



Pages 14-16



Scan the QR code to access
the Arab Times WhatsApp Channel

Assets unlocked, exit still blocked

Kuwait reforms debt collection process as travel ban holds

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: In line with Decree-Law Nos. 58 and 59/2025, amending Bankruptcy Law No. 71/2020 and Civil and Commercial Procedures Law No. 38/1980; the

enforcement departments on Wednesday started to lift the seizure of all debtors' assets held by banks, pending the adoption of a new mechanism for dealing with debt cases.

In accordance with the new amendments, Head of the Enforcement General Administration Counselor Abdullah Al-Othman sent a letter to the governor of the Central Bank a week ago, instructing banks to seize

only half of the debtors' salaries.

Sources stated that travel bans and vehicle seizures remain in place until the new procedures are finalized.

Sources said the Enforcement General Administration attributed these procedures to the issuance of Decree-Law No. 59/2025, amending certain provisions of the Civil and Commercial Procedures Law.

Continued on Page 5

Committee strips 434 of Kuwaiti citizenship

KUWAIT CITY, May 1, (KUNA): The Supreme Committee on Kuwaiti citizenship announced on Thursday the stripping citizenship of 434 individuals prior to referral to Cabinet.

The decision was made during the committee's meeting on Thursday chaired by Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

The Ministry of Interior revealed to KUNA that five individuals lost their Kuwaiti citizenship according to Articles 10 and 11 of the citizenship law, due to dual citizenships.

The commission also stripped 275 individuals of their citizenship as they have obtained it through forgery, fraud, and those who attained the document via affiliation.

Continued on Page 5

'No swap'

Kuwait releases 10 more US detainees

WASHINGTON, May 1, (AP): Kuwait has released an additional 10 American detainees, bringing to nearly two dozen the total number freed by the country in the past two months, U.S. officials told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The pardons of 23 Americans, done as a goodwill gesture by a U.S. ally, have yielded a quick succession of prisoner releases in the early months of a Trump administration that has sought to make hostage and detainee issues a foreign policy priority.

Continued on Page 5



In this image released by the U.S. State Dept., Adam Boehler, the Trump administration's top envoy for hostage affairs, left, greets military contractor Tony Holden, who was recently released from Kuwait, at Washington Dulles International Airport, in Chantilly, Va., on Wednesday, April 30, 2025. (AP)

Sheikha Jawaher highlights Kuwait's worker-centric reforms

Kuwait reaffirms workers' rights, housing standards

KUWAIT CITY, May 1, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait is committed to protecting workers' rights and providing them with a suitable housing and work environment, in line with international standards, said Assistant Foreign Minister Sheikh Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah.

This came in a speech delivered by Her Excellency during her participation in a roundtable session held, Thursday, under the title: "Adequate Housing

and Workers' Welfare in Kuwait: International Standards and Sustainable National Solutions," in the presence of Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Sheikha Jawaher stressed that Kuwait's efforts stem from a national and constitutional commitment to protecting human rights, noting the measures and initiatives taken that align with Kuwait's international obligations.

She pointed out that Kuwait attracts contract labor, as this workforce repre-

sents approximately 75 percent of the total workforce and represents more than 174 nationalities, reflecting the developmental nature of the major projects the country is witnessing.

Further, she affirmed Kuwait's continued development of the legislative environment for labor by updating laws on human trafficking, domestic workers' residency, and private sector work, in a manner that enhances justice and

Continued on Page 5

KAAA's chief calls for a unified approach to tax implementation

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Association of Accountants and Auditors (KAAA) Sabah Al-Jalawi has stressed the importance of raising awareness on tax and ensuring full understanding of the mechanisms for its implementation in institutions.

In his speech at the opening of the

First Gulf Forum on the Future of Tax Systems held Wednesday with the theme, "Spreading Tax Awareness and How Institutions Can Implement It," Al-Jalawi asserted that this responsibility requires the concerted efforts of all relevant parties, including government agencies, the Ministry of Finance and civil society organizations.

Representatives of the Ministry of Finance and numerous government

Continued on Page 5

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwaiti Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Thursday received US Ambassador to Kuwait Karen Hideko Sasahara, to discuss strengthening bilateral relations and confronting regional and international issues of mutual concern. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) said on Thursday its emergency teams have managed to extinguish a limited fire at Mina Abdullah Refinery's desulfurization unit.

One worker was killed and four others injured in the fire, the KNPC said in a

press release on its X account.

Of the four, two injured workers were taken to hospital for necessary medical treatment, while the other two were treated on the spot, it added. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: The Government's Grievances Committee for the Kuwaiti citizenship said on Thursday that doors would be open next Sunday for individuals who were contesting the withdrawal of their citizenships.

In a statement to KUNA, chair of the committee Justice Ali Al-Dhubaibi revealed that the first phase of contesting process would be done online via a link provided by the committee. (KUNA)

century, it has been supported by the efforts of the Academie Francaise to standardize the language."

He pointed out that French is a refined and melodious language deeply intertwined with the artistic expressions of poetry, song and storytelling. It helped express complex philosophical ideas in an understandable language, facilitating their dissemination during the Age of Enlightenment.

He stressed that Francophonie played a distinctive role in enriching Arab culture, especially since French was the official language of European culture from the 17th century until the end of the 19th century. He said that intellectual, political and diplomatic elites used it as a means of dialogue and openness; adding that it was used by kings, ambassadors and non-native thinkers, most notably the Enlightenment philosophers such as Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Montesquieu and Pascal.

He continued saying that the French language played a major role in spreading the concepts of rationalism, politics and human rights; and clearly contributed to the emergence of modern concepts like the social contract,

individual freedom and separation of powers. He stated that these concepts were first formulated in French before being translated into the rest of Europe's languages.

He added the French language has produced a rich world literature, ranging from novels like those of Balzac and Flaubert, to theater such as those of Molière and Corneille, and poetry such as those of Baudelaire and Rimbaud. He asserted that French literature has won the largest number of Nobel Prizes and has a prominent presence in the arts, fashion and cinema; ranging from Impressionism and painting to pioneering French cinema.

He emphasized that Francophonie is not merely a means of communication, but rather a carrier of cultural heritage and concepts that have shaped modern western consciousness. He described French as "the language of reason and beauty" for its phonetic elegance and philosophical and poetic vocabulary. "The language is still used in international forums and centers of intellectual and legal legislation, most notably the United Nations and the International

Continued on Page 5

OCHA reports critical shortages of food, medicine in Gaza

Kuwait calls out Israeli humanitarian blockades

PARIS, May 1, (Agencies): Kuwait's denounced, before the Hague-based International Court of Justice (ICJ), the "dangerous" and "loud" Israeli violations committed against the Palestinian people, especially in terms of delivering humanitarian aid.

This came in a statement by Ambassador to France Abdullah Al-Shaheen, who said "the continuation of such practices, including deliberate siege, starvation and targeting aid teams represent heinous crimes against humanity."

On February 28, Kuwait sought after an advisory opinion on Israeli occupation commitments towards presence and activities of the UN, international organizations and third countries in Palestine, mainly for providing main services, and development and humanitarian aid to Palestinians and their self-determination right.

The move taken is compatible with the UN General Assembly resolution No. 232/29 adopted in New York on December 19, 2024.

The United Nations' emergency relief coordinator urged Israel on Thursday to lift its blockade of aid into the Gaza Strip, saying the halting of humanitarian aid amounts to "cruel collective punishment."

Continued on Page 5

Heat meets haze as weather whiplash looms

KUWAIT CITY, May 1, (KUNA): The Meteorological Department has forecast that the country will be affected by a surface low-pressure system accompanied by a relatively hot and humid air mass. Light to moderate southeasterly winds, occasionally active, may stir dust, particularly in open areas. Scattered clouds are expected, with a chance of light, scattered rain that may be accompanied by occasional thunderstorms.

Over the weekend, the weather is expected to remain hot during the day and warm to mild at night.

The acting Director of the Meteorological Department Dharar Al-Ali explained to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Thursday that the weather during day time on Friday will be hot, partly cloudy, and relatively humid,

Continued on Page 5



A shroud of dust blankets Kuwait City on Thursday, casting a hazy veil over the skyline.

Photo by Samer Shiqer

8 Gulf Bank wins 'Best Mobile Banking Application and Experience' Award



9 KIPCO focuses on growth across companies and wealth creation for shareholders

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:41	Asr	15:21
Sunrise ..	05:07	Maghrib ..	18:24
Zohr	11:45	Isha	19:47

Local

Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Hot, partly cloudy and relatively humid with light to moderate freshening at times southeasterly wind, with speeds of 10-42 km/h with a chance for rising dust over open areas and a chance for scattered light rain.			
By Night: Rather hot to mild,			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait Airport	41	25	

partly cloudy to cloudy and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate southeasterly wind to wind, with speeds of 08-35 km/h with a chance for scattered rain.	Abdaly	42	25
	Bubyan	39	26
	Jahra	40	28
	Failaka Island	41	27
	Salmiyah	35	28
	Ahmadi	37	24
	Jal Aliyah	40	25
	Nuwaisib	37	25
	Wafra	39	23

Kuwait-Netherlands rely on diplomacy to safeguard interests: Westhoff



Photos by Rizk Taufiq

Some pictures taken at the event.

60 years of shared values: envoy

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Kuwait Laurens Westhoff praised the close historical ties between his country and the State of Kuwait, indicating these ties extend to more than 60 years of diplomatic and economic cooperation based on shared values and interests.

In his speech at the Dutch National Day celebration, which coincided with the birthday of His Majesty King Willem-Alexander, Westhoff stressed that Kuwait and the Netherlands are two relatively small countries surrounded by larger powers; hence, they rely on diplomacy, soft power and economic cooperation to protect their national interests and defend the international order based on laws and agreements.

Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Ambassador Sadiq Marafi and a number of diplomats were also present at the event.

Westhoff continued to say that the two countries have stood together on

many occasions in defense of the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-violation of internationally recognized borders. He called to mind the participation of the Royal Netherlands Navy in the international coalition to liberate Kuwait in 1990/1991. He affirmed that these values continue to form the solid foundation of bilateral relations despite the current decline in respect for the rules of the international system and multilateralism.

He also reminisced on the celebrations in his country; where every city or village organizes popular events, disclosing that the King and his family participate annually in this occasion by visiting a different city. He pointed out this affirms the royal family's connection to the people.

He confirmed that these traditions have continued for more than 500 years; contributing to the building of a cohesive society characterized by creativity and innovation, particularly in agriculture, trade and energy.

He added that the Netherlands, like Kuwait, overlooks the sea; and that the sea has been a bridge for trade and exploration for centuries. He said the economic relations between his country and the Gulf region date back

to the 17th century, when the Netherlands began trading textiles and spices with pearl merchants in Basra and Bahrain. "In the mid-18th century, the Netherlands became the most active European partner in the Gulf. Trade was not just about exchanging goods; but also a means of understanding other cultures and strengthening relations between peoples, something humanity needs today more than ever," he asserted.

He also called for the common defense of a global system that allows small countries to flourish and guarantees freedom and prosperity for their people.

He expressed his deep appreciation to the leadership and people of Kuwait for their close friendship, while extending gratitude to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and all the staff of the ministry for their continued support for bilateral relations. He confirmed that much has been achieved between the two countries, but the future holds even more opportunities; especially in the areas of food security, climate change, trade, investment and shared values.

Life after jail ... rights group aims to rehabilitate inmates

'Support Them' initiative protects prisoners' rights

KUWAIT CITY, May 1, (KUNA): The National Bureau for Human Rights (NBHR) announced on Thursday that the 'Sanedohum' or 'Support Them' initiative seeks

to rehabilitate inmates of correctional institutions by offering training and employment-oriented programs, along with projects to renovate and furnish correctional

facilities.

This was stated in a press release issued following a coordination meeting for the national initiative, held in strategic partnership with the Human Construction Society for Social Development, the Ministry of Interior, and private sector organizations. The meeting was chaired by Minister Plenipotentiary Anas Al-Shaheen, head of the tripartite committee overseeing the bureau's affairs, and attended by representatives from various government bodies and private sector companies.

According to the statement, the 'Sanedohum' initiative fosters collaboration between governmental entities, civil society, and charitable organizations to support projects that uphold human rights, enhance living conditions within correctional institutions, and promote respect for the rights of inmates.

Participating organizations included the General Administration of Correctional Institutions (Ministry of Interior), the Human Construction Society for Social Development, the Public Authority for Youth, the Union of Kuwaiti Charitable Societies and Foundations, the Union of Investment Companies, the Kuwait Industries Union, the Kuwait Lawyers Association, Kuwait Dairy Company, Shuwaikh Holding Company, Al-Rawdatain Company, and Namaa Charitable Society.



Officials from different government entities during the meeting.

KUNA photo



Some of the winners at the ceremony.



Audience at the event.

Photos by Mohammad Morsi



The Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) hosted the 66th meeting of the Board of Directors of the Federation of Gulf Chambers on April 30, 2025.

Meeting reflects GCC belief in common goals, destiny: KCCI

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: The Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) hosted the 66th meeting of the Board of Directors of the Federation of Gulf Chambers on Wednesday, April 30, along with the 13th regular consultative meeting of the Ministers of Commerce and Industry and the chairpersons of the boards of directors of federations and chambers of commerce and industry in GCC countries.

According to a press release issued by KCCI, Chair of the Federation of Gulf Chambers, Sheikh Faisal Abdullah Al-Rawas inaugurated the Board of Directors meeting, and welcomed the esteemed members. He expressed his gratitude to KCCI for hosting the current session.

KCCI welcomed the distinguished guests and affirmed that the meeting aims to support GCC states in facing developmental and competitive challenges at the national, regional, and international levels. It stressed that the meeting reflects the GCC states' belief in a common goal and destiny, and

the importance of joint efforts to overcome challenges and realize aspirations.

The items on the agenda were approved, including the union's annual report for 2024, the final financial accounts of the union's General Secretariat for 2024, and a comparative report on the Secretariat's revenues and expenditures.

The 13th regular consultative meeting was then held by the ministers of Commerce and Industry and the heads of the boards of directors of federations and chambers of commerce and industry in the GCC states.

Topics discussed included the unilateral decisions taken by some countries that negatively affect the Gulf private sector, as well as the importance of supporting the pharmaceutical and medical products industries in the GCC states. The meeting affirmed the need to adopt the food and drug authorities in GCC states as the primary reference bodies for registering medicines and related products, and establishing unified requirements among member states.

Fires, drowning common

KFF warns of lurking risk as warm weather digs in

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: With the arrival of summer and the rise in temperatures, the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) has urged all citizens and residents to exercise caution due to the increased risk of accidents associated with both indoor and outdoor summer activities.

According to a press release issued by KFF, Director of the Public Relations and Media Department at KFF Brigadier General Mohammad Bader Al-Ghareeb stressed that one of the most common dangers during this period is drowning, which is often caused by negligence or inadequate supervision at beaches, swimming pools, farms, and chalets.

He said many drowning incidents result from the absence of direct supervision of children while swimming, as well as a lack of rescue equipment or proper safety measures in areas that are unprepared or unsafe, such as unfenced pools or open water ponds on farms.

Brigadier General Al-Ghareeb warned of the dangers of neglecting safety procedures during sea voyages, and urged the public to ensure an adequate number of life jackets are available on board, notify relevant authorities of their travel plans and locations, and check both the vessel's condition and weather forecasts before departure.

He highlighted the heightened risk of home fires during summer, particularly due to the misuse of electrical appliances or negligence in the kitchen during peak hours.

Brigadier General Al-Ghareeb stressed the importance of regularly inspecting electrical wiring, avoiding overloads, keeping flammable materials away from heat sources, and educating children about the dangers of tampering with electrical devices.

He affirmed that KFF is committed to raising public awareness and ensuring rapid emergency response, emphasizing that personal vigilance and responsibility are the first line of defense.



Al-Ghareeb

Awqaf honors winners of Mafaz Charity, Volunteer Competition

By Mohammad Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: The Secretariat General of Awqaf held a ceremony Thursday in honor of the winners of Mafaz Charity and Volunteer Competition at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center, under the patronage of Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi.

In his speech on behalf of the minister, acting Secretary General of Awqaf Nasser Al-Hamad asserted "we are proud to reap the fruits of our latest tool for serving the community -- the Mafaz Competition for Spreading Awareness on Endowments, Charity and Volunteer Work. This competition is for students in intermediate and secondary schools under the Ministry of Education.

Al-Hamad thanked the partners of the Secretariat General of Awqaf in the Ministry of Education for their belief in the charitable and humanitarian mission of the institution, as well as their ongoing cooperation with the Secretariat on activities and projects that contribute to promoting community development.

He disclosed "the competition aimed to promote values among students by introducing them to the importance of endowments and charitable works; as well as to develop their scientific research skills by motivating them to research, analyze and utilize information about endowments and charitable works in their projects in the competition. It also aimed to enhance the value of teamwork and prepare students to become future leaders by developing their leadership skills through organizing events and workshops related to endowments and charitable initiatives. The competition encourages creativity and innovation among students and trains them on social responsibility through participation in actual and practical charitable activities."

He pointed out "this competition serves as a legacy of endowments and charitable work in the hearts of young people, so that they may be an extension of their fathers and grandfathers who pioneered endowments and charitable work hundreds of years ago. Despite the harshness of living conditions and the financial constraints at time; the love for goodness was deeply rooted in their souls. They were pioneers in charitable work in and outside Kuwait."

Furthermore, acting Deputy Secretary General for Administration and Support Services and Chairperson of the Supreme Committee supervising the competition Amal Al-Dallal revealed that the objectives of Mafaz Competition include spreading the culture of endowment, charitable work and volunteering among students; and to pass on the tradition of endowment to future generations.

She affirmed that the initiative was a resounding success, as most schools responded positively. She said "52 schools reached the final rounds. We are hoping to expand the competition next year to include all public schools, not just those located in the Capital."

The final results of the competition were announced, with prizes totaling KD6,300. The financial reward for each first-place student -- whether in the intermediate or secondary levels for boys and girls -- was KD300 or a total of KD900 for each team of three students from the winning school. The supervising teachers also received a reward of KD150 each for all positions in the competition.

The reward for the second-place winner was KD250 for each student or a total of KD750 for each team from the winning school; while the third-placers received KD200 each. The incentive was KD100 for each student in the intermediate and secondary levels.



Dr. Al-Wasmi

diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Public disciplined...traffic law same for top notch, citizens

“SINCE the implementation of the new traffic law, society has witnessed a noticeable shift toward greater traffic discipline and stability. This development reflects the principle of the rule of law, a cornerstone of institutional sustainability. The slogan “The rule of law above all” marks the beginning of a new era focused on building a more organized and stable society”, columnist Major General Eng. **Faisal Musa**

“Compliance with the law should not be a quick or temporary reaction, but rather a sustained educational process that instills the values of respect and commitment to public order.



Faisal Al-Jazzaf

“While individuals may differ in their understanding and adherence to the law, what matters most is building a deeply rooted culture of legal respect. This serves as a fundamental pillar for organizing societal affairs and guaranteeing the rights of all its members.

“In this context, it is necessary to emphasize that the application of the law should take into account humanitarian considerations and exceptional circumstances, ensuring it is enforced in both spirit and letter. The ultimate goal is not merely formal enforcement, but genuine compliance, instilling a culture of deterrence and voluntary discipline.

“I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Al-Sabah for his tireless efforts in strengthening the public’s sense of security and reassurance. I also stress the importance of enforcing laws in all state institutions, ensuring they are applied equally, without discrimination between senior officials and ordinary citizens.

“Achieving societal sustainability requires a shared responsibility among the government, civil society organizations, and citizens. This responsibility goes beyond the mere enactment of laws, but it also involves their fair, balanced, and humane implementation in a way that respects human dignity and supports the development of a prosperous, stable society.

“The partnership between civil society and the media plays a major role in promoting long-term compliance with the law. It is important to actively involve civil society organizations in supporting government programs through continuous awareness campaigns, lectures, and lasting partnerships, rather than relying on occasional campaigns.

“The media plays a pivotal role in this framework, beginning with the Ministry of Information and extending to all media outlets, by promoting community awareness and instilling the values of loyalty and patriotism.

“We pray to Almighty God to protect Kuwait and its people from all harm under the leadership of His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince (May God protect them). May God also have mercy on our righteous martyrs.”

Also:

“Ignorance is one of the main factors that lead some young people into the cycle of drug addiction”, columnist **Sami Al-Enezi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Indeed, a lack of awareness about the dangers of drugs, and in some cases, negative upbringing, can contribute to the problem. However, based on our observations of this issue and its harmful impact through the Al-Bashaer Association, where I volunteer, as well as through our communication with the Addiction Treatment Hospital and our interactions with individuals in recovery or those who have repented, we have found that addiction is not limited to any specific background. Many of those affected were raised in stable, educated, and religiously grounded households. These cases are not rare; they are, in fact, quite common.

“This is a deeply alarming reality, especially when we consider the growing number of addicts. While the number of those recovering is indeed encouraging, a closer look at the situation reveals a troubling pattern: there is a deliberate scheme targeting our youth, a fact that becomes evident to anyone with a mind.

“This scheme is intentional, and aimed at derailing young people from their noble aspirations and their potential contributions to their country and society. Recognizing this threat compels us to take firm and decisive action to confront and deter the criminals who seek to destroy our youth and lead them astray.

“In response, we must focus on three main pillars to protect our society, our nation, and our youth in particular.

“First, assess the situation thoroughly and develop appropriate treatment strategies, as is already being done in our country through the Addiction Treatment Hospital and the associations that work alongside it. These organizations, such as the Al-Bashaer Association and others, contribute valuable scientific expertise and experience in dealing with addiction by raising awareness of its health, psycho-

logical, and social consequences.

“Second, take a firm stance against drug dealers until we reach a point where they are deterred and intimidated, as reflected in the implementation of the new laws. To the Ministry of Interior, we express our gratitude and appreciation ... May you be rewarded, God willing.

“Third, use religion, followed by ethics and role models. Many specialized organizations approach this matter with professionalism, combining both scientific and spiritual support to protect recovering youth, help them reintegrate into society, prevent relapse, and encourage continued positive contributions toward a better future.

“In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Interior, under the leadership of its minister Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, for their resolute and commendable efforts in combating drugs and drug dealers. I pray to God to guide everyone to what He loves and is pleased with.”

“Kuwait, by the grace of God, is renowned for its quick relief efforts and charitable actions. The country’s charitable projects have extended to most countries around the world, from the East to the West, and the North to the South. These acts of charity are not a recent development nor are they solely tied to wealth and the discovery of oil. They have been an integral part of Kuwait’s history. The spirit of giving and charity work is deeply embedded in the hearts of the generous Kuwaiti people”, columnist **Hamad Salem Al-Marri** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Even during times of poverty when Kuwait’s people lived off the sea and herded livestock, many Kuwaitis were quick to undertake charitable projects. They helped those in need, built mosques and schools such as the Al-Saada Orphanage School established by Shamlan bin Ali Al-Saif Al-Roumi, and constructed hospitals, like the one established by the Kuwaiti people through the charitable society in 1913.

“These efforts were not limited to the people of Kuwait alone; the country’s rulers were also known for their dedication to charitable work. A prime example is the late Sheikh Jaber bin Abdullah Al-Sabah (may God have mercy on him), who was known for his generosity and support for the poor and needy.

“After Kuwait became an independent state, charitable societies were established to carry out humanitarian projects both inside and outside Kuwait, on behalf of donors and under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

“However, the sheer number of these organizations, coupled with the influence of some ideologically driven individuals, has led to chaos. Some charitable organizations have unfortunately become hubs for partisan groups, who exploit them for their own interests.

