



DEGREE CONDITION FOR EXPAT FAMILY VISA SCRAPPED

Filipino skilled worker hiring resumes

Philippines implements immediate circular for recruitment to Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) in the Philippines recently issued a circular on the resumption of the recruitment of Filipino professional and skilled workers bound for Kuwait.

The Arab Times obtained a copy of Memorandum Circular No. 01 Series of 2024 on the accreditation mechanism, required documents, processing of contracts, and ways of protecting the workers.

According to the circular, "the existing procedures under Part III Rule 1 of the 2023 DMW Rules and Regulations Governing the Recruitment and Employment of Landbased Overseas Filipino Workers for the verification of accreditation documents, approval and revalidation of job orders of foreign employers/principal, foreign recruitment agency (FRA) and onsite

accreditation outlined under Memorandum Circular No. 16, Series of 2022 are hereby implemented."

The circular enumerated the necessary documents for "the processing and issuance of Overseas Employment Clearance (OECs)" for the abovementioned workers as follows:

1. Accreditation Certificate with approved job order issued by the Migrant Workers Office (MWO) in Kuwait as registered by the Landbased Accreditation Bureau (LAB) in the system;
2. Master employment contract duly verified by the MWO-Kuwait;
3. Copies of the worker's employment documents such as valid passport, employment visa or work permit, certificate of medical fitness, and certificate of attendance to the required employment orientation briefing.

On the processing of contracts, the circular explained that "the qualified Licensed Recruitment Agency (LRA) will be allowed to process the documents of their workers through the existing Online Processing System for Landbased professional and skilled workers and pay the fees for the issuance of the OEC."

The circular includes a stipulation on protecting the workers; indicating that employers who wish to hire professional and skilled workers from the Philippines should have no welfare cases record and this must be certified by the MWO in Kuwait.

It also stipulates the formation of a Joint Technical Working Group, whose members are from the concerned authorities in Kuwait and the Philippines. The group will "monitor, discuss and address issues and concerns" of both the employers and employees.

The DMW affirmed that this circular is effective immediately, adding that it will issue another set of guidelines for the resumption of the recruitment of domestic workers from the Philippines. In other news, Al-Seyassah daily reported that the Ministry of Interior on Monday decided to cancel the university degree condition for expatriates to apply for a family visa.

Sources explained that based on the decision, expatriates are allowed to bring their wives and children under the age of 14 to the country without the condition of having a university degree. Last January, the ministry issued a directive for the residency affairs departments in various governorates to start receiving family visa applications according to new controls and conditions as per the instruction of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior and Defense Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah.

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Opinion

Nationalize jobs and make them rewarding

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

THE nationalization of jobs is a crucial matter for any country, due to which it must work on achieving this goal.

Article 26 of the Kuwaiti Constitution stipulates that, "(1) Public office is a national service entrusted to those who hold it. Public officials, in the exercise of their duties, shall aim at the public interest. (2) Foreigners may not hold public offices except in the cases specified by law."

Unfortunately, this article has been suspended for decades due to chaotic practices in employing non-Kuwaitis. If a non-citizen is needed for a task, it is considered temporary rather than permanent.

Therefore, the government must address this issue by first reviewing the employment structure in the public sector and aligning it with the current needs of the labor market. Secondly, it should focus on increasing citizens' involvement in the private sector, rather than settling for arbitrary placements in sectors where some employees enjoy greater benefits than others, such as the oil sector where there is an oversupply.

On the other hand, there is a false slogan that has become common among Kuwaitis - "A Kuwaiti does not work in this or that profession, and he dislikes it", but the truth is otherwise.

The brief period of the invasion had revealed that citizens are capable of working in various professions. We saw citizens working as bakers, barbers, mechanics, and in other occupations during that time.

This opportunity has not been exploited over the past three decades. What is worse is that the use of non-Kuwaitis has expanded to the point where the government employment apparatus is saturated with expatriates.

Is it reasonable that a small country with few citizens, such as Kuwait with 1.518 million citizens, needs 2.858 million expatriate workers to serve them?

While successive governments promoted Kuwaitization, they undermined it by allowing recruitment agencies to place non-Kuwaiti employees who had resigned from the public sector into the positions they were occupying, thereby increasing the financial costs.

In this regard, I remember an event in the Sultanate of Oman, which was attended by the late Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'eed. During the horse parade, some of the horses had defecated. A Filipino worker emerged to clean it, but as soon as the Sultan saw him, he asked an aide, "Why was the worker not Omani?"

The official replied that the worker's salary is approximately USD 300, and a citizen will not work in this profession, as he expects a salary of about USD 1,000. He therefore mandated that Omanis should receive competitive salaries across all professions.

This is why today you see national workers throughout Oman. There are Omanis working as taxi drivers, in hotels and other such professions.

Also in Bahrain, citizens work in all professions, and there is nothing wrong with honorable work.

In Saudi Arabia, following the Saudization decision, the percentage of Saudis working in all professions increased to about 70 percent. Women also started working in many professions. There are even taxi drivers. The standard of living of Saudis has thus improved.

Kuwait's problem is multi-faceted. First is the multiplicity of job cadres in the public sector. Second, there is no vision for the localization of professions and jobs. Thirdly, there are no incentives for citizens to work in various public and private sectors. Fourth is the indiscriminate support for national workers and lack of oversight. Fifth is the government's lack of seriousness in all of this.

Because of all this, the state will continue to suffer. If the current government is serious about addressing the crisis of depletion of public reserves, it must look into these problems and develop serious solutions to them.

The nationalization of jobs and professions is the first step towards independence and strength for any country.

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The Arab Times had the distinct honor of speaking with His Excellency Miguel Moro Aguilar, the outgoing Spanish Ambassador to the State of Kuwait. Over the past four years, His Excellency has played a pivotal role in strengthening bilateral relations between Spain and Kuwait, fostering economic, cultural, educational, social and diplomatic ties. - See Page 11



KUNA photo

KRCS volunteers carry food parcels to the displaced Palestinians in Khan Yunis' Al-Mawasi neighborhood, southern Gaza.

KRCS sends urgent relief to displaced Gazans

Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) started on Monday its urgent relief aid project implementation to Palestinians by distributing necessities to thousands of displaced people in Khan Yunis' Al-Mawasi neighborhood, southern Gaza.

Director General of Wafaa Capacity Building and Microfinance, the project's

executing body, Muhaisen Al-Atawna said to KUNA, that the project comes in light of Israel's ongoing war on Gaza since October.

Al-Atawna added the project supports and provides help to the displaced and refugee camps that were recently targeted by the occupation

forces, noting that food and bread is included as there is no gas for cooking, as well as medical and personal hygiene supplies.

Kuwait Red Crescent Society has implemented many relief and medical aid projects to support Palestinians in need. (KUNA)

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KUNA photo

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, chairs the third permanent committee meeting to follow up on the development plan and the government's work program.

Deputy FM, panel discuss development plan

Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired on Monday the third meeting of the permanent committee tasked with following up on the development plan and the government's work program.

The meeting discussions focused on projects, programs, and plans overseen by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and ways to overcome any obstacles that may hinder their implementation. (KUNA)

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MEW, STC smart meter deal to facilitate collection of bills

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has signed a contract with STC for the supply of 500,000 smart electricity meters.

Sources from the ministry said that the supply contracts will enable the Customer Affairs Sector at the ministry to collect payments for outstanding electricity bills in a more precise manner compared to the past, when such payments were calculated through a manual accounting method and mechanical meters that do not have any electronic specifications.

Sources explained that the ministry will cover all types of housing, including private, industrial, commercial and investment; indicating this is a qualitative leap towards the digital transformation that the government has been keen on achieving.

Sources confirmed that the meters' specifications will enable customers to control electricity consumption in real time; especially during the summer period, which contributes to supporting rationalization efforts.

In a related development, sources revealed that the ministry recently formed a committee whose members are from the concerned government agencies, including Kuwait University and the Public Authority for Applied Education and

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced on Monday the allocation of an issuance of bonds and tawarruq amounting to KD 240 million (about USD 792 million).

The CBK said in a statement to KUNA that the issuance period is three months with a return rate of 4.375 percent. (KUNA)

MUWASI, Gaza Strip: Hamas said Sunday that Gaza cease-fire talks were ongoing and the group's military commander was in good health, a day after the Israeli military targeted Mohammed Deif with a massive airstrike that local health officials said killed at least 90 people, including children.

Deif's condition was still unclear after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Saturday night "there still isn't absolute certainty" he was killed. Army chief Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi told journalists Israel attacked a compound where Deif "was hiding" but added: "It's still too early to summarize the results of the attack, which Hamas is trying to hide." (AP)

Financial stability rests on 3 key axes: Dr Al-Mudhaf

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf, Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs, said achieving financial sustainability for Kuwait hinges on three fundamental axes, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

These include, rationalizing government spending to control the growth of the government budget, aiming to stabilize spending at 5.24 billion dinars by 2027/2028; diversifying government income sources to reduce reliance on oil revenues by doubling non-oil revenues in the general budget to 4 billion dinars and enhancing government financial performance and public finance management to improve budget preparation and address waste, requiring full cooperation from government agencies.

During his speech at the inauguration of the first General Budget Forum 2024, organized by the Ministry of Finance at Jaber Al-Thaqeef Center, Dr. Al-Mudhaf underscored the state's ambition to increase non-oil revenues in the general budget from 4 percent to 10 percent of the GDP by 2030.

He highlighted that Kuwait's non-oil revenue percentage is significantly lower compared to Gulf countries, where Saudi Arabia stands at 10 percent and the UAE at 15 percent.

Dr. Al-Mudhaf also pointed out that the salary item in the general budget has been steadily increasing, with a 40 percent rise in recent years to reach 8.14 billion dinars in the 2024 budget, up

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Authority reaffirms commitment to enhancing and developing young people's competencies

Kuwait marks 'Int'l Youth Skills Day' with focus on empowerment

CAPT postpones bid submission date for 18 road repair projects

New deadline set for July 28

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Central Agency for Public Tenders has announced the postponement of the bid submission date for the '18' road repair projects, originally scheduled for Sunday, July 14, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The new deadline for submitting bids has been set for Sunday, July 28. This delay provides additional time for companies competing for these projects to finalize their proposals.

According to sources from the Ministry of Public Works, the road repair practices encompass extensive maintenance across the country's six governorates.

This includes both fundamental maintenance of road works within the first and second ranges, and comprehensive infrastructure services under the PART oversight.

These services encompass sewage, rainwater drainage, telephone networks, lighting installations, and landscaping along designated roadways.

