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Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

To the land of multiple flags ... Iraq will return to its senses ... We are patiently waiting

ANYONE observing the Iraqi media will notice the frequent media campaigns launched by mouthpieces that are known for their anti-Kuwaiti sentiments. The noise ebbs and flows from time to time, depending on the interests of those running them.

At times, these campaigns are nothing more than baseless noise, while at other times, they aim to create false heroes through social media. Regardless of the motive, these campaigns harm Iraq and its people in the end.

It is well known that since 2003, Iraq has become a land of multiple flags, each with its own financial and political sponsors. None of these flags truly represent Iraq. They are reminiscent of the Baath Party's attempt to monopolize the representation of Iraqis during its rule.

Saddam Hussein was the dictator who dragged this

once-great country through one hell after another. Then came the American occupation, leaving Iraqis vulnerable to the fangs of two monsters: terrorism and sectarian gangs. Despite this, there are still those who seek to turn back the clock.

So, we say: If Saddam Hussein's reckless adventure, represented by the brutal invasion of Kuwait, has revived among some weak-minded individuals the desire to adopt the King Ghazi and later Abdul Karim Qasim's slogan that Kuwait was part of Iraq, then these people are only harming their own country. They should have realized on February 26, 1991, that adopting such an assertion brought nothing but great misfortune upon their people.

I would like to assure those who still dream of realizing this illusion that they can never nullify international agreements, UN resolutions, or the Iraq-Ku-

wait border demarcation treaty. They seem unaware that all of these agreements fall under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, making them impossible to undo. These individuals should understand that the eternal relationship between the Kuwaiti and Iraqi peoples is far greater than the noise of their media campaigns. Kuwait has stood by Iraq at every stage, both government and people, even during the most difficult moments. Therefore, these voices will not harm Kuwait.

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Kuwait set to host Lebanon president

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Lebanese President Joseph Aoun, accompanied by an official delegation, is set to arrive in Kuwait on Sunday on an official visit, where he will hold official talks with His

Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, Lebanese Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji said Saturday that the upcoming visit by Lebanese President Joseph Aoun will express deep appreciation and gratitude to the Kuwaiti people and

leadership for their nonstop support to Lebanon.

Speaking to KUNA, the minister underlined the significance of continued support extended by the State of Kuwait to the government and people of Lebanon under various circumstances, saying, "Kuwait has always been supportive of Lebanon and a key partner of its development process."

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Aoun



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

Editor-in-Chief of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers, Ahmed Al-Jarallah, along with Major General Eng. Faisal Al-Jazzaf, are pictured at the forefront of the attendees during the Youth Forum, part of the 20th Arab Media Forum on Saturday.

Kuwait opens youth-driven forum on media, tech shifts

By Mohammad Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Youth Forum, which is part of the 20th Arab Media Forum, kicked off Saturday, with a huge turnout of media professionals.

With the theme, "Media Challenges in Light of Advancing Technology and Digital Transfor-

mation," this year's forum is under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

The first day of the forum featured four diverse dialogue sessions, with a number of media professionals and digital content creators in attendance.

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Kuwait's rights blueprint gets UN seal of approval

Justice minister vows follow-up on recommendations

GENEVA, May 10, (KUNA): The UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) endorsed unanimously on Friday Kuwait's fourth report in which it affirmed boosting its national system to safeguard human rights through field, constitutional and legislative reforms.

This came in a UNHRC session held in Geneva where Kuwait's delegation, led by Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait, submitted the country's national report examined by the member states.

Speaking to KUNA in a special statement after endorsing Kuwait's report, the minister expressed Kuwait's pride for support and consecutive notes received from the member states.

He affirmed Kuwait's commitment



KUNA photo

Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait (center) leads the Kuwait delegation at UNHRC session held in Geneva.

to transparency and positive collaboration within the framework of this international mechanism.

Kuwait's national report came due to consultative and serious national path among different concerned agencies,

he said.

The report also highlighted tangible steps in human rights, topped with the national plan, to develop legislations, the State's most outstanding priority to boost the rule of law, he stated.

During his speech before the council, the minister affirmed Kuwait's eagerness to study 290 recommendations received by the member states, and to provide the council with the official response during the 60th session in a manner that shows Kuwait's keenness on serious follow-up.

He highly expressed appreciation to Troika - Thailand, Czech Republic- and Benin - which supervised studying the report, and all national agencies and officials who contributed to the success of this report.

In its report, the State of Kuwait affirmed a comprehensive legislative review of all laws totaling 983 that resulted in a series of new legal reforms.

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Newswatch

No more extras as Kuwait cuts perks

KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA): The Public Institution For Social Security (PIFSS) declared on Saturday that execution of the Cabinet decision to lower special payments and halt bonuses would be effective as of May 1.

PIFSS said on the social media application, X, that concerned civil servants could inquire at the institution' headquarters during the official work hours from 8 a.m. until 12:30 noon time through contacts by the phone numbers: 22994086-22994085.

KUWAIT CITY: The Environment Public Authority (EPA) on Friday affirmed that the red tide and fish death recur at the summer onset every year due to the rising temperature.

EPA has closely monitored these occurrences, monitored this week in the waters of several beaches in the country, said Sheikh Al-Ibrahim, EPA's Public Relations and Information Director, in a statement to KUNA. (KUNA)

Other Voices

Importance of the United Nations Human Rights Council

By Tareq Yousef AlShumaimry

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is an international body responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights around the world. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, it is one of the United Nations' human rights arms.

Establishment of the Council: The United Nations Human Rights Council was established in 2006 to replace the Commission on Human Rights, which had existed since 1946. It was established by the United Nations General Assembly pursuant to resolution 60/251.

Among the main reasons for Replacing the Human Rights Commission with the Human Rights Council include the fundamental shortcomings and repeated accusations against the previous Commission including

1. Weak credibility and legitimacy

The Human Rights Commission was heavily criticized for allowing countries with poor human rights records to become members, which led to the politicization of its work and inconsistent decisions.



Tareq Yousef AlShumaimry

Some countries used their membership to deflect criticism rather than reform their situations.

2. Politicization and double standards

Many observers believed that the Commission tended toward political bias, targeting some countries over others, while ignoring clear violations by powerful countries or allies of influential members.

3. Weak implementation mechanisms

The Commission lacked strong powers or effective mechanisms to hold countries accountable, and its decisions were mostly symbolic and non-binding. Its reports were not properly followed up and were often ignored.

4. The need for a more efficient and representative structure

The UN General Assembly wanted to establish a more geographically representative body with comprehensive periodic review mechanisms for all countries, something the Commission did not provide.

5. Professionalism and effectiveness

This is achieved by introducing a comprehensive periodic review system for all countries without exception, defining clearer membership criteria, and allowing for the suspension of membership for countries that grossly violate human rights.

The Comparison between the former Commission on Human Rights (1946-2006) and the current Human Rights Council (2006-present), affiliated with the United Nations:

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Kuwaiti, US naval officials chart stronger ties

NEW YORK, May 10, (KUNA): Kuwait's Coast Guard Commodore Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Sabah discussed on Friday strengthening bilateral cooperation and exchange of expertise in the field of maritime security, with Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, deputy commander of the U.S. Central Command.

During their meeting, they also tackled recent regional escalations and security challenges, emphasizing the need for joint coordination to ensure maritime security in the Arabian Gulf, Ministry of Interior said in a statement.

Furthermore, both sides addressed operational enhancements, best practices in maritime surveillance, and emergency response strategies, the statement added.

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KUNA photo

Kuwait's Coast Guard Commodore Sheikh Mubarak Ali Al-Sabah with Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, deputy commander of the U.S. Central Command.

Kuwait and Bahrain in sync on media strategy

KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi said Saturday Kuwaiti-Bahraini cooperation is continuing in all domains, especially in media and culture.

The minister made the statement to KUNA while welcoming Bahraini Information Minister Dr. Ramzan Al-Noaimi upon the latter's arrival in Kuwait to attend the Arab Media Forum due on Saturday, and the 28th meeting of GCC information ministers due on Sunday.

"We believe in the significance of coordinating Gulf media efforts in a way that serves our people's interests and strengthens media in supporting development," he

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KUNA photo

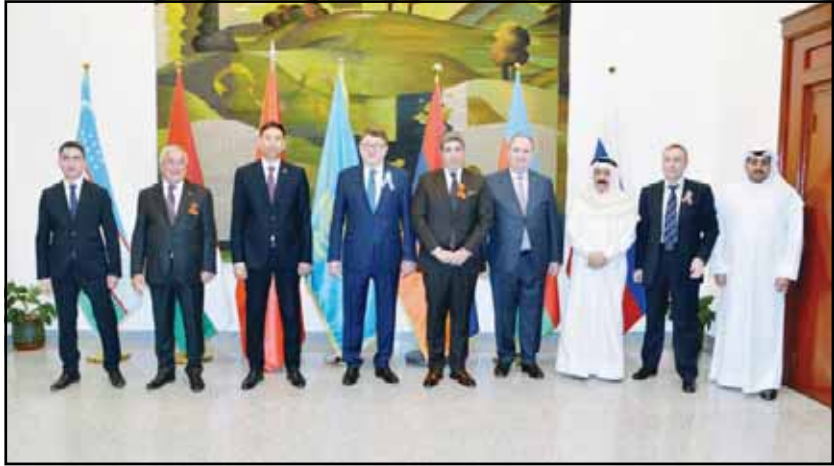
Kuwait's Minister of Information during his meeting with Bahraini Information Minister.

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:31	Asr	15:20
Sunrise ..	04:59	Maghrib ..	18:30
Zohr	11:44	Isha	19:55

Local

Weather			
Expected weather for next 24 hrs:			
By Day: Hot with light variable wind to light to moderate south-easterly wind, with speeds of 06-28 km/h.			
By Night: Rather hot and relatively humid especially over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate south-easterly wind, with speeds of 06-28 km/h.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait Airport	42	25	
Abdaly	42	24	
Bubyan	43	24	
Jahra	42	28	
Failaka Islana	43	27	
Salmiyah	38	29	
Ahmadi	36	27	
Jal Aliyah	41	25	
Nuwaisib	41	25	
Wafra	41	23	

Russian Embassy marks 80th anniversary of victory over Nazism in WWII



The Russian Ambassador with guests .



Russian Ambassador to Kuwait Vladimir Zheltov receives Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers.



Photos by Samer Shaqair
The Russian Ambassador with diplomats and guests.

Event transcends historical occurrence: Tajik envoy

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Embassy of the Russian Federation in the State of Kuwait hosted the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of victory over Nazism in World War II.

Present at the event were numerous ambassadors, diplomats and representatives of international communities.

The event highlighted vital moments at such a remarkable period in human history and underscored the contributions of Soviet Union in defeating the Nazi regime.

Speaking on behalf of the ambassadors of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) -- Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan; Russian Ambassador to Kuwait Vladimir Zheltov stated “eight decades have passed since the conclusion of the Great Patriotic War, the term used in Russia to denote World War II, commencing with the Nazi German assault on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941 and culminating in Germany’s capitulation on May 9, 1945.”

He explained “this conflict remains deeply entrenched in the collective con-

sciousness of those who experienced it or inherited its legacy, notwithstanding the evolving geopolitical landscape and the dissolution of the Soviet Union.”

He added the events during those tumultuous years were not spontaneous, as they are rather the consequences of the major disruption of the global order following World War I and the endeavors of certain powers to exploit Nazism as a tool against the Soviet Union.

He pointed out that the Nazi offensive against the Soviet Union is considered the most brutal assault in history, with the Soviets confronting a force bolstered by the majority of European nations. “This conflict evolved into a protracted war of attrition lasting four years. During this period, the Red Army effectively dismantled the German war machine and liberated half of the European continent,” he revealed.

He stressed that the Soviet Union bore the brunt of the war, incurring the loss of 27 million citizens, predominantly civilians; and that 78 percent of the Nazi Army casualties occurred on the Eastern Front alone. He said the Second Front was not established until June 1944, less than a year before the end of the war, illustrating the immense challenge that the Soviet forces faced independently.

He vehemently condemned the attempts of some western entities to revise history and distort facts, asserting that “today, we observe disconcerting efforts to di-

minish the Soviet Union’s role and absolve those who collaborated with the Nazis. This signifies a lapse in political memory and disregard for the lessons of history.”

He affirmed that observing this anniversary is a moral imperative towards those who sacrificed their lives for liberty and a reminder to all generations that historical accuracy remains an impenetrable defense against falsehoods and distortion of facts.

Moreover, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to Kuwait Zubaydullah Zubaydov asserted that the observance of the 80th anniversary of the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) holds national importance, as it allows Tajikistan to reaffirm its commitment to the considerable sacrifices made by its people in the fight against Nazism.

He said this anniversary transcends historical occurrence, as it is an essential element of the Tajik national identity. He disclosed that more than 300,000 Tajiks served in the Red Army -- a huge figure considering the Republic’s population at the time was below 1.5 million.

He elaborated that Tajikistan, despite its geographical separation from the main areas of conflict, played a crucial role in the provision of military and humanitarian aid; thereby, contributing to the liberation of main areas such as Belarus and Crimea. He added some Tajik soldiers were among those who first entered the Reichstag in Berlin in 1945.

Cooperation eyed to fight human peddling, protect rights of labor

Kuwait, ILO top officials hold meeting

GENEVA, May 10, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs, Ambassador Sheikhha Jawaher Al-Sabah, met on Thursday with (Ms.) Manuela Tomei, Assistant Director-General for Governance, Rights and Dialogue at the International Labour Organization (ILO), discussing ways for enhancing cooperation on common issues.

During her side meeting with the UN official, as part of Kuwait’s delegation participating in the Universal Periodic Review held in Geneva, Sheikhha Jawaher emphasized the strength of the historical ties between Kuwait and the ILO, dating back to Kuwait’s accession to the organization in 1961, which was crowned by the opening of a regional office in Kuwait in 1972.

The two sides discussed the best approaches and practices for enhancing labor rights and



KUNA photo
Kuwait’s Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Affairs, Ambassador Sheikhha Jawaher Al-Sabah, Manuela Tomei, Assistant Director-General for Governance, Rights and Dialogue at the International Labour Organization (ILO) meet.

combating human trafficking, including exploring frameworks for cooperation and joint coordination across all areas that benefit the labor

market, in alignment with human rights standards, national laws, and international treaties ratified by Kuwait.

In this context, Sheikhha Jawaher highlighted Kuwait’s launch of the National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking (2025-2028), which strengthens measures for prevention, protection, accountability, and the elimination of all forms of labor exploitation. This initiative reflects Kuwait’s commitment to supporting contract workers.

She also added that Kuwait is currently undertaking a comprehensive legislative review of relevant national laws, including labor-related regulations.

Sheikhha Jawaher also emphasized the great importance that Kuwait places on supporting and empowering women in the labor market across both the public and private sectors. This commitment stems from the noble directives of His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. She also reviewed the achievements of Kuwaiti women in the labor sector, particularly within the private sector.

UN official lauds commitment to global pacts

Kuwait Dive Team effort in protecting environment hailed

BEIRUT, May 10, (KUNA): UN’s Director and Regional Representative of West Asia Office Sami Dimassi affirmed that Kuwait has a clear environmental footprint , thanks to the Kuwait Dive Team in preserving the marine environment and protecting it from ruin.

In a statement to KUNA after Thursday’s meeting with the Kuwait Dive Team and the UN’s Office in Beirut, Dimassi said that the team’s efforts reflect Kuwait’s commitment to international environmental treaties, and its keenness to coordinate with appropriate organizations.

He explained that the meeting was held to review the team’s 2024-2025 report as part of the global Clean Seas campaign to protect the seas from plastic, and to discuss future projects related to marine environment conservation.

The report was full of outstanding environmental achievements and projects, including

130 environmental missions.

Dimassi praised the team’s efforts to combat plastic waste, which has caused environmental damage and has become a global issue threatening the health of marine ecosystems, he also expressed his pride in the team’s recent win of the World Energy Foundation Award.

For his part, team leader Waleed Al-Fadhel told KUNA that the team signed a memorandum of understanding with the office in 2018 as part of the global Clean Seas campaign.

Al-Fadhel explained that the team’s achievements included recovering 12 ships, boats, and a marine vessel weighing 60 tons from several locations, they

removed 120 tons of abandoned fishing nets and harmful waste from various coasts, and maintained 107 marine anchorages for safe mooring of boats and yachts to protect coral reefs.

He also noted its ongoing campaigns to clean Kuwait’s coasts and islands, as well as the installation and comprehensive maintenance of all marine moorings at reef sites, they periodically monitor several locations in the Kuwaiti sea to ensure safe navigation.

They monitor the condition of coral reefs in the southern islands, coasts, and reserves, and submit reports to government agencies, international organizations, the Environment Public Authority, and the Coral Watch program at the University of Queensland in Australia.

For the 10th consecutive year, the team is organizing the weekly “Mobile Beach Cleaning Campaign” in cooperation with several bodies.



Al-Fadhel

‘GCC Red Crescent societies exemplary model in relief work’

KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (Agencies): Minister of Social Affairs and Minister of Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila affirmed on Thursday that the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Red Crescent societies represent exemplary models in humanitarian and relief work.

The GCC Red Crescent societies also embody the honorable Gulf values of solidarity and support for those in need, said Minister Al-Huwaila following her meeting with a delegation representing GCC Red Crescent societies, in the presence of Khaled Al-Sunaidi, GCC Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs, and Ambassador Khaled Al-Mughamis, Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society.

The Kuwaiti Minister highly appreciated the significant humanitarian and relief efforts undertaken by GCC Red Crescent societies at both regional and international levels, noting their distinguished contributions in assisting those affected by disasters and crises.

She underscored the importance of continuous

cooperation and coordination among GCC Red Crescent societies, indicating that such meetings provide a valuable opportunity to exchange experiences, coordinate joint efforts to face increasing humanitarian challenges, and strengthen preparedness to respond rapidly to affected populations.

The Gulf delegation included Secretary-General of the UAE Red Crescent Ahmad Al-Mazrouei, Secretary-General of the Bahrain Red Crescent Society Mubarak Al-Hadi, President of the Saudi Red Crescent Authority Dr. Jalal Al-Owaisi, Acting CEO of the Omani Charitable Organization Badr Al-Zaabi, and Chairman of the Qatar Red Crescent Society Yousef Al-Khater.

Flags to decorate roads: The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality affirmed that the Higher Committee for Preparations has completed all necessary arrangements for the upcoming 28th Ministerial Meeting of Municipal Affairs Ministers from GCC countries,

scheduled to be held from May 10 to 15, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The department revealed that the route expected to be taken by the delegations arriving from Kuwait International Airport has been decorated with the flags of GCC member states.

Valid card must for aid: The distribution of essential aid by charitable associations -- covering rent support, tuition fees, chronic illness treatment and hospital care for Bedouins -- is contingent on the validity of the recipient’s security card, reports Al-Anba daily quoting a source from the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The source explained that if the security card is expired, assistance is suspended until the card is renewed and a copy of which is submitted to the concerned charity for record updates.

For expatriates, a valid civil identification card is required and must be verified through the ‘Kuwait Mobile ID’ app, after which assistance is provided without delay, the source added.

‘New milestone in Japan–Kuwait friendship’

Visa exemption for holders of diplomatic, official passports

By Mukai Kenichiro

Starting May 12, 2025, Japan and Kuwait will officially implement a mutual visa exemption for holders of diplomatic, official and special passports. Under this new agreement, Kuwaiti nationals holding valid diplomatic, or special passports issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait will be allowed to enter Japan without a visa for a period not exceeding 90 consecutive days. Similarly, Japanese holders of valid diplomatic and official passports will be able to enter Kuwait without a visa.



Kenichiro

This historic step reflects the deep mutual trust and longstanding friendship between our two nations, and lays a solid foundation for further political, economic, and cultural cooperation.

Japan and Kuwait have enjoyed a long-standing and mutually beneficial relationship, dating back to 1958 when a Japanese oil company got oil drilling rights in Kuwait. This visa exemption scheme will make it easier for government officials, international conference participants, and special passports holders to travel between our two countries, thus encouraging more dynamic exchanges and high-level dialogue.

This is more than a procedural change – it is a symbol of our shared commitment to building a forward-looking, trust-based partnership.

Experience the Future at Expo 2025

Japan is currently hosting the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, from April 13 to October 13, 2025. It is more than an exhibition; it is a platform for co-creating the future. And Visitors can encounter a wide array of transformative ideas and cutting-edge solutions addressing challenges in sustainability, technology, healthcare, and mobility.

In EXPO, Japan is presenting technical proposals as investment opportunities, such as Room Temperature Hydrogen Production Device, CO2 Adsorption and Desorption Device, Room Temperature Synthetic Fuel Production Device. These technologies are already at commercially practical level, and I believe that investing in these technologies will be able to assist Kuwait oil sector to achieve net-zero by 2060 as envisioned in the national plan.

