



Pages 14-16



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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

From the Nakba to the present ... Who served Israel?

DO Arabs genuinely want to liberate Palestine? Have they been striving to achieve this goal for 80 years, or has the Palestinian cause merely been used as a justification for actions, crimes, coups, and revolutions by Arabs to change the previously-stable regimes?

This question calls for a realistic analysis to avoid injustice to anyone.

Since the beginning of the project to establish the Israeli state, many movements, organizations, and entities emerged to raise the slogan of "liberation of Palestine", as a justification for their existence, while they were actually working in the opposite direction.

It began with Haj Amin al-Husseini's movement, which aligned itself with Hitler, followed by a series of ideological factions, including communist parties supported by the former Soviet Union. This period also saw nationalist movements, who hid behind the banner of "Arab unity," along with groups like the Muslim Brotherhood, the Dawa Party, and other sectarian organizations.

Throughout eight decades, these groups have done everything to deepen Arab divisions and attempt to overthrow ruling regimes, while the original slogan faded into obscurity. This reflected the principle established by Jamal Abdel Nasser following his 1952 coup: "The road to Palestine passes through the overthrow of reactionary regimes." Nasser's actions led to the separation of Sudan from Egypt, despite Sudan having been under stable governance with growth rates averaging around 5.5 percent. Just ten years later, Egypt plunged into an economic crisis, largely due to the failed decision to nationalize the Suez Canal Company.

Military cliques in Iraq, Syria, Sudan, followed by Libya, Yemen, and Algeria, adopted a similar path. They engaged in failed wars, beginning with the Nakba, followed by the Naksa*, and the War of Attrition.

Nasser rejected the Rogers Initiative, and prior to that, the Arab states refused to acknowledge the UN resolution for the partition of Palestine.

Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba was accused of treason when he called on the Arab nations to recognize and reconcile with Israel in 1963. During that time, the Shuqairi-Nasser slogan "Let's throw the Jews into the sea" emerged.

Each time, Arab governments, parties, and organizations wasted one opportunity after another. They created fronts of steadfastness and defiance that ultimately failed. Some Arabs relied on the Soviet Union, despite the fact that it was the first to recognize Israel just seven minutes after its declaration by the United Nations.

The Palestine liberation project left Syria mired in internal crises since 1963, severely hampering its economy and development.

Iraq descended into a bloodbath, transforming into a vast prison, a situation that persisted until the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Yemen was ravaged by division, culminating in the rise of Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, whose actions sparked conflicts that eventually led to international intervention. The Houthis' obstruction of the global trade route in the Bab al-Mandab Strait triggered attacks on Yemen by foreign powers.

That is why when Benjamin Netanyahu claimed to have "begun to change the Middle East," he was capitalizing on the Arab world's divisions and their preoccupation with sub-issues, while neglecting their shared existence and future.

Continued on Page 5

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Amir to attend KU honors ceremony

KUWAIT CITY, April 29, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will patronize and attend the honors ceremony of excelling students at Kuwait University for the 2021-22 and 2022-

23 semesters. The ceremony will be held on Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. local-time in Abdullah Al-Salem University City's Al-Dana Theater.



Crown Prince Diwan photo

HH The Crown Prince receives Peru's Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Crown Prince receives letter from Peru president addressed to Amir

KUWAIT CITY, April 29, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received a letter Tuesday morning at Bayan Palace addressed to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from President Dina Boluarte of Peru.

The letter discussed bilateral relations between the two countries and ways to strengthen cooperation in various fields, as well as the latest regional and international developments.

The letter was delivered by Peru's Minister of Foreign Affairs Elmer Schialer Salcedo.

The meeting was attended by Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya, His Highness the Crown Prince's Office Director Retired Lt. General Jamal Al-Thayab, His Highness the Crown Prince's Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs Mazen Al-Issa, and Assistant Foreign Minister for American Affairs Minister Plenipotentiary Nawaf Al-Ahmad.

Kuwait eases set up for SMEs

One HQ, five licenses

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel issued a ministerial decision on Monday to allow any natural or legal person who own more than 50 percent of a subsidiary or branch company to use a unified headquarters and a single automated civil number for up to five licenses for those subsidiaries or branches, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), the Ministry of Commerce and Industry explained that the decision aims to reduce operational costs for investors, particular-

ly those operating small and medium enterprises (SMEs), by eliminating the need to rent multiple office spaces. This move is part of an effort to improve Kuwait's business environment.

The request to unify the headquarters must be submitted via the ministry's single window, along with a rental contract and a payment receipt in the name of the main natural or legal person, as stipulated in Article 2 of the decision.

Companies and individuals covered

Continued on Page 5

'Kuwait pillar of diplomacy'

Arab League's chief sounds alarm on Gaza, global shifts

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Secretary General of the Arab League Ahmed Aboul Gheit has affirmed that the stability of the Arab region is the priority of the league, taking into consideration the rapid global changes and profound geopolitical transformations.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a lecture entitled, "Challenges to Stability in the Arab Region in a Changing World," Aboul Gheit pointed out that the region is facing a series of complex challenges that necessitate vigilance, solidarity and concerted action by the governments and peoples of member-states.

He asserted that despite these challenges, the Arabian Gulf region serves as an example of stability due to the balanced policies and strategic vision



Photo by Rezk Tawfiq Secretary General of the Arab League Ahmed Aboul Gheit addressing the attendees.

adopted by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states in the management of

Continued on Page 5

NewsWatch

DAMASCUS: Clashes broke out in a suburb of the Syrian capital early Tuesday between local gunmen belonging to the minority Druze sect and pro-government fighters, leaving at least 10 people dead, a war monitor and an activist group said.

The fighting in the southern Damascus suburb of Jaramana began after an audio clip circulated on social media of a man criticizing Islam's Prophet Muhammad. (AP)

TEHRAN: Two people were killed and two others injured in an explosion that occurred in a warehouse in central Isfahan province, said a media source on Tuesday. (KUNA)

Kuwait sets June 5-9 Eid Al-Adha holiday

Crypto mining crackdown wins Cabinet praise

KUWAIT CITY, April 29, (KUNA): Kuwait has decided to suspend work across all state bodies and public institutions from June 5-9 to mark the Islamic Eid Al-Adha holiday, the Cabinet said on Tuesday.

Government employees will report back to work on Tuesday, June 10, while workplaces of "unconventional" nature will determine their holidays as they see fit, the Cabinet agreed amid its weekly session presided over by Acting Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad

Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

The Cabinet then proceeded to look into a letter addressed to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, in which the latter expressed his gratitude for the hospitality shown to him during his official state visit to Kuwait earlier this month.

In his letter, the Egyptian President expected the visit to be a catalyst towards more progress in bilateral relations, saying that it would bear fruit by paving the way for greater cooperation between Kuwait and Cairo.

Continued on Page 5

Jan-Feb 2025 subsidy total hits KD 58 mln, says report

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The monthly report of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry revealed that subsidies disbursed in January and February totaled KD 58 million - KD 32 million in January and KD 26 million in February.

Around KD 35 million of the abovementioned amount was allocated for construction materials, constituting 60 percent of the total subsidy value.

Basic commodities distributed through the ration card totaled KD 20 million - KD 12 million in January and KD 8 million in February or 34.5 percent of the total. Milk and baby food constituted 4.5 percent of the total subsidy, amounting to KD 2.584 million.

The report confirmed the increase in patent applications, grants and renewals in February; while the number of patent examination transactions decreased compared to January.

Continued on Page 5

Day by Day

GOVERNMENT institutions, mosques, and many other facilities have air conditioning running around the clock, and Kuwait can be seen brightly lit throughout the night from above, yet the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy complains of shortages.

If this is the situation, then why not treat electricity as a commercial enterprise? You will then find it will not be interrupted. This is exactly how it works in cities like Riyadh, Dubai, London, and others.

We are in an era of legal reform, yet many outdated laws remain merely to waste public funds, benefit the wealthy, and burden the less fortunate. These laws are now obsolete.

Hence, it is time to focus on what you already have, and solve the electricity crisis.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

India honors Sheikhha Ali Al-Jaber with Padma Shri award

NEW DELHI, April 29, (KUNA):

The Indian government held a ceremony on Monday to honor Sheikhha Ali Al-Jaber Al-Sabah with the Padma Shri Award for her contributions to promoting yoga in Kuwait, the Gulf region, and the Arab world.

Kuwait Ambassador to India Meshal Mustafa Al-Shamali told KUNA that this occasion, in which the Indian government honors Sheikhha Ali Al-Jaber Al-Sabah with the Padma Shri award in recognition of her efforts in promoting yoga and mental and physical health in Kuwait and the Arab world, affirms the diversity and strengthening of the solid bilateral relations between Kuwait and India.

On this occasion, the Ambassador expressed his happiness at Sheikhha Ali Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receiving this prestigious award, which was presented by the President of India Droupadi Murmu at an official ceremony held at the Presidential Palace.

She is the first Kuwaiti citizen to receive the Padma Shri, a civilian award in India given in recognition of outstanding initiatives and contributions.

Sheikhha Ali Al-Jaber Al-Sabah told KUNA that this high honor represents a source of pride



KUNA photo Indian President Droupadi Murmu presents the Padma Shri award to Sheikhha Ali Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

for her. Her passion for yoga and methods of developing physical and health fitness has opened new doors for cultural exchange between Kuwait and India, strengthening ties between the two countries and contributing to the consolidation of values of respect and mutual understanding between the two peoples, he clarified.

Continued on Page 5



9 NBK Wealth receives three prestigious awards from Euro-money Private Banking Awards 2025

Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:43 Asr 15:21
 Sunrise .. 05:08 Maghrib .. 18:23
 Zohr 11:45 Isha 19:46

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot and partly cloudy with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h.

By Night: Rather hot to mild and partly cloudy with light to moderate southeasterly wind to

Weather

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait Airport	41	30	Jahra	43	30
Abdaly	42	27	Failaka Island	36	27
Bubyan	34	26	Salmiyah	35	26
			Ahmadi	37	21
			Jal Aliyah	41	29
			Nuwaisib	39	27
			Wafra	41	25

Visas on arrival ... Sierra Leone envoy woos Kuwaiti tourists, businessmen



Sierra Leone envoy and EU representative in Kuwait Anne Koistinen.



Cake-cutting ceremony.

Photos by Mohammad Morsi
Sierra Leone envoy and Palestinian ambassador.

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Deputy Foreign Minister for African Affairs Nayef Al-Mudhaf said the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) is currently reviewing the domestic and civil labor agreements with Sierra Leone.

He affirmed that Kuwait will submit a copy of the proposed agreement to the Sierra Leonean government for deliberation and consensus on its stipulations, in preparation for its official implementation.

In a press conference organized by the Embassy of Sierra Leone on the occasion of the National Day, Al-Mudhaf revealed that Kuwait has finalized a similar agreement with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia; and it is engaged in discussions with the Republic of Kenya and other African nations in this regard, consistent with the policy of the State to expand its civil and domestic labor sources.

He elaborated that Kuwait has, in recent years, commenced the recruitment of skilled professionals from certain African nations, whose competence in the country has been substantiated.

On the standardization of labor recruitment costs, Al-Mudhaf explained that pricing variations are contingent upon the legislative frameworks of each country. "Nonetheless, Kuwait employs comprehensive agreement formats, resulting in considerable convergence in price levels. It also complies with international accords on labor practices," he stressed.

He added that Kuwait remains amenable to proposals from those seeking to engage in such agreements for the benefit of all concerned parties.

Concerning bilateral relations with Sierra Leone, Al-Mudhaf confirmed the continuous contributions of Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) to support development projects in Sierra Leone. He revealed the fund has granted 11 loans totaling around \$83 million to boost

vital sectors like infrastructure and water treatment.

He said Kuwait and Sierra Leone have executed seven substantive cooperation agreements; encompassing various areas; such like economic and trade, establishment of a joint commission, political consultations, air transport services and education.

He added other agreements are under negotiation and are being finalized, indicating that dialogues are being conducted to strengthen coordination in different fields like reciprocal visits to fortify bilateral relations.

Meanwhile, Ambassador of Sierra Leone to Kuwait Haja Ishata Thomas confirmed that her country appreciates the strong bilateral relations with Kuwait. She described these relations as "substantial, enduring and mutually advantageous throughout more than three decades of collaboration."

She lauded the constructive role of Kuwait, through KFAED, in assisting her country; especially during difficult times like the Ebola outbreak in 2014 and the 2017 landslide,

as well as its contributions to the funding of water infrastructure, medical facilities and road systems.

She affirmed the allocation of land in the capital - Free-town -- for the construction of the new Kuwaiti embassy, reflecting the two nations' dedication to deepen their diplomatic relationship.

She encouraged Kuwaiti investors to capitalize on the promising investment opportunities in her country, underscoring the economic reforms that have positioned her nation as an appealing investment destination in West Africa.

She revealed the Sierra Leonean government offers incentives like tax relief, simplified administrative procedures and profit repatriation.

She also mentioned the abundant natural and cultural resources in her country; such as pristine beaches, tropical rainforests and historical monuments.

She invited Kuwaiti nationals and residents to visit Sierra Leone, disclosing that visas are issued upon arrival or through the Sierra Leonean Embassy in Kuwait.



The Cabinet session in progress on Tuesday, April 29.

PM Diwan photo

'Arab plan for Gaza still on table, we are waiting for the ceasefire'

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Assistant Secretary General of the Arab League Ambassador Hossam Zaki said "our visit was successful by all standards and within the framework of ongoing consultations ahead of the upcoming Arab Summit in Baghdad, Iraq on May 17."

In a press statement on the sidelines of the lecture delivered by Arab League Secretary General Dr. Ahmed Aboul Gheith at the Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute on Tuesday, Zaki confirmed that "the Arab plan for Gaza is still on the table. We are awaiting the implementation of the ceasefire."

He revealed the Egyptian and Qatari efforts are currently focusing on achieving this goal. He stated that "the Israeli side -- through its practices and the statements of its leaders -- shows no desire to commit to the ceasefire, as it rather continues its military operations, which are tantamount to daily massacres."

On the visit of US President Donald Trump to the region and if some countries are being pressured to stop

the war, he asserted "it is difficult to understand the continuation of this strange situation. After the collapse of the first agreement and the return of the Israeli military machine, achieving a ceasefire has become more complicated."

On the Syrian issue, he confirmed that the recent Arab ministerial meeting approved a new draft resolution on Syria -- the first of its kind since the regime changed.

He said the resolution affirms support for Syria and its people in restoring security, stability and normal economic life, and also calls for lifting sanctions imposed on it.

He added "the statement reflects the official Arab position on the situation in Syria. The Arab role, especially that of Saudi Arabia and Qatar, on this issue is very positive. We hope it will contribute to pressuring the parties that are imposing sanctions to ease them in preparation for lifting them."

On Syria's participation in the Baghdad Summit, he said the Arab League invited the Syrian leadership; but participation at the leadership level is a political decision taken by the State.

Regarding the summit's agenda, he

pointed out this is a regular summit that will address various political issues. "The fifth development summit will be held as well -- a pioneering Kuwaiti idea. The first summit of this kind was held in Kuwait and it was a tremendous success."

He praised the commitment of Kuwait to pay its full share of the Arab League's budget, stressing that this commitment reflects the firm and responsible stance of the country on Arab issues and joint Arab action.

"During our visit to Kuwait, we met with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled. It was an important and fruitful meeting, which addressed various issues on the Arab scene, particularly the Palestinian issue. We also discussed the same issues with Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya," he added.

On efforts to reform the Arab League system, he said "the League amended its charter in 2000 and 2005, introducing a voting system. Additional amendments were later discussed, but did not achieve consensus among member states. The idea is still on the table. It will be approved once consensus is achieved."

Seatbelt, phone use see massive cut in violations

Kuwaiti sentenced to death for killing his driver

By Munif Naif /Jaber Al-Humoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Public Relations and Security Media Department at the Ministry of Interior has announced that the number of traffic violations decreased by 72 percent in the first week of implementing the new Traffic Law.

This is a confirmation of a report that the newspaper published some days ago on the reduction of traffic violations due to the implementation of the revised Traffic Law. It is considered an achievement that reflects the extent of compliance with the new law.

Statistics issued by the General Traffic Department revealed that the number of violations recorded from April 22-28 totaled 6,342; compared to 22,651 from April 15-21.

According to the statistics, seatbelt violations decreased from 18,208 to 5,176 -- 71 percent decrease; using a mobile phone while driving decreased from 2,962 to 422 or 35 percent; not following landline signs decreased from 1,081 to 700 or 35 percent; making a wrong turn decreased from 400 to 44 or 89 percent.

The Public Relations and Security Media Department attributed

this remarkable decrease in traffic violations to the effective implementation of the new law, thereby, contributing to efforts to instill traffic discipline and raise public awareness.

The ministry also confirmed the continuation of efforts to closely monitor roads and apprehend violators, explaining that the main goals of strictly enforcing the law are to protect lives and guarantee road safety throughout the country.

□ □ □

Death for citizen: The Criminal Court sentenced a citizen to death for killing his house driver in Saad Al-Abdullah and burying the body in Amghara scrapyard.

The Ministry of Interior was able to apprehend the accused in the pre-meditated murder case after receiving a report about a person being seen throwing blood-stained clothes in the trash.

Immediately, search and investigation teams intensified their investigation into the incident.

After reviewing the surveillance cameras, it was determined that the driver of a vehicle dumped the clothes, which had traces of blood. The vehicle's route was tracked and traces of blood were found inside; leading to the arrest of the citizen.

During interrogation, the citizen confessed to killing the victim and throwing the body in the desert area behind Amghara scrapyard.

He provided the investigators with

information on the location of the body, and it was discovered that the victim worked for him as a house driver.

□ □ □
Beware fake websites: The Cyber-crime Department at the Ministry of Interior has warned the public against using unverified websites advertised through the Google search engine.

The department advised users to refrain from accessing such websites and from inputting any confidential data through them.

Security officials have clarified that these unverified websites are intentionally promoted to deceive search engine users into believing that they are official platforms.

Subsequently, users are manipulated into divulging personal data and banking details in exchange for purported services; thereby, making them susceptible to fraudulent activities.

It has been observed that some of these websites, exemplified by those offering online complaint filing services, capitalize on users seeking information on official procedures through search engines.

These deceptive websites are strategically positioned to appear prominently in search results, enabling them to capture user data.

All individuals are urged to verify the authenticity of websites by consulting the official social media channels associated with the respective organizations.

Other Voices

Gripe Water: the myth of miracle cure

By Ahmad alsarraf

SINCE childhood, I have heard of the popular remedy known as "Gripe Water" that was often given to crying infants based on the belief that it relieves stomach pain and helps them sleep soundly.

My father used to buy it from Al-Mishaan Pharmacy on Palestine Street (formerly Al-Gharaballi Street), and for years it was a household staple in Kuwait. That was until it was discovered that the formula contained alcohol, likely the ingredient that soothed colic and lulled babies to sleep. In response, our wise government banned the import of Gripe Water, allowing only alcohol-free versions in the market.

What those behind the ban may not have realized is that countless products, including medicines, cosmetics, dyes, and even some bullets, contain substances derived from pigs.

In a previous article, I discussed the widespread prevalence and importance of substances such as alcohol, which plays a significant role as a solvent, preservative, and effective aid in various products.

Alcohol is commonly used in many medications, including cough syrups, cold treatments, Vicks Formula, liquid Tylenol, and more. In fact, both the United States and the European Union produce around 200 prescription and over-the-counter medications that may contain up to 85 percent alcohol, particularly in mouthwashes and toothache solutions.

Alcohol also appears in many foods, often in small

amounts due to fermentation or processing. Common examples include breads, hot dog and burger buns, rye, and fruit juices such as grape, apple, and orange, especially if left to ferment or exposed to heat. Other foods like kefir, sauerkraut, kimchi, soy sauce, pure vanilla extract, mustard, and even white wine vinegar contain alcohol.

In short, alcohol is not only present in a variety of liquid medications but also in many everyday foods, especially those involving fermentation, yeast, or certain flavor extracts.

In a recent article, I highlighted the importance of being more tolerant of various substances in efforts to combat the spread of dangerous drugs.

Returning to the topic of Gripe Water, its history is neither surprising nor unusual. The confusion surrounding it likely arises from the similarity between the English word "gripe" and the Arabic word "ghareeb," which means strange or amazing.

Gripe Water has been produced by several European and American companies for years, each adapting its formula based on the needs of its specific markets or customers.

The word "gripe" refers to clinging tightly to something, choking, or experiencing colic. However, caution should be exercised when using Gripe Water with newborns, as it is not recommended for infants under one month old.

Despite some potential side effects, the FDA has approved Gripe Water as a dietary supplement for many years, meaning it does not require regulation or monitoring regarding its safety and effectiveness.

□ □ □
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Youths trained on boosting skills

CMA, Capital Markets Academy honor graduates

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Capital Markets Authority (CMA), in collaboration with the Capital Markets Academy, held a ceremony to honor the graduates of the "8th Kuwaiti Training and Qualification Program for New Graduates" on Thursday, April 24.

According to a press release issued by CMA, the ceremony was attended by Chairman of the Board of Commissioners and Executive Director Emad Tifoni, along with members of the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Trustees of Capital Markets Academy.

The ceremony kicked off with an introduction to the program and the role of both CMA and the Capital Markets Academy in supporting and developing the skills of young Kuwaiti graduates through this program.

In collaboration with Harvard University, the program provided trainees with the opportunity to gain a range of theoretical and practical skills related to capital markets, along with field and external training that expanded their global knowledge.

This initiative serves as a valuable opportunity for new graduates to enhance their professional and technical skills in the capital markets sector.

The Capital Markets Academy



Picture taken at the event

hosted Harvard University in Kuwait for the first time, which is a huge milestone. The intensive training program included lectures from financial experts and virtual field visits to prominent global financial institutions, such as Nasdaq, the New York Stock Ex-

change, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission.

Director General of the Capital Markets Academy Abdul Aziz Al-Rasheed Al-Badr expressed his pride in the successful completion of the program.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Time Gulf counts on its own potential in march forward

“POPE Francis’s funeral, which was attended by 400,000 people from around 55 countries, including heads of state, was certainly a momentous event. However, a few observations deserve attention. Notably, the speech was delivered first in English, followed by Arabic. This is significant because everyone knows that the original language of the Holy Bible is not English or Latin but it is Aramaic, a language closely related to Arabic”, columnist **Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Adel Al-Kharafi

“This led me to reflect on the global respect for the Arabic language, particularly in the context of the Quran. Its role has gained significant respect, especially in light of its opposition to the Israeli war on Gaza. This stance has triggered strong reactions from Tel Aviv, with many Israeli leaders refusing to attend his funeral, or even offer condolences.

“The crowd at the Pope’s funeral was expected to be large, but it was small compared to other occasions. Nevertheless, organizing the event required the mobilization of all Italian state agencies. Rome and surrounding cities were overwhelmed by the crowds, and the logistics involved several days of round-the-clock work. Despite some delegations staying for just a few hours, Italy struggled to accommodate the number of pilgrims.

“In contrast, during the Hajj season, more than two and a half million pilgrims visit Saudi Arabia annually, flocking to Makkah and Madinah. Despite the short time-frame, the Kingdom manages to accommodate this massive number, and the same is true during Ramadan and other Umrah seasons. This highlights Saudi Arabia’s immense organizational potential and strengthens its positive global image.

