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Kuwait Cabinet approves decree-law to regulate media

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Opinion

■ Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Iranians today don't know their leader

WHEN protests against the Shah of Iran broke out in 1977, all political forces in the country participated, not only the Islamic movement.

About two years later, the leaders of the United States, Britain, France and Germany met on the French island of Guadeloupe and decided to end the rule of the Shah.

Paris realized that the revolution against the monarchy had spiraled out of control. Therefore, France agreed to host Khomeini in 1978, seeing him as a suitable alternative to assume power.

The success of the revolution in 1979 marked a major turning point in the Middle East. The so-called 'Cassette Revolution' paved the way for the revolution through cassette tapes recorded in the French village of Neauphle-le-Château, where Khomeini resided, and distributed in Iran.

This intro is necessary to understand the current Iranian public opinion, how events are unfolding, and who is capable of changing the internal situation.

Since the 16th century, Iran has always been an arena of regional and international power struggles. At every significant juncture, external decisions have been the deciding factor.

Today, with the significant advancements in communications and technology, the landscape has completely changed and the truth is now fully exposed.

Thus, it was not surprising when US President Donald Trump stated, "we do not know who is ruling Iran." The absence of an apparent political and military leader has allowed the Revolutionary Guard to effectively rule from behind the scenes, with various factions in the regime vying for power.

Given the past experience, particularly between 1977 and 1979, the embers of conflict still burn.

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First Deputy PM backs Al-powered crime fight



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah during his visit to the General Department of Criminal Evidence.

Labs go high-tech

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1, (KUNA): Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah visited the General Department of Criminal Evidence to review its workflow, performance and latest technical and technological developments.

The Ministry of Interior's (MoI) General Department of Public Relations and Security Media stated in a press release on Tuesday that Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef was briefed by Criminal Evidence Director General Brigadier General Abdulrahim Al-Awadhi on the department's plans and goals for further development and improving its work.

He also watched a presentation on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in criminal investigations, including identity verification and fraud detection, the statement noted.

He toured several departments and laboratories, reviewing their work, procedures and specialized technical services, the statement added.

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Impounded cars get house arrest from Sept 6

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: The General Traffic Department at the Ministry of Interior on Tuesday announced that the Smart Home Impoundment system will be implemented starting Sept 6.

In a press statement, the Public Relations and Security Media General Department at the ministry revealed that a device will be installed on the vehicle at the location of violation, and the impoundment period will begin at midnight on the same day in order to have time to move the vehicle to the designated home impoundment location.

It added that the device installation fee is KD10 and the storage fee is KD2 per day of impoundment.

The vehicles that are currently in the traffic impoundment lot will be transferred to the home impoundment location under the new system to complete

the remaining period.

Once the impoundment period ends, a notification will be sent to the violator through the Sahel application, then the violator must visit the unit designated by the General Traffic Department to complete the vehicle release procedures.



8 KFH receives recognition for its support to 'A Nation Protects You' national campaign



9 NBK wins 13 global Brandon Hall awards in recognition of excellence in human capital development

Day by Day

HESITATION is the enemy of success. The train does not wait for those who hesitate, and hesitation often stems from a lack of understanding.

Of course, I do not mean all forms of hesitation, as there is commendable hesitation that seeks certainty. However, even this kind of hesitation should not lead to missing the train.

Reprehensible hesitation, on the other hand, stems from ignorance. An ignorant person is their own worst enemy. ... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



Photos show Editor-in-Chief of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah with Egyptian Military Attaché to Kuwait Colonel Mohamed Abdel Wahid, along with Head of the Retired Officers Association retired Major General Faisal Al-Jazzaf, colleagues Saud Al-Farhan and Bassam Al-Qassas, and Director for Legal Affairs Counselor Hamada Al-Amir.

Arab Times Editor-in-Chief hosts Egyptian Military Attaché to Kuwait

Al-Jarallah highlights media role in Kuwait-Egypt ties

By Bassam Al-Qassas
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah met

with Egyptian Military Attaché to Kuwait Colonel Mohamed Abdel Wahid, and his deputy, Lieutenant Colonel Ahmed Kamel Abdel Salam, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Head of the Retired Officers Association retired

Major General Faisal Al-Jazzaf, colleagues Saud Al-Farhan and Bassam Al-Qassas, and Director for Legal Affairs Counselor Hamada Al-Amir were also present at the meeting.

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Yemen highlights Kuwait's vital role in future recovery

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: Yemeni Minister of Foreign and Expatriate Affairs Dr. Afrah Abdulaziz Al-Zuba affirmed that Kuwait is a historical partner for Yemen.

In an extensive interview with media representatives in Kuwait, Al-Zuba pointed out that relations between the two countries are not limited to the context of war or aid, but extend to a long history of political stances, mediation, development and humanitarian support, and cultural and people-to-people exchange, spanning more than six decades of official relations.

Al-Zuba stated that her visit aims to elevate such relations to a more structured and effective phase through political consultation, activating agreements and cooperation frameworks, and expanding the partnership in development.

She disclosed that she met with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, during



Yemeni Minister of Foreign and Expatriate Affairs Dr. Afrah Abdulaziz Al-Zuba during an interview with media representatives.

which she delivered a written message from Chairman of the Yemeni Presidential Leadership Council Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah regarding the fraternal relations between the two countries, and ways to strengthen and develop these relations in various fields.

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One framework rewrites Kuwait's school rules

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaie approved the comprehensive regulatory framework for education, establishing it as a unified reference for the educational process

at all levels – from kindergarten to secondary and religious education, thus, ending the multiplicity of documents and regulations.

The framework includes an updated assessment system for secondary school, allocating 40 percent of the grade to coursework and 60 percent to the final exam.

The framework adopts the grade point average (GPA) system, calculating the cumulative average with varying weights for Grades 10, 11 and 12. It reorganizes procedures for disciplinary infractions, examinations, invigilation processes and appeals.

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Travel continues despite floods

Nepal thanks Kuwait for aid

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: Ambassador of the Republic of Nepal to Kuwait Ghanashyam Lamsal expressed his country's deep appreciation for the support and solidarity shown by the State of Kuwait following the destructive floods in Nepal recently.

Ambassador Lamsal made the statement on the sidelines of the opening of the book of condolences at the Nepalese Embassy, in solidarity with the flood victims. Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Nawaf Abdul Latif Suleiman Al-Ah-

mad and several heads of diplomatic missions attended the event.

On behalf of the Nepalese government, the Nepalese people and the embassy staff, he expressed his gratitude to the Kuwaiti government for its support and solidarity during this difficult time.

He said the devastating floods caused significant loss of life, property damage and damage to vital infrastructure. He affirmed that his country considers the stance of Kuwait a testament to the growing friendship between the two nations.

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The Italian ambassador signs the book of condolences at the Nepalese Embassy.

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	04:05	Asr	15:21
Sunrise ..	05:26	Maghrib ..	18:10
Zohr	11:48	Isha	19:31



Amiri Diwan photo
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Kuwait's newly appointed ambassador to Austria, Fawaz Abdullah Boursli.

Amir meets FM, new Austria envoy

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Tuesday, who presented to His Highness Kuwait's newly appointed ambassador to Austria, Fawaz Abdullah Boursli.

The ambassador took the constitutional oath before His Highness the Amir, on the occasion of assuming his new post.

His Highness the Crown Prince

Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also received on Tuesday Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Minister Al-Sabah presented His Highness the Crown Prince with newly appointed Ambassador to Austria, Fawaz Abdullah Boursli. Attending the meeting was Chief of Crown Prince Diwan, Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and top state officials. (KUNA)



Amiri Diwan photo
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a letter from the UAE President delivered by the UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Matar Hamed Al-Neyadi.

Amir receives UAE Pres. letter

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Tuesday a written letter from President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, inviting him to attend the United Nations Water Conference 2026.

The conference is scheduled to be hosted by the UAE in partnership with the Republic of Senegal from December 8 to 10.

The letter was delivered to His Highness the Amir by UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Matar Hamed Al-Neyadi.

The meeting was attended by Director of His Highness the Amir's Office retired Lt. Gen. Jamal Mohammad Al-Theyab, Amiri Diwan Undersecretary Sheikh Abdulaziz Meshal Mubarak Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and Amiri Diwan Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs Mazen Issa Al-Essa. (KUNA)

45 job opportunities for Kuwaitis at co-ops

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: The Director General of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), Engineer Rabab Al-Osaimi, announced the start of accepting applications for 45 job opportunities for Kuwaiti citizens at 15 cooperative societies, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Osaimi explained that the available positions include Central Market Manager for university graduates, as well as Receiving Clerk and Warehouse Keeper for diploma holders, in accordance with the qualifications and experience required for each position.

Applications will be accepted online through the Fakhru-na Platform for the recruitment of national workers from September 2 to 16, 2026.

Each applicant may apply for only one job opportunity. The deadline for applications is 12:00 noon on Wednesday, September 16.

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

Al-Osaimi affirmed that these opportunities are part of PAM's efforts to support national employment.

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Ministry of Health Undersecretary Sheikh Dr. Salman Al-Khalifa Al-Sabah visited Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Chemical Defense and Radiological Monitoring Center at Kuwait National Guard on Tuesday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, KNG revealed that Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Affairs Dr. Al-Mundhir Al-Hasawi accompanied Sheikh Dr. Salman Al-Khalifa.

Acting Commander for Military and Security Affairs Brigadier General Abdullah Saleh and Director for Medical Services Brigadier General Engineer Mohammad Ali warmly welcomed the visitors.

During the visit, Sheikh Dr. Salman Al-Khalifa was briefed on the mission and national role of the center in monitoring stations, which cover the land and territorial waters of the country.

Cabinet nods decree-law to regulate media

Sukuk draft-decree law approved

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1, (KUNA) : The Kuwaiti Cabinet on Tuesday approved a draft decree-law to regulate media in the light of recent world digital and technological developments.

This came during the Cabinet's weekly meeting, chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

The decree-law will cover different pieces of legislation regarding publishing, digital advertisements and social media.

The Cabinet sent the new draft law to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for final approval.

The Kuwaiti Cabinet approved a draft decree-law regarding governmental sukuk and referred it to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for final approval.

This came during the Cabinet's weekly meeting, held under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

At the onset of the meeting, the Cabinet was briefed on a written letter received by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from Chairman of the Yemeni Presidential Leadership Council, Rashad Mohammed Al-Alimi regarding fraternal relations between both countries and means to promote and develop them across various fields.

The letter was delivered to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah by Yemeni Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Afrah Al-Zoubah.

Relations

The Cabinet was also apprised of a letter sent by His Highness the Amir to South Korean President Lee Jae Myung concerning bilateral relations, ways to strengthen them, and the current regional developments.

The letter was delivered by Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to his South Korean counterpart Cho Hyun during their meeting in Seoul, as part of the Kuwaiti minister's official visit to the Republic of Korea.

The meeting reviewed the strong relations between the two countries, with both sides affirming their shared commitment to enhancing cooperation and coordination across various fields and at all levels, in a manner that advances bilateral ties and serves their mutual interests.

The ministers were then briefed on His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's written message to Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi concerning the historical and close ties between the two friendly countries and peoples, ways of enhancing and developing them,



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting.

as well as current developments in the region.

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 capital, Tokyo.

In addition, the ministers were apprised of an invitation received by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah from UAE Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al-Maktoum to attend the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week Summit.

The Cabinet also reviewed the meeting between His Highness the Prime and Lebanese Ambassador in Kuwait Ghady El-Khoury in presence of His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan Acting Chief Sheikh Khaled Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah.

The Cabinet expressed Kuwait's strong condemnation and denunciation of the heinous Iranian attack on the sisterly United Arab Emirates using a drone in a blatant violation of its sovereignty and a threat to the security and stability of the region.

It reiterated Kuwait's full solidarity with the sisterly United Arab Emirates, affirming its support and backing for all measures it takes to safeguard its sovereignty and protect its

security and territorial integrity.

Furthermore, the Cabinet expressed Kuwait's strong condemnation and denunciation of the Iranian attacks on Jordan early Monday with several missiles, as a blatant violation of Jordan's sovereignty and territorial integrity and a threat to regional security and stability.

It reaffirmed Kuwait's full solidarity with Jordan, support for its measures to safeguard its sovereignty, and efforts to protect its security and territorial integrity.

Meanwhile, the ministers were briefed on Kuwaiti Defense Minister Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah's official visit to Pakistan, where a joint defense and military cooperation agreement was concluded.

The agreement was signed by the Kuwaiti minister and his Pakistani counterpart Khawaja Muhammad Asif in the presence of Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army, Lieu. Gen. Khaled Al-Shuraiaan, and Kuwaiti Ambassador in Islamabad Nassar Al-Mutairi.

The agreement marks a significant milestone in the military and defense cooperation between the two countries, as it provides a framework to enhance operational coordination, exchange expertise, and raise the level of readiness and integration between the armed forces, serving common interests and contributing to regional security and stability.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad

Al-Sabah kept the Cabinet posted on his ministry's political and diplomatic efforts to cope with the latest regional and international developments.

The minister also apprised his colleagues of the outcomes of his recent visit to Beijing, where he was welcomed by Chinese Vice President Han Zheng.

During the meeting, Sheikh Jarrah conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, to President of China Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang, and Vice President Han Zheng.

Historical

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

They also discussed the latest regional and international developments and exchanged views on issues of mutual concern.

The minister briefed the Cabinet on the outcomes of his official visit to South Korea, where he met with National Security Advisor Wi Sung-lac.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed the latest regional developments and efforts aimed at reducing tensions in the region, and sought ways to strengthen the ties between both countries in various fields.

He also elaborated on his meeting with former United Nations Secretary-General and President of the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) Ban Ki-moon during his official visit to Seoul.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the latest regional and international developments and exchanged views on them.

The foreign minister then explained the outcomes of his recent visit to Japan, where he met with his Japanese counterpart Toshimitsu Motegi.

During the meeting, they reviewed the historical and close relations between the two friendly countries and their growing development following their elevation last year to the level of a comprehensive strategic partnership.

The two sides also stressed the significance of this year as a milestone in Kuwait-Japan relations, coinciding with the 56th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Finally, the minister explained the findings of his recent phone calls to several foreign ministers of sisterly and friendly countries, which highlighted the ongoing regional developments and diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalating tensions, bolstering regional security and stability and ensuring the safety and freedom of maritime navigation.

'Strong economy to pull foreign investment'

Kuwait financial status solid despite challenges

KUWAIT CITY, Sep 1, (KUNA): Kuwaiti State Minister for Economic Affairs and Investment Abdulaziz Al-Marzouq and Finance Minister Dr. Yaqoub Al-Rifai affirmed Kuwait's economic resilience and strong financial position against regional and international challenges.

This came during the Cabinet meeting, held on Tuesday under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

The Cabinet reviewed the visual presentation submitted by the Ministers regarding the state's financial position as of March 31, 2026, it reflected the state's financial assets and liabilities, based on the provisions of Article 150 of the Constitution.

The presentation was attended by the Undersecretary of the Finance Ministry Aseel Al-Munifi, and the Managing Director of the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) Sheikh Saoud Salem Al-Sabah.

The Ministers reviewed the data on the General Reserve and the Reserve Fund for Future Generations, and affirmed the Kuwaiti economy's resilience and the strength of the state's financial position in confronting regional and international challenges, given its substantial assets and financial reserves.

The Cabinet also reviewed the visual presentation on the first-quarter report concerning the implementation of the 2026-2027 budgets of ministries and government departments, which

indicated that non-oil revenues are projected to achieve significant growth during the fiscal year 2026-2027, driven by a series of financial reforms currently being implemented.

The Cabinet affirmed that these reforms will pave the way for building a more sustainable and competitive economy in the medium and long term.

These positive indicators reflect the strength and resilience of the Kuwaiti economy, contributing to attracting foreign investment to Kuwait and confirming the success of the state's policy aimed at economic openness and supporting the drive to make Kuwait an attractive financial and commercial center, while providing sustainable job opportunities for future generations.



The meeting in progress.

KUNA photo

Kuwait, GCC officials address medicine stocks and supplies

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1, (KUNA): Kuwait's Health Undersecretary Sheikh Dr. Salman Khalifa Al-Sabah led Tuesday the country's delegation to a preparatory meeting of GCC health undersecretaries ahead of the 12th GCC Health Ministers' Meeting in Bahrain on September 6.

Health Ministry said the meeting, held virtually, addressed several priority issues, including strategic stocks of medicines and medical supplies, the GCC Health Excellence Award, expatriate worker health screening and health insur-

ance.

It also reviewed the 2026-2030 GCC Health Ministers' action plan and ways to boost coordination on joint health programs and initiatives.

The meeting further discussed emerging technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in healthcare, also focusing on ways to improve the quality of health services.

Kuwait also made an active contribution to drafting several decisions and recommendations supporting Gulf health cooperation and joint efforts.

Bid to raise security, community awareness

Mol to launch comprehensive 'Prevention and Safety' campaign

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: The Ministry of Interior confirmed that it is fully prepared for the launching of the comprehensive security awareness campaign under the slogan, "Prevention and Safety", to coincide with the start of the academic year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, Director General of the Public Relations and Security Media General Department at the ministry Brigadier General Nasser Bouslaib explained that the campaign is aimed at enhancing prevention and raising security and community awareness. He added that the campaign will continue throughout the academic year as per the schedule.

He said the campaign will use a variety of media and awareness tools, in addition to direct

communication with students, parents and educational institutions to raise awareness on safe behavior.

He revealed that the campaign has several themes, which were chosen according to their importance, using the latest print, audio and digital media platforms.

He added that the campaign includes a range of activities and events for the relevant groups, such as meetings, lectures and workshops for students, parents and educational institutions, in coordination with the concerned authorities.

He indicated that one of the aspects of the campaign is related to juveniles, as the Juvenile Protection Law stipulates the rights and responsibilities of the juveniles and their families.

He said the campaign shall focus on prevent-

ing first-time drug use, educating students and families about the dangers of narcotics, methods used to lure victims and peer pressure. He added that it emphasizes the importance of family dialogue, early detection, seeking treatment, and full awareness of the new Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances Law.

He stated that the campaign shall stress the significance of raising awareness about the need to protect personal data, combat fraud and extortion, and familiarize the public with the Cybercrime Law.

He explained that the campaign aims to protect society from extremist ideologies and hate speech, promote moderation and patriotism, and encourage obtaining information from official sources.

An initiative that will not end Iranian provocations

"I followed the statement made by Iraqi Prime Minister's Security Adviser Qasim Al-Araji regarding an initiative to establish a unified security coordination council comprising Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Iran," columnist Eng. **Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"I reflected on this initiative, which I believe has little to do with reality. At the very least, the Iraqi side needs to exert considerable efforts to rid itself of militias affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. In theory, this initiative could have been possible if relations among the three countries were based on respect for sovereignty and the principles of good neighborliness. However, when the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states become an arena for Iranian, Iraqi, or Yemeni militia warfare, the initiative appears to be an attempt to absolve Iran of responsibility for the aggression it launches, from time to time, against its neighbors.



Adel Al-Kharafi

"Over the past six months, the militias supported by Tehran have not been acting independently, but rather implementing the Revolutionary Guard's agenda, attacking Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and other Gulf states, while Iran has been bombarding our countries with missiles and drones. In this war, people were killed and interests were destroyed. After all this, can we trust a neighbor like this? This statement comes from some Iraqi officials, whose government announced more than a month ago that it would work to restrict weapons to the state.

"Just days ago, armed factions affiliated with Iran announced impossible conditions. This means they have reneged on the agreement they had previously accepted. The visit by Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf disrupted progress on the agreement, especially when he insisted on placing a map behind him labeled "Persian Gulf" instead of "Arabian Gulf." These events, if taken in good faith, indicate that this initiative will not stop Iranian provocations against the Gulf states. For decades, we have witnessed how Iran has operated in Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen, using its proxies to destabilize countries, wage wars, and commit acts of terrorism on Iran's behalf.

"All of this was not a match between two teams, but a war in every sense of the word. Can diplomacy bring back the lives that have been lost? Can the Houthi aggression against Saudi vessels in the Red Sea and the targeting of vessels in the Strait of Hormuz go unpunished? The Iraqi initiative appears to have been stillborn because one of its parties - Iran - has hidden intentions that differ from its stated objectives. As they say, a book can be judged by its cover."

Also:

"With the proliferation of rumors, hearsay, and gossip, particularly concerning politics and lawsuits, and given the silence of the relevant official bodies and the lack of comment from the Cabinet, the question repeatedly arises - Who is shaping public opinion, and who is contributing to its formation?" columnist **Khaled Ahmad Al-Tarrah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Political and legal rumors and hearsay are unacceptable because the rule of law and its application are not limited to security matters alone. They also encompass strengthening public trust in the government as a decision-making institution and ensuring transparency in its policies and decisions, so that the government serves as a role model and a point of reference.

"Building trust is not achieved by implementing non-developmental or unimportant projects. Rather, it requires establishing the foundations of good governance and ensuring popular participation in decision-making and in shaping policies aimed at achieving prosperity. Recently, a British newspaper raised an issue concerning Kuwait and one of the esteemed members of the Al-Sabah family, who heads an important and sensitive economic body and enjoys an excellent international and regional reputation.

"Should we wait until the foreign media covers an issue before hearing a clarification from the relevant official bodies that reveals the facts? The issue of investments in Spain during the Iraqi invasion became a matter of public opinion. Kuwait was outside the country for a year. At the time, some foreign media outlets launched a media campaign against Kuwait, until the state began refuting the rumors with evidence and arguments.

"The same thing happened with the tanker case. The role of Dr. Fahad Al-Rashed in reporting the former Director General of the Public Institution for Social Security, Fahad Al-Rajaan, in 2008 deserves commendation. Al-Rajaan was later found to have died outside Kuwait. Without this individual effort, the case might not have progressed as we later saw it before the legal authorities. Are we to expect the case involving millions of dinars deposited into the bank accounts of some members of the National Assembly to become fodder for the foreign press, given the government's silence?"

"This file took on political, social, and legal dimensions, creating a storm in the National Assembly at the time, while differing positions and opinions emerged. Some believed that depositing money for the benefit of certain members of the National Assembly was a legitimate act,

while questions were raised about the reasons for paying such large sums to some members of the National Assembly. Perhaps the talk of reopening the investigations into this case will allow the legal procedures that were previously halted by certain circumstances to be completed. This would be unprecedented and would present the facts to the public.

"I reiterate my call to His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah, to set the record straight and direct the relevant authorities to clarify the validity of the claims circulating about this matter, which has sparked and continues to spark considerable controversy. The public deserves official facts and information to refute the rumors. Public opinion should be guided by facts, not rumors."

□ □ □

"From the beginning of the confrontation, it was clear that US President Donald Trump was not seeking a traditional truce that would preserve the dignity of both sides, but rather an agreement that could be presented to the American public as a political and strategic victory," Saudi writer **Saleh bin Abdullah Al-Muslim** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"For this reason, the American discourse surrounding the agreement was closely linked to the Strait of Hormuz, the nuclear issue, and sanctions. On August 1, Trump spoke of the outlines of an agreement that would include reopening the Strait of Hormuz and ending the Iranian nuclear threat. This proves that Washington views these three issues as components of a single deal.

"The US-Iranian conflict is no longer measured by the number of missiles launched or the number of airstrikes that cease, but rather by what unfolds in the hours that follow at the negotiating table and in the maritime corridors of the Strait of Hormuz. Herein lies the great paradox of the current situation. The war appears less intense militarily than it was at the beginning, but the underlying causes of the conflict remain unresolved, and the United States has not yet achieved the outcome sought by President Donald Trump.

"Iran has not made the concessions that would allow Washington to declare the confrontation over. The most important question is no longer whether the war with Iran has ended, but whether it has entered a new phase, shifting from missiles and aircraft to sanctions, negotiations, and control of the Strait of Hormuz. The problem is that what Washington wants differs radically from what Tehran can accept. The real conflict now revolves around three questions - Who will set the terms for reopening the Strait of Hormuz? What will Iran offer in exchange for lifting or easing sanctions? And can Trump secure an agreement that he can present as a historic deal without having to resort to war?"

"Till today, there is no definitive answer. But the fact is that the battle has moved into a more complex stage - from missiles to sanctions, from aircraft to ships, and from battlefields to negotiating tables. This is perhaps the most likely scenario for the next phase - neither a full-scale war nor complete peace, but rather a prolonged armed truce during which the two sides negotiate a deal that goes far beyond simply reopening the Strait.

"The Strait of Hormuz is no longer just a waterway, but it has become a bargaining chip that could determine the shape of the regional order after the war with Iran. The question that will determine the next phase is not whether Trump wants to end the war. Trump wants to end it on his terms. But can Iran grant him a political victory without having to admit defeat? If both sides can find an answer to this equation, peace may be near. But if they fail, the Strait of Hormuz will remain the key to the next war, even if the guns fall silent today.

