



Pages 14 & 16



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## Amir receives Crown Prince, Chief Justice, Acting Premier

KUWAIT CITY, April 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received the President of the Supreme Judicial Council and President of the Court of

Cassation, Counselor Dr. Adel Bouresli. His Highness the Amir received Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Also on Sunday, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

## Kuwait condoles Iran following 18 deaths in Bandar Abbas blast

KUWAIT CITY, April 27, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah expressed his condolences to Iranian President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian following the deadly explosion at Shahid Rajaei Port in Bandar Abbas on Saturday.

In his cable, His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow His mercy and forgiveness on the victims and wished the injured a speedy recovery.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent condolences to President Pezeshkian, offering his heartfelt sympathies for the tragic event and praying for the victims' souls and the recovery of the wounded. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Sabah joined in extending his condolences to the Iranian President, expressing his sorrow for the loss of life and the numerous injuries caused by the explosion at Bandar Abbas port.

In a statement, Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs conveyed its deep sympathy and solidarity with Iran, offering condolences and wishing a speedy recovery to those injured in the catastrophe.

The explosion, which occurred at Bandar Abbas port in Hormozgan, has claimed at least 18 lives, with over 800 others injured, according to Iranian officials. The blast, believed to have been caused by the detonation of several containers, has left on-going efforts by firefighters to control the fire.



### Opinion

#### Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

## Jordan missed key international gains due to 'Muslim Brotherhood'

JORDANIAN security authorities quietly dismantled a subversive network affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood Group, according to Interior Minister Mazen Faraya. He stated that the plot aimed to undermine the constitutional structure and the very existence of the Kingdom of Jordan.

This stance by the Muslim Brotherhood is not out of context, but rather a continuation of the group's broader destabilizing agenda – one that began in 2011 and has played out across several countries including Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Syria.

This attitude by the Muslim Brotherhood is not an isolated occurrence; rather, it marks a new chapter in the group's ongoing campaign of chaos that began in 2011, starting from Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria, and beyond.

Throughout its history, the Muslim Brotherhood Group has been widely known throughout the Arab world for its attempts to undermine national security in pursuit of controlling one Arab country, using it as a springboard to influence others. The group exploited the Mohamed Bouazizi incident in Tunisia to fuel public outrage and transform it into a full-blown revolution that ultimately led to the overthrow of the regime.

That single spark was enough to topple several regimes, most notably in Egypt, the cornerstone of Arab national security.

The 1952 coup in Egypt is another example, as it served as a gateway for regime changes throughout the Arab world and ushered in waves of regional instability. Time and again, the same justification was used: defending the Palestinian issue and liberating Palestine.

Many innocent people were misled by these lies, which allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to secure a strong foothold in political movements. They entered parliaments, joined governments, and eventually rose to power in Egypt following the January 25, 2011 uprising.

However, the group began digging its own grave through acts of brutality, torture, and efforts to dominate the economy and state institutions. Their true intentions were revealed in messages exchanged between Mohamed Morsi and Tel Aviv, which revealed plans to cede certain territories as part of a scheme to relocate Gaza's population to Sinai.

This betrayal prompted the Egyptian people, supported by the Army, to rise up just one year later, overthrowing the Muslim Brotherhood's rule and reclaiming Egypt's stability from the grip of chaos.

In this context, it is important to emphasize the

Muslim Brotherhood's relationship with the West and the various services it provided in exchange for the West's control over the resources of the Arab world. As a result, when the Gulf states began to approach the Muslim Brotherhood with caution, especially after the scandal involving the "Kuwaiti Brotherhood" and their power grab during the Iraqi invasion, it marked the first step toward liberating the region from the grip of this evil group.

Subsequently, some Gulf countries decided to ban the Muslim Brotherhood and classify it as a terrorist group. Over the past few years, Jordan has found itself at the center of the storm, particularly after the so-called "Al-Aqsa Flood," which brought widespread destruction to Gaza and the West Bank and resulted in the deaths of thousands.

It was a clear attempt to undermine the Palestinian cause and obstruct the two-state solution, which was on the verge of being realized. The discovery of the Brotherhood's chaotic cell in Jordan is the result of relentless efforts by the government, particularly King Abdullah II, to prevent the Kingdom from becoming a battleground for regional disputes. This was notably reflected in the revelation of a direct connection between the Muslim Brotherhood, Iranian-backed militias and Hezbollah, as well as Hamas's quick request for Amman to release the members of the cell.

This reveals the new face of the Muslim Brotherhood's long-standing agenda. Jordan serves as a strategic link in the region, and it is widely understood that there have been ongoing attempts to destabilize the country in order to gain access to the Gulf states. This is especially significant since the 1994 Wadi Araba Agreement, which was primarily designed to establish an economic and industrial zone through a US-Jordanian-Israeli partnership, thus opening the door to Arab North Africa and the rest of the Middle East.

Over the years, the Muslim Brotherhood has consistently attempted to disrupt any progress in this regard by using its MPs to block the ratification of laws aimed at strengthening Jordan's economy and development, or by agitating the Jordanian street.

Continued on Page 5

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## MEW urges public to conserve energy amid 55% reduction in Wafra

## Kuwait ramps up energy campaign, crypto miners in crosshairs

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Official spokesperson of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Fatima Jawhar Hayat said the ministry remains committed to ensuring the efficiency and sustainability of the electricity system through collaboration with the concerned authorities.

It has been reported that the ministry initiated a comprehensive field campaign in Wafra Residential

Area last week.

On Friday, the ministry participated in the security initiative led by acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, alongside Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem, Minister of State for Municipal and Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari, and Minister of State for Communications Affairs Omar Al-Omar. This campaign targeted residences involved in cryptocurrency mining operations.

In a press statement Saturday, Hayat stated that a

meticulous technical analysis of electrical load readings from the primary transformer stations serving Wafra Residential Area was conducted; revealing a decrease in electricity consumption of approximately 55 percent compared to the preceding period.

"This reduction occurred despite the observed increase in ambient temperatures. It was emphasized that collaborative efforts are ongoing nationwide to eradicate such illicit activities," she asserted.

Continued on Page 5

## Kuwait tightens food rules, introduces new service fees

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) will soon launch a new fee list for its services, along with a list of trans and hydrogenated fats. This is aimed to balance the prices and value of services provided, while supporting the government's efforts to rationalize and reduce consumption of these services.

Deputy Director and official spokesperson of PAFN Dr. Shaima Al-Asfour



Dr. Al-Asfour

confirmed in an interview with the daily that PAFN is taking serious steps to implement the Smart Inspector Program and risk-based inspections to support the digitization of PAFN's services and help achieve faster, more efficient completion of transactions.

Al-Asfour said the revised school canteen regulations are nearing approval after being submitted to the Fatwa and Legislation Department for final approval, adding that the amendments will include provisions for private schools and accreditation for companies supplying school food.

At the start of the interview, Al-Asfour highlighted the Board of Directors' decision to raise the prices of 76 services in three sectors to reflect the global increase in prices. The following are the details of the interview:

Continued on Page 5



Photo by Mohammad Morsi  
Peruvian Ambassador to Kuwait Carlos Enrique Tomás Jiménez Gil addressing the press on Sunday.

Peruvian FM to visit Kuwait

## Peru to strengthen Gulf ties

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Peruvian Ambassador to Kuwait Carlos Enrique Tomás Jiménez Gil stated that Peru is currently looking into the revision of its foreign policy toward the Gulf states in order to strengthen bilateral cooperation, expand trade exchange and stimulate investment.

The ambassador indicated that the upcoming diplomatic missions are essential for revitalizing relations with the region and will coincide with the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations with Kuwait this year.

In a press conference on the upcoming visit of Peruvian Foreign Affairs Minister Elmer Chialler to Kuwait, Gil confirmed that Peru intends to intensify its international presence and promote global economic stability through strategic alliances with the Gulf states; acknowledging the increasing significance of this region.

He affirmed the importance of relations with Kuwait, citing collaboration in various areas, particularly technical cooperation. "This cooperation is founded on shared challenges, such as water scarcity and limited arable land," he revealed.

Continued on Page 5



**9** Kamco Invest focuses on fee-based income for stronger earnings quality



**10** KIB Group announces net profit of KD 7.3m for Q1 of 2025 with an increase of 21 percent



Prayer Timings			
Fajr .....	03:45	Asr .....	15:21
Sunrise ..	05:10	Maghrib ..	18:21
Zohr .....	11:46	Isha .....	19:44

# Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Hot, partly cloudy and relatively humid with light variable wind to light to moderate freshening at times southeasterly wind, with speeds of 12-45 km/h with a chance for rising dust over open areas.

**By Night:** Rather hot to mild, cloudy and humid especially over

Weather

coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate freshening at times southeasterly wind, with speeds of 08-40 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times and a chance for rising dust.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait Airport	42	25

Abdaly	45	25
Bubyan	35	25
Jahra	45	26
Failaka Island	43	28
Salmiyah	35	26
Ahmadi	40	22
Jal Aliyah	45	25
Nuwaisib	41	22
Wafra	44	23

Crown Prince and Prime Minister extend best wishes

## HH Amir congratulates S. Africa, Togo and Sierra Leone on Nat’l, Independence Days

KUWAIT CITY, April 27, (KUNA: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah extended his congratulations to South African President Cyril Ramaphosa on the occasion of the country’s national day. In his message, His Highness wished President Ramaphosa good health and prosperity, and expressed hopes for continued progress for South Africa and its people.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a congratulatory cable to President Cyril Ramaphosa, wishing him well on South Africa’s national day and good health.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah conveyed his con-

gratulations to President Cyril Ramaphosa on South Africa’s national day.

On Sunday, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory message to Togo’s President Faure Gnassingbé on the occasion of the country’s Independence Day. In the message, His Highness wished President Gnassingbé enduring health and prosperity for the Togolese people.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also extended his congratulations to President Faure Gnassingbé on Togo’s Independence Day, wishing him long-lasting health.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Ab-

dullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent his congratulatory message to President Faure Gnassingbé on Togo’s Independence Day.

Additionally, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah congratulated Sierra Leone’s President Julius Maada Bio on his country’s Independence Day. In the message, His Highness expressed wishes for further prosperity for Sierra Leone and its people, and wished President Bio enduring health.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a congratulatory cable to President Julius Maada Bio on Sierra Leone’s Independence Day, wishing him continued health and prosperity for the country.

Kuwait’s draft up for final review

### Arab League nears consensus on anti-hate speech legislation

CAIRO, April 27, (KUNA): League of Arab States is to hold the fifth meeting of the interior and justice ministries joint committee tomorrow Monday to discuss draft bill submitted by Kuwait on eliminating hate speech.

Chief of the League’s legal affairs department, Dr. Maha Bakheet stated Sunday that the meeting is in execution of Arab justice ministerial

council resolution on holding the final committee meeting to discuss the draft bill.

Participants, representatives from the justice and interior ministries as well as other concerned bodies, are to discuss the bill articles over the span of two days, she clarified.

Bakheet added that the final format will be arrived at during the meeting.

## Kuwait set to host pivotal renewable energy summit

May conference to attract global experts

By Mohammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: The Sustainable Energy Conference will be held in Kuwait from May 11-13; under the auspices of Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem.

Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE) and Director of the Renewable Energy Department Ahmed Al-Dosari said the conference will be held in conjunction with Kuwait’s presidency of the Board of Trustees of the center.

Interested parties from the local and international arenas are expected to attend the conference, whose main objective is to ease the transition to sustainable energy sources in line with the 2035 Kuwait Vision.

In a press conference, Al-Dosari disclosed that the above-mentioned conference aims to fortify collaboration among Arab nations and the Mediterranean region in research, development and technology exchange fields related to renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable energy and environmental technology.

He affirmed the ministry is keen on enhancing synergy with scientific research organizations, centers and entities operating in the energy sector; while addressing global policy developments and contributing to the formulation of effective strategies that underpin energy transition and achieve sustainable development in the region.

He pointed out that the conference will raise awareness and foster innovation concerning the significance of transitioning to renewable and sustainable energy sources and their impact on economic advancement.

He mentioned other goals like attracting local and international investments in renewable energy, providing an interactive platform for the exchange of ideas, and bolstering cooperation between the public and private sectors.

On the other hand, acting Executive Director of the Energy and Building Research Center at Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) Dr. Futouh Al-Raqam said the



Photo by Samer Shajer

Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE) and Director of the Renewable Energy Department Ahmed Al-Dosari addressing the press conference on Sunday.

three-day conference will gather a distinguished assembly of speakers, decision-makers and experts from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, Mediterranean region and international community to deliberate on vital issues related to energy transition and sustainable development.

Al-Raqam indicated that the first day of the conference includes a high-level session; followed by regional dialogues on renewable energy solutions, hydrogen trade routes, and the function of electrical interconnection in expediting the transformation of the energy sector in the Arab region.

In addition, the conference will commemorate the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the League of Arab States, during which progress in energy efficiency will be assessed.

The second day of the conference will focus on green investment prospects, enhancing adaptation to climate change, and sustainable entrepreneurship.

A specialized side event will be conducted on Critical Energy Transition Minerals (CETMs), spotlighting Kuwait’s role and opportunities in supporting global energy security and sustainability through the strategic advancement of these minerals.

Other Voices

### Drugs and Major General Fahd Al-Rasheed

By Ahmad alsarraf

IN response to the government’s growing concern over the imminent threat of drugs, particularly to young people, and the rising number of drug defendants escaping conviction due to procedural errors or legal loopholes, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahd Yousef Al-Sabah has decided to form a committee headed by Counselor Mohammed Al-Duaij.

This committee will work on drafting a law aimed at dealing with the gaps in current drug-related legislation, keeping pace with the rapid developments in the methods of committing these crimes, and closing existing procedural loopholes.

The committee has finalized the draft law, with notable amendments including the establishment of a Supreme Council for Combating Drugs and Intoxicants, chaired by the Prime Minister. This council will be responsible for submitting an annual report to His Highness the Amir, detailing developments in the fight against drugs.

The amendments also include expanding the death penalty for drug and intoxicant traffickers and imposing hefty fines, potentially amounting to millions of Kuwaiti dinars.

Furthermore, the law mandates medical examinations for individuals applying for marriage, driving licenses, weapons licenses, and public jobs to ensure they are free from drugs and intoxicants.

In addition, all military personnel, regardless of rank, in the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense, National Guard, and Kuwait Fire Force, as well as school and university students, will be subject to medical examinations to detect drug use. Those refusing the exam without justification will face up to four years in prison.

Penalties have also been increased for drug use in prisons, schools, or sports clubs. Doctors who prescribe psychotropic substances without medical justification will face imprisonment. Pharmacies that negligently handle psychotropic substances will be fined KD 100,000 and may face years of suspension.

Minister of Interior and First Deputy Prime Minister



alsarraf

Sheikh Fahd Yousef Al-Sabah made a commendable decision in forming this committee and issuing the recommended amendments. However, several areas should be given attention for a more comprehensive approach. These are:

1. It is important to include the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Information, and religious institutions in community awareness campaigns about the dangers of drugs.
  2. There should be explicit and implicit warnings about the dangers of drugs incorporated into school curricula.
  3. Agencies should be appointed to monitor youth behavior and address psychological issues early on. Serious consideration should also be given to revisiting the ban on consuming certain prohibited items.
  4. There needs to be an expansion of the professional and consistent use of social media to raise awareness about the catastrophic dangers of drugs.
  5. Special attention should be given to the rehabilitation of minor offenders, as research shows they are at a higher risk of becoming major criminals in the future.
  6. Lawyers should be prohibited from publicly announcing their success in acquitting clients, particularly in drug-related cases and especially after First Instance Court rulings.
  7. It is essential that security personnel conduct their duties without abuse when dealing with suspects. There must be a balance between protecting public interest and upholding human rights. Adequate training and qualification of police officers and security personnel in police sciences and procedural law are vital.
- Drugs enter the country through various channels. Aside from the security forces, the only civilian entity responsible for combating drug smuggling is the General Administration of Customs. Despite its important role, the General Administration of Customs has not been led by a competent head in recent years. Therefore, we welcome the appointment of Major General Fahd Mohammed Ali Al-Rasheed as Director General of the vital administration, along with his Deputy for Investigation and Research Saleh Mohammed Al-Omar. Both are renowned for their integrity, excellent qualities, and decisiveness.



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Shipbuilding



Sadu craft



Publications corner

‘Capital of Arab Culture and Media 2025’ celebrations

## Exploring Kuwait’s cultural roots at intellectual symposium on pre-oil era

KUWAIT CITY, April 27, (KUNA): The intellectual symposium titled “Culture in Kuwait before Oil” kicked off on Sunday as part of the celebrations of “Kuwait as the Capital of Arab Culture and Media 2025,” under the patronage of Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi. The symposium aims to shed light on the historical roots of Kuwait in the pre-oil era.

In his opening speech at the symposium, held at the Movenpick Hotel in Al-Bidaa, Secretary General of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NC-CAL) Dr. Mohammad Al-Jassar said that the choice of the conference topic stems from the firm belief that understanding our cultural present can only be achieved by returning to its authentic roots, which were formed during a very important phase of our national history.

He stressed that highlighting the pre-oil era is important, as it represents the founding stage that witnessed the birth of the first features of the Kuwaiti cultural identity, with all its dimensions. This era also marked the golden age of societal interaction, which created authentic cultural forms such as diwaniyas, councils, and scientific and literary clubs.

Dr. Al-Jassar emphasized that this period embodied the Kuwaiti people’s ability to innovate despite scarce resources, confirming that “culture was and remains our true wealth.”

He also explained that studying this historical era is doubly important today because it documents the national cultural memory, presents a model for cultural communi-



Part of the audience attending the intellectual symposium.

KUNA photos

cation, contributes to strengthening a sense of belonging among new generations, and enriches the dialogue on the role of culture in sustainable development.

He added, “We at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters believe that culture is the true guarantor of sustainable development, and that interest in our

pre-oil heritage is not a regurgitation of the past, but rather an anticipation of the future through understanding the foundations of our modern renaissance.”

Al-Jassar emphasized that Kuwait’s celebration of the title of Arab Capital of Culture this year is not just a passing event, but rather “a recognition of our pioneering role in the Arab cultural scene,” indicating that this symposium confirms that Kuwait’s selection did not come from nowhere, but rather is the culmination of a long-standing cultural journey that began decades before the discovery of oil.

For her part, Assistant Secretary-General for the Culture Sector at the Council, Aisha Al-Mahmoud, said in a press statement that the symposium represents an important dialogue platform, noting that the symposium’s proceedings will be issued by the Council later in a documentary book.

The symposium program includes six morning and evening intellectual sessions over two days, with the participation of an elite group of academics and thinkers from Kuwait and the Arab world, who will address integrated themes including cultural history, social role, economy, education, identity, and other factors that shaped Kuwaiti culture before the major economic transformation.

The intellectual symposium will also be accompanied by a miniature exhibition of traditional handicrafts from the pre-oil period, such as Al-Sadu and Al-Qallaf (shipbuilding), as well as a corner for the Council’s periodical publications and Al-Arabi magazine.



diwaniya

ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Homeland and then citizen

“WHEN the Ministry of Interior announced the new traffic law four months ago and set a deadline for its full implementation for all road users, the goal was not to collect fines, but to protect citizens from the devastating consequences of traffic accidents, ranging from loss of life to serious injuries”, columnist **Ali Jaber Al-Ahmad** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“This measure is necessary for ensuring the safety of our roads and eliminating reckless drivers, provided that all motorists adhere to the law, which is designed to protect their lives and property.



Sheikh Ali

“Meanwhile, if it were logical and humane, I would address the respected officials at the Ministry of Interior, who have shown leniency in recent years towards residency law violators, and offered them ample time to rectify their status due to their financial circumstances.

“Would His Excellency the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, out of compassion for road users, consider exempting them from fines for the first two weeks after the law’s implementation, taking into account factors like age and forgetfulness, and allow individuals to correct their mistakes without penalty? By doing so, the ministry could remove the justifications of violators, and offer them a four-month grace period before the law takes full effect and a two-week exemption period after its enforcement.

“Furthermore, on the median strip of Khaled Yousef Al-Marzouq Street, which separates South and North Shuwaikh, we see many palm trees planted in tight proximity to each other, an act intended as a generous donation from the area’s residents. However, even the most novice gardener would recognize the issue with this planting method.

“Who, or what group, approved this ill-conceived arrangement of palm trees so close together? Where is the common sense in this decision, which doesn’t even require the expertise of engineers? Is the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources aware of this situation? If they are aware, we urge the government to intervene, cancel the current arrangement, and repurpose the space for residential plots to be distributed to citizens. If they are not aware, we strongly recommend this proposal be considered.

“Not every man values salt and bread.

Not every man who remains silent should be obeyed, A friend who turns into an army of goodness is like a fast food meal.”

“O God, protect Kuwait and its people from all evil and harm.”

□ □ □

“Addiction is one of the most widespread health issues worldwide, and it is a common misconception to associate the term exclusively with drug abuse. In reality, addiction is defined as a physical and psychological dependence on a substance or activity to the extent that the individual is unable to stop, despite the harmful effects on their health and daily life”, columnist **Dr. Waleed Al-Thunayan** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

“According to the American Society of Addiction Medicine, addiction is a chronic but treatable disease that alters the brain’s neural circuits and affects the body’s nervous systems, resulting in significant behavioral changes in the individual.

“Today, many families around the world are grappling with a different kind of addiction, which is their children’s addiction to electronic devices and video games.

“This growing issue has derailed the futures of countless young people and strained family dynamics, creating a disconnect between the addicted children and their environments at home, in school, and in society at large.

“To combat this destructive trend, society must actively reduce the chances of such addiction by providing free physical and artistic programs tailored to youth, and urging families to enroll their children in these activities. Unfortunately, many sports clubs today seem to cater only to the athletically gifted or those chasing competitive success.

“Society, through institutions like the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Health, must launch continuous awareness campaigns on media to educate parents about the signs of addiction, how to deal with them, and which entities they can turn to for support when the situation becomes unmanageable. This is especially vital, as most families lack access to this necessary information.

“We must stay vigilant, as we are facing a serious battle against addiction, whether to drugs or digital devices and games. It is a shared responsibility, and we must act with sincerity and unity to shield our society from this growing threat. This silent epidemic can enter any home unnoticed, with parents unaware of its symptoms or how to intervene, often resulting in tragic consequences for both families and children.”

□ □ □

“The Ministry of Social Affairs’ decision to suspend online donations through links and websites of charitable associations and foundations has justifications and reasons,” **Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“However, this will also halt most charitable work, until the ministry establishes the rules and guarantees for online donations. Until all these are completed, it is as if the ministry decided to put the horse behind the cart.

“It goes without saying that charitable work relies heavily on obtaining donations and grants for needy families and individuals and the disabled who will also suffer from this decision.

“While this is a regulatory decision, the logic behind it is for the ministry to exercise its role in establishing what-



Al-Kharafi

ever controls and standards it deems appropriate and be ready before implementing this decision, rather than suspending charitable work and requiring it to wait until it fulfills its duty of regulating online donations

that constitute an important part of charitable work flow.