“I am not trying to make a comparison, but rather to highlight the immense capabilities of the Gulf region, particularly Saudi Arabia, in terms of organizing large-scale operations. We also remember the World Cup in Qatar, where the organization was impressive despite limited space and a large number of visitors in a short period.

“What I am trying to convey is that we must trust in our own strengths and work to benefit from them. The future holds great potential, and if we capitalize on it, we can become the heart of development in the region. But do those in charge in the Gulf region recognize this opportunity?”

Also:

“Jordan successfully navigated the turbulence of the so-called Arab Spring, largely due to the solidarity of its people behind their political leadership. However, the country now faces difficult economic conditions, including rising unemployment, increasing poverty, and persistent corruption”, columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“King Abdullah II tried to solve these issues by appointing popular prime ministers, but each of them failed. Between 1999 and 2012, eleven political figures were appointed to the prime ministerial role. Since then, the number of prime ministers has increased to several dozen. Public frustration has increased, despite the king’s effective management of the country since he assumed power in 1999.

“In an effort to revive the economy, King Abdullah II sought the support of Jordanian tribes and citizens throughout the country.

“However, the economic situation remained grim, and the government’s economic policies fell short. The opposition, led by the Muslim Brotherhood, took advantage of the crisis, and organized large demonstrations that initially called for economic reforms but eventually evolved into demands for changes to the ruling system itself. The Muslim Brotherhood intensified its calls for constitutional amendments that would allow the people to take a more active role in governance. In response, Jordanian police arrested dozens of members of the Muslim Brotherhood, represented by the Islamic Action Party, due to their incitement of public sentiment against the status quo.

“The extremism of Islamist militants gradually intensified, prompting growing concern from the government as some opposition members began carrying Kalashnikov rifles and using them against Jordanian security forces.

“When ISIS seized control of several cities in Iraq, it extended its reach and occupied Rutba, a city near the Jordanian border. This development left Jordan vulnerable to the threat of ISIS, which openly declared its intention to establish an Islamic state within Jordan’s borders.

“Jordanian security forces are highly skilled and well-equipped. The country benefits from strong support from the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Gulf states, receiving both financial and military assistance. Jordan’s intelligence and military capabilities are highly advanced, and the people remain loyal and supportive of the monarchy.

“On March 31, 2024, Jordan issued a warning to Hamas leaders, urging them not to incite people to march against Israel or stir up public opinion against the political leadership. Hamas relied on Jordanians of Palestinian origin to further its agenda, which is seen as interference in Jordan’s internal affairs and a threat to its national security.

“On April 15, 2025, Jordan success-

fully thwarted dangerous terrorist plots designed to destabilize the Kingdom’s security, incite chaos, and sabotage critical infrastructure. Sixteen individuals were arrested, and they confessed to manufacturing rockets using local tools, possessing explosives and weapons, and having ties to Hamas, which Jordan classifies as part of the Muslim Brotherhood. The detainees revealed that these activities had been carried out over the course of four years. They revealed that the plot was aimed at destabilizing the Jordanian state and undermining its sovereignty, rather than being linked to the events in Gaza.

“One of the defendants admitted to being a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, which could lead to strict official actions against the group.”



“In an increasingly unstable economic and social world, it has become important to reevaluate our financial habits, particularly as Kuwait embarks on a new phase marked by a sincere desire for administrative and societal reform, and the rebuilding of a modern state founded on rationality, efficiency, and sustainability”, former Minister of Health **Dr. Mohammad Al-Jarallah** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

“One of the main challenges obstructing development and straining the resources of both families and the state is the widespread prevalence of irrational consumption habits. This growing phenomenon has become deeply embedded in daily life and is an increasing source of concern for both the economy and society.

“In a country like Kuwait, which is characterized by financial abundance and substantial government support, families might be expected to enjoy financial stability. Yet, the reality paints a starkly different picture: mounting debt, excessive spending, minimal savings, and a relentless cycle of financial obligations.

“This phenomenon, with its profound social and economic consequences, has not escaped the attention of policymakers. In 2004, while serving as Minister of Health, I took the initiative to propose a project aimed at rationalizing the consumption behavior of Kuwaiti families. In response, the Cabinet formally appointed me to lead a national team tasked with developing a comprehensive program to tackle the issue, despite my role not being within the economic portfolio. This decision reflected the government’s recognition of the initiative’s importance and the pressing need for a structured and wide-reaching response.

“The team comprised representatives from several ministries including Finance, Planning, Commerce, and Information, along with the Central Bank, the State Audit Bureau, the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as well as a number of experts in economics, social affairs, and media. We held preliminary meetings and arrived at several significant, and in some cases, alarming, findings:

- A significant surge in consumer loans, often surpassing the repayment capacity of many citizens.

- A weak savings culture, with a large rate of families lacking basic financial planning.

- Excessive spending on social occasions and luxury items, often at the expense of essential needs.

- Growing dependence on loans to cover everyday expenses, making families captive to banks and financing companies.

- An increase in bounced checks and financial disputes, pointing to deep-rooted flaws in the prevailing economic culture.

“Our conclusion at the time was clear: the issue is not solely financial, but it is deeply cultural and behavioral. Changing it cannot be accomplished through top-down directives alone. What is needed is a comprehensive, nationwide initiative that starts in schools, includes the media, shapes legislation, and involves the Central Bank, the private sector, and families alike.

“While studying in the United Kingdom, I observed a starkly different approach. British families, despite having more modest incomes than their Kuwaiti counterparts, were disciplined in saving regularly. They channeled their savings into investment funds tied to companies and financial markets, all within a well-regulated system that linked individual financial behavior to the national economy.

“This was part of everyday life, and was taught early in schools, instilled in children, and regarded as a core element of responsible citizenship.

“From that experience, I came to understand that saving is not a form of deprivation, but it is a path to peace of mind. It is not a luxury, but a sign of awareness. It is not a burden, but a powerful tool for empowerment.

“Imagine if every Kuwaiti family set aside just ten percent of its income for saving or investment in national projects. How much capital could be mobilized? How many new ventures could be launched? How many job opportunities could we create?

“We are talking about billions invested right here in Kuwait, with the returns flowing back to the citizens themselves. This shift would ease reliance on the state and strengthen a culture rooted in productivity rather than consumption.

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

Al-Harees acquitted of money-laundering

Ex-minister jailed in influence peddling, profiteering

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Court of Cassation sentenced former minister and MP Mubarak Al-Harees to two years in prison with hard labor in a case of influence peddling and profiteering from industrial plots.

The court also imposed a fine of KD 565,000 on Al-Harees and acquitted him of money laundering.

The Ministerial Court previously sentenced him to four years in prison with hard labor.

Investigations by the Criminal Investigation Department at the Interior Ministry revealed that the accused, as a member of the National Assembly then, provided assistance and connected him with individuals in the Kuwait

Municipality, the relevant committee in the Municipality, and the Public Authority for Industry (PAI) in an effort to obtain the necessary approvals to add service activities to certain plots, including his plot.

The company was aware that the defendant was the actual beneficiary of the two plots. It was determined that the company’s Collections Department notified the Legal Department to file lawsuits, not the Customer Service Department or Board of Directors. When the defendant was informed about the

lawsuit filed against him, he contacted the concerned officials in the company and the lawsuit was dismissed.

It was also established from the statements of the detective during the investigations that the real beneficiary of the two plots (12-E11) in the Jahra expansion area is the defendant and that he obtained them from the previous beneficiaries, A.G.M. (11), free of charge, as well as W.A. (E12), for a total KD150,000. The price per square meter for both plots before the transfer was KD 6.

When the plots were transferred to the defendant, the company rented them at KD 3.5 per square meters; knowing that the real beneficiary was the defendant, who at that time held two positions as a member of the National Assembly and later as a minister.



Al-Harees

Five police officers jailed for facilitating escape of inmate

Family seeks death penalty for murderer

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Court of First Instance, presided over by Judge Nayef Al-Dahoum, sentenced five officers from the Saad Al-Abdullah Police Station, including the station chief, to three-year imprisonment with hard labor for facilitating the escape of a detained suspect.

The court also found them guilty of committing forgery in the civil registry and enabling the suspect’s escape.

The sixth defendant, the escaped detainee, was sentenced to one year in prison with hard labor.

The Public Prosecution charged the defendants with facilitating the escape of a detainee from within the police station, abuse of authority, and negligence in performing their duties.



Al-Dahoum



Al-Mousawi

the forensic doctor and the investigation officer.

The defendant stands accused of premeditated murder of Kuwaiti citizen Hani Al-Mousawi. During a previous session, a forensic report confirmed the defendant’s mental competence at the time of the crime.

In court, Lawyer Hassan Al-Mousawi requested that the defendant be held civilly liable and ordered to pay compensation to the victim’s heirs.

He also urged the court to impose the maximum legal penalty - capital punishment - against the accused for the severity of the crime.



Drugs found on lawyer: After obtaining a warrant from the Public Prosecution, officers from the Drug Control General Department of the Ministry of Interior raided the office of a well-known lawyer on charges of possessing narcotics and intoxicants, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The suspect was arrested in possession of a quantity of illegal substances. Investigations are currently underway to determine the source of the seized items.

In its ruling, the court stated that subordinates, regardless of their position, must not follow orders from superiors if those orders violate the law.



Call to hang murderer: The Criminal Court continued proceedings in the high-profile murder case of Kuwaiti citizen Hani Al-Mousawi, with Lawyer Hassan Al-Mousawi, representing the victim’s family, leading the questioning of both

Media personality accused of Iran slander acquitted

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Criminal Court acquitted media personality Aisha Al-Rasheed in a case filed by the Iranian Embassy, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The lawsuit stemmed from the complaint that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs filed against a memorandum submitted by the Iranian Embassy objecting to Al-Rasheed’s statement about the presence of Iranian

cells in Kuwait in an episode on her YouTube channel.

Al-Rasheed was investigated on charges related to violating the State Security Law, including broadcasting false news, committing a hostile act against a foreign country, exposing the country to the risk of severing relations with a friendly country, and misusing a telephone.

She denied these charges, asserting that she exercised her constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom of opinion and expression as a media professional specializing in Iranian affairs and that her statements were intended to serve her country’s interests and security without any intention of harm.

Lawyer of Al-Rasheed, Attorney Nawaf Al-Fuzai, disclosed

that his defense of his client focused on confirming the rulings in the Abdally Cell case regarding the presence of Iranian spy cells in the country.

He added that she expressed her opinion, which was consistent with the details of the case, considering she is a journalist specializing in the Iranian file.

Blackmailing Kuwaitis...man caught running fake accounts

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Criminal Security Sector of the Ministry of Interior arrested a Kuwaiti citizen, identified only as S.F., after receiving confidential information about his involvement in running 16 fake social media accounts, through which he used to spread rumors and harm the

reputations of many citizens for financial gain, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In a statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that specialized security teams launched an investigation upon receiving the information. This led to the identification of the suspect, and authorities

subsequently monitored his daily activities, residence, and means of transportation.

After obtaining a warrant from the Public Prosecution, the suspect was arrested while at a shopping mall in coordination with the mall’s administration. He was accompa-

nied by two friends at the time.

He admitted to managing several fake accounts, which he used to spread false news, malicious rumors, and insult citizens.

A number of mobile phones used by the suspect to manage these accounts were seized.



KFF photo

Traces of smoke and fire can be seen on the building.

Probe underway in cause of Hawally apartment fire

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Fire broke out in an apartment building in Hawally on Monday afternoon, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The Hawally and Salmiya Central firefighting teams rushed to the location after receiving information about the fire incident. The combined firefighting units quickly extinguished the fire, preventing its spread to other parts of the building or neighboring structures.

Emergency personnel were on the scene to provide immediate medical attention and assess the situation. Fortunately, there were no significant injuries reported as a result of the incident.

The cause of the fire is currently under investigation. Authorities are working hard to determine the origin of the blaze and whether any safety regulations were violated.

Residents of the building were temporarily evacuated as a precautionary measure, while the investigation and any necessary repairs are conducted.



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Right to Left: Khaled Al-Dughhaishim, Sheikh Abdullah Salem al-Ali, Abullatif Al-Jassar, Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Ahmad Al-Saleh Al-Eqab and Abdulaziz Al-Dughhaishim



Ahmad Al-Jarallah and Abdulaziz Al-Dughhaishim

Gov't seeks more powers for governors in Kuwait reforms

We work as team, live as one family: Sheikh Abdullah



Sheikh Abdullah Fahad Saad Al-Abdullah and Ahmed Al-Jarallah



Ahmed Al-Jarallah talking to Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ali and Abullatif Al-Jassar



Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Abdulaziz Al-Dughhaishim and Sulaiman Al-Jarallah

By Bassam Al-Qassas

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Amiri directives underscored the need to fully support the governors and grant them a bigger role in the development of the country, especially in expediting the implementation of strategic projects and mobilize government agencies to achieve the desired renaissance.

This is part of the steps of the government toward the expansion of the governors' powers to oversee the implementation of the general policy of the State, monitor development plan projects, and contribute to improving services in all governorates to reflect the civilized image of the country.

This is the main topic in the weekly discussions at Al-Dughhaishim Diwan, with Capital Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah; Sheikh Abdullah Fahad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism Ahmed Al-Jarallah and a number of prominent social and media figures in attendance.

Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah pointed out that the situation in Kuwait has changed dramatically in light of the government's wise directives, stressing that "we work as one team and live as one cohesive family. The governors' powers are exercised with complete transparency through continuous communication and coordination with ministers and officials in the interest of the public and to better serve our beloved country. Cooperation between State agencies is a fundamental pillar of the success of government work."



Deputy Editor-in-Chief Sulaiman Al-Jarallah and Hamad Al-Shaiji

He affirmed that "as governors, we work side by side with the ministers within a single, integrated system, united by national goals and motivated by a shared commitment to the advancement and prosperity of the country. The secret to our success lies in our belief in the importance of integration and cooperation, free from bureau-

cracy; and a commitment to being close to citizens and constantly striving to meet their needs and follow up their issues."

Al-Jarallah commended the relentless efforts of the government to maximize the impact of the governors' work on development and service delivery and to grant them a more effective role in forming the governorate council, which assists them in exercising their responsibilities.

He called for launching an initiative to support beautification projects in the governorates. He pointed out this initiative relies on symbolic contributions to address the challenges hindering beautification work, such as water and equipment shortage and other issues.

He stressed the importance of the governors' role in supporting and promoting this initiative, given their closeness to the people and their trust in him.

Ahmed Saleh Al-Oqab agreed with Al-Jarallah on the importance of beautification in the governorates; suggesting the formation of a specialized beautification committee in the Capital Governorate, comprising a group of promising Kuwaiti youths.

He said the governor personally oversees the work and ensures that obstacles to the efficient completion of the projects are removed.

Abdulaziz Al-Dughhaishim underscored the importance of such meetings for enriching dialogue, enhancing communication, and advancing development works. He affirmed the commitment of Al-Dughhaishim Diwan to be updated on contemporary issues and to open its doors to everyone in order to enrich discussions, and raise cultural and societal awareness.



Dignitaries at the gathering.



Photos by Mohammad Morsi
Right to Left: Bassam Al-Qassas, Ahmad Al-Aswad, Mohammad Jassem Al-Man-souri and Saud Al-Fraih

Dar Al-Muhamah wins '25 Global Lawyers Forum award for quality

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Dar Al-Muhamah Law Firm has been honored with the prestigious Litigation Law Firm of the Year 2025 award by the Global Lawyers Forum (WLF), a distinction granted annually to leading firms excelling in domestic and international litigation practices.

The award was announced during the Global Lawyers Forum, held in the Kingdom of Bahrain on April 28-29, 2025. The event brought together more than 300 legal professionals from prominent law firms and institutions across the globe to explore critical legal themes such as cybersecurity, data privacy, and the evolving landscape of cross-border litigation.

Dar Al-Muhamah was represented by a high-level delegation led by Managing Partner Attorney Abdulrahman Ibrahim Al-Houti and Founding Partner Attorney Mubarak Hasyan Al-Dosari.

Attorney Al-Houti, who holds a Master's degree in Law, brings over two decades of specialized experience in corporate and financial litigation. He is a certified arbitrator at multiple local and international arbitration centers and is recognized as a prominent contributor to globally renowned legal publications.

Attorney Al-Dosari, with more than 20 years of legal practice, has extensive expertise spanning real estate, commercial and investment law, banking and finance, criminal law, and telecommunications. He is also an of-

ficially appointed judicial guardian by Kuwait's Ministry of Justice. Dar Al-Muhamah's participation in this international platform reflects its commitment to advancing its strategic vision, which aligns with Kuwait Vision 2035.

The firm actively promotes the representation of Kuwaiti private legal talent in major global arenas and seeks to strengthen legal collaboration with international and regional legal alliances, in harmony with Kuwait's open ten-year development plan.

Established in 2005, Dar Al-Muhamah has solidified its status as one of Kuwait's and the region's foremost legal institutions. With a team exceeding 70 professionals – including over 15 attorneys and 15 legal consultants across diverse legal specializations, including an international law division – the firm maintains a robust network of affiliate offices throughout the Arab world and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), a factor that has played a key role in its international recognition.

It is worth noting that the World Lawyers Forum (WLF) was founded in 2016 with a mission to foster global legal dialogue around contemporary legal challenges and opportunities. WLF serves as a collaborative platform for legal professionals to connect, engage, and develop solutions to pressing legal issues worldwide.



Pictures taken at the ceremony.

LOCAL



Photo during the meeting.

Kuwait-Belgium trade talks highlight \$253 mln exchange

KCCI hosts Belgian economic delegation

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) hosted a Belgian economic delegation led by Isabelle Griba, CEO of the Brussels Economic Development Agency, on Tuesday.

According to a press release issued by KCCI, the delegation included the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to Kuwait Christian Doms, Secretary-General of the Joint Arab-Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce Qaisar Hijazin, representatives from the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, and several Kuwaiti business owners.

KCCI extended a warm welcome to the visiting delegation, and affirmed the strong and enduring ties between Kuwait and Belgium.

It highlighted the long-standing friendship, mutual trust, and shared goals that define the relationship between the two nations.

KCCI noted the great potential for economic cooperation between the two countries, revealing that the total trade exchange between Kuwait and Belgium amounted to approximately \$253.5 million in 2023.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Doms expressed his pleasure with the meeting, and highlighted that the significant participation of Belgian companies affirms the growing interest in enhancing relations between the two nations.



Group photo.

He also highlighted the companies' eagerness to establish joint ventures with their Kuwaiti counterparts.

Ambassador Doms affirmed Kuwait's strategic importance as one of the world's leading oil-exporting countries, as well as the prominence of the Kuwaiti sovereign wealth fund, which ranks as the fifth-largest globally.

He outlined several factors for future collaboration between Kuwait and Belgium, including strong political ties, the purchasing power of Kuwaiti tourists, and the potential for joint efforts in sectors such as digital economy, food security, healthcare, renewable and sustainable energy, infrastructure, and free zone projects.

In addition, Hijazin expressed his pleasure in hosting the meeting, emphasizing the presence of 40 prestigious Belgian companies.

Hijazin called for greater collaboration between both nations to achieve shared goals, particularly highlighting Kuwait's importance as an important investment partner, especially in the realm of strategic oil and gas investment projects in Belgium.

The Kuwait Investment Promotion Authority (KIPA) presented the New Kuwait 2035 vision, and shed light on the important projects and private sector partnerships currently underway. In turn, Belgian companies made a presentation on their services and products.



KUNA photo
DGCA Director General Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Sabah in a meeting with Dubai Civil Aviation and Emirates Airlines officials.

Kuwait and UAE forge stronger aviation links

Airline alliance takes off at Dubai travel market

DUBAI, April 29, (KUNA): Director General of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Sabah participated in a specialized meeting with Dubai Civil Aviation and Emirates Airlines officials on Monday to discuss future plans between two countries.

This came during Sheikh Humoud's partaking at the Arabian Travel Market exhibition in Dubai, a prominent international exhibition in the field of aviation, travel, and tourism with the presence of the Consul General of Kuwait in the Emirate of Dubai, Khaled Al-Zaabi.

The meeting also addressed means to improve companies' performances, including airline employees and

ways of training them with the latest methods and techniques in order to raise passenger satisfaction, while ensuring a safe and comfortable travel experience.

Sheikh Humoud stressed the importance of Kuwait Airways' participating in this year's exhibition, considering it a strategic step towards strengthening Kuwait's presence in key international events dedicated to aviation, travel, and tourism.

He also praised the signing of the bilateral partnership agreement between Kuwait Airways and Emirates Airlines, as it will open up broad horizons for expansion and growth while also supporting the development of national companies and enhancing their regional competitiveness.

While also adding that these efforts are part of the preparations for the opening of the new modern Kuwait International Airport, a qualitative leap in air transport services in Kuwait and position it as a major regional aviation hub.

Event advances patient-centered care

Scientific posters highlight physio advances

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Women's Physiotherapy Department at the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Hospital held its first Scientific Poster Day at the Women's Building (Hydrotherapy and Rehabilitation).

The event witnessed the participation of multiple physiotherapy specializations like pediatrics, women's health, geriatrics and adult care; with the express purpose of advancing health literacy.

Head of the Medical Board and Chairman of the Physical

Medicine and Rehabilitation Departments Council Dr. Jamal Mohammed said "a comprehensive review of all posters revealed an exceptionally high standard of performance by all participants. The presented materials touch on the welfare of patients, striving to provide exemplary services that the Physical Medicine and Physiotherapy departments need."

Head of the Men's Physiotherapy Department Dr. Mustafa Abu Abbas disclosed that the posters showcased innovative ideas and demonstrated a high level of creativity. "Each poster has the potential to be developed into an individual project; particularly those addressing elderly care, women's health, men's health and pediatric health," he added.

Continued from Page 1

From the

For example, Bashar al-Assad was solely focused on preserving his presidential position. Meanwhile, the Muslim Brotherhood and Hezbollah, acting as mercenaries of Iran, have been actively inciting sectarian conflict. Hassan Nasrallah and Naim Qassem sought to control Lebanon's decision-making process, regardless of the tens of thousands killed in the recent conflict. The losses exceeded ten thousand innocent lives and amounted to over \$15 billion, which deepened Lebanon's poverty.

These are just some of the disasters caused by organizations, political parties, and coup regimes that insisted on waging futile wars under the guise of grand slogans.

Today, Gaza lies in ruins, with the death toll nearing 53,000 and more than 150,000 wounded.

Meanwhile, the West Bank is suffering from land erosion due to the ongoing expansion of Israeli settlements. The Palestinian Authority remains constrained by various restrictions, largely because of Hamas's continued control over the Gaza Strip.

The Muslim Brotherhood has sought to turn Jordan into a battleground for settling regional disputes, often aligning with Israel's interests. Israel is awaiting the deportation of West Bank residents to Jordan and the announcement of the completion of the 2018 Jewish Nation-State Law.

This raises some important questions: Who has served Israel more? Is it the parties and regimes that have exploited the Palestinian cause for their own agendas, or the Arab countries, particularly the Gulf states, that have pursued realistic policies and maintained stability in the face of regional challenges?

