



KUWAIT-SAUDI PACT TARGETS SMARTER LABOR RECRUITMENT



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

O President Sharaa ... With Syrian-Israeli reconciliation, you are the winner

AFTER the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference, a saying became common in the realm of international politics: "The Middle East is a land of missed opportunities." This phrase indicated the failure of the conference.

At that time, Syria was in a position to compel Israel to withdraw from the Golan Heights. Unfortunately, it was mired in adopting non-sensical slogans.

The late President Hafez Al-Assad was quoted as saying: "I used to swim in the Sea of Galilee and I will swim in it again."

Tel Aviv annexed the Golan Heights in 1981, 10 years before that conference, while Damascus continued its political line of raising slogans, because those who exploited the Palestinian cause were more powerful than the Arab realists.

Since 1974, a lot of political water had been flowing under the bridge in Syria, yet Damascus did not benefit from it, because it adopted the policy of rejecting the peace process.

Years before that, Syria formed the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front in response to Egypt's signing of the Camp David Accords with Israel. Syria continued to chant slogans and gained nothing.

In contrast, the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was more astute. He recognized that the existence of Israel was a reality, and that peace would weaken Israel and force it to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories.

Sadat believed that signing peace treaties was the foundation for containing Israel within its political borders, especially since Israel had not defined its borders since 1948.

The approach that Sadat adopted brought peace and stability to Egypt, which did not abandon the Palestinian cause, but rather prevented Palestinian factions from exploiting it.

Syria continued on its path, suffering heavy losses and enduring a comprehensive economic blockade from 1979 until the fall of the regime of Bashar Al-Assad.

This historical overview of the Syrian reality must be on top of the mind of Syrian President Ahmed Al-Sharaa, lest he fall into the trap set by factions exploiting the Palestinian cause.

Today, Syria needs Arab and international support. Therefore, the optimal solution is to continue negotiations with Israel to restore the occupied territories. Those who followed the events of 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973 perfectly understand that the international community will never allow Israel to be defeated.

This is why the Camp David Accords signed by Cairo and Tel Aviv, as well as the Jordanian-Israeli Wadi Araba Agreement, are considered the cornerstones in imposing peace on Israel, particularly its recognition of the political borders of both countries.

Today, Syria has an opportunity to restore its land, preserve its national stability and prevent any party from interfering in its affairs. To achieve this goal, Syria must cut the arms of those who exploit the Palestinian cause, and then strive to recover its occupied land through negotiations. Syria must realize that political and military equations are constantly changing, especially if the balance of power is skewed. Developments over the past few years have forced everyone to change the rules of the game.

The new Syria, fortified by strong public support and that of the Arab and international powers, must seize this opportunity to resume its regional role.

Syria must reform its devastated economy, prevent tampering with its territorial integrity, and silence the sectarian and religious voices keen on imposing a new geographical reality.

Syrian President Ahmed Al-Sharaa must go to great lengths for the sake of his country, which has been exhausted by decades of corruption under the slogan, "Strategic balance in preparation for the great battle," a policy that only brought more suffering for the Syrian people.

The current political situation is different from what it was in 1991. The Middle East is no longer the land of missed opportunities.

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PAM ups skills filter for expats



KUNA photo
Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, during the MoU signing with Takamol Holding.

AI enters labor-market overhaul

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Takamol Holding – a Saudi company, in order to strengthen coordination and exchange expertise in fields related to the labor market.

PAM Director Rabab Al-Osaimi confirmed that the agreement is a new step towards developing the labor market in Kuwait and benefiting from Saudi expertise in developing smart electronic platforms.

She said PAM is keen on providing more advanced and flexible online services, utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, and establishing professional standards for measuring and testing the skills of expatriate workers before they are recruited to Kuwait.

She stated that the signing of the MoU is in compliance with the directive of First Deputy Prime Minister and

Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef to strengthen cooperation and exchange expertise with specialized entities.

She disclosed that the agreement covers the development of electronic systems according to the latest global technologies, updating labor market policies, and implementing a system for accrediting the skills and professional qualifications of workers.

She pointed out that skilled labor is one of the important aspects of the agreement, affirming that clear mechanisms for measuring the skills that companies need and their proper implementation will prevent the haphazard recruitment of workers.

She added that selecting workers based on the required skills will have a positive impact on productivity and efficiency in the labor market, and consequently, the Kuwaiti economy.

She stated that the implementation of the skills measurement and testing system will combat visa trafficking by regulating the recruitment process and aligning it more closely with the actual manpower needs of the labor market and the required skill level.

Continued on Page 5

US Embassy opens visa bookings

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The U.S. Embassy in Kuwait announced an update and expansion of its consular services.

The embassy revealed that applicants can now book visa interview appointments online.

It expressed its eagerness to welcome applicants back and encouraged those seeking further details about consular services and visas to visit its official website.

62 vehicles taken off Kuwait roads

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The General Traffic Department (GTD) at the Interior Ministry carried out an extensive traffic campaign, covering all governorates.

In a press statement, the ministry disclosed that the campaign is under the supervision of Traffic and Operations Sector Director Brigadier Ahmad Al-Azmi and led by GTD Director Brigadier Rashid Al-Hajri.

During the campaign, 62 vehicles and motorcycles were impounded, while 67 traffic violation citations were issued.

The objectives of the campaign include instilling traffic discipline and ensuring road safety by focusing on grave violations and behaviors that endanger the lives of road users.

Continued on Page 5

Day by Day

BEAUTY has three faces - patience without complaint, avoidance without harm, and forgiveness without reproach.

God described them all as beautiful -

"So be patient with beautiful patience." (Surah Al-Ma'arij, verse 5)

"And avoid them with gracious avoidance." (Surah Al-Muzzammil, verse 10)

"And overlook with gracious forgiveness." (Surah Al-Hijr, verse 85)

Glory be to God for such beautiful descriptions.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Amiri decree names Al-Shatti as KPA's assistant director-general

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): An Amiri decree has been issued, naming Musaed Abdelsalam Al-Shatti as the new assistant director-general of Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA) with the rank of assistant under-secretary.

Under the decree, Al-Shatti will serve a renewable four-year term.



KUNA photo
Musaed Abdelsalam Al-Shatti



Ministry of Foreign Affairs photos
Left: Chinese Vice President Han Zheng receives Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Right: Sheikh Jarrah with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi.



Kuwaiti FM holds high-level talks in Beijing

55 years on, Kuwait-China ties surge ahead

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): Chinese Vice President Han Zheng, received the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Monday, on the occasion of his official visit to Beijing.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the meeting reviewed the historical

relations between the two countries and their friendly peoples, and discussed ways to develop and enhance the existing strategic partnership in various fields to achieve the common interests of both nations.

They also discussed the latest regional and international developments and exchanged views on

issues of mutual concern.

During the meeting, Sheikh Jarrah conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah

Continued on Page 5

Co-ops sharpen school bargains

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Director General of the Union of Cooperative Societies Mariam Al-Awad said the cooperatives are considered the primary outlet for meeting the needs of the family, including school supplies.

Al-Awad revealed that the cooperative societies are now competing in organizing 'Back to School' festivals and offering school supplies at affordable prices.

She stated that cooperative societies are committed to provide

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait Municipality ramps up encroachment removals

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait Municipality held an expanded meeting last Tuesday to follow up on the work of its branches in the governorates as part of the plan to remove encroachments on state property and discuss obstacles facing the removal teams and mechanisms to address them.

The meeting continued the coordination efforts led by Kuwait Municipality Director General and Head of the Committee for Removing Encroachments on State Property, Engineer Manal Al-Asfour, on August 17.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Directors General for Governorate Affairs and the Municipal Services Sector, directors of the municipality's branches in the governorates, and representatives of the removal teams. Participants reviewed fieldwork procedures and violations related to private and model residential areas. The meeting concluded with several recommendations, foremost among them the removal of structures built over large areas within land-scaping boundaries.

Continued on Page 5



Al-Asfour



National Bank of Kuwait successfully concludes the ALT Summer Program for developing youth skills & enhancing future readiness

10 Gulf Bank launches back-to-school campaign



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:59 Asr 15:25
 Sunrise .. 05:22 Maghrib .. 18:19
 Zohr 11:50 Isha 19:41



HH the Amir



Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Amir congratulates Ukraine Pres. on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy on his country's Independence Day on Monday.

His Highness the Amir wished Zelenskyy good health and more development and prosperity for Ukraine and its people.

Crown Prince congratulates

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to

President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy on his country's Independence Day on Monday.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished Zelenskyy good health and more development and prosperity for Ukraine and its people.

Premier congratulates

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy on his country's Independence Day on Monday.



Left: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives Lt Gen Mohammad Asim Malik, National Security Adviser and Director General of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan. Right: HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives Lt Gen Mohammad Asim Malik.



Crown Prince and PM Diwan photos

Crown Prince and PM receive Pakistan's National Security Adviser and DG of ISI

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday Lieutenant General Mohammad Asim Malik, National Security Adviser and Director General of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and his accompanying delegation, on the occasion of his visit to Kuwait.

The meeting was attended by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, Head of the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and senior officials.

Prime Minister

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

Monday Lieutenant General Mohammad Asim Malik, National Security Adviser and Director General of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and his accompanying delegation, on the occasion of his visit to Kuwait.

The meeting was attended by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.



KUNA photo
 Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwait Armed Forces Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian attended the closing ceremony of the Rayat Watan 2 or Flags of the Nation exercise.

'Rayat Watan 2' exercise highlights joint action, enhanced readiness

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwait Armed Forces Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian attended, Monday, the closing ceremony of the Rayat Watan 2 or Flags of the Nation exercise.

It was held at 35th Shaheed (Martyr) Armored Brigade with the participation of the Ministry of Interior and the Kuwait National Guard (KNG).

In a press statement, the General Staff said that Lieutenant General Al-Shuraian was received upon his arrival by Commander of the Land Forces Brigadier General Hamad Al-Suwaidi, who briefed him on the course and stages of the exercise, as well as its key scenarios and missions.

The statement added that the exercise aims to enhance operational readiness, unify operational concepts and procedures, and strengthen coordination and cooperation mechanisms among the participating entities.

Lieutenant General Al-Shuraian stressed that "Rayat Watan 2" highlights the importance of joint action and coordination between military and security agencies,

contributing to enhanced readiness and improved efficiency in handling various missions and emergency situations.

He commended the efforts made by the participants during the preparation and implementation of the exercise, praising the high levels of competence, discipline and cooperation they demonstrated.

He also emphasized the importance of continuing to develop capabilities and exchange expertise to achieve the highest levels of integration and effectiveness in carrying out joint duties and missions.

The closing ceremony was attended by KNG Undersecretary Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas; Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Air Vice Marshal Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah; Head of the Private Security Affairs and Correctional Institutions Sector at the Kuwait Ministry of Interior Brigadier General Dakhil Al-Dakhil; Director General of Kuwait Coast Guard Commodore, Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Yusuf Al-Sabah; and a number of senior commanders and officers from the participating entities.

Naturalized Kuwaitis lose vote or poll run

Forged nationalities will be withdrawn

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The explanatory memorandum for Decree-Law No. 79/2026, amending certain provisions of Amiri Decree No. 15/1959 concerning the Kuwaiti Nationality Law, was published on Monday in the supplement to the official gazette "Kuwait Al-Youm", reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The explanatory memorandum explained that the amendment complements Decree-Law No. 52/2026 and aims to affirm the national identity of original Kuwaitis and strengthen their sense of belonging to the State of Kuwait. It also seeks to rectify irregularities in the Kuwaiti nationality issue resulting from intentional or unintentional errors in its handling.

Article 1 of the Decree-Law stipulates replacing Clause 4 of Article 14 of the Nationality Law. The clause mandates the revocation of Kuwaiti nationality from anyone whom the

Higher Committee for Kuwaiti Nationality Investigation determines, through an investigation it conducted or a final judicial ruling, to have intentionally added to their own or another person's nationality file an individual who is not a descendant of their children or offspring, with the aim of falsely granting them Kuwaiti nationality.

The amended clause permits the revocation of Kuwaiti citizenship from any children or descendants of the person who committed the forgery, provided that they were aware of the forgery and failed to report it to the competent authorities.

Article 1 stipulates amending Article 19 of the Nationality Law. Under the amended provision, the certificate issued by the Minister of Interior to anyone whose Kuwaiti citizenship is proven will be issued electronically instead of in traditional paper form, in line with the state's move towards comprehensive digital transformation.

The second paragraph of the same article refers to a decision by the Minister of Interior specifying the technical and technological controls and requirements for issuing the electronic citizenship certificate, as well as how it will be stored and used, procedures

for verifying its validity, and the circumstances under which it may be revoked or suspended.

In light of Article 82 of the Kuwaiti Constitution, which stipulates that a member of the National Assembly must be a Kuwaiti citizen by birth in accordance with the law, Article Two of the Decree-Law adds a new paragraph to Article 7 of the Nationality Law. The amendment explicitly prohibits those who acquired Kuwaiti citizenship through naturalization from voting, running for election, or being appointed to any parliamentary body.

Article Three of the Decree-Law grants electronic certificates the same legal validity and effect as paper certificates. It also stipulates that electronic certificates will replace paper certificates in the application of all legislation requiring their submission to obtain a service or benefit.

Article Four of the Decree-Law repeals any provision that conflicts with its provisions.

Article Five requires the Prime Minister and the Ministers, each within their respective jurisdictions, to implement the Decree-Law from the date of its publication in the official gazette.

KDIPA refers tender for HQ construction to SAB

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) on Monday referred the

tender for the construction, completion, furnishing, maintenance and operation of its headquarters at a total cost of KD71.88 million to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) for pre-audit and review procedures.

KDIPA previously issued a tender for the construction of the building and obtained approval from CAPT to award the contract to the bidder that met the technical requirements.

Technical glitch cause of power outage in Al-Zahra

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The plan of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy for the current fiscal year includes 56 contracts for the modernization of the electricity distribution network, which will be tendered through the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT).

These contracts cover the maintenance of secondary substations in Ahmadi, Capital, Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Farwaniya and Hawally governorates, maintenance of street lighting equipment in several areas, cable maintenance, construction of manholes, and supply of fault detection devices for overhead lines.

Meanwhile, the ministry announced Monday that several feeders at the main substation power plant in Al-Siddiq (A) went out of service due to a technical malfunction, resulting in power outage in a few areas in Al-Zahra, Block Two.

The ministry indicated that its emergency teams worked hard to restore power as quickly as possible.

It confirmed later on the same day that power was restored in some of the affected areas and full restoration is underway.

MoE opens job applications for 'Gifted Schools' project

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Ministry of Education announced the opening of applications for teaching, administrative, and technical support positions under the "Gifted Schools" project, overseen by the Gifted Students Office within the Minister of Education's Office, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry explained that eligibility criteria include giving priority to Kuwaiti citizens and those with Kuwaiti mothers, as well as requiring applicants to hold a university degree in the relevant specialization.

For teaching positions, applicants must hold a university degree in the specialization required for the position and have received an "Excellent" performance rating for the past two years.

The requirements also include at least two years of practical experience. Preference will be given to applicants with previous experience working with gifted students, as well as those with outstanding

activities and achievements in their field of specialization and proficiency in computer use and applications.

Applicants must also submit a "no criminal record" certificate and have a clean employment record with no administrative penalties.

Applicants will undergo an entrance examination and a personal interview, with final selection based on a competitive ranking system.

The ministry invited those interested in applying to register online through the "Mawhoob" platform between August 23 and 30, 2026, by completing the required information and attaching the necessary documents.

The ministry emphasized its commitment to attracting qualified educational, administrative, and technical talent to work in a specialized educational environment dedicated to identifying gifted students and contributing to a stimulating learning environment that fosters creativity and innovation.



KUNA photo
 Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Sabah meets the Argentinian Ambassador to Kuwait Ramiro Hernan Veloso.

Kuwait, Argentina discuss ways to up civil aviation cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Sabah discussed with the Ambassador of the Republic of Argentina to Kuwait Ramiro Hernan Veloso, ways to enhance joint cooperation in the field of civil aviation.

The meeting reviewed opportunities to develop bilateral relations and exchange expertise in technical and operational

fields, contributing to strengthening cooperation between the two friendly countries, the DGCA said in a statement to KUNA Sunday.

The meeting comes within the framework of exploring ways to enhance mutual cooperation and exchange expertise in civil aviation, and broadening prospects in the air transport sector, the statement added.

MoH schedule for new student registrations

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Ministry of Health (MoH) announced on Monday the schedule of the registration of new students at the school health centers in various health districts, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the ministry revealed that in the Capital Health District, new students should register at Hamad Al-Saqer Health Center in Adaliya.

In Hawally Health District, new students must register at the school health center in Bayan (Block 7, Street 1, Avenue 8).

In Mubarak Al-Kabeer Health District, new students must register at the school health center in Adan (Block 2, Street 60).

In Jahra Health District, new students should register at Jahra Health Center and Mutlaa Health Center (N8).

In Farwaniya Health District, new students must register at Riq'a'i Health Center.

In Ahmadi Health District, new students must register at Fahaeel Health Center and Sabah Al-Ahmad Health Center (Sector D).

The working hours in these health centers are from Sunday to Thursday, from 7:30 am to 1:30 pm and from 2:00 pm to 8:30 pm.

Student registration at Al-Mutlaa Health Center (N8) is in the evening hours, as the center is open to the public during the morning hours.

Student registration at Sabah Al-Ahmad Health Center (Sector D) is in the morning hours only.

The required documents include a copy of the civil identification card of the parent, school acceptance letter of the student, a copy of the immunization certificate, a copy of the civil identification card, a copy of the birth certificate, recent photograph and recent medical report for existing medical conditions, if any.

The ministry urged parents to book an appointment to open a health file for the new students electronically through its website before visiting the center by clicking this link <https://shonline.moh.gov.kw/SchoolHealthPortal>.

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250 Kuwaitis clear exam for top cooperative jobs

Competence, merit in candidate selection: Dr. Al-Huwailah

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amth al-Huwailah revealed that 250 Kuwaitis passed the examinations for the financial and administrative supervisor positions in cooperative societies.

These candidates were among those who took the exams held at the American Univer-



Dr. Al-Huwailah

sity of Beirut.

Al-Huwailah stated that the results reflect the commitment of the ministry to select candidates for cooperative supervisory positions based on merit, competence, transparency and equal opportunity.

She said 484 applicants applied for the administrative supervisor position and 173 out of the 295 who took the exam passed or 58 percent success rate, while 244 applicants applied for the financial supervisor position and 77 out of 140 who took the exam passed or 55 percent success rate.

She indicated that the exams were conducted in cooperation with the American University of Beirut, affirming the comprehensive administrative and technical organization,

with camera surveillance and video recording to ensure order, procedural integrity and equal opportunities for all applicants.

She explained that the minimum passing score for the exam is 80 percent and the exam will account for 90 percent of the final evaluation, while the personal interview conducted by the specialized committee will constitute 10 percent of the evaluation.

She affirmed that the ministry is proceeding with the selection process according to the announced regulations and standards, reiterating that the selection is based on competence and merit to ensure the selection of the best national candidates for supervisory positions in the cooperative societies.

Deadline for submitting bids for causeway is now Sept 22

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) extended the deadline for submitting bids for the management, operation and maintenance of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Causeway until Sept 22, instead of Aug 25.

This tender aims to guarantee the management, operation and maintenance of the bridge and its associated facilities and infrastructure. This includes providing the necessary materials, equipment, labor, and technical and specialized personnel to execute the work according to the terms and specifications outlined in the contract.

The work includes the execution of temporary, additional, supplementary and modification works that are required for operation and maintenance, as well as the operation and maintenance of the buildings and facilities, including the truck weighing stations, visitor cent-

er and other facilities associated with the causeway.

The ministry will review the submitted bids and then present its recommendation regarding the bid that meets the requirements, paving the way for the settlement of the tender.

□ □ □

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health Sheikh Dr. Salman Al-Sabah recently visited the Abdullah and Sharifa Al-Mahri Health Center in Khaldiya to review the workflow and the quality of healthcare services provided to patients, reports Al-Seyassah.

During his visit, the undersecretary assessed the operational procedures at various departments and clinics in the center.

The tour covered several departments and clinics, where Sheikh Dr. Salman Al-Sabah intently listened to the opinions and feedback of the patients regarding the quality of healthcare services and level of accessibility to these services.

GCC Consumer Protection Law discussed at meeting

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, represented by the Commercial Control and Consumer Protection Department, participated in the 16th meeting of the Consumer Protection Committee of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, held virtually, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the meeting, they discussed the GCC Consumer Protection Law, the committee's objectives and work plan, and mechanisms for exchanging information in the field of consumer protection.

Participants also discussed measures to ensure the continued flow of food supply chains, particularly during emergencies.

Faisal Al-Ansari, Director of the Commercial Control and Consumer Protection Department, presented a comprehensive overview of Kuwait's consumer protection initiatives.

Other Voices

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) – Mercy to the Worlds

By Hassan TwahaBwambale

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sent as a universal mercy, bringing spiritual awakening, social justice, and divine guidance to all humanity. His life modeled compassion, forgiveness, and universal brotherhood, establishing a timeless legacy of peace, respect for human rights, and love for all of creation.



TwahaBwambale

His purpose transcended geographical boundaries and eras, coming to guide humanity out of darkness into the light of divine truth, justice, and peace. Almighty Allah says, translated as: “And We (Allah) have not sent you, (O Muhammad), except as a mercy to the worlds.” (Al-Anbiya’a – the Prophets 21:107)

The above-quoted verse establishes that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was/is a conduit of Allah's Grace - not just for Muslims, but for all of mankind, jinn, animals, and the environment.