“The government’s efforts to regulate charitable work and close the headquarters of these charitable organizations in private residences is a necessary and correct step. We have seen these organizations renting residential villas in prime locations for thousands of dinars per month. This raises important questions about the source of the



Hamad Al-Marri

unless it shuts down all of these organizations. Some of them are known to serve as partisan headquarters for groups that are banned in several countries, while others are linked to organizations classified as terrorist groups.

“We observed the actions of some of these organizations during the so-called “Arab Spring” and the events at Rabaa al-Adawiya Square in Egypt.

“Following the dissolution of these associations, a government-run charitable foundation will be established. This foundation will employ Kuwaiti youth and be responsible for managing charitable work overseas with the cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

“The Zakat House will be assigned the responsibility of overseeing charitable work in Kuwait and will operate under the supervision of relevant regulatory authorities. A comprehensive online platform for charitable work will also be created under the supervision of the government, the Ministry of Finance, and the Central Bank of Kuwait, similar to what some Gulf Arab states did.

“Shifting charitable work in Kuwait from the private to the public sector will boost donor confidence, ensure proper regulation, and protect it from partisanship. It will also help curb the influence of ideological groups both inside and outside Kuwait. Unfortunately, these groups had been collaborating with their counterparts in some countries to implement charitable projects aimed at expanding their political influence there.”

— Compiled by Mahmoud Attiyeh/Simi K. Kutty



Al-Rai photo

No cars seen at the Salmi border post.

Power outage disrupts travel via Salmi border post: report

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: A recent power outage disrupted travel through the Salmi border, halting movement in and out of the country for approximately 30 minutes, reports Al-Anba daily.

A security source revealed that authorities temporarily closed the entry and exit points as a precautionary measure to prevent any individual

wanted by law or subject to legal restrictions from crossing the border during the outage.

“We immediately contacted the Ministry of Electricity, which resolved the issue; allowing border traffic to resume. A large number of vehicles got stuck in both directions until power was restored,” the source added.

Court upholds 5-year jail for ISIS supporter, acquits one

Kuwaiti bailed out in cryptocurrency mining case

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: The Court of Appeals, presided over by Judge Naser Salem Al-Haid and including judges Saud Al-Sanea and Tariq Metwally, upheld the Criminal Court’s ruling which sentenced a Kuwaiti citizen to five-year imprisonment, and acquitted a second defendant in a case involving charges of joining and financing ISIS, as well as creating a website to promote the group’s ideology.

The first defendant is a soldier in the Ministry of Defense, and the second is employed as an assistant engineer.

The Public Prosecution charged the two with joining a terrorist organization ISIS, facilitating communication among its members, and promoting its extremist ideology.

It stated that their actions endangered national interests and undermined the state’s core principles by joining ISIS, which is classified as a terrorist organization under a United Nations Security Council resolution.

The Public Prosecution stated that the first defendant confessed to all charges, admitting his support for ISIS and pledging allegiance to the group’s leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. He also admitted to following ISIS-related content on various social media platforms, as well as initiating contact with an individual named Abu Amara, an ISIS member and supporter, via the Telegram messaging app in 2016.

Abu Amara requested a donation to support ISIS, and the defendant responded by handing over KD 60 to an individual in Kuwait linked to Abu Amara. The defendant also joined several pro-ISIS social media channels and groups and created multiple Telegram channels, making them publicly accessible for others to join.

The first defendant said he met the second defendant in 2017 through Telegram after discovering the latter’s interest in ISIS. The second defendant expressed a desire to travel to Syria to join ISIS fighters. In response, the first defendant told him that the situation at the time made travel to Syria diffi-



Al-Sanea



Al-Matrouk

cult and instead suggested going to Yemen to join the group there. However, the second defendant was unable to travel to Yemen, and their relationship ended in 2018.

The second defendant also admitted to communicating via Telegram with several individuals affiliated with ISIS, most recently in 2024 with a man known as “Abu Amir,” with the intent of recruiting them to join ISIS fighters in Syria.

Kuwaiti bailed out: The Public Prosecution has decided to release a Kuwaiti citizen on bail of KD 500 in connection with the cryptocurrency mining case.

The Public Prosecution had charged the citizen with three offenses related to undermining state security and endangering national interests.

Lawyer Salman Al-Matrouk appeared on behalf of his client, who is the homeowner where the mining equipment was discovered, and requested his release on any bail amount the Public Prosecution deemed appropriate.

It is worth highlighting that the citizen denied all charges against him.

Court rejects appeal: The Constitutional Court has rejected the appeal filed by the chairman of the Board of Directors of the Union of Private Medical Professionals against Minister of Health Decision No. 196/2022 on requiring private medical institutions to treat medical waste generated by their operations in the Medical Waste Treatment Unit of the ministry by contracting with the company assigned by the ministry.

The court also prohibited the granting or renewal of health licenses to all private medical institutions unless they submit a certificate indicating they have a contract with the abovementioned company.

The appellant based his appeal on the argument that “this decision conflicts with the constitutionally protected right to property and violates the provisions of the Competition Protection Law, as well as Article 56 of the Medical Profession Law, which requires private medical institutions to safely dispose medical waste without contracting with a specific company.”

The appellant added that the decision was flawed due to the abuse of power in the form of the exorbitant cost of contracting with the company commissioned by the ministry, which could harm the interests of medical institutions. He said the union failed to appeal this decision.



Mol photo

Kuwait Army plans to hire more women in the institution. Registration is open.

Arrest of lawyer reveals ‘drug-peddling’ network

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: The lawyer accused of drug possession in his office has confessed that a woman in her twenties was the one who had supplied him with various quantities of narcotics. She has been apprehended, and a quantity of drugs was found in her possession, reports Al-Rai daily quoting security sources.

They explained that she admitted, during questioning, to distributing drugs as part of an international trafficking network operating outside of Kuwait.

She also admitted to regularly supplying the lawyer with drugs.

The case is under further investigations, and the necessary procedures are being taken to refer the case to the Public Prosecution.

Drug carrier held in office: The Ministry of Interior announced that the Criminal Security Sector, represented by the Drug Control General Department, arrested a Kuwaiti citizen inside his office in Bneid Al-Gar for possessing various narcotic substances and intoxicants, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry explained that the arrest followed careful monitoring of the suspect’s movements, based on confidential information received regarding his involvement in possession and trafficking of drugs. A well-planned ambush led to the suspect’s arrest in the act, along with the arrest of his accomplices in the crime.

The search operation uncovered the following items: 40 grams of cocaine, 24 grams of marijuana, 30 grams of hashish, 300 intoxicating pills, and two sensitive scales used in the preparation and distribution of narcotic substances.

The ministry affirmed that necessary legal measures have been taken against the suspects, who have been referred to the relevant authorities along with the seized items for further investigation.

CBK orders banks to stem donations from charities

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: The Central Bank of Kuwait has issued a circular to all banks, instructing them to suspend receiving all forms of donations for charitable organizations, based on the directives of the Ministry of Social Affairs, reports Al-Rai daily.

The receipt of all forms of donations, including deposits via money transfer companies, checks, online bank transfers, ATMs, and payment orders for charitable organizations will be suspended until further notice.

The circular also stipulates that banking transactions for charitable organizations will be restricted to disbursements within Kuwait, and will require prior approval from the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Ex-staff to pay losses: The Court of First Instance ordered the former board members of a real estate company, including representatives of government entities, to jointly pay the company an amount of KD8.385 million -- with immediate effect, as they are responsible for investment decisions that affected the company, reports Al-Rai daily.

This is the court’s ruling on a case filed by a government entity that owns a stake in the real estate company.

Army to hire women: The Administration and Human Resources Department of the Ministry of Defense’s General Staff of the Kuwait Army has announced the opening of volunteer recruitment for women holding eleventh-grade certificates (science or literature sections), reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry invited interested candidates to register between May 4 and May 7, through the official volunteer recruitment website: <https://vc.kuwaitarmy.gov.kw>.

MUGHAL MAHAL APP OFFERS

20% OFF + 5% CASHBACK

IN WALLET

ORDER NOW

SCAN QR TO DOWNLOAD THE APP

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

1800 188 / 5501 1985 | www.mughalmahal.com | @mughalmahalkuwait

Al-Huwailah shows 7 board members door

Group involved in funds misappropriation: probe panel

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: As part of her ongoing efforts to eliminate violations in cooperative societies, Minister of Social Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah recently dismissed seven members of the Board of Directors of Al-Naeem Co-operative Society as they were proven to have committed financial and administrative violations identified by the



Dr. Al-Huwailah

committee tasked to review the operations and accounts of the cooperatives.

The decision included the appointment of seven board members to manage the affairs for of the cooperative for one year, or until a new board of directors is elected, whichever comes first.

The dismissed members are required to hand over mandates, funds, official documents and others to the appointed members within a period not exceeding one week from the date of the decision.

Meanwhile, sources told the newspaper that the ministry is continuing its oversight campaign against cooperative societies, indicating that it is preparing to take a number of legal and administrative measures against those proven to have committed serious financial and administrative violations, based on reports from specialized technical committees recently formed to review the work of some cooperatives.

Sources said the ministry is tightening its oversight of cooperative societies' performance and it is taking all the necessary measures to ensure the protection of shareholders' rights and promote cooperative work, pending the enactment of the new Cooperative Societies Law.

Meanwhile, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah chaired the weekly meeting with a number of citizens and visitors, in the presence of senior ministry officials, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the meeting, Dr. Al-Huwailah stressed the importance of removing any obstacles faced by visitors, and affirmed the ministry's commitment to the "open door" policy in all sectors and departments to ensure citizens' needs are identified and their feedback heard.

It is worth highlighting that Dr. Al-Huwailah's weekly meetings will be held every Wednesday at her office in the Ministries Complex, Block 17, second floor. Appointments must be booked in advance through the Sahel app.

Need to strengthen ties: Al-Shamali

Kuwait envoy in India presents papers to Nepal head

NEW DELHI, May 1, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Ambassador to India Mishal Al-Shamali presented on Wednesday his credentials to Nepalese President Ram Chandra Paudel as non-resident ambassador to Nepal.

Kuwait Embassy in New Delhi told KUNA that Ambassador Al-Shamali conveyed greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and their sincere wishes for his health and well-being, and for continued prosperity and progress for his country.

Al-Shamali expressed Kuwait's joy in maintaining strong relationship with Nepal and its desire to further develop and strengthen the ties to achieve the aspirations of the leadership and peoples of both the countries.

During the credential presentation ceremony, bilateral relations between the two countries and ways to strengthen cooperation across various sectors were discussed, with the Kuwaiti ambassador expressing his happiness in the trust bestowed upon him for representing the State of Kuwait in Nepal.

On his part, the Nepalese President conveyed his best regards to His Highness the Amir of Kuwait and His Highness the Crown Prince and expressed satisfaction in maintaining strong relations between Kuwait and Nepal.

He also praised the Kuwaiti government's care for Nepalese residents in Kuwait and its efforts to facilitate their living conditions.

He expressed keenness to develop and strengthen bilateral relations between the two friendly countries to serve common interests.



KUNA photo
Kuwaiti Ambassador to India Mishal Al-Shamali presents credentials to Nepalese President Ram Chandra Paudel as non-resident ambassador to Nepal.

The credential presentation ceremony, held at the Presidential Palace in Kathmandu, was attended by senior leaders and officials from the Nepalese government.

Better quality higher education eyed

MoE puts block on some US courses

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jallal has issued a ministerial decree to remove certain academic programs and degrees from the list of higher education institutions in the United States recognized by the State of Kuwait.

This action is pursuant to the systematic evaluation of accredited academic programs and specializations, and the commitment of the ministry to improve the quality of higher education while ensuring relevance to labor market demands.

The decree stipulates the cancellation of the accreditation for several programs as follows: Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) and Bachelor of Pharmacy (PharmD) at the University of South Carolina-Lancaster, Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Sciences at Northeastern University, Master of Health Operations Management and Master of Management at Monmouth University, Master of Management Information Systems at Montclair State University and Doctor of Emergency, Disaster and Crisis Management at North Dakota State University.

This decree applies to all students who have not commenced their studies in the aforementioned programs prior to the date of its promulgation.

Registration or continuation in any

of these programs shall be contingent upon authorization from the ministry.

This measure is an integral component of the endeavor of the ministry to guarantee the enrollment of Kuwaiti students in academic programs of superior quality.

Meanwhile, the acting Assistant Undersecretary for Public Education Affairs at the Ministry of Education Mansour Al-Dhafiri announced the second semester exam schedules for 10th, 11th, and 12th high school grades in science, literature, religious education, and for homeschool students.

Al-Dhafiri explained that exams for grades 10 and 11 (science and literature) will begin on June 21. Exams for grade 12 (science and literature) are scheduled to start on June 11. Religious education exams for grade 12 will begin on June 1.

He stressed that 15 minutes will be added to each exam to allow students to read the instructions and check the number of question papers.

Al-Dhafiri added that students with learning difficulties will receive an extra 30 minutes for all subjects, in line with the decision of the General Technical Guidance Council.



Dr. Al-Jallal

Ahmadi gov seeks collaboration with KES on urban development

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Hamoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Secretary of the Kuwait Society of Engineers (KES) Eng. Fahad Ardini Al-Otaibi, and board members Eng. Ali Abbas Mohseni and Dr. Shurooq Al-Jasser at his office in the Ahmadi Governorate General Diwan recently.

According to a press release issued by Ahmadi Governorate, they discussed ways to collaborate, exchange ideas and experiences, and benefit from each other's expertise, particularly within the framework

of the Ahmadi Governorate and the Green Urban Development Initiatives Committee.

During the meeting, Sheikh Hamoud reviewed the committee's work mechanisms, as well as its developmental and societal objectives, commending KES's significant role and contributions toward advancing sustainable development in Kuwait.

Eng. Al-Otaibi, in turn, expressed the society's readiness to collaborate with the Ahmadi Governorate and the Initiatives Committee, and offer its full support and expertise to maximize community benefits.

Court Cases

Detention of 134 suspects extended

Four Iranians to hang for smuggling 350kg of drugs

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: The Criminal Court, headed by Justice Nayef Al-Dahoum, sentenced four Iranian drug dealers to death after being charged with attempting to smuggle 350 kilograms of hashish, worth KD1 million, into the country.

The court also sentenced a citizen to five years in prison and fined him KD5,000 for using psychotropic substances and possessing drugs. Two other defendants were acquitted.

According to the case files, the Drug Control General Department in the Criminal Security Sector at the Interior Ministry, in cooperation with the Coast Guard General Department, foiled the attempt of six individuals to smuggle a large quantity of narcotics into the country through the sea.

As search and investigation operations intensified into drug dealers and traffickers, information was obtained about a number of individuals attempting to smuggle a large quantity of narcotics into the country.

The vessel was seized immediately after being monitored by the authorities; leading to the discovery of 13 bags containing around 350 kilograms of hashish.

Detention extended: After investigating the cryptocurrency mining case involving about 134 individuals, the



Al-Dahoum

Public Prosecution (Commercial Affairs Unit) at the New Justice Palace decided to extend the detention of the defendants until Sunday; while some, who own homes used for cryptocurrency mining, were released on bail.

During investigation, the prosecution charged the defendants with undermining the interests of the country and engaging in cryptocurrency mining activities without obtaining a license from the Kuwait Municipality, Public Authority for Industry and Communications Authority; in addition to using excessive energy to produce currency -- a violation of the electricity usage regulations of the country. The defendants denied the charges when questioned.

The prosecution released some of them on various amounts of bail, while others were detained by the Criminal Investigation Department for further investigation.

It is worth noting that the charges against the defendants include harming national interests, engaging in unlicensed industrial activity, and using a residential building in a manner not intended for it.

Appeal rejected: The Criminal Court rejected the appeal filed by Salman Al-Khalidi against the in absentia ruling to sentence him to five years in prison with hard labor for insulting the Emirate.

This is one of several lawsuits filed against Al-Khalidi, who have been accused of violating the State Security Crimes Law through his social media posts.

The Criminal Court recently deliberated on more than one case against Al-Khalidi, one of which resulted in the receipt of a report from the Psychiatric Hospital proving he is mentally sound.



MAY
Room Promotion



Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 57.173	BHD 128.000/-net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 65.000/-net	BHD 145.000/-net

Promo period from 1st May to 31st May 2025

Terms & conditions apply*

Tel: +973 17701201 - Ext. 351

Email: reservation@albander.com

www.albander.com

@albanderhotelandresort

Bid to drive investment

First fashion law forum stitches together growth, empowerment

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: Assistant Undersecretary for Legal Affairs at the Ministry of Information Manal Al-Baghdadi recently launched the First Fashion Law Conference entitled, “Protection... Economy... Sustainability.”

Advocates Group Academy organized the conference, with specialists and legal experts in and outside Kuwait in attendance.

In her opening remarks, Al-Baghdadi affirmed that Kuwait has a comprehensive and well-established legal system for the protection of trademarks and patents. She said Kuwait is a pioneer in issuing legislation related to literary and commercial protection rights.

She added the country also joined numerous international agreements; such as the WIPO Convention, TRIPS Agreement, Berne Convention and Rome Convention, thereby, strengthening its position as a safe and attractive economic zone for future investments.

She revealed the conference tackles developments in the fashion industry, challenges and the role of innovation in brand building. She explained this is achieved by opening the door to constructive dialogue between designers, brands and consumers; striving for a more creative and sustainable future in the world of fashion.

Creativity

She said the conference brings together fashion enthusiasts and makers under one roof; indicating it coincides with the World Intellectual Property Day that falls on April 26 of each year. “World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) declared this day in a bid to protect literary creativity and commercial rights,” she clarified.

She enumerated the objectives of the conference as follows: attract foreign investments, strengthen the fashion industry, push national economic growth, generate job opportunities for youths, and support the diversification of sources of income in line with the New Kuwait Vision 2035. She added the conference does not only discuss fashion and clothing, but also the language that expresses culture and keeps pace with global changes.

She said “fashion is not just about what we wear; it is a message of creativity and investment. Global and local brands have become part of this evolving landscape; influencing consumer taste, driving the economy, and shaping trends in beauty and art.”

On the other hand, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Advocates Group Academy Attorney Mohammed

Jameel confirmed that the conference draws inspiration from creativity, art and innovation -- the foundations of the fashion industry.

He explained that the academy organized the conference in collaboration with key players in the fashion sector; including designers who have achieved success at the tip of the needle, suppliers who paved the way between materials and the market, brand agents, lawyers and insurers -- all of whom are united by passion and the belief that beauty deserves protection.

Legislation

He added “the themes of the conference, its sessions and workshops are delicate threads weaving a new fabric for the fashion industry. We are here not only to emulate beauty in its fleeting manifestations, but to restore its texts. Just as a poem needs its meter, the industry needs its legislation. It is now time for fashion to be liberated from the chaos of convention, embrace the light of text, and to move from the confines of individual inspiration to the horizon of collective organization. The law we seek is not a restriction, but an existential necessity. If Kuwait is enacting a fashion law today, the world is now awaiting this product as a comparative study, a model law or a guideline. Whatever the product, it is certain that Kuwait is the first.”

Chairman of Kuwait Lawyers Association Adnan Abel, who represented the strategic partners, stressed that Kuwait is a pioneer and leader in enacting legislation and diversifying it.

He said the country is witnessing a tremendous legislative boom, with the total number of Kuwaiti laws reaching around 930 and 10 percent of which -- about 90 -- are currently under review.

He underscored the importance of addressing the issue of fashion, and enacting laws that protect patents and intellectual properties. He said the fashion market in 2024 generated about \$253 billion and the annual turnover in the Gulf market exceeds \$50 billion.

He confirmed the oversight role of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in combating trademark tampering and imposing severe penalties on violators. “Last July, the oversight and inspection teams of the ministry confiscated around 600 products valued at more than KD10 million in just one seizure operation,” he added.

He also stressed the importance of empowering women in various fields; citing the recommendations of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to support women, as evident in their vital contributions, which exceed 40 percent in various governmental and civil institutions.



KUNA photos

The Third Session of the Kuwaiti-Azerbaijani Cooperation Committee in progress.

Kuwait, Azerbaijan sign MoUs to boost bilateral cooperation

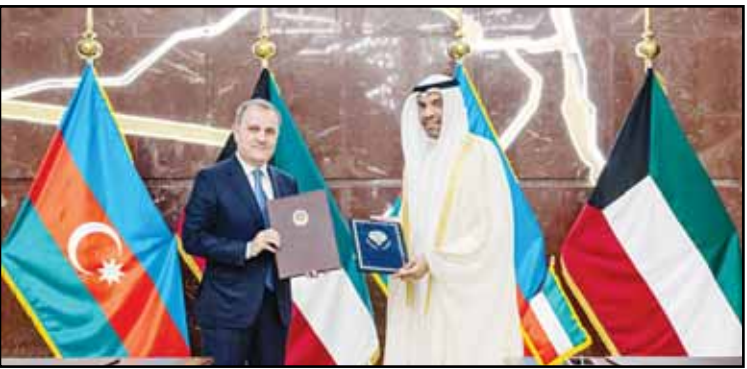
FM Al-Yahya, Azeri counterpart co-chair talks

KUWAIT CITY, May 1, (KUNA): The Third Session of the Kuwaiti-Azerbaijani Cooperation Committee kicked off in Kuwait on Wednesday, presided over by Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya and his Azerbaijani counterpart Jeyhun Bayramov.

Kuwaiti-Azerbaijani cooperation covering various sectors were reviewed during the official talks, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a press release.

Several memos of understanding and programs were inked in a sign of both friendly countries’ willingness to bolster existing close relations in vital and significant domains.

Minister Al-Yahya said on Wednesday that the State of Kuwait valued relations with Azerbaijan since establishing relations back in 1994, affirming that both countries



Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya and his Azerbaijani counterpart Jeyhun Bayramov.

were eager to seek bolstering of ties on all possible domains.

This came in a speech by Al-Yahya during the third session of the joint Kuwaiti-Azerbaijani cooperation committee meeting held in Kuwait, which he co-chaired with his counterpart Jeyhun Bayramov.

Minister Al-Yahya hoped that this session would lead to further exploration of ties and ways to boost them between the two countries.

While, the minister focused on ways to boost ties, he touched on the recent developments in the world, which required close coordination amongst the global community members, saying that Kuwait and Azerbaijan would be collaborating to improve joint coordination on matters of regional and international importance.

The minister brought up the participation of Representative of His

Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah in the 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) held in Azerbaijan, which also saw a meeting with President Ilham Aliyev on the sideline of this grand international event.

In this light, the minister commended the relentless efforts of officials from both countries to boost bilateral ties, saying that the holding of the first session of the joint cooperation committee meeting in Kuwait back on February 13, 2025 was the first spark that led to ongoing efforts in this regard.

He reiterated the utter importance of such meetings for the boosting of ties, noting that the current meeting will witness the signing of several accords in agriculture as well as a variety of executive programs within sports, culture, and tourism.

He expressed willingness to partake in the upcoming session of the joint cooperation committee in 2027.



KUNA photo
Undersecretary of the Ministry Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi listens to a briefing of the participating entities.

Kuwaiti charities promote transparency, unity

Kuwait’s vision echoes at humanitarian aid summit

DUBAI, May 1, (KUNA): Kuwait Ministry of Social Affairs affirmed on Thursday the importance of participating in the 21st Dubai International Humanitarian Aid and Development (DIHAD) Conference and exhibition, emphasizing the country’s commitment in regulating charitable work.

Speaking to KUNA at the event, Undersecretary of the Ministry Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi said that Kuwait’s partaking in this event reflects its humanitarian contributions and the role of its charitable societies to ensure aid reaches the recipients under the ministry’s supervision. The three-day event, which is held under the patronage of UAE Vice President, Prime Minister, and the Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, hosts more than 18,000 participants from 160 countries.

