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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Excessive pressure on debtors is unjustified

IT is not an exaggeration to say that the recent measures approved by the Council of Ministers regarding debt repayment are pushing people towards a dead end. This is because judicial rulings in Kuwait become enforceable as soon as the First Instance court issues its ruling. However, both legal logic and human rights considerations suggest that rulings, especially those related to financial matters, should not be enforced until all three levels of litigation have been completed.

Pressures on borrowers have recently intensified, including arrest warrants, travel bans, imprisonment, and even the withholding of half or all of their salary. These measures fail to consider the individual circumstances of the indebted citizens.

When the government cuts off a borrower's salary, it overlooks their family responsibilities and disregards the fact that borrowing was a last resort due to urgent need. As previously mentioned, this pushes them toward illegal actions.

An insolvent debtor may be forced to take illegal steps, as they no longer have any means to provide even a minimum standard of living for their family, let alone repay their debt. This is especially true if their salary is limited, with no other source of income. How are they expected to cover medical expenses, education, or even provide food for their children?

Those who adhere to strict procedures and legal provisions must answer this question before the government becomes a collector for creditors, including usurers and fraudsters?

As we have repeatedly stated, these individuals aim to seize people's money through various illegal means, and exploit legal loopholes that remain unknown to most citizens. This is especially concerning in a world rife with new forms of fraud, such as electronic scams.

In other countries, debtors are not subjected to travel bans. Instead, they are allowed to work

and repay their debts. However, in Kuwait, an indebted citizen finds themselves trapped, unable to work, with their salary seized, and at risk of arrest, imprisonment, or having both their salary and car confiscated. The guarantor also faces legal prosecution, which only exacerbates the suffering and leads to numerous social problems.

It is important to note that bounced checks are now treated as a single offense in terms of penalties. Previously, the issuer of bounced checks could face up to three years in prison for each bounced check. However, a check is essentially a promissory note and should be handled with flexibility, taking into account the debtor's financial situation, whether insolvent or solvent. This is especially relevant when the check involves trade, the purchase of goods, or loans with high interest rates.

In Kuwait, a big group of non-Kuwaiti fraudsters has recently emerged who use a variety of deceptive methods. These include filing lawsuits with forged checks, allowing them to obtain court rulings from the Court of First Instance in their favor. They then go directly to the Judicial Execution Department, which assists in seizing people's money, after which these fraudsters leave Kuwait.

The truth often comes to light in the Court of Appeals, which dismisses the false charges upon verifying that the signature on the submitted check is fraudulent. The situation is made even more challenging because Kuwaiti courts are unable to recover these funds, despite issuing dozens of rulings.

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@Ahmedaljarallah

Ahmed aljarallah

ahmed@aljarallah.com



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Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya met Monday with the Arab League Secretary General Ahmad Aboul Gheit, on the occasion of his visit to the country.

In a statement, the foreign ministry said that during the meeting latest regional and global events were touched on. (KUNA)

CAIRO: The Arab League's fifth meeting for legal and security experts began on Monday to discuss Kuwait's draft proposal on the Arab guide against hate speech.

Head of legal affairs at the Arab League Maha Bakheet said, during the meeting chaired by Kuwait, that the gathering would be focusing on the document and would prepare the final version for the next meeting of the Arab justice ministers meeting next November.

She indicated that the proposed draft paper was forwarded from the 40th meeting of Arab Justice Ministers held last November. (KUNA)

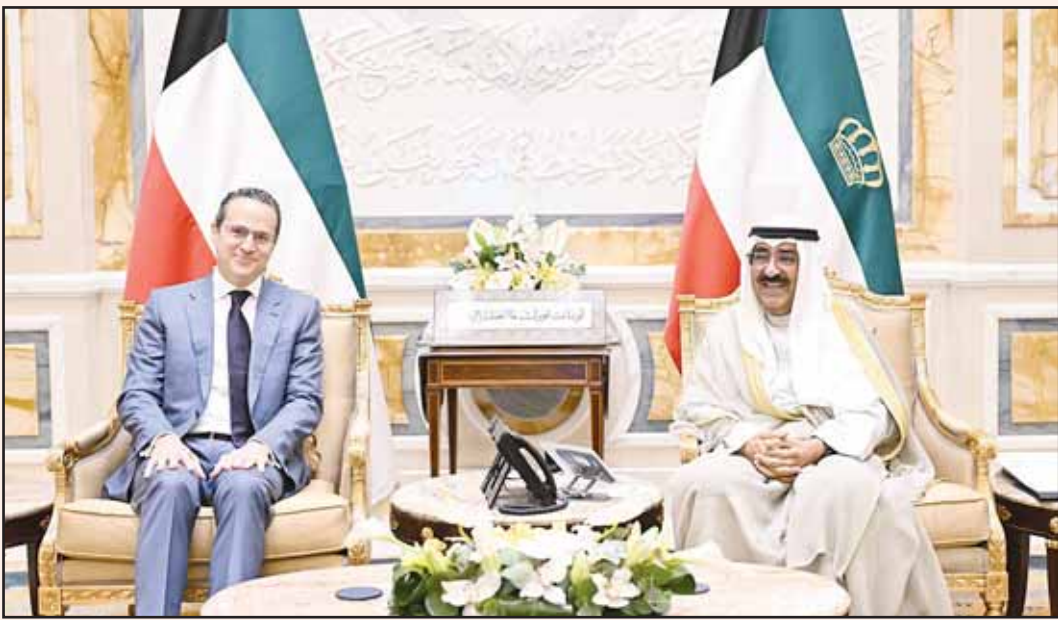
Day by Day

ENDING the practice of buying unused vacation days from employees is a wise decision. Even though this may affect employees with lower salaries, the reality is that many of those who sell their unused leave days do not actually show up for work. Some of them even reside abroad and profit from leave because they don't need them, as their lives are essentially one long vacation. They are not committed to their duties, and as the saying goes, "God's creation is full of wonders".

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

HH Amir receives Minister of Oil, Shell officials



His Highness the Amir receives CEO of Shell.

Amiri Diwan photo

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Monday Minister of Oil Tareq Al-Roumi who was accompanied by visiting CEO of Shell Wael Sawan and Chairman of Shell Group of Companies Anwar Al-Mutlaq.

Present at the meeting was Deputy Chairman and CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Sheikh Nawaf Saud Nasser Al-Sabah.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Monday Minister of Oil Tareq Al-Roumi who was accompanied by visiting CEO of Shell Wael Sawan and Chairman of Shell Group of Companies Anwar Al-Mutlaq.

Present at the meeting was Deputy Chairman and CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Sheikh Nawaf Saud Nasser Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince's Office Director retired General Jamal Al-Theyab.

Gallows fall on five

Kuwait pardons 2, postpones one execution

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Correctional Facilities Sector at the Ministry of Interior executed five individuals convicted of premeditated murder at the Central Prison on Monday.

on on Monday.

Sources from the security sector disclosed that the implementation of the death sentence of one convict was postponed, while two others were pardoned. Sources said all these convicts received final court rulings.

It can be recalled that five individuals with final murder conviction were executed in January.

Trust in Kuwaiti beef remains high

FMD cases fail to dent beef demand

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: With the emergence of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) cases in a number of Kuwaiti farms; the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) has reassured the public that it continues to control the disease, stressing that eating beef does not transmit the infection to humans.

The staff of the newspaper visited the meat market in Shuwaikh Industrial Area, where it was observed that meat sales continued normally. Several butcher shop officials confirmed that sales of beef from Kuwaiti farms are proceeding at normal rates and had not been affected at all by the FMD cases in some farms.

Several consumers at the butcher shops said they could not do without beef, especially since the PAAAFR reassured everyone that FMD is not transmitted to humans through meat consumption.

Hamoud Al-Enezi, a citizen, pointed out that the

disease is not unique to Kuwait; as it is also prevalent in many countries that raise cattle and livestock.

"Therefore, there is no cause for panic over the discovery of FMD cases in the country, especially since the responsible authorities are performing their duties to the best of their ability, as they are primarily concerned with human health. I did not stop purchasing meat," he asserted.

Another citizen, Ibrahim Al-Rashidi, revealed he did not completely refrain from purchasing meat despite the discovery of FMD cases in some local farms. He buys only from the branches of meat companies with good reputation in the market and maintains normal rates.

Butcher shop manager Alaa Sadiq confirmed that beef sales are continuing at a normal rate despite the discovery of FMD cases; indicating that the price of a kilogram of beef from Kuwaiti farms starts at KD 3. He said Kuwaitis prefer this beef over other types of meat, and most expatriates order meat from Kuwaiti farms only because their

products are fresh.

Meat shop manager Khaled Al-Sheikh Ali said meat sales have not been significantly affected by the FMD outbreak in some farms. "Things are proceeding well, especially since the regulatory authorities are doing their job to the fullest, up to the point of closing any shop that sells meat unfit for consumption," he revealed.

Butcher Baroudi Abdullatif said the impact the disease on meat sales is very minor, hoping for a boost in sales in the coming period.

Butcher Tariq Abu Jabal asserted that Kuwaiti meat is among the finest in the market, so most consumers prefer it.

He pointed out that government authorities have reassured consumers about the quality of meat in the market, particularly since the FMD cases are limited to certain farms. He said the company he works for sells only good-quality meat.

Butcher Adel Imam stated that he sells beef and other types of meat normally, and that sales have not been affected by the FMD outbreak.



Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

The iconic Kuwait Towers pierce the skyline, towering over the city as the last whispers of spring fade, making way for the relentless heat of summer.

Summer's fierce arrival sends temps skyrocketing in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Al-Ojairi Scientific Center affirmed that summer has gradually begun, with the emergence of the first signs of the end of the mild spring season, known as the "Kanna" season, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press release, the center explained that the "Kanna" season will start by Tuesday, marking the official onset of summer. The "Kanna" season lasts for 39 consecutive days, divided into three 13-day phases.

With the arrival of the "Kanna" season, the sun's rays become more intense, causing temperatures to rise rapidly. This season serves as a transitional phase from spring to early summer, and is characterized by high temperatures, increased dust and dirt movement, and the possibility of rain.

The middle of the "Kanna" season marks the end of the "Sarayat" period, which may bring sudden rain showers accompanied by thunder, lightning, and sometimes hail.

The Pleiades disappears from view during this season, only to reappear on June 7, which marks the end of the "Kanna" season.

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Complete pre-voting by May 7

Philippine Embassy in Kuwait calls on Filipinos to vote online

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Philippine Embassy in Kuwait urged all registered Filipino overseas voters to exercise their right to vote in the 2025 Philippine National Elections.

In a press statement, the embassy announced that the registered Filipino overseas voters in Kuwait are voting online, instead of using paper ballots; indicating that online voting started on April 13, 2025 and will continue until 6:59 pm on May 12, 2025.

According to the embassy; 36,046 out of 223,482 Filipinos residing in Kuwait as of Dec 31, 2024 are registered overseas voters. It reminded all registered overseas voters that pre-voting enrollment is required in order to proceed to online voting. "They should have their passport ready, because they will be taking a photo of the passport during the enrollment process. The deadline for pre-voting enrollment is on May 7, 2025," the embassy added.

The embassy also announced that its Enrollment and Voting Assistance Desk is open from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm daily, including Fridays and Saturdays, to assist voters until the end of the voting period.

It added that the Enrollment and Voting Assistance Desk will be open until 8:00 pm from May 1, 2025 to May 6, 2025; and until 6:59 pm on the last day of pre-voting enrollment on May 7, 2025.

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Cabrera

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Ministry of Public Works is actively pursuing infrastructure development, including the ongoing road maintenance works in Abu Futaira, which is part of 18 major contracts aimed at developing highways and internal roads throughout the country.

Public Works Minister Noura Al-Mashaan has affirmed the dedication of her ministry in following the highest international standards of quality in the execution of road maintenance projects. She pointed out that advancements



Al-Mashaan

Abu Futaira roadworks part of major infrastructure contracts

in road infrastructure are vital in boosting the economy, improving the quality of life, and realizing the New Kuwait 2035 vision for sustainable development.

She added "infrastructure serves as the cornerstone of national advancement. We are operating with a holistic perspective to propel Kuwait's economic and urban development."

On the other hand, Eng Noura Al-Mutairi, who is overseeing Contract 18-Second Zone in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, disclosed that ministry teams have been assigned in Abu Futaira, Block Eight. She stated that upon completion of fieldwork and the necessary treatments, the 'Type 3' asphalt will be applied.

Al-Mutairi added that fieldwork and maintenance operations are being carried out Abu Futaira, Block Six to prepare for asphalt paving and the subsequent maintenance activities will proceed in Block Seven.

5 Editor-in-Chief Al-Jarallah hosts Peru ambassador in key meeting



9 CEO Shaikha Al-Bahar: Continuing excellence and driving innovation are key pillars of NBK's success



10 Kuwait Airways and Emirates sign MoU to enhance travel options

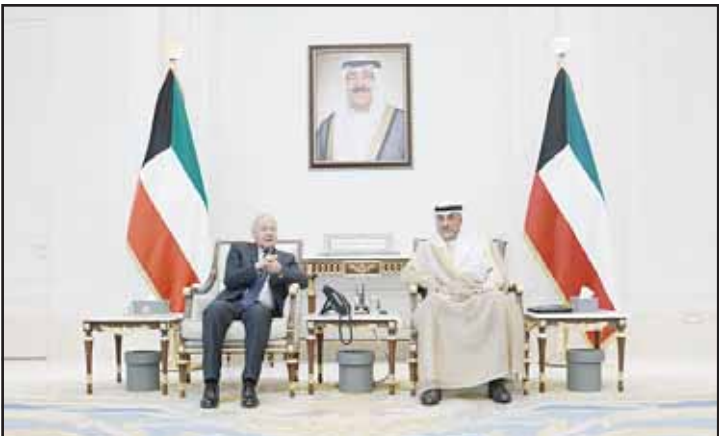
Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:44	Asr	15:21
Sunrise ..	05:09	Maghrib ..	18:22
Zohr	11:46	Isha	19:45

Local

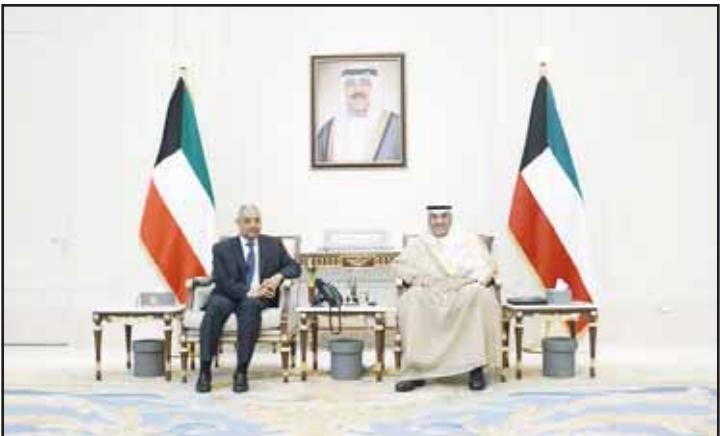
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Hot, cloudy to partly cloudy and relatively humid especially over coastal areas with light to moderate freshening at times northeasterly wind to northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-40 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times and a chance for rising dust.

Weather			
By Night:	Rather hot to mild, partly cloudy to cloudy and relatively humid with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 06-32 km/h with a chance for scattered light rain.		
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait Airport	37	23	

Abdaly	40	20
Bubyan	32	26
Jahra	41	25
Failaka Island	37	26
Salmiyah	31	25
Ahmadi	29	19
Jal Aliyah	39	21
Nuwaisib	34	21
Wafra	38	20



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets the Arab League Secretary General.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets the Djibouti Foreign Minister.



Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah receives Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya (right) and Djibouti Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Abdoukader Omar.

HH Crown Prince meets AL chief, Djibouti Foreign Minister

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Monday visiting Djibouti Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Abdoukader Omar and the accompanying delegation.

Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, His

Highness the Crown Prince's Office Director retired General Jamal Al-Theyab, Assistant Foreign Minister for Arab Affairs Ahmad Al-Bakr.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also received on Monday at Bayan Palace visiting Secretary General of the Arab League Ahmad Abul-Gheit and

the accompanying delegation.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, His Highness the Crown Prince's Office Director General (Rte.) Jamal Al-Theyab, Assistant Foreign Minister for Arab Affairs Ahmad Al-Bakr, and Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the Arab League Ambassador Talal Al-Mutairi.

Acting PM meets FM, Djibouti official

Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Monday, in the presence of Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, Djibouti Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Abdoukader Omar and the accompanying delegation.

Present at the meeting was head of the Diwan of His Highness the Prime Minister Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel and Assistant Foreign Minister for Arab Affairs Ahmad Al-Bakr. (KUNA)

Red tape hinders skills of youths: Al-Mulla

GCC is one and stand on global issues firm: Al-Budaiwi



Pictures taken at the event.



Photos by Mohammad Morsi

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jas-sim Al-Budaiwi has affirmed that the GCC enjoys unity and consistent positions on regional and international challenges.

Budaiwi made the statement at the Diplomacy Forum organized by Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute, focusing on the memoirs of the first Kuwaiti female ambassador -- Nabila Al-Mulla.

Asked about the GCC's ability to adopt a unified Gulf position on regional challenges, Al-Budaiwi asserted "the GCC is unified, and its positions are firm, clear and unequivocal. It is sufficient to refer to the official statements issued periodically by the Ministerial Council and the Supreme Council

of the GCC leaders; confirming that the GCC was built on unity, works on unity, and will work on unity of positions, ranks and self-determination."

He said the current regional and international circumstances require the GCC states to continue consultations and coordination to come up with clear and unified positions on various issues.

He expressed happiness over the opportunity to participate in the launching of Al-Mulla's book, praising her distinguished diplomatic career.

He stated that "the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs has always been replete with high-level diplomatic figures, and Her Excellency Ambassador Nabila Al-Mulla is one of the most prominent figures in the ministry. She served Kuwait and raised its name high."

He narrated his personal experience working with Al-Mulla at the Kuwaiti Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Vienna, stressing that she was "a beacon for all employees and remains so today."

He added "Kuwaiti women in general have had numerous accomplishments. They have taken many explicit positions and steps. Al-Mulla was also one of the first women in the Gulf and the Arab world to have distinguished herself as demonstrated in her work."

Meanwhile, Assistant Foreign Minister for the institute Ambassador Nasser Al-Subaih disclosed that the book launched by Al-Mulla is considered a guide for future generations. "It is the culmination of a renowned diplomatic experience spanning more than three decades. Al-Mulla belongs to a well-known Kuwaiti family that has played a prominent role in political decision-making since the reign of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah. This family's leaders greatly contributed in serving Kuwait," he added.

She explained that her decision to publish this book stemmed from a desire to inform young people and readers about a career filled with challenges and achievements. She said the book does not merely narrate events, as it rather focuses on how to deal with political and dip-

lomatic crises.

She urged young people to read the book carefully and draw lessons and morals from it, emphasizing that documentation is not only a means of preserving memories but also a message to establish political and intellectual awareness for future generations.

In the intervention session with the trainees, Al-Mulla emphasized the importance of developing the institute through openness to international experience and external scholarship programs.

She called for strengthening cooperation with major international centers and organizations such as the United Nations, European Union and IAEA.

She criticized some aspects of administrative bureaucracy that hinder the development of skills, stressing that this phenomenon requires a comprehensive approach to ensure the continued development of a Kuwaiti diplomatic generation capable of representing the country effectively on the international stage.

Other Voices

'Don't let the company down'

By Ahmad alsarraf

Regent Aerospace, a leading American company globally accredited by various official and international bodies, has chosen Kuwait as its regional headquarters, a decision that is hopefully well-studied.

The company specializes in manufacturing aircraft interior components, including seats, galleys, lavatories, sidewalls, ceiling panels, power supply panels, overhead bins, entertainment systems, and cargo holds and trolleys.

Founded in 1993, Regent Aerospace provides services to commercial airlines, leasing companies, and aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) companies. The company offers a wide range of services and spare parts to support maintenance operations, from complete cabin redesigns and comprehensive overhauls to spare parts for ongoing maintenance needs.

Regent Aerospace, headquartered in Valencia, California, employs a global workforce and is the world's largest independent company in its field. It offers a full range of engineering capabilities, including a team of FAA-certified aircraft manufacturers who oversee the production of vacuum-formed plastic components, fire-resistant foam pads, and mechanical and electrical systems. The company also maintains an FAA-certified laboratory for testing material flammability, enabling it to secure approvals at record speed.

Regent Aerospace may not be a large company, but it is a leader in its field and could be the first American company in years to choose Kuwait as its regional

headquarters. We must ensure that we don't let the company down, especially given the reputational challenges Kuwait faces as a country that has struggled to attract international businesses and retain talent. I hope Regent Aerospace marks a positive step forward, even if the path ahead may not be easy.

Based on an agreement with Kuwait Airways, Regent Aerospace will soon begin the maintenance, refurbishment, and furnishing of Kuwait Airways' aircraft cabins.

Kuwait Airways Chair and CEO Captain Abdulmohsen Al-Faqan announced that the airline has provided logistical support to Regent Aerospace in establishing its regional center in Kuwait. This move is aimed at enhancing the company's services in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, the Middle East, and North Africa. The agreement promises economic benefits and strengthens Kuwait's position in the aviation maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) sector.

We extend our gratitude to our brother Abdulmohsen and appreciate Kuwait Airways' role in selecting Regent Aerospace as its regional headquarters in Kuwait.

In an article I wrote last Thursday, I mentioned that the contracting company CAT built the Al-Sabah Hospital complex, which was once the largest in the region. However, I inadvertently omitted the fact that the company also established the iconic Shuwaikh High School, which opened 72 years ago and was, for decades, the largest educational complex in the Middle East. Shuwaikh High School was built on a cost-plus-15 percent basis. I employed the same method in constructing more than 80 villas in the 1980s when I was active in the construction contracting business, a field I bid an early farewell to, with no regrets.

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw



The Municipal Council session in progress.

Multiple requests get go ahead in new MC session

'Fast-track Metro Project to realize Kuwait Vision '35'

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Municipal Council, headed by Abdullah Al-Mahri, held its 17 regular session for the third legislative round on Monday.

During the session, the council approved the following:

■ Request of the Ministry of Public Works to allocate a reservoir and a track, add the use of Unitized Distribution System (UDS) transformer and cancel the previous allocation of reservoirs in South Sabahiya;

■ Request of the Ministry of Electricity to allocate overhead lines to connect Wafra Z2 main transformer station to the overhead lines

■ Request of the Ministry of Interior to create additional parking spaces next to Qurain Health Center in Qurain, Block Two;

■ Amendments to Table No. Six stating the requirements and specifications for agricultural and livestock areas in the new building regulations;

■ Building requirements for areas affiliated with the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR), Public Authority for Sports (PAS), Public Authority

for Manpower (PAM) or any other government agency.

