



FIRST DEPUTY P.M. CALLS FOR UNITED FRONT AGAINST DRUGS

Kuwait scores historic drug bust



Ministry of Interior photo
First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah presents the five suspects, including three Kuwaitis, a Jordanian and an Egyptian, arrested in Kuwait's largest-ever Lyrica manufacturing and trafficking operation.

Treatment, rehabilitation efforts for addicts expand

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah has reaffirmed that combating drugs remains the Interior Ministry's top priority, warning that the danger of narcotics reaches far beyond the individual, threatening families, society and the future of the nation.



Ministry of Interior photos
The suspects and items seized in Kuwait's largest-ever Lyrica operation, including five tons of raw powder, nearly four million capsules and machinery used for manufacturing, filling and packaging the drugs.

Speaking Wednesday at the conclusion of the national anti-drug awareness campaign "A Nation that Protects You," Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef described the fight against narcotics as a shared national responsibility requiring a coordinated effort by all state institutions.

With several ministers attending the event, he said the campaign was not merely an awareness initiative, but a national message underscoring that building Kuwait is a passion while protecting it is a responsibility shared by all.

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Drug crimes fall 33% under new law: Minister of Justice

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait affirmed on Wednesday that crimes involving the trafficking of narcotics and psychotropic substances fell by 33 percent, while drug-use crimes declined by 20 percent, eight months after the implementation of the new anti-drug law.

Al-Sumait made the remarks in a press statement during the closing ceremony of the comprehensive national media awareness campaign for drug prevention, "A Nation That Protects You," organized by the Ministry of Social Affairs at the Four Seasons Hotel under the patronage and in the presence of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, with the participation of several government, civil society and private entities.

He said the results were promising and unprecedented since the establishment of the General Department of Narcotics Control in 2006, noting that the campaign was the result of joint efforts by relevant government entities, civil society institutions and the private sector.

He pointed out that the state had enacted stringent legislation to protect society and combat this scourge by toughening penalties



KUNA photo
Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait during his statement to the media.

for drug and psychotropic substance trafficking, while striking a balance in protecting addicts and working to treat them.

Al-Sumait praised the Ministry of Interior's efforts in combating drugs and the Ministry of Health's efforts in treating addiction cases, while commending the Ministry of Social Affairs for launching the awareness campaign and the Ministry of Information, newspapers and news organizations for supporting its awareness messages.

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Protecting youth from drugs is nat'l priority: Al-Huwailah

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah said Wednesday that protecting society, especially youth and children, from drugs is a top national priority requiring joint efforts.

The minister made the remarks during the closing ceremony of "A Nation That Protects You" national anti-drug awareness campaign.

The event, held at the Four Seasons Hotel, was patronized and attended by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Al-Huwailah said the campaign proved that collaboration among the ministry, government bodies, civil society organizations and the private sector is the main pillar for the success of any national endeavor.

She added that the initiative aimed to establish a sustainable preventive culture rather than being a temporary campaign, confirming plans to launch it annually and attract more active partners.

The minister stressed the need to sustain the awareness momentum to deepen the family's role in supporting children, building trust and guiding them toward the



Photo by Samer Shqair
Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah addressing the audience.

state's safe and confidential treatment channels without fear or hesitation.

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HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

The king who built a modern kingdom fell victim to ignorance

In 1901, Habibullah Khan became the king of an isolated country

He immediately worked to bring electricity to palaces and houses

He built roads, and cars began to travel on paved streets of Kabul

He maintained his country's neutrality during World War I

The reforms did not please the tribal leaders who feared change

Perhaps, the sound of gunfire will break the morning silence and bring down the king

The job of 'Tunnel Explorer Rabbit' is held by an unemployed bear

How can I object to the decision of the Leopard Committee when they are all donkeys?!

The devil said to himself, "Let me cause some chaos for my own amusement."

The cow killed the woman... the son killed his father, and the husband committed suicide

Reps lose 'free' rein

Kuwait tightens screws on pharma 'promotion'

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi issued Ministerial Decree No. 296/2026 on the regulations, practices and principles for promoting medicines and medical products and dealing with company representatives in the facilities of the ministry.

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Kuwait-Bahrain defense ties highlighted in Manama talks

MANAMA, Aug 26, (KUNA): Commander in Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmad Al-Khalifa and Brigadier General Musaed Al-Azmi, Military Attaché at the Kuwaiti Embassy to Bahrain have met on the occasion of his appointment.

The meeting reviewed the longstanding relations between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the State of Kuwait and their continued cooperation in the military domain, according to Bahrain's official news agency.

The Commander in Chief welcomed the new Kuwaiti Military Attaché and wished him success in carrying out his duties.



Bahrain News Agency photo
Commander in Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmad Al-Khalifa with Brigadier General Musaed Al-Azmi, Military Attaché at the Kuwaiti Embassy to Bahrain.

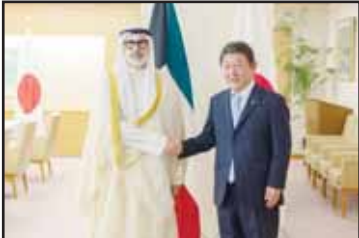


Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah with Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi.

Kuwait and Japan renew push for closer strategic partnership

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Wednesday a written message to Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi concerning the historic and close ties between the two friendly countries and peoples, ways of enhancing and developing them, as well as current developments in the region.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that His Highness the Amir's message was delivered by Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah during his meeting with the Japanese prime minister on Wednesday, as part of his official visit to the Japanese



MoFA photos
Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah with Japanese counterpart Toshimitsu Motegi.

capital, Tokyo.

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Kuwait grid passes summer test

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: As the summer season draws to a close, indicators confirm that the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy triumphed over the challenges of the summer of 2026 despite the difficult circumstances brought about by the Iranian attacks on power generation facilities.

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Day by Day

WISE Arabs warned against three types of people - the newly rich, the half-educated, and the two-faced hypocrite.

Experienced Arabs knew life well. Some scholars have described it precisely. Arab proverbs offer valuable lessons for mankind.

O God, help us against those who have wronged us.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



NBK-Egypt delivers net profit of EGP 4.2 billion (equivalent to KWD 26.1 million) in 1H2026



Kuwait, US Congress delegation discuss energy cooperation and supply security



Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:00 Asr 15:24
 Sunrise .. 05:23 Maghrib . 18:17
 Zohr 11:50 Isha 19:39



PM Diwan photo
 His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired the meeting of the Ministerial Committee for Following Up on Major Development Projects.

PM, ministers review progress of major development projects

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired on Wednesday a meeting of the Ministerial Committee for Following Up on Major Development Projects in the country.

The meeting discussed the latest developments concerning major development projects as His Highness the Prime Minister directed members of the ministerial committee to continue joint efforts to overcome all obstacles in accordance with previously agreed strategies, ensuring

the swift implementation of projects in line with the vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The meeting was attended by a number of ministers, senior state officials and representatives of relevant authorities.

Campaign targets insect, rodent infestations: MoH

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: The Pest and Rodent Control Department at the Ministry of Health set up its second environmental health awareness pavilion for 2026 at the Avenues Mall, with the theme, "Prevention is better than cure," reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Affairs Dr. Al-Mundhir Al-Hasawi attended the event.

Head of the department Dr. Fatima Al-Draiweesh pointed out that environmental health is a shared societal responsibility, indicating that the pavilion focused on raising awareness about reducing the causes of insect and rodent infestations and pollution, and promoting recycling and good environmental practices.

She said the pavilion showcased the field efforts of the department in maintaining environmental health from November 2023 to July 2026. She revealed that these efforts included monitoring and addressing thousands of environmental observations, in cooperation with the public health service departments in various health districts and the relevant institutions.

She disclosed that the services of the department are available 24/7 through the Ministry of Health hotline number 151, by selecting option 6, in addition to the services available on 'Salem' application.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health is expected to award the consultancy services contract for the Salwa Health Center project in the third quarter of 2026, reports Al-Seyassah daily quoting a source familiar with the project.

The Ministry of Health issued the tender on March 8 and the deadline for submitting bids was extended from April 7 to April 28.

The contract covers the study, design and supervision services for the construction of a specialized health center in Salwa.

The source hinted that the consultancy contract will be awarded in September and the project is expected to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2027.

'Global role vital to curb cross-border graft crime'

Nazaha promotes Kuwait transparency in Vienna

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): Kuwait's Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) underscored the importance of the Globe Network in enhancing swift and effective international cooperation and building professional, trust-based relationships among anti-corruption bodies, contributing to advancing investigations into cross-border corruption cases.

These remarks made by Nazaha Vice President Dr. Majed Al-Daihani on Tuesday during his participation, heading a high-level Nazaha delegation, in the seventh General Meeting of the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities, held at the United Nations Office in Vienna International Centre from August 25 to 28.

During a panel discussion, Al-



KUNA photo
 Nazaha Vice President Dr. Majed Al-Daihani and delegation took part in the Vienna meeting.

Daihani reviewed Nazaha's role and experience in investigating cross-border corruption crimes, stressing the importance of the Globe Network in supporting co-operation alongside official channels, Nazaha said in a statement.

The meeting witnessed a number of member states signing a model agreement to strengthen international

cooperation mechanisms, as well as the launch of the second edition of the Guide to Good Practices for Cooperation in Cross-Border Corruption Cases.

Furthermore, the meeting's program included specialized panel discussions on the use of artificial intelligence in law enforcement, in addition to bilateral and multilateral

meetings to discuss operational and strategic issues, statement added.

The Globe Network aims to facilitate cross-border cooperation in corruption cases by enabling direct communication among law enforcement practitioners in member states and allowing them to exchange information and coordinate efforts swiftly, Nazaha said.

The network comprises 252 anti-corruption bodies from 137 countries and operates within the framework of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and under the umbrella of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Nazaha said it was among the first bodies to join the network in 2021 and participated in discussions on the adoption of its founding charter. Additionally, it is also a member of all of its affiliated working groups, and has chaired a number of meetings of the international network.

This participation stems from Kuwait's commitment to strengthening cooperation with the international community in combating corruption crimes, in accordance with its objectives and mandates stipulated in its establishing Law No. 2 of 2016 and its amendments, statement added.

Basic pay ranges from KD 400-500

Co-ops start Kuwaitization of supply manager position

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: The cooperative societies have started the Kuwaitization of the branch supply manager position, say reliable sources.

Sources said this is in line with the directive of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Union of Cooperative Societies to complete the Kuwaitization of managers in 91 supply branches within 30 days.

Sources revealed that the appointment requirements include being a Kuwaiti citizen with a diploma in the relevant field, such as accounting or business administration, and at least five years of experience, as well as the submission of a criminal record clearance through the Sahel application.

Sources stated that the basic salary for

a branch supply manager ranges from KD400 and KD500, in addition to the subsidy allocated for national employment in the private sector, allowances and incentives.

Sources indicated that the cooperative societies will receive applications, select candidates and then submit the list of candidates to the Control Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs to ensure they meet the conditions.

Sources clarified that if no qualified candidate is found, a Kuwaiti employee will be assigned to do the duties of the position temporarily. Sources added that the appointment of supply branch officials is exempted from the six percent allocated for employee salaries and expenses, and does not require obtaining approval from the Kuwaitization Committee.

Other Voices

Tragedies of Africa descent 'human beings' in the West

By Ahmad alsarraf

Western citizens of African descent have faced discrimination dating back to the era of slavery, when more than 12.5 million people were kidnapped and sent to the New World for forced labor, as well as during the European colonial period in Africa. When European occupation ended, it left behind ignorance, poverty, disease, and widespread administrative corruption.

The story of Jason Arday, a former professor at the prestigious University of Cambridge, is a classic example of the injustices that people of African descent can face in the West.

Arday resigned from his position on August 5 amid investigations and academic controversy. He had been appointed Professor of Sociology of Education at Cambridge University in 2023, becoming the youngest Black professor in the university's history.

He faced accusations of plagiarism in some of his work, while questions were also raised about his academic qualifications and certain honorary positions or appointments associated with his career.

Arday denied the accusations while acknowledging some errors. Cambridge University launched an investigation into his qualifications and appointments, along with separate complaints of academic misconduct.

After weeks of media coverage and pressure, Arday resigned, saying it was the only way to bring a difficult period to an end. He emphasized, however, that his resignation did not constitute an admission of the allegations. Nine days later, he was found dead at his home at the age of 41. No official cause of death was released, but no foul play was suspected. It is believed that he died of a broken heart due to the intense pressure he had endured.

Cambridge had celebrated its new star, Professor Arday, hailing him as its youngest Black professor and promoting his inspiring personal story of growing up in public housing and overcoming severe hardship to rise through the academic world.

Suddenly, a blog post by a former Cambridge researcher who had previously faced disciplinary action accused Arday of plagiarism and falsifying his biography. The accusation sparked a

storm of controversy, and the British media, particularly the conservative press, found the story incredibly compelling.

Arday's appointment to the prestigious position came amid considerable pressure to increase the representation of people of color among faculty members and students. The challenge of the task cannot be overstated. Cambridge University was, and still is, a predominantly white institution.

Arday was the top candidate. He held a doctorate in education, but his research record was modest. He had moved between universities and possessed a compelling personal story - he was diagnosed with autism at a young age and spoke late, but overcame these challenges to make a name for himself.

Cambridge University promoted this story as part of its growing trend of recruiting high-profile figures with inspiring personal narratives and broad public appeal, helping to ensure positive media coverage for the institution.

However, it later emerged that some of what Arday said was untrue, while other claims were so exaggerated as to be almost unbelievable. His appointment was made by a nine-member panel, which included a psychiatrist who had conducted research on autism.

It was possible to uncover the falsity of Arday's claims, but the desire to rehabilitate Cambridge University's image and address accusations of bias against non-white people seems to have hastened his appointment, despite doubts about his abilities and claims that surfaced shortly after his hiring.

Despite this, Cambridge University strongly defended its decision, arguing that Arday had faced numerous problems at the time he wrote the questionable research, which had influenced his work, including both direct and indirect racism.

The university then received a warning from a prestigious academic journal about issues with Arday's doctoral dissertation, but Cambridge ignored it and considered him the victim of a smear campaign. Cambridge was defending both itself and its decision to hire him. Consequently, the university was criticized on the grounds that, had it not been for the extensive media coverage and earlier action, the situation might not have escalated into such a public and tragic crisis.

The story has not yet come to an end.



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KUNA photo
 Deputy Chief of the Kuwaiti Army General Staff Air Vice Marshal Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah witnessed a live-fire training exercise conducted by the Saleh Al-Mohammad Mechanized Brigade (94).

Army Deputy Chief witnesses live-fire 'Brigade 94' drill

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): Deputy Chief of the Kuwaiti Army General Staff Air Vice Marshal Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah witnessed a live-fire training exercise conducted by the Saleh Al-Mohammad Mechanized Brigade (94) on Wednesday.

In a press statement, the General Staff said

that the exercise featured various scenarios and training tasks purposed to reinforce combat readiness and proficiency.

The army deputy chief reviewed the execution phases and the performance of the participants, underlining the significance of maintaining field training and developing combat

capabilities and skills to bolster the readiness and efficiency of army units.

At the conclusion of the training program, the Deputy Chief of the General Staff touted the organizers and participants for their efforts, wishing them sustained success in carrying out their tasks and duties.

Educational, logistical needs provided

MoE readies 161 schools for '26/'27 school year

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: As part of its ongoing preparations for the 2026/2027 academic year, the Ministry of Education continues to implement its comprehensive plans to provide schools with all their educational and logistical needs, in accordance with the directives of Minister of Education Engineer Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry explained that the Supplies and Warehouses Department continues its efforts to equip and furnish schools with the required school furniture, based on needs assessments received from the relevant authorities and approved distribution plans.

The equipping and furnishing process currently covers 161 schools across various educational zones. The plan includes providing schools with more than 15,000 pieces of student furniture for different educational levels, including chairs spe-



Al-Tabtabaei

cifically designed for kindergarten, furniture suitable for primary, intermediate, and secondary levels, as well as improved student desks that can be configured and rearranged to suit the nature of educational activities.

The plan for distributing the improved furniture also includes fully furnishing five new schools with this type of furniture, including two schools for gifted students.

The upgraded school furniture features flexible and practical designs that allow desks to be arranged in various classroom configurations. This supports individual, group, and collaborative learning styles while enhancing student interaction and participation in the classroom.

The specifications adopted for the new furniture take into account student comfort, safety, and quality of use.

The ministry went on to explain that equipping and enhancing schools with furniture is a key component of its preparation plan for the 2026/2027 academic year. The plan aims to meet the actual needs of educational institutions and enhance their readiness, while providing a safe, organized, and stimulating learning environment that supports students and teachers and keeps pace with the requirements of modern education.

Meanwhile, Firas Kartash, Director of the Supplies and Warehouses Department at the Ministry of Education, confirmed that the department is working diligently to complete the equipping of new and existing schools and provide them with all required student and school furniture in accordance with the ministry's approved plan.

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



The king who built a modern kingdom fell victim to ignorance

WHEN ignorance prevails, the achievements of nations become a disaster. This happened in Afghanistan at the beginning of the last century. In 1901, Habibullah Khan became the king of a country isolated from the world, succeeding his father.

He immediately set about bringing electricity to the palaces first, then to the houses, while cars began to travel the paved streets of Kabul for the first time, and cameras began to capture images of Afghans.

In 18 years, this enlightened king built a modern nation and established the first telegraph system connecting remote areas to the capital, Kabul, so that messages could be transmitted in minutes, instead of weeks.

Among his other achievements was maintaining his country’s neutrality during World War I. His people loved him and foreign powers respected him. Nevertheless, this did not sit well with the tribal leaders who feared change, and his relatives felt threatened by his reforms.

The king’s brother, Nasrullah, and his son, Amanullah, were plotting in the shadows, preferring the isolation of the country over its progress. In February 1919, while on a hunting trip near Jalalabad, unknown snipers lay hidden among the trees. Suddenly, a gunshot shattered the morning silence and the king fell dead.

The bear that became a rabbit:

A story from Czech literature

In a certain forest, the vacancy for a ‘Tunneling Rabbit’ was announced. The only applicant was an unemployed bear. He was accepted and officially appointed.

After some time, the bear noticed that another rabbit in the forest was appointed as ‘Bear Opener’, receiving much higher salary, privileges and bonuses.

The bear complained to the department head, and

- In 1901, Habibullah Khan became the king of an isolated country
- He immediately worked to bring electricity to palaces and houses
- He built roads, and cars began to travel on paved streets of Kabul
- He maintained his country’s neutrality during World War I
- The reforms did not please the tribal leaders who feared change
- Perhaps, the sound of gunfire will break the morning silence and bring down the king
- The job of ‘Tunnel Explorer Rabbit’ is held by an unemployed bear
- How can I object to the decision of the Leopard Committee when they are all donkeys?!
- The devil said to himself, “Let me cause some chaos for my own amusement.”
- The cow killed the woman... the son killed his father, and the husband committed suicide

the complaint was forwarded to the general administration. A committee of leopards was formed to investigate the complaint, and both the bear and the rabbit were summoned to the hearing.

The committee asked the rabbit to present his papers and identification documents. All the documents confirmed that the rabbit was a bear.

The committee then asked the bear to present his papers and identification documents, and all the documents confirmed that the bear was a rabbit.

The committee decided not to make any changes, because the rabbit was a bear, and the bear was a rabbit by all accounts and evidence.

The bear neither appealed nor objected to the decision of the committee. When the bear was asked why he did not object to the decision, he replied: How can I object to the decision of the Leopard Committee, which is actually a group of donkeys, even though their documents say they are leopards?

The devil did nothing but to move the peg

The devil passed through a quiet village and stopped to rest for a while, leaning against a tree trunk. He observed the village and saw a woman milking a cow, her calf tied to a stake nearby. He watched for awhile, and then said to himself, “Let me cause some trouble for fun.”

He got up, and when he reached the calf, he moved the peg. The calf, frightened, ran to its mother to nurse, causing the bucket to fall and the milk to spill onto the ground.

The woman, angered by the loss of her livelihood, grabbed a stick and hit the calf violently, knocking it to the ground.

When the cow saw her calf in this condition, she kicked the woman hard, killing her instantly. The woman’s father-in-law was passing by and saw his daughter-in-law lying dead on the ground. He grabbed his rifle and shot the cow.

The husband heard the gunshot and rushed to the scene. He found his wife dead and his father standing over her. Without asking, he pulled his pistol and killed his father.

When the husband heard the story from the neighbors who witnessed what happened, he could not bear the tragedy and shot himself.

As for the devil, who had been observing the events from afar, said mockingly, “They will hold me accountable for everything they did, even though I did nothing but to move the peg.”

The wise say: Beware of two types of people: one who reads a lot and one who never reads at all. The first sees you from within, while the second does not see you at all... Such is life.

If you are burdened with worldly worries, remember that they all belong to God. Do not worry about sustenance, for it comes from God. Do not worry about the future, for it is in God’s hands. Focus only on how to please God, for He is the One who pleases you, and He satisfies you when He is pleased with you.