Dr. Al-Ajmi emphasized the value of this event in exploring innovative projects and learning from other’s countries experiences that would enhance Kuwait’s charitable and humanitarian ecosystem, thanking

Consul General of Kuwait in Dubai and the Northern Emirates Khaled Al Zaabi for his presence and support. The Ministry is showcasing its “Central Aid Program” aiming to unify the efforts of charitable organizations, tracks underprivileged families, and ensures efficiency and transparency across its recognized societies.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education unveiled its “Naseemat Al-Khuzama Award”, a creative competition for high school students to propose solutions for food preservation and promoting awareness around food waste. Kuwait Association for Needy Families (KANF) presented local initiatives such as debt repayment for detainees, school fee support, and seasonal campaigns including “Iftar for Fasting Individuals.” DIHAD, which began Tuesday and concludes today, is a globally recognized platform for humanitarian aid and development, aiming to unite relief service providers, government bodies, and aid institutions in creating innovative ways to support vulnerable communities worldwide.



KUNA photo
Kuwait’s pavilion at the 21st Dubai International Humanitarian Aid and Development (DIHAD) Conference and exhibition.

Continued from Page 1

Assets unlocked,

Sources added the administration has started amending the computer system regarding the seizure of debtors’ assets held by third parties to impose a seizure on the salaries of debtors (those subject to execution) at a rate ranging from 25 percent to 50 percent of the salary, as determined by law, based on the nature of the debt and the place of work of the debtor.

Committee strips

According to Article 13, Clause four, one person (of a Kuwaiti mother) was stripped of citizenship, citing the state’s higher interest.

Similarly, 16 cases who obtained their citizenship through recognition of valuable services, has their citizenship stripped as per Article 13 Clause four.

Some 137 individuals had their citizenship taken for the country’s higher interest according to Article 13, Clause four, and those who obtained it via affiliation.

Francophonie month

Organization of La Francophonie. Kuwait is keen on providing all the necessary facilities to support Francophonie, as it has always been an incubator for culture and arts in the region. Its doors will remain open for the exchange of knowledge and cultural cooperation with various French-speaking countries,” he stressed.

He pointed out that the French language, with its long history, is present on all continents -- from Asia to Africa, from Canada in the North to Haiti in the South, and even New Caledonia and Tahiti in the Pacific Ocean, and Saint Pierre and Miquelon in the Atlantic Ocean. He wished it further spread and prosperity until it reaches the North and South Poles.

His Highness concluded his speech by conveying feelings of friendship and celebration to all French-speaking peoples, extending his thanks to the ambassadors of the member states of the Francophonie Organization for their participation in this celebration and praising the successful organization of the evening.

On the other hand, French Ambassador to Kuwait Olivier Gauvin, said “thanks to the collective efforts of the members of the Council for the Promotion of La Francophonie -- 44 ambassadors -- and our partners. We held an exceptional celebration that coincides with the announcement of Kuwait as the Capital of Arab Culture and Media.”

He asserted that La Francophonie promotes the values of participation and cultural diversity. He said the French language -- which is spoken by more than 320 million people in 130 countries including 500,000 in Kuwait

-- is considered a tool for building bridges between cultures and promoting dialogue and exchange. He stated that around 50,000 students in Kuwaiti public schools learn French annually, reflecting the growing local interest in the language.

He then quoted French writer and Nobel laureate Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio stating, “Francophonie is a space for dialogue and exchange, a place where cultures meet.”

Addressing His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad, he said; You are the father of Francophonie in Kuwait. You took the initiative to support it in the 1980s. On this occasion, the Council for the Promotion of Franco-phone Languages in Kuwait unanimously chose you as its honorary president. So, Your Highness, allow me to reiterate by deep gratitude to you.”

Kuwait releases

The prisoners, both men and women, include military contractors and veterans held for years on drug charges and other offenses.

Ten others were released in March, weeks after a visit to Kuwait by Adam Boehler, who is serving as the Trump administration’s envoy for hostage affairs. Other countries, including Venezuela, have released large numbers of Americans over a period of years, but it’s unusual for so many U.S. citizens to be freed by a foreign nation in such a short period of time as Kuwait has done.

“We flew out, we sat down with the Kuwaitis, and they said, ‘Listen, no one’s ever asked before at this level’ for the release of the Americans, Boehler told the AP.

The releases were not done as part of a swap and the U.S. was not asked to give up anything in return.

“They’ve been extremely responsive, and their view is the United States is a huge ally. They know it’s a priority for (President Donald Trump) to bring Americans home,” Boehler said. “I credit it to the Kuwaiti understanding that we’ve stood up for them historically and they know that these things are important for the president.”

Among those freed Wednesday was Tony Holden, an HVAC technician and career defense contractor. He was working in support of Camp Arifjan at the time of his November 2022 arrest.

Kuwait reaffirms

transparency and serves sustainable development goals.

She also expressed the importance of strengthening cooperation with civil society organizations, noting that the Permanent National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons and Migrant Smuggling has developed a national strategy for 2025-2028, which was recently announced during the Sixth Regional Forum on Combating Trafficking in Persons.

Heat meets

with southeasterly winds blowing at light to moderate speeds, occasionally becoming active at 10 to 42 km/h. There is a chance of dust in open areas and light, scattered rain. High temperatures are expected to range between 39°C and 41°C, and sea conditions will be light to moderate, with waves occasionally reaching up to six feet.

Friday night is expected to be warm to mild, partly to mostly cloudy, and relatively humid along coastal areas, with southeasterly winds at light to moderate speeds of 8 to 35 km/h. Scattered rain is a possibility. The temperatures will range between 25°C and 27°C, and sea conditions will be light to moderate, with wave heights from one to five feet.

On Saturday, the weather during the day will be hot, cloudy to partly cloudy, and relatively humid, with southeasterly winds at light to moderate speeds of 10 to 38 km/h. There is a chance of scattered rain. High temperatures are expected to range between 40°C and 42°C, and sea conditions will be light to moderate, with waves ranging from two to five feet.

Saturday night will be warm to mild and partly to mostly cloudy, with light, variable winds at 8 to 32 km/h. Scattered rain is expected, occasionally accompanied by thunderstorms. Temperatures will range between 26°C and 28°C, and sea conditions will remain light to moderate, with waves between one and four feet.

KAAA’s chief

and private entities attended the forum, during which Al-Jalawi affirmed that KAAA has always been committed to raise level of the accounting and auditing professions, develop national competencies, and stimulate innovation to serve institutions and entities in the public and private sectors. He also underscored the need to cooperate with government agencies and private entities to develop and strengthen the aforementioned professions.

He pointed out that the one-day forum will contribute to the exchange of expertise and exposure to best regional and international practices in the field of tax systems, as well as produce plausible recommendations for the development of these systems, while enhancing their role in serving the national economy and that of other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

He asserted this is important given that the conference is being held at a critical time, when the Gulf region is witnessing rapid economic and developments; hence, the need for the development and modernization of the financial and tax systems to keep pace with such aspirations. He added the modern tax systems are the main pillars in ensuring financial sustainability and promoting economic and social development.

On the other hand, Chairperson of the forum’s Scientific Committee Dr. Jumana Al-Sayrafi who is also a fac-

ulty member at Kuwait University disclosed that the forum focused on the economic development, tax and financial systems and policies.

She said “we are currently witnessing many local, regional and international transformations; particularly with regard to financial and tax policies that necessitate the development of an ambitious plan with clear objectives. Kuwait has laid down a plan to improve government performance and direct national resources toward achieving the desired goals. The plan includes an integrated system of development documents.”

She cited the five-year plan, which outlines the long-term development paths of the country through mechanisms, means and projects that ensure the achievement of development goals in the long and medium terms; as well as the provision of appropriate infrastructure, financial legislation and a business environment conducive to development.

Kuwait calls

Israel has blocked any humanitarian aid from entering the territory since the end of a ceasefire in March, throwing Gaza into what is believed to be the worst humanitarian crisis in nearly 19 months of war. Israel has said the blockade and its renewed military campaign are intended to pressure Hamas to release the remaining hostages it still holds and to disarm.

The war began when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting 251. Hamas is still holding 59 hostages, 24 of whom are believed to be alive, after most of the rest were released in ceasefire agreements or other deals.

As Israel continued its strikes on the Palestinian enclave, another 18 people were killed and dozens more were wounded, Gaza’s Health Ministry said.

Tom Fletcher, the U.N. under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, said Thursday that while the hostages should be released and should never have been taken in the first place, international law mandates that Israel allow humanitarian aid into Gaza.

“Aid, and the civilian lives it saves, should never be a bargaining chip,” he said in a statement. “Blocking aid starves civilians. It leaves them without basic medical support. It strips them of dignity and hope. It inflicts a cruel collective punishment. Blocking aid kills.”

The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, or OCHA, has described severe shortages of food, water and medicine in Gaza as medical services collapse and charity kitchens shut down because of a lack of supplies. Hospitals have reported that cases of malnourished pregnant and breastfeeding women are rising sharply, and most newborns are now being born underweight.



This photo provided by the Lexington Fire Department shows flooding in Lexington, Okla on April 30. (AP)

2 dead as storms flood roads across Oklahoma, Texas

A least two people drowned when their vehicles were caught in floodwaters in Oklahoma on Wednesday as slow-moving thunderstorms inundated roads across parts of that state and Texas, authorities said, while Pennsylvania residents picked up from a powerful storm that left three people dead.

Heavy rains and severe thunderstorms will mean a heightened risk of flash flooding across the south-central US through early Thursday, the National Weather Service said.

The storms drenched much of southern Oklahoma and northern Texas, flooding and washing out roads and causing hundreds of flights to be canceled or delayed at major airports.

One man drowned in Oklahoma after his vehicle got

swept off a Pottawatomie County highway, said Sheriff Freeland Wood.

"My deputy went in to try and save him, and he got caught up in the same mess," Wood said.

The deputy was treated at a local hospital and released, Wood said. Floodwaters closed nearly three dozen roadways in the county.

Another drowning was reported in neighboring Lincoln County after a driver's vehicle got trapped in floodwaters along a highway northwest of Prague, Oklahoma Highway Patrol spokesperson Sarah Stewart said.

Authorities in the state reported that numerous drivers were rescued from floodwaters, while some residents in the small city of Lexington were evacuated from homes as the waters rose. (AP)

Musk defends work as tech billionaire, prepares to wind down at DOGE

WASHINGTON, May 1, (AP): Elon Musk, preparing to step back from his work leading the Department of Government Efficiency, had a request of the reporters gathered at the White House to interview him: Before he would answer any questions, he wanted someone to tell him a joke.

The tech billionaire's request in the Roosevelt Room on Wednesday underscored the surreal and idiosyncratic presence of the world's richest man at the highest echelons of American power. Over the past few months, his work of downsizing the workforce has sent shocks through the federal government and drawn intense pushback, including protests of his electric vehicle company, Tesla.

Musing about his and DOGE's incongruous role in the US government, he said, "It is funny that we've got DOGE."

"Doesn't the absurdity of that seem, like, like, are we in a simulation here or what's going on? But, like, it was a meme coin at one point," he said, laughing. "How did we get here?"

Musk, clad in all black but missing the two hats he had worn at Wednesday's earlier Cabinet meeting, defended DOGE's work as he prepares to scale back his government role and spend more time at his businesses. But he gave hazy answers about the work he'd been doing and DOGE's future, and he seemed taken aback by the intense backlash he'd encountered.

"Being attacked relentlessly is not



Elon Musk speaks during a cabinet meeting at the White House on April 30 in Washington. (AP)

super fun," he said. "Seeing cars burning is not fun," he added, referring to the instances of Tesla cars being smashed or set on fire.

"In the grand scheme of things, I think we've been effective. Not as effective as I'd like. I think we could be more effective," Musk said. "But we've made progress."

DOGE's large-scale slashings have been met with dozens of lawsuits. DOGE's attempts to access sensitive government information, including Social Security data, has similarly met resistance in court. And Democrats

this week unveiled an online tracker tallying the federal funds approved by Congress that DOGE has blocked, setting up a constitutional struggle between two branches of government.

Musk wouldn't offer examples of anything he'd do differently, though DOGE is nowhere near its original savings goal and has overstated its progress.

DOGE had sought to cut spending by \$1 trillion. Musk estimates he's cut \$160 billion so far and acknowledged it would be hard to get anywhere close to \$1 trillion.

Trump's 100 days filled with 'chaos, cruelty and corruption': Jeffries

Harris accuses Trump of 'wholesale abandonment' of American ideals in speech

SAN FRANCISCO, May 1, (AP): Former US vice president Kamala Harris used a high-profile speech Wednesday to sharply criticize President Donald Trump amid speculation about whether she will mount another presidential campaign or opt to run for California governor.

In her most extensive public remarks since leaving office in January following her defeat to Trump, Harris said she's inspired by Americans fighting Trump's agenda despite threats to their freedom or livelihood.

"Instead of an administration working to advance America's highest ideals, we are witnessing the wholesale abandonment of those ideals," Harris said a day after Trump reached 100 days in office.

Before Wednesday, Harris had barely mentioned Trump by name since she conceded defeat to him in November.

In a 15-minute speech, she spoke to the anxiety and confusion that have gripped many of her supporters since Trump took office but discouraged despair.

"They are counting on the notion that if they can make some people afraid, it will have a chilling effect on others. But what they have overlooked is that fear is not the only thing that's contagious," Harris said. "Courage is contagious."

Trump went after Harris in a campaign-style rally Tuesday marking his 100th day in office. He sarcastically called her a "great border czar" and a "great candidate," and repeated some of the applause lines he routinely delivered during the campaign.

Until Harris replaced Joe Biden atop the Democratic ticket last summer, Trump said, "I knew nothing about her."

Harris cautioned Americans against viewing Trump's administration as merely chaotic, casting it instead as a "high-velocity event," the culmination of extensive work on the right to remake government.

"A vessel is being used for the swift implementation of an agenda that has been decades in the making," Harris said. "An agenda to slash public education. An agenda to shrink government and then privatize its services. All while giving tax breaks to the wealthiest among us."

Harris chose a friendly audience for her return to the political arena, addressing the 20th anniversary gala for Emerge America, an organization that recruits and trains Democratic women to run for office. It grew in part from Harris' run for San Francisco district attorney in the early 2000s.



Former US vice president Kamala Harris delivers the keynote speech at the Emerge 20th Anniversary Gala in San Francisco on April 30. (AP)

The speech was delivered below luminous chandeliers in a gold-trimmed ballroom in the landmark Palace Hotel.

Harris is ramping up her public presence as Democrats nationally search for a path forward after November's election, in which Republicans also won control of Congress. While a slate of high-profile Democrats - from governors to businessmen - seek leadership roles within the party, the former vice president retains unique influence and would reshape any future race she chooses to enter.

She praised Democrats who have been especially prolific in criticizing Trump, name-dropping lawmakers diverse in their ideology and style: Sens. Cory Booker, Chris Van Hollen, Chris Murphy and Bernie Sanders along with Reps. Jasmine

Crockett, Maxwell Frost and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

But she did not take a stand in one of her party's central divides, neither calling for mass mobilization like Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker or questioning Democratic positioning on key issues like California Gov. Gavin Newsom.

"I'm not here tonight to offer all the answers," Harris said. "But I am here to say this: You are not alone and we are all in this together."

But she warned that things will probably get worse before they get better.

"The one check, the one balance, the one power that must not fail is the voice of the people," she said.

Harris, a former state attorney general and US senator from California, has not discouraged speculation that she might enter the race to replace the term-limited Newsom, himself a potential contender for president. And she has not ruled out another run for the White House.

Also:

WASHINGTON: Bringing the kind of punch many voters are demanding, House Minority Leader **Hakeem Jeffries** said Wednesday that President **Donald Trump's** 100 days in office have been an assault of Americans' very way of life and promised Democrats in Congress are fighting as hard as they can to stop more "bad things" from happening.

In a major address on the milestone of Trump's time at the White House, Jeffries, who could become House speaker if Democrats regain power, also put Republicans in Congress on notice that their days as a "rubber stamp" to Trump's agenda of "chaos, cruelty and corruption" won't last.

"The Trump administration has been a disaster," Jeffries of **New York** told the packed crowd at a historic theater in Washington.

"Donald Trump and the Republicans thought they could 'shock and awe' us into submission," he said, adding they were wrong. "We're just getting started."

The leader's speech stood as an assessment not only Trump's return to the White House, but also of the strength of the Democratic resistance. Americans are registering a weariness with the president, with just half saying he's focused on the right priorities. The Democratic leadership in Congress is being tested over how best to confront the speed, scope and scale of the Trump administration's unprecedented, and at times unlawful, actions.

Farage's Reform UK seeking big gains

Parts of England vote in local elections

LONDON, May 1, (AP): Voters in many areas of England go to the polls Thursday in local elections that provide a test of feeling about Prime Minister Keir Starmer's center-left Labour government, 10 months after it was elected in a landslide.

Both Labour and the main opposition Conservative Party are bracing for losses in the midterm poll. The hard-right Reform UK led by Nigel Farage is fielding more candidates than any other party and hopes to make major gains in the elections for about 1,600 seats on 23 local councils, six mayoral-ties and one seat in Parliament.

Reform got about 14% of the vote in last year's national election and holds just four of the 650 seats in the House of Commons. But polls now suggest its support equals or surpasses that of Labour and the Conservatives, and it hopes to displace the Conservatives as the country's main party on the right before the next national election, due by 2029.

"Tomorrow is the day that two-party politics in England dies for good," Farage told supporters at a rally on Wednesday evening.

Polls are open until 10 pm (2100GMT, 5 pm EDT), with most results due on Friday.

Reform is aiming to win hundreds of municipal seats, largely from the



Reform UK party leader Nigel Farage with his party's candidates onstage during a campaign event at Stafford Showground, Stafford, England, whilst campaigning for this week's local elections on April 30. (AP)

Conservatives, whose leader Kemi Badenoch could face revolt if the party does very badly.

Badenoch has acknowledged that the results could be "very difficult" for the Tories. The party did extremely well when these areas were last contested in 2021, a time when then-Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative government enjoyed a surge in popularity due

to the COVID-19 vaccine program.

Farage's party also hopes to win two or three mayoral contests and a special parliamentary election for the seat of Runcorn and Helsby in northwest England. It was long a secure Labour district, but the previous lawmaker, Mike Amesbury, quit after he was convicted of punching a constituent in a drunken rage.

Attack in Russian-occupied Ukrainian region leaves 9 dead: Moscow-appointed officials

KYIV, Ukraine, May 1, (AP): A Ukrainian drone attack left at least nine people dead in the partially-occupied Ukrainian region of Kherson Thursday, Russia-appointed officials there said.

The attack in the Kherson region, which struck a market in the town of Oleshky, killed seven and wounded "more than 20" people, Moscow-appointed governor Vladimir Saldo said.

"At about 09:30 Moscow time in Oleshky, in the area of the central market, Ukrainian forces carried out a massive strike with FPV drones on civilians. At the time of the attack, there were many people in the market," Saldo wrote on Telegram.

After the first wave of strikes, he said, Ukraine sent further drones to "finish off" any survivors.

Meanwhile, a Russian drone strike on the Black Sea port city of Odesa early Thursday killed two people and injured 15 others, Ukrainian emergency services said.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, emergency services personnel work to extinguish a fire following a Russian attack in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on April 30. (AP)

Regional Gov. Oleh Kiper said the barrage struck apartment buildings, private homes, a supermarket and a school. Videos shared by Kiper on Telegram showed a high-rise building with a severely damaged

facade, a shattered storefront, and firefighters battling flames. A drone struck and ignited a fire at a petrol station in the center of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, according to Mayor Ihor Terekhov.

Court tells Serbia to prevent use of sonic weapons for crowd control

BELGRADE, Serbia, May 1, (AP): The European Court of Human Rights said on Wednesday that Serbia "should prevent the use of sonic weapons or similar devices" for crowd control following claims that a sound cannon was directed at protesters during a huge anti-government rally on March 15.

The court in Strasbourg, France, said its interim measure did not mean it had taken "any position as to whether use of such weapons had occurred" at the demonstration that was part of months-long anti-corruption protests in the Balkan country.

Serbian authorities have repeatedly have denied claims by opposition parties and several experts that a sonic weapon broke a commemorative silence during the March protest causing people to suddenly run in panic while experiencing an array of symptoms and huge discomfort. The authorities initially said Serbian security agencies did not possess any sonic devices but later admitted they do own several.



People attend an anti-corruption protest in the southwestern town of Novi Pazar, Serbia on April 12. (AP)

The European court said 47 Serbian nationals had filed complaints over the incident while up to 4,000 people reported their experiences in the application collected by a group of Serbian

civil society groups. The court rejected requests to investigate the incident or prevent legal proceedings against people who publicly alleged some kind of a device was used.

Belarus releases US citizen who was jailed for years

TALLINN, Estonia, May 1, (AP): Belarus on Wednesday released a US citizen who had been jailed on allegations of plotting to assassinate the country's authoritarian leader, charges his supporters and the US government called bogus.

Youras Ziankovich, a lawyer who has dual Belarusian and US citizenship, was convicted on a number of charges, including plotting a coup against Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko, and given an 11-year sentence in September 2022. He then had six months added to his sentence later that year. In August 2024, a court in Belarus handed Ziankovich an additional two-year sentence on charges of "malicious disobedience to the prison administration," bringing his overall prison term to 13 1/2 years.

The US government on Wednesday identified the man as Youras Ziankovich but his name has also been rendered as Yuras Zyankovich in different news accounts.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who designated Ziankovich as wrongfully detained in February, announced his release on Wednesday and said he would return to the United States soon. Rubio acknowledged "Lukashenko's humanitarian gesture" and thanks the Lithuanians, calling them "incredible allies" who have been "supportive of our efforts these past few months to bring Americans home."



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio speaks during a cabinet meeting at the White House on April 30, in Washington, as President Donald Trump looks on. (AP)

Ziankovich was arrested in Russia in April 2021 together with Alexander Feduta, who served as a spokesman for Lukashenko when he was first elected in 1994. Feduta later joined the opposition.

People Power Party remains in disarray

S.Korea acting leader resigns amid reports Han will run for presidential election

SEOUL, South Korea, May 1, (AP): South Korea's acting leader, Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, said Thursday he is resigning to take on "heavier responsibility" amid expectation he will run in next month's presidential election.

Han has emerged as a potential conservative standard bearer as the main conservative People Power Party remains in disarray over ousted President Yoon Suk Yeol 's stunning martial law imposition in December. South Korean media reported Han will officially launch his presidential campaign Friday.

"I have two paths ahead of me. One is completing the heavy responsibility that I handle now. The other is putting down that responsibility and taking a heavier responsibility," Han said in a nationally televised announcement. "I've finally determined to put down my post to do what I can and what I have to help overcome the crises facing us."

Han, who Yoon had appointed prime minister, the country's No. 2 post, is expected to align with the People Power Party to launch a unified conservative campaign against liberal front-runner Lee Jae-myung, observers say.