"The war has already led to a sharp decline in oil traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. Recent reports indicate that flows have fallen to about five million barrels per day, compared with more than 20 million barrels per day before the war. Therefore, effective or partial control of the Strait of Hormuz means having leverage over Washington, the Gulf states, and global markets simultaneously.

"The irony is that this Iranian leverage may be a temporary weapon that cannot be maintained indefinitely. Iran can negotiate a mechanism for reopening the Strait of Hormuz, as well as security or navigational arrangements, and perhaps even specific nuclear restrictions. But Iran will be extremely sensitive to any agreement that is interpreted locally as a surrender to the United States. Herein lies Trump's dilemma - How can Iran secure a dignified exit while allowing Trump to declare victory? Such a deal has not yet been reached."

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

134 kg of non-compliant food items wasted

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) on Monday confirmed that a food establishment was raided and it was proven to have committed serious violations, such as offering spoiled and substandard food items, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In a press statement, PAFN disclosed that the inspection campaign carried out by the Capital Governorate Inspection Department, in cooperation with the Capital Governorate Security Directorate at the Ministry of Interior, resulted in the issuance of 10 violation reports, closure of the establishment, and

destruction of 134.116 kilograms of non-compliant food products.

PAFN added that the violations included thawing frozen meat for sale as fresh, as well as violations related to general hygiene, licenses and health certificates of employees.

Indian stabs compatriot to death over earlier dispute

Expat husband flees with son: Kuwaiti woman

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: Jahra Criminal Investigations officers referred an Indian expatriate, born in 1996, to the Public Prosecution after he was accused of fatally stabbing an Indian national, born in 1992, four times following previous disputes between them, reports Al-Anba daily

Investigators included the suspect's confession and the knife allegedly used in the crime in the case file.

According to a security source, the Ministry of Interior's Operations Room received a report recently in the morning about a violent altercation inside a farm in Abdali.

Security officers immediately went to the scene, and found an Indian expatriate who had died from four stab wounds. Initial investigations indicated that the suspect, who was also Indian, had fled the scene.

Investigators intensified their efforts and managed to determine where the suspect was hiding. He was subsequently arrested at a farm. During questioning, he confessed to the crime, stating that a dispute had arisen between him and the victim over previous workplace problems before escalating into a fight that ended with him stabbing his colleague.

The necessary legal measures were taken against the suspect, who was referred to the Public Prosecution for further investigation.

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Expat flees with son: A Kuwaiti woman born in 1988 filed a police report accusing her non-

Kuwaiti ex-husband of taking their son, born in 2019, out of the country after he failed to bring the child to a court-ordered visitation appointment, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

According to her statement, the woman waited for her son at the scheduled visitation time but the father did not bring him. She then contacted the father to ask about the child's whereabouts and was told that he had left the country with the boy.

The woman subsequently went to a police station and filed a report. The Public Prosecution was notified and it ordered that a case be registered.

The Criminal Investigations Department was tasked with conducting inquiries to determine the circumstances of the incident and verify the child's whereabouts.

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Kuwaiti assaults officer: A Kuwaiti citizen born in 1972 was detained at Al-Sulaibiya Police Station after being accused of assaulting a Ministry of Defense military officer while he was on duty, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The military officer filed a report at Al-Sulaibiya Police Station, stating that he was assaulted while driving a military vehicle on the Seventh Ring Road, opposite the Sulaibiya warehouses, heading toward Jahra.

According to the officer's report, he was driving the military vehicle when the driver of a four-wheel-drive vehicle suddenly stopped in front of him. The driver then got out of his vehicle and assaulted the officer.

Security personnel immediately took the necessary legal measures. The officer obtained a medical report documenting the injuries he sustained and attached it to the case file. The other

party was then contacted by phone and asked to report to the police station. After questioning him, the investigator ordered his detention pending completion of the legal procedures.

A case was subsequently registered, and the suspect was detained at the station. The case file was referred to the relevant authorities to complete the investigation, determine the circumstances of the incident, and take the necessary legal action.

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Celebration down the drain: Hawally security officers referred two people to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) after catching them in possession of a carton of imported alcoholic beverages inside their vehicle, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The two claimed that they had purchased the alcohol for "fun" and were taking it to an apartment they rented in the governorate.

According to a security source, officers were conducting a checkpoint in Hawally Governorate when they became suspicious of a vehicle carrying two people. The officers noticed signs of nervousness, prompting them to stop the vehicle and conduct a search. They found a carton of imported alcoholic beverages inside.

The two individuals told officers that they had purchased the alcohol for personal consumption and were taking it to their apartment. However, they did not identify the source from which they had purchased it, raising suspicions about the purpose of possessing the alcohol.

They were subsequently referred to DCGD for further investigation and inquiries to determine whether the alcohol was intended for personal consumption or another purpose.

Asian expat held in Khaitan on drug peddling suspicion

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: Officers from the Farwaniya Security Directorate's Support Patrols arrested an Asian expatriate in Khaitan recently on suspicion of involvement in drug trafficking, reports **Al-Anba** daily

According to security sources, the suspect was stopped to verify his identity, but when officers became suspicious of him, they searched him and found several bags containing the narcotic substance "shabu" (crystal methamphetamine), packaged and prepared for sale and distribution. The discovery heightened suspicions that he was involved in drug distribution.

The suspect was taken into custody and referred to the Drug Control General Department for further investigation.

Authorities are working to determine the source of the drugs, identify the individuals with whom the suspect was dealing, and establish whether any accomplices or other parties were

involved in the distribution operation.

The suspect remains under investigation as narcotics officers seek to uncover further details and identify any other individuals connected to his activities. His statements are being reviewed and the information he provides verified, with legal action to be taken against him and anyone else proven to be involved in the case.

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Pay comp to citizen: The Commercial Court ordered a contractor and his partner to pay a citizen KD 36,979 for breaching their contractual obligations under a construction agreement for his residential plot, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The court also ordered the first defendant to pay an additional KD 5,000 in compensation for the moral damages suffered by the citizen.

The citizen filed the lawsuit through his lawyer, Ali Jawhar, seeking the appointment of an

expert to determine the outstanding obligations and amounts due under the construction contract, which was signed in 2018 for the construction of his residential property.

The court explained in its ruling that the appointed expert concluded in his report that, after the accounts were settled, the defendants owed the plaintiff KD 36,979. The technical report also confirmed that the defendant was the party in breach.

The court stated that it was satisfied with the expert's report and the soundness of the grounds on which it was based.

It noted that the defendants failed to prove that they had paid the outstanding amount. It also found that the psychological harm suffered by the plaintiff as a result of the seizure of his subsidized building materials during the construction of his house constituted moral damages warranting compensation.

Road No. 103 in Al-Siddiq to shut down for 15 days

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: The Ministry of Public Works announced that Road No. 103 in Al-Siddiq will be closed from Tuesday, September 1, 2026, for a period of 15 days, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The ministry urged road users to follow traffic instructions and use alternative routes during the closure period in the interest of everyone's safety and to avoid traffic congestion.

2,756 traffic violations, 232 cars 'impounded'

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: The General Traffic Department conducted a large-scale traffic campaign that resulted in the issuance of 2,756 traffic violations, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The department explained that the campaign was carried out under the supervision of Head of the Traffic and Operations Sector Brigadier General Ahmad Fahd Al-Azmi. It was led by Director General of the General Traffic Department Brigadier General Rashid Hamoud Al-Hajri and Assistant Director General of the General Traffic Department for Traffic Regulation Affairs Colonel Ayoub Ghazi Fathallah.

The campaign resulted in the detection of 35 speeding violations, 243 violations of overtaking regulations, 940 violations for obstructing traffic flow, and 1,508 violations for failing to use turn signals.

Five violators were detained, while two juveniles were referred to the Juvenile Prosecution. A total of 232 vehicles were impounded, while 14 wanted individuals and three wanted vehicles were apprehended and referred to the relevant authorities.

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Back from the dead: An Egyptian worker sustained serious injuries while carrying out electrical wiring maintenance after falling into a three-meter-deep pit and becoming covered in dust, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The injured worker was transported to the hospital, where a medical report stated that he arrived without breathing or a heartbeat and showed no signs of life.

The medical team immediately began cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the worker responded to the resuscitation efforts. He was subsequently admitted to the intensive care unit for further treatment.

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HH the Amir



Peter Pellegrini



Shavkat Mirziyoyev

Amir congrats Uzbekistan, Slovakia on National Days

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable on Tuesday to the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, on his country's Independence Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished President Shavkat Mirziyoyev good health and well-being, and more progress and prosperity to Uzbekistan and its people.

Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable on Tuesday to the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, on his country's Independence Day.

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Prime Minister

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SLOVAKIA

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a congratulatory cable to President of Slovakia Peter Pellegrini on his country's National day.

His Highness the Amir wished the president a long healthy life and further development and prosperity for Slovakia.

Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a congratulatory cable to President of Slovakia Peter Pellegrini on his country's National day.

His Highness wished the president a long healthy life and further development and prosperity for Slovakia.

Prime Minister

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Tuesday sent a congratulatory cable to President of Slovakia Peter Pellegrini on his country's National day.

PAHW greenlights 22 consortia for three new housing projects

Housing demand jumps to record 108,086

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) announced the qualification of 22 investment consortia, consisting of 41 Kuwaiti and international companies, to move to the next stage of procedures for launching three new housing projects, along with the activation of the real estate developer model.

Acting Deputy Director General for Investment and Private Sector Projects at PAHW Eng. Ahmad Al-Ansari confirmed that this move is in compliance with the directive of the Cabinet to expedite the completion of residential cities.

Al-Ansari pointed out that the involvement of the private sector is based on legal and technical frameworks that ensure the development of integrated urban communities, which include services and infrastructure in line with the sustainable development plan

of the country.

He affirmed that PAHW is keen on easing the financial and administrative burdens on the state budget, while ensuring the implementation of housing projects according to the latest international standards in construction and urban planning.

Moreover, real estate expert Abdullah Al-Hadi Al-Gharib stated that the announcement of this consortium could contribute to solving the housing crisis by expanding the involvement of real estate developers, accelerating the pace of housing project implementation, and remarkably reducing the waiting time for citizens who applied for housing grant.

He indicated that attracting foreign investment should be done by opening the door to global alliances, which contribute to the flow of foreign capital into the Kuwaiti



Eng. Al-Ansari

market.

He believes this step will revitalize related sectors and stimulate several other sectors, such as contracting, building materials, logistics, financial and banking.

He asserted that involving the local private sector and foreign companies in the implementation of housing projects is a national necessity to rescue the housing welfare system of the government.

He said the number of outstanding housing applications has jumped to record levels, reaching 108,086 and 2,477 of which were registered in the first half of this year.

He explained that this strategic shift prompted the government to expedite the formulation and development of an attractive and stimulating legislative framework and laws that guarantee the establishment of a genuine and sustainable partnership between the public and private sectors according to the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) system, thus, protecting the rights of all parties and achieving the desired development sustainability.

2,058 male, female trainees accepted

PAAET approves admission results for '26/'27 AY

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: The Director General of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), Dr. Hassan Mohammad Al-Fajjam, approved the admission results for applicants holding a Grade 9 certificate or its equivalent, as well as those holding a Grade 5 certificate or its equivalent, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The results also included applicants to special classes at PAAET institutes and their specialized training courses for the first academic year of 2026/2027.

The Dean of Admissions and Registration, Dr. Mohammad Taleb Al-Kandari, explained that the admission process was conducted in accordance with the approved plan and regulations, based on the minimum admission requirements, applicants' preferences, and the number of available training places.

A total of 2,058 male and female trainees were accepted from among 2,108 applicants holding a ninth-grade certificate or its equivalent.

All 58 male and female applicants holding a fifth-grade certificate or its equivalent were accepted.

A total of 30 male and female trainees were also accepted into the special classes. PAAET congratulated all those accepted, wishing them success, and urged them to follow announcements and instructions issued through its official channels for information on guidance procedures, personal interviews, study schedules, and the start of classes.



KUNA photo

Kuwaiti Ambassador in Algeria Nawaf Abu Sheiba submits his credentials to Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune.

Kuwait reiterates solidarity with Algeria over forest fires

ALGIERS, Sept 1, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Ambassador in Algeria Nawaf Abu Sheiba on Monday submitted his credentials to Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune as Kuwait's ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Algeria, tout-ing firm fraternal relations between both nations.

Abu Sheiba reiterated his country's solidarity and sympathy with Algeria over the forest fires in its central and eastern provinces, the Embassy of Kuwait to Algeria said in a statement, a copy of which was received by KUNA.

The Kuwaiti ambassador expressed sincere condolences and sympathy with the government and people of Algeria and with the families of the fire victims, while wishing a swift recovery of the in-

jured.

He said that he had conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to the Algerian president.

He added that the Algerian leader had asked him to convey his sincere greetings to His Highness the Amir, speaking highly of the distinguished level of relations between both countries.

The Kuwaiti diplomat underlined the commitment of his country's political leadership to promoting and developing bilateral relations to wider vistas across all fields in a way that serves the common interests of both countries and their peoples.

Continued from Page 1

One framework

Al-Tabtabaie stated that the framework signals a new phase of clear roles and stability in the educational process. He explained that field observations contribute to refining the provisions of the framework and bringing it to its final form.

The framework has 22 chapters covering various educational stages and includes comprehensive regulatory provisions that take into account the characteristics of different educational levels. It protects the children's rights and strengthens partnerships with families.

The regulations specified that the secondary school grades for each semester will be distributed as follows: 25 points for coursework, 15 points for quizzes and 60 points for the final exam, in addition to the adoption of the GPA system, with a grade of A+ worth four full points.

The cumulative GPA system for secondary school will be implemented with varying weights: 10 percent for Grade 10, 20 percent for Grade 11 and 70 percent for Grade 12.

The cumulative GPA is calculated based solely on the year of passing, without considering the impact of previous final grade failures.

Student misconduct is categorized into four levels and each level is linked to progressive and proportionate corrective

measures, taking into account the nature and severity of the violation.

The school discipline regulations are according to the principles of fairness, gradation and verification, while emphasizing the educational and preventative aspects of disciplinary measures to guarantee discipline without neglecting the educational role of the institution.

There are provisions for social and psychological services, and support for students with special needs, learning difficulties and health conditions, taking into account their diverse needs and providing them with the necessary support in the educational institutions.

The regulations addressed the governance of administrative and educational work, and the organization of councils, committees and working groups in educational institutions.

Online learning, school media and the learning environment are incorporated in the organizational framework for education.

Examinations, paper marking, appeals and examination violations are regulated through a set of controls.

A clear framework for rights, duties and responsibilities is included, thereby, ensuring the stability of the educational environment and achieving greater clarity in the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in the educational process.



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Continued from Page 1

Iranians today

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian stated “the war must end at some point. It is better to end it today. People staying away from the ruling circle do not understand the conditions under which the government is operating.”

In this statement, Pezeshkian alluded to the unbearable living and economic conditions. History is repeating itself for the Iranian people.

When the revolution of Mohammad Mosaddegh succeeded in 1951, at a time the Shah was at the height of his power, the people could not endure the British blockade of Iranian ports, so they revolted against the government in 1953, and the Shah regained power.

Today, after 47 years of oppressive rule and immense suffering, Iranians are even more resentful of the regime of Ayatollah.

With the recent developments in the war, the tightening of the suffocating embargo and the international community’s abandonment of the rogue Iranian regime, the regime has no choice but to heed the voice of its people. No matter how hard the regime tries to beautify its image, it is defeated, at least in the eyes of 90 million Iranian people.

Attempts to repeat the SAVAK tactics that preceded the downfall of the Shah —bombings, riots and blaming protesters—are no longer effective in this era, where everything is clearly exposed.

The attempts of media outlets in and outside Iran to mend the image of the Iranian regime are nothing more than a smokescreen.

The Iranian media campaigns against American imperialism and global Zionism will not benefit the average citizen, even if they provide him with the price of a loaf of bread, especially since inflation soared to 350 percent.

While it is true that the Shah will not return and there are no ready-made alternatives to the Iranian regime, a Venezuelan-style scenario will emerge as soon as the international community agrees on a suitable replacement.

Trump stated an undeniable truth when he said that the Iranians do not even know who their Supreme Leader is.

Chanting slogans is useless for starving people. Possessing nuclear weapons and missiles is a curse for a regime that is detached from the reality of its people.

First Deputy

At the end of the visit, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef issued directives to support further development, improve efficiency and the accuracy of results, and strengthen the security system.

He was received upon arrival by Head of the Criminal Security Affairs Sector, Brigadier General Fahd Al-Badr, Assistant Director General of the General Department of Criminal Evidence, Brigadier General Mishari Al-Rish, and several department directors and their assistants.

Al-Jarallah highlights

They talked about the depth of Kuwaiti-Egyptian relations and the historical and fraternal ties that bind the two countries and their peoples, in addition to the role of the media in strengthening these relations and highlighting avenues of cooperation and rapprochement between them.

During the meeting, Al-Jarallah affirmed the commitment of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers to support Kuwaiti-Egyptian relations through media coverage, while highlighting the shared interests and deep-rooted bonds between the two countries, thereby, enhancing communication between the two peoples and keeping pace with the development of bilateral relations in various fields.

He praised Egypt’s standing and its Arab and regional role, affirming that it possesses significant capabilities that qualify it for leadership, foremost among them its wealth of talent and intellect capable of contributing to shaping the future.

He also commended the policies of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and his efforts to enhance the presence and role of Egypt, indicating that its human and strategic capabilities are significant sources of strength for Egypt and the Arab region.

Meanwhile, Wahid affirmed that Kuwait has a special place in the hearts of Egyptians, stressing the strength of the historical and fraternal relations between the two countries. He praised the role of the media in strengthening communication and highlighting the unique nature of Kuwaiti-Egyptian relations.

Discussions also focused on a number of topics of mutual interest, in an atmosphere that reflected the depth of the ties that bind the two countries and their brotherly peoples.

Nepal thanks

Regarding the situation of Kuwaiti citizens in Nepal, he confirmed that there has been no report about any Kuwaiti being victims of the disaster. He said the disaster will certainly affect tourism in his country, but he expressed optimism that the effect will be short-lived.

He added that travel to Nepal is continuing normally, as major international airports like Tribhuvan International Airport, Gautam Buddha International Airport and Pokhara International Airport are operating as usual. He indicated that tourists arriving through the land border crossings are not facing any problem.

Yemen highlights

She said the meeting served as an opportunity to brief the Kuwaiti leadership on the developments in Yemen, as well as the efforts of the Presidential Leadership Council and the government to restore state institutions, continue economic reforms, and enhance security and stability.

She added that her discussions with Foreign Affairs Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah covered bilateral relations, latest developments in Yemen and the region, and issues of mutual concern.

She confirmed that both sides underscored the importance of reviewing, updating and reactivating the agreements, memoranda of understanding and cooperation frameworks signed by the two countries.

She stressed that Kuwait has a special place in the Yemeni memory, not only because of its political stances, but also the fact that its presence is felt in the daily lives of generations of Yemenis through the construction of schools, hospitals, roads and other development projects.

She praised Kuwait’s diplomatic legacy of supporting dialogue and de-escalation, indicating that its involvement in the Yemeni conflict predates the current crisis by decades, beginning with its mediation efforts between the two Yemens in the 1970s and its hosting of the Yemeni political consultations in 2016.

She affirmed that Kuwait consultations will remain a highly valued event for Yemenis, given the serious space they provided for dialogue and the commitment they demonstrated to unify positions and bridge differences.

She asserted that any political agreement requires clear implementation arrangements and institutions

capable of safeguarding what is agreed on and preventing the return to the imposition of a fait accompli by force.

She cited the memorandum of understanding signed in January 2015 regarding political consultations between the two foreign ministries, and cooperation between the Yemeni Diplomatic Institute and Saud Nasser Al-Sabah Kuwaiti Diplomatic Institute.

She also mentioned the financial agreement signed with Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) in February of the same year, which paved the way for the resumption of funding and the revitalization of development projects.

She said KFAED is one of Yemen’s oldest and most important development partners, and that the value of its experience is measured not only by the volume of funding, but also by the continuity of the relationship and its ability to adapt to difficult circumstances.

She stated that the current phase involves assessing the situation and then determining the cost of reconstruction, adding that the priority is restoring political and security stability and strengthening the capacity of state institutions.

She revealed that Yemen has major investment opportunities in the energy, water desalination, fisheries, transportation and service sectors.

She indicated that the Yemeni government is working hard to establish partnerships with the private sector and improve the regulatory frameworks for investment.

She asserted that the Kuwaiti capital has experience and a regional presence that can play a crucial role in the recovery and reconstruction phase.

She said serious discussions about investment must be accompanied by improvements in stability, governance, guarantees and project transparency.

She pointed out that Yemen is the southern extension of the Gulf region, overlooking the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandab Strait and Gulf of Aden, which are key points for international trade, energy and maritime navigation.

She reiterated her country’s condemnation of the Iranian attacks on Kuwait and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations, emphasizing the full solidarity of Yemen with the Gulf states and its rejection of any violation of their sovereignty or threat to their security and stability.

She said the position of Yemen is based on respect for the sovereignty of states, good neighborliness, non-interference in internal affairs, and peaceful resolution of disputes.

Kuwait restarts ‘outdoor’ clock

Heat work ban ends

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1, (KUNA): The Public Authority for Manpower announced on Tuesday the end of the period prohibiting work in open areas, in accordance with Ministerial Decision No. 3 of 2006 regulating labor in outdoor workplaces during restricted periods and

unsuitable weather conditions.

In a press statement, the Public Authority for Manpower stressed the need for employers to provide a safe working environment and appropriate conditions to protect workers’ health and safety.

The authority said it will continue monitoring compliance with occupational health and safety requirements and take the necessary measures against violators.

Kuwait plans pediatric care boost with Boston hospital

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1, (KUNA): Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health Sheikh Dr. Salman Khalifa Al-Sabah met Tuesday with Dr. Ziad Abdulhak, Executive Director of International Business Development at Boston Children’s Hospital Alliance and Global Services, to discuss strategic cooperation aimed at developing pediatric healthcare in Kuwait.

The Ministry of Health said in a statement that the meeting covered leveraging international expertise in the operation and management of children’s hospitals, including clinical governance, patient care pathways, quality standards and patient safety.

The two sides also discussed specialized training for Kuwaiti medical staff to enhance their ability to manage complex cases and perform advanced medical and surgical procedures locally, as well as strengthen clinical and advisory cooperation and knowledge exchange.

Discussions further explored specialized programs in healthcare leadership and hospital management, in addition to cooperation in genetic medicine and



Ministry of Health photo Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health Sheikh Dr. Salman Khalifa Al-Sabah with Dr. Ziad Abdulhak, Executive Director of International Business Development at Boston Children’s Hospital Alliance and Global Services.

advanced diagnostics, including the establishment and development of a specialized genetic testing laboratory and training of national cadres.

The meeting is part of the Ministry of Health’s efforts to expand cooperation with leading international medical institutions, transfer expertise and build national capabilities to improve specialized healthcare services for children in Kuwait.

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America

Woman killed after stabbing 2 in NY: A woman randomly stabbed two people in New York City’s Times Square on Monday, killing one woman, and then was fatally shot by police, according to the New York Police Department.

The shooting happened next to a New York Police Department substation, just outside One Times Square, the building that hosts the city’s annual New Year’s Eve ball drop celebration. It is one of the most heavily touristed and policed spots in all of New York.

The 49-year-old woman from Queens pulled out two knives from a shopping bag and stabbed a 68-year-old man in the abdomen before quickly turning and stabbing a 32-year-old woman also in the abdomen, police said at a news conference Monday evening. Both were taken to the hospital. The woman died and the man is in stable condition, according to police.

Police didn’t say disclose if the victims were tourists visiting the city or residents.

Videos posted on social media show a group of at least 10 officers gathered around the woman, who was holding two large kitchen knives. (AP)

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Tropical storm approaches Texas, Louisiana: Tropical Storm Edouard headed toward the Gulf Coast early Tuesday and expected to gain strength before bringing potentially heavy rains and flooding into parts of Texas and Louisiana.

The storm was upgraded Monday night from a tropical depression and forecasters with the National Hurricane Center expect it will make landfall in Texas later on Tuesday.

Early Tuesday the storm was about 65 miles (100



This image made from video provided by WABC shows NYPD officers on the scene after a woman brandishing two large knives was shot by officers in Times Square in New York on Aug 31. (AP)

kilometers) south-southeast of Cameron, Louisiana, and 90 miles (145 kilometers) southeast of Port Arthur, Texas, with maximum sustained winds of 40 mph (65 kph) while moving west-northwest at 8 mph (13 kph).