These areas are used for the cultivation of agricultural products; fish farming; poultry, livestock, cattle, horse and camel breeding; beekeeping, honey production and services; breeding and training of racehorses and camels by hunting and equestrian clubs and camel clubs; in addition to certain plots in Abdally and Wafra.

The important amendments include specifying the building percentages in the agricultural areas in Wafra, Abdally and Sulaihiya. The permitted building percentage is 10 percent of the plot size with a maximum of 10,000 square meters.

Dairy farms are permitted to have varying building percentages distributed as follows: five percent for feed stores, one percent for repair shops, three percent for milking facilities and 10 percent for residential buildings, not exceeding 1,000 square meters.

Horse breeding plots should not exceed 10,000 square meters, with building percent-

ages not exceeding 15 percent of the plot size.

Five percent of broiler and layer chicken plots should be allocated for workers' housing and five percent for feed and machinery storage. Areas designated for light pens for poultry production and breeding should also be included. Areas for raising horses and racing camels should not exceed 50 percent of the plot size.

Plots located in Block 10 in Wafra Agricultural Area should measure at least 500 square meters and not exceeding 5,000 square meters; which will be distributed to unions, associations, and companies.

Moreover, the council presented three recommendations as per the reply of the Kuwait Municipality to the question of Deputy Chairman Khaled Al-Mutairi about the Kuwait Metro Project as follows:

1. Identify the government entity responsible for designing and implementing the Metro Project.

2. Re-evaluate the metro lines and stations stated in the previous decision of the Municipal Council.

3. Expedite the implementation of the Metro Project to realize the New Kuwait Vision and the development plan of the country.



Photos by Rizk Taufiq



Al-Mutairi

diwaniya

ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Info quiet in Western media
barrage raises huge queries

“THE magnitude of the media campaign that recently intensified against Kuwait is unmistakable. Political calculations are also unmistakable regarding the influence of western media on erroneous and selective information and statements directed against Kuwait, its policies, and its decisions regarding the withdrawal and loss of citizenship, as well as the ‘forgery’ cases.”

Khaled Ahmad Al-Tarah wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Some western outlets have published press reports, exaggerating news and opinions about Kuwait; while we have not heard a response or comment from the official media. We cannot excuse the Minister of Information and Culture; as the ministry is supposed to convey a message and be constantly on alert to confront the barrage of attacks, media bias and political slander against Kuwait, its regime and its government.

“The Minister of Information certainly attends Cabinet meetings and listens and reads – just as we do – what is being discussed abroad about Kuwait. If this is not possible, for some reason or no reason, the ministry’s executive leadership should assume it has a role to play, a professional reading, and support for the minister in carrying out his duties and ministerial work within the government, not outside it!

“We can analyze the controversial mysteries of the official media, identify the sources of shortcomings, and identify the reasons preventing the Minister of Information from playing his professional role and addressing the mediocre performance of this government and the previous governments.

“The minister leaves his mark and that of the government; but unfortunately, we have neither detected a single mark nor identified any political or media achievements by the Minister of Information!

“The issue is not about exploiting opportunities to criticize the official media and specific leaders. The issue is bigger than that, when the country’s reputation is at stake, and the Ministry of Information fails to take action, respond, comment or clarify what is published and included in press reports – whether for or against Kuwait!

“Is the official media waiting for the onslaught of criticism, and the political and media onslaught on Kuwait and its reputation?

“Social media has its own leaders and symbols, some of them on paper; while others are superficial, illusory, aesthetic and vocal. They operate haphazardly, and most, if not all of them are licensed by the Ministry of Information. There is no difference in number or density. The difference lies in leading public opinion toward the abyss of chaos, without any sense of the Ministry of Information’s role in shaping public opinion and confronting the absurdity of illusions and chaos!

“The silence and indifference of the official media regarding reports targeting Kuwait, its policies, and its international reputation lead to the weakening of the government, its role, the prestige of the law, and the undermining of social justice. This silence, if media silence continues, stems from false information that is not rectified by the official media.

“Unfortunately, there are many initiatives by Kuwaiti writers and genuine accounts that serve Kuwait and its reputation. However, the official media is concerned with the faint echo of its voice and its inactive role; not the echo of the voice of reason, wisdom, objectivity and professionalism.

“Admitting political mistakes is a virtue for those who acknowledge errors, shortcomings, and limited capabilities and capacities. What is required is not fluency in the Arabic language in the media, but rather the unconditional and selective use of professional capabilities and capacities outside the Ministry of Information in news programs and dialogue forums.

“Media and political panic is a disastrous phenomenon in the official media. The responsibility lies not in holding exhibitions, managing entertainment, or enjoying the comforts of ministerial positions; but rather in presenting initiatives that align with and complement the political vision of the State and government, so that the Ministry of Information is part of the executive branch, not outside it!”

Also:

“Your Excellency Minister of Interior (May God protect and guide you), what provisions have been

made to uphold the dignity of the elderly, particularly retirees, under the new traffic laws? Has your esteemed ministry considered granting seniors any special exemptions or recognition within these updated regulations?”, Kuwaiti writer **Dr. Hamoud Alhattab** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Your Excellency, would it be possible to grant elderly citizens some leniency regarding traffic violations such as slightly exceeding the speed limit particularly in cases like rushing to medical appointments? We kindly ask you to consider easing restrictions in such situations by avoiding harsh fines or penalties without proper legal review. Ideally, a judge should assess their individual circumstances before any decision is made.

“We also hope that their vehicles will not be impounded or scrapped, as the saying goes, given their limited financial means and the fact that their pensions have remained unchanged for many years.

“Also, we kindly urge you to consider granting lifetime driving licenses to senior citizens.

“Your Excellency, those who are no longer fit to drive would not endanger their lives by getting behind the wheel, even if they hold a hundred valid licenses. The process of renewing licenses is both financially and logistically burdensome for them. The same consideration should apply to vehicle registration. It, too, could be made valid for life. And if someone’s car has truly become unfit for use, they won’t drive it and they will take it to the scrapyards themselves.

“Wishing you continued success. I have kept this message brief to respect your time. Please accept our sincere appreciation and respect, Your Excellency.”

“And those who restrain anger and pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good.” (Al Imran 134).

“Sometimes it is difficult to restrain anger, but it is even more difficult to forgive all those who have hurt us, especially those who intentionally harm us, knowing well that they are doing us harm.” **Dr. Khaled Al-Jenfawi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Some are evil, harmful, hostile, arrogant, cruel, and perhaps, even downright psychopathic, who leave no room for forgiveness from their victims in their rampant evil. Examples of those who have shown me personally that they do not deserve forgiveness from their victims include the following:

— The Sick-Hearted: people who have spiritual, psychological and moral illnesses by choice. They are the sick-hearted, whose hearts are almost overflowing with deep hatred toward those who are different from them, or more virtuous or distinguished than them.

“Since it is difficult to heal the moral illnesses of those with sick hearts, it is also difficult to expect their victims to forgive them. How can you forgive someone who has persevered and worked tirelessly for years, both in secret and in public, to destroy your life?

— The Disobedient to His Parents: It is difficult to forgive an adult who deliberately cuts off family ties for purely narcissistic reasons, and who sometimes, deliberately harms his family and relatives. How can you forgive, be satisfied, or be tolerant of someone who does not suffer from a clear mental illness and who had many opportunities to be kind to his family in the previous period, but who responded with disobedience, negligence, ingratitude, forgetfulness, backbiting and gossip?

— Breach of trust: A betrayer of trust – whether money, property, covenants, agreements, moral, individual, social or national commitments – is extremely difficult to forgive or reform. Someone who betrays once will betray a thousand times, even if they present thousands of proofs of their alleged moral commitment. Therefore, do not forgive someone who betrayed you.

— Insulting and blackmailing during times of weakness or trial: It is illogical for a rational person to forgive someone who deliberately insulted him, or perhaps, blackmailed him in times of weakness or trials. This type of vile person is the worst. Those who criticize the weak will be afflicted, and every giver will receive what he gives them. Therefore, do not forgive someone who has gone too far in harming you.”

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



KFF conducted training on elevator incidence response.



Fire-fighters managed to put out the fire in a carpentry shop in Shuwaikh.

KFF conducts training on elevator mishap response

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: As part of the ongoing efforts by the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) to enhance the capabilities of its personnel, the Prevention Sector organized a specialized technical training course on elevator systems for members of the Firefighting Sector.

According to a press release issued by KFF, the course was conducted in collaboration with certified companies in the elevator industry. It focused on developing practical skills for handling elevator-related emergencies and improving overall field readiness.

Meanwhile, fire broke out at a carpentry

workshop on Friday in Shuwaikh Industrial Area. No casualties were reported.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from the Shuwaikh Industrial and Shaheed fire stations rushed to the location and successfully extinguished the fire.

Prosecution demands maximum
penalty in rape, woman murder

Al-Khalidi ruling on May 11

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: On Sunday morning, the Public Prosecution, represented by Public Prosecutor Fares Al-Dabbous, presented its case before the Criminal Court in the murder of a Kuwaiti woman in Rumaithiya, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In its pleadings, the Public Prosecution demanded the maximum penalty for the accused as punishment for his crimes.

It described the crime as a tragic human event that highlighted the depravity and cruelty of the perpetrator, who violated the fundamental right to life, which is a right guaranteed by all divine religions.

Meanwhile, Al-Jarida daily reported that the Public Prosecution requested the death penalty for a Kuwaiti citizen who is accused of sexually assaulting, detaining, and murdering a Kuwaiti woman.

The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Abdulwahab Al-Maili, has set the verdict hearing for May 18.

The Public Prosecution, represented by the Deputy Public Prosecutor Fares Al-Dabbous, presented the case before the court, stressing that the defendant carried out the crime in cold-blood and a clear disregard for the law and justice.

The prosecution explained that the defendant lured the victim to his home, where he committed the sexual assault, detained her, and killed her, before transporting her body out of his house in a bag.

The defendant confessed to the crimes during the investigation, admitting to the assault and drug use, though he denied involvement in the victim’s death.

The Public Prosecution stated that the defendant, who had lost his sense of humanity, stalked the victim after they had developed a deceptive relationship through social media. The defendant crafted a web of deceit until he managed to lure the victim to his home to commit the horrific crime.

Investigations revealed that the accused had a relationship with the victim and had promised to marry her. After she became pregnant and informed him, he lured her to his house where he detained her, raped her, and then strangled her to death.

The Public Prosecution requested that the court apply the Penal Code to the accused and impose the death penalty.

Ruling on May 11: The Criminal Court adjourned until May 11 the hearing on a case filed by the State Security Service against Salman Al-Khalidi to announce its ruling.

In Sunday’s session, the court received the psychiatric report of the defendant, which confirmed

that he is responsible for his action and in full possession of his mental faculties at the time of the incident in front of the Kuwaiti Embassy in London.

The court, headed by Justice Mutab Al-Aridhi, previously referred Al-Khalidi to a psychiatric hospital for a mental health examination at the request of his lawyer who was appointed by the court in the State Security case.

The court charged Al-Khalidi with deliberately challenging the HH the Amir’s authority through his post on his account on the X platform and intentionally insulting others using social media.

Al-Khalidi denied the charges against him.

‘Stick to traffic laws’: The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) has issued a circular urging adherence to the Traffic Law to ensure the safety of everyone on campus, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The circular stresses that legal action will be taken against those who violate traffic safety regulations.

The following guidelines were included in the circular:

- Do not park on sidewalks.
- Do not obstruct traffic.
- Refrain from exceeding the speed limit.
- Do not drive against traffic.
- Do not tint vehicle windows.
- Refrain from reckless driving or showing off, which may endanger the driver or others.

‘Rights of children will be safe-guarded at all costs’

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Assistant Undersecretary for Foreign Health Services at the Ministry of Health Dr. Hisham Kalandar has affirmed the commitment of the ministry to protect the rights of children.

Kalandar made the statement in a meeting with the US Consul to Kuwait at the Child Protection

Office in the ministry recently.

He discussed the efforts of the ministry in child protection, reporting mechanisms through Child Helpline 147, and the role of specialized protection teams in government hospitals.

He also talked about the approved awareness programs, such as the ‘Safe Schools’ program and ‘Dayem’ positive parenting program, which aim to promote sustainable health education methods in the community.

He confirmed the commitment of the ministry to full compliance with international agreements and treaties related to children’s rights. He praised the collaborative efforts of multiple parties in promoting a safe and healthy environment for children.

Meanwhile, the US Consul commended the efforts of the ministry in this vital field, as well as the caliber of its programs and initiatives that contribute to strengthening child protection in Kuwait.

Drastic cut in violations
after April 22 traffic law

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry issued around 13,000 traffic violation citations last week – about 71 percent decrease following the implementation of the new Traffic Law, as the department recorded approximately 51,000 traffic violations in the previous week.

The weekly statistics of the department showed that the number of traffic violations recorded from April 19-25 reached 13,055; while 25 vehicles were impounded, 16 minors were referred to the Juvenile Prosecution for driving without a license, 66 vehicles were seized and 21 persons wanted by law were arrested.

The decrease in the number of traffic violations is attributed to the implementation of the new Traffic Law on April 22, considering it stipulates tougher penalties. It has been observed that most drivers are now committed to wearing the seatbelt, not using the mobile phone by hand while driving and the prescribed speed limits.

The ministry also announced a 71 percent decline in the number of recorded traffic violations on the first day of implementing the revised law.

Liquor seized as Asian held
selling local brew to youths

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Ahmadi Security Directorate back-up patrol officers arrested an expatriate, in his 50s, who has a criminal record and is wanted by law for involvement in various crimes in Mangaf, reports Al-Anba daily.

Upon searching the man, the officers found a roll of hashish in his possession. The arrest occurred while patrol officers were conducting a routine inspection in Mangaf. The suspect, who was driving, was stopped for inspection. Further checks revealed he is wanted by law, prompting a search that led to the discovery of the narcotics.

In a separate case, officers from Fahaheel Police Station arrested an Asian wanted by law for various criminal offenses and for violating the Residency and Labor laws.

He is also involved in the sale of locally-made alcohol to young people. Authorities confiscated around 1,030 bottles of alcohol from him.

While patrolling the area, the officers noticed a suspicious closed bus. When they approached the bus, the driver attempted to flee on foot but he was quickly apprehended. A thorough search of the bus led to the discovery of a large quantity of alcohol.

During questioning, the suspect admitted to manufacturing the liquor with the assistance of other Asians and selling them to customers at KD10 per bottle.

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Fund eases loan terms for SMEs

Entrepreneurs empowered

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The acting Director of the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprise Development Heba Al-Rifai announced that the Board of Directors' decision issued in mid-March to amend the loan repayment mechanism for beneficiaries has officially taken effect, and it has set a loan repayment period of 15 years, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

She explained that the fund is currently reviewing its policies and operational mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness of its support and achieve optimal development outcomes. It has lately been committed to diversifying its financing portfolio to support various vital sectors based on the needs of the local market.

It recently launched the "Mubader Plus" program, which is designed to empower small and medium enterprise owners and develop their skills to meet the demands of the knowledge economy. The program includes a four-month implementation plan that has specialized workshops.

Al-Rifai revealed that the fund currently sponsors approximately 1,040 projects in various sectors. These projects are distributed as follows: 40 percent in the economic sector, 40 percent in the commercial sector, 14 percent in the industrial sector, 4 percent in the handicrafts sector, and 2 percent in the agricultural sector.

She affirmed that these projects play an important role in Kuwait's entrepreneurship support system, with a strong focus on providing both technical and administrative support to ensure their continuity, improve operational efficiency, and achieve sustainable growth.

KD 2.7mn road deal awarded

New rep for insurance unit

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has amended the composition of the Supreme Committee for the Insurance Regulatory Unit by appointing acting Undersecretary Marwa Al-Jaidan as its representative, replacing the former representative who resigned.

Ministerial Resolution No. 49/2025, issued by Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel, modifies Ministerial Resolution No. 34 on the formation of the aforementioned committee.

Furthermore, the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) has requested

extension of the insurance terms for various Public Authority for Industry (PAI) projects; including consultancy services for the study, design, preparation of tender documents, and supervision of the implementation of the infrastructure and essential infrastructure project at Site B12.

This is in addition to the supervision of the infrastructure construction, completion, operation and maintenance of Na'ayem car scrapyard, measuring two square kilometers.

On the other hand, CAPT has recommended awarding a contract for asphalt maintenance works on roads, valued at KD 2.739 million, to First Class General Trading and Contracting Company.

Swift action key in saving reefs, say Kuwait divers

Kuwait Dive Team removes 200 kg net from coral reefs



KUNA photos

Kuwait divers rescue coral reefs, removing a massive abandoned net without causing damage.

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): The Kuwait Dive Team, affiliated with Environmental Voluntary Foundation, announced on Monday the successful removal of an abandoned fishing net weighing 200 kilograms from coral reefs located in Um Deera north of Qaruh Island, at the depth of nine meters.

The head of the team, Waleed Al-Fadhel told KUNA that the abandoned net had become entangled with coral reefs, causing harm to marine life and damage to the coral itself.

Al-Fadhel explained that the team's divers managed to carefully lift the net without harming the reef, thanks to their extensive expertise using

lifting bags, air-filled sacks, and various diving equipment to complete the operation.

He noted that coral reefs rely on sunlight and water currents for survival, and abandoned nets can suffocate coral, cause its death, and kill fish and other organisms living in the reef environment, which poses serious threats to biodiversity, environmental balance, maritime navigation, and diver safety.

Al-Fadhel described the Um Deera reef site as comprising three adjacent areas of varying sizes, located 13 kilometers north of Qaruh Island and 50 kilometers from Khiran's coast, known for its clear waters, attracts divers and fishing enthusiasts.

asts.

He also called on the public to promptly report any sighting of abandoned fishing nets to the Kuwait Dive Team, the Coast Guard, or the Environment Public Authority to ensure swift removal and minimize environmental damage and navigational risks.

Regarding the team's ongoing coral conservation projects, Al-Fadhel mentioned initiatives such as the Marine Moorings Project -- with 108 marine moorings established -- a project to remove nets, the Jaber Al-Kuwait Reserves for Sea Creatures project involving 25 artificial reef colonies, and the Coral Planting project.

CMA hosts workshop on financial tech, investment awareness at KU



KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Capital Markets Authority (CMA) conducted an awareness workshop at the College of Business Administration in Kuwait University on April 21.

According to a press release issued by CMA, the workshop is part of CMA's ongoing efforts to promote financial inclusion and investment awareness, with a focus on financial technologies as a main pillar of financial inclusion.

The workshop was led by:

■ Zahraa Al-Mousa, Director of the Financial Technology Unit

■ Abdullah Al-Shamri, Senior Analyst at the Financial Technology Unit

■ Jumana Al-Qallaf, Analyst at the Financial Technology Unit

The workshop began with an introduction to CMA and its objectives in accordance with its founding law, particularly focusing on the protection of securities dealers, the development of capital markets, and the enhancement of investment tools.

The session then shifted to an introduction of financial services and financial technologies, followed by a historical overview of the development of financial technologies from their inception in the mid-nineteenth century to the present day.

The second section focused on the technologies used in providing financial services, including blockchain and its applications, cryptoassets, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and quantum computing.

It also reviewed the most prominent sectors in the financial technology industry, their current and future status, and the latest developments in the field.

The workshop further detailed the regulatory framework for the first package of financial technology services, specifically the automated investment advisor and securities-based crowdfunding services, as well as the mechanisms for offering and accessing them. The session concluded with a Q&A session to answer participants' questions and concerns.



Photos during the workshop



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Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Editor-in-Chief of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah, welcomes Ambassador Carlos Enrique Tomas Jiménez Gil of Peru, with Managing Editor Marlon Aquino Malinao in attendance.



Photos by Rezk Tawfiq

Ambassador Jiméñez Gil thanks Al-Jarallah for supporting Kuwait-Peru cultural exchange

Editor-in-Chief Al-Jarallah hosts Peru ambassador in key meeting

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Editor-in-chief of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah formally received Ambassador of the Republic of Peru to Kuwait Carlos Enrique Tomas Jiménez Gil at his main office in Dar Al-Seyassah Printing Press.

This meeting was held to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Kuwait and Peru. Discussions focused on the instrumental role of media outlets in fostering and rein-

forcing amicable relations between the two nations.

The two parties deliberated on the significance of strengthening relations between Peru and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, as Peru aims to expand its global influence and bolster international economic stability through strategic alliances in the region.

Ambassador Jiménez Gil expressed deep gratitude for the contribu-

tions of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers in supporting diplomatic efforts and enriching cultural exchange between Kuwait and Peru.

He commended Al-Jarallah for his unwavering commitment to build collaborative bridges with the Embassy of Peru in Kuwait.

Managing Editor of the Arab Times Marlon Aquino Malinao also attended the meeting.

Kuwaiti delegation takes part in Arab Space Group meeting

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: A delegation from the Kuwait National Center for Space Research, a subsidiary of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), participated in the 11th meeting of the Arab Space Cooperation Group. The meeting was held in Egypt and hosted by the Egyptian Space Agency from April 21 to April 25.

According to a press release issued by KFAS, the Kuwaiti delegation included Dr. Yasser Mohammed Abdul Rahim and Dr. Hala Khaled Al-Jassar.

During the meeting, the delegation affirmed the importance of enhancing cooperation and integration among Arab countries to drive progress in the space sector.

They highlighted that strengthening joint Arab capabilities is necessary for the region to stay in step with rapid global advancements in science and technology.

The delegation also showcased the country's recent advancements in space science and technology, emphasizing Kuwait's dedication to developing a robust space infrastructure that supports innovation and contributes to sustainability.

They underscored the pivotal role of the Kuwait National Center for Space Research in line with the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The delegation stressed the efforts aimed at achieving research excellence in space technology, advancing technological development, nurturing youth skills,



Dr. Yasser Mohammed Abdul Rahim and Dr. Hala Khaled Al-Jassar

creating investment opportunities in the space economy, and establishing strategic partnerships with the private sector and international institutions. These initiatives are designed to enhance Kuwait's standing both regionally and internationally.

The delegation members expressed optimism that these joint efforts would help advance the Arab space sector by unifying visions and coordinating collaborative research projects for realizing meaningful achievements that serve the scientific and technological future of both Kuwait and the region as a whole.



Photos during the meeting.

GCC discusses unified education standards at Kuwait-led meeting

Kuwait's leadership key to advancing academic mobility

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

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Director General of the National Bureau for Academic Accreditation and Education Quality Assurance Jassem Al-Ali chaired the 15th meeting of the Gulf Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, coinciding with Kuwait's presidency of the network for 2025.

In his opening speech, Al-Ali affirmed that the meeting is part of Kuwait's ongoing efforts to strengthen regional cooperation in enhancing the quality of higher education and advancing academic system development within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

He highlighted that higher education is the cornerstone for community development for achieving sustainable development and building a knowledge-based economy.

Al-Ali stressed that the Gulf Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education plays a crucial role in ensuring the quality of education and learning across the member states.