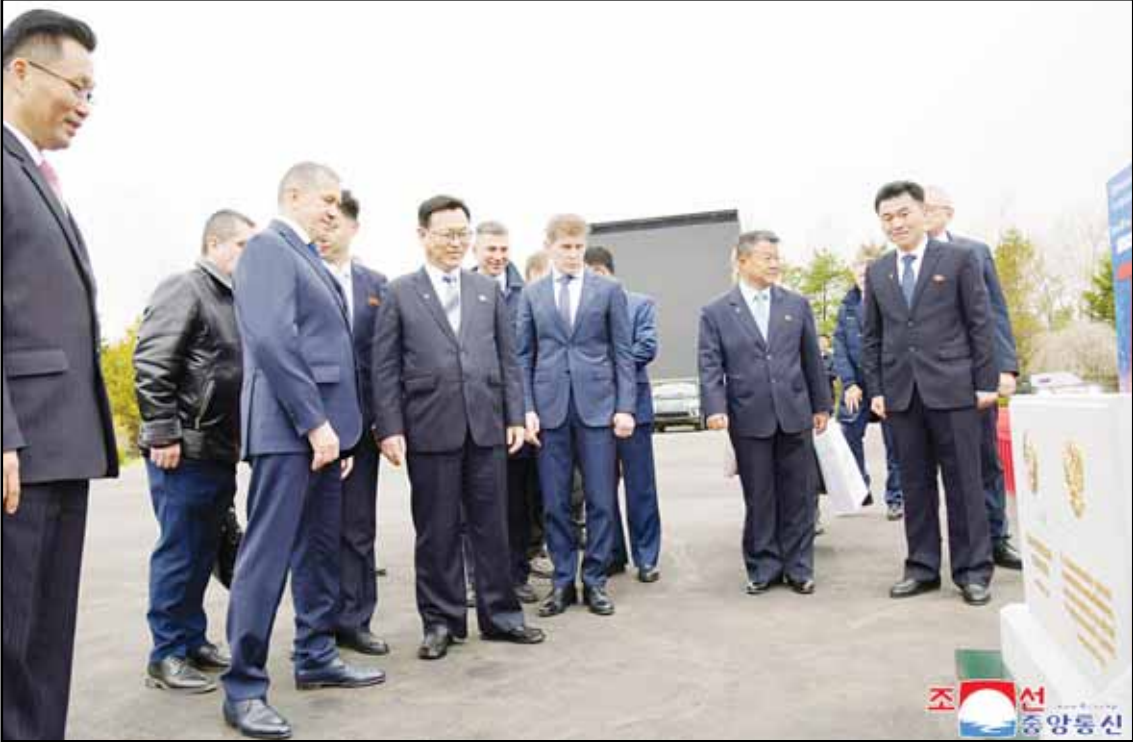
Han, 75, is a career bureaucrat with about 40 years of public service and a Harvard doctorate in economics. He has held top posts under both conservative and liberal governments, including trade minister, finance minister and ambassador to the USS. He's served as prime minster twice, first under liberal President Roh Moo-hyun from 2007 to 2008 and later under Yoon.

Han's supporters say his extensive government experience, especially on economic affairs, would make him the right leader who can deal with President Donald Trump's aggressive tariff policies and other economic problems. But his critics say Han - who has never had an elected post - has no strong political support base and is too old to become president.

With Han's resignation, Deputy Prime Minister Choi Sang-mok becomes acting



South Korean acting President Han Duck-soo, center, leaves after a press conference announcing his resignation at the Government Complex in Seoul, South Korea on May 1. (AP)



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, officials from North Korea and Russia stand in front of a monument to mark a ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of a bridge between the two countries, in Rason Municipality, North Korea on April 30. (AP)

North Korea, Russia begin building first road link

North Korea and Russia have begun building their first road link, the two countries announced, hailing the construction of a bridge over a border river as a major development that will further expand their booming ties.

Russia's Tass news agency reported that the bridge would be 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) long and its construction is expected to take 1 ½ years. North Korea's Korean Central News Agency said Thurs-

day the bridge would expand cross-border travel of people, tourism and circulation of commodities.

Relations and exchange programs between the two countries have been flourishing in recent years, with North Korea supplying ammunitions and troops to support Russia's war against Ukraine.

North Korea has been receiving Russian tourists since February 2024 amid slowly easing pandemic

curbs, but Chinese group tours, which made up more than 90% of visitors before the pandemic, remain stalled.

In 2023, about 97% of North Korea's external trade was with China, while 1.2% was with Russia. There are currently at least 17 active road and rail links across the long, porous border between North Korea and China, according to South Korea's Unification Ministry. (AP)

Rubio calls India, Pakistan in effort to defuse crisis over Kashmir attack

NEW DELHI, May 1, (AP): US Secretary of State Marco Rubio called senior officials in India and Pakistan in an effort to defuse the crisis that followed last week's deadly attack in Kashmir, the State Department said.

Rubio urged Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar to de-escalate tensions on Wednesday.

India has vowed to punish Pakistan after accusing it of backing the attack, which Islamabad denies. The nuclear-armed rivals have since expelled each other's diplomats and citizens, ordered the border shut and closed their airspace to each other. New Delhi has suspended a crucial water-sharing treaty with Islamabad.

Soldiers on each side have also exchanged fire along their de facto border, driving tensions between India and Pakistan to their highest point in recent years.

The region of Kashmir is split between India and Pakistan and claimed by both in its entirety. The two countries have fought two wars and one limited conflict over the Hi-



A Pakistani paramilitary soldier searches a vehicle as another stands guard at a checkpoint in Wagah, a joint border crossing point on the Pakistan and India border, near Lahore, Pakistan on April 30. (AP)

Kenya opp'n MP killed in shooting

NAIROBI, Kenya, May 1, (AP): A Kenyan opposition legislator was shot dead in the capital Nairobi in what police have described as a "targeted and premeditated" crime.

MP **Charles Were** was shot on Wednesday night after his car stopped at a roundabout on a busy major road.

President William Ruto urged police to conduct a "through investigation" and said Thursday that those responsible "must be held to account."

Were was in the company of his driver and bodyguard when a motorcycle taxi approached their car, and a passenger disembarked and approached their car before firing at the MP, police said in a statement.

The legislator was reelected in 2022 to represent Kasipul constituency in western Kenya for the Orange Democratic Movement party.



Were



In this handout photo provided by the Philippine Red Cross, rescuers check the site of a multiple-vehicle collision after a speeding passenger bus slammed into a row of vehicles lined up at a highway toll booth killing about a dozen people in Tarlac city, north of Manila, Philippines on May 1. (AP)

Philippine vehicle collision kills 10

A speeding passenger bus slammed into a row of vehicles lined up at a highway toll booth Thursday in the northern Philippines, killing 10 people, including children, police said.

More than two dozen others were injured in the multiple-vehicle collision in Tarlac city, north of Manila, at a heavy travel time on May Day holiday, police said.

The bus driver, who was among

the injured, was taken into custody and initially told investigators that he dozed off shortly before the crash, Tarlac police chief Lt Col Romel Santos told reporters.

The bus crashed into a van, which was lined up with three other vehicles at the toll booth. Eight of the dead, including children, were in the van, which was pinned between the wayward bus from behind and another car in front, police said. (AP)

New Zealand hit by destructive winds, heavy rain and snow and high waves

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, May 1, (AP): Severe weather warnings covered swathes of New Zealand on Thursday with heavy downpours prompting a state of emergency for the South Island's largest city, Christchurch, while forecasters recorded "destructive" gales in the capital, Wellington.

Heavy snow and large waves lashed other parts of the country. No deaths or serious injuries were reported. The extent of damage was not clear by afternoon, but evacuations were not widespread.

Thursday's red wind warning for Wellington, at the southern end of New Zealand's North Island, was the first time the capital - famous for its gusty gales - has ever faced the most severe alert level. Residents were urged to stay indoors, avoid travel and keep away from doors and windows as gusts of up to 150 kph (93 mph) posed a "threat to life" from falling trees and flying objects, the forecaster MetService said.

Flights to and from Wellington were cancelled throughout Thursday and passenger ferry sailings between the North and South Islands were halted until at least Friday afternoon. MetService expected 5 meter (16 foot) swells in the Cook Strait, the body of water between New Zealand's two largest islands.

About 1,000 properties were without electricity Thursday afternoon in the wider Wellington region, which has a population of 550,000. The city's largest university closed for the day,



Cars drive through flooded streets in Christchurch, New Zealand on May 1. (AP)

the Royal New Zealand Ballet cancelled an evening performance, and several schools sent students home.

Wellington is New Zealand's windiest city -- registering gusts at gale speeds of 63 kph (39 mph) on about half the days of the year. But Wellington's emergency management chief, Dan Neely, warned residents to take the warnings seriously because the southerly tempest was unusually strong and could threaten lives, Radio New Zealand reported.

In the city of Christchurch, the largest on the South Island, and in some

nearby rural areas, heavy deluges caused rivers to spill over their banks, closing roads and prompting fears the floodwaters could reach homes. Local states of emergency were declared Thursday, including in Christchurch, Emergency Management Minister Mark Mitchell told reporters.

Orange-level warnings -- the second most serious -- were issued across parts of both islands for severe rain and large sea swells, and in some South Island districts for heavy snow. The storm system that lay across much of the country Thursday was due to ease Friday.

Colombia rebels recruit youth on social media; UN wants TikTok, FB to do more

BOGOTA, Colombia, May 1, (AP): Rebel groups in Colombia are using apps like Facebook and Tik Tok to recruit children and young adults, and social media companies must do more to moderate content, the United Nations says.

The UN's top human rights official in Colombia, Scott Campbell, in an interview with The Associated Press said more investment is needed in both automated tools and human moderators to take down videos posted by gangs and rebel groups that are targeting youth from marginalized communities.

Colombian rebel groups such as the FARC-EMC are increasingly posting videos that glamorize life in their ranks and urge youth to enlist.

"These companies are not putting enough resources into online content moderation in the global south," Campbell said, calling Colombia an example of how "grave" the threat can be for children and Indigenous communities. He said companies take more action in the global north, where they feel the most political pressure.



UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia Scott Campbell gives an interview in Bogota, Colombia on April 29. (AP)

Campbell, who previously served as a human rights and technology specialist at the UN's Geneva office, said he recently met with representatives from

Meta, which owns Facebook, to discuss how rebel groups and gangs can be stopped from using the company's platforms to recruit young people.

UN calls for Mali to probe alleged executions by army, Wagner Group

DAKAR, Senegal May 1, (AP): United Nations experts on Wednesday urged Malian authorities to investigate reports of alleged summary executions and forced disappearances by the army and Russian mercenaries, following the discovery of dozens of bodies near a military camp last week.

According to a statement from the UN humanitarian agency, the bodies were found near the Kwala military camp in western Mali's Koulikoro region between April 21 and 22, and are suspected to be those of men arrested by Malian soldiers and mercenaries from the Russia-backed Wagner Group ten days earlier.

Citing "unconfirmed reports," the agency said around 60 men, most of them ethnic Fulani, were allegedly tortured and interrogated at the camp about alleged links with "terrorists," before being executed.

The Associated Press has not been able to independently verify the reports. Spokespeople for Mali's military and the government did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The UN experts said that, if confirmed, the killings may amount to war crimes, while the forced disappearances may constitute crimes against humanity. They urged Malian authorities



Interim President of the Republic of Mali, Assimi Goita, arrives at Beijing Capital International Airport, ahead of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), starting Wednesday, in Beijing, China on Sept 1, 2024. (AP)

to conduct an independent and transparent investigation into the killings and forced disappearances of the men.

Fulani people - also known as the Peuhl - are disproportionately represented in Islamic militant groups in central Mali, which has led to them being stigmatized by other ethnic groups and security forces.

Mali, along with neighbors Burkina Faso and Niger, has for more than a decade battled an insurgency fought by armed groups, including some allied with al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group.

Following military coups in all three nations in recent years, the ruling juntas have expelled French forces and turned to Russian mercenary units for security assistance instead. Since seizing power in 2021, interim president Assimi Goita has struggled to curb violence in Mali, while the army has been accused of targeting civilians.

Also:

BAMAKO, Mali: A national political conference launched by Mali's military regime has recommended naming junta leader Gen. **Assimi Goita**, who seized power following coups in 2020 and 2021, as president.

Members of the national dialogue, held Tuesday in the capital Bamako, also recommended "the dissolution of political parties and the abolition of the status of opposition leader."

They said Goita should be installed as president for a renewable five-year term, according to **Abdou Salam Diepkilé**, director general of territorial administration and general reporter of the meeting.

Kuwaiti crude oil price drops to \$64.82 pb

KUWAIT CITY, May 1, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti crude oil price fell USD 2.60 during Wednesday’s trading to reach USD 64.82 per barrel (pb), compared with USD 67.42 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Thursday. Brent futures, declined by USD 1.13 to USD 63.12 pb and West Texas Intermediate (WTI) went down USD 2.21 to USD 58.21 pb.

Business

In collaboration with Civil Defense

Zain strengthens corporate risk management with successful HQ evacuation drill

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: As part of its ongoing efforts to promote a culture of safety and security in the workplace, Zain conducted a successful emergency evacuation drill at its main headquarters in Shuwaikh, in collaboration with the General Directorate of Civil Defense at the Ministry of Interior. The drill aimed to ensure the readiness and commitment of all employees in emergency situations. The company achieved a new record by fully evacuating its buildings smoothly within just five minutes, according to the Civil Defense report. The drill was designed to test the efficiency and preparedness of emergency response procedures. Employees demonstrated a high level of commitment and notable safety awareness through the accurate implementation of security and safety protocols, marked by an orderly evacuation process and the absence of injuries or delays. The drill was supervised by Civil Defense officials, who monitored the evacuation plan and ensured it complied with all official requirements and regulations set by the Ministry of Interior to safeguard the wellbeing of all company personnel. This initiative falls under Zain’s corporate risk management strategy, through which the company is keen on implementing all the safety requirements outlined by the Civil Defense. These include appointing trained



Zain officials and the Risk Management team with Civil Defense representatives.

staff members as emergency marshals on every floor of its headquarters to oversee evacuation procedures dur-

ing emergencies.

Zain also ensures that safety signage is placed at all

entry and exit points, and regularly checks the readiness of safety systems such as alarms, internal speakers, fire hoses, and smoke detectors. Designated assembly points and emergency exits are clearly marked, and evacuation drills are carried out periodically. Employees are also trained in first aid and other key measures to guarantee a safe working environment. Zain remains committed to renewing its collaboration with various governmental entities to implement policies and procedures that ensure the health and safety of its employees. The company also regularly hosts awareness seminars and health campaigns, such as vaccination drives and blood donation events, in collaboration with bodies like the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Health. Zain places human capital at the heart of its priorities, believing that any organization’s ability to stay competitive depends on developing its workforce and addressing their needs. Zain reaffirms its commitment to an internal strategy that focuses on all aspects of its employees’ professional and personal wellbeing. The company is dedicated to maintaining strong communication with its staff, both inside and outside the workplace, recognizing that employees are the cornerstone of its success and the driving force behind its position as Kuwait’s leading technology company.

Al-Saffar calls for real estate authority to balance land use

Real estate transactions peaked in 2014

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: Real estate consultant Ali Al-Saffar has stressed the need to establish a real estate authority in order to balance residential and investment land uses. He pointed out that the principal objectives of the real estate authority should encompass its formal designation as a land use authority, strategic investment in commercial land, maintenance of a land reserve equivalent to residential land allocation, and application of professional land use management practices. During the second panel discussion convened by Kuwait Economic Society (KES) titled, “Kuwaiti Real Estate Dynamics Over Three Decades and Key Challenges,” Al-Saffar revealed that the real estate trading activity from 2010 to 2025 witnessed numerous fluctuations due

to the COVID-19 pandemic, adjustments in bank interest rates, and recent real estate legislation. In the panel discussion moderated by member of the Board of Directors and Chairman of the Studies and Research Preparation Committee at KES Hamad Khaled Al-Abdul Karim; Al-Saffar disclosed that real estate transactions experienced an upswing in 2011; reaching about KD 2.896 billion or 26.5 percent increase compared to 2010. He said the residential real estate constituted about 54 percent of the trading volume, while investment and commercial properties reached 37 percent and nine percent respectively. He explained that apportionment is attributed to the implementation of Law No. 8-9/2008 and its impact on the real estate market, which stimulated growth in investment property sales and expanded financing options for prospective homeowners. He confirmed that the volume of real estate transactions expanded, culminating in a peak transaction value of KD4.880 billion in 2014 or 44 percent

increase compared to 8,271 transactions in the previous year. “Several factors were identified as contributors to the 2014 real estate growth, including the introduction of building material subsidies for eligible recipients, enhanced financing flexibility offered by commercial banks, an increase in housing applications exceeding 109,000 and the establishment of a Kuwaiti joint-stock company tasked with the construction and operation of power and water desalination facilities, among other elements,” he added. He underscored the adverse impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the domestic real estate market, leading to a decline in real estate transactions in 2019 and 2020. “These reductions ranged from two to 39.5 percent, reducing total transactions to KD2.499 billion. Subsequently, trading activity rebounded to the KD4 billion range in 2021, reflecting a 63.42 percent increase. Residential properties comprised the majority of transactions at 72.4 percent, while investment properties contracted to 19.1 percent,” he concluded.

MEED recognizes Gulf Bank’s excellence in digital banking

Gulf Bank wins ‘Best Mobile Banking Application and Experience’ Award

DUBAI, May 1: Gulf Bank has been awarded the “Best Mobile Banking Application and Experience” by the globally renowned MEED business intelligence platform during the Middle East and North Africa Banking Excellence Awards ceremony held in Dubai. This prestigious recognition highlights Gulf Bank’s ongoing commitment to delivering an advanced, exceptional digital banking experience, and the success of its strategic focus on innovation and digital transformation to meet customer expectations and enhance ease of access to banking services anytime, anywhere. Upon receiving the award, Mr. Bader Al-Ali, General Manager of Consumer Banking at Gulf Bank, stated: “We are proud to receive this recognition, which highlights our continuous efforts to provide a distinguished digital experience for our customers. We remain committed to developing and investing further in digital services to solidify Gulf Bank’s position as the bank of the future.”

He added that the award serves as an incentive for the Bank’s team to continue advancing its digital platforms and offering more smart solutions that enhance customer experience, adapt to the evolving banking environment, and exceed customer expectations. Mr. Al-Ali also highlighted that the Gulf Bank Mobile App marks a significant advancement in customer experience within the banking sector, offering a wide range of services and seamless transaction processes through a simple, fast, and secure interface accessible anytime, anywhere. “Our mobile application is equipped with outstanding features and provides customers with access to advanced technological services that deliver a truly innovative banking experience,” he added. “Many of these services are exclusive to Gulf Bank customers, and we continue to enhance and expand our offerings to meet their evolving needs.”



Bader Al-Ali receiving the award during the MEED ceremony in Dubai.

Bader Al-Ali:

- Bader Al-Ali: We are proud to receive this recognition, which highlights our continuous efforts to provide a distinguished digital experience for our customers.
- The Gulf Bank Mobile App marks a significant advancement in customer experience within the banking sector.
- It is equipped with outstanding features and provides customers with access to advanced technological services that deliver a truly innovative banking experience.

Last year, Gulf Bank’s mobile application was honored with the “Best Digital Platform Implementation” award, and its digital transformation program received the “Best Vision” award during the 2024 IBSI Global FinTech Innovation Awards held in Mumbai, India. Founded in 1957, MEED (Middle East Economic Digest) is a leading business intelligence platform special-

izing in economic and business news related to the Middle East. In partnership with Retail Banker International and Private Banker International, both part of GlobalData, MEED recognizes excellence in the banking sector through its Middle East and North Africa Banking Excellence Awards, honoring institutions that provide innovative financial services and exceptional customer experiences.”

Focus on customer lifecycle, personalization & loyalty

UIC hosts training on ‘Maximizing Client Engagement and Retention’

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance professional skills and strengthen Kuwait’s business environment, the Center for Investment Studies - the training arm of the Union of Investment Companies (UIC) - organized a specialized interactive training program titled “Maximizing Client Engagement & Retention.” According to a press release issued by UIC, the program, held on Tuesday, April 29 at the UIC headquarters, was aimed to equip professionals in the investment and service sectors with tools to improve client communication, boost customer satisfaction, and transform clients into loyal advocates and promoters for the brand and organization. It targets a select group of professionals, including those in customer relationship management, financial advisors, account managers, sales and customer service teams, business developers, as well as team managers and leaders in marketing and customer experience. The program offered a comprehensive and hands-on learning experience in four main themes that cover every aspect of customer interaction and retention. The primary focus is on practical application and the direct benefits for professionals in the workplace. The training started by redefining the client relationship, which extends beyond conventional business transactions, and explores the customer lifecycle from initial acquisition and establishment to expansion and long-term growth. The program offered strategies

for building strong relationships and mastering the art of customer engagement. It emphasizes the importance of personalizing the customer experience by understanding each client’s unique needs, with a focus on proactive support and creating touchpoints that add long-term value to the relationship. In the third section, the program explored tools and techniques for enhancing customer retention, such as loyalty programs and subscription models. It also highlighted the use of data analytics and performance indicators to track changes in customer behavior and address potential risks early. The program concluded with a section on Planning for Implementation and Best Practices, where all the strategies are integrated into an integrated customer journey. This section highlighted real-life success stories and global best practices. In addition, the program included a

hands-on group activity that simulated a real-world scenario in which a company faced declining customer renewal rates. This allowed participants to apply the concepts they learned in an interactive and practical environment. The program was delivered by Dr. Arezou Harraf, an academic and international consultant with a PhD in technology management and human resources training and development. On this occasion, Secretary General of UIC Fadwa Darwish highlighted the program’s significance in developing national capabilities. She emphasized that enhancing customer engagement skills is no longer optional but a strategic necessity for businesses that are aiming for excellence and sustainability. Darwish stated that financial performance alone is no longer enough to secure success in today’s competitive business environment.



Specialized program focuses on improving client communication and satisfaction.

Auditors to assess risk, system effectiveness & due diligence

CBK mandates external audits for AML/CTF compliance by payment providers

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) has issued a directive requiring all providers of electronic payment services, electronic money services, and operators of electronic payment systems to appoint an external audit firm affiliated with an international auditing entity to assess their compliance with anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorism financing (CTF) regulations, reports Al-Rai daily quoting sources. Sources said the appointed audit firm must not be among the company’s existing auditors or those responsible for reviewing its internal control systems (ICRs). Sources disclosed that the primary responsibilities of the external auditor include: Review financial records to ensure the company’s operations are free from money laundering activity. Assess the effectiveness of automated systems and existing AML/CTF programs. Ensure that a comprehensive risk assessment study is conducted. The Central Bank stressed that compliance audits must be conducted on a semi-annual basis -- as of June 30 and December 31 each year. The appointed audit firm is required to submit its audit report within 60 days following the end of each review period. Furthermore, the auditor’s appointment must be approved by CBK no later than June 15, 2025; along with a copy of the engagement letter outlining the scope of work. This is part of the Central Bank’s efforts to ensure that the local financial sector strictly complies with international standards, particularly those issued by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). It underscored the need for the auditor’s report to include the following points: A summary of the measures taken to complete the process of examining the extent of compliance with AML and CTF regulations. If samples are used, advice should be provided on the basis for determining sample options. Identification of the risks to which the company is exposed based on the results of the audit and classifying them (high/medium/low), along with determining the company’s overall risk rating. Audit recommendations to expand AML regulations and mitigate the risks identified. An opinion on the substance of the findings revealed during the assessment, the extent of compliance with AML regulations, and their impact on the company. An opinion on the adequacy of the measures taken by the company to correct the evaluation findings contained in the report, and the measures it plans or decides to take to correct the situation. This is in addition to the existing findings from previous reports, if any, and the reasons for not correcting them if the accounts were not audited during the examination. The Central Bank has defined the scope of work for the ongoing assessment of compliance with AML regulations, taking into account the following: 1. Verify the preparation of a study to identify and assess the risks associated with money laundering to which the company may be exposed through its activities, and the ap-

propriateness of the scale of the activity and the nature of its transactions. This includes developing appropriate measures to manage these risks for different types of customers, countries, regions and products/services. This includes establishing risk management mechanisms and determining the type of due diligence followed in executing transactions according to the degree of risk associated with each. 2. Verify the preparation of a policy that includes the objectives and scope of AML regulations. 3. Verify the development of work procedures, systems and internal controls in place to implement operations in accordance with the company’s business activities, ensuring full compliance with AML regulations. 4. Verify the company’s compliance with customer due diligence requirements according to the level of risk associated with each customer (low, medium, high) by examining a selected sample of customer files and transactions, particularly the application of enhanced due diligence procedures required when dealing with customers classified as high-risk. 5. Verify compliance with collecting and retaining customer and beneficial owner information throughout the transaction period, updating data, documents or information collected within the framework of due diligence measures and ensuring their validity. 6. Evaluate the effectiveness of automated systems and programs used for anti-money laundering procedures and continuously monitor customer transactions to ensure that transactions are conducted in accordance with available customer information. 7. Assess the competence of the company’s compliance officer, his work independence and reporting to the company’s director, and the quality of the reports prepared by the compliance officer, which are submitted to senior management or the board of directors, if present, as well as to the company’s partners, regarding the company’s efforts to comply with AML regulations. 8. Verify the availability of AML training programs and the participation of all employees in these programs, ensuring that all partners and the company’s general manager attend similar programs. 9. Verify the transactions of clients from public benefit organizations or charitable institutions with which the company deals, by examining a selected sample of these transactions. 10. Verify the effectiveness of the company’s procedures for reporting suspicious transactions, ensuring that investigations and inquiries are conducted, and information is gathered when a transaction is suspected to constitute the proceeds of a crime or may be related to money laundering or terrorist financing. This includes all parties involved in the transaction, and the extent to which the company documents the results of the investigation and inquiries in writing and maintains the relevant documents. 11. Verify the company’s commitment to retaining records, including all customer documents and records, transactions conducted or attempted, and supporting documents, for at least five years from the date of completion of the transaction. 12. Ensure that the company has an automated system.