The wise say that four types of people are invincible:

- A rich man who can buy the law,
- A powerful man backed by his tribe,
- A skillful hypocrite who knows how to flatter well,
- An ignorant man followed by crowds.

Heed the advice of your father and understand the world. Earn a sincere prayer from your mother and use it to overcome your trials. Take a prostration of gratitude to God in the depths of the night. Pray to your Prophet and you will receive whatever you want.



The National Guard, in the presence of its Undersecretary, Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas, conducted a public lottery to select a new batch of applicants for the “Officer Cadets with High School Diplomas”.



KUNA photos

KNG selects 47 ‘hopefuls’ in draw for new cadet officers

Army Chief lauds transparency in public lottery

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (Agencies): The Kuwait National Guard (KNG), in the presence of its Undersecretary, Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas, conducted a public lottery to select a new batch of applicants for the “Officer Cadets with High School Diplomas” course after they completed all legal procedures and passed all stages of the admission process, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas emphasized the National Guard leadership’s commitment to applying principles and standards that ensure fairness and equal opportunities for all applicants.

He noted that the lottery was conducted publicly and broadcast through the National Guard’s Instagram account.

Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas underscored the National Guard’s commitment to transparency and equality among applicants.

Lieutenant General Al-Barjas wished the accepted applicants success and continued service to their country alongside their colleagues in the National Guard after graduating from the course.

The lottery resulted in the selection of 47 applicants, based on the number of vacancies available in the National Guard this year. They will be assigned to Ali Al-Sabah Military College and King Khalid Military College in Saudi Arabia, Ahmed Bin Mohammad Military College in Qatar, and the Gendarmerie Academy in Türkiye.

Army Chief

Kuwait Armed Forces Chief of General Staff, Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraiaan, said Wednesday that the public lottery for selecting officer cadets reflects the principles of fairness, equality and equal opportunity, while reinforcing

transparency and integrity within the military.

His remarks came after he attended the public lottery held by Ali Al-Sabah Military College to select applicants for the 52nd officer cadet course from high school and diploma graduates, according to a General Staff press release.

The lottery was held under the patronage of Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

The General Staff places great importance on ensuring fairness and equality throughout the admission process, noting that the public lottery protects applicants’ rights through clear, objective criteria without exceptions, Al-Shuray’an said.

He congratulated the successful applicants and wished them success in their military careers, urging them to serve alongside their fellow armed forces members in fulfilling their duties and serving Kuwait.

Applicants who were not selected still have many opportunities to contribute to Kuwait in other fields, he added.

PAFN issues 16 violations during Qurain Markets inspection drive

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) carried out a joint inspection campaign in Qurain Markets area on Wednesday, in cooperation with relevant government authorities, resulting in 16 violations being issued and several violations detected at food establishments.

The Food Authority said in a press

statement that the inspection campaign covered 35 food establishments. Violations included handling food products unfit for human consumption and opening food establishments before obtaining a health license from the authority.

The violations also included failure to comply with health and general hygiene requirements, as well as handling food without health certificates.

Special Buffet

LARGEST SPREAD IN TOWN

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

AVAILABLE AT HAWALLY BRANCH BEIRUT ST, LULU AL WATAN COMPLEX, OPPOSITE CBK 22626782 ☎ 22626783	AVAILABLE AT FAHAHEEL BRANCH 1ST FLOOR, AL HOOR BUILDING BLOCK NO.11, BEHIND TO CENTERPO 23911175 ☎ 23911174
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African woman succumbs to severe thrashing by husband

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: The General Department of Criminal Investigation, represented by the Jahra Investigation and Search Department, closed the murder case of an African woman who died after being beaten by her husband, who is also of the same nationality, reports Al-Anba daily.

The sources noted that the final legal classification of the crime has not yet been determined, adding that the Public Prosecution will decide whether the case will be classified as premeditated murder or manslaughter.

According to security sources, the accused confessed during initial investigations that he had

beaten his wife following a dispute that erupted between them. He explained that he did not expect the injuries she sustained to lead to her death. He left the house believing his wife would recover and that he would return later to reconcile with her.

The Ministry of Interior’s operations room received a report recently about a fight between a husband and wife, during which the wife called for help. A patrol from the Jahra security command rushed to the location, where officers found the woman inside the apartment with her face covered in blood.

Upon the arrival of paramedics and examination of the woman, it was determined that she had died.

Neighbors reported that her husband had left the apartment after assaulting her.

Forensic investigators and a coroner went to the scene, where an examination revealed that the victim had suffered severe blows that caused fractures to her facial bones and skull, as well as internal bleeding that led to her death.

Detectives intensified their efforts to locate the husband after discovering that his phone was switched off. The suspect’s name was placed on the travel ban list. Officers later received information that he was staying with a friend in Jahra, went to the location, and arrested him.



KUNA photo
KRCS officials at the Dubai-based international humanitarian aid conference.

‘Aid conference platform for global humanitarian coop.’

DUBAI, Aug 26, (KUNA): Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) seeks to use a Dubai-based international humanitarian aid conference as a platform to ratchet up global cooperation in the humanitarian arena, the charity’s secretary general Dr. Latifah Al-Meer said on Monday. Holding talks with delegations from Syrian and international Red Crescent societies on the sidelines of the Dubai International Humanitarian Aid and Development Conference and Exhibition (DIHAD), KRCS officials looked into “coordinating efforts” to meet the humanitarian needs of the wider Arab region, she told KUNA. On talks with Secretary-General of the International Federation of Red Cross and

Red Crescent Societies Jagan Chapagain, she said discussions centered around efforts to ensure preparedness in the event of crises and emergencies, which entail greater knowhow exchange and cooperation among global aid bodies. Addressing talks with the Syrian Red Crescent delegation, the official said that it also covered efforts to bolster cooperation and knowledge exchange in a bid to bring common initiatives to fruition, underlining Kuwait’s commitment to keep aid flowing to Damascus, she added. Since its inception in 2004, DIHAD has been touted as an event that has transformed into the “world’s leading platform” for humanitarian aid and development, according to its official website.

Kuwait seeks to upgrade relations with Tajikistan

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Ambassador to Tajikistan Mohammad Al-Omairi underlined the strong Kuwaiti-Tajik relations on Tuesday. Al-Omairi’s remarks came during his participation in an international scientific conference in Tajikistan, titled “35 Years of State Independence of the Republic of Tajikistan: Developing and Strengthening Weather and Climate Monitoring and Glacier Protection in the Context of Climate

Change,” said Kuwait Embassy in Dushanbe in a statement received by KUNA. The Kuwaiti Ambassador applauded Tajikistan’s achievements in developing key state bodies and promoting peace and national unity. He noted that Kuwait is eager to boost cooperation on different levels with the country, adding that the two sides share similar views on topics like sustainable development and international cooperation.

‘Starving civilians in wars threat to peace, security’

World must implement current commitments: Kuwait

WASHINGTON, Aug 26, (KUNA): Kuwait has stressed that food insecurity related to conflicts is no longer merely a humanitarian issue, but it has become directly linked to preserving international peace and security.

This statement was made by Kuwait’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Tareq Al-Banai late Tuesday during a high-level open debate of the UN Security Council entitled on food under fire. Kuwait stressed the need to implement existing international commitments and prevent the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare, he said. Al-Banai added that the Security Council had early recognized the close link between conflict and food insecurity through the unanimous adoption of Resolution 2417 of 2018. Kuwait had the honor, during its membership of the Security Council at the time, of joining in introducing the resolution. The resolution is important as it established a clear international understanding of the relation between conflict and hunger, as well as condemning the starvation of civilians and the unlawful denial of humanitarian assistance, he pointed out. After adopting the resolution, the priority today should implement existing commitments and turn



Ambassador Tareq Al-Banai

the Council resolutions and early-warning mechanisms into tools aiming to prevent famine before it is too late. In this context, Al-Banai also affirmed that the Gaza Strip represents today a stark example of the consequences of targeting human right to food and restricting access to it. He stated that the blockade imposed on the Strip and Israeli restrictions on the entry of aid and goods, along with the extensive destruction of civilian infrastructure and production facilities, have resulted in famine reaching parts of the Strip. Al-Banai strongly deplored the Israeli occupation’s policy to use the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare, denouncing the placing of unarmed civilians before the choice of “either hunger or surrender”.

He affirmed that this is a blatant violation of international law, international humanitarian law and the most basic principles of human dignity. On regional situation, Ambassador Al-Banai said the recent developments in the Arab region have demonstrated that the consequences of conflicts do not stop at their borders, but they extend to global supply chains and markets. He voiced Kuwait’s strongest condemnation of Iran’s continued closure of the Strait of Hormuz, describing the step as a direct threat to the security and stability of global supply chains. He explained that the danger of this is not limited to energy security, but it also extends to global food security through disrupting trade, increased shipping, fuel and fertilizer costs and others. Al-Banai warned that the erosion of livelihoods, widening poverty and marginalization, and intensifying competition for resources increase the vulnerability of communities, aggravate tensions, and create opportunities for terrorist and extremist groups to exploit such conditions for recruitment, incitement, and violence escalation. The 2026 Global Report on Food Crises showed that acute hunger had doubled over the past decade, while the number of people facing the most severe levels of catastrophic hunger had become nine times higher than it was in 2016, he pointed out. Al-Banai finally stated that a society exhausted by hunger and deprived of its livelihoods cannot build lasting stability.

MPW eyes ‘Info Work’ software to handle water projects

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: The Ministry of Public Works intends to lease the Info Work software for a period of three years. This software will be used to manage water and wastewater networks using advanced technology, while supporting engineers and planners in the design, analysis, operation and maintenance of water infrastructure.

The project is vital due to the production of large quantities of tertiary and quaternary stage treated wastewater, which is being used in Abdaly and Wafra farms, the oil sector and other purposes. Moreover, ministry is finalizing procedures to float the tender for the study, design and supervision of infrastructure improvement works in Rawda, Adailiya and Khaldiya. It recently requested approval from the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) to issue the

tender. The Board of Directors of CAPT then expedited the relevant institution’s response to Resolution No. 22, issued at its meeting held on July 22, within a final deadline of five working days. Through the contract, the ministry aims to raise the efficiency of the sewage network and get rid of certain network facilities due to obsolescence and the end of their useful life, in order to preserve the environment and reduce pollution levels in residential areas.

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KUNA photo
Acting Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Islamic Affairs Dr. Sulaiman Al-Suwailem and delegation prior to departure for Saudi Arabia.

Kuwait backs Gulf in fields of Islamic affairs, endowments

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): Acting Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Islamic Affairs Dr. Sulaiman Al-Suwailem said participation in the 11th meeting of Gulf assistant ministers of Islamic affairs and endowments, held in Saudi Arabia, reflects support for joint Gulf action. Speaking to KUNA on Tuesday prior to his departure for Saudi Arabia to attend the meeting, the Kuwaiti official underlined

his ministry’s commitment to supporting Gulf cooperation in the fields of Islamic affairs and endowments, and promoting collaboration and coordination among relevant authorities in member states. The meeting will address various topics of mutual interest and explore ways to develop cooperation and exchange expertise and experiences among GCC countries, with a view to advancing joint Gulf action in these sectors, he added.

ACI accession boosts Kuwait clout in int’l airport network

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) said Tuesday its accession to Airports Council International (ACI) is deemed a move that promotes Kuwait’s presence within the global airport network. In a statement to KUNA, the authority said that the move supports its efforts to develop Kuwait International Airport by leveraging best practices and specialized expertise from the airport industry. It underlined that this step aligns with its strategy to broaden its presence in specialized international organizations and institutions, and to bolster international cooperation and partnerships, saying that these efforts aim to develop Kuwait’s civil aviation sector and advance the quality of services provided to travelers.

The authority added that joining the Council provides an opportunity to draw upon a vast network of international expertise, access studies, data, and operational benchmarks, and participate in committees, task forces, and specialized events that address key challenges and future trends in the airport industry. It noted that membership provides access to specialized programs and initiatives offered by the Council in areas such as the passenger experience, service quality measurement, operational performance enhancement, safety, security, sustainability, digital transformation, and cybersecurity. Furthermore, it offers training and professional development programs that contribute to building the competencies and capabilities of the national workforce in the civil aviation sector.

Mol launches inmates online service

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: The Sahel app announced on its X account that the Ministry of Interior has launched a new online service called “Correctional Institution Certificates,” reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The service allows users to submit requests for “To Whom It May Concern” certificates for inmates of correctional institutions, with the option to download the certificates directly through the app.

Kuwait scores

He announced that a modern, fully equipped unit has been designated for the treatment and rehabilitation of female addicts, while preparations are underway for additional specialized facilities for men.

Kuwait tightens

The decree mandates that all promotional information should be accurate, clear, up-to-date and verifiable, based on reliable scientific references or the approved product leaflet, and the benefits, risks and warnings must

The ministry is authorized to request a comprehensive technical file from companies, including clinical evidence, therapeutic comparisons, safety data, financial impact assess-

It specifies official forms for implementing its provisions, including registration of company representatives, commitment pledges, review

Drug crimes

On another matter, Al-Sumait said the national plan to develop the legislative system aims to review 40 percent of the laws currently in force, noting that 270 laws have so far been reviewed as part of a plan aimed at facilitating procedures for individuals and institutions, reconsidering the criminal justice system, supporting the economy and developing social legislation.

Protecting youth

The closing ceremony was also attended by Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait and Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi. It featured honoring several participating government, civil and private entities.

Kuwait and

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that the meet-

The meeting also addressed developments in the regional and international situations and involved an exchange of views on issues of common interest, especially developments in the region and diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalation and enhancing security and stability.

Kuwait grid

Fourth is the readiness of the technical emergency teams to deal with power outage in various areas, speed up repair and power restoration operations, and provide emergency generators during maintenance work.

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Darline Graham wins S.Carolina GOP nomination to replace late brother in Senate

Trump and Vance to keynote Republicans’ midterm convention in Texas

WASHINGTON, Aug 26, (AP): As if there was any doubt, Republicans’ midterm convention will be the Donald Trump show, with the president appearing at both nights of the event in Dallas next month.

Trump and Vice President JD Vance are both set to headline respective nights, with Vance to speak on Wednesday night and Trump on Thursday.

The unusual gathering, aimed at promoting the party’s candidates and the Trump administration’s agenda, is being billed by the Republican National Convention as “a primetime showcase for President Trump’s success, candidates, and causes that have propelled the 2026 midterms to unprecedented focus.”

Throughout the event, Republicans, who are grappling with an unpopular president, stubbornly high prices, an unpopular war and surging Democratic enthusiasm, are expected to try to paint the opposing party as radically left by highlighting Democratic socialist candidates who have been surging this year.

Candidate showcases will be held each night from 6 to 7 p.m. to intro-

duce candidates running in competitive races.

The first night will include segments focused on tax cuts, health-care affordability, the border, trade and domestic manufacturing, with appearances by “workers and everyday Americans.”

The second will highlight families benefiting from policies like no taxes on tips, overtime, and Social Security, as well as overseas prisoners who have been released, border security, efforts to lower prescription drug costs, and a tribute to slain conservative activist Charlie Kirk.

It will also include a segment marking the 25th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks with the families of first responders.

There was no mention in the advisory of any programming related to foreign policy nor the unpopular war in Iran.

The convention will also try to appeal to the “MAHA” - or Make America Healthy Again - wing of the party, with segments like one entitled, “Chronic Disease & Corporate Capture: Breaking the hold of corporate interests on public health



Gov Henry McMaster, (right), looks on as Sen. Darline Graham, gives a speech to supporters after winning a special Republican primary runoff to replace her brother, the late Sen Lindsey Graham, in the November general election on Aug 25, in Columbia, SC. (AP)

agencies and empowering families to Make America Healthy Again.”

Several will promote bans on stock trading by members of Congress - a measure Trump has backed, even as he has faced repeated accusations of profiting from the presidency.

Also:

COLUMBIA, SC: US Sen **Darline Graham** won the Republican nomination to replace her late brother on **South Carolina’s** general election ballot, notching another win for President **Donald Trump** after he threw his support behind the political novice.

Graham defeated US Rep **Ralph Norman** in Tuesday’s special Republican primary runoff, two weeks after they were the top two finishers in a 10-way primary.

Despite being a political unknown, Graham bested some of South Carolina’s top political names in the special election spun up after **Lindsey Graham’s** sudden death last month. She was appointed by Gov. **Henry McMaster** to serve out the remaining months of her late brother’s current term and swiftly won an endorsement from Trump, who encouraged her to enter the race for a full term and campaigned for her in the state last week.

Graham got emotional while addressing her supporters Tuesday night, saying she misses her brother every day.

“The past few weeks have been an unbelievably challenging time for our family, but you know what? We did it,” she said.

With McMaster, her family and U.S. Rep. **William Timmons** looking on, Graham went on to thank the president for his support and for the relationship he had with her brother.

“Our victory would not have been possible without you and we are truly grateful,” she said.

Graham will face Democratic nominee Annie Andrews in November.

On Monday, MAGA Inc., the super PAC that supports Trump and aligned Republicans - but that has spent little thus far on Trump’s picks in this year’s midterms - spent nearly \$830,000 for voter calls and text message blasts in support of Graham.

Among the unknowns going into Tuesday was whether Trump’s backing would be enough to boost the political newcomer with the famous last name, but whose political positions were previously unidentified, across the finish line to the nomination.



Protesters gather outside the New Mexico Environment Department to voice opposition to the Project Jupiter data center during a demonstration in Santa Fe, NM on Aug 21. (AP)

In a divided America, the left and right unite to oppose artificial intelligence data centers

MURDOCK, Neb., Aug 26, (AP): In rural eastern Nebraska, a technology revolution could rise from fields of corn and soybean in the form of new data centers to power the artificial intelligence boom.

But just like around many parts of the country, opposition has been building in ways that defy typical partisan boundaries. Conservative farmers and the state Sierra Club chapter recently found common cause against labor leaders as they filled the firehouse in Murdock - population around 275 - to share concerns about data center development moving too quickly.

The scene exemplified an unlikely coalition that worries about dwindling farmland, declining water supplies and rising electricity bills - not to mention how massive corporations could reshape small town America into nodes in a national network of computing warehouses.

The debate around data center projects is one of the rare modern issues to cut across party lines, demographics and geography - from

Republican-dominated Nebraska, Texas and Wyoming to swing-state Pennsylvania to Democratic-leaning New Mexico.

Supporters of data centers, including Republican President Donald Trump and some union leaders who usually back Democrats, praise a potential jobs and economic bonanza, while helping the U.S. thwart China in the geopolitical race for technological supremacy.

But hostility toward developments coming at breakneck speed has surged ahead of November’s midterm elections, and forced national, state and local elected officials to adapt to a shifting political landscape.

Judy Stroy, a fifth-generation Nebraska farmer whose late husband grew corn and soybeans and whose son still does, worried that with “the amount of ground that’s getting gobbled up every year, our food source is in trouble.”

“That should scare everyone,” she said.

Stroy’s fields are just outside Murdock, a village named for a railroad

official at the company that first laid tracks here in the 1890s. There’s a school, a post office, a bar and a Corn Grower’s State Bank branch, plus the Midwest Farmer’s Coop where growers sell their produce and buy supplies like feed and fertilizer.

Murdock is in Cass County, where officials recently approved a 12-month moratorium on allowing data center development.

That might freeze energy company Tenaska’s plans to potentially option 1,300-plus acres of land along Highway 75, south of the nearby villages of Murray and Beaver Lake, in a project that activists fear would pave the way for a data center and its own natural gas power plant.

Tenaska spokesperson Leighton Elise Eusebio said the company has been exploring “the feasibility of developing power generation to serve large loads, whether that is a data center or other form of economic development.”

“We believe there are opportunities to work with public power, communities and other stakeholders to develop power generation that will

benefit Nebraskans,” Eusebio said in a statement.

Meanwhile, data center operator CyrusOne has nearly 400 acres under its control outside another Cass County community, Plattsmouth, also along Highway 75, but no development has occurred nor has a project been announced, according to a CyrusOne spokesperson.

The area may be seen as particularly favorable because the highway has been widened, offering easy access to Omaha to the northeast, and to the college town of Lincoln to the southwest. The Missouri River provides a reasonably close, major water source.

Some landowners accepted large checks to sell. Local land typically can go for \$10,000 an acre, residents say, and developers sometimes offer four times that, or even more.

Such paydays can be extra enticing as farming has gotten more expensive amid rising diesel prices and soybean exports that have declined in the midst of Trump’s tariff fight with a major market for the crop, China.

Europe

Former Armenian president detained: Former Armenian president **Robert Kocharyan** and his eldest son were detained Tuesday after law enforcement officers raided businesses linked to the family, the country’s Anti-Corruption Committee said.

A case was opened against Kocharyan, 71, who leads parliament’s second-largest opposition bloc, on charges of abuse of authority, bribery and large-scale money laundering, according to Armenia’s Prosecutor General’s Office.

Besides Kocharyan and his eldest son, Sedrak, four other people were detained as part of the investigation, the office said.

The raids came less than 24 hours after Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan clashed with Kocharyan’s younger son, Levon, in a fiery exchange in parliament.

