



ELECTRICITY DEMAND HITS HISTORIC PEAK AT 16,810 MEGAWATTS

Kuwait adopts scheduled power cuts

Severe heat, rising humidity expected this weekend

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has announced its plan to take various measures to maintain the stability of the electricity network including the implementation of programmed power cut offs, lasting between one to a maximum of two hours.

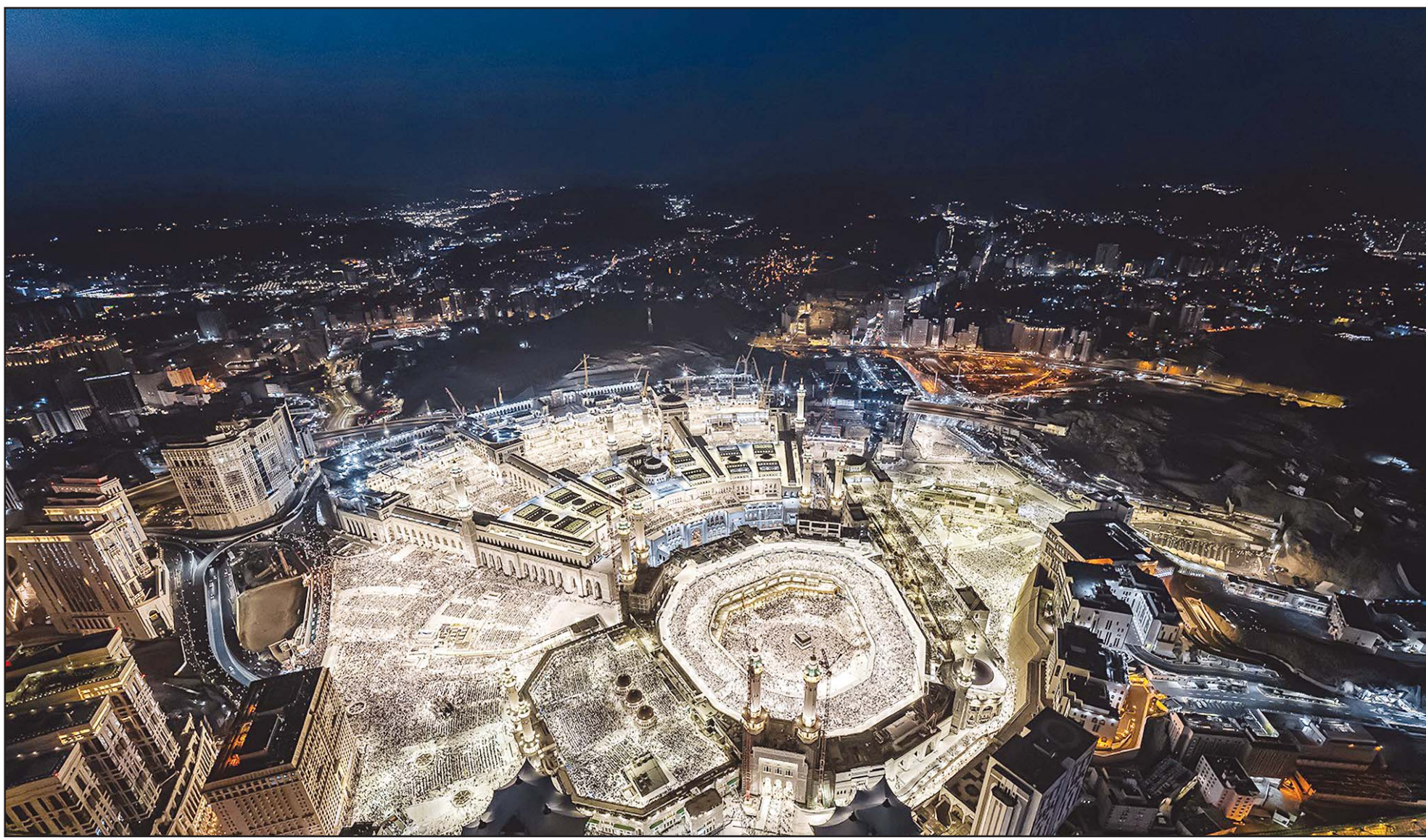
The ministry also urged the public to rationalize their electricity consumption during peak hours – from 11:00

am to 5:00 pm – in order to reduce the power load. It pointed out this will minimize the need for programmed power cut offs and guarantee the stability of the electricity network, indicating that similar measures will be taken again to stabilize the electricity network if the need arises.

Following are the areas and blocks that will be affected:

- Qibla: 3 and 4
- Khaldiya: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6
- Manqaf: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Raqqah: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6
- Rumaithiya: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9

- Salwa: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12
- Salmiya: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9
- Shuwaikh: 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7
- Abdullah Al-Mubarak: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Jabriya: A, B, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9
- Yarmouk: 1, 2, 3 and 4
- Farwaniya: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6
- Khaitan: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
- Andalous: 1, 2 and 3
- Sabah Al-Nasser: 1, 2 and 3
- Dasman: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Daiya: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Rawda: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Surra: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6
- Nuzha: 1, 2 and 3
- Abdullah Al-Salem Suburb: 1, 2, 3 and 4
- Qurtuba: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Rahan: 2, 3 and 6
- Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh: 1, 2, 3, 4, 15, 16, 17, 21 and 23
- Omariya: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Ardiya: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Regae: 1, 2, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15
- Adailiya: 1 and 2
- Faiba: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9
- Qadsiya: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9
- Mansouriyah: 1 and 2
- Shaima: 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9
- Sabhan: 1 and 2
- Mahbula: 1, 2, 6 and 7
- Fahheel: 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 32, 34, 69, 71, 72 and 73
- Umm Al-Hayman: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8
- Jaber Al-Ali: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
- Sabah Al-Ahmad: Sector B, C and D
- Old Jahra: 41, 65 and 87
- Jahra: 4, 5, 6, 7, 28, 29, 92 and 93
- South Jahra: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
- Youn: 1 and 2
- Waha: 2 and 3
- Riqqa: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
- Hadia: 1, 2, 3 and 4
- Abu Halifa: 1 and 2
- Fintas: 1 and 2
- Sabah Al-Salem: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13
- Messila: M12, M11 and M10
- Adan: 6, 7 and 8
- Seville: 1 and 2
- Rabiah: 1, 2 and 3
- Rehab: 1, 2 and 3



An exclusive KUNA photo of the Grand Mosque in Makkah taken from atop the tower. – See Page 4

KUNA photo

Tighter data control eyed

Civil ID crucial for Kuwait security: Interior Minister

KUWAIT CITY, June 20, (KUNA): Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf Saud Al-Sabah affirmed today the crucial role of the civil ID card as a primary source of security information essential for government operations. He emphasized the government's ability to enact legislation aimed at regulating work environments, removing obstacles, and advancing the country's interests.

The statement was issued by the General Department of Security Relations and Media at the Ministry of Interior following Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf's chairing of a meeting held at the Public Authority for Civil Information. The meeting was attended by former Minister of Trade and Industry Abdullah Al-Joan and representatives from Civil Information, the Public Authority for Manpower, Kuwait Municipality, the Kuwait Fire Force, and the Ministry of Civil Information. The Ministry of Interior was represented by the Public Security and Residency and Nationality Affairs sectors.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf emphasized the need for a comprehensive vision to achieve seamless coordination among relevant authorities, ensuring data sharing from a unified source and continuous data updates. Tightening control over this information aims to enhance security effectiveness and ensure accuracy in achieving public safety.

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Mol photo
Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf Saud Al-Sabah chairs a meeting at the Public Authority for Civil Information.

Newswatch

BAGHDAD: Three Islamic State (IS) militants were killed on Thursday in two airstrikes in the northern province of Kirkuk, the Iraqi military said.

Based on intelligence reports, Iraqi warplanes carried out an airstrike at 6:30 a.m. local time (0330 GMT) in the rugged area of Wadi al-Shay, southwest of the namesake provincial capital Kirkuk, leaving three IS militants killed, according to a statement from the Security Media Cell, a media outlet affiliated with the Iraqi Joint Operations Command. (Xinhua)

NEW DELHI: A monthlong heat wave across swathes of India has killed more than 100 people and led to over 40,000 suspected cases of heat stroke in the past three and a half months, according to data from India's Health Ministry.

Between March 1 and June 18, 110 people in India died after suffering heat strokes, according to Health Ministry data provided to The Associated Press. Officials from India's Health Ministry and its subsidiary body, the National Centre for Disease Control, which compiled the figures, declined to comment. (AP)



Eng. Taqj

new strategies to confront food security challenges by diversifying food sources, promoting sustainable agriculture, improving management of water resources, and encouraging

1,618 emergencies during Eid Al-Adha

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: Director of the Medical Emergency Department at the Ministry of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Shatti has announced that the department dealt with 1,618 reports during the Eid Al-Adha holiday – 335 reports per day including 11 birth reports and 27 reports of cases transported by air ambulance.

In a statement to the newspaper, Al-Shatti disclosed that the Operations Unit in the department received 1,731 reports from Friday to Tuesday. He added the medical teams dealt with 1,618 reports; transported 1,143 individuals to nearby hospitals and health centers; and handled 475 cases on-site.

He affirmed that the emergency medical teams dealt with a variety of cases as follows: 61 fire incidents, 112 road accidents, 180 respiratory disease cases, 211 internal medicine cases, 601 circulatory system cases, 58 psychological cases, 74 diabetes cases, 52 fall cases, 10 poisoning and drug cases and 39 cases of quarrels.

On air ambulance cases, he said seven cases were treated on site of the

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Promoting sustainable agriculture key

Kuwait urged to boost food security amid threats

awareness of healthy nutrition methods by enhancing investments in the infrastructure of agriculture, food industry, and livestock sectors.

The concept of food security includes economic, social, cultural, environmental and political aspects, which calls for the need to move from the stage of adopting public policies to sustainable food systems aimed at ensuring the four elements of food security; availability, access, benefit and stability.

Meanwhile, the World Bank included in a report published on January 29, 2024 on its official website, the food security issue among the eight critical challenges facing the world that must be addressed on a broad international scale.

The Kuwaiti Cabinet had decided in August 2022 to establish (the Supreme National Committee for Strengthening the Food and Water Security System), which include competencies from inside and outside the country as advisors to prepare and address technicalities and recommendations regarding food and water security.

In February 2023, the committee approved the broad outlines of the strategy for achieving food, water, and drug security in Kuwait, which included 21 basic pillars and 65 initiatives, with eight pillars and 28 security initiatives, in order to reach the strategic goal of strengthening the food security system.

In such international circumstances, there is an urgent need to adopt an integrated strategy for food security that includes dimensions such as strengthening the national food basket through expanding regional and international agricultural investments and owning agricultural lands, livestock, and fisheries in countries with fertile regions.

In that context, the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for

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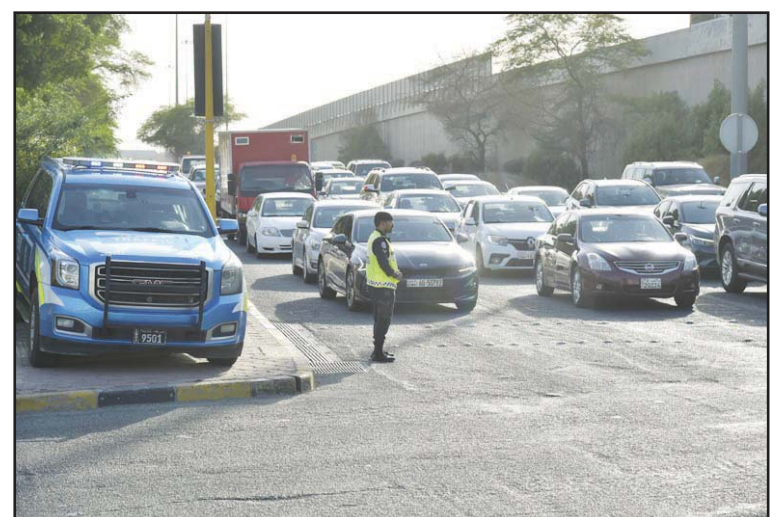
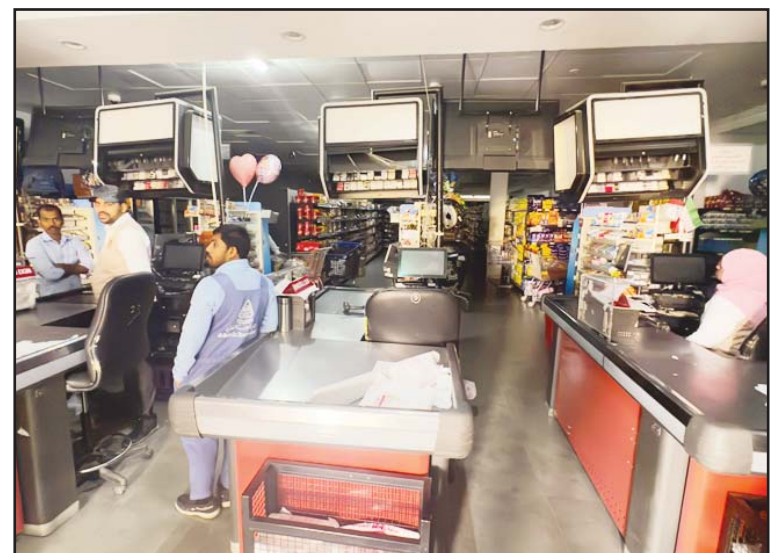


Photo by Samer Shiker
A traffic enforcer directs vehicles during a power outage on Wednesday, as 48 traffic signals malfunctioned. – See Page 3



People are seen inside a supermarket during a power outage in the Capital Governorate, Kuwait, on June 19, 2024. (Xinhua)

Kuwait inflation rises 3.17% on high food costs

KUWAIT CITY, June 20, (KUNA): Data from the Kuwaiti Central Bureau of Statistics revealed that consumer price indexes (inflation) increased by 3.17 percent in May on an annual basis.

In a statement to Kuwait News

Agency (KUNA), the Bureau noted that the inflation rate in Kuwait also rose by 0.15 percent in May compared to April.

This annual increase in inflation is primarily due to higher prices in key categories that influence the in-

dex, particularly food, clothing, and education.

Specifically, the food and beverages index saw a 6.6 percent rise in May compared to the same month in 2023, while the clothing and apparel index increased by 5.6 percent annually.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:13 Asr 15:23
 Sunrise .. 04:49 Maghrib .. 18:50
 Zohr 11:49 Isha 20:23

Local

BIOMETRIC/FINGERPRINT APPOINTMENT: <https://meta.e.gov.kw/En/>

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Very hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind changing to southeasterly wind later on, with speeds of 08-45 with a chance for rising dust over western areas.

Weather

By Night: Hot to rather hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light to variable wind, with speeds of 08-32 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	49	36
Kuwait Airport	49	37
Abdaly	49	32
Jahra	50	36
Salmiyah	46	36
Nuwaisib	46	34
Wafra	49	35

Dr Al-Mudhaf holds talks with ambassadors of both countries

Kuwait discusses trade enterprises with Germany, India

KUWAIT CITY, June 20, (KUNA): Minister of Finance Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf held talks on Thursday with the German and Indian ambassadors to the country on the historic relations and trade enterprises between Kuwait and the two friendly states.

Dr. Al-Mudhaf, also the Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, held the discussions separately with the German and Indian ambassadors, respectively Hans Christian and Dr. Adarsh Swaika, according to a statement released by the Ministry of Finance.

It quoted Minister Al-Mudhaf as saying that his talks with the two envoys dealt with accrediting bills, paying for trade transactions in local currencies in India

and Germany and prospects of shifting to e-payments.

The talks also covered possible launch of Kuwaiti investments in the two friendly countries, establishing strategic investment relations in food security and renewable energy, the statement said, adding that hurdles facing Indian companies in the country were also broached with New Delhi's envoy.

The statement also quoted Minister Al-Mudhaf as underlining significance of the water sewage project in Umm Al-Haiman, indicating that the state was seeking to execute it rapidly, affirming that the venture bonded the private and public sectors.

NBTC expresses 'condolences' to Mangaf fire victims' families

Management supports family members of deceased employees

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: Nasser Mohammed Al-Baddah and Partner General Trading and Contracting Company (NBTC) has expressed condolences to the families of its 49 employees who died in the Mangaf building fire.

In a press statement, the company said: "We are deeply saddened by the tragic fire incident that occurred in one of our employees' residences in Mangaf which, unfortunately, led to the death of 49 employees. We offer sincere condolences to the families of the deceased employees.

"Out of the 49 employees who perished in the tragic fire incident; 45 were from India, three from the Philippines and one whose nationality has yet to be determined. The Forensics Department is working hard to identify the deceased.

"Among the 45 Indians; 24 were from Kerala, seven from Tamil Nadu, three each from Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, two each from Bihar and Odisha, and one each from Jharkhand, Karnataka, Punjab and West Bengal. Results of the preliminary investigations revealed that the cause of the fire was electrical short circuit.

Accident

"The residential building consists of six floors, 24 apartments and a total of 72 rooms housing 196 employees at the time of the accident. So far, 130 employees are in safe condition, including about 40 injured who were discharged from different hospitals. They are currently housed in fully furnished apartments with a resident assistant to serve them. A total of 17 injured employees were admitted to Adan, Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Jaber Al-Ahmad hospitals. All of them are in stable condition and undergoing the necessary treatment until they recover.

"The concerned department is distributing the equivalent of \$10,000 to each of the families of the deceased employees from India as initial financial assistance; and similarly to the families of deceased employees from the Philippines. In addition, a total of INR 25,000 has been distributed to cover funeral expenses. The department will also disburse the deceased employees' salary, other entitlements, compensation and life insurance (48 times their basic salary) for family members upon receiving the certificates of legal heirs. It also provided all forms of medical assistance to the survivors and an amount equivalent to \$2,500 for the injured employees. It paid KD50 to each of the employees housed in the building; in addition to basic necessities like clothing and toiletries. Psychological counseling sessions were conducted for all survivors by a psychological expert.

"We are also in the process of submitting visa applications to bring in the first-degree relatives of seriously injured employees. We intend to bring their family members to the State of Kuwait to provide them with the required psychological support.

"Moreover, we have provided airline tickets to relatives who wish to go to India to attend the funeral of the deceased employees.

Support

"The management has decided to support the family members of the deceased employees by providing job opportunities for their first-degree relatives, educational assistance for their children, housing for homeless employees and other financial support whenever necessary.

"We would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government of the State of Kuwait, including the Ministry of Interior and the authorities of the Ministry of Health for their un-



PM Diwan photos

Top and above: Some photos from the Cabinet weekly meeting on Wednesday.

Kuwait Cabinet hails successful Hajj season

Council of Ministers assigns minister to find solutions to recent power outages

KUWAIT CITY, June 20, (KUNA): The Council of Ministers convened on Wednesday at Bayan Palace under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Following the session, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sharida Abdullah Al-Muasherji made the following statements:

The Council extended congratulations to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and Crown Prince and Prime Minister Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, and the government of Saudi Arabia on the successful conclusion of this year's Hajj season.

Council praised the exceptional efforts and hospitality extended to pilgrims throughout their stay in the Kingdom, highlighting the season's organization, security measures, and medical care, which facilitated safe and comfortable performance of Hajj rituals amid advanced facilities and continuous improvements in Hajj services. The Council prayed for acceptance of all sincere prayers and deeds during these blessed

days, invoking blessings upon Saudi Arabia and its people under the wise leadership of His Majesty.

Additionally, the Council recognized the commendable efforts of the Kuwaiti Hajj delegation, including officials, volunteers, and medical staff, for their dedication in ensuring Kuwaiti pilgrims could perform Hajj rituals smoothly.

Furthermore, the Council reviewed the swift response and effective measures taken by the Ministry of Interior and the General Fire Force in response to the tragic fire incident in Mangaf, expressing appreciation for their efforts alongside other involved entities such as the Ministry of Health and Kuwait Municipality.

The Council also commended the proactive inspection campaigns led by the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, aimed at addressing violations related to illegal properties and buildings across various regions. This initiative involved collaboration from the Ministry of Public Works, Minister of

State for Municipal Affairs Dr. Noura Muhammad Al-Mashaan, and officials from several government agencies to enforce regulations and hold accountable those responsible for violations.

In a gesture reflecting Kuwait's humanitarian role, the Council lauded His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's initiative to provide financial aid to the families of fire victims and arrange for the repatriation of their remains, expressing heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families.

During the session, the Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr. Mahmoud Abdulaziz Bushehri briefed the Council on the causes of recent power outages in several governorates. He cited the strain on electricity generation stations during peak demand periods exacerbated by high temperatures. The Council tasked the minister with addressing the issue and implementing solutions, including upcoming maintenance projects to enhance the efficiency of power generation plants approved earlier this month.

to all media professionals in Kuwait and other countries for their support.

"Lastly, the management would like to commend the employees of Nasser Mohammed Al-Baddah and Partner General Trading and Contracting Company for their immediate response and action during the emergency that the company witnessed."

wavering support and assistance. "We also express our sincere thanks to the Government of India, the Government of the Philippines, the Indian Embassy in Kuwait and the Embassy of the Philippines in Kuwait for their continued support; as well as the support we received from the governments of the states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra

Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Punjab and West Bengal.

"We express our gratitude to all firefighting and rescue teams, Kuwait Police, medical and non-medical staff in various hospitals, ambulance staff, members of the Nursing Association and different care associations in Kuwait.

"We extend our sincere thanks



The Indian Ambassador to Kuwait HE Dr Adarsh Swaika called on HE Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf, Minister of Finance & Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment. The discussion focused on cooperation in the financial sector, as well as some other areas of mutual interest.

Aim to provide integrated health services

MPW advances with design of world's largest children's hospital; KD 440mn

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: The Ministry of Public Works will soon complete the design of the children's hospital -- the largest of its kind in the world -- with a capacity of 800 beds and an estimated contract value of KD440 million, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources said the date of launching the public tender for the project will most likely be announced by the end of June, which indicates the project is entering the implementation phase.

Sources also revealed that the project site is in Sabah Health District and it aims to provide integrated health services for children. Sources stated the hospital will be equipped with the most modern furniture, devices and medical equipment; indicating the project site measures 121,000 square meters with a building area of 690,000 square meters.

Sources pointed out the ministry is making its mark through this pioneering project in terms of improving healthcare infrastructure and affirms its commitment to provide the best services to the community.

Sources added the project is a strategic step towards improving healthcare for children in the region, as it is expected to be a turning point in providing high-quality healthcare to children and their families. Sources said the completion of the project design indicates a clear development in the government's plans to improve health

infrastructure, and provide integrated and advanced medical services.

Sources went on to say that the new children's hospital is expected to have a positive impact on the local economy by generating job opportunities and attracting investments in the health sector; considering it reflects the government's commitment to improve the healthcare sector, and enhances public trust in the local health system and efforts made to meet the needs of the community.

According to sources, the project is a step towards improving healthcare for children; which enhances the health and well-being of families and contributes to easing the burdens of the family and society in general. It also provides the opportunity for local and international companies to participate in implementing the project and equipping the hospital.

Sources expect the project to be a model of modern and advanced hospitals, which will attract medical tourists and affirm the country's position as a leading healthcare destination. Sources added this project could contribute to stimulating innovation in the field of children's healthcare and finding modern technological solutions to improve the quality of healthcare. This is a huge opportunity to train and qualify health personnel to develop their skills and improve the quality of medical services in the country, sources concluded.

500 violators being received daily

Security committee facilitates departure procedures for Residency Law violators

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: A joint security committee has been formed to complete the transactions of those who violated the Residency Law, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting a source from the security sector.

According to the source, the committee members are from the Residence Affairs General Department, Residence Investigation General Department and Criminal Evidence Department in the Ministry of Interior.

The daily's staff recently toured the Farwaniya Residency Affairs Administration to observe the processing of transactions for violators who wish to leave the country.

A security source told the daily that a violator must submit his new passport or temporary travel document to the committee; then his fingerprints are taken by forensic evidence officers, the new passport or travel document is authenticated by investigation officers from the Residence Investigation General Department and the case is filed. Any arrest and subpoena orders related to Residency Law violation

only is cancelled, and then the violator goes to the concerned staff to enter his passport or travel document in the computer system so he can leave the country legally.

The source added that the committee receives about 500 violators per day in the Farwaniya and Mubarak Al-Kabeer Residency Affairs administrations; indicating that there is a high demand among violators to complete their procedures to leave the country. He also affirmed the cooperation of the embassies of the concerned countries, which have started issuing temporary travel documents and renewing the expired passports of their nationals, so they can legalize their status.

In the Hawally and the Capital Residence Affairs administrations; transactions were completed under the field supervision of Hawally Residence Affairs Administration Director Brigadier General Yousef Al-Fahd and Capital Residency Affairs Administration Director Brigadier Mubarak Al-Hajri.