The visa fee will be exempted for those who visit the EXPO . We sincere-

ly invite Kuwaiti people, to visit Japan during this momentous event.

Sharing a Message of Peace 10 012

As we look to the future, we must also learn from the past. The second Hiroshima and Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Poster Exhibition is now open at the Contemporary Art Platform (CAP Kuwait) from April 29 to May 25, 2025.

The opening ceremony which was held on April 29 was a big success, especially with the attendance of Ms. HIRAOKA Sachiko, an Atomic Bomb survivor’s family who visited Kuwait all the way from Hiroshima to deliver the testimony of her family. It was joined by many people in Kuwait, including Ambassadors, artists, students and so on.

This exhibition showcases impactful posters that convey the devastating reality of the atomic bombings, reminding us of the importance of peace and the inhumanity of nuclear weapons. We encourage more people in Kuwait to visit the exhibition and reflect on Japan’s history and its deep commitment to peace. The exhibition welcomes everyone with free admission.

Building the future through education, culture

Education and Culture are essential elements to build the brilliant future between Kuwait and Japan. The MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) Scholarship Program for 2026 is currently open for applications until June 12, 2025. Kuwaiti students wishing to pursue bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, or PhD in Japan are warmly encouraged to apply. This is a chance to receive a world-class education while building bridges between the two countries.

In the field of cultural exchange, submissions are also open for the 18th Japan International MANGA Award, with a deadline of June 20, 2025. This globally recognized award welcomes artists from around the world. We hope to see many talented Kuwaiti creators participate and share their stories through the powerful medium of manga.

The introduction of mutual visa exemption for diplomatic and official passport holders marks a new chapter in Japan–Kuwait relations. It opens doors – not only for official visits – but also for people-to-people connections, cultural exchange, and shared discovery.

We look forward to welcoming more Kuwaiti friends to Japan, and to continuing our journey together as partners in friendship, peace, and progress.

Welcome to Japan! Welcome to the future!

Mechanism to calculate GPA of scholarship students announced

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Ministry of Higher Education has announced the mechanism for calculating the equivalent Grade Point Average (GPA) for students who intend to apply for external scholarships for the next academic year.

This announcement is part of the ‘My Destination’ media awareness campaign, which underscored the need for students to fully understand this mechanism to ensure proper preparation and accurately deter-

mine their preferences.

The ministry explained that the equivalent GPA is calculated by combining the percentage of the high school diploma with the results of the English language and Mathematics tests within the National Examination, whose weights vary depending on the major.

The National Exam is an essential part of a student’s assessment, contributing around 10 percent to 35 percent of the equivalent GPA, depending on the major. This entails the need for students to be fully prepared in order to pass these tests.

diwaniya



A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Who cares ... food and humor clips preferred over politics?

"MOST people follow social media, but they tend to focus on content about food and humor. They show little interest in news or events that directly affect their future, their livelihood, or the fate of their country", columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Ask someone about current affairs, and they will often say, 'I don't like politics.'" However, politics, in simple terms, is the state of a country and its relationships with others.

"Take the Houthis in Yemen, for example. They are a group that felt marginalized and neglected by their government. With Iranian backing, they quickly turned to armed conflict and overthrew the legitimate government, which had relocated to Aden.



Ahmad Al-Dawas

"Their actions did not just damage Yemen but they also harmed Egypt and its people. By attacking ships in the Red Sea and disrupting navigation through the Suez Canal, Egypt lost an estimated \$800 million per month in vital revenue. Insurance costs on goods soared, leading to higher prices and hardship for people around the world.

"Recently, Israeli and American aircraft launched strikes on the port of Hodeidah, a stronghold of the Houthis, in response to their occasional missile attacks on Israel and threats to international shipping in the Bab al-Mandab Strait.

"This is a clear example of how the internal situation in one country can harm the people of another. It is a reminder that everyone should pay attention to important global events, as they directly impact their future and the future of their children.

"Russian President Vladimir Putin sparked a war by invading eastern Ukraine, where people had been living in relative peace and security. He questioned the intentions of NATO countries due to the alliance's expansion toward Russia's western borders. In an attempt to halt NATO's advance and turn Ukraine into a buffer zone between Russia and Europe, Putin launched a military campaign against Ukraine.

"The war resulted in heavy losses and casualties on both sides. Ironically, Putin's actions led more European countries to join NATO, strengthening the alliance rather than weakening it. Meanwhile, both Ukrainians and Russians continue to suffer the devastating consequences of the conflict.

"Taiwan is a stable and economically advanced island, yet China repeatedly threatens its people with the possibility of invasion and annexation. As a result, the people of Taiwan live in constant uncertainty and fear for their safety.

"Meanwhile, Sudan is experiencing a devastating civil war.

"A few days ago, tensions flared between India and Pakistan, with artillery shelling erupting after several Indian tourists were killed in Kashmir. India threatened retaliation, further escalating the situation.

"Also, Israel approved a plan to take control of the entire Gaza Strip and occupy its territory.

"An example of the importance of political news can be seen in the plight of Africans in West African countries, where internal conditions have worsened due to drought, poverty, insecurity, and the presence of terrorist groups. These dire circumstances have forced many to migrate to Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya, with hopes of reaching the coasts of Europe in search of a better life. Unfortunately, many lose their lives when their boats capsize at sea.

"As soon as US President Donald Trump took office, he quickly embraced the "crazy president" theory. This approach involved acting unpredictably to intimidate opponents into making concessions and pressuring other countries to achieve gains.

"Trump threatened to impose tariffs on countries worldwide, to annex Canada as a US state, and even to purchase Greenland. The result was turmoil in the global economy, losses for countries and companies, harm to Americans due to his policies, and a decline in his popularity. We will limit ourselves to these examples to keep the article concise.

"Journalism carries a powerful message that can influence political decision-makers. It exposes fault lines and corruption in society. Yet, there are still those who say, 'I don't like politics.'" For these individuals, following cooking shows on social media seems more important than staying informed about their own living conditions or the security of their country."

Also:

"During the brief tenure of the previous government, many senior officials in the public administration were either retired or asked to resign. This led to a problem that we continue to face: the loss of highly qualified leadership and a huge number of vacancies in leading leadership and supervisory roles. Most of these positions were either temporarily filled through assignments or secondments, or remain vacant to this day", columnist Eng. **Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"As a result, and in conjunction with other contributing factors, the level of public services declined, productivity dropped, and transactions were delayed, while necessary decisions were either postponed or inadequately addressed.

"Due to the limited decision-making capacity among remaining leaders, ministers were frequently seen in the media making technical and administrative decisions that would traditionally fall under the authority of senior officials in each ministry.

"The continued delay in promptly filling these leadership vacancies further contributed to the poor performance of some government agencies, underscoring the urgent need for corrective action.

"In light of the huge challenges facing government administration, it is important to urgently fill leadership and supervisory vacancies with highly qualified, capable individuals who possess both administrative efficiency and a strategic vision. These leaders must be able to comprehend and effectively implement public policies and strategies.

"While the criteria for appointing individuals to leadership and supervisory roles in the civil service system are important, the actual performance of many in these positions suggests that these standards alone are insufficient. As a result, many administrative leaders remain unable to drive development or effectively deal with existing problems. This highlights the urgent need to implement comprehensive, integrated leadership development programs to better prepare candidates for these critical roles."

□ □ □

"Western culture refers to a set of values, principles, and cultural, social, and moral traditions, as well as scientific achievements.", Kuwaiti journalist **Khaled Al-Janfawi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"I believe that Western culture, in certain civilizational aspects, can serve as a model for Arabs and Muslims. However, it certainly cannot become a spiritual model for them for the following reasons:

- Western culture and the spiritual void: Anyone who studies or frequently visits certain Western societies will notice the spiritual void many members of these societies experience. This is evident in the low rates of church attendance and the declining interest in reading their holy books. Spiritual hunger is often filled by converting to Islam or embracing certain Eastern spiritual philosophies. For a rational Muslim, it is difficult to emulate Western materialistic spirituality, as it simply does not exist.

- The condescending view of Arabs and Muslims: The rapid rise of the extreme right in many Western societies is a clear indication of the growing influence of a historical Crusader spirit directed against the Muslim world. The increase in hate crimes targeting Arabs, Muslims, and Eastern minorities further underscores the deep-seated prejudice against these groups, prejudice based solely on ethnic, religious, and cultural differences. How can a rational person look to emulate a culture that harbors such disdain for them?

- Double standards in dealing with Arab and Islamic issues: The historical Western political bias against many Arab and Islamic issues is clear evidence of this. Part of this bias stems from a deep-seated prejudice within the contemporary Western political mindset, particularly against dark-skinned people and their historical causes. It is illogical for a rational person to emulate those who look down on them because of their skin color, especially when these same individuals would continue to despise them, even if they changed their appearance or mastered the language and dialect of their oppressors.

- Western psychological issues: Excessive imitation of the Western lifestyle can lead to the adoption of psychological issues prevalent in some Western societies, such as psychopathy, depression, anxiety disorders, gender identity issues, homosexuality, anorexia, Satanism, and other severe emotional disorders that stem from the materialistic Western lifestyle."

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"Oh my God ... What happened in just one day and one night that transformed our streets into sparkling pearls? The answer is the return of public awareness and the renewed enforcement of the law", Kuwaiti writer **Hamoud Al-Hattab** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Dr. Al-Hattab

his post, he mocked the small minority of drivers who actually use their turn signals, which are included in every vehicle. He wrote, "It is shameful for us, as U.S. truck drivers, to use turn signals when changing lanes," adding that only clumsy and naive drivers do so.

"I was deeply disturbed by this post, as it promotes reckless behavior and a blatant disregard for traffic laws.

"Following the amendment of traffic laws and the implementation of monitoring and surveillance measures, the situation changed dramatically. Streets began to resemble sparkling pearls, illuminated by the frequent use of turn signals, especially by women, many of whom, though not all, previously may not have been fully aware of where the signal controls were located in their vehicles."

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



KFF photo

The Defense personnel are awarded certificates.

KFF trains MoD staff to fight fires

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Specialized Training Center of the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) concluded recently a fire prevention course for members of the Ministry of Defense.

According to a press release issued

by KFF, the course is part of ongoing cooperation between KFF and the Ministry of Defense, with the aim of training participants to deal with various types of fires using advanced professional techniques.



KFF photo

A fireman amidst the smoke in the apartment.

No casualties as fire erupts in apartment

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Fire broke out in an apartment in Salmiya on Thursday morning. No casualties were reported.

According to a press release issued by KFF, firefighters from Salmiya and Al-Bidaa fire stations rushed to the location and extinguished the fire before it spread further.

Foul play suspected in death of Asian expat

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Operations Unit at the ministry received a report about the discovery of a body at a dirt yard near the Kuwait-Saudi border, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

Upon arrival at the scene, the security personnel surmised that the body was that of an expatriate. They found multiple wounds and severe burns on the face, the source added.

The source affirmed that investigations are ongoing, hinting that there could be foul play in the death of the expat. He added the Forensic Medicine Department has the technology to identify bodies and establish the cause of death.

Photos shared on media

Photographer acquitted of snapping two women

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Court of Appeals upheld the ruling of the First Instance Court that acquitted a sports photographer of charges of using a mobile phone and defamation after he photographed two female fans and posted their photos without their consent.

The defendant was referred to trial after the two female fans filed a complaint, in which they stated that they were surprised when he took photos of them and posted their photos on his Instagram account without their knowledge or consent.

The two complainants stated that the defendant defamed them by photographing them while they were in the fans' stands supporting the national team in a foreign tournament without wearing the hijab, despite the fact that they wear the hijab in Kuwait.

In court, Attorney Nawaf Al-Wahib argued that the material and moral elements of the crime were absent, noting that the Court of Cassation's ruling concluded that photographing people in a public place does not constitute a crime.

He explained that his client photographed the two complainants as a photographer in a public place, not private, for the purpose of media coverage and to highlight the Kuwaiti fans and express pride in them and their support for the national team.

He confirmed to the court that his client did not know that the two complainants were wearing hijab in the country; otherwise, he would have refrained from photographing them and publishing their photos out of consideration for their privacy and their desire not to appear without the hijab.

‘Indecent act’

Bedoun threatens to kill owner of grocery

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: A 72-year-old expatriate man said an unidentified person committed an indecent act following a traffic dispute between them, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The complainant told police that he was driving on the left lane of Morocco Expressway when another vehicle overtook him, slowed down and stopped suddenly. The driver of the other vehicle behaved inappropriately and drove off. Unfortunately, he failed to note down the plate number of the other motorist.

A case was registered at Hawally Police Station.

In another development, an expatriate man, born in 1974, filed a report at Hawally Police Station, accusing a Bedoun of threatening to kill him. The expatriate told police that he is managing a grocery store and the Bedoun called him, threatening to kill him for hiring a juvenile to deliver orders to apartments adjacent to the store.

Asian man in 50s run over, dead in Messilah tragedy

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: An Asian man, in his 50s, died when a vehicle ran over him near Messilah.

According to a security source, the Operations Unit at the Ministry of Interior received information about the run-over accident near Messilah. Security and ambulance personnel rushed to the scene. Upon their arrival, it was confirmed that the Asian man succumbed to his injuries.

His body was referred to the Forensic Medicine Department, while the driver who caused the accident was referred to the police station for the necessary legal action

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Traffic crackdown: The Ministry of Interior carried out a comprehensive security and traffic campaign in Sabah Al-Salem on Friday, with participation from several departments including the Traffic Affairs and Operations Sector, the General Department of Rescue Police, Central Operations, public and private security sectors, and the Women's Police.

The campaign resulted in the issuance of 804 citations for various traffic violations, the arrest of six individuals for violations of the residency and labor laws, 10 wanted individuals, five without identification, and one person in an abnormal condition, and the seizure of six vehicles wanted by the judiciary.

Official acquitted of helping person flee

Fugitive, aide get 4 yrs jail

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Court of Appeals upheld the ruling of the Criminal Court that acquitted an employee in the Passports Department at Kuwait International Airport of forging passenger entry and exit records in the automated system of the Ministry of Interior.

The charges stemmed from the alleged escape of a wanted individual who reportedly exited the country using the passport of a friend bearing a close physical resemblance.

While the employee was cleared of all charges, the court sentenced the fugitive in absentia and the individual who provided him with the passport to four years in prison with hard labor. Both were also ordered to be deported following the completion of their prison term.

The case originated from a report filed by a detective at a police station in Hawally Governorate. The officer stated that in July, he attempted to execute an arrest warrant issued by the Public Prosecution against the fugitive who was wanted in multiple fraud cases. Unable to locate him, the officer questioned the fugitive's mother, who revealed that her son left the country using a friend's passport due to their similar appearance and physical characteristics.

During the investigation, the friend admitted that he gave his passport to the fugitive in late 2023, aware of their strong resemblance. He claimed that he later retrieved the passport through a third party. He also acknowledged knowing that the fugitive was wanted for fraud and deception.

Meanwhile, the accused employee denied any wrongdoing, stating that he properly documented the passport's use and verified its details at the time of departure. He emphasized that he had no prior knowledge of the substitution and had no relationship with either individual involved.

In court, Attorney Abdullah Al-Blaihees argued that the elements of the alleged forgery offense were not met. He maintained that his client had no criminal intent and had no prior association with the suspects. He pointed out that there was no conclusive evidence linking the employee to any forgery of travel records.

Further supporting his defense, Al-Blaihees submitted official documentation showing that Kuwait International Airport did not employ a biometric fingerprint verification system at the time of the incident. He also provided evidence highlighting the strong physical resemblance between the fugitive and his accomplice, reinforcing the claim that the employee could not have reasonably identified the impersonation.

The court ultimately agreed, finding insufficient grounds to convict the employee and affirmed his acquittal.

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The Council of Ministers has approved an amendment to Article 16 of Public Assistance Law No. 12/2011 allowing the assistance committee to form subcommittees of specialists, instead of forming a single subcommittee.

Article One of the revised law states that the first paragraph of Article 16 of Law No. 12/2011 shall be replaced with the following text: "The committee shall be formed from those concerned with family care by a decision from the minister. The decision shall specify its mandates, the method of convening it to meet, and the method of voting on its decisions.




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Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwait Army Major General Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives a memento from Kuwait University President Prof. Dina Musaed Al-Mailem.

KU & Army to boost cooperation in research, innovation, training

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Kuwait University President Prof. Dina Musaed Al-Mailem received at Sabah Al-Salem University City the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Kuwait Army Major General Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Tuesday, May 6.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait University, the two parties discussed opportunities for joint cooperation in scientific research, innovation, training, and development. They affirmed the

need to strengthen national competencies and institutional capacities through knowledge exchange and collaborative programs.

Kuwait University highlighted its commitment to supporting various state institutions based on its belief in the need to promote integration among various state sectors to contribute to supporting the development process and achieving national goals.

KU, NCSC discuss plans to set up cybersecurity center

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: President of Kuwait University Dr. Dina Al-Mailem recently received a delegation from the National Cybersecurity Center (NCSC) as part of efforts to strengthen cooperation between the university and the center.

The visit was aimed at exploring the possibility of establishing a cybersecurity center at the university under the “Gov-

ernment Shield” project in order to protect government digital systems.

The proposed center will monitor and oversee the use of government digital systems and support digital transformation in all state institutions.

The center will be located in Sabah Al-Salem University City.

During the visit, the delegation toured several sites within the university city to assess the most suitable location for the center.

UNHCR official briefs donors on Sudan, neighbor nations crises

We value Kuwait partnership: Dr Balde

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Regional Director of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for the Eastern Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Dr Mamadou Diagne Balde concluded his two-day official visit to Kuwait as part of his Gulf tour aimed at strengthening strategic partnerships and mobilizing support for the humanitarian response to the crisis in Sudan and neighboring countries.

Balde pointed out that more than two years after the outbreak of the conflict in Sudan around 13 million people have been displaced, including four million refugees in neighboring countries, while only 11 percent of the UNHCR and its partners’ Regional

Response Plan has been funded.

He made the statement at a press conference to brief major donors on the latest developments in the humanitarian situation in Sudan.

He said “in light of the continuing rise in the number of displaced persons and the dwindling resources, UNHCR values its historic partnership with Kuwait . The solidarity of the Kuwaiti people is not just in terms of humanitarian support, but also a message of hope at a critical time.”

The visit included meetings with a number of senior Kuwaiti officials, including Assistant Foreign Minister for Development and International Cooperation Hamad Al-Mashaan, Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations Abdulaziz Al-Jarallah, and representatives of Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED).

During these meetings, Balde praised the out-

standing humanitarian role that Kuwait plays and affirmed its position as a global humanitarian center. He commended its official and public efforts in supporting refugee issues, especially in light of the escalating Sudanese crisis.

On the other hand, Representative of the UNHCR to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries Nisreen Al-Rubaian asserted that “two years have passed since the outbreak of war in Sudan and the Sudanese crisis remains a top priority among global humanitarian crises. Around 13 million people have been displaced, including four million refugees.”

She affirmed that “Kuwait is one of the largest donor partners to humanitarian work and to the United Nations. Balde’s visit highlighted the urgent humanitarian situation.”

She added “Sudan was once known as a food basket country, but today, it is suffering from famine. Out of its 48 million people, around 30 million are facing critical humanitarian conditions.”

She thanked Kuwait and its partners for hosting the UNHCR delegation, indicating it reflects the strategic and enduring partnership between the two sides.



Dr. Balde

KU launches its first career fair

Bid to train students adopt careers as future teachers

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The College of Education at Kuwait University has launched its first career exhibition titled “Teacher of the Future: Between Qualification and Empowerment”, held recently.

The event reflects the college’s commitment to preparing students for careers in education.

The fair, which is held for the first time at the college level, aims to create an interactive platform linking students with stakeholders in the education sector. This will help in professionally empowering students and preparing them

to confidently enter the teaching workforce after graduation.

In this regard, Director of the Practical Education Center Dr. Sultan Mohammad Al-Sahli affirmed that the exhibition is a strategic initiative to guide students on their career paths as future teachers.

He said it supports the center’s efforts to provide a professional environment that connects students with essential training and support resources.

Meanwhile, Head of the fair committees Jarrah Mutlaq Al-Qazza explained that the exhibition is designed to offer students an inspiring and interactive experience that enhances their

professional awareness. It also provides them with the opportunity to learn about employment and professional development opportunities from accredited sources.

A distinguished group of official, educational, and professional entities is participating in the exhibition, including the Civil Service Commission (CSC), Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), Kuwait Teachers Society (KTS), National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), Kuwait National Library, Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SCGC), and the Human Resources Department of the Ministry of Education.

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KUNA photo
Director General of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Sheikh Hamoud Mubarak Al-Hamoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah represented Kuwait at the meeting.

Kuwait attends ACAO meeting

‘Need to modernize regulations to improve Arab aviation sector’

RABAT, April 10, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait participated in the 72nd Executive Council meeting of the Arab Civil Aviation Organization (ACAO) held recently in Rabat.