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said the biggest problem expected from the storm is flooding. Forecasters are anticipating 3-6 inches (7-15 centimeters) of rain in the greater Houston area, with some areas of the state’s upper coast getting up to 9 inches (22 centimeters). More than 4 inches (10 centimeters) per hour could fall and will likely cause flash flooding in low-lying and urban areas, according to the National Hurricane Center.

“This is our first big storm of the season, and I’ll tell you, Texas is prepared,” Orlando Alanis of the Texas Division of Emergency Management said during a news conference.

Crews worked Monday to clear dry vegetation that could ignite from a lightning strike and cause fast-spreading fires, Abbott said. (AP)

SCOTUS allows Trump’s White House ballroom construction to continue

WASHINGTON, Sept 1, (AP): A divided Supreme Court on Monday allowed the White House to continue construction on a \$400 million ballroom project as lawsuits play out, a win for President Donald Trump as he flexes unprecedented executive power and remakes the capital in his image.

The apparent 5-4 decision replaces a temporary order issued earlier this month, shortly before a court-ordered halt would have gone into effect.

The temporary order was signed by Chief Justice John Roberts, assigned to handle appeals from the capital. But he publicly disagreed with the latest decision, writing a strong dissent that referenced historical figures and called the project “likely unlawful” because it hasn’t been approved by Congress.

“Today’s decision is no victory for the separation of powers,” Roberts wrote. The court’s three liberal-leaning justices agreed.

The majority did not decide the legality of the project, but found a preservation group likely did not have the legal right to challenge it. The unsigned opinion also cited the national security concerns that the



Marine One with US President Donald Trump passes over construction on the new White House ballroom on Aug 21, seen from the Washington Monument in Washington. (AP)

government says the project would address.

The lawsuit will return to lower courts, but documents say that key portions of the project could be complete within months - a quick timeline compared with a typical legal case.

The Trump administration asked the justices to intervene after federal

courts found the project must halt because it didn’t have congressional approval.

The lawsuit from the National Trust for Historic Preservation argued that Trump has no unilateral authority to undertake the work, which has included demolishing the East Wing.

We need help from the president: Kennedy

With elections nearing, GOP still waiting for Trump to open campaign wallet

LAS VEGAS, Sept 1, (AP): When US Vice President JD Vance stepped on stage in Michigan on Monday, it was MAGA Inc writing the check for the campaign event. It was a rare bit of spending in a battleground state from a powerful political organization that has mostly been missing in action this year.

With just over two months to go before the midterm elections, President Donald Trump is still sitting on most of his colossal war chest, and he’s been growing his money pile instead of spending it.

Even though the president and his team insist they’ll open their wallet soon, frustrations are growing as Republicans try to maintain control of Congress despite headwinds partially of Trump’s own creation. While the president remains the party’s best asset in turning out its base, he is historically unpopular, with low marks on his handling of the economy and the ongoing war in Iran that most Americans say was not worth fighting.

The ticking clock narrows Republicans’ options because time on the airwaves gets more limited and more expensive as the election draws near.

“Hope springs eternal,” said Republican donor Dan Eberhart, one of many who have been left wondering about the president’s plans.

Texas is a particular issue, especially after Trump helped scandal-plagued state Attorney General Ken

Paxton beat incumbent Sen. John Cornyn, turning what was supposed to be a safe Republican seat into a potential toss up.

Democratic nominee James Talarico has dramatically outraised Paxton, bringing in more than \$68.5 million to Paxton’s \$9 million. Talarico had more than \$21.5 million cash on hand at the end of June, versus Paxton’s \$1.75 million.

“We need help from the president,” Sen. John Kennedy, a Louisiana Republican, told Fox News over the weekend. “I’m hoping that the president is going to spend \$100 or \$200 million in Texas, but he hasn’t committed to it yet.”

MAGA Inc. had more than \$403 million at the end of July, according to the latest campaign finance filings, having brought in another \$3 million over the course of the month and having spent practically nothing. That’s more cash than any of the major party committees.

Its only major outlay so far has been in South Carolina, where the group invested nearly \$830,000 on a last-minute get-out-the-vote push to help Sen. Darline Graham win the Republican nomination to succeed her late brother Lindsey Graham. The sum included about \$774,000 on get-out-the-vote phone calls and \$53,500 on text messages.

In the meantime, Trump has continued to raise money.

He headlined a Republican Na-



tional Committee fundraiser in Texas last Thursday and participated in several MAGA Inc. meetings and a dinner at his golf course in Virginia on Saturday.

The group announced last week that it is planning to hold a series of rallies in battleground states, which started Monday with the Michigan event headlined by Vance.

MAGA Inc. will be spending in competitive races, according to an operative familiar with the group’s plans who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the yet-to-be-announced investments.

That is expected to include ads highlighting the president and his accomplishments, which he has pushed to focus on despite his low approval ratings, a strategy first reported by The Atlantic.

Some Republican campaign vendors such as advertisers, direct mail companies and canvassing firms were told in August by MAGA Inc. leaders to be ready for action. But they have not been made aware of a comprehensive plan, according to people with knowledge of the situation who requested anonymity to discuss private deliberations.

The delays come with consequences. Advertising rates are much higher at this late date in the campaign than they were in the spring when other organizations reserved airtime.

Indeed, some Republican strategists familiar with the status of the president’s still-developing plans said it is almost certainly too late for outside groups to even purchase advertising in key markets in Texas, where MAGA Inc. was asked by Senate Republican leadership to commit resources.

MAGA Inc. has been testing ads for Paxton, including one criticizing Talarico over rural hospital policy, but the ad has yet to air. People familiar with conversations said it might run online or on digital channels instead of on television.

While super PACs have traditionally spent big on television buys, the group also has other options.

Because the runoff campaign was so brief, the MAGA Inc. team worked to appeal directly to voters who feel loyal to Trump but are less likely to vote in non-presidential elections. Aides have discussed a similar approach in Texas, focused on outreach such as neighborhood canvassing, phone calls and mail specifically targeting those low-propensity voters, according to people with knowledge of the discussions.

Some Republican operatives who

otherwise worry about limited time believe such an effort could make a difference as long as MAGA Inc. commits a significant amount of money to the effort.

The president and his team have said the money is coming soon.

“Of course,” Trump said when recently asked by Punchbowl News. “I’m going to help Republicans.”

James Blair, the former White House deputy chief of staff who left to run Trump’s midterm operation, has also said money is on its way.

“The president is going to expend substantial resources to win the midterms,” he said in June on “The Sean Spicer Show.” “He cares deeply about the party winning, and anything he can do to support that he’s going to do and is already doing.”

But Trump also has incentives to keep much of the money he has amassed.

As a lame-duck president constitutionally barred from running for a third term, maintaining a commanding sum in the bank would help him to continue to wield power. He proved this cycle that he is extremely adept at ousting members he opposes, and Republican candidates could continue traveling to Mar-a-Lago to seek his blessing in the years ahead.

As Trump told Punchbowl News about his campaign cash, “I can spend it on pretty much anything I want.”



King Haakon VIII, (rear center), takes the oath according to the Constitution in the Storting, Norway's parliament, accompanied by Crown Princess Ingrid Alexandra in Oslo, Norway on Sept 1. (AP)

Norway’s king pledges oath of allegiance to constitution as father lies in state

OSLO, Norway, Sept 1, (AP): Norway’s King Haakon VIII pledged an oath of allegiance to the country’s constitution in parliament on Tuesday, an important symbolic step as he takes over at the helm of the Scandinavian country after his late father’s 35-year reign.

Haakon became Norway’s monarch when King Harald V died on Friday at 89. He has adopted the motto “All for Norway,” which dates back to his great-grandfather.

He was driven the short distance from the royal palace to the Storting, or parliament, in an open car. There, speaker Masud Gharahkhani read the official announcement of Harald’s death and Haakon’s succession. Haakon, 53, then took the oath.

“I promise and swear that I will govern the Kingdom of Norway in

accordance with its Constitution and Laws; so help me God, the Almighty and Omniscent,” he said.

Norway’s monarchy has old roots, tracing its origins to King Harald Fairhair in the ninth century. When Norway regained its independence from Sweden in 1905, three-quarters of voters in a national plebiscite approved restoring the monarchy.

Today, its role is largely symbolic as power lies with the elected government and parliament, but the country’s royal family retains a role in promoting the wealthy nation around the world.

On Monday, Harald’s coffin was taken to the chapel of the royal palace in downtown Oslo, where it will remain until his funeral on Sept. 9.

From Tuesday afternoon until Sept. 8, the chapel will be open every day for the public to pay their

last respects by filing past the coffin. The royal palace said in a statement that visitors aren’t allowed to take photos or film inside the chapel, and that they can’t leave flowers or other items.

Haakon’s wife, Queen Mette-Marit, joined Monday’s coffin procession in her first official appearance since assuming the title. She has been largely absent from the public eye following her lung transplant in June.

Ahead of Haakon’s pledge of allegiance, the palace said that Mette-Marit wasn’t going to the ceremony. In a statement, it quoted Are Holm, a pulmonologist at Oslo’s University Hospital, as saying that complications following a transplant aren’t uncommon and that Mette-Marit has experienced them on several occasions, “including today.”

Election campaign to replace Macron as president next May heating up

PARIS, Sept 1, (AP): With the end of France’s summer vacation season, the election campaign to replace Emmanuel Macron as president next May is bursting to life.

An unusually large and broad field of candidates is forming to lead the European Union’s largest country, its second-largest economy and only nuclear-armed power, their appetites whetted by the fact that Macron is constitutionally barred from seeking a third consecutive presidential term himself.

Some won’t get the support they will need from sponsors and their political camps to be on the starting line when the first round of voting is held on April 18.

Still, a crowded field could boost far-right candidate Marine Le Pen - just as it did for Jean-Marie Le Pen, her father, in 2002. The record 16 candidates splintered the first-round vote, creating an electoral earthquake when the elder Le Pen qualified for the decisive second round.

Socialist Party leader Olivier Faure became the latest to declare his candidacy this weekend. He joined more than two dozen others who say that they intend to stand or are contemplating a run in 2027.

Here’s what to know at these early



French President Emmanuel Macron talks with students during his visit to the Chaptal High School on the first day of the new academic year in Mende, southern France on Sept 1. (AP)

stages of what promises to be among the most consequential leadership votes anywhere in the world next year, and which comes as France is grappling with multiple challenges, including the disruptions of Donald Trump’s presidency.

After decades of trying, first by her father and then her, Marine Le Pen’s fourth campaign for the

French presidency is already shaping up as the strongest opportunity for her nationalist, anti-immigration National Rally party to take power.

Such an outcome would rock the European Union, putting a politician who has long been hostile to the bloc of 27 nations and many of their collective rules and policies in charge of one of the EU’s most important countries.

Europe

Russian strikes hammer Kyiv, 12 dead: Russia launched a large aerial assault in and around Ukraine’s capital overnight into Tuesday morning, killing at least 12 people and wounding more than a dozen others, including three children, local authorities said.

The strikes marked the sixth straight day of heavy Russian attacks on Kyiv that began last week and are an unprecedented stretch of consecutive aerial assaults since Russia launched a full-scale invasion of its neighbor more than 4½ years ago. Moscow’s aim is to grind down civilians by disrupting their daily life, Ukrainian officials say.

Several million Ukrainian schoolchildren returned to classes Tuesday for the new school year, just as Russia unleashed its onslaught of cruise and ballistic missiles, jet-powered drones, glide bombs and artillery salvos at Kyiv as well as eight other regions of Ukraine.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that 12 people were killed, including an Indian citizen. (AP)

□ □ □

Switzerland rave shooting suspect held: A suspect has been arrested after a weekend shooting at a rave in northern Switzerland that left one person dead and five wounded, police said Monday.

The 43-year-old Swiss citizen was detained shortly before 1 a.m. Monday, police in Aargau canton (state) said in a statement.

They said that investigations into a possible motive are ongoing and that at present they believe the shooting was carried out by a lone perpetrator. They did not specify where the suspect was arrested.

The shooting took place in the early hours of Sunday in Aarau, the regional capital. Police have said that a 22-year-old woman died of injuries at the scene. Four men and one woman, between 24 and 27 years old, were taken to the hospital with injuries ranging from minor to severe. (AP)

Nepal flood survivors fear loss of culture and community

Rescuers comb through mud, debris as floods leave more than 1,000 dead

KATHMANDU, Nepal, Sept. 1, (AP): Rescue teams with search dogs combed through mud, rocks and debris Tuesday in Nepal and China looking for thousands of people still missing after catastrophic flooding tore through communities across the Himalayas, leaving more than 1,000 dead.

Nepal’s disaster agency said Tuesday that 987 deaths had been counted there, with 3,916 people missing, including 583 foreigners. Chinese authorities, in their latest update on Sunday, reported 16 deaths and 546 people still missing, including 261 foreigners.

The scale of last week’s disaster was hampering rescue efforts in both regions, with landslides, destroyed roads and widespread damage cutting off remote areas. Crews faced challenging conditions as they searched unstable terrain and piles of debris, raising fears the death toll could rise as rescuers reach isolated communities.

In Nepal, rescuers were racing to reach hundreds of workers believed to be trapped inside tunnels at hydropower projects damaged by the floods. About 900 workers are missing from 12 projects, with roughly 500 believed to be trapped in tunnels, according to Nepalese authorities.

Brig. Gen. Raja Ram Basnet, Nepal’s army spokesperson, said teams assisted by foreign experts were working at several hydropower projects. Visuals released by the army showed rescue teams entering dark, debris-filled tunnels, wading through mud

and water and climbing over rocks as they searched for signs of life.

On the Chinese side, rescue crews scoured areas hit by mudslides, particularly around the Gyirong Port border crossing, which was destroyed.

Some rescuers, aided by search dogs, searched gaps among rocks and debris for signs of life. Other teams used heavy machinery to clear a major highway leading to Gyirong Port, hoping to clear the way for equipment, personnel and supplies to reach the disaster zone, according to China’s state-run Global Times newspaper.

At least 11,814 people have been rescued so far, according to Nepalese authorities. Emergency crews were using helicopters and other aircraft to reach stranded communities in areas where roads and bridges have been destroyed by the flooding and landslides.

Authorities on Tuesday also stepped up efforts to provide assistance to survivors in areas where roads and other transportation routes had been damaged or cut off.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said China’s second batch of relief supplies for Nepal was expected to ship Tuesday, including drones, DNA testing and water purification equipment. Chinese DNA testing experts will also help Nepal identity bodies, he said.

Bimal Sharma, a helicopter pilot who has been flying rescue and relief missions since the disaster began, said he was shocked to see the devastation in Timure, a border town close to Tibet



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, rescuers observe a moment of silence for the victims of the Aug 26 mudslide near the Gyirong Port in Gyirong County, southwestern China’s Tibet Autonomous Region on Sept 1. (AP)

that he has known for years.

“It felt like I was flying over an entirely different landscape,” he said.

Sharma said he has had little opportunity to speak with the people he rescued, but their expressions told him how deeply the disaster had affected them.

“I can see the pain in their eyes. It’s heartbreaking,” he said.

The Aug. 26 disaster began with a chain of events high in the Himalayas. A glacial collapse sent large amounts of rock, ice and meltwater into valleys below, triggering powerful floods downstream.

Scientists studying satellite imagery said the collapse appears to

have involved the failure of bedrock beneath a glacier in the Himalayan region. The rockfall was powerful enough to register as a magnitude 5.2 seismic event.

The resulting surge of water and debris entered rivers that flow through valleys in Tibet and Nepal, causing them to rise rapidly. Floodwaters swept away homes, buildings, roads and bridges and carried mud and rocks downstream.

Nepal’s Prime Minister Balendra Shah said that the disaster highlighted the need for action to combat climate change.

“This incident has indicated that the risks we face in the Himalayan

region are increasing with climate change,” Shah said in a social media post Monday night. “Therefore, this region must be alert, and at the same time, it is time for us to strongly raise the issue of disasters caused by climate change before the international community.”

In the days since Tsering Gelbu Lama’s wife was swept away by devastating floods along the Nepal-Tibet border, he hasn’t managed to tell his 4-year-old daughter that her mother is dead.

Lama wiped away tears as he sat on the floor of a Buddhist monastery turned makeshift shelter for hundreds of others evacuated from remote villages to the capital, Kathmandu.

“I don’t know how I will pass on our culture to her,” he said as he coaxed a spoonful of rice into her mouth.

For Lama and a rising number of others displaced by the floods, the losses go beyond homes and belongings. Communities whose culture and practices, often tied to ancestral land, are eroding as young people leave for the city now worry if their sacred traditions can be preserved.

“We’ve become homeless not only because we’ve lost our land - we’ve become homeless with our culture and tradition,” said Tsering Sherpa, 36, from Rasuwa, as he sat on the monastery steps.

Nepal is home to more than 120 ethnic groups, with many preserving distinct languages, rituals and festivals that have been passed down for

generations.

Rasuwa, a district in the Himalayas along the Nepal-Tibet border, is known for its distinct Buddhist culture and Indigenous communities. The Tamang Heritage Trail has become a popular trekking route for tourists looking to see Tibetan Buddhist culture.

Flood survivors now living in the monastery described their villages’ forests as thick with trees and filled with bears, deer and butterflies. Others showed pictures of steep, green hills along a river.

Survivors at the monastery also shared photos and videos of what life in their villages was like before the floods: Women chopping juniper together to make incense, making new decorations for a monastery being built, men and women wearing colorful traditional clothing and dancing during festivals.

“Now all of it is finished,” said Tenzin Dolma Ghale, a 20-year-old from Rasuwa.

Survivors described to The Associated Press how they fled the surging river water by climbing to the top of hills, seeking refuge in monasteries they had built just a year earlier, after the older ones were destroyed by a 2015 earthquake.

Many said they didn’t have time to take anything from their homes and are now left with only the clothes they wore when being evacuated by helicopter. Others spoke of losing important heirlooms that are usually passed down from generation to generation.

Russian force cements its role as Africa junta protector after helping quell Niger’s mutiny

ABUJA, Nigeria, Sept. 1, (AP): Niger’s junta survived its most severe internal threat since seizing power in a 2023 coup when renegade soldiers staged a mutiny over the weekend, triggering a 24-hour standoff that ended with Russian intervention.

The mostly young soldiers took some of their colleagues hostage at a strategic military base in the capital, Niamey, and fired shots near the presidential palace 12 kilometers (7 miles) away before being subdued by presidential guard forces aided by Russia’s Africa Corps paramilitary group, according to several analysts and diplomats.

Russia’s ambassador to Niger, Viktor Voropayev, told Russian media Niger had requested support from the Russian force and the mutineers were “neutralized, particularly thanks to the intervention” of Africa Corps. Nigerien authorities are yet to comment on the event.

Analysts say the clashes at the Base 101 at the Niamey international airport could have gone either way because of the mutineers’ determination and large numbers until the Russian troops stepped in.

On Monday, Nigerien authorities



This undated photograph handed out by the French military shows three Russian mercenaries, right, in northern Mali. (AP)

held a funeral for three members of the presidential guard killed in the mutiny, according to a statement from the Foreign Affairs Ministry. It provided no further details about the incident.

This weekend’s events marked the second time this year the Africa Corps intervened to protect the state

in attacks on power centers in Africa’s Sahel region. The first came in April when jihadis and rebels launched major attacks across junta-led Mali.

In a region known to be the global epicenter of terrorism, “fighting jihadis comes as a second priority (for the Africa Corps), but the first pri-

ority is to sustain regimes and they are succeeding in this,” said Wassim Nasr, a senior research fellow at the Soufan Center, a New York-based think tank.

Across the Sahel region, a vast arid expanse south of the Sahara Desert, militaries that grabbed power citing security failures have severed ties with longtime Western security allies and turned to Russia. They first welcomed the Moscow-backed Wagner private mercenary group before it was replaced by Africa Corps under the direct command of the Russian Defense Ministry.

It is not known how many Russian mercenaries are in the Sahel’s three junta-led countries of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso, but varying estimates put the number between 1,700 and 2,000.

Meanwhile, in the Central African Republic, Wagner is estimated to have around 1,000 forces.

As Russia competes with the United States, Europe and China for greater influence across Africa, the Russian forces have helped Moscow establish its hold in the countries on many fronts, from the economy to security and politics.



A view of a street in Niamey, Niger on Aug 29. (AP)

Hague arbitration panel says India must honor water-sharing treaty with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 1, (AP): India must honor a decades-old water-sharing treaty with Pakistan that New Delhi wanted to suspend, an international arbitration panel in The Hague ruled Monday. Pakistan welcomed the decision but India rejected it.

Acting on Pakistan’s application, the panel prohibited India from pouring concrete beyond specified levels on a hydroelectric plant it is building in disputed Kashmir. The restrictions will remain in effect until 90 days after a World Bank-appointed neutral expert decides whether the project’s design complies with the Indus Waters Treaty.

The expert’s final decision is expected in July 2027. The decision is seen as a big win for Pakistan.

Pakistan’s government in a statement said the findings reaffirmed India’s obligations under the treaty and showed that temporary restrictions on the Rattle dam project were warranted. It expressed hope that the rulings could help the countries resume engagement under the treaty in accordance with their legal obligations.

India’s Ministry of External Affairs called the panel an “illegally constituted” body and said India had never recognized its legal authority or participated in its proceedings. The ministry said the tribunal had been established in violation of the treaty and that New Delhi’s decision to hold the agreement in abeyance remained in force.

In a summary of its decisions, the Court of Arbitration said the 1960 treaty remains legally binding and contains no provision allowing either country to suspend or terminate it unilaterally. Ending or changing the agreement would require another treaty accepted by both governments, the panel said.

India must therefore continue meeting its obligations, including restrictions on the design and operation of hydroelectric projects on rivers that flow into Pakistan, it said.

Brokered by the World Bank, the



Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) activists shout slogans during a protest over rising prices in Srinagar, Indian-controlled Kashmir on Sept 1. (AP)

treaty allocates waters of the eastern Ravi, Sutlej and Beas rivers to India and most of the water from the western Indus, Jhelum and Chenab rivers to Pakistan. India is permitted limited uses of the western rivers, including construction of run-of-river hydroelectric plants under specified conditions.

The agreement endured wars and prolonged periods of hostility between the nuclear-armed neighbors and was widely regarded as one of their most resilient bilateral arrangements.

Pakistan, which relies heavily on the Indus River system for agriculture and other needs, has warned that interference with its water supplies could have serious consequences for regional peace and security.

India announced in April 2025 that it was placing the treaty in abeyance after gunmen killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in Indian-controlled Kashmir, which is divided between the two countries and claimed by both in its entirety.

New Delhi accused Pakistan of supporting cross-border terrorism and said the treaty would remain sus-

pended until Islamabad “credibly and irrevocably” ended that alleged support. Pakistan denied involvement in the attack and offered to participate in an independent investigation.

The attack triggered a sharp deterioration in relations. The countries downgraded diplomatic and trade ties, closed their main land border crossing and revoked visas before exchanging military strikes in May 2025. A ceasefire ended four days of fighting, but relations have remained largely frozen.

The arbitration panel rejected India’s position. It found that the allegations, even if assumed to be true, would not constitute a material breach of the water treaty because the agreement does not address terrorism or the use of force.

The panel also rejected possible grounds for suspension involving national sovereignty, changing circumstances, population growth, demand for clean energy, advances in dam technology and climate change. None met the strict requirements for suspending or terminating a treaty under international law, it said.

US Justice Dept charges more than 80 in Puerto Rico’s gang takedown

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, Sept. 1, (AP): The US Justice Department has charged more than 80 people in the takedown of a violent Puerto Rican gang, Attorney General Todd Blanche announced during a visit to the island as part of the Trump administration’s efforts to highlight its push to tackle violent crime.

Federal prosecutors say the gang known as “Los Baja Deo” for years trafficked fentanyl, cocaine and other illegal drugs from the west coast city of Mayagüez, generating nearly \$50 million in proceeds. The group is also responsible for shootings, killings, kidnappings and assaults and the distribution of at least 340 kilograms of fentanyl or fentanyl-laced narcotics, Blanche said.