He explained that the meeting covered the network's annual report, re-



The 15th meeting of the Gulf Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in progress.

viewed the main achievements, and discussed initiatives aimed at improving the quality of higher education in the Gulf and advancing its standards. The meeting also discussed the "Gulf Qualifications Framework" project, which seeks to standardize academic criteria to enhance academic mobility among GCC countries and strengthen the credibility of Gulf educational qualifications.

The meeting also discussed the proj-

ect to establish a unified Gulf database for external reviewers in quality assurance. This will support the accreditation and review processes for higher education institutions by providing access to a network of certified experts.

Furthermore, the meeting discussed the "Unified Gulf Standards for Academic Accreditation" project, which aims to establish a cohesive framework to ensure that educational programs meet global standards, thereby

enhancing the international reputation of Gulf higher education.

At the end of the meeting, Al-Ali emphasized that strengthening cooperation in higher education would lead to improved educational quality and support sustainable development plans in the GCC countries.

He affirmed the importance of continuing the exchange of expertise and joint initiatives for the benefit of future generations.

KIMS holds first internship year exams for 240 doctors

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

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Kuwait Institute for Medical Specializations (KIMS) launched the first comprehensive examination for the internship year for 240 male and female doctors, including 172 physicians and 68 dentists, on Saturday.

This examination marks a new developmental step in enhancing the quality of medical professionals in the country.

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health and Secretary-General of KIMS Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi inspected the progress of the exam and praised the efforts exerted to ensure the highest standards of quality and objectivity in the assessment process.

The tour was attended by the Deputy Director of Kuwait University for Medical Sciences and Head of the Comprehensive Examination Committee for the Internship Year at KIMS Dr. Noura Al-Suwaih, Assistant Secretary-General of KIMS for Specialized Colleges Affairs Dr. Abdullah Rajab, and Supervisor of the Examinations Office at KIMS Dr. Kifaya Abdulmalik.

Dr. Al-Mutairi affirmed the significance of this qualitative exami-

nation, and highlighted its role in ensuring both the academic and practical competence of newly graduated doctors.

He also stressed its direct impact on the quality of healthcare services provided to citizens and residents, in line with international best practices.

Dr. Al-Mutairi explained that the test design is based on scientific methodologies and approved academic standards, reflecting the Ministry of Health's commitment to implementing the best systems for medical assessment and qualification, in line with leading health systems.

Al-Mutairi added that the test is in line with the ministry's vision to build a modern healthcare system based on quality performance and scientific expertise, which reinforces Kuwait's position as a regional and international leader in medical excellence.

Meanwhile, Dr. Noura Al-Suwaih affirmed that the test, which is being conducted for the first time in Kuwait, includes newly graduated resident physicians (trainees) from the 2024 cohort who are specialized in human medicine and dentistry.

She said the examination is a prerequisite for promotion to the next career level of assistant registrar.

Continued from Page 1

Excessive pressure

We have witnessed several examples of embezzlers and fraudsters escaping justice, and now living off the money they have stolen. Doesn't this serve the interests of fraudsters and usurers? It is important to clarify that I am not referring to debts related to family support or vacation travel expenses.

Undoubtedly, the laws offer alternative solutions, especially considering that travel bans due to financial issues contradict citizens' legitimate rights and violate the Constitution. Such measures even conflict with Islamic law, which is based on the Holy Quran.

As stated in the Quran: "It is He who made the earth subservient to you, so walk in its paths and eat of His provision, and to Him is the resurrection." The Quran also says: "But if someone is in hardship, let there be postponement until [a time of] ease."

Nowhere in the Holy Quran is there a command to imprison an insolvent debtor or prevent them from seeking a livelihood on earth. This violates the fundamental principles of human rights.

Philippine Embassy

Voters may also call the overseas voter helplines at 6043 9909, 6043 9085 and 6043 9668.

Meanwhile, Ambassador of the Republic of Philippines to the State of Kuwait Jose A. Cabrera III affirmed that "online voting offers greater convenience for overseas

voters, especially for those who have busy schedules or little free time after work hours or those who live a long distance away from the Philippine Embassy or consulate in the place where they reside. Voters can enroll and vote at any time day or night using a smart phone or laptop with an internet connection and, if they encounter difficulties in online enrollment or voting, they can call or visit the embassy for assistance."

He explained that while the voting period will end on May 12, 2025; the enrollment period will end a few days earlier -- on May 7, 2025.

"I call on registered Filipino overseas voters in Kuwait to avail of their right to vote and participate in this election; thereby, helping shape the future of our country and society. I used my mobile phone in voting and I feel greatly privileged to be one of those to have experienced first-hand the innovation, convenience and ease of voting online," he disclosed.

More information and updates are available on the official website and social media channels of the embassy with the hashtags #DFAForgingAhead #FilipinosInKuwait

Summer's fierce

The beginning of the season coincides with the migration of certain bird species. The middle of the season normally witnesses a significant rise in temperatures and the end of the rainy season. At the end of the season, the summer heatwave begins, bringing dry weather and rising temperatures.

‘We’re going to get those prices down’

Promises made, promises kept? Trump’s agenda remains work in progress after 100 days

WASHINGTON, April 28, (AP): Since US President Donald Trump returned to office, every week has been a whirlwind of activity to show Americans that his administration is relentlessly pursuing his promises.

With a compliant Republican-controlled Congress, Trump has had a free hand to begin overhauling the federal government and upending foreign policy.

As Trump hits his 100th day in office Tuesday, his imprint is everywhere. But will it last?

Very much unsettled is whether the Republican president has run up his scorecard lawfully. Trump has faced lawsuits over his attempts to surge deportations, punish law firms and slash the federal workforce. All of that and more is being adjudicated in courtrooms, meaning much of what he’s done could come undone.

Here’s a look at where progress on his promises stands:

“We’re going to get those prices down,” he told voters.

Prices have come down - before Trump took office and since. Inflation has been falling since a peak of 9.1% in 2022. It was at 3% in January, the month Trump was inaugurated, and 2.4% in March.

But the Federal Reserve has warned that the president’s tariff plans will most likely lead to higher prices by taxing foreign imports.

Trump has clearly made progress on a signature promise to control the border.

The number of people trying to cross illegally into the United States from Mexico dropped steeply in President Joe Biden’s last year, from a high of 249,740 in December 2023 to 47,324 in December 2024. Under Trump, the numbers sank to only 8,346 in February and 7,181 in March.

For all the legal wrangling about Trump’s unorthodox and possibly illegal tactics to get immigrants out of the country, it’s unclear whether he’s matching Biden’s aggressive deportation record last year - the numbers are not yet in.

Meanwhile, Immigration and Customs Enforcement is arresting large numbers of people across the country. Many who assert their innocence have been deported without due process.

Trump told voters he’ll reduce their



US President Donald Trump speaks as Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, (left), and Commerce Secretary nominee Howard Lutnick listen as Trump prepares to sign an executive order in the Oval Office of the White House on Feb 3, in Washington. (AP)

energy costs by half to three-quarters in 12 to 18 months. That promise comes due next year.

Trump vowed in the campaign: “I will impose across-the-board tariffs on most foreign-made goods.”

He’s followed through, big time, though with frequently changing caveats.

Trump began by escalating tariffs

on Canada, Mexico and China, ostensibly as punishment for allowing fentanyl into the US. Then he announced even more widespread taxes on foreign imports on April 2, part of what he described as “Liberation Day.” Trump retreated from parts of that plan, choosing to pursue negotiations instead, but he left in place tariffs on China as high as 145%.

The stock market has whipsawed from the hefty import taxes and the erraticism in their application.

At rally after rally last summer, Trump promised peace between Russia and Ukraine merely by winning the election. “Before I even arrive at the Oval Office, shortly after I win the presidency, I will have the horrible war between Russia and Ukraine settled,” he told a Detroit conference in August. By then, he’d been making the same vow at least since May. It did not happen.

At times, he framed the promise differently, saying he would end the war in one day. That day has not come.

Trump has tested the limits of what he can do by decree, but he’ll need Congress to achieve his promised tax cuts.

He pledged to eliminate taxes on

tips, overtime and Social Security payments, and he said he will make permanent the expiring tax cuts he enacted during his first term.

None of this has happened. And with big tariffs kicking in, the tax burden is on track to get worse before it possibly gets better. Trump is working with Republicans in Congress to push through legislation achieving the tax cuts, but his party has thin majorities.

Trump’s threats to choke off billions in tax dollars to many universities flow from multiple promises in the campaign - to combat antisemitism on campuses, to take on diversity, equity and inclusion programs and to rid campuses of foreign students he considers hostile to American values.

After several other prominent schools signaled their willingness to comply with Trump’s demands, Harvard stood firm against the pressure.

In response, Trump has called for withdrawing Harvard’s tax-exempt status, has threatened to block it from enrolling foreign students - more than a quarter of its enrollments - and has frozen more than \$2 billion in grants and contracts.



Rescue workers gather at the Seminole Boat ramp north of where a boat crashed into the ferry causing multiple injuries near the Clearwater Memorial Causeway Bridge, on April 27 in Clearwater, Fla. (AP)

Florida boat crash kills one

One person has died and several were injured Sunday when a boat crashed into a ferry off the Memorial Causeway Bridge and then fled the scene, authorities said.

The Clearwater Police Department posted on X that there were multiple injuries and the crash had been declared “a mass casualty incident” by the Clearwater Fire & Rescue Department due to the number of injuries.

All of those injured were aboard the ferry, which was carrying more than 40 people. Police did not provide any information about the person who died.

The ferry came to rest on a sandbar just south of the Memorial Causeway bridge and all patients and passengers have been removed.

Police did not immediately provide any information about the boat that fled the scene. (AP)

Vancouver's ramming attack suspect charged with murder

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, April 28, (AP): A 30-year-old man was charged with multiple counts of murder on allegations he killed 11 people when he rammed a crowd of people at a Filipino heritage festival in Vancouver, as hundreds attended vigils across the city for the victims and the Canadian prime minister visited the site on the eve of a federal election.

K a i J i Adam Lo, 30, was charged with eight counts of second degree murder in a video appearance before a judge on Sunday, hours after he was arrested at the scene, said Damienne Darby, spokeswoman for British Columbia prosecutors. Lo has not yet entered a plea.

Investigators ruled out terrorism as a motive and said more



Rai

charges are possible. They said Lo had a history of mental health issues.

An attorney for Lo was not listed in online court documents and The Associated Press wasn’t immediately able to reach an attorney representing him.

Those killed were between the ages of 5 and 65, officials said. About two dozen people were injured, some critically, when the black Audi SUV sped down a closed street just after 8 p.m. Saturday and struck people attending the Lapu Lapu Day festival. Authorities had not released victims’ names by Sunday evening.

Emily Daniels also brought a bouquet. “It’s sad. Really sad,” she said. “I can’t believe something like this could happen so close to home.”

Police Interim Chief **Steve Rai** called it “the darkest day in Vancouver’s history.” There was no indication of a motive, but Rai said the suspect has “a significant history of interactions with police and health care professionals related to mental health.”



Elizabeth City firefighters are seen staged on Honors Road near the Bias Hall student residence following reports of a gunfire on the Elizabeth City State University campus on April 27, in Elizabeth City, NC. (AP)

Campus shooting kills 1, six hurt

A shooting at a small college in eastern North Carolina left one person dead and six others wounded and prompted a campus lockdown early Sunday, the university said.

The shooting occurred in the center of Elizabeth City State University’s campus following Yard Fest, the final event of the historically Black university’s weeklong Viking Fest celebration, the school said in a statement.

A 24-year-old man who was not a student was pronounced dead. His identity wasn’t immediately released pending notification of his family, the statement says.

Four people sustained gunshot wounds, including three students, while two other students were injured during the commotion. None of the injuries were considered life-threatening. All the injured were taken to a hospital for treatment, the statement says. (AP)



Sections of the Ariane rocket fuselage are seen inside the Airbus Defence and Space manufacturing plant in Getafe, central Spain, on March 31. (AP)

Trump’s threats gave Europe political will to spend more on defense

MADRID, April 28, (AP): Inside a sprawling hangar in Spain, workers bolt together a fuselage for European aerospace giant Airbus, which churns out jets and other military equipment.

The multinational conglomerate is a rarity in Europe’s defense industry, backed by Spain, Germany, France and Britain. The norm for defense industries on the continent is big-name national champions and hundreds of small companies mostly working to fill orders for state governments.

That piecemeal paradigm could hinder Europe’s plan for spending more on defense, which has been given a jolt - and previously unimaginable political backing - following U.S. President Donald Trump’s threats to not protect NATO allies in the context of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

For years, Trump has accused NATO allies of spending too little on their own defense. In recent months, the chasm in trans-Atlantic ties has grown. The Trump administration has signaled that U.S. priorities lie beyond Europe and Ukraine and that the time has come “for Europe to stand on its own feet.”

The shortfall in defense spending is most evident in Spain.

Last year, it trailed all NATO allies in defense spending as a share of GDP, forcing the country to play catch-up this year to reach the alliance’s 2% spending goal. NATO leaders are expected to again increase that goal this summer.

Europe-wide, industry leaders and experts have pointed out challenges the continent must overcome to be a truly self-sufficient military power, chiefly



A Turkish Navy soldier stands in formation during the NATO Dynamic Mariner/Flotex-25 naval exercise in Barbate, southern Spain on March 28. (AP)

its decades-long reliance on the U.S. as well as its fragmented defense industry.

“Europe procures a majority of its defense material outside of Europe, and that’s really something we have to depart from,” said Jean-Brice Dumont, head of air power at Airbus Defense and Space at the aircraft maker’s factory outside Madrid. “The journey until we get full autonomy is a long journey, but it has to be started.”

The pro-defense shift in Europe can be seen in the stock markets, where major European arms makers such as

BAE Systems (UK), Leonardo (Italy), Rheinmetall (Germany), Thales (France) and Saab (Sweden) have all been on the rise despite recent turmoil caused by Trump’s tariffs.

European companies are poised to benefit from a push by European Union policy makers to ensure that as many euros as possible end up in European companies, as opposed to flowing across the Atlantic. The challenge is daunting, but not as scary as having to face a potential military threat without American help.

One question is: How quickly can production scale up?

An EU white paper published last month bluntly stated that Europe’s defense industry is not able to produce defense systems and equipment sufficient for what member states need. It noted where much of the bloc’s spending has taken place: the U.S.

Europe has relied on the U.S. not just for military equipment but also intelligence, surveillance and even software updates. Supply chain complexities mean that European-made equipment often use software or other components built and even operated by U.S. companies.

Airbus’ A330 MRTT air-to-air refueling plane, made outside Madrid, is an example of specialized equipment called enablers that Europe largely lacks.

Another example is Sweden’s Gripen fighter made by Saab, which has an engine made by American firm General Electric, noted Lorenzo Scarazzato, a researcher at the Stockholm Peace Research Institute who studies Europe’s arms industry.

Power outage in Spain, Portugal

BARCELONA, Spain, April 28, (AP): Spanish power distributor Red Eléctrica said that restoring power to large parts of the country after a massive and unprecedented outage Monday that also hit Portugal could take 6-10 hours.

The company declined to speculate on the causes of the blackout. The Portuguese National Cybersecurity Center issued a statement saying there was no sign the outage was due to a cyberattack.

Eduardo Prieto, head of operations at Red Eléctrica, told journalists it was unprecedented, calling the event “exceptional and extraordinary.”

The outage hit across Spain and Portugal, including their capitals, knocking out subway networks, phone lines, traffic lights and ATM machines. Authorities said the cause was not immediately known, though one Portuguese official said the problem appeared to be with the electricity distribution network in Spain.

The Portuguese Cabinet convened an emergency meeting at the prime minister’s residence, and Spanish Prime Minister **Pedro Sánchez** visited power distributor Red Eléctrica to follow efforts at restoring grid operations.



Sanchez

Canadians vote in election dominated by Trump trade war

TORONTO, April 28, (AP): Canadians will decide Monday whether to extend the Liberal Party’s decade in power or instead hand control to the Conservatives. They’ll pick either Prime Minister Mark Carney or opposition leader Pierre Poilievre to lead the way forward, but the election is also a referendum of sorts on someone who isn’t even Canadian: Donald Trump.

Until the American president won a second term and began threatening Canada’s economy and sovereignty, even suggesting the country should become the 51st state, the Liberals looked headed for defeat.

Polls have opened in Atlantic Canada. Canadians vote as the country grapples with the aftermath of a fatal car ramming attack on Saturday in Vancouver. The tragedy on the eve of the election prompted the suspension of campaigning for several hours. Police ruled out terrorism and said the suspect is a local man with a history of mental health issues.

Trump’s truculence has infuriated many Canadians, leading many to cancel U.S. vacations, refuse to buy American goods and possibly even vote early - a record 7.3 million Canadians cast ballots before election day. Trump also put Poilievre and the Conservative Party on the back foot after they appeared headed for an easy victory only months ago.

“The Americans want to break us so they can own us,” Carney said recently, laying out what he saw as the stakes for the election. “Those aren’t just words. That’s what’s at risk.”

Poilievre, a populist firebrand who campaigned with Trump-like bravado, had hoped to make the election a referendum on former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, whose popularity declined toward the end of his decade in power as food and housing prices rose and immigration surged. But then Trump became the dominant issue, and Poilievre’s similarities to the bombastic president could cost him.



Liberal Leader Mark Carney makes a campaign stop in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on April 27. (AP)

Russia declares ceasefire in Ukraine on May 8-10 for WWII Victory Day

KYIV, Ukraine, April 28, (AP): Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday declared a unilateral 72-hour ceasefire next week in Ukraine to mark Victory Day in World War II as the US presses for a deal to end the 3-year-old war. Kyiv insisted on a longer and immediate truce.

The Kremlin said the truce, ordered on “humanitarian grounds,” will run from the start of May 8 (2100 GMT, 5 pm EDT May 7) and last through the end of May 10 (2100 GMT, 5 pm EDT May 10) to mark Moscow’s defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 - Russia’s biggest secular holiday.

Ukraine, which has previously agreed to US President Donald Trump’s proposal of a full 30-day ceasefire, dismissed Putin’s move as window dressing.

“If Russia truly wants peace, it must cease fire immediately,” Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said, according to the ministry. He emphasized that Kyiv is ready for a “lasting, reliable, and complete ceasefire” for at least 30 full days.

“Why wait for May 8? If we can cease fire now from any date and for 30 days - so that it is real, and not just



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, damaged private houses burn following Russia’s air raid in the Donetsk region, Ukraine on April 28. (AP)

for a parade,” he said without specifying whether Ukraine would be ready to accept the Moscow-proposed truce.

The Kremlin had urged Ukraine to follow suit.

“Russia believes that the Ukrainian side should follow this example,” it said, warning that “in case of violations of the ceasefire by the Ukrainian side, the Russian armed forces will give an adequate and efficient response.”

China and Philippines use flags to stake out competing claims in disputed S.China Sea

BEIJING, April 28, (AP): The Philippines on Monday rejected China's claim to a group of three sandbars in the South China Sea, after recent displays by both sides of their national flags on the uninhabited outcroppings.

The back and forth over Sandy Cay is the latest flare-up in a long-running dispute over territory in the hotly contested South China Sea, which China claims almost in its entirety.

The flare-up began last week when a Chinese state-owned newspaper posted exclusive photos of coast guard officers on Sandy Cay from mid-April, including one of them holding up a Chinese flag.

Three days later, a joint Philippines coast guard, navy and maritime police team headed on Sunday to the three sandbars and posed for a photo holding up their national flag.

"This operation reflects the unwavering dedication and commitment of the Philippine Government to uphold the country's sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction in the West Philippine Sea," a government statement said. It was posted on X with a video and photos, including one showing team members holding up the Philippine flag.

The Chinese coast guard described the Philippine landing as "illegal" and said that Chinese officers had gone ashore "to conduct on-site verification and enforcement measures." It didn't specify what those steps entailed.

The sandbars are in the Spratly is-



In this photo provided by the National Task Force West Philippine Sea (NTF-WPS), Philippine inter-agency members which included Philippine Navy, Philippine Coast Guard and Philippine National Police - Maritime Group, hold the Philippine flag as they visit Sandy Cay 2 at the South China Sea on April 27. (AP)

lands between Philippine-occupied Thitu Island and Subi Reef, which China has transformed into a base with a military-grade runway and buildings with communications facilities.

China's state-owned Global Times newspaper, which published the photos of coast guard officers on the sandbars earlier this month, said they had picked up plastic bottles and other debris and displayed the Chinese national flag "to assert sovereignty."

Jonathan Malaya, the assistant director general of the Philippine Na-

tional Security Council, said Monday that there is no truth to claims that China has seized the sandbars.

He attributed the claims to the Chinese coast guard, though the agency has not said anything about the mid-April landing described in the Global Times report, and later by the military channel of state broadcaster CCTV.

"We urge the People's Republic of China and the Chinese Coast Guard to act with restraint and not increase tensions in the West Philippine Sea," Malaya told a news conference.

Humanitarian needs remain pressing month after Myanmar's deadly quake

BANGKOK, April 28, (AP): The humanitarian needs of hundreds of thousands of survivors remain desperately pressing a month after Myanmar's deadly earthquake, compounded by airstrikes that the military government is reportedly carrying out despite ceasefires meant to aid relief efforts during the country's civil war.

The 7.7 magnitude March 28 quake hit a wide swath of the country, causing significant damage to six regions and states, including the capital, Naypyitaw. Myanmar's Department of Meteorology and Hydrology reported Monday there had been 157 aftershocks after the big quake, ranging in magnitude from 2.8 to 7.5.

State-run MRTV television reported on Sunday the quake's death toll had reached 3,769, with 5,106 people injured and 107 still missing. The earthquake left many areas without power, telephone or cell connections and damaged roads and bridges, in addition to tens of thousands of buildings.

In some quake-hit areas, bereaved relatives and friends of the disaster's victims on Monday offered donations to monks, a Buddhist tradition to transfer merit and blessings to the deceased.

A report released Monday by the Myanmar Witness project of the



Firefighters recover the belongings of victims of the earthquake from damaged buildings that house Government's servants in Naypyitaw, Myanmar on April 28. (AP)

London-based Centre for Information Resilience said the group had documented 80 post-quake airstrikes by the military across multiple regions, including 65 after the army declared its unilateral ceasefire on April 2, following similar declarations by its battlefield foes.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the army's 2021 takeover ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, which led to nationwide peaceful protests that escalated into armed resistance, uniting

pro-democracy activists and ethnic minority guerrilla groups that have long been fighting for autonomy.

"Myanmar's population was already on its knees after years of SAC aggression and armed conflict," said Myanmar Witness project director Robert Dolan, referring to the military's ruling State Administration Council. "The layers of suffering are hard to comprehend - we've seen regions wrecked by war and then the earthquake, only to sustain further damage from continued airstrikes."

Putin thanks N.Korea for troop deployment, promises not to forget sacrifices

North Korea confirms it sent troops to Russia to support its war against Ukraine

SEOUL, South Korea, April 28, (AP): North Korea confirmed Monday for the first time that it sent troops to Russia to support its war against Ukraine, saying the deployment was meant to help Russia regain its Kursk region that Ukrainian forces seized in a surprise incursion last year.