Among the notable projects slated for maintenance are:

- Ring Road
- Intersection improvements for the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Ring Roads
- Maintenance of the Sixth and Seventh Ring Roads
- Upgrades to King Fahd Road, Fahaheel Road, Subbiya, Abdali, Jahra Roads, and Al Salmi Road
- Extension Approvals for Maintenance Contracts

In a related development, CAPT has granted extensions for existing maintenance contracts:

Farwaniya Governorate -- Approval for a second extension of urgent, emergency, and miscellaneous road maintenance with a contracted company for 365 days, valued at 625 thousand dinars.

Farwaniya and Jahra Governorates -- Approval for the first extension of a contract for imaging and general maintenance of the rain sewer network, worth 750 thousand dinars, covering a period of 180 days.

These extensions aim to ensure continuity in essential road maintenance services while new bids for comprehensive road repairs are processed.

The agency will oversee the study and evaluation of submitted bids over the next 30 days in adherence to the Tenders Law before making final decisions.

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Nasser Al-Sheikh, Acting Director General of the General Youth Authority, reaffirmed the Authority's commitment to enhancing and developing youth skills as its foremost priority, reports Al-Jarida daily.

On the occasion of International Youth Skills Day, celebrated globally under the theme 'Youth Skills for Peace and Development', Al-Sheikh highlighted the Authority's initiatives aimed at equipping young people with essential tools to achieve their aspirations and contribute effectively to society.

Commitment

In his statement, Al-Sheikh emphasized the Authority's dedication to providing innovative training programs and comprehensive development initiatives. These efforts are designed to foster an environment conducive to youth development and propel societal progress.

Among the prominent projects and programs initiated by the General Youth Authority to nurture youth skills are:

Valley of Youth Project -- Offering workshops and courses in fields such as science, scientific research, technology, and technical software

Work Makers Project -- Focuses on qualifying and training recent graduates to enhance their employability in the labor market

Professional Entrepreneur Program -- Supports young entrepreneurs in transforming their ideas into small and medium-sized projects

Youth Creativity League Project -- Enhances skills in various disciplines including drawing, robotics, mathematics, debates, and Quranic studies

Al-Sheikh underscored the importance of providing appropriate education and training opportunities for young people. These initiatives aim not only to develop their skills but also to empower them to actively participate in national development efforts.

As Kuwait and the world commemorate International Youth Skills Day, the General Youth Authority continues to play a pivotal role in preparing the youth for leadership roles and fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

By investing in youth skills development, Kuwait aims to build a brighter future where young people are empowered agents of positive change in their communities.



Al-Sheikh



Sheikh Ahmed Al-Mishaal during visit to the Kuwait Cancer Center.

Govt performance monitoring agency inspects Kuwait Cancer Center project

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Sheikh Ahmed Al-Mishaal, head of the Government Performance Monitoring Agency, conducted an inspection of the Kuwait Cancer Center project within the Al-Sabah health district, reports Al-Rai daily.

He affirmed the agency's commitment to leveraging all available resources to support cancer patients and expressed readiness to overcome any challenges or delays affecting the project.

During his visit, Sheikh Al-

Mishaal and his delegation were welcomed by Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi, the Minister of Health, and a team of engineers overseeing the project.

They conducted a thorough inspection as part of the agency's regular field visits to monitor government projects.

Emphasizing the urgency of completing the project without delays, Sheikh Ahmed Al-Mishaal underscored the vital importance of the Cancer Center in providing critical medical services.



Al-Kandari honoring Engineer Fatima Hayat.

Al-Kandari commits to state policies

MoSA prioritizes energy efficiency

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Dr. Jassim Al-Kandari, Acting Assistant Undersecretary for the Social Welfare Sector at the Ministry of Social Affairs, emphasized the ministry's commitment to implementing state policies aimed at rationalizing electricity consumption, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He highlighted the importance of partnerships with other government sectors to benefit the nation and citizens, especially in terms of sustainability and saving public funds.

Al-Kandari expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Electricity and Water for their cooperation in promoting the culture of energy conservation.

Jahra governor commends education sector's support

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi received the Director General of Jahra Educational District, Jassim Bu Hamad, the Director of Projects Department at the Ministry of Education, Muhammad Fahhad, and the Director of Maintenance Engineering at Jahra Educational District, Salem Al-Sahou, at the governorate's general office, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The governor praised the support and follow-up of the education sector within the governorate and its effective contributions in overcoming obstacles and facilitating various procedures with ministries, agencies, and state institutions.

He expressed his satisfaction with the efforts made by the educational district administration in operating and opening seven schools in Mutlaa residential city for the new year.

He also reviewed the closed schools in all areas of the governorate and is working towards rehabilitating them.



Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi with government officials at the governorate's general office.

AASU completes sorting for students

KU commences application process for admission for academic year 2024/2025

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Kuwait University has announced the commencement of the application process for admission to the first semester of the academic year 2024/2025, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The application period runs from today until the July 25. Interested candidates can submit their applications through the university's website at <https://portal.ku.edu.kw/admission>

Eligible applicants include Kuwaiti students, children of Kuwaiti women, Gulf nationals, and illegal residents who are not children of Kuwaiti women.

Applicants must have graduated from Kuwaiti schools under various educational systems, including the unified system, the religious institute, the American high school, and the English high school (for graduates of Kuwait schools only).

For those eligible categories who prefer to submit their applications in person, they are required to visit the admission and registration hall at Sabah Al-Salem University City (Shadadiyah) from July 18 to 25.

This announcement underscores the beginning of the admission process and provides clear guidelines for interested candidates regarding eligibility and application procedures.

Meanwhile, Dean of Admissions and Registration at Abdullah Al Salem University, Dr. Ahmed Al-Mutawa, announced the completion of sorting admission applications for Kuwaiti students and children of Kuwaiti

PAFN 'extends' application period for school canteens

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) has decided to extend the period specified for companies to apply for the running of school canteens in line with regulations issued regarding school canteens and the relevant ministerial Decision No. 5/2021, reports Al-Shahed daily.

The applications are to be submitted to PAFN either directly in its headquarters located in Sabah Al-Salem or online via its official website from Sunday, July 14 to Thursday, July 25.

women who graduated from high school and meet the admission requirements for all colleges at the university.

Notifications have been sent to the accepted students via their email. He added that the application portal is open today and tomorrow through the electronic registration system on the university's website.

The competition for seats in all colleges was based on the differential average and secondary school percentage without discrimination between male and female applicants.



JULY

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World News Roundup

Europe

Estonia PM resigns

King Charles to visit Australia and Samoa

LONDON, July 15, (AP) King Charles III is preparing to visit Australia and Samoa in October, an itinerary that will span 12 time zones and test the monarch's stamina as he recovers from cancer treatment.

The trip, announced on Sunday by Buckingham Palace, marks a watershed moment for the 75-year-old king, who has been slowly returning to public duties after taking a break following his cancer diagnosis in early February.

The visit to Australia will be a critical moment for the king as he tries to shore up support for the monarchy at home and abroad. The trip will mark the first time since he ascended the throne that Charles will visit one of the 14 countries outside the United Kingdom where the British monarch remains head of state.



Charles

While he will undoubtedly be welcomed by fans waving the flag and singing, Charles is also likely to hear anti-monarchy voices in a country where 45% of voters in a 1999 referendum supported creating an Australian republic.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's Labor Party supports ditching the monarchy, but the government says it isn't a priority and there is no timeline for another referendum.

Albanese said he and Governor-General Sam Mostyn, the monarch's representative in Australia, would welcome Charles and Queen Camilla. Albanese noted Charles had already made 15 official visits to Australia, the most recent in 2018.

The palace provided few details of the tour. Charles and Camilla will visit the Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales as well as making a more formal state visit to Samoa, where the king will appear at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, the palace said.

Man charged with murder: A 34-year-old man was charged Monday with murdering two men whose remains were found in two suitcases in southwest England.

London's Metropolitan Police said Yostin Andres Mosquera has been charged with murdering Albert Alfonso, 61, and Paul Longworth, 71. He is due to appear in a London court later Monday.

Police said the victims had previously been in a relationship and still lived together, and that the suspect had been staying with them at their west London apartment.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Andy Valentine said "the evidence gathered so far does not suggest there was a homophobic motive" to the killings.

"I hope it will be of some reassurance that whilst enquiries are still ongoing and the investigation is at a relatively early stage, we are not currently looking for anyone else in connection with the two murders," Valentine said.

The suspect was arrested at a train station in Bristol on Saturday, three days after the grisly discovery of body parts in suitcases on the city's Clifton Suspension Bridge.

Police officers arrived at the iconic bridge at around midnight Wednesday, 10 minutes after receiving reports of a man behaving strangely.

Estonia PM Kallas resigns: Estonia's Prime Minister Kaja Kallas has stepped down as the leader of the Baltic country to become the foreign policy chief of the European Union later this year.

Kallas, Estonia's first female prime minister, handed in her formal resignation to President Alar Karis during a brief meeting at the Presidential Palace in the capital, Tallinn, on Monday. Estonia under Kallas, 47, has been one of Europe's most vocal backers of Ukraine following the full-scale Russian invasion in February 2022.

Summing up Kallas' 3 1/2 years at the helm of the nation of 1.3 million, Karis said in a statement that "it has been a time full of crises, the milestones (such as) the coronavirus, the economic recession and the war in Europe, when Russia destroyed our previous security picture with its aggression in Ukraine".

The prime minister's move automatically triggered the resignation of Kallas' three-party Cabinet, made up of her center-right Reform Party, the Social Democratic Party and the liberal Estonia 200 party. It will continue as a caretaker government until the new Cabinet has been sworn in, most likely the end of July or early August.

Germany shuts one of its rail routes: One of the busiest railway lines in Germany, the 70-kilometer (45-mile) stretch between Frankfurt and Mannheim, is closing for five months starting Monday as the country launches an effort to get its notoriously disruption-prone network into shape.

State-owned railway operator Deutsche Bahn is closing the route until Dec. 14 and plans a full overhaul of the tracks, stations and other infrastructure. More than 300 trains per day use the stretch, part of a main north-south route that connects Hamburg and Cologne with Stuttgart and Basel, Switzerland, and often pick up delays that have knock-on effects elsewhere on the network.

During the closure, all regional trains on the route will be replaced by buses, while long-distance services will be diverted via slower routes.

The 1.3 billion euro (\$1.4 billion) overhaul is supposed to kick off a broader program to modernize 40 stretches of railway by 2030 and improve the reliability of a network that often fails to impress. Over the past month, it frustrated soccer fans at the German-hosted European Championship, which ended Sunday.

On Friday, Deutsche Bahn said its punctuality during the tournament was "mixed," adding that it got "the maximum out of the railway system, but the possibilities were limited by outdated and overloaded infrastructure."



