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Amir honors PAAET's top graduates



His Highness the Amir attends the graduation ceremony and honoring of outstanding students of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET). Amiri Diwan photo



His Highness the Amir during the ceremony honoring outstanding students of PAAET. Amiri Diwan photo

Kuwait's youth celebrated for academic triumph

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: A ceremony in honor of the outstanding graduates of colleges and institutes at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) for the 2023/2024 academic year was held Wednesday at the theater of the new PAAET headquarters in Shuwaikh, under the patronage and in the presence of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Upon the arrival of His Highness the Amir's motorcade at the venue, he was warmly welcomed by Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal, PAAET Director General Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam and the deputy directors. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, President of the Supreme Judicial Council and Court of Cassation Dr. Adel Bouresli, Acting Prime

Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, senior State officials, and a large crowd of the graduates' families and the public attended the event.

Al-Jalal delivered a speech, in which he underscored that the esteemed patronage of the ceremony honoring the top graduates of PAAET by His Highness the Amir is a source of pride and honor for all graduates; and it reflects the paramount importance the political leadership puts on education and human empowerment.

He stated "Your Highness, as we commence this auspicious ceremony, I am privileged to express my utmost appreciation and gratitude for your distinguished patronage and honor bestowed upon the ceremony recognizing an exceptional cohort of our top graduates. This honor serves as a significant source of inspiration for them as they embark on their respective professional endeavors."

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HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

**Lion to donkey:
Humans don't
acknowledge others'
favor or sacrifice**

They fear power and glorify those who frighten or intimidate them.

The donkey to the lion: You sink your fangs into living flesh, and people praise you.

Why do I help humans, yet they call those they despise "donkeys"?

I remain loyal without complaint, yet they call me stupid.

Weakness is shameful, even when paired with loyalty, while power is glorified.

The doctor tested his students with a wolf howling puzzle, but only one student solved it.

If wolves decide to stop howling, it does not mean they will not howl.

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Gender mimicry faces legal heat

Kuwait anti-violence group proposes tougher penalties on elderly, disability assaults

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: President of the Kuwait Society Against Violence Attorney Ali Al-Ali disclosed that he submitted two legislative proposals to Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait during their meeting with Vice President of the society Dr. Saleh Al-Naham on Wednesday.

In a statement to the newspaper, Al-Ali revealed that they discussed the spread of certain negative phenomena -- imitating the opposite sex and assaulting people with disabilities and the elderly -- at the meeting.

He explained that the first proposal is to amend the legislation prohibiting the imitation of the

opposite sex; while the second is to impose harsher penalties on those who assault people with disabilities and the elderly, in preparation for the issuance of appropriate legislation and the revision of relevant regulations.

He expressed his gratitude to the minister for understanding the society's legitimate concerns about the negative phenomena that must be addressed through the coordinated efforts of the concerned government agencies and civil society institutions.

On the other hand, Al-Naham confirmed in a similar statement to the newspaper that the phenomenon of imitating the opposite sex is a violation of the Islamic Law. He said many countries around the world have started taking strict measures against homosexuality.

He added that court rulings have been issued in some foreign countries prohibiting gender reassignment. He explained that gender identity disorder among young people is often due to the impact of globalization, uncontrolled openness, absence of a family role and bad company.

Justice Minister thanks UNHRC

Kuwait presents human rights gains at UN panel

GENEVA, May 7, (KUNA): A delegation from Kuwait, led by Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait, presented the country's fourth national report before the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on Wednesday.

This was a part of Kuwait's participation in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) during the Council's 49th session in Geneva.

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Sumait explained that the report was prepared by representatives from relevant national ministries and agencies, in coordination with Kuwait's permanent mission to the UN in Geneva.

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Kuwait delegation headed by Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait, during the presentation of the fourth national report before the United Nations Human Rights Council. KUNA photo

Relations hit new highs

Kuwait and EU close in on free trade deal, says Marafi

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Sadiq Marafi has confirmed that the free trade agreement between Kuwait and the European Union (EU) will be concluded soon, describing it as "our greatest achievement" in bilateral relations with the EU.

Marafi made the announcement at the reception organized by the

European Union Embassy on the occasion of Europe Day, marking the 75th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration that paved the way for the establishment of the European Union as a project of peace and prosperity for the European continent after the bitter suffering of the two world wars. He attended the event as the guest of honor, during which he expressed his happiness over the opportunity to contribute to this occasion.

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Kuwait urges calm as India, Pakistan clash

KUWAIT CITY, May 7, (Agencies): The State of Kuwait followed with deep concern the recent escalation between India and Pakistan, said a statement by the Foreign Ministry on Wednesday.

The ministry called on both countries to exercise restraint, seek diplomatic channels, and peaceful means to end the situation, reaching a sustainable and comprehensive resolution to the situation, which reinforced peace, security, and stability in the region.

India fired missiles at Pakistan early Wednesday, in what it said was retaliation for last month's massacre of Indian tourists. Pakistan called the strikes an act of war and claimed it downed several Indian fighter jets.

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Photo by Mohammad Morsi

Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Sadiq Marafi attends a reception organized by the European Union Embassy on the occasion of Europe Day, marking the 75th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration.

Cabinet okays housing law tweaks for growth

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Council of Ministers approved a decree-law to amend certain provisions of Law No. 118/2023, concerning the establishment of companies to create and develop cities or residential areas for economic purposes.

Article 1 of decree-law states that the texts of Articles 2, 4, 5, 10, 11 - paragraphs one and two, and 29 - Clause 1 of Law No. 118/2023 will be replaced with the following:

Article 2: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) is obligated, under the provisions of this law, to establish companies with varying forms and capital based on the nature of the project and in accordance with the economic feasibility studies to establish integrated residential cities or one or more residential areas on lands allocated to PAHW.

Article 4: Based on the economic feasibility study, PAHW may contribute to the cost of constructing and completing the infrastructure, public buildings, and residential care units.

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**In sacred stillness,
cardinals gather to
elect new Pope**

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**KFH supports the
development initiative of
Al Wataniya Area**



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**NBK chosen as Kuwait's
main settlement bank
by KCC**

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:34	Asr	15:20
Sunrise ..	05:02	Maghrib ..	18:28
Zohr	11:45	Isha	19:53

Local

Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Hot with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 10-40 km/h.			
By Night: Rather hot to mild			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait Airport	36	25	
Abdaly	36	19	
Jahra	37	23	
Salmiyah	33	26	
Ahmadi	32	28	
Jal Aliyah	35	21	
Nuwaibis	35	23	
Wafra	37	23	
Salmiyah	34	28	



Finance Undersecretaries from the GCC who took part in the meeting.

KUNA photo

Unified customs tariff, taxes on tobacco, derivatives top agenda

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance Aseel Al-Munifi presided over the 73rd meeting of the Committee of Finance Undersecretaries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states on Wednesday.

During the meeting, Al-Munifi expressed her hope that constructive recommendations will be presented at the 123rd meeting of the GCC Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee in order to advance the joint Gulf action in line with the aspirations of the GCC leaders and to better serve the citizens of the GCC states. She pointed out this will guarantee the citizens' well-being, in addition to strengthening coordination and ensuring interconnection among the GCC states.

She disclosed that the most important topics lined up for discussion in the meeting include the results of the meetings of the GCC Customs Union Authority, results of the 14th meeting of the Committee of Heads and Directors of Tax Administrations in the GCC states, amendment of the specified minimum levy on tobacco and its derivatives, the unified customs tariff, and the mechanism for implementing the Gulf national product standards.

On the other hand, Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs at the Secretariat General of the GCC Khaled bin Ali Al-Sunaidi said he is hoping that the meeting will lead to positive decisions, which will contribute to the advancement of the diligence of the joint Gulf action in a bid to better serve the citizens and push for the joint economic movement.

Youth cornerstone of peace, security strategy

Participants upbeat as 'Young Ambassador' program concludes

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations and Resident Coordinator to the State of Kuwait Ghada Al-Taher affirmed that the participants in the 'Young Ambassador' Program had a comprehensive transformational experience, as they acquired the tools of true diplomacy through their engagement in activities that opened horizons to complex concepts, such as multilateral peace, climate change and cybersecurity

as well as issues concerning women, peace and security.

Al-Taher made the statement at the closing ceremony of the third season of the 'Young Ambassador' program, which was jointly organized by the embassies of the United Kingdom and Canada, along with the United Nations Office in Kuwait. A total of 39 high school students participated in the seven-month long program.

Present at the event were Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Organizations and Minister Plenipotentiary Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah, representatives of the Public Authority for Youth and Kuwait Diplomatic Institute and a large number of individuals from the diplomatic community and international organizations operating in Kuwait.

Al-Taher affirmed that the United



Ghada Al-Taher

Nations puts the youths at the heart of its strategies to achieve peace and security. She stressed the importance of investing in the young generation, considering them "a generation that carries vision, values and an influential voice."



Aliya Mawani

She pointed out that the program would not have been successful without the cooperation and partnership of all concerned parties. She thanked the embassies, schools and families for their support.

Meanwhile, Canadian Ambassador to Kuwait Aliya Mawani



Belinda Lewis

praised the participants, indicating they proved that their level of commitment and curiosity is truly intellectual. "I am proud of this distinguished group of young ambassadors. Many of them told

me that this experience is a turning point in their lives. I am excited to see their future impact on their communities," she asserted.

British Ambassador to Kuwait Belinda Lewis said the British Embassy is keen on supporting and organizing this program, expressing her admiration for the energy and fresh ideas presented by the participants.

She added "these young people have inspired us with their curiosity and ambition. We look forward to their promising future."

The closing ceremony featured short documentaries produced by the participants, depicting their visions for building a more just and peaceful world and signifying their deep understanding of international issues and their commitment to be effective in bringing about change.

Other Voices

'Strength lies in diverse origins'

By Ahmad alsarraf

AMERICAN commentator Fareed Zakaria stated on his TV show "My Take" that President Trump's tariff policies have garnered significant attention due to the huge losses they have caused. He further stated that Trump's policies on immigration, education, and research funding are likely to have an even more negative impact in the long run.

America has become so technologically advanced that some might believe it has always been at the forefront since its inception. In reality, the United States lagged behind others in scientific achievements, with Germany and Britain leading in Nobel Prizes in science. However, three key factors changed the situation in the mid-20th century.

The first factor was Hitler's rise to power in Germany and his racist policies, which forced generations of the best scientific minds, most of them Jews, to flee to America. These individuals went on to form the backbone of America's scientific establishment. Also, the U.S. continued to attract top foreign scientists and exceptional students from countries like China and India, many of whom chose to stay in the country after their studies.

The second factor was the devastation caused by World War II. Germany, Britain, France, and Russia emerged from the war exhausted, with shattered economies and millions of human casualties. In contrast, the United States suffered minimal damage, which positioned it to dominate the world economically, militarily, and technologically.

The third factor was the U.S. government's decision to allocate the largest budget and subsidy for scientific research, reaching 2.4 percent of its gross national income in 1953. This opened the door for both public and private American universities to compete for these subsidies. This generous strategy, coupled with the absolute freedom granted to educational institutions, led to the creation of the modern American scientific model, which arguably is the most successful in history.

However, these factors have recently been abandoned, and the American administration has begun threatening educational institutions with subsidy



alsarraf

cuts if they violate its policies regarding the structure of scientific research, which is unprecedented in the United States. Even government research centers have not been immune to government interference.

Over the past 10 years, China has taken the lead and managed to secure the largest share of patent registrations, surpassing the United States. Among the world's top 500 universities, China now has 76, up from 27 in 2010. In contrast, the United States' share of the world's top 500 universities has decreased from 154 to 133.

One important area where China has yet to surpass America is the latter's ability to attract foreign talent and expertise. Between 2000 and 2014, immigrants to the U.S. made up one-third of Nobel Prize winners. Their percentage rose to 40 percent among computer software developers and 62 percent in disease prevention. However, this trend has been largely reversed in recent years, coinciding with the arrest and deportation of large numbers of foreign students, as well as FBI investigations into Chinese researchers. As a result, many have chosen to migrate to Canada, Australia, and Europe.

The prestigious scientific journal "Nature" conducted a survey among its participants, the majority of whom are scientists, asking whether they plan to migrate. The results revealed that 75 percent of the 1,600 participants answered affirmatively.

It is important to note that these scientists represent America's true strength, built over more than 100 years, and which has only started to be dismantled in the past 100 days.

Throughout its history, Kuwait has distinguished itself, compared to its Gulf Arab neighbors, as a country of immigrants. The contributions of these immigrants to Kuwaiti society and its wider environment over several decades have far surpassed those made by others in the maritime, commercial, cultural, and artistic fields. This is a natural result of the blending of the diverse components of a multi-ethnic and multicultural society.

For this reason, the naturalization of exceptionally qualified individuals should not be stopped, especially since most Gulf Arab states are striving to achieve this goal by offering various incentives. We, too, are in desperate need of injecting new blood and fresh ideas into the nation's veins. We must not forget that our strength lies in our diverse backgrounds and our shared loyalty to the homeland and devotion to our political leadership.

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'Good character must'

Minister sanctions bonus for 'excellent' employees

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi issued Ministerial Resolution No. 85/2025 on the disbursement of the excellent job performance bonus to eligible employees for the year 2024, in accordance with the regulations that ensure fairness and transparency, reports Al-Anba daily.



Dr. Al-Awadhi

The resolution authorizes the undersecretary to disburse the bonus to eligible employees, provided the conditions and criteria are met. The employee's actual service must be not less than one calendar year beginning Jan 1, 2024; and that no grave disciplinary sanctions were imposed on him within that year.

The resolution also stipulates that employees must adhere to attendance regulations and discipline during official working hours, must not be absent without a valid excuse or must not take leave days beyond the specified period, except for hospitalization or other officially approved cases. It states that the employee's actual working days must not be less than 70 percent of the total number of days in the year.

It stated that the bonus is calculated based on approved Civil Service Commission (CSC) data. The lists should be submitted by employers, accompanied by an official letter, to the Administrative Affairs Sector, which will be reviewed before final approval by the minister.

In order to guarantee fairness, the resolution mandates the exclusion of those seconded to an entity outside the ministry, those who were absent from work or those on extended leave.

It requires employees to update their data electronically on the human resources system of the ministry, and that no lists or data not extracted from the system will be accepted.

Al-Awadhi affirmed this resolution is in line with the commitment of the ministry to acknowledge competencies, motivate outstanding staff, and implement the reward principle based on discipline and professionalism.

Grievances 24/7: official

5,148 appeal withdrawal of nationality as of Wednesday

KUWAIT CITY, May 7, (KUNA): The Head of the Government's Grievances Committee for the Kuwaiti citizenship, Counselor Ali Al-Dhubaibi said that the committee received 5,148 appeals as of today, Wednesday.

In remarks to KUNA, the counselor affirmed that based on the committee's keenness to facilitate the procedures for those who want to appeal, the committee decided to receive grievances (24/7).

He also noted that appealing is currently available to anyone whose Kuwaiti citizenship has been withdrawn or revoked, in accordance with what was recently announced.

The government established on March 11, 2025 the Grievances Committee for the Kuwaiti citizenship, which was tasked to look into motions that contested the decisions of withdrawing the citizenships.

FMD spread in most farms cuts milk production by around 75%

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Director General of the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) Eng. Salem Al-Hai revealed that the number of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) cases among cows in 31 out of the 44 cow farms in Sulaibiya — from April 6 to May 5 — reached around 8,000, hence, the remarkable decline in fresh milk production from 250,000 liters per day to less than 100,000 liters or about 75 percent decline, reports Al-Rai daily.

Al-Hai told the daily that 952 cows have recovered from the disease, while 71 died, explaining that FMD is an organic disease which is also considered an economic disease as it affects the meat and dairy industries of a country. He stressed the need to strengthen the immune system of cows, as well as the biosecurity of farms and agricultural plots, to ensure adequate protection against the disease.

He affirmed that vaccines for the disease will arrive within two weeks, according to the supplier, which will contribute to curbing the spread of FMD and gradually restore milk production levels in the country.

He emphasized the need to adhere

to the rule on limiting animal movement, whether through sale or donation, until the epidemiological situation in Sulaibiya stabilizes.

He called on workers in cattle farms to strictly comply with sanitation and sterilization procedures; such as sterilizing milking equipment, milking tools and milking sites, in addition to training workers and raising their awareness on preventive measures.

Meanwhile, Chairman of the Union of Fresh Dairy Companies Abdulhakim Al-Ahmad said cow farms are experiencing a major crisis due to the delayed arrival of FMD vaccines. He pointed out that losses are huge and farm owners have started selling their cows for as low as KD150; compared to the import price of KD1,500 per cow from Europe and KD1,000 for those imported from Australia.

He stated that the spread of mastitis among cows has exacerbated their health condition and reduced milk production; indicating that in light of these developments, the union, PAAAFR and other concerned authorities must quickly support the affected farms and consider the import of vaccines an urgent matter.



KUNA photo

Fujairah Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammad Al-Sharqi receives Kuwait's Consul General in Dubai and the Northern Emirates, Khaled Al-Zuabi.

Fujairah, Kuwait to enhance ties

Fujairah Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammad Al-Sharqi has held talks with the State of Kuwait's Consul General in Dubai and the Northern Emirates, Khaled Al-Zuabi, on means of boosting the bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries at various levels.

The Crown Prince Diwan said in a statement on Wednesday that Sheikh

Mohammad, during his reception of the Consul General, wished him success in performing his tasks and discussed issues of common interest.

It quoted Al-Zuabi as lauding the significant development in Fujairah and the other Emirates in various sectors, thanked the Crown Prince for the warm hospitality and his keenness on elevating the bilateral relations. (KUNA)

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



Lion to donkey: Humans don't acknowledge others' favor or sacrifice

PEOPLE fear the powerful. Some take pride in being described as a lion, tiger, or wolf, even though these fierce predators do not differentiate between animal and human prey.

On the other hand, some describe a dull and foolish person as a donkey, even though donkeys are known for their intelligence and patience. This description is clearly inaccurate.

The following story sheds light on this idea, and conveys a message about the difference between slogans and action.

One day, a donkey sat by the riverbank, gazing at the reflection of his sad and weary face in the water.

As a lion passed by, the donkey lifted his head and said, “O king of the jungle, whose roar makes the beasts tremble, I kindly ask you a question that has long puzzled me and drained my mind. Why should I help humans, carry their burdens, accompany them on their journeys, and work with them in the fields?

Although I endure hard labor, bear harsh beatings, and remain loyal without complaint, humans still call any foolish or despised person a donkey.

Your Majesty, king of beasts, you attack, prey, and sink your fangs into living flesh. Everyone flees from you, and hearts tremble at the sound of your roar. Yet, when people wish to praise someone, they say, “He is as brave and strong as a lion.” Why, then, am I humiliated while you are praised?”

- They fear power and glorify those who frighten or intimidate them.
- The donkey to the lion: You sink your fangs into living flesh, and people praise you.
- Why do I help humans, yet they call those they despise “donkeys”?
- I remain loyal without complaint, yet they call me stupid.
- Weakness is shameful, even when paired with loyalty, while power is glorified.
- The doctor tested his students with a wolf howling puzzle, but only one student solved it.
- If wolves decide to stop howling, it does not mean they will not howl.

The lion remained silent for a moment, then said, “My friend, this is because humans don’t acknowledge gratitude, nor do they appreciate patience or sacrifice. They fear strength, glorify those who intimidate them, praise those who impose their authority on them, and despise anyone who extends a helping hand.

In the world of humans, weakness is shameful, even if it represents loyalty, while strength is glorified, even if it is unjust. That is how humans are. They don’t care about your heart, as they only care about your ability to dominate.

You carry their burdens while they fill their bags with curses to hurl at

you.”

The donkey fell silent for a few minutes, and then said, “Now I understand. I thought goodness was rewarded, but it seems everything is upside down in the world of humans.”

The lion nodded gently and continued on his way.

Howling wolves and slogans:

The second story carries lessons about those who chant slogans but take no action.