Forgiveness over Retaliation: Despite facing years of brutal persecution in Makkah, when he returned as a victorious liberator – after eight years in exile in Madina - he did not seek revenge. Instead, he granted total forgiveness to his former oppressors.

Forgiving a man who wanted to kill him: Ja’bir bin Abdullah (RA) narrated that he proceeded in the company of Allah's Messenger (PBUH) towards Najd (in Saudi Arabia) to participate in a military expedition. When Allah's Messenger (PBUH) returned, he too returned with him. MIDDAY came upon them while they were in a valley having many thorny trees. Allah's Messenger (PBUH) and the people dismounted and dispersed to rest in the shade of the trees. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) rested under a tree and hung his sword on it. They all took a nap and suddenly they heard Allah's Messenger (pbuh) calling them. They woke up to see a Bedouin with him. The Prophet (PBUH) said, “This Bedouin took out my sword while I was sleeping and when I woke up, I found the unsheathed sword in his hand and he challenged me saying, ‘Who will save you from me?’ I said thrice, ‘Allah.’ The Prophet (PBUH) did not punish him but sat down.” (Al-Bukhari # 2910)

Before migrating to Madina, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) learned of an assassination plot by the Quraysh. He evaded the attackers by leaving his cousin, Ali bin Abi Talib, in his house. One of the reasons Ali risked his life was to return the Makkah's belongings that had been entrusted to the Prophet– some of whom had surrounded Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) house to assassinate him - before secretly migrating to Madina himself. (Islamweb.net)

Empathy for the Vulnerable: He revolutionized the treatment of women, orphans, the poor, and the marginalized. He taught that showing mercy to those on earth is the condition for receiving mercy from the Creator. Abdullah bin Amr (ra) narrated that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said, “The merciful will be shown mercy by the Most Merciful (Allah). Be merciful to those on earth, and the One in the heavens (Allah) will have mercy upon you.” (Al-Albani rated it as Saheeh [authentic] in Saheeh Abi Dawoud # 1, 924)

Compassion for All Creation: His care extended to animals and nature. He instituted laws for animal rights, forbidding cruelty, overloading, and unnecessary harm, even stating that a prostitute was forgiven her sins for quenching the thirst of a wandering dog. Abu Huraira (RA) narrated

that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, translated as: “A prostitute saw a dog moving around a well on a hot day and lolling out its tongue because of thirst. She drew water for it in her shoe and watered the dog. She was forgiven her sins for this kind act.” (Muslim # 2, 245)

Spiritual Guidance: He tirelessly prayed for the guidance of those who opposed him, expressing profound grief and anxiety when people rejected the path of salvation, motivated entirely by his love for humanity's well-being.

His teachings serve as a beacon of empathy, altruism, and pluralistic coexistence. He brought mankind the criterion between truth and falsehood, offering a lifestyle of moderation, justice, and unconditional love for humanity. Following is an example of the Prophet's (PBUH) mercy from the Hadith.

One of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) contemporaries, Zayd bin Su'nah, was a prominent Jewish scholar of the Torah in Madina. He had studied the signs of prophethood in religious texts and had verified most of them, but wanted to test the final two signs: that Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) forbearance would exceed his anger, and that his patience would only increase when met with harshness. To test him, Zayd advanced a large sum of money for dates to be delivered at a later, fixed date. Several days before the debt was due, Zayd found the Prophet (PBUH) praying over a deceased person and sitting under the shade of a wall afterward. Zayd violently grabbed the Prophet (PBUH) by his collar and cloak, glaring at him with intense anger.

Zayd aggressively demanded, “O Muhammad! Why don't you pay off my due?!! By Allah, I know nothing of your family except deferment [on debts]. I know well of your people.” At this shocking display, Umar bin Al-Khattab (RA) was present and could not tolerate the insulting behavior. Umar's eyes blazed with anger, and he unsheathed his sword, scolding Zayd and warning him. Throughout this intense scene, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) remained entirely calm and unbothered. He smiled at Umar and commanded him: “Leave him alone, O Umar! He has a right to speak, as he is the creditor. Go with him, pay him his debt, and give him an extra measure of dates to compensate for the fright you caused him.” Astonished by this immense display of patience, forgiveness, forbearance and justice, Umar took Zayd to pay the debt along with the extra dates.

When Zayd asked about the reason for the extra dates, Umar(RA) explained that it was a direct command from the Prophet (PBUH) to compensate for the fear the sword had caused him. Moved to tears by the Prophet's (PBUH) exemplary character - having confirmed that the Prophet's (PBUH) forbearance indeed increased the more he was provoked, Zayd bin Sou'nah went straight back to the Prophet (PBUH), and embraced Islam. He subsequently donated a large portion of his vast wealth to charity in the path of Islam and remained a devoted Companion until his martyrdom. (Al-Mustadrakfei As-Saheehain - The Supplement to the Two Saheehs [of Al-Bukhari and Muslim], by Al-Hakim An-Nisabouri # 6, 709)

Finally, it is worth noting that Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) character was a practical manifestation of his unique mercy. He taught mankind how to live with empathy, patience, and unwavering justice. Through his actions and traditions, he established a framework of human rights, emphasizing that the most noble of people are those who are most conscious of God and the kindest to His creation.

Courtesy of Kuwaiti Society for Cultural Dialogue

News in Brief

‘No traveler’s ticket downgraded’

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait Airways denied rumors circulating on social media claiming that the airline had downgraded some passengers' tickets from first class to economy, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement issued on Sunday, Kuwait Airways explained that if operational circumstances require a change to a booking, the matter is handled in accordance with established procedures. Passengers are contacted directly and informed of any changes, while their rights are fully protected, including compensation in accordance with applicable international regulations.

□ □ □

Minister gets the job: Decree No. 130/2026 was issued for transferring supervision of the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) to the Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The decree was published in the official gazette, “Kuwait Al-youm,” on Sunday.

It stipulates that the Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment shall exercise all powers and responsibilities vested in the competent minister under Law No. 7/2010 concerning the establishment of the CMA and the regulation of securities activities, and its amendments.

Article Two stipulates that the Prime Minister and the ministers, each within their respective capacities, shall implement the decree, which shall take effect from the date of its issuance and shall be published in the official gazette.



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Kuwait innovation advances sustainable wastewater treatment

KISR researcher wins gold, grand jury prize in China

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): The Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) announced on Monday that researcher Dr. Meshari Khajah won a gold medal and the grand jury prize at the 12th International Exhibition of Inventions in Guangzhou, China.

KISR said in a press statement that Dr. Khajah, from its Water Research Center, won the awards at the exhibition, held on August 21-23, for a patent on a wetland system for treating wastewater generated by reverse osmosis.

The patent, co-developed by Dr. Mohammad Al-Montaser Ahmad and funded by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), was granted by the



KISR researcher Dr. Meshari Khajah during his participation at the 12th International Exhibition of Inventions in Guangzhou, China.

US Patent and Trademark Office in August 2025.

The innovation improves water quality, enabling its reuse in various applications while providing sustainable environmental and economic solutions, KISR explained.

It noted that the invention offers a sustainable wastewater treatment solution that enhances water resource management efficiency.

The institute affirmed that this achievement reflects its efforts to support applied research and transform scientific outputs into practical solutions for environmental and water challenges, thereby boosting Kuwait's international scientific presence.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait Municipality

It also recommended removing structures visible along the edges of landscaping areas on plots overlooking highways and ring roads, as well as removing encroachments around roads, public walkways, and electrical transformers.

During the meeting, they stressed that unauthorized fences or barriers may not be erected in agricultural areas, except for plant hedges within specified height limits. The construction of structures or encroachments on public spaces across streets is prohibited, except for open-sided carports that do not obstruct pedestrian traffic.

The recommendations also prioritized safety and clear visibility for traffic, stressing the importance of keeping sidewalks and pedestrian walkways unobstructed.

It was also decided to reinforce the inspection teams by assigning a representative from the Engineering Control Department to each governorate to provide technical support to the removal teams.

The meeting recommended conducting daily monitoring of the campaign's progress by providing the removal committee representative with reports supported by photographs. These reports will be used to showcase the campaign's results on social media and keep the public informed about the progress of the work.

The meeting emphasized the need to place warning stickers in promi-

nent locations on the offending sections, clearly indicating the type of violation. Inspectors and supervisors were also required to document these warnings.

The directors of the governorate branches were tasked with monitoring the removal operations and submitting final reports on the areas where work had been completed.

The recommendations also required sanitation departments to provide the necessary equipment to the removal teams. The meeting recommended activating the role of the Safety Department in sending alerts through the Sahel application.

The recommendations also called for preparing periodic statistics and submitting them to the Director General of Kuwait Municipality.

Attendees emphasized the need to activate post-clearance monitoring through the emergency team formed by a decision of the Director General to follow up on areas where demolition work has been completed and detect any attempts to re-establish violations or encroachments.

PAM ups

On the other hand, Ahmed Al-Yamani, CEO of Takamol Holding, confirmed that the agreement is in line with the efforts of PAM to develop and restructure the labor market, while ensuring the recruitment of skilled workers based on the actual manpower needs of the employers.

He stated that the partnership begins with the development of the unified Kuwaiti professional guide, for which PAM has already made significant progress. He indicated that achieving these goals depends on developing a professional guide, according to the skills needed by the labor market and ensuring that the workers have these skills.

He revealed that Takamol manages around 200 labor testing and screening centers in several labor-exporting countries, while tests are conducted electronically in countries with limited labor resources.

He said the company has so far conducted about 1.5 million tests for workers who moved to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries through various centers worldwide. He added that the services of the company in the field of certificate and skills verification cover about 160 countries.

Co-ops sharpen

goods at reasonable prices, clarifying that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is responsible for price monitoring.

She added that the union is open to all cooperatives, disclosing that she submitted a proposal two months ago to hold a monthly meeting with the legal representatives of cooperative societies to discuss issues concerning the cooperative sector.

She pointed out that bookstores are

under the management of cooperative societies, just like the central markets and several other branches, while emphasizing that bookstores are not offered for investment.

She confirmed the existence of a central committee for price monitoring, established through the ministerial decree issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, with the participation of the union.

55 years on,

Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, to the President of China Xi Jinping, the Premier of the State Council Li Qiang, and the Vice President Han Zheng.

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah also met on Monday in Beijing with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi to review historical ties and discuss ways to enhance their strategic partnership.

Both diplomats emphasized that this year marks a significant milestone in Kuwaiti-Chinese relations, coinciding with the 55th anniversary of establishing formal diplomatic ties between the two friendly nations.

The ministers reaffirmed their commitment to expanding bilateral cooperation across key sectors, while also intensifying diplomatic coordination to serve mutual interests and advance shared strategic goals.

During the meeting, both leaders

exchanged views on regional and international developments, focusing on diplomatic initiatives aimed at promoting stability, security, and de-escalation across the broader region.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Jarrah visited the China Institute of International Studies (CIIS) on Monday as part of his official visit to the Chinese capital, Beijing.

According to a Foreign Ministry statement, Sheikh Jarrah held a discussion session during the visit with CIIS President Ambassador Chen Bo, alongside a number of Chinese experts and researchers.

During the session, the Foreign Minister reviewed the historical Kuwaiti-Chinese relations, the pillars of Kuwait's foreign policy, and the current regional developments.

62 vehicles

The violations uncovered include overtaking, disregarding lane markings, exceeding speed limits, failing to use turn signals, and parking in prohibited areas.

The department affirmed that it will continue its field monitoring campaigns throughout the country and take the necessary legal measures against those proven to have committed violations. It pointed out that this reflects its commitment to curb dangerous behaviors and ensure compliance with traffic regulations to create a safer and more stable traffic environment for everyone.

GCC fortifies shield against financial crime

RIYADH, Aug 24, (KUNA): Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi affirmed on Monday that GCC states attach utmost importance to developing their national capabilities to combat money laundering and terrorism financing.

In a statement, the GCC General Secretariat said Al-Budaiwi made the remarks during an introductory workshop on international best practices in combating money laundering and terrorism financing, held at the Secretariat's headquarters in Riyadh, with the participation of Secretariat employees and academics from universities and institutes.

Al-Budaiwi said combating money laundering and terrorism financing constitutes a key pillar for safeguarding the integrity of financial systems, enhancing economic stability, and confronting criminal activities and their sources of financing.

He pointed to the GCC states' continued focus on strengthening their national capabilities and developing their regulatory and institutional tools in line with international standards and best practices.

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Buttigieg returns to S.Carolina as ex-sec of transportation weighs another WH run

Kushner meets with Democratic leader with House control at stake in Nov

WASHINGTON, Aug 24, (AP): House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries and President Donald Trump’s son-in-law and outside adviser Jared Kushner met privately recently in New York, a signal that the White House is seeking ways to work with Democrats if they wrest majority control from Republicans in the midterm elections.

The meeting, first reported Sunday by The New York Times, touched on issues ranging from housing, immigration to the high costs of living. People in the United States are struggling under inflationary prices that Democrats blame on Republicans, alongside Trump, for failing to get under control.

Kushner suggested that Jeffries, who is in line to become House speaker if Democrats regain power in November, meet with White House chief of staff Susie Wiles as a follow-up.

Jeffries, in a statement Sunday, did not mention the private conversation but said the Republican administration needed to drop the GOP’s “my-way-or-the-highway” approach that “has failed the American people.”

“To stop the madness, we have repeatedly made clear that an extremist approach will not work and will be met with forceful opposition,” the New York congressman said. “The question is whether Republicans will join us.”

The meeting shows the depth of Republican Party angst over losing their congressional majority, particularly the House, and the need to make inroads with the opposing party as the White House seeks to stem any potential political fallout on the president.

If Democrats retake power, the White House can expect an aggressive oversight agenda into what Jeffries has called the “crooks” in the administration, with the threat of impeachment among the many tools at the party’s disposal.

House Speaker Mike Johnson, a close ally of Trump, bristled Sunday when asked about the meeting. He minimized the role that Kushner, who he said “hedges his bets,” plays in the White House.

“I’m telling you what, you better not bet against the House Republicans,”



Former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg speaks at the South Carolina Democratic Party’s Spratt Issues Conference on Aug 22, 2026, in Florence, SC. (AP)

Johnson, R-La., told Fox News Channel’s “The Sunday Briefing.”

“I don’t know what that’s about,” Johnson said. “I know Jared has interests in lots of other things going on. He’s not really directly involved in the admin, at least in the day-to-day in the White House.”

The White House did not respond to a request for comment. A representative for Kushner also did not respond.

Jeffries and Kushner are not strangers.

The New Yorkers allied during the

first Trump administration on landmark legislation to allow sentencing flexibility for certain drug offenses as a way to curtail lengthy terms in the federal prison system.

While not necessarily close, the two have maintained a relationship despite the repeated attacks Trump has leveled against Jeffries and the Democratic leader’s responses. In Trump’s second term, Kushner has an oversize role despite having no formal position in the White House. He serves as an outside adviser and envoy, particularly shuttling to foreign diplomatic missions as the U.S. war against Iran drags into its sixth month.

Trump has only met with Jeffries once since the president returned to the White House, taunting the House leader and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York with red “Make America Great Again” 2028 caps on the desk in front of them in the Oval Office - a nod to Trump’s toying with an unconstitutional third term in office.

After that fall meeting, Trump posted a fake image of Schumer with Jeffries wearing a sombrero with a handlebar mustache in what was widely viewed as a racist trope as he mocked the Democrats before what became the longest federal government shutdown in US history.

Also:

ORANGEBURG, SC: The last time **Pete Buttigieg** was giving a political speech in South Carolina, it was to mark a distant finish in the state’s primary that effectively ended his campaign for president.

Returning this weekend as he mulls a second run for the White House, Buttigieg set out to reintroduce himself to the state and the Black voters he struggled to win in 2020. The results were encouraging.

There was a standing ovation in a Black church in South Carolina when Buttigieg was credited for helping bring millions of federal dollars to the area for a project as President **Joe Biden**’s transportation secretary. A second ovation came as Buttigieg gave a speech warning of a country in “big trouble” while laying out his own vision for what should come next.

America

Fast-moving wildfire threatens Nevada: An out-of-control wildfire that jumped over fire trucks and made it difficult for crews to reach hot spots destroyed homes in northwest Reno, Nevada, on Sunday. Shifting winds challenged firefighters trying to bring it under control, and authorities urged some 90,000 people to evacuate.

At least six people - three first responders and three civilians - were injured. Officials said the fire was “human-caused” but did not provide details on how they reached that conclusion, or whether it was intentionally set or accidental.

The Hawk Fire began Saturday and grew to more than 23 square miles (60 sq. km.) as it spread Sunday across the Peavine Peak area of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, where rugged foothills are ringed by homes and businesses near the California state line. There was zero containment.

Some 42,000 residents have been ordered evacuated as the “GO NOW” zone expanded, reaching the edge of the University of Nevada. An additional 45,000 people were in the adjacent evacuation warning zone. Authorities urged people to be prepared to stay away for several days, because shifting and strengthening winds were expected to make the fire even more unpredictable.

☐ ☐ ☐

Moke set to dump heavy rain in Hawaii: Tropical Storm Moke was swirling past Hawaii on Sunday, close enough to dump heavy rain on Big Island communities in the aftermath of Hurricane Lala.

The National Hurricane Center located Moke’s center about 320 miles (515 kilometers) south-southwest of Hilo around midday. Top sustained winds were around 40 mph (65 kph), though the real impact was expected from rainfall in places where last weekend’s hurricane flooded communities, triggered mudslides and damaged roads and power lines. Two deaths linked to the hurricane have been reported in Hawaii.

Hawaii County Mayor Kimo Alameda advised residents in a social media post Sunday they “should stay off the roads and shelter in place” as a precaution. He said anyone in need could take refuge at shelters that the county had opened at several locations. (AP)

☐ ☐ ☐

2 Phoenix police officers arrested: Two Phoenix police officers were fired and arrested after an unreported traffic stop in which they assaulted a man and woman and shocked them with a Taser, the police chief said.

Officers Antonio Felix and Luis Vasquez were arrested on charges including aggravated assault and kidnapping, police chief Matt Giordano said at a news conference Saturday.

“Detectives have confirmed that the two former officers physically assaulted both the man and woman during the traffic stop,” Giordano said. “The investigation also shows that a Taser was used on the victims during the stop.”

The officers did not report the Aug. 5 traffic stop and did not activate their body-worn cameras, police said. (AP)



Smoke billows in the distance as a wildfire burns in Reno, Nevada on Aug 23. (AP)



Britain’s Prime Minister Andy Burnham, (centre left), Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, centre, and European Council President Antonio Costa, (centre right), attend a commemorative ceremony marking Ukraine’s 35th Independence Day outside St. Sofia cathedral in Kyiv, Ukraine on Aug 24. (AP)

European leaders join Zelenskyy in Kyiv for Ukraine’s Independence Day

KYIV, Ukraine, Aug 24, (AP): European leaders joined President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv on Monday for official celebrations marking Ukraine’s Independence Day as Russia pushes on with its 4-year-old invasion of the country.

One of President Vladimir Putin’s key goals in starting a war with Russia’s neighbor in February 2022 was to place Kyiv in Moscow’s orbit. Ukrainians voted overwhelmingly for independence in 1991.

With no significant changes on the front line for months and no apparent progress after more than a year of US-led peace efforts, the warring countries are locked in a spiral of escalating aerial attacks that are killing civilians and smashing infrastructure.

UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham, on his first overseas trip since taking office last month, on Monday joined almost a dozen other European leaders, as well as other dignitaries including European Council President Antonio Costa, in Kyiv.

“For Ukraine, independence is not an abstract idea. We defended it against all odds,” Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said on social media. “In times like these, nations learn how important it is to have allies by your side.”

Burnham was to co-chair a meeting of the so-called Coalition of the Willing group of countries helping Ukraine resist Russia’s onslaught, with the leaders of France and Germany expected to join online.

The visiting leaders took to Kyiv pledges of further military and financial support. Burnham is expected to announce that the U.K. Government has agreed to allow defense company MBDA to release classified information relating to British components used in the SCALP

long-range missile, according to his office. That would pave the way for France and Ukraine to advance plans for local production of the weapon in Ukraine.

SCALP is the French version of the UK’s Storm Shadow missile, with both systems incorporating shared French and British technology.

Ukraine has leaned heavily on NATO countries for help fighting Russia’s bigger army, although relations with the United States have been cooler under President Donald Trump.

Russia, meanwhile, is getting help from North Korea and China.

Both Russia and Ukraine are trying through long-range strikes to inflict economic pain, disrupt military supplies and erode public morale.

Ukraine’s long-range drones have repeatedly hit facilities in Russia’s vital oil industry, causing fuel shortages, and have also engaged in a campaign against Russia’s largest online retailer Wildberries.

Three teenagers were killed and six children were wounded in the southern Russian city of Krasnodar, Russia’s children’s rights ombudswoman Maria Lvova-Belova said Monday, as Ukraine attacked several warehouses of Ozon for the third straight day, according to officials and the company.

Ozon is one of Russia’s major e-commerce retailers. The company said a large fire raged at an Ozon logistics facility in the suburbs of Krasnodar following the overnight attack.

A drone also hit the grounds of an Ozon logistics center in the southern Russian region of Adygeya, regional governor Murat Kumpilov said, though the company said its Adygeya warehouse wasn’t damaged.

