap on the final circuit to complete another impressive performance.

The Kuwaiti driver said the team's recent results had improved considerably, reflecting the hard work and effort invested throughout the season. He expressed his happiness at returning to the top step of the podium and competing alongside some of the world's leading drivers.

Sheikh Jaber said he is determined to maintain his momentum, achieve strong results and continue challenging for podium finishes in the remaining rounds. He stressed that consistency and success require hard



Sheikh Jaber Athbi Al-Sabah celebrates with his trophy.

work, dedication and commitment.

He added that one of his biggest ambitions is to represent Kuwait on the international stage, raise the country's flag and demonstrate the ability of Kuwaiti drivers to compete at the highest level.'