“I am afraid this could be the characteristic of other decisions that have a negative impact on citizens, whose consequences necessitate taking more decisions.

“The results of any decision should be studied and scrutinized before it is made -- not after its implementation -- in order to understand and explore its implications. This is the rule in decision-making. Kuwaiti charitable work is a hallmark of the Kuwaiti people and a source of pride for us. It should not cease, leaving those who benefit from it to suffer.

“We hope that the ministry will swiftly implement the rules and regulations indicated in the suspension decision, so that Kuwaiti charitable work can continue its humanitarian journey and those in need can once again benefit from it. Allah is the Grantor of success.”

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

Speed thrills, hefty bills

Speeding fines in Kuwait can now reach up to KD 150

**KUWAIT CITY, April 27: A new Ministerial Decision has been issued, amending provisions of Ministerial Resolution No. 81/1976, which governs the executive regulations of the Traffic Law, reports Al-Seyassah daily.**

The resolution, published in its first article, modifies Article ‘211 bis’ of the Traffic Law to align with Clause ‘7’ of Article ‘41’ in Decree-Law No. 5/2025, which revises aspects of Decree-Law No. 67/1976 related to traffic violations.

Under the amended provisions, the settlement amounts for speeding violations will be based on the extent to which the speed limit is exceeded. The revised fines are as follows:

- 70 dinars for exceeding the speed limit by up to 20 kilometers.
- 80 dinars for exceeding the speed limit by 20 to 30 kilometers.
- 90 dinars for exceeding the speed limit by 30 to 40 kilometers.
- 100 dinars for exceeding the speed limit by 40 to 50 kilometers.
- 120 dinars for exceeding the speed limit by 50 to 60 kilometers.
- 130 dinars for exceeding the speed limit by



Photo by Samer Shiqer

Vehicles make their way to Kuwait City, the heart of the nation’s bustling urban landscape.

60 to 70 kilometers.

- 150 dinars for exceeding the speed limit by more than 70 kilometers.

This amendment is part of ongoing efforts to update and enforce traffic regulations in the country.

Inspections set for May

PAHW to handover 12 new service buildings

By Mohammad Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, April 27:** The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) will soon receive 12 service buildings in South Abdullah Al-Mubarak City, which will be transferred to the concerned government ministries.

The newspaper obtained copies of decrees stating that these service buildings -- located in Blocks Two and Three -- consist of a police station, a community development center, a social service facility, a fire station, a clinic, a central commercial market, a suite of retail establishments, a post office, a citizen services center, a municipal administration building, an elementary school and a preschool.

The formal handover of these facilities shall be conducted in the presence of representatives from the beneficiary government entities.

PAHW revealed that the receiving committees will conduct on-site evaluations, and then submit their findings and recommendations to the deputy director general for Implementation Affairs; contingent upon final approval by the director general.

The decrees stipulate that the formation of the competent committees is based on a formal correspondence between the contractor and the director general, affirming the readiness of the buildings for preliminary handover.

Following is the inspection schedule for these facilities:

- Social Unit on May 14
- Municipal Administration building on May 12
- Citizen service building on May 19
- Postal office on May 26
- Retail stores on May 28
- Preschool on June 1
- Health center on June 3
- Fire station on June 15
- Elementary school on June 18
- Central Market building on June 22
- Community Development Center on June 26
- Police station on June 30



Mol photo

The crocodile seized at a checkpoint.

Farwaniya security seize crocodile from citizen during routine check

**KUWAIT CITY, April 27:** Farwaniya security personnel have detained a citizen in his thirties after discovering a crocodile with him at a checkpoint in Abdullah Al-Mubarak near the Sixth Ring Road, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

According to a security source, the patrol teams were conducting routine checks the night before yesterday

when they noticed the driver’s suspicious behavior. Upon inspection, a box containing a crocodile was found in the vehicle. When questioned, the citizen claimed that he was raising the crocodile.

The case has been referred to the concerned authorities for further investigation.

News in Brief

Large-scale security campaign in Khaitan

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, April 27:** The Ministry of Interior has launched a large-scale security campaign in Khaitan as per the instructions of acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf.

The campaign resulted in the arrest of two individuals for the possession of narcotics, 22 wanted persons and violators of the Residency Law, and the issuance of 184 traffic tickets.

The General Traffic Department in the ministry revealed that it distributed 4,000 awareness leaflets on the new Traffic Law during the campaign, which began on Friday and continued until dawn on Saturday.

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**Bedoun doctor files complaint:** A Bedoun doctor has filed a complaint against a patient for alleged verbal abuse after requesting the latter to wait for his turn at the Sulaibikhat Clinic, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

Authorities have summoned the patient for investigation regarding the incident.

According to a security source, the doctor reported the incident to Sulaibikhat Police Station; stating that while on duty, he was surprised when a patient entered the treatment room without waiting in line. When the doctor asked the patient to leave and wait for his turn, the patient allegedly refused and began hurling insults at him.

□ □ □

**19 building violations cited:** The Public Relations Department at Kuwait Municipality said the Audit and Engineering Follow-up Department in the Municipality branch in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate has conducted an intensive inspection campaign to uncover violations in investment, commercial, industrial and private residential buildings in the governorate, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The campaign includes taking regulatory measures against those proven to have committed violations and to ensure compliance with the rules and regulations.

The department disclosed that this is the fifth campaign carried out by the specialized inspection team in the branch, covering several areas in the governorate.

It has been reported that 19 building violation citations were issued in Sabah Al-Salem during the campaign.



KFF photo

Members of Kuwait Fire Force pose for group photo.

KFF conducts drill at Salmiya West Clinic

**KUWAIT CITY, April 27:** The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, conducted a practical drill at the Salmiya West Clinic on Sunday morning.

According to a press release issued by KFF, the drill involved the evacuation of the center, the rescue of injured individuals, and the control of a fire scenario.

Such drills are part of KFF’s ongoing efforts to ensure a rapid response to emergencies, with the aim of protecting lives and property, and enhancing community safety in the country.

Meanwhile, a small fire broke out in an office at a school in Salmiya on Sunday

morning. No casualties were reported.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from Al-Bidaa and Salmiya fire stations rushed to the location and quickly extinguished the fire.

Additionally, fire broke out in a house in Abdullah Al-Mubarak, resulting in injuries to three individuals.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from Al-Somoud and Al-Istiqal fire stations rushed to the location, evacuated the house, and extinguished the fire before it spread further. The three individuals who were injured in the incident were handed over to paramedics.

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KUNA photo  
Secretary-General of the Kuwaiti Writers Association, Humaidi Al-Mutairi, during his participation in the 29th Muscat International Book Fair.

Debut participation boosts international presence

Kuwaiti Writers Association expands literary reach

MUSCAT, April 27, (KUNA): The Secretary General of the Kuwaiti Writers Association, Humaidi Al-Mutairi affirmed on Sunday the association’s interest in participating in cultural events and regional and international forums to highlight Kuwaiti literary works and creativity.

Al-Mutairi told KUNA on the sidelines of the association’s participation in the 29th Muscat International Book Fair, that this was the association’s first participation in a book fair outside the State of Kuwait since its establishment in 1964, noting that this marks a significant shift in the association’s approach and operations.

He added that the association’s new direction of participating in regional and international exhibitions

stems from its commitment to supporting and encouraging its members and promoting their literary and cultural works more broadly.

Al-Mutairi expressed his happiness with this participation, which coincides with Kuwait being chosen as the Capital of Arab Culture and Media for 2025.

He pointed out that during the fair, the association will display the works and publications of its members at its designated booth.

Al-Mutairi praised the efforts of the organizers of the fair and their cooperation in facilitating the association’s participation, which reflects the deep-rooted relations and strong brotherly ties between Kuwait and the Sultanate of Oman, especially in cultural and literary fields.

He also commended the significant and exceptional scientific and cultural movement-taking place in Oman, which highlights its deep civilizational and sheds light on the rich and authentic Omani heritage.

He expressed hope that this step would succeed in expanding the reach of Kuwaiti books and making them more accessible to readers in the brotherly Sultanate of Oman. He noted that the association plans to repeat this experience in upcoming Arab book fairs, as it serves its members.

The 29th Muscat International Book Fair kicked off last Thursday with the participation of 674 publishing houses representing 35 countries, including Kuwait. The fair features a variety of cultural and literary events and will continue until May third.

MoE’s decision to transfer employee deemed illegal

Legal Advise Department urges reversal

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

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: The Legal Advice and Legislation Department at the Council of Ministers has recommended withdrawing Administrative Decision No. 189/2024 issued by the Ministry of Education to transfer the director of the Investigations, Contracts and Inspection Department in the Legal Affairs Sector to the same position in the Administrative and Technical Affairs Department at Ahmadi Educational District due to the legal violations.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the memorandum submitted to the acting undersecretary of the ministry in which the Legal Ad-

vice and Legislation Department clarified that the transfer decision is not justified by the interests of work and it violated the provisions and regulations of the Civil Service Commission and the decisions of the Civil Service Council.

The employee was transferred from a specialized legal position to an administrative position that was not compatible with the nature of his specialization or qualifications; hence, it was considered a disguised disciplinary action.

The Legal Advice and Legislation Department pointed out that the transfer decision does not protect public interest or benefit public service, considering it is beneficial if the employee works in his field of specialization.

The position to which he was transferred does not fall within the scope of specialized legal positions with technical progression, which deprives the employee of his entitlements to bonuses and other financial benefits stipulated by law for those holding le-

gal positions.

This is based on Civil Service Council Resolution No. 20/2012, which limits these benefits to those working in the legal field.

The memorandum explained that the decision also violated Civil Service Council Resolution No. 38/2006 regarding the conditions for transfer and assignment.

It did not take into account equivalence in career progression, the nature of duties or the job group, instead it led to the employee being removed from his scope of expertise without justification.

The Legal Advice and Legislation Department concluded that the decision in question does not serve the best interests of the business and, in fact, affects the employee’s job status and rights.

It recommended withdrawing the decision and to reinstate the employee to the legal position commensurate with his qualifications and level of supervision in order to uphold the principle of justice and ensure the integrity of administrative procedures.

Students’ guide to scholarships abroad

MoE launches ‘Guide Me’ campaign

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

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: The Ministry of Higher Education has started preparing for the annual national campaign for external scholarships entitled, “Guide Me”.

Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal presided over a meeting recently, during which he reviewed the comprehensive visual presentation on the campaign.

The undersecretary of the ministry; assistant undersecretary for scholarships, equivalencies and cultural relations; department directors; specialists and advisors from the Minister’s Office attended the meeting.

The meeting included a visual presentation on the three main phases of the campaign. First is the introductory phase, during which the external scholarship plan is announced and comprehensive information is provided, including the approved specializations and countries.

Second is the advisory phase that provides a detailed explanation of the conditions and procedures. It also guides students on how to register correctly and raise their awareness on the common mistakes they might commit.

Third is the guidance phase, when the names of those accepted are announced, post-acceptance procedures are explained, and an orientation meeting for accepted students is held.

A total of 12 public and private entities will participate in the campaign to help students make informed decisions in accordance with their abilities and interests.

The campaign will officially start May 4 through the social media accounts of the ministry. It aims to inform, educate and guide Kuwaiti students -- high school graduates and graduates of foreign educational systems in and outside Kuwait -- who wish to obtain scholarships abroad.

This will ensure they are fully informed about scholarship procedures, select courses required by the labor market and submit applications correctly.

The campaign will be held at The Avenues Mall on May 25-30 to respond to the queries of students and their parents.

KPC sees surge in retirement applications

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: The oil sector is witnessing a remarkable rise in retirement applications, particularly in Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiaries, reports Al-Rai daily.

Sources revealed that over the past week alone, 10 senior officials from the International Marketing Sector of

KPC, including managers and team leaders, have submitted their retirement applications.

Sources said the recent spike in retirements reflects a trend that has gained momentum since the beginning of the month. Sources added that more retirement applications are expected in the coming days, including from at

least one high-ranking official who has hinted at stepping down soon.

Sources stated that the growing number of early retirements is attributed to the desire among oil sector officials to capitalize on current financial incentives available to retirees, which may not remain in place long term.

Circular outlines eligibility criteria

Education Ministry opens nominations for supervisory positions in 2024/2025

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: The Ministry of Education has issued a circular regarding supervisory educational positions for public, private, and religious education schools, as well as the Special Education Department, for the 2024/2025 academic year, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to the circular, the positions include school principal and assistant principal roles for kindergarten, primary, and intermediate levels.

The registration period for nominations will be open from April 27 to May 8 via the ministry’s website. Years of experience will be calculated up to October 31 as part of the required experience.

Candidates with experience in two stages can be nominated for their current stage if they have completed three consecutive years in it, or for their previous stage if there is a nomination available for it.

Candidates must be Kuwaiti citizens and have received an actual “excellent” performance rating for the past three academic years.

All candidates on the waiting list must register their nominations via the website. If they meet the nomination criteria, their test scores and personal interview results will be considered according to the new criteria outlined in Ministerial Decision No. 116/2025. Candidates may choose to have their test or interview scores, or both, recalculated.

The ministry outlined specific requirements for nominations at different educational levels.

For the kindergarten stage, candidates for the position of school principal must have at least one year of experience as an assistant principal. For the assistant principal role, candidates must have a minimum of three years of experience as a technical supervisor. Music teachers are required to have 11 years of experience for those with an educational degree, 12 years for

those with a non-educational degree, and 13 years for those with a diploma.

For the primary stage (male), the requirements for nominating a school principal include at least three years of experience as an assistant principal. Candidates for the assistant principal position must have at least six years of experience as a department head. Music and computer science teachers are required to have 14 years of experience for those with an educational degree, 15 years for those with a non-educational degree, and 16 years for those with a diploma.

For the primary stage (female), candidates for the principal position must have at least four years of experience as an assistant principal, and for the assistant principal position, at least eight years of experience as a department head. Music and computer science teachers must have 16 years of experience for those with an educational degree, 17 years for those with a non-educational degree, and 18 years for those with a diploma.

For the intermediate stage (male), candidates for the principal position must have at least four years of experience as an assistant principal. For the assistant principal position, at least six years of experience as a department head is required. Music teachers must have 14 years of experience for those with an educational degree, 15 years for those with a non-educational degree, and 16 years for those with a diploma.

For the intermediate stage (female), candidates for the principal position must have at least four years of experience as an assistant principal. For the assistant principal position, at least eight years of experience as a department head is required. Music teachers must have 16 years of experience for those with an educational degree, 17 years for those with a non-educational degree, and 18 years for those with a diploma.

Four Jahra areas being considered

Municipality considers wilderness sites for temporary wedding halls

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: The Kuwait Municipality is reviewing a proposal to designate four wilderness sites in Jahra Governorate for the establishment of temporary wedding halls and event tents, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources informed the daily that the proposed locations are strategically located in various areas in the governorate as follows:

- Camel stables area opposite Jahra Industrial City
- Al-Oyoun, behind the gas station at the former camping site
- Pilgrims Rest House, opposite the Sixth Ring Road
- Saad Al-Abdullah, at the site of the old scrapyard

Sources explained this aims to provide regulated and designated spaces for large events, particularly weddings, in response to growing demand.

Sources said the concerned authorities have stressed that any future use of these sites must be in compliance with the regulations set by relevant entities, including the Ministry of Interior, Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) and the Environment Public Authority (EPA).

These conditions include:

- No construction of permanent fences around the sites
- Minimum distance of 500 meters from main roads
- 100-meter buffer from high-voltage electrical lines
- 200-meter distance from nearby facilities
- Strict maintenance of site cleanliness and environmental standards

Sources added the proposal is still under review; as officials intend to assess its alignment with safety, environmental and urban planning regulations.

# APRIL

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Education Ministry rolls out major academic calendar reforms

Kuwait mulls earlier school start, Ramadan break adjustment

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: The Ministry of Education is considering an earlier start for the 2025/2026 academic year and plans to include the last ten days of Ramadan as part of the holidays, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to educational sources, the ministry is currently working on the academic calendar in coordination with relevant authorities. The plan is to have school administrations begin on September 1, with students returning to school on September 7. This adjustment is being considered to compensate for the holiday during the last ten days of Ramadan, a period the ministry is contemplating suspending. The goal is to allow students and teachers to focus on worship and to promote religious and social values during this special time.

Meanwhile, the ministry announced that registration for educational supervisory positions is open from Sunday, April 27 to May 8. Interested individuals can apply through the Ministry of Education's website under the "Electronic Services" section, specifically the "Educational Supervisory Positions Services."

In another development, the acting Undersecretary of Public Education Affairs Mansour Al-Dhafiri announced changes to the dates and procedures for the examination control center for the end of the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year for the twelfth grade, as per Ministerial Resolution No. 115/2025, issued on April 1.

Al-Dhafiri explained that the start period for the examination control center has been reduced by approximately 27 days compared to previous years. The start date for the control center for the science, arts, and religious education sections will now be Sunday, April 13, instead of the previous date of Sunday, March 16.

The period from April 17 to April 24 was set for the printing

and reviewing of twelfth-grade student transcripts by school administrations from the student record system. The period from May 11 to May 15 will be designated for conducting exams for subjects outside the schedule. Grades will be recorded in the student's record, and grade sheets (including daily work, practical work, and exams for subjects outside the schedule) will be printed for review by the school. Vertical technical review sheets for subjects outside the schedule will also be issued and recorded in the school's student record system.

On May 19, the student record system will be closed for entering or modifying grades for twelfth-grade students at the end of that day.

On May 22, the seat numbers for twelfth-grade students applying for the General Secondary Education Examinations will be announced on the ministry's website.

On May 26, the exam committee cards and roll call lists for twelfth-grade students applying for the General Secondary Education Examinations will be made available on the ministry's website by the end of that day. Seat numbers for students applying for the second round of exams will be set on June 30.

Al-Dhafiri confirmed that the exams for subjects outside the schedule (Quran, Constitution, and Human Rights) for home-schooled students will be standardized throughout the ministry.

He stressed that if any of the unified tenth- and eleventh-grade certificates are unavailable, an equivalency certificate from the Private Education Department's Certificate Equivalency Department must be attached, irrespective of whether the student is studying outside Kuwait or transferred from private (foreign) schools. Also, a curriculum system certificate or the result of the equivalency exam for religious education certificates must be provided if the student is studying at home.

Continued from Page 1

Jordan missed

Jordan has suffered a lot as a result of these actions. Therefore, when Jordan decided to ban the group, it relieved itself of a considerable burden. Although this step came later than hoped, it effectively thwarted a plot aimed at undermining Arab national security.

Blocking the

The decision stipulates that if the commitment is for a period of 15 years with one-time payment of the rental value, the 10G capacity will be rented at KD54,111 and KD216,446 for a 100G capacity circuit.

On the other hand, Sheikh Athbi Jaber Al-Sabah also issued a decision regarding the tariff for international leased circuits for internet services through international submarine and land cables and the interconnection tariff (retail sale).

He said the rental value tariff will be KD133,848 for additional capacity subscriptions for international leased circuits for internet services for a capacity of (10G) STM64; if a commitment is made for a period of one year with a one-time payment of the rental value, while for the environmental connection, the capacity and duration will cost KD111,540 and this is applicable to additional subscriptions, not the existing ones.

He revealed the decision states that the additional capacity subscriptions included in the tariff mentioned in this decision may be sold to end users, whether individuals or companies (retail sale). "The decision prohibits selling them to companies licensed as internet service providers or providers, in accordance with the Ministry of Communications' decision, the CITRA Law, and the regulations and decisions issued in this regard," he said.

The decision regulates the work between the internet and communications portal of CITRA and local telecommunications and internet networks. It requires telecommunications and internet companies and those licensed to manage, establish or operate a telecommunications network or internet service to provide communications to the public and information or content providers to connect the network they use to the internet and communications portal of CITRA in accordance with the privacy protection standards set by the authority.

Kuwait tightens

**Question:** The implementation of the hydrogenated fats regulation is set to be announced by early May. Will it be released on time?

**Answer:** Yes, the regulation on hydrogenated trans fats is already in effect in most Gulf countries and worldwide. We aim for Kuwait to become a country free from hydrogenated trans fats and to ban the import of foods containing these fats or their use at home. According to the World Health Organization's recommendations, individuals should consume no more than one percent of trans fats due to their severe health risks.

**Q.** What is the mechanism for implementing the regulation?

**A.** The regulation will be implemented in two phases. The first phase will take place before food enters Kuwait, where health and laboratory certificates will be checked, along with the product's nutritional label. If the product contains more than two percent hydrogenated fats, it will be rejected and not allowed entry for ensuring the safety of imported food. The second phase will involve inspections of restaurants and food establishments. Any establishment found using hydrogenated raw materials in its production will face penalties through intensive inspection campaigns. Statistics will be published to assess the impact of the regulation's implementation. No reconciliation will be allowed for violations.

**Q.** Did you encounter any difficulties in dealing with companies?

**A.** Initially, there were some concerns about implementation, but we later realized that this regulation is well-known to large companies, and there are no issues with its enforcement. These companies are eager to obtain international recognition and accreditation.

**Q.** What is the penalty for non-compliance with the regulation?

**A.** The penalty is non-negotiable. Violations involving the use of non-compliant materials, whether for display or circulation, do not fall under financial penalties and will be referred directly to the Public Prosecution.

He also referred to Kuwaiti consumer's desire to diversify consumption sources, and back Arab products and deliver them easily.

Kuwait ramps

Furthermore, the Ministry of Electricity urged the public to ensure prudent energy consumption; reiterating its intention to pursue legal recourse against any entity or individual found to be engaged in excessive electricity usage through unauthorized activities that deplete the national electricity supply.

Also, sources from the ministry indicated such reduction in consumption is projected to result in an annual savings of KD15 million.

Meanwhile, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi has called on the Board of Directors of the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies to instruct cooperative societies to reduce their electricity loads and rationalize consumption, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Peru to

He pointed out that Peru has succeeded in overcoming these challenges and it has become one of the leading global exporter; hence, it is a reliable partner committed to strengthening relations with Kuwait.

He announced that Chialler will arrive in Kuwait on Tuesday; as part of a Gulf tour, including Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia. He said the tour aims to create new opportunities for investment and trade, and strengthen inter-regional ties.

On the agreements, he confirmed that Chialler will sign a memorandum of understanding between the National Library of Kuwait and the National Library of Peru; adding that the two sides are discussing other memoranda of understanding.

On tourism, he disclosed that the Embassy of Peru issues around 250 visas for Kuwaitis annually. "Kuwaitis are currently required to obtain a visa to enter Peru, which is usually issued on the same day of submitting the application," he clarified.

He also stressed that the Gulf states have become a main player in the foreign policy of Peru since 2010, following the visit of the former foreign affairs minister to the region that coincided with the ASPA summit in Lima, which signaled the beginning of Peru's openness to the Arab world.



Part of the signing of a cooperation agreement.