US, South Korean and Ukraine intelligence officials have said North Korea dispatched about 10,000-12,000 troops to Russia last fall in its first participation in a major armed conflict since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War. But North Korea hadn't confirmed or denied its reported troop deployments to Russia until Monday.

The North Korean announcement came two days after Russia said its troops have fully reclaimed the Kursk region. Ukrainian officials denied the claim.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un decided to send combat troops to Russia under a mutual defense treaty signed by him and Russian President Vladimir Putin in June 2024, the North's Central Military Commission said in a statement carried by state media. The treaty - considered the two countries' biggest defense agreement since the end of the Cold War - requires both nations to use all available means to provide immediate military assistance if either is attacked.

The statement cited Kim as saying the deployment was meant to "annihilate and wipe out the Ukrainian neo-Nazi occupiers and liberate the Kursk area in cooperation with the Russian armed forces." "They who fought for justice are all heroes and representatives of the honor of the motherland," Kim said.

Kim said that a monument will soon be erected in Pyongyang to mark North Korea's battle feats and that flowers will be laid before the tombstones of the fallen soldiers. Kim said the government must take steps to preferentially treat and take care of the families of the soldiers who took part in the war.

The North Korean statement didn't say how many troops North Korea eventually sent and how many of them had died. But in March, South Korea's military said that around 4,000 North Korean soldiers had been killed or wounded in the Russia-Ukraine war fronts. The South Korean military also assessed at the time that North Korea sent about 3,000 additional troops to Russia earlier this year.

North Korean soldiers are highly disciplined and well trained, but observers say they've become easy targets for drone and artillery attacks on Russian-Ukraine battlefields due to their lack of combat experience and unfamiliarity with the



Russian President Vladimir Putin, (left), and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un pose for a photo during a signing ceremony of a new partnership in Pyongyang, North Korea, June 19, 2024. (AP)

terrain. Still, Ukrainian military and intelligence officials have assessed that the North Koreans gained crucial battlefield experience and have been key to Russia's strategy of overwhelming Ukraine by throwing large numbers of soldiers into the battle for Kursk.

South Korea's Unification Ministry on Monday urged North Korea to withdraw its troops from Russia immediately, saying the North's support of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine poses a grave provocation to international security. Spokes-

person Koo Byongsam also called the North's troops' deployment "an act against humanity" that has sacrificed young North Korean soldiers for their government.

In a Kremlin meeting Saturday, Valery Gerasimov, chief of the general staff for Russia's armed forces, informed Putin of Gerasimov's regaining of the Kursk region. Gerasimov also confirmed that North Korean soldiers fought alongside Russia to repel Ukrainian troops from the Kursk region and "demonstrated high professionalism, showed fortitude, courage and heroism in battle."

Ukraine's General Staff countered that its defensive operation in certain areas in Kursk was continuing.

If confirmed, Russia's victory in Kursk would deprive Ukraine of key leverage in U.S.-brokered efforts to negotiate an end to the more than 3-year-old war by exchanging its gains for some of Russia-occupied land in Ukraine.

Putin thanked North Korea Monday for fighting alongside his troops against Ukrainian forces and promised not to forget their sacrifices, hours after North Korea confirmed its deployment for the first time.

The back-to-back Russian and North Korean statements - which illustrate their expanding military partnerships - came two days after Russia said its troops have fully reclaimed the Kursk region that Ukrainian forces seized in a surprise incursion last year. Ukrainian officials have denied the claim, insisting that the operation in certain areas of Kursk is continuing.

In a statement posted on the website of the Kremlin, Putin praised North Korean soldiers who he said "shoulder to shoulder with Russian fighters, defended our Motherland as their own."

"The Russian people will never forget the heroism of the DPRK special forces. We will always honor the heroes who gave their lives for Russia, for our common freedom, fighting side by side with their Russian brothers in arms," Putin said, using the acronym for the North's official name.

While Russia's claimed recapture of the Kursk region could deprive North Korea of legitimate grounds to maintain its troops in Russia, Moon said that North Korea won't likely pull out its troops from Russia anytime soon as the war is still going on. Moon said that North Korea could provide support to Russian forces in other regions in a different and covert manner.



Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, center right, and Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba attend a meeting at the Government Office in Hanoi, Vietnam, on April 28. (AP)

Vietnam and Japan pledge support for free, rule-based int'l order

Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh and his Japanese counterpart Shigeru Ishiba agreed, Monday, on importance of supporting a free, open, inclusive, and rules-based international order, with full respect for international law and the UN Charter.

During Ishiba's official visit to Vietnam, in a joint statement issued by the Vietnamese Prime Minister's Office, the leaders stressed the need to maintain peace and stability in the East Vietnam Sea (South China Sea) and resolve disputes peacefully in accordance with in-

ternational law, particularly the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

They highlighted economic cooperation as the cornerstone of bilateral ties and pledged to strengthen collaboration in science, technology, innovation, and high-quality human resource development.

Ishiba also affirmed Japan's support for Vietnam's hosting of the 2027 APEC summit and promised to consider sending a government representative to the 16th UNCTAD ministerial meeting in Hanoi. (KUNA)

Vietnam War ended 50 years ago, but battle with Agent Orange continues

DA NANG, Vietnam, April 28, (AP): The Vietnam War ended on April 30, 1975, when the South Vietnamese capital of Saigon fell to Communist forces. But millions of people still face daily battles with its chemical legacy.

Nguyen Thanh Hai, 34, is one of millions with disabilities linked to Agent Orange. Born with severe developmental challenges, it's a struggle for him to complete tasks others take for granted: buttoning the blue shirt he wears to a special school in Da Nang, practicing the alphabet, drawing shapes or forming simple sentences.

Hai grew up in Da Nang, the site of a US air base where departing troops left behind huge amounts of Agent Orange that have lingered for decades, leeching into food and water supplies in areas like Hai's village and affecting generations of residents.



Students exercise and play with wooden blocks in physiotherapy class at a school for victims of Agent Orange in Da Nang, Vietnam on March 7. (AP)

Across Vietnam, US forces sprayed sprayed 72 million liters (19 million

gallons) of defoliants during the war to strip the enemy's cover. More than half was Agent Orange, a blend of herbicides.

Agent Orange was laced with dioxin, a type of chemical linked to cancer, birth defects and lasting environmental damage. Today, 3 million people, including many children, still suffer serious health issues associated with exposure to it.

Vietnam has spent decades cleaning up the toxic legacy of the war, in part funded by belated U.S. assistance, but the work is far from complete. Now, millions in Vietnam are worried that the U.S. may abandon Agent Orange cleanup as President Donald Trump slashes foreign aid.

When the war ended, the US turned its back on Vietnam, eager to turn the page on a painful chapter in its history.

United Nations voices grave concerns about rising civilian deaths in Darfur

GENEVA, April 28, (KUNA): The UN Human Rights Chief Volker Turk expressed grave concern over the worsening human rights situation in North Darfur in Sudan, stating that at least 129 civilians were killed between 20 and 24 April in (El Fasher) city (Um Kedada) district and the (Abu Shouk) IDP camp.

In a statement issued from Geneva Turk warned about the increasing of civilian casualties attacks on humanitarian personnel and cases of sexual violence as the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) intensify their offensive on the city and nearby camps for internally displaced people (IDPs).

According to the UN Human Rights Office at least 481 civilians have been killed in North Darfur since 10 April although the actual number is likely much higher. This figure includes at least 210 civilians including nine medical professionals who were killed in Zamzam IDP camp between 11 and 13 April.

Turk also reported that dozens of people have died due to lack of food water and medical care in RSF detention facilities or while walking for days in harsh conditions in an attempt to flee violence.

Turk warned about ethnically motivated attacks targeting specific communities are occurring once more in (Darfur) following a similar



Sudanese displaced families take shelter in a school after being evacuated by the Sudanese army from areas once controlled by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Omdurman, Sudan, located across the Nile River from Khartoum, on March 23. (AP)

pattern of violations and abuses seen elsewhere in the region when the RSF and allied militia gained control of areas held by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) such as (El Geneina) and other locations in West (Darfur) in 2023.

"The rising number of civilian casualties and the widespread reports of sexual violence are horrifying" said the High Commissioner adding his grave concern at continued attacks

on humanitarian workers and medical personnel that go against international law and exacerbate the already limited access to healthcare.

"We have heard accounts of people being abducted from Zamzam IDP camp and of women, girls and boys being raped or gang raped there or as they tried to escape the attacks" said Turk noting that the fate of so many others trapped inside the camp is unknown.

Bombing in former stronghold of Pakistani Taliban kills seven people and wounds 16

DERA ISMAIL KHAN, Pakistan, April 28, (AP): At least seven people were killed and 16 wounded on Monday after a powerful bomb went off outside the office of a pro-government peace committee in a former stronghold of the Pakistani Taliban in the restive northwest, police said.

The attack happened in Wana, a main city in the district of South Waziristan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, a local police chief, Usman Wazir, told The Associated Press.

He said the bomb targeted the office of the peace committee, which publicly opposes the Pakistani Taliban. The committee also helps solve disputes among residents.

Wazir said some of the wounded were listed in critical condition at a local hospital. The bombing happened a day after the military said troops in a major operation killed 54 militants in the nearby North Waziristan district following their attempt to cross into the country from Afghanistan.

On Monday, the military said troops killed 17 more militants in an overnight operation in North Waziristan, bringing the total number of insurgents killed in the region in the past three days to 71.



Security personnel guard outside Pakistan High Commission a day after militants indiscriminately opened fire on tourists near Pahalgam in Indian-controlled Kashmir, in New Delhi, India on April 23. (AP)

Highlighting governance infrastructure for sustainability

Gulf Bank issues its Fifth Annual Sustainability Report for 2024

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Gulf Bank has officially released its Fifth Annual Sustainability Report for the year 2024, titled “From Vision to Execution”, highlighting the Bank’s advancements in sustainability in line with Kuwait Vision 2035. The report is aligned with the Global Reporting Standards (GRI), MSCI ESG rating criteria, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the sustainability disclosure guidelines issued by the Kuwait Stock Exchange.

The report highlights Gulf Bank’s key achievements in executing its ESG strategy, highlighting its prominent role in accelerating the national sustainability agenda through strategically selected initiatives. It emphasizes the Bank’s active contributions to fostering a sustainable approach within society by adopting responsible practices in the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) fields, while providing innovative financial solutions and services to its clients.

Core Pillars

On this occasion, **Mr. Meshal Al-Wazzan**, Chief Strategy Officer at Gulf Bank, stated, “In 2024, our focus remained steadfast on advancing our sustainability strategy through sustainable banking solutions and community-centric initiatives, which are key pillars across the Bank’s path toward creating a long-lasting positive impact.”

He added: “Our journey towards sustainability has been marked by several key milestones. Among the most notable achievements was the completion of the Bank’s sustainability governance infrastructure, following the development of the Bank’s ‘Sustainable Finance’ and ‘Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Risk Management’ frameworks. Additionally, we established an internal policy to document the Bank’s sustainability commitments and developed transparent criteria for classifying and evaluating sustainability-related initiatives.”

The report further highlights the Bank’s significant achievements in reducing its carbon footprint, enhancing monitoring and follow-up systems, improving facilities management, and advancing responsible banking practices. It also showcases progress in corporate governance standards, with a focus on responsible governance, equitable workplace, employee empowerment, professional development, and gender equality.

Commitment to National Economy

Gulf Bank reaffirms its steadfast commitment to sus-



Meshal Al-Wazzan

Meshal Al-Wazzan:

- We have completed the Bank’s sustainability governance infrastructure, following the implementation of the ‘Sustainable Finance’ and ‘Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Risk Management’ frameworks.
- We established an internal policy to document the Bank’s sustainability commitments and developed transparent criteria for classifying and evaluating sustainability-related initiatives.
- This year, we are preparing to implement the IFRS S1 and S2 sustainability disclosure standards, deepening the integration of ESG considerations into regulatory policies.

tainability through its diverse Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and long-term strategic partnerships. The Bank further expanded its support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), recognizing their crucial role in driving economic growth and contributing to the broader goals of Kuwait’s 2035 Vision.



Gulf Bank’s Sustainability Report.

The year 2025 will mark several significant milestones, including its readiness for the implementation of the IFRS S1 and S2 sustainability disclosure standards, emphasizing the integration of ESG considerations into the Bank’s policies, governance charters, communication channels, and reporting procedures, in parallel to ensuring a more seamless execution and monitoring of the Bank’s strategies.

Mr. Al-Wazzan concluded, “As we look to the future, we reaffirm our commitment to delivering exceptional banking products and services to our clients, partners, and community, as we continue to actively contribute to shaping a sustainable and resilient future for the State of Kuwait.”

Gulf Bank launched its 2030 Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Strategy last year. The strategy outlines clear goals for implementing sustainability

standards and measurable key performance indicators, leading to the adoption of selected initiatives that promote environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and corporate governance. This approach reflects the Bank’s core values and serves as a guide across all aspects of its practices and banking operations. The strategy is built on four main pillars: Accountable Governance, Equitable Workforce, Empowered Community Engagement, and Responsible Banking.

Key Achievements in 2024:

- Regulatory Framework for Sustainable Finance
- Formulation of sustainability-related policies
- Evaluation of initiatives from an ESG perspective
- Integration of climate and ESG risks
- Strengthened disclosure and reporting processes
- Development and execution of sustainability strategies

Boursa Kuwait ends in the red

General index drops 0.17%

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Monday’s trading session in the red, with its general index falling by 13.75 points, or 0.17 percent, to close at 7,901.22 points.

Trading activity saw 459.19 million shares change hands through 25,428 cash transactions, with a total value of KD 107.8 million (approximately USD 329.8 million).

The Main Market Index, however, advanced by 30.56 points, or 0.43 percent, to 7,219.03

points, supported by the trading of 278.17 million shares across 13,957 transactions, worth KD 38.5 million (about USD 117.8 million).

Meanwhile, the Premier Market Index declined by 25.50 points, or 0.30 percent, to settle at 8,461.75 points, with 181 million shares traded through 11,471 transactions totaling KD 69.2 million (roughly USD 211.7 million).

The Main 50 Index recorded a strong performance, gaining 63.33 points, or 0.90 percent, to reach 7,115.95 points. This came as 227.6 million shares were traded through 11,238 cash transactions valued at KD 33.13 million (about USD 101.3 million).

Company targets 100 by 2040

KNPC expands to 80 stations

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The number of fuel stations operated by the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) has increased to 80, including six mobile stations, with the opening of a new fuel station in West Abdullah Al-Mubarak.

According to informed sources, KNPC is proceeding with its plan to open the highest number of fuel stations according to its timeline. This plan is aimed to alleviate traffic congestion near fuel stations in certain areas, with a long-term goal of opening at least 100 stations by 2040.

KNPC is designing new fuel stations in line with environmental standards. Its expansion plan also focuses on establishing more stations in new residential areas, in coordination with the Kuwait Municipality and relevant ministries.

In addition, KNPC aims to at least double its gasoline sales by 2040, with current sales standing at 4.86 million liters. Last year, the company sold approximately three million liters of Super 95 octane gasoline, 1.8 million liters of Premium 91 octane gasoline, and around 33,000 liters of Ultra 98 octane gasoline.

Company extend bidding deadlines

KOC, KNPC announce new tenders

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT), at the request of Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), has opened a tender for comprehensive maintenance and operational support services for the Jurassic production facilities in North Kuwait.

The tender opened on April 27 and will close on July 27.

Also, the agency announced another KOC tender for the flow group of the manifold and assembly lines in North Kuwait with an opening date of April 27 and a closing date of July 27 as well.

On the other hand, the deadline

for submitting bids for the tender for the secondment of specialized employees of Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGO) has been postponed to May 13.

KPC cancelled the tender for the provision of special consulting services to review and develop its current financial investment strategy and policy, citing Article 55 of Public Tenders Law No. 49/2016.

Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) has extended the closing date for the bidding for the development of areas designated for the provision of interactive banking machines and automated teller machines (ATMs) at KNPC sites until May 15.

As part of its ongoing commitment to empower entrepreneurs

stc launches 3rd intake of the ‘inspireU’ program

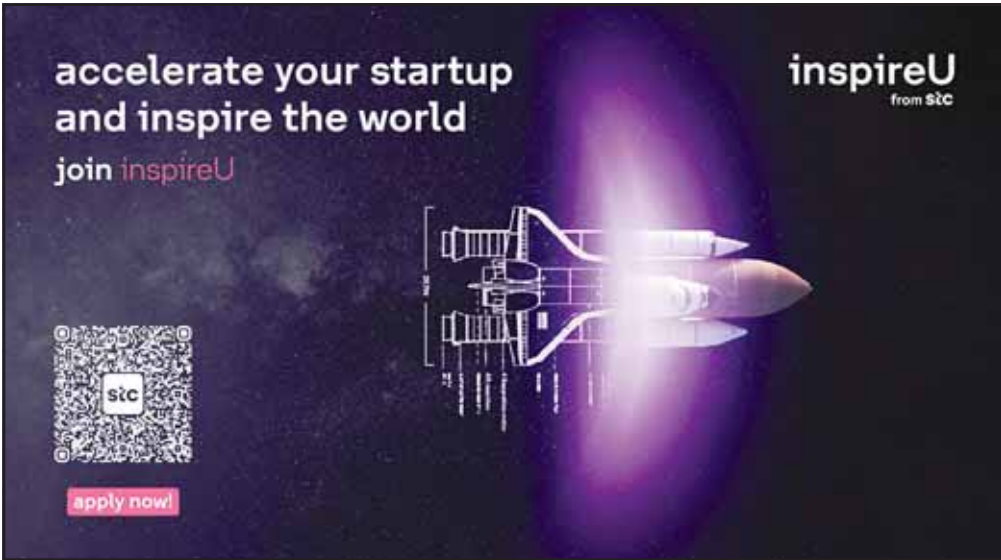
KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, launched the 3rd intake of “inspireU”, an entrepreneurial state-of-the-art accelerator designed to support startups and SMEs in Kuwait. The incubator falls under stc’s ‘weyak’ initiative and aspires to stimulate economic growth in line with Kuwait’s 2035 vision, further strengthening the local entrepreneurial and startup ecosystem in Kuwait.

The inspireU program aims to encourage and support startups in following through on their creative and innovative projects, while seeking the support of experienced professionals. As part of last year intake, 5 startups from Kuwait were featured in the inspireU graduation ceremony from the 1st and 2nd intakes in Kuwait that was held by stc Group in Saudi Arabia. Some of the graduates from the program have now held a leading role in the market such as Motery, Central trade Company (‘CTC’), and SPARTS.

inspireU was initially launched by stc Group 10 years ago, and then adopted by stc Kuwait, which launched the first intake two years ago. The initiative attracted a large number of startups who were eager to benefit from the dedicated support that will enable them to grow and scale their businesses to succeed in today’s competitive market.

All ambitious entrepreneurs who have innovative projects, startups, or ideas can apply for the “inspireU” program by filling out the application form on www.stc.com.kw. It is worth mentioning that registration will be open for a limited time with only a select number of seats. This program will provide substantial support for applicants wanting to share their products in a stimulating and structuring setting, whereas only completed applications will be evaluated according to the program’s criteria.

As a strategic program, inspireU aligns with



stc’s ‘inspireU’ program.

stc’s approach to enabling digital transformation while positioning the Company at the center of digital innovation in the region.

inspireU provides entrepreneurs with workspaces in both Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and assists in obtaining permits and licenses for winning projects in addition to providing practical guidance and targeted trainings. Participants with winning projects will also have access to several networking opportunities through participation or visiting international conferences such as (MWC - Silicon Valley - LEAP). In addition, inspireU provides financial support, with a value of KWD 8,000, to enable startups to realize their ideas and dreams.

About stc

Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is a

Kuwait-UAE deal to enhance investment, foster Gulf economic unity

UIC & Kuwait Business Council boost ties to empower Kuwaiti entrepreneurs in UAE

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: In a move reflecting a strategic push to boost regional cooperation in investment and economic fields, the Union of Investment Companies (UIC) in Kuwait has signed a cooperation agreement with the Kuwait Business Council in Dubai and the Northern Emirates.

According to a press release issued by UIC, the agreement aims to establish an institutional bridge that enhances integration between the Kuwaiti and Emirati business environments, and create new opportunities for communication and professional partnerships among members.

The agreement is in line with the UIC’s efforts to expand its regional and international outreach, and keep pace with the rapid developments in Gulf investment markets. It also capitalizes on the Kuwait Business Council’s role as a non-profit platform for Kuwaiti business professionals in various sectors in the UAE.

The agreement underscores the



UIC, Kuwait Business Council sign agreement to expand joint investment ventures.

importance of strategic partnerships by coordinating efforts and unifying visions to support investment events and conferences organized by both parties in Kuwait and the UAE.

The significance of this co-operation includes media and promotional dimensions, with both sides supporting each other through joint media coverage and mutual promotion of invest-

ment initiatives. This collaboration aims to expand outreach to target groups and enhance the institutional visibility of both parties within the regional investment environment.

Board Chair of UIC Abdullah Hamad Al-Tikrit stated that the partnership marks a new step toward expanding Kuwait’s presence in Gulf markets, particularly within the dynamic economic en-

vironment of the UAE.

He said the ongoing institutional communication between economic bodies is the true gateway to meaningful investment integration and offers a clear roadmap toward achieving Gulf economic unity driven by Kuwait’s strategic vision.

In addition, Chair of the Kuwait Business Council in Dubai and the Northern Emirates Dr. Firas Adel Al-Salem expressed optimism about the new agreement and its potential to empower Kuwaiti entrepreneurs in the UAE by linking them with key stakeholders in Kuwait.

He said the agreement combines institutional expertise with entrepreneurial vision to strengthen the Kuwaiti presence in the UAE, where Kuwaiti investments exceed \$50 billion.

Al-Salem affirmed that the agreement also aims to pave the way for joint investment opportunities between the Kuwaiti and Emirati private sectors.

In an interview with CNBC International

CEO Shaikha Al-Bahar: Continuing excellence and driving innovation are key pillars of NBK's success

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: In an interview with CNBC International, Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer of National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) affirmed the Group's commitment to maintaining excellence and fostering innovation as key pillars of its success, while emphasizing the continued use of technology and data-driven strategies to seize emerging opportunities across NBK's growth markets.

Al-Bahar noted that, in Kuwait, the bank remains focused on developing digital services, diversifying its customer base, and enhancing the banking experience. Internationally, NBK is working to strengthen its presence in key markets, improve operational efficiency, explore sustainable financing opportunities, and expand cross-selling activities.

She further highlighted that NBK Group is reinforcing its regional leadership through NBK Wealth, focusing on the enhancement of its financial advisory and investment services.