Armenia’s Anti-Corruption Committee said it was investigating allegations that state assets had been illegally sold to private companies for under market value during Kocharyan’s time in office from 1998 to 2008.

Former President Serzh Sargsyan, who served under Kocharyan before taking office himself from 2008 to 2018, also is facing charges as part of the case, the committee said.



Kocharyan

Bagrat Mikoyan, who heads his office, described the detentions as “yet another attack on President Kocharyan and his family” by authorities. He added that Kocharyan felt ill after his detention and was taken to a hospital. (AP)

□ □ □

Hungary files complaint over deal: Hungary’s foreign ministry has filed a criminal complaint with prosecutors over what it says was possible fraud related to the previous government’s purchase of ventilators worth some \$965 million during the COVID-19 pandemic, Foreign Minister Anita Orbán said Tuesday.

Hungary’s previous government under former Prime Minister Viktor Orbán purchased the roughly 17,000 ventilators from China in March and April 2020, drawing criticism at the time that it was buying far more units than could be realistically deployed and paying much more per unit than other European countries.

In a video posted to Facebook on Tuesday, Foreign Minister Orbán, who is not related to the former prime minister, said the results of a ministry investigation into the purchase “raises suspicions of breach of fiduciary duty causing particularly substantial financial loss and other criminal offenses.”

She didn’t detail specific allegations, but noted that the investigation involved tens of thousands of documents - some of which had to be recovered using digital tools “after unsuccessful attempts to delete them” - and raised further questions “about the responsibility of the ministry’s former senior leadership.” (AP)



Smoke rises following a Ukrainian drone strike on a warehouse belonging to online retailer Wildberries, in St. Petersburg, Russia, on July 24. (AP)

Wildberries depot in Russia hit again as Ukraine extends drone campaign

UN and Red Cross step up call for int’l rules on ‘killer robot’ weapons systems

GENEVA, Aug 26, (AP): The United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross on Tuesday ratcheted up a joint call for countries to adopt bans and restrictions on use of autonomous weapons systems - often known as “killer robots” - warning that “the risks have intensified.”

Building on an initial appeal three years ago and international talks on the issue for years, the appeal stops short of calling for a blanket ban, but notes that such weapons systems are being developed - though the UN and Red Cross haven’t confirmed their use on the battlefield.

The organizations said, however, that civilians need to be protected for when that day may come.

“We are now dangerously close to crossing a moral red line: The autonomous targeting of humans by machines,” said UN Geneva spokesperson Alessandra Velucci, reading a joint statement by U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres and ICRC President Mirjana Spoljaric.

“Today, we renew this call with



A Ukrainian FP-1 long-range attack drone is launched at an undisclosed location in Ukraine on Aug 16. (AP)

even greater urgency,” the statement said. “The fundamental concerns remain unchanged, but the risks have intensified.”

The two international organizations say the development of weapons technology at “record speed” has strained the international rules sys-

tem, and widened the gap between technological capacities and regulatory constraints.

“Autonomous weapons systems are not part of a distant future - a race toward greater autonomy in weapons systems is already well underway,” the joint statement said.

KYIV, Aug 26, (AP): Ukrainian long-range drones struck for the second time in five weeks a major warehouse belonging to Russia’s biggest online retailer, causing a fire that burned it to the ground, local authorities said on Wednesday.

The depot in the Tambov region southeast of Moscow, which is several hundred kilometers (miles) from the Ukrainian border, was previously hit on July 18 when seven people were killed. That attack heralded the start of Ukraine’s aerial campaign that has delivered repeated blows to Russian e-commerce giant Wildberries. The company’s size and commercial importance have brought comparisons with Amazon.

Ukraine’s cutting-edge drone capabilities developed since Russia’s February 2022 invasion have allowed it to hit dozens of Wildberries facilities across Russia in recent weeks. Ukraine says goods sold by the company include equipment and technical components that are used by the Russian military. The attacks have also served Ukraine’s war goals by unsettling Russians living far from the front line and hurting the Russian economy.

Ukraine has also targeted oil facilities that are the backbone of the

economy in Russia, which is one of the world’s largest energy producers.

Ukraine’s General Staff said its forces struck a Lukoil refinery in Kstovo, in Russia’s Nizhny Novgorod region, overnight. The facility, which has an annual processing capacity of about 125 million barrels, was on fire after the attack, a General Staff statement said.

Nizhny Novgorod has repeatedly been targeted by Ukraine. Local Gov. Gleb Nikitin confirmed the attack and said that an unspecified “industrial facility” sustained damage, without providing further details.

The relentless barrages prompted Russian President Vladimir Putin to decree Monday that the state can temporarily seize control of critical infrastructure facilities if private owners don’t protect them from Ukrainian drone attacks or don’t rebuild them after the strikes. Analysts said the move aimed to compel companies to pay for their own security and bring damaged assets back into service, despite the financial cost.

Russia has targeted Ukraine with ballistic and cruise missiles, powerful glide bombs and jet-powered drones, killing thousands of civilians. A woman and a 4-year-old child were killed in a Russian strike on a

residential building in the northern Chernihiv region, emergency services said on Wednesday.

Ukraine has been firing hundreds of drones at Russia almost nightly, hoping to overwhelm air defenses. The Russian Defense Ministry said that its forces overnight shot down 426 Ukrainian drones over 15 Russian regions and illegally annexed Crimea.

Ukraine struck Russian oil facilities, airfields, logistics and infrastructure, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a social media post on Wednesday, referring to attacks over the previous 24 hours. He didn’t provide details of the targets.

Wildberries confirmed the overnight attack and a fire at its depot in the Tambov region and said the facility was evacuated, but it didn’t elaborate on the extent of the damage.

Tambov’s Gov. Yevgeny Pervyshov said that the fire completely destroyed the logistical center and injured two people - a 19-year-old man who suffered a concussion, and a 49-year-old woman, who broke her finger.

Elsewhere, two people were killed and two others were wounded in Russia’s Lipetsk region, south of Moscow, after a drone fell on a house, setting it ablaze, the region’s Gov. Igor Artamonov said.

Flood fury at Nepal-China border leaves 98 dead, hundreds missing

UDIN DHUNGA, Nepal, Aug. 26, (AP): Massive flash floods in a border area of Nepal and China on Wednesday killed at least 98 people and left hundreds of tourists, workers and others missing after sweeping through communities and bringing travel in some areas to a halt.

The prime minister's office in Nepal reported at least 95 dead. China's state broadcaster CCTV said a mudslide in the Tibet region's Gyirong County near the border killed at least three and left 265 missing.

Officials in Nepal said 403 people, including 341 foreign nationals, were reported missing. Sunil Sharma, a tourism board spokesperson, said 133 were from India on pilgrimage to Mount Kailash in Tibet, a sacred site for Hindus. Also missing were 47 from the United States, 34 from Australia, 33 from the Britain and 24 from Canada, he said.

At least 62 missing Nepali citi-

zens were among hundreds of locals trekking in the Gosaikunda lake in Rasuwa, coinciding with the local festival of Janai Purnima on Friday, Sharma added. Nepal police spokesperson Abi Narayan Kafle told The Associated Press that at least 28 police officials were missing.

Officials warned residents in several of Nepal's districts to stay away from the banks of the Bhotekoshi, Trishuli and Narayani rivers. The Bhotekoshi flooded around 9 a.m. Wednesday, destroying several villages, roads and hydropower projects, officials said.

"We have asked both India and China to help us with the rescue efforts," said Sasmit Pokharel, a Nepali government spokesperson.

Nepal's steep valleys are economic lifelines and travel corridors but precarious ones when disaster strikes. Images showed what appeared to be the second floors of buildings in hard-hit Nuwakot district slathered in mud after the tor-

rent rushed by. Debris hung from tree branches and wires, vehicles were buried and stunned survivors were caked in mud.

The U.S. Geological Survey reported a magnitude 4.4 earthquake early Wednesday, about 100 kilometers (60 miles) north of Kathmandu, near the border with China's autonomous region of Tibet.

Though the current monsoon season is less favorable for trekking in Nepal, it's a major season for Kailash trekking in Tibet, which follows the route in Nepal's Rasuwa district bordering Tibet's Gyirong.

South Korean government officials said nine of its citizens working on building a hydropower plant in Nepal were among those reported missing.

Malaysia's foreign ministry said its embassy in Kathmandu received reports from travel agencies that they had lost contact with 11 Malaysians believed to be in the Rasuwa district, also hit hard by floods.



A boy looks at the devastation caused by flash flooding along the Trishuli River in Nepal's Nuwakot district, Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2026. (AP)

'This is a major political and security test for govt, int'l mission'

More than 50 kidnapped as violent gang attack in Haiti leaves 47 dead

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, Aug. 26, (AP): At least 47 people were killed and more than 50 others kidnapped when armed men attacked a once-peaceful community near Haiti's capital earlier this week, the United Nations said Tuesday.

It is believed to be one of the largest mass kidnappings in Haiti in recent years, and one gang leader is threatening to kill the hostages if authorities kill any gang members as they try to secure the community nestled in the hills above Port-au-Prince.

Sunday's attack on Kenscoff pierced the belief that security in the troubled Caribbean country was improving.

"This is a major political and security test, for the government, for the police and for the international mission," said Romain Le Cour, head of the Haiti Observatory at the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.

He said the threat of executing hostages is a trap: If forces don't act, they've failed to protect them; if they do and hostages die, the gangs will blame the state.

Kenscoff resident Marc Paul, 42, said gangs kidnapped his brother, stepmother, stepfather and two cousins. He said his 16-year-old niece also was kidnapped and raped but was able

to escape and has reunited with him.

"I had to run over bodies," he said as he recalled how he fled the attack. "I can't sleep knowing all these people died."

Paul and his family had already lost their home to a previous gang attack in January 2025, but he said it was not as violent as Sunday's attack. Paul was upset about the video the gangs posted: "My brother is probably going to die."

In a video posted on social media, the gang leader threatened Vladimir Paraison, director of Haiti's National Police.

"Paraison, if any of our soldiers are hurt, I will kill all of them," he said, referring to the hostages.

The gang member identified himself as Izo 2, a reference to Izo, or Johnson André, one of Haiti's most powerful gang leaders.

Le Cour said Izo 2 is also known as "Didi" and leads the armed group in Kenscoff on behalf of and in coordination with Izo and other gang leaders.

Kenson Paul, the 17-year-old nephew of Marc Paul, said he managed to escape the attackers.

"They have not called us to let us know what they want," he said of the gang. "I worry for my family's life."

Le Cour said the aim of Sunday's attack could be to force Haiti's po-



Men transport an empty coffin on a motorcycle in the Kenscoff neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Haiti on Aug 25. (AP)

lice and the U.N.-backed gang suppression force to disperse even more of their limited resources.

"They don't have enough personnel," Le Cour said in a phone interview. "If you force them to deploy more troops, it would inevitably be at the expense of other areas."

The attack might also just be a show of force and a message to Haiti's government and police as the country prepares to hold general elections on Dec. 13 for the first time in more than a decade.

killed were children, according to the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti, known as BINUH.

U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres condemned the attack on Tuesday, noting that 22 of the victims were reportedly executed in a church compound where they had sought shelter: "The relentless gang attacks on communities and the loss of lives underscore the alarming security conditions in Haiti," he said.

Kenscoff Mayor Jean Massillon told The Associated Press on Tuesday that gangs set fire to 25 homes and killed two government employees including his cousin, who served as his security detail.

"The atrocity of this crime reminds us that we have to continue working stronger every day to bring peace to the community," Massillon said. "I'm optimistic that the state will continue working to eradicate the gangs in Kenscoff."

Gangs are coveting Kenscoff because it allows them to surround and control the upscale community of Pétion-Ville and alternate routes connecting Haiti's capital to its southern region, said María Fernanda Arocha, a researcher with the nonprofit Armed Conflict Location & Event Data.

Between January and August this year, security operations had man-

aged to reduce violence in Kenscoff by 66% prior to the attack, she said in a statement.

"While security forces have concentrated their efforts on operations aimed at regaining control in the central areas of Port-au-Prince, criminal groups have instead sought to expand into rural communities that are vulnerable due to the limited response capacity of the police, but which remain strategic hubs," she added.

Some survivors accused the government of not providing enough protection prior to the attack, with Haiti's National Police rejecting those accusations.

Le Cour said that if police and armored vehicles were indeed stationed in Kenscoff prior to the attack, then the assertion is concerning: "You let the gangs come in even if you had everything in place?"

Haiti's National Police issued a statement Tuesday saying Paraison ordered an investigation to establish the truth about the attack "whether due to complicity or negligence." He also ordered additional specialized units to the area, saying "It is an obligation to protect the civilian population."

Armed men control an estimated 70% of Port-au-Prince and swaths of land in Haiti's central region and beyond.



Sailors and Marines line the deck of aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN-72) as it deploys from San Diego on Jan 3, 2021. (AP)

Pakistan's hospital nursery fire kills 14 newborns, say officials

ISLAMABAD, Aug. 26, (AP): A fire triggered by an exploding air conditioner killed 14 newborns in a hospital nursery in Pakistan's capital on Wednesday, officials said.

One baby of the 15 who were in the nursery at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences was rescued, the hospital said.

Television footage showed rescue workers using ladders to reach the third-floor nursery through broken windows. Grieving parents and relatives gathered at the hospital, some weeping while others demanded answers about how the fire began and whether the nursery had adequate fire-fighting equipment.

The government has opened an investigation, and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif ordered Health Secretary Aslam Ghauri, the Health Ministry's highest civil servant, to be removed from office.

A woman who identified herself as Mrs. Mohammad Sami said she gave birth three days earlier and her baby was receiving intensive care in the nursery when the fire broke out.



A father, (center), of a victim in a fire is comforted as his child's coffin is carried outside a hospital in Islamabad, Pakistan on Aug 25. (AP)

The fire was confined to the nursery at the institute, which is one of Islamabad's largest public hospitals. The rest of the facility was unaffected with no other injuries reported, according to hospital officials and witnesses. The blaze was later extinguished, Islamabad

Chief Commissioner Suhail Ashraf said.

It was among Pakistan's deadliest recent tragedies involving children. In June, 14 schoolchildren were killed when the roof of a tutoring center under construction collapsed in the eastern city of Lahore.

Asia

USS Abraham Lincoln heads to Thailand: The US aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln will make a stop in Thailand after its grueling deployment in the Middle East, Thai officials said Wednesday.

The Lincoln was supporting the US war against Iran, and its deployment included a record-setting uninterrupted time at sea of more than 250 days. Concerns have grown about the Lincoln's lengthy deployment following reports of deteriorating mental health among the crew and shortages of supplies including food and hygiene products.

A Thai government official, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief the press, confirmed that the Lincoln will make a brief visit in Thailand for rest and recovery.

A statement from the Royal Thai Navy on Tuesday said three ships from a US Navy's carrier strike group were scheduled to make a short stopover in eastern Thailand for recuperation and that no military exercises would be carried out during the visit.

It did not identify the ships nor specify the port or their arrival date, citing security concerns. (AP)

Typhoon slams Japan, 2 injured: A powerful typhoon headed west over the East China Sea on Wednesday after slamming Okinawa and other remote southwestern Japanese islands, causing blackouts, flight cancellations and threatening landslides. Two people were slightly injured.

Typhoon Soudel was about 180 kilometers (112

Africa

'Rebel group kills 27 in southern Sudan': Four children were among at least 27 people killed in the latest ethnic clashes in southern Sudan, a local medical group said on Tuesday.

The killings were carried out by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM-N) in Qarduf and Abu Hamama, areas inhabited by the Otoro tribe in South Kordofan, according to the Sudan Doctors Network, which monitors casualty numbers in the war-torn East African country.

The SPLM-N is a breakaway faction of the SPLM, the ruling party of neighboring South Sudan. Its leader Abdel Aziz al-Hilu, has aligned his fighters with the RSF and joined ranks with the RSF-led parallel government. (AP) (AP)

Al-Hilu

Tanzania's vice president resigns: Tanzania's vice president is resigning after less than a year in office, following what analysts say was a power struggle with the country's first female leader.

Vice President Emmanuel Nchimbi offered to vacate the office on Sept. 4, according to a statement released on Tuesday. The presidency confirmed that constitutional measures will be taken to select a new deputy to President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

Nchimbi's statement said he was "fully convinced" that Hassan desires another deputy. "I assure you that I will continue to be a good citizen of Tanzania," it said.

His resignation is remarkable in a country known for its relative stability under the one-party rule of the Chama cha Mapinduzi party, or CCM. (AP)

Liberia's ex-VP to await trial: Liberia's former vice president was sent to prison on Tuesday to await trial on drug trafficking and other charges, after a court in the West African country denied her request to be released on humanitarian grounds for medical treatment.

Jewel Howard-Taylor's lawyers asked the court for her to remain at a local hospital in Monrovia to receive treatment for a health emergency. She suffered an asthma attack and her blood pressure was high while in police custody after her arrest, according to local media reports.

Alongside three other foreign nationals charged in absentia, the former vice president and wife of former president, Charles Taylor, is facing multiple charges for drug trafficking, money laundering and other offenses as part of an investigation into an alleged transnational narcotics network. Howard-Taylor was vice president from 2018 to 2024. (AP)

Kuwait oil price down to \$87.43 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil dropped by USD 5.22 to reach USD 87.43 per barrel during Tuesday’s trading, compared with USD 92.65 pb on Monday, according to Kuwait Petroleum

Corporation (KPC) Wednesday. Globally, Brent crude went down by USD 3.59 to reach USD 88.58 pb, while US West Texas Intermediate dropped by USD 2.65 to reach USD 82.36 pb.

Business

Zain recognized as a key partner to nationwide campaign against drug abuse

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: Zain has been recognized as a key partner to Kuwait’s biggest national awareness campaign against drug abuse, titled “A Nation That Protects You”. The campaign ran for a full month under the patronage of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, with supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs and broad participation from state institutions, the private sector, and civil society organizations.

The closing ceremony was attended by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, Minister of Social Affairs and Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, and Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait. Zain was represented by Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer Waleed Al-Khashti.

As a key partner to this national initiative, Zain reinforced Kuwait’s efforts to protect youth and families, promote preventive awareness, and strengthen society’s resilience in the face of challenges that impact national security and stability.

Zain believes that the fight against drug abuse is a shared national responsibility that requires genuine awareness, effective cross-sector partnership, and a united commitment to ensuring young people do not face this danger alone.

The partnership with this initiative reflected an important model of collaboration between state institutions, the private sector, and civil society. It supported prevention efforts, opened pathways to hope and treatment, and contributed to protecting the future of Kuwait’s youth.

Zain also believes its role goes beyond providing connectivity. It extends to helping build a more aware and empowered society that can move forward with confidence. The company’s participation in this campaign aligns with its corporate purpose, “Better Lives. Lasting Connections.”, placing people at the heart of its priorities



Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah and Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah honor Waleed Al-Khashti in recognition of Zain’s support.

and supporting efforts that create real impact in people’s lives while protecting the bonds that bring families, communities, and the nation together. As a leading TechCo and digital innovator, Zain views

digital awareness as an essential pillar of community protection. By leveraging its platforms, social reach, and capabilities, the company continues to support national efforts that engage youth and families, strengthen prevention, and position technology as a positive force for society’s resilience.

The campaign’s launch coincided with the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and continued for a full month as part of a broad national coalition. It aimed to raise public awareness of the dangers of drugs and psychotropic substances, strengthen prevention efforts, and highlight the importance of confidential treatment for anyone in need of support and assistance.

The campaign targeted youth and families through a wide range of awareness programs and community initiatives, carrying a clear message that combating drug abuse begins with the individual and the family, requires serious action to address the roots of the issue, and depends on continuous cooperation between the different institutions of society to protect Kuwait’s youth and safeguard their future.

Zain’s support for the campaign came as an extension of its long-standing commitment to supporting national initiatives focused on community awareness, youth empowerment, and the promotion of positive values. This reflects its role as a national institution that believes in the importance of partnership in serving society, and in leveraging its presence and capabilities to support causes that strengthen Kuwait’s social security and stability.

Zain also commended the significant efforts of the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs, and all participating entities in this national campaign, reaffirming its continued support for all initiatives that raise awareness, protect youth, and reinforce a shared responsibility that makes prevention, treatment, and community solidarity one unified path toward a safer nation and a better life for all.

Initiative supports national efforts led by the MEWRE to improve resource efficiency

Warba joins national ‘Wafer’ campaign as strategic partner to promote energy and water conservation

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: Warba Bank announced its participation as a strategic partner in the national awareness campaign “Wafer” (Save), launched by the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy (MEWRE). The campaign aims to raise community awareness around electricity and water conservation and support national efforts to reduce pressure on the electricity grid and preserve vital resources.

The partnership forms part of Warba Bank’s corporate social responsibility and sustainability agenda, supporting environmental awareness through collaboration between the public and private sectors.

Campaign Activities:

As part of the campaign, Warba Bank sponsored and produced four awareness videos designed to encourage practical conservation habits:

■ Air Conditioning Management: Practical guidance on using air conditioning more efficiently, adjusting thermostat settings, and turning off units in unoccupied rooms to reduce electricity demand.