KUNA photo

Kuwait strengthens credential check with global partnership

New shield against degree fraud

KUWAIT CITY, April 27, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Higher Education announced on Sunday the signing of a cooperation agreement with Quadrabay Verification Services, a leading global firm specializing in verifying academic and professional qualifications directly from their original sources.

Acting Undersecretary of Higher

Education and Scientific Research Ministry, Lamia Al-Melhem said the agreement marks a significant step in the ministry's efforts to ensure the authenticity of academic credentials, particularly in the medical sector.

This reflects the ministry's commitment to upholding the highest standards of quality, professionalism, and fairness in the certification process.

Al-Melhem explained that, in its initial phase, the agreement will focus on verifying the academic and professional qualifications of healthcare workers to strengthen the integrity of the health sector and ensure the competence of medical staff.

She added that the cooperation would speed up the certification approval process, reduce fraud, and minimize human error through a reliable digital verification platform, boosting both local and international confidence in Kuwait's qualification approval procedures.

Al-Melhem stressed that the agreement enhances institutional partnerships between the ministry and regulatory bodies and supports Kuwait's international reputation for adopting professional verification mechanisms.



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Tender Fees to be deposited in the National bank of Kuwait (NBK) Account No. 1001132057. Saudi Suppliers can collect the tender documents from Saudi Arabian Chevron office in Al-Khobar Telephone No.: (013) 8645104 - Fax No.: (013) 8985436

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# 9 people killed after car rams into Filipino street festival in Vancouver

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, April 27, (AP): A man drove a vehicle into a crowd at a Filipino heritage festival in the Canadian city of Vancouver, killing at least nine people and injuring an unknown number of others, police said Sunday.

The vehicle entered the street at 8:14 pm on Saturday and struck people attending the Lapu Lapu Day festival, the Vancouver Police Department said in a social media post.

Several other people were injured, but the exact number of casualties wasn't immediately available.

A 30-year-old Vancouver man was arrested at the scene and the department's Major Crime Section is overseeing the investigation, police said.

"At this time, we are confident that this incident was not an act of terrorism," the police department posted early Sunday.

Interim Vancouver Police Chief Steve Rai told a news conference that the man was arrested after initially being apprehended by bystanders.

Video circulating on social media

shows a young man in a black hoodie with his back against a chain-link fence, alongside a security guard and surrounded by bystanders screaming and swearing at him.

"I'm sorry," the man says, holding his hand to his head.

Rai declined to comment on the video, but said the person in custody was a "lone male" who was "known to police in certain circumstances."

The festival was being held in a South Vancouver neighborhood. Video posted on social media showed victims and debris strewn across a long stretch of road, with at least seven people lying immobile on the ground. A black SUV with a crumpled front section could be seen in still photos from the scene.

Carayn Nulada said that she pulled her granddaughter and grandson off the street and used her body to shield them from the SUV. She said that her daughter suffered a narrow escape.

"The car hit her arm and she fell down, but she got up, looking for us, because she is scared," said Nulada,

who described children screaming, and pale-faced victims lying on the ground or wedged under vehicles.

"I saw people running and my daughter was shaking."

Nulada was in Vancouver General Hospital's emergency room early Sunday morning, trying to find news about her brother, who was run down in the attack and suffered multiple broken bones.

Doctors identified him by presenting the family with his wedding ring in a pill bottle and said that he was stable, but would be facing surgery.

James Cruzat, a Vancouver business owner, was at the event and heard a car rev its engine and then "a loud noise, like a loud bang" that he initially thought might be a gunshot.

"We saw people on the road crying, others were like running, shouting, or even screaming, asking for help. So we tried to go there just to check what was really actually happening until we found some bodies on the ground. Others were lifeless, others like, you know, injured," Cruzat said.



Vancouver police secure the scene after a car drove into a crowd at the Lapu Lapu Festival in Vancouver, British Columbia on April 26. (AP)

Murphy's 'emergency' message about US president connecting with voters

# Georgia Democrat Ossoff says Trump's 'chaos and uncertainty' hurts economy

MARIETTA, Ga., April 27, (AP): Democratic Sen Jon Ossoff of Georgia said Saturday that President Donald Trump's unsettled economic policy is the biggest problem facing his state, saying the "chaos and uncertainty" is hurting the ability of businesses and individuals to makes decisions for the future.

Ossoff, who's gearing up to run for reelection in 2026, has been ramping up his criticism of Trump even as he says he will seek to work with Republicans and the Trump administration to deliver for Georgia. In his first four years, Ossoff tried to carve out a reputation as a traditional senator interested in advancing Georgia's traditional interests, including its farmers and military bases.

The 38-year-old Ossoff defeated incumbent Republican Sen. David Perdue in a 2021 runoff that helped flip control of the Senate to Democrats for four years. He's the only Democrat seeking reelection in 2026 who represents a state that Trump carried in 2024, making him a top target for Republicans seeking to defend their current Senate majority.

The Republican field is currently frozen, awaiting a decision from two-term Republican Gov. Brian Kemp on whether he will seek to unseat Ossoff. The Democrat declined to discuss how he would run against Kemp or any other Republican, saying only, "I am more than prepared for any chal-

lenger."

He spoke in an interview with The Associated Press at Dobbins Air Reserve Base in the Atlanta suburb of Marietta, Georgia, following a meeting with students interested in appointments to military academies. Here are some excerpts from the conversation:

**Ossoff:** "Look, at this very moment as we conduct this interview, and of course, this can change by the hour depending upon the president's whim, businesses are unable to invest with an understanding of what the rules of international trade will be from one hour or week or month to the next. Households are unable to plan their annual budgets because there's so much chaos and uncertainty in the implementation of federal economic policy. This administration needs to clearly define its economic objectives, and it needs to competently implement its plan, whatever that plan may be. The fact that the White House does not even know what its policy is, and is with such unpredictability and chaos, lurching from one policy to the other, is putting the state's economy at serious economic risk."

**Ossoff:** "I think it's clear. We have never seen a president try to wield the federal government to crush his critics and political adversaries. That's something new in American history, and it is, in my view, un-American. And it's something that should chill us to the bone, no matter our politics, no mat-



Sen Chris Murphy, D-Conn., speaks from the stage of the Haw River Ball Room during a town hall in Saxapahaw, NC on April 24 as Rep. Maxwell Frost, D-Fla., (left), listens. (AP)

ter our policy preferences. And with every new exercise of unprecedented presidential power, what I remind my Republican colleagues and my Republican and conservative friends and supporters here in Georgia, is that one day again there will be a Democratic president in the White House, and the shoe will be on the other foot. This is about checks and balances. This is about whether or not the executive branch is constrained as designed by our Constitution, by judicious legislators who can

put their partisanship aside to protect the public interest."

**Ossoff:** "My view is that the American people expect and deserve secure borders. And I think the Biden administration failed in its border policies. The American people expect and deserve for people who enter this country illegally and may pose a threat to public safety or national security to be apprehended by the authorities. But the American people don't support and don't expect federal police raids on

elementary schools and hospitals and churches. And don't except our military installations to become mass prison camps for immigrants. And don't want entire families rounded up with no due process. We just learned yesterday about a 2-year-old US citizen, a 2-year-old girl, who was deported without due process. Our immigration policy needs to be responsible and serious. It also needs to be humane."

**Also:**

**SAXAPAHAW, NC:** Connecticut Sen Chris Murphy isn't drawing arena-size crowds like Vermont Sen Bernie Sanders and New York Rep Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez are as he tours the country talking to voters. But in a packed concert hall in rural North Carolina, people are starting to view the Democrat as worthy of the national spotlight.

Murphy and Rep. Maxwell Frost, D-Fla., have been staging events in Republican congressional districts in recent weeks, trolling GOP lawmakers such as Rep. Richard Hudson, who represents the area they visited Thursday. Hudson, the chairman of the House GOP campaign arm, has discouraged Republicans from holding town halls, so Murphy and Frost decided to hold one on his home turf in North Carolina.

"We are doing the job that these Republican congressmen and senators won't do," Murphy told the hyped-up crowd of mostly older voters at

the event, while acknowledging that Democrats need to do more to soothe their anxiety and counter President Donald Trump. "I want to make sure that everywhere, in every corner of this country, people are willing to stand up and fight."

As other Democrats grasp for a response to Trump's election, unsure of how to confront him, Murphy is channeling his own frustration and anger into a sustained blitz of television appearances, fundraising appeals, Senate floor speeches and events like the one in North Carolina. He also is talking directly to voters on social media, including through lengthy live videos on Instagram where he sits in his kitchen with a cocktail and tries to explain what he sees as "the central story" of Trump's presidency - "the billionaire takeover of our government made possible by the destruction of our democracy."

It's a methodical approach for Murphy, 51, a serious-minded legislator who has been most well known for his yearslong fight to stem gun violence in the aftermath of the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut that killed 20 first-grade students and six educators.

While the kitchen talks on Instagram seem to come more naturally to Murphy than riling up a crowd, his message is clearly resonating with his party's base of voters, many of whom are angry at Democrats in Washington for inaction.

# It might be Carney vs. Poilievre to lead Canada, but Trump unofficially on ballot

TORONTO, April 27, (AP): Donald Trump might as well be on the ballot when Canadians vote for a new government.

The U.S. president's trade war and threats to make Canada the 51st state have infuriated Canadians and led to a surge in nationalism that has helped the Liberal Party flip the narrative heading into Monday's parliamentary election, at least in opinion polls.

"Trump is the campaign," former Quebec Premier Jean Charest said. "The ballot question is who is the person we are going to choose to face Trump. Everything has changed."

Foreign policy hasn't affected a Canadian election this much since 1988, when, ironically, free trade with the United States dominated the political discourse.

Prime Minister Mark Carney, the Liberal leader who was sworn in on March 14 following Justin Trudeau's resignation, led in the polls heading into Monday, marking a dramatic turnaround for a party that seemed destined for a crushing defeat until Trump started launching broadsides at Canada's economy and sovereignty.

"We are in a crisis. President Trump is threatening Canada, he's threatening



Liberal Leader Mark Carney waits to be introduced at his rally beside the Ambassador Bridge in Windsor, Ontario, on April 26. (AP)

our companies, he's threatening our workers, he's threatening the savings of our retirees," Carney said Tuesday. "This threat is not only an economic threat, it is an existential threat."

Until a few months ago, Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre was seen as a shoo-in to become the next

prime minister by shepherding his opposition faction back into power for the first time in a decade.

Charest, a moderate who led Canada's French-speaking province from 2003-2012, said if Trump wants to help his ideological allies abroad, he needs to tone down the bluster.

# Romanians confront deluge of online disinformation ahead of election redo

BUCHAREST, Romania, April 27, (AP): Romanians are confronting a deluge of online disinformation ahead of a fraught presidential election redo next week, including ominous claims that the NATO member country is surging toward "imminent war" with Russia.

The campaign, attributed to unidentified anti-government and pro-Russian actors, underscores how large social media platforms can be exploited to fuel distrust and spin anti-Western narratives.

It's also a somber lesson for other democracies across the European Union.

Romania's political landscape was shaken last November when Calin Georgescu, a little-known, far-right populist, won the most votes in the first round of the presidential election, advancing to the runoff against reformist Elena Lasconi of the progressive Save Romania Union party.

Soon, allegations emerged of electoral violations and a Russian campaign promoting Georgescu, following declassified intelligence showing a highly-sophisticated, coordinated campaign via TikTok. Moscow denied



A man records video of Calin Georgescu, an independent candidate for president who won the first round of presidential elections, speaking to media outside a closed voting station after Romania's Constitutional Court annulled the first round of presidential elections, in Mogosoaia, Dec 8, 2024. (AP)

it meddled.

Romania's Constitutional Court then annulled the vote and ordered a redo.

Georgescu, who has praised Russian President Vladimir Putin and criticized NATO and the EU, is now under

criminal investigation. In March, he was barred from running in the May 4 election redo, prompting chaos on the streets of Romania's capital, Bucharest, as his incensed supporters staged protests that descended into violence.



Ukrainian searchers clear the rubble after a Russian ballistic missile attack in Kyiv, Ukraine on April 24. (AP)

# Russia launches nearly 150 drones against Ukraine as US doubts Putin desire for peace

KYIV, Ukraine, April 27, (AP): Russia launched a sweeping drone assault across Ukraine overnight into Sunday, targeting multiple regions, officials said, after US President Donald Trump cast doubt over Russian President Vladimir Putin's willingness to end the war.

One person was killed and a 14-year-old girl wounded in the city of Pavlohrad in the Dnipropetrovsk region, which was hit for the third consecutive night, regional Gov. Serhii Lysak said.

The attacks came hours after Russia claimed to have regained control over the remaining parts of the Kursk region, which Ukrainian forces seized in a surprise incursion last August. Ukrainian officials said the fighting in Kursk was still ongoing.

Trump said Saturday that he doubts Putin wants to end the more than three-year war in Ukraine, expressing new skepticism that a peace deal can be reached soon. Only a day earlier, Trump had said Ukraine and Russia were "very close to a deal."

"There was no reason for Putin to be shooting missiles into civilian areas, cities and towns, over the last few days," Trump wrote in a social media post as he flew back to the United States after attending Pope Francis' funeral at the Vatican, where he met briefly with Ukrainian

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Trump also hinted at further sanctions against Russia.

The Trump-Zelenskyy conversation on the sidelines of the pope's funeral was the first face-to-face encounter between the two leaders since they argued during a heated Oval Office meeting at the White House in late February.

Russia fired 149 exploding drones and decoys in the latest wave of attacks, the Ukrainian air force said, adding that 57 were intercepted and another 67 jammed.

One person also was wounded in drone attacks on the Odesa region and another in the city of Zhitomir, according to local officials.

Russia's Defense Ministry said Sunday that air defenses shot down five Ukrainian drones in the border region of Bryansk, as well as three drones over the Crimean peninsula, which was illegally annexed by Russia in 2014.

Five people were wounded when Ukrainian forces shelled the city of Horlivka in the partially occupied Donetsk region, the city's Russian-installed Mayor Ivan Prikhodko said.

A peace proposal by the Trump administration that includes recognizing Russian authority over Crimea shocked Ukrainian officials, who say they will not accept any formal surrender of the peninsula,

even though they expect to concede the territory to the Kremlin, at least temporarily.

Giving up the land that was illegally annexed by Russia in 2014 is also politically and legally impossible, according to experts. It would require a change to the Ukrainian constitution and a nationwide vote, and it could be considered treason. Lawmakers and the public are firmly opposed to the idea.

"It doesn't mean anything," said Oleksandr Merezhko, a lawmaker with Zelenskyy's party. "We will never recognize Crimea as part of Russia."

Unlike a territorial concession, a formal surrender would permanently relinquish Crimea and abandon the hope that Ukraine could regain it in the future.

The Ukrainian public largely understands that land must be ceded as part of any armistice because there is no way to retake it militarily. Polls indicate a rising percentage of the population accepts such a trade-off.

But much of the public messaging about land concessions has suggested that they are not necessarily permanent, as when Kyiv Mayor Vitalii Klitschko told the BBC recently that Ukraine may need to temporarily give up land as part of a peace deal.



We're not here practicing a war plan: Cederholm

## US forces deploy anti-ship missiles in Philippines, stage live-fire drills near China hotspots

BATAN ISLAND, Philippines, April 27, (AP): The US military has deployed an anti-ship missile launcher for the first time on Batan Island in the Philippines, as Marines unloaded the high-precision weapon on the northern tip of the archipelago, just a sea border away from Taiwan.

US and Philippine forces separately unleashed a barrage of missile and artillery fire that shot down several drones acting as hostile aircraft in live-fire drills on Sunday in Zambales province facing the disputed South China Sea.

The mock battle scenarios over the weekend in the annual Balikatan exercises between the US and its oldest treaty ally in Asia, the Philippines, not only simulated real-life war. They were also staged near major geopolitical hotspots, which have become delicate frontlines in the regional rivalry between China and the US under former US president Joe Biden and now Donald Trump.

About 9,000 American and 5,000 Filipino military personnel took part in the combat maneuvers. At least 260 Australian personnel also joined, with smaller observer delegations from Japan and other countries.

China has fiercely opposed the combat drills as provocative. Its aircraft carrier group sailed by a few days earlier near Batanes, where the US military had deployed the Navy Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System on Saturday on Batan near the Bashi Channel just south of Taiwan, a critical trade and military route that the US and Chinese militaries have tried to gain strategic control of.

"The introduction of NMESIS into the first island chain for sea denial, sea control is another step in our force design journey," US Marine Lt Gen Michael Cederholm told a small group of journalists, including from The Associated Press, who were invited to witness the transport of the missile system aboard a C-130 Air Force aircraft to Batanes. "We're not here practicing a war plan," said Cederholm. "We're practicing for the defense of the Philippines."

The US and the Philippines have denied the annual combat maneuvers - which both said would focus on a "full-scale battle scenario" this year - were aimed at China or any adversary. The lines between what's mock and real, however, have been at times murky.

Asked if US forces would pull out the anti-ship missile system from Batanes after the combat drills, Cederholm did not reply clearly.



US Marines prepare a US Marine Air Defense Integrated System, or MAD-IS, before a live-fire joint Philippines-US military exercise at a Philippine Navy training camp in San Antonio, Zambales province, northern Philippines on April 27. (AP)

"We don't broadcast when we're going in, when we're coming out and how long things are going to stay," Cederholm said. "All I'll say is we're here at the invitation and with the support of the Philippine government."

"But I'm glad it's here," he said.

Additionally, China had repeatedly expressed its strong opposition to the US Army deployment last year of a mid-range missile system in the Philippines for joint exercises.

The US Army launcher with at least 16 Standard Missile-6 and the Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles was repositioned in January from an international airport in northern Laoag city to a northwestern coastal area facing the Scarborough Shoal, where China's forces have used water cannons and dangerous blocking maneuvers against Philippine coast guard and fishery ships and fired flares near Manila's patrol planes, a Philippine official then told The AP.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity due to a lack of authority to discuss the delicate issue publicly.

Tomahawk missiles can travel over 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers), which places China within their target range.

During the combat exercises from April 21 to May 9, American and Filipino forces will also practice jointly defending Philippine islands by repelling hostile forces attempting to assault from the sea in the western Philippine province of Palawan, which faces the South China Sea, and in northern Cagayan province near Batanes.

Philippine Brig. Gen. Michael Logico said the combat exercises were crucial to strengthening deterrence against aggression in the Bashi Channel.

"A peaceful region can only be maintained through a proper balance of strength between opposing forces until such time that ... both countries decide that it's not going to be worth it to fight over this area," Logico said.

Early this month, the Chinese military staged largescale drills in the waters around Taiwan and renewed a warning to the self-ruled democracy not to seek independence. Chinese navy, air, ground and rocket forces staged the drills.

The Philippines used to host two of the largest US Navy and Air Force bases outside the American mainland. The bases were shut down in the early 1990s after the Philippine Senate rejected an extension, but American forces returned for large-scale combat exercises with Filipino troops under a 1999 agreement.

Cederholm cited the tens of thousands of US military personnel, along with Filipino scouts, buried in the vast American cemetery in Manila as proof of Washington's commitment to help defend the Philippines beyond the US bases era in the Philippines.

"We take our treaty obligations very seriously," Cederholm said.

## South Korea's liberal leader Lee wins party nomination to run for president

SEOUL, South Korea, April 27, (AP): Lee Jae-myung, a liberal who wants greater economic parity in South Korea and warmer ties with North Korea, became the main opposition party's presidential candidate Sunday, solidifying his position as front-runner to succeed recently ousted conservative President Yoon Suk Yeol.

The former Democratic Party chief had led the opposition-controlled parliament's impeachment of Yoon over the imposition of martial law in December. The country's Constitutional Court formally dismissed Yoon earlier this month, prompting a snap presidential election on June 3 to find a new president.

In a nationally televised announcement, the Democratic Party announced Lee won its presidential nomination with nearly 90% of the votes cast during the primary that ended Sunday, defeating two competitors.

"Now, the people and our party colleagues gave me an opportunity to win back the presidency and build a new, real Republic of Korea. Thank you! I'll humbly uphold that ardent, serious task," Lee said in a victory speech.

Lee, 60, who served as the governor of South Korea's most populous Gyeonggi province and a mayor of Seongnam city, is the clear favorite to win the election.

In a Gallup Korea poll released Friday, 38% of respondents chose Lee as their preferred choice, while all other aspirants obtained single-digit ratings. The main conservative People Power Party is to nominate its candidate next weekend. Its four presidential hopefuls competing to win the party ticket won a combined 23% of support ratings in the Gallup survey. It will be Lee's third bid to run for president. He lost the 2022 election to Yoon in the narrowest margin in the country's presidential elections. In 2017, Lee ranked third in a Democratic Party primary.

Lee has long established an image as an anti-establishment figure who can eliminate deep-rooted inequality and corruption in South Korea. But his critics view him as a populist who relies on stoking divisions and demonizing opponents and worry his rule would likely further polarize the country.

Lee currently faces five trials for corruption and other criminal charges. If he becomes president, those trials will likely stop as he will enjoy special presidential immunity from most criminal charges.

Lee's rise comes as conservatives are struggling to win back public confidence in the wake of Yoon's martial law decree that plunged the country into turmoil. The People Power Party is grappling with internal feuding between senior members defending Yoon's action and reformist members who voted for his impeachment.

"This election is a venue where the people hand down their judgment on Yoon's martial law imposition after the Constitutional Court issued a judicial judgment on it," said Choi Jin, director of the Seoul-based Institute of Presidential Leadership.



South Korea's main opposition Democratic Party's former leader Lee Jae-myung, (center), attends a party's convention in Goyang, South Korea on April 27. (AP)

## DomRep under fire as deportations of pregnant women to Haiti increase

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, April 27, (AP): The United Nations and human rights activists are warning about an increase in pregnant women being deported from the Dominican Republic to Haiti, where they say their lives are being put at risk.

Less than 40% of health centers in Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, remain open as gang violence surges.

Meanwhile, the University Hospital of Mirebalais, which has around 300 beds and is located in Haiti's central region, has suspended operations, according to a statement Thursday from the U.N.

The U.N. said two other hospitals in that area "face critical shortages, including oxygen and emergency medical kits."

The two hospitals have treated more than 200 patients for gunshot wounds, strokes, malnutrition and suspected cholera since the Mirebalais hospital closed, according to the U.N.

U.N. spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric said that many of those deported "arrive in precarious and highly vulnerable conditions, often without any resources."

The International Organization for Migration said that it has seen an increase in women deported from the Dominican Republic in recent weeks, along with children and newborns.

It warned they're being deported to a country "where access to basic services remains severely limited."

The increase in those deportations comes as the administration of Dominican President Luis Abinader implemented a new measure this week requiring hospital staff to ask patients for their identification, work permits and proof of residence.

The measure is one of more than a dozen announced earlier this month to crack down on migrants living in the Dominican Republic without legal permission, as people in neighboring Haiti flee a surge in gang violence.

