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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2025 / SHAWWAL 25, 1446 AH

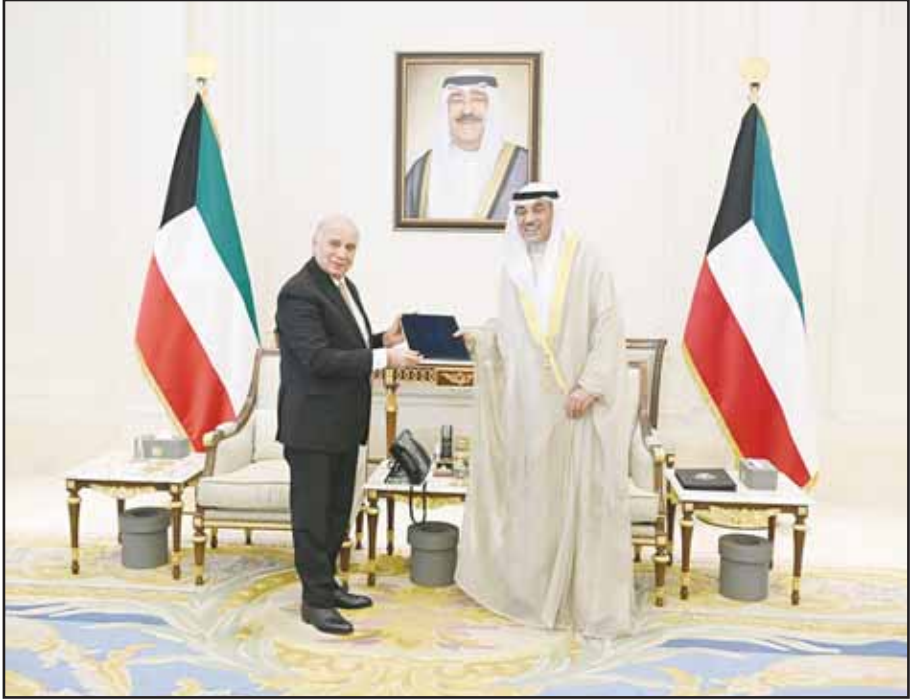
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16 PAGES

150 FILS

Crown Prince receives Iraq invite for Amir to attend dual summits



Crown Prince Diwan photo
Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dr. Fuad Hussein hands over an invitation from Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, addressed to His Highness the Amir, during a meeting at Bayan Palace.

KUWAIT CITY, April 22, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received an invitation extended to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid to attend two Arab summits in Baghdad.

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dr. Fuad Hussein handed His Highness the Crown Prince the invitation at Bayan Palace for the 34th Arab Summit and the Fifth Arab Economic and Social Development Summit due in the Iraqi capital on May 17th.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, His Highness the Crown Prince's Office Chief Jamal Al-Theyab, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs at His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan Mazen Al-Issa and Iraqi Ambassador in Kuwait Al-Manhal Al-Safi, were present at the meeting.

Iraqi court defers Khor appeals to end of April

BAGHDAD, April 22, (KUNA): Iraq's Federal Supreme Court postponed Tuesday looking into appeals submitted by Iraqi president Abdullatif Rashid and Prime Minister Mohammad Al-Sudani on Khor Abdullah agreement between Kuwait and Baghdad, to April 30th.

According to the court's schedule, these two sessions will be held as postponed sessions and without pleadings.

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Vatican Embassy opens book of condolences

Kuwait Amir remembers Pope Francis as beacon of tolerance

KUWAIT CITY, April 22, (Agencies): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah mourned on Monday in a cable sent to Cardinal of the Catholic Church Giovanni Battista Re, the demise of Pope Francis at the age of 88 years old.

In his cable, His Highness the Amir expressed his sorrow and praised the Pope's great contributions, including the Pope's courageous stances, which supported peace and coexistence, and became a model of religious tolerance and bringing people together, and forgiveness throughout his career.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah mourned on Monday in a cable sent to Cardinal of the Catholic Church Giovanni Battista Re, the demise of Pope Francis.

In his cable, Sheikh Sabah expressed sorrow on the demise of Pope Francis at the age of 88 years old, and after long battle with illness.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a similar cable to Cardinal of the Catholic Church Giovanni Battista Re.

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Pope Francis's body is laid out in state inside his private chapel at the Vatican, Monday, April 21, 2025. (AP)



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Dear Central Bank of Kuwait, protect the money from hackers

IT is reassuring that the Ministry of Interior has issued a warning about suspicious websites, links, and deceptive communications that are designed to steal people's money. In doing so, the ministry is fulfilling its duty. However, there is a need for more efforts to deal with technological vulnerabilities related to the bank accounts of individuals, institutions, and companies. This responsibility primarily falls on the Central Bank of Kuwait, and secondly on commercial banks.

Today, technology has grown into a vast and expansive realm with both several pros and cons. Therefore, protection against hackers has become a critical defense against "hacker gangs" that steal people's money.

Recently, gangs have been hacking government websites or creating counterfeit versions that closely resemble the original ones. These gangs have stolen money from many people who trusted these fake sites, as they appeared identical to the legitimate ones. Not everyone is equipped to recognize the signs of a fraudulent website.

As a result, theft from bank customers' accounts has become more widespread lately, and yet a solution to the issue remains elusive. Many citizens continue to be shocked when they discover that money has been stolen from their accounts.

It is important to note that this type of theft is classified as aggravated theft and is punishable by law, both in Kuwait and internationally.

Transferring funds to domestic or foreign accounts without a legal basis is considered money laundering, as it involves the movement of illicit funds.

Concealing the source of such funds through transfers or transmissions also raises red flags,

as the money is often obtained through electronic fraud. Preventing these unauthorized transfers is the responsibility of the central authority overseeing funds movements both inside and outside the country.

When victims visit their bank, they are often told that the bank cannot assist them. The bank claims that since the victim did not inform them of the non-transfer of funds, the transfer was processed as usual. The bank advises the victim to report the issue to the police and file a case with the Public Prosecution Office. In the meantime, the bank may temporarily suspend the victim's card until the case is resolved. Unfortunately, this often results in the victim losing their money and being unable to access their bank account.

It is well known that the primary responsibility for financial security lies with the Central Bank of Kuwait, as is the case in neighboring countries and globally.

The Central Bank operates a "Customer Identification and Monitoring Room," which is authorized to delay any fund transfer between customers for a set period of time. This delay allows for verification of the transaction's legitimacy and ensures that no fraudulent activity is involved.

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Traffic Law reboot off to smooth start



Combo photos show Kuwait's streets on Tuesday take a turn for the better as drivers comply with the newly implemented Traffic Law on day one.



Photos by Rezk Tawfiq

Seatbelts on, phones down: Road safety wins on day one

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Enhanced road discipline and compliance among motorists were noticeable on Tuesday -- the first day of implementing the revised Traffic Law.

Motorists are obligated to use seatbelts, abstain from mobile phone usage by hand while driving, respect traffic signals, and refrain from parking in restricted zones.

Issued in January, Decree-Law No. 5/2025 amended certain sections of Decree-Law No. 67/1976 on traffic regulations. These amendments were published in the Official Gazette and took effect after a three-month grace period.

Director of the Security Media Department at the Ministry of Interior Colonel Othman Al-Gharib affirmed the extensive preparatory efforts of the ministry, including a six-month public awareness campaign to educate citizens and expatriates about the new traffic legislation. He said the objectives of the revised law are to guarantee public safety, and prevent traffic accidents that result in fatalities and serious injuries.

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'Sahel Manpower' goes live

Private sector workers get new digital access via PAM

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has announced the launch of its newly developed "Sahel Manpower" platform, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This platform is designed to allow private sector workers to track all submitted applications, view employment contracts, and submit and follow up on labor complaints through a

unified, integrated electronic system.

In a statement, PAM explained that the platform's services enable private sector workers, once logged in using authentication via the mobile ID app, to do the following:

■ Track submitted applications and view their acceptance or rejection, including reasons for rejection.

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Day by Day

THE suspension of national employment support had caused serious harm to those who were denied it, whether rightfully or not.

Thank you to the acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef for announcing the reinstatement of this support, particularly for the women whose citizenships had been revoked.

Today, many feel a sense of relief because of this decision. We look forward to justice through a thorough investigation into the citizenship revocation cases and an end to any related injustices.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

NewsWatch

Illegal crypto mining threatens power grid

KUWAIT CITY, April 22, (KUNA): The "illegal" practice of cryptocurrency mining risks threatening the stability of the national power grid, Kuwait's interior ministry warned on Tuesday, saying such activities are prohibited by state laws.

Cryptocurrency mines could potentially overtax national power generators and subsequently lead to outages, affecting residential and industrial areas alike, according to a ministry statement, citing that such "unlawful" acts adversely affect the nation's energy infrastructure.

Education minister refers 9 corruption cases to Public Prosecution

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei has announced the referral of nine new corruption cases to the Public Prosecution, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Tabtabaei affirmed the keenness of the ministry to promote integrity and transparency within the education sector.

He explained that the violations included abuse

of power for personal gain, facilitating the illegal seizure of public funds, misuse of administrative authority, and the provision of false information, all of which reflect serious corruption warranting legal accountability. The ministry has submitted all documents and records related to the cases to the relevant judicial authorities to ensure that appropriate legal action is taken and that those involved

are held accountable without any discrimination or exception.

The activation of the Inspection and Audit Office has played a major role in enhancing internal oversight and uncovering recent serious financial and administrative violations.

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Diwaniya honors shared values, strong ties

Francophonie fest highlights Morocco-Kuwait bond



Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to Kuwait Ali Ben Issa delivers a speech during the Francophone Diwaniya.

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to Kuwait Ali Ben Issa has confirmed the deep ties, cooperation, brotherhood and solidarity between Kuwait and Morocco under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and King Mohammed VI of Morocco.

In his speech during the Francophone Diwaniya that the Embassy of Morocco hosted on Tuesday with the heads of diplomatic missions in attendance, Ben Issa stressed "this moment that we share is not merely a linguistic or cultural celebration; as it is rather a living expression of pluralistic identity, permanent dialogue between nations, and a renewed

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2 Dean Al-Jarallah visits Red Palace and Weapons Museum



9 NBK celebrates graduation from Harvard's Executive Leadership Program

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:51	Asr	15:22
Sunrise ..	05:15	Maghrib ..	18:18
Zohr	11:47	Isha	19:40

Local

Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Hot and partly cloudy with light variable wind to light to moderate northeasterly wind, with speeds of 06-32 km/h.			
By Night: Mild with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 06-28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait Airport	37	24	
Abdaly	39	24	
Jahra	39	25	
Salmiyah	30	23	
Jal Aliyah	36	22	
Nuwaisib	35	23	
Wafra	37	23	



Ahmed Al-Jarallah explores Kuwait's legacy at the Red Palace and Weapons Museum.

‘History is not a cultural luxury, but a strategic necessity’

Dean Al-Jarallah visits Red Palace and Weapons Museum

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah visited two important landmarks in Kuwait's history - the Red Palace and the Weapons Museum in Jahra, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The visit was aimed at exploring the nation's past, remembering the sacrifices that helped shape its identity, and exploring their lasting impact on the depth of Kuwaiti identity in the public consciousness.

Al-Jarallah said, "Such visits serve as a reminder that preserving history is not a cultural luxury, but a strategic necessity to strengthen loyalty and face current challenges with the spirit of our ancestors."

"The Red Palace Fort and the Weapons Museum are not merely stones and metal but they are the backbone of Kuwaiti memory, linking a past filled with sacrifices to a prosperous present and an ambitious future."

The Red Palace: a fortress of steadfastness

The Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism's first stop was the Red Palace, which is a living testament to the Battle of Jahra in 1920. This battle became a symbol of resistance, led by Sheikh Salem Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, who united a popular alliance to repel the attacks, supported by military strategy and a collective spirit.

The site highlights the vital role of solidarity between Kuwait's leadership and its people, particularly with



Ahmed Al-Jarallah during his visit at the Red Palace and the Weapons Museum.

the arrival of naval and land supplies under the leadership of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, which had shifted the balance of power in the battle.

The Battle of Jahra: an epic immortalized in memory

The Battle of Jahra represents a pivotal moment in Kuwait's history. It was here that the late Sheikh Jaber bin Abdullah Al-Sabah, who became a symbol of sacrifice, was

martyred. His grave today stands as a national memorial in honor of the souls who gave their lives for Kuwait's sovereignty.

The museum displays war tools and documents that chronicle the battle, offering new generations valuable insights into the defense strategies and geographical challenges of that era.

Museums: a bridge between past and future

This visit highlights the vital role of museums as custodians of identity, preserving artifacts such as traditional weapons, military maps, and letters from leaders. These items serve as a source of inspiration in helping to understand Kuwait's political and military resilience in the face of past threats.

The museum offers an interactive experience through illustrated panels and documentaries,

bringing to life the most important events of the Battle of Jahra and building a deeper emotional connection to the nation's historical events.

The role of media and research in preserving history

The visit of the Dean of Journalism Ahmed Al-Jarallah, along with researchers Fahad Fares Al-Jarba and Abeer Al-Jafira, highlights the significance of collaboration between the media and academic sectors in accu-

ately conveying historical narratives, especially amidst attempts to distort or omit certain details.

These tours play a vital role in producing rich media and cultural content, such as documentary reports or research articles, that highlight the human dimension of conflicts, such as the untold stories of women and children who contributed to the war effort.

Kuwait's Charitable Societies make major strides with new SDGs report

Over 2K projects globally highlight local and int'l impact

By Fares Al-Abdan
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The Ministry of Social Affairs, in cooperation with Kuwait Charitable Societies Union (KCSU), has announced the release of the first voluntary national report of its kind, titled "Localization and Empowerment."

The report documents the contribution of the Kuwaiti charitable sector to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2030) and reflects its active engagement in the New Kuwait Vision 2035.

The ministry revealed in a press statement that this report is a milestone in institutional charitable work, as it provides an in-depth analytical reading of the efforts of accredited charitable societies and foundations in integrating Islamic and humanitarian values with the pillars of sustainability and instilling the concepts of community partnership and

integration with national and international policies.

It added that the report's important indicators include the number of implemented projects, which exceeded 2,172 in 72 countries, covering a wide spectrum of development and humanitarian needs.

Local spending also accounted for 38 percent of total spending, highlighting the balance between domestic and international work.

Regarding the contribution of the sector to the Sustainable Development Goals, spending was distributed among quality education (29 percent); poverty eradication (21 percent); zero hunger (17 percent); shelter, sustainable cities, and communities (11 percent); clean water and sanitation (10 percent); and health and well-being (9 percent).

The report is the result of extensive consultations with stakeholders, a comprehensive review of administrative and financial reports, and international guidelines -- all within a framework of professionalism and impartiality, presenting a model of governance and transparency.

It conveyed vital messages that stressed the structural compatibility between Kuwaiti charitable work and the objectives of Islamic Sharia on one

hand, and the Sustainable Development Goals on the other hand.

It also called for more coordination and integration between civil society and government agencies to achieve development plans efficiently and sustainably; while highlighting Kuwaiti charitable work as part of the State's 'soft power' and an effective element in supporting community security and regional stability.

It contains a number of qualitative recommendations, including the design of training programs to build institutional awareness of sustainability concepts among those working in the sector, encouraging associations to issue periodic follow up reports on their development performance, and adopting a unified national plan to enable the charitable sector to align with the standards and goals of sustainable development.

It also established the localization and empowerment of a new knowledge structure that documents the Kuwaiti charitable experience as a model regionally and internationally, and embodies an ambitious vision for the humanitarian work institution in light of the requirements of comprehensive and sustainable development.

Historic step towards protecting society

KSAV commends new anti-narcotics law for stronger penalties, expanded rehabilitation

By Jaber Al-Hamoud
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Head of the Kuwait Society Against Violence (KSAV) Ali Al-Ali praised the results achieved by the committee that acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf tasked to address loopholes in the Anti-Narcotics Law; particularly the new draft law which stipulates harsher penalties to deter dealers of narcotics and psychotropic substances.

Al-Ali disclosed that KSAV initiated the draft law on mandatory drug testing and treatment, which was submitted to the Council of Ministers in cooperation with the relevant government agencies. He believes



Ali Al-Ali

the issuance of this highly anticipated law will be a historic achievement that will contribute to strengthening the protection of families and society from the dangers of drug addiction.

He said the new law mandates the Ministry of Health to establish specialized centers for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts and users. He stressed the need for these centers to be located in independent buildings with all the necessary treatment and security equipment. He added the law also

stipulates the need to designate separate sections for those under the age of 21.

He stated that Article Four of the law obliges the Ministry of Interior to establish reform and rehabilitation centers to implement prison sentences for those convicted of possessing narcotics or psychotropic substances for personal consumption. "Convicts will be required to undergo treatment, rehabilitation, family and social integration programs in facilities that are totally separate from public prisons," he elaborated.

He added this project is considered a qualitative shift in the mechanisms for combating drugs, and a manifestation of real partnership between State institutions and civil society to preserve the social fabric and ensure a secure future for the next generations.

Other Voices

The dangers of prescriptions

By Ahmad alsarraf

For well known reasons, I don't rely on, or rather don't trust, Arabic references unless they explain the intricacies of the Arabic language itself. Even then, they are not always reliable. Therefore, I turn to English references whenever possible to understand things that I find difficult, which, frankly, is quite often.

English is the language of science, space exploration, medicine, and economics. Increasingly, it is the language of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which will inevitably change our lives, for better or worse.

Because of negative experiences with Arabic references, I make sure to read about how to take or use medications and their side effects in English. Yesterday, for the first time, I decided to compare instructions for ear drops in both Arabic and English.

I came across the following in the Arabic version: "Earwax can accumulate inside the ear canal, causing various ailments such as tinnitus, whistling, internal noise, ear pressure imbalance, skin irritation, hearing loss, pain, and dizziness. These natural ear drops help improve ear condition, eliminate excess earwax, and prevent its buildup. They contain natural ingredients and organic oils, such as propolis and blackcurrant, which help form a protective barrier around the outer ear canal. This barrier indirectly soothes redness and irritation while also relieving



alsarraf

dry skin. The product is gentle yet effective, making it suitable for hearing aid users, and can be used over extended periods. For children aged 3 to 12 years, instill 2 to 3 drops. For individuals aged 12 and older, instill 4 to 5 (without writing "drops"). The product should be used once a week to prevent earwax buildup. In cases of excess earwax, redness, or skin irritation, it should be used 2 to 4 times a day for 3 to 5 days, or as needed if the problem persists."

The translation is clearly confusing and unclear. On the other hand, the English text is clearer and reads as follows:

"- For children aged 3 to 12 years: 2 to 3 drops in the ear.

- For individuals aged 12 and older: instill 4 to 5 drops in the ear.

Tilt the head to one side after applying the drops. Allow the drops to work for approximately five minutes while keeping the head in the tilted position. Then, gently clean the ear. Use once a week to prevent earwax buildup, and two to four times a day for three to five days if there is excessive earwax, along with skin redness and irritation."

There is a clear, though not critical, difference between the two texts. This difference could be more serious with other medications, potentially leading to a loss of effectiveness of the medication. The English text is more precise, and the situation could become serious with certain medications. This issue requires the attention of the Ministry of Health, especially considering that, to my knowledge, drug control in Kuwait is effective. From my experience, it works very efficiently.

☐ ☐ ☐

e-mail: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Call to action, Kuwait's path to sustainable development

"A FEW days ago, I had the honor of participating in the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development 2025 in Beirut, at the invitation of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). Held under the theme "Restoring Hope, Enhancing Ambition," the forum was attended by sustainability expert Dr. Sami Al-Adwani. The event emphasized that sustainable development is not a choice but a critical necessity, particularly in the face of the interconnected economic and environmental crises in the region", columnist Major General Faisal Musaed Al-Jazzaf wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.



Al-Jazzaf

"The forum served as a vital platform for exchanging ideas and accelerating efforts toward achieving the 2030 Development Agenda, with a focus on issues such as health, decent work, equality, development financing, governance, and the role of data.

"In this context, the State of Kuwait stands out as an effective player in development that can benefit from its long-standing legacy of development support and humanitarian work. "Kuwait's development landscape is increasingly aligning its policies and plans with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, the challenge remains in accelerating implementation and achieving integration in various sectors.

"A prominent opportunity for Kuwait today lies in developing a national model for sustainable development and forging strategic partnerships with the private sector, both local and international, as well as the charitable and civic sectors.

"Enhancing data systems and expanding the scope of voluntary national reports can improve the effectiveness of public policies and direct resources toward real priorities.

"Empowering youth and women is equally crucial, as they represent a vast reservoir of social and economic potential that must be invested wisely.

"With its stability, human and material resources, and prominent regional standing, Kuwait is well-positioned to lead regional initiatives that strengthen its role on the sustainable development map. Achieving this requires a clear vision, institutional integration, and bold decision-making to ensure a more sustainable and prosperous future for generations to come.

Note: The parking issue remains a challenge, particularly for visitors to various government institutions and ministries. We hope that future solutions will address this problem, as it continues to contribute to traffic congestion.

□ □ □

"There has been much governmental talk about 'Kuwaitization' of jobs and simple professions in cooperative societies and elsewhere. However, the ministerial rush to implement the 'Kuwaitization' policy made the current, enthusiastic government turn the page on those who preceded it at the expense of public funds!" **Khaled Ahmad Al-Tarrah** wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"As we contemplate the talk on 'Kuwaitization' in the current government and the rush toward it, I remember Kuwaiti figures who have preceded the government in 'Kuwaitization' -- metaphorically -- since 1990, during the months of the Iraqi invasion. These are the thieves of public funds who were 'Kuwaitized' by the privilege of seizing public funds and escaping the justice of the court!

"It is useful to reflect on the thefts of public funds since 1990, including the theft of funds from the Public Institution for Social Security, led by the maestro of commissions, former Director General Fahad Al-Rajaan, who was paid all his entitlements, including vacations and end-of-service benefits, and who crossed with his family from Kuwait to the British capital, London, where they settled until rumors of his death and funeral outside Kuwait surfaced!"

"They preceded you in 'Kuwaitizing' corruption. It must be acknowledged, not denied. Some failed to hold accountable those responsible, including members of the previous boards of directors of the Public Institution for Social Security, and those who signed on the disbursement of benefits to Al-Rajaan at his request and following procedures approved by previous executive administrations, except former board member, my dear brother Dr. Fahad Al-Rashed, who filed the complaint in 2008.

"The 'Kuwaitization' of corruption came on the shoulders of military stars, ministers and sheikhs alike!

"Former Director General of Social Security Fahad Al-Rajaan managed to cross into London under the pretext of performing Umrah. Meanwhile, the Legal Advice and Legislation Department team is keen on obtaining special bonuses from the Council of Ministers and the Social Security, similar to what happened in Kuwait Investment Authority. This happened despite the State Audit Bureau's violation and objection to the principle of disbursement, as the core of its mandate is to protect public funds in and outside Kuwait.

* * *

"I am impressed with the statement of Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah regarding the US Treasury's oversight of charitable work in Kuwait. I mistakenly assumed that international reports on money laundering, especially those from the US Treasury, did not reach Kuwait. Nonetheless, it seems that reading the English text was difficult, even for implementation and comprehension, even in the former Ministry of Social Affairs and previous governments over the past decades. But, glory to God, the Changer of Circumstances!"

* * *

"A common mistake is better than a missed opportunity.

"Why does the government adopt such linguistic rigidity?

"It is noteworthy, for example, that the masculine gender is used for the position of minister, not minister of public works. This is without adherence to the rules of masculinity in the text attributed to the minister. Verbs such as 'mentioned' or 'clarified' cannot be used as feminine verbs when making a statement, or when a press release is attributed to a masculine gender, not a feminine noun!