■ Water Conservation: Addressing water waste in residential gardens and promoting efficient usage of domestic water heating systems.



Dr. Mohamed Barakat

■ Multi-Channel Distribution: The videos will be shared across the digital and social media channels of MEWRE and Warba Bank, as well as local media platforms including 360 FM, “Diwaniyat

Mahfoof,” “Rukn,” and selected social media influencers.

Executive Commentary:

Dr. Mohamed Barakat, Chief Marketing and Corporate Communications Officer at Warba Bank, stated:

“Warba Bank’s participation in the ‘Wafer’ campaign reflects our commitment to partnering with government entities on initiatives that directly benefit society. Resource conservation is a shared responsibility across public institutions, private entities, and individuals.”

Dr. Barakat added: “By producing awareness videos focused on simple, actionable daily habits and sharing them across digital platforms and local media, we aim to encourage practical conservation habits in everyday life and support the country’s broader resource efficiency goals.”

About Warba Bank:

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



Al-Awazem showcases Kuwait’s institutional charity model in Brazil.

Al-Bseis represents Kuwait at Brazil-Arab Economic Forum

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: As part of Kuwait’s active participation in international economic and development forums, Founder and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Al-Awazem Charitable Foundation and UN Ambassador for Community Partnership, Hamad Zaid Saud Al-Bseis, participated in the fifth edition of the Brazil-Arab States Economic Forum 2026, held in São Paulo, Brazil.

According to a press release, Al-Bseis’s participation, as part of the Regional Network for Social Responsibility delegation, underscored the network’s role in building bridges of cooperation between Arab and international institutions, promoting social responsibility and sustainability, and supporting development and economic partnerships that create a sustainable impact.

On the sidelines of the forum, Al-Bseis presented William Abid Deep Jr., the forum’s organizer and President of the Arab-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, with a copy of the Al-Awazem Charitable Foun-

dition’s documentary publication titled “The Idea and the Establishment.” The publication chronicles the foundation’s transformation from a community-based initiative into a corporate charitable entity based on governance, organized operations, and sustainability.

The presentation reflects the Al-Awazem Charitable Foundation’s commitment to showcasing Kuwait’s pioneering experience in charitable and institutional work, highlighting the State of Kuwait’s historical and contemporary contributions to social responsibility and humanitarian action, and sharing its experience on international platforms.

The participation also reflects the synergy between Kuwait’s humanitarian efforts, the regional and international role of the Regional Network for Social Responsibility, and the Al-Awazem Charitable Foundation’s experience in documenting institutional practices, promoting governance and sustainability, and measuring societal impact.

US economic push against Iran faces China challenge

WASHINGTON, Aug 26, (AP): The “economic onslaught” that Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has declared on Iran’s financial connections around the world may have one major caveat: China.

Beijing is Iran’s biggest trading partner and its leading oil buyer. While the U.S. is trying to isolate the Islamic Republic from its remaining economic partners, President Donald Trump also is preparing to host Chinese leader Xi Jinping next month to maintain a fragile trade truce.

Absent from Bessent’s remarks this week were specifics about how the Trump administration would target China, casting doubts on how effective the new campaign would be when the U.S. must balance putting maximum pressure on Iran and avoiding higher tensions with China that could be costly to the American economy.

“The announcement yesterday was very careful in my view to avoid specifics (against China), which could have led to a disruption in the summit,” Edgard Kagan, senior adviser and Freeman Chair in China studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said Tuesday. “For Xi, a state visit to Washington is a big deal; and for Trump, hosting it is a big deal.”

That means both Washington and Beijing will have a dance to do, said Kagan, who served as U.S. ambassador to Malaysia from December

2023 until this February.

“I think the real question is, is there room to push (the Chinese) to reduce what they’re doing with Iran, to put more pressure on the Iranian regime in a way that doesn’t lead them to say, ‘This is unreasonable, and we’re not going to comply,’” he said.

In response to “Operation Economic Outcast,” which Bessent announced Monday, Beijing said its cooperation with Iran has always been “within the framework of international law.” China receives more than 80% of Iranian oil shipments but usually through indirect channels.

Lin Jian, a spokesperson for the Chinese foreign ministry, said China-Iran cooperation “should not be disrupted or undermined.”

“China is closely monitoring relevant developments and will take all necessary measures to resolutely safeguard its own rights and interests,” Lin said. He repeated China’s opposition to “illegal unilateral sanctions.”

Kagan described Beijing’s remarks as “a holding response” and said Beijing will try to do the least to comply without openly confronting the U.S.

“They’ve tended to be careful not crossing explicit red lines, but they haven’t addressed the spirit of what the U.S. has sought,” Kagan said, pointing to practices such as ship-to-ship oil trans-

fers that obscure the origin of Iranian crude oil to evade American sanctions.

Sun Yun, director of the China program at the Stimson Center, a Washington think tank, said China will not go along with the new campaign if the U.S. goal is to destroy the Iranian economy and seek the government’s collapse.

But “if the goal is to exert enough pressure for Iran to make concessions on the Strait of Hormuz and potentially ending the conflict, I think China can and will demonstrate its cooperation without having to completely sever ties with Iran,” Sun said. “China only needs to do enough to demonstrate it is cooperating, such as cut back on its oil import from Iran.”

With a planned summit between Trump and Xi weeks away, “neither side wishes to have a major escalation bilaterally at this point,” she said. “China needs to give U.S. something, and U.S. needs to understand and accept that it is not going to be everything U.S. asks for.”

So far, the Trump administration has refrained from imposing sanctions on major Chinese businesses or banks connected to the U.S. financial system and thus vulnerable to American penalties.

The Treasury Department said Monday that it was penalizing nearly 60 Iran-linked entities, accusing them of involvement in Iran’s nuclear and missile programs, cyber activities and oil shipments.

Iran’s gas lines are growing, but there’s no sign so far that its leaders will bow to US sanctions

DUBAI, Aug 26, (AP): Lines have grown outside gas stations across Tehran in recent weeks as the United States has tightened its blockade and threatened more severe sanctions, with some people waiting for two hours or more to fill up.

The uncertainty deepened on Tuesday, after U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent vowed to fully sever the country from the global economy. In recent days, Iranian officials have spoken of a possible reduction in heavy gas subsidies as they seek to endure the tightening blockade.

“Maybe we will face a shortage of fuel,” said Hashem Abadi, a 34-year-old barber. “I rush to the filling stations whenever my tank is down to half or so.”

The latest U.S. measures are aimed at wringing concessions from the Islamic Republic nearly six months into the war launched by President Donald Trump and Israel. The war has already battered Iran’s economy and inflicted mounting pain on ordinary people. But there’s no sign yet that it has brought Iran’s leaders to their knees, or that it will reignite the anti-government protests that convulsed the country in January.

The lines had been growing longer well before Bessent’s announcement, amid shortages caused by the American blockade and existing sanctions. And with double-digit inflation and the rial currency at a record low, Iranians are struggling to afford more than just fuel.

“I’m filling my car as much as possible since soon it will be sold at higher prices,” said 51-year-old taxi driver Mahmoud Chavoshi. “Everything I buy has grown more expensive over the last week, from milk to pasta.”

There were no such lineups outside banks, and grocery stores and pharmacies are still well-stocked, but customers complained about being able

to afford less. Inflation has soared during the war, and the currency hit a record low ahead of Bessent’s announcement.

“Some of our regular customers buy now and pay later, since their pockets are not as full as before,” said Morteza Daryani, who runs a grocery store in Tehran.

Iran’s President Masoud Pezeshkian accused the U.S. of resorting to economic pressure after failing to defeat Iran militarily. He said it was trying to create “social problems and economic dissatisfaction in order to throw Iran into chaos.”

“Should we bow down to the problems and surrender? Absolutely not,” he was quoted as saying by the semiofficial Fars and Tasnim news agencies.

There are no signs yet that the economic discontent has translated into protests in Iran, where authorities violently crushed demonstrations at the start of the year, killing thousands.

Iran has been under heavy international sanctions for decades due to its nuclear program and support for armed groups. Oil sales to China have long provided a lifeline, and it’s unclear if the U.S. can cut them off.

Still, there are “always limits to resistance and resilience,” said Mohammad Farzanegan, a professor of Middle Eastern economics at the University of Marburg in Germany.

“People are losing their purchasing power every day,” he said. “All of this, combined with worsening diplomatic prospects and the psychological burden of mounting pressures, could push frustration to a point where it can no longer be effectively managed by the state.”

Esfandiyar Batmanghelidj, who heads the Bourse & Bazaar Foundation, a think tank focused on Iran’s economy, said the sectors that Bessent

threatened to target “are not lifelines for the Iranian state, they are lifelines for the Iranian people.”

In an analysis posted on X, Batmanghelidj said digital assets and gold are how Iranians protect their savings, technology keeps them connected with the world, aviation allows them to travel, and shipping is how food and medicine reach Iran.

At the moment, the most effective economic pressure has come from the naval blockade.

But last week’s announcement from the United Arab Emirates that it was cutting off all trade and financial transactions with Iran could have longer-term effects if the country follows through, said Sascha Bruchmann, an analyst with the International Institute of Strategic Studies’ Middle East office in Bahrain.

Bessent, who on Monday threatened secondary American sanctions on countries doing business with Iran, suggested it was pressure from Washington that led the UAE to its decision.

“Actions that they took last week were not coincident but likely causal, and I would expect that we would see a broad array of countries taking similar actions as we continue our engagement,” he said.

Iran is exerting pressure of its own by largely closing the Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway that carried a fifth of the world’s oil and gas before the war. It’s betting that the impact on the global economy - and U.S. gas prices ahead of midterm elections - will force Trump to back down.

“Trump is betting that their time runs out first due to the naval blockade,” Bruchmann said. “Both clocks are ticking, and no one knows which clock is right.”

Operating income up 11% year-on-year

NBK-Egypt delivers net profit of EGP 4.2 billion in 1H2026

CAIRO, Aug 26: National Bank of Kuwait – Egypt (NBK-Egypt) reported a net profit of EGP 4.2 billion (equivalent to KWD 26.1 million) for the first half of 2026. Net operating income increased to EGP 8.6 billion in 1H2026, compared to EGP 7.7 billion in the corresponding period of 2025, reflecting growth of 11% year-on-year. Net interest income rose by 7.4% to EGP 7.2 billion, compared to EGP 6.7 billion in 1H2025, while net operating income, excluding interest, increased by 32% to EGP 1.31 billion, up from EGP 0.99 billion in the same period of 2025.

Income from financial investments also increased significantly, reaching EGP 56 million in 1H2026, compared to EGP 27 million in the corresponding period of 2025, representing growth of 111%. Meanwhile, the cost-to-net operating income ratio stood at 27% during the first half of 2026.

Total assets grew to EGP 270 billion at the end of 1H2026, compared to approximately EGP 225 billion at year-end 2025, representing growth of 20%. Net loans and credit facilities to banks and customers increased to approximately EGP 147 billion, up around 22% from EGP 121 billion at the end of 2025. Customer deposits rose to EGP 206 billion at the end of 1H2026, compared to EGP 180 billion at year-end 2025, reflecting growth of 14%. The ratio of Net Fees and Commissions to Net Operating Income increased to 11.6%, compared to 10.2% in the corresponding period of 2025. Return on Average Assets (ROAA) stood at 3.4% in 1H2026, while Return on Average Equity (ROAE) reached 26.9%.

Commenting on the financial results, Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer, National Bank of Kuwait, and Chairman of NBKEgypt, said: “NBK Egypt delivered strong operating performance in the first half of 2026, reflecting the strength of our financial position and the resilience of our business model, which continues to generate solid earnings and sustainable growth despite a challenging macroeconomic environment.”

Al-Bahar emphasized that, amid an increasingly challenging global economic landscape, the Bank continues to perform well, supported by balanced growth across its key business segments and a flexible operating strategy.

She noted that the continued expansion of the Bank’s balance sheet and improvement across most financial indicators underscore the success of its business diversification strategy and accelerated digital transformation, aimed at increasing its market share, particularly in retail banking, within the region’s largest market by population.

Al-Bahar added that, in line with the Group’s commitment to digital transformation, NBK Egypt continued to deliver an advanced digital banking experience supported by innovative solutions that meet evolving customer expectations and keep pace with changing market dynamics.

“We are focused on enhancing the quality of our services, expanding our geographic footprint, and reaching a broader range of customer segments, supported by the significant progress the Bank has made in modernizing its IT infrastructure and digital channels. These developments have advanced considerably and strengthened NBK Egypt’s competitive position in the Egyptian market,” Al-Bahar added.

She also noted: “Egypt represents a key growth market for the Group and a strategic long-term investment. The growth we continue to achieve reinforces



Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar

Al-Bahar:

- We delivered strong operating performance across our key business segments in the first half of the year
- We continue to advance our digital infrastructure and IT capabilities, further strengthening our competitive position in the banking sector
- The Bank’s financial indicators demonstrate that we remain firmly on track for further expansion and increased market share
- Our focus remains on enhancing service quality, expanding our market presence, and reaching a broader range of customer segments

El-Tayeb:

- The Bank continues to deliver strong performance, with robust growth across all key financial indicators despite operating challenges
- We remain focused on strengthening our position across both corporate and retail banking
- Expanding our digital services and supporting the continued shift toward digital transformation remain key priorities
- We continue to support the global transition toward sustainable finance and a green economy

the Group’s foresight in pursuing this investment, which we aim to further expand amid rising demand for banking services and increasing levels of financial inclusion.”

Meanwhile, Mr. Yasser El-Tayeb, Vice Chairman, CEO and Managing Director of National Bank of Kuwait – Egypt, said: “The Bank’s strong financial figures and indicators clearly demonstrate its ability to sustain growth and deliver solid business results during the first half of 2026, despite the operational challenges weighing on the business environment both locally and globally.”

El-Tayeb noted that NBK Egypt’s growth remains well balanced across all business activities, while maintaining efficiency levels and risk metrics that support both growth and long-term business sustainability. This reflects the Bank’s prudent strategy and disciplined business model, which enables it to respond flexibly to evolving customer needs.

El-Tayeb added that NBK Egypt’s income streams are predominantly driven by credit activities through the corporate banking segment, alongside the increasingly significant contribution of retail banking, particularly in recent years. The Bank’s credit portfolio is highly diversified, encompassing large corporates as well as small and medium-sized enterprises, while its retail portfolio spans a broad range of customer segments. This diversification reflects the strength and resilience of the Bank’s income structure.

He emphasized that the Bank is focused on further strengthening its position in the retail banking segment over the coming period by introducing advanced products and services tailored to the needs of different customer segments and reinforcing its position as a comprehensive banking provider capable of meeting their diverse financial requirements. The Bank also seeks to expand its Islamic banking services to meet the needs of a broad customer base, while continuously enhancing the products offered in this segment. NBK Egypt is among the leading banks in the Egyptian market offering both Islamic and conventional banking products and services.

El-Tayeb further noted that, recognizing the pivotal role of technology and digital applications in advancing the banking sector and their importance in strengthening banks’ competitiveness and enhancing the quality of services delivered to customers, NBK Egypt has accelerated the expansion of its digital banking services and made significant investments in this area. These efforts are aimed at delivering a differentiated banking experience that enables customers to complete most of their banking transactions anytime and anywhere. The Bank also continues to encourage broader adoption of electronic channels and payment methods, in line with the strategic direction of the state and the Central Bank of Egypt. The recent launch of the latest update to the Bank’s mobile banking application represents an important step in this direction and reflects its continued commitment to providing advanced digital solutions that meet customer expectations and evolving banking needs.

Moreover, El-Tayeb emphasized that NBK Egypt remains firmly committed to supporting the global transition toward sustainable finance and a green economy, while backing environmentally friendly projects that promote sustainability and make greater use of renewable energy. The Bank also continues to explore available solutions to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change and reduce carbon emissions, recognizing sustainable finance as one of the key tools for supporting and preserving long-term financial stability.

Core inflation steady at 3.3%

US inflation holds at 3.7% in July, above Fed’s 2% target

WASHINGTON, Aug 26, (AP): An inflation measure closely watched by the Federal Reserve was unchanged last month in the latest sign that many Americans are still struggling with higher costs.

The Commerce Department’s Wednesday report showed that prices rose 3.7% in July compared with a year earlier, the same as June. Inflation has worsened since the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran in late February, when it stood at 2.9%. It’s noticeably above the Fed’s target of 2%.

Stubbornly high prices are shaping up to be a key issue in the midterm elections, now just 10 weeks away, particularly as the Iran war keeps gas prices high, President Donald Trump is threatening new tariffs on Canada and China, and spending on AI infrastructure has pushed up the cost of computers, gaming consoles, and semiconductors.

The new inflation data is unlikely to fully resolve a split at the Federal Reserve, where most officials are willing to hold interest rates steady to see if inflation can cool on its own. But many Fed officials have supported raising rates in a bid to slow borrowing and spending to combat higher prices. New Fed Chair Kevin Warsh will deliver a high-profile speech Friday in Jackson Hole, Wyoming that will be closely watched by Wall Street for any signs of his thinking about next steps.

Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, core inflation was also unchanged at 3.3% in July. It had fallen to 2.6% before President Donald Trump imposed sweeping tariffs in April 2025.

Separately, a second estimate from the government Wednesday showed that the economy grew at a sluggish pace in the April-June quarter, expanding at a 1.5% annual rate, down from 2.1% in the first quarter. Still, consumer spending was healthy and businesses ramped up investment in AI infrastructure.

Americans may be turning more cautious as inflation stays high. Consumer spending, adjusted for inflation, was unchanged in July.

On a monthly basis, overall inflation

rose 0.2% from June to July, after declining 0.1% the previous month and jumping 0.5% in May. Core prices also moved up 0.2% from June to July, higher than 0.1% in the previous month. Some Fed officials have said that core inflation running at about 0.2% a month would be a reassuring sign that inflation is heading back to the 2% target.

Gas and other energy prices fell sharply last month, the report showed, declining 2.7% from June to July. Grocery prices also slipped 0.1%. Yet car prices jumped 0.4% and the cost of housing and utilities moved up 0.3%.

On a more positive note, Americans’ incomes rose at a healthy clip. Adjusting for inflation, they increased 0.4%, the best showing since February. Still, compared with a year ago, Americans’ incomes have just kept pace with inflation.

And gas prices have rebounded this month, which will likely push up inflation when the August figures are reported next month. Prices ticked up again overnight to \$4.10 per gallon on average, according to the AAA. Many Fed officials worry that with inflation topping their target for more than five years, higher rates may be necessary to get price increases under control.

Persistent inflation has contributed to higher longer-term interest rates, which have lifted borrowing costs for things like mortgages, auto loans, and credit cards. Many Wall Street analysts say that a lack of clarity from Fed chair Warsh about how the Fed will respond to persistent inflation has also pushed up those rates. The yield on 30-year Treasury bonds briefly reached a 19-year higher earlier this month, prompting an unusual intervention by Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent.

Bessent said the Treasury would double its buybacks of longer term bonds - those lasting for 10 to 30 years - starting next month. Such a move would raise Treasury prices and lower yields, which move in the opposite direction. The announcement initially had little effect, though yields have since declined.

Haif Al-Huwaileh named Director of Operations for North Kuwait

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: The CEO of Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) Ahmad Al-Eidan has implemented a series of organizational changes that will take effect next Tuesday.

Haif Khaled Al-Huwaileh has been appointed as Director of Operations for North Kuwait.

A decision on the Director of Operations for West Kuwait has been postponed.

Mohammed Fahad Al-Otaibi has been appointed

as Director of Operations Support.

Ali Hussein Qassem has been appointed Director of Operations Safety Management in the Commercial and Project Engineering Directorate.

According to informed sources, these administrative changes go beyond mere reshuffling and form a fundamental pillar for strengthening Kuwait’s oil security and enhancing operational efficiency.

The new appointments will contribute to accelerating tactical decision-making and supporting the state’s strategic plans aimed at increasing

production capacity and meeting global market demand, in addition to strengthening the safety of assets and infrastructure.

These structural changes will bring significant benefits to the oil sector, including delegating authority to qualified national leaders, ensuring production stability, and supporting the state’s ambitious plans.

The new appointments also aim to strengthen governance and occupational safety systems that protect petroleum assets and minimize risks at facilities.

KOC strengthens operations with new appointments

Committing to stable energy supplies with US partners

Kuwait, US Congress delegation discuss energy cooperation and supply security

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): Oil Ministry Undersecretary Sheikh Dr. Nemer Fahad Al-Malek Al-Sabah discussed Wednesday with a US Congress delegation ways to enhance communication and exchange views on issues of common interest in the energy sector.

In a press statement, Al-Sabah affirmed the depth of the historic and close relations between Kuwait and the United States, characterized by a well-established partnership and longstanding cooperation across various fields.

He noted Kuwait’s keenness to continue strengthening frameworks for cooperation and coordination between the two friendly countries, particularly in the energy sector, in a manner that serves their common interests and supports the security and stability of energy supplies.