The Kuwaiti delegation was led by Director General of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Sheikh Hamoud Mubarak Al-Hamoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, alongside delegations from other member states.

In a statement to KUNA, Sheikh Homoud Al-Sabah emphasized that the meeting reflects ACAO’s continued efforts to enhance the aviation sector in Arab countries by modernizing regulations to align with international standards.

He added that the meeting addressed various topics related to the opportunities and challenges facing the air transport sector in the Arab region. Additionally, discussions

included the review of recommendations and decisions from previous sessions, financial matters, and preparations for the upcoming General Assembly of the Organization.

The meeting also focused on key issues to be discussed at the upcoming International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) General Assembly in September, which will be held at ICAO’s headquarters in Montreal, Canada.

Sheikh Hamoud extended Kuwait’s congratulations on the inclusion of Yemen and Tunisia in the Executive Council following a decision to expand its membership.

The Executive Council, composed of 11 member states elected every two years by the General Assembly, serves as the governing body of ACAO, overseeing its administration and ensuring the implementation of decisions from the General Conference.

Court rejects PAHW move

‘Citizen will get rent allowance’

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Court of First Instance has ordered the State Ministry of Housing to retroactively and continuously reimburse a rent allowance of KD11,300 to a citizen who previously replaced and waived his housing application multiple times.

In a landmark ruling, the court clarified that the criterion for suspending the rent allowance is not merely the allocation of a housing plot, but rather the completion of the construction period or the connection of electricity.

Details of lawsuit filed by Attorney Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan indicated that the plaintiff was allocated a new plot in Al-Mutlaa on May 4, 2023. However,

as construction had not yet been completed and electricity was not connected -- conditions required for halting the rent allowance -- he remained entitled to receive the allowance.

The administrative authority’s decision to stop the payments and demand repayment for that period was deemed erroneous.

The court ruled that the ministry must return the deducted amount and resume payment, as the plaintiff submitted a new housing application and had not yet benefited from the allocated plot.

The judgment further stated that rent allowances must be reinstated for all individuals whose payments were previously suspended due to substitution or waiver of alternative housing, starting from the month following the implementation of the relevant regulation.

To the land

It is true that the Iraqi government cannot curb the unbridled freedom of the media. I also emphasize that the official Iraqi decision has nothing to do with what is circulating on social media and in the media. However, at the same time, I affirm that no one can change a single letter in these relevant agreements. These individuals do not have the power to build a wall between Kuwait and Iraq, similar to what the United States did with Mexico or Israel with the West Bank and the Lebanese border.

In Kuwait, we understand that these media outlets are controlled by those outside Iraq's borders who seek to achieve their dubious interests at the expense of the Iraqi people. Media propaganda will not alter the facts on the ground and will have no impact on Kuwait. The geographical reality will remain unchanged.

This is what both the Iraqi presidents and prime ministers relied on in their appeal of the Federal Supreme Court's ruling, as they recognize that good neighborliness is one of the foundational principles of the new Iraqi state.

Therefore, any attempt to revive the border issue between Iraq and Kuwait is a suspicious act that conceals malicious intentions, which certainly do not represent the Iraqi people.

Unfortunately, and with great bitterness, we must acknowledge that some are trying to exploit this for regional interests aimed at undermining Iraqi national security, attempting to disrupt relations between Kuwait and Iraq, and divert attention from a matter that has been settled for a long time.

Here, we must emphasize once again: The failed experience of the "Qasr Al-Zohour" radio station, the propaganda of Abdul Karim Qasim, Saddam's Fedayeen, or the so-called Al-Quds Army, will not be repeated.

So, we say, be patient, and may God be the most helpful. Anyone familiar with the nature of relations between Kuwait and Iraq during King Faisal's reign will understand the significance of Kuwait's immediate assistance to Iraq after its liberation from Saddam's Ba'athist regime.

They will also realize that those beautiful cities on the Iraqi border near Kuwait were built with Kuwaiti funds to stimulate trade between the two countries. Moreover, they will realize that Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port and Al-Faw Port complement each other, and that Kuwait aims to transform the northern region into an integrated economic zone, including factories, commercial, and service institutions that will benefit Iraq more than Kuwait.

On this basis, the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, along with all Kuwaiti rulers, sought to build strong relations based on cooperation between the two countries and peoples. Kuwait believes that stable economic security and extensive trade exchange are the paths to prosperity, not the propaganda and nonsense spread by those with sick minds or those who raise sectarian banners.

Therefore, it is not in anyone's interest to allow these suspicious voices to continuously stir up uproar with justifications that have no connection to the truth. The danger of these mouthpieces lies in their ability to drown out the voice of reason and create openings for those with regional agendas to disturb the cordial relations between the two countries and peoples, while also sowing discord among Iraqis themselves.

The rational people in these media arms, if they exist, should learn from the experiences in Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen. I urge them to always remember how Iran's boasting about occupying four Arab capitals ended. Soon, the people of Iraq will ask, "Where have these mouthpieces gone?"

I have avoided discussing this issue in the past and endured the pain of silence. But the uproar has reached a point where remaining silent is no longer an option. Perhaps, we will find rational voices who will tell these individuals "Enough is enough".

They must wake up from their intoxication of stupidity and realize that the true loser from their actions is Iraq, not Kuwait. I hope they carefully read the memoirs of the Iraqi President and Prime Minister, as they encapsulate wisdom spoken at the right time and place.

Importance of

Structure and composition

The Commission on Human Rights was affiliated with the Economic and Social Council, and its membership was 53 countries. Its members were elected by the World Economic Forum. The Human Rights Council, on the other hand, is affiliated with the United Nations General Assembly, and the number of member states has increased to 47. Elections are direct and secret by the United Nations General Assembly, with an absolute majority of 97 votes out of 193 member states. The country's contribution to promoting human

rights and its voluntary commitments are taken into account.

Powers and Functions

With the Human Rights Council, it has become possible to suspend the membership of any state that commits serious and systematic human rights violations by a two-thirds majority of the members of the General Assembly present and voting. This was not possible under the Commission on Human Rights.

With the Human Rights Council, a comprehensive periodic review of the human rights records of all member states every four years has also become possible. This was not possible under the Commission on Human Rights.

Membership and Credibility

With the establishment of the Human Rights Council, the Council has become more effective and transparent, with stronger accountability mechanisms. However, the Commission on Human Rights has lost its ability to address some human rights violations and issues.

The overall outcome of replacing the Commission with the Human Rights Council. The previous Commission was considered an outdated structure that was no longer effective and lacked decisiveness and credibility.

The current Council represents an attempt to rejuvenate the human rights machinery within the United Nations, with broader powers and stronger oversight tools, despite the persistence of some political challenges.

The most prominent functions of the Human Rights Council, according to the new mechanism established after the Council's establishment in 2006, are

- Monitoring human rights violations in member states.
- Conducting the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which assesses each member state's human rights record every four years.
- Appointing special rapporteurs and independent experts to investigate specific issues such as torture, freedom of expression, or racial discrimination.
- Convening emergency sessions in times of crisis or grave violations.
- Recommending international measures to protect civilians in situations of conflict or mass atrocities.

Structure of the Council

The Human Rights Council has 47 members. States are elected for three-year terms, with a 33% annual turnover rate, meaning approximately 15 to 16 new members are elected each year depending on the expiration of their terms.

No state may serve more than two consecutive terms, but may re-elect after a period of interruption. The principle of equitable geographical distribution among the continents is based on the allocation of 13 seats to Africa, 13 seats to Asia and the Pacific, 8 seats to Latin America and the Caribbean, 6 seats to Eastern Europe, and 7 seats to Western Europe and other countries.

The Council has a bureau consisting of a president and four vice-presidents representing each regional group. They serve for a one-year term, according to the Council's annual session.

Powers

It can issue resolutions and recommendations. Although these are not legally binding, they carry significant political and moral weight.

Member States of the Human Rights Council (2025–2027):

The Council consists of 47 member states, elected by the United Nations General Assembly with due regard to equitable geographical distribution. In the elections held in October 2024, 18 new states were elected to the Council for the period from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2027

African Nations: Benin, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Kenya.

Asia-Pacific States: Cyprus, Marshall Islands, Qatar, Republic of Korea (South Korea), Thailand Eastern European States: Czech Republic, North Macedonia

Latin American and Caribbean States: Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico Western European and Other States: Iceland, Spain, Switzerland

Other states continue their membership until the end of their specified terms. For example, Kuwait continues its membership until 2026, after being elected in October 2023.

Although their reports and recommendations are not legally binding, they carry significant moral and political weight and are often used as a basis for international action or diplomatic pressure.

Special Rapporteurs and their areas of expertise:

- The Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression investigates restrictions on freedom of the media, arrests for expression, and publication bans.
- The Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Ill-Treatment or Punishment receives reports of torture in detention centers or during interrogation.
- The Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women focuses on forms of domestic violence, sexual violence, and forced marriage. Reports on States' policies and compliance with women's rights con-

ventions.

■ The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory Monitors and reports on Israeli and Palestinian human rights violations in that territory.

■ The Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing investigates issues of forced evictions, displacement, and precarious housing worldwide.

Since its establishment in 2006, the United Nations Human Rights Council has achieved a number of significant accomplishments in monitoring and protecting human rights around the world. The most notable of these accomplishments is the establishment of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism, based on an internationally recognized system that includes the following:

■ The human rights record of each member state is reviewed every four to five years.

■ It allows states to hold each other accountable in a public and organized manner.

■ It includes all states without exception, a practice that was not previously implemented.

The Council established independent fact-finding missions to investigate serious violations, most notably:

■ Syria (since 2011): documented widespread violations by all parties to the conflict.

■ Myanmar (since 2011): Reports of ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya.

■ Palestine: Repeated reports of excessive use of force and violations against civilians.

■ Ethiopia (Tigray in 2020): Investigations into alleged war crimes.

The Human Rights Council has appointed special rapporteurs and international experts to investigate alleged or ongoing violations in some countries, most notably issues such as freedom of expression, torture, the right to housing, women's rights, and racial discrimination. These experts submit periodic reports, visit countries, and address governments regarding violations.

The Council has taken rare but influential measures, such as:

1. Suspension of membership, including:

Libya's membership was suspended in 2011 due to the suppression of the revolution.

Russia's membership was suspended in 2022 after the invasion of Ukraine.

This step reinforces the Council's seriousness in holding countries accountable.

2. Supporting complaints mechanisms for individuals and organizations:

The Council has opened the door for individuals to submit confidential complaints regarding serious violations via an independent mechanism.

It enhances the role of civil society in international oversight.

3 - Enhancing international cooperation:

The Council provides a platform for dialogue between states and non-governmental organizations on critical issues such as:

■ Climate change and human rights

■ Discrimination against minorities

■ Post-conflict transitional justice

Reports issued by the Human Rights Council and its committees:

The United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry has issued several reports on human rights violations in Gaza, Yemen, and other countries.

Israel was accused of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity, including:

■ Wilful killing.

■ Torture and inhuman treatment.

■ Sexual and gender-based violence.

■ Targeting health facilities and medical personnel.

■ Systematic destruction of the health care system.

■ Forcible transfer of populations.

■ Reports indicated that these acts may amount to the crime of genocide.

Where as the Palestinian armed groups were accused of committing war crimes, such as:

■ Firing indiscriminate rockets at civilian areas in Israel.

■ Taking hostages, which constitutes a war crime.

■ The Commission called for the immediate release of all hostages and an end to attacks on civilians.

The United Nations established the Group of Experts on Yemen, which issued previous reports documenting violations by all parties to the conflict, including:

■ Indiscriminate killing of civilians.

■ Torture and ill-treatment.

■ Restrictions on humanitarian aid.

■ The group's mandate was terminated in 2021 following a vote at the Human Rights Council.

The fate of the reports of the Human Rights Council's international commissions of inquiry is often influenced by international politics. Although they document serious violations of international law in their prepared reports, some are still influenced by geopolitical events in the region. The procedures for these reports can usually be summarized as follows:

1. Submitting the report to the Human Rights Council

The reports are formally presented during Council sessions.

This is followed by an interactive discussion among member states, concerned states, and civil society.

■ The Council can:

■ Adopt the report.

■ Condemn the violations.

■ Recommend further action or investigations.

2. Refer the case to other bodies.

Even though the Council does not have the power to prosecute anyone, it can recommend referring the case to:

■ The UN Security Council.

■ The International Criminal Court (ICC)

■ The International Court of Justice (ICJ).

■ This requires a sensitive political vote and is often vetoed by major powers.

3. Political influence and international pressure.

These reports are used:

■ As tools for diplomatic pressure.

■ As a reference in calls for boycotts or sanctions.

■ In national courts under the principle of "universal jurisdiction" (as has occurred in some cases against Syrian officials).

The fate of specific reports can be reviewed.

Gaza (2023–2024)

The latest report held Israel responsible for acts that may amount to genocide. The report was used in a case brought by South Africa against Israel before the International Court of Justice.

Some states called for action, but the Security Council did not take actual action due to division among the permanent members.

Yemen:

The UN Panel of Experts documented potential war crimes, but its mandate was terminated in 2021 under pressure from some states.

Its reports did not lead to direct international accountability.

It is clear that the reports of commissions of inquiry play an important role in documenting and providing moral and political accountability, but they rarely translate into direct legal accountability due to:

The complexities of the international system.

The interests of some states, particularly major powers.

The absence of binding enforcement mechanisms within the Human Rights Council.

Perhaps the most prominent international trials or judicial cases in which reports of UN commissions of inquiry or human rights expert teams were used as primary evidence to prove war crimes or crimes against humanity related to the region are:

1. The 2024 Genocide Case against Israel - International Court of Justice which included the deliberate killing of civilians. The destruction of civilian infrastructure and the forced transfer of populations.

The Court issued provisional measures requiring Israel to prevent and investigate acts of genocide.

2. The Syrian War: Trials have been filed in Europe under universal jurisdiction. Several European courts (Germany, Sweden, France) have tried former officials of the Syrian regime.

3. The Yemen War: The UN Panel of Experts on Yemen documented:

Indiscriminate bombing. The blockade imposed on civilians. The recruitment of children. Some European human rights organizations attempted to bring cases against officials from the Arab coalition under the principle of universal jurisdiction, but political pressure prevented some cases from being accepted. The reports are still being used in legal and media campaigns.

4. Myanmar - The Genocide Case Against the Rohingya. Reports of the Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar (2018) documented genocidal intent against the Rohingya minority. The Court agreed to hear the case and issued provisional measures to protect the Rohingyas.

The importance of these reports cannot be downplayed as the reports issued by the Human Rights Council are not merely symbolic. They can serve as key legal tools in building criminal cases and international lawsuits, and politically independent states are required to bring them before international or national courts.

Examples of how UN commissions of inquiry reports have been used as primary evidence in international trials include:

Anwar Raslan Trial in Germany (2022)

In January 2022, the Regional Supreme Court in Koblenz, Germany, sentenced former Syrian Colonel Anwar Raslan to life imprisonment after convicting him of crimes against humanity

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, described the verdict as a "historic step towards justice," noting that the trial highlighted the torture and inhumane treatment suffered by countless Syrians in detention facilities. These reports have been used as evidence in legal attempts in some European countries to hold those responsible for these violations accountable, although political pressure has prevented some cases from progressing.

Kuwait and its Membership in the Human Rights Council:

Kuwait has been a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council twice so far, as follows:

1. First Term: 2011–2014

Kuwait was first elected to the Council in 2010, and its three-year term began in 2011.

2. Second Term (Current): 2024–2026

Kuwait won a seat in the October 2023 elections. Its membership began in January 2024 and will continue until the end of 2026.

During its membership in the Human Rights Council, Kuwait played an effective and balanced role in supporting human rights issues, with a focus on Arab, Islamic, and humanitarian issues. Among its most notable contributions and positions during its two terms are the following:

■ Strongly supported investigations into Israeli violations against Palestinians, especially during the aggression on Gaza.

■ Demanded the international community protect Palestinian civilians and halt settlement activity.

■ It emphasized the need to respect international humanitarian law and stop violence against civilians.

■ It adopted moderate positions calling for comprehensive political solutions to crises.

■ It highlighted Kuwait's role as a global humanitarian center, particularly in providing support to displaced persons and refugees.

■ It supported some recommendations and expressed reservations on some provisions that conflict with sovereign or religious values.

■ It participated in sessions discussing freedom of religion and expression, emphasizing the need not to link terrorism to religions.

■ It supported resolutions promoting women's empowerment and combating violence against children, within a framework of respect for cultural specificities.

■ Kuwait adopts a non-confrontational approach in the Council, seeking to bring viewpoints closer together rather than confronting them.

■ It expressed its support for developing the Council's mechanisms to make them more just, effective, and non-politicized.

□ □ □

Tareq Yousef AlShumaimry, served as Chairman of the Finance Committee and Chairman of the General Budget Committee of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague (PCA) and an observer in the Administrative Council of the Court and the Consular at International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in the Netherlands during this period from 2013 to 2020. Email: tareq@alshumaimry.com

Kuwait's rights

The Kuwaiti delegation reviewed the most outstanding achievements made on field, constitutional and legislative levels, including the laws on protection against family violence and punishment, and amending the citizenship act as well as raising the minimum age of marriage to 18 years old and others.

Kuwait made some key constitutional steps, including establishing centers to protect victims of family violence, a national office on childhood protection, national committee on women rights and enhance their roles and others.

The report stressed Kuwaiti women's key role in development, noting that they make up 58 percent of national workforce and have three ministerial portfolios in the current government.

The report shed light on utmost attention paid by Kuwait to boost rights of disabled, referring that the country has allocated USD 340 million to support the services of this segment.

On fighting corruption, the report pointed out that Kuwait prepared new bills to expand powers of Nazaha (Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority), and enhance the role and independence of judiciary.

It referred to Kuwait's efforts on digital transformation, including the launch of "Sahel" app. that has achieved more than 60 million e-transactions.

Kuwait is working to enhance partnership with civil society, ensure the protection of vulnerable segments' rights and spread the culture of human rights, the report said.

Led by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Kuwait continues to honor its commitment to achieving reforms, and enhancing human rights and freedom, it noted.

The document also highlighted Kuwait's role as the center of humanitarian action, affirming commitment to continuing offering a wide-range of humanitarian aid, through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, and backing relief efforts in the dispute-inflicted areas, mainly Gaza, Syria and Yemen, in addition to host and organize international donor conferences

The report said Kuwait responded to calls for field visits during 2023 and 2024 that included development field, violence against women, rights of those disabled and others.

The national report, which covered the period from 2020 to 2024, was prepared by governmental and civil society agencies, and the National Diwan for Human Rights.

Kuwait's delegation vowed to study the recommendations totaling 290 submitted by the UNHRC member states.

Kuwait and

said, commending Bahrain's rich media and cultural assets that marks a valuable addition to any joint action.

He added that Bahrain's participation in the 28th meeting of GCC information ministers due in Kuwait on Sunday represents a significant opportunity for promoting Gulf media integration and looking into ways of developing media in a bid to cope with rapid regional and global transformations.

The minister underlined Kuwait's commitment to continuously beefing up media and cultural cooperation with Bahrain in a way that contributes to promoting joint Gulf action and fulfilling the aspirations of GCC leaders and peoples.

Kuwait opens

They discussed the most difficult challenges that the media is currently facing in light of the digital transformation. They addressed several issues, including content creation and the future of the media.

During the sessions, the speakers shared their experiences, while highlighting the importance of self-development and keeping up with technological advancements. They stressed that media professionals must keep pace with the times and develop themselves by using modern media tools.

They said the forum provides young people with the opportunity to meet young Arab media professionals and gain insight into their practical experiences and career paths. This contributes to raising their media awareness and enhancing their ability to navigate the changing media landscape.

Participants in the sessions agreed that modern media requires innovative skills, which go beyond traditional approaches. They underscored the need to empower the youths by providing them with training tools to use digital platforms creatively and responsibly, believing that the future of media depends on the new generation's ability to balance technology and media content.

The first session was moderated by media personality Amani Al-Kandari; with other media personalities Fatima Al-Tabbakh, Aya Hajouj and Neela Janahi; content creators Shihab Al-Hashemi and Mohammad Taher; and artist Maria Juma in attendance.

Media personality Basant Nour Al-Din moderated the second session; with technology consultant Hani Al-Ghafeeli, content creators Ahmed Raafat and Rawan Nasser, and trainer Khadija Karam in attendance.

The third session was moderated by media personality Shaima Rustum, in the presence of content creators Shawq Al-Shirazi, Rania Yahya and Ihsan Bin Alloush; as well as media personalities Ali Hassan, Ali Al-Khalidi and Taghreed Al-Tasan.

The fourth session was moderated by media personality Wurood Hayat, with the attendance of media personalities Alaa Bushnaq, Ahmed Al-Fahed and Iman Zainal; content creator Noura Mahriya and space expert Lama Al-Ariman.

Kuwaiti, US

The Task Force 59 unit of the US Navy Central is expected to visit the Sabah Al-Ahmad Naval Base, to observe Kuwaiti unmanned vessels and exchange expertise, the statement noted.