On Tuesday, the Dominican Republic's migration agency arrested 48 pregnant women and 39 others who just gave birth, along with 48 minors. On Wednesday, agents arrested 78 other migrants at hospitals, although the agency didn't provide additional details.

Amnesty International on Thursday called on Abinader's administration to repeal the measure, saying it "must



Haitians line up at non-profit help center to receive food after being deported from the Dominican Republic in Belladere, Haiti on Jan 30. (AP)

take concrete action against racial discrimination." Haiti and the Dominican Republic share the Caribbean island of Hispaniola.

Abinader visited the shared border on Thursday, telling soldiers that it was "completely unacceptable" to let through any migrants trying to enter the Dominican Republic illegally.

He also dismissed criticism by Amnesty International and called on the rights group to work in Haiti and address its crises. "My responsibility is to defend the Dominican Republic," he said. Overall, the Dominican Republic has expelled more than 180,000 people since October, when it announced mass deportations.

### Bid to ease access to critical minerals

## US oversees peace pledge for east Congo

WASHINGTON, April 27, (AP): US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Friday oversaw the signing by Congo and Rwanda of a pledge to work toward a peace deal that would ease US access to critical minerals in resource-rich eastern Congo, bringing US influence to bear in a minerals trade that has helped fuel conflict that has killed millions for three decades.

Rubio's participation in the Washington ceremony with his Central African counterparts is an early step in what the Trump administration says is a rebuilding of US foreign policy to focus on transactions of direct financial or strategic benefit to the United States.

Congo and Rwanda hope the involvement of the United States - and the incentive of major investment if there's enough security for US companies to work safely in east Congo - will calm the fighting and militia violence that have defied peacekeeping and negotiation since the mid-1990s.

The risk is that the United States becomes involved in or worsens the militia violence, corruption, exploitation and rights abuses surrounding the mining and trade of east Congo's riches.

"A durable peace ... will open the door for greater US and broader Western investment, which will bring about economic opportunities and prosperity," Rubio said, adding that it would "advance President Trump's prosperity agenda for the world."

Congo is the world's largest producer of cobalt, a mineral used to make lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles and smartphones. It also has substantial gold, diamond and copper reserves.

Congolese President Felix Tsh-



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio hosts a Declaration of Principles signing ceremony with Congo's Foreign Minister Therese Kayikwamba Wagner, (left), and Rwanda's Foreign Minister Olivier Nduhungirehe, (right) on April 25, at the State Department in Washington. (AP)

isekedi has sought out a deal with the Trump administration that could offer the U.S. better access to his country's resources in exchange for US help calming hostilities.

Eastern Congo has been in and out of crisis for decades with more than 100 armed groups, most of which are vying for territory in the mining region near the border with Rwanda. The conflict has created one of the world's largest humanitarian disasters with more than 7 million people displaced, including 100,000 who fled homes this year.

Conflict in eastern Congo is estimated to have killed 6 million people since the mid-1990s, in the wake of the Rwanda genocide. Some of the ethnic Hutu extremists responsible for the 1994 killing of an estimated 1 million of Rwanda's minority ethnic Tutsis and Hutu moderates later fled across the border into eastern Congo, fueling the proxy fighting between rival militias aligned to the two governments.

"Today marks not an end but a beginning," Congolese Foreign Minister Therese Kayikwamba Wagner said Friday before signing the broad agreement, which commits Rwanda and Congo to draft a peace accord and work to instill security and a good business environment, allow the return of the millions of displaced and accomplish other goals.

"The good news is there is hope for peace," she said. "The real news is peace must be earned."

She directed part of her remarks to the civilians of east Congo, brutalized, isolated and displaced by the fighting: "We know you are watching this moment with concern, with hope and, yes, with doubt. You are entitled to actions that measure up to the suffering you have endured."

### Khan attacker gets life

## Pakistani troops kill 54 militants

ISLAMABAD, April 27, (AP): Pakistani security forces overnight killed 54 militants who attempted to cross into the country from Afghanistan, the military said Sunday, marking one of the deadliest such killings in recent years.

In a statement, the military said intelligence reports indicated the killed militants were "Khawarij" - a phrase the government uses for the Pakistani Taliban.

Without directly blaming anyone, the military said the slain insurgents had been sent by their "foreign masters" to carry out high-profile terrorist attacks inside Pakistan.

**Also:**

**LAHORE:** A Pakistani man who shot and wounded former Prime Minister **Imran Khan** and killed one of his supporters in 2022 was convicted and sentenced Saturday to life in prison, his lawyer said.

The attacker, Naveed Ahmad, was arrested shortly after he opened fire on Khan in Wazirabad, a city in Punjab province, wounding him in the leg.



Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan, (right), and Bushra Bibi, his wife, speak to the media before signing documents to submit surety bond over his bail in different cases, at an office of Lahore High Court in Lahore, Pakistan, on July 17, 2023. (AP)

### Africa

**Niger border village attack kills 12 soldiers:** An attack by armed men in western Niger killed 12 soldiers, the army said Saturday, in a border area that has long been a hotbed of extremist violence.

The "surprise offensive" was launched Friday against a military unit near the village of Sakoiria near the border with Mali and Burkina Faso, the army said in a statement. It described the assailants as "terrorists" but did not say what group was responsible.

The tri-border area has long been a site of extremist violence. Last month, an attack by a jihadi group on a village in the region killed 44 civilians. The army blamed that attack on the Islamic State in the Great Sahara, or EIGS.

Niger, along with its neighbors Burkina Faso and Mali, has for over a decade battled an insurgency fought by jihadi groups, including some allied with al-Qaida and the Islamic State group. Following military coups in all three nations in recent years, the ruling juntas have expelled French forces and turned to Russia's mercenary units for security assistance. The three countries have vowed to strengthen their cooperation by establishing a new security alliance, the Alliance of Sahel States. (AP)

□ □ □

**Gunmen kill 20 in northwestern Nigeria:** Armed men killed at least 20 people and injured dozens in a mining village in Nigeria's northwestern Zamfara state, a rights group said.



Gunmen arrived on motorcycles in the village of Gobirawa Chali in the Dan Gulbi district around midday Thursday, and went on a "house-to-house killing spree," Amnesty International Nigeria said in a post on X the same day.

The gunmen's first target was a gold-mining site where they initially killed 14 people, before more bodies were found inside homes and in a mosque.

The possible motive for the attack was unclear but bandit groups have been known for mass killings and kidnappings for ransom in the conflict-battered northern region, most of them former herders in conflict with settled communities.

Dozens of armed groups take advantage of a limited security presence in Nigeria's mineral-rich northwestern region to carry out attacks on villages and along major roads. (AP)





Dari Al-Bader and Jaber Ashkanani honor the two winning companies in the 2025 Company Program Competition.



Gulf Bank's Corporate Affairs General Manager, Dari Al-Bader, and Deputy General Manager, Sabeeka Al-Abdulrazzaq, were among the attendees.

‘Amal’ named Best University Company & ‘Seaclean’ wins Best School Company

## Gulf Bank & INJAZ announce winners of the 2025 Company Program Competition

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: INJAZ Kuwait successfully concluded its 2025 Company Program competition, proudly sponsored by Gulf Bank, at the American University of the Middle East (AUM). Over two dynamic days, the judging panel selected 15 exceptional projects from both the university and school categories.

As part of its commitment to empowering youth, and in the presence of sponsors, students, parents, volunteers, and educators, Gulf Bank celebrated the top two winning companies: “Amal,” recognized as Best Student Company in the university category, and “Seaclean,” named Best Student Company in the school category. Both teams will go on to represent Kuwait at the Regional Company Program Competition in Egypt, competing against teams from 14 Arab countries.

### Gulf Bank's Commitment to Youth Development

On this occasion, Mrs. Najla Aleisa, Chief Marketing Officer at Gulf Bank, stated:

“We congratulate both winning companies on their well-deserved awards. We also commend INJAZ Kuwait for its vital role in organizing this annual competition. Gulf Bank continues to support the training and mentorship of the winning teams as they prepare to represent Kuwait at the upcoming Regional Competition in Egypt later this year.”

She added, “We take great pride in our long-standing partnership with INJAZ Kuwait, a collaboration that has flourished for over 19 years. Over the past two decades, this partnership has helped nurture countless ideas and student-led companies, many of which have become key contributors to Kuwait's economy and business sector today.”

Mrs. Aleisa emphasized Gulf Bank's strategic commitment to youth development as a key pillar of its Gulf Bank 2025 strategy, in line with Kuwait Vision 2035, which prioritizes investment in the younger generation. She highlighted the popularity of the Company Program competition among high school and university students, noting that it provides a unique opportunity for participants to gain hands-on experience in starting and managing a real company, supported by esteemed institutions



Najla Aleisa

like Gulf Bank.

Mrs. Aleisa also noted that the successful partnership with INJAZ Kuwait resulted in the training of nearly 25,000 students during the 2024/2025 academic year. Students across all levels – from elementary to university graduates – benefited from numerous training programs. Gulf Bank volunteers actively contributed to initiatives like the “Innovation Camp,” “Company Program,” “How to Start,” “INJAZ Talks,” field visits, and a range of workshops.

### INJAZ Kuwait Highlights the Importance of Private Sector Support

Mr. Jaber Ashkanani, Business Development and Strategic Partnerships Manager at INJAZ Kuwait, acknowledged the vital role of the private sector in youth development: “The private sector's commitment to fostering future generations has been a fundamental factor in INJAZ Kuwait's success over the past 20 years.”

He emphasized Gulf Bank's strategic and comprehensive support, particularly its contribution of volunteers and participation in delivering training programs to students.

Mr. Ashkanani shared that INJAZ Kuwait has trained nearly 150,000 students over the past two decades, across four key pillars: career readiness, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and STEM skills. He highlighted the organization's ongoing efforts to develop initiatives that address the needs

### Najla Aleisa:

- We congratulate the winning companies and are committed to supporting them in representing Kuwait at the regional INJAZ competition.
- We are dedicated to supporting youth as part of our commitment to encouraging and developing their professional work skills.
- Our successful partnership with INJAZ over the past 20 years has resulted in the training of 25,000 students in 2024/2025.

### Jaber Ashkanani:

- The private sector's commitment to fostering future generations has been a fundamental factor in INJAZ Kuwait's success over the past 20 years.
- Gulf Bank's involvement, particularly through its dedicated volunteers, has been crucial in driving these achievements over the years.
- Over the course of its 20-year journey, INJAZ Kuwait has successfully trained nearly 150,000 students across various training programs.

of young people and support them in achieving their future goals.

He added: “The commitment to supporting companies in corporate social responsibility and sustainable development goals is a key factor behind the continued success of INJAZ Kuwait. Gulf Bank's involvement, particularly through its dedicated volunteers, has been crucial in driving these achievements over the years.”

Mr. Ashkanani highlighted that this year's activities encompassed workshops, training programs, advisory and scientific sessions, as well as field training opportunities designed to enhance the practical skills of youth. The annual Company Program competition offers students an expanded platform to launch their own projects, contributing to national economic growth and aligning with Kuwait Vision 2035 and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

### About INJAZ Kuwait

INJAZ Kuwait is a non-profit organization affiliated with Junior Achievement Worldwide, supported by Kuwait's private sector. Through strategic collaborations with the business and education

sectors, and with the support of trained volunteers, INJAZ provides educational programs in both Arabic and English. These programs focus on four key pillars: entrepreneurship, financial literacy, career readiness, and STEM skills, all aimed at helping youth build a successful future.

### Gulf Bank Volunteers Play a Key Role

Gulf Bank volunteers played a vital role this year in supporting university and school students participating in various INJAZ Kuwait programs. Their contributions were significant in career mentoring, team guidance, and delivering entrepreneurship training through the “Company Program.”

### About the Company Program

The Company Program teaches high school and university students the essentials of entrepreneurship, leadership, management, and financial literacy. Students get the opportunity to establish and manage real student companies, developing a business plan, conducting feasibility studies, building teams, raising capital, creating products or services, and selling them. The program concludes with an annual national competition where the best student companies are recognized.

## Other Voices

### Isabelle Grippa leads Belgium's economic mission to Kuwait

By Nasser Al-Hajeri

As Belgium looks to renew its economic ties with Kuwait, one person is quietly but confidently leading the way: Isabelle Grippa, CEO of hub.brussels. With a calm energy and a clear sense of purpose, she's heading a delegation of 44 Belgian companies across a wide range of sectors, all eager to open new doors in Kuwait.

Grippa's career has always been about connecting people and possibilities. After earning her degree in International Relations from ULB (Université Libre de Bruxelles) and completing her Master's at the Institute for European Studies, she moved into public service, working on initiatives that bridged business and society. From advising senior leadership in Brussels to coordinating employment programs, her focus has consistently been on creating opportunities that last.

Since taking the reins at hub.brussels in 2018, she's helped countless startups and SMEs think beyond local borders, encouraging them to dream bigger and compete globally. That same spirit is woven into this economic mission, organized in collaboration with Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT), Wallonia Export & Investment Agency (AWEX), and the Arab-Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce (ABLCC).

For Grippa, this mission isn't just about business deals. It's about making introductions



Isabelle Grippa  
CEO of hub.brussels

that could grow into real, long-term partnerships — and showing a side of Belgium that goes far beyond the well-known chocolate and waffles. Belgian companies across sectors like healthcare, engineering, sustainability, education, and technology are here to show how innovation and creativity run deep.

Over two full days of forums, B2B meetings, and networking events, the delegation hopes to plant seeds for collaborations that will grow in the years to come. And at the heart of it all, Grippa's steady leadership ensures that this visit feels personal, meaningful, and forward-looking. Belgium's renewed outreach to Kuwait carries the promise of new beginnings and with Isabelle Grippa at the helm, it feels like the start of a very genuine journey.

Firm sponsors student sports & cultural events to boost engagement

## Zain sponsors fourth ‘KTech Career Fair’ to support student employment opportunities

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Continuing its longstanding strategic partnership with the Kuwait Technical College (ktech), Zain announced its platinum sponsorship of the fourth ktech career fair, held under the theme With you all the way. The event brought together more than 30 leading organizations from both the public and private sectors, offering students and graduates valuable opportunities to connect with potential employers.

Zain participated in the fair's opening ceremony, which was attended by Meshari Ayman Boodai, Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Kuwait Technical College; Hamad Al-Musaibeeh, Corporate Relations Department Manager at Zain Kuwait; alongside Zain's Human Resources team and officials from both sides.

The sponsorship comes as part of Zain's strategic collaboration with the Kuwait Technical College to support a wide range of student, academic, cultural, and athletic activities organized throughout the academic year. It reflects Zain's continued efforts to support the educational ecosystem and empower students and youth across Kuwait.

Zain is committed to actively participating in the country's leading career fairs and working closely with top educational institutions from both the public and private sectors. Through these efforts, Zain aims to attract outstanding national talents to the private sector and introduce students and fresh graduates to



Meshari Boodai honors Hamad Al-Musaibeeh and the HR team for Zain's support.

the company's pioneering experience in the technology industry.

At its dedicated booth during the fair, Zain showcased its recruitment policies and available career opportunities. The team engaged with visiting students, graduates, and job seekers, providing insights into the company's work environment, the nature and requirements of available roles, and answering all inquiries about potential career paths within Zain's various departments and sectors.

By taking part in initiatives like this, Zain aims to help energize

the local job market, exchange professional expertise, and offer young talents access to career opportunities that align with their skills, ambitions, and capabilities – ultimately contributing to national economic growth and boosting the presence of Kuwaiti talents within the private sector.

Through its partnership with ktech, Zain supports a diverse lineup of programs and events throughout the academic year, including the annual student carnival, which features cultural, entertainment, and interactive activities. Zain also sponsors athletic competitions that foster

teamwork and physical activity, such as the student Ramadan football tournament and the Ramadan volleyball tournament for female students, among others.

This initiative reflects Zain's steadfast commitment to supporting education and youth development at every stage. The company continues to foster strategic partnerships with educational institutions, universities, and colleges across both public and private sectors to strengthen its engagement with students and contribute to building a brighter future for the next generation.



Equity funds outperform peers, leading Kuwait's market

## Kamco Invest focuses on fee-based income for stronger earnings quality

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse with one of the largest AUMs in the region, held its Annual General Meeting for the fiscal year ended 31 December 2024 where shareholders approved all agenda items. Shareholders approved the Board of Director's recommendation to distribute 5% cash dividends (5 fils per share), amounting to KWD1.7mn.

The AGM was chaired by the Company's Chairman, Sheikh Talal Ali Abdullah AlJaber Al Sabah, who discussed the Board of Director's report highlighting key milestones achieved during 2024.

The Chairman began with an overview of the year 2024, stating strong gains witnessed by the global markets driven by double-digit growth in key economies, despite geopolitical tensions and economic uncertainties. GCC markets on the other hand underperformed, while IPO activity remained strong, reaching record issuances. Despite external challenges, the region maintained steady economic activity, supported by a resilient non-oil sector and continued investor confidence in the markets.

GCC markets were impacted by regional challenges and global economic dynamics in 2024, with the MSCI GCC Index posting modest gains of 0.7% for the year. Dubai led the region with a strong 27.1% rally, followed by Kuwait and Oman with gains of 8.0% and 1.4%, respectively, while other markets faced declines amid geopolitical tensions and macroeconomic headwinds. Capital markets saw strong activity with record IPOs and increased bond and sukuk issuances, reflecting the region's growth potential.

Talal Al-Ali said, "These results reflect the strength of our fee-based business model and our ability to generate consistent value for our stakeholders. The Company reported a 41.1% increase in total revenue reaching KWD25.4mn, supported by a 15.0% growth in fee income, which stood at KWD16.9mn."

He added, "We have consistently prioritized the quality of earnings, with a strategic focus on growing fee-based income, which accounted for 66.5% of our total income



Kamco Invest Annual General Meeting.

in 2024. We remain committed to further strengthening our liquidity position to support our growth ambitions and drive the expansion of our fee-generating business lines, particularly asset management and investment banking."

The Company maintained a solid financial position with KWD62.3mn in shareholders' equity as of 31st December 2024. In its most recent review dated in May 2024, Capital Intelligence maintained its "BBB" long-term credit rating and "A3" short-term rating with a stable outlook.

Faisal Mansour Sarkhou, Chief Executive Officer, provided a detailed presentation of the operational performance for the year, which witnessed numerous milestones and achievements across various fields. During 2024, wealth managers worked closely with various business sectors, leveraging their diversified in-house expertise to provide clients with customized solutions and advice. This resulted in attracting new clients, strengthening relationships with existing clients and raising funds for new and existing products.

Sarkhou said, "During the year, we successfully raised over USD1.2bn across various products and transactions. We also managed to grow our assets under management by 7.0%, equating to USD1bn, to reach USD15.9bn, further solidifying our position as

one of the largest asset managers in the Middle East. 2024 was also a strong year for our Investment Banking business who successfully executed transactions across the GCC totaling USD4.9bn. This brings Investment Banking mandates total value since inception to USD41.3bn in equity capital markets, debt capital markets, and mergers & acquisitions."

Sarkhou added, "Throughout the year, Kamco Invest and Burgan Bank further strengthened their strategic relationship in alignment with the bank's strategic acquisition of United Gulf Bank (UGB), the major shareholder of Kamco Invest, and several initiatives were launched between the two parties."

He added, "The acquisition of UGB was completed in Q1 2025, paving the way for greater synergy between Kamco Invest and Burgan Bank and unlocking new avenues for collaboration."

Kamco Invest's equity funds and managed portfolios continued to outperform their peers and respective benchmarks. During the year, the equity funds managed by the Company maintained their rankings as the top performers. Kamco Investment Fund was the best performing fund in Kuwait reporting a return of 14.89% according to the funds' performance information declared on the website of Boursa Kuwait. Furthermore, the fund won in six categories during the 2024

LSEG (London Stock Exchange Group) Lipper Fund Awards in recognition of the fund's exceptional performance and risk-adjusted returns.

Alternative Investments, which includes real estate, private equity, and structured products, continued to broaden their suite of offerings, delivering enhanced value to clients. Over the year, the team distributed USD58.1mn to investors while actively evaluating new opportunities to expand and diversify its investment portfolio. The team expanded its real estate portfolio by venturing into private debt investments in real estate projects, marking a strategic entry into a new asset class. Additionally, it played a key advisory role in a USD94.7mn Sharia-compliant junior funding for the development of a premier Class A office and retail property in the US. Reinforcing its commitment to delivering value, the team also distributed USD52.4mn to real estate investors, an annualized cash yield of 7% on invested capital.

Despite headwinds in regional capital markets and sustained high interest rates, 2024 has been another outstanding year for the Company's Investment Banking business. The team successfully executed 11 landmark transactions during the year which included 9 bond and sukuk issuances for financial institutions and corporates across Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the

- Net profit grew by 481.8% to reach KWD4.4mn
- AUM reached USD15.9bn, an increase of 7%
- Raised over USD1.2bn for several products and transactions
- Shareholders approved the Board of Director's recommendation to distribute 5% cash dividends

**Talal Al-Ali:** These results reflect the strength of our fee-based business model and our ability to generate consistent value for our stakeholders

**Sarkhou:** Throughout the year, Kamco Invest and Burgan Bank further strengthened their strategic relationship, and several initiatives were launched between the two parties

UAE, and Bahrain in debt capital markets. Additionally, the team led the largest mandatory tender offer in Kuwait's insurance sector and managed the Initial Public Offering of a sovereign-owned oil company in Oman, further solidifying the Company's track record in M&A and equity capital markets.

Network expansion and business growth remained central to the Company's strategy and its commitment to expanding in key financial and business hubs. During 2024, Kamco Invest bolstered its global presence and provided enhanced value and comprehensive turnkey services to clients and investors, further strengthening the contribution to fee income. Kamco Invest – Saudi partnered with Fl-exam Invest to introduce European sharia compliant leasing opportunities to regional investors while contributing to a sustainable future.

The Company's brokerage arm, First Securities Brokerage Company, continued to expand its client base by leveraging its online trading platforms. It experienced growth in market share and contributed to Kamco Invest's overall income.

In 2024, Kamco Invest continued to strengthen its commitment to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles into its core operations, reflecting a longstanding commitment to sustainable and responsible growth. This year, employee health and well-being, sustainability-driven partnerships, youth empowerment through training, and community engagement in sports were prioritized under the program.

As part of its digital transformation, Kamco Invest launched

a new mobile app and web client portal in 2024, offering enhanced performance, AI-powered features, and seamless access to portfolios. These platforms reflect the Company's commitment to delivering a smarter, more efficient investment experience through advanced technology.

The Chairman concluded by extending his sincere appreciation to the regulatory authorities for their continued guidance and constructive collaboration. He also thanked the Company's clients and shareholders for their trust and loyalty, emphasizing that their ongoing support remains a driving force behind Kamco Invest's ongoing growth, resilience, and ambition to achieve greater milestones in the years ahead.

### About Kamco Invest

Kamco Investment Company K.S.C (Public) "Kamco Invest" is a regional non-banking financial powerhouse headquartered in Kuwait with offices in key regional financial markets, established in 1998 and listed on Boursa Kuwait in 2003. It is an Independently managed subsidiary of KIPCO Group adopting highest standards of corporate governance and regulated by the Capital Markets Authority and Central Bank of Kuwait.