US President Joe Biden addresses the nation from the Oval Office of the White House in Washington on July 14, about the assassination attempt on Republican presidential candidate former president Donald Trump at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania. (AP)

Politics

Trump calls for unity after attack

Reject political violence, says Biden

WASHINGTON, July 15, (AP) US President Joe Biden on Sunday urged Americans to reject political violence and recommit themselves to resolving their differences peacefully, saying the upcoming presidential election will be a "time of testing" in the aftermath of the attempted assassination of former President Donald Trump.

In a prime-time national address from the Oval Office, Biden said political passions can run high but "we must never descend into violence." The president said his party and the Republicans can compete forcefully over different policy visions - but must do it in a civil fashion.

"All of us now face a time of testing as the election approaches," Biden said. "There is no place in America for this kind of violence - for any violence. Ever. Period. No exception. We can't allow this violence to be normalized."

Biden spoke for six minutes in his third address to the nation since Saturday evening's attack by a shooter that left Trump with a bloodied ear, killed one rallygoer and seriously injured two others. His warning came hours after FBI Deputy Director Paul Abbate said agents have seen increasingly violent rhetoric online since the attack at the Trump rally.



Estonia's Prime Minister Kaja Kallas and her husband Arvo Hallie arrive at an event commemorating the 75th anniversary of NATO at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium at the NATO summit in Washington on July 9. Kallas has stepped down on July 15 as the leader of the Baltic country to become the foreign policy chief of the European Union later this year. (AP)



Healey



Abbott

America

Abbott demands answers: With around 270,000 homes and businesses still without power in the Houston area almost a week after Hurricane Beryl hit Texas, Gov. Greg Abbott on Sunday said he's demanding an investigation into the response of the utility that serves the area as well as answers about its preparations for upcoming storms.

"Power companies along the Gulf Coast must be prepared to deal with hurricanes, to state the obvious," Abbott said at his first news conference about Beryl since returning to the state from an economic development trip to Asia.

While CenterPoint Energy has restored power to about 2 million customers since the storm hit on July 8, the slow pace of recovery has put the utility, which provides electricity to the nation's fourth-largest city, under mounting scrutiny over whether it was sufficiently prepared for the storm that left people without air conditioning in the searing summer heat.

Abbott said he was sending a letter to the Public Utility Commission of Texas requiring it to investigate why restoration has taken so long and what must be done to fix it. In the Houston area, Beryl toppled transmission lines, uprooted trees and snapped branches that crashed into power lines.

With months of hurricane season left, Abbott said he's giving CenterPoint until the end of the month to specify what it'll be doing to reduce or eliminate power outages in the event of another storm. He said that will include the company providing detailed plans to remove vegetation that still threatens power lines.

Abbott also said that CenterPoint didn't have "an adequate number of workers pre-staged" before the storm hit. (AP)

Bid to replace bridges: Massachusetts is making headway on putting together the funding needed to replace two aging bridges that connect Cape Cod to the rest of the state.

Gov. Maura Healey announced Friday that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have secured nearly \$1 billion in additional federal dollars for the construction of the replacement spans over the Cape Cod Canal. The funding was included in a bipartisan bridge investment program.

a balkanized media environment and exploited by American enemies. "Here in America we need to get out of our silos, where we only listen to those with whom we agree, where misinformation is rampant, where foreign actors fan the flames of our division to shape the outcomes consistent with their interests, not ours," Biden said. Earlier Sunday, Biden was briefed in the White House Situation Room and condemned the attempted assassination of Trump as "contrary to everything we stand for as a nation." He said he was ordering an independent security review of how such an attack could have happened.

The president said he has also directed the US Secret Service to review all security measures for the RNC. Hours later, Audrey Gibson-Cicchino, the Secret Service's coordinator for the convention, said the weekend attack against Trump did not warrant any changes to the agency's security plan for the event and officials "are fully prepared."

Motives

Biden promised a "thorough and swift" review and asked the public not to "make assumptions" about the shooter's motives or affiliations.

The president said he and first lady Jill Biden were praying for the family of Corey Comperatore, a former fire chief who was shot and killed during the Trump rally Saturday night in Butler, Pennsylvania.

The president also said he'd had a "short but good conversation" with Trump in the hours after the shootings and said he was "sincerely grateful" that the former president is "doing well and recovering."

Trump, who has called for national resilience since the shooting, posted on his social media account after Biden's remarks, "UNITE AMERICA!"

Biden, who has set out to brand Trump as a dire threat to democracy and the nation's very founding principles, put a temporary pause on such political messaging after the shooting. Shortly after Saturday night's attack,

Biden's reelection campaign froze "all outbound communications" and worked to pull down its television ads.

The president also postponed a planned trip to Texas on Monday, where he was to speak on the 60th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act at the Lyndon B. Johnson presidential library. An NBC News interview between Biden and anchor Lester Holt will now occur at the White House, instead of in Texas, as initially planned.

Campaign

Biden's campaign said that, after the NBC interview airs on Monday night, the Democratic National Committee "will continue drawing the contrast" with Trump over the course of the GOP convention. It was unclear when campaign ads will resume.

Biden still plans to make a planned trip to Las Vegas, which will include a campaign event Wednesday. Vice President Kamala Harris postponed her planned campaign trip to Florida on Tuesday, where she had been set to meet with Republican women.

Meanwhile, Trump called for unity and resilience Sunday after an attempt on his life injected fresh uncertainty into an already tumultuous presidential campaign.

A full day after the shooting, the gunman's motive remained a mystery, with investigators saying they believe he acted alone before he was fatally shot by Secret Service agents.

Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, said the upper part of his right ear was pierced by a bullet. His aides said he was in "great spirits" and doing well. He arrived in Milwaukee on Sunday evening for the convention, which begins Monday. He told the Washington Examiner that he had rewritten his speech for the event to focus more on national unity than on the policies of Biden.

In a post Sunday on his social media site, Trump said: "In this moment, it is more important than ever that we stand United, and show our True Character as Americans, remaining Strong and Determined, and not allowing Evil to Win."

The additional \$1 billion brings the total amount of federal funding secured for the project to nearly \$1.72 billion, in addition to the \$700 million in state funding pledged by the Healey administration. The full cost to replace both bridges is estimated at around \$4.5 billion.

"This is a game-changing award for Massachusetts. We've never been closer to rebuilding the Cape Cod Bridges than we are right now. This funding will be critical for getting shovels in the ground," Healey said.

Cape Cod and the islands — Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket — are home to 263,000 permanent residents and are popular tourist destinations with five million annual visitors. The Army Corps of Engineers currently owns and maintains the bridges, which officials say are structurally deficient, functionally obsolete, and nearing the end of their usable life. The corps has warned that if the spans aren't replaced within the next several years, one of them would have to be completely closed for 18 months for



Children cool themselves off at Fontana dei Leoni amid a heatwave in Rome, Italy on July 14. (Xinhua)

maintenance. (AP)

Congress OKs bill: The Senate passed legislation to overhaul oversight and bring greater transparency to the crisis-plagued federal Bureau of Prisons following reporting from The Associated Press that exposed systemic corruption in the federal prison system and increased congressional scrutiny.

The Federal Prison Oversight Act, which the House passed in May, now goes to President Joe Biden to be signed into law. It establishes an independent ombudsman for the agency to field and investigate complaints in the wake of rampant sexual abuse and other criminal misconduct by staff, chronic understaffing, escapes and high-profile deaths.

It also requires that the Justice Department's Inspector General conduct risk-based inspections of all 122 federal prison facilities, provide recommendations to address deficiencies and assign each facility a risk score. Higher-risk facilities would then receive more frequent inspections.

Sen. Jon Ossoff, D-Ga., introduced the bill in 2022 while leading an investigation of the Bureau of Prisons as chair of the Senate Homeland Security Committee's subcommittee on investigations. It passed unanimously Wednesday without a formal roll call vote, meaning no senator objected. Ossoff and the bill's two other sponsors, Judiciary Committee Chair Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Sens. Mike Braun, R-Ind., launched the Senate Bipartisan Prison Policy Working Group in February 2022 amid turmoil at the Bureau of Prisons, much of it uncovered by AP reporting. (AP)

What's On



Photos during the event.

Supporting environmental initiatives and encouraging eco-friendly practices in community

stc sponsors 2nd Bloom Market highlighting 'Plastic-free July'



Group photo at KON program.

KON program at AUK empowers young entrepreneurs

NBK supports LOYAC's 'KON' program

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: As a platinum sponsor, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) welcomes the participants from LOYAC's program "KON". This social entrepreneurship program is co-created with Babson College, the most prestigious entrepreneurship college in the United States and the number one institution in the world for entrepreneurship education. The program aims to introduce young adults between the ages of 12 to 16 to the world business and to turn their ideas into action.

The program will take place in the American University of Kuwait (AUK) and includes 50 student trainees.

NBK will take part in the training sessions that will be ongoing until the 15 of August 2024. Throughout the five weeks program, leaders from NBK along with a group of professional leaders mentors and trainers, locally and regionally will encourage the participants to create a profitable business that solves social challenges.

NBK's sponsorship and participation in the program comes as a part of its strategic partnership with LOYAC. NBK is dedicated towards supporting talented young people and empowering them towards achieving their goals.

"KON" is one of these initiatives that help invest and

support young youths. NBK supported KON for eight consecutive years. The program provides its expertise to young people through training sessions and workshops and looks forward to seeing the participants moving into key leadership roles in their near future.

"KON" students will experience different stages during the program, thinking, planning and doing. The experiential learning journey the students undertake throughout the five weeks supports them to learn skills that include creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration. The students also learn technical skills to write up a successful business plan, and how to pitch their business ideas to investors. By the end of the program, students will be able to present their business ideas before a jury panel, in addition to a professor from Babson College.

NBK believes that investing in human resources is investing in our future. The KON program goes along with NBK's initiatives to invest in youth and support their aspirations.

LOYAC is a nonprofit organization that runs several programs for the youth to develop their professional skills, enhance their personal growth and help them find their sense of purpose by extending themselves to others.



Al Dehani, Al Musaiibeh, and Al Mana with Zain, SACGC, and Assima officials.



The initiative features engaging tech workshops.



The camp runs daily until 21 July.

Tech skills camp for youth at Assima Mall

Zain, SACGC launch Innovation Nation Summer Camp

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: For the second year in a row, the Innovation Nation (IN) Summer Camp has kicked-off in strategic partnership between Zain and Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC) – a KFAS center, and in collaboration with Assima Mall. The initiative aims to foster young people's tech skills through engaging mini-workshops that run daily from 15-21 July.