"We have the right to draw a parallel with the permissibility of saying 'wife', as the poet Dhu Al-Rummah said, instead of 'husband', so we say 'minister of women', instead of 'minister'.

"It is better to return to the common error than to miss the mark. The best practical reference is the news published by newspapers, which linguistically proofread and edit the texts of statements and press releases from the original text.

"Because Minister of Public Works Eng. Noura Al-Mashaan has been interested in 'photographing potholes' since the beginning of her ministerial tenure, and in selective field visits to maintenance and road projects, she neither visited Yamouk nor followed up the safety and security measures there and she not impose international preventive measures (PPE) on workers in residential areas, we ask the minister, not Minister Noura: Is it permissible to expand the photocopying of linguistic references and send them to the account of the ministry on the 'X' platform?"

* * *

Disclaimer and Apology
"I made a mistake in my previous article entitled, 'The Toxins of the Muslim Brotherhood', regarding the name of one of the group's members and his activities in Sudan. He is Tariq Al-Suwaidan, not Issam, as stated in the text.

"Therefore, a disclaimer and apology are required for this unintentional error."

— **Compiled by Mahmoud Attiyye/Simi K. Kutty**

Court 'acquits' ministry officials of negligence in public funds scandal

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The Criminal Court acquitted the head of the Advertising Department at the court and a female senior legal clerk in the Ministry of Justice of causing serious damage to the ministry's funds and negligence of duties, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

It also imposed KD 3,000 fine on a transaction executor in the Clerks Department at the Court of First Instance for unlawfully getting salaries deposited into his account during his absence from work -- about KD 29,490.

The Public Prosecution charged the defendant, a public sector employee, with seizing public funds during his absence from work without notifying the competent authorities.

Two defendants -- the head of the Advertising Department and the fe-

male senior legal clerk -- were charged with causing serious damage to the ministry's funds when they committed a professional error. This was due to negligence in taking the required administrative measures and failure to follow up letters about the absence of the public sector employee, which led to the unlawful continuation of the payment of his salary.

Attorney Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan, who appeared in court on behalf of the female senior legal clerk argued that his client had no fault; stating that the responsibility for follow up falls on the shoulders of the Employment Affairs Department.

The defendant also denied any connection to the accusations against her during the prosecution's investigations -- a view that the court accepted in its final ruling.

By **Mohammad Ghanem**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan has referred 118 employees for retirement to pave the way for the appointment of competent nationals as part of efforts to improve performance and keep pace with changes.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Public Works disclosed that major road maintenance works under the new contracts are being carried out in 30 areas

from April 19-24.

The ministry stated that the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) is carrying out maintenance works in eight areas: Abdally Road, Subiya Road, intersection of the Fourth Ring Road with Morocco Road, Fahaheel Road (opposite Mishref and Salwa), flyover at the Fourth Ring Road intersection towards Salmiya, Fourth Ring Road intersection with Morocco Road to the intersection of Damascus Street, Salmi Road towards Kuwait Road, and the Seventh Ring Road from

Lilometer 24 to Kilometer 27 in both directions.

The ministry added that the Maintenance Engineering Sector is doing the same work in 22 areas in the six governorates -- Jahra (Saad Al-Abdullah, Sulaibiya and Qasr); Mubarak Al-Kabeer (Qurain and Mubarak Al-Kabeer); Capital (Sulaibhat, Qairawan and Nahda); Ahmadi (Sabahiya, Fahad Al-Ahmad, Egaila, Dhaher, Mangaf and Raqqa); Hawalli (Mishref, Salwa, Jabriya and Salmiya); and Farwaniya (Ardiya and Ishbiliya).

Arab pharmacist sentenced to 15 years for drug theft, forgery

Court upholds prison, deportation for arsonist

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The Criminal Court, headed by Justice Mutab Al-Ardhi, sentenced an Arab pharmacist to 15 years in prison for stealing growth hormone medications and forging prescriptions.

According to the case file, investigations conducted by the Criminal Investigation Department at the Interior Ministry revealed that the accused, who is working at a government hospital, stole muscle growth hormone medications and forged

prescriptions for other patients, in order to sell them to bodybuilders, health club members and athletes. The value of the stolen items reached KD14,000.

The court sentenced the accused to 15 years in prison with hard labor, dismissed him from his job, fined him KD28,000 -- double the amount he embezzled, and then ordered his deportation after serving prison time.

Meanwhile, the Court of Appeals has upheld a two-year prison sentence with deportation issued by a lower court against a Jordanian expatriate who was convicted of setting fire to a popular restaurant in Jabriya.

The defendant had previously received a similar two-year sentence for burning down a

well-known café in Rumaithiya.

Also, the Fast Track Court will hold a session on Wednesday to deliberate on a lawsuit filed by a debtor -- a citizen -- who demanded for the suspension of the implementation of the decision of the Enforcement General Department in the Interior Ministry to permanently seize his salary.

Attorney Hussein Hani filed the lawsuit on behalf of the citizen, requesting that the Enforcement General Department immediately stop the implementation of the abovementioned decision.

This case is the first of its kind, considering the legal and social controversies surrounding 'seizure' decision.

Municipality removes abandoned cars, shops in hygiene crackdown

By **Inaas Awadh**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff/Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: A field campaign by the Public Hygiene and Road Occupancy Department of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Municipality resulted in the removal of 33 abandoned and scrap vehicles, mobile grocery stores, and illegal commercial containers.

During the campaign, 38 citations on violations related to public hygiene and road obstructions and 59 warning stickers for pending violations were issued. Also, 37 old garbage containers were replaced with new ones.

Meanwhile, in accordance with the directive of Kuwait Municipality Director General Eng. Manal Al-Asfour to Director of the Public Sanitation and Road Works Department Saad Al-Khurainj; Public Sanitation Supervisor Dr. Mubarak Al-Mujawb instructed the Fahaheel Cleaning Center to intensify oversight of cleanliness efforts in the area, reports Al-Anba daily.

Under the leadership of Fahaheel Cleaning Center Supervisor Mohammad Qunais Al-Hajri, and with the support of the supervisory team -- represented by Shift C Head Mohammad Faleh Al-Azmi and Inspectors Ahmad Eid, Nasser Rashid, Faleh Arshid and Turki Ahmed -- an intensive inspection campaign was launched on Friday. The campaign focused on abandoned vehicles in residential and commercial areas, as well as monitoring the activities of marginal workers.

As a result, seven abandoned cars were impounded, 21 warning stickers were issued, two violations were recorded, seven pledges were obtained, and nine marginal workers were referred to Fahaheel Police Station.

The Municipality has affirmed the continuation of these inspection campaigns to enhance public cleanliness and eliminate all related violations in the area.



Electrical transformer extinguished.



KFF photos House in Andalous.

Fire strikes in Egaila, Andalous

Firefighters from Mangaf and Bairaqa fire stations successfully extinguished a fire that broke out in an electrical transformer in Egaila on Monday morning.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force, the incident resulted in injuries to two individuals who were handed over to paramedics for treatment.

Meanwhile, fire broke out in a house in Andalous on Monday morning.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from Sulaibikhat and Ardiya fire stations rushed to the location. They rescued 12 individuals from the house and then extinguished the fire. The scene was handed over to the competent authorities for further investigation.

News in Brief

Asian man assaulted: An Asian man lodged a complaint at Khaitan Police Station, stating that his roommate assaulted him during dinner, reports Al-Anba daily.

The complainant revealed that he was having dinner at his residence when his roommate, who is a relative, entered and asked if he could join him. When he refused, the roommate allegedly attacked him, resulting in injuries.

The case was referred for investigation in order to apprehend the accused.

□ □ □

Two expatriates arrested: Personnel from the Residence Affairs Investigation Department at the Interior Ministry arrested two expatriates in Ahmadi Governorate after discovering 64 bottles of locally-produced liquor in their possession, reports Al-Anba daily.

Following their arrest, the individuals were referred to the relevant authorities for legal action.

Authorities confirmed that both suspects will be deported and their names added to the list of individuals permanently banned from re-entering the country.



KUNA photo

Kuwaiti Army Special Naval Units carrying out an operation to recover a submerged sea obstacle near Qaruh Island and remove abandoned fishing nets.

Kuwait Army clears hazardous fishing nets near Qaruh Island

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The Special Naval Units and Divers Battalion, affiliated with the General Staff of the Kuwait Army, successfully carried out a field operation to remove a submerged marine obstruction near Qaruh Island.

The obstruction consisted of abandoned fishing nets stretching approximately 500 meters, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The General Staff of the Kuwait Army explained that the fishing nets

were entangled on the seabed and posed a serious threat to coral reefs and the marine ecosystem. They also endangered navigation safety and could have caused accidents involving boats and ships.

During the operation, fish and other marine creatures trapped in the nets were rescued, as part of the efforts to protect Kuwait's marine environment and combat harmful practices that endanger wildlife in the country's territorial waters.



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Reforms athlete treatment abroad approved

Info Minister chairs PAS board meeting



KUNA photo
The Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs chaired the 24th meeting of the General Sports Authority.

KUWAIT CITY, April 22, (KUNA): The board of directors of Public Authority for Sport (PAS) held on Monday a meeting led by Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi to discuss some topics on developing sports action.

Five sports academic have been approved to work in the sports field, the authority said in a news statement after the meeting.

The move came after a deep study that aims to enhance the private sector's role in developing sports sector, and contributes to providing Kuwait's teams with outstanding players in all games, it added.

The board approved amending the bylaw regulating supporting athletes' treatment abroad in a manner that ensures proper cure, according to the actual condition of injury, it noted.



Cutting the ribbon for the opening of Al Wafra Specialized Center.



KUNA photos
Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi inspects the center's facilities.

Municipal Council calls for institutes oversight

License revocation pushed

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The Legal and Financial Affairs Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Fahad Al-Abduljader, held its eighth meeting for the third legislative term on Monday.

The committee retained the proposed establishment of an electronic platform for municipal violations on its agenda.

It endorsed the return of two proposals to the executive body concerning the revision of fees stipulated in Temporary Exhibitions Regulation No. 93/ 2019, and the modification of fees in Advertisements Regulation No. 599/2023, pending an update on the response.

It deliberated on the executive body's response to the query of council member Walid Al-Dagher about private institutes and nurseries in private residential areas.

It recommended the surveillance of all private institutes in private residential areas and the submission of a comprehensive report to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Commercial Licensing Department), with the aim of revoking the primary licenses of said institutes, in accordance with the prevailing law of the Ministry of Commerce.

It recommended providing the Municipal Council with details of the measures undertaken and the names of the institutes operating in private residential areas.

It also received and acknowledged the executive body's response to the proposal of member Sherifa Al-Shalfan regarding the translation of Kuwait Municipality regulations into English.



Al-Abduljader

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Enhancing care in remote areas

Al-Awadhi inaugurates Wafra Health Center

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi inaugurated the Wafra Specialized Primary Healthcare Center on Monday.

Present at the opening ceremony were Assistant Undersecretary for Engineering and Projects Affairs Ibrahim Al-Naham, Assistant Undersecretary for Dental Affairs Dr. Ahmed Asad, Assistant Undersecretary for Primary Healthcare Affairs Dr. Nadia Al-Juma, and Director of Ahmadi Health District Dr. Bader Al-Otaibi.

This is part of the Ministry of Health's strategy to facilitate access to healthcare services for citizens and

expatriates, particularly in peripheral and remote areas, to keep pace with the country's population expansion, and to expand the scope of comprehensive care in various governorates.

Al-Awadhi said "the center is a reflection of the commitment of the ministry to expand the scope of primary healthcare and provide high-quality specialized medical services near the residential areas. This contributes to alleviating the burden of commuting for citizens, while raising the quality of life, in line with the development vision of the country and health sustainability indicators."

He considers the center an added value to the primary healthcare system (clinics), as it represents Center No. 26

in Ahmadi Health District with an area of 3,000 square meters.

He added the center operates seven days a week from 7:00 am to 2:00 pm, serving those residing in Wafra area and surrounding areas.

He disclosed that it offers a range of specialized medical services like clinics specializing in chronic diseases; an ophthalmology and optics clinic; an ear, nose and throat clinic; two maternity clinics; two dermatology clinics and two dental clinics.

He added this is in addition to a medical laboratory for examinations and tests, four nursing clinics to ensure primary nursing care, and a fully equipped emergency clinic to ensure rapid response to urgent cases.

Teachers seek clarity on new promotion rules

MoE overwhelmed by training demand

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The Development and Training Department at the Ministry of Education witnessed overcrowding due to the overwhelming demand from teachers wishing to register for training courses, which are a prerequisite for promotion in accordance with the new regulations issued by the ministry.

Educational sources indicated that the department called on all applicants to register through the designated electronic form on the ministry's website, stressing that it would not accept any application submitted manually, especially given the influx to the department.

Sources attributed the overcrowding to the teachers' eagerness to meet the promotion requirements; particularly after the issuance of the ministerial resolution, in which Article Two, Clause Six (Nomination Procedures) stipulates that "the validity

of the training course is two years from the date of completion."

However, the resolution did not clarify whether the passage of more than two years since completion of the course affects final nomination or this condition is limited to interviews and tests.

This ambiguity has raised concerns among applicants, considering it is not clearly stated if the results will be canceled once the certificate expires.

Sources pointed out that such ambiguity could open the door to challenging the validity of some decisions issued pursuant to this ministerial resolution.

They said this requires an official clarification from the ministry to resolve the issues and ensure the stability of administrative procedures. They affirmed that the administration explained that the training program is part of a comprehensive development plan implemented by the ministry to raise the professional level of its teaching and administrative staff.

'World of Values' exhibition gains governor's support in Farwaniya

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received in his office this morning educational technology supervisors from Farwaniya Educational Zone.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, the supervisors invited the governor to sponsor and attend the "World of Values" exhibition, which is scheduled for Monday, April 28, at Umm Al-Hakam Bint Abi Sufyan High School for Girls.

The governor expressed his gratitude to the educational team and affirmed his willingness to participate in and support all educational activities due to their vital role in enhancing students' skills.



Farwaniya Governorate photo
Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah with the educational technology supervisors from Farwaniya Educational Zone.

The team also gave a presentation on the exhibition preparations, and highlighted the activities it will include. They explained the Educational Technology Department's role in supporting and developing students' skills.

They expressed their gratitude to Farwaniya Governor for his ongoing support of the educational process and his commitment to encouraging meaningful educational initiatives.

Public Authority for Sports sets legal framework to ensure transparent ops

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The Public Authority for Sports has issued Circular No. 22/2025 to enhance cooperation among sports institutions and ensure full compliance with relevant laws and regulations, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The circular, which was signed by Deputy Director General of the Competitive Sports Sector Bashar Abdullah Al-Salem, stressed the importance of adhering to Law No. 87/2017 on sports, particularly Article 50, Clause 2, which highlights the importance of joint action among sports bodies to serve the interests of sports and athletes in a spirit of cooperation.

It indicated that enhancing cooperation between various sports administrations is a crucial step toward achieving long-term success.

The circular also pointed out that some sports bodies face obstacles that hinder their smooth operation, including a lack of

commitment from some senior officials to proper administration.

In response, the Public Authority for Sports stated that it will take strict legal action against anyone who disrupts the work of sports institutions or harms their interests, in accordance with Article 62 of the same law. This article stipulates fines ranging from KD 3,000 to KD 20,000 for individuals found guilty of engaging in activities that conflict with the objectives of the sports body or cause material damage.

The authority emphasized that achieving sporting success requires a collective commitment to the laws and working within a framework that ensures transparency and professionalism. This circular is part of the authority's ongoing efforts to develop the sports system and create an environment of positive competitiveness, with the aim of sustaining sporting success and supporting Kuwaiti talent in regional and international arenas.

Government discusses key issues, approves citizenship stripping decision

Cabinet gears up for GCC-Central Asia summit

KUWAIT CITY, April 22, (KUNA): Kuwait's Cabinet on Tuesday looked forward to forthcoming talks between Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states and central Asian nation, slated for May 5 in the Uzbek city of Samarkand.

The gathering will see Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah representing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in the second such summit bringing together the two regions, the Cabinet was informed amid its weekly session presided over by Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Public Works' Minister Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan delivered a visual presentation over the progress in road maintenance work carried out on highways and areas nationwide, assuring the Cabinet that the project is set to meet its deadline without any delays.

The Cabinet then went on to discuss a number of issues on the



Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah presides over the weekly Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

agenda, referring the matters to concerned committees for further examination, pending approval.

The Cabinet also approved a decision to strip Kuwaiti citizenship off a number of individuals, based on

the works and findings of a national committee formed to investigate the matter.

Welfare workforce boost eyed

Kuwait and UN unite for stronger social safety net

KUWAIT CITY, April 22, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthlal Al-Huwailah discussed Sunday with UN Secretary General's Representative and Resident Coordinator in Kuwait Ambassador Ghada Al-Taher ways to enhance cooperation and organize a specialized conference on social welfare organizations.

A ministry statement said both sides reviewed aspects of cooperation and exchange of expertise in the fields of social welfare and



Al-Huwailah

development.

Minister Al-Huwailah affirmed the ministry's commitment to supporting all initiatives and partnerships with the UN office in Kuwait, praising efforts made to strengthen integration among government agencies, international organizations, and civil society institutions in matters related to social care and development, contributing positively to serving the community and achieving desired humanitarian and developmental objectives.

For her part, Ambassador Al-Taher stressed the importance of coordinating efforts between governmental bodies and civil society institutions, expressing the UN office's desire to organize an expanded conference on social welfare organizations with local and regional participation to highlight key challenges and opportunities in this vital area.

Kuwait pushes audit reform, sustainability goals

Strategic collaboration aims to elevate business standards

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Association of Accountants and Auditors Sabah Mubarak Al-Jalawi has stressed the importance of accounting, auditing and sustainable governance in developing the business environment.

In his speech at the opening of the Accounting, Auditing, Governance and Sustainability Conference, Al-Jalawi revealed the conference aims to share regional and international experiences and expertise in the field of sustainability and leverage them to address the challenges that the global economy is facing, particularly the rapid changes it is witnessing, which call for building an economic system capable of meeting these challenges.

Assistant Undersecretary for Corporate Affairs Sultan

Al-Otaibi attended the conference.

Al-Jalawi said the association is keen to hold these annual conferences that discuss issues of economic importance and benefit from their results and recommendations to build the New Kuwait 2035 and move forward in achieving and enhancing governance and sustainable development.

He emphasized that the association has been keen since its inception to hold annual conferences, with the participation of experts and speakers in the field, and to leverage these conferences to improve the performance of its practitioners by addressing the issues raised from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

He disclosed that the conference is being held in cooperation with the College of Business Studies at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), with the attendance of a number of international experts and academics in the profession, including the president of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), a representative of the World Bank, and a number of international academics, experts, and researchers in the profession from several countries.

Honorary President of the association Yousef Saleh Al-Othman stated that the topics and themes presented by the speakers and participants in the conference, which discuss the sectors of accounting, auditing, governance, and sustainability, will have practical outcomes that contribute to achieving sustainable development.

He pointed out that the recommendations emerging from the conference will undoubtedly contribute to developing the business environment and addressing challenges.

Director General PAAET Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam affirmed the importance of the topics at the conference, citing the recommendations and practical outcomes that will contribute to developing the auditing and sustainability sectors.

Chairman of the conference organizing committee Dr. Saud Al-Azmi said the conference is the result of a constructive strategic partnership between the association and PAAET.

He added the organizing committee wanted to attract distinguished research papers and organize working sessions bringing together leading researchers and leaders of

the profession to discuss the most prominent challenges and developments in the field and to create an interactive space for the exchange of experiences and knowledge between all parties.

Dean of the College of Business Studies Dr. Fares Al-Hayyan, asserted that the conference reflects the strategic partnership between the college and the association. "We aspire to see this as a strategic partnership that achieves Kuwait's development vision by addressing economic issues capable of achieving the goals and development plan adopted by Kuwait," he stressed.

Secretary General of the association Faisal Abdul Mohsen Al-Tabikh added the conference attracts the best international and regional expertise in the field of governance and sustainability.

"It also hosted a number of officials from Gulf and Arab professional organizations, indicating that the presence of these professionals provides a great opportunity to exchange views and experiences on topics that have become essential components of the work of business organizations, specifically the areas of auditing, governance, and sustainability," he concluded.

Continued from Page 1

Dear Central

In some Gulf countries and around the world, effective solutions to this issue are already in place. The Operations and Activities Monitoring Room, which tracks transactions in real time, delays fund transfers for a short period to allow its staff to contact the issuing bank. The bank, in turn, reaches out to the customer to confirm their approval of the transaction, regardless of the amount.

It is unacceptable to treat this matter lightly, as it directly impacts financial and economic security and undermines citizens' trust in the safety of fund transfers.

Moreover, such incidents can lead to customers being falsely implicated in money laundering cases, which may result in serious consequences until their innocence is proven. By then, not only might the customer have lost their money, but also their reputation.

Therefore, the Central Bank of Kuwait must take stronger measures to protect customers' funds from hackers and fraudulent activities.

Iraqi court

The court did not issue any comment as to the cause of the postponement.

Iraq's President Abdullatif Rashid and Prime Minister Mohammed Al-Sudani launched separate appeals against a Federal Supreme Court decision to render an agreement regulating navigation in the Khor Abdullah waterway between Baghdad and Kuwait unconstitutional.

In September of 2023, Iraq's Federal Supreme Court ruled that a bilateral agreement regulating navigation in the Khor Abdullah waterway was unconstitutional, a decision Kuwait said contained "historical fallacies".

Education minister

Al-Tabtabaei affirmed that the ministry is taking these cases seriously and is conducting a comprehensive review of existing oversight systems.

He said the ministry is taking corrective measures to prevent the recurrence of such violations, strengthen compliance with laws, and ensure the integrity of administrative and financial procedures to protect public funds and the state's rights.

Al-Tabtabaei urged the employees of the Ministry of Education to uphold the highest standards of integrity and professionalism, stressing that cleansing the administrative environment of violations is necessary for any future educational reform.

Private sector

- Print a copy of the employment contract attached to their approved work permit applications.
- Submit complaints related to entitlements and transfers, and attach supporting documents.
- Access educational qualification recognition services.
- Cancel work permits for departure or transfer of residency to another sector.
- Print labor-related academic certificates.

Francophonie fest

commitment to promote the values of peace, tolerance, diversity and solidarity. We proudly carry these values as members of the great French-speaking family."

He explained "we decided to use the name, 'Diwaniya', for this celebration "because this beautiful tradition has a stunning cultural and historical significance that reflects the depth and authenticity of the pure Kuwaiti traditions deeply rooted in the brotherly Kuwaiti people, for whom we wish further progress and prosperity."

He stressed that the Kingdom of Morocco, under the enlightened leadership of King Mohammed VI, has always been a constant and convincing part of this Francophone dynamic.

He said that the participation of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in the celebration of Francophonie

Month is an affirmation of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Kingdom of Morocco, rich in its Arab, Amazigh, African, Mediterranean and Andalusian cultural tributaries.

He added "this participation is also a way to affirm Morocco's commitment to the larger Francophone family by sharing the same universal values of peace, dialogue and solidarity -- values that the Kingdom of Morocco shares with its sister, the State of Kuwait."

He asserted "the Kingdom, which has always chosen dialogue over withdrawal and bridges over walls, has been working hard for several years to promote dynamic cooperation among the countries in the South, not only in Africa; but also with the Arab world, Europe, America and Asia. This openness is the essence of our identity."

He continued "I take this opportunity to congratulate Kuwait on the declaration of the late Kuwaiti poet Ahmed Al-Adwani as a symbol of Arab culture by the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization and the Moroccan Ministry of Culture on the occasion of the opening of the Rabat International Book Fair."

He also praised the Moroccans residing in Kuwait; indicating that they work in various fields, including university professors and teachers who greatly contribute to promoting Francophonie and building bridges of cultural communication with their Kuwaiti brothers and sisters.