A lecturer once asked his students: “If there are five wolves, and four of them decide to stop howling, how many wolves remain howling?”

The students all answered, “One.”

However, one student disagreed and said, “There are still five wolves howling.”

The professor asked, “How so?”

The student replied, “You said the wolves decided, not stopped. Making a decision does not necessarily mean following through with it. The answer is five.”

The student’s response was absolutely correct.

This story reflects the lives of some people who endlessly repeat slogans and catchy phrases, which make them stars in their social circles. But in reality, they are not. Many talk, but few act. Deciding to do something and then doing something else does not make you a star.

■ A Kuwaiti who defaults on his loan payments finds himself trapped by arrest warrants, banned from traveling, his car confiscated, and wanted by the police.

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■ Where else can such a situation occur, even in some of the most underdeveloped countries?

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■ In most countries, debt is treated as a civil matter. In developed nations, the police and judiciary are not authorized to collect money from debtors on behalf of creditors. Prisons are not suitable for debtors who have gone bankrupt and cannot repay their debts.

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■ It is the creditor’s responsibility to protect their money. They must take precautions to ensure they can recover their money, such as requiring collateral for the loan. The idea that a debtor is wealthy enough to repay simply because they can travel is absurd. Could it not be possible that the debtor is traveling at someone else’s expense?

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■ Dear government, allow the debtor to travel; perhaps God will help them find a way to repay their debt.

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■ Don’t worry, as long as God is your Lord. Don’t be sad, for your whole situation is in His hands. Don’t despair, for all hope lies in Him. Trust in God and call upon Him with sincerity ... God is the protector of the patient.

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■ Some usurers have exploited a bounced check to imprison the debtor. When asked what the creditor gains, they respond, “He will stay in prison until his friends raise money to pay off his debt, or the Zakat House might cover it on his behalf.”

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■ We say to the creditor, “The debtor doesn’t have the money, and you are the one who lent it to him.”

The creditor responds, “He’ll stay in prison. That is his problem, and it is up to him to fix it.”

Debtors, including women, are thrown into the darkness of prisons without any fear of God.

The government and its agencies, including the Judicial Execution Department, have become debt collection agents. I fear that God’s wrath may descend upon us.

I repeat and emphasize that the responsibility lies with the creditor who was negligent in granting loans without proper security.

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■ The imprisonment penalty for “bounced checks” does not exist in any country in the world, except in some underdeveloped nations. Travel bans should only be applied to individuals convicted in criminal cases.

Police nab illegals, drug-runners; 1,885 citations issued, cars seized

Traffic violation traps wanted Kuwaiti man

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Rescue patrols continued their security campaigns in all governorates resulting in the referral of 26 people to the anti-narcotics police for the possession and consumption of narcotic substances, while 207 Residency Law violators and wanted persons were arrested over the past week.

The weekly statistics of the rescue police patrols showed that 26 individuals were referred to anti-narcotics police and 207 people were arrested, including those wanted by law for committing various crimes, those with expired residency permits, those who were reported absconding, and those convicted of various charges.

The statistics for the period from April 27 to May 3 indicated the seizure of 20 vehicles, dealing with eight fights, and the issuance of 1,885 traffic tickets.

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Wanted man caught: A traffic violation revealed the whereabouts of a citizen wanted by the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) at the Interior Ministry. According to a security source, Hawally traffic officers were patrolling the area when they noticed a vehicle whose driver violated the Traffic Law.

Upon inquiring about his information, it became clear that he is wanted by law for involvement in drug-related cases. He was referred to the concerned authorities for the necessary action.



KUNA photo
Vice Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Air Vice Marshal Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah presents a shield to Colonel Engineer Youssef Al-Shatti for achieving a Guinness World Record.

Army Deputy Chief honors Guinness topper officer

Vice Chief of Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Air Vice Marshal Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah honored, on Wednesday, Colonel Engineer Youssef Al-Shatti for achieving a Guinness World Record for completing the fastest marathon in full military gear, held in

Portugal.

In a statement, the Chief of General Staff commended Colonel Al-Shatti's remarkable accomplishment, with Major General Sabah Jaber extending congratulations and praised the officer. (KUNA)

Customs officer facilitates entry of drugs thru airport

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Bassam Al-Ghuwainem, sentenced a customs inspector, a cooperative society member, their accomplice, a wanted fugitive in London, and two other individuals of ages 15 and 17, to life imprisonment in a drug smuggling case, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The group had smuggled 60 kilograms of drugs, worth KD 750,000, from London.

Investigations by detectives and surveillance by securitymen revealed that the customs inspector at Kuwait International Airport had accepted a bribe of KD 30,000 to smuggle bags through the airport without inspection. The inspector handed over the bags to the defendants, who were subsequently arrested . Upon searching the bags, authorities found marijuana, hashish, and other toxic substances.

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Deadline extended: The Administration and Human Resources Department at the Kuwaiti Army Chief of Staff has announced the extension of the deadline for Kuwaiti women holding grade 11 and lower certificates to enroll in the Army until May 10, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

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Rising dust in high winds decreased visibility to a few meters in many areas.

KUNA photo

High winds cause infrastructure damage

KFF dealt with 15 emergencies in recent sandstorm

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Director of the Public Relations Department at Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Gharib disclosed that fire stations responded to 15 emergency reports during the severe sandstorm that hit the country recently, reports Al-Anba daily.

These reports included accidents, fire incidents and rescue operations; specifically a warehouse fire, a wood storage fire, a residential fire, a container fire, an elevator malfunction and a boat malfunction.

Al-Gharib confirmed that all fire stations in the six governorates were on red alert and were instructed to respond promptly to any call received through the Operations Unit of the Interior Ministry.

He added that from the time the sandstorm started; KFF urged the public to exercise caution

and to immediately contact emergency services when needed.

In a related development, the ministry issued an awareness notice advising drivers to take safety precautions during the sandstorm.

The guidelines included using hazard lights only when necessary to warn others, avoiding mobile phone use, keeping windows closed with the air recirculation system on, maintaining a safe distance, reducing speed in low visibility areas, avoiding driving near sand dunes, and switching to secondary roads if visibility dropped to zero.

The sandstorm also caused structural damage in some areas, such as the collapse of a limestone brick wall that damaged an awning and a parked vehicle; while a video of a mobile taxi damaged by falling bricks went viral on social media.

‘Train Kuwaitis, replace expats’

Market-specific workforce eyed

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The government and the Ministry of Finance are currently coordinating their efforts to modernize the educational process in the country in order to meet the demands of the labor market.

Reliable sources told the newspaper that the two parties have agreed on the need to invest well in establishing centers and academies for the Kuwaiti youths to undergo specialized training and qualify them to work in most fields required by the labor market. Sources affirmed these steps greatly contribute to changing the demographic structure.

Sources elaborated that such cooperation

aims to expand the implementation of major development projects, which strongly support the private sector and attract Kuwaiti migrant capital to invest in the local economic environment; thus, contributing to the Kuwaiti economy.

They affirmed that the current and future projects will contribute significantly to solving the problem of employing Kuwaiti graduates; in addition to their role in diversifying sources of income, so that the Kuwaiti economy does not remain subject to a single-income indefinitely, especially since oil prices are affected by global political and financial developments.

They said the ministry, through its cooperation with the government, has included several projects in the 2025/2026 budget to activate the private sector and increase its efficiency. “At the same time, it is working hard to intensify new projects to a greater extent in the 2026/2027 budget, as it believes that the present and upcoming projects will benefit from future budget deficits; especially since the directives of the country’s senior leader-

ship consistently emphasize advancing all mechanisms of the national economy while eliminating all difficulties and obstacles to the progress of the private sector.

Sources added the unprecedented and advanced approach of the ministry is encouraging the private sector to participate in the sports renaissance by supporting nationals in all sports fields; while participating in the construction of more sports facilities, for Kuwait to regain its leading sporting reputation in Asia.

Sources affirmed that the Mubarak Port project, most of which is expected to be completed in 2028, will boost the private sector; not to mention its role in restoring the leading economic position of Kuwait, when it was known as the ‘Pearl of the Gulf’ in the final decades of the last century.

They asserted that the Kuwait of the future will be called the ‘Jewel of the Gulf’, considering the country is experiencing an unprecedented economic renaissance in the new era of reform.



Top and above: The National Identification Card Committee issues ID cards to Egyptian citizens.

ID cards issuance underway

Bid to build Egyptian Consulate in Mishref takes shape: official

By Bassam Al-Qassas
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Head of the Egyptian Consulate in Kuwait Ambassador Sherif Badir confirmed the start of the initial stages of constructing a new permanent headquarters for the Egyptian Consulate in Mishref.

In a statement to the newspaper, Badir pointed out this step aims to provide the best services to Egyptian citizens and all consulate visitors.

He said the consulate is currently operating under the supervision of the National Identification Card Committee, with an extended shift schedule of up to 12 hours a day. He disclosed the committee consists of a number of officers and technicians from the Civil Status Department at the Egyptian Ministry of Interior.

He affirmed that the committee, in most cases, continues to work until all national identification card issuance or renewal applications are processed; indicating the work of the committee will end at 5:00 pm on Thursday.

He stressed that the committee continued working during the weekend and on Labor Day (May 1), out of its commitment to serve the citizens.

Regarding the mechanism for issuing na-

tional identifications cards, Badir explained that citizens who previously booked and registered with the consulate are entitled to obtain the card immediately for a fee of KD 32. “Those who have not previously registered will pay KD 18, and their application is sent to Cairo for completion of the procedures and the issuance of the card, which will then be sent to the consulate,” he added.

He stressed that the consulate offers various services to those requesting the card; citing the opening of a reception hall in the building and assignment of committee members to hospitals to complete the card issuance procedures for critically ill patients who are unable to physically visit the consulate.

On passports, he explained that issuing a passport from Cairo through the consulate currently takes approximately two weeks, and passports are issued with a validity of seven years for those who hold a valid national identification card. “Those who do not hold a valid card or have never obtained one are issued a passport valid for three years the first time, one year and three months the second time, and only one year thereafter,” he added.

He confirmed the consulate’s commitment to provide the best services to Egyptians in Kuwait and easing procedures form them to ensure their comfort and dignity.





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Co-ops must prioritize display of Kuwaiti products: Al-Walan

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Chairman of the Pricing, Import and Group Purchasing Committee at the Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies Bader Al-Walan has announced that all cooperatives will be required to prioritize the display of Kuwaiti products in central markets, cooperative branches and authorized sales outlets; without charging for shelf space or promotional fees, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In a press statement, Al-Walan affirmed that this decision reflects the national commitment of the union to support the local economy and promote self-sufficiency. He highlighted the high quality and competitiveness of Kuwaiti products, indicating they continue to be a preferred choice for consumers.

He explained that the committee views

support for local products as a core responsibility, disclosing that the committee will issue binding recommendations to ensure this policy is implemented in all cooperatives. He said this move aims to foster a culture of purchasing national goods.

He added that the committee is keen on expanding the presence of local products as part of a comprehensive strategy to strengthen food security, stabilize markets, and provide the best possible options for Kuwaiti consumers.

In other news, former chairman of the union Ghareeb Al-Adhan congratulated Talal Al-Kashti on his election as Vice Chairman of the Arab Cooperatives Union for the 2025-2029 term.

He pointed out that Al-Kashti’s election is a testament to the leading role of Kuwait in promoting Arab cooperative efforts and establishing economic and social integration among member states. He expressed his best wishes for Al-Kashti’s continued success in this key leadership position, which underscores the distinguished status of the country in the regional cooperative movement.



Al-Walan

Envoys push forward ties

Kuwait, Azerbaijan discuss bilateral cooperation boost

ANKARA, May 7, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Ambassador to Azerbaijan Mohammad Al-Mutairi met with Azerbaijan Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs Yalchin Rafiyev, discuss with him ties and ways to bolster cooperation.

A statement by the Kuwaiti embassy in Baku, obtained by KUNA, said that the meeting also touched on the recent visit by Azerbaijan Foreign Minister to Kuwait Jeyhun Bayramov last week where he attended the high joint committee meeting between the two countries.

Bayramov also met with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, added the statement.

The Azerbaijani official said that he was looking forward to the upcoming meeting of the committee in 2027 in Baku.



KUNA photo
Kuwaiti Ambassador to Azerbaijan Mohammad Al-Mutairi with Azerbaijan Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs Yalchin Rafiyev.

Kuwait’s cultural clout grows with influential media award

KUWAIT CITY, May 7, (KUNA): A Kuwait-sponsored award recognizing exceptional talent in the Arab media industry aims to shine the spotlight on such skill, an official said on Tuesday, hailing the all-inclusive nature of the prize.

Some 145 diverse works, encompassing fields running the gamut from television and radio to journalism and digital production, are vying for the Kuwaiti-sponsored award, its chief organizer and director of Kuwait’s Al-Arabi TV station Talal Al-Haifi told KUNA, citing the vast array of exceptional work the panel of judges has looked into.

Such works are a testament to the technical progress the region’s media industry has seen as of late, added the official, underlining the “meticulous and confidential” nature of the judging process, ultimately leading to the announcement of the

final results in due course.

The official went on to thank local media outlets for their comprehensive coverage of the award, saying the process to judge the quality of the works being evaluated is both transparent and time-consuming, while the judges are given the authority to have the final say, he added.

Kuwait continues to play an increasingly significant towards the development of Arab media as a whole, he said, as evidenced by its designation as the “Capital of Arab Culture and Media” for the year 2025, which he explained was fitting given how the country has emerged as a “shining light” in terms of media production.

Since its inception in 2015, the award has sought to acknowledge standout media works in the Arab region, particularly when it comes to their ability to deal with some of the most pressing matters concerning the Arab world.

Qaruh Island gets environmental upgrade

Kuwait Dive Team safeguards coral with new buoys

KUWAIT CITY, May 7, (KUNA): The Kuwait Dive Team, operating under the Environmental Voluntary Foundation (EVF) completed, Tuesday, maintenance work on marine mooring buoys around Qaruh Island, as part of its project to safeguard coral reefs across Kuwait.

The head of the team, Waleed Al-Fadhel told KUNA that the team began the operations at coral reefs sites, successfully completing repairs in the southern islands, and coastal areas.

He noted that Qaruh Island has now 22 mooring buoys placed around its perimeter, bringing the total number of the buoys installed by the team up to 107, built to high durability standards for various boats and yacht sizes.

Al-Fadhel pointed out that many seafarers actively use these buoys, which have been carefully distributed to meet environmental and aesthetic needs while minimizing damage to coral reefs.

The buoys also help identify reef locations, particularly during low tide, against coral destruction caused by human activities.

He further said that coral reefs in Kuwait serve as vital homes for marine life, providing environmental and economic benefits, adding that in many coastal nations, cities rely on reef-related-resources.

Al-Fadhel emphasized the team’s commitment to the project, with divers and a dedicated maintenance workshop working daily alongside specialized boats to complete the tasks to the highest standards.

He described Qaruh as one of Kuwait’s most beautiful is-



Kuwait Dive Team photo
Kuwait Dive Team placed 22 mooring buoys on Qaruh Island.

lands, as it is the smallest and the furthest of the southern islands, known for its clear waters, rich coral diversity and

regular visits from sea turtles for nesting.

He urged fishermen to avoid using nets too close to coral

reefs, warning that such practices harm marine ecosystems, pose navigational hazards, and violate environmental laws.

Continued from Page 1

Amir honors

He elaborated that the modernization of academic and training programs at PAAET, in accordance with its vision of aligning educational outputs with the demands of sustainable development and the domestic labor market, is indicative of an ambitious national vision aimed at empowering and preparing youths to become integral partners in realizing the aspirations of the nation for a more prosperous and sustainable future.

He said the purpose of establishing the authority transcends the theoretical framework. “Rather, there is a commitment to ensure its realization. Efforts have been directed towards integrating modernization plans in the strategic framework of the authority; while emphasizing the enhancement of efficiency and quality, and diligently working to establish an educational and training model that contributes to the advancement of the nation. This will boost the community’s confidence in the educational and training outputs and realize the aspiration of the nation for a brighter future,” he asserted.

The minister conveyed his deep gratitude and appreciation to His Highness the Amir for his unwavering support for the educational process and his persistent encouragement of the students. “This serves as an impetus for all stakeholders to persist in working with dedication and integrity to fulfill his noble directives,” he added.

On the other hand, Al-Fajjam affirmed that the patronage and presence of His Highness the Amir at the ceremony is a source of immense pride and an enduring memory for the students. “It underscores the judicious leadership’s unwavering commitment to foster education and support educational institutions,” he stressed.

He stated that the support and patronage extended to the authority reflect His Highness’ dedication to instill excellence and distinction in Kuwaiti youths. “It also serves as an incentive to push for the development of academic and training programs; thereby, contributing to the preparation of national competencies to cover the needs of the labor market and achieve sustainable development,” he explained.

He said around 10,000 students graduate from PAAET annually. “These students are academically and professionally qualified. The vision of the authority is to serve four principal objectives: empower human resources, achieve institutional excellence, promote research and innovation, and spread the culture of volunteer work and environmental sustainability.

He added around 59,000 students are currently enrolled at PAAET; which keeps on updating its curricula, and developing its workshops and laboratories. He stated that the academic accreditation and global quality achieved by the authority are the culmination of the collective efforts of its personnel.

Addressing the parents, he asserted that “behind every outstanding

student are a supportive heart and a family that has stayed up late and sacrificed. Congratulations on this achievement.”

He also addressed the graduates, saying, “you are the hope and the future, so be role models in your performance and adhere to your ethics and principles. Kuwait deserves your utmost dedication, effort and spirit.”

In an exceptional moment that manifested pride and gratitude, Sarah Ali Ramadan delivered a speech on behalf of her fellow graduates. She expressed her deep gratitude to His Highness the Amir for his patronage and honoring of the ceremony, emphasizing that meeting His Highness was a source of inspiration for all graduates.

She described the youth as “the flame of life and an inexhaustible source of energy,” indicating that “the fruit of excellence is not harvested by chance, but rather it is planted with patience and watered with determination,” and that every success is followed by moments of challenge and hours of tireless work.

She added “we love Kuwait because it is not just a homeland, but a story of struggle and pride written with the sweat of our ancestors and watered by the sacrifices of the loyal, and because it is the warm embrace that unites its children in love and devotion.” She then thanked the teachers, describing them as “the makers of hope and the builders of generations.”

His Highness the Amir was presented a commemorative gift on this occasion.

Cabinet okays

Any changes to the financial values borne by PAHW, whether increases or decreases, after the tender is awarded, will be considered null and void.

Article 5: PAHW may tender residential or non-residential cities and areas, and determine investment patterns based on the results of economic feasibility studies, ensuring there are no obstacles preventing private sector’s participation in project implementation.

Article 10: The regulations specify the company’s obligations.

Article 11 (paragraphs 1 and 2): City or residential area construction companies, in coordination with PAHW, shall offer residential unit products in each residential area they develop, and provide diverse housing options for those eligible for housing care in accordance with the priority outlined in Law No. 47/1993.

Available options include residential plots, prefabricated houses, prefabricated residential apartments, and various residential resorts, such as attached villas, mixed-use residential complexes, gated compounds, and duplexes.

The company’s board of directors will determine how to distribute these units within the residential area once the final concept is approved by the PAHW, based on the feasibility study and the nature of the project. Projects will be implemented according to the technical specifications agreed upon with the PAHW,

using the specified models in the contract and varying in size.

Article 29 (Clause 1): The amount of bank and insurance guarantees imposed on the company shall be commensurate with the cost of the projects assigned to it, in order to protect the rights of beneficiaries and shareholders.

The second article of the decree-law stipulates that the phrase “establishing cities or residential areas” shall be replaced with “establishing residential cities,” as specified in Article 1 of Law No. 118/2023.

The text of clause 2 of Article 24 of Law No. 118/2023 shall be replaced with the following: “If PAHW, before handing over the residential unit sold to the beneficiary as per the plan, proves that it is unfit for habitation and has substantial structural defects.”