The camp's recent launch was attended by SACGC General Manager Neda Al Dehani, Zain Kuwait Corporate Relations Department Manager Hamad Al Musaiibeh, Zain Kuwait Innovation and Entrepreneurship Expert Haya Al Mana, and officials from Assima Mall. The opening day was a tremendous success, with many ambitious young individuals signing up to seize this opportunity to develop their passion for technology.

Designed for children and youth aged 7-14, the Innovation Nation Summer Camp features a combination of daily courses and engaging workshops located on the ground floor of Assima Mall. Each workshop is approximately two hours long, and those interested can easily walk in and sign up for their favorite course without the need for pre-registration.

The workshops are supervised and facilitated by experts and certified trainers from Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity. The content is presented in an innovative and engaging manner that appeals to young people. The IN Camp covers a variety of topics, including digital drawing and 3D printing, augmented reality (AR), robotics and programming, electronics, mechanical and software engineering, and more.

Additionally, Zain hosted a similar camp dedicated to the children of Zain employees. This special two-day camp was held at the Zain Innovation Campus (ZINC) in the company's main headquarters in Shuwaikh and featured rich and engaging content for children aged 5-13. The youngsters had fun learning about technology, robotics, and more.

This partnership between Zain, SACGC, and Assima Mall is part of the broader Innovation Nation initiative, which encompasses all of Zain's innovation and entrepreneurship programs. The initiative focuses on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) and primarily targets young people and entrepreneurs, aiming to foster a digitally capable generation.

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, sponsored the 2nd Bloom Market, which highlighted a "Plastic-free July" initiative amongst other activities focusing on sustainable living. The sponsorship aligns with stc's 2024 sustainability program and follows the Company's commitment to environmental preservation and the adoption of long-term sustainable practices.

The Bloom Market was held at the Avenues Mall from July 11th – 13th, with the theme focusing on a plastic-free July. In alignment with the concept, the event featured 17 local businesses, with participants ranging from recycled furniture stores to eco-friendly daily consumables and fashion-wear. The market also included numerous activities and awareness workshops aimed at raising awareness about the importance of preserving the environment and reducing plastic usage. Visitors were also able to view different innovative products that contribute to sustainable living from the different participating businesses.

stc's sponsorship of the market, for the second year, follows the strategic partnership formed in collaboration with SEEDs Co. under the "weyak" umbrella, which focuses on supporting local SMEs and start-ups as well as youth initiatives. The Company indicated that by incorporating sustainability into the core of its operations and community activities, stc aims to demonstrate its belief in the power of small, sustainable moves to make a significant impact.

Commenting on the sponsorship, Danah AlJasem said, "Environmental stewardship and encouraging sustainable living are two key attributes that fall under our progressive

sustainability strategy at stc. We are thrilled with the level of participation at the 2nd Bloom Market in Kuwait, and highly support this year's theme of promoting a plastic-free month. Our sponsorship of the Bloom Market reflects stc's commitment to sustainability, preserving the environment, and supporting local SMEs operating within this field. SEEDs Co. has managed to once again create an appealing platform for all ages while making sustainability an inclusive and engaging topic for discussion and action."

Allasem further added, "stc would like to congratulate SEEDs Co. for another successful market that included various initiatives to educate the local community on environmental preservation. Our commitment to sustainability remains a core aspect of our CSR strategy, and we firmly believe that through collective efforts with both the gov. and private sectors, we can make a significant impact on our community and inspire lasting change for future generations."

Yuser Almutawa, Chief Operating Officer of SEEDs Co., said, "We are proud to have had stc as the main sponsor of the 2nd Bloom Market and look forward to more future collaborations that will positively influence our community. Their commitment to sustainability and community engagement perfectly aligns with our mission to promote a lifestyle that prioritizes environmental consciousness. She also highlighted that events and activities similar to the Bloom Market are crucial for encouraging entrepreneurs in various sustainability fields to develop their businesses and concepts. They also play a significant role in increasing Kuwaiti consumer awareness about the availability of sustainable consumer goods in Kuwait."

Bank promotes health and humanitarian goals

KIB concludes annual blood donation campaign

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the conclusion of its annual blood donation campaign, which was launched in collaboration with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank under the slogan "Your Donation Saves Lives". This initiative comes as part of KIB's comprehensive social responsibility strategy, which embraces sustainable corporate practices and embodies the Bank's commitment to environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) principles. The vital campaign was organized at KIB's headquarters and saw the participation of many employees who volunteered to donate blood, aiming to contribute to the campaign's health and humanitarian goals.

Commenting on the initiative, Abdullah Al Khamees, from the Marketing Department and the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, said: "At KIB, we are committed to organizing blood donation campaigns and encouraging employees from all departments to participate. This effort aligns with our commitment to raising health and community awareness and promoting a culture of public health, in line with the goals of the Bank's community program. Additionally, it aims to support the Blood Bank in fulfilling its vital role in meeting the ongoing needs of hospitals and healthcare institutions for surplus blood supplies for their patients." He added: "Blood donation helps stimulate blood circulation and prevent diseases. We consider it an important motivator for adopting a healthy lifestyle that improves the physical health of participants."

Al Khamees praised the active role KIB employees play in supporting and ensuring the success of this campaign every year through their continuous dedication to volunteering and donating blood. He noted that "this reflects their understanding of the importance of each



KIB blood donation drive

individual's role in achieving the success of any charitable initiative and the significant impact it has on society as a whole."

It is worth noting that KIB continues to launch and participate in various forms of community campaigns and events that have a vital impact on the members of the community. The Bank boasts a distinguished record

of advanced initiatives in the field of volunteer work, within the framework of its comprehensive social responsibility program, both internally and externally. This includes initiatives for health awareness, mental and physical well-being, sports events, as well as local and regional humanitarian contributions and national participation in related fields.

AIU's School of Business secures 'CMI' accreditation for accounting, finance and management programs

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: American International University (AIU) is pleased to announce that its School of Business has received accreditation from the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) for its Accounting, Finance, and Management programs. CMI is a prestigious professional institution that provides certifications in management and leadership.

CMI accreditation ensures that graduates from AIU's programs receive both a degree from AIU and a globally recognized CMI certificate or diploma, depending on their program. This dual credential enhances graduates' employability worldwide and validates their managerial and leadership skills, crucial for success in accounting, finance, and management roles.

"The CMI accreditation underscores AIU's commitment to preparing students for leadership in business," said Dr. Lasha, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at AIU. "It reflects our dedication to providing a curriculum that meets international standards and equips graduates with the skills required for today's competitive business environment."

AIU's Accounting program prepares students for roles in financial management, auditing, and compliance, while the Finance program focuses on financial analysis, investment management, and risk assessment. The Management program emphasizes strategic leadership and operational management skills essential for business success.

Prospective students interested in Accounting, Finance, or Management careers can find more about AIU's CMI accredited programs and apply for Fall 2024 enrollment at aiu.edu.kw



AIU programs earn globally recognized CMI certification.



SPECIAL REPORT

Ambassador Aguilar leaves a lasting legacy

Outgoing Spanish envoy reflects on four years of diplomatic achievements, enduring ties in Kuwait

By Paulo Francisco X. Fernandes
Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Arab Times had the distinct honor of speaking with His Excellency Miguel Moro Aguilar the outgoing Spanish Ambassador to the State of Kuwait. Over the past four years, His Excellency has played a pivotal role in strengthening the bilateral relations between Spain and Kuwait, fostering economic, cultural, educational, social and diplomatic ties.

Under his esteemed leadership, the Spanish Embassy has seen numerous achievements and successful initiatives that have significantly contributed to the mutual growth and understanding between Kuwait and Spain. As he prepares to embark on his new appointment in Spain, we reflect on his remarkable tenure here in Kuwait and the lasting impact of his dedicated service.

Arab Times: Your Excellency, can you highlight some of the key accomplishments or milestones during your tenure as the Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait?

Ambassador: I have been here for nearly four years, arriving in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was definitely not the ideal time to start my journey as ambassador, but I came with the enthusiasm and energy of a first-time ambassador. Despite the constraints of the pandemic and other challenges, I believe the embassy made significant breakthroughs in bilateral relations.

The embassy organized visits at various political levels between Kuwait and Spain, involving the foreign ministries of both countries in April and May, as well as in November 2021.

We actively participated in political consultations with the Kuwaiti Assistant Minister for European Affairs and the Spanish counterpart in Madrid on three occasions. Additionally, the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs visited Madrid for bilateral consultations.

For the first time, we held a joint committee meeting on trade and commerce on November 2022. Although an agreement existed, it had never been implemented until then.

We continued to strengthen relations by signing agreements and significantly improving tourism ties. We worked on establishing direct flight connections between Kuwait and Madrid, as well as Barcelona, in addition to the Kuwait-Malaga direct flight introduced a year before my posting in Kuwait.

I can proudly say that the relations between Kuwait and Spain have reached new heights in politics, tourism, economy, culture, health, and even sports. We also embarked on scientific collaborations between both countries, particularly with KFAS and KISR in Kuwait. Despite the constraints, we have managed to address many issues and enhance the image of both countries.

I have participated in festivals in Marbella organized by Kuwaiti citizens and, along with my Kuwaiti counterpart in Spain to promote the image of Kuwait. I also attended the launch of the direct flight to Madrid in September 2022 at the Kuwaiti embassy in Madrid, an enthusiastic event that was attended by over 150 guests.

I have always supported events in Kuwait with a Spanish connection, including soccer, tennis, paddle, and boxing. I have fully played my part in anything that benefited both Spain and Kuwait.

AT: What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you faced during your time in Kuwait, and how did you address them?

Ambassador: As I mentioned earlier, when I arrived, COVID-19 had brought the world to a virtual standstill. Like many people, I faced significant challenges because the pandemic not only affected Spain and Kuwait but the entire humanity.

Despite taking all necessary precautions, such as wearing a mask and maintaining social distance, I was infected by the virus twice. Nevertheless, I had to carry on with my duties and could not afford to wait for two years for the pandemic to subside. This was, I believe, the most challenging part of my tenure in Kuwait.

Then the political constraints and certain situations here also made it difficult to push some projects forward, either due to a lack of interlocutors or changes in personnel.

However, I had the unwavering support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and civil servants in the Kuwaiti government, such as the assistant ministers, including Mr. Marafi in charge of European Affairs or of those in the areas of protocol and international organizations.

Their assistance and collaboration were invaluable. Additionally, some ministers, like the Minister of Information, were very supportive, as were the people at the NCCAL and the Kuwait Library on the cultural field.

Despite the obstacles posed by COVID-19, we managed to organize and strengthen the relations between our two countries.

In hindsight, when I leave Kuwait, I will carry with me many happy memories. I will leave with a clear conscience, knowing that I have done my best in taking bilateral relations between Kuwait and Spain to another level.

AT: What initiatives or strategies did you implement to promote cultural, economic, or political ties between Spain and Kuwait?