Kuwait Amir

In his cable, Sheikh Ahmad expressed his sorrow on the demise of Pope Francis at the age of 88 years old, and after a long battle with illness.

Meanwhile, the Vatican Embassy in Kuwait has announced that the book of condolences for the passing of Pope Francis will be open on Wednesday, April 23 and Thursday, April 24, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement, the embassy explained that the book will be available for signing at the embassy on Wednesday and Thursday from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm and from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. A prayer service for the late Pope will be held at the Holy Family Cathedral in Kuwait City, led by the Apostolic Nuncio to Kuwait, Archbishop Eugene Martin Nugent, on Friday at 9:15 am.

Pope Francis will be laid to rest Saturday after lying in state for three days in St. Peter's Basilica, where the faithful are expected to flock to pay their respects to history's first Latin American pontiff.

The cardinals met Tuesday in the Vatican's synod hall to chart the next steps before a conclave begins to choose Francis' successor, as condolences poured in from around the world. According to current norms, the conclave must begin between May 5 and 10.

The cardinals set the funeral for Saturday at 10 a.m. in St. Peter's Square, to be celebrated by the dean of the College of Cardinals, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re. U.S. President Donald Trump said he and first lady Melania Trump plan to attend, and Argentine President Javier Milei is also expected.

— See Also Page 6



Group photo during the signing ceremony.

MoU boosts student skills, research

KU, KIC join forces to shape future leaders

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Kuwait University has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Kuwait Investment Company in a ceremony in the presence of the President of Kuwait University Professor Dr. Dina Musaed Al-Mailem, the CEO of Kuwait Investment Company Fawaz Sulaiman Al-Ahmad, Acting Secretary General of Kuwait University Dr. Bader Ahmed Al-Jasser Al-Rajhi, and other senior officials from both parties.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait University, the agreement aims to strengthen collaboration between the two entities to achieve the goals of New Kuwait 2035 vision by promoting the development of social and human resources, qualifying and training national talent, and achieving excellence in education, scientific research, and community service through the application of scientific research and innovation.

Dr. Al-Mailem welcomed Kuwait Investment Company as a partner in Kuwait University's journey of research, development, and training, emphasizing the importance of achieving excellence in education, scientific research, and community service.

She highlighted that this collaboration will contribute to producing outstanding outcomes and enhancing the university's regional and international ranking.

Dr. Al-Mailem praised Kuwait Investment Company's commitment to strengthening its coop-



Photo during the signing of memorandum of understanding.

eration with Kuwait University by supporting student activities and training, providing practical experience to students, and preparing them for entry into the labor market.

She stressed that this reflects Kuwait Investment Company's distinguished role and generous contributions to community service by cooperating in organizing joint lectures and workshops in finance, business, and investment fields.

Meanwhile, the CEO of Kuwait Investment Company Fawaz Sulaiman Al-Ahmad stated that the Kuwait Investment Company is

a Kuwaiti shareholding company established by Amiri Decree in 1960, and it engages in a wide range of investment activities related to capital markets both locally and internationally.

He added that the cooperation with Kuwait University aims to expand training opportunities, provide students with practical experience, and better prepare them for the job market.

Al-Ahmad expressed his pride in partnering with Kuwait University, describing it as a prestigious academic institution.

Harvard sues Trump administration to stop freeze of more than \$2b in grants

BOSTON, April 22, (AP): Harvard University announced Monday that it has filed suit to halt a federal freeze on more than \$2.2 billion in grants after the institution said it would defy the Trump administration’s demands to limit activism on campus.

In an April 11 letter to Harvard, the Trump administration had called for broad government and leadership reforms at the university and changes to its admissions policies. It also demanded the university audit views of diversity on campus and stop recognizing some student clubs. The administration has argued universities allowed antisemitism to go unchecked at campus protests last year.



Garber

Harvard President **Alan Garber** said the university would not bend to the demands. Hours later, the government froze billions of dollars in federal funding.

“The Government has not - and cannot - identify any rational connection between antisemitism concerns and the medical, scientific, technological, and other research it has frozen that aims to save American lives, foster American success, preserve American security, and maintain America’s position as a global leader in innovation,” said the lawsuit, filed in Boston federal court.

“Nor has the Government acknowledged the significant consequences that the indefinite freeze of billions of dollars in federal research funding will have on Harvard’s research programs, the beneficiaries of that research, and the national interest in furthering American innovation and progress,” it added.

Harvard’s suit called the funding freeze “arbitrary and capricious,” saying it violated its First Amendment rights and the statutory provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

Within hours, the White House lashed back.

“The gravy train of federal assistance to institutions like Harvard, which enrich their grossly overpaid bureaucrats with tax dollars from struggling American families is coming to an end,” White House spokesman Harrison Fields said in an email Monday. “Taxpayer funds are a privilege, and Harvard fails to meet the basic conditions required to access that privilege.”

For the Trump administration, Harvard presents the first major hurdle in its attempt to force change at universities that Republicans say have become hotbeds of liberalism and antisemitism. A part of that is targeting research funding which has fueled scientific breakthroughs but has become an easy source of leverage for the Trump administration.

In its letter earlier this month, the administration told Harvard to impose tougher discipline on protesters and to screen international students for those who are “hostile to the American values.”

Trump adds second endorsement in race to be next Arizona gov

Stevens enters race to represent Michigan in US Senate

LANSING, Mich., April 22, (AP): Fourth-term US Rep Haley Stevens has launched her run for Michigan’s open US Senate seat on Tuesday with a video focused on the economic crisis caused by President Donald Trump’s volatile tariffs policies.

Walking through a lot full of pickup trucks and SUVs to make the case that she’s the candidate who will protect the state’s critical auto industry, she says “His chaos and reckless tariffs are putting tens of thousands of Michigan jobs at risk.”

“We absolutely need to put an end to the chaos agenda,” Stevens said in an interview with The Associated Press.

Stevens, a Democrat, is the fourth well-known candidate to join what is quickly becoming one of the nation’s most-watched Senate races, with the Republicans’ 53-47 majority at stake in a battleground state Trump won in November.

Quickly a top possible contender after Democratic Sen Gary Peters chose not to seek reelection, Stevens will oppose State Sen Mallory McMorrow and former gubernatorial candidate and public health official Abdul El-Sayed in the Democratic primary.

On the Republican side, former US Rep Mike Rogers is trying again after losing to Democrat Elissa Slotkin in the state’s 2024 US Senate race by just 19,000 votes.

Stevens will seek to defend her tenure in Congress in the Democratic



US Rep Haley Stevens, D-Mich, joined by House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-NY, speaks during a press conference on Capitol Hill on Feb 6, in Washington. (AP)

primary as McMorrow and El-Sayed establish themselves as outsiders. McMorrow is known nationally for her viral moments and El-Sayed has the backing of Sen. Bernie Sanders.

Before Congress, Stevens served on the US Treasury’s auto task force following the 2008 financial crisis as President Barack Obama’s administration bailed out General Motors and Chrysler. She said Trump’s taxes on imports are creating another crisis for the Michigan economy, which rides or stalls based on the auto industry’s

condition.

“People are very much at a boiling point around the uncertainty of tariffs,” she said.

Stevens has been an ardent voice from Michigan against Trump’s tariffs, particularly those leveraged against Canada. She said they are disruptive to the auto industry and are having a “dizzying” effect on companies of all sizes whose leaders cannot make plans as Trump repeatedly changes positions.

However, Stevens is among the

Democrats who have sought to clarify they are not inherently anti-tariff. Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer recently gave a speech in Washington calling for tariffs to be used like a “scalpel.” Shawn Fain, president of the the nation’s top auto worker union based in Michigan, endorsed Trump’s auto tariffs as leverage aimed at bringing back domestic manufacturing jobs.

Also:

PHOENIX, Ariz: US President **Donald Trump** added another endorsement in next year’s Republican primary for Arizona governor, saying Monday that he was backing US Rep **Andy Biggs** in addition to his previously announced endorsement of housing developer **Karrin Taylor Robson**.

Trump’s endorsement of Robson late last year angered some of his biggest allies in the state, who are suspicious of her longstanding ties to the Republican business establishment and preferred a candidate with deep roots in Trump’s “Make America Great Again” movement.

A former chair of the US House’s hard-right Freedom Caucus and former state Senate president, Biggs has long been a close ally to Trump and supported his false claims about the 2020 presidential election being stolen. Biggs represents a deep red district including cities like Queen Creek and Gilbert, and has ties to the party’s grassroots.

Geopolitical dust is still settling: expert

Countries shore up digital defenses as global tensions raise threat of cyberwarfare

WASHINGTON, April 22, (AP): Hackers linked to Russia’s government launched a cyberattack last spring against municipal water plants in rural Texas. At one plant in Muleshoe, population 5,000, water began to overflow. Officials had to unplug the system and run the plant manually.

The hackers weren’t trying to taint the water supply. They didn’t ask for a ransom. Authorities determined the intrusion was designed to test the vulnerabilities of America’s public infrastructure. It was also a warning: In the 21st century, it takes more than oceans and an army to keep the United States safe.

A year later, countries around the world are preparing for greater digital conflict as increasing global tensions and a looming trade war have raised the stakes - and the chances that a cyberattack could cause significant economic damage, disrupt vital public systems, reveal sensitive business or government secrets, or even escalate into military confrontation.

The confluence of events has national security and cyber experts warning of heightened cyberthreats and a growing digital arms race as countries look to defend themselves.

At the same time, President Donald Trump has upended America’s digital

defenses by firing the four-star general who led the National Security Agency, shrinking cybersecurity agencies and slashing election cybersecurity initiatives.

Businesses now are increasingly concerned about cyberattacks, and governments have moved to a war footing, according to a report this month by NCC Group, a British cybersecurity firm.

“The geopolitical dust is still settling,” said Verona Johnstone-Hulse, a London-based expert on government cybersecurity policies and the report’s co-author. “What the new normal looks like is still not yet set.”

Many in the US are already calling for a more muscular approach to protecting the digital frontier.

“Hybrid war is here to stay,” said Tom Kellermann, senior vice president of cyberstrategy at Contrast Security. “We need to stop playing defense - it’s time to make them play defense.”

Vulnerabilities have grown as people and businesses use connected devices to count steps, manage finances and operate facilities such as water plants and ports. Each network and connection is a potential target for foreign governments or the hacking groups that sometimes do their bidding.

Espionage is one motive, demon-



Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, (left), joined by CIA Director John Ratcliffe, testifies as the House Intelligence Committee holds a hearing on worldwide threats, at the Capitol, in Washington, March 26. (AP)

strated in a recent incursion linked to hackers in China. The campaign known as Salt Typhoon sought to crack the phones of officials, including Trump, before the 2024 election.

These operations seek entry to sensitive corporate or government systems to steal secrets or monitor personal

communications. Such information can be hugely valuable by providing advantages in trade negotiations or military planning. These hackers try to remain hidden for as long as possible.

More obvious intrusions can serve as a warning or deterrent, such as the cyberattacks targeting the Texas water

plants. Iran also has shown a willingness to use cyberattacks to make political points.

The cyberattacks that frighten experts the most burrow deeply into telephone or computer networks, inserting backdoors or malware for later use.

National security experts say this was the motivation behind a recent attack from China called Volt Typhoon that compromised telephone networks in the U.S. in an effort to gain access to an unknown number of critical systems.

China could potentially use these connections to disable key infrastructure - power plants, communication networks, pipelines, hospitals, financial systems - as part of a larger conflict or before an invasion of Taiwan, national security experts said.

“They can position their implants to be activated at a date and time in the future,” said Sonu Shankar, a former researcher at Los Alamos National Laboratory who is now chief strategy officer at Phosphorus Cybersecurity.

National security officials will not discuss details, but experts interviewed by The Associated Press said the U.S. no doubt has developed similar offensive capabilities.

China has rejected U.S. allegations of hacking, accusing America of trying to “smear” Beijing while conducting

its own cyberattacks.

Wars in Ukraine and the Middle East. Trade disputes. Shifting alliances. The risk of cyberattacks goes up in times of global tension, and experts say that risk is now at a high.

U.S. adversaries China, Russia, Iran and North Korea also have shown signs of cybercooperation as they fought tighter economic, military and political relationships.

Speaking to Congress, Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard noted that Iran has supplied drones in exchange for Russian intelligence and cybercapabilities.

“Russia has been the catalyst for much of this expanded cooperation, driven heavily by the support it has needed for its war effort against Ukraine,” Gabbard told lawmakers.

Amid global fears of a trade war after the tariffs that Trump has imposed, supply chains could be targeted in retaliation. While larger companies may have a robust cyberteam, small suppliers that lack those resources can give intruders easy access.

And any tit-for-tat cycles of cyberconflict, in which one country hacks into a sensitive system as retaliation for an earlier attack, come with “great risk” for all involved, Shankar said. “It would put them on the path to military conflict.”



Pope Francis, (left), speaks to migrants, wearing white caps, during his visit to the island of Lampedusa, Sicily, in southern Italy, July 8, 2013. (AP)

Defending migrants priority for Pope Francis from earliest days of papacy

VATICAN CITY, April 22, (AP): Advocating for migrants was one of Pope Francis’ top priorities. His papacy saw a refugee crisis in the Mediterranean, skyrocketing numbers of migrants in the Americas, and declining public empathy that led to increasingly restrictive policies around the world.

Francis repeatedly took up the plight of migrants - from bringing asylum-seekers to the Vatican with him from overcrowded island camps to denouncing border initiatives of US President Donald Trump. On the day before his death, Francis briefly met with Vice President JD Vance, with whom he had tangled long-distance over deportation plans.

Some memorable moments when Francis spoke out to defend migrants:

For his first pastoral visit outside Rome following his election, Francis traveled to the Italian island of Lampedusa - a speck in the Mediterranean whose proximity to North Africa put it on the front line of many smuggling routes and deadly shipwrecks.

Meeting migrants who had been in Libya, he decried their suffering and denounced the “globalization of indifference” that met those who risked their lives trying to reach Europe.

A decade later, in a September 2023 visit to the multicultural French port of Marseille, Francis again blasted the “fanaticism of indifference” toward migrants as European policymakers doubled down on borders amid the rise of the anti-immigration far-right.

Francis traveled to the Greek island of Lesbos at the height of a refugee crisis in which hundreds of thousands of people arrived after fleeing civil war in Syria and other conflicts in the Middle East and South Asia.

He brought three Muslim families to Italy on the papal plane. Rescuing those 12 Syrians from an overwhelmed island

camp was “a drop of water in the sea. But after this drop, the sea will never be the same,” Francis said.

During his hospitalization in early 2025, one of those families that settled in Rome said Francis didn’t just change their lives.

“He wanted to begin a global dialogue to let world leaders know that even an undocumented migrant is not something to fear,” said Hasan Zaheda.

His wife, Nour Essa, added: “He fought to broadcast migrant voices, to explain that migrants in the end are just human beings who have suffered in wars.”

The news of Francis’ death shocked the family and they mourned “with the whole of humanity,” Zaheda said.

In December 2021, Francis again had a dozen asylum-seekers brought to Italy, this time following his visit to Cyprus.

Celebrating a Mass near the US border in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, that was beamed live to neighboring El Paso, Texas, Francis prayed for “open hearts” when faced with the “human tragedy that is forced migration.”

He criticized the pope for not understanding “the danger of the open border that we have with Mexico.”

As pressures surged in Italy and elsewhere in Europe to crack down on illegal migration, Francis made an impassioned plea to end the practice of returning those people rescued at sea to Libya and other unsafe countries where they suffer “inhuman violence.”

He called detention facilities in Libya “true concentration camps.” From there, thousands of migrants are taken by traffickers on often unseaworthy vessels. The Mediterranean Sea has become the world’s largest migrant grave with more than 30,000 deaths since 2014, when the International Organization for Migration’s Missing Migrants Project began counting.

Some GOP states targeting driver’s licenses issued to immigrants illegally in United States

WASHINGTON, April 22, (AP): As drivers on US highways cross from one state to another, they often are greeted by a large “Welcome to ...” sign.

But not all drivers are welcome in every state.

In Florida, motorists with special out-of-state driver’s licenses issued to those in the U.S. illegally are not welcome to drive. Wyoming’s governor enacted a comparable ban this year. And Tennessee’s governor said he will sign similar legislation sent to his desk recently.

The message, though not literally printed on metal, is clear: “The sign says, ‘Welcome to Tennessee, illegal immigrants are not welcome,’” Tennessee House Majority Leader William Lamberth declared during debate.

As US President Donald Trump cracks down on illegal immigration, Republican lawmakers in many states are pushing new laws targeting people lacking legal status to live in the US. The measures contrast with policies in 19 other states and Washington, DC, which issue driver’s licenses regardless of whether residents can prove their legal presence.

The Justice Department is seeking to strike down one such law in New York, which shields its driver’s license data from federal immigration authorities.

States are taking drastically different approaches to licensing drivers even as the federal government attempts to standardize the process.

On May 7, the US will start enforcing a law passed 20 years ago that sets national standards for state driver’s licenses to be accepted as proof of identity for adults entering certain federal facilities or traveling on domestic com-



Heavy snow falls onto the Florida Welcome Center on Jan 21, in Pensacola, Fla. (AP)

mercial flights. Licenses compliant with the REAL ID Act are marked with a star and require applicants to provide a Social Security number and proof of US citizenship or legal residency.

But states remain free to issue driver’s licenses to residents who don’t provide documentation for a REAL ID, so long as they meet other state requirements such as passing a vision exam or a driving laws test. In most states that issue licenses to people illegally in the US, there is no way currently to know from looking at the license whether the person is unlawfully present or simply chose not to apply for a REAL ID.

Peace talks come to crux

Russian drones batter Ukraine’s Odesa

KYIV, Ukraine, April 22, (AP): Russian drones battered the Ukrainian port city of Odesa in a nighttime attack, local authorities said Tuesday, less than 24 hours after a purported Easter ceasefire unilaterally declared by Moscow ended and just over a day before Ukrainian, British, French and US officials are due to meet in London to discuss the war.

Anticipation is building over whether diplomatic efforts can stop more than three years of fighting since Russia’s full-scale invasion of its neighbor. Hostility has run deep between the two sides since Russia invaded and illegally annexed Ukraine’s Crimea Peninsula in 2014.

Trump said last week that negotiations were “coming to a head” and insisted that neither side is “playing” him in his push to end the grinding war.

This came after Secretary of State Marco Rubio suggested last week the US might soon back away from



A rescue worker rests near university building destroyed by a Russian missile strike on Sumy, Ukraine on April 13. (AP)

negotiations altogether if they don’t progress. He spoke in Paris after talks among US, Ukrainian and European officials produced outlines for steps toward peace and appeared to make some long-awaited progress.

A new meeting is expected Wednesday in London, and Rubio suggested it could be decisive in determining whether the Trump administration continues its involvement.

Odesa came under a “massive attack” by Russian drones overnight, injuring at least three people, the head of Odesa regional administration, Oleh Kiper, wrote on his Telegram page Tuesday.

A residential building in a densely populated urban area, civilian infrastructure and an educational facility were hit, he said.

Also, during daylight Tuesday, Russia hit the southern Ukraine city of Zaporizhzhia with two massive aerial glide bombs - a retrofitted Soviet weapon that for months it has used to lay waste to eastern Ukraine.

The attack killed a 69-year-old woman and injured 22 people, including three children, according to regional governor Ivan Fedorov.

Thai-Chinese company denies flouting safety measures in probe of skyscraper collapse following earthquake

BANGKOK, April 22, (AP): A Thai-Chinese company denied Monday allegations its steel rods did not pass safety standard tests after nationwide criticism prompted an investigation into the collapse of a high-rise building under construction after an earthquake last month in Bangkok.

Authorities are probing Xin Ke Yuan Steel and another Chinese contractor involved in the construction to find out why the building crumbled following a quake centered in Myanmar, more than 800 miles (1,200 kilometers) away. It was the only building that completely collapsed that day.

The 7.7 magnitude quake on March 28 killed more than 3,700 in Myanmar, while in Thailand, 47 were killed, mostly at the collapse site, and 47 others went missing.

The collapse sparked questions about the enforcement of construction safety and the state-run Chinese contractor, China Railway No. 10 Engineering Group, leading to the arrest Saturday of its Chinese executive in Thailand, identified as Zhang, on suspicion of operating the business through the use of nominees.

Foreigners can operate a business in Thailand, but it must be a joint venture with a Thai partner, and they



Rescuers work at the site of a high-rise building under construction that collapsed after an earthquake, in Bangkok on March 28. (AP)

cannot own more than 49% to protect local competitiveness.

Three Thai shareholders of the company are also wanted on suspicion of being the nominees, said officials of the Department of Special Investigation, Thailand's equivalent of the FBI. They also said they were looking into the quality of the construction material and whether the company illegally fixed its bidding.

The company posted a video on-line last year advertising the building, meant to be a new office of the State Audit Office, with plenty of drone footage and boasting about the quality of the design, construction and management of the project.

Last week, a Thai engineer filed a police complaint saying that his name and signature were forged as a project controller in one of the construction plans. He denied any

involvement in the project.

Also:

BANGKOK: A Thai court convicted and sentenced on Tuesday two former prosecutors in connection with an alleged cover-up of a 2012 Ferrari crash involving an heir to the Red Bull energy drink fortune that killed a police officer.

Former Deputy Attorney General **Nate Naksuk** and former prosecutor **Chainarong Sangthongaram** were sentenced to three and two years, respectively, for abuse of power to help an individual avoid prosecution, said the Central Criminal Court for Corruption and Misconduct Cases in Bangkok.

They were among eight people charged with conspiring to alter the recorded speed of the Ferrari driven by **Vorayuth "Boss" Yoovidhya** to help him evade a speeding charge. The rest, including former Police Chief Gen. **Somyot Poompanmoung**, were acquitted due to a lack of evidence linking them to the cover-up, the court said on Tuesday.

However, the court ordered all eight to be detained pending an appeal, according to the court statement, which didn't provide further details. They were later released on bail, local media reported.



Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, right, meets with new US Ambassador to Japan George Glass at Ishiba's office in Tokyo on April 22. (AP)

Japan PM, new US Ambassador Glass affirm stronger alliance

TOKYO, April 22, (KUNA): Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and new US Ambassador to Japan George Glass agreed on Tuesday to further strengthen the Japan-US alliance, and its deterrence and response capabilities, Japan's Foreign Ministry said.

The premier described the Japan-US alliance as the "cornerstone of Japan's diplomacy and security," expressing his intention to promote "mutually beneficial cooperation," the ministry said in a statement.

In response, Glass shared this view, saying the Japan-US alliance is the

most important alliance.

Both sides also agreed that the two countries need to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the bilateral alliance while mitigating the impact on local communities.

In addition, Ishiba and Glass exchanged views on current bilateral relations between the two countries, including the tariff measures taken by the US President Trump administration. Speaking to reporters after their talks, Glass said he is "very optimistic" about the results of ongoing Japan-US tariff talks.

UN researchers warn that Asian scam operations spread across rest of world

BANGKOK, April 22, (AP): Transnational organized crime groups in East and Southeast Asia are spreading their lucrative scam operations across the globe in response to increased crackdowns by authorities, according to a UN report issued on Monday.

For several years, scam compounds have proliferated in Southeast Asia, especially in border areas of Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, as well as in the Philippines, shifting operations from site to site to stay a step ahead of the police.

More recently, scam centers that have bilked victims out of billions of dollars through false romantic ploys, bogus investment pitches and illegal gambling schemes are now being reported operating as far afield as Africa and Latin America.

Asian crime syndicates have been expanding operations deeper into remote areas with lax law enforcement that are vulnerable to the influx, according to the report issued by the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime or UNODC. The report is titled "Inflection Point: Global Implications of Scam Centers, Underground Banking and Illicit Online Marketplaces in Southeast Asia."