'Strict adherence to existing laws can help prevent future disasters'

"THE saying 'Prevention is better than cure' is familiar yet enduring. It once graced the covers of our school notebooks, a daily reminder that prevention yields substantial benefits at minimal cost," columnist and Counselor **Adel Boutros** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Adhering to health guidelines, like ensuring proper ventilation and wearing masks around those with cold, shields us from illness without financial burden. Conversely, neglecting such precautions invites illness, halting work and incurring medical expenses. This principle extends beyond health to all aspects of life.

"Consider neglecting car maintenance -- a choice risking engine or vital part damage. Here, the law mandates preventive measures to avert harm. Ignoring these invites danger and legal repercussions.

"Recently, tragedy struck in Kuwait. A fire at dawn on June 12, 2024, claimed 49 lives and left others hospitalized. The fire's origin, a short circuit in the building guard room, sparked devastation. The Ministry of Health remains vigilant, coordinating hospital care and offering specialized medical support, including psychological aid to the injured and their families.

"Such events remind us of the critical need for prevention, not just reaction. The law plays a pivotal role, ensuring adherence to safety protocols to prevent disasters. This vigilance safeguards lives and livelihoods, reinforcing the wisdom of the proverb in every sphere of our lives.

"We shouldn't dwell excessively on the tragic event now under investigation and judicial review in Kuwait. The authorities are actively identifying those responsible and preparing to enforce appropriate accountability measures.

"However, our focus should now shift to preventing future disasters. The solution is straightforward: strict adherence to existing laws without compromise or negligence. These laws comprehensively guide property owners, engineers, contractors, lessors, and tenants on maintaining building safety and proper usage. Any gaps in these regulations can be addressed through timely amendments.

"The real issue lies in implementation. Laws outline responsibilities and penalties to protect occupants and prevent harm. By faithfully observing these regulations, everyone can safeguard themselves and others from harm.

"In the West, recognizing the critical role of property management in ensuring safety and minimizing risks, laws mandate property owners to engage specialized management firms which vet tenants, oversee property use to prevent disruptions, and handle various issues like parking and waste management.

"By embracing such practices, Kuwait could enhance safety standards and prevent future tragedies. The key lies not just in having robust laws but in effectively applying and enforcing them to protect lives and promote community well-being.

"The property management company offers a comprehensive suite of services designed to optimize property ownership and tenant satisfaction.

"Beyond basic management tasks, they excel in marketing properties, assisting owners in maximizing profits from sales or rentals. This includes everything from photography and crafting compelling advertisements to ensuring timely rent collection, crucial for maintaining stable cash flow.

"Moreover, the company acts as a buffer between landlords and tenants, handling tenant communications, rent collection, and potentially difficult situations like evictions.

"They meticulously explain lease terms, ensuring tenants understand their responsibilities and the consequences of any violations. This proactive approach not only fosters compliance but also mitigates legal risks.

"Evacuation procedures, governed by stringent laws, represent another vital responsibility of the management company. Their expertise ensures adherence to legal requirements, safeguarding both landlord interests and tenant safety. By entrusting such matters to professionals, landlords avoid the complexities and potential pitfalls of managing these processes independently.

"A dedicated property manager oversees tenant relationships, leveraging deep knowledge of landlord-tenant laws to preempt legal issues and efficiently resolve disputes. This expertise not only saves time and energy but also safeguards long-term financial interests.

"They manage regular maintenance and repairs through established networks of reliable contractors, to ensure the property remain in optimal condition.

"In essence, hiring a property management company goes beyond mere oversight -- it ensures comprehensive care, legal compliance, and efficient operations. This partnership allows property owners to focus on strategic decisions while their investments are expertly managed and protected.

"Hiring a property management company offers significant relief from the day-to-day burdens of property ownership. It eliminates the need to handle urgent situations like late-night emergencies, evictions, and tenant disputes, as well as the administrative tasks of rent collection, maintenance coordination, and paperwork.

"Additionally, property managers have established networks of contractors, ensuring timely and quality repairs without the hassle of searching for suitable vendors.

"If Kuwait were to adopt legislation mandating professional property management services, it would enforce compliance with legal requirements for both landlords and tenants.

"This proactive approach would prevent many common issues and potential disasters stemming from non-compliance with property laws. By ensuring that all parties adhere to these regulations, the law would promote stability, safety, and fairness in the real estate sector.

"Such legislation would not only streamline property

management practices but also protect the interests of property owners and tenants alike. It would foster a more transparent and regulated rental market, enhancing overall confidence and efficiency in property transactions.

"Ultimately, adopting laws supporting professional property management could lead to a more resilient and sustainable real estate environment in Kuwait."

Also:

"June 19 holds profound significance for Kuwait, marking the day in 1961 when Prince Abdullah Al-Salem signed the agreement that ended British protectorate and granted Kuwait full independence," columnist **Dr Muhammad Al-Maqati** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"This historic event symbolizes Kuwait's unwavering determination to assert its national sovereignty, achieved after years of navigating complex geopolitical dynamics.

"Kuwait's history reflects a strategic balancing act, beginning with its administrative ties to the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century, which allowed autonomy while acknowledging Ottoman authority. As Western powers intensified their interests in the region during the 19th century, Kuwait became a focal point due to its strategic location and access to vital maritime routes.

"Amidst this geopolitical maneuvering, Kuwait forged protective agreements with Britain, first in the early 1800s and later solidified in the 1899 agreement. These agreements were pivotal in maintaining stability and fostering a conducive environment for Kuwait's development and growth well into the mid-20th century.

"The 1961 declaration of independence marked a culmination of Kuwait's efforts to secure its autonomy and chart its own course in the international arena. It signifies Kuwait's resilience in safeguarding its identity and interests amidst external pressures and ambitions.

"Today, June 19 stands as a reminder of Kuwait's journey towards independence and its steadfast commitment to national sovereignty, echoing its historical resilience and strategic foresight in navigating global challenges.

"Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem's leadership marked a transformative era for Kuwait, characterized by the consolidation of national institutions and the establishment of modern governance frameworks. Under his guidance, Kuwait witnessed the formalization of executive, administrative, and judicial bodies, complemented by a robust legislative agenda that laid the foundation for the country's modern legal framework between 1954 and 1961.

"This culminated in the adoption of the Kuwaiti Constitution on November 11, 1962, following the termination of the Protectorate Agreement and Kuwait's attainment of full sovereign independence.

Sheikh Abdullah's leadership was pivotal in navigating challenges to Kuwait's sovereignty, particularly from neighboring Iraq. Through strategic diplomacy and the reinforcement of British protection, Kuwait successfully safeguarded its independence and territorial integrity.

"The observations of writer Hudson in 1978 underscore Kuwait's remarkable resilience and strategic diplomacy. Despite its modest size and location amidst powerful regional forces, Kuwait maintained a delicate balance in its international relations, preserving its unique identity as a beacon of freedom and prosperity in the Arab world.

"Kuwait became known for its commitment to Arab-Islamic values, its nationalistic spirit, and its role as a sanctuary for those seeking a better life and greater freedoms.

"However, the late 20th century brought new challenges. Kuwait faced increased pressures and attempts by neighboring countries to exert influence and alter its course. This led to periods of immigration and settlement by individuals hoping to contribute to Kuwait's development and protect its sovereignty.

"In essence, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem's legacy remains integral to Kuwait's modern identity—a testament to its resilience, commitment to freedom, and strategic diplomacy in safeguarding its national interests amidst regional complexities.

"Kuwait's recent history has been marked by significant challenges, including the treacherous Baathist invasion which tested its resolve.

"Through the wisdom of its leadership and the unwavering unity of its people, Kuwait emerged victorious, yet it faced ongoing issues with demographic integrity, including unauthorized naturalization and falsification of nationality. These practices infiltrated political, executive, and legislative institutions, posing serious threats that demanded decisive action to restore Kuwait's true identity and sovereignty.

"Since September and October 2020, under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, Kuwait embarked on a path of renewal and reform, akin to a second founding stage.

"He initiated comprehensive institutional and structural reforms, addressing critical issues to uphold Kuwait's constitutional and institutional integrity. Central to this effort was the purification of national identity from fraud, infiltration, and misrepresentation.

"These reforms were guided by a commitment to national unity and the supreme interest of the nation, ensuring stability and averting internal strife. The appointment of Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled as Crown Prince underscored a renewed sense of unity and allegiance among Kuwaiti citizens, reaffirming their support for the ruling family and their dedication to Kuwait's future.

"The ongoing efforts aim to safeguard Kuwait's national identity and preserve its distinct role in the Gulf and Arab world. They reflect a steadfast commitment to overcoming challenges and charting a course that ensures Kuwait remains a beacon of stability, prosperity, and Arab unity.

"May God protect Kuwait's leadership and guide them in their efforts to secure the nation's pride, identity, and prosperity for generations to come."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



Adel Boutros



Mol photo

Major General Khaled Fahad in a group photo during one of his visits.

Kuwait Fire Force chief visits fire stations

On the occasion of Eid Al-Adha, the Acting Commander of Kuwait Fire Force Major General Khaled Abdullah Fahad visited a number of fire stations, reports Al-Shahed daily.

Major General Khaled Abdullah Fahad conveyed Eid greetings from the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister

of Defense and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah, and commended them for the excellent efforts they exert to protect people's lives and properties.

Major General Khaled Abdullah Fahad also visited the Central Operations Department, Al-Soor Fire Station and Al-Tahrir Fire Station.

He expressed his pride at the advanced level and full readiness of Kuwait Fire Force.

Major General Khaled Abdullah Fahad was accompanied by the Director of Public Relations and Security Media Department Brigadier Mohammad Bader Al-Ghareeb during his visits.

Man sentenced to 22 years in jail with hard labor for killing his wife

Court sentences ex-MP to two years in prison

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: The Criminal Court has sentenced a man to a total of 22 years in prison with hard labor for beating his wife to death in Omariya, consuming drugs and destroying police vehicles.

Case files indicate that the court sentenced the man to 10 years in prison on the charges of battery without intent to kill and depriving the victim of her freedom. It also sentenced him to 10 years in prison for consuming hashish and psychotropic substances and two years for damaging police vehicles in his attempt to evade arrest.

It has been reported that Omariya witnessed the heinous murder of a 25-year-old Iraqi woman; as her husband, a 30-year-old Bedoun, brutally beat her up until she died. He dumped her body in front of Farwaniya Hospital and fled. The detectives arrested him after a marathon chase from the Jahra stables to Farwaniya, during which he damaged three police vehicles.

Ex-MP gets 2 year jail term: The Criminal Court sentenced former MP Hamad Al-Olayan to two years in prison with hard labor for interfering and challenging the powers of His Highness the Amir.

Al-Olayan appeared in court in the first trial session, during which he denied the charges of transgressing the powers of His Highness the Amir and criticizing His Highness' decisions.

The Public Prosecution charged Al-Olayan based on the fact that on April 15, 2024 in the Department of the State Security Service; he publicly and in writing challenged the rights and powers of His Highness the Amir, as well as defamed and

transgressed the authority of HH the Amir by posting certain phrases on his personal social media account, as indicated in the investigations.

□ □ □

Lawyer sentenced to 4 years jail:

The Criminal Court ruled to imprison a lawyer for four years with hard labor, confiscate his devices and close his account on charges of inciting others to overthrow the ruling system through the X platform, defaming HH the Amir and misusing the mobile phone.

The Public Prosecution had earlier charged the accused with inciting others to use force, calling for the overthrow of the government, insulting HH the Amir and misusing the mobile phone through his posts on his account on the social networking site X.

However, the accused denied the charges when he appeared in court, indicating that his account on X was hacked and he did not know who posted the statements in question.

□ □ □

4 held on kidnap, theft charge:

The Public Prosecution has ordered the detention of two Kuwaiti citizens -- one of them a Sheikh -- and two Egyptians, for kidnapping an Egyptian man, robbing his money, after impersonating personnel from the Criminal Investigations Department, reports Al-Rai daily.

The suspects reportedly stopped the victim while he was driving in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh area, forced him into their vehicle, stole his money (30 thousand Kuwaiti dinars) and drove away with him to the parking lot of the Al-Omariya Coop parking lot.

At this point the Sheikh got out of the vehicle with the stolen money and the others drove away with the victim as the latter struggled with the captors which eventually forced them to pull over and the victim managed to flee from the car and sought help of the passersby and the latter informed the operations department

of the Ministry of Interior.

The suspects were subsequently arrested and referred to the Public Prosecution and the latter ordered their detention pending investigation.

□ □ □

Worker run over, dies: Personnel from the Jahra Governorate Search and Investigation Department have arrested a young motorist for running over and killing a road worker, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily added, the mishap happened on the Fourth Ring Road towards Jahra.

The daily added, the suspect fled the scene and the incident but the men in uniform managed to arrest him and hand him over to the concerned authority.

□ □ □

Interpol arrests expat for murder:

Kuwait Interpol has successfully apprehended an expatriate who was wanted by Interpol for the murder of his compatriot in their home country, after which he fled to Kuwait, reports Al-Anba daily.

Upon receiving the Interpol report, security authorities identified the expatriate and located him in Salmiya, where he was arrested and then deported after taking necessary legal procedures.

□ □ □

Warning over 'luggage': The Drug Control General Department of the Ministry of Interior has warned individuals against accepting luggage from unknown people in order to avoid potential legal repercussions if the luggage contains prohibited substances, reports Al-Rai daily.

The department highlighted that some smugglers exploit the goodwill of innocent and naive individuals to carry out their illegal activities.

It warned that anyone found guilty of drug smuggling, whether directly or indirectly, on their own behalf or on behalf of others, will face severe penalties, including execution.

Crackdown on housing abuses in Hawally area

KUWAIT CITY, June 20:

The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah led a campaign in Hawally to ensure the removal of violations in residential buildings is proceeding as per plan, and that the law is enforced without exemptions, reports Al-Shahed daily.

This is part of the ongoing campaigns aimed at removing all violations in residential buildings.

In this regard, Sheikh Fahad affirmed that he will not be lenient with the violators who do not care about laborers' rights and focus only on benefiting financially.

He stressed that law will be imposed on all such cases without any exceptions.

Sheikh Fahad issued strict directives to remove all violations in residential buildings and rectify the situation in these violating buildings which are being used for unlicensed purposes.



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Security officers impound 10 vehicles

Power outage leads 48 traffic signals to malfunction

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: Over the past two days, security personnel impounded 10 vehicles wanted by judicial authorities as they were used in committing crimes.

A security source confirmed that

public security personnel and highway patrol officers referred these vehicles to the concerned authorities.

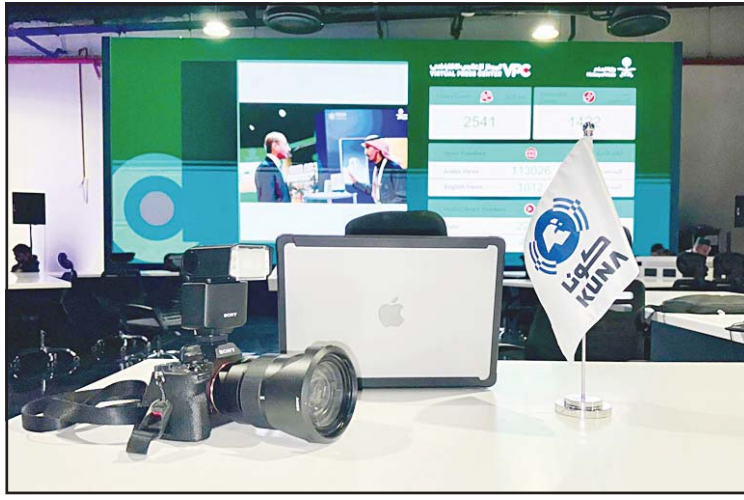
□ □ □

48 traffic signals malfunctioned:

According to informed sources, the Traffic Operations Room received numerous reports of 48 traffic signals that malfunctioned due to the power

outage on Wednesday, reports Al-Jarida daily.

They explained that emergency generators were used to repair 32 traffic signals, and patrols were dispatched to handle the remaining intersections, which were five in Ahmadi, three in Kuwait City, five in Mubarak Al-Kabeer, two in Hawally, and two in Farwaniya.



Kuwait News Agency at the Hajj Media Forum



The Hajj Media Forum.



The Clock Towers in the lens of KUNA.

MoCI's supply support shrinks by 14.35 percent in early 2024

Substantial cuts to basic goods, child nutrition aid

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: The total support disbursed by the Supply Department at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry saw a decline of 14.35 percent during the first four months of 2024, compared to the same period last year, and fell by about 19.1 million dinars from 133.2 million to 114.1 million, reports Al-Rai daily.

The official data revealed that the support disbursed on a monthly basis last April grew slightly by 0.2 percent and by about 52 thousand dinars, raising from 25.055 million in March to 25.107 million in April. In contrast, the support disbursed in April on an annual basis decreased by 40.7 percent and by about 17.23 million, up from 42.346 million in March 2023.

The number of cumulative ration cards increased in April on an annual basis by 3 percent, with an increase of 7.8 thousand cards from 257.3 thousand in April 2023 to 265.14



Ministry of Commerce and Industry's support disbursement trends.

thousand cumulative cards last April.

The number of individuals benefiting from the cumulative provision also decreased on an annual basis by 1.5 percent, by about 34 thousand beneficiaries, from 2.24 million beneficiaries in April 2023 to 2.205 million last April.

The support provided by the Supply Department in the Ministry of Commerce is divided into three main sections: basic materials, chil-

dren's milk and nutrients, and construction materials.

The total support disbursed for basic materials (combined) decreased during the 4 months of 2024 by 14.3 million dinars, or by 28.8 percent, from 49.6 million in the 4 months of 2023 to 35.3 million in the same period of 2024; it also decreased on a monthly basis by 0.35 percent, and by about 28 thousand from 7.961 million in March to 7.933 million in April.

The support spent on milk and child nutrition decreased by about 598 thousand dinars, or by 11.3 percent, from 5.28 million in 4 months of 2023 to 4.68 million in the same period of 2024. This comes with a decrease in support on a monthly basis by 13 percent, and by about 188 thousand, from 1.44 million in March to 1.251 million in April.

The support disbursed for construction materials decreased by about 4.1 million dinars, or by 5.3 percent, from 78.25 million in 4 months of 2023 to 74.07 million in the same period of 2024, while support increased on a monthly basis by 1.7 percent, and by about 268 thousand, from 15.65 million in March to 15.923 million in April.

Collaboration redefines media excellence

KUNA's extensive Hajj coverage shines

MAKKAH, June 20, (KUNA): Kuwait News Agency's (KUNA) unique and expansive coverage of the 2024 Hajj season in cooperation with Saudi Press Agency (SPA), highlighted the achievement of the media hub initiative.

KUNA's participation in the Hajj Media Forum, organized by the Saudi Ministry of Information, underscored the importance of media in covering the annual fifth pillar of Islam.

Furthermore, the hub was successful in its fruitful coverage and accessibility to religious, cultural, and educational sites within Makkah, with the help of the Saudi Ministry of Interior.

Moreover, international media personnel covered the Makkah Road Initiative; concerned with receiving and facilitating entry procedures of pilgrims into Saudi Arabia starting from their arrival at Jeddah's King Abdulaziz Airport.

Meanwhile, KUNA's media team was given access to a myriad of locations to view and record the sites and scenes of the faithful pilgrims performing religious rituals, as well as access to interview numerous officials on the preparation and organization of the recent Hajj season.

KUNA photos
Fahd Al-Aqran, Director of Saudi Press Agency (SPA)

Kuwaiti Hajj delegations were followed by KUNA throughout their stay, underlining Kuwaiti campaigns, directives, and helpful information to the Kuwaiti pilgrims.

In a statement to KUNA, Director of SPA Fahd Al-Aqran praised KUNA's cooperative efforts and expansive yet detailed coverage of the Hajj, which reflected the agency's professionalism and due diligence in being one of the most important news agencies in the region.



Part of the course 'Managing Cooperative Societies and Catering Branches' in cooperation with the Union of Cooperative Societies.

Young volunteers step up for crisis roles

PAY's 'Jahiz 2' training initiative ensures Kuwaiti youth emergency preparedness

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: The Public Authority for Youth's initiative, known as "Jahiz 2", has concluded its training phase aimed at preparing Kuwaiti youth to support government agencies during emergencies and crises, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Acting Deputy Director General, Walid Al-Ansari, highlighted that this national project is part of the Authority's strategic programs. It focuses on qualifying and training young Kuwaitis to handle various critical roles in times of crisis.

In a recent press statement, Al-Ansari emphasized the active participation of youth volunteers in several essential courses. These included "Gas Station Operations" in collaboration with the National Petroleum Corporation, "Cleaning Operations" with Kuwait Municipality, "Management of Cooperative Societies and Catering Branches" in partnership with the Union of Cooperative Societies, and "Bakery Operations" in cooperation with Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company.

Each course spanned a week, providing

valuable hands-on training for managing vital tasks during emergencies. Al-Ansari praised the commitment of the participating youth, noting their positive interaction with instructors and their strong dedication to serving their country. The initiative also received commendation for its collaboration with the General Administration of Civil Defense under the Ministry of Interior.

This partnership underscores the comprehensive approach taken by the Authority in preparing youth for crisis management scenarios. Al-Ansari affirmed the Authority's ongoing commitment to expanding and enhancing such programs, aiming to continually develop youth skills across various fields.

"Jahiz 2" represents a significant advancement in volunteerism in Kuwait, setting a benchmark in crisis and disaster management training within the region. The program's structured approach and practical courses contribute to building a capable and resilient youth workforce ready to respond effectively to national emergencies.

KUNA photos
Some of the participants in the 'Filling Gas Stations' course within the (Jahiz 2) project in cooperation with the National Petroleum Corporation.

Scientific excellence surges

Analysis reveals shifts in high school student performance trends in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: Dr. Nasser Hassan, professor of educational psychology at Kuwait University, has provided insights into the performance of high school students in Kuwait for 2024, particularly highlighting trends in outstanding achievements in both scientific and literary sections, reports Al-Qabas daily.

In the scientific department, the percentage of outstanding students -- those achieving grades of 90% or higher -- rose to 41.80% in 2024 from 41.09% in 2023. This increase indicates a growing number of high-achieving students in fields such as medicine and engineering, which are highly competitive for higher education seats.

Conversely, in the literary section, the percentage of outstanding students dropped to 12.46% in 2024 from 14.06% in 2023.

This decline suggests a shift in academic performance trends within this particular discipline.

Dr. Hassan noted that among Kuwaiti students, there was a slight increase in outstanding achievements in the scientific section, rising to 35.07% in 2024 from 34.72% in 2023. However, in the literary section, the percentage of outstanding Kuwaiti students decreased to 12.25% in 2024 from 13.63% in 2023.

He attributed the rise in outstanding achievements to several factors, including increased student motivation, competition for seats in prestigious fields, and the structure of the Kuwaiti secondary school examination system. This system places significant emphasis on grades from regular exams and end-of-semester assessments.

EID AL ADHA

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Ukraine's envoy preps for new role

Balanutsa reflects on five years of diplomatic success and friendship

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: After spending five years as Ukraine's ambassador to Kuwait, HE Oleksandr Balanutsa reflects fondly on his tenure as he prepares to depart for his new role as Deputy Minister of Defense of Ukraine for European Integration Affairs, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The Ukraine envoy expressed deep appreciation for Kuwait, stating that the country had become dear to him due to the genuine friendships he had formed and the rich Kuwaiti traditions he had experienced.

Balanutsa began his ambassadorial mission in 2019 with a passion for enhancing bilateral ties across political, economic, cultural, and academic domains. His priorities included supporting Ukrainians residing in Kuwait, and he noted significant progress in strengthening Ukrainian-Kuwaiti relations during his term.

Reflecting on the challenges he faced, Balanutsa highlighted the transformative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on diplomatic practices, necessitating virtual engagements.

Despite these formidable challenges, Balanutsa emphasized several achievements during his tenure. Amid the pandemic, he organized numerous online conferences and business-to-business meetings to foster economic ties between Ukrainian and Kuwaiti entities.

Additionally, cultural initiatives such as translating Kuwaiti short stories into Ukrainian and commemorating the legacy of Ukrainian coach Valery Lobanovskiy in



H.E. Oleksandr Balanutsa, Ukraine Ambassador to Kuwait.

Kuwait underscored the deepening cultural exchanges between the two nations.

A significant highlight of his tenure was the visit of Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba to Kuwait in April 2023, marking the thirtieth anniversary of diplomatic relations between Ukraine and Kuwait. This visit served as a pivotal moment, reinforcing the strategic dialogue and cooperation between the two countries.

Throughout his ambassadorship, Balanutsa acknowledged the invaluable support Kuwait provided to Ukraine, particularly amidst the humanitarian challenges posed by the conflict. He expressed optimism that with such solidarity, alongside support from numerous foreign embassies in Kuwait, light would prevail over darkness.

In conclusion, Balanutsa expressed heartfelt gratitude to Kuwait for its unwavering support and hospitality during his tenure, underscoring his belief in the enduring friendship and cooperation between Ukraine and Kuwait despite the geopolitical challenges faced during his tenure.