First Quarter Financial Results

Commenting on NBK's financial results for the first quarter of 2025, Al-Bahar said: "We delivered solid profit growth in the first quarter of 2025, despite the impact of the newly implemented domestic minimum top-up tax ("DMTT") of 15% on the profits of Kuwaiti constituent entities of large Multinational Enterprises ("MNEs"). This tax, rolled out in different markets in which we operate in, raised the effective tax rate to 16.3% in the first quarter of 2025, compared to 9.2% in 2024".

She explained that this led to a drop in net profits by 8.5% year-on-year, adding that excluding the impact of the new tax regime, NBK achieved a growth rate close to 1% in pre-tax profits during the first three months of 2025, supported by robust growth in lending and investment activities, in line with the bank's diversification strategy.

"The implementation of the DMTT tax system was not surprising, given that the related laws were introduced globally two years ago. We had anticipated their actual enforcement in 2025 across most of our regional markets," Al-Bahar said. She added that while this new tax structure will have a transitional impact on the bank's quarterly financials during 2025, its impact will fade beyond this year.

Al-Bahar underscored the strength of NBK's financial position, backed by a solid balance sheet, strong capitalization, high liquidity levels, robust asset quality, and a prudent approach to risk management. Our NPL/gross loan ratio stood at 1.3%, while the NPL coverage ratio reached 251%.

She underscored that the strong growth in non-interest income, which rose by 4.3%, helped offset the pressure on net interest income caused by lower interest rates and a shift in the asset mix.

Al-Bahar added that the asset mix is expected to im-



Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar Interview - CNBC International.

- Locally, the bank remains focused on advancing digital services, diversifying its customer base, and enhancing their banking experience
- NBK seeks to strengthen its presence in key markets, improve operational efficiency, and pursue sustainable financing opportunities
- Excluding the impact of the new tax, NBK's profits in the first quarter of 2025 recorded 1% year-on-year growth
- The impact of the new tax regime on the Group's financial statements is transitional, with the annual effect expected to fade after 2025
- We continue to focus on fee income to diversify revenue sources and reduce the impact of interest rate fluctuations
- Global trade war and new US tariffs heighten uncertainty surrounding future economic prospects
- NBK maintains an optimistic outlook for Kuwait, supported by emerging opportunities and government progress on strategic and legislative fronts
- We expect the operating environment to continue improving locally, with strong infrastructure spending and economic reforms
- The government's efforts to expand the role of the private sector are set to stimulate economic activity and support the banking sector

prove with the deployment of excess liquidity into anticipated government issuances, likely to materialize soon under the new financing and liquidity law that the market has long awaited. She emphasized that this move would enhance profit margins, as the bank continues to prioritize fee income to diversify its revenue streams and mitigate exposure to interest rate volatility.

Trade War

On the impact of the global trade war and geopolitical tensions in the MENA region, Al-Bahar stressed that the global economic environment remains highly volatile. She explained that, along with persistent geopolitical tensions and growing uncertainty surrounding monetary policies, the recent US tariffs have further clouded future

economic prospects.

Al-Bahar noted that while the region remains relatively protected due to the exemption of oil and gas exports from tariffs, the GCC economies are more vulnerable to oil price fluctuations. She added that oil price volatility is likely to persist in the short term as global economic growth projections continue to be revised downward, which in turn impacts oil demand.

"As for Kuwait, despite geopolitical tensions and the looming threat of a trade war weighing on growth prospects, we remain confident that the operating environment and overall economic performance will continue to improve, supported by sustained momentum in infrastructure spending and ongoing economic and legislative reforms," Al-Bahar added.

Commenting on NBK's exposure to risks from a potential decline in oil prices, Al-Bahar acknowledged that the level of uncertainty that prevails today, it is challenging to take a solid view of economic activity going forward, even in the region.

She noted that under a scenario of reduced oil price volatility, regional GDP growth could recover, supported by steady increases in oil production, which would boost economic performance across the GCC.

Optimistic Outlook

Al-Bahar expressed an optimistic outlook for Kuwait, fueled by emerging opportunities and the ongoing progress of the government's strategic and legislative agenda. She highlighted that economic diversification remains a central focus, with increased support for the private sector and its active participation in driving economic growth, which will positively impact the banking sector. She conveyed her strong expectations and optimism about the country's continued positive trajectory.

On the potential effects of this environment on credit demand, Al-Bahar highlighted the anticipated launch of a series of mega projects. She shared her confidence in the continued momentum of project awards, noting that this would create significant opportunities for banks and revive credit activity. In the first quarter, contract awards reached \$1.3 billion, with planned awards amounting to \$33 billion, representing a substantial opportunity for banks to outperform last year.

Additionally, Al-Bahar pointed to the upcoming mortgage law, which is expected to facilitate home loans for customers, offering further avenues for lending. She noted that banks have strong liquidity that they hope to invest in the upcoming government issuance, particularly in alignment with the Finance and Liquidity Law.

"We are extremely optimistic and confident that the business environment will show significant improvement compared to previous years. With the IMF forecasting a 4.2% growth for the GCC economy, this presents a tremendous opportunity for all banks," Al-Bahar explained.

Al-Musalam: Developing talent key to KFH's growth and excellence

KFH celebrates employees for earning KIBS-accredited certifications

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) celebrated the graduation of 56 employees who completed various training programs and earned accredited professional certifications from the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies (KIBS). The graduates were honored at a special ceremony attended by numerous KFH executives and employees.

In a press statement, KFH Executive Manager Talent Management, **Mohammed Al-Musalam** said that recognizing employees for their outstanding achievements and excellence in completing training programs reflects KFH's unwavering commitment to developing its human capital in line with the latest learning tools and banking knowledge. He emphasized the Bank's endeavors to meet employees' training needs, hone their skills, and nurture their talents so they can apply this knowledge in their respective roles. This contributes to enhancing performance efficiency, elevating customer service standards, and driving sustainable growth.

He congratulated the graduates, stressing the importance of diligence and continuous learning, along with the latest banking techniques, to achieve peak performance efficiently and excellently. He also pointed out that, given current economic challenges and intense local and global competition, integrating employee skills and expanding their knowledge are now crucial for achieving distinction.

Al-Musalam commended



Mohammed Al-Musalam and officials from the Kuwait Institute of Banking Studies with graduates from Kuwait Finance House.



Kuwait Finance House employees with their certificates.

the engagement and interaction demonstrated by employees throughout their participation in the high-level training programs. "Candidates were carefully selected based on their experience and their outstanding performance in

their respective roles," he noted, "the meticulous selection process resulted in exceptional outcomes, with the majority of participants achieving top grades and ranking among the highest performers." He added that several employ-

ees successfully completed multiple training programs, marking a distinguished milestone in their training journey. This also reflects KFH's Talent Management successful strategy in carefully selecting participants and tailor-

ing suitable programs for them following a thorough assessment of each employee's skills and interests.

Al-Musalam extended his sincere appreciation to KIBS and its leadership for their cooperation

and commitment to ensuring the success of the training programs.

He also expressed full confidence in the employees' capabilities to add tangible value across various business areas and employ the skills and competencies they demonstrated over the past period. "These capabilities have been clearly reflected in KFH's progress and growth," he commented.

Al-Musalam reaffirmed that KFH is among the first and leading institutions to place great emphasis on investing in human capital, recognizing it as one of the Bank's most valuable assets and a cornerstone for growth, development, and the achievement of its strategic goals and vision. A testament to this commitment is KFH's leading position in recording the highest number of graduates each year from accredited professional certification programs.

He added: "KFH is committed to keeping pace with the latest advancements in the banking field, attracting top talents and employing the most effective tools for working in the banking industry. This is achieved by organizing specialized training programs in collaboration with KIBS and other globally recognized institutions, thus promoting the exchange of expertise and strengthening partnerships and collaboration."

KFH honored employees expressed their profound appreciation for the attention and support they received at the Bank. They affirmed their commitment to continuous development to embody the ideal image of KFH workforce. They also emphasized their unwavering dedication to constantly delivering excellence and contributing to strengthening KFH's leading position at the regional and global levels.

Public offering to non-shareholders has now been closed

Warba Bank announces historic capital increase subscription, with record coverage value reaching close to KD 1.9 billion

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: In a historic achievement in Kuwait's economy, Warba Bank successfully closed its capital increase subscription with the highest value and coverage percentage ever recorded, reaching approximately 430% of the offered value of KD 436,720,000.

The subscription was part of the Bank's strategy to increase its capital by 100%, and consequently, the public offering to non-shareholders has now been closed. The allocation rate for surplus shares following the pre-emptive rights period reached 6.247%.

Warba Bank confirmed that the subscription proceeds, amounting to KD 436,720,000, will be transferred to the Bank's capital account, and surplus subscription amounts will be refunded to subscribers' bank accounts within five working days starting Tuesday, April 29, 2025.

This achievement reaffirms Warba Bank's standing as one of the key pillars of the Kuwaiti economy and highlights its vital role in supporting local economic growth and contributing to building a brighter future for Kuwait.

Commenting on it, Warba Bank's



Shaheen AlGhanem

Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Shaheen Hamad AlGhanem, expressed his deep gratitude to the Bank's shareholders for the trust they have placed in Warba. He emphasized that this capital increase will provide a solid foundation for further investment expansion across vital economic sectors, ensuring rewarding returns for shareholders.

AlGhanem added: "We are proud today to stand at a point where we turn

• A historic achievement that reaffirms the confidence of shareholders and Kuwaiti market in supporting the national economy

• The capital increase enables Warba to strengthen its market share and move forward with development and expansion plans

• Warba has made remarkable advancements in its digital transformation strategy, translating its vision and fulfilling customers' aspirations

the trust and support we have received into tangible achievements that serve everyone. This historic subscription reinforces Warba Bank's role as a committed and sincere partner in supporting economic growth and contributing to building a more prosperous future for our beloved country. This success is the reflection of our firm belief that every step we take must ultimately benefit the Kuwaiti community and economy. We are fully committed

Key Figures:	
•	Subscribed Pre-emptive Rights Shares: 1,704,304,433 shares, representing a coverage rate of 78.05%
•	Subscribed Additional Shares: 7,671,921,090 shares, representing a coverage rate of 351.34%
•	Total Number of Subscribed Shares: 9,376,225,523 shares, representing a coverage rate of 429.39%
•	Total Value of Subscribed Shares: KD 1,875,245,104.600
•	Allocation Rate of Surplus Shares: 6.247%
•	Total Number of Allocated Shares: 2,183,600,000 shares
•	Total Value of Allocated Shares: KD 436,720,000.000
•	Number of Surplus Subscription Shares Allocated to Shareholders Who Requested Additional Shares: 479,295,567 shares
•	The value of the allocated subscription shares (KD 436,720,000.000) will be transferred to the Bank's capital account, and surplus subscription amounts will be refunded to subscribers' bank accounts starting tomorrow, Tuesday, April 29, 2025.

to being an active contributor to building a sustainable economic future for generations to come."

Al Ghanem emphasized that Warba Bank's deep connection with the people is reflected in every service and product it delivers, while its unwaver-

ing support for the national economy is evident through its ongoing initiatives and strategic investments aimed at driving sustainable local growth.

He stated that the Bank has made financial inclusion a reality by providing innovative, accessible bank-

ing solutions for all segments of the society, while proudly embodying the Kuwaiti identity, as well as working every day to be an active contributor to Kuwait's future and its economic development.

He said: "We thank God Almighty for the outstanding success of the capital increase subscription. We promise our shareholders that we will always live up to their expectations by offering them investment opportunities with sustainable and rewarding returns in growing markets. We also promise our customers that we will continue to be closer to them, delivering first-of-its-kind digital banking services in Kuwait that will meet all their current and future banking needs."

Warba Bank had offered the subscription to double its capital by 100%, which amounted to 2,183,600,000 shares at a price of 200 fils per share, comprising 100 fils as issuance premium and 100 fils as nominal value, with a total offering value of KD 436,720,000. The offering was allocated to shareholders holding pre-emptive rights in its first phase.

Memo to further strengthen and develop ties between the two brotherly countries

Kuwait Airways and Emirates sign MoU to enhance travel options

DUBAI, April 28: Kuwait Airways and Emirates have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop their bilateral partnership, offering passengers increased flight options to Dubai and other operating routes. The MoU was signed at the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, reflecting a step forward in strengthening cooperation between the two carriers.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Kuwait Airways Chairman, Captain Abdulmohsen Salem Al-Fagaan, and Emirates' Deputy President, and Chief Commercial Officer, Mr. Adnan Kazim, in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline & Group and

the President of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Kuwait, Sheikh Eng. Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Sabah. The signing ceremony was also attended by other officials of each airline's executive management and partnership teams.

Kuwait Airways Chairman, Captain Abdulmohsen Salem Al-Fagaan stated, "Kuwait Airways is pleased to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Emirates Airline, one of the largest and leading airlines in the regional and global aviation industry and to develop commercial agreements and bilateral partnerships between the two parties.

"We also welcome Emirates as an important strategic partner for Kuwait Airways, as this agreement will support commercial operations to and from the State of



Emirates and Kuwait Airways officials pose together.

Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates."

Al-Fagaan concluded his statement by emphasizing that the memorandum will further strengthen and develop relations between the two brotherly countries, to the benefit of all.

He also extended his sincere

thanks and appreciation to Mr. Adnan Kazim, Emirates' Deputy President, and Chief Commercial Officer, as well as to both teams for their collaborative efforts towards the success of the partnership.

Mr. Adnan Kazim, Emirates' Deputy President, Chief Commercial Officer said, "We are pleased to partner with Kuwait Airways and look forward to developing our partnership agreement to provide Kuwait Airways passengers with enhanced choices and convenient travel schedules to Dubai, and beyond across our extensive global network.

"We look forward to enhancing customer benefits together with Kuwait Airways, and to strengthen relationship between the two airlines in the coming period."

China shrugs off threat of US tariffs to its economy

Beijing says it has tools to protect jobs

BEIJING, April 28, (AP): China's leaders are downplaying the potential impact from U.S. President Donald Trump's trade war, saying they have the capacity to protect jobs and limit damage from higher tariffs on Chinese exports.

The briefing Monday by several senior officials of different government ministries appeared aimed at shoring up confidence with promises of support for companies and the unemployed, easier lending conditions and other policies to counter the impact of combined tariffs of up to 145% on U.S. imports from China.

It followed a meeting of China's powerful Politburo last week that analysts said had focused on ways to counter keep growth on track despite slowing exports.

"Chinese policymakers are on heightened standby mode," Louise Loo, lead economist at Oxford Eco-



Workers assemble circuit breakers at a manufacturer of electronic equipment, in Fuyang city in central China's Anhui province on April 15, 2025. (AP)

nomics said in a report. She noted that the policies were similar to earlier pronouncements.

The status of exchanges, if any, between the White House and Chinese leader Xi Jinping remains unclear.

Trump said last week that he's ac-

putting 125% import duties on products from the U.S., among other measures.

The officials who spoke Monday reiterated China's rejection of what leaders there call bullying.

"They make up bargaining chips out of thin air, bully and go back on their words, which makes everyone see one thing more and more clearly, that is the so-called 'reciprocal tariffs' severely go against historical trends and economic laws, impact international trade rules and order and seriously impair the legitimate rights and interests of countries," said Zhao Chenxin, deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission, the country's main economic planning agency.

The trade war between the world's two largest economies has the potential to bring on a recession in the U.S., with repercussions across the globe. China has been struggling to recharge its own growth after the job losses and other shocks of the pandemic.

Economists at the International Monetary Fund and some investment houses have downgraded their estimates for growth in China this year, to about 4%. Millions of export oriented jobs are at stake.

DAX added 0.2% Global shares mostly gains

HONG KONG, April 28, (AP): Global markets were mostly higher on Monday as investors watched to see what may come of negotiations over U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs.

The future for the S&P 500 dropped 0.3% while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average slid 0.2%.

Germany's DAX added 0.2% to 22,294.34 and the CAC 40 in Paris gained 0.4% to 7,568.75. Britain's FTSE 100 advanced 0.3% to 8436.78.

Shares in China slipped despite more efforts by Beijing to boost the economy, as the status of talks between Washington and Beijing remained unclear.

Trump has said he's actively negotiating with the Chinese government on tariffs - while the Chinese and U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent stated that talks have yet to start.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng was nearly unchanged at 21,971.96, while the Shanghai Composite Index fell 0.2% to 3,288.41.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 picked up 0.4% to 35,839.99 and the Kospi in South Korea was nearly unchanged at 2,548.86.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 advanced 0.4%, closing at 7,997.10. Taiwan's Taiex gained 0.8%.

On Friday, Big Tech stocks helped Wall Street close a winning, rollercoaster week, one that saw markets swing from fear to relief and back to caution because of Trump's trade war.

The S&P 500 rose 0.7%, capping a big three-day rally. It's within 10.1% of its record set earlier this year. Spurts for Nvidia and other influential tech stocks sent the Nasdaq composite up a market-leading 1.3%, while the Dow Jones Industrial Average added only a modest 0.1%.

Alphabet climbed 1.7% in its first trading after Google's parent company reported late Thursday that its profit soared 50% in the beginning of 2025 from a year earlier, more than analysts expected.

Another market heavyweight, Nvidia, was also a major force pushing the S&P 500 index upward after the chip company rose 4.3%.

They helped offset a 6.7% drop for Intel, which fell even though its results for the beginning of the year also topped expectations.

Despite last week's rally, as talk of Trump firing Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell receded and hints emerged of a selective softening of his stance on tariffs, not much has changed, Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

"But let's not kid ourselves: this isn't a clean pivot. It's hope and narrative management, plain and simple. What's really driving the bounce isn't hard policy action - it's the perception of de-escalation," Innes said.

Trump says he's on a path to cut several new trade deals in a few weeks - but has also suggested it's "physically impossible" to hold all the needed meetings.

Companies across industries have increasingly been saying the uncertainty created by Trump's tariffs is making it difficult to give financial forecasts for the upcoming year.

The hope is that if Trump rolls back some of his stiff tariffs, he could avert a recession that many investors see as otherwise likely because of his trade war.

But the on-again-off-again tariffs may be pushing households and businesses to alter their spending and freeze plans for long-term investment because of how quickly conditions can change, sometimes seemingly by the hour.

Things to know about US coal industry and proposed changes under the Trump admin

CHARLESTON, W.Va., April 28, (AP): US President Donald Trump's administration has proposed several changes that would affect the struggling U.S. coal industry.

Trump issued executive orders this month to allow mining on federal land. He has used his emergency authority to allow some older coal-fired power plants set for retirement to keep producing electricity to meet the rising demand amid the growth in data centers, artificial intelligence and electric cars.

The Republican president also granted nearly 70 older coal-fired power plants a two-year exemption from federal requirements to reduce emissions of toxic chemicals. Trump's government efficiency team, run by Elon Musk, made plans earlier this year to terminate the leases of 34 U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration offices in 19 states.

The coal industry once provided more than half of U.S. electricity production. But it has been in steep decline for decades as operators went out of business and utilities installed more renewable energy and converted coal-fired plants to be fueled by cheaper and cleaner-burning natural gas.

U.S. coal production was at 1 billion tons (907,000 metric tons) in 2014 and fell to 578 million tons (524 million metric tons) by 2023, the latest year available, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Coal employment nationally peaked in the 1920s when there were about 900,000 miners. It was at about 350,000 in 1950 and has declined steadily since 1980. After the coronavirus pandemic, employment rebounded from 2022 to 2023, rising 4.2% to 45,476. West Virginia employed the most miners at 14,000, followed by Kentucky at 5,000. About half of the nation's 560 coal mines are located in West Virginia (165) and Kentucky (112). Despite having just 15 mines, Wyoming was the highest-producing coal state due to mechanization and more accessible coal.

Mining fatalities over the past four decades have dropped significantly. There

have been 11 or fewer deaths in each of the past five years, according to MSHA.

MSHA is responsible for enforcing U.S. mine safety laws. It is required to inspect each underground mine quarterly and each surface mine twice a year. The cuts proposed by Musk's so-called Department of Government Efficiency would require MSHA inspectors to travel farther to get to a mine, and that could mean less thorough inspections, said Jack Spadaro, a longtime mine safety investigator and environmental specialist who worked for that agency.

According to the DOGE website, ending the MSHA leases is projected to save \$18 million. It is unclear whether inspectors' positions and other jobs from those offices would be moved to other facilities.

Seven of the MSHA offices set for closing are in Kentucky and four are in Pennsylvania. West Virginia is among the states with two targeted offices. Also under consideration for closure are the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement facilities in Lexington, Kentucky, and Tulsa, Oklahoma, shrinking the national footprint of an agency created during the Carter administration to restore land damaged by strip mining, and reclaim abandoned and damaged mine lands.

A recent review of publicly available data by the Appalachian Citizens' Law Center indicates that nearly 17,000 health and safety inspections were conducted from the beginning of 2024 through February 2025 by MSHA staff in the facilities on the chopping block. Industry advocates have long contended that there are other uses for coal, some of which use cleaner technology.

Canonsburg, Pennsylvania-based Core Natural Resources is working to develop a process using West Virginia coal to create a synthetic material that can be used as an anode for lithium-ion batteries, reducing U.S. dependence on countries such as China, according to Matthew Mackowiak, the company's director of government affairs.



American Electric Power's John Amos coal-fired plant in Winfield, W.Va, is seen from the town of Pocahontas across the Kanawha River, Tuesday, April 22, 2025. (AP)

Coogler's horror movie outshines big new releases

'Sinners' defies odds with massive box office success

LOS ANGELES, April 28, (AP): Horror movies are often one-week wonders at the box office, but Ryan Coogler's "Sinners" is defying the odds and proving to be true event cinema.

In its second weekend in theaters, "Sinners" earned \$45 million in ticket sales from theaters in the US and Canada, according to studio estimates Sunday. That's down a miniscule 6% from its Easter holiday launch, the smallest drop in any genre since "Avatar" in 2009. Worldwide, "Sinners" has now made \$161.6 million.

For the industry, the showing proves the film's reach has broadened beyond horror fans to mainstream audiences wanting to see what the hype is about. Last weekend, men made up 56% of the audience. This weekend, the gender divide narrowed to 50/50. Premium large format showings, like the 70mm IMAX screens, are also a big draw. IMAX screens worldwide accounted for some 21% of the second weekend globally, a nearly 9% increase from last weekend.

The original ensemble movie, starring Michael B. Jordan as twins, rode into theaters on a wave of great reviews. And, to be fair, "Sinners" isn't simply a horror film: It blends elements of drama, action and musical into its southern gothic milieu.

"That's one of the lowest second weekend holds for an overperforming wide release ever," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "It's an absolute phenomenon."

Hollywood expects significant drop off in a movie's second week of release. Even a 50% dip is considered a solid number, baked into the movie math. When it's anything less than that, it's notable.

"You can buy a great opening weekend with marketing, but if a movie



This image released by Warner Bros Pictures shows Michael B. Jordan, (right), in a scene from 'Sinners.' (AP)

doesn't have the goods, it'll drop off," Dergarabedian said. "There's no greater barometer of success than a second weekend hold like this."