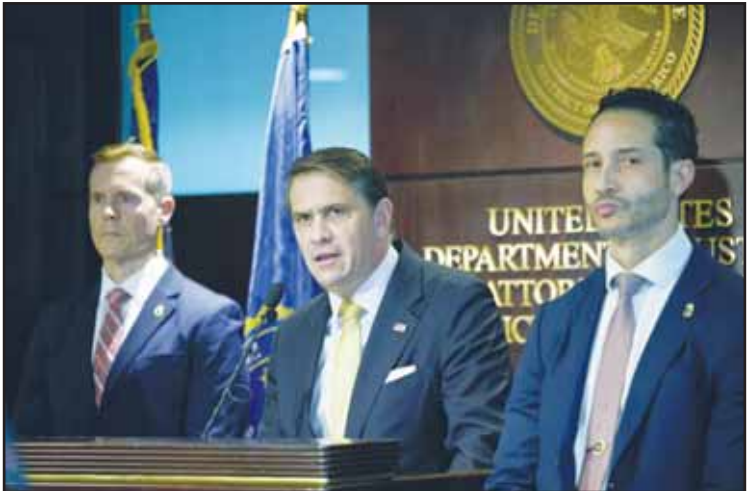
“Our Homeland Security Task Forces around the country are unified and they’re unified to end the presence of criminal cartels, foreign gangs and transnational criminal organizations around the United States,” the newly confirmed attorney general told reporters from the US attorney’s office in San Juan.

Blanche’s presence in the US Caribbean territory for the announcement underscores the Trump administration’s efforts to put a spotlight on its work tackling cartels and gangs that fuel drug trafficking and violence in communities across the US. The Trump administration has dramatically reshaped the Justice Department to make tackling illegal immigration and violent crime a top priority.

“These 81 violent gang members will now face justice and so will any other that try to take their place,” said Héctor Ramírez-Carbó, the acting US attorney for Puerto Rico. “Today, the families of Mayagüez can peacefully enjoy what their communities have to offer without fear of harm.”

Also:

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti: Hundreds of people crowded into a church near Haiti’s capital on Sunday for the fu-



US Attorney General Todd Blanche, (center), gives a news conference about people charged in the takedown of Puerto Rican drug gang “Los Baja Deo” (LBD) in San Juan, Puerto Rico on Aug 27. (AP)

neral of four of the 47 people killed in a recent gang attack so brutal that it shook a country that has long struggled with violence.

Mourners wiped away tears, raised their hands and cried out as coffins arrived at a church in the farming community of Kenscoff.

“We thank everyone who came in solidarity with the families that died and those who lost their loved ones,” Pastor **Jean Robert Dorlus** said. “God will open a space to receive them.”

Armed men attacked Kenscoff on Aug. 23, killing at least 47 people and kidnapping more than 50 others in the middle of the night. It was one of the biggest mass kidnappings in Haiti in recent years, and survivors have organized protests and blamed police for not preventing the attack, which pierced the belief that security in the troubled Caribbean country was improving.

Inside the church, people swayed to gospel music. Some wailed as their shoulders shook. The church was so packed that dozens had to stand outside, peering through the

windows, as they honored those being laid to rest: a mother, father and their son, and a 70-year-old man whose body had been set on fire by the gang members.

“I’ve known them for a long time,” said **Yvon Marleus**, a Kenscoff resident who lost a cousin in the attack. “These are people who are respected in the community.”

“They didn’t act in time to stop the carnage,” Marleus alleged, referring to police.

Haiti’s National Police has said that it ordered an investigation to establish the truth about the attack, and whether it was “due to complicity or negligence.”

Outside the church, civilians stood guard with automatic weapons, ready to repel any potential new gang attacks with the help of police officers stationed nearby.

Kenscoff resident **Jean Calixte Juste** said he and two cousins survived the attack “by luck.”

“I almost died,” he recalled. “I almost fell into a ravine running. This is the worst and most terrible night I’ve ever experienced.”

Kuwait oil gains \$2.21 to \$89.65 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1, (KUNA): Kuwait oil rose USD 2.21 during Monday's trading to reach USD 89.65 per barrel compared with USD 87.44 pb last Friday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Tuesday.

Benchmark Brent future gained USD 1.16 to USD 90.49 pb and West Texas Intermediate (WTI) rose USD 2.34 to USD 85.76 pb.

Business

At the closing ceremony, attended by the Ministers of Interior, Justice, Social Affairs, & Health

KFH receives recognition for its support to ‘A Nation Protects You’ national campaign



Haitham Alterkait receiving the honor from the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah, and the Minister of Social Affairs and Social Welfare.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, and Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila



Participation of the Ministers of Interior, Justice, Social Affairs and Health, and the Deputy CEO of Kuwait Finance House Group for Technology and Operations.

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) received broad recognition from participating ministers and state officials at the conclusion of the “A Nation Protects You” national anti-drug campaign. This honor underscores KFH’s prominent community role and sustained support for national initiatives aimed at raising drug awareness and mitigating its impact on society.

Participants emphasized that KFH serves as an outstanding role model for active public-private sector partnerships, given the bank’s continuous commitment to supporting national initiatives and projects that serve society across various levels.

Meanwhile, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah, praised the leading social role of KFH, emphasizing that the Bank’s contributions to various social initiatives are deeply appreciated for the genuine support they provide to community causes.

In remarks following the closing ceremony of the campaign, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef stated that KFH’s contribution was pivotal in helping achieve the initiative’s awareness goals.

He added that the bank made major contributions to this field, notably supporting the Addiction Treatment Center’s rehabilitation of recovering individuals and assisting authorities in combating substance abuse and its societal impact.

A leading model in CSR

The ceremony was attended by the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Health, and the Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, who praised KFH for its support to community initiatives and recognized its key role as a strategic partner in the “A Nation Protects You” campaign.

The ministers lauded KFH for supporting numerous government-led initiatives across key social sectors, highlighting that KFH’s approach to social responsibility serves as a benchmark for the private sector.

Haitham Alterkait

Deputy Group CEO Technology and Operations, Haitham Alterkait, affirmed that the Bank’s strategic partnership in the “A Nation Protects You” campaign stems from its leading community role and its commitment to supporting impactful national awareness initiatives



Yousef Al-Ruwaieh, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah and Haitham Alterkait

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef:

- KFH is an active partner in community awareness

Alterkait:

- The campaign is a model for public and private community partnership

Al-Ruwaieh:

- We continue to support national awareness initiatives, in line with the bank’s mission and corporate values

that benefit Kuwaiti society.

He explained that the campaign served as an exemplary model of public-private collaboration, which ultimately benefits society.

Alterkait expressed his sincere gratitude to all participating ministries, institutions, and individuals

als whose collaborative efforts drove the campaign’s success and advanced its national awareness objectives. He particularly highlighted the Ministry of Interior for its pivotal role throughout the initiative.

Yousef Al-Ruwaieh

Head of Group Public Relations and Media at KFH, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh, said that the Bank remains committed to supporting national awareness initiatives that serve the community and drive development across various fields, in line with its corporate mission, established values, and leadership in social responsibility.

He added that KFH’s participation in the “A Nation Protects You” campaign stems from its belief that national institutions must look beyond their core operations to actively support community initiatives that enhance quality of life.

He emphasized KFH’s ongoing commitment to corporate social responsibility through active partnerships with state institutions, highlighting the bank’s focus on national awareness campaigns that address societal priorities and maximize sustainable impact of such partnerships.

Strategic contributions

KFH has a distinguished track record of supporting national and community initiatives, with its most notable contributions including:

- The construction and opening of an addiction treatment hospital’s tenth ward, costing KD 4.5 million in total.
- KD 15 million to fund the construction and equipping of the new Cardiac Diseases and Research Center at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital.
- KD 8 million for the reconstruction of the damaged area in Al Mubarakiya.
- KD 20 million to build 15 ambulance centers to support the health ecosystem.
- Spearheaded a landmark initiative in partnership with the Ministry of Justice to relieve defaulting debtors, bringing KFH’s total contributions to over KD 61 million since 2019.
- KD 10 contribution to support the Covid-19 Government Relief Fund, alongside an additional standalone contribution.
- USD 13 million contribution to the Kuwait Emergency Response Fund.
- USD 6 Million to repair damaged power stations.

Main market index slips 0.04%

Boursa Kuwait edges higher as general index closes at 8,903.72

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Tuesday’s session modestly higher, with the general index edging up 0.07 percent to finish at 8,903.72. Trading activity remained active, as investors exchanged 337.3 million shares through 24,963 cash transactions, generating a total turnover of KD 81.8 million (about USD 251.1 million).

The Main Market Index slipped 0.04 percent, losing 3.33 points to settle at 9,227.14. Activity on the main board accounted for 209.9 million shares across 15,302 deals, valued at KD 39.3 million (USD 120.6 million).

By contrast, the Premier Market Index advanced 0.09 percent, climbing 8.70 points to close at 9,297. Investors traded 127.3 million

shares in 9,661 transactions on the premier board, with a value of KD 42.5 million (USD 130.4 million).

The Main 50 Index also finished in positive territory, rising 0.04 percent to 11,002.92. Turnover among the blue-chip names reached 131.9 million shares in 9,005 deals, worth KD 25.4 million (USD 77.9 million).

CyberLogitec signs OPUS Terminal M agreement for Kuwait’s Shuwaikh Port

SEOUL, Sept 1, (PRNewswire): CyberLogitec, a subsidiary of Eusu Holdings and a provider of terminal operating systems (TOS) and logistics IT solutions, has signed an agreement to deploy its cloud-based OPUS Terminal M solution at Shuwaikh Port in Kuwait.

The project forms part of a broader port digitalisation initiative being undertaken by Alghanim Specialities, a Kuwait-based infrastructure company. Under the agreement, CyberLogitec will provide OPUS Terminal M to support the digital transformation of terminal operations and improve operational efficiency at Shuwaikh Port.

OPUS Terminal M is a terminal operating system designed to manage the full spectrum of terminal operations through a single integrated platform. The solution supports vessel operations, planning, yard and equipment management, gate operations, operational monitoring, and data management. By providing real-time operational visibility and integrated workflows, the system is expected to enhance productivity, improve decision-making, and support safer and more efficient terminal operations.

Located near Kuwait City, Shuwaikh Port is one of Kuwait’s principal commercial ports and serves

as a key gateway for the country’s international trade. The port handles container, general cargo, and Ro-Ro traffic and plays a central role in Kuwait’s national supply chain through its extensive berthing facilities and cargo handling infrastructure.

The project further demonstrates CyberLogitec’s ability to deliver digital terminal solutions tailored to a wide range of operational environments and terminal sizes. The deployment at Shuwaikh Port is also expected to strengthen the company’s presence in the Middle East, where demand for terminal digitalisation continues to grow.

The agreement follows CyberLogitec’s recent contract with TTI Algeciras in Spain to provide its OPUS Terminal and Digital Twin solutions for the terminal’s B1 Expansion Project. Together, the projects reinforce the company’s growing presence in Europe and the Middle East and reflect its continued expansion in the global smart terminal market.

CyberLogitec continues to expand its portfolio beyond terminal operating systems into Digital Twin, Operational Visibility, and AI-enabled smart terminal technologies, supporting ports and terminal operators in their digital transformation initiatives worldwide.

Aoun meets Arab chambers chief, backs investment push

BEIRUT, Sept 1, (KUNA): Lebanese President Joseph Aoun stressed Tuesday the importance of the Arab private sector in opening new markets for Lebanese products, attracting investment and supporting economic activity and job creation.

The Lebanese Presidency said in a statement that Aoun made the remarks while receiving Secretary-General of the Union of Arab Chambers Dr. Khaled Hanafy, in the presence of the Arab League Deputy Representative in Beirut, Advisor Dr. Yousef Al-Sabaawi.

Aoun stressed the importance of Arab economic institutions maintaining their presence in Beirut, describing it as an expression of Lebanon’s deep ties with its Arab surroundings.

He praised the Union’s work in Beirut

and stressed the need for its headquarters to remain in the Lebanese capital to continue serving the Arab economy.

Aoun said Lebanon has the potential to regain its role as an Arab economic and financial hub, stressing the importance of strengthening economic and trade cooperation with Arab countries.

He also highlighted the role of the private sector and the Union of Arab Chambers in supporting economic recovery and reconstruction.

For his part, Hanafy briefed Aoun on the Union’s role as the institutional umbrella for the Arab private sector since its establishment in Beirut in 1951.

He said the Union, which comprises Arab chambers and federations of commerce and industry, was ready to work with Lebanon’s

business community by promoting investment opportunities, organizing economic forums and missions, and linking Lebanese companies with Arab counterparts.

Hanafy said the Union would also help attract investors and capital to productive and development projects, stressing that Lebanon needs partnerships and investment to revive its productive capacities and create jobs.

He said restoring confidence was essential to reviving economic and investment activity, adding that the Union would encourage investments and partnerships supporting Lebanon’s recovery.

Hanafy concluded that Lebanon’s stability and economic recovery serve both Lebanese and Arab interests, and its stronger integration into the Arab economic environment would benefit the Arab economy as a whole.

6 gold, 3 silver & 4 bronze awards recognize the bank’s excellence in learning, leadership & talent acquisition programs

National Bank of Kuwait wins 13 global Brandon Hall awards in recognition of excellence in human capital development

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continued to re-inforce its leadership in human capital development and fostering a high-performing workplace, after winning 13 prestigious global awards from Brandon Hall Group, one of the world’s leading organizations specializing in evaluating best practices and programs in human capital and talent development.

This achievement reflects the Bank’s success in implementing advanced and integrated strategies across learning and development, talent management, leadership development, talent acquisition, human resources, and diversity and inclusion, strengthening its ability to keep pace with the rapidly evolving business environment and achieve high levels of organizational excellence.

The 13 awards received by NBK comprised six Gold, three Silver and four Bronze awards, spanning key areas of human capital development, talent management, leadership development and talent acquisition.

In the Learning and Development Awards category, the Bank won Gold for Best Unique or Innovative Learning and Development Program and Silver for Best Learning Strategy.

Under the Talent Management Awards, NBK received the Bronze Award for Best Employee Engagement.

Turning to the Leadership Development Awards, the Bank secured the Gold Award for Best Leadership Development Program and the Gold Award for Best Mentoring Program, in addition to the Bronze Award for Best Development Program for Frontline Leaders.

Under the Talent Acquisition Awards, NBK received the Gold Award for Best New Hire Onboarding Program, as well as the Silver Award for Best Recruitment Marketing and Employer Branding Program, the Silver Award for Best Sourcing & Assessment Strategy, and the Bronze Award for Best Interviewing Strategy.

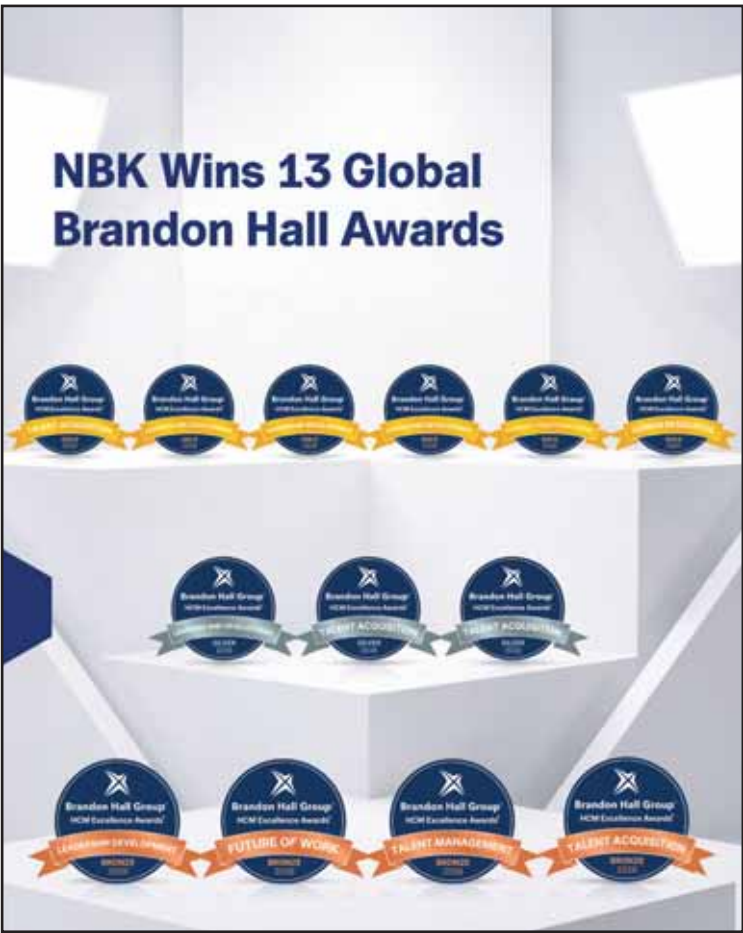
Further adding to its achievements, the Bank also won the Gold Award for Best HR Data Analytics under the Human Resources Awards.

Meanwhile, in the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Awards, NBK won the Gold Award for Best Leadership Development for Women, reaffirming its commitment to empowering women and strengthening their representation in leadership positions.

The Bank concluded its list of achievements with the Bronze Award for Best for Leading Under a Crisis under the Future of Work Awards, reflecting the resilience of its business model and its ability to develop leaders equipped to navigate a wide range of challenges and evolving circumstances.

The awards are granted based on a set of criteria encompassing technology, innovation, design and creativity, and measurable benefits.

This global recognition further reinforces NBK’s leading position in hu-



man capital development and reflects its continued commitment to investing in national talent and advancing its human resources practices in line with the highest international standards, reinforcing the Bank’s ability to sustain growth and deliver on its future strategic objectives.



NBK headquarters

NBK Group Human Resources continues to play a pivotal role in supporting and strengthening the Group’s performance by advancing the development of its people, integrating advanced technologies into employee development, expanding well-being programs, and fostering a culture of diversity and inclusion. These efforts reinforce NBK’s position as an employer of choice in Kuwait.

The Bank also continues to cultivate an integrated and engaging workplace through targeted initiatives focused on employee well-being, greater inclusion, and investment in skills development. This approach strengthens NBK’s competitiveness at both the regional and international levels, enhances its readiness to meet future requirements, and supports the continuity of strong and efficient organizational performance.

NBK remains committed to investing in talent development and providing a progressive workplace aligned with global best practices, further reinforcing its position as a leading financial institution and its ability to create sustainable long-term value.

Fears of resurgence in global inflation led by the geopolitical situation in the ME

By KAMCO Invest

The ongoing conflict in the Middle East is expected to sustain and fuel global inflation increases in the short term. The intermittent return of hostilities between the US and Iran is also poised to elevate oil prices, dampen global economic growth, and drive-up interest rates. Moreover, according to the World Bank, the persistent continuation of the conflict in the Middle East could impact oil infrastructure, which would in turn disrupt the region’s fertilizer exports, primary ingredients for agriculture, and is expected to trigger secondary effects that could push up prices and increase global inflation. The Middle East war has already disrupted approximately 30% of the annual global fertilizer shipments that transit through the Strait of Hormuz, causing a surge in global food prices. Furthermore, policies designed to combat surging inflation are expected to lead to an increase in interest rates, which are anticipated to result in an economic slowdown. Additionally, the disruption caused by the Middle East conflict is expected to have an overarching impact on energy imports for countries in the Asia and Europe regions, which are more reliant on energy imports from the area.

In the United States, inflation increased by 3.4% y-o-y in July-2026. The US Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) recorded a 0.1% growth on a seasonally adjusted basis in July-2026, following a 0.4% decline in June-2026, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. This performance was mixed relative to market expectations with the CPI matching forecasts while the Federal Reserve’s preferred Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) gauge came in slightly higher than anticipated. Meanwhile, excluding food and energy prices, US core CPI recorded a 0.2% increase during July-2026. In contrast, US energy prices declined by 1.5% during July-2026, on the back of a 5.7% decrease in June-2026. However, the US energy sector saw an annual growth of 14.7%, following strong gains in prior months of the year, including a 10.9% surge in March-2026 just after the Iran war commenced. The ongoing instability in the Middle East is expected to support the risk of a continued resurgence in inflation. US food and shelter prices both increased by 0.1% during July-2026.

In the European Union, annual inflation in July-2026 reached 2.9% for the Eurozone, up from 2.8% in June-2026 in line with market expectations, according to Eurostat. The inflation rate also increased to 3% for the greater EU in July-2026, compared to 2.9% in June-2026. In contrast, in July-2025, the annual inflation rate stood at 2% in the Eurozone and 2.4% in the EU. The ongoing conflict in the Middle East and the surge in energy costs remain the main drivers of EU inflation during July-2026, given that the EU is a net importer of energy.

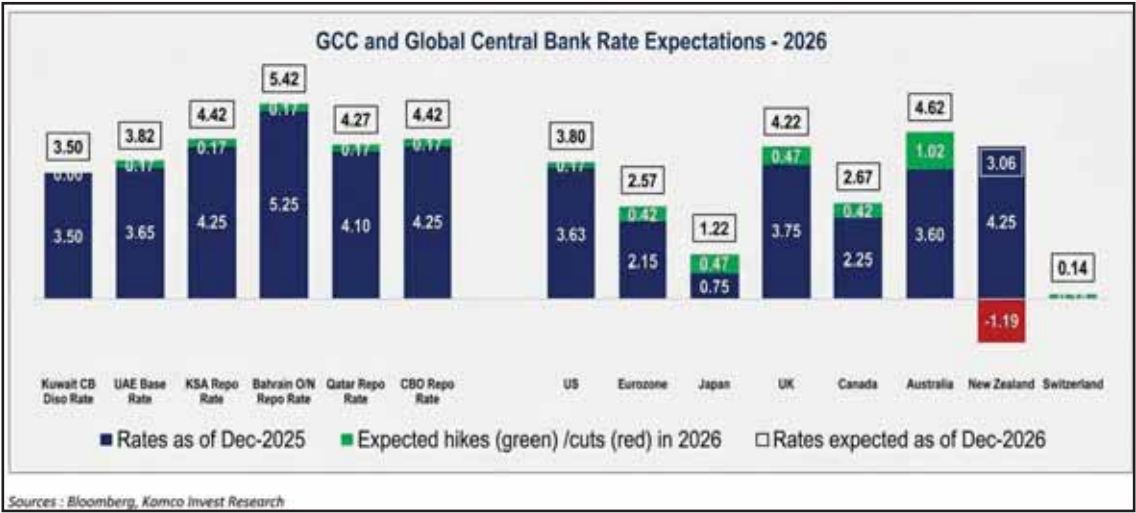
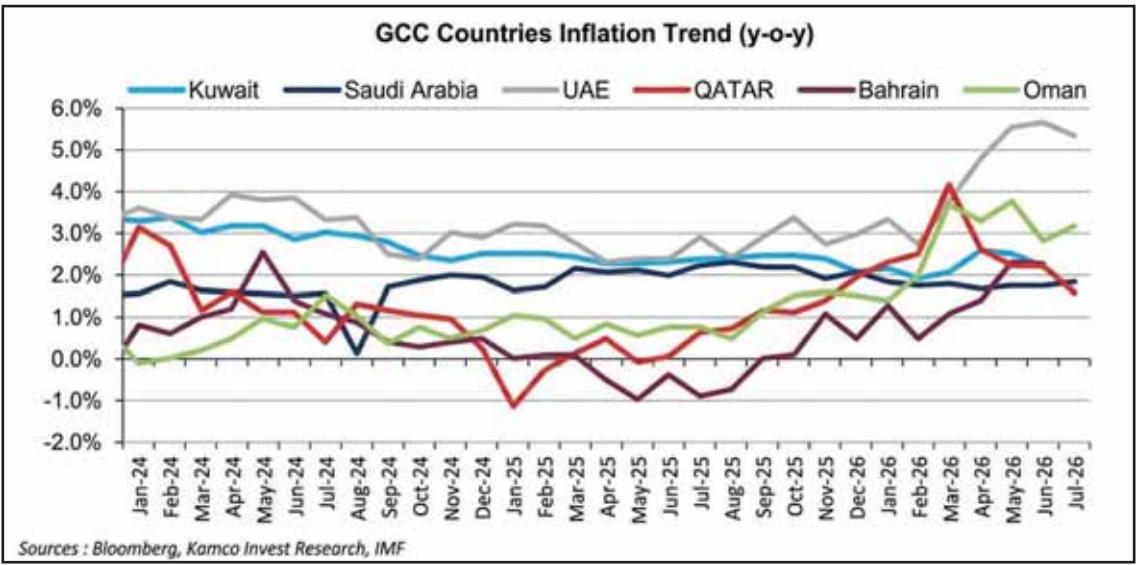
In the GCC, inflation remained subdued in June and July-2026, despite oil and gas price fluctuations prompted by the ongoing US-Iran conflict. In Saudi Arabia, annual inflation remained under the 2% central bank benchmark, increasing by 1.8% y-o-y in July-2026.

Meanwhile, Kuwait’s CPI remained mild, increasing by 2.2% y-o-y in June-2026, mainly supported by moderate growth in food and beverage prices, while Oman’s inflation increased by 3.2% y-o-y in July-2026.

Global Food Prices

Global food prices witnessed moderate y-o-y growth during July-2026 and increased in terms of m-o-m performance during the same period. The FAO Food Price Index increased by 1.0% y-o-y in July-2026 but stood 18.2% lower than its March-2022 peak, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Overall, the FAO Index averaged 131.1 points during July-2026, which was 0.6% higher than the June-2026 average. The mild m-o-m growth of the FAO Index was attributed to stronger crop prices.