"This reflects both a natural expansion as the industry grows and seeks new ways and places to do business, but also a hedging against future risks should disruption continue and intensify in Southeast Asia,"



People from China, Vietnam and Ethiopia, believed to have been trafficked and forced to work in scam centers, sit with their faces masked while in detention after being released from the centers in Myawaddy district in eastern Myanmar on Feb 26. (AP)

Benedikt Hofmann, UNODC's acting regional representative for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, said in a statement.

UNODC estimates that hundreds of industrial-scale scam centers generate just under \$40 billion in annual profits.

The trend to hedge beyond the region has been consistent with continued reports of crackdowns targeting Asian-led scam centers that have been found operating in Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and se-

lect Pacific islands, as well as related money laundering, people trafficking and recruitment services discovered in Europe, North America and South America.

In Africa, Nigeria has become a hot spot, with police raids in late 2024 and early 2025 leading to many arrests, including people from East and Southeast Asia suspected of cryptocurrency and romance scams. Zambia and Angola have also busted Asian-linked cyberfraud operations.



People view the Sydney Harbour Bridge as the flags fly at half mast following the death of Pope Francis, in Sydney, Australia on April 22. Inset: A ballot is dropped into a box as early voting begins in Sydney on Tuesday for a national election to be held on May 3. (AP)

Australians start voting in general elections

Australians began voting Tuesday at general elections as the death of Pope Francis overshadowed campaigning. Polling stations opened to voters who, for a variety of reasons, will be unable to vote on May 3. Around half the votes are expected to be cast before the election date.

Both Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and opposition leader Peter Dutton canceled campaign events planned for Tuesday out of respect for the late pontiff.

Flags were flown at half staff from government buildings across the country, where a 2021 census found 20% of the population were Catholics.

Albanese and Dutton, who leads the conservative Liberal Party, will meet in Sydney later Tuesday for the third televised leaders' debate of the campaign.

A fourth debate is planned Sunday.

"I don't think there's a place for the body blows of politics today. I think it's a very different day from that," Dutton added.

Albanese's center-left Labor Party is seeking a second three-year term.

The government held a narrow majority of 78 seats out of 151 in the House of Representatives, where parties form administrations during their first term. (AP)

Puerto Rico's govt demands answers from energy company after island-wide blackout

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, April 22, (AP): Puerto Rico's governor on Monday urged people to moderate their energy consumption as she warned that the island has no additional power generation capability to fall back on days after a massive blackout hit the US territory.

Gov. Jenniffer González said officials are waiting for an explanation from Luma Energy, a private company that oversees transmission and distribution of power in Puerto Rico, about what caused the island-wide outage on April 16. It affected 1.4 million customers and left more than 400,000 others without water.

The governor announced that two subcommittees have been created: one to help the island's so-called energy czar to audit Luma's contract and another to identify potential companies to replace Luma if its contract is terminated.

"There have been multiple incidents," she said when asked whether the blackout was reason enough to cancel Luma's contract, something she pledged to do while campaign-



Headlights illuminate cobblestone streets in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico, during an island-wide blackout on April 16. (AP)

ing for governor. "The operator sold itself as an expert ... That perception of expertise has proven to be false," Luma said in a statement sent late Monday to The Associated Press that it was focused on the grid's reconstruction, "fulfilling the responsibilities established in our contract."

The company said it "has extensive technical and operational experience,

including personnel with experience in the aviation industry, as well as employees from the former operator," referring to Puerto Rico's Electric Power Authority. Luma has five days to explain why a transmission line failed and to provide details about whether it complied with required flyovers of transmission lines to ensure they remain free of tree branches and other obstructions.

More Democratic lawmakers visiting El Salvador on Abrego Garcia's behalf

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador, April 22, (AP): Four House Democrats have traveled to El Salvador to call attention to the plight of a man the Trump administration deported to a Salvadoran prison and has refused to help return - even after the Supreme Court ruled that it was the government's duty to do so.

Reps. Yassamin Ansari of Arizona, Maxine Dexter of Oregon, Maxwell Frost of Florida and Robert Garcia of California arrived Sunday in the Central American nation to investigate the condition of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, who had lived in the United States for more than a decade. The Trump administration deported him, a move that administration officials have said in court filings was done in error.

But despite a Supreme Court ruling that ordered the Trump administration to help facilitate Abrego Garcia's return, the administration has said it has no power to bring him back, a position being scrutinized by federal courts as potentially in violation of judicial rulings.

In a news conference Monday in El Salvador's capital, the Democratic representatives and Abrego Garcia's lawyer said they were in El Salvador "demanding his safe return home." The group said



US Rep Maxwell Frost, D-Fla. speaks to the media about Kilmar Abrego Garcia, a Salvadoran citizen who was living in Maryland and deported to El Salvador by the Trump administration, accompanied by Rep Robert Garcia, D-Calif., (left), and attorney Chris Newman, (second from left), at a hotel in San Salvador, El Salvador on April 21. (AP)

they hoped to continue to pressure authorities for his release, and that their petition to meet with Abrego Garcia was denied.

"Part of what the Trump administration does is they do so much that they try to make sure people forget - forget

about them breaking the law, forget about them completely ignoring the Supreme Court," Frost said. "We're not going to be the last members of Congress and senators that are here to make sure that he's released and that our country is following our laws."

Sudan's paramilitaries kill more than 30 in new attack on Darfur city

CAIRO, April 22, (AP): A paramilitary group in Sudan attacked a city in the western Darfur region, killing more than 30 people, an activist group said, in the latest deadly offensive on an area that is home to hundreds of thousands of displaced people.

The Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, and allied militias launched an offensive on el-Fasher, the provincial capital of North Darfur province, on Sunday, the Resistance Committees in the city said. Dozens of other people were wounded in the attack, said the group, which tracks the war.

The RSF renewed its attack on Monday, shelling residential buildings and open markets in the city, the activist group said. There was no immediate comment from the RSF.

El-Fasher, more than 800 kilometers (500 miles) southwest of the capital, Khartoum, is under the control of the



Sudan's military chief Gen Abdel-Fattah Burhan (center), is greeted by troops as he arrives at the Republican Palace, recently recaptured from the Rapid Support Forces paramilitary group, in Khartoum, Sudan on March 26. (AP)

military, which has fought the RSF since Sudan descended into civil war more than two years ago, killing more

than 24,000 people, according to the United Nations, though activists say the number is likely far higher.

Many feared dead in gun attack on tourists in Indian-controlled Kashmir, say officials

SRINAGAR, India, April 22, (AP): Many people are feared to have died after gunmen indiscriminately fired at tourists in Indian-controlled Kashmir on Tuesday, officials said.

Police have described the incident as a "terror attack" and blamed militants fighting against Indian rule.

"This attack is much larger than anything we've seen directed at civilians in recent years," Omar Abdullah, the region's top elected official, wrote on social media.

"The death toll is still being ascertained so I don't want to get into those details," he said.

Initial reports said shots were fired at mostly Indian tourists visiting Baisaran meadow, some 5 kilometers (3 miles) from the disputed region's resort town of Pahalgam.

Police and officials said tourists with gunshot wounds were evacuated to local hospitals.

The scene of the attack was cordoned off as police launched an operation to track down the attackers.

India's home minister, Amit Shah, is heading to Srinagar, the main city in Indian-controlled Kashmir, where he said he would review the situation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is on an official visit in Saudi Arabia, has been briefed



Paramedics carry a wounded tourist on a stretcher at a hospital in Anantnag after assailants indiscriminately fired at tourists visiting Pahalgam, Indian controlled Kashmir, on April 22. (AP)

about the incident, Shah said. "We will come down heavily on the perpetrators with the harshest consequences," Shah wrote in a post on the X social media platform.

Growth of 3.2% compared to same period last year, and EPS reached 9.77 fils

KFH reports net profit attributable to the shareholders of KD 168.1 mln for Q1 2025

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Chairman of Kuwait Finance House (KFH) **Hamad Abdulmohsen Al Marzouq** announced that KFH achieved a net profit of KD 168.1 million for the first quarter of 2025 for shareholders, representing an increase of 3.2% compared to the same period last year, and an increase of 41.4% compared to the fourth quarter of last year.

Earnings per share for the first quarter of 2025 reached 9.77 fils; an increase of 3.1% compared to the same period last year.

Net financing income for the first quarter of the year reached KD 318.9 million; an increase of 21.1% compared to the same period last year.

Total operating income for the first quarter of the year increased, supported by an increase in all core activities to reach KD 454.9 million; an increase of 15.9% compared to the same period last year.

Net operating income for the first quarter of the year reached KD 295.7 million; an increase of 19.4% compared to the same period last year.

Financing receivables increased as of the end of the first quarter of 2025 to reach KD 19.3 billion; an increase of 1.1% compared to the end of last year.

Total assets increased as of the end of the first quarter of 2025 to reach KD 36.9 billion; an increase of 0.4% compared to the end of last year. Shareholders' equity amounted to KD 5.5 billion at the end of the first quarter of 2025.

Depositors' accounts increased as of the end of the first quarter of 2025 to reach KD 19.5 billion; an increase of 1.3% compared to the end of last year.

In addition, the capital adequacy ratio reached 19.38% which is above the limit required by regulators. This ratio confirms the solid capital base of KFH.

Sustainable profits

In a press release, Al Marzouq stated that KFH's Q1 2025 growth in key financial indicators demonstrates the successful execution of the strategy approved by the bank's Board of Directors. He further noted that this performance, achieved despite a complex operating environment and market shifts driven by regional and global economic developments, underscores the strength of KFH's comprehensive and integrated business model. Al Marzouq added that the growth in all key financial indicators and balance sheet items confirms KFH's progress in generating higher-quality and sustainable profits.

Al Marzouq highlighted that KFH's financial performance demonstrates its consistent ability to grow profits sustainably. This success validates the effectiveness of KFH's efforts at every level in attaining its objectives. These objectives include boosting profitability, sustaining high growth, rationalizing expenses, elevating service quality, embracing technology and digitization, and enriching customer interactions through well-defined and carefully managed approaches, rigorous and measurable professional standards, and the capacity for prompt and effective responses to market changes. Furthermore, these efforts take into account increasing competition and evolving customer expectations.

He also commended the experienced management for their skill in navigating the business environment and boosting confidence in the bank.

Giant banking entity

Al Marzouq explained that the expansion abroad had gained significant momentum and brought about a qualitative transformation in KFH's growth strategy, turning it into a substantial banking entity with a presence in eight countries worldwide. These notably include Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt, Turkey, the UK, and Germany, supported by an extensive network of over 600 branches. He also noted that KFH continues to lead all banks and companies listed on Boursa Kuwait, with a current market capitalization near to KD 13 billion.

"KFH's recently launched "Beyond Horizons" visual identity reflects the bank's substantial growth, achievements, global reach, and future ambitions. This new identity also underscores KFH's ongoing commitment to technological advancement, digital innovation, and its leading position in Islamic finance," he added.

Supporting the national economy

Underscoring KFH's pioneering position, Al Marzouq stated that the bank will maintain its support for the Kuwaiti market and national economy. This in-



KFH Chairman Hamad Al Marzouq



KFH Group CEO Khaled AlShamlan

- Net financing income increased to KD 318.9 million; an increase of 21.1%
- Total operating income increased to KD 454.9 million; an increase of 15.9%
- Net operating income increased to KD 295.7 million; an increase of 19.4%

Al Marzouq: KFH successfully achieved its objectives of generating higher quality and sustainable profits

- Expansion abroad gained significant momentum and marked a significant shift in the growth strategy
- KFH leads all banks and companies listed on Boursa Kuwait with a current market capitalization near to KD 13 billion
- KFH continues its leading role in supporting the national economy and providing corporate financing

AlShamlan: Q1 financial indicators demonstrate balanced performance and financial strength

- Supporting infrastructure projects and productive economic sectors
- Providing qualitative and competitive digital solutions to expand market share and enhance service quality
- Human resources are the core of KFH's success
- KFH's global excellence has been recognized with approximately 15 awards

cludes providing financing to corporates within established credit guidelines, as well as its continued focus on corporate banking, corporate and retail financing. KFH actively collaborates with relevant authorities to support and finance small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Recognizing the vital role of these businesses in Kuwait's economy, job creation, and youth employment, KFH holds the largest SME financing portfolio in the market by the number of beneficiaries.

Green Sukuk

Al Marzouq highlighted KFH's ongoing commitment, via its investment arm KFH Capital, to issue more Sukuk for both governments and companies globally. He also stressed a particular focus on green Sukuk, aligning with KFH's broader strategy for sustainability and the adoption of ESG standards.

Social leadership

Highlighting KFH's significant societal impact, Al Marzouq noted the progress achieved through numerous strategic social contributions recently. Key ini-

tiatives include a KD 15 million pledge to establish a cardiac center at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital in partnership with the Ministry of Health, and a KD 2 million donation to the Ministry of Social Affairs' debt relief campaign. Previously, KFH also contributed over KD 20 million to settle insolvent individuals' debts in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice.

KFH Group Chief Executive Officer, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan

Solid financial position

KFH Group Chief Executive Officer, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan stated that the Q1 2025 financial indicators demonstrated balanced performance and significant financial strength, showing notable improvements in solvency and growth compared to the same period last year. He added that increased and diversified operating income, along with solid performance across most balance sheet items, highlight the Group's creditworthiness, reliability, and diverse avenues for future growth and expansion.

Diverse financing streams

AlShamlan highlighted the successful issuance of a 5-year, US\$1 billion Senior Unsecured Sukuk under KFH's US\$4 billion Sukuk Program. This issuance aims to finance KFH's operations and diversify its funding sources. Furthermore, it will enable KFH to increase its financing and investment capabilities, support infrastructure projects and local productive economic sectors, and assist customers with their regional and global expansion plans.

Qualitative digital solutions

AlShamlan stated that KFH is focused on increasing its market share and improving service quality by consistently offering qualitative and competitive digital solutions through KFHOnline (both mobile and web), XTMs, and KFH Express. He detailed that KFH offers about 200 electronic services, including online payments, online account opening, instant printing of all bank card types, gold trading, opening deposit and account, instant cheque and card printing, and QR code-based cardless withdrawals via mobile, along with many other financing and banking services that are quick, simple, and secure.

Human resources are central to achieving success

"KFH underscores the paramount importance of its employees, actively working to boost their skills, performance, and academic and professional growth. Viewing them as central to its success, KFH remains committed to fostering their innovation in services and solutions that improve customer experience, exemplified by the annual "Innovation Challenge". Moreover, to foster employee development, KFH offers educational scholarships alongside extensive in-class and online training programs. KFH also focuses on nurturing Kuwaiti youth for leadership roles, empowering them to drive development," AlShamlan said.

He pointed out that KFH is keen on empowering human talents and competencies, noting that the bank celebrated over 230 outstanding staff members at the 2024 Qadha program company. This program, the first of its kind in Kuwaiti banking, has recently earned global recognition with a Gold Medal from the prestigious Brandon Hall Group for Best Advance in Employee Recognition Program at the global level.

Global recognition

In appreciation of its exceptional efforts, AlShamlan said that KFH received global recognition, scooping around 15 awards for the current year from world-class entities and institutions. Most notable of these awards are: "Best Islamic bank in the Middle East" and "Best Bank in Kuwait" from EMEA Finance Magazine. Additionally, KFH attained ISO 22301 certification for its Business Continuity Management Systems (BCMS), reflecting the bank's proactive capacities and preparedness to face potential risks, in addition to its sustainability in operations and operational efficiency.

Thanks and appreciation

AlShamlan commended the support of the Board of Directors, the Central Bank of Kuwait and the regulatory authorities for supporting the banking sector. He also praised the efforts of Executive Management, all employees, partners, and stakeholders for their key role and stressed the continuous efforts to maintain KFH's leading position locally and globally.

Praise be to Allah		Highest in Kuwait Banking Sector	
168.1 KD Million			
Net Profit for Shareholders for Q1 2025			
	31/03/2025	31/03/2024	%
Net Profit for Shareholders "KD Million"	168.1	162.8	3.2
Earnings per Share "Fils"	9.77	9.48	3.1
Total Financing Income "KD Million"	751.4	677.8	10.9
Net Financing Income "KD Million"	318.9	263.4	21.1
Total Operating Income "KD Million"	454.9	392.4	15.9
Net Operating Income "KD Million"	295.7	247.6	19.4
	31/03/2025	31/12/2024	%
Total Assets "KD Million"	36,862	36,703	0.4
Financing Receivables "KD Million"	19,278	19,070	1.1
Depositors' Accounts "KD Million"	19,476	19,220	1.3
Shareholders' Equity "KD Million"	5,489	5,519	(0.5)



Boursa Kuwait shows gains

Foreign investors net buyers in GCC stock markets for Q1-2025

By KAMCO Invest

Foreign investors, including institutional and retail investors, were net buyers on GCC stock markets during Q1-2025 with net buying at USD 2.8 Bn as compared to USD 3.0 Bn in net buying during Q4-2024. The trend was positive at the start of the year with consecutive buying seen in the first two months followed by net selling during March-2025. The biggest buying was seen in Abu Dhabi with total net buying of USD 2.3 Bn followed by Boursa Kuwait also seeing consecutive buying by foreigners that reached USD 705.6 Mn in Q1-2025. Dubai was next with net buying of USD 343.0 by foreigners followed by Saudi Arabia and Bahrain exchanges with net buy transactions of USD 252.3 Mn and USD 23.2 Mn, respectively. Data for Qatar and Oman showed net selling at USD 421.0 Mn and USD 459.2 for Q1-2025.

Meanwhile, the monthly trend showed Boursa Kuwait witnessed consecutive buying by foreigners during the three months of the quarter. Conversely, Saudi Arabia and the UAE recorded net buying by foreign investors during the initial two months, which were succeeded by net sales in March 2025. Recently, Saudi Capital Market Authority (CMA) announced that foreigners can invest in Saudi-listed companies that own real estate in Makkah and Madinah. This move is aimed at attracting foreign capital and providing the necessary liquidity for current and future projects in Makkah and Madinah. Similarly, Qatar witnessed net buy trades by foreign investors during Jan-2025 followed by net sell trades during the remaining two months. On the other hand, Oman exchange witnessed net sales by foreign investors during the quarter. The Muscat Stock Exchange has announced new investment initiatives that involve collaboration with other market exchange platforms, aimed at enhancing liquidity sources across various markets to encourage increased local and international investments.

Some of the key factors that affected the flow of foreign money in the region included regional market trends, IPOs, geopolitical issues, economic health of the individual countries and crude oil prices. The quarterly trend in the equity market was skewed towards decliners as six out of seven exchanges reported declines during Q1-2025. The uncertainty related to US trade policies and a forecasted slowdown in the US economy affected investor sentiments in the region. The US government's consecutive announcements related to imposition of tariffs on US imports and the counter measures from its trading partners affected investor confidence in global economic growth. The seasonal selling pressure during the Eid Holidays also resulted in a decline in the market. As a result, local investors were net sellers during the quarter and these shares were grabbed by foreign investors resulting in a broad-based net buy trades by the latter.

In terms of m-o-m performance, net buying value by foreign investors peaked during February-2025 with aggregate monthly net buying at USD 2.4 Bn. January registered net buying at USD 833.8 Mn, while March witnessed a decline with net selling at USD 518.4 Mn. Historical trend for trading by foreigners in GCC listed stocks showed declines merely in one quarter over the last five years. Foreigners bought the most stocks during Q1-2022 with net buy transactions of USD 11.0 Bn, reflecting steep increase in buying mainly in Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

In the Saudi market, Saudi investors were net sellers on Saudi stock market during Q1-2025 at SAR 945.6 Mn as compared to SAR 4.2 Bn in net selling during Q4-2024. However, Saudi Institutions were net buyers of Saudi stocks to the tune of SAR 102.8 Mn that was more than offset by net sell trades by Saudi retail investors at SAR 1.0 Bn. On the other hand, buying was mostly seen in trades by non-GCC foreigners that bought SAR 2.4 Bn in net buy trades during the quarter that was partially offset by net sell trades by GCC investors at SAR 1.5 Bn.

Trading by GCC investors (Excluding Bahrain due to unavailability of data) in GCC exchanges showed net selling during Q1-2025. During Q1-2025, net sell trades by GCC investors reached USD 482.3 Mn, reflecting a decline from the USD 505.3 Mn in net sell trades recorded in Q4-2024. Boursa Kuwait witnessed the biggest net buying by GCC investors during Q1-2025 at USD 56.9 Mn followed by Dubai exchanges at USD 12.4 Mn. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Oman exchanges recorded net sales by GCC investors in Q1-2025 partially offsetting the overall buying by GCC investors.

In terms of the aggregate trading activity, total GCC volume traded declined by 24.5% q-o-q to reach 86.8 Bn shares in Q1-2025 as compared to 115.0 Bn shares in Q4-2024. Most of the GCC Exchanges reported a q-o-q decline in volume during the quarter barring Qatar and Oman. Value of the shares traded on Qatar exchange witnessed a gain of 1.7% to record 8.9 Bn in Q1-2025 compared to 8.8 Bn in Q4-2024, followed by Oman with 27.4% to record 2.2 Bn in Q1-2025 vs. 1.7 Bn in Q4-2024. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi declined by 56.3% and 22.0% in Q1-2025, respectively.

Similarly, the total value of shares traded also declined during Q1-2025. Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi and Oman declined in value traded while the rest of the markets gained during Q1-2025. Aggregate value traded reached USD 157.5 Bn in Q1-2025 vs. USD 164.3 Bn in Q4-2024. Kuwait reported the biggest increase in trading activity with value traded increasing from USD 15.1 Bn in Q4-2024 to USD 21.9 Bn in Q1-2025 resulting a share of 13.9% vs. 9.2% in Q4-2024. Trading activity on the Saudi Arabia Exchange declined q-o-q from USD 104.0 Bn in Q4-2024 to USD 95.7 Bn in Q1-2025.

Top 10 GCC Stocks by Trading Value

Five Saudi-listed stocks ranked among the top 10 most traded GCC stocks by trading value in Q1-2025. Aggregate traded value of the top 10 listed stocks in the GCC stood at USD 39.4 Bn, accounting for 25.0% of the total value traded on the GCC exchanges during the quarter. Al-Rajhi Bank topped the list by recording USD 6.3 Bn in trades followed by Oula Fuel Marketing Co. at USD 5.2 Bn and Saudi Arabian Oil Co. (Aramco) at USD 4.4 Bn. In addition to the Saudi stocks, the most actively traded stocks during the quarter included Adnoc Gas, Ahli Bank (ABOB), and Emaar Properties Co.

KPC reports modest price hike

KUWAIT CITY, April 22, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 34 cents to USD 70.94 per barrel on Monday as opposed to USD 70.60 per barrel last Thursday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation on Tuesday.

At the global level, the Brent crude and the West Texas Intermediate both went down by USD 1.70 and USD 1.60 respectively, settling each at USD 66.26 per barrel and USD 63.08 pb.

KPC inks deal with KNOC

Kuwait celebrates 1st oil shipment to South Korea

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) celebrated Monday the storage of its first oil shipment to South Korea.

Sources told the newspaper that the company's choice to store its oil in South Korea is based on the agreement signed with Korea National Oil Corporation (KNOC) last October to store four million barrels of Kuwaiti crude oil; considering South Korea ranks second in terms of receiving Kuwaiti oil exports -- around 19 percent of Kuwait's oil production.

Sources cited another objective of storing oil in South Korea; that is,

to be close to Asian markets, which import the largest share of Kuwaiti crude oil like Vietnam and Japan. Sources said the East Asian countries import about 1.5 million barrels of Kuwaiti oil per day, not to mention the prevention of shipping fee hikes in the future.

Sources mentioned one more objective -- KPC's efforts to retain the largest possible quantity of oil, especially since it has surpluses resulting from its current and future voluntary OPEC quota reduction policy.