The third article stipulates that two new articles, numbered 31-bis and 32-bis, are added to the provisions of Law No. 118/2023.

- Article 31-bis: PAHW shall establish controls, standards, and technical specifications for buildings, suburbs, areas, and neighborhoods for all project components, whether residential, investment, industrial, service, commercial, or similar.

- Article 32-bis: PAHW may apply the provisions of this law to all cities, residential or non-residential areas, or parts of cities implemented by PAHW, or to certain lands designated by the Board of Directors.

The fourth article states that articles 3, 6, and 19 of Law No. 118/2023 are hereby repealed.

The fifth article stipulates that the ministers, each within their jurisdiction, shall implement this decree-law from the date of its publication in the official gazette.

Kuwait presents

He noted that Kuwait has joined seven core international human rights conventions, in addition to several agreements related to international humanitarian law, underscoring Kuwait’s active role in development and humanitarian relief.

The Kuwaiti delegation engaged in an open and transparent dialogue with the international community on various human rights issues, highlighting key measures taken to fulfill both contractual and voluntary commitments.

The delegation also listened to comments, questions, and recommendations from UN member states and participating delegations, which were addressed objectively, with clarifications provided by relevant officials.

Kuwait expressed gratitude to participating countries, the working group and Human Rights Council staff for their efforts.

Special thanks were extended to the National Committee, represented by Ambassador Sheikha Jawaher Al-Sabah, for coordinating national efforts and report preparation, and to Ambassador Nasser Al-Hain and the permanent mission for their continued representation of Kuwait’s human rights record.

The UPR is a non-treaty mecha-

nism established by the UN to promote human rights through a periodic review held every five years, evaluating the progress made by member states.

Kuwait and

He also revealed that Kuwait will host the 29th Ministerial Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Union in October, in addition to a joint economic event that will be held before the end of the year. He confirmed that “the date for the ministerial conference has been agreed on and will be announced soon.”

He added European Special Representative for GCC countries Luigi Di Maio will visit the country soon; while Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will visit the European Union next month, where he will hold political consultations with his European counterparts.

He said “the Kuwaiti-European relations in political, security, cultural and humanitarian fields are excellent. The Gulf-European relations have witnessed remarkable development over the past year, such that the first Gulf-European summit was held in the Belgian capital, Brussels.”

He pointed out that, at the bilateral level, regular meetings will be held between officials from both sides throughout the year, in addition to convening joint committees.

Meanwhile, European Union Ambassador to the State of Kuwait Anne Koistinen affirmed that relations between the European Union and Kuwait continue to develop at all levels. She praised the pivotal role that Kuwait plays in strengthening the strategic partnership between the EU and the GCC.

around the world, citing the recent visit of the director general of the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid to Kuwait to strengthen this cooperation.

On the economic front, she affirmed that the European Union is open to fortifying trade cooperation with Kuwait -- whether through a free trade agreement at the GCC level or through direct bilateral relations.

She said 2026 will mark the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the European Union and Kuwait, praising the cultural and historical ties that unite the two parties, especially with Kuwait being named the Arab Capital of Culture for 2025.

She highlighted the facilities provided to Kuwaiti citizens regarding the Schengen visa, allowing them to obtain multiple-entry visas valid for up to five years; stressing that the next goal is to achieve visa-free travel.

She then thanked the Kuwaiti leadership, headed by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad and Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya.

She commended the official support for strengthening Kuwait’s relations with the European Union. She also thanked the sponsors of the event -- IKEA and the law firms Dar Al-Mahamah and Hussein Al-Harithi and Partners -- for their contributions. She invited the attendees to visit the pavilions of the sponsors, indicating that the celebration is part of the Europe Month activities in Kuwait.

Kuwait urges

The missiles killed more than two dozen people, including women and children, in Pakistan-administered Kashmir and the country’s Punjab province, Pakistan’s military said. The strikes targeted at least nine sites “where terrorist attacks against India have been planned,” India’s Defense Ministry said.

Pakistan said it reserved the right to respond, raising the specter that the back-and-forth could spiral into all-out conflict. Already, it’s the worst confrontation between the rivals since 2019, when they came close to war.

Following the strikes, there was a heavy exchange of fire that officials in each country said left more people dead. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif commended the armed forces for shooting down five Indian jets, which he said were hit after they fired their missiles but while still in Indian airspace.

There was no immediate comment from India, but three planes fell onto villages in India-controlled territory, according to police and residents.

Tensions have soared between the nuclear-armed neighbors since an April attack in which gunmen killed 26 people, mostly Indian tourists, in India-controlled Kashmir. Some survivors told Indian media that gun-

men in some cases singled out Hindu men and shot them at close range.

India accuses Pakistan of being behind the attack, which was claimed by a militant group calling itself Kashmir Resistance. India has said the group is linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba, a disbanded Pakistani militant group that New Delhi long accused of being backed by Pakistan.

Islamabad denies involvement.

India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars over the Himalayan region of Kashmir, which is split between them and claimed by both in its entirety.

In the wake of the massacre, the rivals have expelled each other’s diplomats and nationals, closed their borders and shuttered airspace. India has also suspended a critical water-sharing treaty with Pakistan.

Pakistan’s prime minister condemned the airstrikes and said his country would retaliate.

“Pakistan has every right to give a robust response to this act of war imposed by India, and a strong response is indeed being given,” Sharif said.

It was not clear if Pakistan’s claim that it shot down fighter jets constituted its retaliation or if more might be coming.

The country’s National Security Committee said Pakistan reserves the right to respond “in self-defense, at a time, place, and manner of its choosing.”

The statement said the strikes were carried out “on the false pretext of the presence of imaginary terrorist camps” and said they killed civilians.

South Asia analyst Michael Kugelman said the strikes were some of the highest-intensity ones from India on its rival in years and that Pakistan’s response would “surely pack a punch as well.”

“These are two strong militaries that, even with nuclear weapons as a deterrent, are not afraid to deploy sizeable levels of conventional military force against each other,” Kugelman said. “The escalation risks are real. And they could well increase, and quickly.”

In 2019, the two countries came close to a war after a Kashmiri insurgent rammed an explosive-laden car into a bus carrying Indian soldiers, killing 40. India responded with airstrikes.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for maximum restraint because the world could not “afford a military confrontation” between India and Pakistan, according to a statement from spokesperson Stephane Dujarric.

China also called for calm. Beijing is the largest investor in Pakistan by far and has multiple border disputes with India, including one in the northeastern part of the Kashmir region.

Several Indian states held civil defense drills Wednesday to train civilians and security personnel to respond in case of attack. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi postponed his upcoming trip to Norway, Croatia and the Netherlands.

The missile strikes hit six locations and killed at least 26 people, including women and children, said Pakistan’s military spokesperson, Lt. Gen. Ahmed Sharif.

In sacred stillness, cardinals gather to elect new Pope

Ballots cast twice daily as papal vote hinges on two-thirds rule



By Fr. Suleiman Heifawi
Catholic Church – State of Kuwait

Today, the Catholic Church prepares for a momentous event as the eyes of believers around the world turn to the Vatican with anticipation and reverence, awaiting the emergence of a new shepherd to lead the Church in a time filled with challenges.

This moment is among the holiest and most significant in the life of the Catholic Church, as the cardinals gather in an atmosphere of silence and prayer to elect the next leader of the universal Church.

In this article, we will explore who a cardinal is, what their role entails, and how the Pope is elected.

Who is a Cardinal?

A cardinal is one of the senior clergy in the Catholic Church, considered a direct assistant and advisor to His Holiness the Pope in global church affairs. Cardinals are appointed by the Pope, and they are often archbishops of major regions or officials in the Vatican.

They typically wear red, symbolizing their readiness to lay down their lives for the Church.

The Conclave (Secret Assembly):

Following the death of Pope Francis on April 21, 2025, the date for the “conclave” was set at the Vati-

can to elect a new successor.

This assembly includes all cardinals under the age of 80.

How the Election Takes Place:

The cardinals gather in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican under strict secrecy, with all communication with the outside world cut off.

The conclave begins with the cardinals taking an oath of secrecy and obedience.

There are four voting rounds daily (morning and evening). A candidate must receive a two-thirds majority to be elected Pope.

Ballots are burned after each round. If no one is elected, black smoke rises from the chimney.

When a new pope is elected, white smoke is released, signaling to the world that a new Pontiff has been chosen.

The chosen cardinal is then asked whether he accepts the role. If he agrees, he is asked what name he chooses for his papacy.

Top Papal Candidates

- **Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle (Philippines, age 67):**
Known as the “Asian Francis,” Tagle is a leading candidate representing the growing Catholic Church in Asia. He serves as Pro-Prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization and is known for his moderate stance on issues like homosexuality and divorce, while remaining faithful to Catholic traditions.
- **Cardinal Pietro Parolin (Italy, 70):**
Vatican Secretary of State since 2013, Parolin is a strong contender due to his diplomatic experience. However, recent criticism regarding his handling of sexual abuse cases may affect his chances.
- **Cardinal Péter Erdo (Hungary, 72):**
Archbishop of Budapest and the leading conservative candidate. Known for his traditional views, especially on migration and family values, he enjoys support from Eastern European political leaders.

- **Cardinal Matteo Zuppi (Italy, 69):**
Archbishop of Bologna and President of the Italian Bishops’ Conference. A champion of dialogue and the marginalized, Zuppi is a prominent advocate of continuing Pope Francis’s reformist and open approach.
- **Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo (Democratic Republic of Congo, 65):**
Archbishop of Kinshasa and head of the African Bishops’ Conference. Renowned for his strong stance on social justice issues, he is a powerful voice from the African continent.
- **Cardinal Jean-Marc Aveline (France, 66):**
Archbishop of Marseille, known for his closeness to Pope Francis and his advocacy for hope and peace amid global unrest.
- **Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa (Italy, 60):**
Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, a prominent voice on peace in the Middle East and a potential symbol of the Church’s commitment to interfaith dialogue.

The election of a new Pope is not just a leadership transition – it is a living testimony of the Catholic Church’s belief that the Holy Spirit continues to work within it, guiding it through history.

In a world torn by wars, divisions, and moral and cultural challenges, the faithful look with hope toward the one who will be chosen to become the successor of Peter and the Servant of the Servants of God.

The conclave – with its silence, prayer, and discernment – is more than just an election; it is a sacred time of invoking the light of the Holy Spirit and listening for God’s voice amid the noise of the world. Despite the diversity of candidates and visions, the Church hopes for a shepherd who bears the heart of Christ: compassionate, humble, bold in truth, and faithful in teaching.

In these days, the whole Church – East and West – is called to accom-

pany the conclave with prayer and supplication, that God may grant His Church a Pope who renews faith, strengthens unity, and leads the people of God into a future where the light of the Gospel shines anew. It is a time of grace, a time of responsibility, and a time that proclaims that the Church, despite all human weakness, remains the living Body of Christ in this world.

From red robes, a cry of unity to heal a divided world

VATICAN CITY, May 7, (AP): With all the pomp, drama and solemnity that the Catholic Church can muster, 133 cardinals on Wednesday began centuries-old rituals to elect a successor to Pope Francis, celebrating a morning Mass before opening the most geographically diverse conclave in the faith’s 2,000-year history.

The dean of the College of Cardinals, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, presided over the service, urging the voters to set aside all personal interests and find a pope who prizes unity. The world today needs a leader who can awaken consciences, he said.

From the altar of St. Peter’s Basilica, Re prayed that the cardinals can agree “on the pope that our time needs,” as he offered a final set of marching orders before they enter the Sistine Chapel later Wednesday to begin the secret voting.

Hailing from 70 countries, the cardinals are being sequestered from the outside world, their cellphones surrendered and airwaves around the Vatican jammed to prevent all communications until they find a new leader for the 1.4 billion-member church.

Francis named 108 of the 133 “princes of the church,” choosing many pastors in his image from far-flung countries like Mongolia, Sweden and Tonga that had never had a cardinal before.

His decision to surpass the usual limit of 120 cardinal electors and include younger ones from the “global south” - often marginalized countries with lower economic clout - has injected an unusual degree of uncertainty in a process that is always full of mystery and suspense, with smoke signals telling the world if a pope has been elected or not.

Many cardinals hadn’t met one another until last week and lamented they needed more time to get to know each another, raising questions about how long it might take for one man to secure the two-thirds majority, or 89 ballots, necessary to become the 267th pope.

“Wait and see, a little patience, wait and see,” said Cardinal Mario Zenari, the Vatican’s ambassador to Syria.



Cardinals attend a final Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica, before the conclave to elect a new pope, at the Vatican, Wednesday, May 7, 2025. (AP)

The cardinals began the day by participating in the Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica, attended by Vatican officials and the public as pilgrims outside braved brief rain showers to watch the proceedings on giant TV screens. The 91-year-old dean of the college, Re, prayed for cardinals to find the wisdom, counsel and understand-

ing to elect a worthy new shepherd.

Wearing bright red vestments, the cardinals processed down the central aisle of the basilica as the Sistine Chapel’s boys’ choir sang. They took up their seats around the main altar, which lies above the traditional burial place of St. Peter, considered to be the first pope.

Re had presided at Francis’ funeral, delivering a heartfelt sermon on the reforming 12-year papacy overseen by Francis, history’s first Latin American pope.

At 4:30 p.m. (1430 GMT; 10:30 a.m. EDT) the cardinals will walk solemnly into the Sistine Chapel, chanting the meditative “Litany of the Saints” and the Latin hymn “Veni Creator,” imploring the saints and the Holy Spirit to help them pick a pope.

Once there, they pledge to maintain secrecy about what is about to transpire and to not allow any interference from outsiders to influence their voting.

Standing before Michelangelo’s vision of heaven and hell in “The Last Judgment,” each cardinal places his hand on the Gospel and swears to carry out that duty.

The awesomeness of the chapel’s frescoes, and Michelangelo’s in particular, is meant to remind the cardinals of the weighty responsibility they bear. In his regulations for the conclave, St. John Paul II wrote that in the Sistine Chapel, “everything is conducive to an awareness of the presence of God.”

After the cardinals take their oaths, a senior cardinal delivers a meditation. The master of papal liturgical ceremonies, Archbishop Diego Ravelli, calls out “Extra omnes,” Latin for “all out.” Anyone not eligible to vote then leaves and the chapel doors close, allowing the work to begin.

The cardinals don’t have to take a first vote on Wednesday, but they are expected to. Assuming no winner is found, the Vatican said black smoke could be expected out of the Sistine Chapel chimney at around 7 p.m.

The cardinals retire for the night and return Thursday morning. They can hold up to two ballots in the morning and two in the afternoon until a winner is found.

Trump plans to announce that US will call Persian Gulf the Arabian Gulf, officials say

WASHINGTON, May 7, (AP): US President Donald Trump plans to announce while on his trip to Saudi Arabia next week that the United States will now refer to the Persian Gulf as the Arabian Gulf or the Gulf of Arabia, according to two US officials. Arab nations have pushed for a change to the geographic name of the body of water off the southern coast of Iran, while Iran has maintained its historic ties to the gulf.

The two US officials spoke with The Associated Press on Tuesday on condition of anonymity to discuss the matter. The White House and National Security Council did not immediately respond to messages seeking comment.

The Persian Gulf has been widely known by that name since the 16th century, although usage of "Gulf of Arabia" and "Arabian Gulf" is dominant in many countries in the Middle East. The government of Iran - formerly Persia - threatened to sue Google in 2012 over the company's decision not to label the body of water at all on its maps.

On Google Maps in the US, the body of water appears as Persian Gulf (Arabian Gulf). Apple Maps only says the Persian Gulf.

The US military for years has unilaterally referred to the Persian Gulf as the Arabian Gulf in statements and images it releases.



US President Donald Trump speaks before Steve Witkoff is sworn as special envoy during a ceremony in the Oval Office of the White House on May 6 in Washington. (AP)

The name of the body of water has become an emotive issue for Iranians who embrace their country's long history as the Persian Empire. A spat developed in 2017 during Trump's first term when he used the name Arabian Gulf for the waterway. Iran's president at the time, Hassan Rouhani, suggested Trump needed to "study geography."

"Everyone knew Trump's friendship was for sale to the highest bidder. We now know that his geography is, too," Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif

wrote online at the time.

On Wednesday, Iran's current foreign minister also weighed in, saying that names of Mideast waterways do "not imply ownership by any particular nation, but rather reflects a shared respect for the collective heritage of humanity."

"Politically motivated attempts to alter the historically established name of the Persian Gulf are indicative of hostile intent toward Iran and its people, and are firmly condemned," Abbas Araghchi wrote on the social platform X.

N.Korea continues to supply arms, troops to Russia

Kim urges increased artillery shell production

SEOUL, South Korea, May 7, (AP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has called for his munitions industry to boost the production of artillery shells, state media said Wednesday, as the country continues to supply arms and troops to support Russia's war on Ukraine.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said that Kim, during recent visits to unspecified munitions and machinery factories, praised modernization efforts that the agency claimed enabled the facilities to double their annual shell production capacity.

Kim urged workers to further accelerate artillery shell production, calling it crucial to "strengthening the fighting efficiency" of his armed forces, and also called for the development of more advanced machinery to boost munitions output. KCNA did not mention any comments from Kim regarding his support for Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

Recent South Korean intelligence assessments suggest that North Korea has sent about 15,000 soldiers to Russia, and that nearly 5,000 of them have been killed or injured while fighting against Ukrainian forces. Washington and Seoul have also accused North Korea of supplying Russia with various types of military equipment, including artillery systems and shells and ballistic missiles.

After denying its war involvement for months, North Korea last month confirmed for the first time that it had sent combat troops to help Russia in recapturing parts of the Kursk region,



In this undated photo provided on May 7, by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, right, visits a machinery factory in North Korea. (AP)

which had fallen to a surprise Ukrainian incursion last year. Moscow also acknowledged the North Korean involvement, with Putin issuing a statement thanking the North for sending troops to support his forces and promising not to forget their sacrifices.

Also:

SEOUL: South Korean officials on Wednesday downplayed a Czech court's decision to put on hold an \$18 billion project for **South Korea** to build two nuclear reactors in the country, describing it as a temporary setback and expressing confidence that the deal will eventually proceed.

A South Korean consortium led by the state-run Korea Hydro and Nuclear

Power had expected to finalize the deal this week with a subsidiary of CEZ, the **Czech Republic's** largest electricity supplier. However, a Czech court blocked CEZ from signing the contract while it reviews a complaint from French company EDF, which lost the bid to the South Koreans.

South Korean Industry Minister **Ahn Dukgeun** told reporters in Prague that the court's decision would only delay the signing of the official contract, and that all other procedures would proceed on schedule, assuming that the deal goes through. He said that the Czech government clearly didn't anticipate the court's decision to pause the agreement, and that CEZ plans to appeal.

We will make sure it's as seamless as possible: Noem

Most travelers must have REAL ID now to fly in US, or face extra screening

SAN FRANCISCO, May 7, (AP): REAL ID requirements for those flying within the United States begin Wednesday after nearly 20 years of delays. The day ahead of the deadline, people lined up at government offices across the country to secure their compliant IDs. In Chicago, officials established a Real ID Supercenter for walk-in appointments, while officials in California and elsewhere planned to continue offering extended hours for the crush of appointments.

"I'm here today so I won't be right on the deadline, which is tomorrow," said Marion Henderson, who applied for her REAL ID on Tuesday in Jackson, Mississippi.

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem on Tuesday assured people who don't yet have a REAL ID but need to take a domestic flight Wednesday that they will be able to fly after clearing additional identity checks.

Some complained about the need to secure the ID after waiting in line for hours.

Michael Aceto waited in line at a DMV in King of Prussia, in the Philadelphia suburbs, for about two and a half hours Tuesday before getting his REAL ID.

"It's a pain in the b..t. It's really a lot of time. Everybody's got to take off from work to be here," he said. "It's a big waste of time as far as I'm concerned."

The Transportation Security Administration warned people who don't have identification that complies with REAL ID requirements to arrive early at the airport and be prepared for advanced screening to avoid causing delays.