Kuwait set

The Lebanese official called for boosting cooperation protocols between the two countries, namely within commercial exchange and tourism, commending in this regard Kuwait's hosting of the large Lebanese community on its soil.

Rajji hoped that the visit would meet the high expectations of both people, wishing for positive results furthering Lebanese-Kuwaiti ties.

In related news, the Lebanese Business Council in Kuwait warmly welcomes President of the Lebanese Republic General Joseph Aoun during his official visit to the State of Kuwait.

This visit is regarded as a significant event, symbolizing the robust and enduring fraternal relations between the two nations.

Chairman of the council Ali Hassan Khalil stated that the visit, in response to the gracious invitation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, exemplifies the mutual esteem held by the leaderships of both countries and presents a valuable opportunity to strengthen bilateral cooperation in multiple sectors.

Khalil elaborated that the council, functioning as a vital economic and social entity for the Lebanese expatriate community, places considerable emphasis on fortifying bilateral relations. "It actively supports the initiation of collaborative ventures and projects aimed at advancing the shared interests of Lebanon and Kuwait, leveraging the professional skills and expertise of Lebanese nationals residing in Kuwait," he explained.

He asserted that the visit of Aoun is a chance to reaffirm the commitment of Lebanon to strengthen its relations with Arab countries, especially Kuwait; grounded in the spirit of amity, mutual respect and reciprocal interests.

Furthermore, the council expressed its deep appreciation for Kuwait's continuous support of Lebanon and its sincere gratitude to the Kuwaiti leadership and people for their hospitality towards the Lebanese community that endeavors to serve as a constructive and contributing element in the Kuwaiti society.



US President Donald Trump speaks with reporters in the Oval Office of the White House on May 9, in Washington. (AP)

Trump signs executive order for self-deportation program

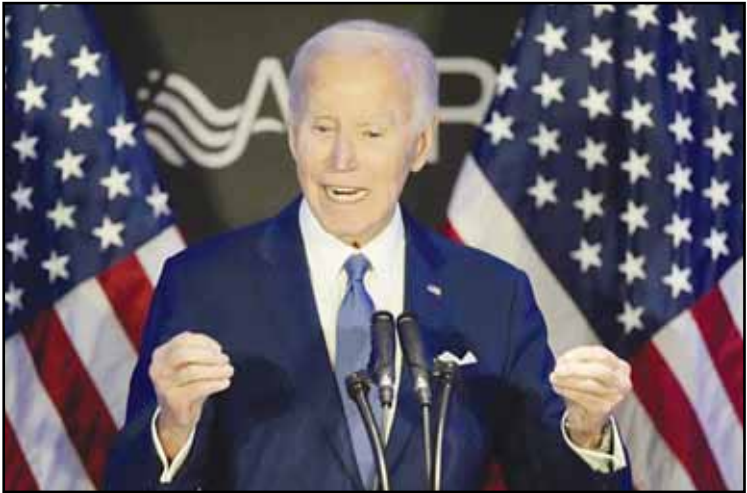
WASHINGTON, May 10, (KUNA): US President Donald Trump has inked an executive order encouraging illegal immigrants to leave the US willingly. "Today, I signed an executive order to launch the first ever self-deportation program for illegal aliens. We are making it as easy as possible for illegal aliens to leave America," Trump said in a video posted by the White House late Friday. "Any illegal alien can simply show up at an airport and receive a free

flight out of our country. We have also launched a phone app called C, B P home. That's C, B P home, where illegals can book a free flight to any foreign country, as long as it's not here, you can go anywhere you want," he said. "We're also adding a very important exit bonus for illegals to further incentivize their self-deportation. This deportation bonus will save American taxpayers billions and billions of dollars," he added.

'I hope she stays engaged'

Biden blames Harris' loss on racism, rejects concerns about age

NEW YORK, May 10, (AP): Former US President Joe Biden says he's responsible for Donald Trump's victory last fall, but he attributes Kamala Harris' loss, at least in part, to sexism and racism. Biden, who left office in January, addressed the Democrats' disastrous 2024 election, concerns about his age and Trump's divisive leadership during an interview on ABC's "The View." The 82-year-old Democrat said he has intentionally avoided speaking out publicly until this week to give the Republican president more than 100 days in office without his interference, as is typically the tradition following a change in the White House. Asked about the last election, Biden said he was surprised by the role that gender and race played in the contest. "They went the sexist route," Biden said of criticism that "a woman couldn't lead the country and a woman of mixed race." He added: "I was in charge, and he won, so I take responsibility." Biden has largely stepped away from national politics since leaving the White House. He's not expected to play a central role in Democratic affairs as the party turns to a new gen-



Former US president Joe Biden speaks at the Advocates, Counselors, and Representatives for the Disabled conference in Chicago on April 15. (AP)

eration of leadership, although he acknowledged on Thursday that he has maintained regular contact with Harris and has offered his guidance on her political future. "She's got a difficult decision to make about what she's going to do. I hope she stays engaged," Biden said, declining to share his specific advice. Biden rejected concerns about his cognitive decline prompted by a disastrous debate performance last June. He also declined to criticize the Democratic leaders who privately pressed him to abandon his campaign. "The only reason I got out of the race was because I didn't want to have a divided Democratic Party," he said, adding that the broader party didn't buy into concerns about his age following

the "terrible" debate performance "but the Democratic leadership and some of the very significant contributors did." Polling, however, suggests that the concerns among Democrats were widespread. In January 2022, just a year into Biden's first term, an AP-NORC poll found that only 48% of Democrats wanted him to seek reelection. That fell to 37% of Democrats in an AP-NORC poll conducted February 2023. And two after his debate flop, nearly two-thirds of Democrats said Biden should withdraw from the race. Thursday's appearance also marked Biden's first joint interview with former first lady Jill Biden since leaving Washington. She rejected those who believe she created a protective cocoon around her husband while in office to protect him from scrutiny about his age. "It was very hurtful especially from some of our so-called friends," she said of the criticism. "I was with Joe day and night ... and I did not create a cocoon around him," she continued. "You saw him in the Oval Office. You saw him making speeches. He wasn't hiding somewhere."

Judge pauses much of WH massive downsizing of federal agencies

US Treasury secretary calls on Congress to raise or suspend debt ceiling by mid-July

WASHINGTON, May 10, (AP): The US is on track to run out of money to pay its bills as early as August without congressional action, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent warned Friday. He is calling on Congress to either raise or suspend the debt ceiling by mid-July. "A failure to suspend or increase the debt limit would wreak havoc on our financial system and diminish America's security and global leadership position," Bessent wrote in the letter to House Speaker Mike Johnson. "Prior episodes have shown that waiting until the last minute to suspend or increase the debt limit can have serious adverse consequences for financial markets, businesses and the federal government." Earlier this week, Bessent twice testified in front of congressional committees that the Treasury's debt ceiling is "on the warning track."

tute "extraordinary measures" intended to prevent the U.S. from reaching the debt ceiling. Since then, the Treasury Department has stopped paying into certain accounts, including a slew of federal worker pension and disability funds, to make up for the shortfall in money. Bessent has continued to notify Congress about the use of extraordinary measures in an effort to prevent a breach of the debt ceiling. In his latest letter, Bessent attributed the August deadline, known as the "X-date," in part to receipts from the latest tax filing season. A Bipartisan Policy Center analysis released in March estimated that the US could run out of cash by mid-July if Congress did not raise or suspend the nation's debt limit. President Donald Trump had previously demanded that a provision raising or suspending the debt limit - something his own Republican Party routinely resists - be included in legislation to avert the last potential government shutdown under his Democratic predecessor, President Joe Biden.



US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent testifies before the House Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, oversight hearing of the US Department of the Treasury on Capitol Hill in Washington on May 6. (AP)

"Anything else is a betrayal of our country," Trump said in a statement in December. That deal did not ultimately address the debt limit. The letter to Johnson comes as Republicans consider a massive tax cut

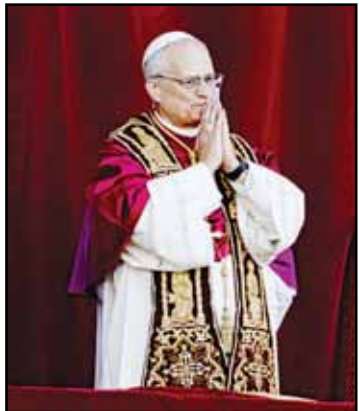
and border security package that includes an increase in the debt limit. Bessent's request could give GOP lawmakers greater incentive to reach an agreement. **Also:** **SAN FRANCISCO:** The Trump administration must halt much of its dramatic downsizing of the federal workforce, a California judge ordered Friday. Judge Susan Illston in San Francisco issued the emergency order in a lawsuit filed last week by labor unions and cities, one of multiple legal challenges to Republican President Donald Trump's efforts to shrink the size of a federal government he calls bloated and expensive. "The Court holds the President likely must request Congressional cooperation to order the changes he seeks, and thus issues a temporary restraining order to pause large-scale reductions in force in the meantime," Illston wrote in her order. The temporary restraining order directs numerous federal agencies to halt

acting on the president's workforce executive order signed in February and a subsequent memo issued by the Department of Government Efficiency and the Office of Personnel Management. The order, which expires in 14 days, does not require departments to rehire people. Plaintiffs asked that the effective date of any agency action be postponed and that departments stop implementing or enforcing the executive order, including taking any further action. They limited their request to departments where dismantlement is already underway or poised to be underway, including at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which announced in March it will lay off 10,000 workers and centralize divisions. Illston, who was nominated to the bench by former President Bill Clinton, a Democrat, said at a hearing Friday the president has authority to seek changes in the executive branch departments and agencies created by Congress.

'AI a main challenge for humanity'

Pope Leo XIV lays out vision of papacy

VATICAN CITY, May 10, (AP): Pope Leo XIV laid out the vision of his papacy Saturday, identifying artificial intelligence as one of the most critical matters facing humanity and vowing to continue in some of the core priorities of Pope Francis. In his first formal audience, Leo repeatedly cited Francis and the Argentine pope's own 2013 mission statement, making clear a commitment to making the Catholic Church more inclusive, attentive to the faithful and a church that looks out for the "least and rejected." Leo, the first American pope, told the cardinals who elected him that he was fully committed to the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, the 1960s meetings that modernized the church. He identified AI as one of the main issues facing humanity, saying it poses challenges to defending human dignity, justice and labor. Leo referred to AI in explaining the choice of his name: His namesake, Pope Leo XIII, was pope from 1878 to 1903 and laid the foundation for modern Catholic social thought. He did so most famously with his 1891 encyclical



Newly-elected Pope Leo XIV, formerly Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, appears on the central loggia of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican shortly after his election as the 267th pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church on May 8. (AP)

ing shape to a distinctly Catholic vein of economic teaching. In his remarks Saturday, Leo said he identified with his predecessor, who addressed the great social question of the day posed by the industrial revolution in the encyclical. "In our own day, the church offers everyone the treasury of its social teaching in response to another industrial revolution and to developments in the field of artificial intelligence that pose new challenges for the defence of human dignity, justice and labour," he said. Toward the end of his pontificate, Francis became increasingly vocal about the threats to humanity posed by AI and called for an international treaty to regulate it. He warned that such powerful technology risks turning human relations into mere algorithms. Francis brought his message to the Group of Seven industrialized nations when he addressed their summit last year, insisting AI must remain human-centric so that decisions about when to use weapons or even less-lethal tools always remain made by humans and not machines.



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer, (left), France's President Emmanuel Macron, (second left), Poland's Prime Minister Donald Tusk, (right), Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, (second right), and Germany's Chancellor Friedrich Merz, (third right), meet at the Mariinskyi Palace, in Kyiv, Ukraine on May 10. (AP)

Ukraine and allies push for 30-day ceasefire starting Monday: Sybiha

KYIV, Ukraine, May 10, (AP): Ukraine and its allies are ready for a "full, unconditional ceasefire" with Russia for at least 30 days starting on Monday, Ukrainian FM Andrii Sybiha said Saturday. His remarks came as the leaders of four major European countries visited Kyiv, amid a push for Moscow to agree to a truce and launch peace talks on ending the nearly three-year war. It coincided with the last day of a unilateral three-day ceasefire declared by Russia that Ukraine says the Kremlin's forces have repeatedly violated. In March, the United States proposed an immediate, limited 30-day truce which Ukraine accepted, but the Kremlin has held out for terms more to

its liking. The leaders of France, Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom arrived together at the train station in Kyiv, and met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy shortly after to join a ceremony at Kyiv's Independence Square marking the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. They lit candles at a makeshift flag memorial for fallen Ukrainian soldiers and civilians slain since Russia's invasion. The visit marked the first time the leaders of the four countries have traveled together to Ukraine, while Friedrich Merz is making his first visit to Ukraine as Germany's new chancellor. Sybiha on Thursday called the Russian truce a "farce," accusing Russian

forces of violating it over 700 times less than a day after it formally came into effect. Both sides also said attacks on their troops had continued on Thursday. "We reiterate our backing for President Trump's calls for a peace deal and call on Russia to stop obstructing efforts to secure an enduring peace," the leaders said in a joint statement. "Alongside the U.S., we call on Russia to agree a full and unconditional 30-day ceasefire to create the space for talks on a just and lasting peace." Meanwhile, Russia has kept up attacks along the roughly 1,000-mile (1,600-kilometer) front line, including deadly strikes on residential areas with no obvious military targets.



People attend a pro-EU rally outside the government headquarters ahead of the second round of the presidential election redo in Bucharest, Romania on May 9. (AP)

Thousands join pro-EU rally in Romania's capital

Thousands of people gathered in Romania's capital on Friday for a pro-European Union march. It came a week before the final vote of a closely watched presidential election that pits a hard-right nationalist front-runner against the capital's pro-EU mayor. Marchers converged in Bucharest in front of the government building, where many waved the blue and yellow flags of Europe.

Many chanted slogans such as "We are in Europe" and "Bucharest is not Budapest," referring to Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, a member but also a longtime critic of the EU. A communist country until 1989, Romania joined the EU in 2007. But last year it was plunged into its worst political crisis in decades when a top court voided the previous election. The far-right outsider Calin Geor-

gescu topped the first round following allegations of electoral violations and Russian interference, which Moscow has denied. The rally was held nearly a week after the first round of a presidential election redo that saw hard-right nationalist George Simion, 38, emerge as the front-runner. In second place was 55-year-old incumbent Bucharest Mayor Nicusor Dan. (AP)

America

Newark mayor released: Newark Mayor Ras Baraka was released after spending several hours in custody following his arrest at a new federal immigration detention center he has been protesting against.



Baraka

Baraka was accused of trespassing and ignoring warnings to leave the Delaney Hall facility and was finally released around 8 pm Friday. Stepping out of an SUV with flashing emergency lights, he told waiting supporters: "The reality is this: I didn't do anything wrong." The mayor said he could not speak about his case, citing a promise he made to lawyers and the judge. But he voiced full-throated support for ev-

eryone living in his community, immigrants included. (AP)

Ex-Supreme Court justice Souter dies: Retired Supreme Court Justice David H. Souter, the ascetic bachelor and New Hampshire Republican who became a favorite of liberals during his nearly 20 years on the bench, has died. He was 85. Souter died Thursday at his home in New Hampshire, the court said in a statement Friday. He retired from the court in June 2009, giving President Barack Obama his first Supreme Court vacancy to fill. Obama, a Democrat, chose Sonia Sotomayor, the court's first Latina justice. Souter was appointed by Republican President George H.W. Bush in 1990. He was a reliably liberal vote on abortion, church-state relations, freedom of expression and the accessibility of federal courts. Souter also dissented from the decision in Bush v. Gore in 2000, which effectively handed the presidency to George W. Bush, the son of the man who put him on the high court. (AP)

Congratulations to both countries on using common sense: Trump

India and Pakistan agree to ceasefire in United States-mediated talks

ISLAMABAD, May 10, (AP): India and Pakistan on Saturday confirmed a ceasefire deal after US-led talks to end a conflict between the nuclear-armed rivals.

It follows weeks of clashes, missile and drone strikes across their border that were triggered by a gun massacre on tourists last month that India blames on Pakistan, which denied the charge. It was their most serious confrontation in decades and left dozens of civilian dead on both sides.

The first word on the truce came from US President Donald Trump, who posted his Truth Social platform that he was pleased to announce that India and Pakistan had agreed to a full and immediate ceasefire. "Congratulations to both Countries on using Common Sense and Great Intelligence. Thank you for your attention to this matter!"

Pakistan's foreign minister said earlier Saturday that his country would consider de-escalation if India stopped further attacks. However, Ishaq Dar warned that if India launched any strikes, "our response will follow."

Dar told Pakistan's Geo News that he also conveyed this message to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who contacted him after Rubio spoke to New Delhi earlier.

"We responded because our patience had reached its limit. If they stop here, we will also consider stopping," Dar added.

India said it targeted Pakistani air bases early Saturday after Islamabad fired several high-speed missiles at military and civilian infrastructure in the country's Punjab state. Pakistan said it intercepted most missiles and responded with retaliatory strikes on India.

Rubio spoke to his Indian counterpart Subrahmanyam Jaishankar and emphasized that "both sides need to identify methods to de-escalate and reestablish direct communication to avoid miscalculation." State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce said Saturday, and offered US support to facilitate "productive discussion."

Earlier Saturday, India's military held a press briefing in New Delhi, saying Pakistan targeted health facilities and schools at its three air bases in Indian-controlled Kashmir.

"Befitting reply has been given to Pakistani actions," said Indian Col. Sofiya Qureshi.



India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri addressed a press briefing in New Delhi, India on May 10. (AP)

Wing Commander Vyomika Singh said India was committed to "non-escalation" provided that Pakistan reciprocated. However, Pakistani ground forces were observed mobilizing toward forward areas, she said, "indicating an offensive intent to further escalate the situation."

"Indian armed forces remain in a high state of operational readiness," she added. Singh said India carried out "precision strikes only at identified military targets" including technical infrastructure and radar sites.

Pakistan's military said it used medium-range Fateh missiles to hit an Indian

missile storage facility and air bases in the cities of Pathankot and Udhampur.

The Associated Press could not independently verify all the actions attributed to Pakistan or India.

Army spokesman Lt. Gen. Ahmad Sharif said Pakistan's air force assets were safe following the Indian assault.

Tensions have soared since an attack at a popular tourist site in India-controlled Kashmir left 26 civilians dead, mostly Indian Hindu tourists, on April 22. New Delhi has blamed Pakistan for backing the assault, an accusation Islamabad rejects.

Indian missiles Saturday targeted Nur Khan air base in the garrison city of Rawalpindi, near the capital Islamabad, Murid air base in Chakwal city and Rafiqui air base in the Jhang district of eastern Punjab province, according to Pakistan's military spokesman.

There were no immediate reports of the strike or its aftermath from residents in the densely populated Rawalpindi.

Pakistanis celebrated the missile launches on India.

"Thank God we have finally responded to Indian aggression," said Muhammad Ashraf, who had gone out in Lahore for breakfast. There were jubilant scenes in Peshawar and Karachi.

Following the announcement of Pakistani retaliation, residents in Indian-controlled Kashmir said they heard loud explosions at multiple places, including the two big cities of Srinagar and Jammu and the garrison town of Udhampur.

"Explosions that we are hearing today are different from the ones we heard the last two nights during drone attacks," said Shesh Paul Vaid, the region's former top police official and Jammu resident. "It looks like a war here."

Vaid said explosions were heard from areas with military bases, adding it appeared that army sites were targeted. Residents living near Srinagar city's airport, which is also an air base, said they were rattled by the explosions and booming sound of jets.

"I was already awake, but the explosions jolted my kids out of their sleep. They started crying," said Srinagar resident Mohammed Yasin, adding he heard at least two explosions.

S.Korea conservative party moves to switch presidential candidates

SEOUL, South Korea, May 10, (AP): South Korea's embattled conservative party has taken the unprecedented step of nullifying its primary and replacing presidential candidate Kim Moon Soo with former Prime Minister Han Duck-soo just one week after Kim's selection, deepening internal turmoil ahead of the June 3 presidential election.

Saturday's move by the People Power Party's leadership, which Kim denounced as an "overnight political coup," underscores the desperation and disarray within the party following the ouster of former President Yoon Suk Yeol over his ill-fated attempt to impose martial law in December.

Kim, a staunch conservative and former labor minister under Yoon, was named the PPP's presidential candidate on May 3 after winning 56.3% of the primary vote, defeating a reformist rival who had criticized Yoon's martial law. But the PPP's leadership, dominated by Yoon loyalists, has spent the past week pressuring Kim to step aside and back Han, whom they believe stands a stronger chance against liberal Democratic Party frontrunner Lee Jae-myung.