They added KPC needs to increase its external reserves, because it aims to increase the capacity of the Kuwaiti oil sector to four million barrels per day in the next few years.

Aligned with Kuwait Vision 2035, bank champions ESG programs

Gulf Bank marks Earth Day with sustainability pledge

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Marking Earth Day, Gulf Bank has once again emphasized its deep commitment to advancing environmental sustainability through a series of ongoing initiatives that support its vision for a greener future "aligned with Kuwait's goals for a clean energy transition.

As part of this commitment, Gulf Bank continues to play an active role in financing clean and renewable energy projects, contributing to the acceleration of the country's shift toward sustainable energy sources. The Bank is also implementing an ambitious plan to gradually transform its branch network into eco-friendly locations by installing solar panels and providing electric vehicle charging stations – an initiative aimed at reducing its carbon footprint and conserving natural resources.

A highlight among the Bank's recent initiatives was the transformation of used billboard materials into reusable shopping bags – an innovative step that reduces plastic waste and promotes a culture of recycling within the community.

Gulf Bank's commitment to sustainability extends beyond infrastructure and technology, focusing also on community involvement. In collaboration with its volunteer team, "Sawa'ed Al Khaleej", the Bank organizes beach clean-up campaigns aimed at raising environmental awareness and fostering a sense of collective responsibility toward both society and the environment.

These initiatives, among many others, reflect Gulf Bank's belief that sustainability is more than a slogan – it is a core, integrated approach that shapes every aspect of its operations, driven by a commitment to creating a better future for generations to come.

Gulf Bank aims to be Kuwait's leading bank, fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace to deliver exceptional customer service while contributing sustainably to the community. Through its extensive branch network and innovative digital services, the Bank empowers customers to conduct banking transactions conveniently and efficiently, ensuring a seamless experience.



Part of Gulf Bank's diverse initiatives to consolidate environmental sustainability.

Part of Gulf Bank's diverse initiatives to consolidate environmental sustainability.



Zain and EPA teams during the initiative.

Company hosts 2nd beach cleanup with BeBot Robot

Zain: leveraging technology for a more sustainable future

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: For the second time, Zain organized a beach cleanup awareness initiative using the smart robot BeBot, in collaboration with the Environment Public Authority. The initiative aimed to invest in advanced technological solutions to build a more sustainable future and to harness innovation in contributing to the protection of Kuwait's environment.

BeBot is the first robot of its kind in Kuwait. It performs sand raking and filtering, detects and collects buried waste, gathers seaweed, levels beach surfaces, and lifts loads. It is also capable of navigating rough terrains.

The initiative successfully collected 13 bags of waste in a short time at the Sharq beach. The waste included over 300 grams of plastic water



BeBot embodies the use of technology in serving sustainability goals.

bottles, more than 2,400 grams of plastic caps, over 400 grams of metal cans, nearly 4,000 grams

of broken glass, and more than 6,000 grams of general waste.

The robot is designed to preserve plant and animal life during the raking process. It operates entirely on electricity using renewable energy through solar panels, which means it produces zero carbon emissions.

Zain remains committed to building a comprehensive program that aligns its operational processes with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The company places climate change action as one of the main pillars of its sustainability strategy and is dedicated to reducing energy consumption and minimizing emissions by improving environmental performance in the workplace and raising awareness of environmental care.

Boursa Kuwait ends lower, general index down 0.30%

KUWAIT CITY, April 22, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Tuesday's trading session in the red, with the general index declining by 23.32 points, or 0.30 percent, to close at 7,850.45 points. A total of 452.3 million shares changed hands in 27,090 transactions, generating a turnover of KD112.8 million (approximately \$345.16 million).

The Main Market Index edged down 5.87 points, or 0.08 percent, settling at 7,225.21 points. Trading volume stood at 312.8 million shares executed through 15,507 transactions, with a value of KD46.4 million (around \$141.9

million).

Meanwhile, the Premier Market Index slipped by 28.83 points, or 0.34 percent, to 8,394.24 points, as 139.5 million shares were traded via 11,583 transactions, amounting to KD66.3 million (roughly \$202.8 million).

In contrast, the Major 50 Index posted a strong performance, gaining 67.3 points, or 0.95 percent, to reach 7,129.21 points. It recorded a trading volume of 256.7 million shares in 11,203 transactions, with a total value of KD38.6 million (about \$118.11 million).

Focus on financial sustainability, innovation, and digital transformation

NBK celebrates graduation from Harvard's Executive Leadership Program

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The National Bank of Kuwait celebrated the graduation of its trainees from the 16th iteration of the Harvard Business School program (HBS) "Executives Leadership Development" as part of "Kafaa" initiative by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in collaboration with the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (IBS).

This iteration of the program witnessed a big participation from NBK with 8 different department heads.

The ceremony was attended by representatives from CBK, local banks, participating companies from Kuwait and outside, as well as IBS and the graduates.

This year's Executive Leadership Development program is titled "Strategic Leadership in the Age of Financial Sustainability" aimed at developing executive leaders in the financial and banking sector.

The program focused on highlighting concepts such as anticipating and responding quickly and electively to strategic opportunities and threats in financial markets, as well as better understanding and addressing the challenges faced today by senior financial executives.

Running for 6 days, the program explored using new technologies and competing with fin tech disruptors and understanding the risks and appropriate responses to cyber threats, in addition to managing and leading digital innovation and understanding and managing investor concerns around environmental, social, and institutional governance and sustainability.

Moreover, the program shed light on leader development through experiences, delved into disruptive leadership techniques, and highlighted the concept of leading and building a culture of innovation that enables transformation.

It should be noted that this program is held annually in alternating GCC countries with the objective of developing executive leadership in GCC banks and financial institutions as per the needs of the banking and financial sectors in the backdrop



NBK celebrates the graduates of the 'Executive Leadership Development' Program in collaboration with Harvard Business School.

of a changing business landscape.

The program consisted of interactive lectures, simulations, and real-life case studies from distinguished Fintech experts at Harvard Business School aimed at enabling leaders to explore different visions for execution, gain the tools necessary for successful leadership, focus on the increasing shift towards global environmental sustainability and new technologies, as well as the way of achieving a successful digital transformation. Moreover, the lectures explored the influence of artificial intelligence on teamwork, team leadership, enhancing communication and leadership under stress, and promoting talent diversity.

On this occasion, Mr. Emad Al Ablani Group Chief Human Resources Officer said: "NBK's participation in this executive development program in collaboration with Harvard Business School comes in line with its endeavors to prepare highly

qualified banking professionals in all majors, especially in the digital field, which have become part and parcel of banking transactions using the latest cutting-edge technology and AI channels."

"Our participants in the 'Kafaa' initiative reflects our strategy to invest human capital by building qualified national leaders in the banking sector as per the latest and best international standards."

Al Ablani added: "We strongly believe that investing in our employees in one of the main strategic pillars of achieving sustainable growth and guaranteeing the bank's excellence and leadership. This is why we strive to provide the best training and development programs in collaboration with the biggest world institutions, to ensure building a flexible and dynamic workforce that can face future challenges and changing banking landscape."

Participation part of its strategy for sustainable human capital development

Burgan Bank participates in ktech’s career fair

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: In line with its committed strategy for sustainable human capital development, Burgan Bank recently participated in the Kuwait Technical College (ktech) career fair, furthering its yearlong efforts to find, recruit, and holistically develop Kuwait’s most aspiring national talents.

Commenting on the Bank’s participation, Mr. **Abdulwahab Abdulraheem**, Executive Manager – Talent Acquisition at Burgan Bank, said: “We were delighted to be present at ktech’s career fair alongside some of Kuwait’s leading businesses across sectors and industries. During the event, our dedicated recruitment team representing Burgan engaged in meaningful conversations with the career fair visitors, highlighting the numerous opportunities for professional and personal growth at Burgan Bank as well as the progressive and supportive work environment it fosters.”



Mr. Abdulwahab Abdulraheem, Executive Manager – Talent Acquisition at Burgan Bank

Mr. Abdulwahab added that ktech’s focused academic tracks in Information Systems and Technology (IT) or Business Management (BM) aligns

with Burgan Bank’s growing need for promising professional talents who have the skill and aptitude to support its forward-looking digital transformation strategy and early adoption of the latest financial technologies, operational frameworks, and security systems. He noted that Burgan’s success in maintaining its competitive growth rate and keeping abreast of the global banking trends relies on hiring and developing eager talents across numerous departments who are self-driven and ready to make the most of the Bank’s culture of continuous learning.

During the event, the Bank also seized the opportunity to share essential financial literacy information as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting the national banking awareness campaign, “Let’s Be Aware” (Diraya) – launched and supervised by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), with the support of Kuwaiti banks

Among Burgan’s most notable

efforts to foster an environment of technology-focused banking innovation that responds to the market’s evolving needs and growing aspirations is Burgan Lab, the Bank’s dedicated innovation and digital transformation central hub. In addition to the advanced tools and cutting-edge technologies that it hosts, Burgan Lab also underscores the importance of collaboration, creativity, and excellence as essential features of the Burgan innovation-driven culture.

Alongside Burgan Lab, the Bank offers its employees various learning and development opportunities all year round, catering to their individual learning preferences and different aspirations for personal and professional growth. These efforts are among numerous factors that earned Burgan Bank the Great Place to Work® certification, further cementing it as a top employer of choice and a dedicated contributor to the success of Kuwait’s 2035 Vision.



Burgan’s team receiving an honorary shield from ktech.

US, global economic outlook deteriorates

IMF attributes situation to Trump trade war

WASHINGTON, April 22, (AP): The outlooks for the U.S. and global economies have significantly worsened in the wake of President Donald Trump’s tariffs and the uncertainty they have created, the International Monetary Fund said Tuesday.

The IMF said that the global economy will grow just 2.8% this year, down from its forecast in January of 3.3%, according to its latest World Economic Outlook.

And in 2026, global growth will be 3%, the fund predicts, also below its previous 3.3% estimate.

And the Fund sees the world’s two largest economies, China and the United States, weakening: U.S. economic growth will come in at just 1.8% this year, down sharply from its previous forecast of 2.7% and a full percentage point below its 2024 expansion. The IMF doesn’t expect a U.S. recession, though it has raised its odds of one this year from 25% to 37%.

China is also forecast to grow more slowly because of U.S. tariffs. The IMF now expects it will expand 4% this year and next, down roughly half a point from its previous fore-

casts.

The forecasts underscore the widespread impact of both the tariffs and the uncertainty they have created. Every country in the world is affected, the IMF said, by hikes in US import taxes that have now lifted average U.S. duties to about 25%, the highest in a century.

The forecasts are largely in line with many private-sector economists’ expectations, though some do fear a recession is increasingly likely. Economists at JPMorgan say the chances of a U.S. recession are now 60%. The Federal Reserve has also forecast that growth will weaken this year, to 1.7%.

“We are entering a new era,” Pierre-

Olivier Gourinchas, chief economist at the IMF, said. “This global economic system that has operated for the last eighty years is being reset.”

The IMF is a 191-nation lending organization that works to promote economic growth and financial stability and to reduce global poverty.

Gourinchas said that the heightened uncertainty around the import taxes led the IMF to take the unusual step of preparing several different scenarios for future growth. Its forecasts were finalized April 4, after the Trump administration announced sweeping tariffs on nearly 60 countries along with nearly-universal 10% duties.

Those duties were paused April 9

for 90 days. Gourinchas said the pause didn’t substantially change the IMF’s forecasts because the U.S. and China have imposed such steep tariffs on each other since then.

The uncertainty surrounding the Trump administration’s next moves will also likely weigh heavily on the U.S. and global economies, the IMF said. Companies may pull back on investment and expansion as they wait to see how the trade policies play out, which can slow growth.

While the U.S. economy will likely suffer a “supply shock,” similar to what hampered during the pandemic and which pushed up inflation in 2021 and 2022, Gourinchas said, China is expected to experience reduced de-

mand as U.S. purchases of its exports fall.

Inflation will likely worsen in the United States, rising to about 3% by the end of this year, while it will be little changed in China, the IMF forecast.

The IMF expects the tariffs to take a big chunk out of China’s economy, but it also forecasts that additional spending by the Chinese government will offset much of the hit.

The European Union is forecast to grow more slowly, but the hit from tariffs is not as large, in part because it is facing lower U.S. duties than China. In addition, some of the hit from tariffs will be offset by stronger government spending by Germany.

How stocks, bonds and others have fared so far in ’25

Trump’s burgeoning trade war turning markets upside down

NEW YORK, April 22, (AP): Global financial markets have been turned upside down this year by President Donald Trump’s burgeoning trade war. Markets are not in full panic, but the double-digit declines in major U.S. stock indexes are testing nerves.

U.S. markets had been on a two-year tear coming into 2025, though many believed that stock prices had become overinflated. Trump’s trade war pushed that sentiment into hyperdrive. The S&P 500 has tumbled more than 12%, and U.S. markets are being outpaced in Europe, Asia, and just about everywhere else.

Trading in traditional “safe havens” like U.S. Treasuries and the dollar has become erratic and unpredictable. On Monday, the dollar struck a three-year low and U.S. Treasury yields have been soaring. Typically, yields would fall as investors seek a safe place to park their money. U.S. Treasuries no longer appear to provide the shelter they once did.

Only gold, a commodity traded internationally, has maintained its reputation as a safe zone. The price of gold is hitting one record high after another.

Here’s a roundup of what is happening in various segments of the financial market:

U.S. stocks have been losing ground in a sharp reversal after two years of stellar gains.

The S&P 500 index, which is considered a benchmark for the broader market’s health, is down 12.3% in 2025. It gained more than 20% in both 2023 and 2024.

The benchmark index is already in “correction,” having fallen more than 10% from the record it set in February. There have been only five weeks in which it’s ended in positive territory this year and with Monday’s decline it’s moving closer to bear market territory, or a 20% drop from recent highs.

It’s worse on the growth-focused Nasdaq composite, which has plunged nearly 18 %.

Overseas markets have largely performed much better than their U.S. counterparts.

Treasuries, typically considered a less risky area of the market, have been volatile throughout the year.

The 10-year Treasury, which influences mortgage rates and other loans, was as high as 4.80% in January but then fell until Trump announced the broad details of his tariff policy in early April. Yields then began to spike this month. The recent jump in bond yields, which happens when bond prices fall, reflects rising anxiety about inflation and a potential recession.

Treasury bonds are essentially IOUs from the U.S. government and they’re how Washington pays its bills. Bond prices typically move in the opposite direction of stock prices, but prices for both have fallen in tandem. That raises more significant concerns, namely a loss of faith in the U.S. as a safe place to invest.

In all of the economic uncertainty, gold is soaring - setting record after record in 2025.

New York spot gold hit another all-time high Thursday, closing at about \$3,343 per Troy ounce - the standard for measuring precious metals - per FactSet. The price is up nearly 27% this year.

Gold futures rose to more than \$3,432 Monday.

Interest in gold spikes in times of uncertainty as investors seek a safe place for their money, although there can still be some volatility. The price of spot gold fell for three straight trading days following Trump’s sweeping “Liberation Day” announcement on April 2, for example, but soon rebounded overall.

The U.S. dollar, the world’s reserve currency, is falling under the weight of uncertainty over tariffs, inflation and the direction of the U.S. economy.

The U.S. dollar is down a steep 9% for the year when measured against a basket of other currencies, including the euro, Japanese yen, Canadian Dollar and Swiss franc.

The dollar began to erode almost immediately in 2025, but those losses have accelerated over the past two months. A weakened dollar means it is more difficult for the U.S. government, businesses and consumers to borrow money at lower rates. It also means less purchasing power for U.S. consumers and the potential for stunted economic growth.

There is good news and bad news about energy prices. The average price for a gallon of gasoline in the U.S. on Monday was \$3.15, down sharply from \$3.67 at this time last year. That’s the good news.

The bad news is that energy prices fall when people start anticipating an economic slowdown. Factories produce less, families call off vacations and businesses cut travel expenses.

Oil prices hit a four-year low this month with anxiety over the impact of tariffs on global economic growth sinking in.

West Texas Intermediate crude, the U.S. benchmark, stood at around \$62.40 per barrel Monday. That’s down nearly 14% year to date. And Brent crude, the European standard, was just above \$66 - down nearly 13% since the start of 2025.

Economists are warning that the steep tariffs Trump is pursuing could cause a recession, which could carry significant implications for the supply chain and jobs in the energy sector.

Bitcoin has continued to undulate.

Wall St, dollar tumble as investors retreat further from United States

NEW YORK, April 22, (AP): Wall Street weakened Monday as investors worldwide get more skeptical about U.S. investments because of President Donald Trump’s trade war and his criticism of the Federal Reserve, which are shaking the traditional order.

The S&P 500 sank 2.4% in another wipeout. That yanked the index that’s at the center of many 401(k) accounts 16% below its record set two months ago.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 971 points, or 2.5%, while losses for Tesla and Nvidia helped drag the Nasdaq composite down 2.6%.

Perhaps more worryingly, U.S. government bonds and the value of the U.S. dollar also sank as prices retreated across U.S. markets. It’s an unusual move because Treasuries and the dollar have historically strengthened during episodes of nervousness. This time around, though, it’s policies directly from Washington that are causing the fear and potentially weakening their reputations as some of the world’s safest investments.

Trump continued his tough talk on global trade as economists and investors continue to say his stiff proposed tariffs could cause a recession if they’re not rolled back. U.S. talks last week with Japan failed to reach a quick deal that could lower tariffs and protect the economy, and they’re seen as a “test case,” according to Thierry Wizman, a strategist at Macquarie.

“The golden rule of negotiating and success: He who has the gold makes the rules,” Trump said in all capitalized letters on his Truth Social Network. He also said that “the businessmen who criticize tariffs are bad at business, but really bad at politics,” likewise in all caps.

Trump has recently focused more on China, the world’s second-largest economy, which has also been keeping up its rhetoric. China on Monday warned other countries against making trade deals with the United States “at the expense of China’s interest” as Japan, South Korea and others try to negotiate agreements.

Countermeasures

“If this happens, China will never accept it and will resolutely take countermeasures in a reciprocal manner,” China’s Commerce Ministry said in a statement.

Also hanging over the market are worries about Trump’s anger at Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell. Trump last week criticized Powell again for not cutting interest rates sooner to give the economy more juice.

The Fed has been resistant to lowering rates too quickly because it does not want to allow inflation to reaccelerate after slowing nearly all the way down to its 2% goal from more than 9% three years ago.

Trump talked Monday about a slowdown for the U.S. economy that could be coming unless “Mr. Too Late, a major loser, lowers interest rates, NOW.”

A move by Trump to fire Powell would likely send a bolt of fear through financial markets. While Wall Street loves lower rates, largely because they boost stock prices, the bigger worry would be that a less independent Fed would be less effective at keeping inflation under control. Such a move could further weaken, if not kill, the United States’ reputation as the world’s safest place to keep cash.

All the uncertainty striking pillars at the center of financial markets means some investors say they’re having to rethink the fundamentals of how to invest.

“We can no longer extrapolate from past trends or rely on long-term assumptions to anchor portfolios,” strategists at BlackRock Investment Institute said in a report. “The distinction between tactical and strategic asset allocation is blurred. Instead, we need to constantly reassess the long-term trajectory and be dynamic with asset allocation as we learn more about the future state of the global system.”

That in turn could push investors outside the United States to keep more of their money in their home markets, according to the strategists led by Jean Boivin.

On Wall Street, Big Tech stocks helped lead indexes lower ahead of their latest earnings reports due later this week.

Tesla sank 5.7%. The electric vehicle maker’s stock has more than halved from its record set in December on criticism that the stock price had gone too high and that CEO Elon Musk’s role in leading the U.S. government’s efforts to cut spending is damaging the brand.

Nvidia fell 4.5% for a third straight drop after disclosing that U.S. export limits on chips to China could hurt its first-quarter results by \$5.5 billion.

They led another wipeout on Wall Street, and 92% of the stocks within the S&P 500 fell.

Among the few gainers were Discover Financial Services and Capital One Financial, which climbed after the U.S. government approved their proposed merger. Discover rose 3.6%, while Capital One added 1.5%.

Google faces off with US govt in attempt to break up company as punishment in monopoly case

WASHINGTON, April 22, (AP): Google is confronting an existential threat as the U.S. government tries to break up the company as punishment for turning its revolutionary search engine into an illegal monopoly.

The drama began to unfold Monday in a Washington courtroom as three weeks of hearings kicked off to determine how the company should be penalized for operating a monopoly in search. In its opening arguments, federal antitrust enforcers also urged the court to impose forward-looking remedies to prevent Google from using artificial intelligence to further its dominance.

“This is a moment in time, we’re at an inflection point, will we abandon the search market and surrender them to control of the monopolists or will we let competition prevail and give choice to future generations,” said Justice Department attorney David Dahlquist.

The proceedings, known in legal parlance as a “remedy hearing,” are set to feature a parade of witnesses that includes Google CEO Sundar Pichai.

The U.S. Department of Justice is asking a federal judge to order a radical shake-up that would ban Google from striking the multibillion dollar deals with Apple and other tech companies that shield its search engine from competition, share its repository of valuable user data with rivals and force a sale of its popular Chrome browser.

Google’s attorney, John Schmittlein, said in his opening statement that the court should take a much lighter touch. He said the government’s heavy-handed proposed remedies wouldn’t boost competition but instead unfairly reward lesser rivals with infe-



rior technology.

“Google won its place in the market fair and square,” Schmittlein said.

The moment of reckoning comes four-and-a-half-years after the Justice Department filed a landmark lawsuit alleging Google’s search engine had been abusing its power as the internet’s main gateway to stifle competition and innovation for more than a decade.

After the case finally went to trial in 2023, a federal judge last year ruled Google had been making anti-competitive deals to lock in its search engine as the go-to place for digital information on the iPhone, personal computers and other widely used devices, including those running on its own Android software.

That landmark ruling by U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta sets up a high-stakes drama that will determine the

American people thus are forced to accept the unbridled demands and shifting, ideological preferences of an economic leviathan in return for a search engine the public may enjoy.”

Although the proposed penalties were originally made under President Joe Biden’s term, they are still being embraced by the Justice Department under President Donald Trump, whose first administration filed the case against Google. Since the change in administrations, the Justice Department has also attempted to cast Google’s immense power as a threat to freedom, too.

In his opening statement, Dahlquist noted that top officials from the Justice Department were in the room to watch proceedings. He said their presence indicated that the case had the full support of federal antitrust regulators, both past and present.

“The fact that this case was filed in 2020, tried in 2023, under two different administrations, and joined by 49 states demonstrates the non-partisan nature of this case and our proposed remedies,” Dahlquist said.

Dahlquist also said that Mehta would be hearing a lot about artificial intelligence and said top executives from AI companies, like ChatGPT maker’s OpenAI, would be called to testify. He said the court’s remedies should include provisions to make sure that Google’s Gemini, a technology build on generative AI, isn’t used to strengthen its existing search monopoly.

“We believe that Google can and will attempt to circumvent the court’s remedies if it is not included,” Dahlquist said. “Gen AI is Google’s next evolution to keep their vicious cycle spinning.”



An employee of a foreign exchange dealing company works under an electronic board showing the exchange rate of U.S. dollar and Japanese yen, top, and the stock index of Japan's Nikkei 225, in Tokyo Tuesday, April 22, 2025. (AP)

Memoir chronicles Hollywood struggles and triumphs

Kwan shares behind-the-scenes story of ‘Suzie Wong’

LOS ANGELES, April 22, (AP): Demure, submissive and erotic, Suzie Wong is that bigger-than-life stereotype, that caricature Asian women grew up with in the US.

We may have also secretly hoped to play that geisha-like image to win our way out of our oppression. But over the years, some of us grew to resent it, fight it and reject it, hoping to claim our true identity and dignity as a person.