The new requirements have been the subject of many Reddit threads and Facebook group discussions in recent weeks, with numerous people expressing confusion about whether they can travel without a REAL ID, sharing details about wait times and seeking advice on how to meet the requirements.

Noem told a congressional panel that 81% of travelers already have REAL IDs. She said security checkpoints will also be accepting passports and tribal identification, like they have already been doing.

Those who still lack an identification that complies with the REAL ID law "may be diverted to a different line, have an extra step," Noem said.

"But people will be allowed to fly," she said. "We will make sure it's as seamless as possible."

REAL ID is a federally compliant state-issued license or identification card that Homeland Security says is a more secure form of identification. It was a



People wait inside a branch of the Louisiana Office of Motor Vehicles in Kenner, La on May 6. (AP)

recommendation by the 9/11 Commission and signed into law in 2005. It was supposed to be rolled out in 2008 but the implementation had been repeatedly delayed. "The whole idea here is to better validate those individuals that were encountering a checkpoint to ensure they are who exactly they say they are," said Thomas Carter, TSA's Federal Security Director in New Jersey.

Carter said those without a REAL ID should give themselves extra time to clear security.

"If they do that, I do not have a belief that this will cause people to miss their flights if they take that additional time in," he said.

Besides serving as a valid form of identification to fly domestically, people will also need a REAL ID to access certain federal buildings and facilities.

State government offices that issue driver's licenses and state IDs have seen a significant increase in demand for REAL ID and some have extended their office hours to meet the demand. Some officials have recommended people

wait for a while to get REAL ID compliant licenses and cards if they don't have flight planned in the next few months.

"We are encouraging people who have passports or other REAL ID-compliant documents and people who don't have travel plans in the next few months to wait until after the current rush to apply for a REAL ID," said Erin Johnson, a spokesperson with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

Johnson said that the department has seen a significant increase in demand for REAL ID in recent weeks. In February, there were more than 48,000 applications for a REAL ID; that has nearly doubled to over 99,000 in April, she said.

Renel Leggett, a college student from West Chester, Pennsylvania, spent hours getting her REAL ID and was not happy about it.

"I've been out here for three hours to get one ID when I've already had one that should have lasted me until about 2029," Leggett said.

"You have to do it. But it feels like a waste of time," she said.

REAL ID is a federally compliant state-issued license or identification card that Homeland Security says is a more secure form of identification. It was a recommendation by the 9/11 Commission and signed into law in 2005.

The commission recommended the government set security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and IDs. It was supposed to be rolled out in 2008. But the implementation has been repeatedly delayed.

Besides needing a REAL ID to fly domestically, people will also need one to access certain federal buildings and facilities.

In recent weeks, Noem has been warning the American public about the upcoming deadline. In a television ad put out by Homeland Security, she warned that these IDs were needed for air travel and for entering public buildings, adding: "These IDs keep our country safe."

A REAL ID-compliant driver's license has a symbol (in most states, a star) in the top corner of the card.

In California, about 58% of all driver's license and ID cardholders have a REAL ID. The state has extended the hours of some Department of Motor Vehicles offices through June 27 to help more people get the federally required identification. Officials are also reminding residents that if they already have a valid US passport, they can use that and wait to upgrade to a REAL ID when their ID or driver's license is due for renewal.

Lucas Krump was traveling Tuesday to San Francisco on business from Newark, New Jersey, and said he was using a passport to get through security.



Fireworks explode over the Kremlin during a Victory Day celebration to mark the end of World War II in Moscow on May 9, 2018. (AP)

Ukrainian drones keep targeting Moscow as foreign leaders arrive for Red Square parade

MOSCOW, May 7, (AP): Attacks by Ukrainian long-range drones caused flight disruption at Moscow's main airports for a third straight day on Wednesday, authorities said, as Russia prepared to receive the Chinese president and other foreign leaders for the annual Victory Day military parade in Red Square.

Russian flag carrier Aeroflot canceled more than 100 flights to and from Moscow. More than 140 flights were delayed as Russian planes were repeatedly grounded, flight data showed, because of what officials described as the Ukrainian drone threat and amid heightened security measures around the Victory Day events. Russian air defenses repelled an attack by nine drones close to the Russian capital, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said.

Though Ukrainian drones have targeted Moscow in the past, the sustained attacks appeared designed to disrupt preparations for the 80th anniversary celebrations marking victory over Nazi Germany in World War II - Russia's biggest secular holiday of the year.

The repeated assaults could unnerve Russians, who have been told by President Vladimir Putin that the more than three-year war with Ukraine is going well, as well as potentially embarrass him in front of his illustrious guests.

Security is expected to be tight at Friday's centerpiece parade. Foreign dignitaries, including Chinese President Xi Jinping and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, were due to arrive on Wednesday.

Russia plans a unilateral 72-hour ceasefire to coincide with the celebrations in Moscow. In March, the United States proposed a 30-day truce in the war, which Ukraine accepted, but the Kremlin has held out for ceasefire terms

more to its liking.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said last weekend that his country cannot provide security assurances to foreign officials planning to visit the Moscow events. Russia could stage provocations and later attempt to blame Ukraine, he said.

"Our position is very simple: we cannot take responsibility for what happens on the territory of the Russian Federation," he said. "They are the ones providing your security, and we will not be offering any guarantees."

Zelenskyy said that he had instructed Ukraine's Foreign Ministry to advise foreign delegations against visiting Russia during this period.

Baltic countries Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which border Russia and its Kaliningrad exclave, plan to close their airspace to the planes carrying Serbia's and Slovakia's leaders to Moscow later this week for the celebrations out of safety concerns, officials there said.

"Who could deny that in such a quite active cyber background ... that somebody will not use this as a possible provocation to create problems and risks for the flight of these people through the Republic of Lithuania," Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda said Wednesday.

Flight restrictions across Russia because of Ukrainian drone threats, including temporary closures at airports in Moscow, St Petersburg, Sochi and elsewhere, affected at least 350 flights and at least 60,000 passengers, the Russian Tour Operators Association said.

Russian public holidays in early May, including the days around Victory Day, is a popular time for many Russians to go on vacation and travel abroad.

Biden calls Trump's pressure on Ukraine 'modern-day appeasement' in interview

LONDON, May 7, (AP): Joe Biden said in his first post-presidential interview that President Donald Trump's pressure on Ukraine to give up territory to Russia amounts to "modern-day appeasement," a historically fraught term that refers to a failed effort to stop the Nazis from annexing land in Europe in the 1930s.

Biden told BBC Radio 4's "Today" program in remarks aired Wednesday that Trump's statements about acquiring Panama, Greenland and Canada have bred distrust of the United States in Europe.

"What president ever talks like that?" Biden said. "That's not who we are. We're about freedom, democracy, opportunity - not about confiscation."

He also said it was a "difficult decision" to leave the U.S. presidential race in 2024 four months from Election Day to allow former Vice President Kamala Harris to challenge Trump. But, he added, making that move earlier as some critics had suggested "would(n't) have mattered."

The term appeasement refers to former British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's efforts in the 1930s to



US President Joe Biden, left, joined by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy, speaks during an event on the Ukraine Compact on the sidelines of the NATO Summit in Washington on July 11, 2024. (AP)

appease Adolf Hitler's moves to annex land in Europe, which failed to prevent World War II.

Trump has long dismissed the war in Ukraine as a waste of lives and American taxpayer money. Early in his presidency, Trump ordered a pause

in American aid to Ukraine - then resumed it. The two countries last week signed an agreement granting American access to Ukraine's vast mineral resources - a return on investment, Trump suggested, that could pave the way for more U.S. aid.

Syria interim leader makes 1st trip to Europe with Paris visit

PARIS, May 7, (AP): Syria's interim President **Ahmad Al-Sharaa** is visiting Paris on Wednesday for talks with President Emmanuel Macron. It's his first trip to Europe since taking office in January, and a possible opening to broader ties with Western countries.

Al-Sharaa took power after his Islamist group, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), led a dayslong offensive that toppled former President Bashar Assad in December. Assad, a member of Syria's Alawite minority, ruled for more than two decades.

The presidential Elysee Palace said Macron will restate France's support for "a free, stable, sovereign Syria that respects all components of its society," while emphasizing the importance of regional stability - particularly in Lebanon - and the fight against terrorism.

The visit comes amid renewed sectarian bloodshed, coming a week after clashes between forces loyal to al-Sharaa and fighters from the minority Druze sect that left nearly 100 people dead. This followed earlier violence in Syria's coastal region between Sunni gunmen and members of the minority Alawite sect that Assad belonged to.



Al-Sharaa



French President Emmanuel Macron, right, welcomes German Chancellor Friedrich Merz on May 7, at the Elysee Palace in Paris. (AP)

Merz stresses European unity

Friedrich Merz plunged straight into international crises on his first full day as Germany's new chancellor Wednesday, urging India and Pakistan to de-escalate their tensions, vowing support for Ukraine and announcing plans to travel to Kyiv soon.

Merz and French President Emmanuel Macron - both firm believers in the European Union - used their first meeting since the German leader's appointment Tuesday to present a united front in the face of US President Donald Trump's trade war, Russian aggression in Ukraine and other issues causing alarm in Europe. (AP)

Kuwaiti oil rises by \$2.14 to \$62.08 pb

KUWAIT CITY, May 7, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil jump up by USD 2.14 to reach USD 62.08 per barrel on Tuesday after it was at USD 59.94 pb the day before, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Wednesday.

At the global market, the prices of the Brent crude and the West Texas Intermediate went up by USD 1.92 and USD 1.96 respectively to settle each at USD 62.15 per barrel and USD 59.09 pb.

Business

In a joint project with Kuwait Municipality and the College of Architecture

KFH supports the development initiative of Al Wataniya Area



The committee selected three winning teams for the best design award.



Group photo after the award ceremony.



Ayman Altatababaei



Eng. Maysa Boushehri



Prof. Adel Al-Mumen

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced its support for an initiative aimed at designing and developing the area between Baitak Tower and Souq Al Wataniya in Kuwait City. This ongoing support reflects KFH's leading national and societal role, affirming its commitment to sustainability and environmental preservation.

This initiative, a collaboration between KFH, Kuwait Municipality, and the College of Architecture at Kuwait University, will develop and execute the winning projects in accordance with sustainability and ESG standards.

Assessment committee

As part of its commitment to empowering youth and supporting sustainability initiatives, KFH invited students from the College of Architecture to participate in this initiative to redesign and develop the Al Wataniya area. KFH established clear guidelines for participating projects in this competition, emphasizing the importance of integrating sustainable design solutions that contribute to environmental protection. A joint committee of experts from KFH, Kuwait Municipality, and faculty members from the College of Architecture is reviewing the submitted projects.

Site visits

Students and stakeholders involved in the project conducted several site visits to assess the space in detail. During multiple sessions and workshops, students presented their ideas, which were reviewed based on precise criteria and engineering principles aligned with sustainable quality of life and environment.

The best design

The committee selected three winning teams for the best design award. For their awarded projects, SamaWael Al-Abduljader, Dalia Hamdan Al-Qashim, Dima Khaled Al-Rashdan, Hamad Moayyad Al-Dulaimi, Zahra Adel Hussain, Alanan Faisal Al-Sabah, and Jawa Hussain Al-Abdalmohsen received valuable cash prizes.

Honoring ceremony

The honoring ceremony was attended by KFH Executive Manager Gen-

eral Services, Ayman Altatababaei, Kuwait Municipality Deputy Director General for Projects Sector Affairs, Eng. Maysa Boushehri, and the Dean of College of Architecture, Prof. Adel Al-Mumen along with several faculty members and officials. Prior to the event, an exhibition was held for the participating teams to showcase their projects.

Contribution to development initiatives

KFH Executive Manager General Services, Ayman Altatababaei, stressed the significance of granting students and youth the opportunity to be part of the country's development initiatives in line with the Bank's sustainability and social responsibility strategy. He highlighted the KFH's commitment to fostering their talents and enhancing their academic and practical capabilities as future investment.

Altatababaei commended KFH's collaboration with Kuwait Municipality and Kuwait University, represented by the College of Architecture. The collaboration underscores the importance of concerted efforts between the public and private sectors in advancing Kuwait at all levels. He pointed out that this initiative affirms KFH's leadership in social and national responsibility and reflects its dedication to sustainability, greening and improving the quality of life.

Commending KFH's contribution

In her statement, the Deputy Director General for Projects Sector Affairs at Kuwait Municipality, Eng. Maysa Boushehri, lauded the trilateral collaboration, adding that this collaborative projectpaves the way for more similar initiatives that contribute to serving Kuwait and the community.

She also thanked KFH for supporting this significant project, and the faculty members of the College of Architecture at Kuwait University for their role in the success of this initiative.

Supporting youth and students

Meanwhile, Prof. Adel Al-Mumen stated that these awards convey a message of confidence to Kuwaiti youth. Such initiatives also assure them that they are the drivers of development and that their efforts are valued and help advance Kuwait in various fields.

He praised the fruitful cooperation among Kuwait University and the

private and government sectors, lauding the remarkable outcomes, unique projects and ideas presented by students. He expressed hope that these designs would soon be realized and that similar collaborations would continue in the future.

Strategic social initiatives

KFH continues to reinforce its CSR leadership by successfully launching impactful and strategic social initiatives. The Bank has commenced the implementation of the Al Mubarakiya Reconstruction Project. Additionally, KFH has pledged KD 15 million to fund the creation and equipping of acardiac diseases and research center at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital. The center, which is named the Kuwait Finance House Cardiac Diseases and Research Center, will be created according to highest quality standards in partnership with the Ministry of Health and all relevant stakeholders. KFH has also contributed to the construction of an addiction treatment hospital worth KD 4.5 million.

KFH also contributed KD 2 million to the Ministry of Social Affairs' debt relief campaign, building on its previous contributionthat exceeded KD 20 million to settle insolvent individuals' debts in coordination with the Ministry of Justice.

KFH continues its exceptional efforts in the Keep It Green campaign, which serves as an umbrella for all other programs and projects focused on environmental protection and awareness, sustainability, and green initiatives. The Bank also implemented several initiatives in cooperation with the Scientific Center and saved over 1.5 million papers compared to last year as part of its digital transformation and environmental initiatives.

KFH cooperated with the Green Dream Team in the greening of chalets on Al Zour Road. It also provided societal and environmental support for Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Natural Reserve, aiming to safeguard its wildlife.

As part of its sustainability leadership, KFH participated in the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), held in Riyadh. The Bank also signed the first-of-its-kind Global Takaful Alliance agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Empowering Kuwaiti talent and women in leadership

Burgan Bank appoints Danah AlJasem as GM of Corporate Communications

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Burgan Bank announced the appointment of Ms. Danah Faisal AlJasem as General Manager of Corporate Communications. This strategic appointment reflects the Bank's ongoing commitment to investing in Kuwait's top national calibers and empowering women in leadership positions as part of its dedicated human capital investment strategy. It also reflects Burgan's strategic focus on enhancing its corporate communications strategy and framework to support its long-term growth objectives.

Commenting on this announcement, Mr. Nageeb Amin, General Manager – Human Resources and Development for the Group at Burgan Bank, said: "On behalf of Burgan's Board and Executive Management, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Ms. AlJasem on her new role. This appointment underscores our great faith in her rich insight and experience, which we are certain will add a wealth of value to the Bank's dynamic and innovative marketing and communications strategy."

He added: "Today, Burgan's fast-paced growth, development, and constant adoption of new technologies rests on several key pillars, including our robust and engaging communications with our community and stakeholders, guaranteeing that our business momentum remains harmonious with the market's aspirations and needs. Guided by Burgan's vision to be the most progressive bank in Kuwait, and by our deeply embedded values of ownership, transparency, teamwork, and passion, we are committed to fostering an environment where talent is empowered and potential is realized."

On her part, Ms. AlJasem said: "I am honored to join the Burgan Bank family during this transformative period, and look forward to contributing to the Bank's vision and success journey,driven by its commitment to



Danah Faisal AlJasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at Burgan Bank.

digital innovation, customer-centric solutions,and sustainable growth. By enhancing our corporate marketing and communication strategies, we aim to amplify our brand presence and cultivate stronger engagement and connections with our customers, employees, and the broader community."

Ms. AlJasem brings to Burgan Bank over 20 years of experience across the ICT &Telecommunications sector and the Investment Banking sector, with a solid track record in strategic communications, brand management and transformation, public relations, sustainability and stakeholder engagement. Most recently, she held the position of General Manager of Corporate Communications at KuwaitTelecommunications Company (stc), where she spearheaded various areas within the communication arena and played a pivotal role in positioning stc as the preferred digital enabler. Some of her milestone achievements were the transformational launch of 5G, launching entrepreneurial and educational initiatives within the ESG agenda, and launching the rebranding exercise of VIVA to stc to achieve the brand unifi-

cation and expansion strategy amongst stc Group and subsidiaries.

Prior to that, Ms. AlJasem started her career at The World Bank in Washington DC before moving back to Kuwait. She then served as Vice President and Head of the Marketing Department at KAMCO Invest, one of Kuwait's leading investment firms, and a subsidiary of KIPCO Group.

During her career in investment banking, she was responsible for overseeing the company's brand strategy, driving marketing innovation, and supporting business development efforts through integrated communication plans.

In addition, Ms. AlJasem served as a member of KIPCO Group'sCSR committee as well as the Union of Investment Company's (UIC)marketing committee. She also sat on the committees of Corporate Governance and Business Continuity & Crisis Management at stc.

Ms. AlJasem holds a degree from The George Washington University,School of Business, in Washington D.C., USA with a major in Management Information Systems, providing her with a strong academic foundation in business and communications that complements her extensive professional experience.

She has completed several executive leadership programs, the most recent ones being the McKinsey Leadership Pogram and NBK RISE for female Leadership, in collaboration with INSEAD and IE graduate schools of business management.

In her new role at Burgan Bank, Ms. AlJasem will lead the Bank's corporate marketing, communications, public relations, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) functions. Her leadership will play a key role in driving the Bank's strategic marketing direction and enhancing engagement with customers, partners, and the broader community.

Educational videos explain key changes in new law

Gulf Bank concludes traffic law awareness campaign with MOI

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Gulf Bank has successfully concluded its awareness campaign on the new traffic law, launched in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior. The initiative is part of the Bank's ongoing commitment to corporate social responsibility and its dedication to promoting road safety awareness across society.

The campaign featured a series of short educational videos recorded with Colonel Faisal Al-Daihani, Head of the Public Relations Department at the Ministry of Interior. These videos were shared across Gulf Bank's social media platforms and aimed to simply explain the key updates and changes in the new traffic law.

The videos covered various important topics, including the importance of adhering to speed limits, the dangers of using mobile phones while driving, new violation monitoring systems, and penalties associated with major traffic offenses.

Additionally, Gulf Bank held an internal awareness session for its employees in collaboration with the General Traffic Department at the Ministry of Interior. The session was led by Major Mohammed Al-Rafee, Head of the Activities Section – Traffic Awareness Department, and Major Musaed Al-Aslawi, Head of the Awareness Section – Traffic Awareness Department. Together, they provided valuable insights into the updated traffic law, clarified recent changes, and answered employees' questions.

Gulf Bank representatives expressed pride in collaborating with the Ministry of Interior on this important initiative, emphasizing the significance of supporting public awareness efforts, particularly in light of the recent updates to the traffic law.

"We believe the private sector has a crucial role in supporting the Ministry's efforts to reduce accidents and save lives," stated a Gulf Bank official,



Gulf Bank honors representatives of the General Traffic Department.



Major Mohammed Al-Rafee speaking during the symposium.

while also commending the tireless work of traffic officers in achieving these goals.

This collaboration is part of a wider range of community initiatives that

Gulf Bank undertakes annually as part of its sustainability strategy, which focuses on supporting national and social causes to contribute to building a safer and more informed society.