Han served as acting president after Yoon was impeached by the legislature in December and officially removed by the Constitutional Court in April. He resigned from office May 2 to pursue a presidential bid, arguing his long public



South Korea's People Power Party's presidential election candidate Kim Moon Soo, right, and independent preliminary presidential election candidate Han Duck-soo pose for a photo during a meeting in Seoul, South Korea on May 8. (AP)

service career qualifies him to lead the country amid growing geopolitical uncertainty and trade challenges intensified by the policies of U.S. President Donald Trump.

After failed talks between Han and Kim to unify their candidacies, the PPP's emergency committee canceled Kim's nomination in the early hours of Saturday and officially registered Han as a party member and its new presidential candidate.

The replacement still requires confirmation through an all-party vote Saturday and approval by the

party's national committee Sunday, which is the deadline for candidates to register with the election authorities.

Han in a message issued through the party claimed "if we unite, we can surely win."

Speaking at a news conference, Kim lamented "democracy in our party died" and vowed to take unspecified legal and political steps, but it remained unclear whether any realistic path existed to restore his candidacy without the party's cooperation.

Reducing student debt re-elected govt first priority, says Australia's Albanese

MELBOURNE, Australia, May 10, (AP): Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told his government colleagues on Friday that reducing student debt would be the first legislative priority for his administration that was returned to power in the nation's first election in which the Baby Boomer generation was outnumbered by younger voters.

Albanese addressed a crowded room full of center-left Labor Party lawmakers in Parliament House for the first time since his government won an emphatic election victory on May 3.

The struggle a growing number of young Australians - particularly those burdened with student loans - face to buy their first home, due to soaring real estate prices and a lack of new housing construction was a major election issue.

Albanese said a bill to reduce student debt by 20% would be the first legislation to be introduced when Parliament resumes in late July.

"I think that's important, not just in itself but for what it says about our commitment to intergenerational equity," Albanese said.

Baby Boomers are often defined as people born between World War II and 1964. Their needs have long dominated Australian election campaigns.

As vote counting continued on Friday, Labor was on track to win 88 seats in the 150-seat House of Representatives, the lower chamber where parties need a majority to form government.



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese reacts as he meets party faithful after winning a second term of the general election in Sydney on May 3. (AP)

The party held 78 seats in the last parliament.

The conservative opposition alliance of parties was likely to claim only 41 seats.

Albanese praised the diversity of Labor's elected lawmakers and said at least 57% of them are expected to be women once the vote counting is completed. The Australian population was 50.7% female at the last census in 2021.

"I ... see people of different ethnicities, different backgrounds, different experiences, different faiths. I see a

diverse group of people that are truly representative of our nation," Albanese told his government colleagues.

But the government has been criticized for dropping Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus and Industry and Science Minister Ed Husic, the government's most prominent Muslim, from the new Cabinet that will be sworn in on Tuesday.

Cabinet ministers are decided by party factions that are entitled to a proportion of ministerial seats that reflects their share of government lawmakers.



The mega-prison known as Detention Center Against Terrorism (CECOT) stands in Tecoluca, El Salvador on March 5, 2023. (AP)

Rights groups sue to free Venezuelans deported from US, held in El Salvador

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador, May 10, (AP): International human rights organizations on Friday filed a lawsuit with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights asking that the commission order El Salvador's government to release Venezuelans deported from the United States and held in a maximum-security prison.

In March, the US government deported more than 200 Venezuelan immigrants alleged to have ties to the Tren de Aragua gang to El Salvador, paying the Salvadoran government to imprison them. Since then, they have had no access to lawyers or ability to communicate with their families. Neither the US nor Salvadoran governments have said how the men could eventually regain their freedom.

"These individuals have been stripped from their families and subject to a state-sponsored enforced disappearance regime, effectively, completely against the law," said Bella Mosselmans, director of the Global Strategic Litigation Council, which helped bring the suit.

One of them is Euder José Torres.

In September, Torres boarded a Houston-bound flight in Quito, Ecuador with his 21-year-old stepson after successfully completing a monthslong screening process that included health exams and criminal history checks.

The 41-year-old Venezuelan and the young man he had raised since early childhood had been approved for family reunification through the UN's International Organization for Migration and were headed to the US to join his long-time partner and his stepson's brother.

But at the airport in Houston, immigration agents saw a tattoo of a compass on the stepson's forearm with the initials of his mother, father and brother in place of the cardinal directions. They said it signaled him as a member of the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua. The next day he was on a flight back to Ecuador.

But Torres didn't have an Ecuadorian visa, so agents

placed him in immigration detention in Texas. He had tattoos too, the name of his saint Elegua in script on one forearm - he is a practitioner of Santería, a fusion of African religions and Catholicism - and skull on the other.

Torres sought US asylum and passed his credible fear interview, but at an immigration hearing in January the government lawyer told the judge, without providing evidence, he too was a member of Tren de Aragua. The judge issued a deportation order, according to his longtime partner, who requested anonymity due to fears of retaliation despite her legal status in the US.

In March, Torres found himself among more than 200 Venezuelans sent to a maximum-security prison in El Salvador.

His partner questions how the US government could send him to a prison there without any evidence that he had broken the law or has a criminal record.

El Salvador has been living under a state of emergency for more than three years, which has suspended some fundamental rights and given the administration of President Nayib Bukele extraordinary powers. More than 85,000 Salvadorans have been arrested over the period for alleged ties to the country's once-powerful street gangs.

The improvement in El Salvador's security has won Bukele widespread domestic support and some admirers in the region who seek to imitate his success. But the lack of due process and numerous arbitrary arrests have drawn international condemnation. Bukele has dismissed those critics as defenders of criminals.

A spokesperson for Bukele's office declined to comment Friday. With the administration of US President Donald Trump taking a hard line on immigration and portraying migrants broadly as criminals, neither government has been swayed by legal maneuvers in their own country to seek the men's release or return to the US.

Myanmar military govt chief meets China's Xi since taking power in '21

BANGKOK, May 10, (AP): The chief of Myanmar's military government, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, has for the first time since seizing power four years ago met with President Xi Jinping of China, a top ally of his military government, state-run media in the Southeast Asian nation reported Saturday.

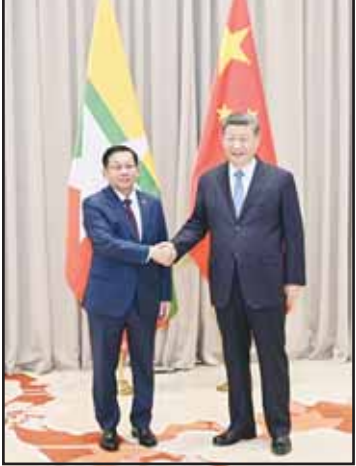
The Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper reported that Xi pledged to provide assistance for recovery after Myanmar's devastating earthquake in March and aid in efforts to end the country's civil war. The two leaders met Friday in Moscow on the sidelines of the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

Its report said they also discussed "bilateral relations, enhancing cooperation in all sectors, and cooperating in regional stability and peace." China has been using its influence with ethnic rebel organizations to ease their pressure on the military government in an apparent effort to stabilize it.

China, along with Russia, is a major arms supplier to Myanmar's military in its war against pro-democracy and ethnic minority resistance forces. Beijing is also Myanmar's biggest trading partner and has invested billions of dollars in mines, oil and gas pipelines, and other infrastructure. Its interests in security in Myanmar are especially strong because the two nations share an 890-mile (1,440-kilometer) border.

China's government has maintained good working relations with Myanmar's ruling military, which is shunned and sanctioned by many Western nations for the army's February 2021 takeover from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi and for major human rights violations.

It is also one of the countries providing major relief and reconstruction assistance after the 7.7-magnitude March 28 earthquake that killed more than 3,700 people in Myanmar and injured more than 5,100. The quake worsened



In this photo provided by Myanmar Military True News Information Team on May 9 Myanmar military chief Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, (left), shakes hands with Chinese President Xi Jinping, right, during their meeting in Moscow, Russia. (AP)

an already dire humanitarian crisis, with more than 3 million people displaced from their homes and nearly 20 million in need due to the war, according to the United Nations.

Beijing has been concerned about instability that threatens its interests in Myanmar since Myanmar's army suffered unprecedented battlefield defeats over the past few years, especially in areas near the Chinese border.

An offensive began in October 2023, by the "Three Brotherhood Alliance," comprising the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, the Arakan Army and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army, was able to quickly capture towns and overrun military bases and command centers and strategic cities along the Chinese border in northeastern Shan state.

It was widely seen at the time as having Beijing's tacit support to help stamp out rampant organized crime activities in areas controlled by ethnic Chinese.

In early 2024, Beijing helped broker a ceasefire, but that quickly fell apart when the alliance launched new attacks. Myanmar's ruling generals and China's government showed concern as pro-democracy guerrillas and armed ethnic minority groups, sometimes working hand in hand, gained the initiative in fighting.

The alliance's offensive lost momentum after China shut down border crossings, cut electricity to Myanmar towns and took other measures to discourage the fighting.



An army soldier walks in front of the damaged Republican palace in Khartoum, Sudan after it was taken by Sudan's army on March 21. (AP)

At least 20 killed in Sudan after suspected drone strike hits jail

CAIRO, May 10, (AP): A suspected drone strike launched by Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces hit a prison in the southern region of Kordofan on Saturday and killed at least 20 inmates, authorities said.

Fifty other detainees were wounded in the attack on the main prison in Obeid, the capital city of North Kordofan, Information Minister Khalid Aleiser said in a statement.

Aleiser, who is also the spokesman of the military-allied government, accused the Rapid Support Forces for the attack, which came as the militia escalates drone strikes on the military-held areas across the country.

Sudan plunged into civil war on April 15, 2023, when simmering tensions between the military and the RSF exploded into open warfare in the capital Khartoum and other parts of the country. Obeid is 363 kilometers (225 miles) south of Khartoum.

Kuwait crude oil up \$1.96 to \$64.53 pb

KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti crude oil price rose by USD 1.96 during Friday’s trading to USD 64.53 per barrel (pb), compared with USD 62.57 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Saturday. Brent futures rose by USD 1.07 to USD 63.01 pb and West Texas Intermediate went up by USD 1.11 to USD 61.02 pb.

Other Voices

\$64 oil may be temporary

OPEC+ aligns with Trump’s push for lower oil prices?!

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

LAST week, OPEC+ decided to increase crude oil output for this month and the next. This appears to be in support of the trend of lowering oil prices. Or perhaps it is a warning to member countries that have been exceeding their agreed production quotas in violation of OPEC’s resolutions.



Al-Harami

Currently, oil prices are around \$ 64 per barrel, a level few expected, and one for which there seems to be no real reason. The increase in supply since last month, continuing into June, could be interpreted as a signal to non-compliant members: either adhere to production limits or risk driving prices down further, which will cause hurt to everyone.

At \$ 64 per barrel, everyone loses. Member countries will suffer financially and will be forced to turn to international banks for funding. While banks may be willing to lend, the terms and credit ratings will likely worsen, especially as uncertainty grows over how long oil prices will remain weak, given

the abundant supply and the current U.S. administration’s strong push for domestic oil exploration and production in America.

OPEC, on the other hand, is currently producing around 30 million barrels per day, which is an increase of 200,000 barrels per day compared to last year. However, this rise in output comes with lower daily revenue due to weaker oil prices, offering little to no financial benefit for OPEC member countries. The root of the issue lies in the non-compliance of two to three member states, whose overproduction has led to huge financial losses for the organization and, more importantly, damaged its reputation as a disciplined and coherent organization.

Events in the coming weeks may provide more clarity on the future of the oil market, particularly with the anticipated visit of the leader of the world’s largest oil-producing country. His meetings with the heads of GCC countries could help stabilize the market, or potentially signal the beginning of a new oil order.

For now, we await the outcomes and their effect on global oil prices. One thing is clear: the current level of \$64 per barrel is unlikely to last. A rebound to around \$70 by year-end seems more probable.

□ □ □

Email: naftikuwaiti@yahoo.com

National Bank of Kuwait’s Soft POS service grows in popularity among SMEs and business owners

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Emphasizing its continued dedication to achieving digital convenience and enriching the customers’ experience, National Bank of Kuwait’s Soft POS service payment is seeing a growing demand by Small and Medium Enterprises and business owners.

This cutting-edge service that highlights NBK’s commitment to providing diverse digital solutions enables merchants and business owners to easily and quickly turn their smartphones into POS terminals. By using the Soft POS service, payments can be accepted just like the physical POS machines, making the banking experience of businesses richer, more convenient and widely accessible.

The Soft POS payment service, which has been in effect for two years, reflects NBK’s commitment to providing substantial support to SMEs and business owners and equip them with advanced digital tools that enhance their banking and financial dealings, as it is designed to offer a secure, fast, and flexible payment acceptance solution.

Business owners who subscribe to this service will be able to enjoy an array of benefits and digital features, including receiving payments to their businesses up to KD 250 and pushing an electronic POS slip through an e-mail message. Moreover, this service allows business owners to receive



Homoud Al Nasrallah

Al Nasrallah:

- Due to its simplicity and flexibility, NBK’s Soft POS service has become widely popular among SMEs and business owners.
- The growing demand for this service reflects our commitment to providing innovative and practical payment solutions for our customers.

payments from credit cards and debit cards, as well as digital wallet payments such as Apple Pay, Samsung Wallet, Garmin Pay, Fitbit Pay, etc.

On this occasion, **Homoud Al Nasrallah SVP – Head of Merchant Business**



Soft POS turns smartphones into payment terminals for seamless transactions.

ness and Customer Loyalty Management commented: “We are very proud that our Soft POS service has become popular among business owners seeking flexibility and simplicity in accepting payments, as this reflects our success in understanding the customers’ needs and providing services accordingly.”

Al Nasrallah also added: “This continued demand reflects our dedication to providing practical and innovative solutions that not only meet the

evolving needs of our customers, but also exceed their expectations, as we always strive to be one step ahead to achieve an optimal and unique banking experience that can keep up with the growing and fast financial market.”

Furthermore, Al Nasrallah stressed that NBK will continue to embark on its digital innovation journey and provide digital banking solutions that make the customers’ experience highly exceptional and convenient.

Egypt inflation rises to 13.5 percent in April

CAIRO, May 10, (KUNA): Egypt’s annual inflation rate in April edged up to 253.8 points in April, a surge of 1.3 percent, compared with March, according to the country’s Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS).

In a press statement, the agency said the country’s total annual inflation hit 13.5 percent in April against 13.1 percent in March. The hike is due to a set of

reasons, primarily faster prices of power, gas and fuel prices (6.7 percent), clothing (two percent), grains and bread (0.5 percent), vegetables (1.2 percent) and household equipment (1.2 percent), it said.

Markaz records total revenue of KD 6.49 million for Q1-2025

Assets under management of KD 1.44 billion

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Kuwait Financial Centre “Markaz” (KSE: Markaz, Reuters: MARKZ.KW, Bloomberg: MARKZ:KK) reported its financial results for Q1-2025 with a Total Revenue of KD 6.49 million with an increase of 7%, as compared to KD 6.06 million in Q1-2024. The net profit attributable to shareholders of Markaz was KD 2.78 million, compared to KD 2.77 million in the same period last year, and earnings per share was 6 Fils for Q1-2025.

Mr. Ali H. Khalil, Markaz’s CEO, stated: “Regional equity markets demonstrated resilience amidst global uncertainties. Although GCC equities posted a marginal 0.77% gain during the first quarter of 2025, the region outperformed global equities, which declined by 1.62%. Kuwait led the regional performance with a strong 9.85% return, which was underpinned by fiscal reforms, structural initiatives and positive momentum in the banking sector. Despite external challenges from global trade tensions, interest rate uncertainty and oil price volatility, the GCC region continues to maintain a stable foundation, anchored by economic diversification efforts and strategic investments in non-oil sectors. At Markaz, we remained disciplined and agile in navigating these dynamics, ensuring that our business fundamentals remained strong. We are optimistic about the outlook for the region, given easing financial conditions, sustained reform agendas and consistent domestic demand. Our focus continues to be on delivering sustainable value for our stakeholders through high quality execution, strategic growth and prudent risk management.

Markaz’s Asset Management fees for Q1-2025 were KD 1.67 million as compared to KD 1.69 million for the same period last year. Investment Banking and Advisory fees for Q1-2025 were KD 0.348 million as compared to KD 0.101 million for Q1-2024, reflecting an increase of 245%. This performance reflects the strength of our diversified platform and disci-



Ali H. Khalil, CEO at Markaz



Abdullatif W. Al-Nusif, Managing Director at Markaz



Markaz logo

plined focus on consistent execution across business verticals.

In asset management, our equity mutual funds continued to deliver stable returns amid heightened market volatility. MIDAF, Mumtaz and the Markaz Islamic Fund recorded returns of 5.02%, 5.28%, and 7.21% respectively, supported by prudent investment strategies and active portfolio management. The Forsa Financial Fund posted a return of 6.29% during the quarter.

In investment banking, Markaz successfully executed key mandates, including the debut Kuwaiti Dinar-denominated bond issuance for a multilateral development bank, further strengthening our capital markets capabilities and client trust. The Advisory team is also working on several transactions including valuations and M&A.

In real estate, our regional and international portfolios remained operationally strong, maintaining stable occupancy levels, steady rental yields and consistent collection ratios. We continue to focus on proactive asset management strategies while exploring new opportunities in private credit and development

financing to diversify assets and enhance long-term returns.

Looking ahead, we remain optimistic about the opportunities presented by favorable demographic trends, sustained infrastructure investments and continued economic diversification across the GCC. Markaz’s focus remains on delivering differentiated investment solutions, expanding our advisory capabilities and maintaining strategic responsiveness to create sustainable long-term value.”

Mr. Abdullatif W. Al-Nusif, Managing Director, Wealth Management and Business Development at Markaz, stated: “Markaz continued to strengthen its wealth management services during the first quarter of 2025. Assets Under Management (AUM) reached approximately KD 1.44 billion as of 31 March 2025, reflecting an increase of 11% compared to KD 1.30 billion in Q1 2024. This growth is underpinned by our disciplined execution and client-focused strategy.

We continue to expand our offering across private markets, alternative investments and bespoke advisory services to meet the increasingly sophisticated needs of our clients. Digital initiatives are further enhancing the overall client experience and improving operational efficiencies. By reinforcing relationships with institutional and high net worth individual clients and aligning our solutions with market trends, Markaz is well-positioned to deliver superior investment outcomes and maintain its leadership position in wealth creation.”

About Kuwait Financial Centre “Markaz”

Established in 1974, Kuwait Financial Centre K.P.S.C “Markaz” is one of the leading asset management and investment banking institutions in the MENA region with total assets under management of over KD 1.44 billion (USD 4.67 billion) as of 31 March 2025. Markaz was listed on the Boursa Kuwait in 1997. Over the years, Markaz has pioneered innovation through the creation of new investment channels. These channels enjoy unique characteristics and helped Markaz widen investors’ horizons. Examples include Mumtaz (the first domestic mutual fund), MREF (the first real estate investment fund in Kuwait), Forsa Financial Fund (the first options market maker in the GCC since 2005), and the GCC Momentum Fund (the first passive fund of its kind in Kuwait and across GCC that follows the momentum methodology), all conceptualized, established, and managed by Markaz.



Afrah Al Arbash and the bank team during the honoring of the exhibition participants.



Human resources department staff during the exhibition



Responding to inquiries from students and graduates.

Supporting young talent is our priority, says Al Arbash

ABK continues commitment to youth empowerment at AUM Career Expo '25

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is proud to return as a gold sponsor of the American University of the Middle East’s (AUM) annual Career Expo, set to take place on 5 and 6 May 2025. The Bank’s involvement underscores its ongoing dedication to education, youth empowerment, and national workforce development.

ABK’s booth at the event offered students and graduates a chance to engage directly with the Bank’s team, learn about diverse career paths, and gain first-hand insights into the professional world of banking.

Commenting on the Bank’s participation, **Afrah Al Arbash**, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK, said, “The AUM Career Expo provides a unique bridge between academic achievement and real-world opportunity. At ABK, we are passionate about supporting youth as they explore their future, and this event allows us to share knowledge, connect with emerging talent, and invest in the leaders of tomorrow.”

The event also serves as an important talent discovery platform for ABK, enabling the Bank to meet ambitious, forward-thinking individuals who may one day become key contributors to its growth.

Beyond talent acquisition, ABK’s sponsorship aligns with its broader mission to empower local youth, foster innovation, and build a resilient and future-ready workforce. Through active participation in initiatives like the AUM Career Expo, ABK reinforces its vision for a strong, skilled, and inspired generation of professionals.

Al Arbash concluded, “It is an honour to support events that align with our purpose of developing national talent. We thank AUM for the opportunity to once again take part in this impactful gathering and look forward to another year of meaningful engagement.”



Afrah Al Arbash

The AUM Career Expo continues to be a central event for students, recent graduates, and employers to exchange ideas, network, and explore employment possibilities. ABK’s presence stands as a testament to its leadership in shaping the future of talent in Kuwait’s banking sector.