'We strive for stable & growing cash flows from sustainable dividends & growth of key businesses' says Group CEO

KIPCO focuses on growth across companies and wealth creation for shareholders

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: KIPCO – Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) – held its Annual General Assembly, chaired by the company’s Vice Chairman, Sheikh Abdullah Naser Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah. The AGM approved all items on the agenda. KIPCO’s Group Chief Executive Officer, Sheikh Dana Naser Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, gave a presentation following the AGM in which she highlighted the achievements of 2024 and gave an outlook for 2025.

Strategic Priorities

Sheikha Dana Naser Al Sabah outlined KIPCO’s strategic journey since 2022, stating: “In 2022, we embarked on a strategic journey aimed at paving the way for sustainable growth and long-term value creation. As we focus on growth across our companies, we believe that we have positioned KIPCO as a future-ready holding company that is ready to harness synergies and identify new business opportunities.”

The first of the three phases of KIPCO’s strategic journey was to conduct a comprehensive assessment of KIPCO’s portfolio, engagement model and capital structure. This was followed by the second phase, which is ongoing and involves targeted reforms to strengthen the creation of value for shareholders through stronger engagement with subsidiaries, transformative mergers and acquisitions, consolidation, divestments and ownership reorganization. The third phase is to focus on growth, whether within the portfolio or through entering new markets, sectors or partnerships.

Geographic Footprint

KIPCO’s Group CEO noted that the company believes in rising potential and boundless opportunities in the MENA region, with 65% of its assets in Kuwait and countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. Despite the shifting global dynamics and instability in the MENA region, there remains strategic advantages for businesses across various sectors.

Liability Management

Sheikha Dana Naser Al Sabah noted that KIPCO’s strategic journey involved efforts to proactively manage liabilities to strengthen the company’s capital structure. Total repayments and/or exchanges of EMTNs and bonds in 2023 and



KIPCO’s Annual General Assembly.

2024 reached a total of US\$ 1.15 billion. In 2024, the company also fully repaid its US\$ 525 million syndicated facility nearly one year ahead of its maturity date. These efforts underscore KIPCO’s prudent approach to liquidity and proactive approach to liability management.

KIPCO’s 2024 Results

KIPCO’s strategy has strengthened the company’s financial performance. In 2024, total revenue increased 16.4% to KD 1.5 billion, net profit stood at KD 15.6 million, total assets were up 3.7% to KD 13.0 billion, shareholders’ equity rose 3.7% to KD 633.9 million and book value increased

3.7% to 139 fils per share. Portfolio companies reflected growth across different indices, reflecting the efforts to enhance their performance throughout 2024.

Major Transactions

Sheikha Dana Naser Al Sabah highlighted Buran Bank’s acquisition of 100% of Bahrain-based United Gulf Bank from United Gulf Holding. The acquisition gives Buran Bank access to an Islamic banking window, as well as expansion into the GCC markets, namely Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

It will also allow for the integration of asset and

wealth management services, resulting in greater synergies and cross-selling.

The Group CEO spoke of developments at OSN, emphasizing Warner Bros. Discovery’s (WBD) 30% strategic investment in OSN Streaming Ltd. She said:

“The deal is a global endorsement by a best-in-class international strategic investor of OSN’s creative talent, advanced technology and market position. The strategic impact of the acquisition covers synergies of content growth, including the production of local content to cater to audiences in the MENA region, as well as solidifying the position of OSN+ as a market leader in the streaming entertainment business.”

Digital Transformation

KIPCO’s Group CEO underscored the importance of digital transformation and its application across all businesses to enhance overall performance and fuel growth.

In its third year, Buran Bank Turkey’s digital banking platform, ON, has gained one million subscribers, with a market share of 5.2%. ON’s digital optimization propelled its market share of vehicle loans to 6.9% among private banks in Turkey.

As for OSN+ and Anghami, both the mobile and television applications have been revamped and 4K and Dolby Atmos features were introduced. User experience, search and recommendations have also been enhanced.

Our Focus

In closing, Sheikha Dana Naser Al Sabah talked about KIPCO’s focus for the coming years, as it continues its journey of growth. She said:

“Our primary target in the coming years will be to continue to enhance wealth creation for our shareholders. We are executing this through three focused tracks, the first of which is deleveraging and selective asset monetization. The second area of focus is enhancing the financial and operating performance of our key companies to reach double digit growth in revenues and net profits. Finally, we will continue to strive for stable and growing positive cash flows from sustainable dividend distribution and growth of our key businesses.”

MENA growth projected at 2.6% in 2025

IMF warns of slowing growth in MENA amid global uncertainty

DUBAI, May 1, (AP): Countries across the Middle East and North Africa face significant challenges to economic growth as the region faces economic uncertainty due to tariff measures, lower-than-recent oil prices and cuts to financial aid, the International Monetary Fund said Wednesday.

The IMF’s regional outlook report for the MENA region said Brent crude oil prices – which are down from highs above \$120 a barrel in 2022 – are likely to be \$65 to \$69 per barrel in 2025 and 2026, making energy-exporting economies vulnerable to market fluctuations.

Tariff plans by the U.S. and other countries and geopolitical tensions also have created mounting economic uncertainty globally that is weighing down on the region’s economies, which could negatively impact their growth by anywhere from 2% to 4.5%, said Jihad Azour, director for Middle East and Central Asia at the IMF.

“Therefore countries need to react and need to devise policies in order to protect their economies,” Azour said in an interview in Dubai.

Reductions in foreign aid coming into the region also will play a role, Azour said, as U.S. President Donald Trump has pulled his country back from its position as the world’s single largest aid donor.

“The drop in international assistance, especially for countries in fragility, is something that is creating new risks for the region,” Azour said.

Growth in the MENA region is expected to be 2.6% this year, as compared to 1.8% last year, Azour said, but he added that global uncertainty could impact the outlook.

Economies in the Persian Gulf continue to attract substantial foreign direct investment, rising by nearly 2% of GDP since the pandemic, while other MENA nations struggle with slower inflows. The IMF says it is willing to work with some of the struggling nations and the new government in Syria. He also said that IMF staff and Lebanese officials were in discussions in Lebanon.

“The Syria recovery will be a long process that would require mobilization of regional and international support and also a comprehensive program of building institutions, reforming their economy, and also addressing a certain number of key issues like infrastructure, refugees and rebuilding a new social contract,” Azour said.

Despite the global economic uncertainty, MENA nations can drive growth through structural reforms and diversifying economic ties, the report said.

Oman launches \$1.6 bln Marsa LNG project in Sohar province

MUSCAT, May 1, (KUNA): The ceremony for the Marsa LNG project took place Thursday in Sohar province, Oman, marking the launch of the largest joint investment between OQ Exploration and Production (OQEP) and TotalEnergies.

The project is valued at USD 1.6 billion, with TotalEnergies having an 80 percent stake, while OQEP holds the remaining 20 percent.

According to the Oman News Agency (ONA), the event was held under the patronage of Eng. Salem Al-Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, and attended by senior officials from TotalEnergies, international investors, and business leaders.

The Marsa LNG project reflects OQEP’s strategic commitment to developing Oman’s energy sector in a way that delivers long-term sustainable value.

It also marks the company’s expansion into a new energy domain, LNG bunkering, which aligns with its strategy to build a more sustainable energy future. The project is also expected to enhance in-country value (ICV). The implementation of the Marsa LNG project strengthens Oman’s position as a regional hub for clean marine fuel and represents a strategic partnership between OQEP and TotalEnergies.

This partnership is a model of successful international collaboration in the development of clean energy projects and will contribute to economic diversification policies, attracting foreign investment, and increasing In-Country Value in line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040. The project will supply ships with liquefied natural gas (LNG) as fuel, supporting the reduction of the maritime transport sector’s carbon footprint through the establishment of low-emission infrastructure.

Speaking during the ceremony Minister Al-Aufi reflected commitment to supporting downstream energy projects as a key pillar for achieving economic integration across the sectors of industry, trade, ports, and logistics. The Marsa LNG project, a strategic partnership between OQ Exploration and Production and TotalEnergies, embodied this vision through the development of advanced infrastructure to supply ships with liquefied natural gas as a clean alternative fuel.

Patrick Pouyanne, Chairman and CEO of TotalEnergies, said, “I’m very proud to see Marsa LNG breaking ground, alongside our longstanding partner OQEP, and with the strong support from Oman’s authorities. This flagship project demonstrates that LNG production can be very low carbon, contributing to making gas a long-term transition fuel. With an ambitious technical design, we intend to set the standard and pave the way for the next generation of low-emissions LNG plants across the world. We also offer an effective way to support the shipping sector’s energy transition, by providing lower-emissions marine fuel in a key location at the entrance of the Gulf.” Eng. Ahmad Al-Azkawi, CEO of OQEP, said, “At OQEP, we are committed to advancing innovation and sustainability across Oman’s energy sector. The Marsa LNG project represents a bold step forward, harnessing cutting-edge technology and strategic collaboration to ensure a cleaner, and affordable energy future. As the first LNG bunkering hub in the Middle East, Marsa LNG will undertake a pivotal role in reducing emissions in the shipping industry while reinforcing Oman’s position as a key player in the global energy sector.”

‘Partners to Employ Them’ for PWDs & ‘With You All the Way’ at K-Tech

NBK expands job fair presence to attract local talent

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: As part of delivering its responsibilities towards all society segments, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) participated in the Career Fair “Partners to Employ Them” for the Disabled, organized by the Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA) in collaboration with the Human Construction Society for Social Development (HCS). NBK also sponsored “With You All the Way” Job Fair at Kuwait Technical College (K-Tech).

The career fair “Partners to Employ Them” was held in April at the Cultural Center of Kuwait University, where NBK Group Human Resources staff showcased available job opportunities for PWDs, and responded to all inquiries raised by participants.

NBK’s participation in the fair aims to provide job opportunities in various fields for people with disabilities (PWDs), foster mainstreaming them into the workforce and increase their active participation in the banking sector. It also serves as an important opportunity to promote inclusion in the labor market and support PWDs to pursue their career ambitions.

Commenting on this, Mr. Emad Al-Ablani, Group Chief Human Resources Officer at National Bank of Kuwait said: “At NBK, we firmly believe in the potentials of every individual in society and seek to provide equal opportunities for all sectors. Therefore, we are keen to extend all sorts of support to the PWDs in Kuwait, regarding this as a national duty and steadfast commitment.”

“We have a policy for recruiting certain categories of people with special needs, in cooperation with the Public Authority for Disabled Affairs (PADA) and the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM). In this regard, we provide them with specially designed training programs to drive their engagement in the workplace, reflecting our dedication to promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace,” Al-Ablani highlighted.

“Seeking to ensure ethical hiring practices, NBK adheres to robust corporate governance, including fair labour standards and the provision of ability and work psychometric tests to all candidates, guaranteeing a transparent and unbiased recruitment process. The bank’s policies are rigorously de-



‘Partners to Employ Them’ Career Fair



Mr. Emad Al Ablani



‘With You All the Way’ Job Fair

signed to combat discrimination and promote a culture of equality and fairness across all hiring activities,” Al-Ablani emphasized.

National Bank of Kuwait also sponsored the career fair “With You All the Way” at Kuwait Technical College (K-Tech).

NBK’s partnership in the fair at K-Tech reflects its commitment to supporting national professionals, attracting the best digital talents and competencies, and exposing them to

suitable work opportunities in a field as significant as the financial and banking sector, especially with the rise in demand for young talents specialized in Fintech, Cybersecurity, and digital transformation.

NBK’s pavilion witnessed a remarkable turnout, as the Human Resources Group team responded to all queries and received employment applications, further echoing the bank’s commitment towards encouraging fresh graduates to join the banking sector,

which plays a pivotal role in the growth of Kuwait’s economy.

NBK annually sponsors various career fairs to give the youth the chance to explore job opportunities that align with their aspirations, which highlights its commitment to supporting young talents and preparing them for the job market. NBK also puts all its efforts into sponsoring career fairs that support the youth and help fresh graduates obtain the jobs they need.

First foreign Trump deal since presidency announced

Trump org strikes luxury golf deal in Qatar

WASHINGTON, May 1, (AP): The Trump family company struck a deal Wednesday to build a luxury golf resort in Qatar in a sign it has no plans to hold back from foreign dealmaking during a second Trump administration, despite the danger of a president shaping U.S. public policy for personal financial gain.

The project, which features Trump-branded beachside villas and an 18-hole golf course to be built by a Saudi Arabian company, is the first foreign deal by the Trump Organization since Donald Trump took office and unlike any done in his first term. Back then, he forswore foreign deals in an extraordinary press

conference surrounded by stacks of legal documents as he pledged to avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest.

Noah Bookbinder, president of a watchdog group that has sued Trump for alleged ethics violations, blasted the Qatari deal.

“You want a president making decisions that are in the best interest of the United States, not his bottom line,” said Bookbinder, who leads Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

In addition to a Saudi Arabian partner, called Dar Global, the planned resort north of the Qatari capital of Doha will be developed by a Qatari company

called Qatari Diar, which is owned by the Qatari government. That would appear to violate the Trump Organization’s much weaker, second-term ethics pledge that, while it would pursue foreign deals, none would include foreign governments.

When asked for clarification, the Trump Organization said its deal was with the Saudi firm, not the Qatari one, though Trump’s son Eric, who is in charge of the business, mentioned both companies in an earlier statement.

“We are incredibly proud to expand the Trump brand into Qatar through this exceptional collaboration with Qatari Diar and Dar Global,” he said.

As part of its Annual Awards for the year 2025

NBK bags 7 awards within MENA Banking Excellence Awards from MEED



Hesham Al-Nisf, Hamoud Al-Nasrallah and Badr Al-Anssari in the middle.



Hesham Al-Nisf, Hamoud Al-Nasrallah, Badr Al-Anssari, Ali Khalil, Nasser Al-Duwaissan, and Dimitri Katkin receiving the awards.



Nasser Al-Duwaissan receives the Bank of Weyay award in the presence of Ali Khalil and Dimitri Katkin.

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: The National Bank of Kuwait received 7 prestigious awards from MEED International Magazine, within the MENA Banking Excellence Awards for the year 2025, for its efforts in providing exceptional banking services and enriching the customer banking experience with innovative solutions.

The awards won by NBK during the annual ceremony organized by MEED in Dubai included Best Retail Bank and Best Bank for SMEs in Kuwait, and 5 MENA awards for Best Loan Offering, Best Contactless Payment Experience, Best Payment Solution for SMEs. In addition, Weyay Bank has been recognized as the winner of MENA Most Innovative Product/Service award for Weyay Jeel's groundbreaking approach to digital banking for children, and finally, Mr. Mohammed Al-Othman, CEO of Consumer and Digital Banking Group at NBK, has been named MENA Retail Banker of the Year for the fourth consecutive year.

These awards are a testament to NBK's leadership locally and regionally and its pioneering innovative digital achievements and catering to customers' banking needs by introducing top-notch banking services and advanced payment solutions, making the name "NBK" associated with everything new in digital banking products and services in Kuwait and across the MENA region.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

Winning the awards for Best MENA

The Awards NBK received from MEED:

- Best retail bank - Kuwait.
- Best bank for SMEs - Kuwait.
- Best Loan Offering - MENA
- Best Contactless Payment Experience - MENA.
- Best Payment Solution for SMEs – MENA.
- Weyay Bank has been recognized as the winner for: Most Innovative Product/Service for Weyay Jeel's groundbreaking approach to digital banking for children - MENA
- Mr. Mohammed Al-Othman as MENA Retail Banker of the Year for the fourth consecutive year.

Payment Solutions for SMEs and Best Bankin Kuwait for SMEs reflects the remarkable efforts of NBK in supporting Small and Medium Enterprises, and its local and regional leadership in providing banking services and products as well as diverse payment solutions that are quick, flexible and support the development and needs of its SMEs clients.

Al-Othman MENA Retail Banker of



The seven prestigious awards.

the Year

Naming Al-Othman as MENA Retail Banker of the Year for the fourth consecutive year reaffirms his pivotal role, and his remarkable leadership of the Consumer and Digital Banking Group team in attaining these achievements and providing a comprehensive digital banking experience that not only meets customers' needs but exceeds their expectations.

This award also recognizes Al-Othman's dedication to setting ambitious goals and implementing innovative strategies that have not only had a significant impact on NBK customers, but also on the Kuwaiti and regional banking landscape, rendering him a role model for banking leaders who are driving regional progress and innovation in the industry.

NBK holds a record filled with achievements and global awards that emphasize its excellence in digital transformation and echo its commit-

ment to being innovative and providing exceptional customer service, in addition to its commitment to making long-term relationships with customers.

Founded in 1957, MEED is a leading magazine focused on economic and business news and intelligence related to the Middle East.

In partnership with leading financial services publications Retail Banker International and Private Banker International, both issued by Global-Data, MEED introduces MENA Banking Excellence Awards to celebrate the best-in-class banking and financial services institutions and individuals for their innovative offering and commitment to customer excellence.

Weyay Bank Wins "Most Innovative Product" Award for Jeel, Banking App and Card

Weyay Bank, Kuwait's pioneering fully digital bank, continues its streak of excellence and leadership in

the digital banking sector, announcing its latest award; the "Most Innovative Product" award at the MEED Banking Excellence Awards in the Middle East and North Africa 2025. This prestigious recognition celebrates "Jeel", the Weyay's banking card and application specifically designed for the 8-14 year age group. This achievement underscores the bank's ongoing commitment to digital innovation, building upon its previous success in being named "Best Digital Bank in Kuwait" by MEED in 2024.

Acknowledging Weyay Bank's role in setting new benchmarks within the banking industry, the "Most Innovative Product" award for "Jeel" highlights the digital advancements the bank champions to elevate customer experience and deliver inventive solutions catering to all age segments. This accolade also reflects Weyay Bank's steadfast dedication to leading the digital transformation within the Kuwaiti banking sector and meeting the evolving needs of the rising digital generation. Since its inception in 2021, Weyay Bank has rapidly established itself as a frontrunner in digital banking innovation, setting new standards for a seamless and round-the-clock banking experience, free from traditional processes and tailored to customer aspirations.

The "Jeel" app, meticulously crafted to empower young individuals, foster their financial independence, and cultivate financial literacy from an early age. By integrating a simplified user interface designed for "Jeel" cus-

tomers with comprehensive parental control tools accessible through the parent's Weyay application, "Jeel" establishes new benchmarks for personalized banking services tailored to this demographic's specific needs. The "Jeel" card embodies simplicity and ease of use across all its digital services and features, contributing to building a sense of responsibility and financial awareness from a young age through a personalized bank card and dedicated application, also enabling the use of e-wallets like Apple Pay.

This new recognition reflects Weyay Bank's continuous commitment to providing a comprehensive digital banking experience centered around users from all segments of society, empowering them to manage their finances with ease. Weyay Bank will continue its unwavering dedication to fostering innovation and delivering the highest levels of excellence in digital banking services.

MEED, a highly respected global publication established in 1957 specializing in the analysis of economic activities in the Middle East, underscores Weyay's leading position in digital banking innovation and reinforces its valuable contributions to the development of the banking sector in Kuwait. Amidst the rapid evolution of financial services, Weyay Bank remains dedicated to its mission of redefining the concept of banking in the digital age and empowering the community to achieve growth and success in an increasingly digital world.

US, Ukraine sign deal giving DC access to country's valuable mineral wealth

Agreement could enable continued military aid to Kyiv

WASHINGTON, May 1, (AP): The U.S. and Ukraine on Wednesday signed an agreement granting American access to Ukraine's vast mineral resources, finalizing a deal months in the making that could enable continued military aid to Kyiv amid concerns that President Donald Trump might scale back support in ongoing peace negotiations with Russia.

"This agreement signals clearly to Russia that the Trump administration is committed to a peace process centered on a free, sovereign, and prosperous Ukraine over the long term," Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said in a statement. "President Trump envisioned this partnership between the American people and the Ukrainian people to show both sides' commitment to lasting peace and prosperity in Ukraine."

The announcement comes at a critical moment in the three-year war as Trump has grown increasingly frustrated with both sides. The signing comes two months after a different but similar agreement was nearly signed before being derailed in a tense Oval Office meeting involving President Donald Trump, Vice President JD Vance and Ukrainian President



An ilmenite open pit mine is seen in a canyon in the central region of Kirovohrad, Ukraine, Feb. 12, 2025. (AP)

Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Trump has long criticized Zelenskyy, saying he didn't "have the cards" to win the war and blaming him for prolonging the killing by not giving up Crimea, but in recent days has rebuked Russian President Vladimir Putin as well, saying he was complicating negotiations with "very bad timing" in launching deadly strikes on Kyiv.

Trump said Wednesday night on NewsNation that the deal, "in theory,"

means that the U.S. will get more from Ukraine than it contributed. "I wanted to be protected," he said, adding that he didn't want to be looking "foolish" by not getting money back for the investment.

For Ukraine, the agreement is seen as key to ensuring its access to future U.S. military aid.

"Truly, this is a strategic deal for the creation of an investment partner fund," said Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal. "This is truly an equal

and good international deal on joint investment in the development and restoration of Ukraine between the governments of the United States and Ukraine."

Ukraine's economy minister, Yulia Svyrydenko, flew to Washington on Wednesday to help finalize the deal.

"Together with the United States, we are creating the Fund that will attract global investment to our country," she said in a post on X after the

signing.

Earlier Wednesday, Bessent said during a Cabinet meeting at the White House - hours after Ukrainian officials indicated a deal was nearly finalized - that there was still work to do.

"The Ukrainians decided last night to make some last-minute changes," Bessent said when asked about reports that Ukraine was ready to agree to the pact. "We're sure that they will reconsider that. And we are ready to sign this afternoon if they are."

He didn't elaborate as to the late changes he said Ukraine made.

The U.S. has been seeking access to more than 20 raw materials deemed strategically critical to its interests, including some non-minerals such as oil and natural gas. Among them are Ukraine's deposits of titanium, which is used for making aircraft wings and other aerospace manufacturing, and uranium, which is used for nuclear power, medical equipment and weapons. Ukraine also has lithium, graphite and manganese, which are used in electric vehicle batteries.