Health of Norway's king deteriorates over the weekend but stable now

OSLO, Norway, Aug 24, (AP): Crown Prince Haakon visited his father King Harald of Norway on Monday at the hospital, after the king’s health deteriorated over the weekend, public broadcaster NRK reported.

The 89-year-old monarch, who has been on sick leave for several weeks, was admitted to the National Hospital a week ago. He is now receiving antibiotics for a bacterial blood infection and has responded to treatment, the royal palace said late Sunday, adding that his condition is stable.

Haakon, has been serving as regent during that time, the palace said.

The king has hemolytic anemia and was being treated with cortisone, leading to fluid accumulation in the body that required hospital treatment, the palace said last week.

Norway’s prime minister sent his wishes for the king and said that “all of Norway is following and thinking about the king,” NRK reported.

“My strong wish is that he continues to receive good treatment from the good healthcare system we



Norway’s King Harald, (centre), leaves the hall after the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony at Oslo City Hall, Norway, on Dec 10, 2022. (AP)

have,” Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre said.

Harald, who has been monarch since 1991, has been in and out of the hospital several times in recent years.

In February, he was admitted to a hospital in Spain’s Canary Islands during a winter vacation for treat-

ment for a skin infection.

Two years ago, the king fell ill during a private vacation with the queen in Malaysia and received a temporary pacemaker there. Harald returned aboard a medical airplane to Norway, where he was fitted with a permanent pacemaker.

Europe

Hungarian Gripen jet crashes, pilot safe: A Hungarian military pilot ejected safely when his fighter jet crashed on Monday, Prime Minister **Péter Magyar** said.

The Swedish-made JAS 39 Gripen came down near the city of Szolnok in central Hungary “for reasons that are still unknown,” Magyar wrote in a post on Facebook. An investigation into the incident is underway and Minister of Defense Romulusz Ruszin-Szendi said in a video on Facebook, adding he was traveling to the crash site with the chief of staff of the Hungarian defense forces.

Mihály Gyorfi, the mayor of Szolnok, told local media that the pilot “was probably training as usual” at the helicopter base just outside the city, and confirmed that there were no known injuries resulting from the crash. (AP)

☐ ☐ ☐

Migrants clash with police in Greece: Migrants clashed with police at a detention center in northern Greece and cut through a perimeter fence, with 35 escaping before authorities recaptured about half of



Magyar

them, officials said Sunday.

Greece is a key entry point for migrants into Europe, and migration is a hot-button issue in the country. Greece’s conservative government has been toughening its migration policies.

Police reinforcements were called late on Saturday to the temporary accommodation center for asylum seekers in Sintiki, a few kilometers (miles) from the Bulgarian border, after migrants threw rocks at guards, according to police.

The facility houses around 450 people who are placed there while their asylum applications are processed, which can be a protracted procedure. (AP)

☐ ☐ ☐

Storm hits Baltic nations, 2 dead: Two people died and around half a million people were left without electricity across Latvia and Lithuania after a powerful cyclone, bringing rain and strong winds, hit the region on Saturday and into Sunday morning.

“This seems to be the most severe storm in Latvia since 2005 in terms of its overall impact,” Andris Viksna, from the Latvian Environment, Geology and Meteorology Center, told the AP.

One person died in Jelgava, central Latvia, when part of a building collapsed on Saturday, and others were injured across the country. Wind speed exceeded 67 mph on Saturday in the capital, Riga. At many stations, half of the average monthly rainfall was recorded on Saturday.

More than a quarter-million people were left without electricity and mobile services were disrupted.

Rail and other public transport services were affected by trees and other objects falling on infrastructure. The Riga airport said on Sunday morning that flights could be delayed or rerouted because of the severe storm overnight. (AP)

Forest fires scorch multiple provinces

Indonesia intensifies aerial firefighting

JAKARTA, Indonesia, Aug 24, (AP): Indonesia on Monday intensified ground and aerial firefighting operations as huge blazes in central and western parts of the country scorched thousands of hectares of forests and peatland, created a choking haze that blanketed cities and crossed borders.

Indonesian authorities have been battling fires driven by an intensifying El Nino pattern and a prolonged dry season, generating dense smoke that crossed into Malaysia and Brunei, according to Indonesia's National Disaster Management Agency, or BNPB.

The BNPB said Monday that fires remain active in several regions, while large-scale suppression efforts continue in fire-prone provinces including West, Central and South Kalimantan on Borneo island and in Riau, South Sumatra and Jambi on Sumatra island. The fires are part of a broader surge in wildfire activity across Indonesia this year.

After visiting areas devastated by forest and peatland fires in Central Kalimantan on Saturday, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto flew to fire-affected Riau province on Sumatra island, where more than 11,500 hectares (28,400 acres) have burned, to encourage authorities to get the haze cloud under control.

Prabowo vowed the government would continue supporting firefighting operations, including through the deployment of additional water-bombing helicopters and oxygen supplies for firefighters. He urged authorities to "thoroughly document and report the work being carried out by firefighting teams" directly to him.

The Transportation Ministry said it has authorized the use of 35 foreign-registered aircraft to support wildfire response operations, including water-bombing missions and aerial patrols. The ministry said the aircraft can be rapidly redeployed to disaster-hit areas as conditions change, while complying with Indonesian aviation safety regulations.

The Environment Ministry satellite data on Monday showed South Sumatra recorded the highest number of hot spots nationwide with 1,429, followed by West Kalimantan with 1,226 and Central Kalimantan with 811. East Kalimantan logged 576 hot spots, ahead of Riau with 503, while West Papua and Jambi recorded 468 and 458 hot spots, respectively.

Forestry Ministry data indicated that nearly 94,000 hectares (232,000 acres) burned in July alone.

Drought, strong winds and dry vegetation have complicated efforts to contain the fires, BNPB said in a statement on Monday. Some hot spots remained inaccessible to more than 10,700 ground firefighters who were deployed as of Sunday, prompting local officials to request additional water-bombing support and firefighting vehicles.

Cloud-seeding resumed over Kalimantan on Monday, with 30 helicopters for water-bombing and aerial patrol missions, and another 22 helicopters covering Sumatra.



People walk along the Ampera Bridge as haze from wildfires blankets the city of Palembang, in South Sumatra, Indonesia on Aug 23. (AP)

PM meets security chiefs after coordinated attacks in 3 southern provinces

Political amnesty law takes effect in Thailand but excludes lese majeste

BANGKOK, Aug 24, (AP): An amnesty for political offenses committed in Thailand over the past two decades took effect Monday, but the law excludes some of the more serious cases, including those involving lese majeste, or defaming the monarchy.

The amnesty was introduced to promote reconciliation after past political instability, violent protests and military coups and could cover about 6,000 people, according to estimates made in Parliament. But the exclusion of lese majeste offenses has drawn criticism that the amnesty will not truly resolve political divisions.

The Peaceful Society Promotion Act passed a final vote by lawmakers in July and was published in the Royal Gazette on Sunday. A committee chaired by the prime minister will determine who qualifies for the amnesty. The committee must hold its first meeting within 30 days, although it's unclear how long the process will take.

The law covers a range of offenses related to political activities from Jan. 1, 2005 to July 15, 2025. It will not only grant release for current prisoners, but also close investigations and prosecutions, dismiss pending court cases, and clear criminal records of those eligible for the amnesty.

In addition to lese majeste, the amnesty will also exclude corruption and crimes resulting in death or serious injury.

The lese majeste law, also known as Article 112 of the Criminal Code, is controversial not only because it has been used to punish things as simple as liking a post on Facebook, but also because anyone - not just royals or the authorities - can lodge a complaint that most of the time leads to detention during lengthy legal proceedings.

A conviction of defaming the monarchy carries a prison term of up to 15 years, and critics say Article 112 has often been used to quash political dissent.

Student-led pro-democracy demonstrations starting in 2020 sought reforms of the lese majeste law, but the protesters became targets of the law.



Thai protesters wave flags and cheer during a rally opposing Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra at the Royal Plaza in Bangkok, Thailand, on Feb 4, 2006. (AP)

Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, a law advocacy group, says more than 290 people, many of them student activists, have been charged with violating Article 112 since early 2020.

As of July, the group said at least 54 people remained imprisoned in

any perceived threats to the status of the monarchy.

The country's political conflicts revolved mostly around former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted by a military coup in 2006.

His populist policies won strong support among poorer voters, particularly in the rural north and northeast, but his popularity and sometimes high-handed style created deep fractures between his base and the country's urban elites, royalists and the military. Violent protests and political upheaval repeatedly followed as parties aligned with Thaksin returned to power while he remained in self-imposed exile.

Also:

BANGKOK: Thailand's Prime Minister **Anutin Charnvirakul**, already facing a flood crisis in the country's north, held an urgent meeting on Sunday with high-level security officials in response to coordinated violence overnight in three southern provinces where a small-scale Muslim insurgency is active.

The meeting, held shortly before Anutin flew north to inspect the badly flooded province of **Nan**, followed 51 incidents on Saturday night in the southernmost provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani and Yala.

The attackers did not engage with military or police forces. Only three civilians were known to have been wounded, and they were reported to be recovering on Sunday.

The violence primarily involved small bombs, arson and other forms of property damage. The highest-profile target was a 7-Eleven convenience store in Pattani. A video circulating on social media appeared to show armed men stalking outside the store while customers and workers fled before it was set on fire.

A bomb that damaged rail tracks in Narathiwat forced the suspension of local and long-haul services. It was not clear when they would be restored due to the uncertain security situation.

As has often been the case with such incidents, no group was immediately publicly blamed or claimed responsibility for the actions.



Rescue workers search through a heap of refuse after it collapsed at Conakry's largest landfill, Guinea on Aug 23. (AP)

Landslide at landfill in Guinea's capital kills 30

A mountainous heap of refuse collapsed at the largest landfill in Guinea's capital of Conakry early on Sunday, killing 30 people, according to the central government.

Authorities said that heavy rains, which started at around 2 a.m., washed over the refuse at Dar Es Salam - the largest landfill in Conakry - and triggered a landslide that buried nearby shacks. A search and rescue operation was underway to find survivors. Six people were seriously injured and several homes were destroyed.

The site, an open-air waste dump which is the largest in the city, had been designated for closure on Sunday, according to Lt. Col. Baldé Mamadou Baillo, the sanitation officer for the military engineering bat (AP)

Mexican gov indicted by US seeks leave again after return to office

MEXICO CITY, Aug 24, (AP): The embattled governor of Mexico's Sinaloa state has reversed his decision to return to his post, bowing to an extraordinary backlash from his own ruling party over accusations by US prosecutors he conspired with a powerful cartel to smuggle drugs into the United States.

State lawmakers were expected Sunday to approve Gov. Rubén Rocha Moya's request for an indefinite leave of absence, about a day and a half after he announced his return by claiming Mexican prosecutors had cleared him of the drug trafficking charges leveled against him by the US Department of Justice in late April.

The rapid reversal demonstrated the authority Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum wields over her Morena party as she walks a fine line between placating US President Donald Trump, who says cartels control Mexico and has repeatedly offered US military help to fight them, and her progressive movement deeply wary of U.S. intervention.

After nearly four months on leave, Rocha Moya announced Friday that he was returning to office, claiming Mexico's Attorney General's Office had found "no evidence to support our participation in any criminal conduct." He declared that he was back "as governor of Sinaloa with my head held high."

That defiance lasted barely a day, as his return unleashed a torrent of criticism from governors, senators and other prominent figures in Morena, including Sheinbaum.

"No personal interest can ever come before the interests of the people and the nation," she wrote Saturday in an apparent rebuke of Rocha Moya, without mentioning him by name. "Mexico deserves public servants who understand that positions are temporary, but responsibility to the nation is eternal."



Sinaloa state Gov Ruben Rocha waves as he takes part in an annual earthquake drill in Culiacan, Mexico on Sept 19, 2024. (AP)

Bangladesh tribunal orders 3 journos held until trial in 2024 uprising case

DHAKA, Bangladesh, Aug 24, (AP): A special tribunal in Bangladesh's capital on Monday asked authorities to keep three journalists jailed until their trial in a case involving a mass uprising that ousted former prime minister Sheikh Hasina from office in 2024, lawyers said.

During the student-led uprising, hundreds of people were killed, and Hasina was later sentenced to death on charges of crimes against humanity. She fled to India two years ago and was tried in absentia.

The tribunal asked that Mozammel Babu, editor-in-chief of private Ekattor Television, its principal correspondent Farzana Rupa and Shyamal Dutta, editor of daily Bhorer Kagoj and former general secretary of the National Press Club in Dhaka, remain jailed.

After they appeared before the tribunal on Monday, the judge fixed Oct. 25 for the next court proceedings and asked the investigators to submit their findings against the journalists.

Global human rights groups have criticized the jailing of the journalists and the denial of bail, asking the government to drop the charges against them and stop criminalizing news reporting.

Prosecutors allege the three journalists incited the suppression of student demonstrators during the uprising. They say that the journalists asked Hasina provocative questions at a press conference on July 14, 2024, that led her to make disparaging remarks about the demonstrators before launching a bloody crackdown on the protesters leading to hundreds of deaths.

The three journalists have been in custody for years following Hasina's ouster as they face various charges including murder involving the uprising in July-August 2024.



Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, (left), greets former Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus during the swearing-in ceremony of the country's new president, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, in Dhaka, Bangladesh on Aug 21. (AP)

Kazakhstan's pro-govt party wins parliamentary elections: officials

TALLINN, Estonia, Aug 24, (AP): Kazakhstan's pro-government Adilet Party won a landslide victory in a parliamentary election, officials announced Monday, a result expected to further strengthen President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's grip on power in Central Asia's largest nation.

Adilet, which is led by the former head of Tokayev's presidential administration, won 71% of Sunday's vote, Kazakhstan's central electoral commission said, according to preliminary results.

The second-place Auyyl Party won 6.26% of the vote, with three other parties - the Nationwide Social Democratic Party, Respublika and Aq Jol - reaching the 5% threshold needed to win a place in parliament.

Election monitors for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe said the vote was marred by a lack of distinct political opposition, with "all contesting parties supporting the incumbent president's policies."

Some 74% of the country's 12.6 million eligible voters took part in the election, the central electoral commission said, which was the first vote to Kazakhstan's new single-chamber parliament.

Known as the Kurultai, the new body is the culmination of a constitutional overhaul initiated by Tokayev in March, when 87% of voters supported a referendum to merge the two chambers of parliament.

The vote also gave the president authority to appoint key officials, subject to lawmakers' approval.



Election commission members count ballots at a polling station during early parliamentary elections in Almaty, Kazakhstan on Aug 23. (AP)

Algeria, Oman sign fertilizer plant expansion agreement

ALGIERS, Aug 24, (KUNA): Algeria’s Ministry of Hydrocarbons announced on Sunday that it had reached an agreement with Oman’s Suhail Bahwan Group on expanding the Algerian-Omani Fertilizer Company plant in Arzew, western Algeria. The announcement was announced dur-

ing a meeting held between Algerian Minister of Hydrocarbons Mohamed Arkab, Suhail Bahwan Group Chairman Saad Bahwan and Omani Ambassador to Algeria Saif Al-Badai, attended by Sonatrach CEO Nouredine Daoudi and ministry officials.

Profit hits historic KD 2.15 bln

KPC enhances profit on efficiency & global sales

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) achieved an unprecedented increase in profits, recording consolidated profits of KD 2.155 billion for the 2025/2026 fiscal year, which ended on March 31.

An oil expert attributed the historic increase to four key pillars. The first was the significant efforts to eliminate financial waste, which played a crucial role in maximizing profits. KPC managed to control spending by increasing operational efficiency, strengthening governance, and redirecting financial resources toward higher-yielding investments.

The second pillar was KPC’s strong operational position in strategic global markets. The corporation ranked among Europe’s leading jet fuel exporters in 2025.

Revenues from Kuwaiti diesel sales represented the third pillar supporting the budget, as KPC successfully strengthened the position of Kuwaiti diesel as the fourth-largest source of gas oil supplied to Europe.

The fourth pillar reflects the flexibility of commercial decision-making, granting KPC’s commercial management authority to adjust shipping routes and redirect tanker unloading operations to promising markets in the United States and Af-

rica in response to customer demand and to capitalize on market opportunities.

This move resulted in significant price increases, supported by advanced logistical capabilities that facilitated the smooth rerouting of the fleet.

According to a recent KPC report, the operational efficiency of the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) has served as a safeguard for energy flows and a key factor in reducing operating expenses despite successive geopolitical crises and security tensions.

The national tanker fleet continued its voyages safely and without interruption, achieving significant time and financial savings by reducing voyage times, which led to a sharp decrease in shipping and insurance costs.

KPC’s successes extended to its regional presence through strong participation in major commercial tenders, culminating in its first-ever win of a QatarEnergy tender to supply jet fuel, outperforming major international companies.

This victory helped open direct supply channels and new sales opportunities in the Arabian Gulf, strengthening KPC’s position as a reliable logistics and industrial partner.

Over 1,500 delegates gather in Paris

Paris summit ’26 unveils agenda for AI, economic transformation

PARIS, Aug 24, (KUNA): The 2026 Global Investment Summit unveiled a series of specialized panel discussions addressing rapid transformations in artificial intelligence (AI), digital infrastructure, and the future application of modern technologies within the real economy.

According to sources from the summit, these sessions are part of the summit’s agenda, scheduled to take place in Paris on September first and second.

A highlight of the first day is the session titled “AI Sovereignty: Building Infrastructure for Strategic Independence”.

This session will explore the development of autonomous AI capabilities and the creation of digital infrastructure, including data centers, energy resources, and computing power, necessary to bolster national technological sovereignty and build integrated national ecosystems.

The session will also examine challenges associated with developing local technical capabilities and mechanisms to reduce reliance on major technological powers.

Furthermore, it will address the infrastructure investment requirements that enable nations and organizations to develop AI solutions aligned with their specific economic and strategic priorities.

The agenda also features a session titled “Europe Leading Technology Deployment: AI at Scale in the Real Economy”.

This session explores the transition of AI from limited pilot projects to broader applications across manufacturing, services, infrastructure, and supply chains, reinforcing its role as a productivity tool that boosts efficiency and drives economic growth.

Discussions will focus on practical experiences in integrating AI into productive sectors and the associated investments needed in data, digital infrastructure, energy, and technical capabilities.

Additionally, the session will highlight the role of companies and investors in scaling up the adoption of modern technologies and align-

ing them with the economy’s actual needs.

The summit brings together over 1,500 participants and 80 speakers, featuring more than 10 keynote sessions, 16 workshops, and over 40 bilateral meetings.

It involves officials, investors, business leaders, and economic institutions from diverse global markets, providing a direct platform for dialogue on investment opportunities, partnership building, and networking between capital providers and high-potential sectors.

The summit’s agenda covers a wide range of economic and investment topics shaping the future of global capital, including technology, artificial intelligence, energy, tourism, real estate, advanced industries, healthcare, and the cultural and creative economy, alongside climate and sustainability issues, which have become increasingly integral to financing decisions and investor trends.

It also includes the announcement of new initiatives across sectors such as energy, culture, investment, and technology, as well as projects focused on sustainable development and the creative economy.

This aligns with a strategic goal to translate insights from sessions and workshops into actionable pathways that can be developed into future partnerships and projects.

The summit emphasizes a broader analysis of the shifts reshaping the global economy and seeks to link modern technologies with investment and growth trajectories.

It also addresses the challenges investors and nations face in building economic structures better prepared for technological and financial changes.

Through this agenda, the Global Investment Summit 2026 aims to foster dialogue among investors, policymakers, and experts, open new avenues for international cooperation, and develop investment opportunities in sectors that will serve as key growth drivers in the coming period.

Business

Enhancing digital experience for corporates

KFH: Remarkable traction for ‘eCorp’ corporate platform



KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait Finance House’s (KFH) “eCorp” platform for corporate customers has witnessed a remarkable increase in usage following the launch of its upgraded e-services and mobile app. The platform provides an exceptional banking experience tailored specifically for the corporate sector.

KFH has introduced a new suite of digital services designed to enhance user flexibility. These include full-authority individual accounts, electronic data updates, and “Zaheb” payment service. Additionally, users can now issue QR-verified IBAN certificates, manage credit facilities and limits, view transaction details, request new transactions and process outstanding payments.

The newly updated platform offers a wide array of services, ranging from salary transfers and checkbook requests to viewing account state-

ments, tracking interbank transfers, and managing user permissions within a multi-registration system.

Furthermore, the platform offers a comprehensive suite of services, including standing order management, monthly statement subscriptions, and automated coverage ser-

vices. Users can also issue balance verification certificates, reactivate dormant accounts, and execute transfers at direct rates (360T). Additionally, the platform supports clearing company distribution subscriptions, the opening of new investment accounts and deposits,

and the issuance of remittances, letters of credit, and guarantees. Other features include drawdowns from existing credit facilities, “Zaheb” payments, all types of transfers, beneficiary management (local and international), lost card reporting, and IBAN sharing.

The launch of our upgraded e-services and mobile app offers exceptional banking experience for corporate customers. By integrating cutting-edge technology with robust security, KFH enables modern financial management through tools that prioritize sustainability. This update reduces reliance on paper-based workflows by digitizing applications and transactions, directly supporting environmental goals. Furthermore, modern digital interface streamlines operations, enhance administrative performance and significantly reduce processing times.