In “The World of Nancy Kwan,” a memoir by the pioneering Hollywood star, we hear from the real-life woman who played Suzie Wong.

We learn an Asian actor getting to play an Asian role was a victory back in those days, as the roles were taken by white actors wearing strange slant-eyed makeup.

Kwan was born in Hong Kong in 1939. Her father was Chinese, an architect with a love for movies. Her mother was English, a model and actor, although she left when Kwan was young, and she was raised by a stepmother. It was hard because being Eurasian was an anomaly, she recalls.

“I’ve broken barriers, celebrated achievements, overcome disappointments and survived tragedies, all part of my remarkable journey from Hong Kong to Hollywood and beyond. This is my story,” she writes in the prologue.

Her book is speckled with the big names of that

era, Pat Boone, Katharine Hepburn, Dick Van Dyke. Some passages read like a gossip column, such as her accounts of her friendship with Bruce Lee.

But she also depicts the racial barriers of that period.

All women, especially in Hollywood, were trying to be beautiful and desirable. In fact, being dubbed “the Asian Bardot,” referring to Brigitte Bardot, was a genuine compliment.



Kwan

Incarcerated

She talks about how Jack Soo, a Japanese American who portrays a nightclub owner in “Flower Drum Song,” was incarcerated with other Japanese Americans in internment camps during World War II.

Kwan believes her story is about hard work and advancement despite racism, not succumbing to it.

After all, Asian actors’ roles used to be limited to “Fu Manchu villains, hypersexualized Dragon Ladies and comic buffoons” and “shopkeepers, maids and houseboys,” according to Kwan.

And so getting featured on the cover of Life magazine, wearing a body-hugging cheongsam,

counted as a victory.

Another big win is when Ross Hunter, a hot producer, rushes over to her at a Hollywood party and casts her in “Flower Drum Song.”

The musical film shattered stereotypes, she says, by focusing on fashionably dressed, wealthy Asians. Regardless of race, people cherish family, suffer heartbreak, laugh, sing, dance and dream of happiness, she writes.

Kwan calls the work “joyous entertainment with the universal message that whatever our race, we’re all alike.”

Even those who may find that message lacking in addressing the meaning of diversity and Asian American pride will acknowledge there is a lot to learn from Kwan’s history.

She is simply trying to land roles, hopefully good ones that showcase her talent in works by respected directors.

Miyoshi Umeki, her friend and another prominent Asian actor of that period, did not like having to speak pidgin in her roles, but did it because that was her job as a professional.

That kind of pain is the legacy being explored in Kwan’s life.

Being an Asian in America is what she calls “our shared humanity,” in which “East can meet West and possibly make the world a little better.”



Idina Menzel attends The Entertainment Community Fund Gala at the Marriott Marquis on Monday, April 21, in New York. (AP)

Palin testifies

‘Times editorial devastated me’

NEW YORK, April 22, (AP): Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin testified Monday at a defamation trial that an editorial about gun control in The New York Times in 2017 was devastating and “kicked the oomph” out of her.

The former Republican candidate for vice president whose college degree is in journalism answered questions in Manhattan federal court at a trial of her libel claims against the newspaper. She seeks unspecified damages.

“This was the gamechanger,” Palin said of the effect on her life after the newspaper in June 2017 published the editorial that became the subject of her lawsuit. “I felt defenseless. It just kicked the oomph right out of you.”

The editorial was written after US Rep. Steve Scalise, a Louisiana Republican, was wounded when a man with a history of anti-GOP activity opened fire on a congressional baseball team practice in Washington.

In the editorial, the Times wrote that before the 2011 mass shooting in Arizona that severely wounded former U.S. Rep. Gabby Giffords and killed six others, Palin’s political action committee had contributed to an atmosphere of violence by circulating a map of electoral districts that put Giffords and 19 other Democrats under stylized crosshairs.

In a correction published less than a day later, the Times said the editorial had “incorrectly stated that a link existed between political rhetoric and the 2011 shooting” and had “incorrectly described” the map.

Reputation

But Palin said the correction didn’t name her or restore her reputation, leaving it hard to overcome “when the loudest voice in the room, the most credible, biggest publication, was making things up about me.”

She said she received death threats. “It got scarier. It got worse,” Palin said.

On cross examination, a lawyer for the Times elicited from Palin that she still has millions of social media followers, is a best selling author and remains welcome to speak at events sponsored by Republican organizations.

Palin told reporters afterward that she was “thankful for the opportunity” to testify and that she is confident the jury will decide in her favor. She said she left court “believing that there’s still justice in the world” and “believing still that the press will be held accountable.”

Last week, former Times editorial page editor James Bennet cried as he apologized to Palin from the witness stand, saying he “blew it” when he inserted the incorrect information in the editorial.

He said he was “really upset, and I still am, obviously.”

In February 2022, a jury found against Palin’s libel claims, but the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan last year revived the case, citing errors made by the trial judge, including by dismissing the case while the last jury was deliberating.

After testimony concluded on Monday, lawyers asked Judge Jed S. Rakoff to make rulings in their favor as a matter of law rather than leaving everything for the jury to decide after closing arguments Tuesday. The judge rejected the requests.



Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin leaves Manhattan federal court, after testifying in her defamation trial against the New York Times, Monday, April 21, in New York. (AP)

Film



Director Ryan Coogler (left) and actor Michael B. Jordan attend the premiere of ‘Sinners’ at AMC Lincoln Square on April 3, in New York. (AP)

Duo on reteaming and reigniting their magic

Coogler, Jordan push limits in ‘Sinners’

LOS ANGELES, April 22, (AP): Ryan Coogler was the one who convinced Michael B. Jordan he could be a movie star.

That was 13 years ago on “Fruitvale Station,” Jordan’s first time leading a feature film and Coogler’s first time making one. And it was the start of an enviably rich creative collaboration that would take them from the Rocky franchise to Wakanda.

In “Sinners,” Coogler pushed his go-to actor to the next level: Jordan isn’t just starring in the genre-bending big screen spectacle with blues music, vampires and Southern lore. He’s playing identical twins.

Over the years, Coogler has watched Jordan grow up on screen. While he may have started as the young man being mentored in his films, on “Sinners” he saw Jordan become “the elder statesmen” on camera and off taking newcomers like Miles Caton under his wing.

The two spoke to The Associated Press about upping the ante with “Sinners,” the excitement of making something original and how the experience changed them. Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: After so many films together, are you still able to surprise and challenge one another?

Coogler: Always. What’s great is, though it may seem like we’re together all the time, we go a long, long time without seeing each other. We keep in touch. We check in for major life milestones. We’ve got business together that’s long lasting, like the Creed franchise. We always going to be tucked in and connected there. Our families are connected. But the intensity of our work is very seasonal.

When we have a project and when we get back together, we’ve always found ways to up the ante. This time he came back and he’d just directed a movie. That gave him a new perspective and like a new set of tools. When I work with an actor who’s capable of all the things Mike is, I also know that I gotta tell him, “Hey man, it’s OK to let all that go.” It is not dissimilar to a conversation I had with Stallone.

And for me it’s exciting to provide him opportunities to stretch in ways. I knew he had Killmonger in him. I knew he had Adonis Creed in him. Obviously, I knew he had a portrayal of Oscar Grant there, and I knew that he could do this, but I did not have any comprehension of how well he was going to do it.

AP: How did this being Ryan’s first original film make it feel different?

Jordan: There’s nothing for you to pull from that already exists. There’s no boundaries, no limitations,



This image released by Warner Bros Pictures shows Michael B. Jordan, left, and Miles Caton in a scene from ‘Sinners.’ (AP)

there’s no preconceived notions. I have the original source right there.

There were so many things that maybe weren’t on the page, but through conversation and through debate we discovered something else that kind of came from that. Like we were trying to figure out the rules with this particular set of vampires, with this particular environment, in this world, in this universe we’re building.

Laughter

There was a lot of laughter and lightness discovering those things. That felt really good, but because it was from him, he was the judge, juror and executioner.

AP: Did this experience change you?

Coogler: Each movie does that. Each time I discover something about myself and the world around me.

This had a pressure on it and a lot of that was self-imposed. Though I’ve spent the better part of my adulthood making movies professionally and releasing them theatrically, filmmakers don’t really know that much about me, just by the fact that it’s surprising to people that I’m making a film with horror elements. Anybody who knows me knows I love those types of movies.

I’ve also been thinking about the Great Migration, talking to older family members, interviewing the ones who came to Oakland from other places. A lot of what triggered that kind of came around the death of my Uncle James. When he passed away he was the

oldest male member of my family, and the last one who was from Mississippi. Losing him left me with blues music, I would listen to all his records to kind of try to conjure his spirit.

That was what the main motivation was behind all this. This whole thing was an exercise in exposing my own interests, both cinematically and personally.

Jordan: Through my relationship with Ryan and the movies that he’s curious about, the stories that he wants to tell, I’m in proximity of that and I’m doing the same exploration.

Now I have this deep education, this deep understanding of the Jim Crow South and blues music. Also this idea of freedom and another layered idea of what family is and what my grandparents went through. While I was filming, my dad came down to visit me and I talked a lot with my mom, and she was sending me old pictures of my grandparents when they were young like partying and things like that. All that stuff kind of puts some things in perspective. It reframed things for me a little bit. And I’m really grateful for that.

AP: How did it alter your understanding of America?

Coogler: It’s in the title of the movie, “Sinners.” The act of passing judgment, the act of casting judgment is something that we do here in this country on both this time period, like the 1930s, the Great Depression era, and the height of the Jim Crow era. It’s a very difficult period for people to reckon with in almost every culture universally.

It’s oftentimes passed over, like, not wanting to be looked at, dealt with, reckoned with, because of all the difficulties associated with it. And in not looking at that, not interrogating it, you also leave out a lot of beauty and the insane strength and resolve and dignity of these people that produced this art form that basically fueled global popular culture.

The American South, there’s a lot of judgment about people down there, like “They talk different. They’re not as sharp.” And the reality being, you really look at it, they’re some of the sharpest people. A lot of the evil that was done down there was not done out of ignorance, it was done very consciously and for reasons often associated with business.

All the false narratives of that time really spoke to me during the process of making this film and I came out of it with a renewed respect for myself, my ancestors and on the world. It makes me want to interrogate everything.

Variety

LAS VEGAS: A young woman who says she was raped and threatened by retired NFL player **Shannon Sharpe** during a “rocky consensual relationship” has filed a civil lawsuit against him seeking \$50 million in damages.

Attorneys filed the lawsuit Sunday in Clark County, Nevada, for a woman listed in court documents as Jane Doe. The lawsuit also accuses Sharpe of using physical force on her and inflicting emotional distress.

The woman first met Sharpe at a gym in Los Angeles in 2023 when she was 20 and a nearly two-year relationship followed, according to court documents. Sharpe, 56, is accused of raping the woman in October 2024 and again in January, court documents said.

Sharpe on Monday posted a statement from his lawyer on X saying the relationship was consensual and calling the lawsuit a “blatant and cynical attempt to shake down” Sharpe for millions of dollars.

“It is filled with lies, distortions, and misrepresentations - and it will not succeed,” Lanny J. Davis said in the statement posted by Sharpe.

Sharpe is accused of becoming increasingly verbally abusive, controlling, and violent over time, once threatening to kill her and recording private moments without consent, according to the complaint. (AP)



Sharpe

NEW YORK: A jury of seven women and five men has been picked for Harvey Weinstein’s #MeToo rape retrial, a more female panel than the five women and seven men who convicted the onetime Hollywood honcho at his first trial five years ago.

Opening statements aren’t expected until Wednesday, as prosecutors and defense lawyers still need time to finish picking the last of six alternate jurors - those who step in if a member of the main panel can’t see the trial through.

Drawn from Manhattan’s jury pool, the 12 members of the main jury include a physics researcher, a photographer, a dietician, an investment bank software engineer, a retired city social worker, and more.

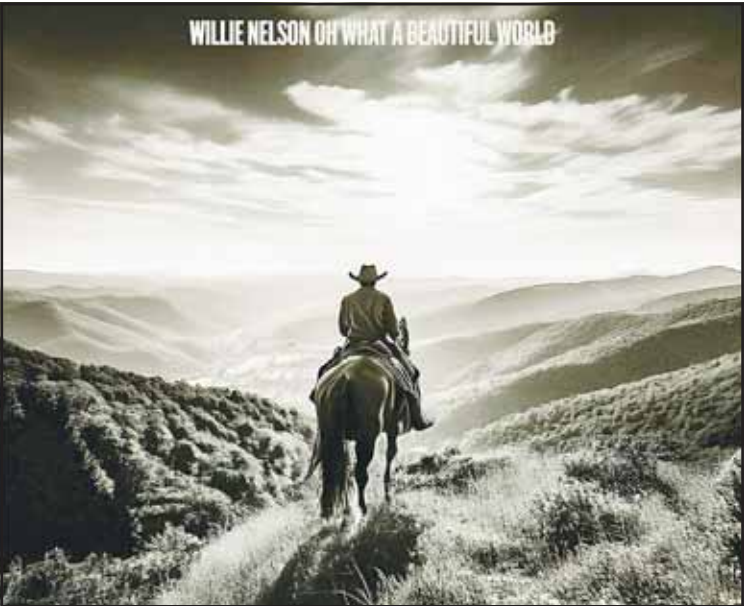
After nine jurors were picked last week, three others and five alternates were picked Monday during a marathon fourth day of jury selection. They and other prospective jurors were quizzed about their backgrounds, life experiences and various other points that could relate to their ability to be fair and impartial about the highly publicized case. (AP)

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump welcomed tens of thousands of people Monday to the White House Easter egg roll, saying the overcast weather meant no one would have to worry about getting sunburned. He thanked the National Park Service for how “spiffy” everything looked.

More than 40,000 people were expected to participate, he said.

“Happy Easter to everyone,” the president said, flanked on the White House balcony by his wife, first lady Melania Trump, and an Easter bunny mascot. “It was a beautiful day yesterday, and it’s a beautiful day today. We don’t have to worry about sunburn but ... it looks like it’s not going to be raining.”

The president and first lady visited the egg roll area, where he blew a gold-toned whistle stamped with the presidential seal to start a few races. They also spent time at a station where kids wrote cards to service members. Melania Trump later read “Bunny with a Big Heart” at a reading area. It’s a story about a forgetful rabbit who gets injured, must stay in bed and learns to be kinder to his family. (AP)



This album cover image released by Sony shows 'Oh What A Beautiful World' by Willie Nelson. (AP)

'Oh What A Beautiful World' captures the wisdom of a lifetime

Willie Nelson is ageless singing Crowell songs

LOS ANGELES, April 22, (AP): It's fun to hear Willie Nelson sing such words as "ninja," "fish-monger" and "absinthe," which are among the many pleasures found in the songbook of influential country songwriter Rodney Crowell.

"Oh What A Beautiful World" is Nelson's latest album devoted to the songs of a specific songwriter, and in Crowell, he's interpreting a kindred spirit. While Crowell has a slightly different lyric vocabulary, both are Texans with a deep love of Hank Williams.

The pairing - great songs and a great singer - works beautifully. The album will be out Friday, just before Nelson's 92nd birthday on April 29.

He has long sounded ageless, but more than ever, Nelson sings like a sage. His reedy tenor can be a little whispery, but he displays surprising vocal range. His relaxed, conversational delivery is filled with warmth and wisdom. He'll start a phrase late, end it early and make it seem perfect.

When he reminisces about childhood on "Banks of the Old Bandera" - originally recorded by Jerry Jeff Walker - Nelson sounds just like he did in 1976, the year the song was written. Other material ranges from "Shame on the Moon," a 1982 pop hit for Bob Seger, to Crowell's overlooked gem "She's Back in Town."

Also included are tunes that have been recorded by Tim McGraw ("Open Season On My Heart") and Keith Urban ("Making Memories of Us") and a folksy ballad co-written with Guy Clark ("Stuff That Works").

Longtime Nelson collaborator Buddy Cannon produced the record, and the backing musicians provide graceful, tasteful support. Nelson's beloved guitar Trigger plays a significant role, in-

cluding on a careening, don't-try-this-at-home solo on the title cut, a duet with Crowell.

Also among the highlights is "The Fly Boy & The Kid," a prayerlike shuffle with playful lyrics that Nelson leans into. He's equally frisky doing roadhouse blues on "She's Back in Town," while elsewhere the mood trends toward contemplative. "The days go by like flying bricks," Nelson sings on the handsome ballad "Open Season On My Heart."

More than any other song in the set, "Still Learning How to Fly" seems as if it was written for Nelson. Nearing the end of the album - Nelson's 154th, according to Texas Monthly's herculean ranking of his prolific discography - he sings: "I've got a past that I won't soon forget / And you ain't seen nothing yet."

He sounds as if he means it.

Television

Cassian Andor returns to Disney+

'Andor' pushes 'Star Wars' boundaries

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif., April 22, (AP): "Andor" returns for its second season on Disney+ with a three-episode premiere Tuesday and the weight of the "Star Wars" galaxy seemingly on its shoulders.

But creator Tony Gilroy says he and his collaborators felt little pressure from Disney and Lucasfilm as they sought to tell the story of a growing revolutionary resentment against the Galactic Empire and the birth of the Rebel Alliance leading up to the events of the 2016 film he scripted, "Rogue One."

"We took no creative notes on this show," Gilroy, whose deep screenwriting resume also includes four films in the "Bourne" franchise and 2007 Oscar nominee "Michael Clayton," which he also directed. He told The Associated Press that "I've never had this much freedom before, even in final-cut films that I worked on. The latitude was astonishing."

The forthcoming season, whose production was delayed by Hollywood's 2023 strikes, are coming with high expectations from fans who have been disappointed in other recent "Star Wars" TV offerings, with no new movies released in the franchise in six years.

The new episodes trace how the spark lit in Diego Luna's Cassian Andor in the 2022 first season spreads through the galaxy. And they do it with characters and arcs rarely found in this realm before.

Universe

"This second season, it's about all the layers, and the social and political climate that needs to happen for a revolution to erupt, for a rebellion to exist," Luna told the AP. "The universe of 'Star Wars' never stopped to tell the story of these regular people that becomes crucial for the history that we know."

Gilroy drew inspiration from a broad range of historical and fictional sources.

"Who's ever going to get another chance to do another 1,500 pages on revolution again, with this much money and this much muscle, and everything else?" he said.

But as epic as the story is, its most essential moments are marked by intimate, one-on-one conversations.

"I start small," Gilroy said. "I work teaspoon by teaspoon."

That includes a season-opening scene that starts with Cassian giving a young imperial mechanic the courage to help him in a major heist. He sells her on the ecstatic feelings of destiny rebellion can bring.

"It's quite beautiful and idealistic also, like a revolution has to be, It's a great reminder of how romantic the idea of revolution is," Luna said.

Cast members say it can feel revolutionary working for Gilroy, who passes on the same freedom to them that Disney gives to him. They're never kept in the dark with the sort of script-rationing and secret-keeping that are the norm in major franchises.

"He doesn't believe in withholding information as power," said Adria Arjona, who plays Andor's partner Bix Caleen. "Before I read episode one, I knew the end. It's just unheard-of."

Her character's arc in particular brings real-world elements including addiction and even darker forms of trauma unlike anything "Star Wars" has shown before.



This photo shows promotional art for the series 'Andor.'

Gilroy said he didn't have to fight over the galaxy's canon at all. He had to get used to certain elements when he first worked within the franchise - no paper, no hinged doors, no knives, for example. But it's not necessarily held as sacred.

"I've seen canon stretch so much," he said. "It was really tight on 'Rogue.' But a lot of things have changed since then."

The overall direction of the show was basically determined when work began on the series five years ago.

"I know what I'm doing with Cassian," Gilroy said. "I know that the first year is the making of a revolutionary

and the road to Damascus, that's the first year. I know I'm leading to Rogue, I know where he's gonna end up."

Other elements, like the route Mon Mothma (Genevieve O'Reilly) takes from respectable senator to leader of the rebellion, were not predetermined. They were discovered in the writing and in the performances.

Her early-season path includes a wedding ceremony full of rituals - and dances - new to "Star Wars" that Gilroy invented out of whole cloth. He said one of the pleasures of getting to make something so large and sprawling is that he has gotten to use nearly every writing thought he has had.

"All I did for five years was just max out my imagination," Gilroy said.

Mothma is among the "Rogue One" characters who appeared in the first season and return for the second, along with Forest Whitaker's radical rebel Saw Gerrera, who this season gives a spine-tingling call to arms that is teased in the trailer: "Revolution," he preaches to an underling, "is not for the sane!"

Season 2 also sees the emergence of "Rogue One" characters for the first time in the TV series, including Andor's droid sidekick K-250, played by Alan Tudyk, and Death Star builder Orson Krennic, played by Ben Mendelsohn.

the Hungarian dialogue of stars Adrien Brody (who ultimately won best actor) and Felicity Jones (who was nominated for best supporting actress).

"The academy and each branch will judge the achievement, taking into account the degree to which a human was at the heart of the creative authorship when choosing which movie to award," the academy said Monday.

The film academy also set down some rules for its new achievement in casting Oscar. After a preliminary round of voting to determine a shortlist of 10 films, members of the casting branch will be invited to a "bake-off" presentation from the shortlisted films, including a Q&A with nominees.

Earlier in April, the academy announced a new category for stunt design, but that award won't begin until the 2028 Oscars.

Next year's Academy Awards will be held March 15, 2026, with Conan O'Brien returning to host the ABC telecast.

Obituaries

Sculptor Tsereteli dead

Herbert Gans, media analyst dies aged 97

NEW YORK, April 22, (AP): **Herbert Gans**, a groundbreaking sociologist and media analyst who advocated for greater diversity and public participation in everything from the suburbs and the arts to the voices that shape the news, died Monday at age 97.

His death was confirmed by his son, David Gans, who said he died at his Manhattan home after a lengthy illness.

Author of such influential works as "The Urban Villagers" and "The Levittowners," Herbert Gans was a refugee from Nazi Germany who liked to say he viewed his adopted country through the eyes of an outsider. He called himself a "participant-observer," combining research and direct experience and lending crucial perspective on municipal planning, attitudes toward race and poverty, mass communication and cultural tastes.

A professor emeritus at Columbia University and former president of the American Sociological Association, he believed in making scholarly work accessible, and was a popular commentator and prolific essay writer. He served on the committee that prepared the Kerner Report, the 1968 government study that warned the country was "moving toward two societies, one Black, one white - separate and unequal." In 1964, he testified on behalf of Lenny Bruce when the comedian was on trial for obscenity.

Gans wrote often about the local impact of government policy. In "The Urban Villagers," released in 1962, he chronicled (and lived in) a blue-collar Italian-American section of Boston's West End that would soon be torn down in favor of more expensive housing. The sociologist Nathan Glazer would praise the book's critique of "urban renewal" and detailed portrait of those displaced for describing "truthfully and without damaging preconceptions a part of American reality."

"The Levittowners," published in 1967, countered the prevalent feeling of the time that suburbs bred conformity and despair. Gans lived for two years in a New Jersey suburb designed by William Levitt, whose "Levittowns" helped define the modern bedroom community. Gans didn't dispute that boredom and homogeneity existed in the suburbs, but concluded that most of the residents were satisfied; the suburbs were less likely to change the people who moved there than to provide what they had been looking for.

"I should like to emphasize once more that whatever its imperfections, Levittown is a good place to live," Gans wrote. "(T)he most urgent priority is to make the benefits of suburban living available to the poor and nonwhite families, now condemned to slum ghettos, who want to give their children and themselves a better life beyond the city limits."

Gans' "Deciding What's News," which came out in 1979, was a snapshot of the peak of print journalism and network power. Focusing on the evening broadcasts of NBC and CBS and the news magazines Time and Newsweek, he spent extensive time with reporters in the 1960s and '70s and noted what they covered, what they didn't cover and the thinking behind their choices, whether the pressures of executives, concerns about objectivity or changes in public concerns.