Ambassador: First of all, I believe that culture is too important to neglect because it is the heartbeat of nations, bringing out the best from deep within.



His Excellency Miguel Moro Aguilar the outgoing Spanish Ambassador to the State of Kuwait.

‘Spain and the Arab world have long-standing relations for many reasons, primarily due to the historical presence of Arabs, Arab culture, and language in Spain.’

Regarding Spain and the Arab world, there are long-standing relations for many reasons, primarily due to the historical presence of Arabs, Arab culture, and language in Spain.

For centuries, the Iberian Peninsula has contributed depth and facilitated people-to-people and cultural contacts with the Arab peoples. Beyond these historic roots, Kuwaitis, in particular, are very fond of certain areas in Spain, where they spend their summers and appreciate many aspects of our culture.

Given the circumstances, our strategy and goal focused on fostering more connections between the people of Spain and Kuwait. We organized several cultural events and activities to achieve this goal throughout the years.

For instance, we brought two different flamenco groups to Kuwait, featuring beautiful nights filled with the culture and essence of Andalusia, the most recent by the ‘Anabel Veloso’ flamenco band. They performed on the stage of Abdul Hussein Abdul Reda under the aegis of the NCCAL, strengthening cultural ties between the two countries and societies.

The embassy also worked an eclectic program featuring the music of Spain and its influence on the music of the Americas, such as the guitar and the violin duo Orbón and Fernández. This music, born from the mixture of two worlds and cultures, created an indelible memory and sensation. Recently we had an excellent pianist, Eduardo Fernández, who offered a magnificent performance here in Kuwait and also in Bahrain.

In collaboration with the National Council for Culture Arts and Letters, the Spanish Embassy orchestrated a musical evening at the Kuwait National Library in May. This event served as a platform for cultural convergence, bringing people together through the universal language of music, fostering understanding and unity among people.

These cultural activities, along with confer-

ences and lectures, were significant milestones. About three years ago, we emphasized various cultural initiatives, including highlighting the First Voyage of Circumnavigation by Fernão de Magalhães and Juan Sebastián Elcano (1519-1522) at the National Library, an event successfully organized with the participation of experts from Kuwait University.

In addition to these efforts, we organized beautiful events to promote Marbella. A delegation led by the Mayor of Marbella, Her Excellency Mrs. Angeles Muñoz, and the Princess of Orleans, along with top representatives from well-known hotels in Marbella, visited Kuwait. This joyful event promoted luxurious tourism dedicated to the beautiful town of Marbella in southern Spain, which is highly appreciated by our Kuwaiti friends.

A special representation from local tourism agents and Kuwaiti friends, including some members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had the opportunity to exchange views with the Spanish delegation in a cordial atmosphere, showcasing the steadily close links between both nations.

We also worked on promoting the Spanish language, literature, and culture abroad. Although we don’t have an institute in Kuwait dedicated to this purpose, the Spanish language is promoted through private academies and various public and private university departments. We collaborated with the French Institute to organize accredited exams, initially held at the embassy premises. However, due to the growing number of enthusiasts, we had to move these exams to other venues due to space constraints.

Spanish is widely spoken, second only to English globally. It is the official language of 20 countries in Europe, and Central, South, and North America, with more than 540 million native speakers. This makes it one of the most widely spoken

languages in the world, excluding languages spoken within individual nations, such as Chinese.

Language is a powerful tool, deserving recognition in our world, and many Kuwaitis have shown interest in learning Spanish.

On the education front, Spain has doubled the number of accredited universities for the benefit of Kuwaitis who wish to study in Spain. Consequently, Spanish culture has also seen improvement on a global level.

I think we’ve worked hard over these years to broaden the perception of Spain, and we’ve succeeded. People are more aware of Spain now. This was one of the main points my team and I insisted on to promote tourism in a more balanced way in Kuwait.

AT: What do you see as the most pressing issues in the region, and how has Spain contributed to addressing them during your tenure in Kuwait?

Ambassador: The international situation is currently quite grim. We are enduring a terrible war in Ukraine, fought on European soil, posing a significant challenge for all European nations at the international level.

Additionally, the devastating war in Gaza has shocked everyone in the region, including us in Spain. These two conflicts and the emerging tensions at the international level have severely affected world peace.

Spain has always voiced its constructive opinion in order to find diplomatic solutions and moderate tensions in Ukraine, Gaza, and other conflict areas. The region is likely to remain turbulent for the foreseeable future.

Conflicts cannot be solved only by force, as some might believe. Spain has worked closely with like-minded nations such as Kuwait and close partners like Egypt and Jordan to find solutions to these conflicts. We are particularly focused on resolving the conflict between Israel and Palestine by recognizing the right of

Palestinians to an independent state.

Recently, the Prime Minister of Spain announced the recognition of an independent Palestinian state, marking an important milestone for Spain. We work along with our partners in the European Union in order to try and give an impulse to the search for a solution to this long festering conflict. We need to make vital moves in this direction to preserve the two-state solution, which still remains the only viable solution to the conflict that has devastated Palestine for so long and put the region to the test.

AT: Can you share a particularly memorable moment or experience from your diplomatic service in Kuwait?

Ambassador: I will take many beautiful memories of Kuwait with me. Frankly speaking, it is difficult to sum them all up due to the intense nature of the work over the past few months.

However, I believe that when I am more relaxed back in Spain, these memories will resurface as I reflect on my achievements. I have had four intense, important, and interesting years, filled with various situations and contacts with Kuwaitis at all levels, particularly those I met during my visits to Diwaniyas.

One beautiful moment was when His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Spain’s King Felipe VI and his accompanying delegation during their trip to Kuwait to offer condolences over the demise of the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

I accompanied His Majesty the King from Spain to Kuwait, and this was a very significant contact between the King and His Highness the Amir.

Another memorable event was during the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to Bahrain in my capacity as Ambassador to that Kingdom. I was the only Ambassador among a restricted audience which took place in the context of that visit, comprising Kuwaiti and Bahraini dignitaries. This was a very special moment because the Pope came with a message of universal peace, particularly to Bahrain and the Middle East.

I was also in Spain whenever Dr. Ahmed Al-Sabah visited, and in 2021, His Majesty the King had a long meeting with Dr. Ahmed. They had very fruitful and positive discussions about bilateral ties, regional affairs, and many vital issues. The opening of the flights to Spain was undoubtedly another milestone.

AT: How do you assess the current socio-political landscape in Kuwait, and what role do you see for Spain in supporting its development?

Ambassador: Internationally, the situation is complex, and some semblance of international order has been put to the test. International law has been flouted. It is crucial for all countries to believe in themselves, to preserve and protect peace, respect states and their sovereignties, and find solutions based on the United Nations charter for peaceful coexistence rather than resorting to war. Unfortunately, we see disturbing scenarios unfolding.

As I mentioned before, Spain is a voice for moderation and a peace mediator, seeking to find solutions to conflicts in a peaceful manner. We collaborate with Kuwait in this arena because the viewpoints of the Kuwaiti authorities align with ours.

Domestically, we see changes in Kuwait, and I sincerely hope that Kuwait will find the best path forward. Under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir, the Crown Prince, and the Prime Minister, Kuwait will hopefully be able to bounce back, achieve social justice, provide the best opportunities for its citizens, and take steps in the right direction for the nation’s betterment.

I sincerely hope that the relations between Kuwait and Spain will continue to flourish in the near future.

AT: Looking back on your term, what do you hope will be your lasting legacy as the Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait?

Ambassador: I was very happy to be in Kuwait these past years. I think Kuwait is a beautiful country, mainly because the people are very welcoming. My colleagues and I know that in other countries, we often cannot communicate as easily with the local people.

Kuwaitis and residents are very interesting, and I was truly able to form beautiful friendships. Spain is a very close friend of Kuwait, and I am sure that in the future, we will continue to strengthen our relations, which are now about 62 years old. Personally, Kuwait will always remain in my heart as a very important part of my professional and personal life.

Thank you for covering all the embassy events. The Arab Times has been very supportive and is very important to the Spanish Embassy and the Kuwaiti people. It is one of the leading newspapers in the country. Congratulations on that, and thank you for this last interview in my last days in the country.

AT: What advice would you give to your successor in terms of navigating the diplomatic landscape and fostering relations between Spain and Kuwait?

Ambassador: The new ambassador will be in Kuwait very soon. He is a distinguished and highly experienced career diplomat, and I am confident he will do a wonderful job. He is well-versed in consular and diplomatic matters in general and is already familiar with the region, having served as the deputy head of mission in Saudi Arabia. I wish him all the best.

editor’s choice



'Severe symptoms may require hospitalization'

Expert tips to prevent heat-related illness, heat stroke

KUWAIT CITY, July 13: Last Friday, temperatures soared above 50 degrees Celsius, as shown by the digital clock at the automatic control tower. Kuwait is facing a severe heat wave with temperatures potentially exceeding 52 degrees Celsius, making this July one of the hottest months globally, according to scientists' predictions, reports Al-Rai daily.

Given this, experts have issued warnings about the health risks associated with extreme heat, such as heat stress, heat stroke, and heat cramps, and have provided 15 tips to mitigate the effects of high temperatures. Preventive health physician Dr. Abdullah Behbehani noted, "There are three medical conditions related to heat waves: heat cramps, heat stress, and the most severe, heat stroke. The risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke increases with high humidity and strenuous physical activity, especially outdoors."

Heat stress
Dr. Behbehani explained, "Heat stress can progress to heat stroke if untreated, potentially leading to death. The groups most at risk include chil-

dren, particularly infants, pregnant women, and the elderly. Dehydration is particularly dangerous for children because their bodies cannot regulate temperature as effectively. For the elderly, medications such as diuretics, heart and blood pressure medications, and antihistamines can impair the body's ability to stay hydrated."

He added, "For pregnant women, dehydration and high temperatures can cause serious complications, such as low birth weight, premature birth, or even stillbirth. The mother may also face risks like gestational diabetes, high blood pressure during pregnancy, and premature labor."

Dr. Behbehani advised monitoring temperatures, avoiding outdoor activities during peak heat times, drinking plenty of water and fluids regularly, especially for children and pregnant women, and having a first aid kit available with oral rehydration salts, a thermometer, water, and cloths for cooling."

Heat stroke
Internal medicine consultant Dr. Ghanem Salman Al-Salem warned about heat exhaustion and sunstroke.

He explained, "Heat exhaustion occurs when the body loses excessive fluids or salts through sweating. Symptoms include dizziness, headache, intense thirst, low blood pressure, and a significant rise in temperature. Severe symptoms can lead to heart and respiratory system fatigue and kidney failure."