Dedication of employees commended

Al-Ajmi affirms ministry's commitment to citizen engagement, service excellence

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi, represented the Minister of Social Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, during the recent holiday period, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a weekly meeting focused on addressing the concerns and inquiries of the public, Al-Ajmi affirmed the continuity of the "Open Door" policy to facilitate direct engagement with citizens and clients.

Dr. Al-Ajmi conveyed that the Minister will resume receiving citizens and clients following the Eid al-Adha holiday.

He emphasized the Ministry's commitment to maintaining an open-door approach, actively listening to the challenges faced by individuals and endeavoring to resolve them in accordance with legal frameworks. This commitment underscores the Ministry's dedication to responsive governance and addressing the needs of the community effectively.

In other news, Dr. Al-Ajmi expressed the Ministry's commitment to providing excellent services and ensur-



Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi, addressing the concerns and inquiries of the public.

ing prompt completion of transactions for customers. He was accompanied by all assistant undersecretaries during the visit.

Dr. Al-Ajmi took the opportunity to interact with employees and visitors, gaining insights into the ongoing work progress following the holiday period.

Kuwait adopts

Continued from Page 1

- Shuhada: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- Iffada: 1, 2, 3 and 4
- Hitthen: 1, 2, 3 and 4
- Hawally: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12

Meanwhile, the electricity load index recorded the highest consumption in the history of the country -- 16,810 megawatts; compared to last year's record of 16,735 megawatts on Aug 2, 2023.

The Meteorological Department at the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said the weather from Thursday until the weekend is extremely hot during the day and hot at night, with a relative increase in humidity in coastal areas.

DGCA Director Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that the country is under the influence of the Indian monsoon low; bringing a hot and sometimes relatively humid air mass. Winds vary from northwesterly to southeasterly, with light to moderate speeds, sometimes becoming active, especially in the western regions.

Al-Qarawi disclosed that it would be very hot Thursday, with northwesterly to variable winds at light to moderate speeds, sometimes reaching 8 to 42 kilometers per hour. He said there could be dust in the western regions with maximum temperatures expected to range between 47 and 50 degrees Celsius; while the sea would have light to moderate waves between one to four feet. At night, the weather would remain hot and relatively humid in coastal areas with variable light to moderate northwesterly winds, speeds ranging from 8 to 30 kilometers per hour, and minimum temperatures between 32 and 35 degrees Celsius, while the sea conditions would have light to moderate waves ranging from one to three feet, he added.

On Friday, the weather will continue to be very hot and relatively humid in coastal areas, with northwesterly to variable winds turning southeasterly in coastal areas. Speeds will be light to moderate, active in the western re-

gions at 8 to 40 kilometers per hour, with a chance of dust. Expected maximum temperatures are between 47 and 50 degrees Celsius, with sea waves between one and four feet.

Friday night will be hot and relatively humid in coastal areas, with variable winds turning southeasterly to light to moderate northwesterly, speeds of 8 to 28 kilometers per hour, and minimum temperatures between 30 and 32 degrees. The sea will have light to moderate waves between one and three feet.

Saturday will be relatively hot and humid, especially in coastal areas, with northwesterly winds turning light to moderate southeasterly, speeds between 10 and 35 kilometers per hour, and maximum temperatures of 45 to 47 degrees. The sea will have light to moderate waves between one and four feet.

Saturday night will be hot and humid, particularly in coastal areas, with light to moderate southeasterly to variable winds at speeds of 8 to 30 kilometers per hour, minimum temperatures between 29 and 31 degrees Celsius, and light to moderate sea waves ranging from one to three feet.

Moreover, sources from the ministry revealed that the total deficit in electricity production this year reached 1,300 megawatts according to the expected annual deficit table. They said this quantity was supposed to be within the production capacity added to the current production of 18,600 megawatts.

Sources enumerated three main reasons behind this deficit and the subsequent forced shutdown -- lack of budget for maintenance and production projects, slow documentary cycle and delayed approval of regulatory authorities; resulting in the ministry's inability to strengthen the electricity network since operating 930 megawatts in Subiya Station on April 7, 2021.

In addition, the General Traffic Department at the Ministry of Interior has declared a ban on delivery motorcycles between 11:00 am and 4:00 pm from June 23 to Aug 31 in order to regulate and manage traffic flow, and guarantee public safety during peak hours.

It has been reported this measure will be strictly enforced to mitigate potential traffic disruptions and ensure

Government agencies navigate post Eid Al-Adha attendance fluctuations

MoSA leads with 72%

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: After the Eid al-Adha holiday, it was business as usual for government agencies, with the typical ebb and flow of employee attendance, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Despite the inherent risks to performance evaluations and rewards, some departments saw around 30% absenteeism.

This phenomenon, though frowned upon, seemed ingrained, reflecting a mix of personal obligations and bureaucratic realities.

At the Ministries Complex and other governmental entities, the Ministry of Social Affairs notably achieved a 72% attendance rate post-holiday. A significant portion of absences -- 21 percent -- were justified by official or emergency leaves, with no reported illnesses.

Meanwhile, 7% faced potential penalties for unexcused absences, a reflection of stringent regulations aimed at maintaining operational discipline.

Similarly, the Ministry of Education reported a 75% attendance rate among its staff, attributing most absences to approved periodic or emergency leaves. Measures were in place to monitor and penalize unauthorized absences, ensuring compliance with civil service regulations.

The Ministry of Health boasted over 90% attendance, citing rigorous monitoring facilitated by integrated systems.

With a workforce exceeding 55,000 across numerous facilities, the Ministry emphasized strict adherence to attendance protocols through advanced fingerprinting attendance technology.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Electricity and Water recorded a 70% attendance rate, noting reduced visitor traffic on the first day back, particularly in customer service areas. Attendance figures were finalized by day's end, underscoring ongoing efforts to maintain service standards despite holiday-related fluctuations.

Overall, while absenteeism persisted as a challenge, these ministries demonstrated varying degrees of success in enforcing attendance policies post-holiday, ensuring operational continuity amid fluctuating workforce availability.



Director General of Kuwait Municipality Saud Al-Dabbous speaking during the meeting with sector heads and branch managers.

Director General calls for accountability

Kuwait Municipality pledges law revision for enhanced efficiency

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: During a meeting with monitoring employees, technical workers, and inspectors of Kuwait Municipality, the Director General of Kuwait Municipality Saud Al-Dabbous stated that the municipality is committed to upholding its laws, which will be revised as per the directives of the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Dr. Noura Al-Mishaan with the aim of enhancing operational efficiency, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Al-Dabbous stressed the importance of transparency by calling for the formation of a neutral fact-finding committee to investigate the Mangaf fire incident.

He described the incident as a tragic disaster, revealing that Dr. Al-Mishaan had issued directives to

implement necessary measures to prevent similar incidents in the future.

Al-Dabbous clarified that the suspension of some officials does not mean they are directly responsible for the incident or that they were negligent in their duties, but rather it was because of the scale of the fire.

He commended the monitoring departments of Kuwait Municipality for their diligent efforts in addressing violations and enforcing the law, highlighting their heroic contributions in this regard.

Al-Dabbous conveyed Dr. Al-Mishaan's greetings to the municipality workers and expressed her appreciation for their hard work.

Delegation tests devices, gains practical insights

KU explores cutting-edge disability solutions at Saudi Arabia exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: The Deanship of Student Affairs at Kuwait University, through its People of Disabilities Department in the Social Welfare Department, organized a significant trip to attend the largest exhibition in Saudi Arabia focused on disabilities, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The purpose was to explore cutting-edge research, studies, modern technologies, and solutions and services tailored for individuals with disabilities.

Leading the delegation was Wael AlObaid, Director of the Social Welfare Department, accompanied by Etemad Al-Kandari, Director of the E-Learning Department, Aseel Al-Shaiji, Acting Supervisor of Social Supervision, Sheikha Al-Qena'ei, Acting Head of the Department for People with Disabilities, and Nawal Al-Mutairi, a social researcher.

During the visit, the delegation thoroughly reviewed the services available for people with disabilities in Saudi Arabia. They exchanged insights on the experiences of disabled students at Kuwait University and various universities in Saudi Arabia.

The focus also extended to examining the latest assistive devices and technologies designed to enhance independence and facilitate participation in education, employment, and societal activities.

The visit included engaging in dialogue sessions and exchanging experiences with other participants at the



The Kuwaiti delegation at the King Saud University pavilion at the exhibition.

exhibition.

Members of the delegation also had the opportunity to test various devices first-hand, gaining practical insights into their functionalities and applications.

This initiative underscores Kuwait University's commitment to staying abreast of advancements in disability support and ensuring inclusive practices for all students, aligning with broader educational and societal goals.

norates.

Earlier on the same day, the Ministry of Electricity and Water cited the peak summer demand for power as the reason behind the power outage that affected a number of areas; in addition to the sweltering summer conditions as temperatures have been higher than normal.

Civil ID crucial

Continued from Page 1

The meeting also addressed the vital role of the Public Authority for Civil Information in providing accurate data and its impact on national stability. Discussions focused on documenting essential data to manage security and promote social stability effectively.

Furthermore, Sheikh Fahad stressed the importance of maintaining clear and precise records for each residential property, ensuring that updated information is promptly reported to authorities when property ownership changes. He underscored the necessity of integrating Kuwait Municipality's data systems with the Public Authority for Civil Information for enhanced operational efficiency.

Kuwait urged to

Continued from Page 1

Planning and Development stated on its website that Kuwait fell 20 places back according to the food security index issued by the Economic Research Unit of the British Economist Group in 2022, where it was ranked 50th globally out of 113 countries, while it was ranked seventh in the Arab world and sixth in the GCC.

Kuwait was ranked 30th globally in 2021 and 33rd in 2020 on the Food Security Index, which measures the performance of 113 countries in providing the food needs of its population through four main factors; the ability to bear the costs and availability of food, the type and quality of food, natural resources, and resilience.

In its evaluation, the Food Secu-

city Index relies on giving countries a score out of 100, as it is calculated from the average of the four main factors that make up the general index, by collecting and weighing the results of the 68 individual indicators distributed among the factors and measuring the extent of each country's ability to provide the food needs of its population on a scale starting from zero to one hundred.

In this vein, Director General of the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources, Engineer Nasser Taqi, confirmed in a previous statement to KUNA after his meeting with the Director General of the Arab Center for Studies of Dry Zones and Dry Lands Dr. Nasraddin Al-Obaid, last January, that the Authority is ready to implement all the development plans that it serves Kuwait in a way that meets its priorities and goals and achieves food security and sustainable development goals.

When talking about food security in Kuwait, there is a major role played by governmental companies concerned with food, such as Al-Mawashi Company, Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company, (KFMCB) and the Kuwait Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies (KUCCS).

According to a report published by KUNA on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of establishing the company, Al-Mawashi owns the largest shaded farm in Kuwait, covering about four million square meters and accommodating 200,000 heads of livestock. It also has another shaded farm in the UAE with an area of 285,000 square meters and accommodating 100,000 livestock.

The company also has a farm in South Africa with a capacity of 70,000 livestock and another in Australia, with a capacity of 100,000 sheep, while the Australian government seeks to stop the export of live sheep across the sea. According to the Australian Agriculture Minister's announcement regarding the decision to stop exports as of May 1, 2028, necessitates searching for other sources for exporting live sheep.

Al-Mawashi relies on several goals, including providing the finest types of meat to local and regional markets in innovative ways and at reasonable

prices through an integrated and sustainable supply chain managed by the company.

On the other hand, CEO of Kuwait Flour Mills and Bakeries Company, Mutlaq Al-Zayed, in a previous statement to KUNA, said that it bears the task of achieving food security in Kuwait, expressing readiness to meet the needs of consumers, provide sufficient stocks of all products in cooperative societies and central markets, and keep up with any updates according to an established emergency plan.

For his part, President of the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies, Musab Al-Mulla, told KUNA that the union has a pivotal role in achieving food security in Kuwait by maintaining the strategic stock of foodstuffs to ensure their continued availability to the consumer.

A study conducted by the Kuwait Society for Science, Technology and Innovation and published on its website, stated that challenges facing food security could be summarized in two main issues: sustainability of agricultural production to future generations, and maintaining the required quality of food while securing its availability in markets.

The study added that there is a shortage of natural resources, increased consumption of energy and water, and a spike in fertilizers and fodder import, which requires management capable of exploiting energy without waste, with the need to find renewable sources of energy in various types of farms.

1,618 emergencies

Continued from Page 1

report, 13 were referred to Adan Hospital, six to Jahra Hospital and one to Sabah Hospital. He appreciated the efforts of the emergency medical teams, and their hard work day and night, to serve the people of Kuwait.

Meanwhile, air ambulance emergency technician Suleiman Al-Masry revealed that the average number of monthly reports about air ambulance cases is 100; with an annual rate of up to 1,200 reports. He added there are four air ambulance planes -- two emergency planes and two reserve planes.

World News Roundup

Europe

Russia hammers Ukraine's power grid again: Russia under the government of Vladimir Putin resumed its aerial pounding of Ukraine's power grid and Kyiv's forces again targeted Russian oil facilities with cross-border drone strikes, seeking to curb each other's ability to fight in a war that is now in its third year, officials said Thursday.

With no major changes reported along the 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) front line, where a recent push by the Kremlin's forces in eastern and northeastern Ukraine has made only incremental gains, both sides in the war have taken aim at distant infrastructure targets.



Putin

In its seventh major attack on Ukrainian power plants since Moscow intensified energy infrastructure attacks three months ago, Russia fired nine missiles and 27 Shahed drones at energy facilities and critical infrastructure in central and eastern Ukraine, the Ukrainian air force said. Air defenses intercepted all the drones and five cruise missiles, it said.

The attack hit power structures in the Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk, Kyiv and Vinnytsia regions of Ukraine, causing "extensive damage," according to national power company Ukrenergo. Seven workers were injured, it said.

Ukrenergo announced extended blackouts across the country despite electricity imports and help with emergency supplies from European countries.

Private energy company DTEK said one of its power plants was hit in the overnight attack but did not specify its location. Three company employees were injured and the plant's equipment was severely damaged, DTEK said on social media. (AP)

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EU envoys agree on more Russia sanctions: European Union ambassadors have reached agreement on a "powerful and substantial" new series of sanctions that are part of its ongoing response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the bloc's Belgian presidency said Thursday.

"This package provides new targeted measures and maximizes the impact of existing sanctions by closing loopholes," the presidency posted on the social media platform X. Full details are likely to be released early next week if EU foreign ministers endorse the measures as expected on Monday.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, whose team drafted the sanctions, posted that the package will "deny Russia access to key technologies. It will strip Russia of further energy revenues. And tackle Putin's shadow fleet and shadow banking network abroad."

The measures will notably target imports of Russian liquid natural gas and make it harder to move around. The EU estimates that about 4 billion-6 billion cubic meters (141 billion-212 billion cubic feet) of Russian LNG was shipped on to third countries via EU ports last year.

More than 100 more officials and "entities" are set to be targeted with asset freezes and travel bans. (AP)

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Swedish court acquits ex-Syrian army gen: A Swedish court on Thursday acquitted a former Syrian army general accused of playing a role in war crimes in his home country more than a decade ago.

Brig Gen Mohammed Hamo, who now lives in Sweden, was charged in February with aiding and abetting crimes against international law. Prosecutors said that as head of the Ordnance Department of the Syrian Army's 11th Division, he was responsible for providing the weapons that were used to commit war crimes in 2012.

The prosecutor alleged that Hamo had participated in the division's indiscriminate attacks on military and civilian targets in and around the Syrian cities of Homs and Hama.

Swedish news agency TT said that Hamo was the highest-ranking military officer ever to stand trial in a European court for international human rights violations in Syria. Syria has been ravaged by civil war for over 13 years.

Little is known about the 65-year-old Hamo. In June 2012, he was transferred to northern Syria, and the following month he decided to leave the army and fled to Turkey. There, he joined a group that was fighting against the Syrian regime. (AP)

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Germany arrests Iraqi man: An Iraqi man who is accused of standing by to carry out attacks for the Islamic State group after he arrived in Germany in 2022 has been arrested, prosecutors said Thursday.

The suspect, identified only as Mahmoud A. in line with German privacy rules, was arrested on Wednesday in Esslingen, near Stuttgart in southwestern Germany, federal prosecutors said in a statement. A judge ordered him to be kept in custody on suspicion of membership in a foreign terrorist organization pending a possible indictment.

He is accused of joining IS in Iraq in or before May 2016 and fighting for the extremist group.

Prosecutors said that Mahmoud A. arrived in Germany in October 2022 and stood by to carry out attacks on behalf of IS. They didn't specify whether any specific attacks were ever planned. (AP)

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Explosion in Montenegro kills 2: An explosion in central Montenegro's historical capital, Cetinje, on Thursday killed two people and seriously injured three others, police said.

Police sealed off the area around the Cetinje town's sports hall. They launched an investigation to find the type and cause of the explosion.

The state RTCG television said it was a bomb, and suggested the blast was linked to the Balkan nation's criminal gangs involved in drug smuggling. The report said, "some of the victims recently got out of prison."

Montenegro is a small Adriatic Sea nation of about 620,000 people. It is a NATO member state and a candidate for European Union membership. The country has been told it must tackle rampant organized crime and corruption to join the EU. (AP)

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Italy searches for dozens of migrants: Italy's coast guard was searching by sea and from the air on Thursday for dozens of people missing when a boat capsized and partially sank earlier this week in the perilous central Mediterranean, officials said.

The partially submerged boat was still in view, but the commander of the search operation said that no bodies were in sight. The boat capsized about 195 kilometers (120 miles) off the Calabrian coast.

A fishing boat was the first to respond on Monday after the boat capsized and rescued 12 people, one of whom later died. Italy's coast guard has recovered six bodies, and survivors say more than 60 people are missing. They include more than 20 children.

Survivors reported that the boat motor had caught fire, causing it to capsize off the Italian coast about eight days after departing from Turkey with about 75 people from Iran, Syria and Iraq on board, according to the UN refugee agency and other UN organizations.

A spokeswoman for Doctors Without Borders said that the survivors have suffered both psychological and physical trauma, and "remained very confused." (AP)

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Summer wildfires plague Greece: Scores of Greek firefighters and water-bombing aircraft succeeded late Wednesday in taming a large wildfire on the fringes of Athens that forced authorities to evacuate two nearby settlements.

Summer wildfires also plagued Greece's Mediterranean neighbor Turkey, where two villages were evacuated but no injuries were reported.

The Greek fire service said the blaze near Athens - one of dozens all over the country Wednesday - had been largely contained but firefighters would remain on alert all evening to stop it reviving.

Officials said the wildfire was exacerbated by windy, hot and dry weather and appeared to have been deliberately started. It broke out in low scrub and olive trees in a sparsely inhabited area near Vari, some 30 kilometers (18 miles) south of central Athens.

Fire service spokesman Vassilis Vathrakogiannis said winds at times reached gale force, while police were enlisted to remove some residents from their homes.

Local authorities also said the fire appeared to be abating late Wednesday. (AP)



Joseph Canzanella, (left), greets members of the Vise family as he walks through the storm surge from Tropical Storm Alberto to get to work on June 19, in Surfside Beach, Texas. (AP)

Alberto dumps rain on Texas, Mexico; 3 deaths reported

Tropical Storm Alberto rumbled toward northeast Mexico early Thursday as the first named storm of the season, carrying heavy rains that left three people dead but also brought hope to a region suffering under a prolonged, severe drought.

Mexican authorities downplayed the risk posed by Alberto and instead pinned their hopes on its ability to ease the parched region's water needs. "The (wind) speeds are not such as to consider it

a risk," said Tamaulipas state Secretary of Hydrological Resources Raúl Quiroga Alvarez during a news conference late Wednesday. Instead, he suggested people greet Alberto happily. "This is what we've been for eight years in all of Tamaulipas."

Much of Mexico has been suffering under severe drought, with northern Mexico especially hard hit. Quiroga noted that the state's reservoirs were low and Mexico owed the United States a massive wa-

ter debt in their shared use of the Rio Grande.

The US National Weather Service said the main hazard for southern coastal Texas is flooding from excess rain. On Wednesday the NWS said there is "a high probability" of flash flooding in southern coastal Texas. Tornadoes or waterspouts are possible.

Areas along the Texas coast were seeing some road flooding and dangerous rip currents Wednesday, and waterspouts were spotted offshore. (AP)

Politics

Arkansas gov signs income, property tax cuts into law

Turmoil rocks Democratic political bosses

TRENTON, N.J., June 20, (AP): Being a political boss in New Jersey ain't what it used to be.

Monday's indictment on racketeering charges of Democratic power broker George E. Norcross III by state Attorney General Matt Platkin caps a series of blows to influential figures in the state's dominant political party and adds to a sense of turbulence in the blue-state stronghold.

There's the ongoing federal bribery case against Democratic Sen. Bob Menendez, who's pleaded not guilty in a New York trial that has consistently delivered glimpses of the tawdry underbelly of Garden State politics. There's the fall this year of a century-old, unique-to-New Jersey primary ballot system that allowed party bosses to give preferred placement to endorsed candidates.

Indictment

And now there's the indictment of Norcross, who Platkin said stepped across legal lines in orchestrating tax benefits for entities he controlled. Norcross angrily denied doing anything wrong.

It all comes months before the November general election, as Democrats look to hold on to a US Senate seat they didn't expect to have to fight for in a year when their thin majority is already in jeopardy. Republicans, meanwhile, have found new reasons to be optimistic about their chances to win a seat they haven't held in more than five decades.

Some New Jersey progressives see the unfolding chaos as part of an overdue cleanup in the messy politics of a state they have long dominated. Other observers draw a parallel to what has happened nationally in the Republican Party, where the power of estab-

lishment Republicans has given way to a more chaotic brand of populism espoused by former President Donald Trump and others like him.

They see it as a dissipation of centralized control all across the political spectrum - perhaps even a restoration of power to the people.

"What we're really seeing is push-back against things that people would have gotten away with some time ago," Daniel Cassino, executive director of the Fairleigh Dickinson University Poll. "This is basically saying, I think that these parties are out of touch with what voters want, and the energy underbelly of Garden State politics."

Platkin, a Democrat, argued that it's time for the state to leave behind its reputation for ugly politics, a legacy that has been helped along at times in caricature, whether in fictional scenes from "The Sopranos" or in the minds of those who embrace it as a badge of honor.

Demanded

Norcross cast Platkin's prosecution of him as politically motivated. He called Platkin a coward and demanded the trial start in two weeks.

He's charged with operating a criminal enterprise over more than a decade, starting in 2012, in which he threatened property owners whose land he sought to acquire, used Camden city government to acquire land and tailored legislation for tax incentives that benefited companies he controlled. Those allegations have been the subject of investigations for years, with Norcross denying any wrongdoing and praising the good his investments did for the economically hard-up city of

Camden, across the Delaware River from Philadelphia.

A longtime kingmaker in southern New Jersey, Norcross often wielded influence through back channels. An old friend of the former Senate president and current gubernatorial candidate Steve Sweeney, Norcross played a key role in getting economic tax incentive legislation passed in 2013. His brothers are lobbyist and co-defendant Philip Norcross - who's fighting the charges as well - and Rep. Donald Norcross, a former state legislator.

George Norcross is the wealthy executive of an insurance firm and, until 2021, a Democratic National Committee member who also contributed financially to state and national Democrats. He's since moved to Palm Beach, Florida, where he had been listed before as a member of Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago club.

Also:

LITTLE ROCK, Arkansas: Arkansas Gov Sarah Huckabee Sanders on Wednesday signed legislation cutting the state's property and income taxes after lawmakers wrapped up a special session where they also approved legislation to keep the state's hunting and fishing programs running.

Sanders signed the measure cutting the state's top corporate and individual income tax rates, and another raising the homestead property tax credit, hours after the predominantly Republican Legislature adjourned the session that began Monday.

The cuts are the latest in a series of income tax reductions Arkansas has enacted over the past several years. Sanders, a Republican, has signed three cuts into law since taking office last year and has said she wants to phase the levy out over time.



Arkansas Gov Sarah Huckabee Sanders (front) talks about the tax cut bills during a news conference on June 19 at the Capitol in Little Rock, Arkansas. Sanders on Wednesday signed legislation cutting the state's property and income taxes after lawmakers wrapped up a special session where they also approved legislation to keep the state's hunting and fishing programs running. (AP)



Thompson



Missaghi

North America

Several people shot in Oakland: A June-nineteenth celebration in Oakland, California, turned violent when several people were shot, police said.

The Lake Merritt event on Wednesday night was largely peaceful, with as many as 5,000 in attendance, until a sideshow involving "motorbikes and vehicles" took place around 8:15 pm on the north side of the lake, police said in a news release Thursday.

A fight broke out down the street from the sideshow and a crowd gathered in the area of the fight, police said. (AP)

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Philadelphia shooting injures 7: Seven people were wounded Wednesday evening in a shooting in Philadelphia, police said.