For its part, the US delegation expressed its appreciation for the close relations between the two friendly countries, praising the level of existing cooperation and coordination and stressing the importance of continuing dialogue and exchanging views on issues of common interest, particularly energy and supply security, in a way that contributes to strengthening bilateral cooperation during the



KUNA photo
Oil Ministry Undersecretary Sheikh Dr. Nemer Fahad Al-Malek Al-Sabah, during his reception with the US delegation.

coming phase.

The statement said the US delegation included Yakira Rosen and John Tucci from the majority staff of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Francesca Irimeva from the minority

staff of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

The delegation also included Payson Roll from the minority staff of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Ashley

Mott from the office of Republican Representative Webb Emmer, Deputy Economic Advisor Brian Shelburne, and economic specialists Karen Nasrallah and Marwan Al-Haddad.

Imports drag US growth lower in second quarter

US economy expanded at sluggish 1.5% pace in second quarter, on par with earlier estimate

WASHINGTON, Aug 26, (AP): The U.S. economy grew at a sluggish 1.5% pace from April through June. But consumer spending stayed strong.

Growth in gross domestic product - the nation’s output of a goods and services - decelerated from a 2.1% pace from January through March, the Commerce Department reported Wednesday. The second-quarter growth number was unchanged from the department’s first estimate.

Still, consumer spending - which accounts for about 70% of U.S. economic activity - increased at a healthy 3.4% annual clip, up from 0.5% in the January-March period.

The reason for the lackluster growth was imports. They are subtracted from growth because GDP is only supposed to count domestic production. Imports rose at a 12.5% annual pace from April through June, partly due to a surge in shipments of computer chips and other products that support artificial intelligence investment, and sliced 1.64 percentage points off second-quarter growth.

Beyond the headline figures, the U.S. economy has proven surprisingly resilient in the face of fighting with Iran and the spike in energy prices it caused. Business investment, excluding housing, rose at a 8.5% pace in the second quarter, reflecting the AI investment boom. And a measure of the economy’s underlying strength - which strips out volatile government



An employee checks a customer’s identification card before checking out alcohol at a cash register in a grocery store in Arlington Heights, Ill., Monday, July 6, 2026. (AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh)

spending and trade numbers - grew at a strong 4.2% rate, up from 1.7% in the first quarter.

Investment in housing rose, ticking up for the first time since the end of 2024. The housing market has been depressed by high mortgage rates.

Wednesday’s report was the second of three Commerce Department looks at second-quarter GDP growth. The third and final report is due Sept. 30.

Also on Wednesday, the U.S. reported that an inflation measure closely watched by the Federal Reserve was unchanged last month in the latest sign that many Americans are still struggling with higher costs.

The Commerce Department’s report showed that prices rose 3.7% in July compared with a year earlier, but the pace was the same as June. Inflation has worsened since the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran in late February, when it stood at 2.9%. It’s noticeably above the Fed’s target of 2%.

Stubbornly high prices are shaping up to be a key issue in the midterm elections, now just 10 weeks away, particularly as the Iran war keeps gas prices high, President Donald Trump is threatening new tariffs on Canada and China, and spending on AI infrastructure has pushed up the cost of computers, gaming consoles, and semiconductors.

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Luxury destination transforms its iconic lobby into an evolving cultural showcase

Waldorf Astoria Kuwait celebrates Kuwait's creative spirit with a curated three-month art exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: Art has always been central to Waldorf Astoria Kuwait experience, reflected throughout the property's curated collection of bespoke installations, architectural details, and exceptional craftsmanship. Building on this artistic foundation, the hotel will unveil a three-month exhibition celebrating the region's creative talent, bringing together distinguished artists from Kuwait and the wider region in an immersive cultural showcase.

Running from September through November 2026, the exhibition will showcase the hotel's iconic lobby into a dynamic gallery where heritage, craftsmanship, and contemporary artistic expression come together. The showcase will feature four acclaimed artists working across diverse disciplines, including wood sculpture, glass art, contemporary Arabic calligraphy, and thread art, with each presenting unique works created to complement the spirit and identity of Waldorf Astoria Kuwait.

Commenting on the cultural initiative, Saleh Bataineh, General Manager of Waldorf Astoria Kuwait, stated: "At Waldorf Astoria Kuwait, we believe that true luxury hospitality extends beyond exceptional service; it is about creating meaningful connections and enriching the communities we are part of. As someone who has always had a deep appreciation for art, I am especially excited to see this exhibition come to life and have no doubt it will become a remarkable platform for artistic expression and cultural dialogue. Art has always been a defining element of our identity, and through this exhibition, we are proud to provide a distinguished platform for local and regional artists to share their stories, inspire our guests, and encourage creative dialogue. We hope every visitor discovers a new perspective and leaves with a deeper appreciation for the region's rich artistic landscape."

The exhibition will feature acclaimed wood artist Yahya Abdul-



Waldorf Astoria Kuwait



Yahya Jeragh



Wood Art



Mohammed S. Alduwaisan



Glass Art



Abeer Javed



Calligraphy

jaleel Jeragh, founder of Khashabaty, whose handcrafted creations celebrate the beauty and history of reclaimed and centuries-old timber. Inspired by organic forms and traditional craftsmanship, Jeragh transforms rare natural materials into sculptural works that preserve the character and heritage of wood. Created exclusively for Waldorf Astoria Kuwait, The Final Beginning features three teak wood sculptures carved from more than 150-year-old trunks, inspired by the traditional mabkhara and reflecting the enduring relationship between nature, heritage, and craftsmanship.

Adding a distinctive dimension



Maison Qassem



Sadu weaving

to the showcase, Mohammed S. Alduwaisan, founder of Gizaz Art Academy, brings together Italian glassmaking techniques with Arabian narratives and Kuwait's natural landscapes. Recognized as a pioneer in regional glass sculpture, Alduwaisan has represented Kuwait at international platforms including Expo Dubai and the Diriyah Biennale. For the exhibition, he will unveil Waldorf Astoria Daza, a handcrafted bridal collection in borosilicate glass featuring mirrors, mabkharas, and ceremonial accessories that reinterpret Kuwaiti traditions through contemporary glass artistry.

The exhibition will also showcase the contemporary Arabic calligraphy of Abeer Javed, who reinterprets traditional script through a refined and minimalist approach. Her work combines meaningful verses with elegant textures and harmonious color palettes, creating a dialogue between heritage and contemporary design. For Waldorf Astoria Kuwait, Javed will present an exclusive monumental three-panel composition featuring Surah Al-Ikhlâs, Salawat upon the Prophet, and Ayat Al-Kursi, offering a contemplative interpretation of Islamic calligraphy.

Completing the lineup is artist and entrepreneur Maisam Qassem, whose intricate thread artworks celebrate Gulf heritage and the traditional craft of Sadu weaving. Through the combination of wood, leather, nails, and textiles, Qassem transforms traditional techniques into contemporary expressions of cultural identity. As part of the exhibition, she will create a bespoke thread artwork live throughout November, reimagining Kuwait's historic Quarter Dinar banknote and inviting guests to witness the evolution of heritage into contemporary art.

Developed by Mabanee, Waldorf Astoria Kuwait was envisioned as a living canvas where contemporary design and artistic expression coexist seamlessly. Today, the hotel's public spaces, signature suites, and fine dining venues feature a museum-quality permanent collection of local, regional, and international artworks. Continuing this legacy, the exhibition will introduce a selection of original commissions and one-of-a-kind creations developed exclusively for the property, further strengthening the connection between art, architecture, and hospitality.

Through this exhibition, Waldorf Astoria Kuwait reinforces its position as a cultural destination where luxury hospitality, distinctive design, and authentic storytelling converge to celebrate the region's evolving creative landscape.

KTMCC 11th Talent Test to be held on August 27

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: The 11th Talent Test of the Kuwait Town Malayalee Christian Congregation (KTMCC) will be held on Thursday, August 27.

The competitions will begin at 8:00 a.m. at various venues within the NECK campus. More than 750 participants from 35 churches belonging to the Mar Thoma, CSI, Evangelical, Brethren, and Pentecostal denominations, including churches in NECK and St. Paul's Church, Ahmadi, will take part in the event.

Competitions will be conducted in various categories, including music, group song, speech, short story writing, instrumental music, essay writing, quiz, drawing, and photography. A video news bulletin competition based on the events of the Talent Test Day will also be held. The competitions will be conducted in three age

groups.

The programme will be telecast live by Harvest TV.

Rev. Arun Bose, President of KECF, will inaugurate the event. The valedictory function will be held at 2:00 p.m., during which prizes will be distributed to the winners. Distinguished guests, along with spiritual leaders and social and cultural leaders from various churches, will attend the function.

A 100-member committee is working under the leadership of Ajos Mathew (General Convener), Shibu V. Sam, Shijo Thomas, Roy K. Yohannan (NECK Secretary), Saju Vazhayil Thomas, Kuruvila Cherian (President), Jino Areekal (Treasurer), Deepak Philip Thomas, Reju Daniel John, and other KTMCC committee members for the successful conduct of the Talent Test.

First-day jitters? Talk it out, visit school to ease anxiety

NEW YORK, Aug 26, (AP): After a summer of vacations and late nights, it's time to set those back-to-school alarms.

A good night's sleep helps students stay focused and attentive in class. Experts say it's worth easing kids back into a routine with the start of a new school year.

"We don't say 'get good sleep' just because," said pediatrician Dr. Gabrina Dixon with Children's National Hospital. "It really helps kids learn and it helps them function throughout the day."

The amount of sleep kids need changes as they age. Preschoolers should get up to 13 hours of sleep. Tweens need between nine and 12 hours. Teenagers do best with eight to 10 hours of shut-eye.

Early bedtimes can slip through the cracks over the summer as kids stay up for sleepovers, movie marathons and long plane flights. To get back on track, experts recommend setting earlier bedtimes a week or two before the first day of school or gradually going to bed 15 to 30 minutes earlier each night.

Don't serve a heavy meal before bed and avoid TV or screen time two hours before sleep. Instead, work on relaxing activities to slow down, like showering and reading a story.

"You're trying to take the cognitive load off your mind," said Dr. Nitun Verma, a spokesperson for the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. "It would be like if you're driving, you're slowly letting go of the gas pedal."

Parents can adjust their back-to-school plans based on what works best for their child. Nikkya Hargrove moves her twin daughters' bedtimes up by 30 minutes the week before school starts.

Sometimes, her kids will negotiate for a few extra minutes to stay up and read. Hargrove said those conversations are important as her children get older and advocate for themselves. If they stay up too late and don't have the best morning, Hargrove said that can be a learning experience too.

"If they're groggy and they don't like how they feel, then they know, 'OK, I have to go to bed earlier,'" said Hargrove, an author and independent bookstore owner from Connecticut.

In the morning, soaking in some daylight by sitting at a window or going outside can help train the brain to power up, Verma said.

Sleep quality matters just as much as duration. First-day jitters can make it hard to fall asleep no matter how early the bedtime.

Bindu John leads interactive public speaking session in Fahaheel

PPF Kuwait hosts public speaking workshop

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: Progressive Professional Forum (PPF) Kuwait successfully conducted "Speak to Spark," a public speaking skills development workshop for high school students in Kuwait, showcasing its commitment to empowering young minds and building a confident future generation.

The workshop was held at Kohinoor Auditorium, Fahaheel, and was facilitated by Mrs. Bindu John, Corporate Trainer. She conducted an engaging and highly interactive session designed to help students overcome stage fear, build confidence, express their ideas effectively, and develop essential public speaking skills. The participants responded enthusiastically and actively engaged throughout the session.

The program began with a welcome address by PPF Kuwait General Secretary Mr. Bipin Punathil, followed by the presidential address by PPF Kuwait President Mr. Anil Kumar.

The workshop also showcased the professionalism, teamwork, and commitment of the PPF Executive Committee in planning and executing programs focused on the development of the younger generation. The coordinated efforts of the ExCom members and volunteers ensured the smooth and successful conduct of the event.

The program concluded with a vote of thanks by Program Convener Mr. Shaji Madathil, who expressed gratitude to the facilitator, students, parents, volunteers, and all PPF members who contributed to the success of the initiative.



Photos during the workshop.



Through initiatives such as "Speak to Spark," PPF continues its

efforts to nurture confident speakers, develop future leaders, and meaning-

fully contribute to the growth of the next generation.

Concluding event of IMA's 10-day Seerah campaign

IMA Kuwait to organize 'Jalsa-e-Seeratun Nabi'

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Kuwait under the patronage of Ministry of Islamic Affairs (Foreign Relations Department), Kuwait, cordially invites Muslims and their families and friends to attend its annual "Jalsa-e-Seeratun Nabi", marking the concluding programme of IMA's ongoing 10-Day Seerah Campaign.

The special evening celebrating the life, character and timeless message of Prophet Muhammad, will be held on Thursday, 27 August 2026, immediately after Isha Prayer, with programs organized at two venues in Kuwait.

NORTH ZONE: Masjid Adsani, Behind Sheraton Hotel, Maliya, Kuwait City. The Program will feature: "Building a Better Society Through the Teachings of the Seerah"; Moulana Sifat Alam; "Raising the Next Generation Through the Seerah"; Moulana Umar Falahi

SOUTH ZONE: Maryam Masjid, Mahboula
The Program will feature: "Building a Better Society Through the Teachings of the Seerah"; Moulana Irfan Nadv; "Raising the Next Generation Through the Seerah"; Moulana Waleed Umri

The Programs will explore how the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad offers timeless guidance for building a better Society — through Justice, Compassion, Integrity, Mutual Respect and Responsible Conduct — and how the Prophet's Exemplary Life can inspire Parents, Educators and Communities in nurturing the next Generation with Strong Character, Faith and Values.

As the concluding event of IMA's 10-Day Seerah Campaign, the Jalsa will bring together the campaign's central message: the Seerah is not merely history to be remembered, but a model to be understood, lived and shared with humanity.

Separate Arrangement for Ladies • Dinner Packets will be served
Come • Listen • Reflect • Learn • Live the Seerah
For Program updates and further information:
60001424 | 97378675
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Desert flower tells a homeland story



“The Desert Flower,” from the “Tales of a Homeland” series by Kuwaiti author Tasneem Al-Hasawi. (KUNA photos)

‘Arfaj Buds’ nurturing pride from the roots

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26, (KUNA): Amidst the Arfaj flower and tales of the homeland, children on Tuesday enjoyed an interactive cultural and artistic experience evoking the values of resilience, loyalty and belonging during the open day titled “Arfaj Buds: From the Land of Kuwait, the Story grow and Loyalty Flourishes.”

The event was held at the Kuwait National Library as part of the 18th Cultural Summer Festival organized by the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL).

The event drew inspiration from the Arfaj flower, Kuwait's national flower, through a range of creative activities aimed at strengthening national identity, developing children's artistic sensibilities and introducing them to the values and meanings embodied by national symbols.

The event included an interactive reading session of “The Desert Flower,” from the “Tales of a Homeland” series by Kuwaiti author Tasneem Al-Hasawi, aimed at children aged five to 12.

Chairperson of the festival's Cultural Activities Committee Fawzia Al-Ali told KUNA that, in addition to the story reading, the event featured artistic activities for children, including coloring, drawing on models and works designed to strengthen national identity, as well as a screening of the film “Our Gulf Shines,” produced by the Joint Program Production Institution of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Al-Ali explained that the film tells the story of the resilience of the GCC countries in the face of the challenges they have experienced, noting that the Arfaj flower was chosen as the centerpiece of the event because of its status as a national symbol and the connotations it carries.

For her part, author Tasneem Al-Hasawi told KUNA that she was pleased to participate in the event, which is being held in honor of frontline heroes and their families, highlighting the sacrifices, loyalty, patience and support these families have provided to frontline heroes in the interest of preserving Kuwait's security and safety.

Al-Hasawi explained that “The Desert Flower” aims to strengthen children's national identity through a story inspired by a national symbol embodying the values of resilience and generosity.



Kuwaiti author Tasneem Al-Hasawi



Kuwaiti author Tasneem Al-Hasawi interacts with children.



“The Desert Flower,” from the “Tales of a Homeland” series by Kuwaiti author Tasneem Al-Hasawi.



A participant holding “The Desert Flower,” from the “Tales of a Homeland” series.

Culture crosses borders

Chinese film ‘Dear You’ finds a global audience

BANGKOK, Aug 26, (AP): The buzziest film in China this year was shot almost entirely in a southern Chinese dialect that most Chinese viewers need subtitles to understand.

Yet “Dear You” has become China's second-highest-grossing film of the year. Now it is heading overseas, part of a broader wave of Chinese cultural exports.

“Dear You” was shot mostly in Teochew, a dialect spoken in Guangdong's Shantou region. Set among the Teochew immigrant community in Bangkok, it tells the story of people who left China in search of work to support their families. Made on a low budget, it features a cast of mostly unknown actors.

The film provides a glimpse into the centuries-long history of Chinese migration to Southeast Asia. It has succeeded in making this little-discussed history visible to a wider audience, threading the fine needle of passing official censorship requirements, experts say, while telling a compelling story.

As of August, the movie had grossed about 269 million yuan (\$40 million) at the Chinese box office. It was released in Thailand in early August after being shown in Singapore, Malaysia and Australia. It will

be released in the U.S. next month.

The film's popularity comes as Chinese culture and consumer brands have been gaining global cachet - from collectible Labubu dolls to “Chinamaxxing,” a social media trend of embracing aspects of the Chinese lifestyle.

The Chinese government began promoting the film as it became a hit and prepared for its international release.

The Chinese consul in Sydney said at a June screening of the film that it “reflects the Chinese nation's virtues of diligence, kindness, courage and unity.”

The movie aligns with Beijing's broader goal of “telling China's stories well,” highlighting themes of friendship, tradition and family, including motherhood and kinship, said Belinda He, an assistant professor of East Asian cinema and media studies at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

China's ambassador to Thailand presented the film at a special screening in July and again at a red carpet event this month.

“We're grateful to Guangdong for making such a wonderful film,” Chinese ambassador Zhang Jiangwei said at the red carpet event, which was attended by officials from Guangdong's Information Office.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, a woman takes photos during the special screening of Chinese film “Dear You” in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on June 15, 2026. (AP)

Ridley Scott's adaptation explores resilience after collapse

Hope refuses to die in post-apocalyptic ‘Dog Stars’

It says something about us that dogs are critical when it comes to post-apocalyptic movies. Tom Hanks had an adorable terrier in “Finch” and Will Smith had a heroic German shepherd in “I Am Legend.” Another German shepherd is due to accompany Brad Pitt in next month's “Heart of Beast,” but until then we have “The Dog Stars” and its four-legged Malinois star.

The pup is named Jasper in Ridley Scott's adaptation of Peter Heller's novel, a tale of man and man's best friend trying to find purpose in a brutal, post-pandemic Colorado. What this proves is you can't tell a story about humanity without a little canine.

Scott's movie is a welcome if slightly odd addition to the post-apocalyptic canon, a movie less centered on the kill-or-be-killed mutant hellscape than the costs of survival itself. Ignoring one unhinged sequence toward the end, “The Dog Stars” is a quiet love story set amid sniper fire, RPGs and fuel cans. It's even optimistic.

Jacob Elordi stars as Hig, a mechanic and pilot who has survived a pandemic that wiped out most of humanity, including his beloved wife. He's holed up at an abandoned airport in Erie, Colorado, accompanied by the ever-alert Jasper - who's a good boy? - and an ex-military man, Bangle, played by Josh Brolin. He's not such a good boy.

Hig spends his days flying his Cessna into Denver to scavenge for food and supplies, or looking after other pockets of survivors, like a Mennonite community whose connection to the land and simple ways seem perfectly suited for the End Days.

Scott and screenwriter Mark L. Smith haven't quite figured out what nasty things are out there, lurking in the dark. Sometimes it's just roving survivalists and sometimes it's a wave of incoherent, shirtless, heavily tattooed



This image released by 20th Century Studios shows Jacob Elordi in a scene from “The Dog Stars.” (AP)

cultists who suddenly swarm, like from “28 Years Later: The Bone Temple.”

Our hero hopes there are other sane uninfected folk out there, but his gruff pal disagrees. “What do you expect to find?” Bangle asks. Stay in the compound, with power, weapons and food, he argues: The virus pulled the mask off civilization. Stay and wait to die.

Hig disagrees - “I can't do this anymore” - and sets off for Grand Junction, where he thinks he heard a radio transmission. First, though, he comes across a young widow and her protective father, played by Margaret Qualley and Guy Pearce. Elordi, already a hand-dog hottie, now shifts into pure smoldering gear; Qualley, despite apparently not having showered in years, sizzles. (Did you know jean shorts survive the

apocalypse?)

There's loads of survivor's guilt to get through before these stupidly beautiful people can think about romance. One lovely scene has them confessing what they miss most about their lives before the virus - driving to music, even traffic. Watching Qualley as she hears recorded music for the first time in years, the joy washing over her face, is a delight.