Dr. Al-Salem stressed the importance of taking heat stroke seriously as it can be fatal. "Symptoms include headache, blurred vision, confusion, muscle and nerve spasms, and loss of consciousness," he said.

Preventive measures
To avoid heat-related illnesses, Dr. Al-Salem recommended:
Wearing loose, light-colored clothing; avoiding outdoor activities in hot weather; staying out of direct sunlight; exercising indoors in air-conditioned spaces; drinking plenty of fluids; avoiding energy drinks high in caffeine; keeping indoor environments cool and using sunglasses when outside.

Impact of climate on health
Director of the Health Promotion Department, Dr. Abeer Al-Buhu, emphasized the significant impact of cli-

mate and weather on human health. "While people can adapt to different climates, extreme short-term fluctuations can cause severe health issues, such as heat stress," she said.

Dr. Al-Buhu highlighted the increasing number of people exposed to extreme heat due to climate change. "Global heat-related deaths among those over 65 have increased by nearly 85 percent between 2000-2004 and 2017-2021. Studies indicate that from 2000 to 2019, nearly 489,000 people died annually due to heat, with significant numbers in Asia and Europe."

She pointed out that heat stress is a major cause of weather-related deaths and can exacerbate conditions like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, mental health issues, and asthma.

Tips to stay safe in extreme heat
Avoid strenuous activity during extreme heat.
Stay in the shade and avoid direct sunlight.
Spend 2-3 hours in a cool place daily.
Stay informed about heat wave warnings.
Keep your home cool and minimize

the use of electrical appliances.
Avoid using electric fans if the temperature is above 40 degrees Celsius, as they can heat the body.
Limit time spent outdoors if the weather is hot and humid.
Drink plenty of fluids to replace what is lost through sweating.
Avoid tea, coffee, and soft drinks as they can lead to fluid loss.
Wear light-colored clothing.
Use sunscreen and wear a hat or use an umbrella.
Monitor the weather to plan outdoor activities accordingly.
Keep a first aid kit with rehydration solutions, a thermometer, water, cooling cloths, and a handheld fan or water sprayer.
Know how to get help and have contact information for the nearest health care center or ambulance service.
Set air conditioners to 27°C and use an electric fan to make the room feel cooler.

Signs of heat exhaustion
Dr. Behbehani outlined key signs of heat exhaustion: excessive sweating, cold and clammy skin, chills, fainting, dizziness, fatigue, increased heart rate,

weak pulse, low blood pressure upon standing, nausea, headache, and painful muscle cramps.

Clothing recommendations
He stressed the importance of using sunscreen, wearing hats or using umbrellas, avoiding unnecessary clothing, particularly for children, wearing cotton clothes to reduce skin rashes and absorb sweat, and ensuring clothing is loose.

Dealing with heat stress
Dr. Behbehani emphasized knowing the symptoms of heat exhaustion and acting quickly by moving the person to a cool place, applying wet cloths to the body, especially the head, neck, armpits, and thighs, and removing unnecessary outer clothing. Some cases may require oral rehydration solutions before reaching a health care facility.

Heat stroke and brain damage
Dr. Ghanem Al-Salem explained that if brain temperature exceeds 40 degrees Celsius for more than 5 minutes, permanent damage can occur if not controlled within 30-40 minutes, potentially leading to death or loss of body function, necessitating hospital treatment.

Breakthrough method

New discovery promises effective weight loss for obese individuals

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Scientists at the University of California have achieved a breakthrough in weight loss methods for individuals suffering from severe obesity with excessive fat accumulation, reports Al-Rai daily.

They have identified that by suppressing a specific protein, white fat cells can be transformed into calorie-burning brown fat cells. This finding, reported by the New Atlas, highlights the potential for a significant advancement in obesity treatment.

The protein in question, KLF-15, known for its role in cell metabolism, particularly in brown and beige fat cells, was found to influence the cellular function significantly. Without KLF-15, fat cells default to a beige phenotype rather than remaining predominantly white.

This discovery, published in the Journal of Clinical Investigation, suggests that inhibiting KLF-15 could facilitate the conversion of white fat into brown fat, which is crucial for efficient calorie burning.

Professor Brian Feldman, lead researcher and expert in endocrinology, emphasized that this approach could simplify long-term weight loss efforts. Unlike previous methods that focused on converting stem cells into brown fat, which requires complex procedures, suppressing KLF-15 appears to offer a more straightforward pathway.

Moreover, research on laboratory mice demonstrated that blocking KLF-15 resulted in an increase in sandy-colored fat cells, which are interspersed within white adipose tissue. This shift effectively reduced overall fat stores.

The study also explored the mechanism by which KLF-15 influences fat cell behavior, identifying its control over a receptor called Adrb1. This finding opens doors for potential drug development targeting Adrb1, potentially offering a safer and more effective alternative to current weight loss treatments.

This groundbreaking research underscores the intricate biology of fat metabolism and holds promise for future therapeutic strategies aimed at combating obesity more effectively.

China's role in global HIV fight recognized

BEIJING, July 15, (Xinhua): China has a very strong commitment to fighting and ending HIV/AIDS, said Winnie Byanyima, executive director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

China's commitment to fighting HIV/AIDS is demonstrated at various levels, from the top leadership to lower-level governments, from institutions to communities and the private sector, the UNAIDS chief said in an interview with Xinhua.

Byanyima, who also serves as the under-secretary-general of the United Nations, has just concluded her visit to China to strengthen collaboration and advance shared goals.

During her visit, a memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation between China and the UNAIDS was signed to boost joint efforts in related fields.

Over the past years, the Chinese government and health authorities have attached great importance to HIV/AIDS prevention and control, and adopted a series of measures that have yielded marked results.

Dengue outbreak

Experts warn of triple avian influenza threat

CANBERRA, July 15, (Xinhua): Australia is facing an unprecedented threat from three different strains of avian influenza according to experts from the national science agency.

Debbie Eagles and Frank Wong from the Australian Center for Disease Preparedness (ACPD) at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) on Monday warned that three strains of the highly pathogenic H7 avian influenza have been detected in Australia in 2024.

The outbreaks have affected poultry farms in the southern states of Victoria and New South Wales (NSW) as well as the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), prompting the culling of over 500,000 chickens.

Wong told the Australian Associated Press (AAP) that experts have not been able to identify a reason behind the simultaneous outbreaks.

"There could be many reasons. We don't really know. The wild bird dynamics at a particular point in time, climate, changes in perhaps weather patterns or just coincidence," he said.

The federal government earlier in July committed 6.9 million Australian dollars (4.6 million U.S. dollars) in funding to boost preparations for a possible outbreak of the H5 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI).

Murray Watt, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, said at the time that Australia is the last continent to remain free of the strain, which has caused significant deaths of poultry, wild birds and wild mammals around the world.

He warned that H5 HPAI could spread in Australia in the spring when migratory birds arrive in the country.

Dengue: Argentina has logged over 520,000 cases of dengue since the start of this year, with an outbreak 3.17 times larger than last year, but there were signs of decreasing in the past few weeks, the Health Ministry said Sunday.

In the first 27 weeks of this year, health authorities registered 520,037 cases of dengue, or 97 percent of the 537,249 infections logged in the entire season starting in epidemiological week 31 of 2023, according to the ministry's National Epidemiological Bulletin.

The highest number of cases was logged in the central region with 60.7 percent, followed by the northwest with 24.1 percent, and the northeast with 13.1 percent.

Meanwhile, Ghanaian health authorities said on Sunday that they have confirmed nine cases of dengue in the Eastern Region.

The Ghana Health Service (GHS) said in a statement that it has received confirmation from the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR) that samples from patients tested positive for dengue.

The GHS said the national surveillance team had detected malaria-like illnesses in some districts of the Eastern Region that were not responding to the recommended malaria treatment.

Protect your phone and financial security

Prevent SIM swapping identity theft with this expert tech tip

NEW YORK, July 15, (AP): SIM-swapping is a growing form of identity theft that goes beyond hacking into an email or social media account. In this case, the thieves take over your phone number. Any calls or texts go to them, not to you.

Any protections consumers enabled to secure access to their financial accounts, such as two-factor authentication texts, now can aid attackers and lock out owners.

Experts say these scams will only increase and become more sophisticated, while the data show they are on the rise. The FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center reports that SIM-swapping complaints have increased more than 400% from 2018 to 2021, with associated personal losses estimated to be more than \$68 million.



A SIM card is shown next to a cellphone in this photo taken on Tuesday, June 11, 2024 in London. Physical SIM cards are going away, replaced by eSIMs which make switching cell carriers easier. (AP)

Information
Rachel Tobac, CEO of online security company SocialProof Security, says the numbers are probably a vast underestimate because most identity thefts are not reported.

Criminals use personal information about their victims - phone numbers, addresses, birthdays and Social Security numbers - obtained through data breaches, leaks, dark web purchases or phishing scams to impersonate the victims as they contact their mobile carriers.

They will claim the original phone and SIM card were damaged, lost or sold accidentally and ask for the number to be associated with a new SIM, or eSIM, card in their possession. Once this is done, the phone number belongs to the criminals, along with the ability to receive text messages or calls to verify accounts.

Prevention is the best form of protection, according to cybersecurity experts. The tricks and habits security experts say help prevent SIM-swapping are what they have long been recommending for online security in general. They include the following:

If your credentials are caught in a cyber breach, the hackers could try using the stolen passwords to get into other services to gather the personal data they need to pull off a SIM swap.

If you've been using the same or similar login information for multiple websites or online accounts, make sure

to change it. If criminals pilfer your password from one service, they can try it on your other accounts and easily get into all of them. If you find it too hard to memorize your various credentials, consider a password manager.

Also use strong passwords that include letters, numbers and symbols. The longer they are, the better. Some experts say they should be 16 characters.

Add biometrics or multifactor authentication apps and devices that do not involve texting. These methods often use separate login methods and encryption that are not tied to your phone's identity, making them more difficult for criminals to access.

AT&T also advises contacting your carrier to set up a unique passcode to prevent significant account changes such as porting phone numbers to another carrier. Your carrier may already have other protections in place to protect against SIM swapping, so it's worth calling them to ask.

Criminals will use email or text messages to try to trick you into giving them your personal and financial information or to expose your workplace to possible attacks, and it's incredibly effective.

In its annual State of the Phish report, the cybersecurity firm Proofpoint found a majority of data breaches across the world still center on human lapses.

If you suspect you have received a possible phishing message or email, report it. Most of the popular email platforms have buttons or functions specifically for reporting phishing attempts. If you're at work, follow the advice from your company's information security team.

All major U.S. carriers have web pages advising victims how to report a SIM fraud.