The shooting happened just before 6:30 p.m. in North Philadelphia.

The victims include a 19-year-old man who was shot in the leg, a 31-year-old woman shot in the hand, a 23-year-old man shot in the buttock, and two women - ages 47 and 29 - who were shot in the thigh, according to police.

A 16-year-old girl was being treated for two grave wounds, police said. An 18-year-old female victim was also wounded in the shooting, according to authorities. (AP)

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Man killed in knife attack: An attempted robbery at a highway rest area in eastern Nebraska left a 72-year-old man dead and his 71-year-old wife critically injured in a knife attack Wednesday, authorities said.

The Hall County Sheriff's Office said deputies were called to an Interstate 80 rest area shortly after 7 am. Wednesday and

found the couple both injured with knife wounds. Authorities said Gary and Mary Weaver had been traveling across Nebraska in their mobile home before the incident oc-

curred.

Gary Nelson died at a Grand Island hospital. Mary Nelson was in critical condition Wednesday at the hospital with life-threat-

ening injuries, authorities said. The Nelsons were from Eureka, Missouri.

The suspect fled the rest area in a vehicle before authorities arrived, but Grand Island Police Captain Dean Elliott told television station KSNB that officers were able to get a description. **James Thompson Jr.**, 22, of Elyria, Ohio, was being held Wednesday in the Hall County Jail. (AP)

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'Victims defrauded family': The gunman in a fatal Toronto shooting earlier this week believed the two victims had defrauded his family, his wife said Wednesday, as court records indicate the family was suing the pair after losing more than CDN \$1 million in an alleged investment scam.

A man and woman were shot to death and a male attacker also died Monday at a north Toronto office space near a daycare center.

In a statement released by her lawyers, Alisa Pogorelovsky said her husband, Alan Kats, who also died in the shooting "could not handle losing our life savings and that is what led to this tragic event."

"I hope someday my family will be able to recover," she wrote.

Police have identified the victims of Monday's shooting as 54-year-old **Arash Missaghi** and 44-year-old Samira Yousefi, but have not identified the 46-year-old shooter. (AP)



Ukrainian servicemen of the 141st brigade take position in a trench at the front line in Zaporizhzhia region, Ukraine on June 18. Russia resumed its aerial pounding of Ukraine's power grid and Kyiv's forces again targeted Russian oil facilities with cross-border drone strikes, officials said on June 20. (AP)

Lat/Am

Chile train collision kills 2

'Violence displaced nearly 580K in Haiti'

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, June 20. (Agencies): Surging violence in Haiti from clashes with armed gangs since March has displaced nearly 580,000 people, according to a new report from the UN migration agency, a sobering figure that underscores the magnitude of the Caribbean nation's crisis.

Haiti has long faced unrest but at the end of February, gangs unleashed coordinated attacks with gunmen taking control of police stations, opening fire on the main international airport that remained closed for nearly three months and stormed Haiti's two biggest prisons.

A report released on Tuesday by the International Organization for Migration said the displacement of more than half a million is mainly due to people fleeing the capital of Port-au-Prince for other provinces, which lack the resources to support them.

In March, the agency reported more than 362,000 internally displaced people in Haiti. Since then, the violence has more than doubled the number of internally displaced in the southern region - already ravaged by a 2021 earthquake - from 116,000 to 270,000.

"Nearly all those internally displaced are currently hosted by communities already struggling with overburdened social services and poor infrastructure, raising further concerns about tensions with the potential to spark further violence," the report said.



Conille

Injured

With more than 2,500 people killed or injured across Haiti in the first three months of the year, Haiti's National Police, understaffed and overwhelmed by gangs with powerful arsenals, has been unable to bring the situation under control.

Marie Jean, 49, and her two children were displaced from their Port-au-Prince home after her husband was killed by a gang in February. She's now sheltered with her children at a public school.

"I lived in a comfortable home that my husband worked hard to build," Jean told The Associated Press. "Now I'm living in a situation that's inhuman."

Juste Dorville, 39, is also staying at a public school with her 12-year-old daughter and boyfriend as gunshots are heard constantly in the area. "Everyday we're hoping that we survive," she said.

With the gangs in control of at least 80% of Port-au-Prince and key roads leading to the rest of the country, many are living in makeshift shelters, including schools and learning institutions that are now hosting more than 60,000 people.

The gangs have also been charging fees for those wanting to use the highways or blackmailing drivers to get their hijacked trucks back on the roads, where police presence is scarce.

Haiti's new acting prime minister, **Garry Conille**, who was appointed last month along with a Cabinet, attended a ceremony on Tuesday where over 400 officers graduated from the police academy, with the expectation that they will help curb gang violence in Haiti. He reminded the graduates that the people count on their dedication to combat insecurity.

Chile train collision kills 2: At least two people were killed and nine others injured Thursday when a train full of passengers collided head-on with another train on a test run just outside Chile's capital of Santiago.

Investigations were underway to determine the cause of the crash, which vaulted one car fully on top of a car from the other train.

The eight-car freight train, which was carrying 1,346 tons of copper, was also packed with people, while the other train had 10 workers on board operating a speed test, the state rail company said.

Authorities have not identified the two people killed. The nine injured included four Chinese nationals who were receiving treatment at hospitals near the crash site in San Bernardo, Chile.

"We have to identify what the causes are and take the corresponding measures," Transportation Minister Juan Carlos Muñoz told The Associated Press.

Bolivia issues 'orange alert': Bolivia has declared an "orange alert" in 74 towns due to the growing risk of forest fires caused by arson or clearing for crops, Deputy Civil Defense Minister Juan Carlos Calvimontes said here on Wednesday.

The "orange alert" is an urgent call for action to prevent an environmental or economic disaster, Calvimontes told a press conference.

He said that forest fires were a direct consequence of agricultural practices that get out of control.

This time of year "everything is dry," Calvimontes said, calling on farmers and ranchers to ensure that their use of fire to clear land for crops or cattle does not "turn into forest fires."

The eastern department of Santa Cruz has been hit the hardest, he added.

Power outage hits Ecuador: A failure in an energy transmission line on Wednesday produced an unexpected blackout throughout Ecuador, the government said, days after announcing that there would be power outages in the country due to production problems.

Ecuador's Minister of Energy Roberto Luque said in a message posted on X, formerly Twitter, that the failure was reported by the country's National Electricity Operator and caused "a cascade disconnection," leaving the nation without energy service.

He added that efforts are being made to solve the problem and repair faulty power lines as soon as possible.

In some sectors of the country the outage lasted 20 minutes, but media outlets and social media users reported that the problem continued in most cities.

Emilia Cevallos, a waitress in a restaurant north of the capital, Quito, said the blackout was surprising.

Ex-Peru soldiers get prison: Ten men were convicted Wednesday in Peru for raping nine teenagers while serving in the military during the country's armed conflict decades ago.

Judge Marco Angulo, of Peru's First Superior Criminal Court, ordered the former soldiers to serve time in prison, with sentences ranging between six and 12 years. Authorities accused them of raping the teenagers between 1984 and 1994 in the Andean community of Manta.

Angulo said that the absence of constitutional guarantees in the community during the armed conflict "turned the possibility of reporting abuse into marginal acts and of no attention."

After the sentences were announced, prosecutors, who sought harsher sentences, and attorneys for the victims said they will evaluate Angulo's decision to decide whether to challenge it.

The war that raged between the Peruvian military and the Shining Path communist insurgency from 1980 to 2000 left an estimated 70,000 people dead, the majority of them in rural areas.



Chinese Premier Li Qiang holds talks with Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim at the Prime Minister's office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on June 19. (Xinhua)

Asia

Putin signs deals with Vietnam

Malaysia PM Anwar says China 'true friend'

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia, June 20. (AP): Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim on Thursday rejected the notion that China's dominance is to be feared, calling China a "true friend" at the end of Premier Li Qiang's visit to mark 50 years of diplomatic ties between their countries.

While the leaders raised some contentious bilateral issues, Anwar said they discussed them as "equal partners, as trusted friends." He didn't give details but was likely referring to the prickly issue of overlapping territorial claims in the South China Sea.

"People say, well, Malaysia is a growing economy. Don't let China abuse its privilege and extort from the country. I said no. To the contrary, we want to benefit from one another, we want to learn from one another and we want to profit from this engagement," Anwar told some 200 business leaders at a luncheon attended by Li.

His words will be welcomed by China's leadership, which finds itself increasingly at odds with countries from the Philippines to Japan as it grows as a regional power in Asia. During his visit, Li held up what he called the "friendship" between China and Malaysia as a positive example for country-to-country relations in the region.

Anwar said he rebuked the "incessant propaganda that we should cast aspersions and fear the dominance of China economically, militarily, technologically."

Resolve

"We do not. We in Malaysia, having a neutral stance, have the resolve to work with all countries and with China," he said. "We see Premier Li Qiang as a friend that would work together with us."

Li, who is China's No. 2 leader after President Xi Jinping, was the first Chinese premier to visit Malaysia since 2015. He flew in for a three-day visit on Tuesday on the last leg of a regional tour. Li was also the first Chinese premier to visit New Zealand and then Australia in seven years.

The two leaders on Wednesday agreed that China and other claimant countries in Southeast Asia should tackle the South China Sea dispute "independently and properly" through dialogue and cooperation, and via bilateral settlement.

No details were given but the statement could escalate tensions between the U.S. and China. The U.S. renewed a warning Tuesday that it is obligated to defend treaty ally Philippines, after Chinese forces seized two Philippine boats delivering food and supplies to a military outpost in a disputed shoal and injured several Filipino navy personnel.

Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan all dispute Beijing's claims to almost the entire South China

Sea. Malaysia's government prefers diplomatic channels and rarely criticizes Beijing publicly, even though Chinese coast guard ships have sailed near Malaysia's waters. This is partly to protect economic ties as China has been Malaysia's top trading partner since 2009. Bilateral trade surged to \$98.8 billion last year, accounting for 17% of Malaysia's global trade.

At the luncheon, Li urged businesses to expand cooperation in emerging fields such as green development, digital economy and artificial intelligence.

Vietnam, Russia sign deals: Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a series of deals with his Vietnamese counterpart To Lam on Thursday, during a state visit that comes as Moscow is seeking to bolster ties in Asia to offset growing international isolation over its military actions in Ukraine.

The two signed agreements to further cooperation on education, science and technology, oil and gas exploration and health. They also agreed to work on a roadmap for a nuclear science and technology center in Vietnam.

Following the talks, Putin said that the two countries share an interest in "developing a reliable security architecture" in the Asia-Pacific Region based on not using force and peacefully settling disputes with no room for "closed military-political blocs."

This was echoed by Vietnam's new President To Lam, who said they seek to further "further cooperate in defense and security to cope with non-traditional security challenges" while implementing energy projects and expanding investments. He also congratulated Putin on his re-election and praised Russia's "domestic political stability."

The agreements between Russia and Vietnam were not as substantial as an agreement Putin signed with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un the previous day, pledging mutual aid in the event of invasion said Nigel Gould-Davies, a senior fellow for Russia and Eurasia with the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, and a former British ambassador to Belarus.

Putin arrived in Hanoi early Thursday morning from North Korea, where he and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un signed an agreement that pledges mutual aid in the event of war.

Putin also met Vietnam's most powerful politician, Communist Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, as well as Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, according to the official Vietnam News Agency.

SKorea blasts Russia-NKorea deal:

South Korea on Thursday condemned an agreement reached by Russia and North Korea that pledged mutual defense assis-

tance in the event of war and said it will reconsider its policy of limiting its support to Ukraine to non-lethal supplies.

The comments by a senior presidential official came hours after North Korea's state media released the details of the agreement reached between its leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin during their summit on Wednesday in Pyongyang.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency said the deal requires both countries to use all available means to provide immediate military assistance in the event of war.

The office of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol issued a statement condemning the agreement, calling it a threat to the South's security and a violation of UN Security Council resolutions, and warned that it would have negative consequences on Seoul's relations with Moscow.

The presidential official, who spoke on condition of anonymity during a background briefing, according to office rules, said Seoul in response will reconsider the issue of providing arms to Ukraine to help the country fight off Russia's invasion.

South Korea, a growing arms exporter with a well-equipped military backed by the United States, has provided humanitarian aid and other support to Ukraine while joining US-led economic sanctions against Moscow. But it has not directly provided arms to Ukraine, citing a long-standing policy of not supplying weapons to countries actively engaged in conflict.

Australia boosts aid to PNG: Australia will provide a further 2 million Australian dollars (\$1.3 million) to support reconstruction efforts in Papua New Guinea after last month's deadly landslide, the government said Thursday.

The South Pacific island nation off Australia's northern coast is still struggling with the aftermath of the disaster in Enga province in its mountainous interior, which the United Nations estimated killed 670 villagers and immediately displaced 1,650 survivors. Papua New Guinea's government has told the United Nations it thinks more than 2,000 people were buried when the mountainside tumbled onto the settlement of Yambali as people slept.

"Road access is critical for essential services as well as food and fuel supply chains," Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong said in a statement that coincided with a visit to the site of the landslide with Papua New Guinea's Defense Minister Billy Joseph and Enga Gov. Peter Ipatas.

Wong said the aid would also support local health care services and the provision of more than 2,000 learning packs for children.



This undated photo shows fire and smoke at the scene of an explosion at an ammunition depot in the Chadian capital N'Djamena. The N'Djamena-Hassana Djamous International Airport of Chad has resumed its regular international passenger flights after hours of suspension following an explosion at an ammunition depot, Senoussi Hassana Abdoulaye, director of the Civil Aviation Authority of Chad, said on June 19. (Xinhua)



Abdoulaye



Kagame

Africa

Morocco rescues 91 migrants: The Moroccan navy rescued 91 sub-Saharan migrants off the Atlantic coast on Wednesday, the official MAP news agency reported, citing a statement from the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces.

The navy unit intercepted a boat heading to the Canary Islands, a Spanish archipelago off the coast of northwestern Africa, during an operation 189 km southwest of Dakhla, the statement said.

The migrants, all from sub-Saharan countries, were handed over to the Moroccan Royal Gendarmerie for standard administrative procedures after receiving first aid care, it added. Morocco has become a transit hub for some West African migrants aiming to reach Europe. (Xinhua)

Nigeria launches probe: Nigerian authorities said on Wednesday an investigation has been launched into an oil spill from an oilfield in Bayelsa, a state in the country's oil-rich Niger Delta region.

The leak was detected during routine operations on Monday at the Oil Mining Lease (OML) 29 in Nembe, a community in Bayelsa, said Solomon Ukponevi, head of operations at the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency, the country's regulatory body.

Ukponevi told reporters that the oil facility was immediately shut down, and an emergency response team was deployed to take precautionary measures to contain the leak while additional resources were being mobilized. (Xinhua)

Chad airport resumes flights: The N'Djamena-Hassana Djamous International Airport of Chad has resumed its regular international passenger flights after hours of suspension following an explosion at an ammunition depot, Senoussi Hassana Abdoulaye, director of the Civil Aviation Authority of Chad, said on Wednesday afternoon.

Abdoulaye said in a statement that a Turkish Airlines plane with 58 passengers in transit and other aircraft were grounded at the airport overnight to Wednesday to preserve "the physical and material integrity of these fellow citizens and guest passengers but also of airport infrastructures and aircraft."

The explosion, which killed nine people and injured 46 others, occurred Tuesday night at the depot in the Chadian capital of N'Djamena, where the airport is located. (Xinhua)

Uganda road accident kills 11: At least 11 people were killed and dozens more injured in a road accident on Wednesday in Uganda's central district of Kassanda,

a police spokesperson said.

The accident involving a truck carrying market vendors occurred at Namiyango village on the Mityana-Bukaya road at about 1:30

pm local time, Racheal Kawala, a regional police spokesperson, said in a statement.

"The driver, who has not been identified, lost control of the vehicle on a slope, caus-

ing it to overturn, resulting in the death of 11 people on the spot," Kawala said. "Others sustained serious injuries and were rushed to hospitals for treatment."

She added that the territorial traffic police in Kassanda have launched an investigation into the cause of the fatal accident. According to police statistics, there are approximately 20,000 road accidents in Uganda each year, resulting in more than 2,000 deaths. (Xinhua)

Rwanda warns of wildfires: Rwanda's forestry authority issued a warning about the increased threat of fires due to the hot weather marked by intense heat.

In a statement, the Rwanda Forestry Authority urged citizens across the country to take proactive measures to prevent potential blazes that could devastate natural landscapes. Rwanda's president is **Paul Kagame**.

"As Rwanda experiences a prolonged dry season characterized by intense heat, the risk of forest fires is heightened. All citizens are urged to exercise caution and refrain from activities that could potentially spark fires," the statement read.

The authority said forest fires can spread rapidly during drought conditions and warned residents against smoking near forests, careless disposal of cigarette butts, uncontrolled charcoal burning, and chaotic honey harvesting practices. (Xinhua)



Police and firefighters inspect two trains that collided in San Bernardo, Santiago, Chile on June 20. At least two people were killed and nine others injured on Thursday when a train full of passengers collided head-on with another train on a test run just outside Chile's capital of Santiago. (AP)

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
JAPAN	-	Nikkei 225	+62.26	38,633.02	
PAKISTAN	-	KSE 100	+2,099.88	78,842.31	
DUBAI	-	DFMGI	-1.59	3,986.63	
PHILIPPINES	-	PSEI	-21.47	6,344.56	

Business

Kuwait banking sector reaches record liquidity of KD 63.9 bln

Demand deposits reach KD 13.2 bln, reflecting high liquidity

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: At the end of the first quarter of this year, total deposits in the banking sector in Kuwait, including both Kuwaiti dinars and foreign currency, reached 63.9 billion dinars, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This marks the highest liquidity level observed in the sector, highlighting abundant sources of deposits with diverse terms ranging from one month to over three years.

Demand deposits, which largely constitute cost-free liquidity, were approximately 13.2 billion dinars. The largest segment of deposits was in term deposits for one month (around 19.3 billion dinars).

This figure shows a decline from its peak in December 2023 when it stood at about 21.2 billion dinars.

There was an increase in deposits from one month to three months, rising from 10.3 billion dinars to 11.4 billion dinars, an increase of approximately 1 billion dinars. On the other hand, deposits for more than three months to six months decreased from 6.8 billion dinars to 5.19 billion dinars by the end of the first quarter of 2024.

A significant rise was noted in deposits for longer periods, specifically from more than six months to nine months, increasing from 2.4 billion dinars in December to 3.3 billion dinars by March 2024, marking a substantial 37.5% increase.

This reflects a trend towards longer-

Main market index decreases by 0.2% to 5,959 points

Boursa Kuwait general index drops by 27.3 points to 7,006

By Mohammed Al-Shendi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: Boursa Kuwait experienced a slight decline in its general index, which decreased by 27.3 points to reach 7,006 points, reflecting a 0.3% decrease.

Trading activity remained robust with 177.4 million shares exchanged through 14,075 transactions, amounting to 48.1 million Kuwaiti dinars (approximately \$7.146 million) in liquidity.

Key highlights of the trading session include:
■ The Main Market index decreased by 12.3 points, reaching 5,959 points, down by 0.2%.

■ The Premier Market Index declined by 32.56 points to 7,622.27 points, a decrease of 0.4%.

■ The (Main 50) index saw a slight increase of 10.8 points, reaching 5,802 points, up by 0.1%.

Notable movers included "Mubarrad," which saw the highest increase at 12.09%, while "UPAC" led the declines with a decrease of 11.48%.

The Gulf Bank's stock was the most actively traded, with a volume of 33.29 million shares and liquidity of 9.53 million dinars.

Foreign investors have shown confidence in the Kuwaiti stock market, with net purchases amounting to 93.3 million dinars so far in 2024 while institutional investors and investment funds also contributed significantly to the buying trend, further enhancing market stability and investor confidence.

Moreover, Kuwait's ownership of US Treasury bonds decreased by 3.02% in April 2024, totaling \$44.91 billion, compared to \$46.31 billion in March 2024.

Despite this monthly decline, Kuwait's year-over-year possession of US Treasury bonds increased by 8.50%, demonstrating ongoing strategic investment in global financial markets.

Overall, despite fluctuations in specific indices and bond holdings, Kuwait's financial markets continue to attract interest and investment, supported by positive economic indicators and robust investor sentiment.

term deposits that typically offer favorable returns.

Deposits for periods exceeding nine months to a year saw slight growth, from 3.2 billion dinars to 3.4 billion dinars. Meanwhile, deposits for periods of more than one year to three years grew by 10%, from 3.2 billion dinars to 3.61 billion dinars.

The slowest growth was seen in deposits for periods exceeding three years, increasing by only 3% from 4.17 billion dinars to 4.3 billion dinars.

Overall, Kuwait's banking sector appears to be in a strong financial position with ample liquidity and a well-balanced distribution of deposits across various time periods. This al-

lows banks to comfortably meet both local and foreign companies' financing needs.

The stability and sufficiency of deposits have contributed to a decline in the interbank market, which decreased by 18.4% from December 2023 to April 2024, reflecting a healthy sector-wide stability and surplus liquidity.

Foreign liquidity stagnates above five billion dinars in stock market

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: Foreign liquidity on the stock exchange market has remained stagnant at a level exceeding five billion dinars, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This stagnation persists due to limited and difficult-to-renew opportunities, particularly in primary market stocks. Some of these stocks have become burdened with risks, while others remain stagnant without contributing value as significant market weights.

Periodic reviews of market weights show minimal changes, with liquidity concentrated on a narrow base of stocks.

The last review, for example, included only 8 stocks, highlighting a lack of diversity and depth in market participation.

There is a clear demand for high-quality companies that can enhance the market through robust operational processes, strong cash flows, and valu-

able assets. This contrasts with unnecessary activities that offer little strategic value.

There remains a critical gap in the listing and classification of companies, especially since relying solely on the banking sector is insufficient to absorb the entirety of market activity or foreign inflows.

As of the latest settlement, foreign liquidity stood at 5.078 billion dinars. In the First Market, 13 listed stocks experienced minimal liquidation activities, while selective buying and position building were notably absent, with some stocks seeing complete stagnation without any transactions taking place.

This situation underscores the need for reforms and proactive measures to attract and sustain diversified investments, ensuring a robust and dynamic stock market that can effectively support economic growth and investor confidence.

Imports rise on weaker Yen

Kuwait's trade surplus with Japan widens to JPY 82.7 billion in May

TOKYO, June 20, (KUNA): Kuwait's trade surplus with Japan widened 2.3 percent from a year earlier to JPY 82.7 billion (USD 522 million) in May, up for the first time in three months, the latest government data showed.

Kuwait stayed in black ink with Japan for 16 years and four months, as exports outpaced its imports by a big margin, the Finance Ministry said in a preliminary report. Overall exports from Kuwait to Japan grew 3.9 percent year-on-year to JPY 102.8 billion (USD 648 million) for the first expansion in three months. Imports from Japan also increased 11.5 percent to JPY 20.1 billion (USD 126 million), up for the first time in six months.

Middle East's trade surplus with Japan widened 13.1 percent to JPY 831.6 billion (USD 5.3 billion) last month, with Japan-bound exports from the region rising 12 percent from a year earlier. Crude oil, re-

fined products, liquefied natural gas and other natural resources, which accounted for 94.2 percent of the region's total exports to Japan, jumped 10.3 percent. The region's overall imports from Japan rose 8.5 percent on strong demand for automobiles, machinery and steel.

The world's third-biggest economy logged a global trade deficit of JPY 1.2 trillion (USD 7.7 billion) in May for the second consecutive month of red ink, as the weaker yen inflated import bills. Exports surged 13.5 percent from the year before, lifted by automobiles, semiconductor-making equipment and chips. Imports expanded 9.5 percent on energy prices, especially petroleum products and crude oil amid the yen's depreciation against the dollar. China remained Japan's biggest trade partner, followed by the US. The trade data are measured on a customs-cleared basis before adjustment for seasonal factors.

US dollar dominance and sanctions drive gold acquisition

Advanced economies eye increasing gold reserves

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: According to recent reports, central banks in advanced economies are increasingly considering increasing their gold reserves while diversifying away from the US dollar, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The World Gold Council's annual survey revealed that nearly 60% of central banks in developed countries anticipate a rise in the share of gold in global reserves over the next five years, up from 38% last year. This shift mirrors the strategy observed among central banks in emerging markets, which have been major buyers of gold since the 2008 financial crisis.

Specifically, 13% of advanced economies plan to boost their gold holdings next year, marking the highest level since the survey's inception.

This trend is driven by concerns over the dollar's dominance and the use of US sanctions, particularly following instances such as those against Russia, which have spurred non-Western financial institutions to increase their bullion purchases.

Gold's appeal remains strong despite its recent price surge, reaching a peak of \$2,450 an ounce. Central banks cite gold's intrinsic value, its historical perfor-

mance during crises, and its role in portfolio diversification as primary reasons for acquiring more.

In 2022 and 2023 combined, central banks added over 1,000 tons of gold to their reserves, reflecting a growing preference for tangible assets amid global economic uncertainties.