Zurab Tsereteli, a prominent Georgian-Russian sculptor known for colossal, often controversial, monuments, died early on Tuesday at 92.

His assistant **Sergei Shagulashvili** told Russia's state news agency Tass that Tsereteli suffered cardiac arrest.

Tsereteli was born on January 4, 1934, in Georgia, which was part of the Soviet Union at the time, in the capital Tbilisi.

In the 1970s, Tsereteli became an art director with the Soviet Foreign Ministry, traveling the world and decorating Soviet embassies. In between, he worked on **Mikhail Gorbachev's** summer house in Abkhazia.

"I don't know why they chose me," he said in a 2013 interview. "But I went through a good school - maybe that's why. A school that synthesised architecture and monumental art! I had good teachers."

In 1989, a monument designed by Tsereteli was erected in London. In 1990, another one was unveiled in front of the United Nations headquarters in New York.

After the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Tsereteli moved to Moscow and built a rapport with then-mayor **Yuri Luzhkov**.

The relationship guaranteed him regular and lucrative commissions. He designed several squares and two metro stations in central Moscow and put up a dozen massive monuments around the city.

Tsereteli's distinctive style prompted much criticism over the years, both in Russia and abroad. Critics argued his pieces were too colossal and didn't fit in the city's architecture.

One of his most controversial monuments was in 1997 when a 98-meter-tall Peter the Great standing on a disproportionately small ship was erected a block away from the Kremlin, prompting protests from Muscovites.

Tsereteli tried to put up a similar monument of **Christopher Columbus** in New York. Russian media reported in 1997 that current U.S. President **Donald Trump** supported his plans at the time, but city authorities rejected them. After being turned down by Columbus, Ohio and Miami as well, the statue found a taker in Puerto Rico.

Russian President **Vladimir Putin** in 2003 awarded Tsereteli Russian citizenship "for special services to the Russian Federation."

In 2010, Luzhkov was dismissed as Moscow mayor. The new city administration preferred Western architects to work on ambitious urban projects, and Tsereteli was shifted to the sidelines.

However, Tsereteli remained president of the Russian Academy of Arts and director of the Moscow Museum of Modern Art, which he founded in 1999.

Academy sets new rules for AI and refugee filmmakers

Oscar voters now required to watch all nominated films

NEW YORK, April 22, (AP): Oscar voters will no longer be able to skip watching some of the nominated films.

The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences on Monday announced that members will from now on be required to watch all nominated films in each category to be eligible to vote in the final round of Oscar voting. Up until now, Oscar voters had only been encouraged to watch the nominees, and vote in categories they felt qualified in.

But in recent years, what films get watched by academy members has been increasingly seen as a significant factor in what wins. At the same time, the publication of anonymous Oscar ballots has often featured members confessing that they didn't get around to watching some notable films or not finishing lengthier nominees.

On Monday, the academy also put forth a handful of new regulations on issues including AI, refugee filmmakers and the newly launched casting category.

In the best international film category, the academy will now allow filmmakers with refugee or asylum status to be represented by a country not their own. The rule change keeps in place the broad apparatus of how international nominees are submitted through countries, but it tweaks eligibility.

The regulation now reads: "The submitting country must confirm that creative control of the film was largely in the hands of citizens, residents, or individuals with refugee or asylum status in the submitting country."

Critics have long called on changes to the nominating process for best international film because it leaves the submission process in the hands of governments, not the academy. That's left dissident filmmakers working under authoritarian or undemocratic regimes with limited pathways to reaching the Oscars.

Last year, for instance, the Iranian filmmaker Mohammad Rasoulof fled

Iran before he was to be flogged and imprisoned for eight years in order to release his film "The Seed of the Sacred Fig." Germany, where Rasoulof settled, submitted it for the Oscars and it was nominated. But other filmmakers, including Rasoulof's friend and countryman Jafar Panahi, have released films without a mechanism for submission.

The rule change notably won't alter the Oscar prospects for filmmakers who haven't fled their home countries or change anything for films passed over by their nation's selection committees.

The academy also ruled that the use of generative artificial intelligence tools "neither help nor harm the chances of a nomination." How significantly AI is used in filmmaking has, as in other industries, been a much-debated topic in Hollywood. In this year's Oscar race, Brady Corbet's "The Brutalist" was a subject of some controversy after its editor said that AI had been used to enhance

First-ever ‘Petticoat’ technique saves patient

Jaber Hospital performs groundbreaking advanced aneurysm repair using TBE stent

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Dr. Ahmed Amir, a vascular surgery consultant at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital, announced the successful treatment of a patient’s aneurysm and dissection using the advanced GORE TAG Thoracic Branch Endoprosthesis (TBE) stent.

He explained that this technique enables complete preservation of blood flow without the need for additional interventions. This is a significant advancement in the quality of medical care provided.

The patient was suffering from a massive aneurysm and dissection in the thoracic and abdominal aorta, extending to the artery supplying the left upper limb. The condition was treated using two stents while successfully maintaining blood flow to the arteries that supply the intestines, kidneys, and liver.

This intervention aims to minimize the risk of aneurysm rupture or blockage of vital arteries, thereby

reducing complications, bleeding, and mortality rates associated with traditional surgeries. The advanced stent has a pre-loaded branch, which eliminates the need for additional incisions or surgical bypasses. It also ensures continuous blood flow to the left arm during the procedure, thereby significantly reducing the risk of branch endoleaks compared to conventional methods.

Dr. Amir announced the first-ever use of the “Petticoat” technique in Kuwait to treat abdominal aortic dissection.

He explained that this approach is considered a standard of care at leading vascular centers and is endorsed by international medical societies such as the Society for Vascular Surgery (SVS) and the European Society of Cardiology (ESC), due to its proven exceptional clinical outcomes.

Dr. Amir affirmed that this milestone further adds to Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital’s growing record of medical achievements.



A radiologist uses a magnifying glass to check mammograms for breast cancer in Los Angeles, May 6, 2010. (AP)

Reassuring report

Advanced cancers back to prepandemic levels: study

NEW YORK, April 22, (AP): Many Americans were forced to postpone cancer screenings - colonoscopies, mammograms and lung scans - for several months in 2020 as COVID-19 overwhelmed doctors and hospitals.

But that delay in screening isn’t making a huge impact on cancer statistics, at least none that can be seen yet by experts who track the data.

Cancer death rates continue to decline, and there weren’t huge shifts in late diagnoses, according to a new report published Monday in the journal Cancer. It’s the broadest-yet analysis of the pandemic’s effect on US cancer data.

In 2020, as the pandemic began, a greater share of US cancers were caught at later stages, when they’re harder to treat. But in 2021, these worrisome diagnoses returned to prepandemic levels for most types of cancer.

“It is very reassuring,” said lead author Recinda Sherman of the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries. “So far, we haven’t seen an excess of late-stage diagnoses,” which makes it unlikely that there will be higher cancer death rates tied to the pandemic.

Similarly, the number of new cancer cases dropped in 2020, but then returned to prepandemic levels by 2021. The size of the 2020 decline in new cancers diagnosed was similar across states, despite variations in COVID-19 policy restrictions. The researchers note that human behavior and local hospital policies played more of a role than state policy restrictions.

Late-stage diagnoses of cervical cancer and prostate cancer did increase in 2021, but the shifts weren’t large. The data analysis goes only through 2021, so it’s not the final word.

European authorities approve Alzheimer’s therapy Leqembi

BRUSSELS, April 22, (AP): European regulators have finally approved the Alzheimer’s treatment Leqembi after an advisory committee initially rejected the drug last summer and then reconsidered it.

The infused treatment from Japanese drugmaker Eisai and Biogen received approval for patients in early stages of the fatal, mind-robbing disease. The decision applies to all 27

members of the European Union plus Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, the drugmakers said late Tuesday.

The European Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use initially said last July that the drug should not receive marketing approval due to concerns about its side effects. Those include brain bleeding and swelling, which can be dangerous in rare cases.

Insecticide

A new tool in malaria fight

BASEL, Switzerland, April 22, (AP): Malaria is one of the world’s most deadly diseases, and it is becoming more pervasive - despite decades of effort and some successes on the path to eradicating it. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), malaria infected 263 million people and killed nearly 600,000 people in 2023 - 75% of whom were children under the age of 5. Of those afflicted, 94% are in Africa - where malaria crushes communities and can cripple economies.

Spread by parasites in infected mosquitoes that are highly adept at evolving, malaria’s rise reflects the reality of insecticide resistance and the difficulties developing new solutions. The effective control of mosquitoes remains a key strategy for reducing disease transmission.

Syngenta, a global leader in agricultural innovation, has announced that its next-generation insecticide Sovrenta has received pre-qualification by WHO, paving the way for its use in malaria-afflicted countries. For decades, Syngenta has been at the forefront of the fight against malaria, reflecting its commitment to researching new solutions through in-house R&D efforts and working alongside key partners across sub-Saharan Africa; its products such as Actellic already help avert as many as 100 million cases of malaria in more than 30 countries.

Sovrenta works by targeting a mosquito’s nervous system, blocking signals that enable the insect’s muscles to relax. The effect paralyzes the mosquito, so that it eventually dies. The ability of Sovrenta to provide long-lasting, effective control means just one application is required each season, reducing the cost for malaria prevention programs.

Sovrenta is based on Syngenta’s cutting-edge Plinazolin technology that features a new mode of action, ensuring effective control of mosquitoes even where the insect’s populations are increasingly resistant to older insecticides. When used in rotation with other products, Sovrenta can further ensure that important vector control solutions remain effective for longer.

Andy Bywater, Global Head of Marketing for Vector Control at Syngenta Crop Protection said: “This marks an important milestone in Syngenta’s quest to bring its most advanced innovations to malaria-endemic countries, and to advancing the health and safety of the millions still at risk.”



A man takes an early morning walk along Long Island Sound in Westchester County, N.Y. on Tuesday, April 15. (AP)

Healthy morning habits for better mental health

A 6-hour morning routine? First, try few simple habits to start your day

NEW YORK, April 22, (AP): Starting with brushing his teeth before 4 a.m., influencer Ashton Hall says he also swims, meditates, journals, rubs his face with banana peel, lifts weights, submerges his face in ice water and accomplishes much more every day before breakfast around 9:30.

A video of his morning routine has racked up millions of views on social media, while sparking reactions that range from disbelief to awe. It also jumpstarted the conversation online about how best to start the day, even if a six-hour regimen is ambitious to say the least.

Don’t worry, said Kamalyn Kaur, a psychotherapist in Cheshire, England. You don’t need to start your day with dozens of activities to improve it. But she said it is a good idea to reevaluate how you get going because setting up a relaxed, structured morning will pay dividends for your energy and mood.

“It just sets the tone for the rest of your day,” said Kaur, an anxiety expert who advises new clients to start by reevaluating how they spend the morning. “If you set yourself up and you start your day properly, you start off feeling good, you feel organized.”

As a professor of workplace psychology at The University of Oklahoma, Shawn McClean has spent years

studying how work life is influenced by the rest of your life.

He said accomplishing tasks in the same order every morning is helpful because people have limited mental bandwidth before they have to recharge. The brain subconsciously reserves resources for tasks that require higher-level thinking, so routines are a type of mental shortcut.

“We’re cognitive misers,” McClean said. “We don’t like to use our mental energy on things that aren’t important.”

His research has found that employees perform better and are more calm throughout the day when they complete their morning regimen uninterrupted. Conversely, employees with disruptive mornings report higher levels of mental depletion late in the day.

“When it comes to routine disruptions, it throws off your whole day,” he said on a day when he was playing catch-up after having forgotten about his daughter’s show-and-tell. “You get to work and you realize you didn’t brush your teeth.”

Most people already have some kind of routine in place, but few consciously decided on it before it became automatic, McClean said.

It’s hard to define what a good routine is, and there is no formula that is best for everyone.

“It’s going to be idiosyncratic to each person,” McClean said. “It’s what helps them function. Now, can we have destructive routines? Yes.”

Rushing around in the morning to shower, eat and get out the door just on time is an example of a destructive morning routine, Kaur said. The stress of a rushed morning produces extra cortisol, which is a necessary hormone that helps regulate the circadian rhythm, she said. It’s what naturally wakes you up and makes you alert in the morning.

Too much cortisol in the bloodstream, however, creates a feeling of restlessness and anxiety that can be similar to drinking coffee on an empty stomach, Kaur said.

People who often have hectic mornings should consider setting their alarm 30 minutes earlier - and resist the urge to hit the snooze button, Kaur said. For many people, snoozed sleep is disrupted sleep that might leave you more groggy.

Kaur recommends adding at least two or three quick activities to your morning that have been shown to improve mood - starting with making your bed. Research shows that clutter foments anxiety, and completing a task first thing in the morning promotes the secretion of the feel-good hormone dopamine, she said.

Trial shows improvement in kidney health

Study brings hope for lupus kidney patients

MANHASSET, N.Y., April 22, (AP): Researchers at Northwell Health’s Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research found that obinutuzumab, a therapeutic antibody that depletes B cells and is approved for the treatment of B cell malignancies, benefitted patients with lupus nephritis, a severe complication of lupus that compromises kidney function.

The study, which was led by Richard A. Furie, MD, professor in the Feinstein Institutes’ Institute of Molecular Medicine and The Marilyn and Barry Rubenstein Chair in Rheumatology, and published in The New England Journal of Medicine, shows findings from a phase 3 clinical trial known as Regency. The Regency trial was a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study conducted across 15 countries, involving 271 adults with biopsy-proven active lupus nephritis. Participants were randomly assigned

to receive either obinutuzumab in addition to standard therapy (mycophenolate mofetil and glucocorticoids), or a placebo along with standard therapy.

Results showed a significantly higher percentage of participants in the obinutuzumab group achieved a complete renal response compared to the placebo group. This positive outcome translated to a clinically meaningful improvement in kidney function.

“These findings represent a major step forward in the treatment of lupus nephritis,” said Dr. Furie, who is also chief of the Division of Rheumatology at Northwell Health. “Obinutuzumab, a well-known and easy-to-obtain drug, could potentially offer new hope for patients living with this challenging condition.”

Lupus is an autoimmune disease where the body’s defense system mistakenly attacks healthy tissues. When this attack targets the kidneys, it leads

to lupus nephritis, causing inflammation and impaired kidney function. This can progress to serious kidney complications, including kidney failure. Many patients with lupus nephritis experience inadequate responses to standard therapies, despite receiving medications like mycophenolate mofetil and prednisone.

“Dr. Furie and his team have delivered new hope for patients with lupus nephritis, a condition where effective treatments are desperately needed,” said Kevin J. Tracey, MD, president and CEO of the Feinstein Institutes and Karches Family Distinguished Chair in Medical Research. “This clinical trial result reveals that obinutuzumab can improve short-term outcomes while further data is being collected to determine the long-term impact the drug has on kidney health.”

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Multibillion-dollar lawsuit settlement expected to go into effect this summer

NCAA passes series of rules setting stage for schools to pay players directly

WASHINGTON, April 22, (AP): The NCAA passed rules Monday that would upend decades of precedent by allowing colleges to pay their athletes per terms of a multibillion-dollar lawsuit settlement expected to go into effect this summer.

The nine proposals passed by the NCAA board were largely expected but still mark a defining day in the history of college sports. An athlete’s ability to be paid directly by his or her university is on track to be enshrined in a rulebook that has forbidden that kind of relationship for decades.

For the NCAA rules to officially go into effect, the changes prescribed by the House settlement still have to be granted final approval by a federal judge, whose hearing earlier this month led to questions about potential tweaks before the new guidelines are supposed to go into play on July 1.

The changes will eliminate around 150 rules and alter many others in the NCAA’s sprawling rulebook. They essentially codify measures set up by the settlement, including:

- Modifying bylaws to allow schools to pay the athletes directly.
- Eliminating scholarship limits for teams, while also setting roster limits that are designed to replace the scholarship caps. Some details of the roster limits, which were a key sticking point in the April 7 hearing, will be finalized later.
- Establishing annual reporting requirements for schools that pay athletes; a payment pool is set to be approximately \$20.5 million for the biggest schools beginning next academic year.
- Setting up a clearinghouse for all name, image and likeness (NIL) deals that come from third parties and are worth \$600 or more.
- Granting authority to an enforcement body

being developed by the conferences named as defendants in the lawsuit to enforce the new rules passed to implement terms of the settlement. This includes compliance with all the new facets coming into play in college sports - roster limits, payment of direct benefits to players and meeting requirements for the third-party deals.

One change allows for the creation of technology platforms for schools to monitor payments to athletes and for the athletes to report their third-party NIL deals.

The board also approved a requirement for athletes to be enrolled full-time and meeting requirements toward their degree to receive the benefits.

The board received updates from a working group designed to propose ways to streamline NCAA governance - a topic that has come up as the bigger conferences have sought more decision-making power in some areas.



In this file photo, Mississippi State guard Trey Fort (11) uses his elbow to dribble around Nicholls State guard Byron Ireland (13) during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game in Starkville, Miss. (AP)

Table-topping Gujarat routs defending champion Kolkata



Gujarat Titans' Jos Butler plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Gujarat Titans at Eden Gardens in Kolkata, India. (AP)

Titans hand Knight Riders a 39-run drubbing in IPL

KOLKATA, India, April 22, (AP): The table-topping Gujarat Titans handed the defending champion Kolkata Knight Riders a 39-run drubbing in the Indian Premier League.

Captain Shubman Gill made 90 off 55 balls and his opening partner Sai Sudharsan scored his fifth 50-plus score of the season with 52 in Gujarat’s challenging total of 198-3.

Kolkata was stifled for 159-8 by the Gujarat spinners and lost its third home game.

“It’s very difficult to have a perfect game,” Gill said. “But you have to find a way to win the game and that’s what we’re really good at.”

Kolkata’s chase was clipped early when Mohammed Siraj pinned Rahmanullah Gurbaz lbw for just 1 in the Afghan opener’s first game of the season, and Rashid Khan dismissed Sunil Narine off his third ball in the powerplay.

Kolkata captain Ajinkya Rahane

resisted with a 36-ball 50 as the middle order struggled to accelerate against the spinners in Gujarat’s sixth win in eight games.

Venkatesh Iyer struggled for 19 balls to make 14. His slog sweep against Sai Kishore’s left-arm spin

went straight to Washington Sundar at deep mid-wicket.

Rahane departed in the next over when he was stumped off Sundar’s wide ball and Kolkata’s chase was derailed at 91-4 in the 13th over.

Gujarat opening pair Gill and Sud-

harsan perfectly assessed the tricky surface with their occasional aggressiveness.

Gill, who lost the toss, missed out on a century but paced the innings nicely with left-hander Sudharsan. They combined for 114 runs then Jos Buttler hit a rampant unbeaten 41 off 23 balls with eight boundaries.

Gill and Sudharsan completed half-centuries in almost identical style, hitting a dozen boundaries and two sixes between them. Kolkata couldn’t separate until the 13th over.

Sudharsan, taking 34 balls for his fifty, perished soon after when he cut Russell’s short ball and got a thin outside edge.

Gill’s 33-ball half-century included 29 runs off 12 balls. He was out swatting Vaibhav Arora’s low full toss to Rinku Singh in the outfield in the 18th over.

Buttler was dropped early but his late flurry closed out a stiff total.

“I thought 199 was chaseable, we came back into the game really well with the ball,” Rahane said. “You expect good opening starts but that’s what we’re struggling with.”



Gujarat Titans' Rashid Khan bowls a delivery during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Gujarat Titans at Eden Gardens in Kolkata, India. (AP)

Mavs GM Harrison says fans’ love for Doncic was deeper than he knew, but stands by trade

DALLAS, April 22, (AP): Dallas Mavericks general manager Nico Harrison says he miscalculated the depth of love his club’s fans had for Luka Doncic before the trade that sent the young superstar to the Los Angeles Lakers for Anthony Davis.

Despite the persistent catcalls from fans for him to be fired in the 2 / 2

months since the deal, Harrison still believes it was the right move for building a championship contender in Dallas.

“I did know that Luka was important to the fan base,” Harrison said Monday during his season-ending news conference, six days after a session with a smaller group of reporters that the club called to try to move on from the exhaustively discussed Doncic trade. “I didn’t quite know it to what level.”

As he has said before, Harrison expected plenty of blowback from the trade, but thought it would have eased sooner if Davis had been able play with Kyrie Irving, Klay Thompson, P.J. Washington and Dereck Lively II for most of the rest of the season.

Instead, those five haven’t played together yet, and the star combo of Davis and Irving shared less than three quarters together before Davis injured a groin in his Dallas debut. Irving tore the ACL in his left knee

while Davis was out.

“We feel that’s a championship-caliber team and we would have been winning at a high level and that would have quieted some of the outrage,” Harrison said as part of the same answer about the fans’ love for Doncic. “And so unfortunately we weren’t able to do that, so it just continued to go on and on.”

The Mavericks almost didn’t have enough players to meet the NBA’s minimum requirement for several games while Davis was sidelined. Once he returned, the Mavs steadied themselves and qualified for the final spot in the Western Conference play-in tournament at No. 10.

Dallas won at Sacramento for a shot at the eighth seed in the playoffs before losing at Memphis.

Harrison said he believed the Mavs would get a good player in the first round of the draft, where they are currently slated to pick 11th. He also

didn’t rule out changes in free agency.

But when asked what Dallas needed to become a contender again, Harrison said, “Really, we just need to get healthy. I think the team we’re bringing back is a championship-caliber. We fully expect to have Kyrie back with us next year when he gets healed from his injury. And we believe we’ll be competing for a championship.”

After Harrison said repeatedly last week that “defense wins championships” while defending the trade, Doncic was asked by ESPN his reaction to the session, saying it was “sad” what Harrison was saying and he wanted to move on.

Harrison, who said last week he still hasn’t spoken to the five-time All-NBA player who led the Mavericks to the NBA Finals last season, was asked about that exchange and said, “I feel the same way he does. I’ve actually never spoken ill of Luka, and I’m just ready to move on with this team that we have.”

Deal finalized

Kings announce hiring of Perry as general manager

SACRAMENTO, April 22, (AP): The Sacramento Kings finalized the deal to hire general manager Scott Perry in hopes that he can get the team back to the playoffs after losing in the play-in tournament the past two years.

The Kings reached an agreement with Perry last week just hours after parting with Monte McNair and announced the deal on Monday. Perry will be introduced at a news conference on Wednesday.

Perry will oversee the basketball operations department and report directly to owner Vivek Ranadive.

“Scott brings a wealth of experience, a sharp basketball mind, and a strong track record of building talented rosters,” Ranadive said in a statement. “He shares our commitment to developing and sustaining a winning culture, and I am excited to welcome him back to Sacramento.”

After snapping an NBA-record 16-season playoff drought in 2022-23 when McNair was named executive of the year, the Kings fell just short of returning to the playoffs the past two seasons, leading to the change.

Perry returns to Sacramento after spending three months in the front office as vice president of basketball operations in 2017.

“I appreciate the opportunity to re-join the Kings organization and help build a successful team that competes at a high level,” Perry said in a statement. “I’m eager to get to work with the players and staff to continue moving the organization forward.”

Perry was hired away from the Kings to become general manager of the Knicks under team president Scott Mills. Perry ran the Knicks briefly on an interim basis in 2020 following Mills’ firing before returning to his role of GM under team president Leon Rose through the 2022-23 season.

Perry spent more than a decade in the front office for the Pistons, play-



In this July 17, 2017 file photo, New York Knicks general manager Scott Perry poses for a picture after a news conference in Greenburgh, N.Y. (AP)

ing a role in building a roster that won the 2004 NBA Finals and made six straight Eastern Conference Finals appearances.