But an Associated Press reporter, who recently was hit by such an attack, advises that victims should be diligent in working with the carrier to fix the issue. Filing complaints with the Federal Trade Commission, the Internet Crime Complaint Center or with their state attorneys general can possibly expedite recovery efforts.

If card payment numbers were stolen, inform your bank or credit card company, explaining that your card is at risk of fraud and asking the company to alert you to any suspicious activity.

You can also notify credit agencies, including the three main firms: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. They can freeze your credit, which restricts access to your credit report and makes it hard to open new accounts or issue a fraud alert and will add a warning to your credit report encouraging lenders to contact you before lending money.

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The honored athletes pose for a group photo.

Kuwait Winter Games Club honors 22 athletes

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: The Kuwait Winter Games Club recently celebrated and honored a group of its outstanding high school male and female players for the academic year 2023/2024. This group includes 22 athletes from various sports within the club.

Fuhaid Al-Ajmi, Chairman of the Board of Directors, emphasized the

club's annual commitment to recognizing its members, particularly those excelling in both academics and athletics across the five sports the club oversees. This initiative aims to motivate players to strive for academic excellence alongside their athletic endeavors, believing that success in academics positively influences their athletic performance.

Al-Ajmi expressed profound gratitude to Sheikh Jaber Bandar Al-Sabah, the honorary president of the club, for sponsoring and attending the ceremony. He also praised the support of Hamed Al-Hazeem, the Deputy Director General of the General Sports Authority for the Sports for All Sector, who attended and contributed to the event.

Fatima Al-Issa, a Kuwaiti national team figure skater, shared her and her peers' joy and appreciation for the club's initiative, recognizing it as a significant encouragement for both academic and athletic excellence. The ceremony was also attended by club board members, team managers, and the parents of the honored students.

Shaoqin clinches first major title

Olympians take gold at IFSC Climbing World Cup

PARIS, July 15, (Xinhua): The 2024 IFSC Climbing World Cup Chamonix concluded in Chamonix, France, with several Olympic hopefuls taking gold.

In the men's speed climbing event, world record holder and Paris Olympic contender Samuel Watson of the United States had a consistent run during the knockout stage with three climbs under 4.90 seconds, the fastest being 4.83 seconds, just 0.04 seconds shy of the world record.

In the final, Watson faced off against China's rising star Wang Xinshang. Both athletes made mistakes in their last climb, but Watson emerged victorious with a time of 6.24 seconds, while Wang finished in 7.76 seconds, securing the silver medal.

CLIMBING

After the competition, Watson commented on his recent training efforts to enhance climbing stability. "I've been working on my consistency with a boring two months training, well boring is not the right word, but tedious training cycle where I tried to work hard every day and I was looking forward to this trip so much," the 18-year-old said. "Having consistent 4.8's and near the world record is a dream for sure and shows I am in the right place," he added.

In the lead event, Watson's compatriot Collin Duffy claimed victory in the men's category, while the women's title was claimed by Japan's Ai Mori, who is also heading to the Paris Olympics.

In the women's speed climbing event, China's Zhang Shaoqin won her first gold medal in a major international competition after beating Poland's Natalia Kalucka with a 6.60-second run.

The 24-year-old Zhang, who had previously won the women's team relay at the Hangzhou Asian Games, demonstrated remarkable consistency, clocking sub-6.80-second times in all four elimination rounds, with her best being 6.58 seconds.

Zhang missed the opportunity to qualify for the Olympics, but she was still pleased with the progress she had made in recent months. "I'm so happy. I broke my personal best today," the 24-year-old said after the Chamonix final. "I really like this place, it is definitely my place of luck," she added.

Abdullah commends Amir's support for Kuwaiti athletes



Bashar Abdullah with representatives of Al-Qadisiyah, Al-Salmiya, Al-Arabi and Al-Tadamon clubs.

KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Sports, Bashar Abdullah, expressed his deepest thanks and gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, for his unwavering support and care for athletes.

This was conveyed during his presentation of the honors for the His Highness the Amir Cup Championship to representatives of Al-Qadisiyah (the defending champion), Al-Salmiya (the runner-up), and Al-Arabi and Al-Tadamon (the third-placed clubs) for the 2023-2024 sports season. The ceremony was attended by Salah Al-Qaeni, the Secretary-General of the Kuwait Football Association.

Bashar Abdullah emphasized that the Authority is committed to implementing the directives of His High-

ness the Amir by supporting young athletes at both local and international levels to elevate Kuwait's standing in global sports arenas and properly qualify the athletes.

He stated, "His Highness the Amir's honoring of the first-place winners of His Highness's Cup is an incentive for all players to exert more effort and dedication to achieve achievements and victories."

Bashar Abdullah also conveyed the greetings of Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, Minister of Social Affairs, Childhood and Family Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, who affirmed her support for all athletes and the implementation of the General Sports Authority's strategy to develop sports in the coming period, based on the aspirations of the political leadership.



Gold medalist Janja Garnbret of Slovenia (C), silver medalist Luo Zhilu (L) of China and bronze medalist Seo Chaehyun of South Korea attend the awarding ceremony for the women's lead event at the IFSC World Cup Wujiang 2024 in Suzhou, east China's Jiangsu Province. (Xinhua)

World swimming body eyes more anti-doping tests of Chinese team before Paris Olympics

GENEVA, July 15, (AP): Chinese swimmers going to the Paris Olympics are undergoing increased drug testing of at least eight times this year before the Games, World Aquatics said on Monday.

The Chinese swim team in Paris is set to have 11 athletes who tested positive for a banned heart medication in 2021, six months before the Tokyo Olympics. They avoided being suspended. In Tokyo, the swimmers won three gold medals.

A Chinese state-backed investigation in June 2021 blamed mass contamination by food in a hotel kitchen though without evidence to prove it. The case was not publicly revealed until reporting three months ago by the New York Times and German broadcaster ARD.

The World Anti-Doping Agency has been widely criticized - and targeted by a United States federal investigation - for accepting the explanation in 2021 when travel to China was not possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. A WADA-appointed prosecutor in Switzerland last week cleared the Montreal-based agency of bias toward China in a report that had a limited remit.

Swimming's governing body also appointed a panel to study how it handled the case three years ago, including following WADA at the time by not challenging the Chinese claim at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

The panel's 11-page report with recommendations was published on

Monday, 12 days before swim events start in Paris at La Defense Arena. It detailed a promise of more anti-doping tests for some countries ahead of the Olympics and especially China.

World Aquatics said "a certain number of athletes from specific nations will be tested four times" since the start of the year by the Lausanne-based International Testing Agency, which runs anti-doping programs for many Olympic sports.

Chinese athletes competing in Paris "will be tested by the ITA no less than eight times during this same period," the world swim body said. Those samples would ideally not be collected by the Chinese anti-doping agency and also not be tested by laboratories in China.

Kuwait make winning start

AMMAN, July 15, (KUNA): Kuwait defeated China 28-24 in its opening match of the 18th Asian Youth Handball Championship, held in Amman, Jordan.

Qaid Al-Adwani, Head of the Kuwaiti delegation, commended the players' efforts and technical skills

HANDBALL

in remarks to KUNA. He noted that the Kuwaiti team is competing in a challenging group that includes Iran and China.

Following the game, Tayseer Al-Mansi, President of the Jordanian Handball Federation, named Kuwait's Abdulaziz Al-Najjar as the man of the match.

This championship serves as a qualifying event for the 25th IHF



A Kuwaiti player makes a goal attempt against China.

Men's Junior (U21) Handball World Championship in Poland in 2025.

Robert 'wins' Scottish Open

Els claims major senior title

NORTH BERWICK, Scotland, July 15, (AP): Robert MacIntyre won an Open that felt like a major to him Sunday when he made a 22-foot birdie putt on the final hole for a 3-under 67 to win the Scottish Open, becoming the first Scot in 25 years to win his national open.

MacIntyre seized on a huge break on the par-5 16th when he realized he was standing on a sprinkler head in rough so deep he could barely see his ball. He received a free drop in shorter grass and blasted his approach from 248 yards to 6 feet for eagle to tie Adam Scott for the lead.

GOLF

His birdie putt took one last turn before falling, and MacIntyre dropped his putter and turned to a delirious Scottish gallery with a sweeping upercut to celebrate.

The 27-year-old from the tiny coastal town of Oban won for the second time this year, also capturing the Canadian Open - the fourth-oldest championship in golf - last month. Colin Montgomerie in 1999 was the last Scot to win the Scottish Open.

And next week is the big one - the British Open, the final major of the year, across Scotland at Royal Troon. It has been just over a century since a British player won at Troon. But this felt just as big to the little lefty.

Scott closed with a 67. Rory McIlroy closed with a 68 and tied for fourth, his first appearance since he lost a late lead in the U.S. Open last month at Pinehurst No. 2.

Ernie Els won the Kaulig Companies Championship for his first senior major title, closing with a 2-under 68 for a one-stroke victory over Y.E. Yang at breezy Firestone.

A stroke behind defending champion Steve Stricker entering the round, Els rebounded to par the final two holes after hitting in the water and making a



Robert MacIntyre poses with the Genesis Scottish Open trophy after he wins the Genesis Scottish Open 2024 golf tournament in North Berwick, Scotland. (AP)

bogey on the par-5 16th. Yang bogeyed the par-4 18th in a 66.

Els became the PGA Tour Champions' first three-time winner this season, winning for the sixth time on the 50-and-over tour. The 54-year-old South African has won four regular major championships - the U.S. Open in 1994 and '97 and the British Open in 2002 and '12.

Els finished at 10-under 270 after opening with rounds of 68 and 64. The Hall of Famer earned \$525,000 and a spot in The Players Championship in March.

Jerry Kelly, the 2020 and 2022 champion, was third at 7 under after a 69. Stricker, also the 2021 winner at Firestone, shot 73 to tie for fourth at 6 under.

Harry Hall chipped in for birdie from 45 feet on the third hole of a playoff to win the ISCO Championship for his first PGA Tour title.

The 26-year-old Englishman closed with a 3-under 69 to get into the playoff with Matt NeSmith, Pierceson Coody, Zac Blair and Rico Hoey. They finished at 22-under 266 on Keene Trace's Champions Course in the event co-sanctioned by the European tour.

Financial demands cited

Kazma forego Saad signing

By Hasan Musa

AL-SEYASSAH/Arab Times Staff KUWAIT CITY, July 15: Kazma Club has decided against signing Saad Al-Rosan, a player from Al-Hussein Irbid and Ma'an Clubs and a member of the Jordanian national team, citing financial disagreements.

Team coach Mohamed Dehelis emphasized the urgent need for a defender and has been reviewing CVs to identify the best-suited candidate.