Kamco Invest has AUM of over USD15.9bn as of 31 December 2024 allocated to various asset classes and jurisdictions, making it one of the largest asset managers in the MENA region. It has acted as investment banker to deals exceeding USD41.3bn from its inception till 31 December 2024 in equity capital markets, debt capital markets and mergers & acquisitions.

## Eurozone economic growth stalls as trade tensions weigh on sentiment

Markets show signs of relief as China-US trade tensions ease

By National Bank of Kuwait

### Market Commentary

Tariffs continued to dominate economic discussions around the world, particularly the trade war between China and the United States. Trump signalled a shift towards a more conciliatory approach with China on trade, likely due to the recent market instability caused by his administration's headline stance on tariffs. He suggested tariffs would decrease if a deal was reached, and he would avoid sensitive topics like COVID-19 origins in negotiations. While Trump hinted at possible tariff reductions, China's firm denial of ongoing negotiations added to market uncertainty. Meanwhile, Chinese media see it as a sign of Trump backing down. Trump's Treasury Secretary also indicated a need for de-escalation, clarifying the US doesn't aim to completely separate its economy from China's. Nevertheless, markets reacted positively to Trump's remarks and that saw the U.S. dollar index recovering from earlier losses and climbing above 99.5. Progress in trade negotiations with Japan and South Korea also supported the dollar. Trump's softened tone on Fed Chair Powell reduced investor uncertainty. Although comments from Cleveland Fed's Beth Hammack about a possible June rate cut briefly weighed on the dollar, trade-related optimism ultimately drove its recovery.

### United States

#### Services and Manufacturing PMIs

The S&P Global U.S. Services PMI dropped to 51.4 in April 2025 from 54.4, missing expectations and marking the second weakest growth in a year. The decline was driven by a sharp slowdown in new orders amid client uncertainty over tariffs and economic instability, particularly from foreign markets. Hiring slowed due to weaker demand and limited labor supply. Input costs rose sharply, prompting firms to raise prices. Business sentiment for the year ahead hit its lowest level since October 2022, reflecting concerns over unclear economic policies from the new administration. Meanwhile, the S&P Global U.S. Manufacturing PMI rose to 50.7 in April 2025, exceeding expectations and marking a fourth month of modest growth. Output and domestic new orders increased slightly, but export orders fell due to tariffs. Jobs were cut for the first time since October. Input costs surged, pushing output inflation to a 29-month high. Business confidence dropped to its lowest since last August amid worries over rising costs, supply issues, and weakening export demand.

#### New Home Sales

U.S. new single-family home sales jumped 7.4% in April 2025 to an annualized rate of 724,000, the highest in six months and well above expectations, driven by lower mortgage rates. Sales surged in the South and Midwest, offsetting declines in the Northeast and West. The median home price fell 1.9% to \$403,600, while inventory stood at 503,000 units, or 8.3

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.1371	1.1307	1.1573	1.1364	1.1260	1.1470	1.1430
GBP	1.3250	1.3230	1.3423	1.3314	1.3220	1.3400	1.3320
JPY	142.09	139.86	144.03	143.67	142.60	144.60	142.20
CHF	0.8149	0.8038	0.8334	0.8278	0.8155	0.8350	0.8188

### Highlights

- The S&P Global U.S. Services PMI dropped to 51.4 in April 2025 from 54.4.
- U.S. new single-family home sales jumped 7.4% in April 2025 to an annualized rate of 724,000.
- The U.S. dollar index rose above 99.5, rebounding on Friday due to renewed trade optimism.
- The Eurozone Composite PMI dropped to 50.1 in April 2025, down from 50.9 in March.
- UK retail sales rose by 0.4% month-over-month in March 2025, beating expectations of a 0.3% decline.
- China's stronger-than-expected Q1 GDP growth of 5.4% has eased pressure for immediate monetary stimulus.
- Core consumer prices in Tokyo rose 3.4% year-on-year in April 2025, the highest in two years.

months of supply.

The US Dollar index closed the week at 99.741.

### Eurozone

#### Economic Conditions

The Eurozone Composite PMI dropped to 50.1 in April 2025, down from 50.9 in March, marking the fourth consecutive month of near-stagnation and slightly missing market forecasts. Services contracted to 49.7 from a revised 51.0, while manufacturing continued to shrink at 48.7 slightly up from 48.6. Weaknesses persisted due to ongoing declines in new orders, driven by global trade tensions and tariff concerns initiated by the US. Employment stalled as backlogs fell, while input costs and pricing pressures rose modestly. Business confidence slumped to its lowest level in more than two years amid continued uncertainty over trade policy.

The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.1364.

### United Kingdom

#### Retail Sales

UK retail sales rose by 0.4% month-over-month in March 2025, beating expectations of a 0.3% decline. Non-food store sales led the growth with a 1.7% rise, especially in clothing (+3.7%) and garden-related goods. Food store sales fell by 1.3%. Excluding fuel, sales were up 0.5%. Year-on-year, retail sales increased by 2.6%, and Q1 saw a 1.6% gain, the biggest three-month rise since July 2021.

The GBP/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.3314.

### Asia-Pacific

#### Chinese Economy

China's stronger-than-expected Q1

GDP growth of 5.4% has eased pressure for immediate monetary stimulus, though markets still anticipate further easing in the months ahead due to mounting risks from the escalating U.S.-China trade war. Policymakers remain cautious, balancing the need for growth support with concerns over a weakening yuan and narrowing bank profit margins, which limit their room to manoeuvre. As widely expected, the central bank kept both the one-year and five-year loan prime rates unchanged at 3.1% and 3.6%, respectively. Despite the solid Q1 data, analysts warn that upcoming export figures may not fully reflect the impact of higher U.S. tariffs, as many manufacturers rushed shipments beforehand. Several global investment banks have since downgraded China's full-year growth outlook, citing expectations for more stimulus to counter growing headwinds.

The CNY/USD currency pair closed the week at 7.2864.

### Inflation in Japan

Core consumer prices in Tokyo rose 3.4% year-on-year in April 2025, the highest in two years and above expectations, driven by reduced energy subsidies and food price hikes. Despite the inflation spike, the Bank of Japan is expected to keep rates steady at 0.5% amid concerns over potential economic impacts from new U.S. tariffs, for which Japan has not secured exemptions. Tokyo's inflation data is seen as a key indicator of national trends.

The USD/JPY currency pair closed the week at 143.67.

### Kuwait

#### Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30655.

## Bank tops Kuwaiti banking sector

# KFH reports 3.2% growth in net profits for Q1 2025

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Group Chief Executive Officer, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan said that all key financial indicators for KFH saw an overall increase in the first quarter of 2025. He stated that KFH topped the Kuwaiti banking sector in terms of net profits that approximated KD 168.1 million for Q1 2025, representing a growth of 3.2% compared to the same period last year and a 41.4% increase compared to the fourth quarter of 2024.

In an interview with CNBC Arabia TV, He added that KFH's net financing income reached KD 318.9 million; an increase of 21.1% compared to the same period last year. Total operating income 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. This affirms KFH's successful strategy, solid capital base and robust operational performance.

AlShamlan mentioned that net operating income reached KD 295.7 million, an increase of 19.4% compared to the same period last year.

Speaking about the non-performing financing ratio for Q1 2025, AlShamlan pointed out that the Group non-performing financing (NPF) ratio reached roughly 1.84% as per the Central Bank of Kuwait calculation. As for the provisions coverage ratio for KFH-Kuwait it reached approximately 337% and about 270% for the Group.

### Financing and Liquidity Law

Discussing the influence of the Financing and Liquidity Law (Public Debt), on both banks and the broader economy, AlShamlan stated that it has a clear and immediate impact. He explained that this law is an integral component of economic reform, playing a role in strengthening financial stability and boosting the confidence of both domestic and international investors and lenders.

Furthermore, he noted that if the government issues sovereign bonds or Sukuk, it will improve its capacity to handle its financial commitments in the future. This will guarantee consistent public spending and support the nation's development plans. Consequently, this will undoubtedly benefit Kuwaiti banks by improving their liquidity management effectiveness, as they can utilize excess liquidity to meet necessary financing needs.

### Tariffs

Discussing the risks and consequences of a trade war involving tariffs, AlShamlan pointed out that such conflicts can slow down global economic growth, increase production cost, and cause exchange rates to become volatile. He further explained that these issues could create difficulties for certain parts of the economy, particularly those businesses that heavily rely on exporting and importing goods.

Turning to KFH, AlShamlan stated that the bank is in a strong position due to its di-



Khaled AlShamlan



KFH headquarters.

verse operations across different regions and sectors. Additionally, KFH's reliance on an Islamic finance model that uses real, physical assets as its foundation offers extra security during periods of economic instability, like a tariff war.

KFH, he stated, had already integrated potential risks into its strategic planning. This was achieved by strengthening stress tests on its financing portfolios vulnerable to global trade, closely monitoring FX markets and their volatility, and ensuring co-ordination across its various departments to address any possible vulnerabilities in advance.

AlShamlan further commented, "While we acknowledge the significance of global risks, we are confident that KFH possesses the necessary protective measures, adaptability, and expertise to navigate this period with awareness and professionalism, ultimately transforming challenges into opportunities for growth and investment."



# KIB Group announces net profit of KD 7.3m for Q1 of 2025 with an increase of 21 percent

Earnings per share 4.40 fils compared to 3.64 fils for the first quarter of 2024

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman of Kuwait International Bank (KIB), announced the Group's financial results for the first quarter of 2025. KIB Group achieved net profit attributable to shareholders amounting to KD 7.3 million, which grew by 21% compared to KD 6 million. Earnings per share (EPS) was 4.40 fils compared to 3.64 fils for the first quarter of 2024. Total operating income was almost KD 21.6 million, marking a growth of 2% compared to the first quarter of 2024.

Commenting on the latest financial results, Al-Jarrah emphasized that KIB's strong performance reflects the success of the Bank's strategic direction, which is built on a solid foundation of qualified talent and rapid digital advancement. He noted that the Bank has embarked on a new phase of growth, driven by the launch of a comprehensive five-year plan aimed at strengthening its position as the Islamic bank of choice in Kuwait and achieving significant improvements in performance and profitability.

Al-Jarrah added that the plan focuses on enhancing core banking operations and expanding growth opportunities through specialized products, innovative digital platforms, and financing solutions tailored to the needs of diverse customer segments. It also aims to strengthen fees and commissions generating activities, improve spending efficiency, and enhance risk management capabilities to ensure a sustainable balance between return and risk.

Regarding the Bank's interim financial statements for the first quarter of 2025, Al-Jarrah stated that KIB's total assets grew by 12% to reach KD3.89 billion compared to KD 3.46 billion as of 31 March 2024. The growth was a result of increase in the financing portfolio by 18% or KD 444 million as of 31 March 2025 to reach KD 2.88 billion compared to KD 2.44 billion for the same period of 2024. Meanwhile, its investment and high-quality Sukuk portfolio grew by KD 110 million, reaching almost KD 496 million as of first quarter 2025, compared to KD 386 million for the same period of 2024.

Moreover, Al-Jarrah pointed out that the Bank places strong emphasis on human capital by attracting and developing top talent and preparing future leaders. This commitment goes hand in hand with its dedication to social responsibility and the advancement of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices, in alignment with global best standards.

From his side, Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, Vice Chairman and CEO of KIB, ex-



Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman



Mr. Raed Jawad Bukhamseen

pressed pride in the Bank's strong performance during the first quarter of 2025, noting that it reflects the robustness of KIB's financial position and its ability to adapt to economic challenges. He added, "These results reaffirm our ability to navigate diverse market conditions efficiently and reflect our unwavering commitment to delivering high-quality banking services that meet our customers' expectations and enhance their overall experience with us."

Bukhamseen stated that this continued growth is driven by the Bank's well-defined strategy, which focuses on developing flexible business models, upgrading its technological infrastructure to support future expansion, and enhancing the integration between business operations and digital capabilities. KIB also remains firmly committed to its core objectives, placing the customer at the heart of its priorities, while strengthening its role in supporting the local economy and community through its ongoing social responsibility initiatives.

Bukhamseen presented in details the key financial results for the first quarter of 2025 compared to the same period of last year, where net financing income increased to reach KD 16.3 million, compared to almost KD 15.2 million, with a growth rate of 8%, and an increase in fees and commission income to reach KD

4.2 million, compared to an KD 3.8 million, with a growth rate of 10%, as this contributed to an increase in total operating income to reach almost KD 21.6 million, with a growth rate of 21%.

In terms of the Bank's financial position, Bukhamseen said that KIB's customers' deposits grew by 34% to reach KD 2.78 billion as of 31 March 2025 compared to KD 2.08 billion for the same period of last year. In addition, the total shareholders equity grew 5% to reach KD 351 million as of 31 March 2025 compared to KD 333 million for the same period of last year. Noting that KIB continues to maintain high levels of total capital adequacy ratio, in accordance with Basel III instructions, of 18.62% at of 31 March 2025.

In this context, Bukhamseen noted that KIB has recently joined the International Islamic Liquidity Management Corporation (IILM), becoming one of the primary dealers in short-term Sukuk issuances. He said that this step reinforces the Bank's commitment to revitalizing and developing the Sukuk market, strengthening its role as a market maker, and contributing to the advancement of the Islamic finance industry both locally and regionally.

Meanwhile, in line with its geographic expansion plans, KIB has extended its network with the opening of its 19th retail banking branch in AlSideeq, Bukhamseen noted. The branch features a modern, elegant design and is equipped with the latest banking technologies, allowing customers to carry out their transactions with the highest levels of security and efficiency. This reflects the Bank's ongoing commitment to providing customers with fast and convenient access to its services, whether in residential or commercial areas.

In a related context, Bukhamseen affirmed that the Bank is continuing its support – now in its fifth consecutive year – of the "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) banking awareness campaign launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait in collaboration with the Kuwait Banking Association. This initiative aligns with the Bank's community engagement goals and contributes to promoting banking and financial literacy across all segments of society.

In their concluding remarks, Al-Jarrah and Bukhamseen commended the Central Bank of Kuwait for its exceptional regulatory and supervisory roles, as well as its consistent support. They also expressed their gratitude to the Capital Markets Authority for its supportive role in fostering an attractive and competitive investment environment in Kuwait. In addition, they praised the tireless efforts of all KIB teams, highlighting their contributions to achieving these results. They also expressed their profound appreciation to the Board of Directors and Executive Management for their ongoing support and wise guidance, which have been crucial in enhancing KIB's financial standing and meeting all environmental, social, and corporate governance requirements.

## Event confirms bank's commitment to human capital development

# Burgan Bank celebrates seven leaders for completing Harvard Business School's program



Mr. Bashar Al-Qattan, Executive Manager – Learning and Talent Development at Burgan Bank



A group photo of the graduates

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Burgan Bank recently celebrated seven of its most promising talents for graduating from the "Strategic Leadership in the Age of Financial Sustainability" program, administered by Harvard Business School (HBS). The prestigious program falls under the umbrella of the Central Bank of Kuwait's (CBK's) Kafa'a initiative, launched in collaboration with Kuwaiti banks and the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS) to develop highly qualified national cadres in finance and banking.

The graduation ceremony was attended by senior Burgan managers alongside representatives from CBK and other participating banks. The Bank's nomination of and support for its graduating calibers comes as part of its dedicated human capital development strategy and commitment to advancing national talents in line with the national Kuwaitization program.

"On behalf of Burgan's management, I would like to congratulate our seven visionary leaders for completing such an important program that equips banking professionals with the strategic leadership skills essential for driving financial sustainability, growth, and innovation in the financial sector. We are confident that our graduates will contribute to a highly skilled national workforce and play a pivotal role in shaping the future of banking in Kuwait," commented Mr. Bashar Al-Qattan, Executive Manager – Learning and Talent Development at Burgan Bank. "As part of our overarching efforts to foster a culture of growth and continuous advancement, we are committed to offering our most driven talents valuable learning opportunities that propel them forward and equip them with the latest knowledge and tools needed for achieving success that benefits our institution and larger community."

He added that Burgan's ongoing partnership with Harvard Business School, under the Kafa'a initiative, reflects the institution's unwavering commitment to empowering national talents with world-class knowledge and expertise, contributing to the success of the New Kuwait Vision 2035 goal of advancing national calibers to leadership and decision-making positions.

It is worth noting that the program graduates were nominated as part of their enrollment in the 'Visionary Leaders' stream of Burgan's flagship talent development program. Ro'ya, designed to prepare leaders across the employment hierarchy for driving sustainable growth, inspiring positive change, and instilling Burgan's values across operations and daily interactions. In its latest effort to develop the flagship program, Burgan introduced the six-month Mentorship Module for Visionary Leaders to prepare emerg-

ing senior leaders on the personal and professional fronts with the guidance of Burgan's senior executives. Besides Visionary Leaders, Ro'ya also includes the Future Leaders, Rising Leaders, and Transformational Leaders streams for high-potential calibers at earlier stages of their professional careers, with each stream catering to the specific needs, aspirations, and recurring challenges of its enrolled cohort.

Owing to its robust talent development strategy and year-long human capital investment efforts, Burgan Bank was certified as a Great Place to Work®, as well as awarded the Brandon Hall Group Human Capital Management (HCM) Gold Award of Excellence in the "Learning and Development" category for the "Best Use of Social/Collaborative Learning" – among other recognitions that reflect the Bank's successful mission to become an employer of choice.

## Fear tied to market turmoil

# Many afraid to check their retirement savings

NEW YORK, April 27, (AP) — Michael Montgomery used to check the balance on his retirement account once a week and smile. But lately, not wanting to get upset and question if he could retire in a few years, there was only one solution.

"I'm not looking," says the 66-year-old professor from Huntington Woods, Michigan.

As the White House simultaneously injects turmoil into financial markets with its trade war and dismisses fears of a downturn, retired and near-retired Americans are anxiously looking on, worried about outliving their savings or having to put off entries on their bucket lists.

Keeping logged off his account has made Montgomery's days less worrisome. He and his wife adjusted their portfolio after Election Day, including moving more money into bonds. But he's not sure what more he can do if the entire world economy can be affected by Washington's decisions.

"I hope like hell I don't lose all my retirement savings," he says. "But where else could you put the money that these people could not disorder? They can't get into your mattress but that's about it."

Many experts warned U.S. stocks were overpriced and due for a correction even before President Donald Trump reclaimed the Oval Office. But a historic blanket of tariffs have injected new uncertainty into the market.

Though stocks rallied this week, the S&P 500 is down 10% from an all-time high reached in February. Losses in the Nasdaq and among small-cap stocks are steeper. Even bonds and the U.S. dollar have been volatile. Many economists are warning of a possible recession.

It has 71-year-old Jeanne Oats Estridge feeling so "paranoid" she called her financial planner with an idea.

"How about we put it all in cash?" Oats Estridge asked.

"I just don't advise it," she heard

back.

Oats Estridge, who lives in Dayton, Ohio, retired from a job in software engineering and now writes books, including her latest, on four octogenarian women kidnapped by sex-trafficking aliens. Her account is down more than \$40,000 and she gets angry thinking about how some in Washington have reacted to the market volatility, including Trump's recent market assessment that it was "a great time to buy."

"Where am I supposed to come up with the money to buy? My underwear drawer?" Oats Estridge asks.

Earlier this month, the Cboe Volatility Index, considered a "fear gauge" of investor pessimism, reached its highest level in five years. The index, known as VIX, has since retreated but is still in territory reflecting fearful investors. Another measure of market sentiment, the Cboe S&P 500 Left Tail Volatility Index, which tracks investor worry about so-called "black swan" events such as the 2008 housing crash that spurred the Great Recession, likewise has backed off from highs but remains elevated.

Trump has urged people to "be cool" in assessing the impact of tariffs on their investments. Asked about his own savings earlier this month, he chuckled and replied: "I haven't checked my 401(k)."

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, meantime, brushed off the possibility that some might need to delay retiring, saying people "don't look at the day-to-day fluctuations of what's happening."

That seeming nonchalance isn't sitting well with some older investors.

Peter Rost, 72, retired from his software development job last year and planned to start tapping his retirement savings to supplement Social Security. But he doesn't want to bake in his losses.

"I'm looking to take \$2,000 and meanwhile the account drops by \$30,000," he says.

# Tech industry tried reducing AI's bias. Now Trump wants to end its 'woke AI' efforts

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., April 27, (AP) — After retreating from their workplace diversity, equity and inclusion programs, tech companies could now face a second reckoning over their DEI work in AI products.

In the White House and the Republican-led Congress, "woke AI" has replaced harmful algorithmic discrimination as a problem that needs fixing. Past efforts to "advance equity" in AI development and curb the production of "harmful and biased outputs" are a target of investigation, according to subpoenas sent to Amazon, Google, Meta, Microsoft, OpenAI and 10 other tech companies last month by the House Judiciary Committee.

And the standard-setting branch of the U.S. Commerce Department has deleted mentions of AI fairness, safety and "responsible AI" in its appeal for collaboration with outside researchers. It is instead instructing scientists to focus on "reducing ideological bias" in a way that will "enable human flourishing and economic competitiveness," according to a copy of the document obtained by The Associated Press.

In some ways, tech workers are used to a whiplash of Washington-driven priorities affecting their work.

But the latest shift has raised concerns among experts in the field, including Harvard University sociologist Ellis Monk, who several years ago was approached by Google to help make its AI products more inclusive.

Back then, the tech industry already knew it had a problem with the branch of AI that trains machines to "see" and understand images. Computer vision held great commercial promise but echoed the historical biases found in earlier camera technologies that portrayed Black and brown people in an unflattering light.

"Black people or darker skinned people would come in the picture and we'd look ridiculous sometimes," said Monk, a scholar of colorism, a form of discrimination based on people's skin tones and other features.

Google adopted a color scale invented by Monk that improved how its AI image tools portray the diversity of human skin tones, replacing a decades-old standard originally designed for doctors treating white dermatology patients.

"Consumers definitely had a huge positive response to the changes," he said.

Now Monk wonders whether such efforts will continue in the future. While he doesn't believe that his Monk Skin Tone Scale is threatened because it's already baked into dozens of products at Google and elsewhere - including camera phones, video games, AI image generators - he and other researchers worry that the new mood is chilling future initiatives and funding to make technology work better



Ellis Monk, professor of Sociology at Harvard University and developer of the Monk Skin Tone Scale, poses at his office, Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2025, in Cambridge, Mass. (AP)

for everyone.

"Google wants their products to work for everybody, in India, China, Africa, et cetera. That part is kind of DEI-immune," Monk said. "But could future funding for those kinds of projects be lowered? Absolutely, when the political mood shifts and when there's a lot of pressure to get to market very quickly."

Trump has cut hundreds of science, technology and health funding grants touching on DEI themes, but its influence on commercial development of chatbots and other AI products is more indirect. In investigating AI companies, Republican Rep. Jim Jordan, chair of the judiciary committee, said he wants to find out whether former President Joe Biden's administration "coerced or colluded with"

them to censor lawful speech.