Moreover, while the dollar remains the largest component of global foreign exchange reserves, its share has declined significantly over the years, exacerbated by the dollar's fluctuating value and geopolitical tensions. Including gold, the dollar's share has fallen below half of global reserves, highlighting a broader move towards diversification.

Looking ahead, market sentiment around gold remains influenced by expectations of US interest rate cuts, which could diminish the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding assets like gold.

Despite these dynamics, gold's role as a safe-haven asset and its perceived stability continue to attract interest from both central banks and investors alike.

Global oil markets near 7-week highs

Geopolitical tensions boost oil prices amid Mideast concerns

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: According to the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, the price of Kuwaiti oil rose by \$1.21 on Tuesday, reaching \$85.71 per barrel, up from \$84.50 per barrel in the previous trading session last Friday. This increase reflects ongoing volatility and geopolitical tensions impacting global oil markets, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In broader global oil market developments, prices showed a slight decline earlier today but remained close to their highest levels in 7 weeks.

Brent crude futures fell 17 cents to \$85.16 per barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate crude dropped 22 cents to \$81.35 per barrel. Both benchmarks had risen by more than a dollar in the preceding session, spurred by geopolitical events, including a Ukrainian drone strike causing an oil terminal fire in a major Russian port.

Geopolitical tensions are intensifying, with Israeli Foreign Minister Yisrael Katz warning of a potential "all-out war" with Lebanese Hezbollah. This comes amid efforts by the United States to prevent further escalation between Israel and Hezbollah, a situation that could dis-

rupt oil supplies from key Middle Eastern producers.

Market strategist Yip Jun Rong from Singapore noted that oil prices have rebounded significantly in recent weeks due to the risks of supply disruptions in case of broader conflicts.

He highlighted the difficulty in immediate resolution of these conflicts, which is likely to sustain high oil prices. Despite economic concerns such as weaker-than-expected US retail sales and mixed data from China, oil market investors are focusing on geopolitical tensions driving market dynamics.

In terms of US inventory data, crude inventories unexpectedly increased by 2.264 million barrels in the week ending June 14th, contrary to expectations of a 2.2 million barrel decline.

Gasoline stocks decreased by 1.077 million barrels, while distillate stocks rose by 538 thousand barrels during the same period, according to sources citing the American Petroleum Institute's figures.

These developments underscore the complex interplay of geopolitical events and economic data influencing oil market movements globally.

Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Egypt lead MENA power projects

MENA power sector sees growth amid diverse energy mix

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is experiencing significant growth in its power generation sector, driven by economic expansion, energy diversification efforts, and commitments to achieve net-zero targets, reports Al-Qabas daily.

According to data from MedProjects, which tracks regional projects, the power generation pipeline across all technologies in MENA is currently around 250 GW.

The following is the breakdown of planned capacity by technology:

Solar Energy -- Solar represents the largest share of planned capacity at approximately 45%. Saudi Arabia leads in solar energy projects with at least 40 GW in the planning and procurement phases. Morocco, Egypt, Algeria, and the UAE are also significant markets for solar power plants.

Fossil Fuel Plants -- Fossil fuel plants, mainly natural gas-fired, account for about 24% of the planned capacity. This includes significant projects in countries like Iraq and Libya, where there is ongoing de-

velopment despite challenges.

Wind Power -- Planned wind capacity totals about 59 GW, largely complementing gas-fired plants for energy generation.

Nuclear Energy -- Nuclear energy projects represent a smaller portion at 7.5%, with notable developments like the Dabaa Nuclear Power Plant in Egypt contributing to the regional nuclear capacity.

The following are the key markets and projects:

Saudi Arabia -- Leading the region with a power generation pipeline exceeding 55 GW, including initiatives in NEOM and substantial solar and gas-fired projects.

Morocco and Egypt -- Both countries are progressing with significant renewable energy projects, including green hydrogen initiatives, contributing to their substantial power generation pipelines (51 GW and 35 GW respectively).

Other Countries -- Kuwait, Iraq, Iran, Algeria, and the UAE also feature prominently in the MENA power generation landscape, with major investments and planned projects across various technologies.

The following are the challenges and opportunities:

Renewable Energy -- Despite the growth in renewable energy projects, fossil fuel plants still constitute a significant portion of the capacity under construction (approximately 46%). This reflects the ongoing need for base load power and the gradual integration of renewable sources.

Investment and Regulatory Frameworks -- Some countries, like Algeria and Iraq, face challenges in advancing renewable energy projects due to investment frameworks and energy market restructuring. Progress in these regions is expected to be gradual.

Technological Advancements -- Advances in solar photovoltaic (PV) technology are notable, with solar PV representing 29% of the total capacity under construction, alongside developments in nuclear power capacity.

In conclusion, the MENA region is poised for substantial growth in power generation capacity across a diversified energy mix, driven by renewable energy expansion, strategic investments in gas-fired plants, and emerging technologies like green hydrogen.

CTG Asia-Africa leads with 321 megawatts in Aswan Solar Projects

Chinese workers power Egypt's solar vision in Benban

ASWAN, June 20, (Xinhua): Amidst the scorching summer heat, a group of Chinese workers are toiling away among rows of neatly aligned solar panels in the Benban Solar Energy Park, working with their Egyptian colleagues to help energize the North African country's vision of becoming a regional clean energy hub.

Located in the desert of Aswan, a southern province of Egypt, the park covers an area of 37 square km and is planned to have a total installed capacity of two gigawatts.

"We have five projects with a total installed capacity of 321 megawatts in the park, and we are becoming the second-largest investor here," said Li Fengyi, vice director of MENA renewable power plants of Asia-Africa Green Energy Investment Limited (CTG Asia-Africa), an investment platform for China Three Gorges International in the Asian and North African regions.

"All the panels used in the CTG Asia-Africa projects are made in China," Li said, expressing the company's confidence in helping meet Egypt's power demand with the country's abundant solar resources.

The solar power plant in the park



Workers check solar panels at the Benban Solar Energy Park in Aswan, Egypt, on April 21, 2024. Located in the desert of Aswan, a southern province of Egypt, the park covers an area of 37 square km and is planned to have a total installed capacity of two gigawatts. (Xinhua/Ahmed Gomaa)

will help Egypt increase its use of renewable energy and is estimated to help reduce global greenhouse gas emissions by cutting two million tons of carbon dioxide annually, the Egyptian Ministry of Electricity and Re-

newable Energy said in a statement released in April 2024. The Chinese projects not only help the country generate clean power but also create job opportunities for local residents.

Ahmed Kamal, a site manager of the

CTG Asia-Africa projects at the park, has moved with his wife and daughter from Alexandria to settle in Aswan after being employed by the company.

"The projects have created thousands of jobs since its establishment, especially during the construction works, which supports many residents of Benban and Aswan," the 33-year-old engineer told Xinhua.

The surrounding areas of the projects have also seen development, and the residents of this desert region have experienced a notable improvement in their living conditions through stable income earned from working in the park, said Kamal.

"I also benefited financially as this job has improved my income and living standards," he added.

Mohammed Hussein, a 39-year-old employee from Benban, said that he and his family are also beneficiaries of the Chinese projects.

Hussein used to travel across numerous provinces in search of work opportunities before ultimately deciding to work at Benban.

"I'm very much satisfied with my work here, and I hope to continue working for the Chinese projects in the future," he added, flashing a smile.

TORONTO, June 20, (Xinhua):

Invest Qatar, the Gulf Arab state's investment promotion agency, told Xinhua the country was planning to step up its cooperation with China and to attract more Chinese investment in a bid to diversify its economy away from oil and gas.

"We set up an office in Hong Kong to better tap into the Chinese market. China excels in many, many technologies. China is maybe the best in the world at hyper scaling very quickly," Invest Qatar's senior manager of investor relations Fahad Ali Al-Kuwari said at Collision, one of the world's leading technology conferences taking place in Toronto from June 17-20.

"The expertise, know how, the talent is available in China and we would like to benefit from it. Hopefully Qatar can provide a platform that allows Chinese companies gain access to markets they didn't have access to before," he emphasized.

Qatar is the world's largest exporter of liquefied natural gas, and one of the top financial hubs in the Middle East with the fifth largest Islamic finance assets globally.

The emirate and peninsular Arab country is also home to Qatar Airways and emerging as a tourism destination which is visa-free for citi-

zens of over 100 countries.

"We're a very small, oil and gas rich country with around 300,000 people. We have a very strong financial and logistics sector that we used to export hydrocarbons," Al-Kuwari explained.

"But we would like to diversify to other sectors as well, not only with larger companies but with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well," he stressed.

In May, data from China's General Administration of Customs (GAC) showed that total goods trade volume between China and members of the Arab League surged to 2.8 trillion yuan (about 393.75 billion U.S. dollars) in 2023 from 303.81 billion yuan in 2004, an increase of 820.9 percent.

The United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Oman, Qatar, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia are China's top six trade partners in the Arab League in terms of trade value. They took up 84.8 percent of the total China-Arab trade in the first four months, GAC data revealed.

Collision, which is part of the Web Summit events, has gathered 37,832 attendees from 117 countries, it said in a press release. It is the last Collision event, and its final year in Toronto, before it transitions to Web Summit Vancouver in May 2025.

BUSINESS

Japan's exports surge 13.5% in May

Japan's exports surged 13.5% in May, faster than expected growth helped by a weak yen and strong demand in the U.S. and Asia.

Finance Ministry data reported Wednesday showed that the trade deficit totaled 1.22 trillion yen (\$7.7 billion), down nearly 12% from 1.38 trillion yen a year earlier. Imports grew 9.5%, year-on-year, to nearly 9.5 trillion yen (\$60 billion).

Exports totaled 8.3 trillion yen (\$53 billion) and grew at the fastest

since November 2022. Shipments to the United States were up nearly 24% and those to the rest of Asia rose more than 13%, led by double-digit growth in shipments of vehicles, electronics and machinery.

Trade with Europe mostly fell. The value of Japan's imports tends to grow when the Japanese yen loses value against the U.S. dollar and other major currencies. The dollar is trading at nearly 158 yen, up from 140-yen levels a year ago.

Japan is a resource-poor nation that imports almost all its oil, and higher imports of oil, gas and other fuels are a big factor behind the deficit in May, for the second month in a row. Fruit imports also gained in May.

But a large factor behind the increases in both exports and imports was rising prices overall, which inflated their value compared with a year earlier, Marcel Thieliand of Capital Economics said in a report. (AP)

US chipmaker to invest \$2b in Czech Rep

The U.S. chipmaker onsemi is planning a multi-year investment of up \$2 billion in its production facility in the Czech Republic, the company and the Czech government said on Wednesday.

The government said the money will be invested in the company's existing production facility in the eastern Czech town of Roznov pod Radhostem. It's the biggest single foreign investment in the country since the split of

Czechoslovakia in 1993.

The company based in Scottsdale, Arizona, currently produces 10 million chips a day in Roznov. The investment would increase production by hundreds of percent, the government said. It said the number of jobs created in Roznov will increase to 3,000 from the current 1,700.

The company said the move "would solidify advanced power semiconductor supply chain for its European and global customer

base."

"The site would produce the company's intelligent power semiconductors that are essential for improving the energy efficiency of applications in electric vehicles, renewable energy and AI data centers," it said in a statement.

The car industry is a key part of the Czech economy. Germany's Volkswagen that owns Skoda Auto, the country's biggest export company, is a strategic partner for onsemi. (AP)

Lawmakers accuse him of placing profits over safety

Boeing CEO defends his safety record, spars with senators

WASHINGTON, June 20, (AP) — Boeing CEO David Calhoun defended the company's safety record during a contentious Senate hearing Tuesday, while lawmakers accused him of placing profits over safety, failing to protect whistleblowers, and even getting paid too much.

Relatives of people who died in two crashes of Boeing 737 Max jetliners were in the room, some holding photos of their loved ones, to remind the CEO of the stakes. Calhoun began his remarks by standing, turning to face the families, and apologizing "for the grief that we have caused," and vowing to focus on safety.

Calhoun's appearance was the first before Congress by any high-ranking Boeing official since a panel blew out of a 737 Max during an Alaska Airlines flight in January. No one was seriously injured in the incident, but it raised fresh concerns about the company's best-selling commercial aircraft.

The tone of the hearing before the Senate investigations subcommittee was set hours earlier, when the panel released a 204-page report with new allegations from a whistleblower who said he worries that defective parts could be going into 737s. The whistleblower is the latest in a string of current and former Boeing employees to raise concerns about the company's manufacturing processes, which federal officials are investigating.

"This hearing is a moment of reckoning," the subcommittee chairman, Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., said. "It's about a company, a once iconic company, that somehow lost its way."

Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., placed the blame squarely on Calhoun, saying that the man who became CEO in January 2020 had been too focused on the bottom line.

"You are cutting corners, you are eliminating safety procedures, you are sticking it to your employees, you are cutting back jobs because you are trying to squeeze

every piece of profit you can out of this company," Hawley said, his voice rising. "You are strip-mining Boeing."

Hawley repeatedly mentioned Calhoun's compensation for last year, valued at \$32.8 million, and asked the CEO why he hasn't resigned.

"Senator, I'm sticking this through. I'm proud of having taken this job. I'm proud of our safety record, and I'm proud of our Boeing people," replied Calhoun, who has announced that he will step down by year end.

Hawley interrupted. "You're proud of the safety record?" he asked with incredulity.

"I am proud of every action we have taken," Calhoun responded.

Senators pressed Calhoun about accusations that Boeing managers retaliated against employees who reported safety concerns. They asked the CEO if he ever spoke with any whistleblowers. He replied that he had not, but agreed it would be a good idea.

The latest whistleblower, Sam Mohawk, a quality assurance investigator at Boeing's 737 assembly plant near Seattle, told the subcommittee that "nonconforming" parts - ones that could be defective or aren't properly documented - could be winding up in 737 Max jets.

Potentially more troubling for the company, Mohawk charged that Boeing hid evidence after the Federal Aviation Administration told the company it planned to inspect the plant in June 2023.

"Once Boeing received such a notice, it ordered the majority of the (nonconforming) parts that were being stored outside to be moved to another location," Mohawk said, according to the report. "Approximately 80% of the parts were moved to avoid the watchful eyes of the FAA inspectors."

The parts were later moved back or lost, Mohawk said. They included rudders,

wing flaps and other parts that are crucial in controlling a plane.

A Boeing spokesperson said the company got the subcommittee report late Monday night and was reviewing the claims.

The FAA said it would "thoroughly investigate" the allegations. A spokesperson said the agency has received more reports of safety concerns from Boeing employees since the Jan. 5 blowout on the Alaska Airlines Max.

The 737 Max has a troubled history. After Max jets crashed in 2018 in Indonesia and 2019 in Ethiopia, killing 346 people, the FAA and other regulators grounded the aircraft worldwide for more than a year and a half. The Justice Department is considering whether to prosecute Boeing for violating terms of a settlement it reached with the company in 2021 over allegations that it misled regulators who approved the plane.

Mohawk told the Senate subcommittee that the number of unacceptable parts has exploded since production of the Max resumed following the crashes. He said the increase led supervisors to tell him and other workers to "cancel" records that indicated the parts were not suitable to be installed on planes.

The FAA briefly grounded some Max planes again after January's mid-air blowout of a plug covering an emergency exit on the Alaska Airlines plane. The agency and the National Transportation Safety Board opened separate investigations of Boeing that are continuing.

Calhoun said Boeing has responded to the Alaska accident by slowing production, encouraging employees to report safety concerns, stopping assembly lines for a day to let workers talk about safety, and appointing a retired Navy admiral to lead a quality review. Late last month, Boeing delivered an improvement plan ordered by the FAA. Calhoun defended the company's safety culture while acknowledging that it "is far from perfect."

Escalating demand to spur increase

Bitcoin 'price' projected to surge to \$500,000 by 2029

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: According to research firm Bernstein, Bitcoin is anticipated to see substantial price increases in the coming years, reports Al-Jarida daily.

They expect Bitcoin to reach \$500,000 by 2029, driven primarily by escalating demand for cryptocurrency exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and the limited supply of Bitcoin itself.

The research note highlights that Bitcoin ETFs have attracted significant investments, totaling tens of billions of dollars since their introduction earlier this year. This surge in demand for ETFs, combined with the inherently limited supply of Bitcoin, is identified as the key factors propelling Bitcoin's price upward.

Currently, Bitcoin is trading at \$65,162, and Bernstein's projections suggest a notable increase in the near future.

The Bitcoin is expected to rise to \$200,000 by next year, up from previous estimates of \$150,000. Looking further ahead, their outlook predicts Bitcoin could achieve \$1 million by 2033.

These forecasts are based on the premise of sustained demand growth for Bitcoin-related financial products and the constrained supply dynamics intrinsic to cryptocurrencies.

As such, Bernstein anticipates significant appreciation in Bitcoin's value over the coming years, driven by these market fundamentals.

African agriculture thrives with Chinese technology, mkt access

NAIROBI, June 20, (Xinhua) — At the Nigerian Agricultural Technology Demonstration Center near Abuja, the capital of the West African country, Chinese agricultural experts have a daily routine of examining newly harvested rice.

As a result of years of dedicated work, experts from the Chinese company Green Agriculture West Africa Ltd. (GAWAL) have developed a high-yield rice seed tailored to local conditions, which outperforms native varieties by over 20 percent. This seed, endorsed by Nigerian agricultural authorities, is now planted across two-thirds of the country's states.

Lawal Musa, a farmer from Jigawa State, has been growing this rice for several years. "Rice is vital in Nigeria and every family consumes it. With China's cooperation, Nigeria is on the path to achieving food self-sufficiency," he said, praising the rice for its high productivity and ability to withstand diseases and drought.

GAWAL, a leading seed company in Nigeria, contributed to the government's seed supply program by distributing over 30,000 tons of seeds across more than 30 states. Its effort has significantly boosted the country's rice production by more than 2 million tons.

In recent years, agricultural cooperation between China and Africa has flourished under the frameworks of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and the Belt and Road Initiative. From local fields to global e-commerce platforms, China's efforts have significantly boosted African agricultural productivity and modernization through technical assistance, industry chain development, and market access.

Transferring techniques to local farmers

Over the past decade, the Nigerian Agricultural Technology Demonstration Center has stood out among the 24 centers established by China across Africa. These centers are pivotal in advancing agricultural technology, successfully transferring over 300 sophisticated agricultural techniques to local farmers.

The impact of these initiatives is substantial, boosting crop yields by 30 percent and positively affecting over 1 million smallholder farmers throughout Africa.

With concerted efforts, Chinese agricultural specialists have remarkably improved the yield and quality of staple crops such as rice, cassava and soybeans. Moreover, they have introduced an array of new fruit, vegetable, and bean varieties. These contributions have not only enriched the diversity of African diets but also forged

fresh pathways for the region's agricultural progress.

In Kigali, Rwanda, Leonidas Mushimiyimana operates the region's largest mushroom cultivation workshop, producing up to 30,000 mushroom tubes monthly and 600 kilograms of fresh mushrooms weekly.

Juncao is a hybrid grass and an important multifunctional agricultural resource developed and used for mushroom farming in China.

After learning the Juncao cultivation technology, Mushimiyimana established the workshop, employing dozens of people. He plans to expand his business to produce dried mushroom products for international markets, fostering communal prosperity.

Juncao technology now benefits over 4,000 Rwandan farmers, creating more than 30,000 jobs along the agricultural value chain.

Eric Rokasse Kamo, former minister of agriculture and rural development of the Central African Republic, lauds the practicality of Juncao technology, highlighting its role in job creation and income enhancement for the African people.

Enhancing value-added products
China-Africa agricultural cooperation extends beyond the fields, encompassing the entire industrial chain to enhance the processing capacity and added value of African agricultural products, thereby increasing farmers' incomes.

During Cote d'Ivoire's rubber harvesting season, trucks queue up outside the Mainland Group's rare rubber factory in Dabou. The newly harvested rubber will be processed into standard rubber at this Chinese factory before being shipped to China for further processing into rubber products.

Despite its favorable natural conditions as Africa's largest natural rubber producer, Cote d'Ivoire's lack of processing capacity limited its exports in the past.

Yobout Roland, a local cooperative member, noted that Chinese factories have doubled their production by providing new sales channels.

Brou Bonaventure, from the Ivorian Interprofessional Fund for Agricultural Research and Advice, said the Chinese factory has boosted local processing capacity and provided fair, stable shipping channels, facilitating farmers to expand their rubber production.

"The Chinese factory has increased the value of our rubber products. We are grateful to China!" Bonaventure exclaimed.

Cassava, a crucial food crop in Africa, has also seen advancements. Poor varieties and technical limitations hindered yield and processing previously.

BoE keeps main interest rate at 16-yr high of 5.25 percent



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, left, is given a tour of the Sizewell B nuclear power facility by Station Director Robert Gunn in Sizewell, England, Wednesday, June 19, 2024. (AP)

With election looming, the Conservatives seize on inflation fall to 2% target

LONDON, June 20, (AP): The Bank of England on Thursday kept its main interest rate at a 16-year high of 5.25%, even though inflation has fallen to its target of 2%.

In a statement, some policymakers on the bank's nine-member Monetary Policy Committee voiced worries that some underlying measures of inflation, such as in the services sector, remain elevated, which could be stoked further if interest rates are cut too soon.

The decision, which was widely anticipated by economists, is likely to disappoint the governing Conservative Party ahead of the U.K.'s general election in two weeks time. A cut would have been seized upon by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak as positive economic news.

Any hopes the governing Conservative Party may have of the Bank of England cutting its main interest rate from a 16-year high of 5.25% Thursday are expected to be dashed - even though inflation in the U.K. has fallen to its target rate for the first time in nearly three years.

Official figures on Wednesday showed that inflation, as measured by the consumer prices index, fell to 2% in the year to May from 2.3% the month before, with food prices providing the biggest downward contribution.

That's the first time since July 2021 that inflation has been at the bank's target.

Despite the welcome decline, some policymakers on the bank's Monetary Policy Committee appear

New Petrobras chief sworn in as mkt worries Brazil's government will have a heavier hand

RIO DE JANEIRO, June 20, (AP): The head of Brazil's state-run oil giant Petrobras, Magda Chambriard, was sworn in Wednesday amid market concerns of increased government intervention in the company.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva - who nominated Chambriard - attended the ceremony at a Petrobras research center in Rio de Janeiro, along with Finance Minister Fernando Haddad and Mines and Energy Minister Alexandre Silveira.

Chambriard's predecessor, Jean Paul Prates, stepped down last month following months of tensions with the federal government. The market viewed Prates as putting the interests of shareholders above those of the nation, and is skeptical Chambriard - who headed oil and gas regulator ANP between 2012 and 2016 - will have the same approach.

"Our management, as expected, is fully aligned with President Lula's and the federal government's vision for the country," Chambriard said during the ceremony. "After all, they are our majority shareholders."

Fears of government interventionism in Petrobras date to the sprawling "Car Wash" investigation that began a decade ago. The yearslong investiga-

tion discovered billions of dollars in kickbacks related to construction contracts that Petrobras awarded. Investigators found illicit funds filled party coffers and lined politicians' pockets, at a time when Lula's Workers' Party was in power.

Lula himself was jailed for almost 600 days as a result, although his conviction was later annulled. During the ceremony on Wednesday, Lula slammed the investigation's legacy.

"With the false argument of fighting corruption, Operation Car Wash was actually aimed at dismantling and privatizing Petrobras," he said. "If the objective was to combat corruption, the corrupt should be punished and our people's assets left intact. But that's not what was done; what was done was an attempt to destroy the company's image."

The Intercept Brasil revealed collusion between prosecutors and Car Wash's crusading judge, Sergio Moro, who later joined former far-right President Jair Bolsonaro's Cabinet. That tainted the investigation's credibility and fueled Lula allies' accusations that it was politically motivated.

After beating Bolsonaro in the 2022 presidential election, Lula returned to power for a third, non-consecutive

term. Car Wash's prosecutions of scores of politicians and executives - celebrated at the time as great achievements in attacking longstanding impunity - have been further dismantled since last year. The Supreme Court has suspended fines stemming from leniency agreements, annulled convictions and closed investigations.

Such developments have contributed to worry that the scope or tolerance for graft may return. But Rafael Schiwozer, a finance professor at the Getulio Vargas Foundation, a university and think tank, said such concern about Petrobras is unwarranted.

"The company's governance has improved a lot. Managers today are aware of the responsibilities they have, and corruption is obviously punished," he said.

Brazil's government has a controlling stake in Petrobras and some Brazilian politicians see the company as a means to leverage national development. That represents a clash of interests with minority shareholders who want the company to focus on maximizing profits. At the event on Wednesday, Lula said he wants the company to be profitable - and that profits are a boon for investments and public spending across Brazil.

environment would help his Conservatives when he surprised many and called an early election for July 4.