24K near KD 45.38, silver at KD 747/kg

Weak dollar, US debt concerns push gold prices higher

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): The gains recorded by precious metals in global markets were reflected in prices in the Kuwaiti market, with the price of one gram of 24-karat gold reaching about KD 45.380 (approximately \$147), while 22-karat gold was priced at about KD 41.600 (approximately \$135) per gram.

The price of one gram of 21-karat gold reached about KD 39.710 (approximately \$129), while the price of one kilogram of silver stood at about KD 747 (approximately \$2,435).

The local price movements came as gold prices ended last week higher at \$4,603 per ounce, recording gains for the third consecutive week. Gold rose about 5 percent during the week compared with the previous week’s close of \$4,377, amid continued weakness in the US dollar and increased demand for the precious metal as a hedge against economic,

financial and geopolitical risks.

A report issued by Kuwait-based Dar Al-Sabaek Company on Sunday explained that gold’s strong gains came after notable movements in US bond markets following the US Treasury Department’s announcement that it would expand its buyback operations for long-term government debt, raising the value of each operation to at least \$4 billion.

The move aims to support liquidity in the long-term bond market and reduce disruptions resulting from higher borrowing costs.

The announcement initially led to a sharp decline in bond yields, accompanied by a weaker dollar, giving gold a strong boost and helping to strengthen its gains during the week.

These developments came amid growing concerns over US public

debt, the fiscal deficit and debt-servicing costs, particularly after total US public debt surpassed \$40 trillion for the first time. This heightened concerns over the sustainability of US public finances and prompted investors to increase their demand for gold as an alternative asset to hedge against the risk of declining purchasing power of the dollar.

Gold also benefited from reduced market expectations of US interest-rate hikes in the near term, despite the minutes of the US Federal Reserve’s meeting showing continued disagreement among policymakers over the interest-rate path. Some members believe a more restrictive policy would be necessary if inflationary pressures persist.

The interest-rate expectations are among the most important factors affecting gold prices, given that higher

interest rates increase the opportunity cost of holding the metal, which does not generate a yield.

The US dollar also declined in foreign-exchange markets to levels close to its lowest point in several months, providing additional support to dollar-denominated gold.

Gold rose last week to its highest level in more than three months, with the spot price reaching a peak near \$4,632 per ounce before retreating slightly and closing the week at \$4,603.

The US bond yields recovered part of the losses recorded following the Treasury announcement, but this did not prevent gold from continuing its upward movement. This indicated that demand for the metal is not based solely on interest-rate and yield movements, but also reflects concerns over US debt, fiscal policy and the weaker dollar.

Treasury yields near year-high levels

Bond yields put pressure on US economy

NEW YORK, Aug 24, (AP): The bond market is one of the few forces in the world strong enough to get politicians to snap to attention. It also helps dictate how much ordinary people have to pay on their mortgages and car loans, as well as how much they earn from their savings accounts and 401(k) plans.

This week rising bond yields forced the U.S. Treasury Department into an unusual intervention and raised the specter of higher borrowing costs putting the brakes on consumer spending, the lifeblood of the economy. It also sparked concerns that investors might finally be thinking twice about financing a seemingly endless flow of government borrowing.

Here’s a look at what’s going on and how it affects everyone:

When governments and big companies borrow money, they don’t ask a bank for a loan. Instead, they sell IOUs to investors and promise to repay the money with a certain interest rate. If those IOUs are set to be repaid many years from now, they’re called bonds. (IOUs the U.S. government will repay more quickly are more often called bills or notes.)

Investors in the bond market often buy and sell these bonds after they’re issued, and they continue to pay the same interest rate. But if the bond starts to look less attractive, a buyer can get bonds that were earlier worth \$100 for less than that. Such a drop in price means the new buyer will get a bigger return, percentage-wise, on their money than the interest rate the bond pays on its face value. Those payments are called the bond’s yield.

The world’s biggest and most important bond market is for IOUs from the U.S. government, which are called Treasurys. The total size of it was \$31.5 trillion, as of July, according to the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association.

Yet Treasurys are facing more competition from higher-yielding bonds overseas than in recent decades. After years of near-zero interest rates, even 30-year Japanese government bonds are now pay-

ing more than 4%. Yields on U.K. bonds have reached 5.81%, and German bonds are also paying 3.76%, versus 5.27% for a comparable U.S. bond. It’s a big reason U.S. rates have been drifting higher.

Ira Jersey, chief U.S. interest rate strategist at Bloomberg Intelligence, said that large global investors such as pension funds and life insurers used to have little choice to invest in Treasurys because most other overseas bonds paid so little interest.

“Now the U.S. 30-year yield has to compete with all these other sovereign bonds,” Jersey said. “The U.S. is not the only game in town anymore.”

The easiest example is mortgage rates. Rates for these loan tend to follow the path of yields for Treasurys that will get repaid in 10 years.

The 10-year Treasury yield is the centerpiece of the bond market, and it shot higher through the summer after the war with Iran sent oil prices higher and worries about inflation upward, adding to longstanding concerns about the size of the U.S. government’s debt.

That in turn made mortgages more expensive for people looking to buy a house. The average 30-year fixed-rate mortgage is near its highest level in a year, discouraging people already worried the price of homeownership may be too high.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent’s announcement Wednesday that the government would double its buybacks of longer-term bonds was intended to bring down the 10-year Treasury yield and lower mortgages. Yet the move brought only temporary relief, with the 10-year yield rising back to 4.74% Friday, matching its highest point in more than a year.

Thierry Wizman, global rates strategist at Macquarie Group, said higher mortgage rates will likely discourage some consumers from buying homes. At the same time, higher yields generally should draw more investment into bonds issued by large tech firms investing in AI infrastructure.

“The private sector wants to have the AI revolution,” Wizman said. “Who’s going to take a step back? It’s going to be the consumer. And higher yields are going to do that a little bit.”

Other parts of the market, including where the Federal Reserve sets its interest rate for very short-term overnight loans, affect rates for everything from credit cards to savings accounts to auto loans.

Generally, higher yields and rates benefit people who are savers. It means they are earning more from lending money to the U.S. government or sticking their cash in a high-yield savings account.

Higher yields and rates, meanwhile, tend to hurt people who are borrowing money. They also drag on prices for stocks, gold and even cryptocurrencies. The thought is: Why should anyone pay high prices for riskier investments when U.S. Treasurys, which are supposed to be safer, are paying more than before?

Washington continues to spend far more than it brings in through revenue, so it has to borrow money to cover the gap. That has sent its total debt over \$40 trillion, a staggering record, and the number keeps climbing by the day.

When yields are rising, the U.S. government has to pay higher interest rates to entice buyers for its bonds when it auctions off Treasurys.

The federal government has already paid \$931 billion in interest on its debt through the first 10 months of its fiscal year, which ends in September. That’s more than it spent on health, national defense or veterans benefits and is just behind Social Security and Medicare.

It’s no secret that the U.S. government has a lot of debt. Officials at the Federal Reserve, economists, investors and many other voices have been saying for years that the U.S. government is on an unsustainable path with how much it spends versus what it brings in.

Everything from tax cuts to increased military budgets adds to the deficit.

Iran’s rial currency hits new record low as US prepares to announce more sanctions

TEHRAN, Aug 24, (AP): Iran’s currency hit a record low Monday as Washington prepared to announce new sanctions it said would add further pressure on an economy already battered by previous sanctions and a U.S. naval blockade.

The rial dropped to 2.02 million to the U.S. dollar as trading opened on currency markets. Iran’s official Central Bank rate stood at around 1.5 million rial to the dollar, but the market rate is what most Iranians pay.

The currency had already been under pressure before the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28, as Iran faced double-digit inflation and negative growth, but has repeatedly hit new lows as nearly six months of war have taken an even greater toll.

Iranians find daily staples increasingly unaffordable. Since the war began, rice is up some 60% and prices of beef are more than 150% higher. The International Monetary Fund forecasts that GDP will contract more than 5%.

Still, economic pressure has not yet translated into political pressure. Iran retains a key strategic advantage: Its attacks and threats on ships in the Strait of Hormuz have brought traffic in the vital waterway to a near halt, damaging the world economy and heaping pressure on U.S. President Donald Trump ahead of congressional elections.

The war, as a result, has devolved into a fight over who controls the strait, through which a fifth of the world’s traded oil transited before the conflict. Iran is now refusing to fully reopen it unless it can charge ships.

Iran and Oman, which is on the opposite side of the strait, are reportedly in the final stages of agreeing upon a plan for joint management of



A man parks his motorcycle beside a sidewalk display of current and pre-revolutionary Iranian banknotes at Ferdowsi Square, a hub for foreign currency trading in downtown Tehran, Iran, Monday, Aug. 24, 2026. (AP Photo/Vahid Salemi)

the waterway. Oman’s foreign minister is set to visit Iran on Tuesday.

In an attempt to break the impasse, Trump’s administration promised

even stronger sanctions than those already in place would be announced Monday, including secondary sanctions on countries that continue to do business with Iran.

Ahead of the announcement, Trump posted on social media that “IRAN IS COMPLETELY COLLAPSING!!!”

“President Trump decimated Iran’s economy to a point where the rial has never been weaker and inflation has rarely been higher,” U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent wrote Sunday in an opinion piece in the Financial Times. “The regime’s final refuge now lies in the self-deception of fearful nations that still believe accommodating aggression can secure a durable peace.”

Already last week, the United Arab Emirates announced that it was suspending all trade with Iran. The UAE has long been one of Iran’s largest trading partners and its biggest source of imports.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei told reporters in Tehran on Monday that “any escalation of this situation will undoubtedly bring about consequences.”

“Our hands are not tied,” he added.

Pakistan, which played a key role in brokering a 60-day ceasefire in June, sent a high-level delegation to Iran on Monday to discuss ending the war, the military said.

In downtown Tehran, 73-year-old Sadeh Mahmoudi did not hold out hope for a resolution. He joined a line of about a dozen people to purchase U.S. dollars with his remaining savings to hedge against further declines.

“There is no hope for a deal and peace,” he said.

Featuring 60 middle school students across two cohorts

National Bank of Kuwait successfully concludes the ALT Summer Program for developing youth skills & enhancing future readiness

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The National Bank of Kuwait successfully concluded its summer ALT program with a special ceremony at its headquarters, in which participating students were celebrated for their achievements and skill development, reflecting the Bank’s ongoing commitment to supporting educational and developmental initiatives aimed at empowering youth.

Conducted in two cohorts, the program targeted middle school students aged 11 to 15 and saw the participation of approximately 60 students, who engaged in a comprehensive educational and training experience that combined personal and leadership skill development with practical application, helping to enhance their capabilities and improve their readiness for future demands.

Over the course of two weeks, each cohort of the program participated in a diverse range of educational sessions and interactive workshops designed to develop skills in communication, creative thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving, while also instilling values of initiative, responsibility, and self-confidence.

Practical experience was a key component of the program, offering students direct exposure to the workplace through practical training, which helped them better understand professional requirements and encouraged a sense of responsibility and independence, while also providing early experience that enabled them to gain insight into various work environments and explore their future interests.

Most activities and training sessions of the program were held at the Rafa Nadal Academy, which provided an environment conducive to learning, interaction, and the acquisition of new skills and experiences. The program also included a field visit to the NBK headquarters, where participants gained insight into the banking sector and gained firsthand knowledge about the Bank’s operations, services, corporate culture, and professional values.

On the occasion, Mohammad Al-Sarraf, Principal - Public Relations and Event Management at the National Bank of Kuwait, said: “The success of the ALT summer program reflects the importance of providing high-quality



Group photo during the ALT Summer Program.



Sanaa Al-Qatami



Abdullah Al-Humaidhi



Luluwa Boodai



Faisal Al-Sanea

Al-Sarraf: The ALT program offers students an early opportunity to discover their capabilities and develop their skills. We are committed to equipping young people with the knowledge and experience that prepares them for future success. Empowering youth and developing their capabilities are central pillars of NBK’s social responsibility strategy.

ity initiatives that offer young people genuine opportunities to learn, gain experience, and acquire life and practical skills early in their lives. The program served as an effective platform for enhancing the participants’ capabilities and developing their skills through a comprehensive experience that combined learn-

ing with practical application in an environment that promotes creativity and innovation”.

“AT NBK,” Al-Sarraf added, “we believe that empowering youth begins with investing in their education and capacity building, as well as providing opportunities that help them discover their potential and shape

their character. With this in mind, we continue to support initiatives that equip future generations with the tools, knowledge, and experience needed for a more successful and productive future”.

Al-Sarraf also emphasized that supporting educational and youth-focused initiatives is a key pillar of NBK’s corporate social

responsibility strategy, noting that the Bank is committed to launching and sponsoring programs that build young people’s capabilities, enhance their skills, and promote entrepreneurship and innovation, which ultimately creates a positive impact on society as a whole.

Several students participating

in the program expressed their delight with the experience, noting that it provided them with the opportunity to obtain new skills and gain insight into diverse work environments, as well as to build new friendships and boost their self-confidence through the program’s interactive activities and practical experiences.

Sanaa Al-Qatami said: “During the program, I learned the significance of teamwork and how diverse ideas can complement one another to achieve the best results. The group activities also helped me develop leadership skills and a sense of responsibility”.

Moreover, Abdullah Al-Humaidhi stated: “The hands-on training experience was a highlight of the program for me, as it gave me the opportunity to gain firsthand insight into the work environment and learn how to realistically handle daily tasks and various responsibilities”.

Meanwhile, Luluwa Boodai said: “The program significantly boosted my self-confidence; I became more capable of speaking in public, expressing my ideas, and participating in various discussions and activities”.

Faisal Al-Sanea said about his experience: “I benefited greatly from the workshops focused on creative thinking and problem-solving, as I learned new ways to approach challenges and seek innovative solutions for them.”

The ALT program is part of a series of educational and developmental initiatives supported by NBK throughout the year, reflecting its commitment to empowering youth and equipping them with the knowledge and expertise needed to enhance their capabilities and broaden their intellectual and professional horizons. NBK consistently supports and sponsors numerous initiatives that deliver sustainable impact, aiming to cultivate a generation that is more aware, confident, and prepared to actively contribute to society’s development.

NBK continues to solidify its position as a leading national institution in corporate social responsibility by establishing sustainable initiatives focused on education, training, and youth empowerment, driven by the belief that investing in people is the foundation of sustainable development and a key engine for progress and prosperity.

Hawkish Fed minutes meet a softer dollar as European activity surprises higher

By National Bank of Kuwait

Global markets this week were shaped by a widening gap between what the Federal Reserve is signaling and what the market is willing to price. The minutes of the July FOMC meeting, released on Wednesday, revealed a committee more hawkish than the headline decision implied, with three dissents in favor of an immediate hike and a majority view that further tightening would likely be required should inflation fail to moderate. Yet the dollar has drifted to multi-month lows and is set for a weekly loss, as softer labor market data since the meeting and the Treasury’s move to expand its long-end buyback program have tempered expectations for a hike in September. In Europe, activity data surprised firmly to the upside, with the Eurozone composite PMI reaching a nine-month high on the back of the strongest manufacturing recovery in over four years and a notably robust German performance, while consumer inflation expectations eased. The United Kingdom presented a more awkward mix, with private-sector activity holding up better than forecast even as headline inflation accelerated on the energy price cap and retail sales recorded their first monthly decline since April. Across the Asia-Pacific region, Japanese inflation firmed further on reduced energy subsidies, keeping speculation of a September Bank of Japan hike alive, while Australian activity moderated. Underpinning all of it, Brent extended its advance above \$93 per barrel as tensions around the Strait of Hormuz showed no sign of easing, leaving energy the common thread running through the inflation outlook in every major economy.

United States

FOMC Minutes Reveal a Divided and Hawkish Committee

The minutes of the 28–29 July FOMC meeting showed nine members voting to hold the federal funds target range at 3.50–3.75%, with three regional presidents — Hammack, Kashkari and Logan — dissenting in favor of an immediate 25 basis point increase. Several participants argued that price pressures had become broad based and that a more restrictive stance was warranted to deliver on the price-stability mandate. Critically, the hawkish tilt extended well beyond the dissenters: many participants judged that further tightening would likely be necessary if inflation did not decline, while some questioned whether financial conditions were currently restrictive enough to return inflation to the 2% objective. A few of those favoring a hike argued that moving earlier could forestall a labor and more costly sequence of tightening later.

Labor Market Stable as Activity Holds Up

FOMC participants described labor market conditions as stable, with the unemployment rate close to most estimates of its longer-run level, payroll gains broadening beyond health care and social assistance, and layoffs and claims low. Economic activity was judged to be expanding at a solid pace, supported by AI-related business investment and resilient consumer spending, though some participants noted that low- and moderate-income

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.1562	1.1558	1.1711	1.1679	1.1570	1.1790	1.1720
GBP	1.3523	1.3516	1.3675	1.3633	1.3400	1.3740	1.3636
JPY	159.21	158.00	159.77	158.93	157.35	160.00	157.83
CHF	0.8111	0.7947	0.8134	0.8009	0.7800	0.8130	0.7930

households face increasing strain as inflation erodes real disposable income. Data released since the meeting has been softer, with a weak July payrolls report and sizeable downward revisions to prior months shifting the market consensus for September towards a hold ahead of the core PCE release on 26 August.

Treasury Moves to Contain Long-End Yields

At the start of the week, we saw a spike in long-term treasury yields, the most notable of which was the US 30y Treasury yield, having risen to 5.32%, its highest level since 2007. This prompted the US treasury to make a move. The US Treasury announced it would at least double the size of liquidity-support buyback operations covering securities with maturities from 10 to 30 years, following a surge in long-end yields that had raised concerns over market liquidity and stability. The measure offered temporary relief before yields resumed their climb later in the week, and contributed to the dollar’s softer tone as investors weighed the implications for the Federal Reserve’s policy outlook.

The Greenback was last seen trading at 98.800.

United Kingdom

UK Composite PMI Defies Expectations of a Slowdown

The UK Composite PMI held at 52.5 in August, beating expectations of a decline to 51.6 and signaling continued private-sector expansion. Growth was supported by stronger services activity, which offset a slowdown in manufacturing, while new orders rose at their fastest pace since February. Employment continued to decline, however, as firms absorbed higher labor costs from increased National Insurance contributions, and both input costs and selling prices accelerated on elevated fuel prices and wages. Business confidence improved for a third consecutive month as margins recovered following the peak in energy prices in June.

UK Inflation Accelerates on Energy Price Cap

Headline inflation accelerated to 2.9% in July from 2.6% in June, driven primarily by a 13% increase in the

household energy price cap and exceeding the Bank of England’s 2.8% forecast. Underlying pressures were less severe, with core inflation steady at 2.6%, services inflation easing to 3.4% and wage growth slowing to 3.2%. Sterling nevertheless remained firm, supported by expectations that the UK economy can withstand the inflation shock and by the prospect that higher prices keep the Bank of England cautious on further rate cuts.

UK Retail Sales Fall for the First Time Since April

Retail sales fell 0.5% month-on-month in July, matching expectations and marking the first decline since April. The drop was driven by weaker non-food and online sales following strong promotional activity in June, with clothing and household goods particularly affected by hot weather and lower footfall. Food sales provided some support, rising 0.5%. On an annual basis, retail sales growth slowed to 1.6% from 3.8% in June, the weakest increase in three months.

The GBP/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.3633.

Europe

Eurozone Composite PMI Hits Nine-Month High

The Eurozone Composite PMI rose to a nine-month high of 52.1 in August from 52.0 in July, beating expectations of 51.7 and signaling continued economic expansion. Growth was driven by a strong manufacturing recovery, with factory output rising at its fastest pace in four and a half years. New orders and export demand also improved, prompting firms to increase employment, while price pressures eased in a sign of moderating inflation. Business confidence nevertheless weakened and remained subdued, reflecting continued uncertainty over the economic outlook.

German Manufacturing Leads the Regional Upturn

Germany’s Manufacturing PMI jumped to 54.1 in August from 52.2 in July, beating expectations of 52.0

and marking the strongest expansion since May 2022. Growth was driven by faster increases in output, new orders and exports, supported by inventory rebuilding, higher defense spending and investment in data-center infrastructure. Input cost pressures remained elevated but eased slightly, while business confidence improved significantly, a notable turnaround from the deepening private-sector contraction recorded as recently as June.

Eurozone Consumer Inflation Expectations Ease

Eurozone consumer inflation expectations eased in July, with the 12-month outlook falling to 2.9% from 3.0% and three-year expectations declining to 2.7%, while the five-year outlook remained unchanged at 2.4%. Near-term inflation uncertainty remained elevated amid the Middle East conflict, with lower-income and older consumers expecting higher inflation. Expected income growth edged down to 1%, while spending expectations remained steady at 3.6%. Consumers also became slightly less pessimistic about the economy, with expected growth improving to -1.2% from -1.4%.

The EUR/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.1679.

Asia-Pacific

Japanese Inflation Accelerates in July

Japan’s annual inflation accelerated to 1.9% in July from 1.6% in June, reaching its highest level since December 2025. The increase was driven by reduced government energy subsidies and stronger price growth across food, transport, household goods and healthcare. Core inflation rose to 1.8% from 1.6%, matching expectations and marking the highest reading since January, though it remained below the Bank of Japan’s 2% target for a sixth consecutive month. The Bank’s preferred measure of underlying inflation also strengthened, to 1.9% from 1.7%, while government fuel subsidies continued to contain the pass-through from higher oil prices linked to the Middle East conflict.