Kuwait sets

On the local front, the Cabinet was informed that His Highness the Amir will attend and sponsor Wednesday a Kuwait University graduation ceremony for students with honors for the academic years 2021/2022 and 2022/2023.

The Cabinet then went on to heap praise on a major security crackdown against the "illegal" practice of cryptocurrency mining, an activity that is strictly prohibited by Kuwaiti law due to its adverse effect on the national power grid, which could overtax power generators and subsequently lead to outages affecting residential and industrial areas alike.

The Cabinet also approved a decision to strip Kuwaiti citizenship off of a number of individuals, based on the works and findings of a national committee formed to investigate the matter.

One HQ,

by this decision must comply with Kuwait Municipality's property classification regulations, ensuring that the unified headquarters is in accordance with the type of business license issued. Compliance with urban planning standards will be verified before approval is granted.

Also, the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) will review the submitted lease contract to ensure it meets requirements. Based on this, PACI will issue separate civil numbers for each licensed entity, up to a maximum of five per unified headquarters.

The ministry affirmed that the decision aims to deal with the issue of some business owners being compelled to rent premises they do not actually need, which has posed a financial burden, particularly during the early stages of company formation.

It explained that relevant authorities will be granted the authority to assess applications, verify compliance with regulations, and establish mechanisms for routine inspections. Clear procedures will be in place to handle violations, including instances where premises are used for unauthorized activities or purely formal purposes.

Jan-Feb 2025

The number of patent transactions within the two months reached about 2,583,000. Around 1,348 transactions were processed in February -- nine percent increase compared to 1,237 in January.

The number of patent applications in both months reached 60; patent grants and publications totaled 19; examinations reached 84; and renewals reached 2,384,000 or 92.2 percent of all transactions.

On trademarks, a total of 9,617 trademark transactions were carried out in January and February; including about 5,440 deposit transactions; 1,007 renewal transactions; 1,010 visa transactions, 65 objection transactions; 1,975 publication transactions; three agent registry transactions; eight grievances and 39 extract transactions.

India honors

During the Republic Day celebrations on January 26, the Indian government had announced the decision to award Sheikhha Sheikhha Ali Al-Jaber Al-Sabah the Padma Shri, one of India's highest civilian awards, in recognition of her distinguished contributions to promoting public culture and social work.

Arab League's

their internal and external affairs. "This stability constitutes a fundamental pillar of collective Arab security and must be preserved and fortified through dialogue and cooperation among nations in the region," he added.

He said the whole world is currently witnessing instability, characterized by escalating rivalry between major powers and the emergence of unprecedented phenomena; raising the possibility of a new Cold War and intense competition among great powers, not to mention the ongoing wars in the Middle East and tension in Europe.

He confirmed there are threats to the concept of globalization, accompanied by a marked resurgence of nationalist ideologies which have started to disseminate at various levels and in diverse forms, reflecting profound transformations in the global order.

He pointed out that regionally, the situation in Palestine is tragic and has remained so for over 15 years. "Several Arab countries are facing serious risks like failure, division or annihilation. The situation is concerning," he stated, although he refrained from naming specific nations.

He stressed that international humanitarian law is being blatantly violated, particularly by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories, amidst regrettable international inaction.

"This phase has exposed the double standards of many western nations, particularly their stances on human rights and respect for international law. While espousing values, killing and destruction continue in Palestine and in various Arab regions," he elaborate.

He identified the Iranian nuclear issue as one of the challenges that the region is currently facing. "Other challenges persist, yet despite these, the Arab world continues its development and progress, overcoming crises and challenges to achieve stability," he asserted.

He added that notwithstanding these challenges, hope remains that the Arab world will persist in its trajectory toward development and resolution of multiple crises; especially since the Arabian Gulf region stands as a model of stability and tranquility, with hopes for its further development and prosperity.

He underscored Kuwait's long-standing societal prominence and significance within the Arab world and the Gulf. He also emphasized that Kuwaiti diplomats possess the requisite capability and knowledge of regional and international affairs.

He confirmed the presence of Kuwait on the regional and international stages, pointing out the Kuwaiti diplomacy's distinctiveness in mediation and humanitarian endeavors. He highlighted the clear positions of Kuwait in defense of the Palestinian cause and Arab issues.

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Emergency vehicles block a road leading to a building where a car smashed through during an after-school program, killing several people and injuring others on April 28 in Chatham, Ill. (AP)

Vehicle smashes through Illinois building, killing 4 young people

Authorities said Tuesday they believe a crash through an Illinois after-school building that killed three kids and one teenager wasn't targeted.

A car traveled through a field, then smashed through a building in a small city of Chatham outside Springfield, Illinois, on Monday afternoon. In an update Tuesday morning, police said two 7-year-

olds, an 8-year-old and an 18-year-old were killed. Six more children were taken to hospitals and one remains in critical condition.

The Illinois driver, who was not injured, was taken to a hospital for evaluation and police said toxicology reports were pending. Police haven't said if the driver was arrested or taken into custody.

The cause was under investigation, but police said the crash doesn't appear to be a targeted attack.

Monday's crash was the latest instance of people driving vehicles into groups of people across the globe. Only two days earlier, a car plowed through a crowded street during a Filipino heritage festival in Vancouver, British Columbia, killing 11. (AP)

Unprecedented success on border effort: Homan

White House focuses on border crackdown

WASHINGTON, April 29, (AP): The White House on Monday opened a weeklong celebration of Donald Trump's first 100 days in office by focusing on his border crackdown, an area of relative strength for the president at a time when there are red flags for him in the latest round of polling.

Yard signs with mugshots of immigrants who have been accused of crimes like rape and murder were posted across the White House lawn, positioned so they would be in the background of television broadcasts outside the West Wing. Tom Homan, Trump's top border adviser, told reporters there has been "unprecedented success" on the border effort and "we're going to keep doing it, full speed ahead."

Immigration is Trump's leading issue in public opinion surveys, and White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said at a morning briefing the administration is in "the beginning stages of carrying out the largest deportation campaign in American history."

About 139,000 people have been removed so far, according to the White House. Deportations have occasionally lagged behind Democratic President Joe Biden's numbers, but Trump officials reject the comparison as not "apples to apples" because so many fewer people are crossing the border now.

Later Monday, Leavitt held a second briefing exclusively for "new media," where Trump-aligned social media in-



White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt, with White House border czar Tom Homan, speaks with reporters in the James Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House on April 28, in Washington. (AP)

fluencers asked friendly questions and applauded at the end.

Trump wasn't so bullish about the idea during his first term, when he was plagued by setbacks, investigations and turnover in his ranks, at that time calling the 100-day mark "an artificial barrier."

But now he's trying to harness the moment to mark the ambitious agenda he's pursued in his first months. Leavitt said Trump had already signed almost

as many executive orders as Biden did during his entire term.

But many Americans believe Trump has mostly been focused on the wrong issues.

Americans are nearly twice as likely to say Trump has been mostly focusing on the wrong priorities as to say he has been focusing on the right ones, according to an AP-NORC survey, and only about half of Republicans say he's mostly had the right focus.

'I run the country and the world'

Trump marks first 100 days in office with rally in Michigan, state rocked by tariffs

WARREN, Mich., April 29, (AP): US President Donald Trump is holding a rally in Michigan on Tuesday to mark the first 100 days of his second term, staging his largest public event since returning to the White House in a state that has been especially rocked by his steep trade tariffs and combative attitude toward Canada.

Trump is making an afternoon visit to Selfridge Air National Guard Base for an announcement alongside Democratic Michigan Gov Gretchen Whitmer. He's expected to speak at a rally at Macomb Community College, north of Detroit, allowing him to revel in leading a sprint to upend government and social, political and foreign policy norms.

His Republican administration's strict immigration policies have sent arrests for illegal crossings along the US-Mexico border plummeting, and government-slashing efforts led by billionaire adviser Elon Musk have shaken Washington to its core. Its protectionist import taxes imposed on America's trade partners have also sought to reorder a global economy that the US had painstakingly built and nurtured in the decades after World

War II.

Trump has also championed sweeping US expansionism, refusing to rule out military intervention in Greenland and Panama, suggesting that American developers could help convert the war-torn Gaza Strip into a Riviera-like resort and even suggesting annexation of Canada.

"I run the country and the world," Trump told The Atlantic magazine in an interview. He told Time of his first 100 days, "I think that what I'm doing is exactly what I've campaigned on."

That doesn't mean it's popular. Only about 4 in 10 Americans approve of how Trump is handling the presidency, and his ratings on the economy and trade are lower than that. Additionally, 46% of US adults approve of Trump's immigration policies, with about half of Americans saying he has "gone too far" when it comes to deporting immigrants living in the country illegally.

Just 33% of Americans, meanwhile, have a favorable view of Musk, the Tesla CEO and world's richest person, and about half believe the administration has gone too far in working to pare



US President Donald Trump arrives on Marine One at the White House on April 27 in Washington. (AP)

back the government workforce.

"The bottom line for the first hundred days is, lots of damage being done to the fundamentals of our government," said Max Stier, founding president and CEO of the Partnership

for Public Service, a nonprofit dedicated to better government.

Stier noted that there'd been "a lot of interest in this idea of trying to make our government more efficient, and what we've seen instead is the most

substantial destruction of our core governmental capabilities in history."

Michigan was one of the battleground states Trump flipped from the Democratic column. But it's also been deeply affected by his tariffs, including on new imported cars and auto parts.

Michigan's unemployment rate has risen for three straight months, including jumping 1.3% from March to reach 5.5%, according to state data. That's among the highest in the nation, far exceeding the national average of 4.2%.

Automaker Stellantis halted production at plants in Canada and Mexico after Trump announced a 25% tariff on imported vehicles, temporarily laying off 900 U.S. employees. Industry groups have separately urged the White House to scrap plans for tariffs on imported auto parts, warning that doing so would raise prices on cars and could trigger "layoffs and bankruptcy."

That seemingly would make the state an odd choice for Trump to hail his own accomplishments.

"I'm not sure that he is at all interested in doing the smart thing," said Bernie Pom, a longtime Michigan

pollster. "He is what I would call an in-your-face president. 'This is what I'm going to do.'"

Trump is also visiting Selfridge, which was established after the US entered World War I in 1917, and the community college campus in Warren. Both are near the Canadian border and home to many people with deep business and personal ties to that country.

"Michigan always feels very, very positively toward Canada," said the pollster, who noted that its voters "can't be reacting well to the kinds of things he's done."

Typically, presidents use the 100-day mark to launch multiple rallies. But Trump is doing only the Michigan stop before giving the commencement address at the University of Alabama on Thursday.

Administration officials say the Republican president is at his most effective staying at the White House, having meetings and speaking to reporters nearly every day. Indeed, Trump's Macomb Community College speech will be one of the few large in-person crowds he's addressed since Inauguration Day on Jan. 20.



Passengers queue at Madrid airport, during a major power outage on April 28. (AP)

Spain and Portugal's power almost fully restored

The cause of Spain and Portugal's widespread blackouts remained a mystery on Tuesday, with some isolated disruption remaining after power was largely restored to both countries.

One of Europe's most severe blackouts grounded flights, paralyzed metro systems, disrupted mobile communications and shut

down ATMs across the Iberian Peninsula on Monday.

By 7 a.m. on Tuesday more than 99% of energy demand in Spain had been restored, the country's electricity operator Red Eléctrica said. Portuguese grid operator REN said all 89 power substations were back online and power had been restored to all 6.4 million cus-

tomers.

As life began to return to normal - with schools and offices reopening, traffic easing and public transport restarting - the authorities in Spain have yet to provide further explanations for what caused one of the most serious blackouts to ever take place in Europe. (AP)

Ukraine officials say Russia hits civilians again

KYIV, Ukraine, April 29, (AP): Russia struck civilian areas of Ukraine with drones in another deadly nighttime attack, officials said Tuesday, as Kyiv officials dismissed Russian President Vladimir Putin's declaration of a unilateral 72-hour ceasefire next week as an attempt "to deceive the United States."

The Russian attack damaged homes in Ukraine's southeastern Dnipropetrovsk region, authorities said, killing a 12-year-old girl and wounding three others, including a six-year-old.

Russia also launched 20 drones and 31 powerful guided bombs at Kharkiv, the second-largest Ukrainian city. Debris from an intercepted Russian drone started a fire in a neighborhood of the capital, Kyiv, according to officials.

Putin announced Monday the temporary ceasefire. However, he hasn't offered details on how the truce, which will start May 8 and last through the end of May 10, would be monitored. It marks Moscow's defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945, known as Victory Day, and comes more than three years after Russia invaded its neighbor.

Russia has effectively rejected a US proposal for an immediate and full



Rescue workers clear the rubble of a house damaged by a Russian strike on a residential neighbourhood in Kyiv, Ukraine, on April 24. (AP)

30-day halt in the fighting by imposing far-reaching conditions. Ukraine has accepted it, according to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Kyiv is keen to lock in crucial US military aid for the war, amid doubts about whether Europe could pick up the slack if Washington walks away.

US President Donald Trump has invested effort in trying to end the fighting, but he expressed skepticism last weekend about Putin's commitment to negotiate a peace deal amid continuing attacks on Ukraine. He said he suspected the Russian leader could be trying to mislead him.

Conservative leader loses seat in Parliament

Mark Carney wins Canadian election

TORONTO, April 29, (AP): Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney's Liberal Party has won the federal election, capping a stunning turnaround in fortunes fueled by US President Donald Trump's annexation threats and trade war.

Carney's rival, populist Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre, was voted out of his seat in Parliament, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation projected Tuesday.

The loss of his seat representing his Ottawa district in Monday's election capped a swift decline in fortunes for the firebrand Poilievre, who a few months ago appeared to be a shoo-in to become Canada's next prime minister and shepherd the Conservatives back into power for the first time in a decade.

But then Trump launched a trade war with Canada and suggested the country should become the 51st state, outraging voters and upending the election.

Poilievre, a career politician, campaigned with Trump-like bravado, taking a page from the "America First" president by adopting the slogan



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney speaks on stage at his campaign headquarters after the Liberal Party won the Canadian election in Ottawa on April 29. (AP)

"Canada First." But his similarities to Trump may have ultimately cost him and his party.

The Liberals were projected to win more of Parliament's 343 seats than the

Conservatives. It wasn't immediately clear if they would win an outright majority - at least 172 - or would need to rely on a smaller party to pass legislation and remain in power.

You can count on us: Steinmeier

Merz's party approves German coalition agreement

BERLIN, April 29, (AP): German election winner Friedrich Merz's party on Monday approved an agreement to form a coalition government with a center-left rival, bringing him closer to the helm of a leading European power as it grapples with a stagnant economy, the Trump administration's trade policy and the war in Ukraine.

Delegates at a convention of Merz's center-right Christian Democratic Union party approved the agreement that was reached earlier this month. German news agency dpa reported that the exact vote count was not released Monday.

The would-be coalition aims to spur economic growth, ramp up defense spending, take a tougher approach to migration and catch up on long-neglected modernization for the 27-nation European Union's most populous member.

The deal still has a bigger hurdle to clear before parliament can meet to elect Merz. The junior partners in the prospective coalition, the center-left Social Democrats of outgoing Chancellor Olaf Scholz, put the agreement to the ballot of their entire 358,000-plus membership. The results are expected on Wednesday.

There is some resistance in the Social Democrats' ranks after the party finished third in Germany's election in February with its worst postwar result



Germany's President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte address the audience during a ceremony to mark the 70th anniversary of Germany's accession to NATO at NATO headquarters in Brussels on April 28. (AP)

in a national parliamentary election. The party's youth wing has come out against the deal.

The CDU is the dominant party in a two-party conservative bloc known as the Union. Its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union, already ap-

proved the deal. If the Social Democrats' members approve the deal, the lower house of the German parliament will meet May 6 to elect Merz as chancellor.

Also:

BRUSSELS: Germany will step up to the new security demands in Europe, President Frank-Walter Steinmeier vowed on Monday, as his country marked 70 years of NATO membership against the background of the Trump administration signaling that US priorities lie elsewhere.

"Today, with (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's war against Ukraine raging on in full force and with the United States putting fierce pressure on its European allies, Germany, I think, is in a crucial position," Steinmeier said.

"Germany is being called on, and we heard the call. We got the message and indeed, Mark, you can count on us," he said, standing alongside NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte at the 32-nation military alliance's Brussels headquarters.

At the same place in February, US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth told Ukraine's Western backers - most of them NATO members - "that stark strategic realities prevent the United States of America from being primarily focused on the security of Europe."

Ishiba, Marcos discuss impact of US tariffs

Japan and Philippines to start talks on 2 defense pacts in face of China's aggression

MANILA, Philippines, April 29, (AP): Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said Tuesday that his country and the Philippines would start talks on two proposed defense pacts to further boost their security alliance and would continue to fight aggression in disputed Asian waters in an obvious rebuke of China.

Ishiba and Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr also discussed in Manila the impact of the barrage of tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump and China's countermeasures on the global economy and free trade system, the Japanese premier said in a news conference with Marcos after their talks.

Ishiba said without elaborating that he would carry out consultations in the Philippines, where major Japanese companies have a presence, to "work toward a better solution." He flew to the Philippines after a visit to Vietnam, another Southeast Asian nation which has had increasingly hostile confrontations with China's coast guard, naval and suspected militia forces in recent years.

China didn't immediately comment on Ishiba's remarks. Beijing claims virtually the entire waterway, where it has bolstered its coast guard and naval presence and built artificial island

bases to fortify its claims. Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have also been involved in the long-simmering territorial standoffs.

The Philippines, Marcos said, would continue its strengthened strategic partnership with Japan, which "shares our ideals and aspirations of upholding democratic institutions and the rules-based international order."

In the East China Sea, China has routinely sent coast guard vessels and planes into waters and airspace that surround islands, which are claimed by both Tokyo and Beijing, to harass Japanese vessels. That has prompted Japan at times to scramble jets in response.

"We oppose any attempt to unilaterally change the status quo through force or coercion in the East and South China Seas," Ishiba said in an obvious reprimand of China, though he didn't name the country. "I hope that our two countries will continue to work closely together to realize a free and open Indo-Pacific based on the rule of law."

The defense pact that Japan and the Philippines would start to negotiate is called the Acquisition and Cross-servicing Agreement, which would allow the provision of food, fuel and other necessities when Japanese forces visit the Philippines for joint training under



Philippine President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr (right), stands beside Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba during the singing of the national anthem at the Malacanang Palace in Manila on April 29. (AP)

a major defense accord that was signed last year and is expected to be ratified by the Japanese legislature.

The other proposed agreement involves the security of highly confidential defense and military information the countries could share. The United States and the Philippines signed such an agreement in November to secure

the exchange of highly confidential military intelligence and technology in key weapons that the US would provide to Manila.

During their talks, Ishiba said that he and Marcos reaffirmed the importance of their trilateral alliance with the US.

The US has repeatedly warned

China over its escalating acts of aggression in the disputed waters against Japan and the Philippines, which are among Washington's staunchest treaty allies in Asia.

However, Trump's tariff impositions on Japan and the Philippines, among other countries worldwide, have sparked an awkward dilemma among the close security allies.

"The US tariff measures have dealt a major blow to the economies of both Vietnam and the Philippines. In addition, there have been major impacts on Japanese companies expanding into these countries," Ishiba said over the weekend in Tokyo before traveling to Vietnam and the Philippines.

He was scheduled to meet with Japanese company executives in the Philippines to hear their concerns, Japanese officials said.

After visiting a Japanese war memorial in Laguna province, south of Manila, on Wednesday, Ishiba is scheduled to board in Manila the BRP Magbanua, one of the two largest patrol ships built by Japan for the Philippine coast guard.

The Magbanua has figured in increasingly hostile faceoffs with the Chinese coast guard in the South China Sea and was damaged in one tense encounter last year in the disputed Sa-

binua Shoal. The countries accused each other then of instigating the high seas confrontation.

Japan has supplied a dozen patrol ships in recent years to the Philippines, which is using them largely to defend its territorial interest in the South China Sea. Japan plans to build at least five more patrol ships for the Philippines. It has also provided radars and other defense equipment for the underfunded Philippine military.

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.

Business, political elite turn out for funeral of Lee

4 ex-HK lawmakers freed after years in jail under Beijing-imposed law

HONG KONG, April 29, (AP): Four former Hong Kong lawmakers were freed from prison Tuesday after serving more than four years for their convictions under a Beijing-imposed security law that crushed a once-thriving pro-democracy movement.

Claudia Mo, Jeremy Tam, Kwok Ka-ki and Gary Fan were among 47 activists arrested in 2021 for their roles in an unofficial primary election. They were the first of the convicted activists to reunite with their families and friends following years of separation.

Only vehicles involved in the release were seen leaving the three prisons in remote areas of Hong Kong. Security was tight and curtains on the vehicles were closed.

Mo's husband, Philip Bowring, told reporters he was pleased Mo had returned home, saying she was "well and in good spirits." But he said she would not give interviews for the time being. "She has to get used to life again in the outside world," he said at their door, adding that they probably would go to England to see their grandchildren later.

In a video posted by local online media HK01, Fan thanked Hong Kongers and the media for their concern. He added he was going to reunite with his family.

The 2020 unofficial primary drew



A vehicle believed to be carrying former pro-democracy lawmaker Gary Fan, who was released after four years for his conviction under the national security law, leaves the Shek Pik Prison in Hong Kong on April 29. (AP)

610,000 voters, and its winners had been expected to advance to the official legislative election. Authorities postponed that, however, citing public health risks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the trial, prosecutors said the activists aimed to paralyze Hong Kong's government and force the city's leader to resign by aiming to win a legislative majority and using it to block government budgets indiscriminately.

The judges said in their verdict last year that the activists' plans to effect change through the unofficial primary would have undermined the government's authority and created a constitutional crisis.

Only two of the 47 original defendants were acquitted. The remaining activists received prison terms ranging from four years and two months to 10 years on a charge of conspiracy to commit subversion. Mo, Tam, Kwok

and Fan pleaded guilty and received reduced sentences.

Also:

HONG KONG: Prominent Hong Kong political and business leaders paid tribute Monday to the city's late billionaire property tycoon **Lee Shau-kee**, who led one of the biggest real estate empires in the former British territory.

Lee, who died at age 97 on March 17, was once ranked as the richest man in Asia. In Forbes' February ranking, he was listed as the city's second-richest person with \$29.2 billion in assets.

Lee founded Henderson Land Development Co Ltd in 1976, and his empire helped shape the Asian financial hub's skyline. The company's portfolio includes landmarks such as the International Finance Centre complex and ifc mall in Central, a vibrant commercial district. His business interests also expanded into other sectors such as hotels, utilities and ferries in the city.

Nicknamed "Uncle Four," Lee was ranked the richest person in Asia and the world's fourth-wealthiest person by Forbes in 1996. He was Henderson Land's chairman and managing director before stepping down from the position in 2019. He was succeeded by his sons, **Peter Lee** and **Martin Lee**, the company's co-chairpersons.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, workers build a scaffolding around the site of a restaurant fire in Liaoyang, northeastern China's Liaoning province on April 29. (AP)

22 people killed and three hurt in China restaurant fire

TAIPEI, Taiwan, April 29, (AP): Chinese authorities say 22 people have been killed and 3 injured in a fire at restaurant in the northern city of Liaoyang.