ABK achieves 8% growth in net profit to KD 15.69 mln in Q1 2025

Behbehani added that ABK is keen to seize op-



■ The Group continues to reap the rewards of major investments to enhance competitiveness in the banking sector in Kuwait and other markets where we operate.

Abdulla Al Sumait, Acting Group CEO of ABK, stated, “The financial results demonstrate our operational strength and resilience, helping

In conclusion, Al Sumait revealed that ABK continues to support the 'Let's Be Aware' financial literacy campaign in cooperation with the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwait Banking Association, offering informative content across its social media platforms to promote financial inclusion, raise awareness against banking fraud, and noting ABK's recognition as one of the top banks supporting the campaign.



Following comprehensive evaluations since 2020

NBK chosen as Kuwait’s main settlement bank by KCC

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: In a significant milestone that reinforces the Bank’s leadership and instrumental role in advancing Kuwait’s financial infrastructure and supporting Vision 2035, Kuwait Clearing Company (KCC) has officially designated National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) as the country’s Main settlement bank.

The announcement follows a meticulous multi-year evaluation process initiated in 2020, during which participating banks underwent rigorous testing over a span of two years. KCC prioritized institutions with superior operational capabilities, ultimately awarding NBK the highest rating among all contenders.

The selection of NBK stands as a testament to the bank’s substantial investments in infrastructure and systems, enabling it to fully meet KCC’s comprehensive technical and operational requirements. Its proactive approach and high level of operational readiness have firmly established NBK as a trusted partner in advancing this strategic national initiative.

NBK played a pivotal role throughout the various stages of testing, supporting six out of ten brokerage firms and enabling them to meet key operational and compliance standards with confidence and efficiency.

This ambitious project which will come into effect on June 29th demanded daily coordination and ongoing communication to meet critical deadlines, underscoring the strong collaboration between NBK, KCC, and market participants. In addition, NBK and KCC jointly conducted technical support sessions to guide participants through the testing process, ensuring seamless integration and full system readiness.

NBK has signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding with KCC, aimed at developing the banking services provided in collaboration with the Company. The agreement seeks to strengthen joint efforts to advance electronic services, accelerating the execution of operations, minimizing associated risks, and automating the necessary processes for each party to seamlessly access and deliver services to the other.

Commenting on the occasion, Mr. Mohammad Al-Kharafi, Group Chief Operating Officer, Group Operations, Technology and Data stated: “We are proud to contribute to the implementation of this national initiative in alignment with Kuwait Vision 2035. This milestone reflects NBK’s unwavering commitment to playing a pivotal role in shaping Kuwait’s economic future leveraging our expertise to drive greater efficiency, resilience, and growth across the capital markets.”

He pointed out that the Bank’s proactive approach, operational readiness, and substantial investments in developing its digital infrastructure over the past years have all contributed to cementing its position as an



Mohammed Al Kharafi



Abdulla Al-Mutawa



Fahad Al-Mukhaizim



Duaij Al-Saleh

ideal partner in supporting this national initiative.

Furthermore, Al-Kharafi added that the Bank is proud of its strong partnership with KCC and of their joint work on strategic projects designed to deliver a qualitative leap in the performance of Boursa Kuwait. These efforts aim to elevate clearing and settlement operations to international standards—positively impacting the broader Kuwaiti economy.

Mr. Abdulla Al-Mutawa, Senior Vice President, Operations, commented: “We are pleased to witness the launch of the Central Counterparty Project (CCP), a fully integrated system that connects the bank, brokerage firms, KCC, the Central Bank of Kuwait, and investors – all securely anchored by a set of programmed rules within systems that are automatically monitored by regulatory authorities.”

“The CCP’s functions include the automated execution of KCC’s operations

for designated accounts, with real-time processing and no human intervention—streamlining workflows for all stakeholders, including investors, trading companies, custodians, and the accounting teams of all parties involved,” he added. Al-Mutawa emphasized that launching the project marks a significant milestone in the development of Kuwait’s clearing and settlement infrastructure, ushering in a new era of transparency, speed, and reliability in local stock market operations.

Highlighting the significance of this occasion, Mr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizim, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Clearing Company (KCC), stated:

“This step represents a cornerstone of KCC’s strategy, aimed at fostering a more robust and sustainable financial infrastructure. Aligned with international best practices in clearing and settlement, KCC, in close collaboration with the Capital Markets Authority, has spearheaded the design and

Al-Kharafi:

- NBK’s proactive strategy and high level of operational readiness have re-inforced its standing as a trusted partner of choice in advancing this pivotal national initiative
- The strategic partnership with KCC marks a key milestone in advancing capital markets and ensuring their future preparedness
- The Bank played a pivotal role throughout the testing phases, ensuring full alignment with key operational and compliance benchmarks
- NBK earned the highest rating in the comprehensive evaluation process, outperforming all other participating banks

Al-Saleh:

- The launch of a settlement bank marks a pivotal milestone in the evolution of Kuwait’s financial infrastructure, underscoring our unwavering commitment to bolstering the efficiency, security, and reliability of market operations
- This key development aligns with our strategic vision to drive innovation, accelerate the growth of Kuwait’s capital markets, and solidify the country’s position as a leading financial hub in the region

activation of this project. It underscores our unwavering commitment to playing a pivotal national role in enabling the market to transition into a more efficient, flexible, and resilient model.

The CCP system is not merely a technical upgrade; it marks a transformative shift in the relationship between market participants and the existing risk model. By reducing credit risk, it establishes a higher level of security and trust between the parties involved.

At KCC, we firmly believe that the future of the market can only be built through effective partnerships, institutional integration, and the application of both institutional and technical intelligence. We continue on this path, striving to achieve the goals of Kuwait Vision 2035, with the ambition to position the Kuwaiti market as a regional financial hub.”

The collaboration with NBK as the Main settlement bank for this project, significantly strengthens the reliability of cash transactions associated with the settlement process.

Meanwhile, Mr. Duaij Al-Saleh, CEO of Kuwait Clearing Company, emphasized the project’s significance, remarking:

“CCP is a milestone in our journey, reflecting both our institutional and technical capabilities in leading major developmental projects effectively and responsibly. In recent years, we have invested significantly in enhancing our technical infrastructure and operational governance in preparation for this phase. Thanks to our national workforce and strategic partnerships, we have successfully implemented this project in accordance with the highest international standards. Our

goal is not just to stay abreast of global developments, but to actively shape them by offering advanced solutions that support liquidity, reduce risks, and strengthen the confidence of local and international investors. We remain committed to expanding our post-trade services and building a more integrated infrastructure that fosters market growth and development.

The partnership with NBK on this project goes beyond cash settlements, symbolizing the integration of roles between market infrastructure and the banks operating within the system – ensuring the seamless alignment necessary for a developed market environment.”

Through its strategic vision, KCC affirms its unwavering commitment to strengthening its position as a leading provider of financial infrastructure in Kuwait. By embracing cutting-edge technologies, developing innovative products and services that meet the evolving needs of the market, and upholding the highest standards of transparency and governance, the company seeks to enhance the market’s appeal and serve the interests of all its stakeholders.

NBK remains committed to advancing its digital and technological capabilities across its global footprint, leveraging a broad network of local and international branches spanning 13 countries across four continents. These include key financial hubs such as London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Singapore, and Shanghai, alongside a strong regional presence in Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

Non-oil growth is seen holding at 2.5%+

Kuwait’s economy set to rebound amid oil sector recovery

By National Bank of Kuwait Kuwait

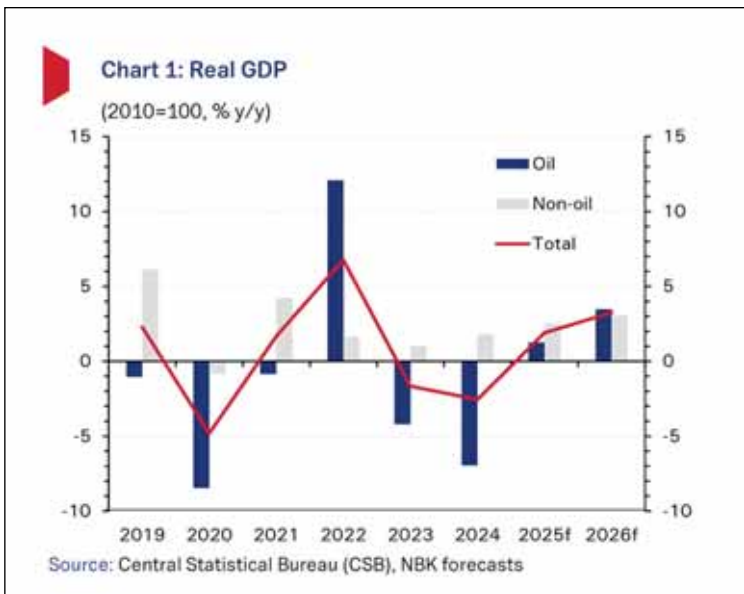
Economic growth should return to positive territory in 2025-26 as the oil sector expands following the unwinding of OPEC+ voluntary production cuts. Non-oil growth is seen holding at 2.5%+ amid gradually rising delivery of government reform and investment initiatives and more stable but subdued consumer spending. Fiscal deficits are forecast at 7% of GDP on average through 2026 amid lower oil revenues. A further, sustained drop in oil prices is a key downside risk to the outlook, while faster reform rollout and higher.

Steady expansion amid challenging external backdrop

The outlook for the economy in 2025-2026 remains broadly positive, with GDP projected to expand by 3.3% by 2026, following several years of below-trend growth that reflected both lower oil production due to OPEC+ cuts and the fading of the post-pandemic consumer spending bounce. Pressures from deteriorating international trade relations and weakening global growth could be transmitted, we think, via potentially lower oil prices, rising uncertainty and reduced prospects for interest rate cuts by the US Fed. Still, even

though the downside risks to the outlook have risen due to external factors, they are not yet assumed to have a large impact on non-oil activity due to a) oil prices holding up at \$70/bbl in our existing base case, b) an already conservative growth forecast and c) a view that domestic trends will be increasingly shaped by government reform and investment initiatives where execution rates should rise.

We expect output gains in the oil sector of 2.4% per year in 2025-26 on average, in-line with the expansion in Kuwait’s crude output (+135 kb/d to 2.54 mb/d by 2026) following the beginning of the unwinding of OPEC+ voluntary supply cuts in April 2025. Non-oil growth is seen averaging 2.8% per year, as consumer spending growth stabilizes after recent declines while corporate and projects activity start to move higher. Indeed, high frequency indicators suggest that this dynamic may already be underway, with the PMI notching its best ever reading in Q4 2024, bank lending to corporates expanding at its fastest pace in more than two years (4.9% y/y) in February and project awards in 2024 reaching a 7-year-high of KD2.8bn. The pipeline of Vision 2035 strategic projects in the energy, water, housing and transportation sectors remains very strong and fast-



er-than-expected execution is a key upside risk to the economic outlook.

Delivery of the government’s legislative and reform agenda is gradually progressing, with various important measures implemented over the last six months. These include the uncapping of government service fees, the 15% top-up tax on multinationals, moves to boost public sector efficiency, streamline regulation for SMEs and approval of the long-delayed public debt law. A housing finance law to address the housing shortage is close to being finalized. A new economic framework is expected to flesh out further development measures including enhancing the role of the private sector, attracting FDI and raising labor force productivity. Critical to achieving Vision 2035 diversification and infrastructure goals will be re-

versing Kuwait’s historically low investment rate, which has lagged GCC peers, and reconfiguring the economy to rely less on consumption as well as the oil sector.

Inflation has trended lower (2.4% in March) since peaking in 2022 at 4.0%, helped by moderating price rises in the food and clothing categories especially. We project it to settle at around 2.5% on average in 2025-26. The domestic policy interest rate stands at 4.0% and our working assumption is for the Central Bank of Kuwait to lower rates more gradually over the course of the cycle than the Fed, given the less aggressive hikes seen in 2022-23 as US policy was tightened.

Fiscal deficits projected, liquidity boosted by debt law

Further fiscal deficits are expected over the forecast period (averaging KD3.5bn, 7.1% of GDP) amid lower-rising oil prices (\$70/bbl), and consolidation will remain a multi-year theme. Expenditures in the FY25/26 budget were held at previous-year levels (with wages up a well-below trend 2%), and we factor-in growth of only 1% on average over 2025-26 with pressure especially on discretionary spending items and subsidies. We expect a rebalancing of spending to allow for higher capital outlays. On the revenue side, measures such as the tax on mul-

tinational, higher fees for government services and penalties and fines could yield around 0.8% of GDP per year, with potential excise duties in 2026 (0.4% of GDP) and VAT (up to 2% of GDP) later on. The IMF have recommended fiscal consolidation at a pace of 1-2% of GDP per year. The new debt law passed in March 2025 provides crucial flexibility on deficit financing going forward and alleviates pressure on the government’s liquid reserves. We expect both local and foreign currency debt issuance over the next two years. Even so, debt levels will remain very low by international standards: if the projected deficits in 2025-26 were 50% debt-financed, government debt would only rise to 10% of GDP from 3% now.

Oil, global trade, local reforms to shape outlook

Lower oil prices, regional geopolitical insecurity and deteriorating global trade relations are major downside risks. On the upside, the rollout of a new government work agenda with high conviction would upgrade the growth and investment outlook. The forthcoming housing law especially could result in much stronger residential investment over time. Separately, successful fiscal consolidation steps could contribute to a sovereign ratings upgrade.

Landmark visit first to include reps from mainland enterprises

Business delegation led by Hong Kong Chief Executive visiting Kuwait to foster strategic cooperation in business & investment

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: A high-level business delegation led by John KC Lee, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China (HKSAR), and organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) will visit the State of Kuwait from 13 to 15 May, 2025 to promote Hong Kong as a two-way platform between Mainland China and the world and to explore new avenues of cooperation aligned with the Belt and Road Initiative and Kuwait Vision 2035.

This landmark visit, the first to involve representatives from Mainland China, underscores Hong Kong’s role as a global hub for finance, trade, investment, and cultural exchange. The delegation – consisting of over 50 senior representatives from Hong Kong and the mainland – will engage with local chambers of commerce and key corporations to explore collaboration, investment, and mutual growth opportunities. The highlight of the visit will be the signing of several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs).

This three-day visit reflects Hong Kong’s efforts



Dr. Peter K N Lam

to promote cooperation between Hong Kong, the Mainland, and the Middle East. Additionally, the visit aims to deepen economic and trade relations and enhance cultural exchange while exploring opportunities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) through mutually beneficial collaboration. Delegates will explore emerging sectors such as innovation and technology, transportation, new energy, and sustainable development, in addition to traditional industries like finance, trade, logistics, and professional services. In 2024, as part of its efforts to strengthen bilateral trade, investment opportunities, and strategic alliances, Hong Kong deepened its ties with Kuwait, which ranked as its sixth largest Middle East trading partner, and its fifth largest export market and seventh largest import market in the region.

Dr. Peter K N Lam, Chairman of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, remarked: “The inclusion of Mainland Chinese enterprise delegates in this Mission marks a new chapter in our global outreach

strategy. It underscores Hong Kong’s unique role as a bridge between the mainland and the Middle East. Through this mission, we aim to unlock new avenues of cooperation with local partners under the ambitious framework of Kuwait Vision 2035, leveraging Hong Kong’s world-class strengths in financial and professional services. At the same time, we are committed to fostering cross-regional collaboration not only in traditional sectors such as finance, trade, logistics, and professional services, but also in emerging fields, ranging from innovation and smart city development to sustainability, new energy, green buildings, and waste reduction. We believe this visit lays a strong foundation for a deeper, future-focused partnership between Hong Kong, the mainland, and the Middle East.”

This mission represents a significant step in strengthening economic ties between Hong Kong and Kuwait, reinforcing shared interests and laying the groundwork for long-term strategic cooperation in alignment with global development initiatives.

What's On



Photos from the event.

First-ever Global Competitive Examination orientation held in Kuwait

ICSK sets new benchmark with global exam prep program

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Indian Community School, Kuwait in collaboration with Vedhik IAS Academy, India marked a significant milestone in the academic landscape by initiating expert-led guidance for the Global Competitive Examination, the first initiative of its kind in Kuwait. The initiative aims to guide students from Classes VIII to XII toward success in national and international competitive exams such as UPSC, Indian Civil Service, SAT, CLAT, NDA, and UN Civil Services.

Vedhik IAS Academy, India (founded and mentored by top IAS, IPS and IFS officers) is renowned for its coaching strategies towards cracking the global competitive exams. Recognized with the 'Excellent Global E-Learning Award-2020' from the UN, the academy prepares students for 568 competitive exams, drawing insights from top civil servants. It also offers scholarship guidance to help meritorious students secure financial support for admissions into prestigious Indian and foreign universities.

The orientation programme for the Global Competitive Examination was held across the four ICSK campuses - The Indian Community School, Kuwait (Senior), The Indian School of Excellence, The Indian Community School (Khatian) and The Indian Community School (Amman) from 24th to 26th April 2025. It aimed to introduce students to the vast opportunities offered by global competitive examinations, instill early awareness, ignite ambition and prepare students to face the challenges of highly competitive national and international examinations with confidence and clarity. The programme saw the enthusiastic participation from students and parents alike.

The inaugural ceremony conducted



ICSK and Vedhik IAS Academy experts during the Global Competitive Exam orientation program for students.



Chat shows featuring interactions with real civil servants like IAS, IPS, IFS, IRS officers, vice chancellors, and globally recognized personalities is one of the key highlights of the academy. 25 mock exams of different competitive exams will be conducted to prepare the students to achieve success in the global competitive examinations.

Dr. Babu Sebastian also explained the entire UPSC exam cycle - while providing valuable insights into eligibility, age criteria and preparation timelines. He stressed the importance of beginning preparation early, developing consistent study habits and maintaining focus. He reassured students and parents that, with dedication and the right guidance, success in even the most competitive exams is attainable.

The sessions concluded with an engaging question-and-answer segment, where students and parents had the opportunity to clarify their doubts and gather detailed information on exam patterns, preparation strategies and career prospects.

Shaik Abdul Rahiman, Hon. Chairman to the Board of Trustees presented mementos to Mr. M.P. Joseph, IAS and Dr. Babu Sebastian as a token of appreciation and gratitude. Vote of thanks proposed by Mrs. Susan Rajesh, Vice Principal of ICSK Senior drew curtains to the insightful event.

The Global Competitive Examination Orientation Programme at ICSK was a resounding success. It was a transformative experience for all attendees, who left the sessions better informed, highly motivated, and inspired to explore academic and professional possibilities at a global level. With this initiative, ICSK has once again reaffirmed its commitment to educational excellence, innovation and holistic student development.

Forum showcases literary diversity through poetry

WFK continues to nurture literature

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Writers' Forum Kuwait, after concluding a recent successful event of poetry at Avanti Palace, held another successful and enriching meeting on 2nd May at the residence of poet Aamir Diwan.

The literary event at Avanti Palace was a reflection of the Forum's continued efforts to bring together and showcase the cultural diversity of India as poetry in multiple Indian languages including Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, Kannada, Marathi and English were recited at the event. Knitting further the relationship with academics and culture, K. Gangadhar Srisath, Principal of Indian Community School Khaitan, was invited as the President of the evening while Nitin Upadhyay from Maurya Kala Parisar was invited as the Chief Guest of the evening. The event was graced by Ali Chougale, patron of the Forum. Presence of family and friends

of the members and poetry lovers from all over India added to the success of the event.

General Secretary of the Forum and Urdu poetess Ms. Nazneen Ali Naaz was the anchor of the event supported by co-anchor and Hindi poetess Dr. Radhika Guleri Bhardwaj. The event started with tradition of lighting of the lamp by the President of the evening K. Gangadhar Srisath, Chief Guest Nitin Upadhyay, President of the Forum Mrs. Maimuna Ali Chougale, Vice President Mr. Saeed Nazar Kadpawi and General Secretary Ms. Nazneen Ali Naaz.