The USD/JPY currency pair was last seen trading at 158.93.

Australian Activity Moderates in August

Australia’s Composite PMI eased to 52.5 in August from 53.2 in July, signaling slower but continued private-sector expansion. Growth was driven by services, while manufacturing output declined. New orders and foreign demand improved modestly, and employment continued to rise but at a slower pace. Input cost inflation accelerated on higher fuel, freight and commodity costs, although selling-price inflation eased. Business confidence climbed to a six-month high on expectations of stronger demand and expansion plans.

The AUD/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 0.7169.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30675.

Campaign combines student activities, financial literacy initiatives

Gulf Bank launches back-to-school campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Gulf Bank has launched a back-to-school and university campaign for the new academic year, combining student activities, financial literacy initiatives and support for children from families in need as students return to in-person learning after an extended period of remote education linked to geopolitical developments.

The campaign is designed to support students across educational stages through activities that combine learning, engagement and social support, while reinforcing the bank's broader focus on youth development.

Activities include workshops for coloring and decorating school supplies, social media competitions and prizes aimed at engaging students as

they begin the new academic year.

The campaign opened with an event held in collaboration with Fun Tiki at 360 Mall. Children took part in workshops on decorating school supplies, painting, arts and crafts, as well as interactive science shows. neo, the mascot of Gulf Bank's neo account for children, also participated.

Under its long-standing strategic partnership with INJAZ Kuwait, Gulf Bank plans to conduct visits to several schools to promote saving and strengthen students' financial literacy. The visits will also highlight INJAZ programs supported by the bank, including training and entrepreneurship initiatives designed to help prepare students for the labor market and

develop leadership skills.

Gulf Bank will also take part in university orientation forums and exhibitions for new students, where it will present banking services and products aimed at young people, including the red account and red plus card.

As part of its support for the national "Let's Be Aware" campaign, Gulf Bank will deliver financial awareness sessions for students focused on saving and the risks of financial fraud, with the aim of building financial awareness from an early age.

The bank is also working with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society and the Basta initiative to distribute school bags and help cover educational expenses for children from

families in need.

Gulf Bank will also produce a series of awareness videos to help children prepare for their return to the classroom and support a balanced start to the academic year.

The back-to-school and university campaign is part of Gulf Bank's year-round community program, which includes initiatives focused on education, sustainability and social support.

Gulf Bank also supports youth development through training and entrepreneurship initiatives implemented with strategic partners. The bank received the "Best Product for Gen Z" award at the Asian Banking & Finance Retail Banking Awards 2026 for its youth-focused offering.



Souvenir photos with the neo kids account mascot.



Distributing gifts to participants.

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait announces official closure on the occasion of the Prophet's Birthday (PBUH)

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) extends its greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah as well as the government, people, and residents of Kuwait on the occasion of the Prophet's birthday (PBUH), hoping it bestows an abundance of blessings.

ABK discloses that its branches will be closed on Thursday, 27 August 2026to resume opera-



tions on Sunday, 30 August 2026. During this time, ABK's digital branch in Al Khiran Mall

will be functional to service customers from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The Bank hasalso confirmed its full operational readiness to serve customers 24/7 via its various digital platforms throughout the holiday. This includes Online Banking via eahli.com, Mobile Banking through the ABK app, its ATM network, as well as the Bank's call center Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899.

Three designated branches will remain open to serve customers

Warba announces Prophet's Birthday holiday branch hours

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Warba Bank announced its branch operating schedule for the Prophet's Birthday holiday, following the Central Bank of Kuwait's announcement that Thursday, August 27, 2026, will be an official holiday.

While most bank branches, including the SIDI branch, will be closed on Thursday, August 27, Warba Bank will continue to provide banking services through three designated branches.

Branches Open During the Holiday:

- Egaila Branch
- The Avenues Branch
- Kuwait International Airport Branch

Digital Banking and Regular Operations:

Abdullah Nasser Al-Shoail, Senior Director of Branches – Retail Banking Group at Warba Bank, noted that the designated branches will



Abdullah Al-Shoail

continue to serve customers during the holiday to ensure continued access to essential banking services.

Al-Shoail encouraged customers to use Warba Bank's digital channels and mobile application, which remain available 24/7 for account management, fund transfers, and standard banking transactions. The full branch network will return to regular working hours on Sunday, August 30, 2026.

About Warba Bank:

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

Economists doubt cattle imports will cut beef prices

WASHINGTON, Aug 24, (AP): The U.S. plans to reopen a border crossing in Arizona to cattle from Mexico on Monday as part of a broader effort by the Trump administration to reduce record-high beef prices, though economists doubt the move will mean much to grocery store shoppers.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has said concerns about the New World screwworm's spread lessened enough to allow the movement of cattle from Mexico at a crossing in Douglas, Arizona, about 230 miles (370 kilometers) southeast of Phoenix. Over time, it hopes to reopen other crossings in New Mexico and Texas.

Beef prices clearly are a concern for President Donald Trump, who announced Friday that he would allow up to 331,000 tons (300,000 metric tons) of imported ground beef into the U.S., tariff-free, to be sold at below-market prices over the next 90 days. In February, the White House said closing the border to livestock imports from Mexico more than a year ago was "essential" to containing the screwworm but it has exacerbated a shortage of cattle for slaughter in the U.S.

"The administration obviously has a lot of incentive to try to be able to say that they're doing something about high beef prices in particular," said Derrell Peel, a professor of agribusiness at Oklahoma State University. "Beef has been singled out because it is an expensive product and because it's just high profile."

The Trump administration closed the border to cattle imports in May 2025 as part of its response to the screwworm, a parasite with flesh-eating larvae that can infest and even kill cattle or other animals. The move came as the U.S. already was struggling to meet beef demand, thanks to a cattle herd that has been shrinking for five years and now is the smallest in decades.

Because the USDA plans a phased reopening of the border, it will take months for Mexican imports to return to their traditional levels, Peel said. Mexico has traditionally provided 1.1 million head, or about 3% of the U.S. cattle supply.

"I don't expect to see any measurable impact on cattle prices or beef prices soon," Peel said.

The USDA reported that on Jan. 1, the U.S. cattle herd had dropped to 86.2 million head, the lowest figure in 75 years. Beef prices skyrocketed over the past five years, rising significantly faster than food prices as a whole, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The average price of a pound (453 grams) of ground beef rose nearly 57% from July 2021 to July 2026, from \$4.39 to \$6.89 - hitting a peak of \$6.90 in May - with a 10% increase over the previous year. Food prices have risen about 25% overall in those five years, according to the bureau's numbers.

The price for a pound of uncooked steak rose 35% over the past five years, reaching a record \$13.06 per pound in July, also 10% higher than a year before.

But Glynn Tonsor, a professor of agricultural economics at Kansas State University, said the potential effect on beef prices from the smaller supply of cattle was lessened because the U.S. beef industry is more efficient and has been able to get more meat from each animal than in past years.

U.S. government and industry officials view the New World screwworm fly as a major threat to the nation's \$113 billion cattle industry. It was an annual warm-weather scourge for U.S. ranchers from at least the 1930s through the 1960s, until the U.S. largely eradicated it. The fly was contained for years near the Panama Canal, but returned to southern Mexico in late 2024 and advanced toward the U.S., with the first case in Texas since 1966 reported June 3.

Since then, more than 40 cases have been confirmed in southern Texas and southeastern New Mexico, with infestations of cattle, sheep, goats and dogs.

In her July announcement of plans for a phased reopening of the border, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins said it was possible to start with an Arizona crossing because the northern Mexican states of Sonora and Chihuahua had stronger animal health programs than other parts of Mexico. She also said each animal would be inspected and declared free of the parasite before

crossing the border.

U.S. House Agriculture Committee Chair John Boozman said the USDA is taking a "careful, science-based" approach to reopening the border and imposing strong animal health protocols.

"This is an important step for America's cattle producers, especially our feeders in the border states," Boozman, an Arkansas Republican, said in a statement. "Restoring this long-standing trade is critical to strengthening our cattle supply and supporting a healthy, competitive beef industry."

Drought in cattle-producing regions of the U.S. is a major reason the national herd is so small, said David Anderson, professor of agricultural economics at Texas A&M University. If grass doesn't grow, cattle have nothing to graze upon, forcing ranchers to sell them off. Low cattle prices over the past two decades also are a factor.

"Where we are today is sort of the culmination of some 18, 19, 20 years of very low cattle prices," he said. "That forces us to reduce our herds. Drought forces us to reduce them even further."

The shortage of cattle also has left beef processing plants operating below capacity.

Tyson Foods, one of the nation's largest meat processors, announced in November that it was reorganizing its beef operations and closing a plant in Lexington, Nebraska, about 220 miles (354 kilometers) southwest of Omaha. Earlier this month, it announced plans to close a plant in Utah outside Salt Lake City and another in Illinois about 150 miles (241 kilometers) southeast of Chicago.

In June, another major U.S. processor, JBS USA, announced plans to close beef plants in Memphis and outside Philadelphia, though it later said it would keep some operations at the Pennsylvania plant to preserve 400 jobs there.

Rebuilding the U.S. herd - and ultimately lowering prices - likely will take years, largely because a cow typically has only one calf a year, Peel said. In addition, breeding a heifer keeps her out of the food supply, tightening it further as the herd is rebuilt.



A man walks by as workers rest near a board promoting Artificial Intelligence (AI) at the China International Supply Chain Expo in Beijing on June 25, 2026. (AP Photo/Andy Wong)

AI-driven layoffs spread in China as 'AI Plus' policy accelerates adoption

HONG KONG, Aug 24, (AP): Computer programmer Fei Zhaojun's boss asked him if artificial intelligence could soon replace humans in coding jobs. Two weeks later, he was laid off from his job in Beijing, together with about 160 of his colleagues.

It's an increasingly common scenario as artificial intelligence, supported by government policies, reshapes China's massive job market. Some economists believe that might eventually undermine the overall strength of the world's second largest economy.

Rapid adoption of AI in many fields, from computer programmers to script writing and physical tasks, is pushing people out of their jobs or leaving them afraid that it might. China is at the vanguard of AI adoption as government policies encourage people and businesses to use AI applications and robotics in all aspects of life, so people like Fei are figuring out how to adapt.

"There appears to be far less anti-AI sentiment in China (than elsewhere). Most people seem either positive, neutral, or mildly interested in AI," said Shujing He, a Beijing-based senior analyst at advisory and research firm Plenum.

"Individuals who worry about being replaced, as well as those who have already left traditional workplaces, are often eager to experiment with AI-enabled businesses and independent ventures," she said. "The level of interest is striking."

Until recently, Fei had doubted AI could do programming work perfectly, even though his bosses thought it was close enough.

"Mid-level coders' job are essentially replaceable in most of the cases," said Fei, 40. "Even if it is a disaster that leads to replacing all humans, at this stage, you just have to use it as everyone else is using it."

Now he's making vlog-style short videos during a career break while figuring out what he wants to do next. He's not making a living off of his videos, which are about ordinary people's lives, but hopes that they might help others.

Du Qinchun, a part-time translator, has been helping to train an AI model to do translations. That's brought him more work, at least temporarily.

"But it's true that the pay in the industry has been cut by more than half compared to what it was years ago," said Du, who is based in southwestern China's Chengdu city.

The trend is so evident that a popular college programs in foreign languages have increasingly fallen out of favor as AI-powered translation tools have become more widespread.

The share of Chinese industrial enterprises saying they use AI models and "agents" jumped to 47.5% last year from 9.6% in 2024, according to the market intelligence firm IDC.

"China's vibrant open-source model ecosystem fosters greater AI application innovation in industrial settings, gradually closing the gap between foundational model capabilities and real-world enterprise value creation," said Yanze Du, an IDC senior research manager in Beijing.

Humanoid robots can now, for example, sort parcels in postal centers, although still on a small-scale basis, and are pushing the boundaries in performing more human tasks such as directing traffic and making coffee. Food delivery robots are also gaining ground across the country, potentially threatening the livelihoods of millions of Chinese food delivery workers.

Generative AI increasingly is used for creation, production and distribution in China's short drama industry. The number of live-action short and vertical video series designed for mobile phones fell about 75% in the first quarter of this year from a year earlier, according to Chinese media reports.

"Tasks that once required specialized training can now be performed by almost anyone with access to AI tools. This is particu-

larly evident in software development and multimedia creation," said Plenum's He. "As a result, workers whose roles are narrowly concentrated in these areas may face greater displacement risk."

A report from International Labor Organization, meanwhile, found that women face higher risks of losing employment due to use of AI than men, as they tend to work in areas more suitable for automation, such as assembling electronics, and remain underrepresented in science and technology.

Under China's "AI Plus" initiative and its five-year plan through 2030, the government is pushing to infuse AI across many industries, aiming to gain an edge in China's technology rivalry with the U.S.

"What is specific to China is that the government is really into diffusing AI across the economy, so AI may get into different domains more quickly comparing to other countries," said Zilan Qian, a research associate at Oxford China Policy Lab.

China's economic growth has already been slowing. Consumer spending has lagged partly due to people becoming reluctant to spend because they're worried about losing their jobs. It's added to problems stemming from a prolonged downturn in the housing market that has undermined household wealth.

China's tech industries may be innovative with high productivity, but they may not generate many new jobs, said Eswar Prasad, a professor of economics and trade policy at Cornell University.

"AI is likely to lift productivity across the board but could have a severe disruptive effect on employment, worsening the employment growth problem and resulting in a detrimental effect on social stability," he said.

Similar to their U.S. rivals, Chinese tech giants have cut or restructured tens of thousands of jobs, partly due to AI. The outlook for the broader jobs market remains uncertain: China's overall urban unemployment rate hovers around 5%, but unemployment for people aged 16 to 24, excluding students, is roughly triple that.

That said, in the longer run, some experts say unemployment rates could fall, since China's population of 1.4 billion is rapidly aging and shrinking.

By 2050, China is projected to have fewer than two working-age adults to support each retiree, compared with more than 2.5 in the U.S., said Xuenan Cao, a professor at San Francisco Bay University whose focus includes technology and society.

"Automation could partially offset a shrinking workforce rather than being purely a threat to it," Cao said.

Wang Zhicheng, 32, often used AI for brainstorming and fact-checking in his previous job as a scriptwriter for a company that produces 3D animated educational videos and interactive exercises for children.

After its parent company laid off roughly half of its 13 script writers, he chose to resign and work independently, making illustrated children's books.

While AI sometimes saved time the scripts it generated, they often felt strange, Wang said. Episodes tended to be repetitive and formulaic and the level of detail devoted to knowledge varied widely.

"You can treat AI as a tool just like (Microsoft) Word," said Wang, who has started his own studio making picture books and other creative works. "Humans are still the decision makers on which one to pick or pursue among all that AI generates."

High school chemistry teacher Yang Zheng said he doesn't consider AI as a threat to his job even though students use AI for help with their homework.

"Teachers cannot be there all the time," he said. "It is a good thing for students as it generates in real-time so that students can ask follow-up questions," said Yang, 29. "It often gets things wrong, but it improves over time."



A woman prepares traditional Chinese tea, showcasing the quiet artistry and timeless traditions behind every brew.



NCCAL Secretary General Dr. Mohammad Al-Jassar delivers his speech.



NCCAL Secretary General Dr. Mohammad Al-Jassar and Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Yang Xin during traditional Chinese tea-industry ceremony.

From China to Kuwait, steeped in tradition

A brew of 2 cultures

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24, (KUNA): The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), in cooperation with the Chinese Cultural Center in Kuwait, showcased the traditional Chinese tea-industry ceremony during the “18th Cultural Summer Festival” to strengthen cultural exchange and highlight similarities between Chinese and Arab tea cultures.

Delivering a speech on this occasion, NCCAL Secretary General Dr. Mohammad Al-Jassar said that the step was the fruits of cooperation and partnership between the council and the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China as part of common keenness to promote cultural exchange between the two peoples.

Such events represent an opportunity to build humanitarian and cultural bridges between Kuwait and China and inform society about different cultures in a manner that enhances mutual understanding and respect among nations, he added.

Offering tea in different cultures is not just a daily habit; it is a way for people to connect and bring each other closer, he noted.

Meanwhile, Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Yang Xin said that the ceremony was held as part of cooperation between the council and the center to show the closer cultural exchange between the two friendly countries.

This year witnesses the 55th anniversary of the establishment of the Kuwait-China diplomatic relations, he added, noting that there are multiple domains to promote cultural collaboration between the two sides.

China’s cultural center in Kuwait is the first facility of its kind held in a GCC state, and it is a key platform to strengthen ties between the Kuwaiti and Chinese peoples.

The ceremony featured also tea culture performances, a special exhibition, and tasting sessions for traditional teas and sweets.



NCCAL Secretary General Dr. Mohammad Al-Jassar and Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Yang Xin during traditional Chinese tea-industry ceremony.



Some photos at the traditional Chinese tea-industry ceremony during the “18th Cultural Summer Festival”.



KUNA photos

Variety

BOSTON: The Boston Symphony Orchestra and its musicians have decided to extend their collective bargaining agreement for 48 hours, a sign they could be nearing a deal to head off what would have been the first strike in the ensemble’s 145-year history.

The Boston Musicians’ Association said Saturday it had authorized a strike ahead of the expiration of the union’s three-year contract at 11:59 p.m. Sunday. The BSO and the musicians said Sunday the contract had been extended to 11:59 p.m. Tuesday.

BSO CEO Chad Smith said Sunday that the extension had been agreed to pending a ratification vote by the BMA and the Boston Symphony Orchestra Players’ Committee.

The orchestra and management have had strained relations since BSO decided in March to force out music director Andris Nelsons

next summer after 13 seasons.

The orchestra’s season is scheduled to open Sept. 17. (AP)

□ □ □

LOS ANGELES: Shelley Fabares, an actor who was a fixture on televi-



Boston Symphony Orchestra music director Andris Nelsons rehearses with the orchestra at Symphony Hall, Nov. 20, 2014, in Boston. (AP)

sion for decades from her days as a young teenager on “The Donna Reed Show,” through “One Day at a Time” and “Coach,” has died. She was 82.

She died Saturday in Los Ange-

les, her family said in a statement to The Associated Press. No cause was given.

“To her family and friends, Shelley was a source of love, strength, laughter, and comfort,”

her family wrote. “She had a remarkable ability to make people feel welcomed, valued, and cared for.”

Fabares was born in Santa Monica, California, in 1944,

and started acting as a young child. Her first television credit came at age 10 when she appeared on “The Loretta Young Show.” Many movies and television shows followed: She acted with Paul Newman, Frank Sinatra and Eva Marie Saint in a Producers Showcase production of “Our Town”; was in the Rosalind Russell movie “The Girl Rush” and the Rock Hudson drama “Never Say Goodbye.” Other early credits include “Annette,” “Captain Midnight” and the “Black Leather Jackets” episode of “The Twilight Zone.”

Her biggest break came when she was cast as Mary Stone on “The Donna Reed Show,” where she was a regular from 1958 through 1963. During that time she also got a recording contract and had two Top 40 hits including “Johnny Angel.” In the early 1960s, she also co-starred in three movies with Elvis Presley: “Girl Happy,” “Spinout” and “Clambake.” (AP)



Shelley Fabares, left, poses for a group photo with other Screen Actors Guild Awards committee members during a tasting of the proposed menu and alternatives for the SAG Awards by Lucques Catering, Sept. 29, 2009, in Los Angeles. (AP)



Master sand casters Mevlut, left, and Ahmet Yildirim make molds for pouring molten metal in their workshop in the Buyukhan artisan quarter in Istanbul, Turkey, Thursday, Aug. 6, 2026. (AP)



Watch and clock repairer Kenan Kaya works in his workshop in Istanbul's Sirkeci commercial district, Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2026. (AP)



Master craftsmen specializing in inlay and relief work, Nejat Kilic, right, and Halit Cakar work in their workshop in Istanbul's Eminonu commercial district, Thursday, Aug. 6, 2026. (AP)



Master polisher Yucel Gur works in his workshop in the Buyukhan artisan quarter in Istanbul, Turkey, Thursday, Aug. 6, 2026. (AP)

Istanbul’s Grand Bazaar: a world of enduring artisans

ISTANBUL, Aug 24, (AP): For centuries, Istanbul’s Grand Bazaar has been more than a marketplace. Behind its crowded passageways, generations of craftspeople have made, repaired and restored the objects that eventually emerge for sale. In workshops and in narrow streets surrounding the bazaar, casters shape molten metal over fire. Engravers add detail. Polishers bring finished pieces to a shine. A single object can pass through several specialists before reaching a merchant’s counter. Much of that work happens out of sight, in rooms crowded with tools and machinery and darkened by years of dust, smoke and heat.

The artisans’ quarter is also a community. Tea circulates through its courtyards and workshops. Craftsmen stop for lunch, gather over games of backgammon or smoke a water pipe between jobs. But that world is changing. Some production has moved away from Istanbul’s historic center to larger, more modern workshops. Technology has changed how and where goods are made. Some traditional trades struggle to attract younger people willing to spend years learning the work. Others have adapted, sustained by repair work, tourism and continued demand for objects made or finished by hand.



Master polisher Yucel Gur polishes a metal object in his workshop in the Buyukhan artisan quarter in Istanbul, Turkey, Thursday, Aug. 6, 2026. (AP)



Master inlay and relief craftsman Halit Cakar works on a metal piece in his workshop in Istanbul's Eminonu commercial district, Thursday, Aug. 6, 2026. (AP)

Variety

WELLINGTON, New Zealand: New Zealand’s Prime Minister Christopher Luxon has unveiled a proposed law banning children younger than 16 from using social media platforms, citing what he said Monday was “harm being done to a generation” of young people.