No word was given on the cause of the fire, which broke out shortly after noon, but images from the scene showed huge flames spurring from the windows and doors of the two- or three-story building.

A slightly longer report released several hours later through the provincial radio and television bureau said

the fire had been extinguished and the search for survivors ended. As is usual in China, no additional information was given about the possible cause of the fire. However, a long list of responding regional politicians - from the governor down - was provided, along with a pledge to get to the bottom of the disaster and severely punish those responsible.

Industrial accidents occur frequently in China, usually due to staff ignoring safety features due to a lack of training or pressure from their superiors.

Gangs attack another town in Haiti's central region, killing 11-year-old child, three others

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, April 29, (AP): Gangs have attacked another town in Haiti's central region, killing at least four people, including an 11-year-old child, a human rights activist told The Associated Press on Monday.

At least 15 other people were injured by gunfire, and more than a dozen homes were burned in Petite Rivière, said Bertide Horace, spokesperson for the Commission for Dialogue, Reconciliation and Awareness to Save the Artibonite.

The attack began Thursday, but police were still battling gang members on Monday, she said in a phone interview.

Horace shared grisly videos that showed people receiving treatment for serious wounds at a local hospital.

Before she could provide further details, Horace warned that the town being attacked was without power. Her cellphone was then cut off.

A spokesperson for Haiti's National Police did not immediately return a request for comment.

Petite Rivière is the latest community in the once peaceful Artibonite region that gangs have targeted.

In late March, gangs struck the city of Mirebalais and stormed a local prison, freeing more than 500 inmates. They also attacked the nearby town of



A police officer patrols an intersection in the Petion-Ville neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Haiti on April 24. (AP)

Saut d'Eau, considered a sacred place that attracts thousands of Haitians annually for a Vodou-Catholic pilgrimage. While gangs control at least 85% of Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital, they have launched attacks in the country's central region in recent years.

On Monday, Chrisla, the powerful leader of the Ti Bois gang, announced a three-day strike in the Port-au-Prince

neighborhood of Carrefour, which has been bereft of any government presence since gangs seized control of it in recent years.

He ordered public transportation and private businesses to close, saying only hospitals and firefighters were authorized to operate.

Chrisla also said he wanted a new Haiti "so that we can all sit at the same table to reconcile this nation."

Authorities shutter dozens of tourist resorts in Indian-controlled Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India, April 29, (AP): Authorities in Indian-controlled Kashmir have temporarily shuttered more than half of the tourist resorts in the scenic Himalayan region after last week's deadly attack on tourists raised tensions between India and Pakistan and led to an intensifying security crackdown in Kashmir.

At least two police officers and three administrative officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity in keeping with departmental policy, said Tuesday that the decision to shut 48 of the 87 government-authorized resorts was a precautionary safety measure. They did not specify for how long these places would be out of bounds for visitors.

The decision comes a week after gunmen killed 26 people, most of them Indian tourists, near the resort town of Pahalgam.

The massacre set off tit-for-tat diplomatic measures between India and Pakistan that included cancellation of visas and a recall of diplomats. New Delhi also suspended a crucial water sharing treaty with Islamabad and ordered its border shut with Pakistan. In response, Pakistan has closed its airspace to Indian air-



An Indian paramilitary soldier talks with tourists outside a garden in Srinagar after it was closed by authorities as a precautionary safety measure following last week's deadly attack on tourists near the resort town of Pahalgam, Indian-controlled Kashmir on April 29. (AP)

lines. India has described the massacre as a "terror attack" and accused Pakistan of backing it. Pakistan has denied any connection to the attack, and it was claimed by a previously unknown militant group calling itself the Kashmir Resistance.

Some tourists who survived the massacre have told Indian media that the gunmen singled out Hindu men and shot them from close

range. The dead included a Nepalese citizen and a local Muslim pony ride operator. The region is split between India and Pakistan and claimed by both in its entirety.

New Delhi describes all militancy in Indian-controlled Kashmir as Pakistan-backed terrorism. Pakistan denies this, and many Muslim Kashmiris consider the militants to be part of a home-grown freedom struggle.

Lat/Am

Mexican activist, husband found dead: Mexican authorities announced Monday the discovery of the bodies of a human rights activist and her husband, six months after they were reported missing in the southern state of Oaxaca.

The Oaxaca State Prosecutor's Office said in a statement that lawyer and activist Sandra Estefana Domínguez Martínez and her husband Alexander Hernández Hernández were found Thursday in the municipality of Santiago Sochiapan in neighboring Veracruz state.

The bodies were found in two graves and authorities waited until testing confirmed their identities before announcing the discovery.

The couple were last seen Oct. 4, in the town of María Lombardo de Caso, in eastern Oaxaca on the border with Veracruz. Domínguez Martínez, a prominent feminist activist and defender of the Mixe Indigenous peoples, native to Oaxaca's eastern highlands, is herself of Mixe descent.

In 2020, Domínguez denounced several state government officials for allegedly participating in misogynist group chats. Domínguez said the virtual chats shared images of Indigenous women and included degrading commentary. Since then, Domínguez had faced ongoing threats. (AP)



Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum gives her daily morning press conference at the National Palace in Mexico City on Feb 3. (AP)

Mexico and US reach deal: Mexico and the United States said Monday they had reached an agreement that involves Mexico immediately sending more water from their shared Rio Grande basin to Texas farmers after US President Donald Trump threatened tariffs and sanctions earlier this month. "Mexico has committed to make an immediate transfer of water from international reservoirs and increase the US share of the flow in six of Mexico's Rio Grande tributaries through the end of the current

five-year water cycle," US State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce said in a statement.

Bruce thanked Mexico President Claudia Sheinbaum for her involvement in facilitating cross-border cooperation.

The countries' joint statement Monday, while lacking specific details of the agreement, said both countries had agreed that the 1944 treaty regulating how the water is shared was still beneficial for both countries and not in need of renegotiation. (AP)

Man dies trying to drive thru floodwaters: A man who tried to drive his car through floodwaters was swept away and killed Monday in Puerto Rico as heavy rains lashed the island, authorities said.

The incident occurred in a heavily flooded area of San Juan, the US territory's capital, police said in a statement.

In Bayamón, a city southwest of the capital, officials rescued four men and two women who were visiting a waterfall and were swept away by floodwaters, police said.

Flash flood warnings and flood advisories were issued Monday for several towns across Puerto Rico, which has been hit by persistent rain since Friday.

Nearly nine inches (23 centimeters) of rain has fallen in some areas since Friday, according to the National Weather Service in San Juan. (AP)

Landlocked Sahel states back Morocco's sea access initiative

DAKAR, Senegal, April 29, (AP): The landlocked countries of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger have endorsed an initiative by Morocco to give them access to the Atlantic Ocean, the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

The foreign ministers of the three military-ruled West African nations shared their countries positions during a meeting Monday with King Mohammed VI in Rabat, the capital of Morocco, according to a ministry statement.

The three-nation bloc of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger announced last year that they were leaving the regional bloc known as ECOWAS. They then created their own security partnership, known as the Alliance of Sahel States, severed military ties with longstanding Western partners such as US and France, and turned to

Russia for military support.

In December 2023, Morocco announced a trade initiative to facilitate Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger's access to the Atlantic Ocean using Moroccan ports after ECOWAS imposed trade restrictions on the three junta-led countries.

The foreign ministers of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger reaffirmed their "full support for and commitment to accelerating its implementation," during the royal meeting, the ministry said.

The meeting comes at a time of growing tensions between Morocco's regional rival Algeria and the Sahel states.

Last month, Algeria says it shot down a Malian drone when it crossed into its air space near the border town of Tin Zaouatine. Mali denied the drone crossed the border.

Kuwaiti oil price slips to \$69.54 pb

KUWAIT CITY, April 29, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went down by 40 cents to USD 69.54 per barrel on Monday as opposed to USD 69.94 per barrel last Friday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Thursday.

At the global level, the price of the Brent crude went down by USD 1.01 to USD 65.86 per barrel, the same occurred to the West Texas Intermediate, which went down by 97 cents to USD 62.05 pb.

Business

Company celebrated winners of the annual Company Program Competition

Zain and INJAZ: 20 years of investing in future leaders



Al-Musaibeh and Ashkanani honor the winning team in the university category.



Honoring the winning team in the high school category.



Honoring the team that won the Sustainability Heroes award.

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Zain has honored the students who won the Best Innovative Product award in the high school and university categories, as well as the Sustainability Heroes award in collaboration with Nestlé, during the closing ceremony of the 2025 edition of the INJAZ Company Program Competition. Zain supports this competition annually in collaboration with INJAZ Kuwait to empower the next generation of Kuwaiti entrepreneurs.

The ceremony was held at the Cultural Center of the American University of the Middle East (AUM), joined by Hamad Al-Musaibeh, Corporate Relations Department Manager at Zain Kuwait; Jaber Ashkanani, Business Development and Strategic Relations Manager at INJAZ Kuwait; and representatives of sponsors, supporters, and partners.

Faisal Al-Duwaihees, Community Partnerships and Youth Empowerment Specialist at Zain Kuwait, joined the panel of judges, which included a group of entrepreneurs and executives from private sector institutions. The panel listened to the students' final project presentations, after which the evaluation process was carried out and the winning teams in each category were selected based on a set of criteria.

Zain honored the two teams who won the Best Innovative Product award: the KeraChick team, winners of the university category, and the BlindSpot team, winners of the high school category, in recognition of their outstand-

ing innovation within their startup companies in achieving the program's objectives.

Zain also honored the KeraChick team for additionally winning the Sustainability Heroes award in collaboration with Nestlé. This came as part of the two companies' recent cooperation with INJAZ Kuwait to empower Kuwaiti youth to excel in entrepreneurship, with a focus on tackling social and environmental challenges to create a sustainable future.

Zain's participation falls under its long-standing strategic partnership with INJAZ Kuwait, a relationship that has spanned 20 years since the organization's founding in 2005. Throughout this partnership, Zain has consistently supported and sponsored various academic and training programs organized by INJAZ to invest in the potential and creativity of Kuwaiti youth, helping them pursue their ambitions, realize their dreams in the world of entrepreneurship, and refine their skills to succeed in the job market.

The annual Company Program Competition aims to empower university and high school students to practice establishing and managing their own startups. This year, 200 students participated, forming 29 teams from various universities and schools. Throughout the competition, volunteers with expertise and competence from different private sector institutions in Ku-

wait trained the participating students on essential business skills.

The skills taught include developing and translating project ideas into reality, conducting feasibility studies, selling shares, managing teams and human resources, creating business plans, producing and selling services and products, among other key competencies.

Through its strategic partnership with INJAZ, Zain seeks to educate and support youth who are passionate about developing their ideas and projects according to international standards. This is achieved through a series of training programs organized throughout the year, including the Company Program Competition, as Zain continuously strives to provide a stimulating environment for the talents and creativity of young people in Kuwait.

INJAZ Kuwait is a non-governmental, non-profit organization aimed at developing the capabilities of young people in Kuwait to succeed within the global economy. It delivers training courses focused on business management, specifically in the areas of entrepreneurship, work readiness, and financial literacy. INJAZ Kuwait is a member of Junior Achievement Worldwide and has trained over 150,000 students from more than 200 public and private sector schools and universities, with the support of over 7,000 volunteers.

'Avoid search engine traps'

Gulf Bank warns against fraudulent sites, recommends use of 'Sahel' app

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: As part of its continued support for the "Diraya" awareness campaign, Gulf Bank is reinforcing its efforts to educate customers on the importance of using secure platforms, such as the "Sahel" app, when paying for services offered by government entities.

Gulf Bank warned against relying too heavily on internet search engines, urging users to verify the authenticity of websites and digital platforms before proceeding with any payments or entering personal and banking details.

The Bank emphasized the importance of accessing government entities' official websites directly, warning that search engine results can be misleading and may lead users to fraudulent sites that appear legitimate. It also cautioned that cybercriminals often mimic the design and branding of trusted institutions to create convincing fake websites – leaving users susceptible to online fraud and the unauthorized access or theft of their confidential banking information.

Gulf Bank urged users to protect themselves by verifying that website links match the official URLs, ensuring the presence of HTTPS and the padlock icon, and double-checking search results against trusted sources to confirm their legitimacy.

The "Diraya" campaign, launched by



Gulf Bank promotes digital safety under 'Diraya' awareness drive.

the Central Bank of Kuwait in collaboration with the Kuwait Banking Association, aims to educate bank customers on essential banking services and promote secure transaction practices.

It also focuses on enhancing financial inclusion and stability, raising awareness about customer rights and responsibilities, highlighting the benefits of digital financial services, and emphasizing the importance of cyber-security.

New regulations aim to boost investor confidence

Ministry of Commerce to implement new real estate valuation standards

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: As part of ongoing efforts to improve the local investment environment, as well as the accuracy and consistency of financial reporting, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is studying new regulatory conditions for the accounting valuation of real estate assets held by banks and companies, reports Al-Rai daily quoting sources.

Sources revealed that the ministry is preparing a set of standards for accredited asset valuers and owners of real estate assets, including banks and commercial entities. These regulations aim to align real estate valuations with international accounting practices and reflect actual market conditions more accurately, sources added.

The ministry is currently holding consultations with regulatory bodies, such as the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Capital Markets Authority (CMA), to assess the adequacy of existing valuation frameworks. These discussions focus on whether current regulations are sufficient for the upcoming phase or if new, ministry-specific guidelines are needed.

Officials noted that one of the key goals of the proposed standards is to require both companies and accredited valuers to comply with a unified set of valuation principles issued by the ministry. These principles will introduce additional criteria aimed at improving the quality and reliability of real estate appraisals; thereby, increasing investor confidence and supporting better financial governance.

The anticipated regulations are expected to include:

- Clear definitions and criteria for the valuation of real estate assets in financial statements;

- Standardized methodologies that reflect both current market conditions and income potential of properties;

- Enhanced technical reporting requirements to ensure consistency across valuation reports;

- Mandatory compliance by all parties involved in the valuation process, including commercial companies and financial institutions.

Currently, the Central Bank of Kuwait mandates specific controls for real estate valuations submitted by banks, such as requiring one of the appraisers to be a bank (typically Kuwait Finance House or Kuwait International Bank) and setting minimum asset thresholds.

Meanwhile, CMA applies broader valuation principles consistent with international accounting standards, which apply to all assets, not just real estate.

Standard valuation reports typically consider factors such as monthly rental income (actual and estimated), market value based on location and current property condition, depreciation-adjusted construction costs, price per square meter, and any condition that may affect asset value. These details are crucial for determining the fair value of assets included in corporate budgets.

Sources emphasized that if the ministry proceeds with its own regulatory framework, no real estate transaction under its jurisdiction will be approved unless all items in the revised valuation report are completed. Research and coordination with relevant authorities on this matter are continuing, sources affirmed.

Premier Market gains 0.31% while Main Market slips 0.24%

Boursa Kuwait edges up 0.21% to close at 7,917.92

KUWAIT CITY, April 29, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Tuesday's trading session with its general index posting a modest gain of 16.70 points, or 0.21 percent, to settle at 7,917.92 points.

A total of 620 million shares changed hands through 25,233 cash transactions, generating a market value of KD 112.19 million (approximately \$343.3 million). The Main Market Index, however, edged down by 16.98 points, or 0.24 percent, ending at 7,202.05 points. It saw 475 million shares traded across 15,914 deals, with a turnover of KD 54.6 million (around \$167 mil-

lion). In contrast, the Premier Market Index advanced by 25.93 points, or 0.31 percent, closing at 8,487.68 points. It registered 144.9 million shares traded in 9,319 transactions worth KD 57.5 million (about \$175.9 million).

Meanwhile, the Major 50 Index remained relatively flat, inching up by 0.14 points to finish at 7,116.09 points, with 396 million shares exchanged through 13,062 deals totaling KD 48.4 million (approximately \$148.1 million).

Kamco Invest strengthens tech portfolio with Mercury success

Mercury raises \$300 mln in Series C

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse with one of the largest AUMs in the region, announced the success of its investment on behalf of clients in Mercury, a leading U.S.-based fintech company that has just closed a USD300mn Series C funding round at a valuation of USD3.5bn. The funding round was led by Sequoia Capital alongside prominent global investors including Spark Capital, Marathon Management, Coatue, CRV, and Andreessen Horowitz.

An earlier investment in Mercury was made by the Alternative Investments team at a lower valuation, around USD1.5bn, as part of its international tech strategy focused on high-growth opportunities. The latest funding round brings a 2.3x multiple on invested capital, reflecting the strong ability to access and identify strong international opportunities at growth stages.

Founded in 2017, Mercury has rapidly positioned itself as a key financial services provider for startups, offering a suite of banking and fintech products, including corporate credit cards, payroll systems, financial reporting, and cash flow forecasting. With over 200,000 customers, processing more than USD 95 bn in transaction volume, USD 500 mn in annual revenue in 2024, and ten consecutive quarters of profitability, Mercury continues to expand its footprint and service offerings across the startup ecosystem.

In 2024, Mercury expanded into the consumer space with the launch of "Mercury Personals" designed and engineered for entrepreneurs and investors who want a self-serve banking option and a high-quality product experience to optimize their personal finances. The new funding will enable Mercury to accelerate product development, pursue strategic acquisitions, and maintain long-term financial flexibility.

Dalal Al-Shaya, CFA, Director - Alternative Investments, said "Our investment in Mercury reflects Kamco Invest's ability to identify and access global opportunities at the growth stage, alongside some of the world's most respected venture capital firms. We are proud to support innovative companies like



Dalal Al-Shaya



Fahad AlSharekh

Mercury that are transforming industries, and we remain committed to delivering long-term value to our clients through our global investment strategies."

Following the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) in March 2023, Mercury quickly emerged as a leading alternative for startups seeking stability and innovation in financial services. Within days of the crisis, Mercury attracted over 8,700 new customers and USD2bn in deposits in just five days. This swift response not only filled a critical gap left by SVB but also solidified Mercury's position as a trusted financial partner for early-stage startups. Since then, Mercury's market share has grown significantly, bolstered by its agility, commitment to innovation, and deep understanding of the startup ecosystem.

Fahad AlSharekh, Tech Investment Advisor, commented, "We are proud to have invested in such a high-profile, rapidly growing company with excellent fundamentals and outstanding growth potential. By leveraging our deep expertise and strong relationships with top-tier managers across global technology markets, we successfully identified this strategic opportunity at an early stage, a valuable achievement in today's challenging business environment. This positions us to generate competitive returns and create lasting value for our investors."

Al Shaye concluded, "This achievement

reinforces Kamco Invest's capability to deliver value through global partnerships and its commitment to uncovering transformative opportunities in innovation-led sectors."

It is worth noting that Kamco Invest was recently named Kuwait's Best for Alternative Investments in 2025 by Euromoney, recognizing the company's strong performance and diverse solutions in the alternative investment space which covers private equity, real estate and structured products.

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

Kamco Invest has AUM of over USD 15.9 bn as of 31 December 2024 allocated to various asset classes and jurisdictions, making it one of the largest asset managers in the MENA region. It has acted as investment banker to deals exceeding USD 41.5 bn from its inception till 31 December 2024 in equity capital markets, debt capital markets and mergers & acquisitions.

'Kuwait's Best Private Bank, Ultra-High-Net-Worth, and Digital Solutions'

NBK Wealth receives three prestigious awards from Euromoney Private Banking Awards 2025

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: In appreciation of its efforts for providing exceptional Private Banking services and enriching customer experience with digital solutions, NBK Wealth, the pioneering wealth management group in the region, received 3 prestigious awards from Euromoney, the international magazine focused on finance and business, as part of its Private Banking Awards for the year 2025.

NBK Wealth received 3 awards for Kuwait's Best Private Bank, Kuwait's Best for Ultra-High-Net-Worth Clients, and Kuwait's Best for Digital Solutions.

Being the largest wealth management group locally and one of the biggest regionally, these awards further reflect the strength of NBK Wealth's prestigious name, which draws its strength from the locally and internationally pioneering NBK Group brand whose record is filled with achievements and global awards for its efforts in the banking sector.

The Euromoney Awards come in light of NBK Wealth's solid growth, strategic initiatives, and technological advancements, as it excels in its ability to understand different customer needs and tailor its strategies accordingly, as it has launched many new products, such as private debt strategies, structured deposits, and specialized discretionary portfolio management services, in addition to comprehensive private banking services like wealth management, financial planning, investment management, and advisory services.

Moreover, the launch of Generation W, a week-long wealth education program based in Geneva targeting second-generation clients and teaching them about the principles of investment and wealth management and maintenance, evidences the bank's commitment to client education and long-term relationship-building.

NBK Wealth has proven its remarkable ability to cater to its ultra-high-net-worth clients and enhanced its wealth management offerings, achieving big growth in its assets under man-



Fadi Choueiry, Head of Private Banking Kuwait, NBK Wealth, receives Kuwait's Best Private Bank award.



Kuwait's Best Private Bank, Kuwait's Best for UHNW Clients, and Kuwait's Best in Digital Solutions.

agement, successfully diversifying its investment portfolio across the different asset classes, and widening its product range, which helped attract new clients and solidify its leadership in wealth management.

It should be noted also that the group formed a strategic partnership with J. P. Morgan Asset Management, which gave the clients a bigger opportunity to benefit from various selected products, and enhanced client-interaction through innovative initiatives including issuing specialized analytical reports as part of "NBK Wealth Insights", which further strengthens its role as a provider of holistic investment solutions.

In line with its strategy to enhance customer experience and operational competency, NBK Wealth adopted digital innovation and technological advancements to present innovative experiences and solutions to its clients. In doing so, it has remarkably simplified operations, leading to more productivity and high-quality services.

Moreover, not only does NBK Wealth strive to enhance its clients' wealth, but it is also committed to becoming the first and most trusted wealth management entity, by providing specialized, innovative, and comprehensive solu-

tions that meet its clients' needs and gives an added value and positive impact as well as maintain generational legacy.

NBK Wealth is one of the pillars of NBK Group and a pioneer wealth management group in the Middle East, as the value of its assets under management exceeds US\$ 41bn Personal Financial Assets as of the end of 2024. It enjoys a wide geographical presence that extends over 9 cities in 5 different countries, in which it provides a comprehensive package of products, including private banking services, financial planning, asset management, and advisory services. NBK Wealth follows a specialized solution-based approach that suits the individual needs of its clients as per their unique goals, whether that of ultra-high-net-worth individuals and institutions.

NBK Wealth is a brand registered under the name of National Bank of Kuwait S.A.K.P ("NBK"), for use by the Asset Management business of, among other NBK group entities, Watani Investment Company K.S.C.C., a leading investment firm and its affiliates worldwide, combined with the Private Banking services of NBK worldwide, which is one of the largest and oldest financial institutions in the region.

Bank promotes saving and investing culture

KIB enhances financial awareness through 'Let's Be Aware' campaign

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) resumes its dedicated efforts at raising the level of financial awareness among its customers within the framework of its support for the financial awareness campaign "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) and promoting banking culture among members of society. KIB emphasizes the importance of adopting a culture of saving and investing as a solid foundation for a secure and future-oriented banking experience. Additionally, the Bank seeks to educate customers about accessing its innovative products and services and utilizing its advanced digital channels specializing in investment, savings, and money management.