In addition to the vivid colours of poetry spread around, inauguration of books by members - Hindi translation of Urdu poetry book "Gham ki Dharti" by Saeed Nazar Kadpawi translated by Dr. Rajesh Gupta and poetry book by Ms. Sangeeta Choubey, "Pankhudi ki Pankhudyani", were the key highlights of the evening.

Books of members is a matter of pride for the Forum as it speaks of the literary contribution and achievement. So the highlight of the meeting on 2nd May was the new poetry book by Umesh Sharma, ex-President and founder member of the Forum. The meeting was presided by the President Mrs. Maimuna Ali Chougale while Ms. Kalpana Shah was invited as the Chief Guest. Ms. Nazneen Ali Naaz, the General Secretary compered the meeting and welcomed everyone and congratulated them on the successful poetry event held at Avanti Palace.

In her Presidential remarks Mrs. Maimuna Ali Chougale expressed her appreciation for the members' continued contribution to literature and presented an article on the literary skills and achievement of Mr. Umesh Sharma. The Chief Guest Ms. Kalpana Shah applauded each of the renditions of the day in her remarks.



A group photo from the event.

Association elects new executive committee

IEI Kuwait Chapter hosts 27th AGM and technical seminar

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Institution of Engineers (India), Kuwait Chapter, successfully conducted its Technical Seminar and 27th Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) at the Millennium Hotel, Salmiya, on Wednesday, May 1. The prestigious event was attended by a large gathering of engineers, dignitaries, and guests, showcasing the chapter's continued commitment to professional excellence and community engagement.

The evening commenced at 7:30 PM with a warm welcome by Engr. Nalin Vasanth Sethunath, who served as the Master of Ceremonies. The event began with the playing of the national anthems of Kuwait and India, followed by a solemn one-minute silence to pay homage to the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack.

Chairman Engr. Sam Ananth ceremoniously escorted the seminar speaker, Dr. Ali Alfayly, to the stage. Venkatesh introduced Dr. Alfayly, an Assistant Professor at the College of Basic Education, Kuwait, and a board member of the Association of Artificial Intelligence of Things (AAIAIT). Dr. Alfayly delivered a compelling presentation on "AI for Life: Engineering the Future of Healthcare". His talk highlighted transformative applications of Artificial Intelligence in healthcare, including improved diagnostics, cost reduction, and minimized errors - earning high appreciation



from the attendees.

A moment of silence was also observed in memory of Dr. Neelamani, a former IEI member and renowned scientist from KISR, as remembered by Dr. Mahendran, past chairman of the IEI Kuwait Chapter.

During the AGM proceedings, Chairman Engr. Sam Ananth extended his gratitude to the outgoing Executive Committee for their dedicated service during the 2024-2025 term. Treasurer Engr. Karthikeyan presented the annual financial report, which was audited and approved by the general body.

General Secretary Engr. Sudhir Menghani presented a detailed overview of the chapter's activities during the year, emphasizing the success of numerous technical events.

Following the dissolution of the existing committee, an election commission comprising Dr. Rumane, Dr. Mahendran, and Engr. Rishabh Zain conducted the election for the new Executive Committee for 2025-2026. The nomination process had already been carried out in advance, and the following were elected:

Elected office-bearers: Engr. Sam



Photos from the event.

Ananth Kumar, chairman; Engr. Karthikeyan Elangovan, general secretary; Engr. Shankhar Chinnathambi, treasurer; executive members: Engr. K. Maran Pramadayan, Engr. Krishna Jagan P; Engr. Anu Kurian K; Engr. Imityaz T; Engr. Nalin Vasanth Sethnath; Engr. Ankamma Kallagunta. Three members Engr. Agnel Stanley Charles, Engr. Subalakshmi Varadarajan, and Engr. Rajalakshmi were absent during the election and will be co-opted into the committee by the newly elected team.

In his acceptance speech, Chairman

Engr. Sam Ananth thanked members for their continued trust and vowed to elevate the chapter's stature with a dynamic year ahead. He acknowledged the high standards set by the previous committee and assured the gathering of continued excellence in programs and services.

As part of the chapter's strategic initiatives, the following were announced:

1. A Free Online Course on Rock-Set Science by Dr. Sivathanu Pillai (Founder, BrahMos Aerospace & former DRDO/ISRO scientist) for students (Grades 8-12) from May-June

2025, with a chance for outstanding participants to visit ISRO in July 2025 (MOU #1).

2. A Certified Online Program on Project Management (Levels I-IV), with further details to be announced soon (MOU #2).

Both MOUs were signed by the IEI Kuwait Chapter and the Kuwait Society of Engineers (KSE).

The event concluded on a delightful note with a grand dinner served to all attendees, leaving behind a sense of inspiration, unity, and purpose within Kuwait's engineering community.

Singer-songwriter embraces new horizons

McAlpine makes Broadway debut at a ‘perfect time’

NEW YORK, May 7, (AP): Lizzy McAlpine is surrounded by music these days. She’s making her Broadway debut in a daring stage musical, and when she retreats to her dressing room, her own songs demand attention.

“When the inspiration hits, I’ve got to write. I’ve got to have a guitar there or else I’ll go crazy,” she says. “I just kind of have to wait for them. I can’t really force a song.”

The folk-pop singer-songwriter is following-up last year’s release of her third album, “Older,” with a role in “Floyd Collins,” a musical about life, death and fame. She calls it perfect timing.

“I was starting to feel like I wanted to do something new, and this kind of came at the perfect time. It’s the first and only Broadway show that I’ve ever auditioned for,” she says.

McAlpine has been building a sonic reputation for raw, stripped-down tracks and intimate, deeply reflective lyrics. Her single “Ceilings” went viral on TikTok, and “Older” has been hailed by critics.

Broadway made sense for a woman who grew up watching shows in New York and who has an “ability to infuse each song with character, as if acting,” the AP said in a review of “Older.”

“I feel like all of my music has musical theater in it because I have loved theater for so long,” she says. “I saw my first Broadway show and I was like 8, and so, it just kind of seeps into my music whether I am conscious of it or not.”

“Floyd Collins,” which just earned six Tony Award nominations, tells the tale of a hapless explorer who gets himself trapped in a Kentucky cave in 1925, triggering the first modern media frenzy. McAlpine plays Floyd Collins’

sister, a woman who doesn’t fit in.

“She is strange, definitely, but it’s just because she’s in her own world, and she sees the world differently than everyone else. She sees the beauty in it. She’s like a sponge. She picks up everything that everyone is throwing out. She’s just different. Not necessarily in a bad way,” McAlpine says.

“It explores being a young woman in the 1920s and being misunderstood and not listened to and not heard, and that’s like been a theme in my life because I’m working in the music industry. I’m surrounded by men all the time.”

McAlpine, 25, didn’t know much about “Floyd Collins” - it debuted off-Broadway in 1996 - but was a fan of its composer and lyricist, Adam Guettel, who created “The Light in the Piazza,” one of her favorite musicals.

Recording

“I saw his name and I was like, ‘Oh, I love him.’ So I listened to the cast recording on Spotify from the original production and immediately was just hooked,” she says. “It just sounded like nothing that was on Broadway now. It was just so unique, and I love that kind of stuff.”

McAlpine, who was raised in a suburb of Philadelphia and attended the Berklee College of Music, did theater in high school. Her grandparents would take her and her siblings to Broadway every year, and her mom would sing “Wicked” in the car. During the pandemic, she livestreamed Broadway covers on Instagram.

“She had a kind of unaffected directness and purity and honesty in how she approached the reading of the role, to say nothing of the singing,” says Tina Landau, who di-

rected “Floyd Collins” as well as supplied the book and some lyrics.

“I really felt that there was something in how unfettered and organic and unadorned her approach to it was that was perfect for the character, because Nellie just speaks truth.”

McAlpine remembers seeing “My Fair Lady” at the Vivian Beaumont Theater at Lincoln Center - the same theater she graces in “Floyd Collins.” “Sometimes I’m on stage and I’m just thinking about I was in the audience one time, and it is just so crazy.”

After the musical, she plans on another album, and the music that’s coming out has been touched by the show. “It feels like it’s becoming more complex because I’m singing these songs that are so complex every day,” she says. After that, she’s open to ideas, even to more theater.

“It has to be the right thing. This felt like it came to me at the exact right time in my life, and this was the exact right show for me. And so, if something else comes along, it would have to be the exact set of circumstances.”

If that sounds like a singer-songwriter who is taking charge of her career, McAlpine would agree. She’s done, for example, with an unhealthy pace to her tours.

“I’m finally at a place in my career where I can make decisions and do things that really align with myself. There was a while there before my last album where I was kind of just being pulled along, and I was just doing things because that’s how everyone does them,” she says.

“I feel like I am now more sure of myself, and I know what I have to do to make myself feel comfortable. Even if it’s outside of the norm or what other people do in the industry, I’m going to do it anyway.”



Lizzy McAlpine poses for a portrait on Friday, April 11, 2025, in New York. (AP)

Sexual assault

Four women sue Robinson

LOS ANGELES, May 7, (AP): Four former housekeepers of **Smokey Robinson** allege in a lawsuit filed Tuesday that the Motown music luminary repeatedly sexually assaulted and raped them while they worked for him.

The suit filed in Los Angeles Superior Court seeks at least \$50 million in damages over the alleged assaults, which the women say took place between 2007 and 2024, and labor violations including a hostile work environment, illegally long hours and lack of pay.

A message seeking comment from a representative for the 85-year-old Robinson was not immediately answered.

The four women each say that Robinson would wait until he was alone with them in his Los Angeles house then sexually assault and rape them over their objections.

“We believe that Mr. Robinson is a serial and sick rapist, and must be stopped,” the women’s attorney John Harris said at a news conference.

All said they eventually quit over the assaults, though in some cases it took several years. And all said they feared coming forward over fears of retaliation, public shame and possible effects on their immigration status.

“Having to tell their husband and children of these despicable actions left them filled with shame and embarrassment,” Harris said. “So throughout their dreadful experiences with Mr. Robinson, all four women remained silent.”

Identified

He said as low-wage earners, they also all feared “missing a payday, and not being able to afford rent or buy food for their families.”

All four women withheld their legal names citing privacy concerns and are identified as Jane Does in court documents. They appeared at the news conference with their attorneys, but did not speak, and covered their faces with masks.

The lawsuit also names Robinson’s wife Frances Robinson as a defendant, alleging that she enabled his behavior despite knowing about past sexual misconduct. It also blames her for the hostile work environment, saying she berated them with language that included ethnic slurs.

One woman said she worked for the Robinsons from 2012 until 2024, and was assaulted at least 20 times in that span. Another said she worked for them from 2014 until 2020, and was assaulted at least 23 times. Another said she worked for them for a year before quitting in 2024 and was assaulted at least seven times. The fourth woman, who said she also acted as Frances Robinson’s personal assistant, hairdresser and cook, worked for them for 18 years before resigning in 2024. She cited similar experiences to the other women, but did not say how often she was assaulted.

The women, some of whom worked for the Robinsons at the same time as each other, also kept stories of the assaults from one another, but are now bonding over their experience, the attorneys said. They declined to give details at the news conference about how they came forward and learned there were others.

Fashion

Met Gala crowd rocks dandyism



Lupita Nyong'o attends The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute benefit gala celebrating the opening of the 'Superfine: Tailoring Black Style' exhibition on Monday, May 5, in New York. (AP)

A night of bold suits, hats and heritage

NEW YORK, May 7, (AP): Pinstripes. All Ways. Hats galore. Pantsuits. Gown suits. Zoot suits. Canes. A single cigar (looking at you Madonna) - and expert displays of tailoring. The Met Gala crowd, for the most part, did the Black dandy menswear theme proud at fashion’s biggest party of the year.

“Those that researched the moment and pulled inspiration from history made it modern and their own. I loved it,” said Holly Alford, assistant dean and an associate professor in the fashion and merchandising program at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts.

Among her favorites: Colman Domingo’s homage to dandy icon André Leon Talley. It was one of many that honored the towering fashion figure, a rare Black fashion editor in a largely white industry. And among others in odes to Talley, who died in 2022, were Anne Hathaway in a Carolina Herrera dress she picked specifically for him.

“We wanted André Leon Talley to look down from heaven and scream ‘GLAMOUR,’” Hathaway said on the Vogue livestream Monday night.

A glamorous night it was, and an inventive one at that amid a broad White House siege on DEI programs and protections that serve immigrants, special people and myriad others. What does that have to do with fashion and the theme this year? Everything, in terms of Black power, ownership, heritage and, most importantly, freedom.

What, exactly, was the suggested dress code? It was “Tailored for You,” inspired by Black dandyism through time, the subject of the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s spring show at its Costume Institute.

On the blue carpet, a bit soggy from drenching rain, guests played with the fundamentals of fashion to make their looks their own with the help of designers and stylists. And many honored their heritages in special touches like the cowrie shells on the cuffs of Lewis Hamilton’s Wales Bonner jacket.

The shells pay homage to Black diasporic culture, to spirituality, to memory, said Rikki Byrd, assistant professor of visual culture studies at the University of Texas at Austin and founder of the Black Fashion Archive.

Tessa Thompson honored Talley with a fan adorned with his image.

“It’s representative of a church fan and André Leon Talley often talked about his first introduction to fashion was through his church,” Byrd said.

Teyana Taylor was a standout for Shantrelle P. Lewis, author of “Dandy Lion: The Black Dandy and Street Style.” With her cane, in her red velvet cape, “she understood the assignment,” Lewis said. Taylor’s cape was emblazoned with her nickname in honor of her home turf: “Harlem Rose.” And she, like Swizz Beatz, donned a durag.

Lewis, who has been seminal in understanding dandyism, said the attire on the carpet was generally underwhelming.

“The lack of color, the lack of African print, even the absence of African designers. I said, ‘Where is the Black dandyism?’” she said. “No sartorial risks were taken.”

Big risks? Perhaps. Perhaps not. Brandon Tan, fashion director for Cosmopolitan, was satisfied.

“A classic silhouette can be completely reimagined by something as simple as the color and fabrication of the textile, as seen on Henry Golding,” he said. “Inversely, a very classic gray wool can be totally re-mixed by the cut and silhouette like Walton Goggins’ kilt look by Thom Browne.”

A few simply showed up in comparatively routine black tuxedos (hello James Corden) and questionable spins on the theme (Sorry, Halle Berry, but that was a lot of skin in the crotch area).

A-listers

Coattails of varying lengths were a huge trend amid the sea of hats and head pieces anticipated ahead of the gala that brought together A-listers from the worlds of sports, entertainment, music, art, literature, politics and more to raise money for the Costume Institute.



Laurny Hill attends The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute benefit gala on May 5, in New York. (AP)

Black and white looks carried the night, with enough pops of color to keep it interesting.

Kevin Huynh, InStyle’s fashion director, also praised Domingo, who wore a huge Talley-esque collared blue cape first, then ditched the cape to reveal a pearled window-pane jacket he wore with dot accessories.

“As the undisputed king of the red carpet, his regal look was beyond appropriate for the night’s theme,” Huynh said. “He fully embodied the spirit of dandyism in not one but two statement-making looks from Valentino, and he aced it in terms of being unapologetically bold and flawlessly fanciful.”

That “fearlessness and individuality,” he said, is what the night was all about.

“After a marathon awards season run, his Met Gala red carpet reveal was well worth the wait. From the moment he stepped out of The Carlyle draped in a jewel-toned Valentino cape, it was clear that more was coming,” said Claire Stern Milch, Elle’s digital director.

“And when he finally arrived on the steps, his custom three-piece zoot suit, also designed by Alessandro Michele, was a playful and sophisticated nod to the theme,” she added.

Milch called Domingo’s oversized polka dot flower on one lapel undoubtedly the highlight. The look, she said, was the “perfect marriage of classic tailoring and avant-garde flair.”

Nikki Ogunnaike, editor-in-chief of Marie Claire, noted that suiting of all kinds wasn’t a huge surprise, considering the style guidance from Vogue’s Anna Wintour, who puts the gala together each year.

“My favorites included Ayo Edebiri in Ferragamo, Tracee Ellis Ross in Marc Jacobs, Zendaya and Lisa in Louis Vuitton, Colman Domingo in Valentino and Mindy Kaling in Harbison, all of whom interpreted dandyism and suiting in their own unique way,” she said.

Athletes, meanwhile, also took the spotlight. Tailoring for them is a special craft that Tom Marchitelli, custom menswear designer and stylist, takes into consideration with all the suits he creates for NFL, NBA and Major League Baseball players.

“These guys have these superhero builds, as I like to say, and they can’t walk into any store on Fifth Ave, in Rodeo, anywhere and just pick out a suit off the rack to fit them,” he said.

Marchitelli said he appreciated the clean form-fitting looks on Philadelphia Eagles players Jalen Hurts and Saquon Barkley.

“To have this many athletes showcased, I think that says a lot about how important sport is to culture, pop culture in America, how influential the athletes are,” he said.

The night’s vibe was inspired by the exhibit called “Superfine: Tailoring Black Style.” It’s the first Costume Institute show to focus exclusively on Black designers, and the first in more than 20 years devoted to menswear.

Variety

LOS ANGELES: A man was arrested after crashing a car into the front gate at **Jennifer Aniston’s** home in Los Angeles, authorities said Tuesday.

Police told KABC-TV that the “Friends” star was home at the time of the crash.

The incident occurred around 12:20 p.m. Monday on the 900 Block of Airole Way in the wealthy Bel Air neighborhood, according to Officer Jeff Lee of the LA Police Department.

Online property records show a home on that block owned by a trust run by Jennifer Aniston’s business manager.

Private security guards apprehended the driver and held him until police arrived. Lee described the suspect as a white middle-aged man. He has not been identified, and no charges had been filed as of Tuesday morning, Lee said.

“He used his vehicle to ram a gate to the residence,” Lee said.

Messages were left Tuesday with representatives and attorneys for Aniston. (AP)



Aniston

CARSON CITY, Nev.: A hearing Wednesday before Nevada’s high court could provide the first public window into a secretive legal dispute over who will control Rupert Murdoch’s powerful media empire after he dies.

The case has been unfolding behind closed doors in state court in Reno, with most documents under seal. But reporting by The New York Times, which said it obtained some of the documents, revealed Murdoch’s efforts to keep just one of his sons, Lachlan, in charge and ensure that Fox News maintains its conservative editorial slant.

Media outlets including the Times and The Associated Press are now asking the Nevada Supreme Court to unseal the case and make future hearings public. The court is scheduled to hear arguments in the afternoon in Carson City, the capital.

Murdoch’s media empire, which also includes The Wall Street Journal and New York Post, spans continents and helped to shape modern American politics. Lachlan Murdoch has been the head of Fox News and News Corp. since his father stepped down in 2023. (AP)

NEW YORK: A jury in the sex trafficking trial of Sean “Diddy” Combs is expected to be in place sometime Wednesday, lawyers told a federal judge after dozens of prospective jurors were questioned over two days to see if they can judge the music mogul fairly.

The lawyers measured the progress made over two days after Judge Arun Subramanian completed questioning dozens of prospective jurors to weed out any biases.

Opening statements are scheduled for Monday, when prosecutors will cast Combs as the head of a criminal organization who exploited his fame and fortune to sexually abuse women and destroy young lives. Defense attorneys plan to counter by saying Combs was not committing crimes when he engaged in inappropriate activity with consenting adults.

Combs, 55, has pleaded not guilty to a five-count indictment charging him with leading a racketeering conspiracy from 2004 to 2024 that resulted in various crimes, including kidnapping, arson, bribery and sex trafficking. (AP)



30 nurses undergo specialized emergency care training to strengthen health services.

Health Ministry launches advanced emergency nursing training

By Marwa Al Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

The Ministry of Health has announced the commencement of an advanced training program entitled, "Emergency Nursing."

This program, organized by the Nursing Services Department in collaboration with the Oman College of Health Sciences in the Sultanate of Oman, is considered a further advancement in the department's ongoing professional development strategy that started in April under a formal memorandum of understanding.

As per the official statement released Monday, the two-week program integrates theoretical instruction and practical application.