However, the bill hasn’t yet attracted enough support to pass into law because two of the three parties in Luxon’s coalition government will vote against it. Passage would require support from opposition lawmakers, who have yet to decide how they would vote.

There also wasn’t enough time for lawmakers to hold a vote on the proposal before Parliament dissolved on Oct. 1 ahead of November’s election, Luxon said. Bills are required to pass three rounds of voting, usually over a period of months, before they become law.

If reelected, Luxon is seeking to make his government the latest worldwide to enact age restrictions for social media platforms after dozens of countries have either introduced or are mulling such measures. He said 2025 research showed a third of New Zealand teenagers spent at least five hours a day on social media.

“Social media is exposing them to harmful content, addictive technology and pressures they are not equipped to deal with and it’s affecting their family life, mental health, sleep, and education,” Luxon said.

The proposal would require social media platforms including Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and Facebook, to “take reasonable steps” to check users were older than 16, according to material supplied by Luxon’s party Monday. This could include “existing account information, facial age estimation, digital ID services and formal ID,” the material said (AP).

Music

Band’s final tour leg begins in Los Angeles & ends where it all started

Journey’s farewell tour could mark end of era

NEW YORK, Aug 24, (AP): The long, riding road once more beckons for the members of iconic rock band Journey. Is it the band’s final journey together?

The last leg of what is being billed as their farewell tour kicks off in September in Los Angeles and what likely will be an emotional homecoming is at the end of it - in San Francisco in November.

“I’m sure it’s going to be somewhat emotional because that’s where it all started,” says co-founder and lead guitarist Neal Schon. “I know the audience is going to be off the hook.”

The band has plenty of dates before that finale, with stops in Phoenix, Seattle, Chicago, Atlanta, Nashville, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Detroit, Boston, Cleveland, Denver and Las Vegas, among others.

The tour’s last show in San Francisco will cap more than 100 concerts this year, and the band frequently plays for more than two hours, adding deep cuts - like the spacy, melodic “Of a Lifetime” from the early ‘70s and songs from the album “Raised on Radio” from the ‘80s - to the reliable hits, like “Faithfully.”

“I’m loving it because it’s the type of show I’ve been wanting to do with Journey,” says Schon, who is frustrated when the band is lumped in with other ‘80s bands like REO Speedwagon, Styx or Foreigner.

“I always felt like even though all those bands have contributed something that a lot of people like, we were much different. I thought musically we could go any place that we wanted to. And so now we’re doing that, finally.”

Journey has had six Top 10 hits on the Billboard singles chart - including “Open Arms” and “Who’s Crying



Arnel Pineda, left, and Neal Schon, of the rock band Journey, perform after a panel discussion on the Independent Lens documentary “Don’t Stop Believin’: Everyman’s Journey,” at the PBS Summer 2013 TCA press tour in Beverly Hills, Calif., on Aug. 6, 2013. (AP)

Now” - and eight albums in the Top 10 of the Billboard 200, including the 1981 No. 1 “Escape.”

Fans can expect to hear those hits as well as Journey’s enduring anthem, “Don’t Stop Believin,’” which Schon wrote with keyboardist Jonathan Cain and then-lead singer Steve Perry.

It has shown up in the Broadway show “Rock of Ages,” the cut-to-black

finale of “The Sopranos,” the TV show “Glee,” Brad Pitt’s “Moneyball,” the movie “Monster” and the Democratic National Convention roll call in 2024. Journey returns to the road this fall after a summer in which “Don’t Stop Believin’” was heard at the World Cup and as the New York Knicks won the NBA crown.

“Don’t Stop Believin’” has surpassed our expectations,” says Cain. “Every band wishes they had one and we have one. So, I guess that’s our ‘Hey Jude’ calling card. So we’ll take it.”

In addition to Schon and Cain, the current Journey lineup includes singer Arnel Pineda, keyboardist Jason Derlatka, drummer Deen Castronovo and bassist Todd Jensen. Cain, Derlatka

and Castronovo pick up the mic to give Pineda a break on some songs. Band members say they look out and see five generations attending their shows. “I like to say Journey is certain music in uncertain times,” Cain says. “Journey is a soundtrack to a lot of people’s lives.”

The band, born in San Francisco in the days of vinyl, have endured through huge changes in the music business - CDs, Napster, digital and streaming. Schon, who cut his teeth playing with Carlos Santana, remembers Journey in the early days opening for Kiss, Jeff Beck and Cheech and Chong

Touring seems to be the only way for most bands to make any money since each streaming song earns them a fraction of a penny. Journey has leaned into the tour, sometimes hitting three cities in one day.

“I feel bad for the new generation,” says Cain. “I remember when I got a big old fat royalty check and they were playing our songs on the radio and that a new album meant you would sell more tickets. Not so today.”

The end point - Nov. 28 at the Chase Center - looms, but the band isn’t sure what that night will include. “It’ll be fitting to end there for sure,” says Cain. “Who knows who’s going to show up? I don’t know. There might be a reunion of sorts, I hope.”

After that, the band isn’t certain. “The future kind of remains up in the air really,” says Cain. Schon agrees but isn’t ready to make predictions.

“I’m not nearly done with what I want to do,” he says. “I think there’s many great opportunities in the future. Whether or not it’s with everybody that’s here right now, I’m not certain.”

Regional shows to boost attendance

National Symphony Orchestra splits season across six venues

LOS ANGELES, Aug 24, (AP): Forced from the Kennedy Center following approval of a reconstruction project by allies of President Donald Trump, the National Symphony Orchestra will split its 2026-27 season among six venues in Washington, D.C., and the capital’s suburbs.

The NSO made its delayed 2026-27 season announcement Tuesday, 5 1/2 weeks before its opening concert on Sept. 26 and five months later than the release of its 2025-26 schedule.

The Kennedy Center, named by Congress after President John F. Kennedy, was taken over in 2025 by a board of Trump loyalists who added his name to the complex, only to be ordered to remove it by a federal judge. The board said last week it intends to close the complex for a two-year renovation and add Trump’s name to the building’s facade so it would read “The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Restored and Renovated By President Donald J. Trump.”

NSO tickets sales declined from 72% of capacity in 2024 to 58% in 2025 to 41% last season, The Washington Post reported. The NSO did not confirm the figures.

“For us to perform and to be somehow disconnected with the Kennedy Center probably will convince some of the audience who stayed away from the center to come back to our concerts, and not only that, even to increase the number of the audience,” music director Gianandrea Noseda said in an interview with The Associated Press. “At least this is my hope.”

Noseda was the only NSO official who commented on the record about the season announcement. Trump’s name was included twice in the joint statement by the NSO and the Kennedy Center, which cited his “strategic direction” as



Music Director of the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) Gianandrea Noseda conducts the orchestra during a rehearsal at Milan’s La Scala theatre, Italy, on Feb. 26, 2024. (AP)

Kennedy Center chair and “vision for a revitalized institution.”

Entering his 10th season as music director, Noseda is signed through the NSO’s 100th anniversary season in 2030-31. Tickets go on sale Aug. 28, leaving little time to start rebuilding an audience.

There are 64 scheduled NSO classical concerts in the upcoming season, including 56 in the D.C. area and eight on a U.S. tour from April 20-30. The total matches 2025-26, when there were 62 at the Kennedy Center’s Concert Hall and two on tour.

Next season will include 24 concerts at George Washington’s Lerner Auditorium in D.C. (1,350 available seats), 13 at the Music Center at Strathmore in North Bethesda, Maryland, (1,925), nine at Northern Virginia Community College’s Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center in Alexandria (900), eight at George Mason’s Center for the Arts in Fairfax, Virginia, (1,850), and two each at the University of Maryland’s Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center in College Park (1,050) and D.C.’s Lincoln Theatre (1,150).

Pop stars shine across 13 fan-voted categories

Madonna, Swift lead 2026 MTV VMA nominations

NEW YORK, Aug 24, (AP): Madonna leads the 2026 MTV Video Music Award nominations, the network announced Tuesday.

The pop superstar has been nominated in every decade of her musical career. She has 19 competitive MTV VMA wins and in 1986 became the first solo female artist to receive the Video Vanguard Award.

She is up for 11 awards at this year’s ceremony, including video, artist and song of the year as well as best collaboration, dance, direction, art direction, cinematography, editing, choreography and visual effects.

If she were to sweep, she’d tie Beyoncé and Taylor Swift for the title of most-awarded musician in VMA history. They have 30 each. (Eminem is the male artist with the most VMAs, with 15.)

Speaking of Swift: She follows Madonna with the second-most nominations, with nine. If she takes home even one award, she will become the most-awarded artist in VMA history.

Swift is up for video and artist of the year as well as best pop, direction, art direction, cinematography, editing, choreography and visual effects.

Madonna and Swift are followed by Ariana Grande and Sabrina Carpenter with seven nods to their name as well as Bruno Mars, PinkPantheress and Zara Larsson with five. Blackpink’s LISA has four and Sha-



Madonna appears at The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Costume Institute benefit gala in New York on May 5, 2025, left, and Taylor Swift appears at the MTV Video Music Awards in Elmont, N.Y., on Sept. 11, 2024. (AP)

kira, Tate McRae, GENER8ION and Yung Lean are tied for three.

Rounding out the artist of the year category nominees are Grande, Mars, Carpenter and Morgan Wallen, in addition to Madonna and Swift.

The top prize of the night, video of the year, sees Swift’s “The Fate of Ophelia” compete against Madonna’s “Confessions II - The Film,”

Grande’s “Hate That I Made You Love Me,” Mars’ “I Just Might,” Carpenter’s “Tear” and GENER8ION’s “Storm” starring Yung Lean.

The two-hour show will broadcast live on CBS on Sunday, Sept. 27, at 7:30 p.m. Eastern and 4:30 p.m. Pacific, from the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles. It will also simulcast on MTV and be available to stream on Paramount+ in the U.S.

Meta defends child safety efforts as critics say it falls short

CHICAGO, Aug 24, (AP): Meta insists it has a long history of protecting its youngest customers as it defends itself against a swath of lawsuits alleging its social media empire harms children.

In the latest such instance, the social media giant is fighting allegations in a California federal court that it contributes to the youth mental health crisis by deliberately and stealthily designing features to get children hooked on its platforms Instagram and Facebook. Four states are seeking billions of dollars in

damages as well as fundamental changes to how Meta runs those apps.

Children’s mental health, and what they do and see on social media, are all issues “Meta takes seriously and tries to act on,” Paul Schmidt, a lawyer for the tech giant, said in opening statements this week.

Critics say the company’s safety record falls short and that many of its protections simply don’t work.

They include Marc Berkman, executive director at the Organization for Social Media Safety, who said

Meta introduced safeguards promising to protect children in response to public pressure rather than out of concern.

There’s been a “lack of real institutional willingness to act here,” Berkman said.

Here’s a look at some of the changes Meta has introduced, along with the work advocates say could still be done.

Most of the changes Meta has introduced focus on addressing harassment and offensive content.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, the combination of the Chang'e-7 lunar probe and the Long March-5 Y14 carrier rocket is transferred vertically to the launching area at the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site in southern China's Hainan Province on Aug 19. (AP)

China postpones ambitious Chang'e-7 lunar mission launch

China said on Sunday it was postponing its planned ambitious Chang'e-7 lunar mission, which was set to carry out explorations including searching for water ice on the moon.

The Chang'e-7 spacecraft was originally set to lift off in the coming days from the Wenchang Space Launch Site on China's southern Hainan island.

The mission does not meet the launch conditions, said the China Manned Space Agency in a brief statement, and "cannot take place during the planned window this year."

The decision was made following a "comprehensive assessment," the agency added, and was based on the principles of "prudence, reliability and absolute mission suc-

cess." It did not further elaborate on the reasons behind the decision.

Preparations have been carried out at the Wenchang launch site for the Chang'e-7 mission over the past weeks, the seventh in the Chang'e moon exploration program. It aimed at making breakthroughs in key technologies, the official Xinhua news agency previously reported. (AP)

What beats seeing eclipses from space? Try the northern and southern lights

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., Aug 24, (AP): Eclipses may be wondrous, but nothing beats seeing the northern and southern lights from space.

That's the word from a pair of NASA astronauts living aboard the International Space Station for the past six months.

Astronauts Jessica Meir and Jack Hathaway told The Associated Press that the space station's position prevented them from seeing totality during last week's solar eclipse, but they still enjoyed a partial eclipse. They said they'll try to catch next week's lunar eclipse, too.

"We're hoping for the best. It should be pretty awesome," Hathaway said.

Meir said the best cosmic shows are auroras. The sun is coming off its busy season, making the northern and southern lights more dramatic and brilliant, she noted.

After one especially large blast of plasma from the sun, "the green dancing aurora" appeared right beneath them instead of off in the distance near the poles, she added.

"It looked like a snake making its way right beneath us and that was a really extraordinary one," said Meir, the space station's commander. "You could see the green light bouncing off the white outside exterior of the space station."

Meir has also taken special pleasure in whipping up culinary de-



NASA astronauts Jessica Meir and Jack Hathaway participate in an interview while aboard the International Space Station on Aug 19. (AP)

lights in orbit, donning a space cat-adorned apron while sampling some of the station-grown mustard greens and kale. She joined crewmate Anil Menon, wearing a chef's toque, for his first cooking episode of "Chez ISS" this week.

Arriving last month in a Russian capsule, Menon packed the apron and toque for his more-to-come cooking show. Meir's luggage included a piccolo: She performed John Philip Sousa's "The Stars and Stripes Forever" with the Boston Pops on July 4. Her part was prerecorded in space.

Meir also took up a fancy scarf and glittery violet bell bottoms, con-

siderably more casual than the dress she flew on her last station trip that saw her take part in the first all-female spacewalk.

While Hathaway's culinary and musical talents may be lacking, he said he's never bored. "There's always something to do," he said, including weekend karaoke nights featuring the guitar and other musical instruments.

Launched in February, Meir, a marine biologist, and Hathaway, a Navy captain, are due to return to Earth via SpaceX once their replacements arrive next month. The current crew includes three Americans, three Russians and one French astronaut.

'Sit-to-stand' helpful in narrowing down issues

Mobility tests can tell doctors a lot about how you're aging, but there are many other factors

WASHINGTON, Aug 24, (AP): Hand grip strength. Balance tests. Standing up from a seated position on the floor. These physical challenges are often touted as measurements of healthy aging and even predictors of longevity.

They can provide valuable indications of your stamina and strength. They can estimate the risk of falls, which increase older adults' risk of death. And they're useful to doctors who work to address aging or people with injuries.

But they're no crystal ball.

"A poor or declining result is a reason for a health professional to investigate why function is changing, rather than gauging how long someone will live," said Auriel Willette, an expert on brain aging at Rutgers University.

Here's a look at what mobility tests entail and how to apply the results to your health.



A participant uses light weights during a class for older adults at the Dale Turner Family YMCA in Shoreline, Wash., April 30, 2026. (AP Photo/Lindsey Wasson, File)

"Sit-to-stand" tests come in several forms. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 30-second chair-stand test is designed for patients older than 60, to see how many times they can stand up in that time period.

Another test, popularized on social media, asks someone to move from standing, to sitting cross-legged on the ground, and then back up to standing. Making your way down to the floor is worth 5 points, as is standing up, for a total score of 10. You lose a point for each support you use (such as a hand or knee) and half a point if you're unsteady. The score is zero if you're unable to sit or stand without external help.

Doctors said they haven't seen the test used with older US adults, but researchers in Brazil published studies in 2020 and 2025 that concluded middle-aged people who scored higher were less likely to die within about a decade.

Many American doctors use a test called "Timed Up and Go," or TUG. It requires the patient to get up from a chair, walk 10 feet (3 meters) and come back to their seat. That allows doctors to evaluate a person's balance, mobility and lower extremity strength all at once.

Dr. George Hennawi, who treats older adults at MedStar Health in Baltimore, said all the tests are meant to pinpoint specific weaknesses and narrow down their underlying cause, whether that's knee pain, slow reflexes, poor

balance or feeling winded or dizzy because of cardiovascular issues.

"The key to react to it is to understand where did we not do well," he said.

Tests like the viral sit-to-stand one are what doctors call screening tools. They're helpful in narrowing down issues, but they don't provide enough information for a full diagnosis.

Other popular tests for a person's "physiological age," or how your body is aging, include tests of grip strength, walking speed, gait steadiness and balance. Such tests look at how hard your hand can squeeze something, whether

you favor one side while walking, how long and well can you stand on one leg and how far forward can you reach without becoming unsteady.

Many doctors also use these challenges to understand a person's risk for "frailty," a medical condition that means the body is less able to handle strain from illness or injury.

Doctors sometimes use a 10-minute assessment called the Short Physical Performance Battery, which includes several tests including gait, balance and strength. It was developed by the National Institute on Aging and large clinical trials have shown it predicts mortality, disability and more.

At the University of California, Los Angeles' Multidisciplinary Falls Clinic, Dr. David Lee said it's important to look across multiple tests in combination. Grip strength, for example, is predictive of many different things, but it can be affected by arthritis, stroke or even simply not conditioning those muscles.

"It's one measure of many," Lee said.

Experts note that strength and mobility are just one part of healthy aging. Tests of cognition, memory, hearing, eyesight and many other measures are key to evaluating how someone is aging.

They also cautioned against training to pass a test. Instead, keep the big picture in mind. Exercise your whole body. Eat nutritious meals. Address stress in a healthy way. Prioritize your sleep. Take care of your heart.

Finally, experts said it's important to know the context in which a test has been studied and verified. If it's shown to predict an outcome for one age group, the performance standards won't necessarily apply to others.

If you score poorly in a mobility test and are concerned about your fall risk, or have recently fallen, talk to your doctor. The test results are the first step in determining if you need an assistive device, physical therapy, a change in medications or something else, said Emily Nabors, a falls prevention expert with The National Council on Aging.

She cited one estimate that more than a quarter of older adults fall each year, but most of them don't tell their doctor about it.

"If you've fallen, you might feel fine," she said, "but you might not be fine at all."

Taxi drivers rarely die of Alzheimer's – how complex mental maps protect your brain

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

By Hatim Sharif

The University of Texas at San Antonio

Taxi and ambulance drivers are less likely than workers in almost any other job to die of Alzheimer's disease. That was the surprising result of a 2024 study examining the death certificates of nearly 9 million people in the US.

These findings stopped me in my tracks because those two jobs rely on the same thing as my own work: maps.

I have spent more than two decades staring at maps. Not paper maps on a wall, but digital ones with multiple layers: flood boundaries draped over census blocks, car crash hot spots plotted against road geometry, and satellite readings of rainfall stitched across river basins. Much of my work as a civil and environmental engineer is done through GIS - that is, geographic information systems. Engineers like me hold several spatial relationships in their minds at once, reasoning about where things sit relative to one another across scales ranging from a city block to a whole watershed.

I always assumed that spatial reasoning across map layers was purely professional. But that study on taxi and ambulance drivers made me wonder whether all that mental work might be doing something good to the brain.

Of the 9 million death certificates from January 2020 to December 2022 that researchers examined, taxi and ambulance drivers had the lowest risk of dying from Alzheimer's disease out of 443 occupations. After adjusting for age, sex, race, ethnicity and education, roughly 1 in 100 taxi and ambulance drivers died of Alzheimer's, compared with 1 in 60 people overall.

This pattern did not extend to other driving jobs. The researchers concluded that the key to reducing the risk of Alzheimer's was not driving itself but continuous real-time navigation: the constant work of locating yourself in space, tracking a destination and updating a mental map as conditions change. Drivers whose jobs relied on fixed or predetermined routes, like bus drivers and aircraft pilots, didn't seem to experience a similar advantage.

Researchers believe the association between navigation-heavy work and lower Alzheimer's risk centers on the hippocampus, a part of the brain that governs memory and spatial navigation. It's one of the first brain regions that Alzheimer's damages: Problems with spatial navigation and orientation are among the earliest signs of the disease, sometimes surfacing before obvious memory loss.

In one landmark 2000 study, neuroscientists compared the brains of licensed London taxi drivers with those of people who did not drive cabs. Their findings provided the first evidence via structural imaging that regions of the adult brain can measurably change under sustained navigational demand. To earn a license, London cabbies must memorize more than 25,000 streets within a 6-mile radius of Charing Cross, a challenge known as "The Knowledge" that takes three to four years.

The researchers found that London taxi drivers had

measurably more gray matter in the posterior hippocampus, a brain area tied to storing large-scale spatial maps. That volume tracked with experience: The longer someone had driven, the larger that part of the brain. The change was built through practice, not inherited. While people who are good at navigation might gravitate to this kind of job, the job itself does have an impact on the brain.

Together, these two studies make a coherent case: Work that intensively exercises the hippocampus may reshape it, and that reshaping may protect against one of the most feared diseases of aging.

Cartographers, urban planners and geospatial analysts spend their working days in sustained spatial reasoning. A geographic information system specialist might use a computer to overlap population data on flood exposure maps to find who is at risk, or read satellite imagery to map land cover after a wildfire. Researchers juggle several layers of data, coordinate systems and scales at once.

Does spatial reasoning through a screen engage the hippocampus the way moving through a real city does?

While a taxi driver navigates from inside the scene at street level, GIS researchers picture space from above as a map - what cognitive scientists call allocentric reasoning. But these two perspectives overlap in the brain: The hippocampus also builds maps from outside viewpoints, not just from a navigator's own position.