However, opinion polls have barely budged over the past four weeks and the main opposition Labour Party, which is led by Keir Starmer, is widely expected to return to power for the first time since 2010.

economist at asset management firm abrdn, formerly Aberdeen Asset Management. "But we think the Bank's communication tomorrow will set out a path for a cut in August, which is now looking increasingly likely."

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak bet that the more stable economic envi-

ronment would help his Conservatives when he surprised many and called an early election for July 4.

However, opinion polls have barely budged over the past four weeks and the main opposition Labour Party, which is led by Keir Starmer, is widely expected to return to power for the first time since 2010.

Al Dirwaza account leads Kuwait with high winners and returns

KIB announces winners of Al Dirwaza account's weekly draw

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the winners of the weekly draw held under the Al Dirwaza account's 2024 campaign, which is distinguished by the highest number of winners throughout the year. The third weekly draw, based on customers' May deposits, recently took place in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as representatives from the Bank. The KD 1,000 prize was awarded to Ahmed Salem Faraj Alyan, Mashael Salman Khalaf Rashed, Ebraheem Abdullah Mohammad Al Saffar, Ahmed Fawzi Yahya El Gammal, and Fadhel Helal Hasan Almutawa whilst the KD 500 prize was awarded to Reem Bahaaldeen Mirza Alseleemi, Hanadi Fakharuddin Adenwalla, Hazem Mustafa Abdulhameed Muhaisen, Ayman Sami Ameen Ali, Mohammed Jahangir Hossain Kader Matbar, Nadrah Abdulghani Abdulredha Almutawa, and Adnan Nouri Ali Alshereedah.



KIB's Al Dirwaza account features monthly profit disbursement and prize draws.

monthly basis, where the customer gets an expected profit of 2% for the first 3 months from the account opening date and up to 1% expected rate onward. The expected profits are automatically deposited into the cus-

tomers' account within the first day of the beginning of each month.

Al Dirwaza account holders are eligible to enter the weekly, monthly and annual draws on the condition of maintaining at least KD 100 in

their account. For the weekly and monthly draws, each KD 1 that has completed a full month's cycle in the account will count for one chance, and chances are calculated based on the lowest monthly balance preceding the draw. As for the mega draw, chances are calculated for each KD 1 that completes a two-month cycle in the account – based on the lowest two monthly balances prior to the draw.

Al Dirwaza account is also in compliance with the provisions of Islamic Sharia and approved by the KIB's Sharia Supervisory Board. Furthermore, the account comes with a wide range of benefits, including the ease of opening the account, which does not require a salary transfer, and the customer's ability to open it remotely without visiting a branch through KIB Online on the Bank's website or KIB Mobile application on smartphones.

Additionally, Al Dirwaza account automatically grants customers instant issuance of an ATM card, with a KD 2,000 ATM daily withdrawal limit, as well as the ability to issue credit cards against the cash collateral in the account. To open the account and participate in its draws, a minimum of KD 100 is required and can only be withdrawn upon account closure.

'Bank launches new draws'

ABK announces KD 10,000 Alfouz weekly draw winner

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced Awatef Yousef Al Sabah, as the KD10,000 Alfouz weekly draw winner on Wednesday, 19 June 2024, whereby the draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Since its launch, the Alfouz account continues to offer an impressive weekly draw of KD10,000. The Bank has recently expanded its offering by adding a new alluring monthly draw of KD20,000, and an exceptional quarterly draw of KD100,000.

The account also retains its hallmark mega annual draw of a KD5,000 month-

ly salary for ten years. Furthermore, the Bank now offers customers an increased opportunity to win for every KD10 as opposed to KD100 previously.

ABK encourages everyone to open an Alfouz draw account and/or increase their balances to have more chances in winning in the upcoming draws. The higher the deposits, the higher the chances to win.

For more information about ABK, please follow the Bank's Instagram account @abk_kuwait, visit eahli.com, contact Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 or visit one of the Bank's branches across Kuwait.



Alfouz weekly draw winner

Renowned scholars illuminate Dhul Hijjah significance in Kuwait

IMA Kuwait hosts successful Arafat Day gatherings across Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Kuwait successfully conducted a series of events known as Arafat Day Gatherings from May 31 to June 13, 2024. These gatherings, held across various mosques in Kuwait, commemorated the sacred sacrifice of Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, in this month of Dhul Hijjah, also known as the Month of Sacrifice and Hajj.

The Arafat Day Gatherings took place in mosques located in Khaitan, Ababasiya, Kuwait City, Salmiya, Mahboula and Fahaheel, drawing hundreds of attendees. Special arrangements were made to accommodate families, ensuring a comfortable and inclusive environment for all.

Renowned Scholars and Khateeb in Kuwait graced these gatherings, delivering insightful speeches on a range of topics related to the significance of the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah, Arafat Day, the objectives and message of Hajj, Qurbani (sacrifice) & Eid Al-Adha, the biography of Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH) and the farewell sermon of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Mohammad Umar Falahi, President of IMA, spoke on the topic ' Virtues of the First 10 Days of Dhul Hijjah' after Friday Prayers at Masjid Abu Ra-

fae, Abbasiya. Friday sermon was delivered by Hafiz Hafizur Rehman on the 'Life of Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH)'. Farooq Khan presented a beautiful nasheed in urdu on Palestine & the program concluded with a Q&A session, where winners were awarded prizes.

Masood Shihab spoke to audience at Masjid Haya Ibraheem, Salmiya and also at Masjid Yousuf Musaid Al Mailem, Khaitan after Isha Prayers on the 'Life of Ibrahim (PBUH) & Its Relevancy in Today's World'. His talk was followed by Q&A Session conducted by IMA President Mohammad Umar Falahi, with attractive gifts awarded to winners.

Sharafudin Soofi, a keynote speaker and Khateeb while addressing a large gathering at Maryam Masjid, Mahboula enlightening the audience on the 'Message of Arafat Day & Last Sermon of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ'. He emphasized on Muhammad (PBUH) last message to the world of universal brotherhood, equality and oneness of God, which is universally accepted but sometimes less practiced. Last farewell Sermon of Prophet highlights universal human right which is relevant during all times.

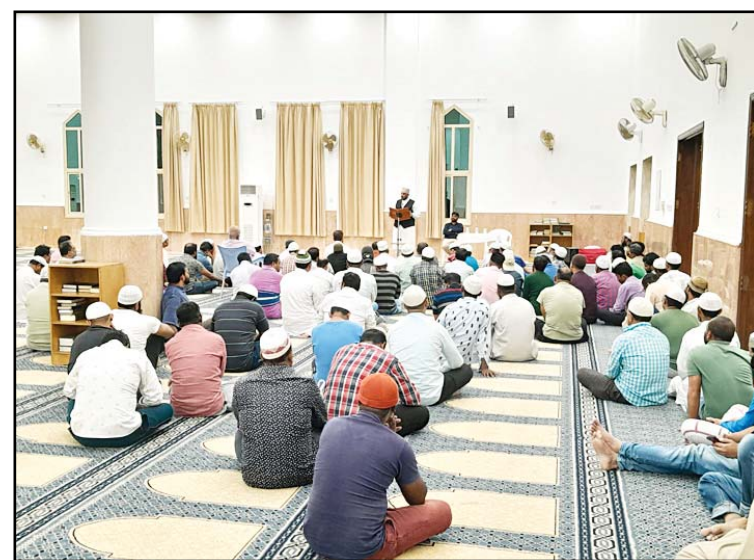
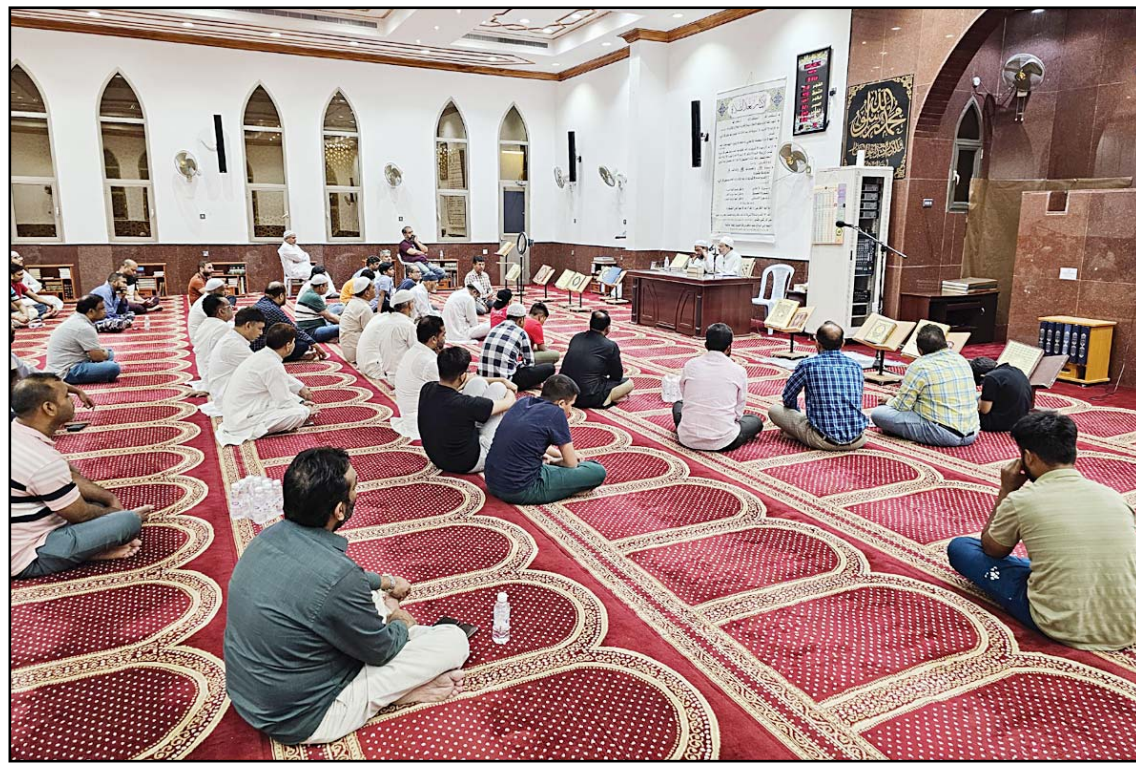
IMA President Mohammad Umar Falahi also delivered Friday Sermon on

the topic 'Hajjatul Wida' followed by a speech on the 'Purpose of Qurbani' at Masjid Yousef Al-Adsani Maliya, Kuwait City. Additionally, he spoke on the 'Message of Hajjatul Wida to Humanity' on Thursday, at Urdu Sermon Masjid, Fahaheel after Isha prayers.

A large turnouts at each event are a testament to the strong sense of community and devotion among Muslim expatriates in Kuwait toward observing the sacred traditions of Dhul Hijjah. At the end of each gathering, dinner packets were served, fostering a sense of community and togetherness.

IMA Kuwait extends its gratitude to the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Kuwait, for their patronage and support in organizing these impactful events.

IMA Kuwait is an Indian socio-religious organization that operates under the patronage of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Kuwait. IMA always focusses to provide platform for enhancement of expatriates living in Kuwait for their spiritual & social aspect through various programs & social gatherings. It looks forward for organizing various beneficial programs in future, considering the occasions and requirements of expatriates in general and specifically Indian community.



Photos during the program.

What's On



Family photo of young artists with their teachers and KMA co-founders.



Final gala concert performers group photo with awards, diplomats, teachers and co-founders of KMA.



A group photo of 9:30am concert performers with their teachers.

KMA hosts 22nd 'Treasure of Talents' festival

Young musicians shine at annual fiesta

By Cezary Owerkowicz
KMA co-founder

The co-founders of the Kuwait Music Academy organized the annual fiesta of Young Music Talents in Kuwait at the prestigious Yarmouk Cultural Center. The day-long event featured seven consecutive concerts starting at 9:30 am.

Co-founders of the KMA, Fajer Al-Mazidi and Professor Cezary Owerkowicz, inaugurated the esteemed event aimed at showcasing young musicians in Kuwait.

Professor Cezary emphasized the event's significance, describing it not as a routine occurrence but as a tradition that grows and evolves, akin to a tree 'From Roots to Fruits'.

He elaborated, saying "This is the main idea of the Festival". Fajer Al-Mazidi articulated the Kuwait Music Academy's mission, stating, "Talents are a priceless treasure of every country and society. Our duty is to discover and cultivate the talents and skills of each generation".

The event featured over 120 talented young musicians, as highlighted in the elegant festival brochure, showcasing their remarkable achievements in singing and playing various musical instruments.

Variety

The performances were held on an exquisite Steinway Grand Piano, as well as strings ranging from the playful ukulele to classical and electric guitars and violins, along with wind instruments such as the flute and clarinet, and drums, joyfully manned by Freddie Azer.

The programs offered a picturesque variety, starting from classical and opera hits to jazz, pop, and original compositions.

What added to the excitement was the diverse ages of the musicians. For instance, one young girl played the piano standing because she could barely reach the keys, while some children were just a bit taller than their violin's bow.

Notably, adults also participated passionately, from simpler pieces to technically demanding classical works, a tradition upheld annually by Dr. Mohamed El Maraghy. The event also saw the delightful participation of family teams on almost every concert, including siblings, twins, and even parents, along with friends. These participants came from diverse cultural backgrounds and traditions, showcasing how music truly fosters social connection and unity.

The Evening Gala Concert was graced by members of the Diplomatic Corps, distinguished guests, and a numerous audience. The embassies of the UK, Poland, and Ukraine presented Special Prizes to the winners.

The previous day, the Open Competition 'Summer Melodies of Kuwait,' organized by KMA, concluded with the jury deciding to hold the Awarding Ceremony on the following day, at the start of the 22nd ToT Fest.



Ms. Kholoud delivers captivating performance.



Mrs Kinga with son Witold Masternak, the youngest star award winner.



Dr. El Maraghy poses with 'Frederic Chopin Prize' from Embassy of Poland.



Prof Cezary with Gill brothers Divraj and Gurtay.



Ms. Houda AlMalab showcases piano prowess.

During the Gala Concert, two outstanding young ladies, Loulwa Almutawa and Maryam Abu Rouss, who shared the 1st Prize, were honored with performances at the opening ceremony.

Then their presentation, enthusiastically applauded by audience, was

followed by twenty performances from Winners of the Festival starting from the youngest to those awarded by top prizes.

The following were the prize winners:

■ The Youngest Star Awards went to: Dana Tu & Reyna Elisabeth

Philip

■ The Piano Awards were given to Elisey Kon, Ioannis Papadopoulos, John Marchese, Lamar Mallak, Qays El Dirani, Witold Masternak & Zais Al Sabouni

■ The Violin Award was bagged by Nanah Kim

■ The Vocal Awards were grabbed by Kholoud Salman & Najlaa Al Fakih

■ The Special Prof. Cezary Owerkowicz & Mrs Fajer Al Mazidi Awards were won by pianists

■ The HE Ambassador of Ukraine Award went to Shaun Thomas (piano)

■ The Frederic Chopin Award by The Embassy of the Republic of Poland was bagged by two pianists Danah Ahmed Rabeea & Dr. Mohamed El Maraghy

■ Special British Ambassador HE Belinda Lewis' Prize 'Female Faces of Music Award' was awarded to Keisha Mokashi (piano)

■ The Grand Prix of 22nd Treasure Of Talents Festival was bagged by pianist & singer - Tejia Wang Masters -Educators

Once again, young talents received steadfast support from their mentors: acclaimed pianist and Director Karol Masternak, alongside Inna Agibalova, Viktor Šramko, Dmitri Krasnikov, Aleksandr Kovalev, and Kamil M. Derylo.

The Gala Concert was enriched by excellent and virtuosic performances, notably by Dmitri on viola, accompanied by Inna on piano, and Aleksandr on classical guitar.

These performances underscored the exceptional mastery of the KMA educators, who not only impart technical skills and repertoire but also nurture a deep appreciation for music, akin to a magical reflection of life.

HE Ambassador of the UK, Belinda Lewis, said in her message that: Music possesses a magical quality of its own and plays a fundamental role in our lives, transcending geographies and cultures.

It intensifies emotions, evokes happy memories, gives energy, and can even bring tears. Music unites us, fosters a sense of belonging through anthems, and preserves forgotten dialects through songs. Music emanates from the soul, and while technology can enhance it, it can never replace this essence.

Inspire

The Polish Charge d'Affaires, Anna Godoj-Ciszowska, in praising the participants said it is the dedication, passion, and hard work of students and teachers, expressing hope that: "May tonight's concert serve as a reminder of the power of music to unite us, inspire us, and uplift our spirits."

Owerkowicz concluded by saying, such heartfelt words serve as the greatest reward for young talents and their mentors. From strong, well-tended roots, abundant fruits are growing. "As I said from the stage, 'Music, the magical mirror of life, is inherently social. It originates from the people, moves through the people, and exists for the people'..."



Keisha Mokashi receiving her award from UK Embassy.



Polish Embassy members with Karol, Ioannis, Kamil, and Prof. Cezary.



Danah Rabeea receives the Chopin Prize.



From left: KMA co-founder Fajer Al-Mazidi, Prof. Cezary, first prize winner Tejia Wang and Karol.



Ms Aida Alanzi performing with Aleksandr.

People & Places

PARIS
a guy thing



Undercover



Walter Van Beirendonck



Undercover



Undercover



Undercover



Walter Van Beirendonck

Above and below: Models present creations for the Walter Van Beirendonck and Undercover Spring Summer 2025 collections, that were presented in Paris, France, Wednesday, June 19. (AP)

Couture-like poetry

Miyake's wind-inspired show takes off in Paris

PARIS, June 20. (AP): Diaphanous origami-like sculptures that floated like spring seeds caught in the wind captured the essence of the subtle, rich, and exquisite display from Issey Miyake at Paris Fashion Week - one of the strongest in seasons.

The breathtaking menswear displays in the show "Up, Up, and Away" featured couture-like poetry: seemingly weightless textiles that billowed like parachutes or kites. The garments seemed ready for flight.

In Mobilier National's cobbled courtyard, the Homme Plissé show Thursday morning took inspiration from all things windy, transforming the elements into wearable art.

The collection was a testament to designer Satoshi Kondo's deft innovations with fabric techniques.

A vivid blue coat cut a striking figure, with stiff, angular sleeves that contrasted beautifully with the softness of its pleats. This was not just a coat, but a sculptural piece that transformed with the air, reminiscent of Kondo's signature romantic approach to silhouettes.

Kondo brought garments to life, like kites in the sky with voluminous silhouettes created by fastening and unfastening buttons. One standout piece, a pale blue hooded look, billowed like a parachute when the model walked across the cobbled courtyard, its back panels filling with air dramatically.

A beige T-shirt and waistcoat ensemble looked red carpet-ready with its chicly pleated, arrow-thin assorted tie.

Kondo's was a poetic masterclass in fusing complexity with simplicity, and when the collection entered to rousing applause, the Paris sun finally peeked out from between the clouds.

Collections

Meanwhile, Milan Fashion Week opened last Friday with two co-ed collections, underlining that the old calendar rules no longer apply.

The week featured just 20 runway shows, which should allow time for reflection on where fashion is headed. Moschino opened with a show combining menswear for next summer and women's 2025 resort, followed by Canadian fashion house Dsquared2 with a full menswear and womenswear collection.

In his second season as Moschino creative director, Adriano Paolozza took the rules and literally shredded them.

"The idea of freedom of expression through dressing is what I want to bring to the future of Moschino, which is tied to the original DNA," Paolozza said backstage. "It is not about gender. It is not about nationality. It's really about feeling comfortable, dressing the way you want and not the way you should."

The Argentine designer reads our collective minds as the summer season beckons in the northern hemisphere, tapping desires to break free from the office routine and reach dream destination. Along the way, daydreams take over, and familiar objects shift.

Paolozza creates a shimmery tank out of big paperclips. A jacket is covered in textile post-its of forgotten tasks. Another becomes the office worker's survival jacket, with slots for pens, a note pad, credit cards, ID badge, charging cables, nothing is concealed; this later becomes an adventure jacket with field guides and a magnifying glass.

Suits and trenches are deconstructed into dresses. Then they are shredded, as if to say: Enough. The last straw: An airliner perched on a hat. Then a literal straw skirt.

Style



Undercover



Undercover



Walter Van Beirendonck



Undercover

Fashion

Wednesday that Verzuz cemented an exclusive partnership for independent distribution with the social media site X.

Swizz Beatz said he's looking forward to the new chapter for Verzuz, which became popular during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Not only are we excited to have Verzuz on X, we're excited to help X build the biggest entertainment company in the world," he said in statement before he thanked several X executives including owner **Elon Musk** for believing in their vision. "We can't wait to get back to work."

Both companies agreed on a "mutually beneficial alliance" where Swizz Beatz and Timbaland maintain full ownership and creative control, while



Lamar



Beatz

DJ Mustard production, which Lamar restarted twice after the first verse and performed four times in full. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Swizz Beatz and Timbaland are bringing the "Verzuz" series back with a new major platform for viewers to watch musicians face off in a song-against-song battle. The legendary producers announced

Angeles unity.

Lamar curated a three-hour concert featuring a mix of up-and-coming LA rappers and stars including **Tyler, The Creator, Steve Lacy** and **YG**. When it was his turn to take the stage, the 37-year-old rapper powered through a set with Black Hippy collaborators Schoolboy Q, Ab-Soul and Jay Rock, performed his Drake diss songs "Euphoria" and "6:16 in LA," then was joined on-stage by **Dr. Dre**.

The two West Coast titans performed "Still D.R.E." and "California Love" before Dre quieted the roaring crowd by calling for a moment of silence. It was a misdirect. He then delivered the "Sixth Sense" quote that opens Lamar's chart-topping "Not Like Us": "I see dead people."

A crowd of 17,000 that included The Weeknd, **LeBron James, Ayo Edebiri** and **Rick Ross** rapped along to every word of the biting-but-jubilant

X receives exclusive distribution rights. (AP)

ROME: The World Food Forum (WFF) on Tuesday announced a week of activities in restaurants worldwide, as part of the United Nations' "Sustainable Gastronomy Day", aimed at encouraging youth to reduce food waste.

Named "Sustainable Gastronomy Restaurant Week" (SGRW), the one-week event is the first of its kind, built upon the theme of "More Taste, Less Waste". The SGRW partnered with restaurants owned by young chefs to create a co-branded menu or items for the campaign. These dishes use fresh, seasonal ingredients and follow culinary guidelines to help reduce food waste and emissions.

According to the WFF, around 17 percent of food is wasted at the retail and consumer levels. Sustainable gastronomy aims to avoid waste as well as any harm to our natural resources. True sustainable cooking can be practiced without being detrimental to our environment or health.

At the launch event, **Lindsey Hook**, Head of Culture at the WFF, said that the campaign is to inspire all those involved in the agrifood system, including consumers, to make better choices about food production and consumption. "It aims to highlight the leadership role of youth as chefs and entrepreneurs in sustainable gastronomy," said Hook. (Xinhua)

NEW YORK: Black music traditions such as jazz are central to celebrations of Juneteenth, says civil rights lawyer and jazz pianist **Bryan Stevenson**.

That's why he and Pulitzer Prize-winning jazz artist **Wynton Marsalis** have debuted "Freedom, Justice and Hope," a live performance album of historic jazz records created to protest racial injustice, in time for this year's celebrations.

Along with a new arrangement of saxophonist **John Coltrane's** "Alabama," which pays homage to the four Black girls killed when the Ku Klux Klan bombed Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church in 1963, the project includes original compositions by up-and-coming bassist **Endea Owens** and trumpeter **Josh Evans**.

The album, released under **Blue Engine Records**, features the orchestra of Jazz at Lincoln Center, where Marsalis is the artistic and managing director. It is now streaming on digital platforms. (AP)

Variety

INGLEWOOD, Calif.: Not content with merely taking a victory lap after winning his battle against fellow rap superstar **Drake**, **Kendrick Lamar** turned his Juneteenth "Pop Out" concert at the Forum into a cathartic livestreamed celebration of **Los**

Understanding heat stroke: A doctor's insights

Stay safe in hot weather: 3 tips for preventing heat stroke

By Gabriel Neal

Texas A&M University

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



As a primary care physician who often treats patients with heat-related illnesses, I know all too well how heat waves create spikes in hospitalizations and deaths related to "severe nonexertional hyperthermia," or what most people call "heat stroke."

Heat stroke is when a person's core body temperature rises too high - often more than 104 F (40 C) - because high environmental temperatures and humidity prevent the body from cooling itself through sweating and breathing. As heat stroke develops, a patient experiences rapid heart rate, ragged breathing, dizziness, nausea, muscle cramps and confusion. Eventually the patient may lose consciousness entirely.

Without medical intervention, heat stroke is often fatal. On average, about 658 Americans die each year from heat stroke, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Victims of heat stroke can be any age, but most often it strikes the elderly - particularly those over the age of 70 - because our bodies' ability to cool off declines with age. Additionally, many common medications used to control blood pressure, seizures and psychological disorders reduce a person's ability to regulate temperature. Those risks increase even more when an elderly person doesn't have awareness of the dangerous heat wave, doesn't have working air conditioning in their home and doesn't have anyone to check on them.