The film was produced by Coogler's Proximity Media and Warner Bros., which handled the theatrical release. After some disappointments earlier in

the year, it's the second major win for the studio after "A Minecraft Movie" helped energize the box office earlier this month.

"Sinners" easily topped the biggest new competition this week: "The Accountant 2," a sequel starring Ben Affleck and released by Amazon MGM Studios, which opened in third place with an estimated \$24.5 million in its first weekend. Gavin O'Connor directed the film, which played in 3,610 theaters in North America. Audiences gave it a promising A- CinemaScore.

The film that beat "The Accountant 2" for second place was a 20-year-old Star Wars movie: "Revenge of the Sith." The anniversary re-release took in an estimated \$25.2 million over the weekend, with many sellouts reported, more than doubling last year's release of "The Phantom Menace." Internationally, it earned \$17 million from 34 territories, giving it a \$42.2 million global weekend. It's one of the top grossing re-releases ever.

"A Minecraft Movie" landed in fourth place with \$22.7 million, bringing its domestic total to around \$380 million.

The scary video game adaptation "Until Dawn" also opened this weekend to an estimated \$8 million, rounding out the top five. Sony Pictures released the film, starring Ella Rubin and Michael Cimino, which has earned \$18.1 million globally.

The "Minecraft" and "Sinners" wins have meant a huge boost for the April box office, which is up 102% from April 2024. The annual box office is also up over 10% from last year after running at a double-digit deficit in March. And this is all happening right before the industry's summer movie season kicks off on May 2 with Disney's "Thunderbolts(asterisk)."

"There cannot be a better opening act for the summer movie season than this weekend," Dergarabedian said.

People

\$6m heist

Kim to testify in Paris trial

PARIS, April 28, (AP): **Kim Kardashian** thought she was going to be raped and killed when criminals broke into her bedroom in central Paris, tied her up and stole more than \$6 million in jewelry.

More than eight years later, 10 people will go on trial in Paris over the robbery, abduction and kidnapping of the media personality and the concierge of the residence where she was staying during Paris Fashion Week the night of Oct. 2, 2016.

Kardashian's lawyers said she will testify in person at the trial starting Monday and scheduled to run through May 23.



Kardashian

"Ms. Kardashian is reserving her testimony for the court and jury and does not wish to elaborate further at this time," she said. "She has great respect and admiration for the French justice system and has been treated with great respect by the French authorities. She wishes the trial to proceed in an orderly fashion, in accordance with French law and with respect for all parties to the case."

In interviews and on her family's reality TV show, Kardashian has described being terrified as robbers pointed a gun at her.

Recalled

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.'"

Twelve people were originally expected in the defendants' box. One of them has died and another is seriously ill and can't be tried. According to the investigation, five of the 10 defendants were present at the scene of the robbery.

The French press has dubbed them The Granddad Robbers because the main defendants are elderly and have careers as bank robbers with long criminal records.

Kardashian told investigators she was taken to a bathroom next to her bedroom and placed in the bathtub. Her attackers fled on bicycles or on foot and she managed to free herself by removing the tape from her hands and mouth.

She had also removed the tape from her feet and rushed to her stylist's room. She called her sister Kourtney to tell her about the theft. Shortly afterward, Kardashian told investigators that she had not been injured. She filed a complaint, adding that she wanted to leave France as soon as possible to be reunited with her children.

According to her testimony and that of the concierge, at least one of the suspects had a handgun, with which he threatened the victims.

The gangsters stole many pieces of jewelry, including a ring of great value, estimated to be worth more than \$6 million. Only one piece of jewelry - a diamond cross on platinum that was lost during the suspects' escape - has been recovered.

Two of the accused have partially confessed to the crime, as their DNA was found at the crime scene.

Hong Kong Awards



Michelle Wai reacts after receiving the Best Actress award for her role in the film 'The Last Dance' at the 43rd Hong Kong Film Awards at the Hong Kong Culture Center on Sunday, April 27. (AP)



Sean Lau reacts after receiving the Best Actor award for the film 'Papa.' (AP)



Nansun Shi, (left) and Tsui Hark receive their Lifetime Achievement Award at the 43rd Hong Kong Film Awards on Sunday, April 27. (AP)



From left: Aaron Kwok, Louis Koo, producer John Chong and Raymond Lam receive best film award for 'Twilight of the Warriors: Walled In.' (AP)



Terence Lam receives the Best Original Film Song award for the film 'The Last Dance.' (AP)



Jo Koo receives the Best Supporting Actress award for her role in the film 'Papa' at the 43rd Hong Kong Film Awards on Sunday, April 27. (AP)

Hollywood legends celebrate iconic filmmaker's legacy

Coppola accepts AFI Life Achievement Award

LOS ANGELES, April 28, (AP): Steven Spielberg proclaimed "The Godfather" the "greatest American film ever made," Robert De Niro teasingly bemoaned being cast in the sequel and the original and Harrison Ford fought back tears reflecting on his role in the 1974 film, "The Conversation."

At the center of it all was Francis Ford Coppola, who on Saturday received the AFI Life Achievement Award at a ceremony at Dolby Theatre that brought together legendary stars from a seemingly bygone era of cinema.

A founding AFI trustee, Coppola's recognition from the organization was a kind of full circle moment for the "Apocalypse Now" director.

"When I was a kid there was the Oscars and that was it. Now they're going to have an award show for the best award show," the 86-year-old said on the red carpet ahead of the show. "But this is a little different because it's a personal recognition of the people that you've known all your life and your colleagues over many years, so it's like a homecoming in a way."

"You, sir, are peerless. You have taken what came before and redefined the canon of American film," Spielberg said.

Coppola sat between Spielberg



Filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola waves to the audience as he takes the stage during the 50th AFI Life Achievement Award tribute to Coppola on Saturday, April 26, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. (AP)

and George Lucas, as actors and fellow filmmakers like Spike Lee, Dustin Hoffman, Al Pacino and Morgan Freeman took turns gush-

ing over the Oscar winner.

"Dreamer of dreams on a dime, teller of tales that cost and lost millions. But tonight, (expletive) the

bankers and the bank," Freeman said to laughs and cheers.

Lucas, Coppola's longtime friend and colleague, presented him with the award. The pair have known each other for decades and cofounded their own production company, American Zoetrope, in 1969.

"You rounded up a bunch of young film students, gathered us together. We moved to San Francisco, hoping to beat the system. And we did. Like the filmmakers from the dawn of the art form, we had no rules. We wrote them, and you were holding the pen," Lucas said.

Coppola was mostly stoic throughout the ceremony as Hollywood sang his praises - until he accepted the award at the end of the night. He beamed as he approached the stage and thanked the room, which was filled with some of his family members as well as multi-generational A-listers.

"Now I understand here, this place that created me, my home, isn't really a place at all, but you - friends, colleagues, teachers, playmates, family, neighbors, all the beautiful faces are welcoming me back," he said. "I am and will always be nothing more than one of you."

Coppola was the 50th recipient of the award first handed out to John Ford in 1973.

Guests were served wine from the Francis Ford Coppola Winery and after dinner - true to his Italian heritage - a trio of cannolis. Actors who have worked with Coppola painted a unified picture of him as a director, reminiscing on how they were invited to participate and educated about film in a way that empowered them.

"He's very professional. He talks about history and things and even older movies in the scene he's inspired by," said "The Godfather III" star Andy Garcia. "You go into working with him in a movie, and you go in seeking an associate's degree and you would walk out with a master's."

Coppola last year released his long-in-development "Megalopolis," a Roman epic set in a modern New York. The film drew mixed reviews from critics and flopped with audiences. Coppola, though, has maintained he was compelled to make "Megalopolis" as an artist, not as a businessman. He self-financed the film.

"For a year in our culture when the importance of the arts is minimized, and our industry is seemingly out in the open that the only metric to judge a film's success is by how much money it makes, I hang on to individuals like Francis for inspiration, who live through their convictions," said Adam Driver, who starred in the film.

relationship (and maybe even of this life of honky-tonk one-nighters) and are asking to please be released," he wrote in a statement. "Both of their souls are so pure as artists and as people."

Also included in the star-studded lineup is CJ Chenier, Clifton's son. "It was an honor to be a part of this project with all of these wonderful, ultra talented artists celebrating my dad's 100th birthday," he said in a statement.

All proceeds from "A Tribute to the King" will fund the newly established Clifton Chenier Memorial Scholarship, which will provide financial assistance to students studying traditional music - specifically zydeco accordion - at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. (AP)

Variety

NEW YORK: The Rolling Stones' **Mick Jagger** sings in swaggering French. Louisiana native Lucinda Williams delivers a slow, slinky, swamp pop sound. Steve Earle, Taj Mahal, Jimmie Vaughan, Charley Crockett and more energize Creole classics from accordionist and pioneer Clifton Chenier, the late King of Zydeco.

Chenier, who died in 1987 due to diabetes-related kidney disease, would've turned 100 on June 25. To celebrate his centennial, Valcour Records founder Joe Savoy and Los Lobos' Steve Berlin teamed up with executive producer John Leopold



Jagger

It was a tall order. "In the same way Muddy Waters more or less invented electric blues, Clifton ef-

fectively invented what is now known as Zydeco. It's that driving beat," said Berlin. This tribute album "is not just a fun record," he adds. "But we're also telling the history of this music as well."

And telling it with some incredible artists who double as longtime fans. The Stones' Keith Richards said in a statement, "Zydeco and Clifton Chenier have been with me since forever! It's deep South with some interesting French."

The first song out from "A Tribute to the King" is "Release Me," performed as a duet by Williams and Tommy McLain.

C.C. Adcock, who produced the track, said the song "frames them as two old sweethearts who've been through the wreckage and the ropes of a re-

lationship

lationship (and maybe even of this life of honky-tonk one-nighters) and are asking to please be released," he wrote in a statement. "Both of their souls are so pure as artists and as people."

Rock & Roll Hall of Fame 2025 inductees announced

Cyndi Lauper, Joe Cocker and more to enter Rock Hall

NEW YORK, April 28, (AP): First-time nominees Chubby Checker, Joe Cocker and Bad Company will be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, a class that also includes pop star Cyndi Lauper, the hip-hop pioneers Outkast, the rock duo the White Stripes and grunge masters Soundgarden.

Salt-N-Pepa, the first female rap act to achieve gold and platinum status, and the late singer-songwriter Warren Zevon will get the Musical Influence Award. The late record producer Thom Bell, pianist Nicky Hopkins and bassist Carol Kaye will each get the Musical Excellence Award.

The late Cocker, who sang at Woodstock and was best known for his cover of The Beatles' "With a Little Help From My Friends," had



This combination of photos shows Cubby Checker at the Songwriters Hall of Fame Awards in New York on June 12, 2014, left, British singer Joe Cocker performing in Monaco on Aug. 5, 2011, center, and Cyndi Lauper at the MTV Video Music Awards in New York on Sept. 12, 2021. (AP)

the backing of Billy Joel, Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top and Pete Thomas, a member of Elvis Costello & The Attractions, who argued that Cocker

is "about as rock and roll as it gets."

Soundgarden - with the late Chris Cornell as singer - get into the Hall on their third nomination. They follow two other grunge acts in the Hall - Nirvana and Pearl Jam. Bad Company get in having become radio fixtures with such arena-rock staples as "Feel Like Makin' Love," "Can't Get Enough" and "Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy."

The Ahmet Ertegun Award - given to nonperforming industry professionals who had a major influence on music - will go to Lenny Waronker, a former head of Warner Bros. Records who signed Prince and R.E.M., and had a part in records from Madonna, Randy Newman, the Doobie Brothers, Rickie Lee Jones, Paul Simon and Gary Clark Jr.

Some nominees that didn't get in this year include Mariah Carey, Phish, Billy Idol, Joy Division/New Order, Maná, the Black Crowes and Oasis.

Checker's recording of "The Twist," and subsequent "Let's Twist Again" are considered among the most popular songs in the history of rock 'n' roll. The 83-year-old has expressed frustration that he hadn't been granted entry before, including telling the AP in 2014: "I don't want to get in there when I'm 85 years old. I'll tell them to drop dead, so you better do it quick while I'm still smiling."

Lauper rose to fame in the 1980s with hits such as "Time After Time" and "Girls Just Want To Have Fun" and went on to win a Tony Award for "Kinky Boots." OutKast, made

up of André 3000 and Big Boi, have six Grammys and a reputation for pushing the boundaries of hip-hop. The White Stripes - made up of Jack White and Meg White - were indie darlings in the early 2000s with such songs as "Seven Nation Army."

Artists must have released their first commercial recording at least 25 years before they're eligible for induction. The induction ceremony will take place in Los Angeles this fall.

Nominees were voted on by more than 1,200 artists, historians and music industry professionals. The selection criteria include "an artist's impact on other musicians, the scope and longevity of their career and body of work, as well as their innovation and excellence in style and technique."

Music

New album explores Mexican cinema's Golden Age

Lafourcade's alter ego shines in 'Cancionera'



Mexican singer Natalia Lafourcade performs at the Concha Acustica of Bello Monte in Caracas, Venezuela on Aug. 22, 2023. (AP)

LOS ANGELES, April 28, (AP): When Natalia Lafourcade sat down to craft "Cancionera," she never expected to discover an alter ego that would lead her down a pathway of artistic enlightenment.

She had always worn her heart on her sleeve through her lauded career, but with "Cancionera," Lafourcade finally felt she was able to stop holding back, lean into the "spirit of play" and showcase all her multitudes on her 12th studio album, out last Thursday.

"Cancionera (the character) challenged me and asked, 'Who are you, really?' 'Who do you think you are?' and 'Are you much more than what you tell yourself? I mean, if you are who you think you are, because, in reality, you are many different things. So it opened up huge possibilities,'" said Lafourcade, whose answers have been translated from Spanish. "Cancionera" translates to "singer" in English.

Lafourcade, who has four Grammys and 18 Latin Grammys to her name, felt it was time to step into Cancionera's duality and the varied energies: "earthly energy, volatile energy, romantic energy ... they all became a part of her world, and I didn't want to interrupt as they began to manifest," she said.

The 14-track album transports listeners within the trifold theatrical walls of the Golden Age of Mexican cinema - an era spanning the 1930s to the 1950s when the Mexican film industry cemented its role as a dominant force across Latin America and received international acclaim, creating stars like Pedro Infante and María Félix and introducing surrealist styles of filmmaking.

"This album is full of symbolism, inspired by the surrealism of Mexico and the values of our tradition and iconography. I wanted to honor the songs and the path of the cancioneras and cancioneros of life," said Lafourcade via email.

From the very beginning, with the inviting complex string arrangement of "Apertura Cancionera" ("Opening"), the album sends listeners on their own cinematic journeys as the jewel-toned red curtain ascends to reveal the black-and-white screen.

Interpretation

"It led me to think of characters, like the ones we saw in the movies, like (Mexican actor) Tin Tan, and these surreal worlds of lots of tropicality, music crafted by Agustín Lara," said Lafourcade. But she says this is her own interpretation of those characters, inspired by the language and stories of everyday life in Mexico.

Lafourcade has paid homage to Lara in the past: She recorded her own interpretation of the Mexican composer's most notable works on her 2012 album "Mujer Divina: Homenaje a Agustín Lara" ("Divine Woman: An Homage to Agustín Lara"). "Cancionera" revisits some of Lafourcade's past stripped-down work as a singer-songwriter with acoustic tracks like "Cómo Quisiera Quererte" ("How I Would Like to Love You"), featuring El David Aguilar.

The album was coproduced by Adan Jodorowsky, who also produced Lafourcade's Grammy-winning "De Todas Las Flores" ("Of All the Flowers"). Lafourcade recorded the album in one take on analog tape alongside collaborators like Aguilar, Hermanos Gutiérrez, Israel Fernández, Diego Del Morao, Gordon Hamilton and Soundwalk Collective.



Natalia Lafourcade poses for a portrait on Oct. 11, 2024, in New York. (AP)

This was Lafourcade's chance to explore the duality of her artistic self and her alter ego. She created the visual assets for the album in tandem with her unique recording process, which pushed her to express herself through other creative media, like painting and movement.

"This opened my view and my heart to be more sensitive to the things around me. I began to understand the story behind 'Cancionera,'" said Lafourcade. "Things started to happen, like I started to paint. It unblocked a lot at a creative and imaginative level."

A constant throughout Lafourcade's music is her roots in Veracruz, the same Mexican state Lara was from. Veracruz, known for its thriving arts and culture scene, infuses the entire album and naturally evokes itself through songs like "Cocos en la Playa" and "La Bruja" ("The Witch"), a reimagined version of a folk song made popular in the region.

"I love everyday life in Mexico. I love the markets and the streets; I love its nights. I love its clandestine spaces and its characters ... Mexico is full of beautiful things. Strong things, dark things and luminous things. There's so much duality," said Lafourcade. "It's all reflected in the lyrics, in the music."

Fans of Lafourcade will be able to experience the recording artist's alter ego on the "Cancionera" tour, which kicked off Thursday in Xalapa, Mexico, and runs through October. The recording artist will tour throughout the United States, Canada and Latin America, along with stops in Spain.



Alyona alyona & Jerry Heil of Ukraine perform the song Teresa & Maria during the Grand Final of the Eurovision Song Contest in Malmö, Sweden, on May 11, 2024. (AP)

37 countries compete

Switzerland preps to host Eurovision 2025

LONDON, April 28, (AP): Get out the glitter balls, sew on the sequins and prepare to party: The Eurovision Song Contest approaches.

The 69th annual musical extravaganza takes place in Basel, Switzerland in May. It will see acts from 37 countries vie for the continent's musical crown in a contest that has been likened to a pop Olympics, complete with triumph, tears and geopolitical rivalries.

Here's a guide to the wonderful world of Eurovision:

Eurovision is an international pop music competition, in which acts from countries across Europe - and a few beyond it - compete in a live televised contest. Each singer or group performs a three-minute song, with the winner decided by votes from national juries and viewers around the world.

Launched in 1956 to test new live-broadcasting technology and foster unity after World War II, Eurovision has become a campy yet heartfelt celebration of diversity, national pride and the joyous power of pop. It has grown from seven countries to almost 40, including non-European nations such as Israel and Australia. Organizers say last year's competition was watched by 163 million people around the world.

Spectacle

Eurovision has become synonymous with elaborate costumes, spectacular staging and songs that range from anthemic to extremely silly. Past winners include songs with titles like "La, La, La" and "Boom Bang-a-Bang," as well as soaring power ballads and slick disco dancefloor-fillers.

Past champions range from Sweden's ABBA - with "Waterloo" in 1974 - to Finnish metalheads Lordi in 2006, Austrian drag performer Conchita Wurst in 2014, Italian rock band Måneskin in 2021 and Ukrainian folk-rap group Kalush Orchestra in 2022.

Traditionally the competition is hosted by the previous year's winner, and last year's victor was nonbinary Swiss singer Nemo with their operatic anthem "The Code." The 2025 contest will be held at the St. Jakobshalle arena in Basel, a largely German-speaking city bordering France and Germany.

Two semifinals, on May 13 and 15, will be followed by a grand Saturday night final on May 17, hosted by Swiss broadcasters Hazel Brugger, Michelle Hunziker and Sandra Studer.

United

Switzerland is the birthplace of Eurovision - it staged the first-ever contest, and the European Broadcasting Union, which runs the show, is based in Geneva. It has won twice before: in 1956 and in 1988, when Canadian chanteuse Celine Dion competed under the Swiss flag.

Eurovision's motto is "united by music," an admirable goal that's not always achieved.

Contest rules ban overtly political lyrics or symbols, but regional rivalries are rife and global tensions often intrude. Russia has been banned since its 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Ukraine won Eurovision that year, but could not host in 2023 because of the ongoing war, so the English city of Liverpool stood in.

Last year's event in the Swedish city of Malmö attracted large pro-Palestinian protests that called for Israel to be dropped from the contest over its conduct of its war against Hamas.

Tensions spilled over into the competition, where Israeli singer Eden Golan was given tight security. Israel was ordered to change the lyrics of its competing song, originally titled "October Rain," an apparent reference to Hamas' cross-border attack on Oct. 7, 2023 that killed some 1,200 Israelis. Renamed "Hurricane," the power ballad came fifth.

Festival famous for celebrity acts highlights local talent

Student voices rock New Orleans music festival



The Eleanor McMain Secondary School Singing Mustangs gospel choir performs at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival in New Orleans, Friday, April 25. (AP)

NEW ORLEANS, April 28, (AP): The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival each spring is known for hosting some of the world's most famous jazz, funk and rock acts. Yet it's also become a showcase for lesser-known talent: local schoolchildren.

Gospel choirs from area high schools took the stage recently at the festival's famed Gospel Tent, continuing a decades-long tradition for Louisiana students.

First up to perform was the Eleanor McMain choir, jolting the audience with a blast of musical joy, from the rollicking call-and-response of "Melodies From Heaven" to an a cappella rendition of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Choir member Chloe Bailey, 18, said the performance is about pride.

"Not only do I get to make myself proud, my parents proud, I get to make the whole world proud and have a look of how beautiful it is to see Black people and Black children thriving and going up higher, because we don't get a lot of opportunities like this," she said.

In a city with a rich music heritage, the festival is a prized opportunity to celebrate arts that teachers say do not receive the attention they once did in schools.

Music education suffered in New Orleans in the 1990s due to funding cuts, said Matthew Sakakeeny, a professor of music at Tulane University. Up until then, majority Black schools typically had at least one full-time music teacher, even when schools were segregated, but dozens of teachers lost their jobs and offerings were "drastically cut back," he said.

Hurricane Katrina was another blow, leading to the city's traditional public schools being replaced with charter schools. Sakakeeny said there's enormous pressure to focus on core academics, rather than arts, as they'll get shut down if their test scores are not good enough.

"It's just ironic that we're the birthplace of jazz, yet middle school students, elementary school students might not even go to a music class," said Emeka Dibia, the choir director McDonogh 35, the first public high school established for Black

students in New Orleans.

Gospel has been an integral part of Jazz Fest since it began in 1970, headlined by gospel legend Mahalia Jackson. Students from McDonogh 35 started performing in the 1970s, and more schools followed, Dibia said. It's now tradition for Jazz Fest to have a day featuring student gospel choirs.

Even the artist featured on this year's official Jazz Fest poster, Tarriona "Tank" Ball of Tank and the Bangas, performed in the Gospel Tent when she was in ninth grade.

Choirs from another historic Black public high school, L.B. Landry, as well as two local Christian schools performed Friday, while McDonogh 35 will perform next week.

McMain soloist Tyree Arso, 18, said it's amazing to think about performing at the same festival as artists like Lil Wayne.

"It makes me recognize the people who have come before me, and it reminds me to try to do my best to honor them," said Arso, who will attend the Boston Conservatory at Berklee next year.