After Kyiv felt the initial U.S. draft of the deal disproportionately favored American interests, it introduced new provisions aimed at addressing those concerns.

According to Shmyhal, the latest version would establish an equal partnership between the two countries and last for 10 years. Financial contributions to a joint fund would be made in cash, and only new U.S. military aid would count toward the American

share. Assistance provided before the agreement was signed would not be counted. Unlike an earlier draft, the deal would not conflict with Ukraine's path toward European Union membership - a key provision for Kyiv.

The Ukrainian Cabinet approved the agreement Wednesday, empowering Svyrydenko to sign it in Washington. The deal still needs to be ratified by the Ukrainian Parliament before it can take effect.

The negotiations come amid rocky progress in Washington's push to stop the war.

Putin backs calls for a ceasefire before peace negotiations, "but before it's done, it's necessary to answer a few questions and sort out a few nuances," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. Putin is also ready for direct talks with Ukraine without preconditions to seek a peace deal, he added.

"We realize that Washington wants to achieve quick progress, but we hope for understanding that the Ukrainian crisis settlement is far too complex to be done quickly," Peskov said during his daily conference call with reporters.

Trump has expressed frustration over the slow pace of progress in negotiations aimed at stopping the war. Western European leaders have accused Putin of stalling while his forces seek to grab more Ukrainian land. Russia has captured nearly a fifth of Ukraine's territory since Moscow's forces launched a full-scale invasion on Feb. 24, 2022.

Marches spotlighted growing anger over U.S. leader's aggressive tax agenda

From Tokyo to Turin, Trump's policies loom over May Day rallies

PARIS, May 1, (AP): From Tokyo to Turin, Taipei to Paris, tens of thousands marched in May Day rallies that spotlighted growing anger over U.S. President Donald Trump's aggressive tariff agenda and fears of global economic turmoil. In France, union leaders condemned the "Trumpization" of world politics. In Italy, protesters paraded a puppet of the American president through the streets of Turin. And in Germany, unionists warned that extended workdays and anti-immigrant rhetoric were eroding hard-won labor protections.

The holiday, also known as International Workers' Day or Labor Day, honors the struggles and achievements of workers and the labor movement. Rallies are expected across the United States as well, including in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York and Philadelphia.

Across multiple countries, Trump's



Members of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions gather to attend a rally on May Day in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, May 1, 2025. The letters read 'Let's win basic labor rights.' (AP)

agenda was cited as a source of concern. In the United States, organizers said their message this year focused on fighting Trump's approach target-

ing immigrants, federal workers and diversity initiatives.

In Taiwan, President Lai Ching-te referenced new U.S. tariffs under

Trump as he promoted a proposed spending bill aimed at stabilizing the job market and supporting livelihoods. In the Philippines, protest leader Mong Palatino warned that "tariff wars and policies of Trump" threatened local industries.

In Japan, Trump's image loomed over the day quite literally, as a truck in the Tokyo march carried a doll made to resemble him. There, participants' demands ranged from higher wages and gender equality to health care, disaster relief, a ceasefire in Gaza and an end to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"For our children to be able to live with hope, the rights of workers must be recognized," said Junko Kuramochi, a member of a mothers' group in Tokyo.

Tadashi Ito, a union construction worker, said he worried about rising prices for imported raw materials.

US futures jump

Asian shares advance in subdued holiday trading

TOKYO, May 1, (AP): Asian shares advanced Thursday, with many markets in the region closed for Labor Day holidays, after U.S. stocks stormed back from steep early losses to a seventh straight day of gains.

Uncertainty about what President Donald Trump's trade war will do to the U.S. economy remains a key focus for investors.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 rose 0.9% to 36,359.24 after the Bank of Japan decided to keep its benchmark interest rate unchanged as worries continue to grow about the impact of Trump's policies.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 edged up less than 0.1% to 8,137.40. On Wednesday, the S&P 500 rose 0.1% to extend its winning streak to a seventh day, closing at 5,569.06. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 0.3% to 40,669.36. The Nasdaq composite edged down by 0.1% to 17,446.34.

It was a stunning reversal after the S&P 500 dropped as much as 2.3% and the Dow fell 780 points in early trading. Stocks initially tumbled after a report suggested the U.S. economy may have shrunk at the start of the year, falling well short of economists' expectations, in a sharp turnaround from the economy's solid growth at the end of last year.

What's On



Photos from the launch of the LuLu World Food Festival at LuLu Hypermarket's Al Rai outlet.



2-week fest promises unbeatable offers, cooking shows and competitions

LuLu World Food Fest offers flavors, fun, and fabulous prizes

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: LuLu Hypermarket, the leading retail chain in the region, is once again set to delight food lovers across Kuwait with the highly anticipated LuLu World Food Festival. The festival, which runs from 30 April for a period of two weeks across all LuLu Hypermarket outlets in the country, promises an exciting celebration of world cuisines, unbeatable offers, live cooking shows, and win-big competitions.

The official inauguration of the LuLu World Food Festival was held on 30 April at LuLu Hypermarket's Al Rai outlet. Adding glamor to the event, renowned South Indian film actress Mahima Nambiar, Indian Masterchef Season 7 finalist Chef Gurkirat Singh, and Arabic chef Mona Maabreh inaugurated the food fest, alongside top management of LuLu Kuwait and the top management representatives of the festival sponsors.

Throughout the festival, shoppers can look forward to amazing offers and discounts across all food categories, including groceries, fresh fruits and vegetables, meat and fish (both

fresh and frozen), chilled and dairy products, home appliances, and kitchen essentials. The festival promises something for everyone, whether it is stocking up on everyday essentials or discovering exotic new ingredients.

A major attraction during the festival will be the special live cooking demonstrations by celebrity chefs Gurkirat Singh and Mona Maabreh, both of whom will be showcasing their culinary skills and sharing cooking techniques and unique recipes with shoppers. In addition, throughout the promotion period, LuLu Hypermarket outlets will host a wide range of contests and competitions designed to engage customers of all ages and cooking abilities. Events include cookery contests featuring Arabic, Indian, Italian, Continental, and Filipino cuisines, as well as enticing dessert preparations.

Other exciting competitions include, Wow the Master Chef competition, the Mom& Me healthy salad-making contest, the Master Junior Chef contests for two separate age groups (6-10 years and 11-15 years), the Barista competition, Cake Challenge, Biryani competitions,

and Blindfold Food Taste competitions. Winners of all competitions will be rewarded with amazing, valuable prizes, while all participants will receive consolation prizes to celebrate their effort and enthusiasm.

Among the many themed promotions taking place during the festival are Global Foodie, featuring world cuisines such as Mexican, Korean, Italian, Spanish, Thai and more; Healthy Eats, focused on salads, cheeses, and olives; Meet a Meat, offering a wide range of meat products; Go Fish, showcasing fresh and frozen seafood; The Best Bake for bakery lovers; Snack Time for quick bites; Biryani World for biryani enthusiasts; Desi Dhaba offering Indian street flavours; Cake So Cookies, a paradise for dessert lovers; Naadan Thattukada, highlighting traditional South Indian street snacks; and Kitchen Must Have, featuring essential kitchen tools and gadgets.

Adding to the excitement is the introduction across all outlets of special global cuisine street food counters featuring an array of international flavors from South Indian, North Indian,



Celebrity guests at the LuLu World Food Festival launch, including top chefs and a film actress.

Mexican, Korean, Italian, Spanish, Continental cuisines and more. The festival will also include a Summer Special Variety Drinks Zone, where shoppers can enjoy refreshing seasonal beverages.

In true LuLu Hypermarket style, the

food festival will also set records with extraordinary food creations at all its outlets, including the longest taco shawarma, biggest burger, biggest pizza, biggest biryani, longest zings fillet, biggest basbousa, biryani dhamaka, longest Mexican crispy wrap sandwich, longest

lotus cakes, and live koshary preparation. These mouth-watering attractions promise to captivate visitors and create memorable moments during the two-week celebration.

The LuLu World Food Fest is supported by an impressive list of sponsors, including Alvazzan, Bayara, Afia, Betty Crocker, Nature Valley, Americana, Seara, Sadia, Lamb Weston, Arla, Puck, Kraft, Kitco, Nestlé, IFFCO, Noor, London Dairy, McCain, Maggi, Nescafé, Haribo, Majdi, Ritz, Dr. Oetker, Darelo, Panzani, Lurpak, Al Tayeb, Tanniah, Kellogg's, Lindt, Hershey, Al Hajri, President, Tiffany Biscuits, Panasonic, Black+Decker, and Philips.

With such an exciting line-up of offers, contests, cooking shows, and record-breaking food creations, the LuLu World Food Festival promises to be a memorable and flavor-packed experience for all shoppers in Kuwait. Running from 30 April for two weeks, the festival invites everyone to enjoy a world of tastes, culinary creativity, and family fun at all LuLu Hypermarket outlets across the country.



A well-deserved standing ovation after the concert. From left: Viktor, Kamil, Ms. Kinga, Dmitrii, and Ms. Inna.

Academy expands musical horizons in Kuwait

KMA's Spring Chamber Concert wows audience with classical masterpieces

By Cezary Owerkowicz

Special to the Arab Times

After the Kuwait Music Academy (KMA) Spring Chamber Concert last Friday, music lovers in Kuwait can confidently say they have found a new home for enjoying live performances.

One of the concert participants shared his thoughts online after the event: "Each performance was truly inspiring and created an unforgettable experience for all listeners, captivating the audience and bringing the spirit of spring to life through music."

KMA has long been committed to nurturing young musical talent. At the end of each academic year, it organizes the 'Treasure of Talents' Festival -- a well-established event that has been running for over 25 years. In recent years, this prestigious festival has been held at Dar al-Athar Hall in Yarmouk.

KMA also organizes the popular New Year Winter Concert series at its headquarters in Salwa, in addition to hosting occasional concerts and collaborative events with foreign soloists and bands visiting Kuwait. These performances have been warmly received, drawing enthusiastic audiences and earning wide recognition.

Love music like Einstein

Albert Einstein, hailed as a genius of the 20th century for his contributions to Physics, also held music close to his heart. Encouraged by his mother's musical talent, he became a passionate violinist, playing Mozart's sonatas flawlessly by the age of 13.

He once said, "Love music like you love Physics." Nevertheless, we all



Ms. Kinga Masternak captivates the audience with songs by Chopin and S. Rachmaninoff, with Ms. Inna accompanying on piano.



Kamil Derylo, a singer and pianist

remember his powerful reminder that resonates with musicians and educators alike: "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving forward."

Inspired by growing number of students, KMA opened new branch-



Alexandr Kovalev, guitar virtuoso

es in Mahboula and Sabah Al-Salem. A team of dynamic, young, yet highly experienced teachers -- many of whom are virtuosos themselves -- has laid the foundation for orchestral rehearsals and regular public concerts at the KMA headquarters. This is a confirmation of the advice of Einstein that you should not stop developing. The success of previous event, 'Viola Bouquet', and the current 'Spring Chamber' concert, confirms that the academy is moving forward in the right direction.

Music in the Chamber

A day before the concert, the KMA hall was filled with elegantly prepared chairs, then the next day was filled with guests and music lovers clad in casual clothes. All ages of live music enthusiasts attended the event -- from the seven-year-old girl, Pola to the senior citizens, as well as distinguished guests and diplomats including H.E. Michał Cholewa, Head of the Polish Embassy, and Dr. Dmytro Serov from the Ukrainian Embassy.

Competition winners honored

Radio Kuwait Urdu's 'Anwaar-e-Ramadan' enlightens listeners with spiritual insights

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: Radio Kuwait Urdu Service successfully aired its special Ramadan program titled "Anwaar-e-Ramadan" during the holy month. Designed for the people in Kuwait, the program featured a speech competition and insightful Islamic teachings, making it a spiritually enriching experience for listeners.

The broadcast included thought-provoking speeches on the virtues of Ramadan such as self-restraint, kindness, and spiritual growth. Alongside this, distinguished scholars Maulana Sifaat Alim Muhammad Zubair, Al-laudin Ainul Haque, Muhammad Mustafa, Islam Abdul Hakim, and Muhammad Umar Falahi delivered meaningful teachings on the significance of fasting and Islamic values.

Behind the scenes, the program was coordinated and executed by a dedicated team from Radio Kuwait Urdu Service: Aboobacker Payyoli (Coordinator), Anees Backer and Barkat Khan (Sound Engineers), Nida Mirza and Razia Ashraf (Announcers), ensuring a smooth and high-quality transmission throughout Ramadan.

The initiative was supported under the leadership of Sheikhja Shejoun Al-Sabah, programme director, foreign services, Shejoun Al-Marshoud, programme supervisor, foreign services, and Essa Abdulrahman Al-Kandari, supervisor of coordination and follow-up, radio, directed roreign programs.

Following the broadcast, a prize distribution ceremony was recently held at the Ministry of Information, honoring the winning institutions that took part in the competition. The results



Photos from the event.

were as follows:

- 1st position: Indian Muslim Association (IMA)
- 2nd position: Pakistan English School & College Kuwait (PESC)
- 3rd position: International School of Pakistan (ISP)
- 4th position: Islamic Education Committee Kuwait (IEC)

The event was graced by Sheikhja She-

joun Al-Sabah, Shejoun Al-Marshoud, and Essa Abdulrahman Al-Kandari, who presented awards and appreciated the efforts of all contributors.

"Anwaar-e-Ramadan" stands as a testament to Radio Kuwait's commitment to promoting faith-based learning, community engagement, and spiritual enrichment for the people of Kuwait.

Indian Muslim Association youth shine

IMA tops 'Anwaar-e-Ramadan' contest

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: With immense gratitude to Allah, the Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Kuwait is proud to announce its outstanding achievement in securing First Prize in the prestigious 'Anwaar-e-Ramadan' Competition, conducted by Radio Kuwait's Foreign Services Department as part of their special Ramadan programming. The event was held to celebrate the spirit and values of the holy month of Ramadan, featuring various cultural and Islamic knowledge-based segments aimed at engaging and inspiring participants across Kuwait whereas IMA Kuwait's participation stood out for its heartfelt performances, rich Islamic content, and the exemplary

involvement of its youth members.

In a prestigious award ceremony conducted at the Ministry of Information, Sheikhja Shejoun Al-Sabah, Director of Programs for Foreign Services at Radio Kuwait, personally presented the Certificate of Excellence and a Commemorative Shield to IMA Kuwait and its deserving Winners. The event was attended by respected members of the Organizing Committee, Educators, and proud Representatives of the IMA family. Her encouraging words and gracious hospitality made the occasion truly memorable for all attendees.

The Winners, a group of enthusiastic and talented Students from IMA Kuwait's Youth division, were recog-

nized for their Outstanding Efforts in the Competition. Their dedication, creativity, and deep-rooted understanding of Islamic values were evident in their submissions, which resonated strongly with the Judges and Audience alike.

The IMA Kuwait awardees are: Huda Ismail; Areeba Mahreen Mohammed; Mohammed Ibrahim Khan; Afifa Firdaus; Muhammad Abdul Rafey; Muhammad Umar; Mohammed Wajid Ali and Mrs. Yasmeen Begum.

This triumph is a testimony to the hard work, creativity, and Islamic spirit of IMA Students and Mentors, who dedicated their time and efforts to preparing for the competition.



Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Kuwait members and youth pose with the top prize at the 'Anwaar-e-Ramadan' competition.



Dmitrii Krasnikov brings Prokofiev's 'Romeo & Juliet' to life on viola, with Ms. Inna on piano.

Documentary chronicles late pontiff's cultural movement

Scorsese, Pope Francis teamed up to produce 'Aldeas'

NEW YORK, May 1, (AP): Martin Scorsese is producing a documentary made with Pope Francis that will chronicle the late pontiff's work with cinema in the global educational movement he founded before his death.

"Aldeas - A New Story" will feature conversations between Pope Francis and Scorsese, including what the filmmakers say are the Pope's final in-depth on-camera interview for a film. The documentary will detail the work of Scholas Occurrentes, a non-profit, international organization founded by the pope in 2013 to promote the "Culture of Encounter" among youth.

Part of that organization's work has included filmmaking under the Aldeas initiative. The documentary will show young people in Indonesia, Italy and the Gambia participating in Aldeas and making short films.

Aldeas Scholas Film and Scorsese's Sikelia

Productions, which announced the documentary Wednesday, said the film is "a testament to the enduring belief that creativity is not only a means of expression but a path to hope and transformation."

Before his death, Pope Francis called Aldeas "an extremely poetic and very constructive project because it goes to the roots of what human life is, human sociability, human conflicts ... the essence of a life's journey."

No release date was announced for the film.

"Now, more than ever, we need to talk to each other, listen to one another cross-culturally," Scorsese said in a statement. "One of the best ways to accomplish this is by sharing the stories of who we are, reflected from our personal lives and experiences."

It helps us understand and value how each of us sees the world. It was important to Pope

Francis for people across the globe to exchange ideas with respect while also preserving their cultural identity, and cinema is the best medium to do that."

Scorsese met numerous times with Pope Francis over the years, and their conversations sometimes informed work undertaken by the 82-year-old filmmaker of "The Last Temptation of Christ" and "Silence."

After meeting with Pope Francis in 2023, Scorsese announced that he would make another film centered on Jesus, though that project - an adaptation of Shūsaku Endō's "A Life of Jesus" - hasn't yet gone into production.

Last fall, Scorsese produced an eight-part docudrama series for Fox Nation called "Martin Scorsese Presents: The Saints."

Francis died on April 21 and a conclave to elect a new pope is scheduled to begin on May 7.



This image released by Vatican Media shows Martin Scorsese, left, and Pope Francis. 'Aldeas - A New Story' is a new feature-length documentary and global cultural project developed by Scholas Occurrentes, the global educational movement founded by Pope Francis, in collaboration with Academy Award-winning director Martin Scorsese. (AP)

Film



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Damson Idris, left, and Brad Pitt in a scene from 'F1.' (AP)

A high-speed thriller with Brad Pitt and Lewis Hamilton

'Top Gun' filmmakers drive into F1

LOS ANGELES, May 1, (AP): "Top Gun: Maverick" filmmaker Joseph Kosinski came to Formula One like many Americans: "Drive to Survive."

In that popular Netflix series, he saw the potential for a cinematic event, full of immersive thrills, the high stakes of the competitive racing world and the idea that your teammate could be your greatest rival.

"I don't think there's any other sport that's quite like that," Kosinski said. "It's ripe for drama."

The movies have loved car racing since their earliest days, and the popularity of F1 has exploded in recent years. Giving it the "Top Gun" treatment made sense. But it would take nearly four years for that dream to become "F1," which is speeding into movie theaters on June 27.

It was a complex operation that would involve unprecedented coordination with the league, groundbreaking innovation in camera technology, and letting one of the biggest movie stars in the world, Brad Pitt, drive a real race car at 180 miles an hour on film. Many, many times.

Hollywood, it turned out, was a little easier to convince to make the film than the league. By the time Kosinski and producer Jerry Bruckheimer approached them, Pitt had already agreed to star and they'd decided to go with Apple to help make the movie at the level they needed, with the guarantee of a robust theatrical release (which Warner Bros. is handling). Then came the Formula One meeting. "When you come in, the first thing they think is you're going to make them look bad," Bruckheimer said. "I went through this with when I went to the Navy the first time on 'Top Gun.'"

There were many concerns: About anything going wrong, accidents, and the question of the villain. But, the filmmakers explained, this story wasn't about a villain. It's a competition between two drivers - a younger driver (Damson Idris) and an older driver (Pitt) trying to make him better.

Bruckheimer said it took almost a year to get the league on board, and then they had to go around to the individual teams to explain it to them as well. But once everyone bought in, they committed and opened their world to the filmmakers.

"The amount of, let's say, conversations regarding things not related to the actual filmmaking has been massive just from a coordination point of view," Kosinski said. "But there's no way we could have made this film without that partnership with Formula One."

Among the things they got to do: Build a garage at the Grand Prix for their fictional team; Drive on the track during Grand Prix weekends in front of hundreds of thousands of spectators; Put their Formula One cars on the track with the film's cars (and drivers); Have Pitt and Idris stand at the end of the national anthem in both Silverstone and Abu Dhabi; And sit in on drivers meetings and technical briefings.

Integration

"It was full-on integration of these two worlds coming together," Kosinski said. "There's no way the film could have happened or look like it does without that partnership. I think you'll see the result of that on screen because you couldn't recreate what we were able to capture by doing it for real."

In true "Top Gun" spirit, part of "doing it for real" meant trying to create the experience in the driver seat for the audience. Seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton, who was involved in the film from the earliest days, told Kosinski that he'd never seen a film that had really captured what it felt like to be in one of those cars.

"These Formula One cars, they deal in grams," Kosinski said. "Adding 100 pounds of camera equipment works against the very thing you're trying to capture. It became a technical engineering project for a year to figure out how to get very tiny cameras that are IMAX quality onto one of

these cars."

During "Top Gun: Maverick," they had six Sony cameras inside the cockpit. Here, engineers were able to slim those down to about a quarter of the size (he estimates a 10x10 cm cube). Panavision also developed a remote control that allowed director of photography Claudio Miranda to pivot the cameras left and right, which they didn't have on "Maverick."

They had 15 camera mounts built into the cars and were able to run up to four at a time keeping the weight penalty to a minimum, and the close-ups real. "Every time you see Brad or Damson's face, they're really driving that car," Kosinski said. "It's not being driven for them." And once it was go-time on the tracks, it was a race against the clock.

"It was a technical feat and an organizational feat," Bruckheimer said. "You get limited access and we'd get in there between some of their qualifying laps and have eight minutes to get on the track and off the track. It's precision, you can't be at nine minutes."

When Hamilton first saw some of their racing footage cut together, Kosinski got a confidence boost.

"He smiled and said, 'It looks fast,'" Kosinski said. "I was like, 'Oh, thank God.' If Lewis says that we're in a good place."

"This movie needed an icon kind of at the center of it," Kosinski said. "It's a big, complicated, expensive film. And I needed one of our, you know, top, top movie stars."

Kosinski knew Pitt liked cars. About a decade ago he, Tom Cruise and Pitt actually developed a car movie that never came to be. Plus, he said, "I just felt like it was a role that I always wanted to see him play." The character is fictional driver named Sonny Hayes who was "the greatest who never was." A phenomenon in the 1990s, he was destined to be the next world champion before an accident at a Grand Prix ends his Formula One career.

Variety

LONDON: British counterterrorism detectives will investigate comments by Irish hip-hop group Kneecap, which has been criticized by UK politicians over statements about the Middle East and British politics, police said Thursday.

The Irish-language rappers from Northern Ireland were reported to police over footage from a 2024 concert in which a band member appeared to say: "The only good Tory is a dead Tory. Kill your local MP." Footage from another concert in 2023 appears to show a member of the trio shouting support for banned organizations in the UK.

London's Metropolitan Police force said officers had concluded that "there are grounds for further investigation into potential offenses linked to both videos."

"The investigation is now being carried out by officers from the Met's Counter Terrorism Command and inquiries remain ongoing at this time," the force said in a statement.

The Belfast trio is known for satirical lyrics and use of symbolism associated with the Irish republican movement, which seeks to unite Northern Ireland, currently part of the UK., with the Republic of Ireland. (AP)



NEW YORK: Five years after she first told her story to a jury, one of **Harvey Weinstein's** accusers testified anew Wednesday that he restrained her and assaulted her after she told him, "No, no - it's not going to happen."

"The unthinkable was happening," Miriam Haley testified, dabbing her eyes as she recalled the alleged July 2006 assault.

Weinstein, sitting between his lawyers, shook his head as she spoke. The 73-year-old former Hollywood honcho has pleaded not guilty and denies sexually assaulting anyone.