Since its establishment in 1967, ABK has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the region that offers a wide array of personal, corporate, and private banking products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK Capital.

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

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

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

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

During the ‘Retail Banking Beyond Horizons’ forum

KFH takes a leap in banking innovation



Khaled Yousef Al Shamlan and the executive management at the forefront of the attendees.



Youssef Al-Saleh during the forum



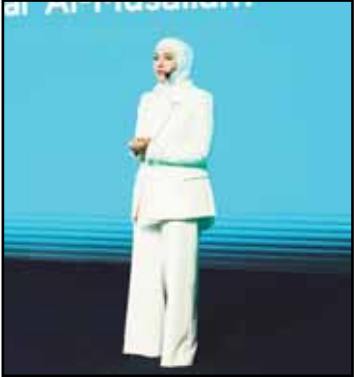
Meshal Alobaid



Talal Al-Arbeed during the forum.



Sameh El-Meligy



Nehal Al-Musallam



Mashaal Mandani during the forum.

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has organized a forum titled (Retail Banking Beyond Horizons), bringing together the Retail Banking employees with the Group Chief Executive Officer, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan and leaders of the executive management team.

KFH’s product showcase unveiled a fresh suite of banking services and solutions designed to simplify customer experiences, underscoring the bank’s dedication to digital innovation and excellence.

KFH Acting Group Chief Retail Banking Officer, Sameh El Meligy

During his address at the event, the Acting Group Chief Retail Banking Officer at KFH, Sameh El Meligy emphasized the rapid changes within retail banking. He stated that staying ahead in a competitive landscape demands innovative approaches to continually improve customer experience. El Meligy further noted that the introduction of new financial products and services has revolutionized the banking sector and significantly enhanced customer experience, a key focus for KFH.

El Meligy confirmed that KFH is moving forward with its strategic objectives by implementing initiatives across four key pillars. The first pillar is unleashing the capabilities of AI and effective marketing to generate sales opportunities and employ digital channels and branches to acquire the largest market share in the market. The second pillar encompasses the contribution of Hybrid Service Hubs in transforming traditional branches into smaller sales centers to increase reach and reduce costs.

He pointed out that the third pillar focuses on achieving global service rates through a customer-centric culture, and enhancing key performance indicators based on customer feedback. The four pillar relies on the integration of retail banking services across the Group.

Group Service Center
KFH Deputy General Manager Products, Nehal Al-Musallam, said that as part of KFH’s efforts to achieve a comprehensive performance and enhance the unified vision across the Group units, KFH launched the Group Service Center for KFH-Turkey and KFH-Egypt. The dedicated center is soon offering its services in Mishref branch, meeting the needs of customers and delivering an integrated banking experience.

She added that the center offers an array of services tailored for the needs of customers. These services include facilitating the opening of new accounts for customers, updating their personal and banking information to ensure an efficient and uninterrupted service. The Service Center also provides technical support for activating and using banking applications of KFH-Turkey and KFH-Egypt, enabling customers to securely access and manager their transactions.

“The center is open to all KFH customers, reinforcing our commitment to delivering exceptional customer-centric services and enhancing their banking experience,” she noted.

Gold Collateral Financing

Al-Musallam announced the launch of Gold Collateral Financing, the first of its kind in Kuwait, allowing customers to obtain financing secured by the gold held in their account. Accordingly, customers can access the value of their gold without selling it.

She explained: “The Gold Collateral Financing allows custom-

Alobaid:
■ KFH enhanced its applications, branches, digital channels and updated its ATMs and card printing devices

ers to obtain quick financing by the gold held in their KFH gold account, whether they already have an account or opened a new one. This service provides liquidity to customers while

AlArbeed:
■ KFH introduced Virtual and Rewards prepaid cards with new design templates

service. Al sundus and Alruban programs have been merged into one program: Personal.

KFH targets two additional segments: the youth segment, offering



Talal Al-Arbeed, Sameh El-Meligy, Mishaal Al-Obaid, and Youssef Al-Saleh

keeping their assets stable. Customers requesting a financing can easily hold their gold as collateral at KFH and receive the financing they requested at competitive rates.”

Al-Musallam pointed out that this product is one of the financing solutions that provides customers with the financing they need with numerous benefits, simplified and minimal procedures, as well as flexible repayment options.

Updating Banking Tiers

Al-Musallam also stated that KFH updated its banking tiers, in line with the Bank’s global expansion. These updates are as follows:

Al Ruwad program has been re-branded as Premiuma. The minimum salary requirement was reduced from KD 4,000 to KD 3,000. The Premium customer experience was also enhanced by adding distinctive services, including increasing complimentary airport transfers from two to three times per year and extending free valet parking on weekends only to daily availability in addition to more complimentary services added to the program.

Al Tamayoz program has been re-branded as Advance while retaining its original conditions. For Advance customers registered for the concierge service, KFH have introduced new privileges, including complimentary airport transfers and Eid cash delivery

the specialized Hesabi program for individuals aged 15 and above; and the children’s segment, which features Baiti program for those from birth to 14 years old. This program provides access to various exclusive discounts and events throughout the year.

Hesabi customers can enjoy a suite of premium services via the KFHonline app, including a complimentary Hesabi prepaid card for the first year, automatic enrollment in KFH Rewards, a leading rewards program in Kuwait, and an initial gift of 1,000 welcome points. Many other benefits and offers are also available.

Redesigning KFH Cards

Meanwhile, KFH Deputy General Manager Cards, Talal AlArbeed, presented the latest developments of the Cards department in terms of design, benefits and services. He said that KFH announced the launch of its re-designed debit, credit, and prepaid cards in February.

He added that these cards boast a modern and attractive aesthetic and represent a step towards sustainability through their environmentally friendly materials, reflecting KFH’s commitment to environmental responsibility and the provision of more sustainable financial solutions.

Rewards and Benefits

Speaking about virtual prepaid cards and KFH rewards prepaid cards,

Sameh El Meligy:
■ KFH leverages 4 pillars to boost market share, talent, and digital prowess

AlArbeed said: “Responding to the digital age, we now offer our customers virtual prepaid cards, instantly and conveniently issued 24/7 through KFH-Online app.”

He added:“These cards deliver a



Photo of the new application experience at the forum.

unique and flexible digital banking experience by being instantly added to digital wallets, providing customers with control and security for both local and international online and point-of-sale shopping.”

He affirmed KFH’s commitment to enhancing customers’ banking experience, and announced the launch of the KFH Rewards prepaid card. By using this card, customers can earn unlimited KFH Rewards points, redeemable with various brands, and enjoy cashback benefits. This empowers customers to maximize the value of every purchase.

Retail Banking Beyond Horizons

KFH Deputy General Manager Digital and Alternative Channels, Meshal Alobaid, said that the statistics confirm the remarkable success of KFH’s digital channels and its digital transformation strategy. “In 2024 alone, we recorded over 400 million successful banking transactions carried out by customers through our digital channels,” noted Alobaid, “KFHonline provides access to more than 200 banking services.”

Additionally, KFH smart hybrid branches provide comprehensive and integrated experience, offering more than 50 services, with the flexibility for customers to either interact directly with an employee or use state-of-the-art self-service devices.

Nehal Al-Musallam:
■ KFH launched Gold Collateral Financing, Group Service Center and updated its banking tiers

He noted that the digital channel services include e-payment solutions such as WAMD service, online account opening, instant printing for all bank cards, buying and selling gold, adjusting ATM card purchase and

perience, improving the efficiency of transactions and fast implementation.

■ Launching a new mobile banking vehicle to serve customers. As the first time in Kuwait, KFH introduced Mobi Vehicles equipped with two advanced devices:

■ Full function ATM: offering all standard ATM services including cash withdrawals, deposit and transfers.

■ Instant card issuance: enabling customers to instantly print their ATM cards, saving time and effort.

Alobaid added that KFH has achieved a record number in the distribution of advanced ATMs, with over 650 devices operating 24/7. This underscores KFH’s leadership in banking services and digital transformation excellence.

KFH Hybrid Branches

Reflecting KFH’s vision for digital excellence and offering a modernized banking experience, Alobaid said that KFH introduces KFH Hybrid Branches, with the first branch being inaugurated at the Avenues Mall branch. The new hybrid branch seamlessly integrates digital and regular banking services. He further stated that the launch of their D-POS device has revolutionized branch operations and direct sales, allowing customers to open accounts quickly and without paper, enabling immediate shopping and banking transactions within minutes.

Moreover, KFH implemented the D-POS Pro, empowering KFH branch staff to deliver an exceptional customer experience and efficiently complete sales transactions. It grants quick customer service and offers customized banking experience.

Account Opening Devices

Alobaid revealed that D-POS and D-POS Pro devices have many features. These include:

■ Speed and efficiency: compared with the regular account opening process that takes over 15 minutes and requires multiple signatures, customers can now open the account in less than three minutes with just a single signature.

■ Paperless process: this digital approach eliminates the need for paper-based transactions, making the banking process more efficient and environmentally friendly.

■ Automated data entry: by entering the Civil ID number in D-POS system, all required information is retrieved automatically. This process minimizes errors and ensures a seamless and more accurate account opening process.

■ Cost reduction: the system helps reduce operational costs associated with express document courier services for reviewing and archiving purposes.

He went on to say that the D-POS Pro tablet has been designed to empower KFH branch staff to deliver an exceptional customer experience and efficiently complete sales transactions. The tablet provides seamless access to customer service systems, enabling employees to manage customer interactions more effectively.

Alobaid explained that the device has many features. Key features include:

■ Customer 360 View, AI-powered analytics, Accelerated sales and services, Cards management, operational efficiency.

“With this device, branch employees can enhance customer engagement, boost efficiency, and drive sales, providing a faster and more streamlined banking experience,” remarked Alobaid.



Part of the audience.



Members of Burgan's Senior Management team with the graduate employees in a group photo.



Members of Burgan's Senior Management team in a group photo with the Ro'ya graduates.

Under the umbrella of its robust human capital development strategy and unwavering commitment to ESG

Burgan Bank celebrates 35 aspiring talents for graduating from flagship program ‘Ro’ya’

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Reaffirming the Bank's steadfast commitment to investing in its human capital, Burgan Bank recently celebrated 35 employees from across all departments who completed multiple modules of its flagship Ro'ya program. Featuring a curated curriculum designed to propel employees' careers forward and prepare them for more advanced leadership positions, the program has become a central component of the Bank's overarching talent development strategy, which remains at the core of its vision and its commitment to adhere to the highest standards of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices.

The graduation ceremony was attended by several members of Burgan's senior management team as well as HR leaders, who continue to champion the Bank's people-first approach. Commenting on the graduates' commendable success, **Mr. Bashar Al-Qattan**, Executive Manager – Learning and Talent Development at Burgan Bank, said: "On behalf of Burgan's management, I would like to express my sincere admiration for our exceptional talents for the hard work and dedication they exhibited throughout their Ro'ya journeys and extend my heartfelt congratulations to all graduates for their achievements.

The success we have achieved so far and the future growth we aspire to unlock rely

greatly on our talents' devotion, aptitude for innovation, and drive for knowledge. This is why we persist in identifying and recruiting Kuwait's most promising talents who share our pursuit of excellence and seek to enrich their professional journeys with yearlong learning and talent development opportunities that catalyze their holistic growth as individuals, employees, and future leaders."

The flagship talent development program has undergone several enhancements since launching in 2020, culminating in its modern structure that features four streams: Future Leaders, Rising Leaders, Transformational Leaders, and Visionary Leaders – each tailored to align with talents' length of experience, needs, and aspirations.

In its latest edition, the 35 distinguished talents were enrolled either in the one-month Future Leaders program for fresh graduates, the six-month Rising Leaders program for employees with up to four years of experience, or the six-month Transformational Leaders modular program for managers and senior managers with up to 10 years of experience.

As part of its ongoing efforts to elevate the Bank's flagship program, the learning and talent development team announced the introduction of the Ro'ya Mentorship Module for Visionary Leaders in the third quarter of 2024, designed to prepare emerging senior leaders



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

on the personal and professional fronts under the mentorship of Burgan's senior executives.

In line with its commitment to being an employer of choice and placing its employees on a steady trajectory for personal and professional growth, Burgan Bank – certified as a Great Place to Work® – earned two consecutive Brandon Hall Group Human Capital Management (HCM) Awards of Excellence, along with the GCC Excellence Award in Recruitment and Development of Nationals

from the Council of Ministers of Labor and Social Affairs in the GCC States Executive Bureau.

About Burgan Bank

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is a Kuwait-based conventional bank with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institution sectors. From its earliest days, the Bank has significantly sought to diversify its offering to cater to its growing retail and private banking customer base.

Burgan Bank has majority-owned subsidiaries, collectively known as the "Burgan Bank Group", in the MENAT region. This Group is supported by one of the largest branch networks across the region and includes: Gulf Bank Algeria – AGB (Algeria), Tunis International Bank – TIB (Tunisia), and Burgan Bank Turkey. Furthermore, Burgan Bank has a presence in the UAE through its corporate office, Burgan Financial Services Limited.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years, through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Moreover, Burgan Bank's brand has been built on a foundation of real values –

trust, commitment, excellence, and progression – which serve as a reminder of the high standards to which the Bank always aspires. In fact, the Bank's core philosophy of 'Driven by You' is the foundation on which its products and services are continuously developed.

Burgan Bank has achieved the LEED v4.1 O+M: EB Gold Certification for its Head Office in Kuwait City. The Bank has also obtained the ISO/IEC 27001: 2022 Information Security Management Systems certificate (ISMS), ISO /IEC 27701:2019 Privacy Information Management Systems (PIMS), ISO/IEC 20000-1: 2018 Information Technology Service Management System (ITSM) and was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System (QMS), making it one of the few banks in the GCC and Kuwait to receive such certification for five consecutive times. At the same time, the Bank has the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twenty consecutive years. Moreover, in a testament to its dedication to the development of its human capital, Burgan Bank is the first bank in Kuwait to be certified as a Great Place to Work®, earning the distinct honor in 2023.

Burgan Bank is a majority-owned subsidiary of KIPCO (Kuwait Projects Company), one of the largest holding companies in the MENA region.

US & China begin trade talks in Geneva amid growing tensions

Swiss govt monitors US tariff impacts on key industries

GENEVA, May 10, (AP): The U.S. Treasury Secretary and America's top trade negotiator began talks with high-ranking Chinese officials in Switzerland Saturday aiming to de-escalate a dispute that threatens to cut off trade between the world's two biggest economies and damage the global economy.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer have begun meetings in Geneva with a Chinese delegation led by Vice Premier He Lifeng.

Diplomats from both sides also confirmed that the talks have begun but spoke anonymously and the exact location of the talks wasn't made public. However, a motorcade of black cars and vans was seen coming and going from the home of the Swiss ambassador to the United Nations delegation in the wealthy city, and a diplomatic source, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the meeting, said the sides met for about two hours before departing for a previously arranged luncheon.

Prospects for a major breakthrough appear dim. But there is hope that the two countries will scale back the massive taxes - tariffs - they've slapped on each other's goods, a move that would relieve world financial markets and companies on both sides of the Pacific Ocean that depend on U.S.-China trade.

U.S. President Donald Trump last month raised U.S. tariffs on China to a combined 145%, and China retaliated by hitting American imports with a 125% levy. Tariffs that high essentially amount to the countries' boycotting each other's products, disrupting trade that last year topped \$660 billion.

Even before the talks began, Trump suggested Friday that the U.S. could lower its tariffs on China, saying in a Truth Social post that "80% Tariff seems right! Up to Scott."

Sun Yun, director of the China program at the Stimson Center, noted it will be the first time He and Bessent have talked. She doubts the Geneva meeting will produce any substantive results.

"The best scenario is for the two sides to agree to de-escalate on the ... tariffs at the same time," she said, adding even a small reduction would send a positive signal. "It cannot just be words." Since returning to the White House in January, Trump has aggressively used tariffs as his favorite economic weapon. He has, for example, imposed a 10% tax on imports from almost every country in the world.



US Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent, right, shakes hands with Switzerland's President Karin Keller-Sutter, center, next to Switzerland's Economy Minister Federal Councillor Guy Parmelin, left, during a bilateral meeting between Switzerland and the United States, in Geneva, Switzerland, on Friday, May 9, 2025. (AP)

But the fight with China has been the most intense. His tariffs on China include a 20% charge meant to pressure Beijing into doing more to stop the flow of the synthetic opioid fentanyl into the United States. The remaining 125% involve a dispute that dates back to Trump's first term and comes atop tariffs he levied on China back then, which means the total tariffs on some Chinese goods can exceed 145%.

During Trump's first term, the U.S. alleged that China uses unfair tactics to give itself an edge in advanced technologies such as quantum computing and driverless cars. These include forcing U.S. and other foreign companies to hand over trade secrets in exchange for access to the Chinese market; using government money to subsidize domestic tech firms; and outright theft of sensitive technologies.

Those issues were never fully resolved. After nearly two years of negotiation, the United States and China reached a so-called Phase One agreement in January 2020. The U.S. agreed then not to go ahead with even higher tariffs on China, and Beijing agreed to buy more American products. The tough issues - such as China's subsidies - were left for future negotiations.

But China didn't come through with the prom-

ised purchases, partly because COVID-19 disrupted global commerce just after the Phase One truce was announced.

The fight over China's tech policy now resumes.

Trump is also agitated by America's massive trade deficit with China, which came to \$263 billion last year. In Switzerland Friday, Bessent and Greer also met with Swiss President Karin Keller-Sutter.

Trump last month suspended plans to slap hefty 31% tariffs on Swiss goods -- more than the 20% levies he plastered on exports from European Union. For now, he's reduced those taxes to 10% but could raise them again.

The government in Bern is taking a cautious approach. But it has warned of the impact on crucial Swiss industries like watches, coffee capsules, cheese and chocolate.

"An increase in trade tensions is not in Switzerland's interests. Countermeasures against U.S. tariff increases would entail costs for the Swiss economy, in particular by making imports from the USA more expensive," the government said last week, adding that the executive branch "is therefore not planning to impose any countermeasures at the present time."

Exports to other regions surge

China's exports to US plunge 21% as trade war intensifies

BEIJING, May 10, (AP): China's exports to the United States tumbled in April while its trade with other economies surged, suggesting that President Donald Trump's tariffs offensive is hastening a shakeup in global supply chains.

Total exports from China rose 8.1% last month from a year earlier, much faster than the 2% pace most economists had been expecting. That was much slower than the 12.4% year-on-year increase in March. Imports fell 0.2% in April from the year before.

Shipments to the U.S. sank 21% in dollar terms as Trump's tariffs on most Chinese exports rose to as high as 145%. With Chinese tariffs on U.S. goods at 125%, business between the two biggest economies has grown increasingly uncertain.

China's imports from the U.S. dropped more than 13% from a year earlier, while its politically sensitive trade surplus with the United States was nearly \$20.5 billion in April, down from about \$27.2 billion a year earlier.

In the first four months of the year, China's exports to the United States fell 2.5% from a year earlier, while imports from the U.S. fell 4.7%.

A potential break in the tariffs stalemate could come as soon as this weekend. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and other senior trade officials are due to meet with Chinese officials in Geneva on Saturday. But Beijing and Washington are at odds over a raft of issues, including colliding strategic interests that will may impede progress in the talks.

Some of the punitive tariffs, including Beijing's retaliatory 125% tariffs on U.S. exports, could be rolled back, but a full reversal is unlikely, Zichun Huang of Capital Economics said in a report.

"This means China's exports to the U.S. are set for further declines over the coming months, not all of which will be offset by increased trade with other countries. We still expect export growth to turn negative later this year," Huang said.

Whatever the outcome of those discussions, the rapid increase in Chinese exports to other countries reflects a restructuring that began years ago but has gained momentum as Trump has raised barriers to exporting to the U.S.

Global manufacturers have been looking for alternatives to a near total reliance on manufacturing in China after disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for more diverse options.

The need for more versatile supply chains grew more apparent as Trump hiked tariffs on Chinese exports during his first term in office. Most of those remained during former President Joe Biden's term.

Exports to the United States accounted for about a tenth of China's total exports in April and the U.S. is still China's largest single-country market. But the European Union and Southeast Asia are larger regional export markets.

Trade with a broader grouping, the 15-nation Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which does not include the United States, is still bigger. And exports to countries participating in China's "Belt and Road Initiative," a vast network of Beijing-supported infrastructure projects, are bigger still.

In the first four months of the year, exports to the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations rose 11.5% from a year earlier, and those to Latin America also climbed 11.5%. Shipments to India jumped nearly 16% by value, and exports to Africa surged 15%.

Some of the fastest growth was in Asia, reflecting moves by Chinese and other manufacturers to diversify their supply chains outside of the Chinese mainland. Most notable were exports to Vietnam, which jumped 18% year-on-year. Exports to Thailand were up 20%.