Research on cognitive maps points toward the same conclusion as the study on taxi drivers. In 2023, researchers ran a machine learning model on more than 22,500 people in a national dataset and were able to predict which ZIP codes had higher rates of Alzheimer's with 84% accuracy based on how complex the environment was. Those living in spatially complex surroundings - the kind that force active map building, such as dense street networks with numerous intersections, diverse points of interest and landmarks, and multiple path options - were less likely to develop Alzheimer's.

A follow-up study tied geospatial complexity in one's environment to greater volume in the brain's spatial navigation regions. The researchers hypothesized that routinely building cognitive maps exercises the very circuitry that Alzheimer's attacks first. Repeatedly engaging the cognitive systems involved in spatial navigation could help delay symptoms of disease.

However, these two studies focus on where people live, not the work people do. Whether spatial reasoning through a screen exercises the same circuitry as real-life city navigation remains untested.

The implications of whether sustained spatial reasoning protects the brain reach beyond mapmakers and cab drivers. Studies have repeatedly found a link between mentally complex occupations and delayed cognitive decline and lower dementia risk, even after accounting for education.

Research on cognitive reserve - the brain's capacity to continue functioning despite disease - can help explain why two people with a similar disease burden can show markedly different levels of cognitive impairment. If demanding spatial thinking protects the brain, then how societies design schooling, professional training and retirement all become questions of brain health. (AP)



Floodwaters from Hurricane Katrina fill the streets near downtown New Orleans on Aug 30, 2005. (AP)

What's in a name? Why naming storms, army ops and medical maladies matters

WASHINGTON, Aug 24, (AP): US hurricane season is gearing up. And from Amanda and Boris onward, tropical cyclones' names in the Pacific region are unfolding quickly.

But why the monikers each year? Or at all?

Humans have given names to the world around them for almost as long as language itself has existed, but formal naming practices for storms and other events of national and international importance are a relatively new phenomenon. Names of military operations ("Operation Epic Fury"), hurricanes (Hugo, Andrew, Katrina, etc.), diseases (COVID-19) and even companies need to serve purposes other than just differentiation. They need to tell stories.

"Look around in your home. Who or what has a name? Your family members, your pets. You may even have named certain objects of significance," says Shannon Murphy, CEO of Namestry, a firm that helps companies and entrepreneurs develop their brand identities. "If it's got a name, it has meaning in some way, and it's going to come up in conver-

sation or other types of communication."

The World Meteorological Organization, which manages the naming of tropical storms worldwide, says assigning a moniker is "proven to be the fastest way to communicate warnings and raise public awareness and preparedness," as well as limit confusion when more than one cyclone is moving through. They can also help with research and record-keeping.

Tropical storms the world over are named on a set of pre-agreed alphabetical lists decided by five tropical cyclone regional bodies. Some of these are cyclical, returning to the same lists every few years, starting at "A" with the first storm of the given year; others start a new list every year. Those covering the Atlantic region skip names beginning with Q, U, X, Y and Z because examples are difficult to find.

Until 1979, the United States used only female names, but now it alternates. For example, Amanda's successor in the Eastern North Pacific storm region is Boris, and residents of the Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mex-

ico and the North Atlantic region have already seen Arthur and Bertha.

While storm names are designed to be memorable and simple, they are not necessarily trying to elicit feelings. Neither were military operation names, which functioned to maintain secrecy and to differentiate one from another until British Prime Minister Winston Churchill changed the nomenclature to suit the broader aims of the allies in World War II.

"In the Second World War, names such as Overlord, Torch or Husky were planning code-names," says Ruben Stewart, senior fellow for land warfare at the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "Churchill's intervention in the naming of Operation Overlord," Stewart said, referring to the Allied push that began with D-Day, "reflected a broader wartime realization that operation names mattered."

In a 1943 memo to his wartime chief of staff discussing code words to be used during World War II, Churchill argued operation names should not imply a "boastful and overconfident sentiment" or be "frivolous."

Trump waves green flag for race in Washington DC

Kirkwood dominates Freedom 250 for second IndyCar win of season

WASHINGTON, Aug. 24, (AP) — Kyle Kirkwood gave the Freedom 250 an American winner, racing to his second victory of the IndyCar season on the streets of downtown Washington in a dominant performance Sunday.

In a race set up as part of the country's 250th birthday celebration, President Donald Trump gave drivers the green flag at the start and D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser served as grand marshal. Kirkwood crossed the finish line in front of the U.S. Capitol 3.09 seconds ahead of Christian Lundgaard, after leading for 128 of a possible 147 laps.

Will Power and Marcus Ericsson, Kirkwood's teammates with Andretti Global, finished third and fourth.

Pole winner Alex Palou, who had a chance to clinch the series title, finished 20th in his second-worst showing of the year.

After Trump's green flag, the field quickly went under caution because of debris in Turn 4. The first big wreck came when David Malukas went into the wall and Sting Ray Robb could do little to avoid crashing into him coming around a turn. Just like that, two of the race's eight American drivers were out.

Several cars went onto pit road, and that's when the day started to

fall apart for Palou. He appeared to hit a tire in someone else's area while exiting, and he was assessed a drive-through penalty.

Later, on another pit stop, one of Palou's tires was loose when he started driving. That caused another delay, and he ended up off the lead lap. Palou later spun coming through a turn. His lead in the standings dropped from 133 points over second-place Kirkwood to 91 with three races to go.

Kirkwood had a commanding lead before Palou's spin caused a caution. On a restart with 19 laps remaining, Scott McLaughlin tried to pass Kirkwood and went into a tire barrier. Then Kirkwood pulled



Kyle Kirkwood (27) poses for a photo after winning the IndyCar Freedom 250 Grand Prix auto race in Washington. (AP)

Fever beat Sky behind Clark's 37

Wings tie wins record

ARLINGTON, Texas, Aug. 24, (AP) — Paige Bueckers scored 18 of her 32 points in the first quarter, Jessica Shepard had 11 points and 11 rebounds, and the Dallas Wings beat the Seattle Storm 92-70 on Sunday to tie the franchise's single-season wins record.



Indiana Fever guard Caitlin Clark, right, drives against Chicago Sky guard Courtney Vandersloot, left, during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Chicago. (AP)

The Wings (22-16) can clinch a playoff spot with a home win against Portland on Tuesday.

Bueckers was unstoppable in the first quarter, making seven of her eight shot attempts, including all four 3-pointers. The Wings outscored the Storm 34-17 in the opening 10 minutes.

Seattle scored the final 14 points in the second quarter, holding Dallas without a point for the final four-plus minutes of the half, but still trailed 56-35.

The Storm (7-31) have lost three straight and 14 of 15.

Flaujae Johnson made a career-high tying five 3-pointers and finished with 23 points for the Storm. Jade Melbourne added 15 points and Dominique Malonga scored 12.

Fever 113, Sky 90

In Chicago, Caitlin Clark scored 37 points, Kelsey Mitchell added 30 and Indiana pulled away from Chicago for a victory.

Clark made a career-high eight of Indiana's franchise record 18 3-pointers. She also had 10 assists.

The Fever closed out a 3-2 trip with their third game in four nights. They had dropped two in a row.

Natasha Cloud had 16 points and seven assists for Chicago, which had won three in a row. Azura Stevens added 14 points and eight rebounds. The Sky were eliminated from the playoff race with the loss and a win by Washington on Sunday night.

Indiana played without center Aliyah Boston, who was sidelined by a right leg injury. Boston had 22 points and six assists in Saturday's 109-102 loss at New York.

Mystics 105, Fire 100

In Portland, Shakira Austin had a career-high 31 points and 10 rebounds and Georgia Amoore hit two free throws with 4.2 seconds left to help Washington rally from a 14-point deficit and beat Portland.

Kiki Iriafin shot 7 for 11 from the field and finished with 18 points and 10 rebounds for the Mystics (22-15).

Sonia Citron added 14 points, and Cotie McMahon and Amoore scored 13 apiece.

Amoore's foul on a 3-point shot was upgraded to a flagrant. Carla Leite made all three free throws and then added a layup that cut the Fire's deficit to 92-90 with 3:09 to play. Amoore responded with a basket inside and Portland got no closer.

Leite had 27 points and 11 assists, and Emily Engstler hit five 3-pointers and finished with 23 points, both career highs, for the Fire (15-22). Megan DiLeo had 21 points on 7-of-8 shooting and Bridget Carleton added 18 points and five steals.

Leite hit two 3s and DiLeo scored four points in the final minute before Amoore's free throws sealed it.

Aces 88, Tempo 78

In Vancouver, A'ja Wilson had 27 points, seven rebounds and seven assists to help Las Vegas beat Toronto.

The Tempo (11-26) played their second consecutive game at Rogers Arena, this time in front of 15,877 fans, after they beat Portland 82-79 on Friday to snap a 12-game losing streak.

Jackie Young added 21 points for the Aces (26-13), who pulled within a half-game of second-place Golden State in the WNBA standings.

Kia Nurse led Toronto with 19 points and Kiki Rice scored 14 and Temi Fagbenle 13.

ST. LOUIS, Aug. 24, (AP) — Wyndham Clark lost a five-shot lead and then birdied his last three holes Sunday for an even-par 70 and a three-shot victory in the BMW Championship in what felt like a repeat of his U.S. Open victory this summer.

Just like at Shinnecock Hills, Clark lost a big lead and had the crowd pulling for the other guy, in this case Rory McIlroy at Bellevue. McIlroy couldn't keep up over the final holes and finished third. Patrick Cantlay closed with three straight birdies for a 68 to finish second, which moved him into the top 30 who advance to the Tour Championship next week in Atlanta.

Gary Woodland, still coping with recovery from brain surgery three years ago, tied for fourth and advanced to East Lake for the first time since 2019. Robert MacIntyre also moved into the top 30.

Clark won for the third time this year, including a major and a FedEx Cup playoff event. He finished at 17-under 263.

Jon Rahm finished the LIV Golf season Sunday in style - claiming his third straight season points title and his second team crown in a row at the revised season finale in suburban Indianapolis.

Now the 31-year-old Spaniard and the other full-time tour players will wait to see what happens to the tour in 2027.

Rahm closed with a 7-under 63 for his second straight runner-up finish in Indy. He ended up a stroke behind 22-year-old Michael La Sasso, the 2025 NCAA individual champ at

LIV Golf closes season amid uncertainty



Wyndham Clark holds the Wanamaker Trophy and the BMW trophy after winning the BMW Championship golf tournament in St. Louis. (AP)

Mississippi.

La Sasso finished with a 65 to get to 18 under.

Diminutive Japanese star Miyu Yamashita matched the LPGA Tour's 72-hole scoring record Sunday in a wire-to-wire, nine-stroke victory in the CPKC Women's Open at Royal Mayfair.

The 4-foot-11 Yamashita made an 8-foot birdie putt on the par-4 18th for a 4-under 66 and 23-under 257 total. Sei Young Kim also shot 257 in the 2018 Thornberry Creek LPGA Classic in Wisconsin, finishing at 31 under.

Six strokes ahead entering the

round, Yamashita pushed the margin to nine on the tree-lined layout - and mosquito hot spot after record summer rain - for a tournament record in the national championship. She broke the tournament record of 262 set by Jin Young Ko in 2019 at Magna in Aurora, Ontario, after also setting 36- and 54-hole marks.

Fellow Japanese player Yuri Yoshida was second at 14 under after a 69.

Three spots on the U.S. Solheim Cup were decided during the week, with captain Angela Stanford set to announce her three picks Monday for the Sept. 11-13 matches in

the Netherlands. Allisen Corpuz wrapped up the last automatic place Friday, and Andrea Lee and Alison Lee took spots off the working ranking Sunday.

Scott Jamieson won the Nexo Championship by two shots at one of President Donald Trump's golf courses in Scotland on Sunday, closing with a 5-under 67 to secure his first European tour title in 14 years.

The 42-year-old Scot finished on 11-under par overall at Trump International Golf Links. It was his second title on the tour, after winning the Nelson Mandela Championship in South Africa in 2012.

NYCFC draws with Revolution

Atlanta extends MLS win streak

ATLANTA, Aug. 24, (AP) — Tomás Jacob and Fafa Picault both scored goals with an assist from Miguel Almirón and Atlanta United beat Sporting Kansas City 2-1 on Sunday night for its first three-match MLS win streak in five years.

Jacob used assists from Almirón and 18-year-old Cooper Sanchez to score his third goal and give Atlanta United a 1-0 lead in the 13th minute.

Picault scored off a corner kick by Almirón with an assist from rookie defender Elías Báez in the 24th minute for a 2-0 lead. Picault has three goals in his first 14 matches with Atlanta United and 63 in 258 career

appearances.

Sanchez has five assists in his first full season, while Almirón and Báez both have four.

Sporting KC cut its deficit in half in the 70th minute when Stephen Afrifa was in the right place to score his second goal - unassisted.

Lucas Hoyos finished with one save for Atlanta United (6-12-3), which entered with the second fewest points in the league before finishing the day three points out of the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

Stefan Cleveland saved one shot for Sporting KC (4-14-3), which has the fewest points at 15.

Wolff defends Mercedes' Russell order

McLaren not good enough for F1 title yet, Norris

ZANDVOORT, Netherlands, Aug. 24, (AP) — Lando Norris says he doesn't yet have a car capable of vying for the Formula 1 title despite back-to-back Grand Prix wins but he could "win every race" remaining this season if McLaren manages to solve its biggest vulnerability.

The F1 defending champion boosted his title chances with victory at the Dutch GP on Sunday after a daring pass on standings leader Kimi Antonelli in the process.

"I know I've just won two races in a row and had two poles in a row, but at the minute I don't have the car I need to fight for a championship," Norris said after the race. He added that

the right changes to target McLaren's troubles in slow-speed corners could set him up to chase down Mercedes driver Antonelli.

Norris urged McLaren not to get "complacent" and to focus on improving how the car handles in low-speed corners to unlock its full potential.

"If we can improve on these slow speeds, I'm confident that I can win every race this season. If we don't, then it's much more difficult to believe so," he said.

Meanwhile, Mercedes boss Toto Wolff defended the use of team orders in the Formula 1 title fight after George Russell protested when he was asked to give up second place



Mercedes driver Andrea Kimi Antonelli of Italy waves for the podium after taking the second place at the Formula One Dutch Grand Prix in Zandvoort, Netherlands. (AP)

Over team radio, Russell questioned the call to let Antonelli past in the final stages of Sunday's race, suggesting it left him vulnerable to Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton behind with little to gain for the team. Antonelli was on fresher tires but eventual winner Lando Norris was far ahead.

Russell, who held off Hamilton to keep third, relented after the race and said his teammate and title rival Antonelli "deserved to finish ahead."

"Team orders are always harsh from one driver's perspective," Mercedes team principal Wolff said, arguing that not swapping positions would have left both drivers a target for Hamilton.

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Bodø/Glimt on brink of Champions League return

GENEVA, Aug. 24, (AP) — The Champions League's Cinderella club Bodø/Glimt is one game away from returning to the 36-team main draw being made Thursday alongside the wealthy giants of European soccer like title holder Paris Saint-Germain, Real Madrid and Bayern Munich.

With the final seven Champions League entries to be decided in playoffs this week, the Norwegian fishing town team holds a 3-1 lead hosting Dutch debutant NEC Nijmegen at its Arctic Club home on Tuesday.

Norway could have two teams advance as domestic champion Viking hosts Dinamo Zagreb on Wednesday with the teams tied at 2-2. The Croatian champion wasted an early two-goal lead in the first leg last Tuesday.

The Champions League draw ceremony starts at 6 p.m. local time (1600 GMT) Thursday in Monaco, when the local team will be preparing to kick off about 10 minutes' drive away in the Conference League playoffs.

Monaco defending a 3-2 first-leg lead over Gornik Zabrze is among 36 playoff second legs this week in the second-tier Europa League and third-tier Conference League to finalize lineups for those draws being made Friday.

After winning games against Manchester City, Atletico Madrid and Inter Milan in last season's Champions League, Bodø/Glimt started this time in qualifying needing to advance through two rounds in August.

Glimt has scored three goals in each of its three games so far, first eliminating Union Saint-Gilloise 6-5 on aggregate score. Almost its entire squad was retained with just one big-money exit, selling Denmark forward Kasper Høgh to Celtic for a reported 11 million pounds (\$15 million).

Høgh and Celtic also are in action Tuesday, taking a 3-0 first-leg lead to Austria against LASK.

Israel's champion Hapoel Beer-Sheva has a 2-1 lead going to Azerbaijan to face

Sabah, a club which was created just nine years ago.

Lyon, now owned by U.S. investor Michele Kang, hosts Fenerbahce on Wednesday tied at 1-1.

Pot 1: Paris Saint-Germain (France), Bayern Munich (Germany), Real Madrid (Spain), Liverpool (England), Inter Milan (Italy), Manchester United (England), Arsenal (England), Barcelona (Spain), Atletico Madrid (Spain).

Pot 2: Borussia Dortmund (Germany), Roma (Italy), Sporting Lisbon (Portugal), Aston Villa (England), Porto (Portugal), Manchester United (England), Club Brugge (Belgium), Real Betis (Spain), PSV Eindhoven (Netherlands).

Pot 3: Feyenoord (Netherlands), Lille (France), Napoli (Italy), Leipzig (Germany), Villarreal (Spain), Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukraine), Galatasaray (Turkey) - possibly Slavia Prague (Czech Republic).

Pot 4: Stuttgart (Germany), Como (Italy), Lens (France). Seven playoff winners are yet to be decided.

The draw sees UEFA's software program allocate eight opponents to each team, with two coming from each seeding pot.

The first round of games is played over three evenings from Sept. 8-10 - the only games before the new and expanded four-game international break for national teams that starts Sept. 24.

The Champions League resumes Oct. 13 with the second round. The sixth round is played Dec. 8-9 before a break until January. The eighth and final round with all 36 teams playing simultaneously is Jan. 27.

The Europa League has a stronger look than last season with AC Milan, Juventus and Bayer Leverkusen waiting in the draw Friday for the eight-round league phase.

So too are a curious group from England - Conference League title holder Crystal Palace, European debutant Bournemouth and Sunderland, which last played in a UEFA competition 53 years ago.

Kuwait Club completes signing of 3 American players

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kuwait Club has completed their foreign-player recruitment for the first basketball team, signing Americans Chinanu Onuaku, Christian Brown and Day Granite to strengthen the squad ahead of a busy period.

The trio will bolster the team as it prepares for several key competitions, led by next month's Asian "Final Eight" tournament in Lebanon, along with the completion of last season's competitions and the start of the new campaign.

Kuwait Club's management, headed by basketball director and vice president Bader Al-Osaimi, is looking to build a squad capable of maintaining the team's domestic dominance while mounting a serious challenge for regional and international titles.

Onuaku, a 2.10-meter center, started his professional career with the Houston Rockets before gaining experience in European and Asian competitions.

Brown, who is also 2.10 meters tall, can play at both forward positions. He began his college career



The three American basketball players.

at the University of Tennessee and went on to play for several clubs, most recently Interanik in Lebanon and Al-Ittihad Ahli Aleppo in Syria.

Granite, a 1.88-meter point guard, began his college career at the University of Miami before transferring to Duquesne University, where he made a strong impression in US college basketball. He subsequently

moved to Europe, playing in the leagues of Spain, Turkey and Greece.

The arrivals strengthen Kuwait Club's status as a major force in domestic basketball. The Whites have won the league title for seven consecutive seasons and will now look to extend their success on the regional stage when they compete in Lebanon next month.

Rodriguez takes charge of Kazma volleyball team

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

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Kazma Club has appointed Brazilian coach Anderson Rodriguez as head coach of their volleyball team for the upcoming season, replacing compatriot Cacareto, who has moved to South Korea.

The Orange team had been training under assistant coach Renato Santos before the club decided to bring in Rodriguez as part of its preparations to compete for titles in the new campaign.

Rodriguez, a former Brazil international, has coached the country's U21 and U23 national teams. He has also worked with the women's teams of Swiss club Volero Zurich and Brazilian side Sesi.

Kazma further strengthened their squad by signing Brazilian player Lailson Costa, who joins Abdulrahman Al-Mulla and Fahad Al-Kout as new additions ahead of the season.

The club is seeking to assemble a competitive squad as it prepares for the new campaign. The remainder of last season, which was suspended in February due to security developments in the region, is expected to



A file photo of players in action.

resume in late October.

Changes to the 2026-27 volleyball calendar also forced Kazma's Indonesian professional Farhan to withdraw because of his international commitments. The club has moved quickly to replace him and is expected to announce the signing of a Colombian player, whose name

has not yet been disclosed. He is due to arrive in Kuwait in October as the new season gets underway.

Kazma also completed their technical preparations, with Brazilian fitness coach Renato Santos and statistician Daniel Melo arriving to join the team ahead of the next stage of preparations.

Torres 'impresses' on PSG debut; Salah scores as Trabzonspor sinks Basaksehir

Milan opens Serie A campaign with triumph

PARIS, Aug 24, (AP): Ferran Torres scored twice in his Paris Saint-Germain debut to help the French defending champion draw 2-2 at Rennes in its league opener.

Feyenoord's game in the Dutch league was disrupted by fireworks.

Torres, who joined PSG from Barcelona after scoring Spain's World Cup winning goal last month, came off the bench to score in the 71st and 82nd minutes, helping his new club avoid a second consecutive loss after a penalty shootout loss to Lens in the French Super Cup.