In this context, Abdullah Al Khamees, Senior Specialist, Internal Communications - Marketing and Corporate Communication at KIB, said: "We are pleased to contribute to advancing the essential and important culture of saving and investing in Kuwait, as it represents a safe and sustainable path for future banking experiences. At KIB, we are always committed to enhancing our customers' saving skills, as well as maximizing the benefits of the investment products and tools we offer. This advanced approach reaffirms our commitment to empowering customers to increase their returns and savings rates, achieve their aspirations of educating their children, start personal projects, or enjoy a more comfortable and secure retirement."

He added: "KIB spares no effort in adhering to all the recommendations of the 'Let's Be Aware' campaign. Furthermore, we focus on innovating services and launching products that meet our customers' aspirations and fulfill all their needs regarding saving and investing. Examples include the investment deposit that provides substantial returns over specific periods, the investment fund for joint investments in stocks, Sukuk, and money markets, as well as savings accounts that allow withdrawals and deposits at any time, along with a wide range of other services and products."

Among the key advantages available at KIB is the Dirwaza account, one of the latest savings accounts designed for individual



Abdullah Al Khamees



'Let's Be Aware' Campaign.

customers. It is based on the Wakala principle. This account is the best of its kind, providing the highest returns among investment savings tools, with an expected annual return of up to 2% disbursed on a monthly basis.

It is worth noting that KIB diligently strives to provide its customers with a smoother, more efficient, and secure banking experience that aligns with their modern lifestyles and supports its leading role in enriching the banking sector with solutions and products. This is backed up by the Bank's comprehensive strategy which is focused on offering a more advanced and luxurious experience, reflecting its main slogan, 'Bank for Life'.

Qatar invests over \$53 billion in British economy, says PM

DOHA, April 29, (KUNA): Qatari Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs stated Sunday that his country invests more than GBP 40 billion (USD 53 billion) in the British economy.

In a joint press conference with UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs David Lammy, Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani noted that the volume of trade exchange between the two countries reached GBP 1.6 billion (approx. USD 2 billion) in 2024.

He pointed out that the State of Qatar continues to play a pivotal role among major global investors in the United Kingdom, as it is the first partner of the leading British partnerships.

Sheikh Mohammad considered the United Kingdom one of the most important investment partners of the State of Qatar, in light of its proven track record of successes in key investment areas.

He added that Qatari investments in

the United Kingdom have contributed to supporting the growth of the British economy and its projects, increasing job opportunities, innovation, and economic development in both friendly countries, particularly in the fields of science, technology, sustainability, climate change adaptation, and digital development.

The Qatari Premier He emphasized that this partnership is a strong sign of the shared commitment to creating prosperity and a bright future for the two friendly peoples.

On the developments in the Gaza Strip, the Qatari official warned of the escalation of the ongoing Israeli aggression against the occupied Palestinian territories and the Gaza Strip, indicating that the region is facing greater dangers than ever before.

He warned of the dangers of politicizing humanitarian aid, targeting humanitarian workers, and using hunger as a form of collective punishment, as this places the entire region on the brink of collapse.

KFH launches smartphone-based POS payment solution

As part of its ongoing commitment to digital excellence

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has introduced a new payment solution for business owners, switching their smartphones into secure and user-friendly POS terminals for debit cards and digital wallets.

The new service, available on Android 11 devices and above, reflects KFH's continuous efforts in advancing its technological infrastructure and improving how customers access technical services across its various platforms.

The new payment service features the highest security standards, as it doesn't require sharing information with any third party and is disabled when connected to unsecured internet networks. Setting up the service is quick and easy. Customer can make cardless transactions via smart devices for amounts ranging from KD 25 to 250, with a maximum limit of KD 250 per transaction. For



KFH introduces secure cardless payment option for business owners.

smaller transactions up to KD 25, customers can use smartphones and an ATM card, without a limit on the number of transactions. Additionally, the service accepts ATM cards and payments can also be made through digital wallet.

This payment service eliminates the need for paperwork or invoices after payment. Customers can scan the QR code on their receipt for transaction details. To learn more about the new service, please contact us at merchantsales@kfh.com.

KFH is dedicated to spearheading digital innovation, offering diverse digital services and solutions to enhance customer experience and keep pace with the latest technology trends. The Bank is also focused on providing seamless, swift, and secure banking that caters to all needs remotely, eliminating the necessity for branch visits.

Oil sector to lead UAE expansion as output climbs to 3.27 mb/d

UAE GDP growth forecast at 4.2% in 2025-2026 despite global risks

By National Bank of Kuwait

Although downside risks to the UAE's externally-exposed economy have increased, our base case outlook for 2025-26 remains relatively upbeat with GDP growth averaging 4.2% in 2025-26 led by higher oil production, while non-oil growth will slow but is underpinned by continued reform and investment initiatives, strong international competitiveness metrics and healthy if narrowing macroeconomic balances. Property price rises are seen moderating amid rising supply and still-high interest rates. Escalating regional security tensions, a more severe drop in oil prices, an extended global downturn, and tighter financial conditions are the preeminent downside risks to the outlook.

Outlook remains positive, despite external headwinds

Despite mounting external risks, our base case for the UAE economy in 2025-26 remains relatively upbeat, helped by rising energy production, still-strong tourism, population inflows, a pipeline of infrastructure and real estate projects, higher public spending and diversification steps. We see the main downside pressures coming from deteriorating global investor sentiment, weaker trade and tighter financing conditions, on top of the imposition of US tariffs on aluminum and steel, which could weigh on the UAE's non-oil exports. GDP is forecast up 4.2% in 2025-26 on average, led by the energy sector, while non-oil growth moderates from the very robust 5.4% recorded in 2023-24 on average to a still solid 3.9%. (Chart 1.) We also think that a moderation from previous fast growth rates would be beneficial for long-term sustainability, noting that private sector lending growth stood at almost 4% at the end of 2024, with retail lending at a very robust 17%. (Chart 2.) Government growth and development initiatives continue to be forthcoming, with a new National Investment Strategy presented in March 2025, targeting raising annual FDI inflows from \$31 billion (2023) to \$65 billion by 2031, focusing on growing industry, logistics, finance, renewable energy and IT.

The oil sector, meanwhile, is poised for rapid growth in 2025-26 (5.3%), as OPEC+ unwinds members' voluntary crude production cuts and the UAE capitalizes on its higher production baseline (in recognition of its higher capacity). Output is expected to reach 3.27 mb/d by end-2026. In addition, the completion of the Dalma and Upper Zakum field projects by 2026 will push ADNOC closer to achieving its production capacity target of 5 mb/d by 2026.

Real estate sales growth to moderate

Property sales remained buoyant in 2024, though the breakeven pace of growth of previous years has eased, with Abu Dhabi sales up 8.8% y/y (14.4% in 2023) and Dubai sales up 27% (57%). Prices, on the other hand,

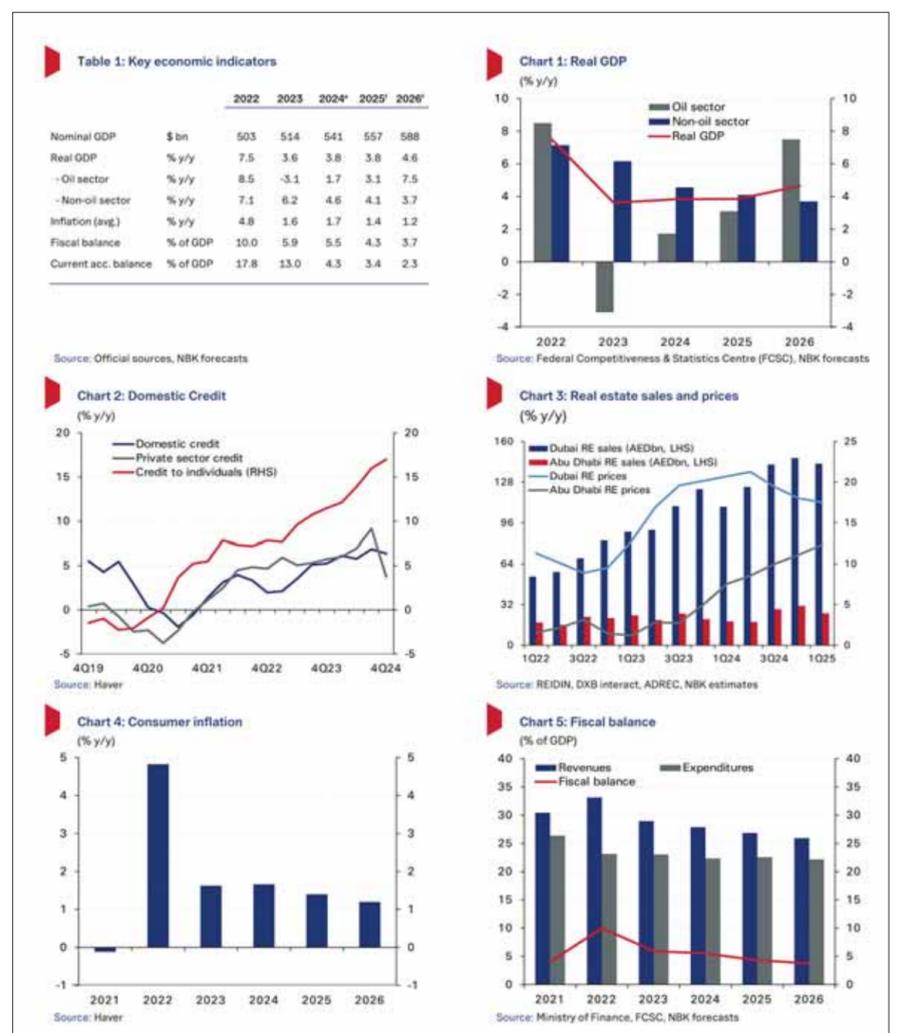
continued to rise (20% y/y in Dubai and 8.6% in Abu Dhabi), reflecting limited supply in the ultra-luxury residential market. (Chart 3.) Cognizant of undersupply and the risk of an overheating sector, the authorities launched key initiatives including Dubai's real estate sector strategy 2033, which aims at expanding housing supply, raising homeownership to 33%, and doubling the sector's contribution to GDP. Local and federal authorities also adopted several reforms, including capping cash transactions, the introduction of a digital auction platform, and data-sharing agreements in Dubai, while the Federal government provided tax guidance for individuals and investors to boost transparency, confidence, and promote stability while reducing the risk of illicit activities. Interest rate cuts would support demand, though higher supply and stricter regulations could weigh on sales and price growth over 2025-26. Meanwhile, CPI inflation could slow in 2025-26 to 1.3%, after stabilizing in 2023-24 at 1.6%, due to slower rent growth and the fall in fuel prices. However, tariff barriers, along with a potentially weaker US dollar, could provide some upside risk. (Chart 4.)

Fiscal surplus narrowing on lower oil revenues

The fiscal surplus is seen narrowing over 2025-26 due to lower oil prices (\$70/bbl), though higher production levels would support hydrocarbon revenues. As a result, the fiscal surplus could decline from an estimated 5.5% of GDP in 2024 to 4.0% in 2025-26. (Chart 5.) Expenditures are expected to rise during the same period (3.6%), on higher allocations for infrastructure, diversification initiatives and social benefits as outlined in the federal and Dubai budgets. Financial buffers in sovereign wealth funds are huge at 407% of GDP (\$2.2trn). Meanwhile, the current account surplus is expected to narrow to 2.3% of GDP by 2026 due to lower oil prices, slower external demand, and the impact of the US's 25% tariffs on iron, steel and aluminum, to which the UAE is exposed as the second largest supplier of aluminum to the US accounting for about 8.0% of the country's non-oil exports. The recently agreed 10-year \$1.4 trillion investment deal with the US, which focuses on AI infrastructure, semiconductors, and clean energy among others, highlights ambition in the tech sector, and good long-term capital returns would contribute to the country's strong external position.

Trade and oil prices are the main risks to the outlook

Downside risks to the outlook, from lower oil prices to the trade-tariff induced deterioration in global trade, predominate in the current climate, potentially dampening investor sentiment and external demand. That said, the attractiveness of the UAE for tourists, and its economy to labor, capital and business, underpinned by its investment and diversification agenda, provide underlying resilience.



Award ceremony held under patronage of Governor of the Central Bank

ABK recognized among top supporters of the CBK's 'Let's Be Aware' banking awareness campaign for '24

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) honored Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) as one of the top-performing banks in the annual evaluation for 2024 of the 'Let's Be Aware' banking awareness campaign. The initiative aims to promote financial inclusion and educate customers on various banking services, their rights and responsibilities, digital banking, services for individuals with special needs, and fraud prevention, among other key topics.

The award ceremony was held under the patronage of the Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait, Basel Al-Haroon, at the Bank's headquarters. It was attended by Acting Group CEO of ABK, Abdulla Al Sumait, alongside representatives from other honored banks and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA). During the event, ABK was commended for its notable efforts in promoting the campaign and contributing to its successful outcomes throughout the year. The Bank delivered standout content that reached diverse segments of Kuwaiti society across all social media platforms.

On this occasion, Al Sumait expressed his pride in ABK being recognized among the top supporters of the 'Let's Be Aware' campaign. He praised CBK and KBA for their ongoing commitment, which has helped sustain the campaign's success for the fourth consecutive year. Al Sumait noted that ABK has been a proactive force in delivering



Abdulla Al Sumait receiving the award from the Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait, Basel Al-Haroon.

the campaign's educational banking message – the first of its kind in Kuwait and the GCC – by broadcasting daily awareness videos through its social media platforms, in-branch screens, and

ATMs across Kuwait.

Among the Bank's key initiatives in 2024 were the launch of a themed calendar featuring campaign topics, a TV commercial during Ramadan



Mr. Abdulla Al Sumait – Acting Group Chief Executive Officer

addressing banking fraud, and other activations. The Bank also hosted a range of public events in support of the campaign, such as monthly padel tournaments and cultural competitions at major shopping centers. Additionally, the campaign was highlighted during ABK's sponsorship of numerous community events in collaboration with partners from different sectors.

Al Sumait added, "ABK also published a wide range of campaign advertisements through various media channels, including outdoor screens and cinemas. It participated in numerous TV and radio interviews across Kuwait and continuously sent out SMS messages throughout the year to reinforce the campaign's messages. We



ABK logo

work closely with CBK and KBA to keep content relevant and explore new methods to engage all age groups. This positions ABK as a key contributor to the ongoing success of the campaign, which has significantly increased public awareness about banking and financial literacy in Kuwait."

He emphasized that ABK remains fully committed to supporting the 'Let's Be Aware' campaign and will continue to promote its messages through the Bank's sponsorship of various social initiatives. ABK's team is dedicated to consistently producing meaningful content that helps the public understand how to avoid fraud and take full advantage of evolving banking solutions and services.

Since its establishment in 1967, ABK

has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the region that offers a wide array of personal, corporate, and private banking products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK Capital.

Across the region, the Bank offers individuals and corporates the convenience of comprehensive banking and financial services in the Egyptian market through ABK-Egypt's network of 46 branches.

This is in addition to ABK's three branches located in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) in the United Arab Emirates, servicing both Kuwaiti and Emirati individual and corporate clients.

ABK is a strong supporter of Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Banking Association's 'Let's Be Aware' awareness campaign. Through its various initiatives, the Bank aims to promote financial inclusion by educating Kuwaiti society about customer rights, responsibilities, and the different types of banking and special needs services. Additionally, ABK consistently provides strategic information on how to avoid banking and financial fraud, loan application requirements, digital services, and more.

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

Bank's win based on a set of outstanding qualitative indicators

Warba Bank wins 'Best Customer Service' award at Card & Payments Middle East '25

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: In a step that reflects its leading position in delivering innovative and Sharia-compliant digital banking services, Warba Bank was awarded the "Best Customer Service" title at the "Card & Payments Middle East 2025" Awards Ceremony, one of the region's most prominent awards recognizing excellence in the payments, banking and digital services sectors.

This recognition crowns the bank's ongoing efforts to elevate customer service across all touch points by blending innovation with advanced technology and offering smart, seamless services that meet customer needs and exceed their expectations, all while adhering to the highest standards of quality, transparency and compliance.

Commenting on this achievement, Abdullah Nasser Al-Shuaib, Senior Director of Branches and Private Banking Services at Warba Bank, stated: "This award marks another proud milestone in our journey and reflects our continuous commitment to innovation and delivering a unique, customer-centric banking experience at Warba Bank. We strive not only to keep pace with market aspirations but to anticipate them, backed by a deep understanding of our customers' evolving needs."

He added: "We don't just focus on providing advanced products and services; we place customer experience and service quality at the core of our priorities. Through a strong technological infrastructure, robust operations and effective, immediate communication, we ensure a reliable and sustainable banking experience founded on excellence and trust."



Warba Bank official receives the award.

About "Card & Payments Awards"

The Card & Payments Awards remains the longest-standing and leading event in the cards and payments sector, continuously recognizing excellence and innovation for over 20 years. The awards witness strong annual competition among a wide range of eligible institutions across different categories.

Originally launched in the United Kingdom and Ireland where it is considered the premier networking and knowledge-sharing event for the sector, with participation from over 300 leading global companies, the awards expanded this year to the Middle East to raise service and product standards in the region's payments and banking sectors. The organization maintains full transparency in its annual awards

process. The awards were founded by Michael Hartyw ho brings extensive experience from senior roles across major global banking and financial organizations, specializing in financial services, business strategies, start-ups and strategic planning.

The awards cover a broad spectrum of categories across the key disciplines of the sector, offering institutions the opportunity to showcase their achievements and leading initiatives. Categories include: Best Achievement in Sustainability, Best App User Experience (CX Initiative), Best Application of AI or ML in Financial Services, Best Benefits or Loyalty Scheme, Best Credit Card or Credit Facility, Best Customer Service, Best Early-Stage or Future Payments Initiative, Best Industry Innovation, Best Marketing Campaign, Best Payment Facility, Best Prepaid Product or Programme, Best Product Design, Best Security or Anti-Fraud Development, Best Service to Business, Best Technology Integration, and the Financial Inclusion Award.

Judging Criteria
An entirely independent judging panel, comprising top industry experts, evaluates hundreds of banks and companies annually to ensure neutrality and professionalism in selecting the winners. The judging is based on specific criteria aimed at assessing excellence, innovation, and the real-world impact of the services, products, or initiatives presented. These criteria include the level of innovation, added value to customers, improvement in customer or retail experience, measurable results (such as usage rates, customer satisfac-

tion and financial performance), impact on the market or industry, alignment with modern user needs and market trends, as well as usability, security, and technological sustainability.

Outstanding Results Reflecting Warba's Customer Satisfaction

Warba Bank's win was based on a set of outstanding qualitative indicators, most notably achieving the highest Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) score in the Kuwaiti market, a complaint resolution rate of 79.9%, and a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 53%, surpassing the sector's average.

Additionally, the Warba Bank mobile app received an impressive satisfaction rating of 85.6% for delivering a seamless and integrated digital banking experience, enhanced by features such as personalized alerts, biometric authentication, and instant service resolution, all reflecting the bank's strong focus on simplifying banking interactions and boosting user satisfaction.

Warba: A Model for Modern Islamic Banking

This achievement reinforces Warba Bank's vision of being at the forefront of Islamic banking innovation in the region by delivering customer-centered digital banking experiences that meet the highest standards of quality and creativity, thus contributing to the acceleration of digital transformation.

Today, Warba Bank is one of the fastest-growing Islamic banks in Kuwait, distinguished by its rapid growth, comprehensive digital solutions that enhance customer experiences for individuals and businesses, and a wide shareholder base that deepens its connection to the community.

'Nowhere to turn'

Small businesses are feeling more desperate

NEW YORK, April 29, (AP): Major orders canceled. Containers of products left stranded overseas. No roadmap for what comes next.

The Trump administration raised tariffs on goods from China to 145% in early April. Since then, small business owners who depend on imports from China to survive have become increasingly desperate as they eye dwindling inventory and skyrocketing invoices.

President Donald Trump seemed to back down somewhat last week when he said he expected the tariffs to come down "substantially." That helped set off a rally in the stock market. But for small businesses that operate on razor-thin margins, the back and forth is causing massive upheaval. Some say they could be just months from going out of business altogether.

Game makers are particularly susceptible to the tariffs since the majority of games and toys sold in the U.S. are made in China, according to The Toy Association.

WS Game Co., based in Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts, is a family-owned business that licenses Hasbro board games like Monopoly, Candy Land and Scrabble and creates deluxe versions of them. Its most popular line of games come in boxes that look like vintage books and sell for \$40.

The company's games were featured in Oprah's Favorite Things list in 2024 and sold in 14,000 stores in North America, from big national chains to mom-and-pop stores, said owner Jonathan Silva, whose father founded the company in 2000.

All of WS Game's production is done in China. The tariffs have brought the past 25 years of healthy growth to a screeching halt.

Over the past three weeks, WS Game has had three containers of finished games, worth \$500,000, stranded in China. It lost orders from three of the largest U.S. retailers totaling \$16 million in business. And there's not much Silva can do about it.

"As a small business, we don't have the runway or the capabilities to move manufacturing on a whim," said Silva, who has 22 employees. He said the tariffs have "disrupted our business and put us on the verge of insolvency" and estimates he has about a four-month runway to stay afloat if nothing changes.

"We're really hoping that cooler heads prevail," he said. Jeremy Rice co-owns House, a home-décor shop in Lexington, Kentucky, that specializes in artificial flower arrangements for the home. About 90% of the flowers his business uses are made in China.

Rice uses dozens of vendors. The largest are absorbing some of the cost of the tariffs and passing on the rest. One vendor is raising prices by 20% and another 25%. But Rice is expecting smaller vendors to increase prices by much higher percentages.

House offers mid-range artificial flowers. A large hydrangea head will retail for \$10 to \$16, for example. China is the only place that manufacturers higher quality silk flowers. It would take a vendor years to open a factory in a different country or move production somewhere else, Rice said.

Proposed cap thrown out

How to avoid credit card late fees

NEW YORK, April 29, (AP): A Texas judge earlier this month threw out a federal rule that would have capped credit card late fees at \$8.

The Consumer Finance Protection Bureau finalized the rule last year as part of the Biden administration's efforts to do away with what it called junk fees. It was paused by the courts before it could take effect.

At the time, the CFPB estimated that American families would have saved more than \$10 billion in late fees annually had the fees been capped at \$8, significantly less than the \$32 average.

Banks and industry groups argued that the rule didn't allow card issuers to charge fees high enough to deter late payments and discourage repeat violations.

The Texas judge's ruling earlier this month came a day after a collection of major industry groups and the CFPB under President Donald Trump announced that they had reached an agreement to throw out the rule.

Here's what to know about credit card late fees:

The average late fee for major issuers has steadily ticked up since the 2010s, going from \$23 at the end of 2010 to \$32 in 2022, according to the CFPB. WalletHub, which tracks financial data, found the average late fee in 2025 to be \$30.50, with the maximum \$41.

A September 2023 Consumer Reports study estimated that 1 in 5 American adults, or about 52 million people, paid a credit card late fee in the previous year. People with lower incomes pay proportionately bigger fees, according to the CFPB, with the highest burden falling on communities of color and those living paycheck to paycheck.