Back in China, preliminary data have shown a sharp decline in shipping and other trade activity. Earlier this week, Beijing announced a barrage of measures meant to counter the impact of the trade war on its economy, which was already struggling to regain momentum after the pandemic and a lengthy downturn in its housing sector.

Federal Reserve official sees signs of slowing economy but not ready to cut rates

WASHINGTON, May 10, (AP): A top Federal Reserve official said Friday that massive uncertainty created by President Donald Trump's tariffs has caused some businesses to cut back on hiring and spending, threatening to slow the economy, but he added that it's not yet clear whether the central bank should cut its key interest rate.

Tom Barkin, president of the Federal Reserve's Richmond branch, said businesses have turned cautious, though are not yet engaging in steep job cuts or other behavior typical of a recession.

"The way I've been describing it is, it's really hard to drive when it's foggy," Barkin said in remarks to the Loudoun County, Virginia Chamber of Commerce. "That's what I'm seeing on the business side. Hiring freezes, discretionary spending being cut back, but not major layoffs."

Barkin and other Fed speakers Friday underscored the difficult challenge the central bank faces right now. If the tariffs push up inflation, the Fed would keep rates elevated - or raise them further. But if the duties worsen the economy, the Fed

would typically cut rates.

On Wednesday, Chair Jerome Powell said the risks of higher inflation and higher unemployment are rising and that the Fed would wait for greater clarity about where the economy is headed before making its next move. Powell spoke after the Fed kept its key rate unchanged for the third straight meeting.

Trump, however, has continued to assail Powell for not cutting rates, which over time could lower borrowing costs for consumers and businesses.

Trump is pushing for rate cuts because he argues that the economy no longer suffers from the high inflation that spurred the Fed to sharply raise borrowing costs in 2022 and 2023.

But the most likely reason for the Fed to reduce its key rate in the coming months, economists say, would be to offset a sharp slowdown in the economy stemming from the tariffs. As companies see their costs rise because of higher duties - about half of imports are parts used by American companies - they could institute widespread layoffs, pushing up unemployment and risking recession.

Gregory Daco, chief economist at EY, a consulting firm, said he thinks the Fed should cut rates soon because "the economy is slowing and will continue to slow and flirt with the recession."

A key challenge for the Fed right now, however, is determining which risk is bigger for the economy, inflation or unemployment.

Barkin said it was too early to say that lower borrowing costs are needed to boost growth.

"We have risks on the inflation side, and if you see as I see that we have risks on the unemployment side, then declaring that one risk is more significant than the other right now feels almost like guessing," Barkin said.

Barkin is one of the 19 officials who participate in the Fed's eight yearly meetings to decide on interest-rate policy. Only 12 of those members vote on the decision. Barkin is not one of the voters this year.

Other Fed officials Friday echoed Barkin's cautious message.

Michael Barr, a member of the Fed's Washington-based board of governors,

Santa Fe celebrates Native designers

Indigenous fashion explores heritage in silk, hides

SANTA FE, N.M., May 10, (AP): Fashion designers from across North America are bringing together inspiration from their Indigenous heritage, culture and everyday lives to three days of runway modeling that started Friday in a leading creative hub and marketplace for Indigenous art.

A fashion show affiliated with the century-old Santa Fe Indian Market is collaborating this year with a counterpart from Vancouver, Canada, in a spirit of Indigenous solidarity and artistic freedom. A second, independent runway show at a rail yard district in the city has nearly doubled the bustle of models, makeup and final fittings.

Elements of Friday's collections from six Native designers ran the gamut from silk parasols to a quilted hoodie, knee-high fur boots and suede leather earrings that dangled to the waste. Models on the Santa Fe catwalks include professionals, dancers and Indigenous celebrities from TV and the political sphere.

Clothing and accessories rely on materials ranging from of wool trade cloth to animal hides, featuring traditional beadwork, ribbons and jewelry with some contemporary twists that include digitally rendered designs and urban Native American streetwear from Phoenix.

"Native fashion, it's telling a story about our understanding of who we are individually and then within our communities," said Taos Pueblo fashion designer Patricia Michaels, of "Project Runway" reality TV fame. "You're getting designers from North America that are here to express a lot of what inspires them from their own heritage and culture."

The stand-alone spring fashion week for Indigenous design is a recent outgrowth of haute couture at the summer Santa Fe Indian Market, where teeming crowds flock to outdoor displays by individual sculptors, potters, jewelers and painters.

Designer Sage Mountainflower remembers playing in the streets at Indian Market as a child in the 1980s while her artist parents sold paintings and beadwork. She forged a different career in environmental administration, but the world of high fashion called to her as she sewed tribal regalia for her children at home and, eventually, brought international recognition.

Patterns

At age 50, Mountainflower on Friday presented her "Taandi" collection - the Tewa word for "Spring" - grounded in satin and chiffon fabric that includes embroidery patterns that invoke her personal and family heritage at the Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo in the Upper Rio Grande Valley.

"I pay attention to trends, but a lot of it's just what I like," said Mountainflower, who also traces her heritage to Taos Pueblo and the Navajo Nation. "This year it's actually just looking at springtime and how it's evolving. ... It's going to be a colorful collection."

More than 20 designers are presenting at the invitation of the Southwestern Association for Indian Arts.

Fashion plays a prominent part in Santa Fe's renowned arts ecosystem, with Native American vendors each day selling jewelry in the central plaza, while the Institute for

American Indian Arts delivers fashion-related college degrees in May.

This week, a gala at the New Mexico governor's mansion welcomed fashion designers to town, along with social mixers at local galleries and bookstores and plans for pop-up fashion stores to sell clothes fresh off the fashion runway.

A full-scale collaboration with Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week is bringing a northern, First Nations flair to the gathering this year with many designers crossing into the U.S. from Canada.

Secwépemc artist and fashion designer Randi Nelson traveled to Santa Fe from the city of Whitehorse in the Canadian Yukon to present collections forged from fur and traditionally cured hides - she uses primarily elk and caribou. The leather is tanned by hand without chemicals using inherited techniques and tools.

"We're all so different," said Nelson, a member of the Bonaparte/St'uxwitéws First Nation who started her career in jewelry assembled from quills, shells and beads. "There's not one pan-Indigenous theme or pan-Indigenous look. We're all taking from our individual nations, our individual teachings, the things from our family, but then also recreating them in a new and modern way."

April Allen, an Inuk designer from the Nunatsiavut community on the Labrador coast of Canada, presented a mesh dress of blue water droplets. Her work delves into themes of nature and social advocacy for access to clean drinking water.



A model wears a design by Livia Manywounds on the runway at the 2025 Native Fashion Show, Friday, May 9, in Santa Fe, N.M. (AP)

Obit

Battled cancer

'Fifty Shades' director James Foley dies at 71

LOS ANGELES, May 10, (AP): **James Foley**, a journeyman director best known for "Glenngary Glen Ross," has died. He was 71.

He died earlier this week after a yearlong battle with brain cancer, his representative, Taylor Lomax, said Friday.

In his long and varied career, Foley directed Madonna music videos, 12 episodes of "House of Cards" and the two "Fifty Shades of Grey" sequels, but it was his 1992 adaptation of David Mamet's foulmouthed Pulitzer Prize winning play that stood above the rest. Although it wasn't a hit at the time, "Glenngary Glen Ross" wormed its way into the culture and grew into an oft-quoted cult favorite, especially Alec Baldwin's made-for-the-film "always be closing" monologue.

Critic Tim Grierson wrote 20 years after its release that it remains "one of the quintessential modern movies about masculinity." He added, "while there are many fine Mamet movies, it's interesting that the best of them was this one - the one he didn't direct."

Born on Dec. 28, 1953, in Brooklyn, Foley studied film in graduate school at the University of Southern California. Legend has it that Hal Ashby once wandered into a film school party where his short happened to be playing at the time and he took a liking to him. Foley would later attribute his ability to make his first feature, "Reckless," a 1984 romantic drama about mismatched teenagers in love starring Daryl Hannah, Aidan Quinn and Adam Baldwin, to the Ashby stamp of approval. It was also the first screenplay credited to Chris Columbus, though there were reports of creative differences.

He followed it with the Sean Penn crime drama "At Close Range," the Madonna and Griffin Dunne screwball comedy "Who's That Girl" and the neo-noir thriller "After Dark, My Sweet," with Jason Patric. Critic Roger Ebert included "After Dark, My Sweet" in his great movies list, calling it "one of the purest and most uncompromising of modern film noir" despite having been "almost forgotten."

He also directed several music videos for Madonna including "Papa Don't Preach," "Live to Tell," and "Who's That Girl," and an episode of "Twin Peaks."

Foley adapted John Grisham and worked with Gene Hackman on "The Chamber" and made the Reese Witherspoon and Mark Wahlberg teenage love-gone-scary thriller "Fear," as well as the largely derided Halle Berry and Bruce Willis psychological thriller "Perfect Stranger," which was released in 2007.



Robert De Niro poses for photographers at the photo call for the film 'Killers of the Flower Moon' at the 76th international film festival, Cannes, southern France on May 21, 2023. (AP)

De Niro to receive an honorary Palme d'Or

CANNES, France, May 10, (AP): Robert De Niro will receive an honorary Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival, a culmination for the 81-year-old actor whose history with the French film festival stretches back half a century.

In 1976, De Niro starred in two films - Martin Scorsese's "Taxi Driver" and Bernardo Bertolucci's "1900" - that premiered in competition at Cannes. "Taxi Driver" was an immediate sensation, and went home with the festival's top prize, the Palme d'Or.

Since then, De Niro has been a regular on the Croisette, returning with "The King of Comedy" in 1983, Sergio Leone's "Once Upon a Time in America" in 1984 and Roland Joffé's "The Mission" in 1986. Joffé's film also won the Palme, making De Niro the rare actor to star in two Palme d'Or winners.

Though De Niro helps run his own film festival back in New York, the Tribeca Festival, he has remained a mainstay in Cannes.

Film



This image released by Netflix shows Lorraine Bracco, Talia Shire, Brenda Vaccaro and Vince Vaughn in a scene from 'Nonnas.' (AP)

A flavorful mix of comedy and drama

Schmaltzy and sweet, Vaughn leads 'Nonnas'

LOS ANGELES, May 10, (AP): The new Vince Vaughn movie "Nonnas" aspires to be a bit of cinematic comfort food. It's based on a heartwarming true story, features a lot of shots of simmering Sunday sauces and touts a lovable cast of veteran Italian American actors in Talia Shire, Lorraine Bracco, Brenda Vaccaro and Susan Sarandon. One would hope that those are the kind of ingredients that would be difficult to mess up too badly.

And "Nonnas," streaming on Netflix, is what it wants to be: A glossy, movie version of the local joint. Nothing's groundbreaking or particularly unexpected, the story beats are predictable, and the music choices and Italian American stereotypes a bit cliché. And yet it's done with an evident earnestness and kindness that makes it impossible to write off. Is it a sign of the times that a bunch of people just being kind to one another is basically enough?

"Nonnas" was directed by Stephen Chbosky ("Perks of Being a Wallflower") working off of a script by Liz MacCie, whom he is married to, and based on the true story of a New Yorker named Joe Scaravella (Vince Vaughn) who starts a Staten Island restaurant with Italian grandmothers as the chefs.

Joe has no business savvy or restaurant knowledge, just

an idea after the loss of his own mother and grandmother. He just wants to pay tribute to the way that they always made him feel with their cooking in the kitchen. There's a gauzy, sun soaked flashback to the neighborhood in the 1960s showing a young Joe watching his mother and grandmother make the Sunday sauce that's so idealized, so full of smiles as substitute for character, it might as well be a Prego commercial.

There is an obvious reverence for cultural predecessors like "Moonstruck" and "My Cousin Vinny" baked into "Nonnas," though it can't quite find the natural rhythm that might have made it work better. It whiplashes between big comedic swings (including a food fight between the feuding nonnas) and utter sincerity and it is in no rush to get anywhere fast.

But perhaps the greatest miscalculation is centering the story on Joe instead of the women. The nonnas are met where they are in life - a former nun (Shire), a hair salon owner (Sarandon), a retiree (Bracco) who's estranged from her kids and a widow (Vaccaro) who needs to get out of the house. It seems like there was a missed opportunity to get to know their stories and recipes more. If food is love, give the audience a chance to fall in love with them through their favorite dishes. Instead, they

bond not over food or new appreciation of one another's heritage, but a makeover.

Still, it's worth noting that "Nonnas" is not nearly as gimmicky as it could have been. Vaughn is good in a more subdued role - the stereotypes-for-comedy's-sake are left for his friends (Joe Manganiello and Drea de Matteo) to live and die by. A love story with his old prom date (played by Linda Cardellini) feels a little tacked on to everything else, but I suppose is also just another layer to the second chances narrative.

Chbosky and his cinematographer Florian Ballhaus take care to shoot working class Staten Island beautifully, without gimmicks to overromanticize the reality. Even the "before" images of the restaurant have a glint to them, drawing the audience in to see the potential that Joe sees. Be sure to keep watching through the credits for a little real-life coda.

"Nonnas," like comfort food, may be a little obvious, a little safe, but that's the point.

"Nonnas," a Netflix release currently streaming, is rated PG by the Motion Picture Association for "suggestive material, language and thematic elements." Running time: 111 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

Variety

NEW YORK: Harvey Weinstein's lawyers sought Friday to raise doubts about an ex-model's allegation that he sexually assaulted her in her teens, portraying her as a wannabe actor who tried to leverage the former studio boss.

"You believed that consensual relation with Mr. Weinstein would help you get your foot in the door and become a movie star," defense lawyer Mike Cibella said.

"No, that's not what happened," Kaja Sokola responded. "I never had a consensual relation with Mr. Weinstein."

Throughout a day of questioning, Cibella sought to suggest that Sokola hadn't told the full story of her interactions with Weinstein. At one point, Cibella repeatedly asked whether she invited Weinstein up to a New York apartment - and into the bedroom - where she was staying in 2005. She denied it.

"I didn't want any shortcuts from Mr. Weinstein. I wanted him to be honest with me," Sokola testified at a later point, her voice growing heated.

She said the Oscar-winning producer promised to help her fulfill her acting ambitions but instead "broke my dreams, and he broke my self-esteem."

The Polish psychotherapist has accused Weinstein of re-



Sokola

peatedly abusing her when she was a teenage fashion model. Some of those allegations fall outside the legal time frame for criminal charges, but Weinstein still faces a criminal sex act charge related to her 2006 claim of being forced into a sexual act. (AP)

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NEW YORK: Sean "Diddy" Combs was not treated differently because of his race by prosecutors who brought racketeering and sex trafficking charges against him, a judge ruled Friday as he rejected a request to dismiss some charges three days before opening statements in the hip-hop mogul's trial.

Judge Arun Subramanian said Combs had shown no evidence of discriminatory effect or intent based on his race, when his lawyers made their arguments in Manhattan federal court in February. In a separate written opinion, the judge also refused to suppress evidence in the case.

The lawyers had written that the prosecution was unprecedented because, "most disturbingly, no white person has ever been the target of a remotely similar prosecution."

The judge agreed with arguments by prosecutors that the extent of criminal conduct by Combs from 2004 to 2024 - when he was alleged to have overseen a racketeering enterprise that enabled him to abuse women - was enough to separate the case against him from other prosecutions.

"It's the severity of what Combs allegedly did - not his race - that mattered," the judge wrote.

Subramanian noted that lawyers for Combs had alleged that the government sought to humiliate him through its news releases, the way search warrants were executed at his home, the refusal to let him surrender and alleged leaks to the media. (AP)

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LONDON: In late September 2023, as the first big storm of the fall was kicking up in the UK, a malicious plan was hatched to take down one of England's favorite trees.

Daniel Graham sent a message to his buddy, Adam Carruthers, telling him to "get the saws warmed up," suggesting they might get some work clearing fallen trees.

But it wasn't high winds that brought down the famous Sycamore Gap tree that night, jurors determined Friday. It was Graham and Carruthers - not cleaning up damage from the storm, but creating a mess of their own.

The pair were convicted of two counts each of criminal damage by a jury in Newcastle Crown Court after little more than five hours of deliberations over two days.

Even without the smoking chainsaw, prosecutors were able to prove the case through a trove of digital evidence that either put the men near the tree at the time it was felled or showed them excitedly discussing it the next day as the story of the tree's demise went viral.

The prime piece of evidence was a grainy video on Graham's phone of the crime being committed on the dark and stormy night.

Footage of the tree's last stand showed a solitary figure silhouetted beneath the towering canopy in a struggle with the trunk as the unmistakable sound of the chainsaw whined above the wind. With a single crack, the buzz of the saw died down, the person stepped back and the tree that had stood about 150 years crashed to earth.

Metadata pinpointed the location of the video at the tree's location in Northumberland National Park. Other data showed Graham's Range Rover had traveled there. (AP)



First Lady Melania Trump, (from right), Dorothy Bush Koch, Alice Gonzalez Yates, CEO of the George and Barbara Bush Foundation, and Judy de Torok, vice president of corporate affairs at the US Postal Service, unveil a US Postal Service Stamp honoring former first lady Barbara Bush, May 8, in the East Room of the White House in Washington. (AP)

Bush family joins first lady in WH commemoration ceremony

Melania Trump leads stamp unveiling for Barbara Bush

WASHINGTON, May 10, (AP): In the White House’s East Room on a rainy Thursday, First Lady Melania Trump and members of the Bush family gathered to unveil a US postage stamp bearing the portrait of former first lady Barbara Bush.

Amid the anticipation of the unveiling, Trump, Bush’s daughter Dorothy “Doro” Bush Koch and Judy de Torok, a vice president at US Postal Service, took turns sharing stories chronicling the former first lady’s life and achievements.

Bush Koch held back tears recalling moments from her mother’s early life. “Mom was never one to shy away from speaking the truth or taking a stand,” she said. “With her signature white hair and pearls, she became an icon in her own right, and yet, even as a former first lady, she remained humble and humorous.”

The image on the stamp is Barbara Bush’s official White House portrait, which currently hangs in the entrance to the East Wing. She is depicted in a black suit and purple blouse, wearing her hallmark triple strand of pearls.

After a commemoration ceremony in Kennebunkport, Maine, where the Bush family compound is located, the stamp will go on sale June 10th.

Bush notably championed literacy programs and helped destigmatized people with AIDS and HIV when she cradled an infant during a 1989 visit to a hospice for children with the disease. Trump said Bush “changed the national conversation on AIDS and took a stand supporting gay rights.”

Trump also said she appreciated how Bush inspired people to pursue their personal dreams and was ahead of her time when she made the call for a female American president.

“Who knows?” Trump said. “Somewhere out in this audience may even be someone who will one day follow in my footsteps and preside over the White House, and I wish him well,” she said to laughs.

Barbara Bush died in 2018 at 92 years-old. She was married to President George H. W. Bush. She is the mother of former President George W. Bush.

She was one of only two first ladies who had a

child who was elected president. The other was Abigail Adams, wife of President John Adams and mother of President John Quincy Adams.

And in 2016 - at 90 years-old - Barbara Bush campaigned for her son, former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush when he vied for the Republican presidential nomination, according to the George H. W. Bush library.

She had strong words for Donald Trump - back in 2016 she said in a joint CNN interview with Jeb Bush that she was “sick” of the current president. “He’s said terrible things about women, terrible things about the military. I don’t understand why people are for him, for that reason,” she said at the time.

Melania Trump attended Bush’s funeral in 2018 while Donald Trump did not attend. The White House said he stayed away to avoid security disruptions.

Bush is the eighth first lady to be honored with a US postage stamp. Bush Koch said “it’s unlikely that mom ever pictured herself on the postage stamp, and it’s very likely that she would be wondering what all this fuss is about.”

Music

Alan Jackson honored

Lainey Wilson rules 2025 ACM Awards

NEW YORK, May 10, (AP): It was her night once again. Lainey Wilson took home the top prize at the 60th annual Academy of Country Music Awards - the title of entertainer of the year - for a second year in a row. And that was after she cleaned house, taking home trophies for both female artist and album of the year.

“I really do have the best fans in the world,” she said in her final acceptance speech, admitting to experiencing impostor syndrome. “I dreamed about entertaining. ... Country music has given me more than I deserve.”

Beyond Wilson’s dominance, the 2025 ACM Awards were packed with celebration. Earlier, first-time and leading nominee Ella Langley’s duet with Riley Green, the ubiquitous “You Look Like You Love Me,” was named single and music event of the year.

Both Langley and Green used their first acceptance speech to shout out classic country - songs with talking in them - that inspired their modern hit.

A revisitation of the past might have been a theme Thursday night, evidenced right at the top of the ceremony: a 14-minute medley of six decades of country classics, performed by giants of the genre.

Launched

Host Reba McEntire launched into Merle Haggard’s “Okie from Muskogee,” followed by Clint Black with Glen Campbell’s “Rhinestone Cowboy” and Wynonna Judd with The Judds’ “Why Not Me.” LeAnn Rimes returned to the ACM Awards stage for her 1997 ballad “Blue.” Little Big Town tackled their 2014 track “Girl Crush” and Dan + Shay delivered their “Tequila.”