Both goals were assisted by Torres' Spain teammate Fabian Ruiz.

Sebastian Szymanski and Esteban Lepaul had put host Rennes ahead with first-half goals.

Earlier, Olivier Giroud, who turns 40 next month, scored from about 20 meters (yards) out as Lille won 2-0 at Angers. Midfielder Ayyoub Bouaddi was left out of Lille's squad amid reports of an imminent big-money move to Man City.



Trabzonspor's Mohamed Salah in action during the Turkish Super Lig soccer match between Kasimpasa and Trabzonspor in Istanbul, Turkey. (AP)

Meanwhile, Mohammed Salah scored twice as Trabzonspor beat Basaksehir 2-1.

The Egypt forward scored in the eighth and 48th minutes.

Salah signed a two-year contract with the Turkish club after a long and successful stint with Liverpool.

Feyenoord's 5-2 win at Cambuur had to be interrupted after away fans set off fireworks that reportedly caused minor injuries to some supporters.

The Dutch soccer federation released a statement condemning the incident and saying it is "doing everything we can to track down the perpetrators and punish them severely. They can expect, among other things, a nationwide stadium ban for setting off fireworks."

AC Milan opened its Serie A campaign with a 2-1 win at Torino with goals three minutes apart from Alphonso Davies and Adrien Rabiot in the second half.

Milan will be trying to improve from a fifth-place finish last season.

Gleison Bremer scored in the first half to give Juventus - sixth last season - an opening 1-0 win at Frosinone.

France's Fils defeats Tiafoe in men's final

Gauff beats Pegula for second Cincinnati Open title

MASON, Ohio, Aug 24, (AP): Coco Gauff defeated fellow American Jessica Pegula, 6-2, 6-4, to capture her second women's Cincinnati Open title on Sunday, and Arthur Fils of France defeated American Frances Tiafoe 6-3, 1-6, 6-0, in the men's final for his first Masters 1000 title.

In Saturday's semifinals, Pegula beat defending champion Iga Swiatek and Gauff defeated Sara Bejlek to set up the first all-American women's final at the Cincinnati Open in 56 years.

The last time two American women played in the Cincinnati final was in 1970, when Rosie Casals beat Nancy Richey.

Pegula's best finish in Cincinnati came in 2024, when she lost to Aryna Sabalenka in the final.

Gauff, who won the 2023 title beating Karolina Muchova, stormed out to a 5-0 lead in the first set on Sunday before winning 6-2. Pegula battled back to within 5-4 in the second before Gauff closed out the win. Gauff won five of six break points.

"I think it was a long journey, but I'm happy," Gauff said. "I think it's night and day, the player I was last year to now. I don't think that this is an indicator that I'm going to do well in New York. Just knowing the quality ones that I had this week, hopefully I can use that experience."

Gauff had five wins in straight sets in Cincinnati.

"I thought she just played at a



Arthur Fils of France hits a return to Rafael Nadal of Spain during his quarter final tennis match at the National Bank Open in Montreal. (AP)

really high level and didn't really have many dips," Pegula said. "I didn't really think I played bad. The more you construct the point (against her), the worse it is because she almost likes to run. It was tough today. A dangerous, confident Coco is going to New York."

The head-to-head series between Gauff and Pegula is now tied at five apiece. Sunday was their second meeting in a final, with Gauff winning at Wuhan last year.

The Fils-Tiafoe match was the first time two Black players have met in an ATP Masters 1000 final.

Fils is the third Black man to win a Masters 1000 title, joining Ben Shelton, who won twice in Canada, and Jo-Wilfried Tsonga,

who won in Paris in 2008 and Canada in 2014.

At 22 years old, Fils is the youngest French champion in Masters 1000 history. He became the second French player to win a Cincinnati final, joining Guy Forget in 1991.

"Very happy with that," Fils said. "It's been a tough last year. I didn't play the French Open (due to a hip injury). I lost early in Washington. People think that I'm done. But here we are. I got the title."

It was the second time Tiafoe has appeared in the Cincinnati Open final, losing to Jannik Sinner in 2024. He was looking to become the first American male to

win in Cincinnati since Andy Roddick in 2006.

"I'm going to have two Cincinnati finals trophies at the crib," Tiafoe said. "I wish they were both champion ones. Losing on Sunday sucks. I've had a tough summer. I was able to play five great matches and beat quality players."

Fils overpowered Tiafoe early in the first set on Sunday, winning 12 of 13 points to take a 3-0 lead. Tiafoe was dominant in the second, rolling to a 3-0 lead.

Tiafoe used the time break before the third set to stretch and receive massage treatment on his upper left leg and lower back.

"My hip bothered me a little bit, but that's neither here nor there," Tiafoe said. "It's not about how I feel. I'll be alright in a week (for the US Open)."

Tiafoe saved three championship points in the final game before Fils closed out the victory.

The Frenchman had 11 aces and won 71% of his points on first serve. He improved to 10-0 in deciding sets this year and 8-0 against American opponents.

Fils also won his only previous meeting with Tiafoe in Miami last year, also in three sets.

"It feels very good to have a trophy next to me, especially Masters 1000," Fils said. "Never won one before. You just have to stay positive and find a way to make it work. Being positive is going to help me in the next weeks in the US Open."

Sheikh Al-Nasser urges allocation of dedicated site for horse stables

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: Sheikh Sabah Fahad Al-Nasser, Chairman of the Supreme Horse Racing Committee and Secretary-General of the Kuwait Hunting and Equestrian Club, has called on the Public Authority for Sport to approach Kuwait Municipality to allocate a dedicated site for horse stables.

Sheikh Al-Nasser said a recent survey identified 1,884 horses housed in 235 stables currently located in desert areas across Kuwait.

The horses include locally bred Kuwaiti horses, Thoroughbreds and purebred Arabian horses used in sprint racing and marathon competitions.

He stressed the need to preserve this national asset while supporting horse owners and traditional equestrian sports, calling for a suitable site capable of accommodating the large number of horses and providing proper facilities and a safe environment.

"Given the importance of preserving this national wealth and supporting horse



Sheikh Sabah Fahad Al-Nasser

owners and traditional sports, a dedicated and suitable site is needed to accommodate these stables and provide an appropriate environment for the horses," Sheikh Al-Nasser said.

Best of the Rest

Iran edges Kuwait in tight clash: Iran defeated Kuwait 21-18 in a closely contested group-stage match at the ongoing Asian Amateur Handball Championship in Jordan on Monday.

Kuwait entered the second half four goals behind and pushed hard to turn the match around, but the deficit proved too difficult to overcome as Iran held on for a narrow victory.

The result marked Kuwait's second defeat of the tournament, leaving the team on two points from three matches after one win and two losses.

Kuwait's hopes of reaching the knockout stage now hinge on their decisive final group match against Saudi Arabia. (KUNA)

□ □ □

Third stage of Spanish Vuelta stopped: The third stage of the Vuelta a Espana ended without a winner after being halted because of hail.

Riders started taking shelter in shops and restaurants by the road with about 15 kilometers (nine miles) to go on the difficult 174-kilometer (108-mile) route that was set to finish in the French Pyrenees.

Organizers neutralized the race as conditions became dangerous with ice on the road and the threat of lightning. Organizers eventually suspended the stage and declared no winner.

"For the security of the riders, stage three has been canceled due to hail and severe weather," race organizers said. "There will be no winner and no podium ceremony."

The riders started communicating and asking each other to slow down when the hail began.

Mats Wenzel of Equipo Kern Pharm and Lorenzo Fortunato of XDS Astana were on a breakaway at the time the race was called off.

Heavy rain hit the peloton with about 25 kilometers (15 miles) to go in the stage.

Tadej Pogacar, the Tour de France winner seeking a personal sweep of the Grand Tour races, remained the race leader after three stages. The Slovenian from UAE Team Emirates leads the general classification by nine seconds from Wout van Aert, with Matthew Brennan another second behind in third. (AP)

Springboks still irritated after All Blacks loss and make 4 changes

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 24, (AP): South Africa was no longer looking down the rankings on the rest of world rugby on Monday for the first time in almost a year.

New Zealand officially replaced the two-time world champion Springboks as the No. 1 men's test side after the shocking 33-16 win last Saturday at the launch of their first four-test series in 50 years.

The second test in Cape Town this Saturday has become a must win for the host. Lose again and South Africa can no longer win a series it started as the heavy favorite.

Coach Rassie Erasmus reacted on Monday to their heaviest defeat at Ellis Park to New Zealand with four changes to the starting XV - the least changes he's made this year - and brought in five new reserves.

Siya Kolisi was bracketed with Paul de Villiers in the only (possible) change to the forward pack, Handré Pollard and Cobus Reinach were the new halves, and winger Ethan Hooker replaced an injured Cheslin Kolbe.

Onto another bench split 6-2 came hooker hybrid Deon Fourie, prop Thomas du Toit, lock Lood de Jager, flanker Cameron Hanekom, and scrumhalf Morné van den Berg. All bar Fourie were involved in the 17-10 win over Argentina on Aug. 8.

Erasmus believed South Africa did enough in the first hour to win at Ellis Park. It dominated the scrums and mauls and owned the sky. But it failed to convert numerous chances.

"Most of the things we inflicted on ourselves, and that's frustrating,"

Erasmus said. "We are irritated with each other inside the camp.

"We've got a big hiding of 17 points. When they got the two, three opportunities, like New Zealand most of the years in the past, they converted."

The bench didn't have the impact he expected because the starters didn't take their chances, he added.

"Our plans didn't work, and that's on me," Erasmus said. They, and I'm including the coaches there, didn't give those guys the platform to actually go on and finish those things. They had to chase the game."

Kolisi was chasing a start. If he proves his hamstring can stand the rigors of training he'll captain the Springboks on Saturday. Kolisi has played only 25 minutes in the last two months because of injuries to both hamstrings, the last time against Argentina. In his absence, de Villiers has received his first four caps and become a breakout star.

"Paul played well on Saturday and there's no reason why we should keep him out," Erasmus said. "But Siya is our captain."

South Africa: Damian Willemse, Kurt-Lee Arendse, Jesse Kriel, Damian de Allende, Ethan Hooker, Handré Pollard, Cobus Reinach; Jasper Wiese, Pieter-Steph du Toit (captain), Siya Kolisi/Paul de Villiers, Ruan Nortjé, Eben Etzebeth, Wilco Louw, Malcolm Marx, Ox Nché. Reserves: Deon Fourie, Gerhard Steenekamp, Thomas du Toit, Lood de Jager, André Esterhuizen, Cameron Hanekom, Morné van den Berg, Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu.

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NEWS



French President Emmanuel Macron, left, presents the EWC 2026 Club champions award to AG.AL at the closing ceremony of the Esports World Cup in Paris, France. (AP)

Sports



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (right) and French President Emmanuel Macron attend the closing ceremony of the Esports World Cup in Paris, France.

Saudi Crown Prince and Macron attend Esports World Cup in Paris

PARIS, Aug 24: French President Emmanuel Macron presented the 2026 Esports World Cup trophy to Team Falcons Global in the presence of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Paris.

The champions finished top of the overall standings with 5,300 points to secure the \$7 million grand prize. The tournament offered a record total prize pool of more than \$75 million, the largest in esports history, with the money distributed among participating clubs and players according to their results and rankings.

The seven-week event, held from July 6 to August 23,

brought together more than 200 teams and over 2,000 professional players representing 100 countries. Competitors took part in 25 tournaments featuring some of the world's most popular video games.

The event also achieved record growth across several areas, drawing large crowds and recording a 94% increase in ticket sales for esports competitions.

More than 850 million viewers worldwide watched the action through digital platforms, generating over 440 million hours of viewing time. The tournament was supported by global media coverage produced in 47 languages.



Barcelona's Fermin Lopez scores his side's fifth goal during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Elche and Barcelona in Elche, Spain. (AP)

Barcelona makes flying start

MADRID, Aug 24: Barcelona made a flying start to its La Liga title defense, crushing hosts Elche 5-0 in a dominant display as they target a third consecutive league crown.

Raphinha gave the visitors the lead from the penalty spot in the 14th minute after being brought down by Elche defender Víctor Chust. The Brazilian captain made no mistake, calmly placing his effort into the bottom-right corner.

Karim Adeyemi marked his Barcelona debut with a goal in first-

half stoppage time. The German forward, who recently joined from Borussia Dortmund, raced onto a brilliant pass from Raphinha, beat the offside trap and fired home from the left.

Barcelona continued to control the game after the break, with substitute Anthony Gordon making an immediate impact. His powerful run down the left set up Raphinha for his second goal in the 67th minute.

Raphinha then turned provider

four minutes later, setting up Fermín López to score into an empty net and make it 4-0.

Fermín completed the rout in the 79th minute with a fierce strike from the edge of the penalty area that gave the goalkeeper no chance.

The only concern for Barcelona was Gavi's early departure. The midfielder was substituted before half-time after appearing to suffer pain in his right knee. The club has yet to provide an official update on his condition.

Fiery start to Zain Premier League as Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi lock horns

Al-Qadsia begins campaign away to Al-Fahaheel

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The 65th edition of the Zain Premier League kicks off today with a blockbuster clash as five-time defending champion Kuwait Club face Al-Arabi at Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium at 6:45 p.m. Al-Qadsia will also begin its campaign away to Al-Fahaheel at Nayef Al-Dabbous Stadium at 9 p.m.

The opening round continues tomorrow, with Al-Shabab hosting Al-Jahra at 6:45 p.m. at Al-Shabab Stadium in Ahmadi, while Al-Salmiya takes on Al-Nasr at Thamer Stadium at 9 p.m.

The round concludes the following day when Al-Sahel meets Al-Sulaibikhat at Abdullah Al-Khalifa Stadium at 6:45 p.m., before Kazma hosts Al-Tadamon at Friendship and Peace Stadium at 9 p.m.



A file photo of Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi players showing sportsmanship.

Kuwait Club begins its title defense aiming to extend an unprecedented run of five consecutive league championships.

The Whites have retained most of their key local players and kept continuity among their foreign professionals, with Brazilian Carlos Vinicius the main change after replacing Ivorian

Idrissa Doumbia.

The champion has also added local trio Salman Al-Awadi, Hassan Hamdan and Abdullah Al-Qarza, all former Al-Arabi players.

Syrian coach Firas Al-Khatib has been handed the reins after replacing Portuguese coach Alexandre Santos, who oversaw the team during last

month's pre-season camp in London.

Al-Khatib knows Kuwaiti football well, having played for Al-Nasr, Al-Qadsia, Kuwait Club, Al-Arabi and Al-Salmiya before moving into coaching. He spent the previous four seasons in charge of Al-Fahaheel.

Al-Arabi will seek to spoil the champion's opening-day plans under Croatian coach Goran Sablic. The team recently suffered a 4-1 defeat to India's East Bengal in the AFC Champions League Two playoff, a result that sent it into the AFC Challenge League.

The availability of Nigerian forward Anayo Iwuala remains uncertain, but Al-Arabi has plenty of experienced players and foreign professionals capable of making an impact.

Meanwhile, Al-Qadsia is targeting a winning start under returning coach Mohammed Ibrahim as they attempt to challenge for a league title that has eluded the club for several years.

Al-Fahaheel, on the other hand, begins life after Al-Khatib, who guided the club for four seasons. Slovakian coach Martin Sevela has taken over and will make his first coaching appearance in the Gulf as the club looks to improve on its previous campaigns.

Kazma draws Al-Ettifaq, Ajman & Erbil in Gulf Champions League

DOHA, Aug 24, (KUNA): The draw for the 2026-27 Gulf Champions League was held Monday at the headquarters of the Arab Gulf Football Federation (AGCFF) in Doha, with 12 clubs divided into three groups.

The tournament is scheduled to begin on October 13 and run until April 30, 2027.

Qatar's Al Duhail was drawn in Group A alongside Saudi Arabia's Neom, Oman's Al Shabab and Yemen's Shabwat Hadramout.

Group B consists of UAE side Al-Nasr, Qatar SC, Iraq's Al-Zawraa

and Bahrain's Al-Riffa.

Kuwait's Kazma will compete in Group C alongside Saudi Arabia's Al-Ettifaq, UAE club Ajman and Iraq's Erbil.

The top two teams from each group will qualify for the quarterfinals, along with the two best third-placed teams across the three groups.

The Gulf Champions League was first held in 1982. Kazma, Kuwait's representative in the upcoming edition, have won the competition twice, in 1987 and 1995, and finished runners-up in 1988 and 1997.

'Quit or face leadership challenge'

Ceferin won't run against Infantino

LONDON, Aug 24, (AP): UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin says he won't run against FIFA President Gianni Infantino but warned the beleaguered head of world soccer that he must either quit or face a leadership challenge in March.

Infantino has come under increasing pressure to step down over his plan, now aborted, to sell stakes in soccer's biggest tournament, the World Cup, to private equity investors. Three of the sport's continental confederations accused him of "deception" and European soccer body UEFA threatened a boycott of FIFA competitions.

"One option is that he realizes that he doesn't have the support, and that's not only a political support of the ones who vote, but the political support of football community, the political support of fans, the political support of the players, former players, coaches," Ceferin said in an interview with "The Rest is Politics: Leading" British podcast which is set to be broadcast Monday.

"And the second option is that he goes to the elections in March, but in that case, I think he will have a candidate against him. I don't know yet who."

Ceferin's comments were in ex-



UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin (left) talks to FIFA President Gianni Infantino.

cerpts from the podcast that were published Sunday in the British media.

Infantino has been FIFA president since 2016 and, until the backlash over his proposals, seemed set to be reelected unopposed next year in Morocco. FIFA has set a Nov. 18 deadline for challengers to nominate.

Despite being widely seen as a potential challenger to Infantino, the 58-year-old Ceferin expressed his commitment to UEFA.

Ceferin told the podcast: "I'm not interested because of two reasons. One reason is that I love UEFA and I love working here, and I think that at a certain point ... it's time to also enjoy life a bit.

"And the second point is, my credibility is much, much higher if I'm not interested in the position."

Kuwait approves historic 12-team Premier League

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 24: The Kuwait Football Association (KFA) Board, headed by Sheikh Ahmed Al-Yousef, has approved the expansion of the Zain Premier League to 12 teams for the first time in the competition's history, beginning with the 2026-27 season.

The historic edition will feature the 10 clubs that competed in the top flight last season — Kuwait Club, Al-Qadsia, Al-Arabi, Al-Shabab, Kazma, Al-Salmiya, Al-Jahra, Al-Tadamon, Al-Fahaheel and Al-Nasr — alongside Al-Sulaibikhat and Al-Sahel, the First Division champion and runner-up respectively.

Since assuming leadership of the federation during its transitional period

in October 2024, before being elected to a new four-year term on May 20, Al-Yousef has worked to broaden participation in Kuwaiti football by encouraging government bodies, institutions and private- and public-sector companies to support and participate in domestic competitions within the legal framework.

Those efforts have already led to the involvement of new teams. Sporty, Al-Shamiya and Al-Jazeera competed in the First Division last season, while Al-Ittihad and the Ministry of Interior, represented by the Police Union Club, will join the second tier this season.

The expansion means the Premier League will now have 12 teams, while



Kuwait Football Association Chairman Sheikh Ahmed Al-Yousef addresses the media.

the First Division will feature eight.

The move is part of the KFA's wider efforts to bring Kuwaiti football closer to the Asian professional league system and meet the Asian Football

Confederation's requirements, with the ultimate aim of ensuring Kuwaiti clubs can compete across all continental competitions.

The 12-team format represents a significant change after the Premier League had been restricted to 10 clubs for many years. It could also open the door for further expansion if the new teams establish themselves and deliver strong performances.

Sheikh Al-Yousef's approach reflects an effort to raise the overall standard of the domestic competition and develop Kuwaiti football, with the improvements expected to have a positive impact on the national team in the years ahead.

Jurel century lifts India to formidable score as Sri Lanka struggles at stumps

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Aug 24, (AP): Druv Jurel scored an unbeaten second test century to help India to a formidable 503 for nine declared in the first innings on the second day of the second cricket test against Sri Lanka.

Devdutt Padikkal had also made a century on the opening day Sunday to set up India's big score.

At stumps on the second day Sri Lanka was

in trouble with 8 for two wickets.

Jurel remained not out on 115 when India captain Shubman Gill declared the first innings. He spent nearly five hours at the crease, faced 177 deliveries and hit two sixes and nine boundaries.

Earlier he shared 112-run partnership for the second wicket with Rishabh Pant (63) who was out first ball after lunch trying to step out and

hit off spinner Keshara Nuwantha.

"About my century, I am kind of used to the conditions, a game on and off because I was touring (with) India A, so I am aware about the situation," Jurel told reporters after the day's play.

Pant had returned to bat late Sunday after being hit by a Lahiru Kumara delivery. He faced 89 deliveries and hit two sixes and six bound-

aries.

India had resumed after lunch at 419 for six and despite being interrupted by a long rain delay, managed to score 84 more runs in the last two sessions with the tailenders holding one end firm.

Only 58 overs of play was possible for the day with most of the second session being lost to rain and another short break in the final ses-

sion.

Sri Lanka were eight for two at stumps with opener Lahiru Udara and nightwatchman Prabath Jayasuriya being dismissed within the three overs bowled in the innings.

Fast bowler Prasad Krishna had Udara (1) caught at slip by a diving Yashasvi Jaiswal and spinner Manav Suthar trapped Jayasuriya (2) lbw.