Michael Kratsios, director of the White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy, said at a Texas event this month that Biden's AI policies were "promoting social divisions and redistribution in the name of equity."

The Trump administration declined to make Kratsios available for an interview but quoted several examples of what he meant. One was a line from a Biden-era AI research strategy that said: "Without proper controls, AI systems can amplify, perpetuate, or exacerbate inequitable or undesirable outcomes for individuals and communities."

Even before Biden took office, a growing body of research and personal anecdotes was attracting attention to the harms of AI bias.

One study showed self-driving car technology has a hard time detecting darker-skinned pedestrians, putting them in greater danger of getting run over. Another study asking popular AI text-to-image generators to make a picture of a surgeon found they produced a white man about 98% percent of the time, far higher than the real proportions even in a heavily male-dominated field.

Face-matching software for unlocking phones misidentified Asian faces. Police in U.S. cities wrongfully arrested Black men based on false face recognition matches. And a decade ago, Google's own photos app sorted a picture of two Black people into a category labeled as "gorillas."

Even government scientists in the first Trump administration concluded in 2019 that facial recognition technology was performing unevenly based on race, gender or age.

Biden's election propelled some tech companies to accelerate their focus on AI fairness. The 2022 arrival of OpenAI's ChatGPT added new priorities, sparking a commercial boom in new AI applications for composing documents and generating images, pressuring companies like Google to ease its caution and catch up.

Then came Google's Gemini AI chatbot - and a flawed product rollout last year that would make it the symbol of "woke AI" that conservatives hoped to unravel. Left to their own devices, AI tools that generate images from a written prompt are prone to perpetuating the stereotypes accumulated from all the visual data they were trained on.

Google's was no different, and when asked to depict people in various professions, it was more likely to favor lighter-skinned faces and men, and, when women were chosen, younger women, according to the company's own public research.





Mosaic floor panels and murals from the museum collection.



One of the decorated ceilings of the museum.



Artistic beauty of traditional architecture.

KUNA photos

Tunisia's Bardo National Museum recounts history through diverse collection

The Bardo National Museum represents the jewel of Tunisian heritage as one of the oldest Arab museums, it recounts a significant portion of the country's history through its diverse collections.

The museum is located within an old Beylical

palace since 1888, formerly named the Alaoui Museum, after Ali Bey who ruled Tunisia from 1882 to 1902, however, after Tunisia's independence from France, it was later changed to Bardo National Museum.

Bardo houses the largest collection of mosaics in the world, evidence of Tunisia's long and diverse history, among them is the largest Roman mosaic weighing four tons, depicting Neptune, Roman's god of the sea, holding a three-pronged spear.

The museum comprises of numerous pavilions and halls, including the Carthage Hall, Virgile Hall, Dougga Hall, Mahdia Hall, Marin Mosaics Hall, Sousse Hall, and the Arab Gallery housing statues, sculptures, jewelry, and manuscripts. (KUNA)

Paris heist trial

Kardashian robbery suspect to apologize

PARIS, April 27, (AP): One of the suspects in the armed robbery of Kim Kardashian said he plans to take responsibility for his role in the 2016 high-profile heist and will apologize in court as the trial begins Monday in Paris.

Yunice Abbas, 71, who has publicly acknowledged his participation in the heist, is among 10 suspects facing charges including armed robbery and kidnapping.

"I will apologize," Abbas told The Associated Press. "I mean it sincerely."

Kardashian, 44, is expected to testify in person at the trial scheduled to run through May 23. In interviews and on her family's reality TV show, she has described being terrified as robbers pointed a gun at her to steal millions of dollars worth of jewelry in an apartment where she was staying for Paris Fashion Week. She said she thought she was going to be raped and killed.

Abbas said he acted as a lookout at the reception area on the ground floor, ensuring the escape route was clear. He said he was unarmed and did not personally threaten Kardashian, but acknowledged he shared responsibility for the crime.

He was arrested in January 2017 and he spent 21 months in prison before being released under judicial supervision. In 2021, he co-authored a French-language book titled "I Sequestered Kim Kardashian."

Forcing

In her account to investigators, Kardashian described two men forcing their way into her bedroom and pointing a gun towards her, asking for her ring. She said she was tied up with plastic cables and tape while the intruders were looking for jewels, including her engagement ring worth millions of dollars.

In a 2020 appearance on David Letterman's Netflix show, she tearfully recalled thinking: "This is the time I'm going to get raped. I'm like, 'What is happening? Are we gonna die? Just tell them I have children. I have babies, I have a husband, I have a family'."

She told investigators the men brought her in the bathroom before they ran off and she managed to free herself. The residency's concierge, held at gunpoint and forced to lead the robbers to her apartment, also suffered psychological impact.

Investigators found Abbas' DNA on plastic ties used to tie the hands of the concierge.

Asked about the trauma Kardashian suffered, Abbas said: "It's true, I didn't think about it. I recognize that because I did not brutalize her myself... I was not blaming myself regarding this aspect, and yet I'm responsible for it too."

According to Abbas, minutes after the raid started, his accomplices came down from Kardashian's apartment and gave him a bag of jewelry.

As he was fleeing the scene on a bicycle, he saw a police car, but officers were not yet aware of the robbery. Abbas said as he rode the bicycle the bag containing the jewelry became caught in the front wheel and he fell to the ground, spilling the contents of the bag. "I picked the jewels up and left," he said.

The following morning, a passerby found a diamond-encrusted cross in the street and handed it to police. That was the only jewel from the robbery that was ever recovered.



Kim Kardashian attends the Cannes Lions 2015, International Advertising Festival in Cannes, southern France, on June 24, 2015. (AP)

Auction price exceeds estimate

Titanic letter sells for nearly \$400K

LONDON, April 27, (AP): A lettercard penned by one of the Titanic's most well-known survivors from on-board the ship, days before it sank, has sold for 300,000 pounds (\$399,000) at auction.

In the note, written to the seller's great-uncle on April 10, 1912, first-class passenger Archibald Gracie wrote of the ill-fated steamship: "It is a fine ship but I shall await my journeys end before I pass judgment on her."

The letter was sold to a private collector from the United States on Saturday, according to auction house Henry Aldridge & Son in Wiltshire, England. The hammer price far exceeded the initial estimate price of 60,000 pounds.

The letter is believed to be the sole example in existence from Gracie from onboard the Titanic, which sank off Newfoundland after hitting an iceberg, killing about 1,500 people on its maiden voyage.

Auctioneer Andrew Aldridge described it as an "exceptional museum grade piece."

Gracie, who jumped from the ship and managed to scramble onto an overturned collapsible boat, was rescued by other passengers onboard a lifeboat and was taken to the R.M.S. Carpathia. He went on to write "The Truth about the Titanic," an account of his experiences, when he returned to New York City.

Gracie boarded the Titanic in Southampton on April 10, 1912, and was assigned first-class cabin C51. His book is seen as one of the most detailed accounts of the events of the night the ship sank, Aldridge said. Gracie did not fully recover from the hypothermia he suffered, and died of complications from diabetes in late 1912.

The letter was postmarked Queenstown, Ireland, one of two stops the Titanic made before sinking.



A letter-card, penned by one of the Titanic's most well-known survivors from onboard the ship days before it sank, which has sold for 300,000 pounds (\$399,000) at auction. (AP)

Film



This image released by A24 shows Helena Zengel in a scene from 'The Legend of Ochi.' (AP)

A teenage girl's dangerous quest

A darkly whimsical fable in 'Legend of Ochi'

LOS ANGELES, April 27, (AP): "The Legend of Ochi," a scrappy and darkly whimsical fable about a misunderstood teenage girl on a dangerous quest, has the feeling of a film you might have stumbled on and loved as a kid. Something tactile, something fantastical and, maybe, something a little dangerous - the kind of movie you knew you probably weren't supposed to be seeing just yet. They're the ones that tend to linger, like that strange English dub of the Norwegian adventure "Shipwrecked" that I once saw on the Disney Channel at an impressionable age.

Perhaps this is something familiar only to those first home video generations, from a naive, pre-social media era when the movies that you loved felt like your own personal discovery and secret, no matter if it was "Star Wars" or "The NeverEnding Story." How disappointing it was to learn later that everyone else loved them too.

It's no surprise that "The Legend of Ochi" was made by someone (Isaiah Saxon) in this zone - an older millennial shaped by some combination of "E.T.," "The Black Stallion" and the Palm Pictures' Directors Label box set. Those DVDs taught many a cinephile about the transportive possibilities of music videos dreamt up by Spike Jonze, Chris Cunningham and Michel Gondry for artists like Aphex Twin, Daft Punk and Björk (for whom Saxon would direct

the "Wanderlust" video).

That music video energy and committed world building is evident in "Ochi," in a positive way. It's a description that seems to be used more pejoratively than not, like shallowly dismissing something pretty as a perfume commercial. But perhaps those people just haven't seen the good ones.

Helena Zengel ("News of the World") is the central heroine, Yuri, who lives with her father Maxim (Willem Dafoe) and a de-facto brother Petro (Finn Wolfhard) on the woody, old-world island of Carpathia.

Threatening

Maxim loves to hunt the Ochi, a species of primates that are constantly threatening the safety of the humans and their farms, and he's trained an army of young boys to help. Yuri is largely kept off to the side, partly for her protection, partly, probably, because Maxim is a blustery alpha male who dresses up in elaborate, ancient armor for his missions. Her armor is a dirty, oversized yellow puffer jacket that could double as a sleeping bag. At home, she stewes silently and listens to death metal in her room.

She's a bit feral, which would be a cliché trope for a girl raised without a mother, but Zengel makes it work. It's clear she doesn't feel at home in this world, but finds a kind of

purpose when she comes across an injured baby Ochi and takes it upon herself to return it to its family. The Ochi, she quickly realizes, have been misunderstood too.

It's still a dangerous journey, which involves a humorous and slightly disgusting visit to a local supermarket, the discovery of her own long-lost mother (Emily Watson, who promptly helps Yuri brush her hair out of her eyes), and a comical, intense showdown between Watson and Dafoe. David Longstreth, of the Dirty Projectors, did the fanciful score and Evan Prosofsky is responsible for the vivid cinematography.

"The Legend of Ochi" was forged out of many influences, from Miyazaki to Amblin, and it's the kind of ambitious swing that Hollywood doesn't seem to take very often these days - especially not with a PG rating. That doesn't mean it all works seamlessly, though. The emotional beats don't seem to land as authentically as the more irreverent humor. But it's impossible not to admire the creativity, the imagination and the care that went into making something like this, with puppetry, matte paintings and inventive graphics, for a mere \$10 million.

"The Legend of Ochi," an A24 released in theaters nationwide Friday, is rated PG by the Motion Picture Association for "some language, smoking, a bloody image, thematic elements and violent content." Running time: 96 minutes. Three stars out of four.

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Los Angeles police have released video from the shooting of author Jillian Lauren, the wife of a Weezer band member, during a chaotic backyard confrontation that culminated in a volley of gunfire.

Lauren - listed by police as Jilian Lauren Shriner - was released on a \$1 million bond on suspicion of attempted murder pending further investigation. She is scheduled to appear in court this week.

Police on Friday released excerpts from police body camera video, surveillance video and audio of 911 dispatch conversations. The video clips show officers peering over a high wooden fence into a yard and shouting



Lauren

over the noise of an overhead surveillance helicopter at a woman to put down her gun or risk getting shot. The fence obscures from those body cameras what is on the other side.

"Ma'am, we're trying to help you. Put the gun down," a voice says. "You're going to get shot. It's the police."

An officer indicates that the woman has cocked a gun - "Oh, she racked it" - immediately before the sound of at least six shots rings out.

In a separate segment of silent surveillance video from Lauren's backyard, Lauren can be seen exiting the home barefoot and carrying a pistol in her right hand. Another segment shows Lauren from behind, apparently raising a gun that is briefly visible. Dirt kicks up near Lauren's feet, and she turns and walks toward a doorway to the house.

Further bodycam video shows Lauren lying prone in the middle of a residential road as police place handcuffs behind her back, while noting that she has a wound on her arm.

Lauren's published works include two bestselling memoirs - 2010s "Some Girls: My Life in a Harem" and 2015's "Everything You Ever Wanted."

Weezer is a Los Angeles-based band, beloved especially for their 1994 record unofficially known as the "Blue Album" with songs including "Say It Ain't So." Shriner joined the band in the early 2000s. (AP)



Memoir offers unseen glimpse into the life of Beyoncé’s mother

Tina Knowles traces Beyoncé and Solange’s rise to fame

NEW YORK, April 27, (AP): Many of Tina Knowles’ fondest childhood memories are of sitting under a pecan tree as her mother recited the history of their family, stretching back generations. Now, the mother of Beyoncé and Solange has given her own story to the world with “Matriarch: A Memoir,” out this week.

“Beyoncé and Solange have been busy since they were little kids working, and Kelly (Rowland). ... I’ve told them stories, but I don’t even know if they really listened,” said the 71-year-old Knowles. “When you’re young, it’s very few people that want to hear those stories about old times.”

At 59, Knowles began recording voice notes of that history - adding in her contributions - after contemplating her mortality following her divorce from Mathew Knowles after a three-decade marriage. The recordings were meant only for her grandkids and future great-grandchildren, before eventually becoming the book’s foundation.

The 432-page Oprah’s Book Club selection explores a vast range of topics, including her enslaved great-grandmothers, her entrepreneurial spirit, the Houston childhoods of Beyoncé and Solange, her infidelity-plagued first marriage, Destiny’s Child’s struggle to get a record deal, and the blatant racism her family

experienced navigating a segregated United States. (She was once allowed to briefly sit in the front of a whites-only bus as a child, disguised by her fair skin tone.)

But you won’t find juicy details from the protective mother; there’s no mention of the infamous 2014 Met Gala elevator incident between Jay-Z and Solange, or of Kanye West taking the mic from Taylor Swift at the 2009 MTV VMAs in his attempted defense of Beyoncé. This is Celestine Beyoncé’s story - not her children’s - still intriguing and very personal, revealing she was diagnosed with Stage 1 breast cancer last year. She had initially left it out of the book.

**Surgery**

“I just wanted to keep it to myself ... as I went through that process of getting the surgery and all of that, there were things that I felt that I needed to share,” said Knowles, who is now cancer-free after surgery and treatment, and urges women to make mammogram appointments and get second opinions.

Knowles, who next month will launch a nine-city book tour that will include conversations with famous friends like former first lady Michelle Obama and Tyler Perry (she also hints at “family” joining her at some stops), spoke with The As-



Tina Knowles poses for a portrait on Tuesday, April 22, in New York. (AP)

sociated Press about receiving due credit, regrets as a parent and finding happiness. Answers have been edited for clarity and brevity.

**AP:** Some may have thought of you as only Destiny’s Child’s stylist or Beyoncé’s mom. Is there a desire to get due credit?

**Knowles:** I gave a lot of people credit for things - and I’m fine with that - but this is all about my truth.

I definitely feel like I was a driving force, and I can say that now without feeling like - I was taught as a kid to just be super humble and to not ever

brag. ... I think I’ve dimmed my light for so long, I don’t want to do it anymore.

**AP:** There are events involving Beyoncé or Solange that you barely mentioned — if you mentioned them at all — like the reasons surrounding Destiny’s Child’s breakup. Why exclude your perspective?

**Knowles:** I don’t think that’s important, because from that time, everyone has flourished and just moved on from that. And I just choose to focus on the positives in life. ... I don’t feel like it’s a need to

harp on those things. I don’t want to talk about them.

**AP:** In highlighting the differences between Solange and Beyoncé, you describe how Solange loved school and craved structure, and you weren’t always able to provide that as Destiny’s Child began to take off. Why be so vulnerable with your parenting mishaps? (Solange, not wanting to travel or leave friends, eventually stayed with a family friend for a period of time for consistency.)

**Knowles:** Solange has been a speaker of truth since she was little ... she was the one that was in my case all the time. ‘Cause she’s like, “Mom, you’re just so irresponsible when it comes to school.”

**Healing**

I just felt like that was healing for me to talk about it. Because people think ... you’re trying to be the perfect mother, and definitely, I was screwing up just like everybody else. And so, I was really wanting to be honest about my shortcomings.

**AP:** Why did you mention the importance of teachers, negatively affecting your own confidence attending Catholic school, as well their impact on your daughters?

**Knowles:** Some of them can be detrimental, and I go into detail about that because I realize that a teacher telling me that Beyoncé

was slow in kindergarten and that she needs to repeat the grade and it’s December - that woman could have messed up my child’s life. We wouldn’t even have a Beyoncé today if I had listened to her.

You gotta fight for your kids. I hope that lesson came through loud and clear. ... That was important to me because I see a lot of parents that don’t, and my mom didn’t protect me.

**AP:** Have Beyoncé and Solange read the book yet?

**Knowles:** By the time I finished the book and I was ready to share it with them, both of them were on these really crazy schedules and I just didn’t want them to feel, “Oh, I got to stop and go read a book.” So, I sent them all of their parts and they approved the parts.

**AP:** Did they asked you to cut anything after they read their parts?

**Knowles:** No. They were in agreement with everything.

**AP:** What do you hope readers will take away from “Matriarch”?

**Knowles:** Your life, whatever it is, cannot just center around everyone else but you. And it took me a long time - I had to be 59 years old before I realized I deserve to be happy. And I deserve to have the things that I deserve, and not feel bad about it, not feel guilty about it.

I’m going to live my life - live my best life, as the kids say.

Film

Vietnam War

War cinema’s silent women

LOS ANGELES, April 27, (AP): “Me love you long time,” a Vietnamese woman tells the US troops, swiveling her hips as she hawks her services. “You party?” The first female character in Stanley Kubrick’s Vietnam War classic “Full Metal Jacket,” she appears for just a moment - and halfway through the film.

Likewise, it’s an hour into Francis Ford Coppola’s “Apocalypse Now” when a helicopter suddenly deposits three women onto a stage. They’re scantily clad Playboy Bunnies, chopped in to rile up the troops. They, too, appear for just a few minutes.

The Vietnam War produced some of the most unforgettable films of the late 1970s and 1980s, as top Hollywood filmmakers like Kubrick, Coppola, Oliver Stone and others grappled with its painful legacy. Few, however, had classic, or even three-dimensional, female characters - with the notable exception of “Coming Home,” which won **Jane Fonda** an Oscar.

But while these films were almost exclusively about how war dehumanized men - with female characters mere devices to tell that story - the opposite was often true of Vietnamese films about the conflict. Many of these were told from a female viewpoint - the stories of brave and loyal women, for example, left to hold families together.



Fonda

Here are some ways that classic Vietnam War films used female characters to tell their stories:

Michael Cimino’s multi-Oscar-winning “The Deer Hunter” focuses on three lifelong buddies from a Pennsylvania steel town who go off to fight, with traumatic results.

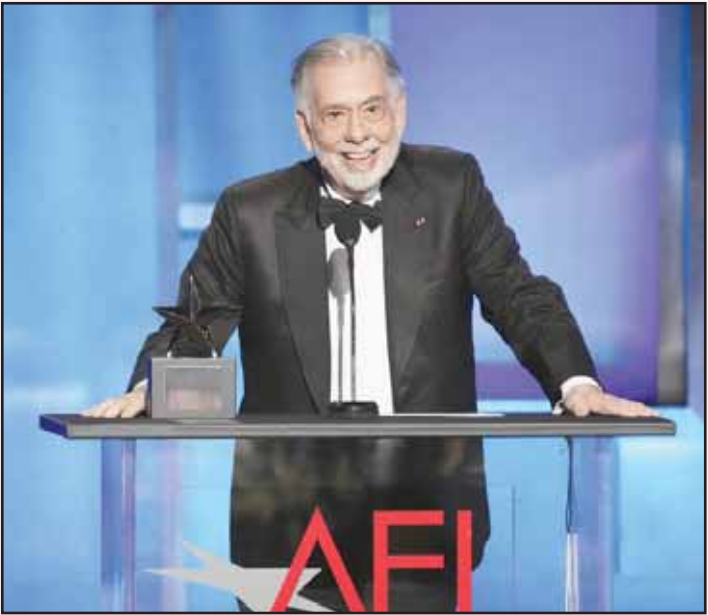
Since the 1978 drama starts and ends at home, there’s room for a female character in Meryl Streep’s Linda, girlfriend of Nick (Christopher Walken) who also connects with Michael (Robert De Niro). An early-career Streep was such a magnetic presence as Linda - earning an Oscar nomination - that it disguised a fairly thin role that mainly advanced the men’s narrative.

A rare contrast was Hal Ashby’s “Coming Home” the same year, in which Fonda and Jon Voight both won Oscars for the tale of a Marine wife embroiled in an intense affair with a wounded veteran at the rehab center where she volunteers.


“This is the only Hollywood film set during the Vietnam War that’s told from the point of view of a female character,” says filmmaker Tony Bui, who also teaches Vietnam War cinema at Columbia University. “That’s really saying something.”

Its tortured journey to the screen is a drama in itself, but 1979’s “Apocalypse Now,” with Martin Sheen as an army captain tasked with assassinating a renegade US colonel (Marlon Brando), is considered a masterpiece of the genre. As in many Hollywood Vietnam films, women are extras in villages, screaming and running from gunfire and deadly explosions - or killed brutally for no reason at all.


AFI Award



Filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola accepts the 50th AFI Life Achievement Award during a gala celebration for him on Saturday, April 26, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP)



Actor Diane Lane makes remarks during the 50th AFI Life Achievement Award tribute to Francis Ford Coppola on Saturday, April 26, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP)



Elle Fanning arrives at the 50th AFI Life Achievement Award tribute to Francis Ford Coppola on Saturday, April 26, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP)

Power of the press takes center stage at WHCA dinner

WH journalists toast the First Amendment

WASHINGTON, April 27, (AP): There was no president. There was no comedian. What remained at the White House Correspondents’ Association’s (WHCA) annual dinner on Saturday night were the journalists and the First Amendment.

The stripped-down festivities were a reflection of the somber tone in Washington at the beginning of President Donald Trump’s second term, in which he has battled with the press on multiple fronts and wrested from the correspondents’ association the power to decide which outlets have the most access to Trump.

Trump’s deeper involvement in politics began after then-President Barack Obama roasted the New Yorker’s presidential ambitions during the 2011 correspondents’ dinner. He skipped the annual gala during his first term, and his absence had been widely expected this year.

The association scrapped a scheduled appearance at this year’s dinner by comedian Amber Ruffin after she referred to the new administration as “kind of a bunch of murderers” on a podcast last month. The organization, a nonprofit that helps White House journalists provide robust coverage of the presidency, decided to forgo the event’s traditional levity and focus on celebrating journalism.

Association President Eugene Daniels said in an email to the organization’s 900 members last month that the dinner was meant to “honor journalis-



Lydia Moynihan (left) and Elizabeth Pipko pose for photographers as they arrive at the annual White House Correspondents’ Association Dinner in Washington, Saturday, April 26. (AP)

tic excellence and a robust, independent media covering the most powerful office in the world.”