AI and genetics team up to find new ways to kill bacteria

Drugs that aren’t antibiotics can also kill bacteria: study

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

By Mariana Noto Guillen
UMass Chan Medical School

Human history was forever changed with the discovery of antibiotics in 1928. Infectious diseases such as pneumonia, tuberculosis and sepsis were widespread and lethal until antibiotics made them treatable. Surgical procedures that once came with a high risk of infection became safer and more routine. Antibiotics marked a triumphant moment in science that transformed medical practice and saved countless lives.

But antibiotics have an inherent caveat: When overused, bacteria can evolve resistance to these drugs. The World Health Organization estimated that these superbugs caused 1.27 million deaths around the world in 2019 and will likely become an increasing threat to global public health in the coming years.

Recent discoveries are helping scientists face this challenge in innovative ways. Studies have found that nearly a quarter of drugs that aren’t normally prescribed as antibiotics, such as medications used to treat cancer, diabetes and depression, can kill bacteria at doses typically prescribed for people.

Understanding the mechanisms underlying how certain drugs are toxic to bacteria may have far-reaching implications for medicine. If nonantibiotic drugs target bacteria in different ways from standard antibiotics, they could serve as leads in developing new antibiotics. But if nonantibiotics kill bacteria in similar ways to known antibiotics, their prolonged use, such as in the treatment of chronic disease, might inadvertently promote antibiotic resistance.

In a paper published in 2024, my colleagues and I developed a new machine learning method that not only identified how nonantibiotics kill bacteria but can also help find new bacterial targets for antibiotics.

Numerous scientists and physicians around the world are tackling the problem of drug resistance, including me and my colleagues in the Mitchell Lab at UMass Chan Medical School. We use the genetics of bacteria to study which mutations make bacteria more resistant or more sensitive to drugs.

When my team and I learned about the widespread antibacterial activity of non-antibiotics, we were consumed by the challenge it posed: figuring out how these drugs kill bacteria.

Survival

To answer this question, I used a genetic screening technique my colleagues recently developed to study how anticancer drugs target bacteria. This method identifies which specific genes and cellular processes change when bacteria mutate. Monitoring how these changes influence the survival of bacteria allows researchers to infer the mechanisms these drugs use to kill bacteria.

I collected and analyzed almost 2 million instances of toxicity between 200 drugs and thousands of mutant bacteria. Using a machine learning algorithm I developed to deduce similarities between different drugs, I grouped the drugs together in a network based on how they affected the mutant bacteria.

My maps clearly showed that known antibiotics were tightly grouped together by their known classes of killing mechanisms. For example, all antibiotics that target the cell wall - the thick protective layer surrounding bacterial cells - were grouped together and well separated from antibiotics that interfere with bacteria's DNA replication.

Intriguingly, when I added nonantibiotic drugs to my analysis, they formed separate hubs from antibiotics. This indicates that nonantibiotic and antibiotic

drugs have different ways of killing bacterial cells. While these groupings don't reveal how each drug specifically kills antibiotics, they show that those clustered together likely work in similar ways.

The last piece of the puzzle - whether we could find new drug targets in bacteria to kill them - came from the research of my colleague Carmen Li. She grew hundreds of generations of bacteria that were exposed to different nonantibiotic drugs normally prescribed to treat anxiety, parasite infections and cancer. Sequencing the genomes of bacteria that evolved and adapted to the presence of these drugs allowed us to pinpoint the specific bacterial protein that triclabendazole - a drug used to treat parasite infections - targets to kill the bacteria. Importantly, current antibiotics don't typically target this protein.

Additionally, we found that two other nonantibiotics that used a similar mechanism as triclabendazole also target the same protein. This demonstrated the power of my drug similarity maps to identify drugs with similar killing mechanisms, even when that mechanism was yet unknown.

Our findings open multiple opportunities for researchers to study how nonantibiotic drugs work differently from standard antibiotics. Our method of mapping and testing drugs also has the potential to address a critical bottleneck in developing antibiotics.

Searching for new antibiotics typically involves sinking considerable resources into screening thousands of chemicals that kill bacteria and figuring out how they work. Most of these chemicals are found to work similarly to existing antibiotics and are discarded.

Our work shows that combining genetic screening with machine learning can help uncover the chemical needle in the haystack that can kill bacteria in ways researchers haven't used before. There are different ways to kill bacteria we haven't exploited yet, and there are still roads we can take to fight the threat of bacterial infections and antibiotic resistance. (AP)



Technician Heather Browning packages a color sample made of beet powder for a customer at Sensient Technologies Corp., a color additive manufacturing company, in St. Louis., on Wednesday, April 2. (AP)

‘Food dyes poisonous’

Beets and bugs may hold the key to natural food coloring

ST. LOUIS, April 28, (AP): As pressure grows to get artificial colors out of the US food supply, the shift may well start at Abby Tampow's laboratory desk.

On an April afternoon, the scientist hovered over tiny dishes of red dye, each a slightly different ruby hue. Her task? To match the synthetic shade used for years in a commercial bottled raspberry vinaigrette - but by using only natural ingredients.

"With this red, it needs a little more orange," Tampow said, mixing a slurry of purplish black carrot juice with a bit of beta-carotene, an orange-red color made from algae.

Tampow is part of the team at Sensient Technologies Corp., one of the world's largest dyemakers, that is rushing to help the salad dressing manufacturer - along with thousands of other American businesses - meet demands to overhaul colors used to brighten products from cereals to sports drinks.

"Most of our customers have decided that this is finally the time when they're going to make that switch to a natural color," said Dave Gebhardt, Sensient's senior technical director. He joined a recent tour of the Sensient Colors factory in a north St. Louis neighborhood.

Last week, US health officials announced plans to persuade food companies to voluntarily eliminate petroleum-based artificial dyes by the end

of 2026.

Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. called them "poisonous compounds" that endanger children's health and development, citing limited evidence of potential health risks.

The federal push follows a flurry of state laws and a January decision to ban the artificial dye known as Red 3 - found in cakes, candies and some medications - because of cancer risks in lab animals. Social media influencers and ordinary consumers have ramped up calls for natural colors to be removed from foods.

The FDA allows about three dozen color additives, including eight remaining synthetic dyes. But making the change from the petroleum-based dyes to colors derived from vegetables, fruits, flowers and even insects won't be easy, fast or cheap, said Monica Giusti, an Ohio State University food color expert.

"Study after study has shown that if all companies were to remove synthetic colors from their formulations, the supply of the natural alternatives would not be enough," Giusti said. "We are not really ready."

It can take six months to a year to convert a single product from a synthetic dye to a natural one. And it could require three to four years to build up the supply of botanical products necessary for an industrywide shift, Sensient officials said.

Pregnancy, childbirth becoming more dangerous

A pregnant woman in Gaza fears for her baby under Israel blockade

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip, April 28, (AP): Nearly seven months pregnant, Yasmine Siam couldn't sleep, living in a crowded tent camp in Gaza and shaken often by Israeli bombardment. She couldn't find proper food and hadn't eaten meat for more than a month. Weak and losing weight, she saw doctors every day. There was little they could do.

One night this month, pain shot through her. She worried labor was starting but was too terrified of gunfire to leave her tent. Siam waited till daybreak to walk to the nearest mobile clinic. The medics told her to go to Nasser Hospital, miles away.

She had to take a donkey cart, jolted by every bump in the bombed-out roads. Exhausted, the 24-year-old found a wall to lean on for the hours-long wait for a doctor.

An ultrasound showed her baby was fine. Siam had a urinary tract infection and was underweight: 57 kilos (125 pounds), down 6 kilos (13 pounds) from weeks earlier. The doctor prescribed medicine and told her what every other doctor did: Eat better.

Supplies

"Where do I get the food?" Siam said, out of breath as she spoke to The Associated Press on April 9 after returning to her tent outside the southern city of Khan Younis.

"I am not worried about me. I am worried about my son," she said. "It would be terrible if I lose him."

Siam's troubled pregnancy has become the norm in Gaza. Israel's 18-month-old military campaign decimating the territory has made pregnancy and childbirth more dangerous, even fatal, for Palestinian women and their babies.

It has become worse since March 2, when Israel cut off all food, medicine and supplies for Gaza's more than 2 million people.

Meat, fresh fruits and vegetables are practically nonexistent. Clean water is difficult to find. Pregnant women are among the hundreds of thousands who trudge for miles to find new shelters after repeated Israeli evacuation orders. Many live in tents or overcrowded schools amid sewage and garbage.

Up to 20% of Gaza's estimated 55,000 pregnant women are malnour-



Palestinian woman Yasmine Siam, who was pregnant but suffered a miscarriage a few days later, undergoes a prenatal checkup at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip, Wednesday, April 9. (AP)

ished, and half face high-risk pregnancies, according to the United Nations Population Fund, or UNFPA. In February and March, at least 20% of newborns were born prematurely or suffering from complications or malnutrition.

With the population displaced and under bombardment, comprehensive miscarriage and stillbirth figures are impossible to obtain. Records at Khan Younis' Nasser Hospital show miscarriages in January and February were double the same period in 2023.

Dr. Yasmine Shnina, a Doctors Without Borders supervisor of midwives at Nasser Hospital, documented 40 miscarriages a week in recent weeks. She has recorded five women a month dying in childbirth, compared with around two a year before the war.

Impact

"We don't need to wait for future impact. The risks are emerging now," she said.

For Siam and her family, her pregnancy - after a whirlwind, wartime marriage - was a rare joy.

Driven from Gaza City, they had moved three times before settling in the tent city sprawling across the barren coastal region of Muwasi.

Late last summer, they shared a meal with neighbors. A young man from the

tent across the way was smitten.

The next day, Hossam Siam asked for Yasmine's hand in marriage.

She refused initially. "I didn't expect marriage in war," she said. "I wasn't ready to meet someone."

Hossam didn't give up. He took her for a walk by the sea. They told each other about their lives. "I accepted," she said.

On Sept. 15, the groom's family decorated their tent. Her best friends from Gaza City, dispersed around the territory, watched the wedding online.

Within a month, Yasmine Siam was pregnant.

Her family cherished the coming baby. Her mother had grandsons from her two sons but longed for a child from her daughters. Siam's older sister had been trying for 15 years to conceive. Her mother and sister - now back in Gaza City - sent baby essentials.

From the start, Siam struggled to get proper nutrition, relying on canned food.

After a ceasefire began in January, she and Hossam moved to Rafah. On Feb. 28, she had a rare treat: a chicken, shared with her in-laws. It was her last time eating meat.

A week later, Hossam walked for miles searching for chicken. He returned empty-handed.

Early warning

New test spots ‘hidden’ cancer

MADISON, Wis., April 28, (AP): Exact Sciences Corp., a leading provider of cancer screening and diagnostic tests, has announced the launch of Oncodetect - a new test designed to detect molecular residual disease (MRD) across multiple solid tumors. The Oncodetect test provides patients and their healthcare providers with the insights needed to make more informed decisions throughout the treatment process, advancing the field of MRD testing.

The Oncodetect test delivers clear "Detected" or "Not Detected" results, accompanied by quantitative data to help support adjuvant therapy decisions, evaluate treatment response, and monitor cancer recurrence. Notably, patients who test positive for ctDNA with the Oncodetect test during surveillance are 50 times more likely to experience cancer recurrence than those with negative results. Highly sensitive and personalized, the test tracks up to 200 tumor-specific variants and identifies even trace amounts of ctDNA - down to ctDNA molecule in 20,000 ctDNA molecules. This sensitivity enables earlier detection of CRC recurrence compared to imaging alone.

Clarity

"Exact Sciences is transforming cancer care by delivering tests that provide the clarity patients and physicians need to make confident decisions," said Brian Baranick, Executive Vice President and General Manager, Precision Oncology at Exact Sciences. "After surgery and definitive therapy, such as chemotherapy or radiation, the risk for cancer recurrence remains a major concern. Advanced detection tools like the Oncodetect test help bridge that gap by providing clinical insights at critical periods, leading to more informed treatment decisions and personalized care."

Backed by robust clinical validation, including data from the Alpha-Correct study - one of the longest-followed MRD cohorts for CRC recurrence with nearly five years of follow-up - the Oncodetect test enhances understanding of cancer recurrence and helps support timely, personalized treatment decisions. Exact Sciences is actively working with Medicare to secure reimbursement for the test, ensuring broad patient access nationwide.

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Lucknow stays 6th after its fifth loss in 10 games

Pandya powers Bengaluru to top

NEW DELHI, April 28, (AP): Krunal Pandya hit 73 not out off 47 balls as Royal Challengers Bengaluru beat Delhi Capitals by six wickets and moved to the top of the Indian Premier League.

Star batter Virat Kohli scored 51 runs off 47 deliveries as Bengaluru cruised to its seventh win in 10 games.

Pandya and Kohli's 119-run partnership off 83 balls for the fourth wicket helped Bengaluru finish with 165-4 in 18.3 overs in reply to Delhi's 162-8.

Delhi suffered its third defeat in five matches - along with a washout - and slipped to fourth in the points table.

In the other IPL game, Suryakumar Yadav and Ryan Rickelton scored half-centuries as Mumbai Indians beat Lucknow SuperGiants by 54 runs, lifting their side to third.

Rickelton scored 58 off 32 while Yadav made 54 off 28 as Mumbai notched up 215-7 in 20 overs.

In reply, Lucknow was bowled out for 161 in 20 overs with star pacer Jasprit Bumrah picking up 4-22 in four overs as the five-time champions registered their fifth consecutive win of the season.

Lucknow stayed sixth after its fifth loss in 10 games, while Mumbai's rise also pushed down Punjab Kings - 11 points from nine games - to fifth.

Chasing 163, Bengaluru was pegged back early as Delhi skipper Axar Patel struck twice in the third over.

In-form Phil Salt missed out owing to fever and Jacob Bethell (12) opened the innings with Kohli, putting on 20 off 14 balls, before he was caught off Patel.

The left-arm spinner also bowled impact substitute Devdutt Padikkal for a two-ball duck, and then Karun Nair ran out Rajat Patidar (6) with a direct hit.

It left Bengaluru struggling at 26-3 in four overs

before Kohli and Pandya came together to put on their century stand.

Kohli dropped anchor at one end, while Pandya attacked after he settled in, hitting four sixes and five fours.

Pandya scored his maiden half-century for Bengaluru off 38 balls, while Kohli's sixth of the season took him atop the highest runs' tally with 443 runs in 10 games.

Kohli departed in the 18th over. Tim David scored a five-ball 19 not out to take his side home with nine balls to spare.

Earlier, Lokesh Rahul top-scored for Delhi with 41 off 39 balls after the Capitals were 69-2 in nine overs.

Delhi failed to accelerate after Abhishek Porel's initial 28 off 11 balls. Tristan Stubbs later scored 34 off 18 balls to help cross 150, but Delhi finished with an under-par score.



Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Virat Kohli plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Delhi Capitals and Royal Challengers Bengaluru at Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi, India. (AP)

Timbers extend unbeaten streak

Miami, without Messi, loses first MLS game of the season

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., April 28, (AP): Inter Miami lost its first MLS game of the season Sunday with Lionel Messi watching from a private box as FC Dallas scored three unanswered goals in the second half for a 4-3 victory.

Inter Miami squandered a two-goal advantage and slipped to 5-1-3, with 18 points.

Inter Miami lost at Vancouver in the first leg of its CONCACAF Champions Cup semifinal round on Thursday. Messi played all 90 minutes of Miami's 2-0 loss. With the teams playing the second leg in Miami on Wednesday, the 37-year-old Messi playing Sunday seemed unlikely.

Pedrinho scored the go-ahead goal in the 81st minute to cap the comeback for Dallas (4-3-3, 15 points). Logan Farrington retrieved a ball before it crossed the backline and centered to an open Pedrinho, who converted from 15 yards.

Goals from Osaze Urhoghide and Anderson Julio within a five-minute span midway through the second half tied it at 3.

Urhoghide got Dallas within one when he beat Miami goalkeeper Drake Callender with a shot outside the 6-yard box in the 64th minute. Julio scored the equalizer when he retrieved a long ball from Pedrinho, dribbled unmarked inside the large area and beat Callender with an 18-yard conversion.

Down an early goal, Miami responded with two strikes within a 13-minute span in the first half.

The tying score was ruled an own goal when a shot by Fafá Picault bounced off Dallas defender Shaq.

David Da Costa, Santiago Moreno and Kevin Kelsy each scored a goal to help the Portland Timbers beat the LA Galaxy 4-2 and extend the defending MLS Cup champions' season-opening winless streak to 10 games.



Vancouver Whitecaps forward Daniel Rios, left, and Minnesota United defender Michael Boxall, right, chase the ball during the first half of an MLS soccer match in St. Paul, Minn. (AP)

Portland (5-2-3) is unbeaten in seven consecutive games, beginning with a 1-1 tie with the Galaxy on March 16.

The Galaxy (0-7-3), off to the worst start of any champion in MLS history, has a minus-12 goal differential, the worst in the league.

Antony Alves Santos - known simply as "Antony" - had three assists for the Timbers.

Antony chased down a loose ball along the left side of the goal line, flicked a pass over the head of defender Miki Yamane to himself and then side-footed a pass to Da Costa, who slammed home a volley to open the scoring in the 38th minute.

On the counterattack, Antony played a centering pass to Moreno for the finish from near the right corner of the 6-yard box to make it 2-0 in the 53rd and Kelsy bounced a first-touch shot off the crossbar to give the Timbers a 3-0 lead in the 63rd minute.

Team ready to defend title

Liberty opens up camp

NEW YORK, April 28, (AP): Breanna Stewart and her New York Liberty teammates are focused on the present and that includes defending the WNBA championship.

The Liberty opened camp Sunday along with the other 12 teams in the league. Stewart knows exactly how hard it is to repeat as champion, having won two titles in Seattle and failing to repeat each time. The only repeat champion in the past two decades in the WNBA was the Las Vegas Aces in 2022 and 2023.

"The mentality is turning the page," she said. "Knowing what we did last year, we had a lot of time to celebrate it and now it's, building to be better. You know, we talked about, being consistently great night in and night out. And that starts with building great habits in training camp and keeping them sustainable throughout the entire season."

The Liberty have most of the core back from last season's title run that was the first in franchise history. They also added Natasha Cloud and Isabelle Harrison.

"I thought it was a great start. And like, I always said, you can't bring back the same when you win and we have a real good, nice freshness about us," New York coach Sandy Brondello said. "We've got some players that were really going to help us. Obviously, you know, no one greater than Natasha Cloud,"

Brondello wasn't concerned that Stewart is working her way back from offseason meniscus surgery last month. Stewart took part in the early part of practice, Sunday and said she's "feeling great." She will integrate more fully into live practice next week.

Stewart said she felt she did something to it in Game 5 of the WNBA Finals last year and waited until after the inaugural season of Unrivaled was over to take care of it.

"I just needed to kind of clean up things in there and clean up the meniscus," she said. "And, it was just a little bit uncomfortable to be dealing with. And I want to when I'm on the floor, I want to be playing and, free flowing and not really thinking about other things."

While Stewart will be back before the regular season begins, the Liberty are going to be missing Betnijah Laney-Hamilton for a few months as she recovers from her own knee injury.

"We're definitely gonna miss her a lot this season," Stewart said. "I think, you know, with her being out, it gives people opportunities. You know, Leonie (Fiebig) will have a bigger role, Marina (Johannes) coming here. ...It's just going to be like next woman up mentality and knowing that they're not going to take her place. But they're going to be the best version of themselves."



Mao Saigo of Japan holds the trophy after a playoff round of the Chevron Championship LPGA golf tournament in The Woodlands, Texas. (AP)

Novak and Griffin team to take Zurich Classic

THE WOODLANDS, Texas, April 28, (AP): Mao Saigo of Japan won the Chevron Championship on Sunday for her first major title, making a 3-foot birdie putt on the first hole of a five-way playoff.

Saigo birdied the par-5 18th in regulation for a 2-under 74, leaving her tied with Hyo Joo Kim, Ruoning Yin, Ariya Jutanugarn and Lindy Duncan. They finished at 7-under 281 at The Club at Carlton Woods.

Saigo won on the 18th in the playoff after Yin and Jutanugarn had birdie tries lip out. Jutanugarn bogeyed the 18th in regulation after stubbing her third shot only inches.

Saigo won for the first time on the LPGA Tour. She was the tour's rookie of the year last season. The 23-year-old player is the first Japanese winner in the event and the fifth major champion. She has six victories on the Japanese tour, five in 2022.

Winners had been jumping into Poppie's Pond off the 18th green at Mission Hills since 1988, and Saigo became the second to do it in Texas by leaping into the brown-tinged water. She shrieked and smiled as she went in holding hands with two members of her team.

Saigo took home \$1.2 million from

the \$8 million purse.

In Avondale, Louisiana, Andrew Novak and Ben Griffin shot a 1-under 71 in alternate-shot play to become first-time PGA Tour winners - by one stroke - at the Zurich Classic.

They finished at 28-under 260 at the Pete Dye-designed TPC Louisiana and Novak finally broke through after a pair of top-three finishes this month - the last a playoff loss to Justin Thomas a week ago at the RBC Heritage.

Play was delayed by weather for just over 90 minutes with Novak on Griffin on the eighth hole.

Masters champion Rory McIlroy

and fellow Irishman Shane Lowry, the defending champions, were in contention through 12 holes, but fell to 12th - six shots behind - with three late bogeys.

Danish identical twins Nicolai and Rasmus Hojgaard narrowly missed out on a first PGA Tour win, finishing second after a 68.

Joaquin Niemann won LIV Golf Mexico City for his third victory in six events this season, closing with a 6-under 65 for a three-stroke margin over Bryson DeChambeau and Lucas Herbert.

Niemann finished at 16-under 197



Andrew Novak hits off the 17th tee during the final round of the PGA Zurich Classic golf tournament at TPC Louisiana in Avondale, La. (AP)

Cindric gives Team Penske its first win of NASCAR season with victory at unusually calm Talladega

TALLADEGA, Alabama, April 28, (AP): Austin Cindric celebrated his first win of the season by wearing Talladega's Superspeedway traditional victory wreath all around the track.

A wreath like he just won the Indianapolis 500.

He thought so, too.

"Feels like I just won the Indy 500," he said of Sunday's NASCAR race. "I'm trying to walk on the plane with this."

Cindric wasn't even concerned how such a gesture might be received by Team Penske teammate Joey Logano, who raged on his radio after the second stage when Cindric didn't push him and it allowed Bubba Wallace in a Toyota to win the segment and its valuable

bonus points.

"Way to go Austin," seethed Logano, who used multiple expletives in his anger over his Penske radio. "You just gave it to him. Gave a Toyota a stage win. Nice job. Way to go ... put that in the book."

Cindric was unconcerned by the idea Logano might take issue with the wreath on the Penske plane.

"I think that would be very immature," Cindric said. "I don't see him doing that. We'll see."

It was a celebratory day for Cindric, who gave Team Penske its first NASCAR victory of the season by holding off a huge pack of challengers over the closing lap in a rare drama-free day

at Talladega Superspeedway.

"Rock on, guys," Cindric said over his radio. "Rock and roll. Let's go!"