Just as this quiet love story gets going, it's time for more knife-slitting and killer hordes. And for Allison Janney to appear in what surely will be 2026's most bananas performance by an actor in a post-apocalyptic airport. It's a sequence that really doesn't fit, but are you going to turn away as Janney downs martinis to “Fly Me to the Moon (In Other Words)”?

What Scott and Smith have managed is very hard, putting a tender love story into a zombie flick, like that Trojan Horse trick from “The Odyssey.” One odder decision is to film this Colorado-specific tale in Italy, with the Dolomite mountains filling in for the Rockies.

The filmmakers found the perfect song - Hozier's gorgeous “Like Real People Do” plays at the beginning and end - to go with the perfect postapocalyptic couple. And that dog - such a good boy.

“The Dog Stars,” a 20th Century Studios release in theaters starting Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for “strong violence and language.” Running time: 118 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four. (AP)

Obituary

Singer-songwriter behind hits like ‘Jolene’ & ‘I Will Always Love You’ leaves lasting legacy

Dolly Parton, the voice and heart of country music, dies at 80

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug 26, (AP): Dolly Parton, the country music icon whose soaring vibrato vocals, poignant songwriting and sparkling costumes defined her rise from a log cabin in the Tennessee mountains to the height of stardom and acclaim, has died in Nashville. She was 80 years old.

“After bravely facing a brief battle with cancer, Dolly departed her Earthly life today at the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center surrounded by loved ones,” her publicist, Marcel Pariseau, said in a statement Tuesday.

Known for her curvy physique, massive blond wigs and skin-tight outfits that served her self-deprecating wit, she was among the most beloved personalities in music and beyond - the rare celebrity whose appeal transcended generations, geography and politics.

She wrote hundreds of songs, including classics like “Jolene,” “Coat of Many Colors” and “I Will Always Love You,” that totaled more than 100 million worldwide sales and more than 1 billion online streams. Parton, who plucked bejeweled banjos, guitar and dulcimers with her long fingernails during performances, was a generous philanthropist and successful businesswoman whose projects included a theme park in the Smoky Mountain foothills near her birthplace.

Her career was forever influenced by her upbringing as one of 12 children born into what she called a “dirt poor” Tennessee family. She started her education non-profit, Imagination Library, to send free books to children in Tennessee because her father, who quit school to work on the farm, struggled to learn to read.

Parton’s first musical performances were in church, where her grandfather was a preacher. By age 10, she was learning guitar and singing on local television shows. At 13, she appeared on the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, where Johnny Cash introduced her as “a little girl here from up in East Tennessee.”

With a suitcase of songs, she followed her uncle, Bill Owens, also a songwriter, to Nashville after graduating high school in 1964. Fred Foster, who produced Roy Orbison, Willie Nelson and more, saw her potential and got her songs cut by other artists, as well as recording and releasing Parton singing her own material. By the mid-1970s, Parton was a Nashville queen.

Parton’s partnership with Porter Wagoner, a pencil-thin pompadoured star with flashy rhinestone outfits, was key to her career. She honed her acting skills on his syndicated TV show and he advocated for her to get a record deal at RCA. Their first duet, “The Last Thing On My Mind,” was released in 1967, the same year she started her own publishing company.

While their duets were often big radio hits, Parton’s solo singles didn’t chart as high at first. With Wagoner as a co-producer, she began to adjust her country warble to a more polished, pop-leaning style.

She got her first No. 1 solo single with “Joshua,” and reached the Top 5 with the ballad “Coat of Many Colors,” about how her mother sewed together scraps of clothes to make a coat Parton wore “so proudly” even as her peers mocked her for being poor. The song, with its Biblical references and ode to maternal love, was later made into a children’s book and a TV movie.

In 1973, she had the hit that made her career - “Jolene,” a country music standard with its steady, churning rhythm and Parton’s repeated delivery of the title as she pleads for the woman not to steal her man.

The song topped the country charts, crossing over to pop and later being released internationally, opening up new audiences for Parton. “Jolene” is one of her most



Dolly Parton performs at Glastonbury music festival, June 29, 2014. (AP)



Jane Fonda, from left, Dolly Parton and Lily Tomlin appear at a Los Angeles news conference to promote their movie “9 To 5” on Dec. 12, 1980. (AP)



Dolly Parton, center, stands on stage with Lily Tomlin, left, and Jane Fonda at the 69th Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles, Sept. 17, 2017. (AP)

covered compositions, including by Miley Cyrus (Parton’s goddaughter), Olivia Newton-John and The White Stripes.

She left Wagoner’s show in 1974, amid reports of squabbling between the two, although they continued to record together and Wagoner stayed her producer for years after that. But the relationship turned litigious when Wagoner sued her in 1979 for millions in management fees and royalties.

She followed “Jolene” with a huge hit in 1974, “I Will Always Love You,” an ode and farewell to Wagoner that helped her win the Country Music Association’s female vocalist of the year back-to-back in 1975 and 1976. She famously turned down Elvis Presley, who wanted to record it, because she would not share publishing rights.

Decades later, Whitney Houston’s version of “I Will Always Love You” became a smash for the soundtrack of

her 1992 film “The Bodyguard,” and broke sales records. Houston won a Grammy for her performance in 1994, presented to her by Parton.

“Here You Come Again,” a pop crossover hit and one of the few she didn’t write, further established Parton as a multi-genre entertainer and brought her first Grammy Award in 1979.

“A lot of people thought I had totally lost my mind,” she told The Associated Press in 1979 of changing her singing style. “But I had no fear of change. I expected success, but I was braced for failure. I didn’t care if people thought I was wrong. In my own heart, I knew I was doing the right thing.”

Parton’s other crossover hits included the title song from “9 to 5,” the 1980 comedy starring Parton, Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin; and her duet with longtime friend Kenny Rogers, “Islands in the Stream,” written by

brothers Barry, Maurice and Robin Gibb of the Bee Gees. In 1987, she collaborated with Linda Ronstadt and Emmylou Harris on the million-selling “Trio” album.

For millions of fans, she was simply “Dolly,” a mixture of Southern charm, humor and glamour. But she was also considered a feminist role model for holding the reins of her own career, writing her own songs, owning her content and looking after her finances in an entertainment world dominated by men.

Parton was open to making fun of herself; when she hosted “Saturday Night Live” in 1989 she told the writers that her only restrictions were she wouldn’t curse and she wouldn’t make fun of Jesus. She regularly joked about her breasts or her dumb blonde appearance, but with a wink that she was the one controlling the laughs. In the memoir “My Life So Far,” Fonda remembered Parton’s way with a wisecrack, “usually high raunch,” and a laugh that was “somewhere between a girl’s giggle, an explosive shriek, and a cascade of little bells.”

After her gown split down the front when she won CMA’s entertainer of the year in 1978, Parton quipped: “My Daddy said that’s what I got for putting 50 pounds of mud in a five-pound bag.”

Throughout her career, she embraced a glamorous style, often wearing custom curve-hugging rhinestone dresses and bodysuits even if they drew tsk-tsks from others in the industry. Her look was always a part of her larger musical business plan.

“I knew my songs were good even if I had been ugly as sin,” she told the AP in 2014. “So I thought, ‘Well, I would have probably chose to look this way even if I had been a waitress.’ I mean, this is my look. I mean, I like a lot of makeup. I like a lot of hair. I like flashy clothes. I like to show it off. But that’s just who I am.”

She married Carl Dean, an asphalt paving contractor, in the mid-1960s; they were together until his death in 2025 at the age of 82. Though rarely seen in public, he was an influence on her career. She told NPR that she wrote “Jolene” about a flirty bank teller who seemed to take an interest in Dean.

In her first major film role, Parton played alongside Fonda and Tomlin as office workers who rebel against their tyrannical boss in “9 to 5.” Critic Roger Ebert called her a “natural-born movie star” and the title song earned her two Grammy Awards and a ranking of 78 on the American Film Institute’s list of top 100 movie songs. Starring roles in “The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas” and “Steel Magnolias” followed.

“I never thought of myself as a movie star,” she told AP’s Bob Thomas in 1979. “I knew I’d be a star, but as a singer or as a writer of songs or books or poetry. I wanted to be a famous performer and wear flashy clothes, but singing in movies was not one of my ambitions. My family lived in the mountains and we didn’t see movies.”

Her love affair with TV and film continued for decades, with appearances alongside Cyrus on “Hannah Montana” and adaptations of her music for Christmas specials, films and streaming series. She also became an author, her books ranging from the memoir “Dolly” to a bestselling novel co-authored by James Patterson, “Run, Rose, Run.”

The stage adaptation “9 to 5: The Musical” debuted in 2009, and “DOLLY: A True Original Musical” is set to open Jan. 19, 2027, on what would have been her 81st birthday.

Beyond her music, Parton’s most lasting legacy might be her generosity and broad appeal.

19-track tribute pairs Dilla’s beats with Rhymes’ signature flow

Busta Rhymes & J Dilla reunite on ‘Dillagence II’

NEW YORK, Aug 26, (AP): Twenty years ago, in 2006, Detroit producer J Dilla died from complications from lupus. He was 32.

The hip-hop visionary, born James Dewitt Yancey, left behind an unimpeachable legacy, collaborating with artists such as D’Angelo, Erykah Badu, A Tribe Called Quest and Common - as well as Busta Rhymes.

Close collaborators and friends, Dilla sent Rhymes upward of 300 beats across their professional relationship, which the emcee utilized in small doses across releases - and, of course, on 2007’s joint mixtape, “Dillagence.” On Tuesday, Rhymes released “Dillagence II,” a full deep dive into their connection, 19 tracks of Dilla compositions and Rhymes’ flow.

In some ways, “Dillagence II” meets expectations: Rhymes’ flexible raps work in concert with what is referred to as “Dilla Time.” The term describes Dilla’s idiosyncratic style of pairing straightforward and uneven beats to create a cockeyed swagger often described as “drunk.” Those non-quantized rhythms went on to transform much of 21st-century popular music.

It is particularly evident in the third verse of “Spazzz,” where a tuneless woodwind pierces Rhymes’ braggadocious posturing. “I spit in ciphers,” he spews. “And I got the game locked more than categorized lifers.” It’s not his characteristic speed rapping, but it is still athletic.

In truth, the intersection of their skillsets is evident throughout “Dillagence II.” On “Talk Ya (Expletive),” with a verse from Lil Wayne - his first time on a Dilla beat - the two veterans float above bouncy production. “Dillagence II” finds an emotional heart on “Royalty,” which features



Busta Rhymes performs at the ESPY Awards in Los Angeles on July 16, 2025. (AP)

Dilla’s mother, Ma Dukes, who makes a few appearances on the album - as well as Rhymes’ own children, CIE and Trillian.

There’s also “This Woman,” a posthumous track with the Grammy-winning R&B singer D’Angelo, who died in October after a long bout with cancer. It’s a standout, born of a collaboration started between Dilla and D’Angelo over 20 years ago. (And for those itching for even more of a throwback: Hype Williams, who directed some of the late ’90s and early ’00s most imaginative music videos, including many of Rhymes’ own, is responsible for the official visual.)

On its surface, Busta Rhymes and J Dilla’s “Dillagence II” sounds like one for fans of rap records past; two giants of the genre working together once again - Dilla’s posthumous talents and Rhymes’ contemporary ones. The latter could’ve easily attempted to fit into some approximation of what hip-hop should or could sound like in 2026. But there is no placating trends here. But there’s also nothing revolutionary. Instead, together, Rhymes and Dilla continue to accomplish what they always have: Tracks that feel simultaneously classic and contemporary. Nostalgists will enjoy it the most, no doubt. But so, too, will fans of legacy rap - those who continue to see value in Dilla’s asymmetrical, human beats.

“Dillagence II” by Busta Rhymes and J Dilla Three and a half stars out of five.
On repeat: “This Woman”
Skip it: “The Story Of The Old Man”
For fans of: “Dillagence,” “Donuts” and Dilla

Humanoid robot sets new 100m record of 8.86 seconds in Beijing



Humanoid robot competes in the 100m race during the World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing, Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026. (AP)

BEIJING, Aug 26, (AP): A Chinese humanoid robot set a new 100-meter sprint record of 8.86 seconds in Beijing on Tuesday, beating its robot competitors - and the fastest recorded human time.

The race was part of China’s World Humanoid Robot Games, an Olympic-style competition now in its second year in Beijing. The event is also a showcase for China’s rapid advances in robotics amid an intensifying technology rivalry with the U.S.

The previous robot record of 9.39 seconds had been set just three days earlier, on Saturday.

For comparison, the men’s 100-meter world record is 9.58 seconds, set by Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt in 2009.

The record-breaking robot fell after crossing the finish line and crashing into a padded barrier, with sparks flying from its waist.

The Games features over 1,300 competitions include more than 2,000 robots in 51 events like running, long jump and table tennis, as well as ballroom dancing.

Unlike the traditional Olympics, the robots also compete in teams in real-world scenarios, including household tasks, hotel services and emergency response.

Gardening

Plants that bring fresh color to gardens & pots after summer blooms fade

NEW YORK, Aug 26, (AP): The hanging planter on my porch has seen better days. And by better days, I mean the summer annuals have dried to a brown crisp that likely has the neighbors wondering if the Addams Family has moved in. I like to believe the extreme heat did them in, but I know neglect has also played a role.

I dug up some impatiens from the garden and plopped them in the basket to save face, but with September approaching, it’s time to freshen it up for a new season.

Pansies are my usual go-tos for fall. Their smiling faces of orange, purple and yellow brighten even the most faded of gardens. And fall-planted pansies will return in spring, ready to bloom for another season. That’s because, unlike most garden annuals, they’re done in by the heat of summer, not the cold.

I’ve bordered most of the front

garden bed with Sedum Autumn Joy, a perennial in horticultural zones 3-9 that changes with the seasons. Its green early-season flowers gradually take on a pinkish hue that darkens as summer progresses, landing on a fall-appropriate maroon by mid-September. It’s the only flowering plant I can think of that meets the seasons where they are every step of the way.

As summer annuals fade, consider replacing them with garden chrysanthemums, but don’t pull them out at the end of the season. Plant them at the front of beds, where their orange, rust, bronze, yellow, pink, purple or white flowers will obscure the fading plants behind them. Leave them be, and they’ll return year after year for effortless fall flair.

Firecracker plant (Cuphea) is an easy-care, heat-tolerant choice with striking, tubular orange flowers that



This combination of images shows various Sedum Autumn Joy on Long Island, N.Y. The plant’s flowers emerge green in spring, gradually take on a pinkish hue that darkens as summer progresses, then turn a seasonally appropriate maroon in fall. (AP)

attract hummingbirds. It’s hardy in zones 8-11 and used as an annual in cooler regions, where it blooms from

spring through frost. But fall plantings work, too, and the plant makes a dramatic addition to containers alongside

lantana, fountain grass (Pennisetum), coral bells (Heuchera), globe amaranth (Gomphrena) or calibrachoa.

Croton, a foliage plant with yellow- and orange-veined, large green leaves, is typically treated as a houseplant outside of the tropics, but I wouldn’t discount it as a container or bedding plant, especially in fall arrangements.

Reblooming azaleas like Encore and Perfecto Mundo bloom in spring, like their cousins, but make repeat performances straight through frost. Check specific varieties to ensure they are hardy in your zone.

Firecracker bush (Russelia equisetiformis) is unrelated to the firecracker plant above, but boasts similar weeping, arching stems, covered in bright red tubular flowers on 3- to 5-foot-tall (.9- to 1.5-meter) shrubs that hummingbirds and butterflies love. It’s

hardy in zones 9-11.

Rainbow chard is an edible contender, its orange, red and green leaves perfectly suited to the season. After it has performed its aesthetic role, cut it down and sauté it with salt, pepper and garlic.

Miniature red, orange and purple ornamental peppers make interesting focal points, too, but they should be considered only decorative because of the pesticides used in the ornamental trade. They would taste awful, anyway.

Ornamental cabbages and kales are technically edible, but it’s best to limit their use to the garden for the same reasons. They’ll add texture and color, with their purple, green or cream leaves remaining fresh until temperatures below freezing collapse their cell walls.

Then it’ll be time to start planning your spring garden.



This photo made with a long exposure and released by the European Southern Observatory (ESO) on Nov 10, 2025, shows four lasers at ESO’s Paranal Observatory, each one launched from one of the four eight-meter telescopes on site in Taltal, Chile. (AP)

Telescope spies fastest star in Milky Way zipping around black hole

NEW YORK, Aug 26, (AP): A telescope has spied the fastest known star in our galaxy, racing around the supermassive black hole at the center of the Milky Way.

The star is zipping around the black hole, reaching speeds of about 15,534 miles per second (25,000 kilometers per second). That’s 100,000 times faster than a commercial plane.

“That star is really, extremely fast,” said astronomer Stefan Gillessen with the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics.

The newly discovered star also orbits the black hole at closer range than scientists have ever seen before, taking just 8.7 years to complete a revolution. It harnesses the black

hole’s gravity to fly faster without falling in.

Gillessen and colleagues uncovered the star in data collected by the European Southern Observatory’s Very Large Telescope in Chile’s Atacama Desert. Their findings were published Wednesday in the journal Nature.

There are several hundred stars that closely orbit this giant black hole and are sensitive to its gravity. Scientists have mapped the orbits of around 50 of them. The new star is 10 times closer than the previous record holder, meaning that it also feels the effects of the black hole’s rotation.

There are supermassive black

holes lurking in the center of almost every large galaxy. But nothing can escape them - not even light - so it’s notoriously difficult for scientists to figure out what’s going on inside.

Studying stars like this one could help scientists measure those mysterious properties, including how fast the supermassive black hole spins. Advanced telescopes are helping to pinpoint fainter stars that previously eluded detection, so there could be even speedier ones waiting to be found.

“This is just the tip of the iceberg,” said astronomer Tuan Do with the University of California, Los Angeles, who had no role in the study. “As we get fainter, there should be many more stars like this.”

Elon Musk’s space company to build new rocket launching site in Louisiana

ABBEVILLE, La., Aug 26, (AP): Elon Musk’s space company plans to spend \$100 billion to build a massive new spaceport in Louisiana to launch rockets, state officials and the company announced Tuesday.

Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry said the deal was a big win for the state and country, likening the impact of the new launch site to the 1803 Louisiana Purchase.

“Today is nothing short of a transformational moment,” he told lawmakers and others at a special event to celebrate the deal.

Musk was not there, but he appeared with Landry in a promotional video that played before the Republican governor’s speech. SpaceX President and Chief Operating Officer Gwynne Shotwell also spoke at the event.

The spaceport would be located on 125,000 acres (50,600 hectares) of land formerly owned by Exxon along Louisiana’s southern coast about 200 miles (322 km) west of New Orleans in Vermilion Parish. The location provides key advantages, state officials said, including access to abundant natural gas and the ability to launch to a wide range of trajectories.

It would be the company’s fourth and largest launch site, playing a key role in ramping up missions of its reusable Starship launch system, according to a news release from Louisiana Economic Development. SpaceX wants to dramatically increase rocket launches as it aims to put more satellites in orbit. The Louisiana site could support thousands of launches each year, the news release said.

State lawmakers had approved sizable tax incentives for the project.

Anne Rolfes, director of the environmental advocacy group, the Louisiana Bucket Brigade, said she was worried the state was moving too fast with a project that would “irrevocably alter” the state’s fragile



SpaceX President and COO Gwynne Shotwell speaks during an event announcing a deal to build a new SpaceX spaceport in Louisiana on Aug 25, in Abbeville, La. (AP)

coastline. Construction is expected to begin in 2027, with the first launch targeted for as early as 2029, according to state officials.

“It should be thoughtfully done - with public hearings, and a public process that is transparent and gives people time to understand and consider the project,” Rolfes said in a statement. “The speed of the project and the fanfare and bombast make it all highly questionable.”

Shotwell said SpaceX planned to keep much of the site undeveloped and would help with restoration and protection efforts, including working to reverse land loss from erosion and “careless use.”

“We are committed to doing our part to ensure that this land doesn’t disappear,” she said.

The company plans to host town halls and other community engagement events in the coming months. State officials said the project would generate 3,000 jobs over a decade.

In June, Musk sold SpaceX shares to the public for the first time in the biggest initial public offering ever.

Shares jumped as high as \$225 a share, briefly making Musk a trillionaire.

Also:

KYIV, Ukraine: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Wednesday awarded **Elon Musk** the Order of Freedom, one of Ukraine’s highest state honors, for his “outstanding personal merits” in protecting human life and freedom and strengthening ties between Ukraine and the **United States**.

Musk, the founder of SpaceX, has become one of the most influential, and contentious, private sector figures in Ukraine’s war effort. His decision to provide Ukraine with access to Starlink, SpaceX’s satellite internet network, was critical. It remains a communications lifeline for Ukrainian forces and civilians after **Russia’s** full-scale invasion in 2022.

Starlink has become deeply embedded in Ukraine’s military operations, with commanders and soldiers relying on satellite connectivity to communicate and coordinate operations.

This year’s El Niño expected to be the strongest ever recorded

World inches toward catastrophic climate events: ‘Bigger shocks are on the way’

NEW YORK, Aug 26, (AP): In the opening scene of American writer Kim Stanley Robinson’s “The Ministry for the Future,” a heat wave combined with a breakdown of the electrical grid in India kills 20 million people. The devastation causes the world’s nations to unite to combat climate change.