Several VISA and MASTER credit cards are shown in Buffalo Grove, Ill., Thursday, Feb. 8, 2024. (AP)

China's chief diplomat urges opposition to protectionism

Call for support of free trade

BEIJING, April 29, (KUNA): China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi called for rejecting all forms of protectionism and safeguarding the multilateral trading system based on rules and World Trade Organization (WTO).

Wang made the call during the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Rio de Janeiro City in Brazil on Monday, according to CCTV.

He underlined that it is necessary to ensure trade integration and mutual benefits, criticizing the U.S. for exerting pressure on countries by imposing tariffs on them.

He believed that multilateralism is the cornerstone of the post-World War II order and that in-



China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi attends the BRICS foreign ministers' meeting at Itamaraty Palace in Rio de Janeiro, Monday, April 28, 2025. (AP)

tegration and cooperation are the key common denominator of the international community.

The Chinese foreign minister also emphasized that it is essential to reform the international financial structure in order to better serve global south countries' economic growth.

Meanwhile, while meeting with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov on the sidelines of the meeting, Wang stressed the significance of promoting coordination between both countries and solidarity with developing countries and emerging economies.

The foreign ministers of Brazil, China, Russia and other BRICS members began two days of talks in Rio de Janeiro on Monday, aiming at forging a united front to US President Donald Trump's trade policies.

Asian shares advance after a quiet day on Wall St

NEW YORK, April 29, (AP): Asian shares were mostly higher on Tuesday after U.S. stocks drifted to a mixed, quiet finish ahead of a busy week of corporate earnings and economic data that could bring more bouts of volatility.

U.S. futures edged higher and oil prices fell. Tokyo's markets were closed for a holiday.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng was nearly unchanged at 21,969.67, while the Shanghai Composite index edged 0.1% lower, to 3,285.68.

In South Korea, the Kospi jumped 0.7% to 2,565.42. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 also rose 0.9%, to 8,070.60.

Taiwan's Taiex gained 1%, while the Sensex in India edged less than 0.1% higher.

A recent relative lull in trading has brought a respite from the sharp swings that have rocked markets for weeks, as hopes rose and fell that US President Donald Trump may back down on his trade war.

The Trump administration appears to have made little headway in finding a way forward with Beijing, with both sides insisting the other needs to make the first move. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, speaking on CNBC, said he believed China wants a "de-escalation" in the trade war.

"I do have an escalation letter in my back pocket, and we're very anxious not to have to use it."

"Maybe they'll call me one day," Bessent told Fox

Chef Mo reimagines Lebanese classics at new restaurant at Burj Alshaya

Lī Beirut brings Lebanese hospitality to Four Seasons Kuwait



Lī Beirut opens at Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait, showcasing reimagined Lebanese cuisine and hospitality.

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait presents a fresh take on authentic Lebanese cuisine with its latest dining outlet, Lī Beirut. Celebrating heartfelt connection, the restaurant invites diners on a journey through Lebanon's classic flavours, reimagined with a contemporary twist. Rooted in Lebanon's warm hospitality, Lī Beirut offers a vibrant space for friends and family to gather, celebrate and savour shared moments.

Launched in December 2024, the restaurant is led by acclaimed Lebanese Chef Mohammed El-Hajjar. With over two decades of experience as a specialty chef, consultant, food stylist and mixologist, El-Hajjar is a

defining force in Kuwait's fine-dining scene. His gastronomy fuses the rich heritage of his homeland with an extraordinary creative flair.

"Lebanese dining is an immersive experience – it's all about bringing people together to feel a sense of joy and belonging," says Chef Mo.

Chef Mo's welcoming interactions with guests impart the hospitable spirit of the Lebanese people from the start. His talents as a mixologist and food stylist are evident, while his conversation-starter dishes showcase generations-old family recipes infused with contemporary sensibilities and Kuwaiti influences. His signature techniques – sous-vide cooking, smoking, fermentation, and emulsi-

fication – combine in creations designed to delight both the palate and the eye. "I love to engage all the senses," he says. "Great flavour doesn't need to be complicated; simple, high-quality ingredients can shine when treated with love and care."

The resulting dishes surprise and delight, striking a delicate balance between tradition and innovation. The crispiest, flakiest layers of potato in coriander sauce present a game-changing take on Batata Harra. Scintillating Wagyu Beef and Truffle Hummus sparks a new culinary conversation between past and present. Mango Tabbouleh gives a culinary heritage classic a bold tropical boost, while the humble Kibbeh receives a

luxury lift with the addition of lobster, caviar and potato.

Desserts are equally exciting: a reimagined Kanafeh Sambousek with Jalal sauce and pistachios; a zesty Saaj Millefeuille layered with lemon cream, pecans and apricots that introduces a playful Levantine take on the French classic. All are crafted in Lī Beirut's open kitchen, inviting diners into the heart of the culinary experience. Set on the fourth floor of Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait, Lī Beirut offsets its cuisine with a dynamic ambience. Large windows framed by olive and palm trees create a luminous, warmly colourful space. Indoor dining features chic Lebanese décor and cosy sofas made for chilling.

IWG members enjoy coastal views, camaraderie

IWG hosts scenic cruise to celebrate Kuwait's beauty, foster connections

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The International Women's Group (IWG) hosted a scenic cruise from Marina Crescent to the iconic Kuwait Towers, surrounded by an atmosphere of joy and awe, as participants admired the breathtaking beauty of the Gulf and the remarkable architectural landmarks along the coast.

According to a press release issued by IWG, Paulina Dlamini, Chair of IWG and spouse of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Eswatini, delivered a welcoming speech in which she ex-

pressed her happiness at meeting the members on this special occasion.

She also shared important safety and security tips with the attendees to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone during the cruise.

Participants savoured a light breakfast and a selection of snacks specially prepared for the occasion.

From the boat, attendees took in the stunning views of Kuwait City's most prominent landmarks, including Marina Mall, Al-Hamra Tower, Liberation Tower, the Grand Mosque, Souq

Sharq, and the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Causeway. The cruise concluded with breathtaking close-up views of the iconic Kuwait Towers.

It was a wonderful day, as it offered a valuable opportunity to strengthen friendships and boost connections among members in a joyful and relaxed atmosphere.

This event reflected the group's ongoing commitment to organizing activities that combine the joy of exploring Kuwait's landmarks with the deepening of human bonds.



International Women's Group members enjoy a scenic cruise from Marina Crescent to the iconic Kuwait Towers.



A group photo from the event.

Experts share global perspective on finance, governance

ICAIKC hosts CPE event on global economic challenges

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, Kuwait Chapter (ICAIKC) hosted the Continuing Professional Education (CPE) event on "Global Economic Challenges and Governance: A Finance Focus." The event attracted a strong turnout from the professional community, driven by the relevance of its theme and the insights offered by a distinguished panel of international experts.

CA Aditya Dhanuka, Chairperson of ICAIKC, formally inaugurated the event by welcoming the distinguished speakers and participants. He also provided an update on ongoing chapter initiatives and highlighted the vital role that accounting professionals play in shaping ethical, transparent, and resilient economic systems. His remarks set the tone for an evening of meaningful dialogue and knowledge exchange.

The event featured a stellar lineup of speakers, each of them bringing distinct global insights into the discussion.

Jean Bouquot, President of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), delivered a compelling keynote on the evolving dynamics of the global economy. Drawing on IFAC's policy work, he emphasized the importance of resilience, adaptability, and governance reforms in both public and private institutions. He highlighted sustainability related developments globally and the need to counter green-

washing. He also underscored the need for global collaboration among accounting bodies to foster sustainability, ethical conduct, and trust in financial systems.

Mona El Chami, Senior Governance Specialist at the World Bank, provided a policy-oriented lens on governance frameworks across developing economies. She elaborated on the World Bank's role in advising governments on fiscal accountability, anti-corruption measures, and institutional strengthening. Her talk highlighted the interconnectedness of sound governance and economic stability, advocating for inclusive institutions and transparent policymaking.

CA Atul Gupta, Past President of ICAI and current IFAC Board Member, offered a strategic analysis of how global economic trends are impacting India and other emerging markets. He spoke about the transformational role of technology in governance, the rise of digital public infrastructure, the essentiality of independent director, and the need for ethics-driven assurance practices. His address called on Chartered Accountants to balance profit with sustainability and to take the lead in promoting good governance.

The session was further enriched by the presence of special guests:

Prof. Shahzad Uddin (University of Essex), Prof. Musa Mangena (University of Nottingham), Sabah Mubarak Al Jalawi (Chairman, KAAA), Mohammad

Shuaib (Member, KAAA), Dr. Souad Alazemi (Faculty Member, PAAET), and Ahmed Bastaki, whose participation added academic and regulatory depth to the discussions.

The event was seamlessly moderated by CA Ketan Puri, whose professionalism and engaging style ensured a smooth and insightful program. The event concluded with a warm vote of thanks by CA Andaleeb Girkar, who expressed heartfelt appreciation to the speakers, special guests, attendees, and organizing committee. She also extended gratitude to the chapter's annual sponsors – NBK, Al Mulla Exchange, and Cube Innovators – as well as media partners IndiansinKuwait.com (IHK), Times Kuwait, and Arab Times for their continued support.

The event reinforced ICAIKC's dedication to fostering ongoing professional excellence and promoting dialogue on globally relevant economic and governance challenges. It served as a valuable platform for knowledge sharing and reinforced the chapter's mission to equip finance professionals in Kuwait with world-class insights and expertise.

About ICAIKC

The ICAIKC is one of the overseas chapters of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India. It serves as a hub for continued professional development, networking, and thought leadership for Indian Chartered Accountants based in Kuwait.

DentEdge, a huge success

IDAK's 5th ISS highlights innovation in dentistry

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Indian Dentists' Alliance in Kuwait (IDAK), in association with Kuwait Dental Association (KDA), held its prestigious 5th International Scientific Symposium (ISS) at the AlHashmi Ballroom, Radisson Blu Hotel on Friday, 25th April, 2025. The event was accredited for 8 CME points with Kuwait Institute for Medical Specializations (KIMS). The symposium, titled DentEdge: Current Paradigms in Dentistry, brought together over 300 practicing dentists in Kuwait.

Dr. Jagan Kumar Baskaradoss, the Chairman of the Scientific Committee, welcomed the speakers, dignitaries, and participants to the event and officially inaugurated it. The full-day event featured three prominent international speakers – Prof. Dr. Monty Duggal, Prof. Dr. Gunaseelan Rajan, and Dr. Siju Jacob - and a local speaker, Dr. Manal Abu AlMelh.

Prof. Dr. Monty Duggal, the Dean of College of Dentistry, Qatar University is a world-renowned pediatric dentist, started the event with an excellent presentation on Molar-Incisor Hypomineralization (MIH). His presentation comprehensively covered the topic, including the clinical characteristics, etiology, and management of MIH patients.

Spellbound

Dr. Gunaseelan Rajan, a trailblazer in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Director of Rajan's Institute in Chennai, India, spoke about zygomatic implants, presenting clinical cases managed in his clinic, which captivated the audience and left everyone spellbound.

Dr. Siju Jacob, Director of The Microscope Training Center in Bangalore and New Delhi, India, showcased how microscopes could be part of everyday general dental practice. Dr. Jacob captivated the audience with his enchanting presentation skills. Lastly, Dr. Manal Abu Al Melh, Associate Professor in College of Dentistry at Kuwait University, presented on the topic of "painless orthodontics," effortlessly combining her personal experiences with evidence-based research find-

ings into clinical practice. The first Dr. David Gnana-shekar Oration, in memory of the Founding President of IDAK, was delivered by Dr. Monty Duggal, who spoke about managing long-term complications of severe dento-alveolar trauma in adolescents using bone augmentation and auto-transplantation. His lecture helped raise awareness about this relatively new technique to replace missing teeth.

Ceremony

The chief guest for the Felicitation ceremony was Dr. Jaber AlTaqi, Director of Dental Administration, Ministry of Health. Dr. Fahad AlZoubi, Chair of the Faculty of Dentistry, Kuwait Institute for Medical Specializations (KIMS), and Dr. Adel Al-Asfour, Former Dean and Chairman of the Department of Surgical Sciences, College of Dentistry, Kuwait University, were the 'Guests of Honor' for the event. Dr. George P. Alex, President of IDAK, welcomed the dignitaries and the audience and outlined IDAK's achievements in past symposiums. The Scientific Committee Chairman, Dr. Jagan Kumar Baskaradoss, introduced the speakers and session chairpersons to the dignitaries and highlighted the importance of this symposium. Dr. Fahad appreciated IDAK for successfully conducting the symposium, which he believes helps to disseminate knowledge to busy dental practitioners in the country. He also spoke about his close links with India and Indian colleagues in his address. He expressed his happiness over the high standard of the symposium.

IDAKconnect, a members directory edited by the membership committee headed by Dr. Tiny Elsa Thomas, was released during the function by Dr. Jaber Al Taqi, who handed the first copy to Dr. Fahad Al Zoubi. President Dr. George P. Alex complimented the membership committee for bringing out the members directory, the first in the last 12 years, and said it would enable the members to stay connected more meaningfully. The event also featured a trade fair, where the sponsors for the event displayed their company's products.



A photo of the scientific committee.



A collage of photos from the IDAK symposium.

PBFPK holds insightful training on data analytics

By M. Irfan Shafiq

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: The Pakistani Banking & Finance Professionals in Kuwait (PBFPK) successfully conducted a highly impactful training session titled "Data Analytics for Finance

Professionals" at the Grand Majestic Hotel, Kuwait City.

The event gathered a good turnout of finance professionals, all eager to strengthen their understanding of data-driven financial decision-making, risk

analysis, and strategic planning. The training provided participants with insightful practical knowledge on real-world applications of data analytics in the financial sector.

The session was led by an out-

standing trainer; Shahzad Z Khan, whose expertise, practical approach, and dynamic delivery style kept the participants thoroughly engaged. The trainer's ability to simplify complex concepts and relate them to the real-world finance environment was particularly praised by attendees, making the session both highly educational and inspiring.

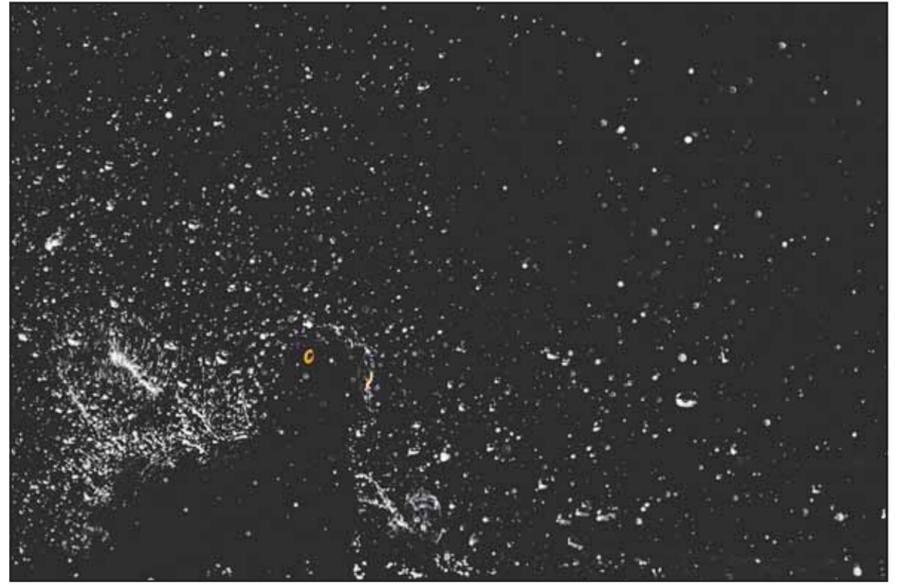
At the conclusion of the session, the President of PBFPK, Ahsan Ashraf extended his heartfelt thanks to the trainer for sharing such valuable insights, and to all participants for their enthusiastic engagement. On behalf of the committee, he emphasized that PBFPK remains committed to organizing more such insightful and skill-enhancing trainings to support the continuous professional development of its members. He also mentioned that Executive Committee of PBFPK looks forward to offering a series of future programs designed to keep its members at the forefront of industry trends and innovations.



A group photo from the event.



A Sword in The Chest: This photograph, awarded Bronze Medal (Third Place) in the 2025 World Nature Photography Awards - Birds Category, captures two White-cheeked Terns battling for territory on Kubbar Island, Kuwait. One bird's beak presses into the chest of the other, creating a dramatic "sword in the chest" moment. Kubbar is renowned for its large summer colonies of Terns, which nest in exposed areas, offering little shelter from the intense summer heat.



Yellow Between The Stars: Awarded First Place in Artistic Vision at the 2019 Festival of L'Oiseau et de la Nature and Third Place in Garden and Urban Birds at the 2017 Bird Photographer of the Year, this shot was taken in a South African drinking station hide. I used backlighting in the afternoon to capture the starling as a silhouette, emphasizing the water droplets during its bath by underexposing the image.

Murad's lens brings Kuwait's wild beauty to the world

Kuwait's wildlife photographer shines on the global stage

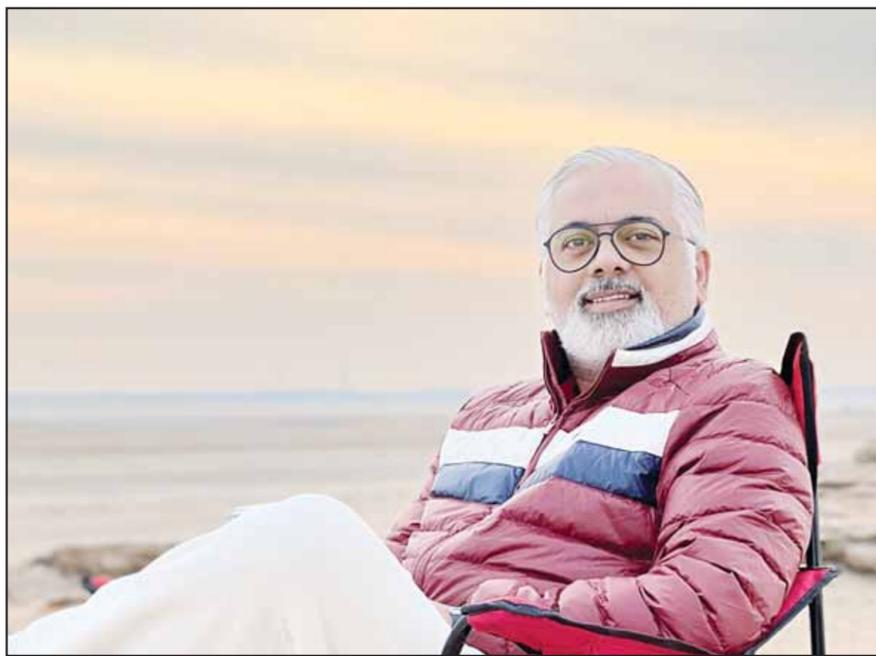
Kuwaiti wildlife photographer Mohammad Murad has earned international acclaim by winning the Bronze Medal at the 2025 World Nature Photographer of the Year Awards. His award-winning photograph, "A Sword in the Chest," captures a dramatic moment in nature, showcasing the raw intensity of a territorial battle between two White-cheeked Terns on Kubbar Island. In an interview with the Arab Times, Murad shares the story behind the stunning image, the challenges of photographing wildlife in Kuwait, and how his work aims to change perceptions about nature in the Gulf region. From the support of his father to his commitment to conservation, his journey highlights the power of patience and persistence in both photography and life.

Question: Congratulations on winning the Bronze Medal at the 2025 World Nature Photographer of the Year Awards! Can you tell us about the story behind your award-winning photograph, "A Sword in the Chest"?

Answer: Thank you so much! This image holds a special place in my heart. It captures a dramatic territorial battle between two White-cheeked Terns during nesting season on Kubbar Island. The moment was intense – one bird thrusting its sharp beak into the chest of its rival mid-air, almost like a sword piercing through armor. I spent hours observing their behavior to ensure I could capture this fleeting moment. It's not just a photograph; it's a story of survival and dominance in the wild.

Q: Kubbar Island seems to play a significant role in your work. How does photographing wildlife in Kuwait differ from your experiences in other places, and what challenges do you encounter here?

A: Kubbar Island is a gem for wildlife photography, especially during the nesting season. However, photographing wildlife in Kuwait comes with unique challenges.



Mohammad Murad

The extreme heat and the flat terrain make it difficult to approach animals unnoticed. Unlike other regions, Kuwait has limited biodiversity, so finding subjects requires patience and persistence. But these challenges make every successful shot even more rewarding.

Q: You've represented Kuwait internationally and are often the only Arab participant in global competitions. How does it feel to carry that responsibility, and what message do you hope to convey through your work?

A: It's an honor to represent Kuwait and the Arab world on such prestigious platforms. Many people have misconceptions about Gulf countries, imagining us as disconnected from nature. Through my work, I aim to break those stereotypes and showcase the rich natural

beauty of Kuwait. I want people to see that we value and protect our environment, and that there is a deep connection between our culture and the natural world.

Q: Behind every great artist is a strong support system. Who has been your biggest inspiration or source of encouragement throughout your journey?

A: My dad has always been my greatest inspiration. He taught me the importance of hard work and perseverance, values that have shaped both my career as an engineer and my passion for photography. I'm also incredibly grateful to Canon, especially Binof Nair, B2C Business Unit Director at Canon Middle East & Türkiye, and the team, who provided me with essential equipment, such as the 800mm lens, for a critical project. Their belief in my

vision has made a huge difference in my journey.

Q: Winning this award is a milestone, but your work also focuses on conservation and education. How do you use your photography to raise awareness about wildlife and the environment?

A: Photography is a powerful tool for storytelling and advocacy. For example, my images of Arabian foxes helped dispel misconceptions about them being dangerous predators. I also give lectures at schools and collaborate with organizations like the Kuwait Environment Protection Society to educate people about the importance of preserving wildlife. Every photo I take carries a message – it's about connecting people to nature and inspiring them to protect it.

Q: What advice would you give to aspiring wildlife photographers in Kuwait who want to follow in your footsteps?

A: Start small and focus on your passion. Don't rush into buying expensive gear – rent or borrow equipment first and see if wildlife photography truly resonates with you. Patience is key, some of my best shots took months of planning and waiting. Also, respect the environment and the animals you photograph. Photography isn't just about capturing moments; it's about understanding and preserving the beauty of the natural world.

Q: You've mentioned patience as one of the biggest lessons you've learned from wildlife photography. How has this skill impacted other areas of your life?

A: Wildlife photography has completely transformed my approach to life. Before I started, I was someone who wanted everything done quickly – I didn't have much patience. But spending hours, sometimes days, waiting for the perfect shot taught me the value of slowing down and appreciating the process. This change has spilled over into my personal and professional life as well. Whether it's managing a team at work or spending time with my family, I've learned to be more patient, calm, and present in the moment.



Night Killer: Awarded Second Place in the Other Animals Category at the 2020 GDT Nature Photographer of the Year Contest and Second Place in the Other Animals Category at the 2019 National Wildlife Federation Magazine Competition, this image captures an Arabian Horned Viper spotted during a walk near my workplace in northern Kuwait. While searching for wolf spiders, I encountered the snake beneath a small plant, and it soon began to slither across the sand dunes.