Ford drivers went 1-2, with Ryan Preece finishing second. But Preece and Logano were disqualified following postrace inspections because of spoiler infractions. Logano had crossed the finish line in fifth.

After the DQ's, Kyle Larson moved up to second and William Byron third for Hendrick Motorsports. The two Chevrolet drivers pushed Cindric and Preece from the second row rather than pull out of line on the final lap and make a third lane in an attempt to win.

It was Larson's best ca-

reer finish at Talladega, where drafting and pack racing is required and neither suits his style. He said he wanted to make a move to try to take the win from Cindric but there was never any room.

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The Embassy of India, Kuwait invites bids from interested companies for the supply, installation, and commissioning of a CCTV camera system at its premises, along with AMC for 5 years.

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Bids must be submitted at the Embassy on or before **26th May 2025 [Monday]**. A pre-bid meeting will be held at 1430 hours on **08th May 2025 [Thursday]** at the Embassy.

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A grand showcase of talent, teamwork & sportsmanship

Red Raptors dominate as IDAK TriSport Indoor Championship concludes



Participants of the IDAK TriSport Indoor Championship pose for a group photo.



A winner receives a trophy.



Carrom competition in progress.

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The vibrant spirit of camaraderie and competition came alive at PlayPark Lounge, Argan Al Bida’a, Salmiya, as IDAK successfully hosted the much-anticipated IDAK-KDD TriSport Indoor Championship. The event was a resounding success, blending enthusiasm, energy, and healthy competition across three exciting indoor sports namely, Table Tennis, Pool, and Carroms.

Organized by the dynamic IDAK Sports Committee comprising Dr. Eldho George (Chair), Dr. Renjit George (Co-chair), Dr. Anjana Nair, Dr. Abraham Thomas, Dr.

Varsha Manmohan, and Dr. Sharon Thomas, the championship witnessed three spirited teams, the Green Dragons, Red Raptors, and Blue Phoenixes, battling it out for top honors.

The event was ceremoniously flagged off by IDAK President Dr. George P. Alex, along with Mr. Anand, representing title sponsor KDD, as the Chief Guest. Also in attendance was Mr. Srengar, representing Al Mulla Exchange, the official Remittance Partner, further adding prestige to the occasion.

After an action-packed day marked by

thrilling matches and remarkable sportsmanship, the Red Raptors emerged as the Overall Champions, showcasing their dominance across all three sports.

The Green Dragons and Blue Phoenixes finished as joint runners-up, reflecting the close competition and excellent performances across the board.

Individual event results were as follows:

Table Tennis

- Champions: Red Raptors
- Runners-up: Green Dragons

Pool

- Champions: Red Raptors
- Runners-up: Blue Phoenixes

Carroms

- Champions: Red Raptors
- Runners-up (Tie): Green Dragons & Blue Phoenixes

Best Player Awards:

- Pool: Dr. Jubin
- Carroms (Women): Dr. Ranjitha
- Carroms (Men): Dr. Manoj
- Table Tennis (Women): Dr. Sabina
- Table Tennis (Men): Dr. Jacob

Alongwith the Sports committee, Dr. Rahul, Dr. Rupesh, Dr. Altaf, Dr. Reeby, Dr. Faraaz, and Dr. Sudhin extended crucial support and help in refereeing, thus ensuring a smooth and fair competition.

Dr. Santosh and Dr. Jijan captured the energy, emotion, and unforgettable moments of the day with their stellar photography.

All in all, the IDAK-KDD TriSport Indoor Championship 2025 was more than just a sporting event, it was a celebration of unity, enthusiasm, and the indomitable spirit of the IDAK family.

Italian remains alarmingly vulnerable on set pieces

Donnarumma’s weakness under high ball could be exploited by Arsenal

PARIS, April 28, (AP): Gianluigi Donnarumma was hailed as the world’s best goalkeeper by Paris Saint-Germain coach Luis Enrique after his saves helped the French club reach the Champions League semifinal against Arsenal.

However, for all of his shot-stopping ability, Donnarumma remains alarmingly vulnerable on set pieces and corners - areas which just happen to be Arsenal’s major stronghold.

The sides meet on Tuesday in London in the first leg of their semifinal, where Donnarumma will be in the spotlight.

His blunders cost PSG when it lost 2-0 at Arsenal early into the league phase.

Two weeks ago, the 26-year-old Italian made great saves with his team under pressure against Aston Villa in the quarterfinal return leg. PSG emerged 5-4 winners on aggregate thanks in large part to their goalkeeper.

Donnarumma has proved to be outstanding on his line thanks to remarkable speed and agility. He starred in a pen-

alty shootout when Italy won the European Championship in 2021 and did so again when PSG eliminated Liverpool on penalties in the last 16.

It is a far different story on set pieces.

Donnarumma’s reluctance to come for corners and crosses dates back to last season’s competition. It could become a serious problem considering Arsenal is the best side in Europe’s top five leagues from set pieces and especially strong on corners.

Set-piece coach Nicolas Jover has been Arsenal’s mastermind on dead-ball situations. Jover also worked with Arsenal coach Mikel Arteta when both were at Manchester City.

Despite being 1.96 meters tall and stockily built, Donnarumma does not impose himself under the high ball. Accurately flighted balls sent toward the penalty spot often cause panic in PSG’s defense, creating a kind of no man’s land between the goalie and his defenders.

PSG lost 3-1 at home to Nice on Friday for its first defeat in Ligue 1, with two of the goals coming from crosses. Sports daily L’Equipe gave Donnarumma a 3-out-of-10 rating for his performance.

Donnarumma’s passing from the back is also erratic, leading to some blunders in Ligue 1 and almost causing a farcical-looking goal against Brest in their Champions League playoff match in February.

Receiving a routine pass back from captain Marquinhos, he somehow kicked the ball straight at the head of striker Ludovic Ajorque a few meters away and the ball rolled narrowly wide of the goal.

Donnarumma’s hesitancy under the high ball was exposed in October’s defeat at Arsenal.

He was beaten by a dipping cross as Kai Havertz nodded in Arsenal’s first goal.

Last season in the Champions League quarterfinal first leg

against Barcelona, Donnarumma failed to claim a corner and defender Andreas Christensen headed in the winner.

Donnarumma stood rooted to his line and, earlier in that match, he had struggled with Lamine Yamal’s cross when Raphinha put Barcelona ahead.

It was a repeat scenario in the semifinal return leg against Borussia Dortmund when central defender Mats Hummels rose unchallenged to head in Julian Brandt’s corner.

Again, Donnarumma seemed reluctant to commit himself and there appeared little communication between him and Marquinhos.

Another key area in the game could be the contest on the wings.

Left winger Gabriel Martinelli and right winger Bukayo Saka tormented Real Madrid in the quarterfinal return leg, with both scoring as Arsenal won 2-1 to advance 5-1 on aggregate.

McTominay stars, Napoli climbs to Serie A summit

Inter loses to Roma for third consecutive defeat

ROME, April 28, (AP): There are still streamers and banners hanging over the city’s streets and piazzas celebrating Napoli’s Serie A title two seasons ago.

Now there might be another championship to celebrate.

Scott McTominay scored two first-half goals and Napoli beat Torino 2-0 to move three points clear of Inter Milan with four rounds remaining in the Italian league.

Inter lost 1-0 at home to Roma earlier for its third consecutive defeat. Despite losing Victor Osimhen in September and Khvicha Kvaratskhelia in January, Napoli is in position to claim its second title in three seasons. That’s a shorter span than the two championships in four sea-

sons with Diego Maradona in 1987 and 1990.

McTominay has scored five goals in three matches.

“Obviously we’re now leading the race. But for us it’s keep calm, keep everything relaxed and go game by game, because this game’s not important unless we win the next one and the next one after that,” McTominay said. “So for us it’s calm and see where that gets us.”

The Scotland international put Napoli ahead seven minutes in at the Stadio Diego Armando Maradona after redirecting a pass from Andre-Frank Anguissa. Then he doubled the advantage shortly before half-time with a similar goal, redirecting a cross amid four defenders.

With 11 league goals, McTominay set the record for a Scottish player in Serie A, overtaking Denis Law, who had 10 with Torino in 1961-62.

Philip Billing nearly made it 3-0 for Napoli when his header hit the crossbar in the second half.

Napoli hadn’t had sole possession of the lead since February.

Marcus Thuram has missed three matches and Inter has lost all three without scoring a single goal.

Roma’s attacking midfielder Matias Soule scored midway through the first half in Milan by redirecting a deflection as the Giallorossi produced one chance after another.

For Inter, the defeat followed a 1-0 loss at Bologna in the league a week ago and a 3-0 midweek loss to AC Milan in an Italian Cup semifinal derby.

“These are three tough defeats and we’re not used to that,” Inter coach Simone Inzaghi said.

Thuram, who has been out with a left thigh issue, could return for the first leg of the Champions League semifinals at Barcelona on Wednesday. The

France forward has scored 14 goals and provided seven assists across all competitions for Inter this season.

Without Thuram, Lautaro Martinez has appeared fatigued attempting to carry Inter’s attack. And Marko Arnautovic, Thuram’s replacement, has been ineffective.

Roma is sixth, level on points with fifth-placed Bologna, and two points behind fourth-placed Juventus, which beat Monza 2-0.

Roma’s unbeaten run reached 18 matches, stretching back to December. It was the final game at the San Siro for Giallorossi coach Claudio Ranieri, who plans to retire at the end of the season.

“I’ve already handed in my coaching license,” Ranieri said with a smile.

Third-placed Atalanta was held 1-1 by relegation-threatened Lecce in a match that was postponed from Friday due to the death of Lecce’s physical therapist.

Jesper Karlsson put Lecce ahead in the first half with a penalty and Mateo Retegui equalized in the second half with a penalty for his league-leading 24th goal. Retegui matched the Atalanta record established by Filippo Inzaghi, who also scored 24 goals in 1996-97.

Christian Pulisic scored for the first time in more than a month and AC Milan won 2-0 at relegation-threatened Venezia.

It was another solid performance for the Rossoneri after the Cup win over Inter. Still, Milan remained in ninth place. Pulisic’s 10th league goal of the season came five minutes in when Venezia gifted the ball to Milan and Youssouf Fofana set up the United States international in the middle of the area.

Pulisic’s previous goal came in a 2-1 win over Como on March 15.

Milan produced several more chances but couldn’t quite find the target until Santiago Gimenez lobbed over the goalkeeper to finish off a counterattack in second-half stoppage time.

Rüdiger rebuked by Völler over ice incident in Copa

BERLIN, April 28, (AP): Antonio Rüdiger needs to show “class” and respect for others, German national team sporting director Rudi Völler has said, after the defender appeared to throw ice toward the referee during Real Madrid’s Copa del Rey loss to Barcelona.

Rüdiger shouted at the referee and seemed to throw a small bag of ice during extra time in Madrid’s 3-2 loss to Barcelona on Saturday.

Rüdiger has since apologized for his behavior but the incident prompted former Germany player Dietmar Hamann to call Sunday for the defender to be left out of Germany’s squad for the Nations League final four in June.

“You can’t do that. And especially not as a player for the German national team. He needs to change that and he knows that himself, his public reaction shows that,” Völler told the dpa news agency in comments published Monday. “Toni is a classy player, but as a player for the German national team he also needs to display class in his behavior. He rightly demands respect for himself (and) he needs to show this same respect to others without exception.”

Völler’s comments did not address whether Rüdiger’s conduct could have any impact on national team selection. He added he didn’t want Rüdiger to tone down his emotional approach to the game.



Inter Milan’s Yann Bisseck, top, heads the ball over Roma’s Eldor Shomurodov during the Serie A soccer match between Inter Milan and Roma at the San Siro Stadium in Milan, Italy. (AP)

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NEWS



Indiana Pacers' Tyrese Haliburton reacts to a teammate's 3-point basket against the Milwaukee Bucks during the second half of Game 4 of a first-round NBA basketball playoff series in Milwaukee. (AP)

Sports

Timberwolves push Lakers to brink of elimination

Knicks beat Pistons as Game 4 ends with missed foul call

MINNEAPOLIS, April 28, (AP): Jaden McDaniels converted a three-point play with 39.5 seconds left for the lead and stole the ensuing inbound pass from LeBron James, leading a rally by the Minnesota Timberwolves for a 116-113 win over the Los Angeles Lakers that put them up 3-1 in the first-round series on Sunday.

Anthony Edwards, who had 43 points to lead Minnesota in scoring for the first time in this edition of the NBA playoffs, drew a foul on James during a drive to the lane with 10 seconds left and hit both free throws.

With Luka Doncic and James well-defended along the arc, the ball went to Austin Reaves in the corner for the tying attempt that rimmed out and was rebounded by McDaniels at the buzzer.

Julius Randle added 25 points and McDaniels had 16 points and 11 rebounds for the Timberwolves, who trailed by 12 points late in the third quarter.

Doncic bounced back from a bad stomach bug with 38 points on 13-for-28 shooting, but the Lakers were headed home for a win-or-be-eliminated Game 5 on Wednesday.

Knicks 94, Pistons 93

In Detroit, Karl-Anthony Towns made a go-ahead 3-pointer with 46.6 seconds left and finished with 27 points, Jalen Brunson had 32 points and 11 assists and New York beat Detroit to take a 3-1 lead in its first-round playoff series.



Minnesota Timberwolves guard Anthony Edwards (5) goes up to shoot as Los Angeles Lakers forward Dorian Finney-Smith, center left, defends during the second half of Game 4 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series in Minneapolis. (AP)

Detroit's Cade Cunningham had 25 points, 10 assists and 10 rebounds for his first playoff triple-double but

missed two shots and turned the ball over in the final 1:07. Tim Hardaway Jr. shot a 3-pointer

just before the buzzer and drew some light contact from New York's Josh Hart that wasn't called a foul at the

end of a physical game with few whistles from the officials. Game 5 is Tuesday night in New

York.

The Pistons have lost nine straight home playoff games since 2008, equaling an NBA record set by Philadelphia from 1968 to 1971.

Celtics 107, Magic 98

In Orlando, Jayson Tatum had 37 points and 14 rebounds, Jaylen Brown added 21 points and 11 rebounds and Boston took a 3-1 lead in its NBA playoff series with a win over Orlando.

Kristaps Porzingis scored 19 points, including a dunk of his own missed layup that put Boston ahead for keeps with 3:58 left. Derrick White finished with 18 points, seven rebounds and seven assists.

Paolo Banchero led Orlando with 31 points.

Game 5 of the best-of-7 first-round series will be played Tuesday night in Boston.

Franz Wagner had 24 points and seven assists for Orlando. Corey Joseph added 12 points, the highest scoring output for a Magic guard in the series.

The 7-foot-3 Porzingis, who played only 22 minutes due to foul trouble, helped Boston overcome shooting 9 for 31 from 3-point range with dominant inside play in the first half.

The Magic shot 8 for 29 from behind the arc.

Boston guard Jrue Holiday sat out a second straight game with a strained right hamstring.

A dunk by Porzingis started an 18-3 run by Boston midway through the first half. A 3-pointer by Porzingis gave the Celtics a nine-point lead, the largest of the game, with 7:45 left in the second quarter.

The Magic never led after that, but a dunk by Wendell Carter Jr. tied the game at 91 with 4:18 remaining.

Youth titles decided

Kuwait Club & Kazma set for volleyball league showdown

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Premier Volleyball League concludes today with a high-stakes clash between Kuwait Club and Kazma at 6:00 pm at the Volleyball Association Hall, located in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex in Sabah Al-Salem.

Heading into the final, Kuwait Club leads the Premier League standings with 10 points, closely followed by Kazma with 9 points. Burgan sits in third with 8 points, Al-Arabi follows with 6 points, Qadsia holds 3 points, and Al-Shabab remains at the bottom with no points.

Meanwhile, in the First Division, two matches are scheduled: Al-Tadamon will face Yarmouk, while Al-Sahel takes on Al-Sulaibikhat.

Kuwait Club, Kazma, Burgan, and Al-Arabi have already secured their spots in the Premier Volleyball Championship semifinals. In Friday's semifinals, Kuwait Club will meet Al-Arabi, and Kazma will face Burgan.

The semifinals will be played in a best-of-three playoff format. The winners of each series will advance to the final, scheduled for May 9. In case of a tie, an additional playoff match will be organized. The championship final is set for May 12.

In youth competition, Qadsia captured the Under-14 League title with a



Winning team presented with the trophy.

thrilling 3-2 victory over Kuwait in the final. Al-Arabi secured second place, while Kazma finished third.

The Under-14 League Cup was presented to Qadsia by Assistant Secretary of the Volleyball Association Nayef Al-Khamili, Board Member Nayef Al-Failakawi, Competitions Committee Rapporteur Aref Al-Subaihi, and Qadsia Club Board Member Dr. Hussein Al-Qabandi.

In women's volleyball, Al Fatat Club

clinched the Under-18 General League title after defeating Salwa Al Sabah Club 3-2 in a tightly contested final. Salwa Al Sabah finished second, while Al Oyoum Girls Club secured third place.

The top three teams were crowned by Volleyball Federation President Dr. Jaber Al Marri, Women's Committee President Dr. Istiqlal Al Raqam, Salwa Al Sabah Club Vice President Naila Al Ali, and Al Fatat Club Secretary Hamida Al Yousfi.

Kuwait shines at Bahrain Motorcycle Championship

MANAMA, April 28, (KUNA): Sheikh Sabah Dawood Al-Sabah, Director of the Kuwait International Motorsports Club Team, praised his team's impressive performance in the Bahrain Motorcycle Championship for the 2024-2025 season.

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Sabah commended the team's exceptional skills and strong determination, which led them to secure top positions across all seven rounds of the championship, which began in October 2024 and concluded with the final round on April 25, 2025.

Al-Sabah specifically highlighted the outstanding performance of team leader Ali Bushehri, who secured first place in the 600cc category, while Mohammed Al-Zaidan claimed second place in the same category.

Additionally, Saud Al-Torah triumphed in the 1000cc category, further solidifying the team's dominance



The heroes of Kuwait International Motorsports Club Team.

in the competition. The team also honored Jassim Zaman for his achievements in the Outlaw 6 Drag Racing category.

Taijul takes 5 wickets to trigger Zimbabwe collapse

CHATTOGRAM, Bangladesh, April 28, (AP) :Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam claimed 5-60 to put Bangladesh in control against Zimbabwe on the first day of the second test Monday.

Sean Williams and Nick Welch batted resolutely as Zimbabwe looked to be on top of Bangladesh for much of the day until Taijul triggered a sensational collapse that saw the visitors lose seven wickets for 55 runs.

Taijul eventually finished with his 16th five-for in test cricket as Zimbabwe reached 227-9 at stumps.

Sean Williams made a team-high 67 while Welch hit 54 for his second fifty in as many tests. They put on 90 runs for the third wicket to help Zimbabwe dominate the

first two sessions.

Opens Brian Bennett and Ben Curran were solid against the pacers after their captain Craig Ervine chose to bat first. They put on 41 runs before pacer Tanzim Hasan gave Bangladesh a breakthrough in the 11th over by dismissing Bennett for 21 for his debut wicket.

Bennet, who scored half-centuries in both innings of the first test, edged a three-quarter length delivery that carried extra bounce to baffle him.

Zimbabwe's batters then struggled against spin, with the exception of Welch, who hit both Mehidy Hasan and Taijul Islam for sixes. But Taijul's relentlessness got him a wicket when he turned one past sharply to get the better of Curran for 21.

Gauff and Andreeva advance

Tennis matches at Madrid Open suspended due to major power outage

MADRID, April 28, (AP): Play at the Madrid Open tennis tournament was suspended Monday due to a major power outage reported in Spain and Portugal.

The ATP Tour said that two singles matches and one doubles match were underway when power went out at 12:34 p.m. local time (1034 GMT).

"The cut is preventing the use of electronic line calling systems and also left a spider cam dangling over the court inside Manolo Santana Stadium," the ATP added.

Grigor Dimitrov was leading Jacob Fearnley 6-4, 5-4 inside the main stadium when play was stopped. Also, Matteo Arnaldi was leading Damir Dzumhur 6-3, 3-2 when play was suspended. That match later continued - apparently with manual line calling - and Arnaldi won 6-3, 6-4.

Some players were practicing despite the outage, and a few people remained in the stands to watch.

The outage knocked out subway networks, phone lines, traffic lights and ATM machines.

Spanish power distributor Red Eléctrica said restoring power to large parts of the country after the outage could take up to 10 hours.

The company declined to speculate on the causes of the blackout. Two fourth-round women's matches were completed shortly before the blackout.

Coco Gauff beat Belinda Bencic 6-4, 6-2, and Mirra Andreeva beat Yuliia Starodubtseva 6-1, 6-4.

Gauff posted an Instagram story showing only an emergency light working in an otherwise dark locker room.

"No power where the showers are. So I'm about to take a shower and I'll let you all know how it goes," the American said.

Second-ranked Iga Swiatek "sat in the darkened players' lounge, talking with members of her team," ahead of her match against Diana Schneider, the WTA Tour said.

Top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka rallied to defeat former doubles partner Elise



Spectators roam inside the Madrid Open tennis tournament venue during a general blackout in Madrid. (AP)

Mertens in three sets and advance to the last 16.

Top-seeded Alexander Zverev scraped past Alejandro Davidovich Fokina after requiring tiebreakers in the final two sets of their match, while defending men's

champion Andrey Rublev lost in three sets to Alexander Bublik.

Sabalenka got off to a poor start against the 26th-ranked Mertens, but picked up the pace to comfortably close out the match at the Caja Magica center court.

The two-time champion in Madrid won 3-6, 6-2, 6-1 to keep alive her hopes of reaching the final for the third straight time. Sabalenka won the title in the Spanish capital in 2021 and 2023, and finished runner-up to Iga Swiatek last year.

"I think it's one of those days where I didn't feel my best and I got super emotional in that beginning of the first set and put myself in a tough situation," Sabalenka said. "I'm really happy that I was able to bring such a high level in the second and the third set, especially against someone like Elise, if you give her any chance, she's going to be there fighting and putting you under pressure, so really happy with the way I turned around this game."

It was Sabalenka's ninth consecutive victory over Mertens, her doubles partner while winning the 2019 U.S. Open and 2021 Australian Open. Sabalenka had won 14 consecutive sets against the Belgian.

"She's such a great player, it doesn't matter the score between us, it's always a great battle," Sabalenka said.

Sabalenka will next face either Rebeka Masarova or Peyton Stearns.

Zverev struggled early but recovered to fend off a gritty performance by local favorite Davidovich Fokina in the third round. The second-ranked German needed tiebreakers to outlast the Spaniard 2-6, 7-6 (3), 7-6 (0).

Zverev, seeking his third Madrid Open title, has won seven matches in a row and is coming off a title-run in Munich.

"The first set wasn't my best tennis but it is sport and it can change quickly," Zverev said. "I was down a set and a break and I had to fight. I am very happy with the win. Alejandro is playing unbelievable tennis, the best of his life, so I am happy to be through."