The FAO Cereal Price Index averaged 113.8 points during July-2026, recording 6.9% y-o-y growth. Moreover, the index increased by 3.4% m-o-m due to the growth of global wheat prices, which increased by 5.8%, standing 9.9% above their year-earlier level, supported by heightened concerns over continued disruptions to Black Sea export flows and damage to export infrastructure. This was further intensified by the impact of recent heatwaves on crop yields in several key producing countries. Moreover, world maize prices also increased by 3.6% from June-2026, supported by concerns over hot and dry weather in parts of the Corn Belt in the United States of America and spillover effects from stronger energy markets amid heightened



geopolitical tensions. International sorghum prices also increased in line with the increases in maize prices in the US.

Global meat prices improved during July-2026. The FAO Meat Price Index increased by 0.8% y-o-y during July-2026 to average 127.7 points. Comparatively, the index witnessed a 2.8% m-o-m decline during the same period. This was the first decline recorded in 2026, reflecting lower quotations across all meat categories except ovine meat. Overall, international poultry meat prices fell from June 2026, mainly due to lower quotations in Brazil amid plentiful export supplies. On the other hand, the FAO Dairy Price Index averaged 116.2 points in July-2026, recording a 0.7% m-o-m fall from June 2026 and standing 24.8% below its level in July-2025. Prices declined modestly across all dairy products, reflecting lower quotations for butter and milk powders, which more than offset a modest improvement in cheese prices. Skim milk powder (SMP) prices declined by 3.3% from June 2026, due to plentiful export supplies in the European Union and Oceania, coupled with more restrained buying following earlier price increases, which weighed on quotations.

GCC Rates and Inflation

Global inflation for 2026 is projected to rise moderately due to increasing energy costs linked to regional conflicts, shipping expenses, and supply constraints. The IMF increased its inflation forecast by 30 bps to 4.7% from April-2026 and expects it to fall to 3.9% in 2027. The Federal Reserve kept interest rates steady and unchanged in July-2026 at the current range of 3.5% to 3.75%, despite growing concerns about inflation. However, there is growing sentiment regarding the likelihood that the Fed would lift borrowing costs at its September-2026 policy meeting. On the other hand, the ECB raised the three key ECB interest rates by 25 bps in June-2026.

Accordingly, the interest rates on the deposit facility, the main refinancing operations, and the marginal lending facility were increased to 2.25%, 2.40%, and 2.65%, respectively. Nevertheless, in its July-2026 meeting, the ECB kept borrowing rates unchanged. GCC central banks continued to match the Federal Reserve’s rate adjustments throughout 2026 by also keeping their rates unchanged during the first seven months of the year.

Kuwait in June-2026 showed a y-o-y increase of 2.2%, while the CPI monthly index remained unchanged during the same period. This increase was primarily led by a 5.6% growth in the Food and Beverages index, the second-largest weighted index. The Services and Miscellaneous index witnessed the highest y-o-y growth during June-2026, with a 5.8% increase, while the Housing Services Index, the largest weighted index, reported a 0.2% y-o-y growth during the month. Thirteen out of the fourteen sectoral indices witnessed growth during the month. The Transportation group’s prices increased by 4.8% in June-2026, while the prices of the Clothing and Footwear group improved by 0.9%. In terms of m-o-m inflation performance, the prices of the Food and Beverages group increased by 0.2% compared to the previous month, mainly due to increases in the prices of the cereals and bread group and the meat and poultry group. On the other hand, prices of the Cigarettes and Tobacco group remained stable during the month. Meanwhile, the prices of the Housing Services group increased by 0.1% because of a rise in prices of maintenance and repair services.

Saudi Arabia

Overall inflation growth in Saudi Arabia remained stable during the first seven months of 2026, averaging below the 2% mark at 1.8%. The annual average Consumer Price Index (CPI) recorded a 1.8% increase for July-2026 compared to July-2025. The moderate growth was mainly supported by an increase in prices of the Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels group, which recorded a 4.2% y-o-y increase in the prices of actual rentals for the group. This was followed by 2.9% growth in the Personal Care, Social Protection, and Other Goods and Services Division, driven by an increase in the prices of other personal effects by 11.1%, which was supported by a surge in the prices of jewelry and watches by 12.0%. This was followed by robust growth in the Entertainment, Sports, and Culture group, which registered a 2.4% y-o-y uptick supported by growth in the prices of the holiday offers subgroup by 3.7% during the same period. Furthermore, the prices of the Furniture, Home Appliances, and Periodic Home Maintenance group declined marginally by 0.5% y-o-y, while the Clothing and Footwear Division fell by 0.4% y-o-y.

during June-2026 but witnessed a marginal 0.1% m-o-m increase compared to May-2026. In terms of yearly performance, the data showed increases in seven groups, led by the Food and Beverage group, which witnessed a 12.7% y-o-y increase, followed by the Clothing and Footwear group, which improved by 5.0% y-o-y during June-2026. Moreover, other significantly weighted groups registered moderate growth during the month, including Housing, Water, Electricity and Gas by 2.7%, and the Education group, which improved by 2.1%. Meanwhile, the Recreation and Culture group recorded a robust decline of 7.0% y-o-y during June-2026, while the Transport group registered a -0.9% drop during the same period. On the other hand, Qatar’s Consumer Price Index (CPI) witnessed a marginal 0.1% m-o-m increase, led by the Transport group, which recorded a 2.2% increase, followed by a 1.0% uptick in the Food and Beverage group and a 0.4% fall in the Clothing group.

UAE

The Dubai Consumer Price index recorded a 5.3% y-o-y growth in July-2026 as compared to 5.7% y-o-y peak growth this year in June-2026 impacted by the instability due to the US-Iran war which resulted in higher prices in fuel and imported food. Dubai’s CPI growth was attributed to higher prices in specific sub-groups including the Transport group which increased 11.9% y-o-y, mainly driven by a 41.4% increase in air passenger transport costs. Moreover, the Food and Beverages group were also some of the main drivers with 7.8% y-o-y growth during July-2026 supported by residual supply pressures. The Housing and Utilities Group recorded 7% y-o-y increase maintaining its importance as a primary contributor to Dubai’s household budgets. Meanwhile, prices in Restaurants and Hotels groups accelerated 4.5% y-o-y during July-2026. In terms of m-o-m performance, Dubai’s CPI has been subdued improving only a marginal of 0.1% during July-2026.

Bahrain

Bahrain’s inflation rate increased 2.3% in June-2026, as the general CPI closed the month at 103.7 points. In terms of m-o-m change, Bahrain’s CPI improved marginally by 0.9% during the month. Inflation in Bahrain remained moderate during the month despite the Kingdom’s economy being one of the countries severely impacted upon the significant instability caused by the war in the region. The y-o-y moderate uptick of Bahrain’s inflation rate was mainly due to significant increases in four out of the twelve sub-indices within the general CPI. The Transport group witnessed the largest expansion, increasing by 10.6% y-o-y during June-2026, followed by the Food and Non-alcoholic Beverages and the Education Index, which saw y-o-y increases of 5.8% and 2.8% respectively, during the similar period. Meanwhile, Bahrain’s CPI improved marginally 0.9% m-o-m during June-2026 as compared to May-2026. The Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages group recorded a 6.5% m-o-m increase during June-2026 while the Clothing and Footwear group improved 0.7% m-o-m during the similar period. However, five of the twelve indices in the Bahrain CPI recorded m-o-m declines during June-2026, led by a 1.1% m-o-m drop in Miscellaneous Goods and Services, mainly as result of the various disruptions caused by the war in the region.

Oman

Oman’s Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 3.2% y-o-y in July-2026, recording the highest growth among the GCC countries during the month. This growth was mainly driven by significant increases in heavily weighted groups, led by the Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages group (+7.3% y-o-y) and the Transportation group (+6.5% y-o-y). The Food and Non-alcoholic Beverages group growth was broad-based, registering increases across most categories in July-2026 as compared with the same month last year, underpinned by a jump in prices of vegetables. Moreover, prices in the Miscellaneous group recorded 5.3% y-o-y increase during July-2026 while the Restaurants group recorded 3.5% y-o-y uptick during the similar period. On the other hand, Oman CPI recorded a marginal uptick of 0.7% m-o-m during July-2026. This moderate m-o-m growth was mainly driven by 1.7% m-o-m growth in the prices of the Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages group coupled with a 2.2% m-o-m increase in the prices of the Transport group during the similar period.

Initiative invites small & medium-sized enterprises to develop AI-driven solutions for corporate banking

Warba Bank launches 2026 Corporate Banking AI Challenge for SMEs

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: Warba Bank announced the launch of the Warba Bank 2026 Corporate Banking AI Challenge, inviting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to submit artificial intelligence solutions designed for corporate banking operations and services.

The initiative aims to encourage fintech collaboration and explore practical AI applications that can improve corporate banking processes, while creating opportunities for participating SMEs to explore commercial collaboration with the bank.

Challenge Objectives and Participation:

■ Focus on Corporate Banking AI: The challenge seeks AI applications that can enhance corporate banking services, automate processes, and improve operational efficiency.

■ SME Collaboration Opportunities: Participating companies can showcase their technology and explore potential commercial opportunities with Warba Bank.



Abdulrahman Al-Munaifi



■ Registration and Application: Interested SMEs can access participation requirements, evaluation criteria, and submission details through the challenge

registration page atqr1.be/D8J3W8.

Executive Commentary:

Abdulrahman Al-Munaifi, Director of Digital

Transformation at Warba Bank, stated:

“The Corporate Banking AI Challenge reflects Warba Bank’s commitment to digital innovation and collaboration with SMEs and technology companies. By focusing on AI solutions for corporate banking, we provide local and regional enterprises with a platform to present practical solutions that address specific corporate banking needs.”

Al-Munaifi added that the program supports open innovation by connecting emerging technology companies with the banking sector and exploring opportunities to develop practical digital solutions.

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.

Kuwait strengthens digital cooperation with Saudi Arabia & Bahrain

LEAP 2026 kicks off in Riyadh under ‘Into New Worlds’

RIYADH, Sept 1, (KUNA): The fifth edition of the global technology event LEAP 2026 kicked off Monday in Saudi Arabia under the theme “Into New Worlds,” with the participation of Kuwait’s Acting Minister of Information and Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology Omar Al-Omar, alongside technology and innovation leaders.

The event is being held from Aug 31 to Sept 3 at the Riyadh Exhibition and Convention Centre (Malham), north of Riyadh, organised by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, the Saudi Federation for Cybersecurity, Programming and Drones, and Tahaluf, backed by global company Informa and the Events Investment Fund.

The fifth edition is expected to bring together more than 1,000 global speakers and experts, over 1,800 technology companies, more than 600 startups and over 1,900 investors

and venture capital representatives, strengthening the event’s role in fostering partnerships, attracting investment and creating new growth opportunities for technology companies and entrepreneurs.

LEAP 2026 features a wide-ranging program highlighting the latest developments in artificial intelligence, advanced technologies and the digital economy, including the specialised DeepFest AI program, as well as tracks covering fintech, health technology, smart cities, educational and sports technology, space, gaming and digital infrastructure.

The fifth edition also features specialised spaces and experiences, including LEAP Connect for building partnerships, Sports Tech Hub exploring the future of sports technology, World Tech Zone showcasing global innovations and LEAP Studios for live content creation and influence, in addition to startup and

investor programs and platforms for announcing technology agreements and initiatives.

Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology and Acting Minister of Information and Culture Omar Al-Omar discussed with the Deputy Governor for the Technology Sector at Communications, Space and Technology Commission (CST) Eng. Raed Al-Fayez ways to boost cooperation.

The meeting took place at the Riyadh Exhibition and Convention Center, Malham, following Al-Omar’s participation in the opening ceremony of LEAP 2026 late Monday.

The two sides discussed the latest developments in communications and information technology, where Al-Fayez briefed Al-Omar the country’s achievements in this sector.

Acting Director General of Kuwait’s Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) Najat Ibrahim attended the meeting.

him attended the meeting.

Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology and Acting Minister of Information and Culture Omar Al-Omar discussed with Bahrain’s Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications Dr. Sheikh Abdullah Al Khalifa ways to strengthen bilateral cooperation.

The meeting was held at the Riyadh Exhibition and Convention Center, Malham, following Al-Omar’s participation in the opening ceremony of LEAP 2026 late Monday.

The two sides reviewed the latest developments in communications and information technology and stressed the importance of opening new avenues for cooperation between both countries.

Acting Director General of Kuwait’s Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) Najat Ibrahim attended the meeting.

\$9 bln Nghi Son complex targets value-added investments

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: An initiative launched by Nghi Son Petrochemical Company in Vietnam includes an open invitation to the business sector and international companies to invest in a site-sharing arrangement within its giant refining and petrochemical complex in Thanh Hoa Province, Vietnam.

Details of the initiative were revealed in official reports that the newspaper obtained recently.

This step aims to enhance the overall operational efficiency of the complex and create an integrated environment that reduces production costs.

Through this investment system, the refinery intends to encourage developers and businesspersons to establish facilities within the geographical area of the complex, allowing them to benefit from its advanced infrastructure.

These investments are expected to maximize the value of the byproducts and petroleum derivatives produced by the complex, transforming them into highly economic viable materials, instead of selling them as low-value raw materials.

This new operational approach is a qualitative shift in the management of Kuwaiti oil assets abroad, transforming the project from a crude oil refinery into an integrated industrial hub that attracts complementary investments and serves as a major development driver in Southeast Asia.

The investment stakes in the refinery are distributed among four main partners – Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI), a subsidiary of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), holds 35.1 percent stake, Idemitsu Kosan in Japan also holds 35.1 percent stake, Vietnam’s state-owned oil company, PetroVietnam, holds 25.1 percent stake, and Mitsui Chemicals in Japan owns 4.7 percent. The capital value of this consortium is \$9 billion.

The initiative focuses on maximizing the added value of certain compounds and byproducts from basic refining and petrochemical processes, such as paraxylene, benren, propylene and polypropylene.

It will utilize sulfur deposits and convert them into higher-value products, including the establishment of sulfuric acid production plants and use of LPG byproducts.

It also intends to utilize heavy distillation residues and fuel oils to produce special chemicals and high-quality jet fuel.

Southeast Asia’s haze fears grow with new coal smelters

Iran war spurs Indonesia’s coal-powered aluminum boom

BANGKOK, Sept 1, (AP): Resource-rich Indonesia is expanding its production of aluminum as the Iran war disrupts supplies, relying on its abundant coal reserves to power new smelters that run contrary to efforts to curb carbon emissions that cause climate change.

Prices have risen due to fuel shortfalls and attacks on infrastructure that have slowed production in the Middle East of the lightweight, silverish metal used in everything from kitchen foil and power lines to smartphones and cars.

In working to raise its limited manufacturing capacity, Indonesia has a strong ally in China, which makes 60% of the world’s aluminum but is keen to reduce pollution and emissions from smelters on its own shores. Chinese companies have invested in about three-quarters of the planned Indonesian projects.

Here’s what to know about Indonesia’s ambitious aluminum plans:

The Middle East usually makes about 9% of the world’s aluminum, but output from the region is expected to drop 44% this year from 2025, according to Fastmarkets, a commodities information agency.

Energy shortfalls drove Emirates Global Aluminium to back out of deals and Qatar Aluminium Ltd. to slash production, while Iranian strikes damaged Aluminium Bahrain’s facilities.

A metric ton of aluminum traded for between \$3,150 and \$3,250 before the Iran war. But the conflict drove up that price to as high as \$3,780 per metric ton in June. It’s now trading near \$3,400 a metric ton.

The war has magnified the potential for other regions, like Southeast Asia, to replace Middle East production, said Andy Farida of Fastmarkets.

“When that supply is so unsure, end users look for alternatives,” he said. “The war has really accelerated this transformation and put Indonesia on the map.”

Aluminum is one of the most used metals in the world and its production is highly energy intensive. The process starts with the mining of bauxite ore, which is refined into alumina and then smelted into aluminum.

By the end of the decade, Indonesia wants to quadruple its alumina output to 32.5 million metric tons and ramp up aluminum production from around 1 million metric tons in 2025 to 14.5 million metric tons by 2030, according to the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air.

The Finland-registered nonprofit is tracking 32 prospective off-grid coal plants, built by private companies to exclusively power aluminum smelters. These are known as “captive coal” facilities.

There is limited public data on the emissions



A truck operates at a coal mine near Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia, on Aug. 19, 2026. (AP Photo/Ahmad Mulia Panjaitan)

from these types of plants, according to Syahdiva Moezbar, with CREA in Jakarta. “This captive coal boom all over Indonesia is essentially not tracked. That is why it’s very concerning,” he said.

Such plans are contrary to Indonesia’s promises to cut its use of coal, the most heavily polluting major fossil fuel and a significant source of planet-warming emissions.

They also threaten to cause more damage at a time when the expansion of Indonesia’s globally important nickel industry is sacrificing local environments for industrialization.

The aluminum industry accounts for about 2% of annual global greenhouse gas emissions, equaling about 1.1 billion tons of carbon dioxide equivalent each year, according to the World Economic Forum. That’s more than the total annual emissions of most countries.

If all Indonesia’s planned projects begin operating by 2030, CREA estimates that the country’s own bauxite reserves will be depleted in less than 12 years.

China has invested between \$5.5 billion and \$6 billion in Indonesia’s aluminum industry, according to CREA, which forecasts this to surge to \$30 billion by 2030.

After Beijing set a domestic cap on aluminum production to curb overcapacity in 2017, Chinese companies expanded into other countries that have

fewer restrictions, like Indonesia, according to Putra Adhiguna, with the Jakarta-based Energy Shift Institute.

Indonesia categorizes nickel and aluminum as “transition minerals” since they can be used in so-called clean technologies, such as electric vehicle batteries and solar panels.

That’s left a loophole for companies to maintain that these nickel and aluminum investments, which are fueled by coal, are in keeping with climate change commitments, despite the fact that Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged to stop funding overseas coal plants in 2021.

It is unclear what final products Indonesia-origin metals, like aluminum and nickel, will end up in, said Binbin Mariana with the environmental advocacy group Market Forces.

“It is a huge loophole, an elephant can go through the loophole,” she said. “You say it’s a green product, but it is powered by coal... That’s definitely greenwashing.”

Aluminum smelters could run on cleaner energy like hydropower, but this would take longer and cost more.

Indonesia is prioritizing speed to capitalize on the window of opportunity that the Iran war has created, said Adhiguna, with the Energy Shift Institute. “The speed factor is really what is causing the havoc,” he said.



Gulf Bank team receives a commemorative shield from Hope School administration.



Part of the event featuring the mascot for the children’s account Neo.



Students are delighted to have a Neo account mascot for children.

Hope School, Gulf Bank kick off year with inclusive event

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: As part of its commitment to social sustainability, inclusive education, and community empowerment, Gulf Bank sponsored Hope School’s student welcome celebration to mark the start of the new academic year, reaffirming its continued support for people with disabilities and their inclusion in society.

The celebration created an engaging and welcoming environment for students returning to the classroom, featuring interactive educational and entertainment activities designed to encourage participation, confidence, and a strong sense of belonging.

The sponsorship forms part of Gulf Bank’s broader “Back to School and University” campaign, which combines student engagement, financial literacy and financial inclusion initiatives, and community support for children and families in need. The campaign coincides with the return to in-person education following an extended period of remote learning due to recent geopolitical developments.

The event brought together Gulf Bank representatives, Hope School’s teaching and administrative teams, students, and parents. Among the highlights was the participation of the mascot for Gulf Bank’s “neo” children’s account, which engaged students through entertaining activities and helped create a positive and inclusive start to the academic year.

Students also received welcome gifts from Gulf Bank as part of the Bank’s efforts to encourage and support them as they begin a new chapter in their educational journey.

Hope School’s management expressed its appreciation for Gulf Bank’s continued support, highlighting the positive role that private-sector partnerships with educational institutions can play in strengthening students’ confidence, supporting their development, and promoting greater social inclusion.

The initiative reflects Gulf Bank’s broader Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) approach, particularly its focus on the social pillar, through investments in education, inclusion, financial awareness, community development, and partnerships that generate meaningful and sustainable social impact.

Throughout the year, Gulf Bank continues to implement community-focused initiatives that support education, promote financial literacy, empower different segments of society, and contribute to Kuwait’s sustainable development priorities. The Bank also supports national initiatives such as “Let’s Be Aware” (Diraya) and maintains strategic partnerships with organizations including INJAZ Kuwait and the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, reinforcing its commitment to responsible banking and long-term community impact.

Venezuela grants 100-year rights

US eyes Venezuela oil to refill strategic reserves

WASHINGTON, Sept 1, (AP): The White House on Monday said it’s partnering with North American Blue Energy Partners as part of President Donald Trump’s push to tap into Venezuela’s oil industry, setting up a deal that will give the Pentagon a stake over roughly a fifth of the country’s vast oil reserves.

The Trump administration released more details on Monday night, days after Trump announced what he described as the biggest oil deal in history. The sweeping agreement has been met with skepticism from analysts who say it will take years to revive Venezuela’s production, but Trump and his aides are pitching it as a chance to develop a new oil giant in the Western Hemisphere.

As part of the deal, the U.S. is cre-

ating a private company as a joint venture with NABEP - a detail the White House had withheld for days. NABEP, owned by Venezuelan businessman Alejandro Betancourt, is already the second largest operator in Venezuela, behind Chevron.

Venezuela’s acting President Delcy Rodríguez is giving the company 100-year rights over 17 oil fields with proven reserves of 65 billion barrels. Many of those fields were previously owned by Russian or Chinese firms, the White House said.

In a statement Monday, Betancourt said Venezuela is “blessed with an abundance of natural resources, hardworking people and untapped potential,” adding that the deal will “unless that potential to the great benefit of both Venezuelans and Americans.”

From paparazzi stakeouts to lifetime glory

Venice Film Festival opens with Clooney's lifetime honor

VENICE, Sept. 1, (AP): George Clooney just makes sense in Venice.

Like many people, he considers it one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Unlike most, however, he also owns a 15-bedroom villa a few hours away on Lake Como that famously co-starred in "Ocean's Twelve."

In the nearly 30 years since he attended his first Venice Film Festival with "Out of Sight," he's become something of a fixture. It's a place where he's enjoyed many significant moments, from his wedding at the Aman Venice to the debut of "Good Night, and Good Luck," which earned him his first Oscar nomination for best director.

Last year he attended with "Jay Kelly," in which he plays a movie star who travels to Italy for a lifetime achievement award. Life will imitate art this year as Clooney receives the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement Award on the festival's opening day.

Here is a look back at some of Clooney's most memorable Venice moments.

As legend has it, Clooney's long term love affair with Venice began with the festival's premiere of Steven Soderbergh's Elmore Leonard adaptation "Out of Sight." Then 37 and doing press alongside Jennifer Lopez, the actor would also make another big jump soon: Leaving "ER" the following February.

This Coen brothers joint, co-starring Catherine Zeta-Jones, premiered out of competition at the 60th Venice Film Festival, alongside titles like "Matchstick Men," "Once Upon a Time in Mexico" and "The Dreamers." Clooney's nearby Italian residence was already as famous as him, and a stakeout spot for amateur and professional paparazzi.

In a profile that fall, while shooting "Ocean's Twelve," Vanity Fair writer Ned Zeman observed: "That an affable, self-effacing Kentucky-born Hollywood actor is fast becoming the most popular public figure in Italy says a little about Italy and a lot about Clooney, who isn't Italian, doesn't speak Italian, and lives here only in summertime."

Clooney's acclaimed black-and-white dramatization of journalist Edward R. Murrow's clash with Joseph McCarthy began its successful run in competition at the 62nd Venice Film Festival. Though it lost the Golden Lion to Ang Lee's "Brokeback Mountain," it did go on to pick up six Oscar nominations including for Clooney's directing.

During the trip, he also inspired a cocktail still served at the ritzy Hotel Cipriani on Giudecca. One night he retreated to the hotel's Bar Gabbiano where his friend, the legendary bar manager Walter Bolzonella, mixed him a drink of lemon, sugar, vodka, cranberry juice, ginger and Angostura bitters and named it Buona Notte in honor of the film. The two would later name a prosecco, passionfruit and elderflower cocktail La Nina after Clooney's mother, which was



George Clooney arrives in Venice, Italy on a taxi boat for the 65th Venice Film Festival on Aug. 26, 2008. (AP)



George Clooney, left, and Amal Alamuddin arrive in Venice, Italy, on Sept. 26, 2014, for their upcoming wedding. (AP)

served at his wedding.

Tony Gilroy's "Michael Clayton," which nabbed Clooney an Oscar nomination for his turn as the titular law firm fixer, played in competition at Venice. The top prize went again to an Ang Lee film: "Lust, Caution," which also beat out the likes of "I'm Not There," "Atonement" and "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford."