The event, which raises money for journalism scholarships, remains a highlight of the Washington social calendar. The ballroom at the Washington Hilton was still packed with journalists, newsmakers and even a few celebrities. Daniels singled out Debra Tice, whose son Austin has been missing for a decade since disappearing in Syria.

“We’ve been tested and attacked.



Lydia Moynihan (left) and Elizabeth Pipko pose for photographers as they arrive at the annual White House Correspondents’ Association Dinner in Washington, Saturday, April 26. (AP)

But every single day our members get up, they run to the White House - plane, train, automobile - with one mission, holding the powerful accountable,” Daniels said.

He later showed a video of past presidents, from Ronald Reagan to Joe Biden, who addressed the dinner, saying that the association invites the president to demonstrate the importance of a free press in safeguarding democracy.

Trump counter-programmed the

last dinner during his first term, holding a rally to compete with the event in 2019, before the coronavirus pandemic canceled the 2020 dinner. This year, Trump had just flown back from Pope Francis’ funeral in Rome and had no events Saturday night.

The Trump administration has had multiple skirmishes with the press in recent months. The FCC is investigating several media companies, the administration is working to shut down Voice of America and other government-run outlets, and The Associated Press has sued the administration for reducing its access to events because it has not renamed the Gulf of Mexico in line with Trump’s executive order.

A federal judge has issued a preliminary injunction ordering the administration to stop blocking the AP from presidential events. In response, the White House adopted a new press policy that gives the administration sole discretion over who gets to question Trump and sharply curtails the access of three news agencies, including AP, that serve billions of readers around the world.

For many years previously, the correspondents’ association determined which news organizations had access to limited space events.

Alex Thompson of Axios, who won The Aldo Beckman Award for his coverage of the coverup of Biden’s decline while in office, addressed complaints from some on the right that the press had gone too soft on the Democrat.

Authentic music

McRae’s folk-pop strikes a chord

NEW YORK, April 27, (AP): As the COVID-19 vaccine began distributing more widely in early 2021, California-raised singer-songwriter Jensen McRae affectionally joked in a tweet that Phoebe Bridgers would release a song in two years about “hooking up in the car while waiting in line to get vaccinated at Dodger Stadium.”

Bridgers didn’t release the song, but McRae did. As the tweet took off, she threaded a video of herself singing “a pre-emptive cover.” “Immune,” penned by McRae in Bridgers’ contemplative style, was released in full within two weeks.

“It was a perfect storm,” McRae, 27, told The Associated Press. “I was parodying Phoebe Bridgers who was becoming world famous in that exact moment. ... I was also writing about this topic that everyone was thinking about constantly because we were in lockdowns.” Bridgers reposted the video, writing simply: “oh my god.”

The song precluded McRae’s debut EP, released in 2021, and album, in 2022, which led to touring gigs with Muna and Noah Kahan. Last year, she signed with Dead Oceans, the same record label that represents Bridgers. McRae’s sophomore album, the folk-pop “I Don’t Know How, But They Found Me!,” is out Friday.

The title is a reference to “Back to the Future,” her favorite movie. It’s a line of dialogue said by scientist Doc Brown just before he falls in a hail of bullets, causing protagonist Marty McFly to flee back in time in Brown’s rigged DeLorean.

**Bulletproof**

“At the end of the movie - which, there’s no spoilers, because this movie’s 40 years old - you find out (Doc) was wearing a bulletproof vest the whole time. And that to me sort of is what my 20s have been like. There are all these events that are happening that feel like they should take me out, but I just keep standing up anyway,” McRae said. “That’s kind of the narrative of the album.”

Resilience has long been a motif in McRae’s songwriting. Her debut album, “Are You Happy Now?,” deftly tackled sexual predators and racist microaggressions with poetic meditations on identity, love, growth and beauty. On the album’s most-streamed song, the ballad “My Ego Dies in the End,” she sings, “If I don’t write about it, was it really worth it?”

“There’s this quote that I can’t cite, but someone said, as a writer, you’ve experienced enough by the age of 25 to have writing material for the rest of your life. I don’t know if everyone agrees with that statement, but I certainly do,” McRae said. It’s years of practice, and reflection, that have brought clarity to those experiences.

“I Don’t Know How But They Found Me!” is composed of songs McRae wrote throughout her early 20s, in the wake of one relationship and the rise and fall of another. She finished the album last spring in North Carolina with producer Brad Cook, a collaborator of Bon Iver, Waxahatchee and Suki Waterhouse. The 10 days they spent on the record, McRae said, were “a master class.”



Singer-songwriter Jensen McRae poses for a portrait on Thursday, April 17, in Los Angeles. (AP)



Dr. Al-Awadhi outlines vision to combat chronic diseases and improve healthcare facilities

Internal medicine doctors are pillars of Kuwait’s health system

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

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi affirmed that internal medicine doctors are considered the “cornerstone of the health system in the country.”

In his opening remarks at the first conference of the Kuwait Association of Internal Medicine recently, Al-Awadhi explained that the conference is not merely a scientific meeting but rather a message that carries within it a spirit of unity and solidarity among internal medicine doctors, bringing together under its umbrella a group of creative medical minds from various hospitals and specialized associations in the country.

He explained that internal medicine is not just a medical specialization, as it is the beating heart of medical practice; combining the art of diagnosis, precision treatment and a comprehensive vision linking various medical specializations to provide integrated healthcare for patients.

He said the internal medicine doctors have always been the first line of defense and at the forefront in confronting health challenges. “They are responsible for diagnosis, treatment, prevention, research, education and innovation,” he asserted.

He stated that the conference embodies an ambitious future vision that shapes the future of internal medicine in the country based on unifying efforts, enhancing integration, and creating a strong network of cooperation between all hospitals and specialized associations.

He revealed that his ministry is developing a comprehensive strategic vision to support internal medicine doctors and their sub-specializations.



KUNA photo  
Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi addresses the audience during the opening of Kuwait Association of Internal Medicine conference.

“This vision focuses on enhancing the medical work environment by providing the latest equipment and technologies and supporting medical personnel to ensure an environment conducive to creativity and excellence. It includes

launching advanced training programs in and outside Kuwait to ensure continuous professional development and keep pace with the latest global medical practices,” he affirmed.

He added the vision includes adopting effective preventive strategies to combat chronic diseases by activating specialized clinics and raising community awareness to reduce the burden of health facilities.

He emphasized the ministry’s efforts to promote scientific research and clinical trials, encourage doctors to innovate and participate in research that positions Kuwait among the leading countries in the field of internal medicine, and enhance cooperation and integration between internal medicine specializations to provide comprehensive and distinguished healthcare.

He confirmed the adoption of the latest artificial intelligence and digital medicine technologies to develop diagnostic and treatment processes and make the health system more accurate and efficient.

Chairman of the organizing committee for the conference Dr. Abdullah Al-Othman stated that the conference idea stemmed from the association’s deep belief that development can only be built through partnership, and that “the health challenges we face today require effective coordination, knowledge exchange, and a unified scientific approach based on best practices and scientific evidence.”

Al-Othman said “the event that brings us together for the first time under one umbrella establishes a new phase of cooperation and integration between internal medicine departments across Kuwait’s various hospitals. Its importance stems from the fact that it is not limited to a scientific meeting; as it rather represents a true platform for instilling a sense of teamwork, exchanging expertise, and unifying efforts to improve the quality of healthcare services provided to patients.”

‘Help child learn to talk’

Tips to use screen time for child’s development

**By Erika Squires and Lucy (Kathleen) McGoron**  
Wayne State University

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

Screen time permeates the lives of toddlers and preschoolers. For many young children, their exposure includes both direct viewing, such as watching a TV show, and indirect viewing, such as when media is on in the background during other daily activities.

As many parents will know, research points to several negative effects of screen time. As scholars who specialize in speech pathology and early childhood development, we are particularly interested in the recent finding that too much screen time is associated with less parent-child talk, such as fewer conversational turns between parents and children.

As a result, the American Academy of Pediatrics and World Health Organization suggest limiting screen time for children.

Beyond quantity, they also emphasize the quality of a child’s engagement with digital media. Used in moderation, certain kinds of media can have educational and social benefits for children - and even contribute to language development.

Effectively

These tips may help parents structure and manage screen time more effectively.

Parents can enhance their children’s screen-time value by choosing high-quality media - that is, content with educational benefit. PBS Kids has many popular shows, from “Nature Cat” to “Sid the Science Kid,” that would qualify as educational.

Two other elements contribute to the quality of screen time.

First, screen content should be age-appropriate - that is, parents should choose shows, apps and games that are specifically designed for young children. Using a resource such as Common Sense Media allows parents to check recommended ages for television shows, movies and apps.

Second, parents can look for shows that use evidence-based educational

techniques, such as participatory cues. That’s when characters in shows break the “third wall” by directly talking to their young audience to prompt reflection, action or response. Research shows that children learn new words better when a show has participatory cues - perhaps because it encourages active engagement rather than passive viewing.

Many classic, high-quality television shows for young children feature participatory cues, including “Mickey Mouse Clubhouse,” “Dora the Explorer,” “Go Diego Go!” and “Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood.”

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents and children watch media together whenever possible.

Recommendation

This recommendation is based on the evidence that increased screen media use can reduce parent-child conversation. This, in turn, can affect language development. Intentionally discussing media content with children increases language exposure during screen time.

Parents may find the following joint media engagement strategies useful:

- Press pause and ask questions.
- Point out basic concepts, such as letters and colors.

- Model more advanced language using a “think aloud” approach, such as, “That surprised me! I wonder what will happen next?”

Learning from media is challenging for young children because their brains struggle to transfer information and ideas from screens to the real world. Children learn more from screen media, research shows, when the content connects to their real-life experiences.

To maximize the benefits of screen time, parents can help children connect what they are viewing with experiences they’ve had. For example, while watching content together, a parent might say, “They’re going to the zoo. Do you remember what we saw when we went to the zoo?”

This approach promotes language development and cognitive skills, including attention and memory. Children learn better with repeated exposure to words, so selecting media that relates to a child’s real-life experiences can help reinforce new vocabulary. (AP)

10 states hit

Measles cases near 900 in US

NEW YORK, April 27, (AP): With one-fifth of states seeing active measles outbreaks, the US is nearing 900 cases, according to figures posted Friday by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The CDC’s confirmed measles cases count is 884, triple the amount seen in all of 2024. The vast majority - 646 - are in Texas, where an outbreak in the western part of the state that’s approaching the three-month mark.

Two unvaccinated elementary school-aged children died from measles-related illnesses in the epicenter in West Texas, and an adult in New Mexico who was not vaccinated died of a measles-related illness.

Other states with active outbreaks - defined as three or more cases - include Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Tennessee.

Outbreaks

North America has two other ongoing outbreaks. One in Ontario, Canada, has resulted in 1,020 cases from mid-October through Wednesday. And as of Friday, the Mexican state of Chihuahua had 605 measles cases, according to data from the state health ministry. The World Health Organization has said cases in Mexico are linked to the Texas outbreak.

Measles is caused by a highly contagious virus that’s airborne and spreads easily when an infected person breathes, sneezes or coughs. It is preventable through vaccines, and has been considered eliminated from the US since 2000. As the virus takes hold in other US communities with low vaccination rates, health experts fear the virus that the spread could stretch on for a year. Here’s what else you need to know about measles in the US

Texas state health officials said Friday there were 22 new cases of measles since Tuesday, bringing the total to 646 across 26 counties - most of them in West Texas. Hospitalizations were steady Friday at 64 throughout the outbreak.

Genetic research paves the way for treatment

Project brings hope to rare diseases that often go undiagnosed in Africa

DAKAR, Senegal, April 27, (AP): Ndeye Lam visits the cemetery often, praying and gently touching the seashells laid out across her daughter’s gravesite.

“Mariama will always be here,” she said, stepping away from the grave and onto a path that winds through rows of monuments outlined with white tile, stone and sand.

At home, Lam and her husband Pathé smiled over an old video clip of their daughter beaming as she celebrated her 13th birthday with cake and sparklers. When the girl was little, she loved to play. By 13, her muscles had weakened, her spine had curved and stiffened and in her last months, she struggled increasingly to breathe.

She visited Fann hospital in Dakar, where neurologist Dr. Pedro Rodriguez Cruz measured her lung capacity. He suspects Mariama had SELENON-related myopathy, a muscular dystrophy that causes severe respiratory compromise. A new BiPAP machine might have helped to ease her breathing, but it was too late.

Globally, more than 350 million people live with rare diseases, most of them caused by a misstep hidden within their genes. Some conditions can be caught early and treated-but in parts of Africa where population data and resources are scarce, many people go undiagnosed. Rodriguez is trying to change that by connecting patients with genetic testing and medical support, while gathering key data from those patients and their families.

“Most rare disease data has been collected from people of European ancestry, so we have very little knowledge about what’s happening in other parts of the world, mainly in Africa,” Rodriguez said.

Research

His research is funded by organizations including the La Caixa Foundation in Spain and the National Ataxia Foundation in the United States. And he has consulted with scientists in China, France, Boston, and elsewhere around the world, documenting rare diseases and novel disease-causing gene variants.

That research is creating a library of genetic data for scientists and clinicians. Patients in Senegal are benefiting, too, with a path to diagnosis.

In Guediawaye, Fatoumata Binta Sané’s daughter Aissata has glutaric



Rare disease researcher Pedro Rodriguez, (left), examines Ibrahim Ndiaye, 8, in Dakar, Senegal, Jan. 10, 2025. (AP)

acidemia type I, an inherited disorder in which the body can’t process certain proteins properly. Her arms and legs are tightly drawn up toward her chest. She can’t walk or reach for things, speak, sit on her own or hold her head up. Sané cradles Aissata in her arms constantly, and the 8-year-old smiles at the sound of her mother’s voice.

Irreversible

In the U.S., newborns are screened for treatable genetic conditions. In Senegal, newborn screening is not routine. Infants who appear healthy at birth might go undiagnosed and experience irreversible decline. Glutaric acidemia type I, for example, can cause brain damage, seizures, coma and early death.

Sané is waiting for genetic testing results for Aissata’s one-year-old sister Aminata. Patients can live long, healthy lives if they start treatment before the onset of symptoms. That includes following a strict diet, avoiding protein-rich foods like nuts, fish and meat and taking the supplement L-carnitine. Though consultation with Rodriguez was free, lifelong treatment is not. If Aminata shares her sister’s disease, Sané will need government assistance to buy medication.

Prof. Moustapha Ndiaye, head of the neurology department at Fann, hopes young physicians will graduate prepared to assist rare disease patients not just in Senegal but in other African countries.

“Students travel from across Africa to study here,” Ndiaye said.

At the start of her career, Dr. Henriette Senghor saw patients who were hospitalized for months. Some died, and no one knew why.

“There was this problem-there was this void,” said Senghor, who’s now training with Rodriguez.

In 2021, Rodriguez established a partnership between the Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar and CNAG, the National Center for Genomic Analysis in Barcelona. Rodriguez collects patients’ blood samples and delivers the extracted DNA to Barcelona, where scientists sequence it, storing the answers it holds in a large database. Almost 1,300 participants-patients and families-have enrolled in his study of rare disease in West Africa.

In the Gambia, Fatou Samba’s sons Adama, 8, and Gibril, 4, like to play soccer and feed the sheep in their backyard. On a recent afternoon, they took turns playing with a toy airplane and a globe. Adama, who hopes to be a pilot, pointed to where he wanted to go: the U.S. Outside, he started to climb a pile of bicycles propped up against the wall, and Gibril followed.

“We’re climbing Mount Everest,” Adama said. Standing on a bicycle wheel, Adama hesitated. Samba reached for him, setting him down on solid ground. There is a tiny scar on his forehead where broken skin has been stitched back together.

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Saint-Etienne loses 3-1 at Strasbourg

Monaco drops points in CL race after drawing at Le Havre

PARIS, April 27, (AP): Monaco dropped points in the race to qualify directly for next season’s Champions League after drawing 1-1 at Ligue 1 struggler Le Havre.

Monaco moved above Marseille and into second place on goal difference, but direct rivals Nice and Strasbourg both won to move one point behind Monaco with three matches left.

Lyon could also move within one point of Monaco with a home win against Rennes in Saturday’s late game.

The top three qualify automatically and the team finishing fourth enters qualifying.

The draw boosted Le Havre’s chances of staying up after fellow relegation battler Saint-Etienne earlier lost at Strasbourg 3-1.

Le Havre was in 16th place and the relegation-promotion playoff spot, one point above Saint-Etienne.

Le Havre striker Ahmed Hassan headed in a good left-wing cross midway through the first half.

Mika Biereth equalized from close range in the second half for his 13th goal of the season.

United States forward Folarin Balogun went on late for Monaco but did not get a scoring chance.

The draw relegated rock-bottom Montpellier.

Saint-Etienne’s defeat left the 10-time former champion in deep trouble.

Poor defending allowed home striker Emanuel Emegha to break free down the right and pick out left wing back

Diego Moreira, who finished powerfully.

Georgia winger Zuriko Davitashvili equalized with a fine solo goal after cutting in from the left flank.

Moreira returned the favor to Emegha by setting him up in the second half for the Dutch striker’s 14th goal of the season.

Guéla Doué - the older brother of Paris Saint-Germain star Désiré Doué - skilfully started the move which French champion PSG lost 3-1 at home to end its chances of finishing the league unbeaten.



CF Montréal midfielder Aleksandr Guboglo (39) fights for the ball against New York Red Bulls midfielder Wikelman Carmona during the first half of an MLS soccer match in Harrison, N.J. (AP)

Surridge scores four goals as Nashville routs Chicago

Revolution end Charlotte’s home win streak

NASHVILLE, Tenn., April 27, (AP): Sam Surridge scored a club record four goals, Hany Mukhtar added to goals and an assists and Nashville SC beat the Chicago Fire 7-2 on Saturday night.

Nashville coach B.J. Callaghan beat his former boss and current Fire coach Gregg Berhalter in their first meeting. Callaghan served as an assistant for the U.S. men’s national team under Behalter and became interim manager after Berhalter’s contract expired in December 2022.

Surridge - the 19th player in MLS history to score four goals in a game - opened the scoring when he converted from the spot in the 14th minute and Jeisson Palacios scored his first goal in MLS to give Nashville a 2-0 lead when he headed home a corner kick played in by Mukhtar in the 22nd.

Mukhtar added goals in the 25th - when he tapped in a rebound from point-blank range - and 31st minutes before Surridge made another penalty kick in first-half stoppage time make it 5-0. Nashville became the fifth team in MLS history to score five goals in the first half of a match and the first since Philadelphia on July 8, 2022.

Surridge slipped behind the defense to score goals on the counter-attack in the 50th and 57th minutes to make it 7-0.

Carles Gil scored late in the second half and Aljaž Ivacic made it stand up as the New England Revolution handed Charlotte FC its first home loss with a 1-0 victory.

Charlotte (6-3-1) falls out of a tie for first place in the Eastern Conference after losing for the first time in six home matches. Charlotte had the league’s longest win streak at home with eight dating to last season.

The Revolution (4-4-1) have won three in a row and four of their last five behind the red-hot Gil.

Gil netted the winner unassisted in the 77th minute. He has scored four of



CF Montréal goalkeeper Sebastian Breza, left, fights for the ball against teammate Fernando Alvarez, second from left, during the second half of an MLS soccer match against the New York Red Bulls in Harrison, N.J. (AP)

the Revolution’s seven goals this season.

Ivacic saved four shots for his fourth clean sheet this season for the Revolution. Ivacic has allowed just seven goals in nine starts. He had three saves in the first half.

Kristijan Kahlina finished with three saves for Charlotte.

Marco Pašalić had a goal and an assist to help Orlando City beat Atlanta United 3-0 for its fourth consecutive shutout, a club record.

Orlando (4-2-4), which is unbeaten in seven consecutive games, hasn’t allowed a goal in 436 minutes of game time, breaking the previous mark of 364, set mostly during the 2023 MLS Cup playoffs.

Luis Muriel converted from the penalty spot after he drew a foul in the area, conceded by Bartosz Slisz, to give Orlando City a 1-0 lead in the 42nd minute and score the team’s first goal since a 2-1 win over the LA Galaxy on March 29.

Jakob Glesnes had an early goal and an assist late, and Andre Blake became the second fastest goalkeeper to post 80 shutouts as the Philadelphia Union cruised to a 3-0 victory over D.C. United.

Blake, who is tied for the league

lead with five clean sheets this season, reached the mark in 253 starts. Atlanta United’s Brad Guzan got there in 251.

The Union (6-3-1) grabbed a 1-0 lead just 15 minutes into the match on a goal by Glesnes. It was his first this season and his ninth in six seasons with the club. Nineteen-year-old rookie midfielder Francis Westfield notched his third assist and Indiana Vassilev collected his second.

Philadelphia took a two-goal lead seven minutes into the second half on Danley Jean Jacques’ second career goal with both coming this season. He scored with a shot through traffic that ricocheted off the right post into the net.

Bruno Damiani found the net in the 77th minute to cap the scoring. It was the second goal for Damiani. The 23-year-old rookie subbed in for Tai Baribo in the 62nd minute. Baribo leads the league with seven.

Max Arfsten and Sean Zawadzki score goals as Crew beats Earthquakes 2-1

Max Arfsten scored in the 61st minute, Sean Zawadzki added his first goal of the season and Patrick Schulte had five saves to help the Columbus Crew beat the San Jose Earthquakes 2-1.

Arfsten flashed some fancy foot-

work, high-stepping through the left side of the area and eventually causing defender Max Floriani to fall down as his rising shot from the corner of the 6-yard box slipped under the cross bar to cap the scoring.

Zawadzki made a sliding finish, redirected a free kick played to the far post from the left side by Diego Rossi back inside the near post to give the Crew a 1-0 lead in the 29th minute.

Beau Leroux played a through ball to Josef Martínez, who slipped behind the defense and, as goalkeeper Patrick Schulte charged off his line, chipped a shot into the net from near the left corner of the 6-yard box. Martínez has scored in back-to-back games and has all of his five goals this season in the last four matches, beginning with a hat trick in a 6-1 win over San Jose.

Diego Luna scored a goal in each half and Real Salt Lake handed expansion side San Diego FC its third straight loss with a 3-1 victory.

It was scoreless until first-half stoppage time.

Luna scored unassisted in spectacular fashion in the first extra minute to give Real Salt Lake (4-6-0) the lead. But Hirving “Chucky” Lozano answered on a penalty kick five minutes later to pull San Diego (4-4-2) even at halftime.

It was the second goal for Lozano in his first season in the league. The PK was awarded after Anibal Godoy was fouled by RSL defender Alexandros Katranis.

Real Salt Lake regained the lead on a PK goal by Luna in the 54th minute after a foul on San Diego midfielder Jeppe Tverskov. Luna has five goals - three shy of his career high - in nine appearances this season.