In addition to advancing age, other factors that increase the risk for heat stroke are obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

Here are three tips on how to prevent this potentially deadly condition:

■ **Stay hydrated.** In hotter weather, increase your water intake and avoid sugary drinks and alcohol. If your doctor has limited your daily water intake because of heart failure or another diagnosis, stay in communication with them during a heat wave to avoid medical complications.

■ **Rest.** Don't exercise during the hottest hours of the day - typically between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. - and expect longer recovery time after exercise when heat and humidity are elevated.

■ **Find a cool environment.** If you don't have an air conditioned home or car, try:

- wearing light, breathable clothing
- avoiding time in direct sunlight
- spraying yourself with water and sitting in front of a fan
- taking a cool bath or shower
- placing a cold pack on your neck, armpit or head
- contacting your local health department about local heat-relief shelters

Fans help - not by lowering the air temperature but by causing air movement over the skin, resulting in evaporation of sweat, which lowers the body temperature. Even though fans are useful, air conditioning is better in high humidity because it produces drier air that allows your body to cool itself more readily.

In a heat wave, take time to check in with your elderly neighbors, family and friends to make sure they have the means to stay cool. If you encounter someone having the symptoms of heat stroke, call 911 to get them to an emergency room for evaluation and treatment.

Perhaps the Lovin' Spoonful said it best in their hit song "Summer in the City."

The song's next line "All around, people looking half-dead" doesn't have to describe you if you learn to avoid heatstroke. Just stay cool, rest and stay hydrated. Simple, right? (AP)

Hot spell claims dozens

Climate change amplifies killer heat wave across US

WASHINGTON, June 20, (AP) - Human-caused climate change dialed up the thermostat and turbocharged the odds of this month's killer heat that has been baking the Southwestern United States, Mexico and Central America, a new flash study found.

Sizzling daytime temperatures that triggered cases of heat stroke in parts of the United States were 35 times more likely and 2.5 degrees hotter (1.4 degrees Celsius) because of the warming from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas, World Weather Attribution, a collection of scientists that run rapid and non-peer reviewed climate attribution studies, calculated Thursday.

"It's an oven here; you can't stay here," 82-year-old Margarita Salazar Pérez of Veracruz, Mexico, said in her home with no air conditioning. Last week, the Sonoran Desert hit 125 degrees (51.9 degrees Celsius), the hottest day in Mexican history, according to study co-author Shel Winkley, a meteorologist at Climate Central.

And it was even worse at night, which is what made this heat wave so deadly, said Imperial College of London climate scientist Friederike Otto, who coordinates the attribution study team. Climate change made nighttime temperatures 2.9 degrees (1.6 degrees Celsius) warmer and unusual evening heat 200 more times more likely, she said.

There's just been no cool air at night like people are used to, Salazar Pérez said. Doctors say cooler night temperatures are key to surviving a heat wave.

At least 125 people have died so far, according to the World Weather Attribution team.

Intensity

"This is clearly related to climate change, the level of intensity that we are seeing, these risks," said study co-author Karina Izquierdo, a Mexico City-based urban advisor for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Climate Centre.

The alarming part about this heat wave, which technically is still cooking the North American continent, is that it's no longer that out of the ordinary anymore, Otto said. Past studies by the group have looked at heat so extreme that they found it impossible without climate change, but this heat wave not so much.

"From a sort of weather perspective in that sense it wasn't rare, but the impacts were actually really bad," Otto told The Associated Press in an interview.

"The changes we have seen in the last 20 years, which feels like just yesterday, are so strong," Otto said. Her study found that this heat wave is now four times more likely to happen now than it was in the year 2000 when it was nearly a degree (0.5 degrees Celsius) cooler than now. "It seems sort of

far away and a different world."

While other groups of international scientists - and the global carbon emissions reduction target adopted by countries in the 2015 Paris climate agreement - refer to warming since pre-industrial time in mid 1800s, Otto said comparing what's happening now to the year 2000 is more striking.

"We're looking at a shifting baseline - what was once extreme but rare is becoming increasingly common," said University of Southern California Marine Studies Chair Carly Kenkel, who wasn't part of the attribution team's study. She said the analysis is "the logical conclusion based on the data."

The study looked at a large swath of the continent, including southern California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Belize and Honduras and the hottest five consecutive days and hottest five consecutive nights. For most of the area, those five days ran from June 3 to 7 and those five nights were June 5 to 9, but in a few places the peak heat started May 26, Otto said.

Record

For example, San Angelo, Texas, hit a record 111 degrees (43.8 degrees Celsius) on June 4. Between June 2 and June 6 the night temperature never dipped below 80 degrees (26.7 degrees Celsius) at Corpus Christi airport, a record each night, with two days when the thermometer never dropped below 85 (29.4 degrees Celsius) according to the National Weather Service.

Between June 1 and June 15, more than 1,200 daytime high temperature records were tied or broken in the United States and nearly 1,800 nighttime high temperature records were reached, according to the National Center for Environmental Information. The attribution team used both current and past temperature measurements, contrasting what is happening to what occurred in past heat waves. They then used the scientifically accepted technique of comparing simulations of a fictional world without human-caused climate change to current reality to come up with how much global warming factored into the 2024 heat wave.

The immediate meteorological cause was a high pressure system parked over central Mexico that blocked cooling storms and clouds, then it moved to the US Southwest and is now bringing the heat to the US East, Winkley said. Tropical Storm Alberto formed Wednesday and is heading to northern Mexico and southern Texas with some rains, which may cause flooding.

Mexico and other places have been dealing for months with drought, water shortages and brutal heat. Monkeys have been dropping from trees in Mexico from the warmth.

Mediterranean diet or not, eating seasonally can boost your health

Seasonal food promotes wellness



In this undated photo provided by Massachusetts General Hospital, Dr. Francisco Lopera, (left), of the University of Antioquia, a neurologist who has spent decades caring for a large Colombian family plagued by early-in-life Alzheimer's, confers with fellow researcher Yakeel Quiroz of Massachusetts General Hospital. (AP)

Finding sparks new research

Gene variant offers hope in delaying Alzheimer's onset

WASHINGTON, June 20, (AP) - Scientists studying a family plagued by early-in-life Alzheimer's found some carry a genetic oddity that delays their initial symptoms by five years.

The finding points to novel ways of fighting the mind-robbing disease - if researchers can unravel how a single copy of that very rare gene variant offers at least a little protection.

"It opens new avenues," said neuropsychologist Yakeel Quiroz of Massachusetts General Hospital, who helped lead the study published Wednesday. "There are definitely opportunities to copy or mimic the effects."

The first hint of this genetic protection came a few years ago. Researchers were studying a huge family in Colombia that shares a devastating inherited form of Alzheimer's when they discovered one woman who escaped her genetic fate. Aliria Piedrahita de Villegas should have developed Alzheimer's symptoms in her 40s but instead made it to her 70s before suffering even mild cognitive trouble.

The big clue: She also harbored something incredibly rare, two copies of an unrelated gene named APOE3 that had a mutation dubbed Christchurch. That odd gene pair appeared to shield her, staving off her genetic

predisposition for Alzheimer's.

Quiroz's team then tested more than 1,000 extended family members, and identified 27 who carry a single copy of that Christchurch variant.

But would one copy be enough to offer any protection? Those Christchurch carriers on average showed their first signs of cognitive trouble at age 52, five years later than their relatives, concluded a collaboration that includes Mass General Brigham researchers and Colombia's University of Antioquia.

The findings, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, are encouraging, said Dr. Eliezer Masliah of the National Institute on Aging.

"It gives you a lot of comfort that modifying one of the copies could be really helpful," at least in helping to delay the disease, he said.

Already some very early work is beginning to explore if certain treatments might induce the protective mutation, he added.

More than 6 million Americans, and an estimated 55 million people worldwide, have Alzheimer's. Less than 1% of cases are like the Colombian family's, caused by a gene passed through generations that triggers the disease at unusually young ages.

NEW YORK, June 20, (AP) - As peak summer approaches in Sicily, Anna Fiannaca prefers the peppers, eggplants and zucchini her brothers grow over the packaged food in the supermarket.

The 89-year-old cooks everything from scratch and eats mostly vegetarian. But she attributes much of her continued good health to adjusting her diet to what is most available throughout the year.

"It was just the way of life in Sicily, taking whatever the seasons will give you," said Fiannaca, who lives near Agrigento.

Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables is one of many aspects that makes the Mediterranean diet healthy. It also includes an abundance of nuts, legumes, beans and healthy fat from olive oil and fish.

But nutrition experts say no matter where you are, buying in-season produce is an easy step toward better eating habits.

"Seasonal eating is kind of a pathway to build a broader diet variety," said Sharon Gray, a registered dietitian who supervises the University of Connecticut's community nutrition program.

Consuming a high variety of fruits and vegetables is an important part of good nutrition, lowering the risk of heart disease, obesity and other ailments.

Choosing whatever is most abundant in the market each month is a good way to start, said Gray, who offers healthy cooking workshops to low-income Hartford residents. In New England, the summer's tomatoes, berries and peaches give way to autumn's pumpkins, squash and cranberries. All are high in antioxidants and fiber, and provide a wide range of vitamins, minerals and complex carbohydrates.

It helps that in-season produce tastes better.

"A lot of adults don't like a lot of fruits and vegetables, so if you can get them to like something, then they build it into their diet," she said. "That is moving people away from processed food to preparing more food at home."

Eating seasonally often also means eating locally, said Julia Zumpano, a registered dietician at the Cleveland Clinic, specializing in disease prevention and management. Besides the environmental benefits, local produce generally has more nutrients because it has naturally ripened and is consumed soon after being picked.

Minerals

"You're going to maximize your vitamins and minerals in there, the polyphenols and antioxidants that are the foundations of how we decrease the risk of disease," Zumpano said.

Changing your diet requires a bit of an open mind, said Sean Heffron, cardiologist at the Center for the Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease at NYU Langone Health. He counsels patients to look beyond the broccoli, onions and other vegetables that are available year round.

"Open yourself up to, 'Oh, now I see a lot of asparagus or peaches or artichokes,'" Heffron said. "It will expose you to more, and make you willing to try and eat more fruits and vegetables in general."

Gray noted that farmers markets, many of which now accept food benefit programs like SNAP, have become more widespread. But she also recommended shopping at regional grocery chains, which may be more likely than national retailers to offer local produce.

EU rules disinfectants can't be labeled as 'skin friendly'

BERLIN, June 20, (AP) - The European Union's top court said Thursday that products such as disinfectants can't be advertised as "skin friendly."

The European Court of Justice issued its ruling after a German federal court sought its opinion in a case against a drugstore chain that sold a hand, skin and surface disinfectant with a label that, among other things, declared it "skin friendly."

In that case, the German Association for Protection against Unfair Competition argued that drugstore chain dm failed to comply with an EU regulation on biocidal products. The court said the regulation

prohibits promoting such products by calling them a "low-risk biocidal product," "nontoxic," "harmless," "natural," "environmentally friendly" or "animal friendly" - "or any similar indication."

The EU court found that "skin friendly" has positive connotations that avoid suggesting any risk, and may imply that the product could be beneficial for the skin.

"Such an indication is of a misleading nature which justifies the prohibition of its use in the advertising of the biocidal product at issue," the court said in a statement.

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Miami beat Columbus 2-1 without Messi, Suárez



St. Louis City's Akil Watts (right), and Colorado Rapids's Cole Bassett challenge for the ball during the first half of an MLS soccer match Wednesday, June 19, 2024, in St. Louis. (AP)

'I think Paris is going to be a blast'

US swimming stars Dressel & Manuel settle for relay spots at US swim trials

INDIANAPOLIS, June 20, (AP): Coming back from lengthy layoffs, American swimming stars Caeleb Dressel and Simone Manuel were eager to claim their first individual events of the Paris Olympics.

Instead, they had to settle for supporting roles.

Dressel finished third in the men's 100-meter freestyle at the U.S. Olympic trials on Wednesday night, while Manuel touched fourth in the women's 100 free.

Only the top two will get to swim the events individually in Paris, but Dressel and Manuel will both be part of the 4x100 freestyle relay.

"I think Paris is going to be a blast," said Manuel, who has endured a long road back after being diagnosed with overtraining syndrome ahead of the Tokyo Games. "It's a different spot than I'm used to right now with only being a relay swimmer. But it's my third Olympic team and that's something that's really hard to accomplish."

Potential breakout star Kate Douglass claimed the victory and Torri Huske took the runner-up position, with Gretchen Walsh also finishing ahead of Manuel.

Dressel, the winner of five gold medals in Tokyo, won't get a chance to defend his 100 freestyle title after reaching the wall behind Chris Guiliano and Jack Alexy.

"I'm trying to have fun; I am having fun," Dressel told the crowd of 22,209 on the deck of the temporary pool inside Lucas Oil Stadium. "You don't know how much it means to me, the love I'm getting from you. It's been tough."

Dressel walked away from swimming in the midst of the 2022 world championships, later revealing that he needed an extended break to rediscover his love of the sport.

Dressel failed to even qualify for the 2023 worlds, but his times have improved significantly since last fall. He still has a shot to qualify individually in the 50 freestyle and 100 butterfly - two more events he won at the last Summer Games.

Manuel also has the 50-meter freestyle left on her plate.

In perhaps the surest bet of the meet, Katie Ledecky claimed her third victory with another dominating performance in the 1,500 freestyle, though the time was a bit of a disappointment.

Seventeen-year-old Thomas Heilman won the men's 200 butterfly, while Matt Fallon touched first in the 200 breaststroke. Both will be first-time Olympians.

Dressel was all smiles as he hugged the guys ahead of him, saying he was pleased to be on the relay that will set

SWIMMING

its sights on taking down the world record at the Olympics.

"That's an unbelievably fast top four, top five - oh my gosh, the top six," he said, looking at the times on the massive scoreboard above the pool. "That's a great group of guys. It's fast."

Guiliano and Alexy were tied at the turn, but Guiliano got to the wall in 47.38 seconds to edge Alexy's 47.47. The margin was even closer to third, with Dressel missing an individual spot by just six-hundredths of a second.

His time of 47.53 was about a half-

second off his winning performance in Tokyo (47.02). Hunter Armstrong finished fourth, with Ryan Held and Matt King also likely to be added to the Olympic team as relay swimmers.

Manuel was the first Black woman to capture an individual swimming gold when she tied for the top spot in the 100 freestyle at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games.

She didn't get a chance to defend her title in Tokyo, and she won't swim the event in Paris either.

Still, Manuel was clearly moved just to be on a relay, breaking down in tears in front of the big crowd.

"It's a miracle that I'm even able to stand up here and be able to race again," she said. "The people close to me know the journey it took to get here. I'm really proud of myself and proud of Team USA."

Douglass was fourth at the turn, but she powered to the finish for a winning time of 52.56. Huske finished at 52.93, while Walsh faded from the lead at the midway point to touch third in 53.13.

Manuel was next at 53.25, with fifth-place finisher Abbey Weitzeil (53.70) also likely headed to her third Olympics as a relay option.

After winning a bronze medal in the 200 individual medley at Tokyo, Dou-

glass has become one of America's most versatile swimmers. She won a total of 14 medals at the last three world championships in everything from the freestyle to the breaststroke to the individual medley to the relays.

Now, she's headed back to the Olympics, though there's still plenty of work to do in Indy.

Douglass entered five events, leading to a grueling double Wednesday. She returned from her 100 freestyle victory to take the top time in the semi-finals of the 200 breaststroke, stamping her as the favorite over local favorite Lilly King in Thursday's final.

Ledecky added to her victories in the 200 and 400 free, though she doesn't plan to swim the shorter event in Paris. She's also a huge favorite to take the 800 free title before she leaves Indy.

Ledecky's time of 15 minutes, 37.35 second was nearly 17 seconds off her world record and not much better than her pace in the preliminaries.

"I was expecting to go a lot faster," she conceded. "I know I have a lot more in me than the end result today. I just didn't have that next gear."

Grimes earned her second individual event at the Olympics with a time of 15:57.77, adding to her victory in the 400 individual medley. She'll be swimming indoors and outdoors at the Olympics, having also claimed a spot in the 10-kilometer open water race.

Heilman will become the youngest U.S. male Olympic swimmer since Michael Phelps made the team for Sydney at age 15.

Luke Whitlock, 18, had laid claim to that distinction a night earlier with his second-place showing in the 800 freestyle. Then someone even younger made the team when Heilman touched first in 1:54.50.

"I'm just looking forward to hanging out with the team and building relationships that will last a lifetime," Heilman said.

Luca Urlando claimed the expected second spot in Paris with a time of 1:55.08.

Fallon cruised to victory in 2:06.54, more than 2 seconds ahead of expected Olympic teammate Josh Matheny (2:08.86) in the runner-up spot.

Musa's hat trick sparks Dallas to victory

FORT LAUDERDALE, June 20, (AP): Ian Fray and Leo Campana each scored in the opening 22 minutes, and short-handed Inter Miami beat the Columbus Crew 2-1 on Wednesday night without Lionel Messi and Luis Suárez.

Miami (12-3-5) played without Messi, Suárez and midfielder Matías Rojas due to international duty in the Copa América.

Columbus (7-3-6), the reigning MLS Cup champions, had won its last four road games. Columbus hasn't played at Lower.com Field since May 11, a string of six straight games.

Fray, in his first MLS game since July 15, 2023 due to an ACL surgery, opened the scoring in the 10th



Sporting Kansas City attacker Willy Agada (left), and Real Salt Lake defender Bryan Oviedo battle for the ball during the first half of an MLS soccer match Wednesday, in Kansas City, Kan. (AP)

SOCCER

minute by heading in Julian Gressel's corner kick.

Rookie Petar Musa had three goals for FC Dallas, finishing off his first career hat trick with the go-ahead score in the second half of a 5-3 victory over Minnesota United.

Musa used an assist from Paul Arriola to find the net for the first time, giving Dallas (5-8-5) a 1-0 lead in the 17th minute. Musa's second goal came with an assist from Bernard Kamungo in the 38th minute for a 2-1 advantage. He put Dallas on top for good in the 62nd minute - with an assist from Sebastian Lletget - for a 3-2 lead.

Jesús Ferreira used 22-year-old rookie forward Logan Farranton's first career assist to score in the 75th minute for a two-goal lead. Ferreira's goal was his fourth of the season. Farranton followed with his first career goal off another Lletget assist to make it 5-2 in the 90th minute. Farranton has made two starts and 13 appearances this season.

Sam Surridge scored his second goal of the game in the 90th minute as Nashville beat Toronto 2-1 for its first come-from-behind victory of the season.

Nashville (5-5-8) has lost just one of its last six games since a 2-0 win over Toronto on May 15.

Toronto (7-9-3) is winless in its last five league outings and has won just one of its last eight.

Tyler Boyd set up the game-winning goal by cutting through the defense and sending a cross for Surridge to knock home with a back-heel finish for his seventh goal of the season.

Surridge tied it at 1-1 in the 65th by curling a shot inside the far post. Thiago Almada scored late in the second half for Atlanta United and Brad Guzan made it stand up in a 1-0 victory over D.C. United.

Almada used an assist from Ajani Fortune to score the winner in the 79th minute. It was Almada's fifth goal of the season and the second assist for Fortune. Guzan finished with five saves to earn his fourth clean sheet of the season.

Defending champ Vingegaard is fit to compete at Tour de France

BRUSSELS, June 20, (AP): Two-time Tour de France champion Jonas Vingegaard has recovered in time to defend his title next week although there are still doubts about his ability to be competitive.

Vingegaard was seriously injured in a crash in April but will be on the starting line next week when the race kicks off from Italy, the Danish rider's Visma-Lease a Bike team said on Thursday.

His trusted teammate Wout van Aert, who broke his collarbone and several ribs in March in another crash, will also race in support of Vingegaard.

The three-week Tour starts on June 29 in Florence.

"I am excited to start the Tour. The last few months have not always been easy," Vingegaard said. "We have worked together to get to this moment and, of course, I am very excited to see where I stand. I feel good and very motivated."

Vingegaard was hospitalized for nearly two weeks in Spain in April following the multi-rider, high-speed crash in the Tour of the Basque Country. He sustained a broken collarbone and ribs and a collapsed lung.

Before the crash, Vingegaard was considered one of the Tour de France favorites alongside Tadej Pogacar, who won the Giro d'Italia and is aiming for a rare double next month.

"I am very proud of Jonas and the coaching team," his team sporting director Merijn Zeeman said. "He is coming back from a serious injury. In the last few weeks, he has shown what a champion he is, both mentally and physically. Of course, we don't know how far he can go yet. We are being cautious because he

has not been able to race, and his preparation has been less than ideal, to say the least. But he will be there, healthy and motivated."

Van Aert crashed during the Dwars door Vlaanderen in Belgium. He has been training at altitude in the French ski resort of Tignes with Vingegaard.

"Of course, this was not the plan initially, but after my development in the last weeks, I really wanted it, and the team agreed," the Van Aert said. "Our main goal is, of course, to ride a top classification with Jonas. I want to contribute to that with an excellent team."

Van Aert is widely considered one of the world's best and most versa-

CYCLING

tile riders. The three-time cyclocross world champion is also the winner of nine Tour stages and the points classification. He's major race wins include Milan-San Remo, Strade Bianche, Gent-Wevelgem and the Amstel Gold Race.

Matteo Jorgenson of the U.S. is also part of the squad alongside countryman Sepp Kuss, Christophe Laporte, Tiesj Benoot, Wilco Kelderman and Jan Tratnik.

"Matteo Jorgenson has already become one of the strongest riders in the team this year, with wins in Paris-Nice and Dwars door Vlaanderen, and his second place in the Dauphiné," Zeeman said. "Sepp Kuss proved last year that he is a great climber, an important domestique, and a leader in his own right with a victory in the Vuelta a España."



Katie Ledecky and Katie Grimes celebrate after the Women's 1500 freestyle finals Wednesday, June 19, 2024, at the US Swimming Olympic Trials in Indianapolis. (AP)

Lynx ease past Dream

Fever top Mystics for third straight win

INDIANAPOLIS, June 20, (AP): Kelsey Mitchell and Aliyah Boston scored 22 points apiece, Caitlin Clark had her second career double-double and the Indiana Fever won their third-straight game with an 88-81 victory over the Washington Mystics on Wednesday night.

Clark had 18 points and a career-high 12 rebounds plus six assists and four steals for the Fever (5-10). She also had six turnovers. NaLyssa Smith

BASKETBALL

added 11 points and Erica Wheeler had nine points off the bench in a big second half.

Indiana, which has won five of seven has its first four-game winning streak at home since August of 2015.

Lynx 68, Dream 55

In Minneapolis, Napheesa Collier scored 16 points and Minnesota used a balanced attack to defeat Atlanta for their fifth-straight win.

Bridget Carleton scored 14 points and Dorka Juhász had 10 points off the

bench for the Lynx (12-2), who posted a 19-6 advantage from its reserves. Juhász also had 11 rebounds. Carleton was 4 of 5 behind the arc but her teammates were 3 of 17.

Atlanta's top two scorers, Rhyné Howard (16.2) and Allysha Gray (15-

8) combined for 13 points on 2 of 25 shooting, 0 of 14 from 3-point range. Howard left the game in the third quarter with a lower leg injury and did not return.

Minnesota struggled with its offense, going 7 of 22 from 3-point range

and shooting 35.5% overall (27 of 76) but held the Dream to 29% (19 of 66).

Aces 94, Storm 83

In Las Vegas, Jackie Young scored 32 points, A'ja Wilson added 27 and Las Vegas celebrated the return of All-Star point guard Chelsea Gray by defeating Seattle.

Gray, a five-time All-Star and 2020 Olympic gold medal winner who will head to the Paris Games next month, had seven assists, four rebounds and two blocks with one point in 15:30 minutes. Gray missed the first dozen games of the season - as well as the clincher last year when Las Vegas beat the Liberty for its second-straight championship.

"Man I missed this game so much. Never taking it for granted," Gray said. "It's a long journey, lots of crying, lots of sleepless nights, a lot of conversations. I'm so thankful to be back on this court."

Kelsey Plum scored 11 points for Las Vegas (7-6), which led by double figures from the 1:53 mark of the first quarter and by as many as 20 points. Tiffany Hayes had 10 points, and Alysha Clark had 10 off the bench.



Las Vegas Aces guard Tiffany Hayes (15) and Seattle Storm guard Jewell Loyd (24) fight for the ball during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Las Vegas. (AP)

Austria take on Poland

With masked Mbappé? France out to maintain dominance over Dutch

LEIPZIG, Germany, June 20, (AP): Former champions France and the Netherlands clash in their second match at the European Championship. France won seven of the teams' last eight meetings including home and away victories in qualifying. This buildup has been overshadowed by speculation about whether France star Kylian Mbappé can play after breaking his nose in the opening win over Austria.