This Coen brothers comedy featuring Clooney and Brad Pitt opted to debut out of competition in the

opening night slot. Clooney said it completed his "trilogy of idiots" for the Coens, following "Intolerable Cruelty" and "O Brother, Where Art Thou?"

"Looking at the parts we are playing, I'm very concerned about what you think of us," Clooney said at the press conference. Pitt, who'd won the festival's acting prize the year prior, added: "Like George ... I'm not sure if I should be flattered or insulted."

Another opening night, out of



George Clooney, left, and Brad Pitt upon arrival for the press conference of the film 'Wolfs' during the 81st edition of the Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy, on Sept. 1, 2024. (AP)

competition slot debut for this Clooney-directed campaign thriller starring Ryan Gosling and Philip Seymour Hoffman. As usual, Clooney was peppered with political questions in which he observed that, "It's a very difficult time to govern."

Alfonso Cuarón's "Gravity" opened the 70th edition of the Venice Film Festival before going on to win seven Oscars. Clooney, of course, attended the premiere alongside Sandra Bullock and he was self-deprecating about his role: "There

were only two parts and Sandy had the other one, so I felt like this was the only one I could get away with."

Venice's canals were packed with paparazzi for the wedding of one of Hollywood's favorite bachelors. On Sept. 27, Clooney, then 53, and Amal Alamuddin, then 36, exchanged vows in front of 100 of their closest friends and family, including Bono and Matt Damon, at the luxury hotel Aman Grand Canal, originally a grand palazzo built in 1550. She wore a custom Oscar de la Renta dress, of French lace, pearls and

diamanté accents. He wore a black wool/cashmere Giorgio Armani tuxedo.

Clooney returned to the festival with another of his directing projects, "Suburbicon," a dark comedic satire about a seemingly idyllic 1950s community with Damon and Julianne Moore. This festival was especially notable for it being the Clooneys' first public appearance since the birth of their twins, Alexander and Ella, a few months prior.

This time George was the plus one to Amal, who was receiving an award from the Diane von Furstenberg and The Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation for her work as a human rights lawyer. The power couple gave the festival some much-needed star power amid the actors' strike with an appearance at the adjacent DVF Awards. "I am here in Venice with my husband; he is a rising star," she said that night. "I just wanted to say, you, my love, like this city, take my breath away."

Clooney and Pitt reunited for the Jon Watts action comedy "Wolfs," which played out of competition. But the spotlight was less on the film and more on the off-screen drama of the Apple TV-produced film only getting a limited theatrical release, and his then-recent New York Times op-ed urging U.S. President Joe Biden to end his reelection bid.

"The person who should be applauded is the president who did the most selfless thing anyone's done since George Washington," Clooney said. "All the machinations that got us there, none of that's going to be remembered. And it shouldn't be. What should be remembered is the selfless act."

In "Jay Kelly," Clooney played a very Clooney-esque movie star on a self-reflective journey through Europe. He was absent from the press conference with co-stars Laura Dern, Adam Sandler and Billy Crudup due to a sinus infection, but he rallied for the red carpet premiere, cutting a glamorous figure with Amal by his side.

During the making of "Jay Kelly," filmmaker Noah Baumbach had to put together a montage of that character's career, which would play during a tribute ceremony. While it's well-established that Clooney is definitely not Jay Kelly, in this case, he was. The montage was made entirely from Clooney's own films - a surprise to the actor who had no idea what was coming when he sat down in the theater to film the movie's last scene.

Clooney was taken aback, first by all the "bad haircuts" and then by the realization of just how much time had passed.

"There's a line in this film, 'All my memories are movies,'" Clooney told the AP. "That's not true with me. But my memories of movies are not the scenes or the movie. It's the experience."

He added: "What a lucky life I've lived."

Museum chooses caution over celebration

Met pulls plug on Galliano exhibit

NEW YORK, Sept. 1, (AP): The Metropolitan Museum of Art is canceling its planned exhibit honoring British designer John Galliano - plans that had led to bitter backlash in the Jewish community and beyond because of the designer's past antisemitic and racist statements.

"John Galliano: Horizons," the high-profile spring Costume Institute exhibit which was to be launched by the annual Met Gala next May, will be replaced by another exhibit, the museum said Monday.

"Following thoughtful discussions with John Galliano, we have together decided not to proceed with the exhibition," Max Hollein, director and CEO of the museum, announced in a statement.

The designer joined in the statement, saying: "After much reflection and discussion with The Met and all those involved, I have decided, with great sadness, that it is best for the exhibition not to take place at this time. I remain fully accountable for the pain caused by my words in the past, particularly the hurt I caused to the Jewish and Asian communities, and I remain deeply sorry for it."

Galliano, long recognized as one of the fashion world's biggest talents for his creatively flamboyant designs, was at the pinnacle of that world for years as creative director of Christian Dior. He was fired from the post when a series of racist and antisemitic comments from 2010 and 2011 surfaced and went viral, leading to his conviction in an antisemitism trial in France.

Among the remarks Galliano made to bar patrons, circulated on video, were "I love Hitler." He also told patrons, who were Jewish, that their mothers and forefathers would have been "gassed."

Dropped by Dior, Galliano spent several years involved in public and private efforts to rehabilitate. He made a comeback in 2014 when



Fashion designer John Galliano poses at the end of the presentation of the Dior Haute Couture spring/summer 2010 fashion collection on Jan. 25, 2010, in Paris. (AP)

he was hired by Paris fashion house Maison Margiela, where he remained for a decade.

He was to become only the third living designer to be honored with a solo show at the Costume Institute.

The spring exhibit is launched each year by the star-studded Met Gala, the most visible event on the fashion calendar. The gala is overseen by Anna Wintour, Vogue's global editorial director and one of the most influential figures in global fashion. Wintour has been a long-time friend and supporter of Galliano.

The Met, when it announced the show at the end of July, had taken pains to say the exhibit would forthrightly examine Galliano's past mistakes. It also held discussions with Jewish community leaders before announcing the show, in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to ward off anticipated backlash.

One of the key critics of the planned show was New York City Council Speaker Julie Menin, who

issued a statement Monday praising the decision to cancel.

"After my numerous and lengthy meetings and conversations with The Met, I am pleased that they have agreed to not honor John Galliano," said Menin, who had also publicly called on the Met to cancel the show. "From the beginning, I have told them that I strongly disagreed with this decision, and at this rising time of antisemitism, it had served as a gut punch to the Jewish community. This is the correct decision, as the harm and pain this was causing was simply unacceptable."

"As the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, and as the first Jewish speaker of the New York City Council," Menin added, "this decision was personal to me."

In a further complication for the museum, the gala takes place by tradition on the first Monday in May, which in 2027 falls on the same day as Holocaust Remembrance Day. There had been speculation that the museum might change the date for

this reason.

Jonathan Greenblatt, chief executive of the Anti-Defamation League, said Monday in a post on X that the planned exhibit had been "the wrong move at the wrong moment."

"With antisemitism at crisis levels, the Met honoring John Galliano at this moment was misguided, and even Galliano ultimately recognized what the Met should have done at the start," Greenblatt said.

Greenblatt had met with Hollein a few weeks ago, along with a Met board member, urging the museum director to cancel, according to a person with knowledge of the situation. Greenblatt had, in earlier comments when the show was announced, praised Galliano's efforts to repair the damage from his remarks, saying the ADL had long since accepted the designer's apology. But he also indicated the timing was fraught for such an honor and urged the museum to consider that reality.

Another recent public critic of the show was David Ingber, a rabbi who is senior director for Jewish life at the Bronfman Center at 92NY, the prominent New York Jewish institution. Ingber praised Galliano's decision to withdraw from the honor in recognition of its cost to other people. As for the Met, he said there was a big difference between the issue of redemption and the granting of a rare and hugely visible honor. "Redemption doesn't entitle someone to every honor that we have," he said.

"It wasn't that the Met was merely studying Galliano's work," added Ingber, who was not included in the museum's outreach to Jewish community leaders. "It was a solo exhibition that would be launched at the gala, and that would be an act of institutional celebration of his work. Galliano hasn't been erased ... the question was whether the Met should build its most glamorous annual gala celebration around him."

Obituary

Author Berry, voice of agrarian America dies

NEW YORK, Sept. 1, (AP): Wendell Berry, the Kentucky-born author and agrarian who in poems, stories, novels and essays celebrated the farming communities of his native state and warned of the excesses and misjudgments of an industrial, commercialized society, has died. He was 92.

His daughter, Mary Berry, confirmed on Monday that he died in his home in Port Royal, Kentucky.

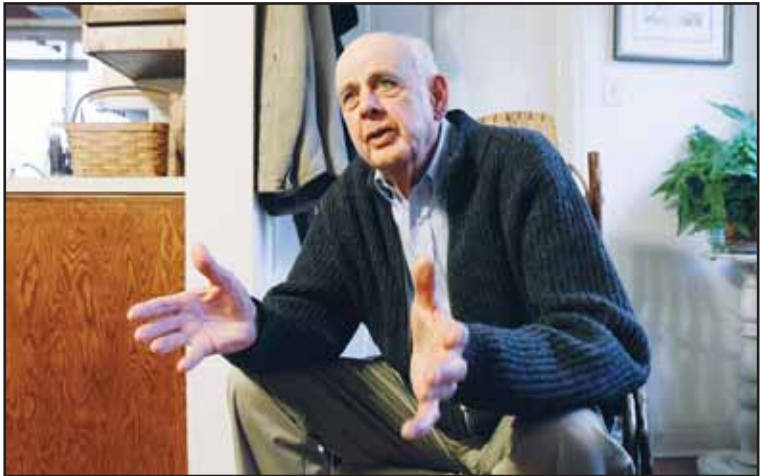
"There's not enough I could say about him to do him justice," she told The Associated Press.

Few authors were more tied to their home than Berry, an intellectual and spiritual heir to Henry David Thoreau and such Southern agrarians as Robert Penn Warren and John Crowe Ransom. In prose and poetry that mirrored the uncluttered and deeply felt life he advocated, Berry challenged modern assumptions about prosperity and happiness and renewed the mysteries of birth, love, work and death.

He had learned from his own history: Berry was born and raised in a farming town during the Great Depression and watched its seemingly immortal ties unravel by his teens.

"Increasingly over the last maybe forty years, the thought has come to me that the old world in which our people lived by the work of their hands, close to weather and earth, plants and animals, was the true world," he wrote in "Andy Catlett: Early Travels," a novel published in 2006, "and that the new world of cheap energy and ever cheaper money, honored greed, and dreams of liberation from every restraint, is mostly theater."

"The world I knew as a boy was flawed, surely, but it was substantial and authentic. The households of my grandparents seemed to breathe forth a sense of the real cost and worth of things. Whatever came, came by somebody's work."



Wendell Berry talks with a reporter at his home in Port Royal, Ky., March 10, 2011. (AP)

Centuries-old abanico offering simple, stylish escape from relentless summer heat

In hotter Spain, the humble hand fan is having a moment

MADRID, Sept 1, (AP): In crowded subway cars and sun-drenched plazas, an old-fashioned accessory in Spain has been everywhere thanks to the blistering summer heat.

Small enough to fit into a purse, the traditional Spanish folding hand fan, or abanico, snaps open into a semicircle. With little more than a flick of the wrist, it creates a surprisingly strong breeze.

As successive heat waves in Western Europe pushed temperatures this summer to punishing levels, the accessory has become essential, embraced by the young and old from Spain and elsewhere. Women - and a growing number of men - unfurl them on public transport, at concerts and at music festivals. In July, rainbow-colored abanicos were everywhere during Madrid's raucous Pride celebrations.

On a recent August day, 20-year-old Ana Feliu blocked the sun with a paper abanico she was gifted during a Valencian festival. She carries it everywhere in the summer, she said.

"This one is my favorite because it's the biggest, but I have many more," she told The Associated Press near Madrid's Puerta del Sol square. Later in the week, temperatures in the Spanish capital were expected to reach 39 degrees Celsius (102 Fahrenheit).

Also fanning himself was David González, whose abanico featured pinks, purples and reds.

"At first, I felt a little self-conscious, because it's something that's mainly associated with women, but I have to admit it serves a purpose - and it brightens my day," said González, 53.

Historians believe the folding fan reached Europe through Portuguese maritime trade with Asia in the 15th and 16th centuries.

As early as the mid-17th century, the Spanish painter Diego Velázquez made his enigmatic "The Lady with a Fan," in which a woman, possibly French, poses with what appears to be a delicate wooden abanico.

As they grew fashionable in European courts, Spain developed a taste and industry of its own. Madrid became an important center of production, and by the 18th century, Valencia had emerged as the Spanish fan-making capital.

"During the 18th century, the printing industry really



Left: A woman uses a fan to cool herself on the subway in Madrid, Spain, on Aug. 18, 2026. Right: Carmen Torres, a professional flamenco dancer, rehearses a guajira, a flamenco style that traditionally incorporates the use of a fan, in Seville, Spain, on Aug. 27, 2026. (AP)



Left: Silvia Ramos López, owner of Manos de Agua, glues red silk to the sticks of a handmade fan at her workshop in Seville, Spain, on Aug. 25, 2026. Right: Fans are displayed at Casa Diego, a fan shop in Madrid, Spain, on Aug. 18, 2026. (AP)



took off. And printing meant that the leaves of fans could be produced quite cheaply," said Mary Kitson, curatorial consultant to The Fan Museum in London.

So embedded was the abanico in Spanish aristocratic

society by the 1800s that women used them to discreetly express flirtation, interest or disapproval through what was called "the language of the fan."

From Spain, the hand fan traveled to Latin America. In

the 19th century, flamenco dancers began using the abanico as an expressive prop, as Cuban song and dance styles such as the guajira influenced the dance form. Over time, the fan's association with flamenco helped turn it into a quintessential Spanish symbol.

"The fan is a perfect element because, on the one hand, it evokes the heat and humidity of Cuba - that heavy, oppressive feeling," said Carmen Torres, a 44-year-old flamenco dancer in southern Spain. "And at the same time, it gives us a way to bring out the seductive, coquettish quality."

For more than a century and a half, Javier Llerandi's family has sold abanicos out of Casa de Diego, a wood-paneled shop in Madrid.

"We live from the heat," Llerandi told the AP.

The fans at Casa de Diego are made in Spain and range from simple two-tone wooden ones to elaborate, hand-painted items crafted from mother-of-pearl with intricate floral patterns. They start at around 30 euros (\$35), while others range from 200 to 500 euros (up to \$580), with some high-end pieces reaching 6,000 euros (nearly \$7,000). The price depends on the materials used, but even more so on the craftsmanship involved, he said.

As Madrid has grown into a tourist hot spot, foreign visitors are also snatching up his fans, which Llerandi notes are more reliable than their portable, electric counterparts.

"Battery-run items eventually run out of power, and always at the worst possible moment," Llerandi said, adding with a smile: "Without a doubt, heat waves are good for this business."

And for the less discerning customer, plastic fans with printed designs are sold for a few euros at souvenir kiosks, including one a couple hundred meters from Llerandi's store. There, too, a salesperson reported strong sales this summer.

Outside a towering bullfighting ring in Madrid, Juaní Durán sells wooden hand fans with traditional floral designs for five euros apiece at a stall. Bullfights take place in open-air stadiums, and spectators traditionally dress up to attend them, making the elegant fans a fitting accessory.

Tradition goes global

Malaysia's Hungry Ghost Festival blends faith, craft and community

BUKIT MERTAJAM, Malaysia, Sept 1, (AP): It's that time of year when the living make room for the dead. Malaysia's Hungry Ghost Festival is held during the seventh month of the Chinese lunar calendar, which this year began in mid-August.

"It is centered around the worship of Da Shi Ye, also known as the Guardian God of Ghosts, and has become one of the major traditional Chinese religious celebrations in Bukit Mertajam," said Lee Kim Fong, general affairs coordinator for the event.

The city is in Malaysia's northern state of Penang, about 320 kilometers (200 miles) north of Kuala Lumpur.

"It dates back to 1888, when there was a serious plague in Bukit Mertajam," Lee said. "After that, our ancestors began worshipping Da Shi Ye."

For 15 days, devotees pray and make offerings before a towering paper-and-bamboo effigy of Da Shi Ye. The celebration culminates in the ceremonial burning of the effigy, symbolically sending the deity back to the spirit world.

Lee estimated that more than 10,000 people attended the burning ceremony this year, with crowds sometimes reaching 20,000.

"The main purpose is to look after wandering spirits, especially spirits who have no one to worship or make offerings to them," Lee said. "Some may have died in accidents or may have no family members to pray for them."

Similar celebrations are held in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan. Devotees travel to Bukit Mertajam from across Malaysia as well as Sin-

gapore, Indonesia and Thailand.

The Da Shi Ye effigy in Bukit Mertajam is traditionally made about five centimeters (two inches) taller each year. In 2026, it reached 8.9 meters (about 29 feet).

Ng Chi Wong, 69, has spent more than four decades crafting the figures. He said completing the towering effigy takes about a month and a half, with a team of seven or eight people working on it.

"We have the measurements and a general idea of the structure, but there are no formal drawings," Ng said. "Most of the design and construction details are already in our minds."

The artisans begin with the head, the part that requires the most work, before building the main frame and shaping the body. The outer layers are then added and painted.

Ng said that the process has undergone some small improvements over time. Yet the craft requires more than technical skill.

"You also need to understand the tradition and the beliefs behind it," he said.

Lim Han Cong, a University of Malaya master's graduate in Chinese studies, described the Hungry Ghost Festival as a counterpart to another traditional Chinese observance: Qingming, or Tomb-Sweeping Day, when families honor their ancestors at their graves.

While Qingming focuses primarily on one's own ancestors, the Hungry Ghost Festival extends offerings to wandering spirits and the unclaimed dead. "This tradition reflects a synthesis of Buddhist, Taoist and Chinese folk religious beliefs," Lim said.



Participants move a paper statue of Da Shi Ye, the Guardian God of Ghosts, through the streets during the Hungry Ghost Festival in Bukit Mertajam, Malaysia, Saturday, Aug. 29, 2026. (AP)

Film

Film revisits Zuckerberg and Facebook's influence

Sorkin's 'Social Reckoning' takes aim at Facebook

NEW YORK, Sept 1, (AP): When Aaron Sorkin made 2010's "The Social Network," he had heard of Facebook, he said at the time, "the way I've heard of a carburetor." Sixteen years later, he has a much deeper idea of what Mark Zuckerberg's social media empire has become.

"Back then, Facebook was a way to keep in touch with people you went to high school with. It's something much different now," Sorkin says. "'The Social Network' was about the invention of Facebook. 'Social Reckoning' is about what it's become and, in particular, Facebook's role in the rise of extremism and divisiveness."

"The Social Reckoning," which Sony Pictures will release Oct. 9, is one of the most timely movies arriving in theaters this fall. Last week, Sony debuted the film's trailer the same day that Meta, Facebook's parent company, agreed to pay up to \$18 billion in penalties over claims its platform endangered children.

"The Social Reckoning" is poised to further scrutinize the social media behemoth at a time when Zuckerberg is under greater pressure than ever over the role Facebook plays in contemporary life and politics.

"When you see this movie, No. 1, I want you to be entertained," Sorkin said in a recent exclusive interview with The Associated Press while doing the final mix on the film. "No. 2, you should be alarmed when you see the movie. I think people will be."

"The Social Reckoning" is one of several films this fall that will take aim at the tech moguls who have helped remake American life. Alex Gibney will unveil his four-hour documentary on Elon Musk, "Musk," on Oct. 16. Luca Guadagnino's "Artificial" dramatizes the saga of Sam Altman, the OpenAI chief executive.

But "The Social Reckoning," which Sorkin wrote and directed, is sure to cause a stir given not just its subject but the legacy of "The Social Network." Often cited as among the best American movies of the century, the film - directed by David Fincher and written by Sorkin - did much to examine and mythologize the origins of Facebook. It is, Sorkin acknowledges, a lot to live up to.

"To tell you the truth, I was hesi-



This image released by Sony Pictures shows writer-director Aaron Sorkin, left, with actor Mikey Madison on the set of "The Social Reckoning." (AP)

tant," Sorkin said. "I recognize the shadow that 'The Social Network' casts. But I think what's going to happen is, 10 minutes into the movie, you'll have forgotten about that and be invested in this."

For the 65-year-old Sorkin, "The Social Reckoning" isn't a sequel. It's centered on the same figure, Zuckerberg, but captures him and his company at a dramatically different stage.

"It's as if Henry Hill showed up in 'Casino,'" says Sorkin, alluding to the "Goodfellas" protagonist.

Sorkin began contemplating "The Social Reckoning" around 2019, the same time he wrote an op-ed in The New York Times addressed to Zuckerberg. It alleged Facebook - which had just announced it was no longer going to fact-check political ads - was responsible for "crazy lies pumped into the water supply that corrupt the most important decisions we make together." Zuckerberg responded by quoting Sorkin's own dialogue from "The American President" about free speech.

"I read this, and I thought: it's just impossible that Mark and the people around Mark don't know the difference between an unpopular opinion and a lie," Sorkin says. "And that kind of stayed with me."

Sorkin has since said he blames Facebook for the Capitol riot on Jan. 6, 2021. Eventually, he was coaxed by Sony chief Tom Rothman and agent Ari Emanuel to wade back into one of his most beloved films.

"I said at the beginning I didn't want to write 'Jaws 2.' I didn't want to return and fail," says Sorkin. "Then I met Frances Haugen and I met Jeff Horwitz and I started thinking more about it. I realized there was a terrific story and the only reason not to do it is being scared. And that's just not a good enough reason."

"The Social Reckoning" stars Mikey Madison as Haugen, a former data scientist at Facebook who became a whistleblower in 2021 and testified before Congress that Facebook was tuning its algorithm to put profit before public safety. Jeremy

Allen White plays Wall Street Journal reporter Jeff Horwitz, a former Associated Press journalist. Jeremy Strong, not Jesse Eisenberg, plays Zuckerberg.

Zuckerberg and Meta have yet to say anything publicly about "The Social Reckoning." The company declined to comment for this article.

In prepping "The Social Network," Sorkin and producer Scott Rudin reached out to the company in an attempt to gain their cooperation. But after a lunch meeting, Facebook declined to participate - a blessing, Sorkin later realized. The script, Sorkin has said, "was vetted to within an inch of its life by a team of studio lawyers." A similar process has followed on "The Social Reckoning."

"I would have been happy to speak to him. I've never met Mark. I don't know him at all," Sorkin says. "And I don't pretend to have any insight into how his mind works, only the results of how his mind works, and then I kind of reverse engineer it."

Your likes, photos and friends could tell AI how old you are

Social media companies increase efforts to detect underage users

NEW YORK, Sept 1, (AP): Of the child safety measures agreed to in Meta's landmark legal settlement, no category contains more detailed requirements than its commitments on age assurance - and for good reason. No matter how well the protections work, they are of little use if Meta can't tell which users are kids.

Determining which accounts belong to children is also the linchpin of child safety measures that other companies, including Google, TikTok, and Roblox, are ramping up as public and regulatory sentiment turns against them in the U.S. and other countries.

The Meta settlement - with pro-

tections the company says could become industry standards - will give the social media giant a year to refine its approach. But the options are limited, and improving age verification technology presents steep challenges, including navigating privacy implications not just for children but for adults who could have to prove they are over 18.

The \$18 billion settlement resolves claims from state attorneys general that it hurt children's mental health by deliberately designing its Instagram and Facebook platforms in ways that hooked young people's attention. The agreement announced last week with the Menlo Park, California, company involves 48 states

plus the District of Columbia and U.S. territories.

In the offline world, people use government-issued IDs to prove they are over 18 or 21, whether they want to get into a club or buy cigarettes. While this technically works online too, many people are not comfortable giving a Big Tech company like Meta or Google access to their driver's license or passport.

Meta accepts IDs to check ages, and promises to delete them within 30 days. Beyond IDs, though, a growing number of tech companies are using artificial intelligence to try to determine users' ages. This is not true age verification. While AI can estimate a person's age, often accurately, it can't

verify a person's birth date.

Last year, Google began using an age-assurance system for YouTube that relies on AI to differentiate between adults and minors based on their watch histories. Meta does the same.

AI age checks use clues to determine how old someone is. On Instagram, this includes "contextual clues" such as posts about birthday celebrations or school, and things like which posts people like, comment or linger on, who their friends are, as well as the times of day they log in. For instance, someone who is offline during school hours would likely be school-aged.

In a blog post last year, Meta said its AI also looks at photos peo-

ple post for visual cues, including "height or bone structure, to estimate someone's general age; it does not identify the specific person in the image."