Noah Eile scored his first MLS goal in the 67th minute, Carlos Miguel Coronel had five saves and the New York Red Bulls beat CF Montreal 1-0.

Eile, a 6-foot-5 22-year-old defender, went up high for a header off a corner kick played in by Omar Valencia that slipped inside the back post to give the Red Bulls (4-3-3) a 1-0 lead.

Montreal (0-7-3) has scored four goals this season, the fewest in MLS, and has been shut out seven times - including each of the last three games.

Al-Dhufairi earns second spot in tough UAE Sprint Rally conditions

ABU DHABI, April 27, (KUNA): Kuwait’s racer Dhari Al-Dhufairi secured second place in the third round of the UAE Sprint Rally Championship, held in Umm Al Quwain.

In a statement to KUNA after the race, Al-Dhufairi, a member of the Kuwait Inspire Club, expressed his satisfaction with the achievement, highlighting the challenges posed by the high temperatures during the competition.

He mentioned that his vehicle en-

countered some issues due to the extreme weather conditions, but despite this, he was able to reach the desired result. Al-Dhufairi also thanked his club for their unwavering support in all his racing endeavors.

The third round saw 12 competitors, with Al-Dhufairi finishing strongly despite the tough conditions. The championship consists of four stages, each spanning 11 km. The upcoming fourth and fifth rounds are scheduled for November and December, respectively.



KUNA photo

Al Dhufairi with other winners on the podium.

Kuwait Club and Kazma reach final

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Kuwait Club and Kazma secured spots in the final of the “Merged” Basketball League after defeating Al-Qurain and Al-Qadsia in the “Golden Square” at the Basketball Association Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex.

Kuwait Club advanced with 88-70 victory over Al-Qurain, marking their second consecutive win, while Kazma triumphed 104-90 against Al-Qadsia for the second time. The two teams will now face off in the league final, which will be decided in a playoff format with a winner-takes-all advantage.

The match between “Sons of Kaifan” and “Al-Qurain” was intense, with Kuwait Club asserting control early on. Al-Qurain’s national coach, Yahya Kleib, worked to keep pace with the defending champion, but Kuwait’s experience and superiority in three-point shooting made the difference.



Players fighting for the rebound.

Kuwait Club’s Alexander Al-Ghais and Jakar Samson were stand-out performers, each contributing 22 points, while Mohammed Adnan added 17 points. Al-Qurain’s key players included Love (20 points), Brown (18 points), and Adel Al-Saeed (11 points).

Al-Qadsia wins U-16 volleyball league title



Premier Volleyball League champion, Al-Qadsia.

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Two exciting matches will take place today in the final round of the Premier Volleyball League. Al-Qadsia will face Burqan at 5:00 pm, followed by the matchup between Al-Shabab and Al-Arabi at 7:00 pm, at the Volleyball Association Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex. Tomorrow will see the conclusion of the Premier League with the final match between Kazma and Kuwait Club. The top four teams – Kuwait Club, Kazma, Burqan, and Al-Arabi – have already secured their spots in the semifinals, which will begin next Friday. The first and second-place teams will face the fourth-place team, while the second and third-place teams will compete in two matches. If the two winning teams emerge victorious, a decisive match will determine who advances to the final.

Kuwait Club leads the Premier Volleyball League standings with 10 points, followed by Kazma with 9 points, Burqan with 8 points, Al-Arabi with 6 points, Al-Qadsia with 3 points, and Al-Shabab with no points.

In the First Division League, Al-Tadamon will play Yarmouk, while Al-Sahel will take on Sulaibikhat.

Meanwhile, Al-Qadsia Club secured the U-16 Volleyball League title after a 3-0 victory over Kazma in the final. Al-Yarmouk Club finished in second place, and Kuwait SC took third place.

The Kuwait Volleyball Federation President, Dr. Jaber Al-Marri, along with the Chairman of the Federation’s Competitions Committee, Dr. Jaber Al-Sharif, former Volleyball Federation President Kamal Al-Ayouni, Al-Qadsia Club Board Member Dr. Hussein Al-Qabandi, and Al-Yarmouk Club Board Member Khaled Al-Failakawi, presented commemorative medals to the top three teams and a trophy to Qadsia’s team captain.

Eubank Jr. beats Benn by unanimous decision

LONDON, April 27, (AP): In a new chapter of a British boxing family feud, Chris Eubank Jr. earned a unanimous decision over Conor Benn in a middleweight bout at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium on Saturday.

Eubank (35-3) handed Benn (23-1) his first professional loss in a brawl for bragging rights under the lights more than 30 years after their fathers shared the ring in two memorable slugfests.

All three judges scored the non-title fight 116-112 after a spirited 12-round affair in front of 67,484 fans.

“I didn’t know he had what he had in him. I underestimated him,” the 35-year-old Eubank said.

In November 1990, Eubank senior beat Nigel Benn by a ninth-round stoppage in Birmingham to take the WBO middleweight title. The rematch was



Chris Eubank Jr., left, and Conor Benn fight during their middleweight bout at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, London. (AP)

three years later in front of 45,000 fans at Old Trafford. It ended in a split-decision draw.

Both dads were on hand Saturday. The surprise, though, was Chris Eubank accompanying his son to the ring. Senior called his son’s antics at an earlier press conference “a disgrace,” and Junior this week said they were not on speaking terms.

“I’m happy to have this man back with me. Onwards and upwards,” Junior said.

His father added: “That’s my son. That’s why I’m here. I was always going to be here.”

The sons’ bout was originally set for 2022 but was scrapped after Benn’s voluntary urine test showed trace amounts of the fertility drug Clomiphene, a banned substance that boosts testosterone levels while burning fat.



Kuwait's future figure skating 'champions' make their mark



KUWAIT CITY, April 27: The Kuwait Winter Games Club successfully hosted the Kuwait National Figure Skating Championship for Girls. Twenty-seven athletes across various age groups participated in the one-day event at the club's skating hall, showcasing an impressive display of Kuwaiti talent.

Following the awards ceremony, Club President Fahid Al-Ajmi expressed his pride in the players' outstanding performances, noting the high level of competition and the enthusiasm that captivated the audience.

Al-Ajmi emphasized that the club's commitment to organizing such championships is part of its broader mission to support young athletes, enhance their technical skills, and prepare them to represent Kuwait in upcoming regional and international competitions. He also highlighted the role of these events in promoting figure skating among girls, particularly the younger generation.

He further noted that the strong ratings given by international judges overseeing the competition are a promising sign, reflecting the progress of Kuwaiti figure skaters and their potential to excel on the global stage.

# Al-Kharafi continues winning run at equestrian champ'ship



KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Kuwait Club's jockey Ali Al-Kharafi continued his impressive streak by winning the seventh round of the Kuwait Equestrian Federation League Championship, held at the Kuwait Equestrian Center track.

Al-Kharafi clocked the fastest time of 34.95 seconds during an outstanding Grand Prix round at a height of 145 cm. Abdullah Al-Awadhi secured second and third places, followed by Anaaz Al-Anaaz, Fawaz Al-Subaie, and Hamad Al-Hajri. Ghazi Faisal Al-Jariwi, Secretary-General of the Equestrian Federation, crowned the winners.

In addition to his Grand Prix victory, Al-Kharafi also topped the intermediate category at a height of 135 cm. Hamad Al-Hajri claimed the minor prize at 125 cm, while Mohammed Karam Ghuloum took first place in the 115 cm category.

The opening day of the tournament also saw Al-Kharafi claim the grand prize at a height of 140 cm, further cementing his dominance.

Secretary-General Ghazi Al-Jariwi praised the exceptional standard of Kuwaiti equestrian sports, highlighting the emergence of talented young riders across all levels – beginners, intermediate, and advanced – and the spirited competition seen throughout the event.

Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah to patronize chess tournament



KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Under the patronage of Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Sabah, Honorary President of the Sea Club, the third annual chess tournament will take place from May 2nd to 3rd at Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak Hall, located at the Kuwait Sea Sports Club. The competition will be held in the evening from 4:00 pm to 10:00 pm, with the event concluding on the second day, followed by a closing ceremony to honor the winners and distribute cash prizes totaling approximately \$70,000.

In a statement to the press, tournament sponsor Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah shared that the tournament has attracted 14 Grandmasters (GMs) and 13 International Masters (IMs). He expressed excitement about the participation of both international players and local talent from Kuwait and other residents, highlighting the opportunity for players to compete alongside world-class champions and refine their skills.

Khalaf Al-Azmi, head of the organizing and arbitration committees, emphasized that the tournament is officially recognized by the International Chess Federation (FIDE) and follows the Swiss system of nine rounds.

He noted that the tournament is one of the premier international chess events, drawing widespread participation



Left-right: Photos from the Kuwait National English School thrilling Sports Day.

# Kuwait National English School hosts thrilling Sports Day at Kaifan Athletics Stadium

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Kuwait National English School in Hawally, proudly held its annual Sports Day on Tuesday, 22 April 2025, at Kaifan Athletics Stadium. The event brought together students, parents, and staff for a day full of excitement, athleticism, and community spirit.

Children from Charlotte Nursery and KG all the way

through to Year 13 participated in a wide range of physical education activities. They competed in House Teams: Oxford, London, Cambridge and Durham. From fun races for the little ones to competitive team events for older students, the day showcased the students' enthusiasm, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

Parents were warmly invited to attend and cheer from

the stands, making the day even more special for the students. Their support created an encouraging atmosphere as children proudly demonstrated the skills they've developed throughout the school year.

"This event is always a highlight of the academic calendar," said KNES Co-Chair of the Governing Body, Madame Chantal. "It's wonderful to see our students so active

and engaged, and to have our parent community join us in celebration."

For more photos and videos from the day, the school invites everyone to visit the official Kuwait National English School website ([www.knes.edu.kw](http://www.knes.edu.kw)), as well as follow along on Instagram and TikTok for behind-the-scenes moments and student highlights.

# OKC sweeps Grizzlies to become first team to reach second round

Cavs hand Heat worst-ever playoff loss as Curry heats up with Butler out

MEMPHIS, Tenn., April 27, (AP): As the first team to move on to the second round of the NBA playoffs, the Oklahoma City Thunder get some time off.

**Rest for the best.**

Oklahoma City, which finished the regular season with the best record in the NBA at 68-14, closed out a four-game sweep of the Memphis Grizzlies on Saturday with a 117-115 victory. The Thunder, who have won eight straight dating to the regular season, await the winner of the Los Angeles Clippers-Denver Nuggets series that is tied 2-2.

The Thunder weren't sure if the break will serve as a benefit.

Oklahoma City dominated the first two games at home and then faced a tougher challenge on the road. After winning Game 1 by 51 points and capturing Game 2 by 19, the Thunder had to overcome a 29-point deficit in Game 3 before holding off a late Memphis rally in Game 4.

One aspect of the Oklahoma City play that improved, particularly in



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) falls as he was fouled by Houston Rockets forward Amen Thompson (1) in the second half of Game 3 during an NBA basketball first-round playoff series in San Francisco. (AP)

Saturday's Game 4, was the play of guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander. After leading the league in scoring during the regular season at 32.7 points a game, he struggled - by his standards - in the first two games. He averaged 21 points in the first two and was a combined 14 of 42 from the field.

In Saturday's series-clinching win, Gilgeous-Alexander made his first seven shots, was 13 of 24

from the field, and finished with 38 points to go with six assists.

**Cavaliers 124, Heat 87**

In Miami, Donovan Mitchell didn't have a great shooting day. Darius Garland was in street clothes, out with an injury.

And Cleveland rolled anyway, moving to the brink of Round 2.

Jarrett Allen scored 22 points, De'Andre Hunter added 21 and the Cavaliers - bullying Miami around

all day - handed the Heat their worst playoff loss with a 124-87 win to take a 3-0 lead in their Eastern Conference first-round series.

The Cavs took control with a 33-5 run early, outrebounded Miami 46-29 and outscored the Heat 60-30 in the paint.

Evan Mobley scored 19 points and Max Strus added 18 for Cleveland. Ty Jerome had 13 points and 11 assists in 22 minutes - he was plus-33 - and Mitchell scored 13 on 4-for-14 shooting.

**Warriors 104, Rockets 93**

In San Francisco, playoff Steph delivered while Playoff Jimmy became his biggest cheerleader on the bench, dressed in a full-length fur coat.

Stephen Curry eventually found his shooting groove while Houston tried everything to stop him, finishing with 36 points, nine assists and seven rebounds to lead the Golden State Warriors past the Rockets without Jimmy Butler for a 2-1 lead in their first-round playoff series.

Buddy Hield had 17 points off the bench with five 3-pointers as the Warriors won their sixth straight Game 3 in the opening round. Gary Payton II scored 11 of his 16 points in the fourth quarter.

Game 4 in the best-of-seven series is Monday night at Chase Center. The biggest question will be whether Butler can heal in time to contribute.

Fred VanVleet hit consecutive 3-pointers and had a three-point play to score Houston's initial nine points and wound up with 17. Alperen Sengun added 15 points and 11 rebounds.

**Nuggets 101, Clippers 99**

In Inglewood, Aaron Gordon slammed down Nikola Jokic's miss as time expired to lift Denver over Los Angeles to tie their playoff series 2-2.

Video review confirmed the ball left Gordon's hands above the rim just before the buzzer sounded after the Nuggets had blown a 22-point lead.

Jokic had 36 points, 21 rebounds and eight assists to lead the Nuggets. Michael Porter Jr. and Christian Braun had 17 points apiece.

Kawhi Leonard scored 24 points for the Clippers. Norman Powell added 22 and Ivica Zubac had 19 points, 12 rebounds and six assists.

The Nuggets split their two games at the new Intuit Dome. Game 5 is Monday in Denver.



Real Betis Academy finishes as runner-up in Juventus Academy football tournament

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: The Juventus Academy Cup football tournament took place on Friday evening, April 25, featuring the participation of both local and international academies. Real Betis Academy finished as the runner-up.



Denver Nuggets forward Aaron Gordon, drives the court while under pressure from Los Angeles Clippers guard Bogdan Bogdanovic during the second half in Game 4 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series in Inglewood, Calif. (AP)

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NEWS





Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior, right, kicks the ball ahead of Barcelona's Jules Kounde during the Spanish Copa del Rey final soccer match between Barcelona and Real Madrid at Estadio de La Cartuja stadium in Seville, Spain. (AP)

# Sports



Qadsia players celebrate with the championship trophy.

### Qadsia clinches under-15 league title with draw

Qadsia Club secured the under-15 league title following a 1-1 draw with Kuwait Club in the final round at Kazma Club's subsidiary stadium. The trophy presentation was attended by Dr. Saleh Al-Majroub, Secretary-General of the Kuwait

Football Association, along with Dr. Hamed Al-Shaibani, Director of the Association's Competitions Department. Qadsia Club was crowned champions, with Al-Arabi Club finishing in second place and Kuwait Club in third.

### Koundé scores extra-time winner

## Barca edges Real in dramatic Copa final

SEVILLE, Spain, April 27, (AP): Barcelona has launched its bid for a treble after edging Real Madrid 3-2 in a thrilling Copa del Rey final, with Jules Koundé scoring an extra-time winner.

Right back Koundé pounced on a pass by Luka Modric and fired into the low corner of Thibaut Courtois' net for the 116th-minute decider.

Barcelona will carry momentum from its record-extending 32nd Copa del Rey title into Wednesday's start of its Champions League semifinal series against Inter Milan. It also leads La Liga by four points over Madrid.

Pedri González dictated the game for Barcelona from midfield and scored from long range to take a 28th lead at La Cartuja Stadium.

Madrid rallied with two second-half goals, with Kylian Mbappé coming off the bench at halftime and scoring from a free kick in the 70th and midfielder Aurélien Tchouaméni's header in the 77th, making it 2-1.

Ferran Torres leveled in the 84th to force extra time.

Barcelona has beaten Madrid in all three clásicos this season, including a 5-2 rout in the Spanish Super Cup final in January after winning 4-0 at Madrid in the league in October.

"This was such a physically demanding game, but we showed that we are a great team that never gives up," said Torres, who filled in perfectly for the injured Robert Lewandowski.

The loss to its fierce rival was another blow to Madrid after it was knocked out of the Champions League quarterfinals by Arsenal. This could have been its last title decider with Carlo Ancelotti in charge. The Italian coach said he will decide his future this summer amid speculation he is bound to take over Brazil.

When asked about his future, Ancelotti said, "As I have said, I can continue, I can stop; it will be a topic for the coming weeks."

While Ancelotti's second stint in Madrid appears to be coming to an end, Hansi Flick has only added to his superb first season with Barcelona. The German coach has invigorated a group of players who seemed spent under Xavi Hernández and helped young players such as Lamine Yamal and Pau Cubarsí continue to grow into stars.

"I have to say thanks to the team because they had an unbelievable performance," Flick said. "A huge win in the Copa final is great for everyone, and it gives us confidence for more."

King Felipe VI awarded the trophy to Barcelona's captains, Ronald Araujo and Marc-André ter Stegen, after the monarch returned to Spain following his attendance at the funeral of Pope Francis.

The trophy is the first piece needed to repeat a treble that Barcelona won under Pep Guardiola in 2009 and Luis Enrique in 2015.

Madrid's Antonio Rudiger was shown a red card by the referee in the final moments when he apparently threw twice at the referee and shouted aggressively.

Jude Bellingham and Lucas Vázquez were also shown red cards for protesting.

One of the biggest rivalries in global soccer was again a tale of two halves - until Torres scored the late equalizer against the flow of play to renew Barcelona's prospects.

Barcelona dominated the first half with its ball control and a pressure defense that was quick to recover the ball.

The only semblance of a Madrid attack came when Bellingham was able to spin away from his marker.

But a Bellingham pass intercepted by Cubarsí cued Barcelona's opener. Pedri lobbed forward for Yamal, breaking down the flank. The 17-year-old phenom - sporting a new dyed-blond hairdo - threaded a pass back to the top of the box, where Pedri arrived to blast it home.

Mbappé started the game on the bench after injuring his ankle last week. But Ancelotti sent his striker on at halftime to replace Rodrygo. Modric and playmaker Arda Guler soon followed.



Barcelona players celebrate with the trophy after winning the Spanish Copa del Rey final soccer match between Barcelona and Real Madrid at Estadio de La Cartuja stadium in Seville, Spain. (AP)

## Al-Dhiyab optimistic about Kuwait Champ'ship chances

KUWAIT CITY, April 27: Following the draw ceremony for the Arab Handball Cup, in Khobar, Abdullah Al-Dhiyab, Assistant Secretary-General of the Kuwait Handball Federation, stated that all participating teams have equal chances of success, especially given their strong performances in the recent World Cup finals.

Al-Dhiyab expressed optimism for the Kuwaiti national team, with hopes high for it to top its group and advance to the knockout stages. He highlighted the addition of a new, high-level technical staff, which he believes will elevate the team's performance and bolster Kuwait's handball reputation. He voiced full confidence in the players' abilities to achieve this goal.

He also noted that the large crowds expected at the tournament would provide significant support for the national team, particularly since the event is being held in Kuwait and attended by passionate Kuwait fans. Al-Dhiyab reassured that the Federation is committed to ensuring the success of the tournament and presenting it in the best possible light. He emphasized that this event will serve as vital preparation for Kuwait's hosting of the Asian Handball Championship Finals early next year.

The Arab Handball Championship will take place in Kuwait from May 5 to 11, with nine Arab teams



Abdullah Al-Dhiyab

participating. Kuwait has been placed in Group C alongside the UAE and Morocco, while Group B consists of Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Tunisia. Group A features Bahrain, Egypt, and Iraq.

The tournament will be divided into three groups, with each group containing three teams. The top team from each group will advance directly to the semi-finals, along with the best second-place finisher from all groups.

# Kuwait wins 10m air rifle mixed team gold

Kuwait secures double bronze in air rifle



10m air rifle mixed team gold medalists Ali Al-Mutairi and Ritaj Al-Ziyadi with officials.

### CAIRO, April 27, (KUNA): Kuwait's shooting team claimed its first gold medal at the Arab Shooting Championship in Cairo, winning the 10m air rifle mixed team event on Sunday.

Team head Abdullah Al-Barakat told KUNA shooters secured first place, earning the gold medal in the competition.

Al-Barakat praised the high level of marksmanship displayed by all participating teams and noted that Kuwait's medal count has now risen to seven.

The championship, which features around 300 shooters from 19 Arab countries, will continue until May 1.

Earlier, Kuwait's shooting team clinched two bronze medals in the air rifle events at the Arab Shooting Championship held in Cairo. With this achievement, the team has now secured a total of six medals, including two golds and four bronzes.

In a statement to KUNA, Abdullah Al-Barakat, head of the Kuwaiti shooting team, confirmed that Ali Al-Mutairi, Abdullah Al-Harbi, and Saud Al-Subaie won the bronze in the men's 10-meter air rifle competition. Meanwhile, Maryam Al-Ruzzuqi, Retaj Al-Ziyadi, and Fajr Al-Dhubaib secured the bronze in the women's 10-meter air rifle event.

The competition, which saw the participation of approximately 300 athletes from 19 Arab countries, continues to showcase the talent and dedication of the region's shooters.



Kuwaitis celebrate their bronze medals with the national flag. KUNA photos

### Best of the Rest

#### Man U scores late in draw:

Rasmus Hojlund scored in added time to salvage a 1-1 draw for Manchester United at Bournemouth in the Premier League on Sunday.

United was on course to lose for a 16th time in the league this season after Antoine Semenyo's first-half strike. But a late flurry of pressure paid off for United after Bournemouth went down to 10 men and Hojlund converted from close range for his ninth goal of the season.

The point moved United up to 14th in the standings.

Semenyo fired a low shot from inside the box to beat United goalkeeper Andre Onana in the 23rd minute.

Bournemouth had chances to extend its lead with Dango Ouattara hitting the post with a free kick after the break. But when Evanilson was sent off for a lunge on Noussair Mazraoui following a VAR review in the 70th, United began to increase the pressure. (AP)

## Kuwait grabs 4 gold medals at Qatar Jiu-Jitsu

DOHA, April 27: Kuwaiti champions clinched four gold medals, along with silver and bronze, at the conclusion of the Qatar International Open Professional Jiu-Jitsu Championship in Doha, Qatar.

Issa Shamsah earned a gold medal in the 77 kg unified system (purple belt), as well as a bronze in the 85 kg unified system (brown belt) and another bronze in the 77 kg unified system. Fahad Al-Marzouqi secured a silver medal in the 85 kg unified system (brown belt) and also won a bronze in the 85 kg unified system.

Fawaz Al-Suwaidan took home a bronze medal in the 77 kg unified system (blue belt) and another bronze in the 77 kg unified system. Abdulaziz Al-Kuraibani triumphed with a gold medal in the 62 kg unified system (white belt). Abdullah Al-Amiri claimed



Issa Shamsah



Fawaz Al-Suwaidan

the gold medal in the unsuited system (blue belt) in the 62 kg category, while Mohammed Al-

Saleh won gold in the unsuited system (white belt) in the 77 kg category.