Haley, who has also gone by the name Mimi Haley, is the first of Weinstein's accusers to testify at his rape retrial. It's happening because New York's highest court overturned his 2020 conviction.

Haley testified at the original trial, sometimes breaking into sobs. Her demeanor Wednesday was calm, if briefly tearful, as she answered prosecutors' graphic questions about the alleged assault.

While much of her account mirrored her earlier testimony, there were some additional details.

She recalled Weinstein asking, "Don't you think we're much closer now?" after either the alleged assault or a subsequent occasion when she says she had an encounter with him that she did not want.

She also recalled telling him after the second encounter, "You know you can't keep doing this."

Weinstein's attorneys haven't yet had their chance to question Haley and potentially challenge her account. The defense has argued that all of Weinstein's accusers engaged with him in hopes of advancing their careers in show business. (AP)



LOS ANGELES: Conservative activist Robby Starbuck has filed a defamation lawsuit against Meta alleging that the social media giant's artificial intelligence chatbot spread false statements about him, including that he participated in the riot at the US Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

Starbuck, known for targeting corporate DEI programs, said he discovered the claims made by Meta's AI in August 2024, when he was going after "woke DEI" policies at motorcycle maker Harley-Davidson.

"One dealership was unhappy with me and they posted a screenshot from Meta's AI in an effort to attack me," he said in a post on X. "This screenshot was filled with lies. I couldn't believe it was real so I checked myself. It was even worse when I checked."

Since then, he said he has "faced a steady stream of false accusations that are deeply damaging to my character and the safety of my family."

The political commentator said he was in Tennessee during the Jan. 6 riot. The suit, filed in Delaware Superior Court on Tuesday, seeks more than \$5 million in damages.

In an emailed statement, a spokesperson for Meta said that "as part of our continuous effort to improve our models, we have already released updates and will continue to do so." (AP)

King Charles III says his cancer journey brought the best of humanity into focus

LONDON, May 1, (AP): King Charles III described Wednesday how a cancer diagnosis can be a "daunting and at times frightening" experience for sufferers and their loved ones as he hosted an event to laud the "extraordinary work" of cancer charities.

In a message written in a booklet for guests at a Buckingham Palace reception to celebrate organizations helping people with the disease, Charles poignantly reflected on his experience of cancer. As one of the 1,000 or so people in the UK who receive a cancer diagnosis every day, Charles said his journey had given him "an even deeper appreciation of the extraordinary work" of charities.

"Each diagnosis, each new case, will be a daunting and at times frightening experience for those individuals and their loved ones," he said. "But as one among those statistics myself, I can vouch for the fact that it can also be an experience that brings into sharp focus the very best of humanity."

The 76-year-old monarch, who is still undergoing treatment more than a year on from his diagnosis for an undisclosed cancer, also said that his experience had reinforced how "the darkest moments of illness can be illuminated by the greatest compassion." Charles and his wife, Queen Camilla, invited representatives from cancer charities they

support, campaigners, and individuals living with cancer, to the royal residence for the reception. Also present was the ex-wife of Prince Andrew, Sarah, Duchess of York, who has also endured cancer treatment, for skin and breast cancer.

"I think the King is a brilliant example of revolutionizing patronage," she said. "He really listens, he wants to fix it, he wants to make a difference."

Though Charles has been increasingly visible in recent months, he was briefly hospitalized last month as a result of "temporary" side effects from a scheduled cancer treatment.

Though no update on the king's health has been provided, his return to public duties has been read that his treatment is heading in the right direction.

"We are so grateful to His Majesty for his continued support, both as our patron and for being so open about his own cancer experience, which has inspired so many others to reach out for support from organizations like Macmillan," said Gemma Peters, chief executive at Macmillan Cancer Support. Charles' illness came as his daughter-in-law, Kate, the Princess of Wales, was also diagnosed with cancer. Kate, the wife of Prince William, took more than six months off before returning to public duties in late September.



Britain's King Charles III and Queen Camilla pose for a photo with Lorraine Kelly and members of the Change and Check choir during a reception in Buckingham Palace, London, in celebration of community-based initiatives raising awareness about cancer and supporting those living with cancer, April 30, 2025. (AP)

Farwaniya Hospital uses surgical robot in 6 procedures

Robotic surgery revolutionizes healthcare in Kuwait

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: Head of the Surgery Department at Farwaniya Hospital Dr. Khaled Al-Bassam has confirmed the use of a surgical robot in six surgeries -- two gastric sleeve surgeries for patients suffering from morbid obesity and four hernia surgeries using robots and medical meshes.

In a statement to the newspaper, Al-Bassam disclosed that the surgical robot is one of the most advanced technologies in the field of surgery worldwide and it is a qualitative leap in the surgical services provided by the hospital.

He said the technology was launched last Wednesday, and that efforts are underway to employ it in several surgeries; thereby, developing the surgical

services in the country. He affirmed that Farwaniya Hospital is the second hospital in Kuwait to use the surgical robot.

Moreover, Consultant in General Surgery and Robotic Surgery Dr. Obaid Al-Harbi asserted that the surgical robot is an added value to the Surgery Department; hinting on a plan to use the robot in performing complex surgeries like gastrointestinal and urinary tract tumor surgeries, among others.

He pointed out that robotic surgery is very precise, and greatly contributes to reducing the recovery period and surgical complications due to its ability to control everything; thereby, yielding accurate results.

He revealed that numerous workshops have been prepared and organized to train doctors on how to use surgical robots, honing their skills and enabling them to perform more complex surgeries.

He said the surgical medical team -- consisting of surgeons, urologists, anesthesiologists and nurses -- has undergone intensive training courses in preparation for robotic surgery under the supervision of Dr. Mohammed Abu Khater, a robotic surgery professor from Saudi Arabia.

He added several workshops will be organized in the coming period to improve expertise in using robots in hernia, obesity and gastrointestinal tumor surgeries; in preparation for expanding its use to include other specializations like obstetrics and gynecology.

He thanked Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi and Undersecretary Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi for their unwavering support for technological development and the introduction of the latest medical equipment in a bid to improve the quality of healthcare provided to citizens and expatriates.

Kuwait boosts preventative care

MoH launches nutrition units to combat chronic diseases

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: The Ministry of Health has affirmed the establishment of therapeutic nutrition units in all health districts, as an integral part of its initiative to fortify preventative measures and unify healthcare provision for citizens and expatriates.



Health Minister Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi

The directive issued by Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi exemplifies the dedication of the ministry incorporating therapeutic nutrition services as a fundamental element of the prevention and treatment framework; specifically within primary healthcare programs, which serve as the initial safeguard against numerous chronic ailments linked to dietary patterns and lifestyle choices.

As per the directive, these units will be in charge of the technical oversight of therapeutic nutrition clinics associated with primary healthcare centers, and serving as technical liaison with the Nutrition and Dietetics Department at the Public Health Sector.

This measure ensures the harmonization of standards and the

implementation of global best practices within this crucial domain, and facilitates specialized nutritional consultations grounded in rigorous scientific principles.

The creation of nutrition units underscores the resolve to attain holistic excellence in healthcare services, elevate beneficiary contentment, and bolster national endeavors to combat chronic diseases and their underlying causes.

These objectives are pursued through the enhancement of dietary conduct and the advancement of community consciousness regarding wholesome nutrition in line with the vision for a sustainable and healthy future.

Awareness

Kids ‘tackle’ food allergies

NEW YORK, May 1, (AP): The Food Allergy Fund (FAF) is launching an engaging new Public Service Announcement (PSA) to empower kids and raise awareness about food allergies during Food Allergy Awareness Month this May. The PSA will debut across Nickelodeon’s platforms from May 1-31, and features Emmy Award-winning culinary social media sensation Tiny Chef (The Tiny Chef Show, produced by Imagine Entertainment and Nickelodeon Animation) alongside content creator Merrick Hanna, who has food allergies. This fast-growing disease affects 1 in 13 children and 1 in 10 adults in the U.S.

“As founder and CEO of FAF, and a food allergy parent, I’m grateful to Nickelodeon for their creativity and support in spotlighting this growing public health crisis,” said Ilana Golant. “Food allergies affect 10 percent of Americans, and every three minutes, someone visits the ER due to an allergic reaction. Food allergies are not a lifestyle choice – they are a serious chronic health condition. Through awareness and simple actions, we can ensure kids with food allergies feel safe, included, and protected.”

Merrick Hanna, known for his viral dance videos, shares in the PSA, “I love to dance, but I also love to cook. The reason I cook is because I have serious food allergies. I have to be careful because every single bite counts. The truth is food allergies affect more people than you might realize – there are usually two kids in a classroom with food allergies.”

The PSA was unveiled today during the Food Allergy Fund’s Annual Summit, an event bringing together scientists, innovators, policymakers, and advocates to advance food allergy research and explore new ways to make living with food allergies easier. The event underscores the progress made in food allergy science over the past decade and the growing momentum to improve prevention, treatments and ultimately find a cure.

□ □ □

At the recent Food Allergy Fund Summit in New York City, **Wade Shen**, Director of Proactive Health at the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H), shared the agency’s strategic priorities for advancing research and innovation to prevent, mitigate, and delay diseases, including food allergies and other urgent health challenges. He encouraged the event’s attendees and the larger research community to engage with the agency as it helps to accelerate work on food allergies

Wade Shen, Director of Proactive Health for the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H), spoke today about the agency’s strategic priorities for advancing research and innovation to prevent, mitigate, and delay diseases, including food allergies at the Food Allergy Fund Summit at the Paley Center for Media in New York City.

Vaccination gaps fuel measles resurgence

Measles spreads across borders as cases rise in Canada, Mexico and US

NEW YORK, May 1, (AP): Dr. Hector Ocaranza knew El Paso would see measles the moment it began spreading in West Texas and eastern New Mexico.

Highways connect his border city with the epicenter of Texas’ massive outbreak, which is up to 663 cases. They’re the same roads used by thousands of families and commercial truckers who cross into Mexico and back each day.

“Diseases know no borders,” said Ocaranza, El Paso’s top public health doctor, “so as people are mobile, they’re going to be coming and receiving medical attention in El Paso but they may be living in Juarez.” It took a couple of months, but El Paso now has the highest measles case count in the state outside of West Texas with 38. Neighboring Ciudad Juarez has 14 cases as of Monday.

North America’s three biggest measles outbreaks continue to balloon, with more than 2,500 known cases; three people have died in the US and one in Mexico. It started in the fall in Ontario, Canada; then took off in late January in Texas and New Mexico; and has rapidly spread in Chihuahua state, which is up to 786 cases since mid-February.

Outbreaks

These outbreaks are in areas with a notable population of certain Mennonite Christian communities who trace their migration over generations from Canada to Mexico to Seminole, Texas.

Chihuahua health officials trace their first case to an 8-year-old Mennonite child who visited family in Seminole, got sick and spread the virus at school. And Ontario officials say their outbreak started at a large gathering in New Brunswick involving Mennonite communities.

Mexican and US officials also say the genetic strains of measles spreading in Canada match the other large outbreaks.

“This virus was imported, traveling



A health worker vaccinates a child for measles at a health center in Cuauhtemoc, Chihuahua state, Mexico, Wednesday, April 30, 2025. (AP)

country to country,” said Leticia Ruiz, director of prevention and disease control in Chihuahua.

North and South American countries have struggled to maintain the 95% measles vaccination rate needed to prevent outbreaks, said Dr. Jarbas Barbosa, director of the Pan American Health Organization.

And a recent World Health Organization report said measles activity in the Americas region is up elevenfold from the same time last year and that the risk level is “high” compared to the rest of the world’s “moderate” level.

Measles cases have been confirmed in six of the region’s countries - Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Canada, the United States and Mexico - and investigating the disease’s spread is labor-intensive and pricey. The response to each measles case in the U.S. costs an estimated \$30,000 to \$50,000, according to Dr. David Sugerman, a U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention scientist.

The cases in Ciudad Juarez have no direct connection to the Mennonite

settlement in Chihuahua, said Rogelio Covarrubias, a health official in the border city. The first measles case in El Paso was in a child at Fort Bliss, Ocaranza said.

More than half of El Paso’s cases are in adults, which is unusually high, and three people have been hospitalized. The health department is holding vaccination clinics in malls and parks and says hundreds have gotten a shot. The vaccines are free - no questions asked, no matter which side of the border you live on.

Communication about measles between the two health departments is “informal” but “very good,” Ocaranza said. Covarrubias said his team was alerted last week to a case of someone who became sick in El Paso and returned home to Juarez.

“There is constant concern in Ciudad Juarez ... because we have travelers that pass through from across the world,” Covarrubias said. “With a possible case of measles without taking precautions, many, many people could be infected.”

Reversing progress

US sees slight rise in maternal deaths in 2024

NEW YORK, May 1, (AP): More US women died around the time of childbirth last year, reversing two years of decline, according to provisional data posted Wednesday. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said 688 people died last year during pregnancy or shortly after giving birth. That’s up from 669 deaths in 2023, but down from 2022 and 2021, when it was the highest level in more than 50 years.

The maternal mortality rate rose to 19 deaths per 100,000 live births, up from 18.6 the year before.

The CDC counts women who die while pregnant, during childbirth and up to 42 days after birth from conditions related to pregnancy. Excessive bleeding, blood vessel blockages and infections are leading causes.

Such deaths spiked during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the coronavirus was particularly dangerous to pregnant

women. And, in the worst days of the pandemic, burned out physicians may have added to the risk by ignoring pregnant women’s worries, experts say.

The waning of COVID-19 is considered a major reason for the declines in maternal deaths in 2022 and 2023, experts say.

But those improvements are now being offset by other factors that may reduce access to medical care, experts say. They say the list includes the closure of rural hospitals and the US Supreme Court decision that did away with the federally established right to abortion, which caused some doctors to feel constrained about providing care during pregnancy-related medical emergencies.

The US has one of the highest maternal mortality rate among wealthy nations. Past research has found wide racial disparities in such deaths, with Black women dying at a far higher rate than white women.

NEW YORK, May 1, (AP): Dr. Google is often on call for worried patients, but it may not give the best advice.

Doctors say internet searches for medical information should be done cautiously, especially with artificial intelligence playing a growing role.

Information from the right websites can teach patients about symptoms and prepare them for a doctor’s visit. But a poorly done search might inflame anxiety well before someone reaches the waiting room. It’s important to know the source of the information you find and to avoid trying to diagnose your health issue.

Here are questions to keep in mind if you seek medical help online.

When you do a search, don’t automatically click the first link. It may not contain the best answers.

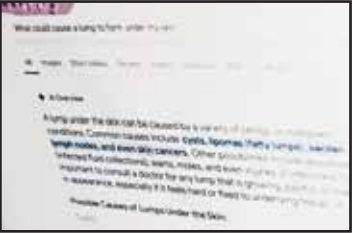
Some companies pay to have their websites listed at the top of a results page. Those links may be listed as sponsored.

Scroll for results that come from a source you can trust for medical information. That can include big health systems like the Mayo Clinic or sites run by government agencies like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“We’ve gotten so used to clicking on that first link,” says John Grohol, a psychologist who specializes in online behavior. “For your health information, especially when it is personal, you want to think about it.”

That depends on what it tells you.

More people are using artificial intelligence to get quick answers pulled from a variety of internet sources.



A health-related query on Google is displayed on a computer screen in New York on Thursday, April 24, 2025. (AP)

Some searches also will generate an AI summary at the top of the results page.

But an AI answer may not say where it got the information. That makes it hard to judge credibility.

AI also can be prone to “hallucinations,” an industry term for issues that cause the technology to make stuff up. Be especially wary of this if no source is cited.

How you phrase a question plays a big role in the results you see. Doctors say patients should search for information based on symptoms, not an expected diagnosis.

“You’ve got to ask at the very beginning the right questions,” said Dr. Eric Boose of the Cleveland Clinic.

That means asking, “What could cause a lump to form under my skin?” instead of “Is the lump under my skin cancer?”

Diagnosis

Focusing on a diagnosis means you may miss other explanations, especially if you just click the first few links listed in the results.

For some issues, you should skip the search altogether. If you are having chest pains, experiencing dizziness or showing signs of a stroke, seek help immediately.

“You don’t want to delay something that should be treated within a certain amount of time,” said Dr. Olivier Gherardi, medical director of Brown University Health Urgent Care.

No. Leave that to the real doctors who are trained to ask questions that lead to a diagnosis.

Blood in your urine could mean cancer. It also might be caused by kidney stones or an infection.

Unexplained weight loss also could be a sign of cancer. Or it could reflect an overactive thyroid or a new job that causes you to move around more.

Some testing and a visit with a doctor who knows your medical history may be the best medicine in these situations.

“There are a lot of symptoms that overlap between minor conditions and major medical problems,” said Dr. Sarah Sams, a board member with the American Academy of Family Physicians.

MEDICAL CLASSIFIEDS

Take care of your health

To advertise in this page please call: 69994428 or E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com

For
your
ads on
this page

Call: 69994428

E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com

DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

مركز شفاء الجزيرة الطبي
SHIFA AL JAZEERA MEDICAL CENTRE

الفحاحيل FAHAHEEL

Special package for family available for eye check up

HOTLINE: 65 95 95 34

- Comprehensive Eye screening
- Paediatric visual assessment
- Glaucoma screening
- Diabetic Retinopathy Screening
- Foreign Body removal

Mecca Street, Near Roundabout, Life Tower
Fahaheel.
Tel: +965 2391 9020
www.shifaaljazeera.com.kw

London club on brink of domestic treble

Chelsea clinches 6th straight Women’s Super League title

LONDON, May 1, (AP): Chelsea clinched its sixth straight Women’s Super League title on Wednesday to secure a second trophy of the season in its bid for another domestic treble in English soccer.

After seeing second-place Arsenal lose 5-2 to Aston Villa, Chelsea beat Manchester United 1-0 away to move into an unassailable nine-point lead with two games remaining and stay undefeated in the league.

Chelsea has already won the League Cup this season and has advanced to the FA Cup final, where the team will face United again at Wembley Stadium on May 18. The London club lost to Barcelona in the Women’s Champions League semifinals to end the quadruple hopes of Sonia Bompastor’s squad.

Chelsea also completed the Premier League-FA Cup-League Cup treble in the 2020-21 season.

Arsenal, which was coming off a 4-1 victory over Lyon to reach the Champions League final on Sunday, was the last team other than Chelsea to win the Super League - in 2019.

England right back Lucy Bronze scored Chelsea’s headed winner against United in the 74th minute and has captured the league title in her first season at the club following a move from Barcelona. She has also won it with Liverpool and Manchester City.

Chelsea spent big again this season, including making United States defender Naomi Girma women’s soccer first million-dollar player by signing her from San Diego Wave in January. The fee was a reported 900,000 pounds (\$1.1 million), surpassing the \$788,000 that Bay FC paid to sign Zambia striker Rachael Kundananji from Madrid CFF last year.

Having a strong, deep squad has paid off, with Chelsea not losing in any domestic competition this season. In the league, the team has won 17 games and drawn the other three.

“The fortunate thing for us this season is that we have always been unbeaten, so there’s always been two things to go for,” Bronze said.

“We knew before the game that Arsenal had got beat so we knew what we needed coming into this game. But we wanted to win, we wanted to keep the unbeaten run this season. Although we’ve won the league tonight, we’ve got two games left - we want to win those games and stay unbeaten this season.”



Chelsea poses for a group photo after defeating Manchester United in a soccer game to win the Women's Super League at Leigh Sports Village in Manchester, England. (AP)

Chahal performs hat trick in Punjab win over Super Kings



Punjab Kings’ Prabhsimran Singh plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Chennai Super Kings and Punjab Kings’ at M. A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai, India. (AP)

Loss ends Chennai’s hopes of playoffs

CHENNAI, India, May 1, (AP): Chennai Super Kings became the first team to fall out of contention for the Indian Premier League play-offs as Yuzvendra Chahal performed a hat trick in Punjab Kings’ four-wicket win on.

Half-centuries from captain Shreyas Iyer (72) and opening batter Prabhsimran Singh (54) anchored Punjab to 194-6 and propelled their team to No. 2 on the table with 13 points.

Leg-spinner Chahal picked up all four of his wickets in the penultimate over to finish with 4-32 as Chennai stumbled to 190 all out in 19.2 overs.

A dismal season for five-time champion Chennai saw them lose five home games and it is the third time in the last four seasons that they have missed the playoffs.

Last-place Chennai started the season with win against Mumbai Indians at home before they lost five straight games. They ended their losing streak by beating Lucknow Super Giants but again lost three consecutive games and have just four points after 10 matches.

Iyer smartly controlled Punjab’s solid run-chase in the company of Singh with both batters hitting 10 fours and seven sixes in between them.

Priyansh Arya (23) provided a



Punjab Kings’ Josh Inglis fields during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Chennai Super Kings and Punjab Kings’ at M. A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai, India. (AP)

brisk start of 44 off 28 balls before he was caught behind of a short ball from Khaleel Ahmed in the fifth over.

Chennai struck back briefly in the middle overs when Singh slog swept spinner Noor Ahmad and was caught at mid-wicket and Maheesh Pathirana dismissed Nehal Wadhwa in the 15th over.

But Iyer upped the ante by smacking 20 runs in Pathirana’s next over that featured two straight sixes. Shashank Singh smashed two sixes in his 12-ball knock of 23 before he was spectacularly caught by Dewald Brevis at deep mid-wicket.

With only three required for victory Punjab lost two more wickets before Marco Jansen raised the victory with a winning boundary. Iyer dragged Pathirana’s full pitched delivery back onto his stumps which ended a scintillating 41-ball knock and Suryansh Shedge was caught at mid-wicket against Ahmed.

Sam Curran had brought Chennai close to breaching the 200-run mark for the only second time this season, but once he got caught behind for 88 off 47 balls in the 18th over, Chennai folded quickly against Chahal.

Iyer resorted to the experience of

Chahal for the penultimate over after Punjab was penalized for slow over-rate and had to deliver the final two overs with five fielders inside the 30-yard circle.

Captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni smacked Chahal for a straight six off the first ball before he holed out at long off of the next delivery. Chahal then dismissed Deepak Hooda, Anshul Kamboj and Khaleel Ahmed off successive balls to complete his hat trick.

Chennai’s struggle at the top-order continued when they lost three wickets inside the batting powerplay that included the key wicket of Ravindra Jadeja (17) who feathered spinner Harpreet Brar behind the wickets.

But Curran and Brevis (32) put on 78 runs and raised Chennai hopes of a strong total before Brevis was bowled by Afghanistan fast bowler Azmatullah Omarzai just before the death overs.

Curran smacked Shedge for 26 runs in the 16th over that included two sixes and two fours before he got caught behind in the next over while trying to leave Jansen’s short ball and the lower order collapsed against Chahal’s brilliant over.

David vs. Gouri

Strikers duel could be a factor in race for CL spot

PARIS, May 1, (AP): One striker is finally turning the corner after five years of frustrating inconsistency in the French league.

The other is soon to leave Ligue 1 for a bigger club after five years of clockwork consistency.

Jonathan David and Amine Gouri face off Sunday with their teams - third-place Lille and second-place Marseille - chasing one of the two remaining automatic spots for next season’s Champions League.

Only two points separate the teams but neither can afford to lose, because Monaco, Lyon, Nice and Strasbourg are right behind them on the home stretch.

Paris Saint-Germain has already won the French league, which has three automatic Champions League places. The team in fourth enters qualifying.

With only two rounds remaining after this weekend, Sunday’s duel between the in-form strikers could have a big impact on which team qualifies directly.

David has netted 16 goals for Lille this season, putting him third in the scoring charts, while Gouri is brimming with confidence after a superb hat-trick last weekend. It included an overhead kick that is destined to be a goal-of-the-season contender.

David and Gouri are both 25, and both started making their mark in Ligue 1 five years ago.