A total of 30 nursing professionals from accident and emergency departments in public hospitals will participate in the program; whose main objective is to enhance their expertise in emergency management and to cultivate their clinical proficiency, aligning with contemporary international standards.

The ministry stated that this program is part of a comprehensive and continuous series of professional initiatives, designed to improve emergency preparedness and response protocols in order to ensure patient safety and

to improve the overall quality of health services.

It also affirmed that the development of nursing proficiencies stands as a foundational element in achieving the strategic objectives of the national health system and in the enhancement of its key performance indicators.

It added that emphasis has been placed on the progress observed in the execution of specialized training programs that adhere to global best practices, reiterating that investment in human capital is pivotal to the realization of the national health vision and the assurance of high-quality, secure healthcare provision.

Tech Tip

Skype pretenders abound

Skype shut down for good, but users still have these options

LONDON, May 7, (AP): Skype is dead. What now?

Microsoft's shutdown of Skype on May 5 sent millions of users scrambling to find an alternative to the pioneering internet phone service.

Skype, which Microsoft bought in 2011, was beloved by a dwindling group of users who appreciated how it let them make cheap long-distance calls as well as communicate with other users through chat messages, voice or video calls.

Some liked its simplicity and ease of use - an advantage, for example, when setting up a communications app for an elderly parent living far away.

Or they just used it out of habit.

Skype was founded in 2003 and was among the first in a wave of communication services that used voice over internet protocol technology (VoIP), which converts audio into a digital signal.



This photo shows the icon for Microsoft's Skype app on a smartphone in New York, April 9, 2016. (AP)

Google users can access the online search giant's internet phone service to make calls from a smartphone or a desktop web browser. You can get your own Google Voice phone number and use features like call forwarding and voicemail. Or you can port your number from another service like Skype, but it will cost \$20.

Calls to U.S., Canadian or Puerto Rican numbers are free. Rates for other countries vary.

The free version of Google Voice is only available to U.S. residents physically located in the 48 contiguous states, so that means expatriate Americans can only use it if they registered before they moved overseas.

"You cannot sign up for a Google Voice number while outside the USA," according to a help page. "Do not try to circumvent this by using a VPN."

Owned by Japan's Rakuten, Viber was long considered one of the closest competitors to Skype. One key difference is that Skype users don't need a phone number and are identified by their usernames, while Viber users need a number to register for service.

Similar to Skype, Viber users can buy credit or packages to call phone numbers around the world but it's no longer possible to get a Viber number to receive calls.

The videoconferencing service that's become a byword for online company meetings offers a calling service, Zoom Phone, and features like number porting and the ability to send and receive SMS text messages.

Take note that Zoom Phone isn't free. There are various calling plans that involve a monthly subscription cost and extra fees for international calls.

Subscription

Microsoft users have the option of making calls on Teams, dubbed Teams Phone. Like Zoom Phone, you'll need to buy a subscription and pay extra for international calls.

But it's not an option for regular people because Microsoft says Teams Phone isn't for consumer use and is only available to small and medium-sized businesses.

If you absolutely need a U.S. number but live overseas, sign up for service with a low-cost virtual wireless carrier that offers cheap cellphone plans or pay-as-you-go rates.

One provider, Tello, offers monthly plans for as little as \$5 and says users can activate its service even if they're living outside the U.S.

Because mobile virtual network operators like Tello are essentially wireless phone companies that piggyback off a bigger carrier's physical network, you can't use it to make calls on a computer or an app.

There are a slew of Skype pretenders offering phone calls over the internet, such as Zoiper, VoIP.ms, CallCentric, Mytello, and Virtual Landline. Many are aimed at business users.

Some are capitalizing on Skype's disappearance. Hushed, which started as an anonymous calling app, bills itself as a Skype alternative. Users can buy a phone number from the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom or Puerto Rico or port their own number.

Safeguards natural resources

UAE leads the way in environmental sustainability via pioneering efforts

ABU DHABI, May 7, (KUNA): The United Arab Emirates maintained efforts in 2025 to ensure sustainability principles and environmental preservation through numerous pioneering initiatives and solutions aimed at protecting natural resources, enhancing biodiversity and promoting environmentally friendly practices.

These efforts align with national frameworks targeting climate neutrality by 2051.

The UAE has succeeded in reinforcing its position as a global hub for rallying efforts to confront the climate change challenge and accelerate environmental protection and sustainability through a series of leading international achievements and initiatives.

UAE President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan has affirmed commitment to contributing to the international climate action.

Sheikh Mohammad, in a statement marking the National Environment Day on February 4, said: "We are inspired by our rich legacy in sustainability, and we continue our steadfast approach to protecting the environment, preserving its resources, and supporting biodiversity for a sustainable future for upcoming generations."

Vice-President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum, called for the preservation of a nature-friendly lifestyle and the safeguarding of national achievements in sustainability domain.

Since the beginning of this year, the UAE has witnessed a series of accomplishments and initiatives that bolstered environmental sustainability at local and international levels. These include announcing the first-of-its-kind marine

exploration journey to conduct a comprehensive survey of the seabed in territorial waters aboard the research vessel "Jeon."

The Environment and Natural Preserves Authority in Sharjah announced the official inclusion of Sir Bu Nair Island Reserve in the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Green List of Protected Areas. It also announced the official membership of the Khor Kalba Mangrove Centre in the World Wetland Network.

Moreover, the UAE has unveiled the development of a geospatial data platform for agriculture and water resources, aimed at reducing groundwater consumption in the agricultural sector by two percent and increasing the use of non-conventional water sources for irrigation from 8-13 percent by 2027.

To reinforce its leadership in sustainability and environmental conservation, the UAE Government approved the launch of the National Green Building Certification Program - a voluntary classification system in its first phase that assesses and certifies sustainable buildings according to the highest environmental standards.

The program targets commercial buildings, hospitality and hotel establishments, industrial facilities, government buildings and residential complexes.

The Green Building Certification Program supports the National Energy and Water Demand Management Program 2050, which aims to reduce energy consumption by 50 percent and water consumption by 40 percent by 2050.

During the "Year of Sustainability 2024," the UAE issued more than 87 policies, initiatives and regulatory decisions in the sustainability sector.

Increase in tooth decay feared

Utah dentists brace for fluoride ban

SALT LAKE CITY, May 7, (AP): With Utah's first-in-the-nation ban on fluoride in public drinking water set to take effect Wednesday, dentists who treat children and low-income patients say they're bracing for an increase in tooth decay among the state's most vulnerable people.

Republican Gov. Spencer Cox signed the law against the recommendation of many dentists and national health experts who warn removing fluoride will harm tooth development, especially in young patients without regular access to dental care.

Florida is poised to become the second state to ban fluoride under a bill that Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis announced Tuesday he would sign soon. The Ohio and South Carolina legislatures are considering similar measures.

Supporters of states' efforts to ban fluoride said they did not dispute that it could have some benefits but thought people should not be given it by the government without their informed consent.

"It really shouldn't be forced on people," DeSantis said.

U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has applauded Utah for being the first state to enact a ban and said he plans to direct the Centers for Disease Control and Preven-

tion to stop recommending fluoridation nationwide.

A majority of Utah water systems already did not add fluoride. The state ranked 44th in the nation for the percentage of residents receiving fluoridated water, with about 2 in 5 receiving it in 2022, according to CDC data. The law will impact about 1.6 million people in Salt Lake City and elsewhere in northern Utah who are losing fluoridation, state officials say.

Dentists in Salt Lake City over the past week said many patients were unaware of the upcoming ban, and most did not realize the city had been adding fluoride to their drinking water for nearly two decades.

"I did not know about a ban," said Noe Figueroa, a patient at Salt Lake Donated Dental Services, a clinic that provides free or heavily discounted dental treatment to low-income residents. "Well, that's not good. I don't think that's good at all."

At Donated Dental, providers expect their monthslong waitlist for children's procedures to grow significantly and their need for volunteer dentists to skyrocket. The effects of the ban in children's teeth will likely be visible within the next year, said Sasha Harvey, the clinic's executive director.

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The ultimate leveler

Giantkilling Bodø/Glimt has a secret weapon to bring down Europe’s giants

OSLO, May 7, (AP): Located north of the Arctic Circle and needing to deal with brutal weather conditions, Norwegian soccer team Bodø/Glimt has an artificial playing field that’s built to handle just about anything.

Including much bigger rivals.

That could be bad news for Premier League giant Tottenham Hotspur when the teams meet in the Europa League semifinal second leg on Thursday.

Spurs leads 3-1 after the first game, but that advantage could look slender once play gets underway at the Aspmyra Stadion in the fishing town of Bodø, more than 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) north of Oslo.

Despite the town having a population of around 55,000, Bodø/Glimt - unheralded outside of Norway - continues to pull off shock wins against famous opponents on home turf. And it is that artificial surface that seems to be such a leveler for teams unused to playing in sometimes Arctic conditions and away from traditional grass.

Evangelos Marinakis, president of Greek team Olympiacos, was critical after a 3-0 defeat in the Europa League in

March, saying “we played on a pitch that is not like other European stadiums” and claiming one of his players “got injured due to the pitch conditions.”

Olympiacos won the second leg 2-1 at home, but was eliminated 4-2 on aggregate, with Marinakis lamenting: “what truly matters is what happened in the first match.”

It is certainly unusual to see a high level match like the semifinal of a major European competition played on artificial turf, which is criticized for the way the ball rolls and bounces in comparison to grass.

Sometimes called plastic pitches, they were banned in England in 1988 due to higher rates of injuries and inconsistent playability. But UEFA allows approved artificial pitches to be used up to and including the semifinals of its competitions - the Champions League, Europa League and Conference League.

“High level football in (a) plastic pitch is not high level football,” Fenerbahce manager Jose Mourinho said after a Champions League qualifying game against Lugano last July, which was also played on artificial turf. “The ball is

slow, the players cannot dribble, they run with the ball and the ball stays behind. The game is slow, so honestly I don’t understand why UEFA allows Champions League in (a) plastic pitch.”

Scottish Premiership clubs have voted to ban artificial pitches in the top flight from the beginning of season 2026-27.

World governing body FIFA also allows approved artificial surfaces, but is relaying synthetic pitches as grass for the men’s World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mexico next year.

Bodø/Glimt’s record at its 9000 capacity stadium would certainly seem to point to an advantage and it has played a major role in it becoming the first Norwegian team to reach the semifinals of a top European club competition.

As well as Olympicos, it has won home games against Lazio, Porto, Besiktas and FC Twente this season. It beat Red Star Belgrade in a home Champions League qualifier earlier in the campaign, but went out on aggregate.

It also thrashed Roma - then managed by Mourinho - 6-1 at home in the Conference League in 2021.

A source of encouragement for Tottenham is the fact that Bodø/Glimt has lost all four of its games against English opposition - including a 3-2 defeat at Manchester United this season.

Tottenham manager Ange Postecoglou, however, lost 5-1 on aggregate against the Norwegians when in charge of Celtic in 2022. That included a 2-0 defeat at the Aspmyra Stadion.

“It is on artificial grass, but it’s still a game of football and I’ve been there, I’ve played there with Celtic,” he said after. “I know the experience and what is important for us is that we need to replicate what we did today (in the first leg).”

“Irrespective of the surface, if we’re as disciplined and organised as we were today, with and without the ball, it won’t matter what the surface is, I think it will make it really difficult for us to be stopped.”

Bodø/Glimt’s stadium is one of the most northerly in world soccer at 67 degrees latitude. The town, on the west coast of Norway, is known as a destination to see the northern lights.

Gujarat moves to top of IPL, ends Mumbai’s win streak

Game twice interrupted by rain

MUMBAI, India, May 7, (AP): Gujarat Titans rose to the top of Indian Premier League with a thrilling three-wicket victory over Mumbai Indians on DLS method.

In a game twice interrupted by rain, Gujarat reached the revised target of 147 for the loss of seven wickets of the final ball as Deepak Chahar couldn’t defend 15 runs.

Mumbai had earlier lost five wickets for 27 runs in the middle overs and was restricted to 155-8 with Will Jacks (53) scoring his first half-century of the season.

Gujarat with 16 points is at No. 1 ahead of Royal Challengers Bangalore on net run-rate while Mumbai is at No. 4 with 14 points as the battle for four playoff spots got intense.

“There was a little bit of chaos when we came in to bat after the rain,” Gujarat captain Shubman Gill said. “But always good to have a W (beside your name) after the match.”

When rain first interrupted the game, Gujarat was eight runs ahead on DLS before Mumbai stormed back through its pace bowlers when play resumed.

Gujarat lost four wickets in space of 16 balls as Jasprit Bumrah clean bowled captain Gill (43) and Shahrukh Khan (6) to finish with 2-19.

Sherfane Rutherford smashed two fours and two sixes in his quickfire 28 off 15 balls but Trent Boult trapped him leg before wicket and Rashid Khan also fell lbw against Ashwani Kumar’s searing yorker before rain took the players



Gujarat Titans’ captain Shubman Gill plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Mumbai Indians and Gujarat Titans at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, India. (AP)

off the field for the second time.

When play resumed for one last time well past midnight, Rahul Tewatia kept his cool against Chahar and smashed the fast bowler for a straight boundary off the first ball and Gerald Coetzee smacked a six over long off to bring down the target to four off three balls.

With scores leveled and two balls to go, Chahar had Coetzee holed out at mid-wicket and captain Hardik Pandya could have run-out Arshad Khan off the final ball, but missed the stumps as Mumbai’s six-match winning

streak ended in the tournament.

“Fought well with the total we had,” Pandya said. “It was a game of margins. It was definitely not a 150-wicket. It was a 175-wicket, we were short by 20-25 runs.”

Earlier, Gujarat made amends of its three dropped catches inside the batting powerplay to contain Mumbai.

Jacks was dropped before he had scored and Suryakumar Yadav also got reprieve on 10 before scoring 35, his 13th successive score of 25 or more in T20 cricket. Both batters combined in a 71-run stand

before Gujarat spinner Sai Kishore (2-34) and Khan (1-21) put the brakes in the middle overs.

Yadav spooned an easy catch at mid-off as he tried to play Kishore inside out and Jacks holed out to Kishore at deep square leg as he tried to drill Khan on the leg-side.

Gill picked up three catches as Mumbai lost momentum after its two set batters got dismissed before Corbin Bosch made 27 off 22 balls and helped five-time champion to cross the 150-run mark in the final over.

Ming and Barshim to speak at OCA General Assembly in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The 45th General Assembly of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), set to begin in Kuwait next Sunday, will feature notable Asian athletes including Chinese basketball legend Yao Ming and Qatari Olympic champion Mutaz Barshim. Both will deliver speeches at the event, with Ming discussing professionalism in sports and Barshim sharing insights on the role of champions in international championships.

The General Assembly, held under the theme “One Asia,” will see the participation of officials from National Olympic Committees (NOCs) representing 45 Asian countries. Approximately 400 sports figures from across Asia and beyond are expected to attend the two-day gathering. A cultural celebration will take place at the



Mutaz Barshim

Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center, showcasing folklore performances from China, India, Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Lebanon, and Kuwait to highlight the unity of Asian sports.

Johnson gets special invite

PGA Championship sets field for second major of the year

WASHINGTON, May 7, (AP): The PGA Championship released its field Tuesday for next week at Quail Hollow, leaning heavily on the top 100 in the world ranking and giving full consideration to players from the Saudi-funded LIV Golf League.

The PGA Championship tries to get the top 100 in the world ranking, which won’t be the case because No. 24 Billy Horschel announced on social media he will have hip surgery next week.

Also missing will be Shaun Norris of South Africa at No. 99 in the world. The PGA of America said he declined his invitation because of his mother’s health.

The PGA Championship is May 15-18 at Quail Hollow in Charlotte, North Carolina. Xander Schauffele is the defending champion and Justin Thomas is the last PGA Championship winner at Quail Hollow in 2017.

LIV Golf will have 16 players in the 156-man field, the same number as last year. That includes John Catlin, a reserve who has played three LIV tournaments this year. He qualified through his Asian Tour performance.

Dustin Johnson required a special invitation because the PGA takes the last five winners of the Masters, instead of a Masters champion getting a five-year exemption. Johnson won the Masters in November 2020 during rescheduling from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among the LIV players getting a spot was Tom McKibbin of Northern Ireland, who joined the rival league this year. He is No. 115 in the world ranking. His lone victory was the European Open in Germany in 2023, and he spent only two weeks in the top 100 before joining LIV.

Also getting special invitations were Joaquin Niemann, a three-time winner on LIV this year, and Sergio Garcia. They were notified months ago. Patrick Reed sewed up his spot with his third-place finish in the Masters.

The PGA Championship does not have a specific category for the top 100 in the world ranking. It’s more an unwritten tradition to fit them under “special invitations.”

Unlike the U.S. Open and British Open, the PGA chose not to create a category for LIV. That’s similar to the Masters, which can invite players through its special exemptions.

“That’s what we have done the last three years and continue to do so,” said Kerry Haigh, the championships director for the PGA of America. “We have that flexibility to be able to invite those players who are deserving from whichever tour.”

The PGA of America takes the top 70 from PGA points - a PGA Tour money list from the last 12 months - and then goes beyond that to fill the field. In this case, it did not go beyond the top 70, leaning more on the world ranking.

The world ranking formula was changed in 2023 and is more heavily weighted toward PGA Tour events because of stronger fields.

Patrick Fishburn was bumped out of the top 70 in PGA points the final week to No. 71. He also is No. 110 in the world. Fishburn wound up getting in when Norris declined his invitation.

Rico Hoey, the second alternate, replaced Horschel.

Michael Thorbjornsen also is assured a spot in the field. The PGA is reserving two places for winners of the Trustist Championship and the Myrtle Beach Classic this week on the PGA Tour if they are not already eligible. Thorbjornsen is the only player at the Trustist Championship not yet eligible for Quail Hollow.

Next in line would be Victor Perez of France.

The PGA Championship also offered an invitation to Rickie Fowler, who has plunged to No. 125 in the world. There is a category for players in the most recent Ryder Cup - Fowler was at Marco Simone in Italy - provided they are among the top 100 in the world.

Fowler’s first PGA Tour victory was at Quail Hollow in 2012.



Tommy Fleetwood practice out of a sand trap on the 16th hole, Tuesday, May 6, 2025, during practice for The Trustist Championship golf tournament at the Philadelphia Cricket Club in Flourtown, Pa. (AP)

Athletes left in the dark

NCAA settlement leaves murky future for non-revenue sports

WASHINGTON, May 7, (AP): The \$2.8 billion NCAA settlement awaiting final approval from a federal judge is touted as a solution for thousands of athletes to finally get the money they deserve and provide some clarity to recruiting. For some, it’s too late.

Sophomore distance runner Jake Rimmel says he was one of five walk-ons cut from Virginia Tech’s cross country team after Thanksgiving break. Rimmel decided to take a leave of absence and train independently while considering his next move - something that’s proven easier said than done.

“Everyone’s got their hands tied right now, so there’s just not many opportunities for me,” Rimmel told the Associated Press. “I’ve just been having to bet on myself and trust the process. It’s just been lonely. I’ve been at home training by myself and living with my family again.”

Pending approval, the so-called House settlement will allow schools to share revenue with athletes directly for use of their name, image and likeness (NIL). That could secure generational wealth for some but not others, and replacing scholarship caps with roster limitations is expected to leave walk-ons, partial scholarship earners, non-revenue sport athletes and high school recruits at risk. There are deep concerns about the potential impact on sports that feed the U.S. Olympic teams.

U.S. District Judge Claudia Wilken told attorneys handling the settlement to come back to her with a plan soon to protect athletes currently or



Attorney Steve Berman arrives at federal court in Oakland, Calif. (AP)

recently on rosters at schools across the country, a request seen as a way to soften the blow.

What that looks like is anyone’s guess for now, but thousands of athletes like Rimmel have no idea where they might be this fall or are in jeopardy of no longer playing college sports at all. And many athletes balancing school and their sport are unaware of what’s at stake and have more questions than answers.