Scientists have long warned that the world will experience more intense extreme weather events like heat waves, storms, floods and droughts. But what once seemed like the realm of fiction is now discussed as a possibility, even an inevitability.

Warning about an “extreme of extremes” or the “Other Big One,” a play off the California reference of a big future earthquake, can be fraught. After all, nobody can say for sure when a weather catastrophe may happen. But in the last few years, the planetary ingredients needed for a massive disturbance have been building. And alarm is growing.

“The risk is that people just think you are exaggerating,” said Daniel Swain, a climate scientist with the California Institute for Water Resources. “It’s the ‘Boy Who Cried Wolf’ problem. Sometimes wolves are real. If it’s outside the door, wouldn’t you want to know?”

In the 1850s, while living in Seneca Falls, New York, amateur scien-

tist Eunice Newton Foote did a series of experiments that put different substances, including carbon dioxide and moist air, inside glass cylinders and left them in the sun. What she found was extraordinary: cylinders with carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that is released when coal, gas or oil is burned, heated up faster and took longer to cool after the sun went down.

Fast-forward: Today, Earth is being heated by massive amounts of greenhouse gases being pumped into the atmosphere, leading to a gradual rise in average global temperature. That increase, 1.44 degrees Celsius (2.59 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer in 2025 compared to the early 1800s, leads to more frequent, and more intense, extreme weather events.

The country that has released the most greenhouse gas, and thus contributed most to climate change, is the United States. But don’t expect recognition of that, much less major government-led efforts to combat it, as the country marks its 250th birthday. President Donald Trump has called climate change “the greatest con job ever,” referred to climate policies as a “Green New Scam” and said UN climate predictions were made by “stupid people.”

At any given time there are numerous extreme weather events happening around the globe. Indeed,



The Bug Fire burns near Doyle in unincorporated Lassen County, Calif on Aug 13. (AP)

some have already been so big that we have arguably entered an age of extremes.

Consider Australia’s “Black Summer” of wildfires in 2019 and 2020, when 19 million hectares (over 46 million acres) were scorched. Or Pakistan in 2022, when flooding left a third of the country under water. Or Hurricanes Milton and Helene in 2024, which ravaged parts of the southern United States. That is to say nothing of periodic smaller disasters, such as last year’s Texas floods that engulfed young camp-

ers; the Los Angeles wildfires that chewed through entire neighborhoods; and Typhoon Kalmegi, which walloped Vietnam and the Philippines.

Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick, a climate scientist at Australian National University, says she had a “come to .. moment” when she realized that constant extreme weather events wouldn’t stop even if the world could immediately reach net zero, the point when as much greenhouse gas is taken out of the atmosphere as released into it. Many countries and

major companies have net-zero targets for 2050 or beyond.

Because carbon dioxide can remain in the atmosphere for hundreds of years, and so much has already built up, the damage could take centuries to reverse. And we keep adding more.

“It’s the issue of the frog in the boiling water,” said Perkins-Kirkpatrick. “If we get used to bracing ourselves, are we going to notice?” What’s clear is that no country is truly prepared for a major climate disaster, and the risks are changing.

Robinson, whose book was published in 2020, says if he were writing today he would include a chapter on wildfires, which have become larger and more destructive. And while the potential heat disaster he writes about in India would arguably be less likely today, thanks to less reliance on the grid and use of solar power, Robinson believes the risks of catastrophe have increased.

The book, he says, “still has a purpose.”

It’s basic psychology to avoid talking about uncomfortable things. Climate change, depressing and overwhelming, falls into that category.

Instead of taking action by radically reducing greenhouse gas emissions, or updating our infrastructure to live in a world altered by extreme

weather events, a common response, from governments to individuals has largely been to ignore it. Part of the challenge is the care scientists must take when discussing extreme events.

It’s impossible to say, for example, that a disaster will happen in a certain year or even decade. But modeling improves every year, and the amount of time between extreme events is shrinking.

Sonia Seneviratne is a Swiss climatologist who vice chairs a working group of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the top UN body of climate scientists. Seneviratne likens the risk to smoking and lung cancer. People who smoke won’t necessarily get lung cancer, but the chances are higher and doctors should say that. Similarly, the risk of massive extreme events rises with every tenth of a degree.

This year’s El Niño, a natural and periodic warming cycle, is expected to be the strongest ever recorded, which could push temperatures even higher, breaking records and leaving damage along the way. Overall, the Earth is on a dangerous path. “We need to be talking about some of the worst things that can happen,” said Tim Lenton, climate science professor at the University of Exeter. “It’s natural to think that some bigger shocks are on the way.”

Pennsylvania reports first two measles deaths in US this year

PHILADELPHIA, Aug 26, (AP): Two unvaccinated Pennsylvania residents have died after being infected with measles, the first U.S. deaths this year related to the contagious virus.

State health officials announced the deaths Tuesday. They did not reveal any details about the people who died, other than that they lived in Lancaster County, west of Philadelphia.

“My deepest sympathies are with the loved ones who are facing this unimaginable loss,” said state Health Secretary **Dr. Debra Bogen**. “Because measles was largely eliminated in the Commonwealth for more than three decades, people are not familiar with this disease and don’t fully understand the potential severity of the illness.”

The US has now seen five measles-associated deaths in the last two years - more than the combined total of reported deaths over the previous three decades - and is enduring its worst year for measles since 1991.

With 2,777 cases as of Thurs-

day, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, this year already has surpassed 2025’s measles count.

In November, international health officials will meet to determine if the US and Mexico have lost their measles-free status. The U.S. eliminated local measles spread in 2000 by maintaining high vaccination rates, which have fallen in recent years to below the 95% coverage needed to prevent outbreaks.

The measles surge has coincided with moves by President Donald Trump’s administration to scale back childhood vaccinations, based on concerns - unfounded, according to scientific studies - about vaccine safety.

Trump earlier this month signed an executive order calling for revamped childhood vaccine recommendations. He also advocated separating the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine into three different shots, and administering all childhood immunizations at separate appointments whenever possible.

Doctors have raised concerns that Trump and US Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr are stoking confusion and hesitancy.

In a media briefing Tuesday, Gov. Josh Shapiro said he had spoken with Kennedy, who offered the assistance of federal health staffers.



Bogen

Using thunderquakes to X-ray Earth – new study shows urban seismology in action

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

□ □ □

By Nolan Roth, The Ohio State University and Tieyuan Zhu, Penn State

When lightning strikes, it superheats the air around it and creates a shock wave that we hear as thunder. But thunder doesn’t just travel through the atmosphere to our ears.

When that energy reaches the ground, some of it is converted into seismic waves that ripple through the soil and rock beneath. The resulting vibrations are known as “thunderquakes.”

Until now, scientists haven’t understood these signals well enough to make practical use of them. Our team’s research shows that thunderquakes can be used to map the structure beneath the Earth’s subsurface - such as groundwater movement, environmental contamination, sinkholes, or for evaluating building sites and foundations - just like X-rays image inside the human body.

We discovered this by listening to thunder with something found in communities around the world but unusual as a seismic measuring instrument: fiber-optic cable.

Using a technique called distributed acoustic sensing, we turned an ordinary fiber-optic cable, the kind used for internet or phone service, into a string of thousands of vibration sensors.

A laser-pulsing computer, called an interrogator, sends light through the cable and measures tiny changes caused by vibrations along its length. In our experiment, part of the Penn State FORESEE project, we used a cable that is over 2 miles (more than 4 kilometers) long. That gave us more than 2,100 sensors, spaced only a few feet apart, all listening to the ground at once.

Over two years, we used an old telecom fiber to record and identify 458 clear, high-quality thunderquakes.

The enormous amount of detail captured by this process has allowed us to see something that had been difficult to observe before: specific types of seismic waves produced when sound from the atmosphere interacts with the ground.

The most important of these seismic waves are what we call air-coupled Rayleigh waves. They are measurable at the surface but can be used to study the subsurface far below, even down 300 feet (around 100 meters).

The trick to this technique is known as seismic dispersion: Waves of different frequencies travel at dif-

ferent depths. By measuring how the thunderquake’s wave speeds changed with frequency, we could reconstruct the seismic wave speed at different depths, which allows us to interpret the properties of the ground beneath the fiber.

The result was the equivalent of an X-ray of the subsurface extending roughly 300 feet underground, without drilling a single hole.

Imaging the subsurface typically requires specialized equipment, such as truck-mounted vibration sources or arrays of sensors that have to be installed for surveys. These approaches can be expensive and difficult to deploy over large areas.

Thunderstorms offer a naturally occurring source of seismic energy that is already spread across the landscape. And fiber-optic cables are buried beneath cities and towns around the world.

Instead of bringing a seismic source to the ground, we can listen to the storms passing overhead. That could eventually make it possible to monitor the shallow subsurface continuously, using infrastructure that is already in the ground and seismic energy that is already coming from the sky.

In State College, Pennsylvania, where we conducted the tests, the geology is mostly limestone and dolomite, rocks that can slowly dissolve as groundwater moves through

them. Over time, this process creates fractures, caves and sinkholes.

Our thunderquake study revealed four distinct areas where seismic waves traveled much more slowly than through the surrounding rock. These “weak zones” could be caused by fractured or weathered rock or the presence of water or air. Two of them coincide with areas where satellite radar shows that the ground is actively subsiding. The depths of all four are consistent with fractures and voids documented at nearby sites.

These results matter because karst landscapes like the one beneath State College are widespread. They cover roughly 20% of the world’s continental land area and affect nearly a quarter of the global population. Sinkholes, groundwater contamination and other hazards associated with these landscapes can threaten buildings, infrastructure and public safety. Knowing where these hazards are allows for better construction and planning.

Our results demonstrate a fundamental process: Sound waves in the atmosphere can be converted into useful seismic waves in the solid Earth. But thunder is only one example.

Sonic booms, volcanic eruptions and meteor airbursts can produce similar atmospheric shock waves, potentially creating other natural seismic sources. (AP)

Mahashe shines with player of the match display

All Blacks survive Lions scare to stay unbeaten in South Africa

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 26, (AP): A dogged Lions side that led for more than an hour was pipped by New Zealand 41-35 at Ellis Park.

The All Blacks swept all four provincial teams to remain undefeated on their tour of South Africa, but they were given a serious scare in an entertaining 12-try contest.

New Zealand had only three players backing up from last Saturday’s test victory over South Africa on the same ground and involved five injury replacements summoned on tour - including one who arrived on Monday - plus a debut for prop Saula Ma’u.

Their defense struggled and missed 19 tackles. They trailed 14-0 after seven minutes, were still behind at halftime and down 35-17 in the 47th. The Lions threatened to become the first South African provincial side to beat New Zealand since Orange Free State, now known as the Cheetahs, in 1976.

But like the Stormers, Sharks and Bulls the All Blacks had already beaten, the Lions were out of season and not match fit. They hadn’t played since May 30 in the United Rugby Championship quarterfinals.

The All Blacks stormed back in the last half-hour with four successive tries; two by Rieko Ioane, a second for flanker Ethan Blackadder that gave them the lead for the first time in the 62nd, and a second by winger Emoni Narawa in the 79th that finally settled the tourists’ nerves.

“The Lions came out hissing,” Blackadder said. “But we stayed composed and found a way in the end. They were quality tonight.”

Blackadder - whose father Todd was on the last traditional tour in 1996



New Zealand's Emoni Narawa, front, is challenged by Lions' Nico Steyn during an international friendly rugby match between Lions and New Zealand, in Johannesburg, South Africa. (AP)

- was one of the New Zealand standouts along with inside center Timoci Tavatavanawai, Narawa, and flyhalf Richie Mo’unga, back from Japan and in a black jersey for the first time since the 2023 Rugby World Cup final.

All Blacks coach Dave Rennie thought Blackadder was phenomenal: “He’s got a massive engine and was everywhere. He picked up some plums (tries) as well.”

Blackadder’s test prospects also improved after Anton Segner was ruled out of the rest of the tour. Segner was a late withdrawal from the first test reserves due to an ankle injury that’s needed two surgeries. The injury was assessed as acute inflammatory arthritis. He won’t be replaced.

Mo’unga, like New Zealand, got better as the game got older, but he and Beauden Barrett could convert only three of their seven tries. On the other hand, Chris Smith, at home, converted all five of the Lions tries and hit the post with a long penalty.

Early pressure by Lions long-time captain Francke Horn resulted in a dummy and try by scrumhalf Nico Steyn, who has been in the Springboks camp.

Moments later, All Blacks scrumhalf Noah Hotham was intercepted by Siba Mahashe who ran in untouched. Mahashe was only 22 and carrying hype. The recent Junior Bok was wanted by the Blitzbok sevens and regarded as a Bob Skinstad type. He was the player of the match.

Narawa laid off a try for Hotham and finished one that started from a mark by Mo’unga in his 22.

Serena and Alcaraz exit US Open mixed doubles

Svitolina & Monfils win

NEW YORK, Aug 26, (AP): Elina Svitolina and Gael Monfils have both gone far but never all the way to the U.S. Open title. Maybe the married couple can finally win a trophy together.

The spouses made quite a pair on the court Tuesday, becoming the first team into the mixed doubles semifinals by edging Katerina Siniakova and Henry Patten 5-4 (6), 4-5 (3) (10-8).

Serena Williams and Carlos Alcaraz won their first-round match but were then ousted after a 5-4 (4), 4-1 loss to Belinda Bencic and Flavio Cobolli.

Svitolina and Monfils will face Bencic and Cobolli in one semifinal Wednesday, with Mirra Andreeva and Andrey Rublev to meet Karolina Muchova and Jakub Mensik in the other. The winning team will earn \$1 million.

That would be quite a payday for Monfils to share with his wife in his final Grand Slam tournament before retiring.

“Happy wife, happy life,” Monfils said in their postmatch interview after a kiss and hug on the court.

Williams and Alcaraz beat Erin Routliffe and Lloyd Glasspool 5-3, 4-1 in Williams’ first match at the U.S. Open since 2022.

“It’s always such an amazing place to be here,” Williams said. “I never expected to be back on this court, so it was just a really cool moment. I never thought this would happen.”

But the 44-year-old Williams, a 23-time Grand Slam singles champion, and the two-time U.S. Open champion Alcaraz appeared to run out of steam after dropping the first-set tiebreaker after quickly returning



Serena Williams, of the United States, and Carlos Alcaraz, of Spain, high-five during a mixed doubles match at the U.S. Open tennis championships in New York. (AP)

to the court for their second match.

Williams and Alcaraz began their opening match just as the two-time defending champions were eliminated. Andreeva and Rublev saved a match point and outlasted Sara Errani and Andrea Vavassori 1-4, 4-1 (11-9). The 19-year-old Andreeva revealed afterward that she used to have a crush on her partner and fellow Russian, who is 28.

They then recovered after blowing four match points in the second set to beat Diana Shnaider and Casper

Ruud 4-1, 4-5 (9) (10-5).

The U.S. Open tinkered with the format of the tournament this year to allow more doubles specialists back in, but it was the singles players who had the upper hand.

Monfils, who will turn 40 on Sept. 1, reached the U.S. Open semifinals in 2016. Svitolina, who is eight years younger, got to the final four in Flushing Meadows in 2019.

Now it’s another semifinal - and an unlikely one - after they outlasted a team featuring the No.-1 ranked play-

ers in men’s and women’s doubles.

Monfils, who is from France, was given a wild card into the singles tournament. He and Svitolina, who is from Ukraine, were given wild cards to compete in mixed. They were married in 2021 and daughter Skai was born the next year.

Because they were unsure at first they would be in the field in New York, Svitolina said they entered with no expectations, having not even worked on their tactics until Monday.

Xavi promises dominant Netherlands style

ZEIST, Netherlands, Aug 26, (AP): Dutch soccer coaches helped shape Xavi Hernandez. Now the former Barcelona and Spain midfielder wants to return the favor and rejuvenate a Netherlands team that disappointed with its defensive style at the World Cup.

Louis van Gaal, who also coached the Netherlands, gave Xavi his debut for Barcelona. The midfielder grew up at the Catalan club where the playing philosophy of Dutch all-time great Johan Cruyff remains strong.

At his presentation Tuesday, Xavi sounded like he was harking back to

the “total football” ideals of Cruyff-led Dutch teams in the 1970s as he laid out his ambitions for the Netherlands playing style.

“We want ... to dominate the game, to take the initiative with the ball,” he said. “And at the same time, our goal is to show to everybody a team with passion, with desire and ambition.”

Netherlands Soccer Federation technical director Nigel de Jong said Xavi was on a shortlist of four candidates for the coveted job after former Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola, and Arne Slot, who is still without a job after being fired by Liverpool in late May.

They both declined. The other candidate was Michael Reiziger, who coaches the Netherlands’ youth team.

The new coach was unfazed by the big names ahead of him in the selection process.

“Well, it’s not a bad position after Guardiola and after Slot. Third position. At least we are ... on the po-



Xavi after Guardiola and after Slot. Third position. At least we are ... on the po-

dium. I don’t care,” he said.

Xavi’s first test comes Sept. 24 in Amsterdam when the Netherlands plays Germany, which also has a new coach - Jürgen Klopp. The former Liverpool manager replaced Julian Nagelsmann, who quit after another disappointing World Cup campaign.

“I feel excited,” Xavi said, “I feel motivated because, you know, we are playing against Germany, one of the best coaches in the last years, Jürgen Klopp. So yeah, it’s a big challenge from the beginning, but I think we will be ready.”



Miami Heat head coach Erik Spoelstra, left, poses with newly signed guard Klay Thompson during an NBA basketball press conference, Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026, in Miami. (AP)

Aaliyah’s career-high leads Sun past Sky

Wings clinch final playoff spot behind Bueckers

ARLINGTON, Texas, Aug 26, (AP): Paige Bueckers had 22 points and 11 assists, Jessica Shepard added 21 points, nine rebounds and six assists, and the Dallas Wings beat the Portland Fire 96-78 to clinch the final WNBA playoff spot.

Dallas (23-16), which is headed to the playoffs for the first time since 2023, set a franchise record for wins during the regular season - with five games left to play.

Arike Ogunbowale finished with 17 points, Awak Kuier had 12 points, 12 rebounds and five blocks, and Alanna Smith scored 10 as all five starters for the Wings scored in double figures. Bueckers, coming off a 32-point performance on Sunday, had her 23rd 20-point game of the season.

Bridget Carleton and Karlie Samuelson each scored 14 points for Portland (15-23). Emily Engstler had 12 points and a career-high 15 rebounds.

Bueckers’ steal and pass to Ogunbowale for a wide-open 3-pointer extended Dallas’

lead to 84-60 midway through the fourth quarter. Bueckers and Ogunbowale each had three of Dallas’ 11 3-pointers.

Portland trailed by as many as 26 points and never led.

Mystics 94, Mercury 84

In Phoenix, Sonia Citron had 19 points and nine assists, Kiki Iriafen added 18 points and 10 rebounds for her 17th double-double of the season, and the Washington Mystics beat the Phoenix Mercury.

With six games remaining, Washington (23-15) has the second-most regular-season wins in franchise history, trailing the WNBA champion 2019 team’s 26.

Shakira Austin scored 16 points for Washington. Michaela Onyenwere and Lauren Betts each had 10.

Natasha Mack and Kahleah Copper each scored 19 points for Phoenix (13-25). Alysa Thomas had 16 points and 10 assists, and Kelsey Plum, playing in her first game since Aug. 9, added 10 points in 17 minutes. Phoe-

nix finished 3 for 17 from 3-point range.

Washington shot 59% from the field in the first half and led 51-33. The Mystics held a double-digit lead the entire second half - with their largest advantage at 64-44.

A Phoenix bench player did not make a field goal until Plum’s basket with 4:42 left in the third quarter.

The teams play again on Thursday in Phoenix.

Sun 87, Sky 81

In Uncasville, Aaliyah Edwards scored a career-high 26 points to go with 10 rebounds, and Diamond Miller added 21 points as the Connecticut Sun beat the Chicago Sky.

Connecticut had a 78-58 lead - its largest of the game - early in the fourth quarter before Chicago clawed within 82-79 with 2:20 left following a 21-4 run. The Sun scored the next four points, highlighted by Edwards’ block and layup for a seven-point lead.

Kennedy Burke added 19 points for Con-

necticut (10-27). Edwards was 11 of 16 from the field in 26 minutes and topped her previous best of 24 points. Brittney Griner (left knee) and Olivia Nelson-Ododa (right knee) did not play.

Kamilla Cardoso led Chicago (15-24) with 24 points and 13 rebounds for her 14th double-double this season. Azura Stevens added 18 points. Courtney Vandersloot became the second player in WNBA history to reach 3,000 career assists, doing so with the highest average per game.

Connecticut led 44-29 at halftime after holding the Sky to 33% shooting, including 0 of 12 from 3-point range. Sun starters Edwards (15 points), Burke (11) and Miller (10) combined to outscore Chicago 36-29 in the first half.