"By combining these visual insights with our analysis of text and interactions, we can significantly increase the number of underage accounts we identify and remove," the company added.

Under the settlement, Meta agreed to strengthen its age-checking technology using its own tools, as well as third-party ones, with regular outside audits on how well it is working. The agreement also includes specific goals around false positive rates - that is, minors who are identified as

over 18. And if a user is identified as under 13 and kicked off one of its platforms, Meta will check the ages of their friends, too.

Identity verification companies like Yoti and Persona, which work with tech companies like Meta and Roblox, use video selfies people upload to estimate their ages.

The gaming site Roblox, which, unlike social media platforms, allows kids under 13 to sign up, requires players to take a video selfie to estimate their age. Roblox says the videos are deleted after the age check is processed. Users are not required to submit a face scan to use the platform, only if they want to chat with other users.

Jaber Hospital team performs first 3D-printed hip reconstruction

KUWAIT CITY, Sept. 1, (KUNA): The Ministry of Health announced that a medical team at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital has successfully carried out a complex hip reconstruction using 3D-printing technology, marking the first procedure of its kind at the hospital.

In a statement Tuesday, the ministry said the operation was led by Dr. Hashem Al-Ali, head of the orthopedic surgery department, for a 48-year-old patient suffering from hip joint failure, complications from metal deposition and significant pelvic bone loss.

Using CT scans and 3D printing, the team produced an exact model of the patient's pelvis before surgery, allowing surgeons to precisely assess bone defects and plan the most suitable approach. The procedure included bone grafts and advanced techniques to ensure joint stability and long-term bone fusion.

The patient was able to stand and begin walking on the second day after surgery, indicat-



Ministry of Health photo
The medical team after performing a complex hip reconstruction and replacement operation.

ing early recovery. The ministry said the achievement reflects Kuwait's efforts to localize advanced medical technologies, build national expertise and treat complex cases domestically in line with international best practices.

US officials tie cyclospora outbreak involving iceberg lettuce to 3 states

WASHINGTON, Sept. 1, (AP): Parasitic illness cases linked to recalled iceberg lettuce have now been confirmed in 20 states, federal health officials said, expanding the scope of the largest outbreak of its kind in the U.S.

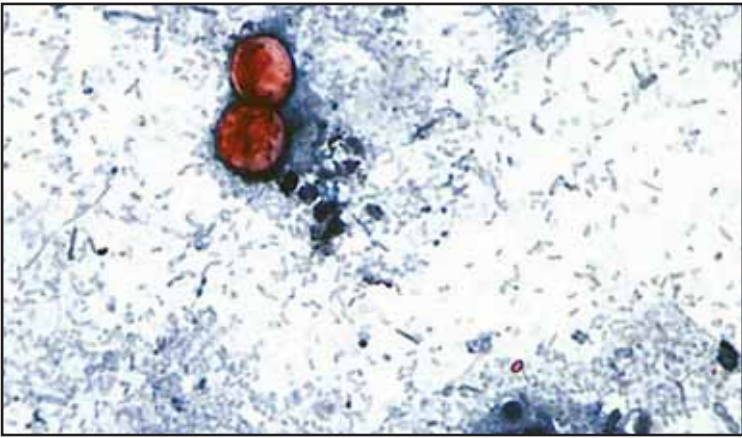
The Food and Drug Administration said government scientists have now identified cases in three additional states: Georgia, Tennessee and Texas.

The tally of people sickened by the parasite is now 11,458, up from about 10,900 reported last week.

The FDA, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state health officials have focused their investigation on lettuce grown at a farm in central Mexico operated by Taylor Farms, a major U.S. produce supplier.

The FDA said its staffers are continuing to inspect and test produce at the farm, in cooperation with officials from the Mexican government. The U.S. agency said it "remains confident that all recalled iceberg lettuce related to this specific cyclospora outbreak is off the market."

Cyclospora is a microscopic parasite that commonly causes watery diarrhea "with frequent and sometimes explosive bowel movements," ac-



This undated photo taken through a microscope and provided by the CDC shows Cyclospora cayetanensis oocysts found in a fresh stool sample which had been prepared with a formalin solution and stained with safranin. (AP)

cording to the CDC. Outbreaks tend to occur most often in the late spring and summer.

The heat-loving parasite infects the bowels and spreads through feces. The illness, called cyclosporiasis, is less common than foodborne illnesses caused by other germs, including salmonella and E. coli. Many cyclospora cases are never linked to a specific food or other source.

Earlier this week, the CDC reported that there have been about 29,000 confirmed or suspected cyclospora cases in the U.S. this year. There have been 922 hospitalizations, according to the agency. Previously, the worst year in the U.S. for infections was 2019, when about 4,700 illnesses were reported nationally.

UN officials estimate about half a million people die a year from heat

Keeping cool saves thousands of lives yearly, but at cost of worsening warming: experts

WASHINGTON, Sept. 1, (AP): Cooling from air conditioning saves lives - more than 5,000 a year in the United States alone - but it also heats up the planet and taxes our electrical grid, scientists say.

As the world warms, heat waves strike nearly every continent and United Nations officials estimate that about half a million people die a year from heat, air conditioning is needed and being used more than ever. A study in Nature Health reported Monday that air conditioning saved nearly 58,000 lives between 2010 and 2020 in the U.S. Air conditioning use is skyrocketing around the world, with electricity demand from cooling expected to triple, according to the International Energy Agency and the United Nations Environment Programme.

It's also more of a problem than ever. Because most of the electricity for cooling comes from the burning of fossil fuels, the UN projects the amount of heat-trapping gas spewed into the atmosphere from air conditioning use to rise from 4.5 billion to 7.2 billion tons in the next 25 years or so. That 7.2 billion tons is almost as much as the carbon pollution from the United States and Europe now.

"Everyone knows air conditioning works, but air conditioning from a climate change perspective is not an

ideal," said Kai Chen, an epidemiology professor at the Yale School of Public Health who was the senior author on the new study. "It leads to more carbon emissions ... then it accelerates the climate warming problem."

Because of a global energy crunch triggered by the war in Iran, eight countries - Bangladesh, Cambodia, Jordan, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Seychelles, Singapore and Sri Lanka - have limited how cool air conditioning can be in offices or even mandated one day a week for public offices to switch it off, according to the IEA. In 2025 the Indian government proposed limits on how cool air conditioners can go.

Experts from 75 countries and 250 cities are trying to walk the tightrope of creating more cooling to reduce deaths from the rising heat, but without worsening climate change. The Global Cooling Pledge will meet in September in Singapore.

One measurement experts use to tally accumulated heat as related to potential air conditioning use is something called "cooling degree days," a calculation of how much energy is needed to cool buildings when it's hot outside. The number of cooling degree days in the United States has increased by 28% since 1990, with 2024 setting a record, according to the U.S. Energy Informa-



Sonel Telemaque, (left), wipes sweat from his brow while installing a new air conditioning unit alongside Brian Hermosillo during record-breaking heat, March 19 in Tempe, Ariz. (AP)

tion Administration. Through May, 2026 has been on pace to beat 2024 for the most cooling degree days, EIA data shows.

In Europe, the number of cooling degree days has more than doubled since 1990, and air conditioning use there has jumped up by 44%. Meanwhile, usage has tripled in India and more than doubled in Southeast Asia, the IEA reported.

In the new study, Chen and his team went through 30 million U.S. death records over an 11-year time span, used county-by-county calculations for levels when heat becomes

dangerous and calculated how many lives air conditioning saved during extreme heat. The most lives saved were in Arizona, Florida, Texas, Louisiana and southern parts of Nevada, Alabama and Mississippi. More than a dozen northern states, from Washington to Maine, had fewer than 10 lives a year saved, according to the study.

Chen said the study concluded that "the essential role" of air conditioning saved on average 5,267 lives a year. But it also found that has to be balanced with "overuse." He pointed to offices - like his - which are cooled so much that many workers wear sweaters even in the summer. More than half the cases researchers looked at could be considered overuse, he said.

Many places use 75 degrees (24 degrees Celsius) as a reasonable limit for air conditioning, Chen said.

He also said the study found that using more air conditioning than needed doesn't save more lives, but it does worsen climate change.

Air conditioning in cities adds extra warmth to the urban heat island effect, as anyone who walks by air conditioning units knows because that's where waste heat is expelled outdoors, Chen said. And the added power use increases traditional soot and smog air pollution.

It's also an issue of fairness since many of the world's most vulnerable populations don't have access to or can't afford air conditioning, according to both Chen and U.N. officials.

Lily Riahi, head of the cooling buildings and energy unit at UNEP, said that in this year's heat waves, "many families had to choose between paying for medicines or running their air conditioner."

"In a warming world, thermal comfort should not be a luxury," UNEP chief heat officer Eleni Myrivili said. "It's becoming a prerequisite for health, dignity and increasingly survival."

Riahi said the goal is not less cooling but rather "smarter and more equitable cooling," and she pointed to Singapore as an example for effective solutions.

"Singapore is a country I think has really tackled cooling from a very comprehensive perspective, looking at individual adaptation measures, early warning systems, passive measures in the city in terms of urban greenery, which saves them, I think, \$35 million in energy costs per year," Riahi said. Officials there also require new and old buildings to have more efficient cooling and ventilation systems.

Singapore has lowered temperatures in some places by 14 degrees (8 degrees Celsius), Riahi said.

Congo reports more than 6,000 confirmed Ebola cases, 2,911 deaths

BUNIA, Congo, Sept. 1, (AP): Congo's authorities said Monday that the fastest-growing Ebola outbreak in history has topped 6,000 cases with 2,911 deaths.

More than 1,360 people have recovered from the virus, in what authorities said was an "encouraging" development.

The outbreak in eastern Congo is spreading under extremely difficult conditions, fueled by insecurity, displacement, a health workers' strike and intense population movements. The situation is particularly concerning at displacement sites, where residents already live in extremely precarious conditions.

Last week, the virus spilled into two new health zones in the region.

The World Health Organization has said that it remains out of control and is on track to surpass the 2014-2016 West Africa Ebola outbreak, the deadliest on record, which killed more than 11,000 people, primarily in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

On Saturday, an Ebola response team was attacked on the outskirts of the town of Mambasa in Ituri province while responding to a call to secure a body. Young people armed with machetes stormed the site of the funeral, forcing the team to flee and injuring one member, a representative told The Associated Press.

"We demand greater security so we can operate in the field and do our work without endangering our lives," said Floribert Magene, a member of the response team.

Bodies of those who died of Ebola can be highly contagious and lead to further spread when people prepare them for burial and gather for funerals.

In response to the outbreak, Congolese authorities have mandated that the dangerous work of burying suspected victims be managed wherever possible by authorities, which can be met by protests from families and friends.

The outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo virus, a rare type of Ebola that has no approved vaccine or treatment.

Last week, Congo began vaccinating health and other front-line workers with the Ervebo vaccine that was

effective in past Ebola outbreaks caused by a different, more common type called Zaire.

Clinical trials are underway to find a licensed vaccine for the Bundibugyo virus.

Although the current outbreak was declared in mid-May, officials believe it had been spreading since February. It has spread from three health zones to nearly 60, with most cases and deaths occurring outside the network of monitored contacts and within communities.

Efforts to bring the outbreak under control - from limited public gatherings to social distancing and airport closures - have disrupted life in the six provinces, particularly Ituri, which also has been ravaged by rebel violence.

The government has introduced some measures, including installing health and sanitary equipment at some locations, but advocacy groups say more needs to be done to build trust with the community.

While neighboring Uganda declared itself free of Ebola last month, the risk of further cross-border spread

remains, WHO said last week.

Meanwhile, Parents and teachers at the epicenter of Congo's fast-moving Ebola outbreak are urging authorities to delay the reopening of schools as infections continue to outpace efforts to contain the disease.

Schools are set to reopen across Congo on Sept. 1, but some teachers and parents in Ituri are urging authorities to delay the return, saying the Ebola outbreak still poses too great a risk to children.

Children aged 4 and below have the highest case-fatality rate of any age group in the outbreak, at 60%, according to available health data.

"We want to resume classes, but not at the cost of our lives," Fazila Rebecca, a teacher in Ituri's capital of Bunia, told The Associated Press. "As long as the disease is circulating and protective measures remain inadequate, returning to the classroom means taking a risk we cannot ignore."

The local Ituri teachers union met Tuesday in Bunia, urging authorities to assess the outbreak before deciding whether to reopen schools.



A health worker pauses after disinfecting a treatment center for Ebola patients, in Beni, North Kivu province, eastern Congo on Aug 31. (AP)



A villager prepares to cross floodwaters in a small boat in Alengmora village in Jorhat, India on Aug 10. (AP)

After floods in India's Assam, experts call for better warnings and long-term planning

GUWAHATI, India, Sept. 1, (AP): Rojo Neog left his house in India's Assam state on the evening of July 19 to buy candles after heavy rain knocked out electricity. As he rode back on his bicycle, the Dikhow River suddenly rose and the current intensified.

The floodwaters swept him away, and his body was found three days later, said his niece Priyakshi Gogoi, who lives nearby. Gogoi said floodwaters around her uncle's village Hulang Katoni rose from knee-deep to neck-deep in about 30 minutes.

"There was no warning, nothing," she said. "In the morning we thought it's fine, there is little flooding but it will subside, but we didn't expect it to become so bad."

More than 100 people have died in flooding in Assam this year in what state officials have described as its worst flooding in about six decades. While flooding is frequent in Assam, climate and disaster experts said increasingly intense rainfall, sand mining, upstream deforestation,

wetland loss, urbanization and heavy reliance on embankments are making floods more unpredictable and destructive.

Experts said Assam and other states upstream must move beyond spending millions of dollars on flood-control structures and relief toward better early warnings, scientific mapping of changing risks and restoring the ability of forests, wetlands and floodplains to absorb water.

"It's very important to study and understand flood risks better in Assam," said Himanshu Thakkar, coordinator of the environmental group, South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People. "Once we understand, we can also forecast well. Then we can prepare well and less people will be affected. India is very good at rescuing people or providing relief after the disaster, but is particularly bad in doing anything significant to reduce the possibilities of such disasters."

Each year from June to September, a series of heavy rains known as monsoons sweep through India,

providing relief from heat, irrigating the country's farms and replenishing its rivers. However, as global heat increases, the rain is becoming more erratic and intense, creating the conditions for deadly floods.

India, one of the world's largest greenhouse gas emitters, is also among the hardest hit by climate change. Assam state is among India's most flood-prone, with about 40% of its land vulnerable to inundation from the Brahmaputra River and smaller rivers.

The floods have displaced more than 700,000 people and submerged farmland while damaging roads and other infrastructure. Although many residents have begun returning home as floodwaters recede, thousands remain in relief camps.

Krishna Karamkar jumped into floodwaters on July 19 when one of his two sons inadvertently fell into the overflowing Dikhow, which is a tributary of the Brahmaputra. The 42-year-old was able to save his son, but he perished.

Team targets first World Cup medal after modest past success

Injuries, losses test Germany ahead of Women’s Basketball World Cup in Berlin

BERLIN, Sept 1, (AP): Injuries and three straight losses in warmups have not dimmed hopes for host team Germany at the Women’s Basketball World Cup in Berlin.

As a well-known German saying goes, “hope is the last to die.”

Germany is making just its second World Cup appearance. The first was when it previously hosted the quadrennial tournament in 1998. The German team reached the second group stage on that occasion and will be aiming for a medal this time, though the absence of star player Satou Sabally is a major blow.

The New York Liberty forward is still dealing with the effects of a concussion - her second of the year - sustained in a game against Las Vegas in June.

Sabally’s younger sister Nyara, who plays for the Toronto Tempo, is yet to make her comeback from a calf injury, while Liberty’s Leonie

Fiebich, another key player, is just back from a foot injury.

Germany’s preparations for the expanded 16-team 20th edition of the tournament haven’t been optimal with three straight defeats to Spain, Hungary and Turkey in warmup games.

“Of course, we were hoping for a win but it was just a friendly,” Luisa Geiselsöder said of the latest loss, 63-62 to Turkey in Cologne on Thursday.

Geiselsöder’s WNBA colleagues Sabally, Fiebich and her Portland Fire teammate Frieda Bühner missed the warmup games but their arrival should provide a boost.

“We learned a lot today,” Germany coach Olaf Lange said after the Turkey game. “But with the three (WNBA players yet to arrive) we’re a completely different team.”

Lange said he was confident Nyara Sabally will be able to play at



In this file photo, Portland Fire forward-center Frieda Bühner plays during a WNBA basketball game against the Chicago Sky in Portland, Ore. (AP)

the tournament based on the results of an MRI scan on her calf.

Germany will also be reliant on combo guard Alexis Peterson as the primary playmaker.

Team captain Marie Göllich made her comeback from a serious knee injury in the 65-60 friendly loss to Spain.

Germany starts Friday with another clash against Spain in the 14,000 capacity Berlin Arena, so-called for the tournament to avoid mentioning the venue’s frequently changing sponsor.

The Max-Schmeling-Halle, a multipurpose 9,000 seat venue named after Germany’s heavyweight champion from 1932, will also host games for the tournament.

Germany has never beaten Spain in seven competitive matchups. Spain won their last meeting 79-60 in the group stage of Eurobasket in Hamburg last year.

Germany then faces Japan in the Max-Schmeling-Halle on Saturday, before finishing Group A with a game it will be expected to win against Mali on Sept. 7.

Only the bottom team in each of the four groups is eliminated. The group winners advance directly to the quarterfinals, while the others face playoffs to advance to the last eight.

Organizers announced that more than 200,000 tickets have been sold for the tournament already - more than for any of the previous editions. The final on Sept. 13 is sold out.

“We’re witnessing an extraordinary evolution of our sport, and this World Cup in Berlin will mark another major milestone,” German Basketball Federation president Ingo Weiss said. “200,000 tickets is a fantastic sign, and we’re far from finished yet.”

Liberty leads WNBA with 7 players

US stars Wilson and Kelsey ruled out of FIBA World Cup

NEW YORK, Sep 1, (AP): A’ja Wilson and Kelsey Plum will miss the FIBA Women’s World Cup for health reasons and will be replaced by Washington teammates Kiki Iriafen and Sonia Citron, USA Basketball announced Monday.

Wilson, the four-time WNBA MVP, has shouldered quite a workload in the first part of the season for the Las Vegas Aces and needed a break to rest and get ready for the playoffs. She was voted the most outstanding player of the 2024 Paris Olympics and the 2022 World Cup. She will be sorely missed by the United States.

Plum has been dealing with a calf injury for most of the WNBA season and it still hasn’t 100% healed. She was a catalyst in the Paris Games gold-medal contest against France and sparked the Americans to the one-point victory.

Iriafen and Citron were both part of U.S. camps this past winter. Iriafen played on the American team that went to Puerto Rico and won the World Cup qualifier. Citron had

to miss that tournament because of an injury, so she’ll be making her national team debut in Germany.

The Americans have won every World Cup since finishing with the bronze medal in 2006. That World Cup saw American star Lisa Leslie pull out at the last minute because of a car accident that her uncle was in. Without her, the U.S. fell to Russia in the semifinals.

Without the two veteran players, the U.S. will rely even more heavily on its youth movement. Caitlin Clark, Angel Reese and Paige Bueckers will make their World Cup debut. The young stars will be joined by Olympic medalists Breanna Stewart, Napheesa Collier, Chelsea Gray, Jackie Young and Kahleah Copper.

Rhyné Howard and Aliyah Boston will also be making their World Cup debuts to round out the team.

The U.S. opens against China on Friday. The Chinese team has a huge front line with 7-foot-3 Zhang Ziyu, 6-10 Han Xu and 6-7 Li Yueru. The two teams played for the World Cup title in 2022 in Australia.

Meanwhile, as the WNBA goes on its FIBA World Cup break, no team has more players headed to Germany than the New York Liberty.

Like the city they play in, the Liberty are an international smorgasbord with players from France, Nigeria, China, Germany, Australia, Spain, the Bahamas and the U.S. New York will have seven of them playing in the tournament that begins Sept. 4 in Berlin. The Liberty would have an eighth, but Satou Sabally is still recovering from a concussion so can’t play for Germany.

“It truly is like the United Nations here,” Liberty star Breanna Stewart said of her teammates’ backgrounds.

Rebecca Allen, the longest tenured member of the team, said it wasn’t like that when she first joined the organization in 2015.

“I was the only foreigner on the team back then. Everyone made me feel welcome, but now it’s different with so many countries represented here,” she said.



In this file photo, Los Angeles Sparks guard Kelsey Plum dribbles during the second half of a WNBA basketball game against the Indiana Fever in Los Angeles. (AP)

Mas retains lead

Tronchon sprints to Vuelta stage win

ELCHE DE LA SIERRA, Spain, Sept 1, (AP): French rider Bastien Tronchon got a career best result winning stage 10 of the Spanish Vuelta on Tuesday, and Enric Mas retained the leader’s red jersey he was gifted by Tadej Pogacar’s race-ending crash.

The 24-year-old Tronchon sprinted clear in the final 20 meters (yards) of a hilly 184.7-kilometer (115-mile) stage between Alcaraz and Elche de la Sierra. Magnus Cort was second and Thibau Nys placed third. Wout van Aert was fourth.

Tronchon put his right hand to his helmet in surprise crossing the line and sobbed tearfully when his Groupama-FDJ United teammates congratulated him.

Mas retained his overall lead of 1 minute, 18 seconds ahead of Primoz Roglic, the 36-year-old Slovenian who is chasing a record fifth Vuelta title. Felix Gall stayed 1’39 back in third.

The Vuelta was upended Saturday when Pogacar, the leader and overwhelming favorite to win the three-week race, crashed out and fractured his left collarbone.

Tuesday’s stage crested three third-category climbs and let a seven-man breakaway, only one of them within an hour of Mas’s overall time, build a lead of more than two and a half minutes.

The peloton reeled in the last of the breakaway inside the final five kilometers (3.5 miles) and caught further attempts by riders to steal away for the win.

Wednesday’s stage 11 is a flat stage suiting the sprinters over 153.8 kms (96 miles) from Cartagena to Lorca. The Vuelta finishes in Granada on Sept. 13.

Five-time Tour de France champion Tadej Pogacar posted a photo from the hospital wearing a neck brace and with bandages on his hand and face after crashing out of the Spanish Vuelta.

The Instagram post came accompanied by the Bee Gees song “Stayin’ Alive.”

Pogacar was expected to undergo surgery after being sent hurtling head-over-handlebars in a frightening crash that forced him to pull out of the Vuelta. He suffered a concussion and broke two bones after he appeared to lose control when a stone came rolling across the road.

The Slovenian from UAE Team Emirates had a big lead and was heavily favored to win the title to complete a hat trick of cycling’s three Grand Tours.

This was Pogacar’s 10th Grand Tour and the first he has ever abandoned. He had never finished lower than third place.



Pakistan’s Saud Shakeel plays a shot on day four of the second cricket test match between England and Pakistan in London. (AP)

ISLAMABAD, Sept 1, (AP): Pakistan pushed the panic button after heavy defeats in the two cricket tests in England by replacing seven players and two coaches on Monday.

Head coach Sarfaraz Ahmed and bowling coach Umar Gul were summoned home by the Pakistan Cricket Board to be replaced by white-ball head coach Mike Hesson and Ashley Noffke respectively for the third and final test in Birmingham starting on Sept. 9.

Wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan, injured opening batter Imam-ul-Haq, first test captain Salman Ali Agha, spinner Ali Usman and pacer Khuram Shahzad - who all played in the second test defeat at Lord’s on Sunday - were also returning home. Allrounder Aamir Jamal and batter Awas Zafar were going with them without getting a game in England.

The wholesale changes in a series which Pakistan has already lost didn’t go down well with former Pakistan captains Shoaib Malik and Shahid Afridi.

“The players dropped from the squad are still our national cricketers who have served Pakistan,” Malik wrote on X. “Phrases like “sent on

the first flight back” are disrespectful ... Plus accountability starts once a tour is done not in the middle of it. Players should not be going through such mental stress and a social media after every bad game or the fear of failure will settle in the minds of our players.”

Afridi said the sacking so many players and coaches midway through a tour was “shocking.”

“Not sure what is the logic or reasoning behind this decision!” Afridi said on X.

“Even the replacements make no sense - T20 players have been included for a Test match in England? What is this thinking and approach? Why has the coach been axed after 5 Test matches? This is the most shocking decision ever by a selection committee which includes so many experienced selectors.”

Ahmed, in his three-month tenure, couldn’t stop Pakistan’s dismal run in red-ball cricket as the team lost five of its six away matches - two in Bangladesh, one in the West Indies and two in England.

Babar Azam’s second stint as test captain also couldn’t turn around the test results after Pakistan sacked Shan Masood in May. Babar drew with the West Indies 1-1 but England has an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series. Pakistan has lost 10 of its last 11 away tests.