Mbappé broke his nose when his face collided with Austria defender Kevin Danso's shoulder on Monday. Blood stained his white France jersey. If he plays on Friday, he'll need to wear a mask. But it remains uncertain. Mbappé returned to light training on Wednesday.

If he does play, the France captain will hope to finally score at a European Championship at the sixth attempt. Mbappé has 47 goals in 80 games for France, including 12 in qualifying for the Euros, but he's yet to score in five games at the tournament.

France and the Netherlands are level on three points in

Group D. The Dutch came from behind to beat Poland 2-1 and France needed an own goal to beat Austria 1-0.

France defeated the Netherlands 4-0 at home and 2-1 away in qualifying. The Dutch were group runners-up.

Dutch forward Xavi Simons will be back in Leipzig, where he played last season on loan from Paris Saint-Germain. The 21-year-old Xavi scored eight goals in 32

The Dutch won their three group games in the last edition, then lost to the Czech Republic in the round of 16.

France won Euro '84 as host, then - with Didier Deschamps as captain - Euro 2000 after he captained the team to the World Cup title as host in 1998. Deschamps took over as France coach in 2012 and led France to another World Cup title in 2018.

Other group members Austria and Poland play earlier Friday in Berlin.

France's biggest question mark is Mbappé. Deschamps was due to give an injury update on Thursday.

Netherlands midfielders Frenkie de Jong and Teun Koopmeiners were ruled out with injuries before the tournament.

Altogether, France has won 15 of the teams' 30 previous meetings, with the Dutch winning 11. The Dutch have scored more goals in those games; 57 to 53.

In the last four major tournaments - World Cups and European Championships - France has reached the final

in three. The exception was the 2021 Euros, where Deschamps' team went out to Switzerland on penalties at the first knockout stage after squandering a two-goal lead with nine minutes remaining.

France defeated Gibraltar 14-0 for a new European Championship qualifying record and the country's biggest win.

"All the people walking the streets in orange, and of course, here in the stadium, fantastic, beautiful. I've always dreamed of this and so far, it definitely hasn't disappointed." - Netherlands goalkeeper Bart Verbruggen.

"Our last meetings against the Netherlands go back a bit, but I remember our solidity, our ability to make the differences in attack. We knew how to be efficient, and we'll need to do that again on Friday. Above all, we'll have to have the same intensity as we did against Austria. It's an essential ingredient to go as far as possible in this competition." - France midfielder Adrien Rabiot.

SOCCER

Bundesliga appearances to help Leipzig finish fourth. The German club hopes he'll be back next season. He has already played 15 games for the Netherlands.

The Netherlands won Euro '88 with current coach Ronald Koeman in the team alongside the brilliant trio of Ruud Gullit, Marco van Basten and Frank Rijkaard, who played together for AC Milan.

Al-Qadisiya renew Khalil's contract

Kazma 'strengthen' roster with Brazilian playmaker Guimaraes

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: Kazma Club has strengthened its first team by signing Brazilian professional Rafael Guimaraes.

Rafael, known as "Dodo," played for Emirati club Ajman from January until the end of the last season. He also had a stint with Emirati club Khor Fakkan in July 2019, after transferring from Brazilian club Fortaleza, where he was on loan from Atletico Mineiro.

"Dodo," 29, is a playmaker who has been selected for the Brazilian U-23 national team.

Kazma has also renewed the contract of Jordanian professional Ahmed Arsan for another season, following a request from head coach Muhammad Dehelis.

Regarding the other professionals, Algerian Imad Eddine Ezzi is close to having his contract renewed, while Frenchman Reda Bencha and Nigerian John Teddy are not expected to return.

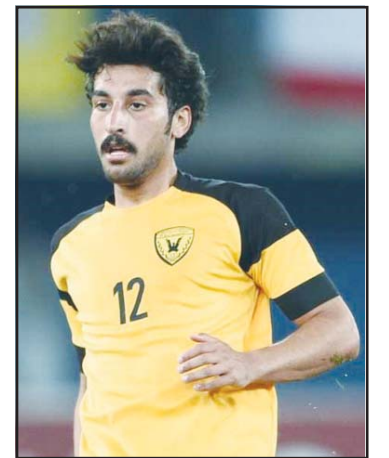
Meanwhile, Kuwait Club's Ahmed Al-Zenki is nearing a move to Al-Arabi for the next season, with negotiations



Ahmed Al-Zenki.



Rafael Guimaraes



Mohamed Khalil

SOCCER

between the two parties reaching advanced stages.

Al-Arabi began its player recruitment early, targeting both local and foreign talents to strengthen its squad according to the wishes of Coach Nasser Al-Shatti. This follows the team's disappointing performance in last season's tournaments after Khaled Al-Wafad's departure.

At the end of last season, Al-Arabi made several changes, appointing Khaled Al-Qabandi as head of the football staff in place of Ali Jawad. The club also hired Tunisian physical trainer Khalil Al-Jababli and goal-keeping coach Saleh Mahdi. Additionally, Al-Arabi conducted a review of its foreign players, releasing Moroccan players Walid Al-Sabbar, Ayman, and Algerian Imad Eddine Bou Bakr. Meanwhile, Moroccan Hamza Khaba and Nigerian Anayo Iweala will continue with the team.

Ali Mandani, Vice Chairman of Al-Arabi's Board of Directors, announced ongoing negotiations with foreign players for the positions of right winger, center-back, and midfielder, and confirmed that talks with Al-Zenki are in progress.

Al-Seyassah reports that Algerian player Ahmed Khalidi is also close to joining Al-Arabi, with negotiations at an advanced stage. Khalidi, a 25-year-old right winger, previously played for Algerian clubs Constantine, Hilal Shalghoum El Eid, and Olympia Medea.

In another development, Al-Qadisiya renewed the contract of Mohamed Khalil for another season.

Khalil had been absent from Al-Qadisiya for an extended period due to injury, leading to speculation about his departure. However, Coach Muhammad Al-Mishaan decided to retain him.

Meanwhile, Al-Qadisiya is restructuring its squad and has thanked player Talal Al-Ansari for his contributions over the past two seasons, marking the end of his tenure with the Yellows.

Al-Qadisiya signed Al-Ansari in July 2022 from Khaitan Club, amid interest from multiple teams for his services.

The club has also announced the

Leicester hire Cooper as manager

LEICESTER, England, June 20, (AP): Steve Cooper is making his managerial return in the English Premier League at Leicester.

The promoted club announced the hiring of Cooper on Thursday on a contract until 2027, six months after he was fired by Nottingham Forest.

Cooper replaces Enzo Maresca, who was hired by Chelsea this month after just one year at Leicester - during which he got the club promoted as second-tier champion.

Cooper has been biding his time to get back into work following an emotional exit from Forest, having got the team back into the top flight for the first time in 23 years and then kept it there.

The Leicester job will not be without its challenges. The Foxes have a possible points deduction hanging over them and may also need to sell players to comply with the Premier League's profit and sustainability rules.

Cooper's tenure will begin with a

departure of several players, including Naif Zuwaid, Sultan Salbukh, and Aziz Nasari. In contrast, they have signed the Salmiya duo Moaz Al-Dhafiri and Athbi Shehab.

Mandani acknowledged that Kuwait Club has acquired most of the prominent local players, emphasizing Al-Arabi's focus on signing professionals who can add significant value to the team.

Additionally, several local players are expected to leave Al-Arabi next season. Following the departures of Saif Al-Hashan and Issa Walid, Badr Tariq is likely to join Al-Salmiya, especially with the Football Association's decision to reduce team rosters to 25 players for the new season. To bolster its squad, Al-Arabi has signed local players Yacoub Al-Tarawa and Mohamed Khaled.

Training for Al-Arabi is set to begin at the end of June, continuing for two weeks before the team departs for an external training camp in Turkey, which will include several friendly matches.

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ments of their promotion to the Premier League. I know how hard that is.

"Any person who loves football can only look with great respect upon how much this club has achieved in recent years. (Winning) the Premier League title of 2016 and the FA Cup of 2021 have demonstrated what's possible for a united club. As the new manager, I don't take that legacy lightly. My job will be to build on those achievements."

SA hold off fast-improving US as England rout Windies in Super 8



England's Jonathan Bairstow bats during the men's T20 World Cup cricket match between England and the West Indies at Darren Sammy National Cricket Stadium, Gros Islet, St Lucia. (AP)

Salt scores 87 runs to lead Poms

NORTH SOUND, Antigua, June 20, (AP): South Africa had to work hard to earn an 18-run win over the fast-improving United States in the opening game of the Super Eight at the Twenty20 World Cup.

Co-host the West Indies also lost its first match in the Super Eight stage Wednesday, beaten by eight wickets by defending champion England. Jack Salt scored 87 runs to lead England.

Andries Gous made an unbeaten 80 off 47 balls for the U.S. - against the country of his birth - to move atop the batting charts at the World Cup before South Africa restricted the Americans at 176-6.

Fast bowler Kagiso Rabada claimed 3-18 and spinner Keshav Maharaj got the prized wicket of U.S. captain Aaron Jones for a duck - no runs - to finish with 1-24.

Quinton de Kock had earlier made a rampant 74 off 40 balls and Heinrich Klaasen provided the perfect finish with 36 not out in the South African total of 194-4 after Jones won the toss and elected to field.

CRICKET

"Pretty happy with the performance as a whole," South Africa captain Aiden Markram said. "A couple of overs here and there we need to tidy up ... but the wicket definitely changes and gets a bit slower."

De Kock and Markram (46 off 32 balls) dominated both spinners and the pacers as they raised a solid 110-run stand after Saurabh Netravalkar (2-21) had provided the early breakthrough by getting the wicket of Reeza Hendricks in his second over.

"We've had some tricky wickets so it was nice to spend sometime in the middle today," de Kock said. "The USA put us under pressure towards the end. It was a great game."

Netravalkar, who bowled a sensational Super Over in the United States' historic win over heavyweights Pakistan in the group stage, struck immediately in his return spell when Markram was brilliantly caught by diving Ali Khan at deep backward point off a full pitched ball.

But Klaasen used all his T20 experience in the last five overs and struck three sixes while Tristan Stubbs also hit two fours in his 16-ball unbeaten 20 which lifted the South Africa total.

"Hard to take a defeat after coming so close," Jones said. "We did lack discipline in the bowling at times, (but)

Kuwait youth team falls to Egypt in friendly



Players challenge for the ball during Kuwait and Egypt friendly game in Cairo.

CAIRO, June 20: The Kuwait youth team lost to Egypt 0-4 in a friendly match at the Air Defense Stadium in Cairo.

After the match, Hayef Al-Mutairi, Vice President of the Football Association, emphasized that such matches are opportunities for players to exchange experiences and develop skills, especially before the start of international and Arab tournaments.

Al-Mutairi praised the spirit of the youth team players and urged them to avoid mistakes in friendly matches and strive for better results in regional and international championships to satisfy Kuwaiti fans.

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He also highlighted the constructive cooperation with the Egyptian side, mentioning the agreement with the Egyptian Federation on team preparation, participation, and mutual visits.

Al-Mutairi added that the team is beginning preparations for the West Asian Championship in Taif, Saudi Arabia, which will serve as preparation for the Asian Cup. He noted two upcoming camps in August, followed by a 21-day training camp in Serbia. The team will then return to Kuwait before participating in a friendly tournament in Azerbaijan, featuring four teams over two weeks. Upon returning to Kuwait, the team will hold two trial matches before starting the Asian Cup qualifiers.

Team director Jarrah Al-Ateeqi confirmed that the players performed well given the limited preparation time following the end of the under-19 league and academic exams. He acknowledged that this short preparation period affected the players' physical fitness, as they had less than a week to prepare for the match.

A capacity crowd in the first night match of the Super Eight stage was out to party but the match really didn't come alive until the end.

The West Indies started well but were disrupted in the six-over power play by the loss of Brandon King who retired hurt after 4.3 overs with a side or groin strain. King had just hit the first six of the match, a 103-meter (338-foot) blow that flew over the grandstand and out of the stadium.

He made 23 from 13 balls and was setting the early pace of the innings when he was forced to retire with the West Indies at 40-0. There was no immediate word on the seriousness of King's injury.

once we play good cricket we can beat any team in the world. We need to be a lot more disciplined."

At Gros Islet, St Lucia, Salt carried his bat for 87 and Jonny Bairstow made an unbeaten 48 as defending champion England beat the West Indies by eight wickets in a match between two-time World Cup champions.

It was the West Indies' first loss of the tournament and their first defeat in eight Twenty20 internationals.

The West Indies made 180-4 batting first on the same pitch on which they made 218-5 against Afghanistan in the final match of the group stage on Monday.

The fireworks came at the end and from England as Salt made his 87 runs from 47 balls with seven fours and five

sixes and Bairstow added his 48 from 26 deliveries. England reached 181-2 with 15 balls to spare.

Salt provided a solid foundation for the England run chase, initially in a 67-run opening partnership with Jos Buttler. Salt scored 30 runs - three sixes and three fours - from the 16th over bowled by Romario Shepherd.

"I'm not looking too far ahead at the minute, just glad that I could contribute to a good team win," Salt said. "It was a little bit tougher in the middle overs with the spin."

The pitch may have been a little slower than on Monday but England captain Buttler also used his bowlers well and the West Indies innings included 50 dot balls.



South Africa's captain Aiden Markram bowls a delivery during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup cricket match between the United States and South Africa at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound, Antigua and Barbuda. (AP)



Slovenia's Andraz Sporar vies for the ball with Serbia's Sasa Lukic, right, during a Group C match between Slovenia and Serbia at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Munich, Germany. (AP)

Sports

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Late leveler denies Slovenia historic win

Shaqiri scores stunning goal in Switzerland draw with Scotland

MUNICH, June 20, (AP): A late strike denied Slovenia a first ever win in a European Championship as Serbia snatched a 1-1 draw on Thursday.

Zan Karničnik's 69th-minute goal put Slovenia on the brink of an historic win until substitute Luka Jović levelled deep in stoppage time.

The goal sent the Serbia fans into raucous joy but also saw them throw flares and other objects onto the field.

The equalizer was virtually the last action as the referee blew fulltime immediately after the players restarted. The Slovenia players collapsed to the ground in disappointment.

It also would have been their first win in a major tournament since victory over Algeria in the 2010 World Cup.

Slovenia plays England in its final group match on Tuesday, when Serbia faces Denmark. Serbia lost to England in their opener.

With both teams needing a win to boost their chances of progressing, the match started at a fast pace and Serbia goalkeeper Predrag Rajković had to make two early saves.

Those two shots on target in the first eight minutes were as many as Slovenia had in total in its draw with Denmark.



Slovenia's Aleksandar Mitrovic and Slovenia's Jaka Bijol jump for the ball during a Group C match between Slovenia and Serbia at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Munich, Germany. (AP)

Slovenia withstood the waves of Slovenia attacks and had its first chance in the 27th minute but Dušan Vlahović's header was straight at goalkeeper Jan Oblak.

Slovenia went even closer moments later when Dušan Tadić whipped in a fabulous corner to the far post but Aleksandar Mitrovic - who scored in his previous two matches against Slovenia - couldn't get a proper touch.

The best chance of the half fell to

Slovenia in somewhat fortunate circumstances. Timi Elšnik tried to pass to a teammate but the ball came off a Serbia defender and fell kindly back to him for a thunderous effort which crashed off the right post. Benjamin Šeško fired the rebound woefully over.

Slovenia started the second half with three great chances to break the deadlock inside the first five minutes, including Slovenia defender Jake Bijol

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almost scoring an own goal.

"Shaq" did it again. At the age of 32 and having left top-flight European soccer behind to play in MLS, Xherdan Shaqiri is back on the international stage and back scoring again.

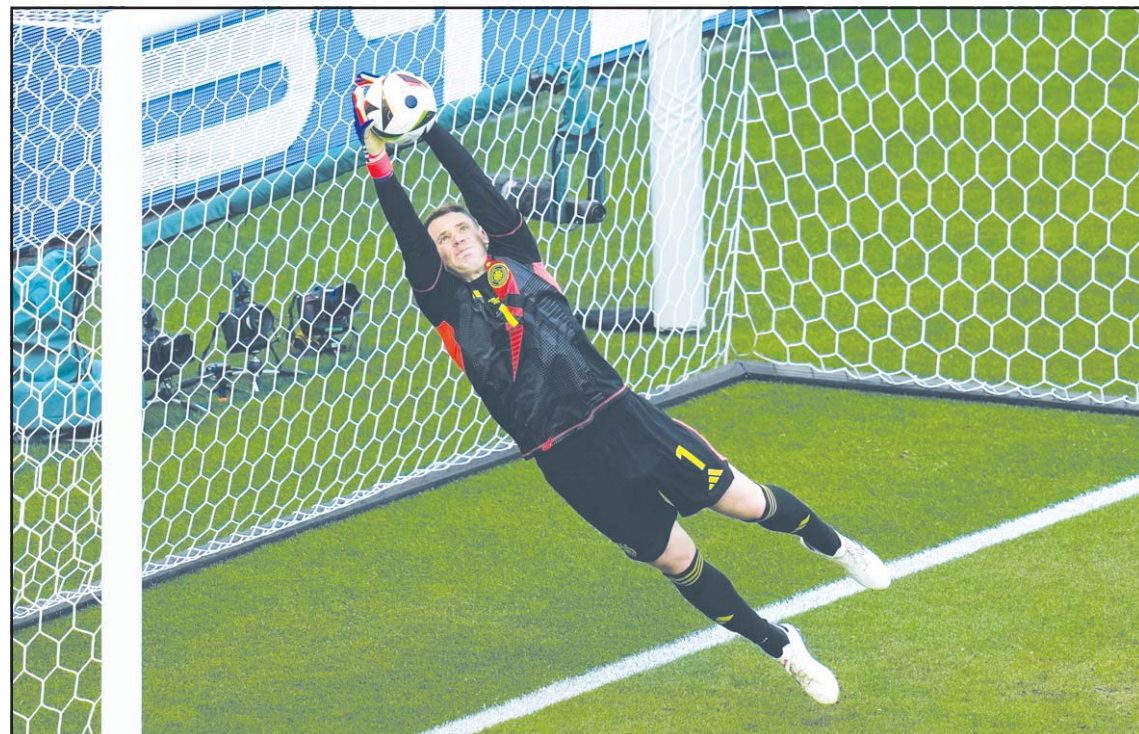
His stunning first-half strike secured a 1-1 draw for Switzerland against Scotland.

It is the sixth-straight major international tournament in which Shaqiri has scored, dating to the World Cup in 2014.

That's three World Cups in a row and now three European Championships for the Chicago Fire forward. According to UEFA he is the first player to achieve that feat.

Shaqiri rolled back the years with a first-time curling effort from about 20 meters out at Cologne Stadium.

Scotland led from the 13th minute



Germany's goalkeeper Manuel Neuer stops a shot during a Group A match between Germany and Hungary at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Stuttgart, Germany. (AP)

when Scott McTominay's shot took a wicked deflection off Fabian Schar to beat Switzerland goalkeeper Yann Sommer.

But Shaqiri pounced on Anthony Ralston's loose pass in the 26th to even the match with a left-footed shot into the top corner and past Scotland keeper Angus Gunn.

The draw leaves Switzerland on four points, second in Group A behind Germany and likely to advance to the round of 16.

Jamal Musiala is lighting up the European Championship and showing just why his teammates think the 21-year-old forward can go on to become one of the best players in the world.

Musiala scored his second goal of the tournament on Wednesday to help Germany beat Hungary 2-0 and book its spot in the knockout stage.

Musiala opened the scoring in the 22nd minute with a goal that was furiously protested by Hungary. Gündoğan had set that up and got on the scoresheet himself in the second half.



Kuwait junior volleyball team.

Kuwait junior volleyball team set for Amman U-17 Championship 'debut'

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 20: The Kuwait junior volleyball team is set to compete in its first championship for under-17 team, scheduled in Amman, Jordan from

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July 1 to 13. The team will kick off its campaign against Qatar on July 4, followed by matches against Iraq on July 4, Jordan on

July 7, Bahrain on the eighth, and Libya on July 10, and conclude against Saudi Arabia on July 11.

The Arab Volleyball Federation conducted the championship draw via video call, involving the participating teams.

Preparations for the Arab Championship are underway with local training sessions led by national coach Khaled Al-Mutairi and assistant Meshal Al-Sabti. The team will depart for Jordan a few days prior to the tournament.

Argentina, France, Belgium remain atop

Kuwait's FIFA ranking rises after Asian Cup & WC success

KUWAIT CITY, June 20, (Agencies): Kuwait climbed two spots in the latest International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) rankings released, now sitting at 137th globally.

This improvement follows the Blues' qualification for the 2027 Asian Cup finals in Saudi Arabia and their progression to the third round of the 2026 World Cup qualifiers.

In the global rankings, Argentina held onto the top spot, with France in second and Belgium in third. Brazil moved up one place to fourth,

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while England dropped to fifth. Portugal remained sixth, followed by the Netherlands in seventh and Spain in eighth.

Croatia advanced to ninth, while Italy fell to tenth.

Among Arab countries, Morocco led the rankings at 12th globally, followed by Qatar (35), Egypt (36), Tunisia (41), Algeria (44), Iraq (55), Saudi Arabia (56), Jordan (69), UAE (70), Oman (76), Bahrain (81), Syria (93), Palestine (95), Mauritania (112), Lebanon (117),

Alcaraz's Wimbledon defense takes a hit

LONDON, June 20. (AP): Wimbledon champion Carlos Alcaraz's buildup took a hit when he lost in the second round of Queen's Club on Thursday.

Alcaraz, the defending Queen's champion and top seed, lost to Jack Draper 7-6 (3), 6-3.

For Draper, the British No. 1, it was the biggest win of his career. He was impressively composed in front of his home crowd.

Queen's was Alcaraz's only grass-court preparation last year en route to winning Wimbledon for the first time.

But this time the Spaniard will have only two grass matches under his belt following his French Open victory. Wimbledon starts in 11 days.

TENNIS

Draper ended Alcaraz's eight-match win streak while extending his own to seven after winning his first ATP title last week in Stuttgart. Draper didn't drop serve against Alcaraz. They were finally separated

in the first set in the tiebreak, where Draper shot to 4-0 then 6-1. Alcaraz netted a return to concede the set.

Alcaraz suffered the only break in the sixth game of the second set, after Draper's backhand return serve down the line.

Draper saved a break point to hold for 5-2, then Alcaraz saved three match points to hold. Draper served out and threw his arms in the air.

"I knew I had to come out here and play really well, and luckily I did that," he said on court.

He faces fifth-seeded Tommy Paul in the quarterfinals.



Messi

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, June 20, (AP): It's sad but true, Copa America could mark Lionel Messi's final chapter with Argentina's national soccer team.

The World Cup winner will turn 37 during the tournament in the United States, which kicked off Thursday. He's clearly past his peak at Inter Miami after two decades of playing at the highest level in Europe.

Messi has not set a date for his retirement and has kept the door open to playing in a sixth World Cup in 2026 to defend his title from Qatar. But he already recognizes his shortcomings.

"I don't think about that yet. The moment I feel that I am not going to help my team, I will retire," Messi said in March in an interview with Saudi broadcaster Riyadh Season. "I always ate well, trained. But as I grew I became aware that the physical effort we make is getting harder. As you grow old, things become more difficult." Last year, the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner struggled with muscular injuries while playing in MLS and for Argentina. That didn't change much in 2024.

Messi has shown he enjoys going out at night with his wife, Antonella, and his friends in Miami. He spends time with his three children, starts new businesses and lives as if soccer is slowly becoming a smaller part of his life.

Still, he has 12 goals and 13 assists for Inter Miami this season.

"I have a good time at the club. I am lucky to have teammates and friends (Luis Suárez, Sergio Busquets and Jordi Alba, all former Barcelona players) by my

side," Messi told ESPN. "I have a good time in the national team, where I have teammates and friends, too. And I enjoy the little details that I know that when I don't play anymore, I'm going to miss." Angel di Maria, a 36-year-old winger who has played alongside Messi for years with the national team, is sure to bid farewell to international soccer after the Copa America. That has also brought more questions about whether the team's biggest star will remain on the squad.

"As long as I feel like I'm fine and I can continue contributing, I'm going to do it. Today, the only thing I think about is getting to the Copa America well and being able to compete in it," Messi told the Star

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Plus platform in December. "Fighting for it again, as we always did, trying to be champions." Argentina's all-time top scorer and the national team's leader with 26 World Cup appearances is also seeking records in the continental competition.

Messi, who won the South American championship in 2021, wants to become the Copa America's leading scorer. He has 13 goals in six editions, four behind Norberto Méndez of Argentina and Zizinho of Brazil with 17.

He also wants to be the player with most appearances in the Copa America, a record he currently shares with former Chile goalkeeper Sergio Livingstone, both with 34 games.

Messi's teammates don't want to see him go.

"We'll see how long, but while he's here we're going to enjoy it to the fullest," Argentina defender Cristian Romero said. "We grew up watching him. We are part of those tournaments."