Chicago was without two of its guards in the second half due to injuries. Starter Natasha Cloud (right knee injury) played 16 minutes in the first half and DiJonai Carrington (foot) logged four minutes.

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Left to right: participants in action during the recreational week.

KUNA photos

Recreational week for people with disabilities wraps up

The Public Authority for Youth and Sports has concluded its recreational week for people with disabilities, which ran from Sunday through today and attracted more than 70 participants from various disability categories.

The initiative was designed to provide greater attention to people with disabilities, create opportunities to identify and develop their talents, and offer meaningful activities during their free time, particularly throughout the

summer break.

Held daily from 5pm to 7pm, the program featured a variety of recreational activities, including bowling, trampolining and arcade games, providing participants with an enjoyable and engaging experience.

The authority stressed its commitment to creating a safe and supportive environment for people with disabilities, encouraging their participation in society while giving them opportunities to showcase their abilities and

creativity.

The authority also recently concluded its Summer Sports Festival for the Blind, held in cooperation with the Kuwait Blind Association from August 16 to 20. The festival brought together 65 participants and featured goalball, table tennis and dominoes, with activities aimed at developing sporting skills and nurturing participants' talents in a positive competitive atmosphere.

Champions League return for Bodø/Glimt



N.E.C. Nijmegen's Freek Entius, center, is challenged by Bodø/Glimt's Andreas Hjemseth and Sondre Aukland, left, during the Champions League qualifying soccer match between Bodø/Glimt and NEC Nijmegen in Bodo, Norway. (AP)

Celtic coughs up 4-goal lead in humiliating exit

GENEVA, Aug 26, (AP): The Champions League's feel-good story Bodø/Glimt is back for a second season joined by two debutants, Sabah of Azerbaijan just nine years after being formed and - remarkably - LASK of Austria.

Bodø/Glimt eased through the second leg of its qualifying playoff Tuesday against NEC Nijmegen and Sabah denied Hapoel Beer-Sheva in extra time after a last-gasp goal in regulation time to level the aggregate score.

LASK seemed all-but out after a half-hour, trailing 4-0 on aggregate to Celtic who had taken a three-goal win from the first leg last week in Glasgow.

Still, LASK had already rained scoring chances on Celtic's goal even before falling further behind and somehow only retrieved three goals of the deficit when the clock passed 90 minutes.

Then Florian Flecker's close-range header forced extra time, during which the Scottish champion continued to implode.

A fifth unanswered goal for LASK came in the 109th by Samuel Adeniran, who then had a penalty saved as the score stayed 5-1 on the night and 5-4 on aggregate. Celtic drops into the second-tier Europa League.

Four more playoff second-leg games Wednesday will confirm the final entries in the 36-team main phase. The draw for those games is made Thursday in Monaco.

Bodø/Glimt's storied series of wins in January and February against Manchester City, Atletico Madrid and Inter Milan make the Norwegian fishing town team seem like a Champions

League veteran compared to Sabah.

Dutch newcomer NEC lost 3-0 as the latest visitor to the Arctic Circle suffering on the artificial turf inside Glimt's tiny Aspmyra Stadium. The aggregate score was 6-1.

Any hope of a comeback effectively ended after three minutes when NEC goalkeeper Gonzalo Cretazzi handled the ball outside his penalty area and was sent off.

Sabah was created in 2017 and exactly nine years later will debut in the Champions League's main competition after a dramatic qualifying playoffs win.

Sabah was just seconds from elimination against the Israeli champion, which won the first leg 2-1 last week, when substitute Tellur Mutallimov scored in the last minute of stoppage time to force extra time.

Sabah's Gabon striker Orphe Mbina then scored with a header in the 101st minute and Joy-Lance Mickels added on in the 115th to make it 5-2 in the second leg and 6-4 on aggregate score.

Hapoel Beer-Sheva finished with nine players in a hard-luck loss after having led 4-2 on aggregate in the 61st when Israel national team right-back Guy Mizrahi scored with a shot from outside the penalty area.

Defender Djibril Diop and midfielder Elier Peretz both were shown second yellow cards in extra time.

No Israeli team has played in the main Champions League since November 2022, when Mac-cabi Haifa finished last in a group with Benfica, Paris Saint-Germain and Juventus.

Sabah will join Italy's Como as Champions League newcomers in the 36-team main phase draw Thursday.

UEFA will make the draw in Monaco to give each team eight opponents playing from Sept. 8 through Jan. 27.

Real Betis goes into that Champions League draw for the first time in 21 years with two straight 1-0 wins to start the La Liga season.

A slick counter attack finished by Pablo Garcia with a smart one-time finish in the 83rd minute settled the result at Valencia.

Valencia had drawn 0-0 at home to Celta Vigo over the weekend and still seeks a goal at the Mestalla stadium in what should be a final season at the historic venue.

The 11 Premier League teams not involved in UEFA competitions this season started in the English League Cup second round that began .

Leeds won at Nottingham Forest for the second time in four days, adding a 2-0 win Tuesday to the 1-0 victory in their opening league game Saturday.

Four years ago, Ipswich beating Leicester 3-1 would have been an upset by a third-tier team hosting one from the Premier League. Their status is now reversed after back-to-back relegations for Leicester, the historic champion of England in 2016.

Ipswich's Chile midfielder Marcelino Núñez scored twice late in the second half to seal the win.

Brentford cruised to a 6-1 victory at second-tier Birmingham, backing up its impressive 3-0 win over Tottenham in its Premier League opener.

'Battle for starting spots more exciting than race for championship'

Bayern dominance overshadows league on Klopp's return as coach of Germany

BERLIN, Aug 26, (AP): When Jürgen Klopp surveys the Bundesliga upon his return as Germany coach, he could be forgiven for sneaking a look elsewhere for excitement.

A new season of Germany's top division starts Friday, but little will have changed from before with Bayern Munich expected to saunter to another league title with minimal opposition. It would be Bayern's third in a row and 14th in 15 seasons.

The Bavarian powerhouse's dominance overshadows the league with Bayern treating the competition as a warmup for the Champions League.

"The battle for starting spots at FC Bayern is more exciting than the race for the German championship," former West Germany great Lothar Matthäus wrote in a column for Sky, where he predicted Vincent Kompany's team would again win the Bundesliga by more than 10 points.

Bayer Leverkusen's league and cup double while remaining unbeaten in 2024 is the only blot on Bayern's record since Klopp led Borussia Dortmund to back-to-back titles in 2012.

This season, Klopp's former club is rebuilding after a summer of change, as is Leverkusen for the second year after its unprecedented success under Xabi Alonso.

Stuttgart is the most settled of Bayern's rivals in

what will be its fourth full season under coach Sebastian Hoeneß, but the gulf in class and resources between the sides is again likely to be too much.

Bayern routed Stuttgart 3-0 in the German Cup final in May with Harry Kane hitting a hat trick to take his season tally to 61 goals.

Kane will be keen to get off the mark again when Stuttgart visits Munich for the season open-



Bayern's Jonathan Tah, left, heads the ball past Dortmund's Fabio Silva during the Franz Beckenbauer German Supercup soccer match between Borussia Dortmund and Bayern Munich in Dortmund, Germany. (AP)

er on Friday.

Bayern is expected to be even stronger in Kompany's third season as coach.

Morocco forward Ismael Saibari has arrived from PSV Eindhoven to boost an already fearsome attack including Kane, Michael Olise and Luis Díaz.

Germany defender Nathaniel Brown has arrived from Eintracht Frankfurt and has already filled in midfield with Saibari still nursing an injury from the World Cup.

Bayern also finalized the transfer of Senegal teenager Bara Sapoko Ndiaye from Gambia All Stars. The promising 18-year-old midfielder is expected to feature more following the departure of Leon Goretzka.

Jamal Musiala is back after missing much of last season with a broken leg, though it remains to be seen how he and the club deal with the neurological issue that caused him to collapse during two warmup games after a change in medication.

Dortmund's rebuilding started long before the summer with new sporting director Ole Book arriving from Elversberg in March to replace Sebastian Kehl, who departed after reported disputes with managing director Lars Ricken. Carsten Cramer took over from Hans-Joachim Watzke as CEO in October.

Mane inspires rally

Al Nassr stages remarkable comeback against Al Ettifaq

RIYADH, Aug 26: Al Nassr staged a remarkable late comeback to beat Al Ettifaq 3-2 in the third round of the Saudi Pro League, despite playing with 10 men for most of the match.

Al Nassr goalkeeper Bento was sent off after just 12 minutes, forcing young goalkeeper Abdulrahman Al-Otaibi to come on. Duda put Al Ettifaq ahead in the 31st minute after Al-Otaibi failed to keep out his shot.

The visitors doubled their lead before halftime when Alvaro Medran's effort again proved too difficult for the young goalkeeper to handle.

Al Nassr coach Tony Popovic made a change at the start of the second half, replacing captain Cristiano Ronaldo with Abdullah Al-Khaibari. The move helped spark a dramatic turnaround.

Mane pulled one back in the 74th minute before Abdulilah Al-Amri equalized three minutes later. Mane then completed the comeback in the first minute of stoppage time, scoring his second of the night to seal a 3-2 victory.

The result moved Al Nassr to the top of the Roshn Saudi Pro League with nine points.

Elsewhere, Al Shabab defeated Al Riyadh 3-0, while Al Taawoun and Al Fayha played out a goalless draw. Abha and Al Khaleej shared a 1-1 draw.

Portuguese newspaper A Bola also praised Al Nassr's Joao Felix, highlighting his two assists in the comeback victory. The newspaper said the Portuguese midfielder's "magic" helped ignite Al Nassr's recovery after a disastrous first half.

Egyptian wrestler Haggag disappears from team camp

CAIRO, Aug 26: Egyptian wrestler Ziad Haggag has gone missing from the Egyptian national team's accommodation in Slovakia, prompting official action to investigate the incident and locate the 19-year-old athlete.

Egyptian Wrestling Federation President Saeed Salah told Sky News Arabia that the federation immediately notified the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Egyptian Embassy and relevant Slovak authorities after Haggag disappeared following his participation in the World Youth Wrestling Championships.

Haggag reportedly left the team's accommodation while the delegation was preparing to attend a training session.

When members of the coaching staff asked him to join them, he said he would follow shortly. He then switched off his phone and left the accommodation without informing the delegation of his whereabouts.

Salah said the federation had already introduced precautionary measures before the delegation travelled from Cairo, including requiring the parents of athletes to sign officially notarized declarations accepting responsibility for their children during the trip and ensuring their return to Egypt.

He stressed that the measure applied to all members of recent Egyptian sports delegations and was not specific to Haggag.



A file photo of Ziad Haggag celebrating the Egyptian flag.

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NEWS



Egyptian giant Al Ahly has extended midfielder Imam Ashour's contract until 2030, the club announced. The new deal was finalized during a meeting between Ashour and Al Ahly's head of contracts, Essam Sirag El-Din, who completed the administrative and financial procedures in coordination with football director Wael Gomaa.

Sports

Winning start for Qadsia as Kuwait Club, Arabi share spoils

Al-Sahel takes on Al-Sulaibikhat; Kazma hosts Al-Tadamon

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: Al-Qadsia made a winning start to its Zain Premier League campaign after coming from behind to beat Al-Fahaheel 2-1 at Nayef Al-Dabbous Stadium.

The victory also marked a promising debut for Al-Qadsia's new foreign recruits, with Omani Abdulrahman Al-Mushaifri and Nigerian Gabriel Orok both finding the net.

The opening round began with an entertaining clash between defending champion Kuwait Club and runner-up Al-Arabi, with the two sides sharing six goals in a 3-3 draw at Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium.

The first round concludes today with two fixtures. Al-Sahel takes on Al-Sulaibikhat at Abdullah Al-



Qadsia's Al-Mushaifri vies for the ball with Al-Fahaheel player during the Zain Premier League match.

Khalifa Stadium at 6:45pm, while Kazma hosts Al-Tadamon at Al-Sadaqa Walsalam Stadium at 9pm.

The meeting between Al-Sahel and Al-Sulaibikhat is particularly significant, with both clubs having secured promotion after finishing first and second respectively in the First Division last season.

The teams met less than two weeks ago in the First Division, playing out a goalless draw. Al-Sahel, coached by national manager Ali Abdulredha, will be seeking revenge for losing the First Division title to Al-Sulaibikhat on the final matchday while also targeting its first Premier League victory.

Al-Sahel has strengthened its squad with five Brazilian professionals: Mauricio Oliveira, Alan de Souza, Lucas Araujo, Clayton de Jesus and Joao Moura.

Al-Sulaibikhat, meanwhile, will look to continue its momentum under Portuguese coach An-

tonio Miranda, who has overseen a period of technical stability. Their foreign players include Brazilians Walfes Santos, Daniel Silva, Elson Pepe and Bruno Dominguez, as well as Portuguese player Cristian Erbizu.

Kazma will then face Al-Tadamon in the evening fixture, with the Orange looking to launch their campaign strongly under Croatian coach Dragan Tadic.

Kazma finished fourth last season and has reshaped its foreign contingent in an effort to improve on that performance. The club signed German Torles Knoll, Brazilian Patrick Robson and Senegalese Amath Ndiaye, while retaining Yemen international Nasser Mohammedou and Algerian Idriss Chaabi.

Al-Tadamon, who finished eighth last season, will be determined to begin the new campaign on a positive note and put last season's disappointing results behind it

Al-Khatib: Coaching Kuwait Club is an honor no one can turn down

Sheikh Al-Yousef: Kuwait set to host two major sporting events

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Aug 26: Kuwait Football Association President Sheikh Ahmed Al-Yousef revealed that the country is close to hosting two major sporting events in December and February, with details expected to be announced within the next few days.

Sheikh Al-Yousef said both events would be "bigger than the French Super Cup," which Kuwait hosted in January.

He also praised the atmosphere surrounding the opening round of the Premier League, saying the clash between Kuwait SC and Al-Arabi attracted a strong turnout and produced an exciting, closely contested match despite the high temperatures.

The KFA president added that the First Division season will begin after Kuwait completes its campaign at the 27th Gulf Cup. He confirmed that Al-Shorta will participate, while talks are continuing with several other clubs.

Sheikh Al-Yousef said the national team will travel to Doha for a training camp following the third round of the league.

The Blues are also scheduled to play a friendly



Kuwait Football Association President Sheikh Ahmed Al-Yousef

in Jeddah before starting their Gulf Cup campaign.

Al-Arabi coach Goran Sablic accepted that mistakes contributed to his side's 3-3 draw with Kuwait Club, describing them as inevitable, particularly in the opening match of a competition.

Sablic praised his players for their aggressive approach and said the team could have taken all three points had it not been for the mistake that allowed Kuwait Club to score a late equalizer.

He thanked the Al-Arabi supporters for their backing and said his side would maintain the same determination and performance level when they face Al-Jahra in the second round on Sunday.

Kuwait Club football department vice president Hani Al-Aqla, meanwhile, defended the decision to replace Portuguese coach and appoint Firas Al-Khatib, saying the move was made in the team's best interests.

Al-Aqla attributed Al-Arabi's second goal to a defensive error and expressed confidence that Kuwait would make up for the dropped points in upcoming matches.

New Kuwait Club coach Firas Al-Khatib described taking charge of the club just days before the start of the season as "an honor no one could turn down."

Al-Khatib highlighted Kuwait's dominance of domestic football over the past decade and acknowledged that the team must work harder in the coming weeks.

He also believes Kuwait Club can compete strongly in the AFC Champions League Two, pointing to the club's impressive record of winning three, four and even five trophies in recent seasons.

Pasindu and Mendis score fighting half-tons

India in winning position after enforcing follow on vs Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Aug 26, (AP): India put itself in a winning position in the second cricket test on Wednesday by restricting Sri Lanka in its second innings after enforcing the follow on.

India batted first after winning the toss at the Sinhalese Sports Club and scored a massive 503-9 declared then bowled Sri Lanka out for 290. Having been forced to follow on, Sri Lanka reached 229-6 to lead by only 16 runs when rain brought an early close to play on Day 4.

"We will try to score as many runs as we can while protecting the remaining wickets. It's not easy but that's what we will try to do," Sonal Dinusha, who is 7 not out, told reporters.

"Even by tea we were in a good position but after that we lost three quick wickets and fell back."

Pasindu Sooriyabandara and Kamindu Mendis scored fighting half-centuries and at one time appeared set to erase the big deficit and build a challenging target for India to chase.

Sri Lanka was immediately in trouble in its second innings, losing its first wicket when opener Lahiru Udara tried to hook fast bowler Mohammed Siraj and was caught at square leg for five.

Kamil Mishara was trapped lbw for 32 by left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja, ending a 58-run second-wicket stand with Sooriyabandara.

Sri Lanka reached lunch at 83-2, still 130 behind, but scored 116 runs in the middle session losing only one wicket.

Sooriyabandara and Mendis swept the spinners for boundaries and stepped out and drove them through mid-on and mid-off to keep pace with the runs needed to erase the deficit.

Mendis brought up his seventh test half-century by hooking fast bowler Prasidh Krishna for a huge six but one run later attempted to repeat the shot and was caught by Shubman Gill, who ran and took a well-judged high catch.

The pair added 115 runs for the third wicket off 172 deliveries.

Sri Lanka went to tea at 199-3, still well placed to score big, but Indian left-arm spinner Manav Suthar took the



important wicket of captain Dhananjaya de Silva quickly in the final session when he tried to play a shot toward midwicket but only managed to edge the ball to his pads for an easy catch to Devdutt Padikkal at slip.

Sooriyabandara, who made 80 in the first innings, looked set for a maiden test century but was stumped by Rishabh Pant off a clever delivery from Suthar, who bowled the ball wide anticipating the batter to advance. In the previous delivery, Sooriyabandara had won an umpire decision review in his favor after being given out lbw for a ball that hit his thigh off the bat.

Sooriyabandara scored 92 off 173 deliveries, hitting a six and 10 boundaries.

Niroshan Dickwella (6) then failed again, trapped lbw by off spinner Saransh Jain.

Suthar took two wickets for India while Siraj, Krishna, Jain, Jadeja took one each.

Earlier in Sri Lanka's first innings, Krishna and Suthar took three wickets apiece to dismiss Sri Lanka with a 213-run first innings deficit.

Blues stay on track for IHF Junior World Championship qualification

Kuwait edges Saudis to book Asian Youth Handball Championship quarterfinal spot



Players celebrate with the national flag after qualifying for quarterfinal.

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
AMMAN, Aug 26: Kuwait advanced to the quarterfinals of the Asian Junior Handball Championship after defeating Saudi Arabia 30-28 in their final Group B match in Jordan.

The Blues produced a strong display in a fiercely contested encounter, maintaining their advantage during key stages before holding off Saudi Arabia's attempts to stage a comeback and secure

a two-goal victory.

The result saw Kuwait finish third in Group B following a mixed preliminary-round campaign. It began with an emphatic 29-9 victory over Syria but subsequently lost to Qatar and Iran before ending the group stage on a winning note against Saudi Arabia.

Kuwait will now face the runner-up from the other group in the quarterfinals, with Bahrain and South Korea battling for second place.

The coaching and administrative staff will aim

to build on the team's improved confidence and prepare the players for the knockout stage, where there is no margin for error and maximum physical and technical readiness will be required.

The quarterfinal also carries significant importance, with the four semifinalists earning qualification for the 2027 IHF Junior World Championship. Kuwait will therefore be seeking another victory to move closer to both the latter stages of the Asian tournament and a place at the global event.

Schiffer calls for FIFA reform, says Infantino has 'no future'

ZURICH, Aug 26: European Leagues President Claudius Schiffer has questioned Gianni Infantino's suitability to remain FIFA president, saying the Swiss-Italian "has no future" at football's world governing body.

Speaking to The Athletic, Schiffer said European Leagues, which represents 53 leading men's and women's competitions, was increasingly concerned about Infantino's leadership and the growing influence of the FIFA president.

"We question whether he is suitable to remain president," Schiffer said, accusing FIFA of making major decisions without meaningful consultation with the stakeholders affected by them.

His comments come amid growing tensions between FIFA and several football bodies, following the governing body's proposal — later withdrawn — to sell part of the commercial rights to World Cup competitions.

Infantino is also facing pressure from UEFA, the Asian Football Confederation and CONCACAF, with the three confederations reportedly dis-

cussing the possibility of a vote of no confidence against him.

Schiffer also criticized FIFA's decision to award its inaugural Peace Prize to US President Donald Trump in December, as well as the lifting of the suspension of US striker Folarin Balogun during this year's World Cup following a phone call between Trump and Infantino.

"FIFA is an organization governed by Swiss law and has clear rules," Schiffer said. He argued that decisions such as the Peace Prize should be properly handled through the organization's governance structures.

He also described the Balogun case as a "real scandal," saying political intervention in sporting matters could undermine confidence in the integrity of the game.

Infantino is expected to seek a fourth term next year despite the prospect of strong opposition. However, Schiffer said the priority should be broader reform of FIFA's governance and a re-assessment of the powers and responsibilities of its president, rather than simply replacing Infantino.