Now he will try to do the same with the Kings after becoming the franchise’s fifth lead executive since Ranadive took over the team in 2013. The Kings have gone through nine coaches in that span - including interims - and have the fifth-worst record in the NBA.

One of the first decisions will be on the status of interim coach Doug Christie, who went 27-24 after taking over when Mike Brown was fired in December.

Perry inherits a core of Sabonis, DeRozan, Zach LaVine, Keegan Murray and Malik Monk. He likely won’t have a first-round draft pick as the Kings have a 3.8% chance of moving into the top four in the lottery. Otherwise the pick will go Atlanta as part of a previous deal made for Kevin Huerter.

Club keeps CL hopes alive

Betis launches first-half blitz to beat Girona 3-1

GIRONA, Spain, April 22, (AP): Real Betis scored three goals in a first-half blitz to beat Girona 3-1 in La Liga on and keep alive its hopes of European football next season.

The win took sixth-placed Betis to within one point of Villarreal. The top five qualify for the Champions League, while the team in sixth will play in the Europa League.

“We still have our Champions League dreams,” Isco, who scored his seventh goal of the season on his 33rd birthday, told broadcaster DAZN. “We know it is difficult, it’s not in our hands, but we will fight

until the end.”

Betis was a constant threat in the air, with all three goals coming from aerial attacks.

Johnny Cardoso headed the opener from a corner after six minutes, an unmarked Anthony side-footed home a cross with 39 minutes gone, and Isco nodded in a third just before halftime.

Cristhian Stuani grabbed a consolation for the home side with five minutes remaining.

Girona has gone 10 league matches without a win and was 16th, three points above the relegation zone.

Best of the Rest

Slater set to be released: Former Australia test cricketer Michael Slater has been sentenced to four years in prison after pleading guilty to domestic violence charges but is set to be released on time already served.

The 55-year-old Slater was sentenced Tuesday in Maroochydore District Court, north of Brisbane in Queensland state. The remainder of Slater’s sentence has been suspended for five years.

Slater was taken into custody last year after his bail was refused on charges of unlawful stalking or intimidation, breaking into a dwelling with intent at night, common assault, assault occasioning bodily harm and choking or suffocation.

The offenses occurred between December 2023 and April last year. He was also charged with contravening a domestic violence order.

Slater made his international debut for Australia in 1993 and played 73 test matches, scoring 5,312 runs at an average of almost 43. He also played 42 limited-overs internationals before retiring from professional cricket in 2004 and launching a career in television commentary. (AP)

□ □ □

Portia comes out of retirement: Rugby great Portia Woodman-Wickliffe has announced she will come out of international retirement in the hope of playing for New Zealand at the Women’s World Cup in Britain later this year.

Woodman-Wickliffe, who is the top try-scorer in Women’s World Cup history with 20, has signed a new eight-month contract with New Zealand Rugby which will carry her through the global tournament in August and September.

The 33-year-old winger already has two World Cup winner’s medals from 2017 and 2021 and two Olympic gold medals in rugby sevens from Tokyo and Paris. She is the top try-scorer on the World Sevens Series with 256.

Woodman-Wickliffe retired from international rugby after the Olympics in Paris last year but has reconsidered that decision in a bid to help a New Zealand women’s team which struggled in 2024.

“By week three of (women’s Super Rugby) I was at 50% of my decision,” Woodman-Wickliffe said. “Each week in the campaign I thought about the possibility of how I could potentially go to the World Cup more and more. (AP)

Change Name

I, Intkhav Ali (OLD NAME)
Intkhav Ali, Father Name
Ramjani
Mother Name Parveen
Jahan
holder of Passport No:
S 6196391
Hereafter in all my dealings
and documents I will be
known as New name :
intkhab Raza

Leeds and Burnley return to Premier League

Forest beats Spurs to move into third

LONDON, April 22, (AP): Leeds United and Burnley won promotion to the Premier League.

Leeds beat Stoke City 6-0 and Burnley beat Sheffield United 2-1 to open unassailable leads in the second-tier Championship with only two games remaining.

The top two gain automatic promotion and the next four go into the playoffs for the last remaining spot.

The victories ensure another two U.S.-owned clubs will enjoy the estimated revenue uplift of around \$180 million that comes with a place in England's top tier.

Leeds is owned by the San Francisco-based 49ers Enterprises group, members of whom include American golfers Jordan Spieth and Justin Thomas. Red Bull, the energy drink company whose other soccer interests include owning Leipzig in Germany, bought a minority stake in the club last May.

Burnley, meanwhile, has been majority-owned since 2020 by the ALK Capita investment group. The New York group is fronted by U.S. businessman Alan Pace and counts former NFL star J.J. Watts as a notable shareholder.

Third-placed Sheffield United and fourth-placed Sunderland are guaranteed two of the four playoff spots and Bristol City and Coventry City are in pole position to join them.

Josh Brownhill scored both of Burnley's goals in front of 21,000 fans at Turf Moor, while Dutch striker Joel Piroe was the star for Leeds, scoring four goals in a blistering first half.

Nottingham Forest beat Tottenham 2-1 to move into third place in the Premier League and deepen the gloom at White Hart Lane.

Forest was clinical in front of goal and 2-0 up within 16 minutes against a team that showed many of the same failings that have dogged it all season.

Elliot Anderson's deflected shot bagged the opener after five minutes and Chris Wood added a second with a header 11 minutes later. Between the two, Wood had a goal chalked off for offside.

Although Spurs controlled possession in the second half it took it until the 87th minute to score, when Richarlison netted a header.

The result was another disappointing one for Spurs fans, who booed their team off at the final whistle.

Although Ange Postecoglou has guided the team to a Europa League



Burnley players celebrate their promotion to the English Premier League after the Championship soccer match against Sheffield United at Turf Moor, Burnley, England. (AP)

semifinal, Monday's defeat was its 18th in 33 Premier League games and left it in 16th place.

For Forest, meanwhile, it was a return to winning ways after defeats by

Everton and Aston Villa.

In third place, it was one point above Newcastle, two above Manchester City and three above Chelsea and Aston Villa.

Korir takes men's race

Lokedi breaks Boston Marathon course record

BOSTON, April 22, (AP): A rider dressed as Paul Revere eased his horse up to the Boston Marathon finish line and proclaimed, "The runners are coming."

And down Boylston Street they came.

In record time. With a historic family first. And even "The Star-Spangled Banner" got some air time as the race and the region commemorated the 250th anniversary of the first shots fired in the American Revolution.

Sharon Lokedi of Kenya broke the Boston Marathon course record by more than 2 1/2 minutes on Monday, outkicking two-time defending champion Hellen Obiri a year after losing to her in one of the closest finishes in race history.

Fellow Kenyan John Korir recovered from a starting line fall

to join his brother as a race champion - the first relatives to win the world's oldest and most prestigious annual marathon in a history that dates to 1897.

On a day that also marked the 50th anniversary of Bob Hall's pioneering wheelchair race, Marcel Hug of Switzerland claimed his eighth victory and Susannah Scaroni of the United States took the women's title.

"I always feel emotional when the national anthem is played," said Scaroni, who won in 2023 but couldn't defend her title last year because of an injury. "And to have ours played on this amazing, historic anniversary gives me goosebumps."

Lokedi finished in 2 hours, 17 minutes, 22 seconds to claim the \$150,000 first prize and another \$50,000 bonus for breaking the course record of 2:19:59 set by Buuzunesh Deba in 2014. A year after sprinting to an 8 second victory, Obiri was 19 seconds back in her attempt to become the first woman to win three straight since Fatuma Roba in 1999.

"Where she passed me last year, I passed her this year," Lokedi said with

a laugh. "I didn't even believe. I kept looking back and thinking, 'Where is she?' I'm just so grateful to her for pushing me all the way through."

Six months after winning on Chicago's flatter course, Korir finished in 2:04:45 - the second-fastest winning time in Boston history as the runners took advantage of perfect marathon weather to conquer the 26.2 miles (42.2 kilometers) from Hopkinton to Boston's Copley Square.

And he did it despite getting tripped up from behind near the start and falling. He got up to rejoin the lead pack at the rear.

"What came to my mind was should I stay down, or should I (get) up and go?" he said. "Something told me to (get) up and go, and that everything will be OK. ... And everything went away."

Korir's race bib fell off and he tucked it into his running tights, pulling it out as he sprinted to the finish line. Waiting to congratulate him: 2012 Boston winner Wesley Korir, his older brother.

Although the race has been won by a pair of unrelated John Kelleys and

two different Robert Cheruiyots, the Korirs are the first brothers to have won.

"He explained to be tough and believe in yourself," said John Korir, who finished fourth and ninth in his two previous Boston attempts. "So I believed in myself and I followed his advice."

Conner Mantz of Provo, Utah, finished fourth after losing a three-way sprint to the finish with Alphonse Felix Simbu of Tanzania, who finished second, and Cybrian Kotut of Kenya, who was third.

Yalemzerf Yehualaw of Ethiopia was third in the women's race. Jess McClain of Phoenix was the top American, in seventh place; 2018 winner Des Linden, who had announced she would retire from competitive running, won the masters division and was 17th overall.

When she crossed the finish line, the other American women bowed to her in tribute.

"I had those folks in front of me who paved the way, and I looked up to them. And they always made me feel like I belonged, made me feel

like my dreams are valid, helped me along the way," Linden said. "So I've always tried to do that for the folks in this sport as well."

A field of 30,000 left Hopkinton on Monday morning for Boston's Back Bay, where riders in Revolutionary War garb - accompanied by a fife and drum playing "Yankee Doodle" - rode down Boylston Street in a reenactment of Paul Revere's ride.

The ceremony came to a temporary halt when the horses was spooked by the finish line decal on the street and pulled up. The actor portraying the colonial silversmith and patriot had to hop off and walk the last few steps himself as the small early crowd laughed and clapped.

After reading a proclamation, Revere gently tugged the horse the rest of the way before riding off to more ceremonies commemorating the midnight ride on April 19, 1775, that warned the Sons of Liberty that the British were on the march.

Linden, the last American runner to win Boston, read the voice-over that introduced the reenactment.

"I wondered, 'Are these professional horses?' Because it seemed like a lot for them," she said afterward. "It turns out, it was."

Hug had no such trouble completing the course, zooming into Copley Square in 1:21:34 for his eighth Boston wheelchair title. He beat two-time winner Daniel Romanchuk by more than four minutes.

Scaroni finished in 1:35:20 on a day the Boston Athletic Association celebrated Hall's push to add a wheelchair division in 1975.

"I am only here today because so many incredible individuals had integrity, tenacity - they knew they belonged as athletes and they allowed us to have what we have today," she said. "And I'm so beyond grateful."

"I'm not brave like them," Scaroni said. "I'm only here because of how awesome those people are."



Boston Marathon winner John Korir, of Kenya, right, and women's division winner Sharon Lokedi, of Kenya, celebrate after the race in Boston. (AP)

Bad light forces an early stumps

Bangladesh fights back against Zimbabwe

SYLHET, Bangladesh, April 22, (AP): Najmul Hossain Shanto hit 60 not out as Bangladesh fought back against Zimbabwe on a rain-truncated day three of the first cricket test.

Shanto's knock, which included seven boundaries, helped Bangladesh reach 194-4 in its second innings with a 112-run overall lead before bad light forced an early stumps Tuesday.

Jaker Ali is 21 not out.

After the entire first session was washed out due to a wet outfield, Bangladesh resumed on 57-1 - still 25 behind Zimbabwe - and appeared to be in control thanks to Shanto, its captain, and Mominul Haque.

But Zimbabwe struck back with the wickets

of Mominul, who made 47 after 56 runs in the first innings, and Mushfiqur Rahim.

Shanto and Ali stabilized the innings and have shared a 39-run partnership for the fifth wicket.

Bangladesh was dismissed for 191 in its first innings and trailed by 82 runs after Zimbabwe replied with 273 all out.

Fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani ended the day with 3-51. He struck in the seventh over Tuesday, dismissing Mahmudul Hasan Joy for 33 after a short-pitched delivery.

Hasan, who survived twice because of poor fielding by Zimbabwe on Monday, added just five runs to his overnight total.

Pacer Victor Nyauchi (1-28) was rewarded for his excellent line and length by dismissing Mominul after forcing the batter to play and edge behind. Mominul hit six fours in his 84 ball-47.

Veteran Rahim, who came to the crease without a 50 in his last 11 innings, struggled against Zimbabwe's pace right from the start.

He eventually nicked a back-of-length delivery from Muzarabani to first slip and was out for 4.

Zimbabwe sensed a chance to dominate Bangladesh again but Shanto and Jaker successfully resisted to keep the game in the balance.

cis' home country of Argentina were also suspended. (AP)

□ □ □

Youngs to retire at end of season: Leicester Tigers scrum-half Ben Youngs, who made a record 127 test appearances for England, will retire from professional rugby at the end of the season.

The 35-year-old Youngs had his 332nd appearance for Leicester at the weekend. He made his senior debut in 2007 and went on to win five Premiership titles with the club.

"It's a bittersweet feeling really. Obviously, I'm sad at the thought it's coming to an end but I'm excited about the rest of this season, excited about what this group can do," Youngs said Tuesday.

"That's the strange part, I'm using the 'R' word (retirement) but it isn't over today, there is still plenty of rugby left this season and that's what is at the front of my mind.

"I'm not done, let's not write the obituary just yet."

Youngs made his England debut in March 2010 and played at four World Cups - in 2011, 2015, 2019 and 2023 - before retiring two years ago after a third-placed finish in France. (AP)

Best of the Rest

CONI calls for events to be suspended: The Italian National Olympic Committee has asked for sports events to be suspended on Saturday, the day of Pope Francis' funeral.

After the government declared five days of national mourning, the Olympic committee, known by its Italian initials CONI, requested Tuesday for Saturday's events to be suspended and for a minute of silence to take place at other sporting events.

The pope, who died Monday at 88, was a lifelong soccer fan.

Saturday's events in Italy include three scheduled top-tier Serie A soccer games, one of them between league leader Inter Milan and Roma.

It wasn't immediately clear whether other league and cup soccer games scheduled on other days this week might be affected too.

All sports events which had been scheduled for Monday in Italy were postponed following the death of Francis. That included four Serie A games which were moved to Wednesday. Games in Pope Fran-

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Mondo Duplantis celebrates the Laureus World Sportsman of the Year award, during the 2025 Laureus World Sports Awards in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

Sports

Kazma looks to rebound from a challenging season

Kuwait Club takes on Al-Jahra as Crown Prince Cup action heats up

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The quarterfinals of the Crown Prince Cup begin today with two highly anticipated match ups. At 5:30 pm, Al-Jahra faces Kuwait Club at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, followed by Kazma vs Khaitan at 8:45 pm at Jaber Al-Mubarak Stadium. The action continues tomorrow with two more fixtures: Al-Arabi vs Al-Fahaheel and Al-Qadsia vs Al-Salmiya. Kuwait Club, who advanced to the quarterfinals after a convincing 3-0 win over Al-Tadamon, will be looking to avoid any upsets against Al-Jahra who stunned Kazma with a dramatic 4-2 comeback win in the preliminary round of the Amir Cup. Currently leading the Zain Premier League with 51 points, just two ahead of title rivals Al-Arabi, Kuwait Club is competing on multiple fronts. The team is eager to bounce back from its recent 2-2 draw with Al-Fahaheel in the league's championship group and continue its march toward the Cup title. Meanwhile, Al-Jahra is riding a wave of momentum as it tops the Zain First Division League with 18 points, boosting its chances of Premier League promotion. After ousting Kazma from the Amir Cup, it's

also defeated Al-Jazeera SC 2-1 in the preliminary round of the Crown Prince Cup. Historically, Kuwait Club has had the upper hand in recent meetings, winning both league matches last season (3-1 and 3-2). Their last Cup encounter dates back to the 2016-2017 semi-finals, when Kuwait Club won 5-0. Kazma looks to rebound from a challenging season. Knocked out of the Amir Cup by Al-Jahra and currently battling in the relegation round, Kazma is aiming to restore pride and push for a Cup run. It reached the quarterfinals by defeating Al-Yarmouk 3-1 in the preliminaries. Khaitan, on the other hand, is proving resilient. It edged out Al-Sulaibikhat on penalties (0-0, 4-1) in the preliminary round and advanced to the Amir Cup quarterfinals after a 2-1 win over Al-Shabab. The two sides have already exchanged wins in the league this season - Kazma 2-0, Khaitan 1-0 - and are set for another showdown. Notably, their last Crown Prince Cup clash came in the 2021-2022 preliminary round, where Khaitan triumphed 4-3 on penalties after a 1-1 draw.



Players in action.

Pistons snap record 15-game playoff skid

Clippers even series against Nuggets



Detroit Pistons guard Cade Cunningham (2), guarded by New York Knicks forward Mikal Bridges (25), drives toward the basket during the first quarter of Game 2 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series in New York. (AP)

NEW YORK, April 22, (AP): **Cade Cunningham wasn't thinking about himself after the first postseason victory of his career. His focus was on all the Detroit fans who stuck by the Pistons during 17 years since the last one.**

Now Cunningham and his teammates want to give those fans more than just a game. They want to get them a series. Cunningham had 33 points and 12 rebounds, Dennis Schroder made the tiebreaking 3-pointer with 55 seconds left, and the Pistons snapped their NBA-record, 15-game postseason losing streak by beating the New York Knicks 100-94 on Monday night in Game 2 of their playoff series. The Pistons, who hadn't even been to the postseason since 2019, recovered after the Knicks erased a 15-point deficit to earn their first playoff victory since Game 4 of the 2008 Eastern Conference finals against Boston. The Celtics won the final two games of that series and the Pistons were then swept in 2009, 2016 and 2019 before dropping Game 1 at Madison Square Garden. Now they are back in the win column, all tied in the series and will host Game 3 on Thursday night. Schroder, who wasn't even on the Pistons until a trade in February, nailed the 3-pointer after the Knicks had used a 16-4 run to tie it at 94 on Josh Hart's dunk. He finished with 20 points off the

bench. The Pistons engineered one of the biggest turnarounds in NBA history this season, going 44-38 after a 14-win season in 2023-24 that included a 28-game losing streak, longest ever in a single season. They were then in good shape to win Game 1 with an eight-point lead after three quarters, before the Knicks used a 21-0 run in the fourth to win 123-112. Detroit built another eight-point advantage after three Monday, and this time made the big plays after another Knicks rally. **Clippers 105, Nuggets 102** In Denver, Kawhi Leonard scored 39 points on 15-of-19 shooting and Los Angeles evened their first-round playoff series against Denver. Christian Braun was long on a 3-pointer with 6 seconds left, and Nikola Jokic, who recorded 19th career playoff triple-double, grabbed the rebound but also missed a 3.1 second remaining. The Clippers, who lost Game 1 in overtime, haven't lost back-to-back games since March 2-4, a stretch of 23 games, and they handed David Adelman his first loss in five games since replacing Michael Malone in a stunning move on the eve of the playoffs. Jokic, just the third player to average a triple-double over a season, had 26 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists and Jamal Murray added 23 points for the Nuggets, who also got a bounce-back game from Michael Porter Jr. (15 points and 15 rebounds) after his 3-point performance in Game 1.

Kuwait handball team begins preparations for Arab Cup

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: The Kuwait national handball team will begin its training at 6:00 pm at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex in the Sabah Al-Salem suburb, as part of preparations for the 10th Arab Cup, which Kuwait will host from May 4 to 12, coinciding with International Handball Federation Week. The team is now under the leadership of newly appointed Icelandic head coach Aron Kristjansson, supported by Danish assistant coach Ansen. Kristjansson has finalized a 24-player squad for the upcoming tournament. Kuwait entered an internal

training camp at the Radisson Blu Hotel, which will run through the duration of the tournament. The camp includes

daily double training sessions - morning and evening - focusing on improving player fitness and refining both offensive and de-

fensive tactics. Additionally, the program will include theoretical sessions to enhance players' tactical understanding.

As part of his preparation, Coach Kristjansson has attended several Premier League and First Division matches to evaluate player performance and finalize his squad selection.

The Arab Cup draw will take place on April 26, with nine teams set to participate: Kuwait (host), Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Iraq, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.

The teams will be split into three groups, with matches played in a single round-robin format. The top two teams from each group will qualify for the quarterfinals.



The handball team intensifies training for the Arab Cup.

Al-Shahoumi honors youth team for Cup qualification



Former President of the Kuwait Handball Association, Ahmed Al-Shahoumi.

KUWAIT CITY, April 22: Former President of the Kuwait Handball Association, Ahmed Al-Shahoumi, honored the national youth handball team in celebration of its qualification for the World Cup finals. He emphasized that recognizing such achievements is a national responsibility, one that plays a vital role in motivating young athletes to continue striving for excellence and to proudly represent Kuwait on the international stage. Al-Shahoumi stated, "I have full confidence in the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Handball Association, as well as in the players and the technical and administrative staff. I know they will exert every effort to support this promising team. My message to them is clear: simply reaching the World Cup finals should no longer be seen as the ultimate goal. We must now aim higher - to consistently compete on global platforms." He continued, "To the players, I say this: do not fall into the trap of believing that merely playing against international teams is the achievement. You are just as capable, talented, and deserving as any opponent you will face. The first key to success is believing in yourselves." For his part, Qaid Al-Adwani, Secretary General of the Kuwait Handball Federation, expressed his gratitude for Al-Shahoumi's unwavering support, stating, "We sincerely thank Ahmed Al-Shahoumi for standing by our national teams and players. His commitment to Kuwaiti handball is well known and deeply appreciated." He added, "We pledge to do everything within our power to meet expectations and represent Kuwait honorably at the World Cup finals."

Best of the Rest

Osaka loses in first round: Naomi Osaka's clay-court season started with a loss in the first round of the Madrid Open against Lucia Bronzetti on Tuesday. Japan's four-time Grand Slam champion stumbled on match point as Bronzetti completed a 6-4, 2-6, 6-4 win before checking Osaka was OK as they approached the net for a post-match handshake. The 55th-ranked Osaka was unseeded in Madrid for her first match in almost a month since reaching the fourth round of the Miami Open. Italy's Bronzetti will play fifth-seeded American Madison Keys in the second round. Alexandra Eala will get a rematch with Iga Swiatek in the second round in Madrid after stunning the Polish player as a wild card in Miami last month. The 19-year-old Eala won her first-round match 6-3, 6-2 against Viktoriya Tomova. Caroline Dolehide of the U.S. won 6-4, 6-4 against Elina Avanesyan to set up a second-round meeting with Liudmila Samsonova. (AP)

Biles, Duplantis and Real win awards: Simone Biles and Mondo Duplantis were named sportswoman and sportsman of the year at the Laureus world sports awards. The American gymnast won three gold medals and a silver at the Paris Olympics, while the Swedish pole vaulter won a second Olympic gold medal

and raised his own world record two times. Real Madrid, the Champions League and La Liga winner last season, was the world team of the year, while young Barcelona forward Lamine Yamal won the world breakthrough player award. Rafael Nadal received the sporting icon award, and American surfer Kelly Slater got the lifetime achievement award. Brazilian gymnast Rebeca Andrade won the world comeback of the year award after winning three medals in Paris - including gold in the floor exercise - after recovering from anterior cruciate ligament injuries. (AP)

Omaha coach Banks fired: Carrie Banks has been fired as Omaha women's basketball coach after five straight losing seasons, athletic director Adrian Dowell announced Tuesday. The Mavericks were 14-17 overall last season and tied for seventh in the nine-team Summit League at 5-11. None of her five teams finished higher than tied for fifth. Banks was an assistant at Ohio State when Omaha hired her in 2020. She was 51-89 with the Mavericks. "Today I informed Carrie Banks, our student-athletes and coaches in the women's basketball program of my decision to make a leadership change for the head coaching position," Dowell said. "After careful assessment of the program, I am confident that under new leadership, we can achieve an elevated standard of competitive success." (AP)