Domination: Awarded First Place in the Birds Category at the 2022 MontPhoto Competition, this image captures a Lappet-faced Vulture attacking a group of White-backed Vultures. With over 15 vultures feeding on a carcass, the Lappet-faced Vulture arrives and asserts its dominance, scaring the others away to claim the meal for itself. Its impressive size intimidates the smaller vultures, who fear its power.



Colorful Night: Awarded First Place in the Animals Category at the 2018 National Wildlife Federation Magazine and First Place in the Biodiversity Our Futures Theme at the 2022 International Photo Competition, this image captures two Arabian red fox kits exploring the night near their den in Kuwait. The colorful glow from street and car lights, reflecting off the sea, creates a unique backdrop. Using small handheld flashlights for backlighting, I waited for the kits to return to the hidden food their mother had buried. Over two months, I spent several evenings photographing them as they grew increasingly curious, even approaching me and my gear.



Obscure: Awarded Second Place in the Art Category at the 2021 Golden Turtle competition, this image of a baby elephant and its mother in Tanzania reflects my fascination with slow shutter photography. It's about reinventing the scene, adding mystery, and expressing something deep within me. Like a violinist playing his melody to evoke emotions, I use photography to communicate my inner self, leaving interpretation to the viewer.

HEALTH/SCIENCE

New trial ordered for Novavax COVID vaccine

FDA's Novavax stance casts doubt on other COVID shots

WASHINGTON, April 29, (AP) - The Trump administration's effort to impose new requirements on Novavax's COVID-19 vaccine - the nation's only traditional protein-based option for the coronavirus - is sowing uncertainty about updates to other vaccines, too.

Novavax said Monday that the Food and Drug Administration was asking the company to run a new clinical trial of its vaccine after the agency grants full approval. The company said it had responded and that it believed its shot remains "approvable."

But a weekend post on social media by FDA Commissioner Marty Makary suggested the prospect of needing a new trial before the shots' yearly strain update - something unlikely to be possible before fall. That's raised questions about whether other vaccines will be caught in the turmoil.

"I don't think because there's a strain change that this is a new product," said Dr. Jesse Goodman of Georgetown University, a former FDA vaccine chief. If that's the new policy, "you'd always be doing clinical trials and you'd never have a vaccine that was up to date."

The unusual move at FDA came shortly after the agency's longtime vaccine chief was forced out over disagreements with Makary's boss, Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

Kennedy won Senate confirmation to his job, in part, by promising not



A vial of the Phase 3 coronavirus vaccine prepared for use in a trial at St Georges University hospital in London, Oct 7, 2020. (AP)

to change the nation's vaccine schedule. Since taking office, he's promised to "investigate" children's shots, canceled meetings of expert vaccine advisers and directed officials to look again for connections between vaccines and autism, a link long-ago debunked.

The Novavax vaccine, which originally showed effectiveness in a nearly 30,000-person clinical trial, is still being sold under emergency use authorization in the U.S. The nation's other two options, mRNA vaccines made by

Pfizer and Moderna, have earned full FDA approval for certain age groups.

Because the coronavirus continually mutates, manufacturers follow instructions from FDA to make one change each year to their recipe - which strain to target - just like flu vaccines.

The FDA was on track to grant Novavax full approval by its April 1 target date, according to two people with direct knowledge of the situation who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss confidential agency matters. But Trump appointees directed FDA

scientists to pause their decision, according to one of the people. Since that highly unusual move, Novavax and the agency have been discussing additional requirements for approval.

In his weekend tweet, FDA's Makary referred to the Novavax vaccine as "a new product," presumably because it had been updated to match last year's common coronavirus strain.

"New products require new clinical studies," Makary added. An administration spokesman didn't respond to specific questions about Pfizer and Moderna but suggested all COVID-19 vaccines could face stricter requirements.

"It's now been years since COVID has presented the threat it once did, and the urgency to rush approval of boosters without normal oversight no longer exists," said Andrew Nixon, a Health and Human Services spokesman, in a statement.

The FDA had been treating the annual COVID-19 strain updates exactly as it's done for decades with flu vaccines - not as new products, but existing ones that are merely adjusted to protect against the latest strains, said Dr. Paul Offit, a vaccine expert at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Offit said the companies still must perform tests in small numbers of people that show these updated vaccines produce levels of virus-fighting antibodies known to be protective, and they're closely monitored for safety.



This image provided by NASA shows astronaut Don Pettit being carried to a medical tent shortly after he, and Roscosmos cosmonauts Alexey Ovchinnik and Ivan Vagner landed in their Soyuz MS-26 spacecraft near the town of Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan on Sunday, April 20. (AP)

'Feels 30-year-old again'

NASA's oldest astronaut felt decades melt away in space

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., April 29, (AP) - Fresh from space, NASA's oldest full-time astronaut said Monday that weightlessness made him feel decades younger, with everyday aches and pains vanishing.

Don Pettit marked his 70th birthday on April 20 by plunging through the atmosphere in a Russian Soyuz capsule to wrap up a seven-month mission at the International Space Station.

In his first public remarks since touchdown, Pettit said he threw up all over the Kazak steppes upon touchdown, the result of feeling gravity for the first time in 220 days.

Returning to Earth has always been "a significant challenge" for his body, Pettit said from NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

"I didn't look too good because I didn't feel too good," he said, adding that his body's normal "creaks and groans" returned.

In weightlessness, on the other hand, Pettit felt the decades melt away. "It makes me feel like I'm 30 years old again," said Pettit, an astronaut since 1996 who ventured to space four times. "All that kind of stuff heals up because you're sleeping, you're just floating and your body, all these little aches and pains and everything heal up."

Mercury astronaut John Glenn was 77 when he returned to orbit on a short shuttle flight in 1998. But he'd been gone from NASA for decades and was close to wrapping up his Senate career.

Even a pair of 90-year-olds have flown to space, but only on 10-minute up-and-down hops by Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin rocket company.

'Recovery first'

US adopts new anti-drug plan

SAN FRANCISCO, April 29, (AP) - Reeling from drug overdose deaths and scenes of people smoking fentanyl on sidewalks, San Francisco has moved closer to adopting a "recovery first" drug policy that sets abstinence from illicit drugs as its primary goal, a proposal that has prompted heated debate in the city that pioneered harm reduction.

Opponents of Supervisor Matt Dorsey's proposal say its emphasis on stopping drug use alienates those who are not ready to quit, while proponents say the city has been far too permissive and making drug use safer does not help break the cycle of addiction.

Dorsey, himself recovering from alcohol and drug addiction, amended the proposal in his public safety committee to clarify that distributing safer-use paraphernalia and linking people to social services regardless of whether they are using remain critical to the city's response.

But more than an hour of public comment with cheers and boos from both sides underscored just how touchy the issue remains.

"No one dies from harm reduction," Patt Denning said. "People die from conventional abstinence-based treatments because they're either left out or kicked out if they don't comply with abstinence."

Brendan Harris, who said he has been clean for six years, countered that harm reduction tactics cannot go on forever and people need a firm if compassionate push into treatment.

"We can't just keep enabling drugs over and over again," he said. In recent years San Francisco's public health department advised people who use drugs to do so with friends to try to prevent overdose deaths. Critics said that sent the wrong message.

Mayor Daniel Lurie, who took office in January, has vowed to solve the city's fentanyl crisis. Last year more than 600 people died from accidental overdoses.

He ordered city-funded nonprofits to offer treatment or counseling options before giving out certain paraphernalia such as foil and pipes, and they will no longer be allowed to distribute those items in parks and on sidewalks.

The rare few find new promise

Genetic medicine often overlooks rare mutations but new therapies offer hope

NEW YORK, April 29, (AP) - Emily Kramer-Golinkoff can't get enough oxygen with each breath. Advanced cystic fibrosis makes even simple things like walking or showering arduous and exhausting.

She has the most common fatal genetic disease in the US, which afflicts 40,000 Americans. But her case is caused by a rare genetic mutation, so medications that work for 90% of people with cystic fibrosis won't help her.

The same dynamic plays out in other genetic conditions. Stunning advances in genetic science have revealed the subtle, insidious culprits behind these brutal diseases and have started paving the way for treatments. But patients with these exceedingly rare mutations have fewer options and poorer prospects than those with more typical forms of these diseases - and many are now pinning hopes on experimental gene therapies.

Desperate

"We feel such pure joy for our friends who have been lifted from this sinking ship," said Kramer-Golinkoff, 40. "But we just feel so eager and desperate to join them. It's really hard to be in this minority of people left behind."

It's not just science that is working against these patients, it's market forces. Drug companies are naturally going to look for medications that target the most common mutations.

"You need a sufficiently large number of patients in a major market in order for a company to be interested in going forward," said Dr. Kiran Musunuru, a University of Pennsylvania gene editing expert. What it amounts to, he says, is "mutational discrimination."

Charities - including a nonprofit Kramer-Golinkoff co-founded called Emily's Entourage - are trying to overcome this barrier. Fundraising efforts have helped jump-start gene therapy that could help patients regardless of mutation.

While it likely won't be available for years, "just to have these thera-



This photo provided by Emily's Entourage in April 2025 shows Emily Kramer-Golinkoff, who has cystic fibrosis caused by a rare genetic mutation, during a trip to Maine. (AP)

pies in trials provides so much hope," Kramer-Golinkoff said.

Kramer-Golinkoff was just six weeks old when she was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis, which causes thick, sticky mucus to build up in the body.

It occurs when the so-called CFTR protein is not made or not made correctly, allowing chloride to become trapped in cells, meaning water can't keep the cell's surface hydrated. Mucus buildup can lead to damage, blockages and infections in the lungs and other affected organs.

Worse

"As I've gotten older ... my CF has gotten worse, despite all my best efforts to delay it," Kramer-Golinkoff said.

Before her illness got so bad, she was able to earn a master's degree in bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania, work, travel and spend time with friends. But she eventually developed CF-related diabetes and other

problems. She's prone to infections, and since the pandemic has lived with her parents in isolation in Greater Philadelphia. "CF is a real monster of a disease," she said.

Meanwhile, others with the condition have seen vast improvements in their health with "CFTR modulator" therapies that work for people with the most common mutation, correcting the malfunctioning protein. Research shows they dramatically improve lung function, respiratory symptoms and patients' overall quality of life.

Besides not working for people with rare mutations, these treatments are unavailable to patients whose disease-causing mutations aren't known or fully understood. Mutations may be unknown because of a lack of genetic testing in places such as developing nations, or understudied because they are uncommon or difficult to detect.

Genetic testing companies such as GeneDx have made some headway in screening more people of diverse backgrounds, but inequities remain.

First batch takes off

Amazon launches internet satellites to rival Starlinks

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., April 29, (AP) - Amazon's first batch of internet satellites rocketed into orbit Monday, the latest entry in the mega constellation market currently dominated by SpaceX's thousands of Starlinks.

The United Launch Alliance's Atlas V rocket carried 27 of Amazon's Project Kuiper satellites, named after the frigid fringes of our solar system beyond Neptune. Once released in orbit, the satellites will eventually reach an altitude of nearly 400 miles (630 kilometers).

Two test satellites were launched in 2023, also by an Atlas V. Project officials said major upgrades were made to the newest version. The latest satellites also are coated with a mirror film designed to scatter reflected sunlight in an attempt to accommodate astronomers.

Stargazers oppose the fast-growing constellations of low-orbiting satellites, arguing they spoil observations. Others fear more satellite collisions.

Founded by Jeff Bezos, who now runs his own rocket company, Blue Origin, Amazon aims to put more than 3,200 of these satellites into orbit to provide fast, affordable broadband service around the globe.

Elon Musk's SpaceX already has launched more than 8,000 Starlinks since 2019. The company marked its 250th Starlink launch Sunday night. More than 7,000 Starlinks are still in orbit some 300-plus miles (550 kilometers) above Earth.

The European-based OneWeb satellite constellation numbers in the hundreds in an even higher orbit.

Amazon already has purchased doz-



A United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket with a payload of 27 of Amazon's Project Kuiper internet satellites lifts off from Launch Complex 41 at the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Monday, April 28, in Cape Canaveral, Fla. (AP)

ens of rocket launches from United Launch Alliance and Blue Origin for Project Kuiper, as well as others.

"There are some things you can only learn in flight" despite extensive testing on the ground, said Rajeev Badyal, the project's vice president.

"No matter how the mission unfolds, this is just the start of our journey," he said in a statement ahead of the evening liftoff. The first liftoff attempt earlier this month was nixed by bad weather. It took until now to secure another spot in the launch lineup at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station.

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Fever roster revamped and upgraded

Stronger Caitlin Clark gears up for 2nd WNBA season

INDIANAPOLIS, April 29, (AP) — Indiana Fever star Caitlin Clark slapped the court with both hands and started gesturing in her side's direction after forcing a 5-second call near the end of Tuesday's practice.

It was only Day 2 of training camp, yet this is what Clark has yearned for these past seven months — going back to work with a new coach, a revamped roster and even higher expectations in her second WNBA season.

After leading the Fever to their first playoff berth in eight years, winning the league's Rookie of the Year Award, being named Associated Press 2024 Female Athlete of the Year and Time magazine's 2024 Athlete of the Year, Clark returned to Indianapolis a stronger, wiser player, more determined to win the championship that eluded her in college.

"It was an adjustment sure, because I was so used to playing minutes for, well, basically a year of my life. That's all I did," Clark said. "So the rest was good. I thought it was going to feel long and it really didn't. We were in here all the time. But that rest aspect, just getting my body where it needed to be and really on things I needed to work on was super important. But I'm ready to compete again."

It was a well-deserved vacation for perhaps the busiest player in women's basketball. She capped her final college season by playing a

39-game schedule while leading Iowa to a second straight national championship game. One week after losing to South Carolina, the Fever drafted her No. 1 overall and 13 days after that, training camp opened.

Following a brief preseason, Clark made her regular-season debut May 10. That started a grueling 42-game grind during which the Fever overcame a 1-8 start to finish 20-20. Then they were swept out of the playoffs.

The only real stoppage for Clark during that 81-game, 10 1/2-month span was the monthlong Olympic break.

Clark turned sellouts at college and WNBA games into the norm as she found her every move scrutinized on social media. Fans complained she was being treated poorly by the league's older players and some even argued the physical play was racially motivated. Her friendships and relationships became all the rage, and nothing seemed to be off limits.

But Clark never complained, never bowed to the pressure and used this seven-month break to focus on being herself. She completed one bucket list item — attending the final round of The Masters earlier this month — and had her college jersey retired.

She attended a Taylor Swift concert, an NFL game with Swift and, of course, Pacers games.

Now, though, she sounds refreshed as she sings the praises of a veteran team full of title dreams and

championship resumes from coach Stephanie White to teammates Natasha Howard and 37-year-old DeWanna Bonner.

And the early returns seem to show the personalities are a perfect match.

"Everything is just absolutely good." All-Star guard Kelsey Mitchell said. "It feels fresh. It feels kind of like when you take your clothes out of the dryer. It just feels different and it feels good because we have new leadership."

It's not just the overhauled roster, either. Mitchell, one of the few holdovers left from last season, also sees a different version of Clark, one showcased in a photo posted on social media last month.

"From a physical standpoint, her strength and her ability to make plays that people don't think about — that skip pass from here to here," Mitchell said. "A person of her caliber, it seems small but it's going to help her go from having 10 assists to 12. And then after that the professional learning, watching film, knowing what you need."

Just the thought of an improved Clark this season could make opponents jittery.

Clark led the Fever in minutes (35.4 per game) and steals (1.3), shared team scoring honors with Mitchell (19.2 points), and broke the WNBA's single season mark for assists with 337.



Indiana Fever guard Caitlin Clark (22) plays against the Dallas Wings in the second half of a WNBA basketball game in Indianapolis, Sept. 15, 2024. (AP)

14-year-old Suryavanshi hits record-breaking T20 century



Rajasthan Royals' Vaibhav Suryavanshi hits a boundary during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Rajasthan Royals and Gujarat Titans at Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur, India. (AP)

Rajasthan stays alive

JAIPUR, India, April 29, (AP) — The 14-year-old batter Vaibhav Suryavanshi hit a breathtaking century in the Indian Premier League, making it one of the greatest innings in men's Twenty20 cricket history.

Just nine days after becoming the youngest player to debut in the IPL, Suryavanshi blew away observers again with a century in his third match and, to boot, the second fastest in the tournament's 18 years.

He got there in just 35 deliveries by pulling Gujarat Titans star spinner Rashid Khan for a six over midwicket, and sending the Rajasthan Royals' packed home crowd in Jaipur to their feet yet again.

Of the 100 runs, an incredible 94 came off boundaries. He hit 11 sixes and seven fours.

"It feels really good," Suryavanshi said. "It is like a dream to score a century in the IPL. What I've been practicing for the last three, four months, the result is showing."

He was out three balls later for 101, missing a yorker.

But his 166-run opening stand with Yashasvi Jaiswal, who scored 70 not



Rajasthan Royals' Wanindu Hasaranga bowls a delivery during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Rajasthan Royals and Gujarat Titans at Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur, India. (AP)

out off 40 balls, propelled Rajasthan to a remarkable run chase of Gujarat's imposing total of 209-4 with 25 balls to spare.

Rajasthan made 212-2, winning for only the third time in 10 games to stay in playoff contention.

Cricket is the most popular sport in India by a considerable margin, and

the lucrative IPL has offered a showcase for talent emerging from the population of 1.4 billion to mix it with the sport's top international stars.

Fervent fans are always on the lookout for the "next" superstar player like Sachin Tendulkar, who transformed from a precocious teenage talent into an iconic figure and the leading international scorer in the sport.

The great Tendulkar was impressed with Suryavanshi, who was described by TV commentators during his dramatic innings as an amazing "14-year-old boy."

Suryavanshi rose to fame when he was drafted at age 13 last November. In a splashy debut this month, he whacked the first ball he faced for six at the same venue.

He showed brutal power-hitting on Monday against a battery of seasoned international bowlers, including Khan, Mohammed Siraj, Ishant Sharma, and Washington Sundar.

The teenager smacked Sharma for three sixes and two fours in one over and clubbed spinner Sundar for two sixes and a four to raise the 2025 IPL's fastest half-century off 17 balls.

Suryavanshi raced to 94 when he belted Afghanistan fast bowler Karim Janat for three sixes and three fours, and raised the hundred against the great Khan.

"It was incredible," Rajasthan captain Riyan Parag said of Suryavanshi. "We've spent two months with him

(and) we have seen what he can do, but to see him do this against the world-class bowlers ... (I) can't express in words."

Suryavanshi was patted on the back by his partner Jaiswal as he celebrated, removed his helmet, and raised his bat to acknowledge the applause of the home crowd. He also saluted his teammates in the dugout with his bat.

Only West Indies great Chris Gayle has hit an IPL hundred in fewer balls, 30, and that was 12 years ago.

Fast bowler Prasidh Krishna finally bowled out Suryavanshi, who walked off to another standing ovation and to hugs from teammates.

Left-handers Suryavanshi and Jaiswal raised Rajasthan's highest stand for any wicket in the IPL, and the teenager eclipsed Sanju Samson's record of 10 sixes in an IPL innings for an Indian batter.

"Batting with him (Jaiswal) gives me confidence because he keeps very positive, (and it) becomes easy to bat with him," Suryavanshi said. He added he doesn't notice the crowds much to "just focus on the ball."

Gujarat captain Shubman Gill made an aggressive 84 off 50 balls while his opening partner Sai Sudharsan scored 39 to overtake Virat Kohli as the leading scorer of the season with 456 runs in nine matches.

The pair added 93 runs for the first wicket off 62 balls before Sudharsan holed out at long-on in the 11th over.

Anti-doping rules breached

Doubles champ Purcell accepts 18-month ban

SYDNEY, April 29, (AP) — Two-time Grand Slam doubles champion Max Purcell has accepted an 18-month ban after breaching anti-doping rules, the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) said Tuesday.

The Australian player admitted to a breach of rules relating to the use of a "prohibited method" after unknowingly receiving an intravenous infusion of vitamins above the allowed limit of 100 milliliters in a 12-hour span and entered into a provisional suspension in mid-December.

Purcell said he'd informed the clinic he was a professional athlete and that the infusion had to be less than 100 milliliters.

The ITIA said the 27-year-old had received IV infusions of over 500 milliliters twice but his full cooperation and information sharing during the investigation had allowed for a 25% reduction in the sanction.

"This case does not involve a player testing positive for a prohibited substance but demonstrates that the anti-doping rules are broader than that," ITIA chief executive Karen Moorhouse said. "It also shows the ITIA considers intelligence from a range of sources with the overriding aim to protect everyone covered by the tennis anti-doping rules, and ensure a level playing field for all."

Purcell said the stress of the ongoing case had been "seriously affecting (his) quality of life" over the past few months.

"From being unable to sleep and eat properly, and refusing to be by myself, to developing nervous and anxious tics which I still currently battle day to day," Purcell said in a statement he posted to Instagram.

"I couldn't sit and enjoy anything without the thought of the case and the endless possibilities of what sanction I would receive. I'm so glad this is finally over for me and I can move on with my life."

Purcell teamed with Jordan Thompson to win the U.S. Open last September, and with Matt Ebden to win Wimbledon in 2022.



Max Purcell of Australia returns to Gael Monfils of France at the BNP Paribas Open tennis tournament, March 7, 2024, in Indian Wells, Calif. (AP)

Júnior taking over Corinthians

Lima to host Copa final in November

LIMA, Peru, April 29, (AP) — Lima will host the Copa Libertadores final on Nov. 29.

The stadium will be chosen later, CONMEBOL said.

The capitals of Brazil and Uruguay, Brasilia and Montevideo, also bid to be the host.

The Peruvian capital hosted the first single match decider in tournament history in 2019, when Brazil's Flamengo beat Argentina's River Plate 2-1.

That final was held at 80,000-seat Monumental Stadium, but Lima also has the 43,000-seat National Stadium, which is the home of the national team.

Brazil's Botafogo is the defending champion of the Copa Libertadores.

CONMEBOL previously announced the Copa Sudamericana final will be on Nov. 22 in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, at Ramón Tahuichi Aguilera Stadium.

Former Brazil coach Dorival Júnior signed with Corinthians on Monday to the end of 2026.

It is his first job since he was fired by the five-time World Cup champion

in March after losing to Argentina 4-1 in 2026 qualifying.

Júnior's first match in charge of Corinthians will be on Wednesday in the Brazilian Cup against Novorizontino.

"It is an important moment of my career. I hope to leave a legacy," Júnior said in a video shared by Corinthians on social media.

He takes over from Argentine coach Ramón Díaz, who was fired this month. The team including Dutch striker Memphis Depay has defense problems.

Corinthians is 12th in the Brazilian league after six matches, with seven points. It lost in the league on Sunday to Flamengo 4-0.

Júnior was fired from Brazil after 14 months amid poor results and disappointing performances.

Brazil, fourth in South American qualifying, has yet to announce Júnior's replacement. Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti and Al-Hilal's Jorge Jesus are the front-runners according to local media.

FIA president signals change to swearing punishments which have upset F1 drivers

LONDON, April 29, (AP) — The president of Formula 1's governing body FIA has signaled he'll make "improvements" to punishments for swearing and criticism which have sparked a backlash from F1 drivers.

FIA President Mohammed Ben Sulayem posted on Instagram Monday that after "constructive feedback" from drivers across the various event the FIA governs, "I am considering making improvements to Appendix B."