Since then, Gouri has scored 54 league goals compared with 87 for David, a New York-born Canadian who joined Lille from Belgian club Gent for about 30 million euros (\$34 million).

A quick and powerful striker with an assured first touch allied to good positional sense, David began scoring immediately after joining Lille.

He helped Lille win the league title in his first season when the northern club beat Paris Saint-Germain in a huge upset.

The Canada striker has not stopped scoring since and netted seven goals in this season’s Champions League.

He has 109 goals in 229 games overall for Lille and is reportedly attracting the interest of Barcelona as an eventual replacement for veteran Robert Lewandowski.

Gouri’s career began with his local club Lyon and saw him compared with Karim Benzema - the former Real Madrid star and 2022 Ballon d’Or winner - because of his skill, vision and scoring ability. He was so highly-rated that then-coach Bruno Genesio called him into the first team squad at 16.

But two years later, he injured his knee in training and was sidelined for seven months. He barely played the following season and was sold to Nice in the summer of 2020 - the same time David joined Lille - for seven million euros (\$8 million).

There were flashes of brilliance at Nice, where Gouri showcased his ability. But he left two years later to join Rennes for 28 million euros (\$32 million).

It was a similar story there: a strong first season followed by a weaker second one.

“With such technical ability, such a good first touch, you would expect him to regularly make a difference,” former Rennes coach Julien Stéphan told sports daily L’Equipe. “Amine has always had the talent, but has not made the most of it.”

Gouri lost his starting place this season and Marseille moved late in the winter transfer window to sign him for 22 million euros (\$25 million).

The move has proved a resounding success with seven goals and several assists in 11 games.

After scoring twice and being involved in the other three in a 5-1 win over Saint-Etienne, Marseille coach Roberto De Zerbi challenged him to become one of the best forwards in Europe.

De Zerbi told Gouri to become clinical and stay closer to the penalty area. He helped him by moving him off the flank and into a more central role, albeit with license to roam.

Mayor hints at longer deal

Mexico City GP signs extension to stay on F1 calendar to 2028

MEXICO CITY, May 1, (AP): The Mexico City Grand Prix will remain on the F1 calendar through at least the 2028 season after a three-year contract extension was announced on Wednesday, and the city’s mayor said negotiations are ongoing for an even longer deal.

With the contract for the Autódromo Hermanos Rodríguez circuit set to expire at the end of this season, the organizers and local authorities needed to get a deal done.

“This (contract) does not mean that it is the end of it, we needed to secure those dates, but early next year we will have good news regarding the continuity of this wonderful event for years to come in Mexico City,” mayor Clara Brugada said at a press conference.

Mexico first hosted an F1 championship race in 1963 and has been on the calendar every year since 2015, excluding 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Formula 1 has a deep tradition in this country, it is part of the history of several generations that saw these cars run and have seen the sport evolve to become one of the most important competitions in the world,” Brugada said.

The extension comes as F1 experiments with rotating some established off-schedule slots in alternate years to meet demand for new hosts outside of Europe.

Mexico also fits in with F1’s plans to reduce travel by scheduling back-to-back races in the same regions of the world. This year, it’s part of a four-race series in the Americas, in October and November. The others are in Sao Paulo, Las Vegas, and Austin, Texas.

“It is an important day for Formula 1, Mexico is an incredible country and that is the reason for staying together for the next years,” Formula 1 president and chief executive Stefano Domenicali said.

This June, NASCAR will hold its first modern-era international points-based race at the Autodromo Hermanos Rodríguez track, and IndyCar is in talks to hold an event there.



In this file photo, Carlos Sainz, of Spain, steers his Ferrari followed by Alpine driver Pierre Gasly of France during the Formula One Mexico Grand Prix auto race at the Hermanos Rodríguez racetrack in Mexico City. (AP)

Forget Premier League for a weekend and buckle up for wild last day in Championship

MANCHESTER, England, May 1, (AP): Liverpool has been crowned Premier League champion with weeks to spare.

The fight for survival is done.

And while there is still a wide open battle to secure Champions League qualification, as far as English soccer is concerned the best show in town this weekend is in the second-tier Championship.

In the final round on Saturday, as many as 10 teams are vying for a place in the playoffs or scrapping to avoid relegation.

There’s also the not-so-small matter of which team will go up to the Premier League as champion, with Leeds and Burnley neck and neck at the top of the standings.

So buckle up and get ready for a day of drama.

Relegated from the top flight over the past two seasons, Leeds and Burnley have bounced back in style.

If both win their final game they will be promoted on 100 points each.

Leeds, relegated in 2023, leads the way on goal

difference, meaning a win at second-from-bottom Plymouth will almost certainly be enough to seal the title. For Burnley, relegated last year, to go top if both teams win, it would need to better Leeds’ result by an improbable 14 goals. Burnley is playing playoff-challenging Millwall.

Third-placed Sheffield United was also relegated last year and has an almighty fight on its hands to join Leeds and Burnley back in the top flight.

Third place means the playoffs, where four teams play in two semifinals and a final to secure the last promotion spot. Sunderland, in fourth, has also qualified for the playoffs, leaving five teams to compete for the last two spots.

Just three points separate fifth-placed Bristol City and ninth-placed Middlesbrough. Coventry, Millwall and Blackburn are also in contention.

The standout game is sixth-placed Coventry vs. Middlesbrough. A win for Middlesbrough would see it leapfrog Coventry, but it would still need other results to go its way to be sure of a playoff place.

Luton Town, a Premier League team last season, has one more game to avoid making it back-to-back relegations.

Luton is one of five teams, realistically, fighting for survival on the final day. Luton, which plays West Brom, is one of three teams that start the day one point above the relegation zone along with Derby and Preston.

Plymouth’s fate has not yet been sealed but with a goal difference of -36, relegation is all but certain in a match against top-of-the-table Leeds.

Only two points separate Stoke in 18th and Hull in the last relegation spot in 22nd. A draw for Hull at Portsmouth could be enough to see it climb out of the bottom three if other results go its way.

One game that is sure to be fraught with tension is Derby vs. Midlands rival Stoke, where defeat for either team would leave them relying on other results to stay up.

Champions League qualification is the main issue still to be determined in the Premier League.

Kuwait Club looks to continue dominant run over Salmiya

Al-Arabi and Al-Qadsiya: A derby of different goals

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: The Zain Premier League returns tonight with two key fixtures in the third round of the championship group. Kuwait Club will take on Al-Salmiya at 5:35 pm at Jaber Al-Mubarak Stadium, followed by the highly anticipated derby between traditional rivals Al-Arabi and Al-Qadsiya at 7:00 pm at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium.

The round concludes tomorrow with a decisive clash between Al-Fahaheel and Al-Tadamon, also scheduled at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium at 7:00 pm.

With the league approaching its climax, the title battle is now limited to Kuwait Club, who tops the standings with 51 points, and second-placed Al-Arabi, with 49 points. The remaining teams – Al-Qadsiya (38), Al-Salmiya (32), Al-Fahaheel (30), and Al-Tadamon (20) – are focused on improving their positions and building momentum ahead of the Amir’s Cup.

Tonight’s derby marks the fifth meeting between Al-Arabi and Al-Qadsiyathis season. Al-Arabi holds the upper hand, having won three of the previous four encounters: 2-1 and 4-2 in league play and a 1-0 victory in the Crown Prince Cup

semifinals last week. Al-Qadsiya’s lone win came in the Super Cup, a 1-0 result.

For Al-Arabi, only a win will keep its title hopes alive as it chases leader Kuwait Club. The team enters the match with high morale after securing a spot in the Crown Prince Cup final. Meanwhile, Al-Qadsiya, with third place nearly secured, faces less pressure but is determined to restore pride and fine-tune ittssquad ahead of their Amir’s Cup opener against Burgan on May 10.

Qadsiya will be without several key players, including Moaz Al-Dhafiri, Khaled Ibrahim, Abdullah Mutawa, and Ahmed Shabib. Availability of goalkeeper Khaled Al-Rashidi and forward Mohammed Soula remains uncertain.

In the earlier fixture, Kuwait Club will look to continue its dominant run over Al-Salmiya, having beaten it 4-3 and 3-1 in the league and 4-1 in the Super Cup. The league leader is riding high after a dramatic 4-2 comeback win against Kazma that secured its place in the Crown Prince Cup final against Al-Arabi on May 19.

With momentum on its side, Kuwait Club is focused on taking another step toward the title. Al-Salmiya, on the other hand, approaches the match with less pressure and is primarily using the fixture to gear up for its Amir’s Cup quarterfinal showdown with Al-Nasr on May 27.



A battle over the ball (unseen) between Bader Al-Mutawa and Ali Aziz.

Promotion race heating up

Zain First Division League enters its ‘decisive’ phase

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: The Zain First Division League is approaching its decisive phase as the fourth and final division kicks off tomorrow, Saturday, with two key matchups in Round 16. Al-Jahra will face Al-Shabab at the latter’s home ground at 5:35 pm, while Al-Sulaibikhat takes on Al-Sahel at Jaber Al-Mubarak Stadium at 8:05 pm. Burgan will sit out this round.

The battle for the two promotion

spots to the Premier League has intensified. Al-Jahra currently tops the table with 19 points, closely followed by Burgan with 18. Al-Sulaibikhat and Al-Shabab are tied for third place with 15 points each, while Al-Sahel remains at the bottom with 10 points.

In the previous round, Al-Jahra dropped two crucial points after being held to a 1-1 draw by Al-Sulaibikhat. Burgan capitalized on the opportunity, defeating Al-Sahel 2-0 to narrow the gap at the top.



A file photo of Jahra and Al-Shabab players fighting for the ball.

Lopetegui takes charge of Qatar

DOHA, Qatar, May 1, (AP): Qatar appointed former Real Madrid and Spain boss Julen Lopetegui as the national coach on Thursday.

Lopetegui, 58, has signed a contract until the 2027 Asian Cup, where Qatar will go for a third consecutive title. His first game in charge is on June 5 at home to Iran, and then in Uzbekistan five days later.

“Ready for a new chapter. Welcome, Lopetegui,” the Qatar Football Association wrote on social media. “We’re excited to embark on this journey together.”

Lopetegui replaces fellow Spaniard Luis Garcia, who took the job only last December and whose departure was also announced on Thursday.

“The QFA extends its deepest appreciation to Mr Garcia for his professionalism and dedication throughout his time with the team,” the QFA wrote on social media.

After poor results in World Cup qualifying, Qatar is fourth in Asia Group A and already out of the running to finish in the top two spots that guarantee a place at the 2026 tournament. But there is still a chance for the 2022 host to qualify for the first time through



In this file photo, West Ham’s manager Julen Lopetegui looks on before the start of the English Premier League soccer match between West Ham United and Liverpool at the London Stadium in London. (AP)

a playoff route.

Lopetegui’s last two jobs were in the Premier League with Wolverhampton Wanderers and West Ham, where he was fired in January.

T-wolves eliminate Lakers



Minnesota Timberwolves forward Julius Randle (30) drives to the basket as Los Angeles Lakers forward Jarred Vanderbilt (2) defends during the first half in Game 5 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series in Los Angeles. (AP)

Rockets rout Warriors to extend series

LOS ANGELES, May 1, (AP): Rudy Gobert had playoff career highs with 27 points and 24 rebounds, Julius Randle added 23 points and the Minnesota Timberwolves advanced in the NBA playoffs with a 103-96 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers in Game 5 of their first-round series.

Anthony Edwards had 15 points and 11 rebounds for the sixth-seeded Wolves, who won three straight games to eliminate LeBron James and Luka Doncic from their first postseason together.

After winning a playoff round in back-to-back seasons for the first time in franchise history, Minnesota next faces the winner of Houston’s series with Golden State. The Rockets avoided elimination Wednesday, and Game 6 is Friday with the Warriors leading 3-2.

Doncic had 28 points and nine assists, while James added 22 points for the Lakers, who lost in the first round for the second straight postseason despite reconfiguring their roster at midseason with their seismic trade for Doncic.

Rui Hachimura scored 23 points for the Lakers,

who have advanced from the opening round just once in five seasons since their 2020 championship in the Florida bubble.

With Gobert running amok in the paint while the Lakers deliberately played without a center, Minnesota won Game 5 despite going 7 for 47 on 3-point attempts, including 17 consecutive misses between the middle of the second quarter and Mike Conley’s dagger 3 with 1:22 to play.

Rockets 131, Warriors 116

In Houston, pushed to the brink of elimination, the Houston Rockets delivered a playoff gem Wednesday night to beat the Golden State Warriors and keep their season alive.

Fred VanVleet scored 26 points, Amen Thompson added 25 and the Rockets extended their first-round playoff series with a 131-116 rout in Game 5. “Nobody wants to go home,” Alperen Sengun said.

Game 6 is Friday in San Francisco.

Warriors coach Steve Kerr threw in the towel early in this one with the game out of hand. A lay-up by VanVleet midway through the third quarter made it 93-64, and Kerr called timeout and cleared his bench.

Houston coach Ime Udoka followed suit with about a minute to go in the third and his team up

105-76. He put all his starters back in with about eight minutes left after Golden State cut the lead to 109-92.

Dillon Brooks added 24 points on a night when all five Houston scored in double figures.

VanVleet, a nine-year veteran who won a title with Toronto in 2019, tried to encourage his young teammates by reminding them that they’ve been in every game.

A 9-5 run by the Warriors got them within 114-101 before a fracas broke out with about four minutes to go. Pat Spencer pushed Brooks and then was ejected after headbutting Alperen Sengun in the ensuing scuffle.

Houston went on a 7-2 run after that to put the game away.

“Houston was great and they took it to us right away,” Kerr said. “But like I said, it was an important finish.”

Reserve Moses Moody led the Warriors with 25 points. Golden State’s 76 bench points were the most in a playoff game for the franchise since 1970-71, when starters began being tracked.

The Rockets put together their best performance this postseason after losing both games in California, including Game 3, which Jimmy Butler sat out with an injury.

Messi held without a goal for fourth straight match

Whitecaps stun Inter Miami to reach final

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., May 1, (AP): Brian White and Pedro Vite scored two minutes apart, and the Vancouver Whitecaps stunned Inter Miami 3-1 in the second leg of their CONCACAF Champions Cup semifinal, spoiling Lionel Messi’s squad’s hopes of making the tournament’s final.

Sebastian Berhalter also scored for Vancouver,

which advanced with a 5-1 aggregate.

Miami entered Wednesday’s match trailing 0-2 in aggregate after being shut out in the first leg last Thursday. That meant they needed to win by at least three goals in regulation on Wednesday to advance.

Messi helped set up Jordi Alba’s goal nine minutes into the game, but the reigning MLS MVP

was held without a goal for the fourth straight match.

“They have a great team,” Whitecaps coach Jesper Sorensen said of Inter Miami, “and it’s not always easy for them because they have these players who come in with all the pressure on them.”

In the tournament’s history, four MLS clubs, including Inter Miami last week, have lost the first leg of a semifinal by a 2-0 on the road. No team has come back to advance to the final.

Miami’s hopes were dashed quickly in the second half Wednesday, when Vancouver, which leads MLS with 23 points, erased a one-goal deficit minutes into the frame.

Berhalter found White for the equalizer in the 51st minute, and Vite sent a deflection past Oscar Ustari in the 53rd. Berhalter, who had an assist on the first two goals, put the game away with a shot from the center of the box into the bottom left corner in the 71st minute.

“We did ourselves a very good favor last week,” Sorensen said, “because we didn’t need to rush things (tonight), and we didn’t need to go panicking because we were up 2-0 (in aggregate).”

Berhalter has accounted for all five of the Whitecaps’ goals in the semis after scoring one in the opener, but he will miss the championship because of yellow card accumulation. He was shown one in the first half after a foul on Miami’s Tadeo Allende.

Alba got Miami on the board with his first goal of the season on a feed from Luis Suarez, who received a pass from Messi. Suarez had several chances, but misfired on them all. The 38-year-old hasn’t scored in his last 10 matches.

Miami also dropped its third straight match, its longest losing streak since Messi joined the club in July 2023.



Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi, left, controls the ball as Vancouver Whitecaps forward Ali Ahmed, right, defends during the second half of a CONCACAF Champions Cup second-leg semifinal soccer match in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (AP)

ARAB TIMES

Kuwait's No.1 English Newspaper

For Subscriptions and Complaints

Please Call

51508991

51526559



Chelsea's Lucy Bronze (22) celebrates with teammates after scoring their side's first goal of the game during the English Women's Super League soccer match between Manchester United and Chelsea at Leigh Sports Village in Manchester, England. Chelsea won 1-0. (AP)
— See Page 14

Sports

Kawasaki ends Ronaldo's Asian title hopes

Al-Nassr knocked out of Asian Champions League

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia, May 1, (AP): Cristiano Ronaldo's wait for a major trophy in Saudi Arabia is set to continue as Al-Nassr lost 3-2 to Kawasaki Frontale in the Asian Champions League semifinals.

The 40-year-old Ronaldo, who signed for the Riyadh club in December 2022, had chances but failed to score.

Kawasaki will face another Saudi Arabian team, Al-Ahli, in Saturday's final, with both teams looking for a first continental title.

Kawasaki was ahead after just 10 minutes thanks to a spectacular volley from Tatsuya Ito. However, just before the half-hour mark, former Liverpool star Sadio Mane scored for Al-Nassr to make it 1-1.

Soon after, Ronaldo headed against the woodwork, but Kawasaki scored next, restoring its lead three minutes before the breakthrough of Yuto Ozeki.

Al-Nassr continued to attack but fell further behind after 76 minutes as Akihiro Ienaga scored from close range. Ayman Yahya scored for Al-Nassr with three minutes

remaining, but despite Ronaldo and Jhon Duran - signed for over \$100 million from English Premier League club Aston Villa in January - going close, the Riyadh club could not get the equalizer.

Two-time finalist Al-Ahli reached the final by beating fellow Saudi Pro League team Al-Hilal 3-1.

Earlier Roberto Firmino and Ivan Toney scored as Al-Ahli beat Al-Hilal 3-1 to reach the final of the Asian Champions League.

The all-Saudi Arabian semifinal was played before more than 50,000 fans at King Abdullah Sports City stadium in Al-Ahli's home city.

Al-Ahli will take on the winner of Wednesday's clash between Al-Nassr, also of Saudi Arabia, and Japan's Kawasaki Frontale in Sunday's final.

"Al-Ahli was the better team," Al-Hilal coach Jorge Jesus said. "This was a game between two good teams and while we had some good periods in the game, they outperformed us."

It took just nine minutes for Al-Ahli to open the scoring as Firmino, who joined the club from Liverpool in 2023, shot home from inside the area.



Al Nassr's Cristiano Ronaldo (7) walks off after his team lost to Kawasaki Frontale during a AFC Champions League Elite semifinal soccer match at Alinma Stadium in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. (AP)

Kuwait's junior team cruises past Bahrain



The players celebrate their friendly win over Bahrain.

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: Kuwait's junior soccer team delivered a commanding performance with a 4-0 victory over Bahrain in a friendly match at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Sta-

dium. The game was part of Kuwait's ongoing preparations for upcoming competitions.

Mohammed Al-Atteqi was the star of the match, netting a hat-trick, while Ali Al-Maraghi

added a fourth goal to seal the win.

This convincing result followed a 1-1 draw between the two sides in their first friendly encounter last Monday.

Kuwait claims runner-up spot at Arab Shooting Champ'ship

CAIRO, May 1: The Arab Shooting Championship concluded with Egypt dominating the overall medal tally, followed by Kuwait in second place and Qatar in third. The event featured competitions in pistol and air rifle shooting, skeet, and trap shooting for both men and women.

Egypt led the standings with a total of 30 medals - 11 gold, 13 silver, and 6 bronze. Kuwait secured second place with 12 medals, including 7 gold and 5 bronze, while Qatar claimed third with 10 medals (3 gold, 4 silver, and 3 bronze). Bahrain ranked fourth with 10 medals, earning 1 gold, 3 silver, and 6 bronze.

The Kuwaiti shooting team delivered standout performances, particularly in skeet and trap events. It clinched gold in both the men's team skeet and men's individual skeet competitions. The team also excelled in trap shooting, securing gold and bronze in the men's individual event, gold in the men's team trap, gold in the women's individual trap, and bronze in the women's team trap.

Kuwait concluded its medal haul with a victory in the mixed team trap event, where Talal Al-Tarqi and Shahad Al-Hawal earned the gold medal.



Crowning of Kuwaiti shooters.

Kuwait Club draws first blood in best-of-five final against Kazma

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seayssah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 1: Kuwait Club's first basketball team seized control of the 2024-2025 league final by defeating Kazma 80-61 in Game 1 of the best-of-five series, at the Basketball Association Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex. With three wins needed to secure the championship, the "Whites" now hold a crucial 1-0 advantage.

After a tightly contested first half, Kuwait Club pulled away in the fourth quarter - outscoring Kazma by double digits - to claim a comfortable victory. The next showdown is set for Sunday; a second win would leave Kuwait Club one victory shy of the title, while a Kazma triumph would send the series into a high-stakes Game 3.

Meanwhile, the bronze-medal series tips off today at 5:00 pm in Al-Itihad Hall, pitting Al-Qurain against Al-Qadisiya. This best-of-three playoff gives the winner of the first match a 2-0 edge in the race for third place; Al-Qadisiya claimed that



Kuwait Club player shoots over Kazma player during the opening game.

opening game last Tuesday with a 90-76 victory over Al-Qurain.

With the final and third-place series under way, Kuwaiti basketball fans are in for a thrilling conclusion to the season. The "Whites" look to build on their decisive opening win, while Kazma fights to keep its title hopes alive - and Al-Qurain aims to avenge its early setback against the "Yellows."

'Tuesday will be a final'

Barcelona and Inter share six-goal spectacle in Champs League semis

BARCELONA, Spain, May 1, (AP): Lamine Yamal's curler that went in off the post after the teenager's great dribble? Marcus Thuram's nifty back-heeled flick? Raphinha's missile that hit the bar and the goalkeeper before finding the net?

And don't forget Denzel Dumfries' bicycle kick, before he scored again with a powerful header.

You have your pick of great goals from Barcelona and Inter Milan's thrilling 3-3 draw to start their Champions League semifinal, setting up a must-see sequel next week in Milan.

Opta Stats said it was the joint-highest score for a draw in a Champions League semifinal since Bayern Munich and Dynamo Kyiv finished with the same score in April 1999.

What was supposed to be a contrast of styles between the top-scoring Barcelona and the stingiest defense in the competition turned into a shootout.

"We saw a fantastic match, and we knew that the semifinals are difficult. We could even have won," Inter coach Simone Inzaghi said. "Our fans know that we've been giving our utmost in difficult times, and we know that Tuesday will be a 'final.'"

Inter matched Barcelona's firepower with two goals from corner kicks, and the hosts needed another stellar performance from 17-year-old Yamal in his 100th appearance



Inter Milan's Denzel Dumfries, center, scores during the Champions League semifinal first leg soccer match between Barcelona and Inter Milan in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

for his club.

Except for Inter's start and strength in set pieces, Barcelona imposed its game and had 66% possession and created 10 shots on goal to Inter's three, according to UEFA's stats, but had to settle for a draw.

Thuram was a doubt for the starting 11 after missing Inter's previous

three matches - all losses without a goal. But the striker used the back of his heel to turn in a cross by Dumfries to stun the hosts just seconds after kickoff.

Dumfries then put Inter into what appeared to be a comfortable lead when he scored his first of two goals with a bicycle kick after a corner kick was headed

onto him in the 21st minute.

Yamal sparked Barcelona into action in the 24th when he dribbled past two defenders and sliced a shot in off the far post. He went close to an equalizer moments later after gliding down the endline and firing a shot with just a sliver of an angle off the crossbar.