Currently, "Orange" boasts four foreign players: Algerian Reda Bencha, Brazilian Rafael Guimaraes ("Dodo"), Jordanian Ahmed Arsan, and Colombian Hansel Zapata. Kazma recently strengthened its squad with Al-Nasr's Mishaal Al-Shammari and extended contracts with team captain Nasser Al-Faraj, Sharida Al-Shraida, Mohamed Al-Azmi, and goalkeeper Faisal Al-Subaie.

The Al-Tadamon Club delegation heads to Alexandria, Egypt, for a training camp ahead of the 2024-2025 season. Returning to the Zain Premier League, Al-Tadamon aims to secure a successful season and avoid relegation.

Under the leadership of Portuguese coach Joao Motta, assisted by national coach Jamal Al-Qabandi, Al-Tadamon has bolstered its roster with local and international talent. International signings include Chadian professionals Casimir Ninga, Portuguese Boubakar Djalo, and Senegalese trio Aboubacar Keita, Mami Saher, and Ibrahim Gueye.

Domestically, Al-Tadamon has secured Abdullah Al-Enezi from Al-Qadisiyah and other players from various clubs. The team plans to play four friendly matches during their camp before returning home in late July.

Meanwhile, the Al-Qadisiyah delegation has arrived in Cairo for a preparatory camp scheduled until the end of the month. The team will engage in three friendly matches as part of their preparation under the guidance of coach Mohamed Al-Mashaan. Al-Qadisiyah will participate in the Gulf

SOCCER

Club Championship after a lengthy absence and commence their local season against Kuwait on August 8 in the Zain Premier League.

In other news, Al-Kuwait has resumed daily training following a successful friendly match against Turkey's Amed FK, which ended with a 2-0 victory for Al-Abyad. The match was part of its training camp in Turkey as it prepares for the upcoming season.



Kazma coach Mohamed Dehelis.



Spain's Mikel Oyarzabal, (center), scores his side's second goal during the final match between Spain and England at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Berlin, Germany. (AP)

Sports

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Messi exits final with apparent leg injury

Argentina win back-to-back Copa America titles

MIAMI GARDENS, July 15, (AP): Lionel Messi pumped his arms. The trophy bounced up and down in his grasp. Tears of frustration from an hour or so earlier had turned to laughs and hugs for the two-time Copa America champion and World Cup winner.

Messi was forced to watch much of the second half and extra time because of a leg injury. Still, Argentina won its second straight Copa America championship, beating Colombia 1-0 on Lautaro Martínez's 112th-minute goal.

"Leo is the greatest player in history," Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni said through an interpreter. "He never wants to leave the pitch. He has a swollen ankle and wants to keep playing. I prefer those players. He wants to play not because he is egotistical or selfish. He wants to keep playing because he doesn't want to leave his teammates. ... He was born to be on the pitch."

Messi appeared to sustain a non-contact injury while running and falling in the 64th minute. The eight-time Ballon d'Or winner covered his face with his hands as he sat on the bench and sobbed.

Martínez later ran to that bench to hug his 37-year-old captain after the goal that propelled Argentina to its record 16th Copa title.

Appearing to be limping after the final whistle sounded well past midnight, Messi beckoned for his senior teammates to lift the trophy with him: 36-year-old Nicolás Ottamendi and Ángel Di María, who is retiring from the national team. As white confetti cascaded, the trio hugged.

SOCCER

"The truth is, it's hard to describe," Di María said. "It was written like that. I told the guys last night at dinner that I dreamt it. That's why I said it was my last Copa America. I dreamt we made it to the final and we won it so I could go out this way."

"I'll be always grateful to this generation who gave me everything, helped me win what I always wanted and today, I am leaving like this," Di María said. "It could not be better."

In a match that started 1 hour, 22 minutes late because of crowd trouble at Hard Rock Stadium, Argentina won its third straight major title following the 2021 Copa America and 2022 World Cup and matched Spain, which won the 2008 and 2012 European Championships around the 2010 World Cup.

Argentina also stopped Colombia's 28-game unbeaten streak dating to a 1-0 loss to Albiceleste in a February 2022 World Cup qualifier, also on a Martínez goal.

Martínez entered in the 97th minute Sunday and scored from Giovanni Lo Celso's perfect pass after Leandro Paredes stripped the ball from a Colombian with a sliding tackle near the center stripe. Paredes exchanged passes with Martínez, then threaded the ball to Lo Celso, who one-timed a through ball as Martínez sprinted past defender Carlos Cuesta.

Martínez ran onto the ball, took a touch that sent him into the penalty area and struck a right-foot shot through the upraised arms of sliding goalkeeper Camilo Vargas for his 29th international goal, his tournament-high fifth.

Colombia coach Néstor Lorenzo said many Colombia players finished with severe cramping. Temperatures were in the upper 80s with humidity around 73%.

"It is not easy to play a final. It's not easy for anyone," Lorenzo said through an interpreter. "They played six matches in 21 days and started feeling the results. They all left feeling cramps, some of them in both legs. They all left the pitch feeling the wear down and the tiredness."

Making his 39th and possibly last Copa America appearance, Messi had one goal in the tournament. He went down in the 36th minute after his left ankle was caught by Santiago Arias but walked back onto the field three minutes later.

Messi looked to the bench as soon as he fell to the field in the second half, appearing to know his tournament was over. He took off his right boot as he walked off and slammed it in frustration, and his ankle appeared to swell.

With his right foot bare, he stood by the bench and raised his arms while teammates ran onto the field when Martínez scored.

The start was delayed from 8 p.m. EDT to 9:22 p.m. because of crowd control issues outside the stadium, including troves of fans breaching security gates at a venue to be used for the 2026 World Cup.

Days after Uruguay players were involved in a brawl with Colombia fans following their semifinal match in Charlotte, North Carolina, video showed fans climbing fences and railings to get inside the championship match, with officials unable to keep track of who had purchased tickets and who didn't.



Argentina's Lionel Messi holds the trophy as celebrating with teammates after defeating Colombia in the Copa America final soccer match in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

Real Madrid back to work

MADRID, July 15, (Xinhua): Real Madrid begin training for the 2024-25 season on Monday, looking to repeat last season's domestic and European double and with an attack that looks on paper to be arguably the best in Europe.

Kylian Mbappe will be presented as a new Real Madrid player in a packed Santiago Bernabeu Stadium on Tuesday, while 17-year-old Brazilian international Endrick will become another new arrival for the coming season after celebrating his 18th birthday next week.

SOCCER

They join a side that already contains Vinicius Jr, Rodrygo, Brahim Diaz and Jude Bellingham, with Turkish international Arda Guler also available after impressing at the end of his first, injury-hit season at the club.

It's going to be a slow start for coach Carlo Ancelotti, however, the European Championship and Copa America mean he only has six first-team players available for the first day back to work.

A fit-again Thibaut Courtois, Fran Garcia, Lucas Vazquez, Jesus Vallejo, Dani Ceballos and Brahim take to the pitch at their Valdebebas training ground, with members of the Real Madrid B-team (Real Madrid Castilla)



Kylian Mbappe of France reacts after losing a semifinal match between Spain and France at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Munich, Germany. (AP)

making up the numbers.

Only two players have left the squad in the close season, with forward Joselu moving to Qatar and experienced Spain international defender Nacho Fernandez going to play in Saudi Arabia.

Mbappe and Endrick should more than cover from Joselu, although the club may consider moving into the transfer market to replace Nacho, especially as it's not certain when David Alaba will recover after his knee injury he suffered last season.

Spain win record fourth Euro title as England suffer another painful loss



Spain's Alvaro Morata holds the trophy as he celebrates with his teammates after winning the final match between Spain and England at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Berlin, Germany. (AP)

Oyarzabal the unlikely match-winner

BERLIN, July 15, (AP): Spain is the king of European soccer for a record fourth time. For England, it's another agonizing near-miss in the team's decades-long tale of underachievement.

Completing a tournament the team dominated from start to finish, Spain beat England 2-1 in the European Championship final with Mikel Oyarzabal the unlikely match-winner in the 86th minute.

Oyarzabal, a backup striker who came on as a substitute for captain Alvaro Morata, slid in to poke home a left-wing cross by Marc Cucurella, just when the game at Berlin's Olympiastadion seemed destined for extra time.

England, the birthplace of soccer, is still without a major title in the men's game since winning the 1966 World

Cup and its players watched on forlornly as Morata raised aloft the silver trophy to backdrop of confetti and fireworks inside the stadium built for the 1936 Olympics.

Add 2024 to the titles won by Spain in 1964, 2008 and 2012.

Lamine Yamal, the prodigy who turned 17 on Saturday and is the youngest player to have appeared at a European Championship, set up Wil-

SOCCER

liams' goal with an inside run before passing across the face of the area. The two wingers have become the poster boys of an exciting, multicultural team that reflects Spain's changing demographics.

Yamal's mother is from Equatorial Guinea and his father is from Morocco, while the 22-year-old Williams has Ghanaian parents who made the long journey to Europe looking for a better

life. To make it to Spain, they had to ride on the back of a crowded truck and walk barefoot through the Sahara desert.



England's Ollie Watkins, (left), duels for the ball with Spain's Dani Carvajal during the final match between Spain and England at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Berlin, Germany. (AP)

Unlike his brother Inaki, who is a Ghana international, Nico chose to play for Spain and will now be regarded as a national hero there.

Spain is back as a major player in senior soccer after winning both the Women's World Cup - also against England - and the men's UEFA Nations League in 2023.

Since 2001, Spanish men's teams have won 23 consecutive major finals in club and international soccer.

Spain won all seven games at this European Championship - an unprecedented feat - and broke the record for goals scored in a single tournament, with 15.

There were joyous scenes after the final whistle, with defender Dani Carvajal piled on by jubilant teammates after slumping to the ground. Spain coach Luis de la Fuente was thrown into the air by his players. Both Cucurella and Yamal led Spain's players in jumping over the advertising boards to reach the red-and-yellow-clad Spanish fans in the stadium's east end.

After getting his medal, the teenager turned and shook his fist in celebration, stuck his tongue out and showed off a beaming grin. By then, Yamal and his team mates were wearing Spain jerseys with "Kings of Europe" and the number "4" on the back.

Meanwhile, fans who had watched the game on a big screen in Madrid celebrated wildly, chanting "champions, champions" in Spanish. It was a great sporting day for the nation, with Carlos Alcaraz winning the Wimbledon men's singles title for a second straight year hours before the Euro 2024 final.

As for England, the men's team has now lost back-to-back Euro finals - it was defeated in a penalty shootout by Italy on home soil in the final in 2021 - and this was another painful loss for a team that will have gone six decades without a major title by the next World Cup.

England's women have been more successful, though, winning the European Championship in 2021 and reaching the World Cup final two years later.