That's the document which lays out the punishments for a range of offenses ranging from physical violence to political statements, swearing, and any comments deemed to cause "moral injury or loss" to FIA.

Ben Sulayem has been seeking to crack down on swearing since last year and punishments were tightened for 2025 to allow for larger fines and suspensions for drivers who swear repeatedly.

The crackdown on swearing prompted a backlash from F1 drivers when Max Verstappen and Charles Leclerc were punished last year. Leclerc was fined and Verstappen was asked to make amends with community service. Drivers in the World Rally Championship boycotted TV interviews last month after one of them was fined.

After the last F1 race in Saudi Arabia, Verstappen refused to talk about a penalty which cost him

the lead because, he suggested, any criticism risked breaking the FIA rules.

"I know that I cannot swear in here but at the same time, you can also not be critical," he said.

There was one sign of a more flexible approach when Carlos Sainz, Jr. wasn't fined for using an expletive in a news conference while he protested another fine for being late for a national anthem.

"Humans make the rules and humans can improve the rules," Ben Sulayem wrote Monday. "The principle of continuous improvement is something I have always believed in and is at the heart of all we do at the FIA."

Best of the Rest

Lillard has torn Achilles tendon: Damian Lillard has a torn left Achilles tendon, confirming the Milwaukee Bucks' worst fears after the seven-time All-NBA guard was helped off the court Sunday night. The Bucks announced the severity of Lillard's injury after he had an MRI on Monday.

The injury knocks Lillard out for the rest of the postseason and could put his status for next season in doubt as well. When Kevin Durant tore his Achilles tendon in the 2019 NBA Finals, he ended up missing the entire 2019-20 season.

"Appreciate all the prayers and well wishes," Lillard said Monday in an Instagram post. "This one really hurt...." (AP)

Sacramento State hires O'Neal: Hall of Famer Shaquille O'Neal has agreed to become the general manager of the men's basketball program at Sacramento State under new coach Mike Bibby.

A person familiar with the situation said Monday that O'Neal will take the voluntary job for the program that his son, Shaqir, recently joined as a player. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the school hadn't made an announcement. ESPN first reported the news.

Bibby, the former NBA star for the Sacramento Kings, was hired as head coach for the Hornets last month as the school tries to raise its profile in collegiate athletics. One of the first additions Bibby made was signing Shaqir O'Neal as a transfer from Florida A&M. Now Bibby has O'Neal's father involved in the program. (AP)

Inzaghi looks to halt decline after treble blow

Inter looking to power back up ahead of Champs League match at Barcelona

MILAN, April 29, (AP): Strange things happen when Inter Milan plays Barcelona in the Champions League semifinals.

The last time the two teams met in the final four of Europe's elite club competition, in 2010, Barcelona had to make a 15-hour journey by bus to Milan after an ash cloud caused by the eruption of the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull shut down air space.

Barcelona lost that first leg 3-1 and a stout defensive performance by Inter in the return match saw it advance to the final 3-2 on aggregate - where it beat Bayern Munich to clinch a historic treble under Jose Mourinho.

Inter is hoping it won't have to make a similarly arduous journey after an unprecedented blackout brought much of Spain and Portugal to a standstill Monday.

Power had almost fully returned to Spain early Tuesday morning and Inter's charter flight was still scheduled to take off for Barcelona at 5 p.m. local time ahead of the first leg of their semifinal on Wednesday.

Inter coach Simone Inzaghi will be hoping his team can power back up for the game as well.

Inter heads to Barcelona following a dire run of results that has seen its dreams of another treble evaporate.

For the first time in more than 13 years, Inter has lost three straight matches without scoring a goal.

Since a 2-2 draw against Bayern in the Champions League quarter-finals, the Nerazzurri have lost to Bologna and Roma in Serie A and AC Milan in the Italian Cup - all by the same 1-0 scoreline.

That has also seen them been leapfrogged at the top of the Serie A table by Napoli, slipping three points behind the new league leader.

"The three defeats hurt and we're not used to this, we have to look at ourselves and try to recover our physical and mental energy," Inzaghi said.

Those three games, however, had something in common: Marcus Thuram was missing.

Thuram, who has been out with a left thigh issue, has scored 17 goals and provided nine assists across all competitions for Inter this season.

Without the France forward, Lautaro Martinez has appeared fatigued attempting to carry Inter's attack. And Marko Arnautovic, Thuram's replacement, has been ineffective.

Thuram has returned to training and could even start on Wednesday.

"We'll head to Barcelona and we will play them with respect, not fear," Inzaghi added.



In this file photo, Inter Milan's Lautaro Martinez, Inter Milan's Nicolo Barella, Inter Milan's Federico Dimarco celebrate during the UEFA Champions League soccer match between Inter and Bayern Munich at San Siro Stadium in Milan, North Italy. (AP)

Cavaliers sweep Heat in record-breaking blowout



Golden State Warriors center Kevon Looney (5) and Houston Rockets center Alperen Sengun, center, compete for a rebound during the second half of Game 4 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series in San Francisco. (AP)

Warriors hold off Rockets to go up 3-1

MIAMI, April 29, (AP): Cleveland moved into Round 2 with the most lopsided series win in NBA playoff history.

Donovan Mitchell scored 22 points, De'Andre Hunter added 19, and the Cavaliers led by as many as 60 points before beating the Miami Heat 138-83 to sweep their Eastern Conference first-round series in four games.

Ty Jerome had 18 points, Evan Mobley added 17, and Jarrett Allen had 14 points, 12 rebounds, and six steals for the Cavaliers. Cleveland won the series by a combined 122 points, one more than the previous record for series margin set by Denver over New Orleans in 2009.

The 55-point margin in Game 4 was the fourth-biggest playoff win ever. The record is 58 points, done twice: Minneapolis over St. Louis in 1956 and Denver over New Orleans in 2009. The Los Angeles Lakers beat Golden State by 56 points in 1973.

Nikola Jovic led the Heat with 24 points. Bam Adebayo scored 13, while Pelle Larsson and Andrew Wiggins each added 12 for Miami.

This is the third instance of Miami being swept in a best-of-seven series. The others: against Chicago in 2007 and against Milwaukee in 2021, both of those in the first round, and both also ending on the Heat's home floor.

It was over fast. Cleveland, which used a 33-5 early run to blow Game 3 open, led 43-14 late in the first quarter before Davion Mitchell beat the buzzer with a

3-pointer. The 26-point margin matched the worst quarter in Heat playoff history; it was the second-best margin for any quarter in Cavs playoff history.

And the lead only kept growing. It looked every bit like a 64-win team that led the East wire-to-wire, going up against a 10th-place finisher that needed to win two play-in games just to get into the tournament.

Cleveland's lead was 39-72-33 - at the half, the third-largest lead after two quarters in NBA playoff history. The only halftime leads bigger than that: Cleveland by 41 over Boston on May 19, 2017, and Detroit by 40 over Washington on April 26, 1987.

Warriors 109, Rockets 106

Jimmy Butler converted three free throws with 58.7 seconds left, grabbed the game-clinching

rebound with 4 seconds to go and then made two more free throws on the way to 27 points in his return from a pelvic injury, sending the Golden State Warriors past the Houston Rockets in a heated Game 4 to take a 3-1 lead in the first-round playoff series.

Fred VanVleet missed a 3-point shot under pressure at the buzzer.

The teams return to Houston for Game 5 in the best-of-seven series on Wednesday night as seventh-seeded Golden State tries to close out the No. 2 seed Rockets on their home floor.

Brandin Podziemski scored 26 points, Stephen Curry finished with 17 in the frantic finish and Buddy Hield hit a go-ahead 3-pointer with 3:32 left and scored 15 after joining the starting lineup.

Alperen Sengun scored with 40 seconds left for Houston to make it

a one-point game. He had 31 points and 10 rebounds, while VanVleet hit a tying 3-pointer with 1:20 to play and scored 25 points.

Butler was back after sitting out Game 3 with a pelvic contusion and deep gluteal muscle bruise suffered on a hard fall when he was fouled by Amen Thompson early in Game 2.

The second quarter Monday featured four technical fouls and a flagrant 1 in two separate tussles, including shoving during one sequence involving Curry, Draymond Green and Dillon Brooks.

With the game tied at 36, Curry dribbled down the sideline when Green put a hard screen on Houston's Amen Thompson. Brooks fouled Curry and he appeared to become angry about the push before going at Curry and Green.

Curry received a technical for "taunting" Brooks, who also received a technical along with Green. Warriors rookie Quinten Post and Houston's Jabari Smith Jr. flailed their arms at each other but avoided technicals upon replay review by the officials.

Then with 2:44 left in the quarter, tempers flared again. Green received a Flagrant 1 foul for pushing Tari Eason's face to the ground and Eason also received a technical. Green was dribbling when Eason went for a steal and the ball got loose and both players hit the floor trying to corral it. Green's left leg was on the Rockets forward's neck.

Butler shot 7 for 12 in 40 minutes after he watched Curry overtake a slow start to finish with 36 points, nine assists and seven rebounds in Golden State's 104-93 victory Saturday night without him.



Cleveland Cavaliers forward Evan Mobley (4) and Miami Heat forward Nikola Jovic (5) chase the ball during the second half in Game 4 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series in Miami. (AP)

Extremely 'positive' about team's future

Klopp congratulates Liverpool on 20th league title

LIVERPOOL, England, April 29, (AP): Ex-Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp has congratulated his former team on winning a record-equaling 20th English league title and suggested the era of success for the Reds is not over yet.

Klopp led Liverpool to a full set of trophies in more than eight years in charge, in-

cluding the Champions League in 2019 and the Premier League in 2020.

"Super grateful for the past, super happy about the present, extremely positive about the future!" Klopp said in an Instagram post.

"Congratulations - YNWA," he added, referencing the team anthem "You'll Never

Walk Alone."

Klopp left the club a year ago.

Arne Slot, who led the team to the title in his first year in charge, paid tribute to his predecessor by singing Klopp's name to fans after the final whistle of the 5-1 rout of Tottenham on Sunday that confirmed the league victory.

Strong 'showing' by Al-Mayouf at Qatar Youth Squash Tournament

DOHA, April 29, (KUNA): Kuwaiti squash player Abdullah Al-Mayouf claimed second place at the Qatar Youth Squash Tournament, following an impressive run that ended with a final match loss to Asia's top-ranked player, Yuwanshi Lu of China.

Held in the Qatari capital, Doha, the tournament featured 74 players from around the world and kicked off on Saturday.

Speaking to KUNA, Abdullah's father, Hussien Al-Mayouf, expressed pride in his son's performance, highlighting the value of participating in such high-level competitions. "Taking part in this tournament boosts players' standing in Asia's rankings," he said. "I'm proud of Abdullah's strong showing and hope it motivates him toward even greater achievements."

Al-Mayouf's second-place finish marks a significant milestone for Kuwaiti youth squash on the regional stage.



KUNA photo Abdullah Al-Mayouf with his father

Recovery expected to take several weeks

Real's Rüdiger could miss rest of season after knee surgery

MADRID, April 29, (AP): Real Madrid defender Antonio Rüdiger underwent knee surgery on Tuesday and could miss the rest of the season.

Madrid said Rüdiger successfully underwent surgery on a meniscus tear in his left knee and will begin "his recovery process shortly." The club did not give a timeline for his return but the recovery is expected to take several weeks.

Rüdiger said it was "unavoidable" to have the surgery after playing for more than seven months "with severe pain." "Now I'm finally pain-free again, and the surgery was a success," he said on Instagram in a post that included photos of him in the hospital after the surgery, one in bed and another in a wheelchair while holding crutches.

"I want to be able to play again as soon as possible as two big tournaments with the Nations League and the Club World Cup are in front of me, but I have to look from week to week now and we will see. I will do everything I can to make it happen."

Rüdiger had to be replaced in extra time of Madrid's 3-2 loss to Barcelona in the Copa del Rey final on Saturday.

He made headlines for shouting at the referee from the bench and for apparently throwing a small bag of ice onto the field.

Rüdiger apologized for his behavior but the incident prompted former Germany player Dietmar Hamann to call for



Real Madrid's Antonio Rüdiger, left, challenges for the ball with Barcelona's Ferran Torres during the Spanish Copa del Rey final soccer match between Barcelona and Real Madrid at Estadio de La Cartuja stadium in Seville, Spain. (AP)

the defender to be left out of Germany's squad for the Nations League final four in June.

German national team sporting director Rudi Völler also criticized Rüdiger, saying he needed to show "class" and respect for others.

Germany plays Portugal in the Nations League semifinals in Munich on June 4. Madrid's first game at the Club World Cup in the United States is on June 18.

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Iga Swiatek of Poland returns the ball against Russia's Diana Shnaider during the Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid, Spain. Swiatek won 6-0, 6-7, 6-4. (AP)

Sports

KFA Chairman congratulates finalists Kuwait Club & Al-Arabi

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Chairman of the Kuwait Football Association (KFA), Sheikh Ahmed Al-Yousef, extended his congratulations to Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi for qualifying for the final of the Crown Prince Cup, under the gracious patronage of His Highness.



Chairman of the Kuwait Football Association, Sheikh Ahmed Al-Yousef.

Sheikh Al-Yousef praised the impressive technical performances showcased by all teams during the semi-finals and commended the competitive spirit displayed throughout the tournament. He also conveyed his best wishes to Kazma and Qadsia clubs for success in upcoming competitions, expressing appreciation for the passionate and respectful support from fans.

Furthermore, he thanked the tournament organizers, staff, and refereeing teams for their professionalism and excellent match management.

Looking ahead, Sheikh Al-Yousef expressed his hope that the final – scheduled for May 19 at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium between Al-Arabi and Kuwait Club – will deliver a match of exceptional quality befitting the occasion.

Kuwait's Al-Kheder takes on a key role at Zamalek

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Kuwait's Ali Al-Kheder, has officially signed a contract to join Egyptian powerhouse Zamalek as the team's goalkeeping coach for the upcoming African Super Cup and African Championship, both of which vserve as qualifiers for the IHF Club World Cup.

Al-Kheder's appointment follows an impressive coaching track record, which includes standout stints with Al-Salmiya (Kuwait), Al-Khaleej Club (Saudi Arabia), and the Kuwaiti national handball team. He also made a significant



Ali Al-Kheder

mark on the international stage, having coached goalkeepers for the Brazilian national team during the Paris Olympics qualifiers, the South American Championship, and the 2025 World Cup qualifiers, where Brazil secured a commendable seventh-place finish globally.

A seasoned competitor, Al-Kheder has represented Kuwait Club twice at the IHF Club World Cup, winning every domestic title as well as the Asian, Arab, and Gulf Championships. Goalkeepers under his guidance have earned numerous accolades, including:

Best Goalkeeper at the South American Championship

Best Goalkeeper at the Arab Cup and twice at the Gulf Championship

Best Goalkeeper at the IHF Club World Cup

Best Goalkeeper at the Paris Olympics qualifiers

Beyond coaching, Al-Kheder is a certified lecturer underscoring his reputation as a respected figure in international sports education.

Commenting on his new role, Al-Kheder expressed his pride in joining Zamalek, describing the club as one of the "largest and most successful" in both the Arab and African regions.

He added that he looks forward to achieving success with the team's goalkeepers in the upcoming continental competitions.

Al-Arabi sets up Crown Prince Cup final showdown with Kuwait Club



Eid Al-Rashidi's desperate attempt to stop Kamil Al-Aswad.

Greens rewarded KD 2,000 bonus for reaching Crown Prince Cup final

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Al-Arabi secured a place in the Crown Prince Cup final against Kuwait Club, scheduled for May 19 at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, after edging past Al-Qadisiya 1-0. Bahraini midfielder Kamil Al-Aswad scored the decisive goal. Earlier Kuwait Club beat Kazma 4-2 to reach the final.

The "Greens previously defeated Al-Qadisiya twice in the Zain Premier League (2-1 and 4-2) but suffered a narrow loss in the Super Cup semi-final. The two sides are set to meet again this Friday in the third round of the league

championship group stage.

To celebrate the win and motivate the squad, Al-Arabi Club President Abdulaziz Ashour awarded each player a KD 2,000 bonus for reaching the final.

Meanwhile, Al-Qadisiya head coach Zeljko Petrovic expressed disappointment after the loss, stating: "We didn't deserve to lose. My players performed better than Al-Arabi, but luck wasn't on our side." He added that several missed chances contributed to the defeat and hinted at other unspoken factors that he would report internally.

When asked about his future with the club, Petrovic responded, "My contract ends on May 31. Whether I continue or not is up to the club. I wish it the best regardless."

Al-Qadisiya remains in contention for silverware, having already qualified for the quarterfinals of the Amir's Cup, with the final scheduled for June 16.

Kuwait Club's Adel Aqla, confirmed that decisions regarding contract renewals for professional players have been deferred until season's end. This

decision comes under the direction of the club's board and technical staff, led by Montenegrin coach Nebojsa Jovovic.

Among the club's foreign players, only Congolese midfielder Malik Zola has a contract extending into next season. The contracts of Tunisian striker Taha Khenissi, Moroccan midfielders Yahya Jabrane and Amin Abu Al-Fath, and Bahraini winger Mohammed Marhoon all expire at the conclusion of the current campaign.

Aqla emphasized that the fate of the coaching staff would depend on the team's performance and achievements during the final stretch of the season. Kuwait SC currently leads the league by two points over Al-Arabi with three rounds to go and has also advanced to the quarterfinals of the Emir's Cup.

Following Kazma's defeat to Kuwait Club, goalkeeper Faisal Al-Subaie criticized Russian referee Sergei Shapin, holding him accountable for the result. "The referee disrupted the focus of our players, the substitutes, and even the fans," Al-Subaie stated.

Catalans too strong for Trabzonspor

Barca wins Youth League, eyes unprecedented European treble

NYON, Switzerland, April 29, (AP): Barcelona is on course for a hat-trick of European titles after beating Trabzonspor 4-1 in the UEFA Youth League final.

It was won the day after Barcelona reached the Women's Champions League final and before the men's team hosts Inter Milan in the first leg of the Champions League semi-finals.

Leading from the 11th minute, on the first of two precise left-foot strikes by Mali youth international Ibrahim Diarra, Barcelona was rarely tested to claim a record third European youth title. Trabzonspor got a deserved goal in the 88th minute.

No club has swept European titles at each level since the Youth League started in the 2013-14 season. Barcelona won the inaugural edition and also lifted the trophy in 2018.

Barcelona's youth system is so strong that first-team players Lamine Yamal and Pau Cubarsi were still eligible for the under-19 team that plays in the UEFA Youth League.

The starting lineup had 10 players older than superstar winger Yamal, who turned 17 last July on the eve of helping Spain win the European Championship final against England.

Barcelona was too strong for Trabzonspor, the first Turk-

ish team to reach even the round of 16 in the competition. Hundreds of its noisy claret-and-blue fans outnumbered Barcelona's support in the small stadium next to UEFA headquarters.

Diarra's opening goal was added to in the 18th when defender Andres Cuenca tapped in a loose ball after goalkeeper Erol Can Çolak pushed away a powerful header by Landry Farré.

Barcelona captain Hugo Alba placed a rising shot in the 57th, and Diarra again found the bottom corner of the net in the 68th.

A late header by Trabzonspor defender Bican Tibukoğlu hardly dimmed the celebrations for Barcelona, which could have a stellar end to the season.

The La Liga-leading men's team must get past Inter over two legs to earn a Champions League final on May 31 in Munich against Paris Saint-Germain or Arsenal.

The women's team faces Arsenal in their Champions League final on May 24 in Lisbon.

The youth team, coached by Juliano Belletti - who scored a Champions League-winning goal for Barcelona against Arsenal in 2006 - did its part.



Barcelona's players and staff pose with the trophy after winning the Youth League Final soccer match between Trabzonspor and Barcelona, at the Colovray Sports Centre in Nyon, Switzerland. (AP)

Kuwait beach volleyball teams finalize preparations

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 29: Kuwait's national beach volleyball teams are intensifying their daily training sessions on the Green Island courts ahead of the West Asia Championship, scheduled to take place in Doha, Qatar, from May 5 to 10.

The national delegation is competing in the tournament with four teams. The men's side features Abdulwahab Talib and Jassim Al-Sabbagh (Team 1), and Nawaf Talal and Ibrahim Diaa (Team 2). The women's teams include Al-Ghadeer Al-Sayegh and Dana Mansour, along with Munira Yousef and Halima Abdullah. The technical staff is led by head coach Ahmed Abdulrazzaq, with Issa Al-Saleem serving as the men's team administrator and Amal Al-Faraj managing the women's squad.

The teams recently took part in the Third Gulf Beach Games, where the duo of Talib and Al-Sabbagh achieved a respectable fifth-place finish.

Issa Al-Saleem praised the team's intensive preparations, emphasizing



Abdulrazzaq directs the players during training session.

the commitment of the Kuwait Volleyball Federation and the national team management to equip the players for high-level performance.

"We aim to deliver a strong showing in the West Asia Championship and contend for top positions, despite

the sport's recent absence from domestic competition," Al-Saleem said. "We have a skilled technical team and ambitious players who are motivated to compete at their best. With continued support from the Federation, we are determined to give our all in Doha."

Shadman's ton gives Bangladesh narrow lead

CHATTOTGRAM, Bangladesh, April 29, (AP): Opener Shadman Islam hit a century to give Bangladesh a narrow lead in the second and final test against Zimbabwe on Tuesday.

Shadman made a career-best 120 to guide Bangladesh to 291-7 at stumps on Day 2, leading the visitors by 64 runs. But a late flurry of wickets prevented Bangladesh from taking complete control as Zimbabwe leg-spinner Vincent Masekesa claimed 3-44 on his debut.

Masekesa's three-for included the wicket of Mominul Haque (33) and captain Najmul Hossain Shanto (23), who appeared set for a big knock. Veteran Mushfiqur Rahim was run out for 40 to give Zimbabwe further hope.

Shadman and Anamul Haque gave Bangladesh a good start, adding 118

runs for the team's first century partnership in the opening stand since December 2022.

They kept the side unscathed throughout the morning session after Zimbabwe couldn't do its overnight score and was all out for 227 in the first innings.

Bangladesh bowler Taijul Islam got the better of Blessing Muzurabani with the first ball of the day, leaving Tafadzwa Tsiga stranded on 18. Taijul finished with 6-60 from 27.1 overs.

Anamul and Shadman were proactive right from the start with the latter slashing Richard Ngarava for a boundary past point in the third over to show his aggressive intent. Playing his first test in three years, Anamul got off the mark with two boundaries against Ngarava in the fifth over. But just af-

ter the lunch session, Muzurabani had Anamul leg-before for 39 after a gritty 80-ball knock that was laced with four fours.

Shadman, who made just 12 and 4 in the two innings of the first test in Sylhet, drove pacer Richard Ngarava for a boundary past cover to raise his second test ton off 147 balls. His first century also came against Zimbabwe in Harare in 2021.

He also became the 16th Bangladeshi batter to reach 1,000 runs.

Shadman and Mominul added 76 runs for the second-wicket stand but then fell in two balls just before tea. Left-arm spinner Wellington Masakadza (1-77) broke the partnership by dismissing Mominul for 33 and Brian Bennett got rid of Shadman in the next over.