Belmont track and field athlete Sabrina Oostburg said everything she knows about the settlement is

from personal research.

“My school doesn’t do a lot of education around it (the settlement). Every now and then, we’ll be told, ‘Hey, if you want to sign up to potentially get some money from this House settlement that’s happening, you can do that,’” Oostburg said. “It’s almost like the education we’re being given is optional to consume, even though it’s limited.”

Oostburg is used to taking matters into her own hands, securing over 50 NIL deals by herself. She has contacted lawyers and asked for up-

dates on the settlement, but she’s not quite reassured. The chaotic nature of college athletics so obvious to the public is even worse for the athletes themselves.

“Being a college athlete, it’s so hard to stay up to date with what’s happening every day because it’s so constantly changing,” she said.

Smaller, non-revenue-generating programs don’t often have a point person to navigate NIL deals or educate athletes. At Belmont, Oostburg said, NIL-related responsibilities are managed by an already busy compliance office.

“To take time to learn about what’s happening is just so time-consuming, especially if you’re not in that one percent or one of the football players where they have people dedicated to helping them stay up to date,” she said.

For now, thousands of athletes are trying to wrap up their spring semesters and many of them have league tournaments or even NCAA championship competition ahead before what many expect will be the final summer before college sports sees some of the most dramatic changes in history. For athletes like Rimmel, those changes are already here.

Some of the others cut from the Virginia Tech program have given up on their dreams of collegiate running altogether. Rimmel hasn’t given up completely; he spoke with his former coach recently, who said the Hokies’ athletics department is still trying to figure out what’s to come.

“I’m still kind of hoping I might be able to find my way back there next fall,” he said.

Briatore to continue as executive advisor

Alpine promotes Colapinto to replace Doohan

LONDON, May 7, (AP): Formula 1 team Alpine has changed its driver lineup to promote Franco Colapinto for at least the next five Grand Prix races at the expense of Jack Doohan.

Alpine confirmed the change Wednesday, a day after Oliver Oakes quit as team principal.

The team said Flavio Briatore will continue as executive advisor and will cover Oakes' duties.

"Colapinto will be paired with Pierre Gasly from the Emilia-Romagna Grand Prix, ahead of a new evaluation before the British Grand Prix in July," Alpine said in a statement.

Alpine is ninth in the F1 constructors' standings after six rounds. The next race weekend is May 16-18 at Imola.

At Sunday's Miami Grand Prix, Doohan ran into another car on the opening lap and then crashed on



In this file photo, Alpine principal Oliver Oakes listens to reporters during a press conference ahead of the Formula One Miami Grand Prix auto race in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

the second lap. Media reports of a driver rota-

tion were dismissed ahead of the Miami GP weekend by Oakes, who had indicated that the rookie Australian driver would remain in the seat.

Doohan, who didn't score a point in his seven GP races and had a best finish of 13th, will revert to being the team's reserve driver.

The son of five-time motorcycle world champion Mick Doohan, Jack Doohan made his Formula 1 debut in the last race of 2024 and started this year for Alpine at the season-opening Australian Grand Prix.

He replaced Esteban Ocon, who left Alpine after a disappointing 2024.

Colapinto joined Alpine as a reserve driver in January after racing in 2024 for Williams, where he earned five points after replacing Logan Sargeant in August.

Al-Tomoooh Club & Global Bilingual Academy participate in sports day

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Players from the Kuwaiti Al Tomoooh Sports Club and students from the Global Bilingual Academy, in collaboration with Special Olympics Kuwait, participated in a dynamic sports day held at the academy's facilities in Mahboula.

The event featured a variety of activities, including football, basketball, badminton, and table tennis matches, alongside several recreational and social events.

The sports day was attended by Special Olympics Kuwait's National Director, Rehab Bouresli; the Secretary-General of the Al Tomoooh Club, Sadika Al-Ansari; and the Academy's Vice Principal for Intermediate and Secondary Schools, Amani Al-Daraisa.

Rehab Bouresli expressed her delight at the spirit of camaraderie and cooperation displayed during the event, highlighting the positive impact of allowing the club's play-



Players in action during the sports day.

ers to interact and compete across various sports. She emphasized the significance of the competitive matches, which included games between the club and academy players, as well as inclusive matches between mixed teams of players with

disabilities and their non-disabled peers. These activities were part of the Unified Champions Schools program, which promotes educational integration through sports, laying the foundation for inclusive and holistic school communities.

Pacers rally past Cavaliers to take commanding lead



Brandin Podziemski (2) grabs for a loose ball against Mike Conly (10) and Jaden McDaniels (3) in the first half as the Golden State Warriors played the Minnesota Timberwolves in Game 1 of the Second Round of the NBA Playoffs at Target Center in Minneapolis, Minn. (AP)

Warriors grab Game 1 in Minnesota despite Curry's absence

CLEVELAND, May 7, (AP): Tyrese Haliburton made a 3-pointer with 1.1 seconds remaining and the Indiana Pacers scored the final eight points in 47.9 seconds to stun the short-handed and top-seeded Cleveland Cavaliers 120-119 on Tuesday night to take a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference semifinals series.

Haliburton scored 11 of his 19 points in the final 12 minutes. After Andrew Nembhard stole an inbound pass by Cleveland's Max Strus with 27.5 seconds remaining, Indiana tried to find a potential tying 3-pointer before Haliburton drove inside and got fouled.

He made the first free throw, but missed the second. Haliburton got the offensive rebound

and dribbled out to the 3-point line, where he made it from the top of the key.

Myles Turner and Aaron Nesmith led No. 4 seed Indiana with 23 points apiece. It's the first time the Pacers have won the first two games of a playoff series on the road since a 1994 first-round set against Orlando.

Donovan Mitchell scored 48 points for Cleveland, who were

missing three key players, including two starters. NBA Defensive Player of the Year Evan Mobley (left ankle) and key reserve De'Andre Hunter (right thumb) were injured in Game 1, while Darius Garland (left big toe) missed his fourth straight postseason game.

Warriors 99, Timberwolves 88 In Minneapolis, Buddy Hield and Draymond Green delivered

from 3-point range with Golden State star Stephen Curry suddenly sidelined by a hamstring strain, and the Warriors opened the second-round series with an inspired victory over Minnesota.

Hield picked up where he left off in the Game 7 win at Houston that finished the first round by scoring 24 points on 5-for-8 3-point shooting.

Jimmy Butler had 20 points, 11 rebounds, and eight assists, and Green had four first-half 3s on his way to 18 points, as the Warriors used 12 players, plenty of hustle, and lockdown defense to overcome the concerning departure of their sharpshooting leader.

The home teams have yet to win in the second round of these NBA playoffs. Minnesota has another chance to get one in Game 2 on Thursday.

Anthony Edwards had 23 points and 14 rebounds after a particularly rough start, finishing 9 for 22 from the floor. Reid had 19 points and Julius Randle added 16 points for the Wolves, who finished 5 for 29 from behind the arc and trailed by 23 points late in the third.



Indiana Pacers' Myles Turner (33) blocks a shot by Cleveland Cavaliers guard Donovan Mitchell, center, in the second half during Game 2 in the Eastern Conference semifinals of the NBA basketball playoffs in Cleveland. (AP)

FIFA World Cup in US very special event: Trump

WASHINGTON, May 7, (KUNA): President Donald Trump affirmed on late Tuesday that his country's hosting of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, alongside Canada and Mexico, would be a momentous occasion, saying that he had tasked the American organizing team to make the event "very special."

This came during the FIFA task force meeting on the 2026 FIFA World Cup in the East Room of the White House.

During the meeting, President Trump said, "In my first term, I negotiated the return of the World Cup to America. And now, in my second term, I'll have the honor of hosting the World Cup for the first time of any president in more than 30 years."

"Next summer, we'll host the official 2026 World Cup Tournament, where 48 national teams will compete in 78 matches right here in the USA. And that will be uh, something very, very different and very special."

He added, "Over 1 billion viewers... You're going to have one of the big -- I guess, one of the biggest, uh, viewerships of any sport of -- at any time."

"These events will also generate tens of billions of dollars in economic activity for local businesses and create thousands and thousands of jobs for American workers."

Trump stated, "I've directed my entire team to do everything within our power to make the World Cup an unprecedented success. And that's what it's going to be. We're going to make sure of it. The State Department, the Department of Homeland Security in every part of the US government will be working to ensure that these events are safe and successful."

"And those traveling to America to watch the competition have a seamless experience during every part of their visit. It's going to be very special. Together, we will ensure that the 2026 World Cup will be the best run soc-

cer tournament the world has ever seen. This is going to blow every other tournament you did."

In statements on Truth Social, President Trump said, "I am proud to announce the appointment of Andrew Giuliani as the Executive Director of the President's Task Force on the 2026 FIFA World Cup."

"During my First Term, Andrew served as a Special Assistant to the President and Associate Director of the Office of Public Liaison, playing a key role in creating the system that enabled athletes from around the World to re-enter the United States during the Reopening of America in 2020."

"Additionally, Carlos Cordeiro will serve as Senior Advisor. Carlos is currently Senior Advisor to... (FIFA), and was previously the President of the United States Soccer Federation, where he was Chairman of the winning bid for the 2026 FIFA World Cup."

Kuwaiti ref Ashwaq Al-Attar takes part in World Para Weightlifting Championship

TBILISI, May 7: Kuwaiti referee Ashwaq Al-Attar is officiating at the World Para Weightlifting Championship in Tbilisi, Georgia, which began yesterday and runs until May 14. Al-Attar's participation comes at the invitation of the International Weightlifting Federation.

With extensive experience in Gulf, Arab, and Asian championships, Al-Attar has also officiated at notable events such as the African Open Championship in Cairo, the Fazza International Championship in Dubai, and the Saudi Arabian Championship in Riyadh.



Ashwaq Al-Attar

López has appeal against ban dismissed

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, May 7, (AP): The Court of Arbitration for Sport said on Wednesday it has dismissed an appeal by Colombian cyclist Miguel Ángel López against a four-year ban for doping.

López was found guilty by the anti-doping tribunal of the International Cycling Union (UCI) of "use and possession of a prohibited substance (Menotropin)" at the 2022 Giro d'Italia. Menotropin is a female fertility drug that can stimulate production of testosterone in men.

López appealed the ban in May 2024. CAS said its panel "is comfortably satisfied that UCI has discharged its burden of proof and unanimously ruled

that Mr. López possessed a prohibited substance ... and used a prohibited substance."

It said the appeal is dismissed and the verdict by the cycling body is fully upheld.

López finished third in both the Giro d'Italia and Spanish Vuelta in 2018. He was also fourth in the 2022 Vuelta, and won the toughest mountain stage at the 2020 Tour de France.

His ban expires in July 2027, when he will be 33.

The UCI said López was caught in the Operation Ilex investigation led by Spanish authorities concerning a doctor who worked in the sport, Marcos Maynar.

Best of the Rest

Wrestler banned for 2 years: Olympic silver medalist wrestler Iakobi Kajaia was banned for two years over missed doping control tests, the International Testing Agency said Wednesday.

Kajaia took silver for Georgia at the Tokyo Olympics held in 2021 in the men's Greco-Roman 130-kilogram category. He did not compete at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

The ITA said it filed an investigation in May last year alleging Kajaia broke so-called whereabouts rules three times in a 12-month period starting in 2023.

International athletes must specify where they can be found for one hour each day to give an unannounced doping control sample.

The agency said "the athlete could not be located based on the whereabouts information he had provided."

The 31-year-old wrestler was banned until April 2027 and had his results in 2024 disqualified by an anti-doping tribunal at the Court of Arbitration for Sport. He can challenge the ruling at a CAS appeal body.

Kajaia is a two-time Olympian who placed seventh in the super-heavyweight class at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics. In Tokyo, he lost the gold medal bout to Mijaín López of Cuba. (AP)

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NEWS



Ruan of Brazil's Sao Paulo, center, eyes the ball, challenged by Miguel Trauco of Peru's Alianza Lima, left, during a Copa Libertadores Group D soccer match at Alejandro Villanueva stadium in Lima, Peru. Sao Paulo won 2-0. (AP)

Sports

San Siro erupts as Inter reaches final

Heartbreak for Barcelona

MILAN, May 7, (AP): Inter Milan has another Champions League final to look forward to. Once the players catch their breath, that is.

In the end, it took extra time, two astonishing comebacks, and 13 goals to separate Barcelona and Inter and see the Italian club, which was a mere seconds away from elimination, prevail 7-6 on aggregate after winning another rollercoaster encounter 4-3.



Inter Milan's Davide Frattesi celebrates after scoring his side's fourth goal during the Champions League semifinal second leg soccer match between Inter Milan and Barcelona at San Siro stadium in Milan, Italy. (AP)

Substitute Davide Frattesi was the extra-time star for Inter, firing home in the 99th minute to leave the Barcelona players slumped to the ground while his Nerazzurri teammates, including those on the bench, were racing to celebrate with him.

"I don't know what happened tonight. I'm lucky I managed to finish the game. I screamed so much (in celebration) that I saw everything black," Frattesi told Italian broadcaster Sky.

Moments earlier, he'd been encouraging the already loud San Siro crowd to make more noise and the atmosphere grew more feverish after Frattesi delivered on his super-sub reputation again. "That's part of my career," the midfielder said. "I wasn't given so much incredible talent, but I am always the last one to give up and the first one to believe we can do it. At 3-3, I told Marcus (Thuram) that we would go through."

Inter coach Simone Inzaghi thinks his squad has shown in wins over Barcelona in the semis and Bayern Munich in the quarterfinals that it can compete against the very best.

"My players have been extraordinary; they've put out two monstrous performances to get to this final," he said. "We have to continue. The final will be played against a really great team, whether it's Arsenal or PSG. Barcelona and Bayern are probably the best teams in Europe at the moment, but it will still be difficult."

There was little sign at halftime of the drama to play out. Inter was comfortably leading 2-0 after Lautaro Martinez scored and earned a penalty, which was converted by Hakan Calhanoglu.

But Barcelona had been in that position before, having gone 2-0 down early last week in the first leg before securing a thrilling 3-3 draw.



Barcelona's Inigo Martinez tackles Inter Milan's Marcus Thuram during the Champions League semifinal second leg soccer match between Inter Milan and Barcelona at San Siro stadium in Milan, Italy. (AP)

And Eric Garcia scored nine minutes after the break before Dani Olmo headed in the equalizer six minutes later. Raphina appeared to have secured the win for Barcelona when he put the Spanish club ahead two minutes before full time, tucking away the rebound after Yann Sommer had saved his initial shot.

However, 37-year-old Francesco Acerbi astonishingly leveled in stoppage time - with his first goal in European competition - to add another 30 minutes. Frattesi had proved crucial off the substitutes' bench before,

both for Italy and Inter, and so he was again, controlling Mehdi Taremi's pass and beating Pau Cubarsi before curling past Wojciech Szczesny.

Barcelona almost leveled again, but Sommer made a fingertip save to push Lamine Yamal's shot past his post.

Barcelona coach Hansi Flick said he told his players "I know everyone is disappointed ... but at the end we can be proud of our performance."

"I'm proud of my team," he said. "We have to accept it, and we start again next season."

Qatar and Egypt advance to semifinals

Morocco and Egypt Ambassadors attend 10th Arab Handball Cup in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The 10th Arab Handball Cup, held in Kuwait at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex until May 11, saw notable diplomatic attendance. His Excellency Ali Ben Issa, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco, and Mohamed Barada, the Moroccan Consul, were present for the second day of the tournament, watching the Morocco-UAE match. During this match, the Moroccan Ambassador presented the Best Player award to Moroccan national team member Al-Zarki Abdullah.

Also attending was His Excellency Osama Shaltout, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Kuwait, who observed the Egypt-Iraq match. He presented the Best Player award to Egyptian star Mo-

hamed Khalaf.

Ambassador Ali Ben Issa expressed his satisfaction with the tournament's organization, praising both the Arab and Kuwaiti Handball Federations for raising the level of competition. He extended his best wishes to all the participating Arab teams.

Ambassador Osama Shaltout thanked Kuwait, represented by the Handball Federation, for hosting the Arab Handball Championship, which had been missing for several years. He emphasized that the tournament not only served as a competitive event but also as a celebration of Arab unity, fostering a friendly and fraternal atmosphere. Shaltout noted that the championship provided excellent preparation for future competitions,

including continental championships and World Cup qualifiers.

The Egyptian youth handball team delivered an impressive 39-31 victory over Iraq in the second round of Group A, advancing further in the tournament.

The second round of the group stage also saw Qatar defeat Tunisia 31-30 and Morocco triumph over the UAE 33-25. These results secured Qatar's qualification to the semi-finals, topping Group B with 4 points. Tunisia followed in second place on goal difference over Saudi Arabia. In Group A, Egypt topped the table on goal difference over Bahrain, with both teams on two points, while Iraq withdrew from the competition without earning any points.



Ambassador of Egypt presents the Best Player award.



Moroccan Ambassador presents the Best Player award.

Al-Jumaan crowned champ, Qurain sweeps top spots at Kuwait Squash Championship



Winners pose with official after the closing ceremony.

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Qadsia's Athbi Al-Jumaan was crowned champion in the general category at the conclusion of the seventh Kuwait Squash Championship, held at the Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah Center at the Federation's headquarters in South Surra.

Khaled Al-Fawzan from Qurain secured second place, while Saif Heikal, also from Qurain, finished third.

Squash Federation President Walid Al-Sumaie, along with Vice President Khaled Al-Habib, and

members Adel Al-Gharib, Ahmed Al-Adwani, and Hamad Al-Daghim, were present to award the winners.

In the overall standings, Qurain topped both the general and junior categories, with Khaithan finishing second in the public and third in the junior categories. Yarmouk Club claimed third place in the public category, while Al-Arabi Club secured second place in the junior category.

In the under-19 category, Khaled Al-Fawzan from Qurain took first place, while Abdullah Hani

from Qurain won the under-17 title. In the under-15 category, Issa Al-Najadah from Al-Arabi triumphed.

Salman Al-Saleh from Qurain emerged victorious in the under-13 category, and Fahad Joul from Qurain claimed first place in the under-11 category.

In the women's category, Basmala Al-Shami from Al-Arabi clinched first place, Aisha Al-Madhen from Qurain finished second, and Sara Al-Ali from Salwa Club took third place.

Historic achievement as Burgan qualifies for final

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Burgan made history by qualifying for the Premier League Volleyball final, where it will face defending champion Kuwait Club on Friday at 7:00 pm. The match will be preceded by a third-place playoff between Kazma and Al-Arabi.

For the first time in the club's history, Burgan advanced to the final after defeating Al-Arabi 3-1 in their semi-final playoff at the Kuwait Volleyball Association Hall in Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex. The set scores were 25-20, 23-25, 28-26, and 25-16.

In a three-match playoff format, Kuwait Club won the first match 3-0, while Burgan SC claimed the second match 3-1, solidifying its position as the "dark horses" of the current season and setting its sights on the title.

Burgan Club Chairman Anwar Al-Otaibi congratulated the club's fans and board members on this historic achievement. He emphasized that this qualification was the result of meticulous planning by the team's technical and administrative staff and the dedication of the players. Al-Otaibi also ac-



Burgan Club Chairman Anwar Al-Otaibi joins the celebration.

knowledgeed the club's management's continuous support for the team's success and urged fans to rally behind the team as it aims to make history in tomorrow's final.

Best of the Rest

Jovic and Nava earn wild-card entries: Iva Jovic, a 17-year-old, and Emilio Nava, a 23-year-old, claimed French Open wild-card invitations from the U.S. Tennis Association on Monday by finishing atop the standings based on points earned at tournaments across five weeks.

Jovic will participate in her third consecutive Grand Slam event; she reached the second round at the U.S. Open last September and the Australian Open in January. She is ranked 120th this week. At Flushing Meadows, Jovic, then 16, became the youngest American to win a women's main-draw match at the U.S. Open since 2000, eliminating 2023 Australian Open semifinalist Magda Linette of Poland. (AP)