A finger injury ruled out Babar from the first test in Leeds and Agha led the side but he was dropped for the second test.

Pakistan has yet to cross the 200-run mark in four innings of the series, losing by an innings and 103 runs in Leeds and by 194 run at Lord’s.

The selectors recalled opening batter Saim Ayub, who has played eight tests, and Abdullah Fazal, who was pulled out of the England tour when he was injured in the West Indies.

The five uncapped players traveling to England included spin allrounder Arafat Minhas, fast bowler Mohammad Imran Jr., wicketkeeper Saad Baig, and fast bowling allrounders Mohammad Imran and Razaullah.

Imam’s torn calf drew criticism in Pakistan media, especially from former chief selector Mohammad Wasim. Imam suffered the low grade injury in the field on the first day at Lord’s and didn’t play in the rest of the match.

However, after Wasim’s criticism, Imam appeared in the outfield on Sunday before the fourth day’s play but was visibly limping as he shadow-batted with his left calf heavily strapped.

Rizwan’s overambitious shot selections against England, including his attempted slog against Ollie Robinson on Sunday that trapped him lbw, led to his axing.

Financial struggles lead to Jarmond firing

UCLA names Harris new athletic director

LOS ANGELES, Sept 1, (AP): UCLA fired athletic director Martin Jarmond on Monday and replaced him with Tim Harris, the former longtime president of business operations for the Los Angeles Lakers.

The shake-up was announced in a letter from Chancellor Julio Frenk to the university community. Frank described it as a “new path forward for UCLA Athletics.”

Jarmond, who had the job for six years, leaves immediately. The Bruins won three NCAA championships last season, including the first by the women’s basketball team.

Harris, 64, will have the title of CEO and athletic director and work on a pro bono basis, Frenk wrote. Harris graduated from UCLA in 1989 with a sociology degree and played goalkeeper for the men’s soccer team while in Westwood.

Harris spent over 35 years with the Lakers and left the NBA franchise in February, four months after the Buss family sold it to Los Angeles Dodgers owner Mark Walter. Harris was among Lakers governor Jeanie Buss’ inner circle who received a major fi



In this file photo, Los Angeles Lakers Chief Operating Officer Tim Harris speaks in El Segundo, Calif. (AP)

\$21.6 million for the 2025 fiscal year. The university has repeatedly bailed out the athletic department to keep it afloat.

Frenk cited the financial situation as a reason for the change.

“UCLA Athletics currently carries a significant financial debt, and its current path is not sustainable,” Frenk wrote. “Now is the moment to build a model for Athletics that protects the breadth of our program, creates new opportunities for student-athletes and coaches, and supports itself through the revenue it generates.”

Frenk mentioned the rapid transformation of college sports in recent years, propelled by name, image and likeness deals that allow athletes to earn money.

“UCLA must have an athletics model that leads - not just keeps pace,” he wrote.

Jarmond won’t be around to see the debut of his last major coaching hire. Bob Chesney arrived in early December from James Madison to reinvigorate UCLA’s moribund football program. The Bruins open the season at California on Saturday.

Best of the Rest

Mourinho calls for patience with Diomande: Real Madrid coach José Mourinho is calling for patience with Ivory Coast winger Yan Diomande, a big-money signing who is yet to shine for his new club after three substitute appearances.

The 19-year-old Diomande joined Madrid for a reported 125 million euros (\$146 million) from Leipzig earlier this month. He played again Sunday in Madrid’s 4-0 win over Malaga, but he was again unable to replicate the form he showed in the Bundesliga last season or with Ivory Coast during the World Cup. (AP)

Alcaraz off to winning start

Sabalenka overcomes Osorio

NEW YORK, Sept 1, (AP): Carlos Alcaraz was nervous. He was excited. Best of all, he was pain-free.

Alcaraz beat Roman Safiullin 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 , showing no problems with the right wrist injury that had sidelined the 23-year-old Spaniard since April.

“I don’t know how it looked from outside, but from inside, my feeling was that I was hitting normal.” Alcaraz said. “I was playing pretty normal, playing my style, and yeah, the arm, the wrist, everything felt great.”

In that case, don’t rule out a run at a repeat.

Following fellow two-time U.S. Open champion Aryna Sabalenka onto Arthur Ashe Stadium, the No. 2-seeded Alcaraz appeared more comfortable as the match went on and delivered the all-around game that has made him a fan favorite in New York. He held his hand to his ear to encourage louder cheers and pumped his fist after a pretty volley winner in the final game of the match.

Forced to miss the French Open and Wimbledon, Alcaraz decided he was good enough to come back at the U.S. Open, stepping right back into Grand Slam tennis without a warmup event.

“I had more nerves than usual, but just happy, because, for me, my goal here is to compete, to enjoy, and let’s see how my body’s going to react after the matches, after the competition again,” Alcaraz said.

“I don’t know how far I’m going to go in the tournament. I didn’t know if I was going to lose this one, if I’m going to make the second round, final. I don’t know how far I’m going to go. But what I just really want to do is enjoy every time that I’m going to walk into the court feeling the energy from the people, feel the competition.”

No man has won consecutive U.S. Open titles since Roger Federer took five in a row from 2004-08. If Alcaraz stays healthy, the seven-time Grand Slam champion may quickly become a huge favorite with top-ranked Jannik Sinner sidelined by a knee injury and No. 4 Novak Djokovic losing in the U.S. Open’s first round for the first time on Sunday.

With the tournament thrown into shock by that result - Djokovic had been 19-0 in the first round at Flushing Meadows, where he won four of his men’s record 24 Grand Slam titles - Sabalenka brought back some normalcy.

Sabalenka beat Camila Osorio 6-4, 6-4 to begin her bid to be the first player to win three straight U.S. Open championships since Serena Williams from 2012-14.

She has been to the last three U.S. Open finals, rebounding from a loss to Coco Gauff in 2023 by winning in 2024 and then topping Amanda Anisimova last year to repeat.

“I feel like this is one of my favorite stadiums,” Sabalenka told the crowd afterward. “I really experienced the best emotions here in this stadium.”

Sabalenka changed up her look from last time she played on Ashe. Her orange Nike outfit was covered by orange mesh, rather than the black mesh of last week in her mixed doubles match with Djokovic that drew some criticism on social media. Sabalenka dismissed the comments, saying all that mattered was she loved it, and turns out the reason for the change was simple.

“To be honest, I didn’t know that I have a day dress,” she said. “I thought I have a black dress with orange underneath. I figured (out) when I went to Nike that I actually have day session and night session, which is just like black and orange for the day.”

She must have certainly been happier with the level of tennis she delivered Monday, after a series of poor events coming into the U.S. Open. She was knocked out in the fourth round in both Toronto and Cincinnati, after being ousted at the same point at Wimbledon.

That has left Sabalenka needing help to retain the No. 1 ranking, even if she wins again in New York. No. 2 Elena Rybakina will pass her if she reaches the semifinals, and won’t even need to win any matches if Sabalenka fails to win the title.

Past U.S. Open champions who advanced included No. 8 Iga Swiatek and 2017 winner Sloane Stephens, before two-time champ Naomi Osaka won in two tiebreakers in a look inspired by former NBA superstar Allen Iverson. Stan Wawrinka lost to Matteo Berrettini in the final Grand Slam match before the three-time major champion from Switzerland, who won the title in 2016, retires at 41.

“I’m going to miss it for sure. I’m going to miss it big time,” Wawrinka said.

Another top-10 seed followed Djokovic out when No. 10 Arthur Fils, coming off the title in Cincinnati, was ousted by Stefanos Tsitsipas 4-6, 7-6 (3), 6-1, 6-4. Tsitsipas, who is unseeded at the U.S. Open for the first time, was asked if he can regain the form that catapulted the Greek to the No. 3 ranking and two losses to Djokovic in Grand Slam finals.

“Why not?” Tsitsipas said.

No. 8 Ben Shelton recovered from a miserable start in which he was broken three times in a 28-minute first set and beat Tallon Griekspoor 1-6, 6-1, 7-6 (3), 6-2. No. 11 Frances Tiafoe rallied to edge fellow American Martin Damm in five sets.

Other winners included No. 6 Linda Noskova, the Wimbledon champion; No. 7 seed Karolina Muchova, who lost to her fellow Czech in the final at the All-England Club, and No. 10 Anisimova. Sara Bejlek, another Czech and the No. 28 seed who stunned Sabalenka in Cincinnati, fell in three sets to Cristina Bucsa.

No. 26 seed Emma Navarro outlasted Lois Boisson 7-6 (6), 6-7 (1), 6-3 in a first-round match that began Sunday but was not completed until Monday because of rain.

An ESPN camera captured the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat in one shot. As Navarro pumped her fist toward the crowd, Boisson could be seen behind her smashing her racket repeatedly to the court.



Carlos Alcaraz, of Spain, returns the ball to Roman Safiullin, of Russia, during the first round of the U.S. Open tennis championships in New York. (AP)

Yuqi suffers first-round exit at badminton China Masters

SHENZHEN, Sept 1, (Xinhua): China’s Shi Yuqi suffered a straight-game defeat to Singapore’s Loh Kean Yew at the 2026 BWF China Masters here on Tuesday, making an early exit for the second consecutive tournament following the World Championships.

The clash between sixth seed Shi and Loh was one of the highlights of the opening day, with the pair having won the world title in 2025 and 2021 respectively. However, Shi struggled throughout the match and was beaten 21-11, 21-10 in just 30 minutes.

After suffering first-round exits at both the World Championships and China Masters, Shi admitted that he was not in his best

condition.

“I had a low fever for a week after the World Championships and felt quite unwell. I’m fully recovered now. I really gave it my all in this match,” Shi said.

Another Chinese player, Hu Zhean, put up a strong fight but was eliminated by fifth seed Anders Antonsen of Denmark, who came from behind to win 19-21, 21-11, 21-16.

In women’s singles, China’s Han Qianxi cruised past Pai Yu-po of Chinese Taipei 21-10, 21-9 and will face top seed An Se-young of South Korea in the next round. An advanced with a comfortable 21-11, 21-3 victory over Lin Hsiang-ti of Chinese Taipei.

President singles out Talal Al-Turqi

Al-Otaibi hails Kuwait shooters’ Grand Prix success



Shooters celebrate on the podium with officials.

KUNA photo



Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federation President Dajeej Al-Otaibi.

MILAN, Sept 1: Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federation President Dajeej Al-Otaibi, who also heads Kuwait’s shooting delegation, praised the strong performance of the country’s shooters at the Grand Prix in Italy.

Al-Otaibi singled out Kuwaiti shooter Talal Al-Turqi after he claimed first place in the trap shooting event at the tournament organized by the Italian Shooting Federation. The competition brought together 740 male and female shooters from several countries.

He said Kuwait’s national team successfully completed its participation in the Nando Rossi Flying Target Grand Prix in Italy, following a training camp held as part of preparations for the upcoming Asian

Games in Japan in September.

Al-Otaibi said Kuwait’s shooters delivered an impressive showing, with Al-Turqi’s victory highlighting their quality and competitiveness. The Kuwaiti shooter was honored by International Shooting Federation President Senator Luciano and Italian firearms manufacturer Beretta.

The achievement, Al-Otaibi added, underlined the growing stature and capabilities of Kuwaiti shooters on the international stage.

He also expressed his appreciation to Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma and Public Authority for Youth and Sports Director General Bashar Abdullah for their continued support of Kuwaiti shooting.

Part of a \$460 million summer sell-off

PSG cashes in again as Ibrahim Mbaye joins Aston Villa

PARIS, Sept 1, (AP): Two-time European champion Paris Saint-Germain sold yet another player on transfer deadline day, with Ibrahim Mbaye joining Aston Villa as the French club continues its metamorphosis from big spender to big earner.

The Senegal forward joined on a permanent transfer, both clubs said.

PSG has been the European club generating the highest transfer revenues from departures this summer, with a total of more than 400 million euros (\$464 million), ahead of Premier League clubs Aston Villa and Manchester City.

PSG parted ways with a big name - France forward Bradley Barcola - in the biggest signing of the summer transfer window, but has only sold players who were used in a substitute role by coach Luis Enrique, a deliberate strategy of the club.

The 18-year-old Mbaye, a product of PSG youth academy, has 15 caps with Senegal and became the youngest African player to score at the World Cup this summer in a 3-1 defeat against France. Two years ago, he also was the youngest PSG player to make his Ligue 1 debut, aged just 16 years, six months and 23 days.

Mbaye won eight trophies with PSG, including



In this file photo, PSG’s Ibrahim Mbaye celebrates at Parc des Princes stadium in Paris, May 31, 2026, after the team won the Champions League final against Arsenal in Budapest. (AP)

two Champions League titles, two European Super Cups and two French League titles.

In addition to the 145 million euros (\$166 million) earned with the Barcola deal, PSG sold Mbaye in a transfer package valued up to 60 million euros (\$69 million). PSG also offloaded de-

fender Noham Kamara, South Korea midfielder Lee Kang-In, striker Randal Kolo Muani and Portugal forward Gonçalo Ramos.

After more than a decade during which owners spent lavishly to attract big names such as Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Lionel Messi and Neymar, PSG has changed its approach since the arrival of coach Luis Enrique. After the departure of Kylian Mbappe to Real Madrid in 2024, he asked for the recruitment of lesser known but excellent players across the squad to create competition and have second options at every position.

The strategy paid off, with successive Champions League titles. This summer, PSG earned 400 million euros (\$464 million) in player sales while recruiting Ferran Torres, Maghnes Aklouché, Mika Godts, Lucas, Digne and Alessandro Longoni for under 210 million euros (\$243 million), generating close to 200 million (\$232 million) in capital gains.

PSG said in October last year that it closed the 2024-25 season with record revenues of 837 million euros (\$970 million) following its first Champions League title. Since 2011, the year that Qatar Sports Investments took over at PSG, the club’s turnover has increased ninefold.

Salah continues impressive scoring run as Trabzonspor falls to Amed



Mohamed Salah celebrates after scoring against Amed.

ISTANBUL, Sept 1: Mohamed Salah continued his impressive scoring run for Trabzonspor in the Turkish league, but his latest goal could not prevent his side from suffering a shock 2-1 defeat to Amed.

The Egyptian forward gave Trabzonspor an early lead in the 11th minute, following his brace in the previous league game against Istanbul Basaksehir.

Trabzonspor appeared on course for victory before Yira Collins Sarr leveled the score in the fifth minute of first-half stoppage time.

Amed completed the comeback in the 90th minute when Gift Orban found the net to secure all three points for the home side.

Best of the Rest

Brazil police search Vasco striker’s home: Brazilian police searched the home of a footballer of top-flight club Vasco da Gama in connection with a drugs and arms trafficking investigation, officials said Monday. A second division player is also under investigation.

The 30-year-old David Corrêa, one of the team’s key players and known by fans as DVD, left the club’s training ground in Rio de Janeiro without commenting on the case.

“These investigations seek to gather elements to clear up crimes and dismantle the criminal structure under investigation,” Espirito Santo police said in a statement. (AP)

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Bahraini forward Mohammed Marhoon celebrates his goal.

Sports

Marhoon stars as Kuwait Club snatches late win over Qadsia



Kuwait Club and Qadsia players vie for the ball during the Zain Premier League match.

KUNA photo

Sulaibikhat holds Al-Shabab to draw with 10 men

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 1: Defending champion Kuwait Club secured its first victory of the Zain Premier League season after defeating Qadsia 1-0 in the headline clash of the second round at Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium.

Bahraini forward Mohammed Marhoon scored the only goal of the match in the final minute to give Kuwait Club all three points.

The victory lifted Kuwait's tally to four points, while Qadsia remained on three.

The two sides shared control of the match, with Qadsia imposing its style in the first half and creating several chances, but failing to find the net. Kuwait Club took control after the break

and eventually got its reward after sustained pressure, beating Qadsia goalkeeper Hamid Al-Qallaf, who produced an excellent performance despite the defeat.

Kuwait Club coach Firas Al-Khatib described the victory as an "important win," particularly because it came against a strong opponent following his side's 1-1 draw with Al-Arabi in the opening round.

"Taking four points against Qadsia and Al-Arabi is excellent," he said, stressing that beating the Yellow side was far from easy.

He added that the team's disciplined organization, particularly in the second half, played a key role in securing the important victory, while expressing hope that Kuwait Club would continue to improve in the coming period.

Al-Khatib also highlighted the importance of Saturday's third-round meeting with Al-Jahra.

"This season is not easy. Every point is impor-

tant for the team. Raising our level of concentration is essential as we continue our pursuit of retaining the title," he said.

"Every match is a final. The league is divided into two stages unlike previous seasons, so collecting points is essential to maintaining our progress toward another title," he added.

He said the team's focus would immediately turn to Al-Jahra, who produced an impressive performance in the latest round and defeated Al-Arabi.

Sulaibikhat earned a point after holding Al-Shabab to a 1-1 draw in a match played two days ago at Abdullah Al-Khalifa Stadium.

Al-Shabab took the lead through Omar Al-Habeiter in the sixth minute of first-half stoppage time, but Sulaibikhat equalized through Mubarak Saeed in the 70th minute.

Sulaibikhat played the second half with 10 men after Ali Taher was sent off for receiving a second yellow card.

Kuwait Olympic Committee briefs delegation ahead of Asian Games

TOKYO, Sept 1: The Kuwait Olympic Committee held an orientation meeting two days ago for representatives of sports federations and committees, as well as athletes preparing to compete at the 20th Asian Games, Aichi-Nagoya 2026, in Japan from September 19 to October 4.

Kuwait Olympic Committee Director General, retired Major General Mohammed Saeed Al-Khalfan, attended the meeting and highlighted the importance of Kuwait's participation in the major continental sporting event.

Al-Khalfan urged federations, committees and athletes to give their best, work hard and represent Kuwait in an honorable manner. He also called on them to aim for strong results, podium finishes and a good medal haul.

The meeting addressed key organi-



The Kuwait Olympic Committee logo.

zational and technical matters related to Kuwait's participation, along with procedures and guidelines designed to help ensure the smooth operation of the Kuwaiti delegation throughout the Games.

Oman defeats Nepal

Kuwait qualifies for the second Asian Cup qualifying window despite loss to Bahrain

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

DUBAI, Sept 1: Kuwait's basketball team booked its place in the second window of the qualifiers, scheduled for November, after being drawn in Group E alongside Bahrain, the UAE, Palestine, Kazakhstan and Sri Lanka. The top four teams in the group will advance to the third qualifying window.

Kuwait ended its campaign in the first Asian Cup qualifying window with a 67-95 defeat to Bahrain at Shabab Al Ahli Club Hall in Dubai. In the other match, Oman defeated Nepal 76-62.

Bahrain finished top of the standings with eight points from four wins, followed by the UAE on seven points. Kuwait collected six points, while Oman and Nepal finished with five and four points, respectively.

Despite the defeat, Kuwait coach Vassilios Bratsiakos expressed pride in his players and praised their efforts throughout the competition.

"I congratulate my players for what they delivered today and for the hard work they put in throughout the competition," Bratsiakos said at the post-match press conference.

"We dealt with injuries and the



Players fighting for the rebound during Kuwait-Bahrain match.

absence of key players, but despite those difficulties, we produced strong performances and managed to qualify for the next window of the qualifiers," he added.

Kuwait and Bahrain started the game strongly, with little separating the two sides in the opening period. Bahrain, however, gradually took control from the second quarter onward, tightening its grip on the game and securing a convincing 95-67 victory for its fourth straight win of the campaign.

Best of the Rest

Scott McTominay to have surgery: Napoli midfielder Scott McTominay will undergo a surgical procedure to treat an irregular heartbeat, the Serie A club announced Tuesday.

Napoli added that McTominay will be out until after the season's first international break, meaning he won't play again until October.

"Following the development of a minor, benign arrhythmia, Scott McTominay over the coming days will undergo an operation a PFA (pulsed field ablation)," Napoli said.

A PFA is a minimally invasive technique used to treat heart arrhythmias.

The 29-year-old McTominay was Serie A's MVP when he helped Napoli win the title in 2025. He played for Scotland at this year's World Cup.

McTominay exited during the second half of Napoli's 2-1 loss to Como on Sunday. (AP)

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Moreno hired as interim South Korea coach: Robert Moreno has been appointed as South Korea's interim head coach after a turbulent summer for the men's national team.

The Korea Football Association on Tuesday said Moreno, a former Spain coach, will take charge for six matches across the September and November international windows and indicated the contract could be extended through the 2027 Asian Cup in January.

"Moreno impressed us with his thorough understanding of Korean football and his ability to propose a wide range of tactical alternatives," KFA National Teams Committee chief Hyun Young-min said. "We hope he and his new staff will help improve our national team's performance."

Moreno guided Spain in 2019, and has since managed AS Monaco, Granada and, most recently, Russian club Sochi, where his tenure ended in August of last year.

The KFA said one of Moreno's key tasks is to "change the mood of the national team." The head coach role has been vacant since Hong Myung-bo quit in late June following South Korea's group-stage exit at the 2026 World Cup.

Public anger over Hong's 2024 appointment intensified over the summer, leading both Hong and then-KFA president Chung Mong-gyu to step down. Both were later questioned at a parliamentary hearing in July. (AP)

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Chilufya has two goals in Angel City win: Prisca Chilufya scored a pair of goals as Angel City snapped a six-game winless streak with a 5-2 win over the Boston Legacy at Gillette Stadium on Monday night.

The match featured four goals in the first 18 minutes. Ally Sentnor scored for Angel City (8-8-5) in the fifth minute with a hard strike from just outside the box.

Some three minutes later, Sammy Smith added her own long strike for the Legacy that bounced to the far post out of reach of goalkeeper Angelina Anderson.

Angel City regained the lead with Chilufya's first goal that got a slight deflection before getting past goalkeeper Laurel Ivory in the 14th minute.

Sveindís Jónsdóttir added a goal from a tight angle that went through Ivory's legs in the 18th. It was her team-leading seventh goals this season. (AP)

Malen the main man in Italy as Roma scores four once more

Arsenal edges Villa as Barca runs riot against Rayo

LONDON, Sept 1, (AP): Arsenal beat Aston Villa 1-0 away from home to maintain its winning start to the Premier League while Barcelona and Roma preserved their perfect records in Spain and Italy with convincing wins.

Osasuna beat Getafe 1-0 to continue its unbeaten start in La Liga, while Atalanta had to wait until the final minute to get the goal that beat Bologna in Serie A.

Lamine Yamal and Raphinha both scored a brace and English winger Anthony Gordon grabbed two assists as Barcelona beat Rayo Vallecano 5-2 to record its 21st consecutive home victory.

Rayo was looking for its first win of the season and it took an unexpected lead in the 12th minute when Sergio Camello hammered home a cutback from Alvaro Garcia on the left.

Barcelona, however, bounced back almost immediately and it was 2-1 up before the first period was even halfway over.

Raphinha equalized with a well-taken goal in the 18th and Lamine Yamal put them ahead 90 seconds later with a characteristic move, cutting in from the right and unleashing a powerful left-foot shot into the roof of the net.

Hansi Flick's men got a third after halftime when Florian Lejeune

turned Gordon's cutback into his own net. Although the excellent Camello cut the deficit with a solid header, Raphinha soon made it 4-2 and Yamal rounded off the scoring with a low shot from just outside the box a minute from time.

The win moved Barcelona above Real Madrid at the top of the league on goal difference. Rayo sat third from bottom.



Barcelona's Anthony Gordon tries a shot during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Barcelona and Rayo Vallecano in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

In Serie A, Donyell Malen took his season tally to five in two games as Roma went to Lecce and won 4-0.

Malen, who scored a hat trick in Roma's opening win over Fiorentina, had Roma 2-0 up midway through the first half, and Matias Soule added a third before halftime. Rodrigo Mora completed the scoring 20 minutes into the second half as Roma established its title credentials

early.

The result, a second consecutive 4-0 win for the capital club, lifted Roma to the top of Serie A after two games.

Later, Atalanta sneaked past Bologna thanks to a stoppage time goal from Lazar Samardzic.

Neither side convinced in an ordinary encounter and it wasn't until stoppage time that Samardzic's long-range effort squirmed in past the Bologna goalkeeper.

The result was harsh on Bologna and left it pointless after two games. Atalanta moved into the top five, one of six clubs with maximum points.

In England, reigning champion Arsenal recorded a familiar 1-0 win as Bukayo Saka's 59th minute goal secured all three points at Aston Villa.

Villa is suffering after a string of high-profile departures in recent weeks, and struggled to make an impact. It ended a second game in a row without recording a shot on target.

Unai Emery's side was pointless after two games, while counterpart Mike Arteta celebrated his 250th Premier League match in the dug-out for Arsenal. Arteta was content to see his side become one of only four English teams to take maximum points from their first two games.