It was an exciting way to kick off the ACM Awards, live from the Ford Center at The Star in Frisco, Texas, just north of Dallas.

And it was a show highlight, rivaled only by the introduction of the ACM Alan Jackson Lifetime Achievement Award, the inaugural trophy given to its namesake, Jackson, after he performed “Remember When.”

In his acceptance speech, he joked that a fan named a dog after him. Having an award named after him? That isn’t half bad, either.

The first trophy of the night, the coveted song of the year, was awarded to Cody Johnson for his radio hit “Dirt Cheap.”

Performances followed, fast and furious. McEntire, Wilson and Miranda Lambert teamed up for the world premiere of their new single “Trailblazer,” celebrating women in country music.

Performed

Eric Church performed his brand-new single “Hands of Time,” succeeded by the most awarded artist in the history of the award show, Lambert with “Run.” She was then joined by Langley to duet “Kerosene” from Lambert’s 2005 debut album of the same name.

Zach Top stripped things down for “Use Me.” Blake Shelton channeled the great George Strait for his new single “Texas,” followed by Wilson with “Whirlwind.” Kelsea Ballerini performed atop her “Baggage.” Johnson rocked “The Fall,” before performing “Red Dirt Road” with Brooks & Dunn. Chris Stapleton and his wife, Morgane, harmonized on “It Takes a Woman.”

Jelly Roll and Shaboozey joined forces for their collaboration, “Amen.”

“It’s Shaboozey’s birthday,” Jelly Roll said. “We wanna thank y’all and we wanna thank God.”

Backstreet Boys and Rascal Flatts closed the show.

The Oak Ridge Boys gave the group of the year award to Old Dominion. It was a moving gesture; in 2024 the Oak Ridge Boys’ Joe Bonsall, a Grammy award winner and celebrated tenor, died from complications of the neuromuscular disorder Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis.

Another tearjerker: McEntire leading the audience in a sing-along of the late Kris Kristofferson’s “Me and Bobby McGee.”

Male artist of the year went to Stapleton. Duo of the year was awarded to Brooks & Dunn.

Megan Moroney covered Keith Urban’s “Stupid Boy” and Stapleton did



Lainey Wilson accepts the award for entertainer of the year during the 60th annual Academy of Country Music Awards on Thursday, May 8, in Frisco, Texas. (AP)



Keith Urban accepts the triple crown award during ACM Awards. (AP)



Alan Jackson accepts the lifetime achievement award during the 60th annual Academy of Country Music Awards. (AP)



Martina McBride, (from left), Gretchen Wilson, Sarah Evans, Crystal Gayle, and Wynonna Judd present the award for female artist of the year. (AP)

“Blue Ain’t Your Color” ahead of the Australian superstar’s reception of the coveted ACM Triple Crown Award, marking the first time an artist has received the trophy on stage since Car-

rie Underwood was honored in 2010. If anything, the 60th ACM Awards proved the show is at its best when it celebrates new acts and legends in equal measure.



Chris Stapleton accepts the award for male artist of the year. (AP)

The ACM Awards streamed on Prime Video and the Amazon Music channel on Twitch Live. No Prime membership was required to view the livestream.



This image released by Apple TV+ shows Ewan McGregor, (left), and Charley Boorman in a scene from ‘Long Way Home.’ (AP)

‘Long Way Home’

It’s back on the bikes for Ewan and Charley

NEW YORK, May 10, (AP): The last time Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman went on a motorcycle adventure, they rode cutting-edge, electric Harley-Davidsons. For their latest trip, they took a trip back in time.

The British best friends and actors chose to use vintage bikes this time as they ride through 17 European countries for Apple TV+’s “Long Way Home,” the fourth installment of their popular road trip docuseries. It starts airing Friday.

McGregor picked a 1974 Moto Guzzi Eldorado, which was used as a patrol bike by the Los Angeles Police Department and California Highway Patrol. Boorman picked a rusted-out BMW R75/5 and scrambled to make it road worthy.

“I guess there’s just sort of nowhere else to go other than backwards,” says McGregor. “We felt that we hadn’t done a trip on old bikes. I’ve always loved old bikes.”

The duo start at McGregor’s home in Scotland - they leave serenaded by a bagpipe band and, naturally, rain - into Holland, up through the Nordics, Arctic Circle, down to the Baltics before going through the Alps and France.

Unlike the Harleys or BMWs they’ve ridden before, using older bikes gave McGregor and Boorman a nostalgic feeling and something practical: The ability to get them back on the road should disaster strike.

Catastrophic

“They’re fixable,” says McGregor. “At the side of the road, you can pretty much - with a bit of sandpaper and a screwdriver and a hammer - you could probably pretty much get them running again. Whereas with something like the electric bike, if something happens - if something goes wrong, as we learned in Central America - it’s catastrophic.”

Series highlights include the duo donning Viking costumes and axe throwing in Norway, camping at a windmill near Amsterdam and kayaking alongside a glacier in the Arctic Circle. “It’s so Mad Max everywhere” says McGregor beside the icy water.

The duo spend the longest day of the year on a beach with a bonfire on an island off the Norwegian coast, try logrolling in Finland, get tattoos in Poland, paraglide in the Alps and spend the night in the northern-most cabin in the world.

“One of the great things about it is seeing the planet that we live on off the back of a motorcycle when you’re sort of part of the environment. If it’s cold, you’re cold. If it’s wet, you’re wet. It’s a very real experience,” says McGregor.

They spent about two months on the road before finishing at Boorman’s home in England, taking time to enjoy the scenery more this time and reducing their speed.

“We were doing a loop of Europe. We weren’t covering days and days getting across far eastern Russia, where the landscape barely changes. On those BMWs, we could ride at 80 miles an hour, 90 miles an hour,” says McGregor. “We didn’t need to do that on this loop. So riding at 60, 65 is a nice speed to go at,” he adds.

Motörhead legend Lemmy’s statue unveiled in England

LONDON, May 10, (AP): A decade after his death, Lemmy, the frontman of the legendary British heavy metal band Motörhead, will stand tall and proud in his hometown in the north of England.

Well, his statue will.

Inside the statue though will be some of Lemmy’s ashes, so it will no doubt become a shrine for Motörhead’s legion of fans around the world.

And indeed it was on Friday, as the statue to the hard-living Lemmy - real name Ian Kilmister - was unveiled in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent.

Black leather and denim jackets emblazoned with Lemmy’s image were the norm for the day on a bright and sunny day in the northern English town. No wonder, many fans opted for a thirst-quencher at the local pub. There were even some Lemmy look-alikes.

Lemmy was the only continuous member of Motörhead, which he co-founded in 1975 after he was fired from another legendary rock band, Hawkwind, following a drug possession arrest at the Canadian border.

So he decided to go his own way and Motörhead helped pioneer heavy metal music in Britain - and around the world - with a string of high-octane albums, perhaps most memorably with 1980’s “Ace Of Spades.”

The statue was crafted by acclaimed local sculptor and lifelong Motörhead fan Andy Edwards - who is best-known for his statue of the Beatles on Liverpool’s Pier Head. It captures



Motorhead fans touch the Motorhead logo to commemorate Lemmy Kilmister the former Motorhead frontman in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, England, Friday, May 9. (AP)

Lemmy, who died from cancer in December 2015 at the age of 70, in his iconic pose with his bass guitar.

In December, following his will’s instructions, another batch of Lemmy’s ashes were installed in an urn shaped like his trademark cavalry hat at the Stringfellows gentlemen’s club in London where he was “a regular.”

That and Friday’s ceremony are part of the “Lemmy Forever!” movement, which sees the rocker enshrined in many of his favorite spots around the world.

Lemmy’s legendary status was evident at his funeral, which saw rock heavyweights including The Foo Fighters’ Dave Grohl, Guns N’ Roses guitarist Slash and Metallica members Lars Ulrich and Robert Trujillo pay tribute.

A new study looks at which types

Cancer diagnoses before age 50 increaing in the US

NEW YORK, May 10, (AP): Cancer before age 50 is rare, but increasing, in the United States and researchers want to know why.

A new government study provides the most complete picture yet of early-onset cancers, finding that the largest increases are in breast, colorectal, kidney and uterine cancers. Scientists from the National Cancer Institute looked at data that included more than 2 million cancers diagnosed in people 15 to 49 years old between 2010 and 2019.

Of 33 cancer types, 14 cancers had increasing rates in at least one younger age group. About 63% of the early-onset cancers were among women.

"These kinds of patterns generally reflect something profound going on," said Tim Rebbeck of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, who studies cancer risk and was not involved in the research. "We need to find research that will help us understand."

The findings were published Thursday in Cancer Discovery, a journal of the American Association for

Cancer Research.

The researchers compared cancer rates in 2019 to what would be expected based on 2010 rates.

Breast cancer made up the largest share of the excess cancers, with about 4,800 additional cases. There were 2,000 more colorectal cancers compared with what would be expected based on the 2010 rates. There were 1,800 more kidney cancers and 1,200 additional uterine cancers.

Reassuringly, death rates were not rising for most cancers in the young adult age groups, although increasing death rates were seen for colorectal, uterine and testicular cancers.

Explanations will take more research. The big databases used for the study don't include information on risk factors or access to care. Theories abound and a big meeting is planned later this year to bring together experts in the area.

"Several of these cancer types are known to be associated with excess body weight and so one of the

leading hypotheses is increasing rates of obesity," said lead author Meredith Shiels of the National Cancer Institute.

Advances in cancer detection and changes in screening guidelines could be behind some early diagnoses.

For breast cancer, the trend toward women having a first child at older ages is a possible explanation. Pregnancy and breastfeeding are known to reduce risk.

This isn't happening across the board. Cancer rates in people under 50 are going down for more than a dozen types of cancer, with the largest declines in lung and prostate cancers.

Cigarette smoking has been declining for decades, which likely accounts for the drop in lung cancer among younger adults.

The drop in prostate cancer is likely tied to updated guidelines discouraging routine PSA testing in younger men because of concerns about overtreatment.



A radiologist uses a magnifying glass to check mammograms for breast cancer in Los Angeles, May 6, 2010.



Stacey Wales, sister of the late Christopher Pelkey, displays her brother's image at her mother's home, May 7, in Chandler, Ariz. (AP)

AI use expanding

AI helps road rage victim confront 'killer' in court

CHANDLER, Ariz., May 10, (AP): There were dozens of statements submitted to the court by family and friends of Christopher Pelkey when it came time to sentence the man convicted of fatally shooting him during a road rage incident. They provided glimpses of Pelkey's humor, his character and his military service.

But there was nothing quite like hearing from the victim himself - even if it was an AI-generated version.

In what's believed to be a first in US courts, Pelkey's family used artificial intelligence to create a video using his likeness to give him a voice. The AI rendering of Pelkey told the shooter during the sentencing hearing last week that it was a shame they had to meet that day in 2021 under those circumstances - and that the two of them probably could have been friends in another life.

"I believe in forgiveness and in God who forgives. I always have and I still do," Pelkey's avatar told Gabriel Paul

Horcasitas.

The AI version of Pelkey went on to share advice for people to make the most of each day and to love each other, not knowing how much time one might have left.

While use of artificial intelligence within the court system is expanding, it's typically been reserved for administrative tasks, legal research and case preparation. In Arizona, it's helped inform the public of rulings in significant cases.

Using AI to generate victim impact statements marks a new - and legal, at least in Arizona - tool for sharing information with the court outside the evidentiary phases.

Maricopa County Superior Court Judge Todd Lang, who presided over the road rage case, said after watching the video that he imagined Pelkey, who was 37 at the time of his killing, would have felt that way after learning about him.

Ovarian cancer advisory group launched

First at-home test kit for cervical cancer approved by the US FDA

WASHINGTON, May 10, (AP): US regulators have approved the first cervical cancer testing kit that allows women to collect their own sample at home before shipping it to a laboratory, according to a medical device company.

Teal Health said Friday the Food and Drug Administration approved its Teal Wand for home use, offering a new way to collect vaginal samples that can detect the HPV virus that causes cervical cancer. Currently, HPV tests and Pap smears are performed at a health clinic or doctor's office.

An influential federal panel recommended last year the use of self-collection of HPV samples to boost screening. The FDA also recently expanded the use of two older HPV tests for self-collection, but those must be done at a medical office or mobile clinic.

HPV, or human papillomavirus, is very common and is spread through sex. Most HPV infections clear up on their own, but persistent infection can lead to cancer of the cervix. Most cervical cancers occur in women who are inadequately screened, diagnosed or treated.

To collect a sample, a swab or brush is inserted into the vagina and rotated, then the swab is put into a tube or container and processed at a lab.

Teal Health's kit requires a prescription, which customers can obtain through one of the company's online health providers. The San Francisco-based company said it will initially begin selling the kits in California next month before expanding to other states. The company also said it is working with insurers on health coverage for the test.



The US Food and Drug Administration campus in Silver Spring, Md., is photographed, Oct. 14, 2015. (AP)

On World Ovarian Cancer Day, the World Ovarian Cancer Coalition has announced the formation of the Global Expert Advisory Group on Ovarian Cancer, a new initiative to elevate ovarian cancer as a global health priority.

As the world marks World Ovarian Cancer Day, the World Ovarian Cancer Coalition announces formation of the Global Expert Advisory Group on Ovarian Cancer, a new initiative to elevate ovarian cancer as a global health priority. The newly formed Global Expert Advisory Group on Ovarian Cancer brings together patient advocates, leading clinicians and policy makers from 13 nations across 6 continents. The group's mission is to develop a comprehensive framework for a global ovarian cancer strategy that will have

an impact at country level to ensure that everyone living with, or at risk of, ovarian cancer has the best chance of survival and the best quality of life possible, no matter where they live. The Group has identified three critical areas of focus: Building Community and Policymaker Awareness; Optimising Routes to Diagnosis; Access to Services and Treatment for Hereditary Ovarian Cancer.

Ovarian cancer is the most lethal of female cancers. With no reliable screening test, low awareness and significant diagnostic barriers, millions of lives are at stake - particularly in low- and middle-income countries where the burden is disproportionately high. Without urgent action, the world could lose eight million women to ovarian cancer by 2050.

FDA to allow 3 new natural food color additives

NEW YORK, May 10, (AP): US regulators said Friday that they would allow three new color additives made from natural sources to be used in the nation's food supply.

It comes after health officials pledged a sweeping phase-out of petroleum-based dyes widely used in foods from cereals to sports drinks to boost health - though action is still pending.

The Food and Drug Administration said it is granting petitions to allow galdieria extract blue, a blue color derived from algae; calcium phosphate, a white color derived from a naturally occurring mineral; and butterfly pea flower extract, a blue color made from dried flower petals.

The colors will be approved for use in a range of foods from fruit drinks and yogurt to pretzels, ready-to-eat chicken and candies. The move "will expand the palette of available colors from natural sources for manufacturers to safely use in food," FDA officials said in a statement.

Health advocates have long called for the removal of artificial dyes from foods, citing mixed studies indicating the dyes can cause neurobehavioral problems for some children, including hyperactivity and attention issues. The FDA has maintained

for decades that the approved dyes are safe and that "the totality of scientific evidence shows that most children have no adverse effects when consuming foods containing color additives."

The new color approvals include a 2021 petition from the French company Fermentalg to allow galdieria extract blue; a 2023 petition from Innophos Inc. of Cranbury, New Jersey, to allow calcium phosphate; and a 2024 petition from Sensient Colors LLC of St. Louis, Missouri, to allow butterfly pea flower extract.

The approvals are set to be published in the federal register on May 12 and would take effect in June.

In April, Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and FDA Commissioner Marty Makary announced that they would take steps to eliminate synthetic food dyes in the U.S. food supply by the end of 2026, largely through voluntary efforts from the food industry. The officials also said they would revoke authorization for two little-used artificial dyes, Citrus Red No. 2 and Orange B, and accelerate the timeline to remove Red 3, a food color banned in January because of a link to cancer in laboratory rats.

Plavix suit

Asbestos clinic forced to close

BILLINGS, Mont., May 10, (AP): An asbestos screening clinic in a small Montana town where thousands have been sickened by toxic dust from a nearby mine has been abruptly shuttered by authorities following a court order to seize the clinic's assets to pay off a judgment to the railroad BNSF.

The Lincoln County Sheriff's Office closed on Wednesday the Center for Asbestos Related Disease in Libby, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) from the US-Canada border. The town of about 3,000 people is near a mine that produced asbestos dust for decades, and the clinic has been at the forefront of efforts to help victims.

Courts in Montana have said BNSF contributed to the pollution when it brought contaminated material from the mine through town, and the railway separately faces numerous lawsuits from asbestos victims in Libby and surrounding communities.

But the Texas-based railway prevailed in a 2023 lawsuit alleging the clinic fraudulently made some patients eligible for government benefits when it knew they were not sick. The railway challenged the validity of over 2,000 diagnoses by the clinic and 337 were ruled false.

The railway brought the lawsuit on behalf of the federal government, which provides specialized Medicare services to Libby's asbestos victims. BNSF was entitled to a share of the \$6 million judgment against the clinic, and after adding in attorney fees, court costs and interest, the railway says it's now owed \$3.1 million.

Blood thinner: Pharmaceutical companies have agreed to pay Hawaii \$700 million to settle its lawsuit over the efficacy and safety of the blood thinner Plavix, the state attorney general's office announced Friday.

A court ruling last year ordered Bristol Myers Squibb Company and three U.S.-based subsidiaries of French pharmaceutical company Sanofi to pay a combined \$916 million.

But before an appeal was decided, a settlement was reached for the lower amount, the attorney general's office said.

A statement distributed by Sanofi said the companies "are pleased to resolve this litigation, and to continue their companies' focus on discovering, developing, and delivering innovative medicines to patients."

"Plavix has helped millions of people with cardiovascular disease around the world for nearly 30 years and it continues to be endorsed as a first-line therapy by leading treatment guidelines across the globe," it added.

US state to ban cellphone use in K-12 public schools

MONTGOMERY, Ala., May 10, (AP): Alabama will soon join the states that have banned or restricted the presence of cellphones in schools.

The Alabama Senate on Wednesday voted 30-2 for the bill to prohibit students in K-12 public schools from using phones during the school day. The phones must be "turned off and stored off their person in a locker, car or similar storage location" during the instructional day.

The bill now goes to Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey for her signature. Ivey used a portion of her State of the State address earlier this year to urge lawmakers to pass the cellphone ban. "In the school systems where this has been implemented, it has worked," Republican Sen. Donnie Chesteen said.

Many schools already ban the use of the devices. The legislation will require all school systems to do so. The Alabama bill leaves it up to schools on how to store the devices.

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Actions tied to military tensions between the two neighbors

India suspends IPL for a week as Pakistan postpones PSL

MUMBAI, India, May 10, (AP): India's biggest domestic cricket tournament was suspended for one week on Friday following the escalating military tensions with Pakistan.

The Indian Premier League, which features top players from around the world and attracts hundreds of millions of TV viewers, was halted with immediate effect, the Board of Control for Cricket in India said.

"Further updates regarding the new schedule and venues of the tournament will be announced in due course after a comprehensive assessment of the situation in consultation with relevant authorities and stakeholders," the BCCI said in a statement.

The decision came after a night of artillery exchanges between Indian and Pakistani soldiers across their frontier in Kashmir, amid a growing military standoff that erupted following an attack on tourists in the India-controlled portion of the disputed region.

The IPL is the most popular cricket tournament in the world and runs between March and May. This year it has featured 65 international cricketers from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Sri Lanka, West Indies, England and Afghanistan.

The 10-team competition still has 12 games to be played in the group stage before the knockout rounds. The final had been scheduled for May 25 in Kolkata.

Overseas cricketers and broadcast staff were given permission to fly out to their respective home countries, reducing the chance that the tournament would be resumed. There about 70 overseas players in the IPL this season.

The BCCI said the decision to suspend the tournament was made "in the collective interest of all stakeholders."

"While cricket remains a national passion, there is nothing greater than the Nation and its sovereignty, integrity, and security of our country," the BCCI statement said.

The suspension comes after the match between Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals in Dharamsala in northern India was abandoned on Thursday evening when the power went out during a government-mandated blackout. Players from both

teams returned by train late Friday to New Delhi.

The Pakistan Cricket Board postponed its Pakistan Super League following rising military tensions between India and Pakistan.

"Cricket, while being a unifying force and a source of joy, must take a respectful pause," the PCB said in a statement.

The PCB said it acted on advice from Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The PCB had earlier confirmed the relocation of eight remaining PSL matches to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, citing growing concerns among overseas players and the need to prioritize their safety.

But the latest announcement said the PSL was being postponed and gave no indication whether this year's edition would resume at some point.

Rawalpindi, Multan and Lahore had been scheduled to host the remaining PSL games.

On Thursday, an Indian drone fell inside the complex of the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium hours before the start of a PSL game in which several cricketers from New Zealand, Australia, West Indies, South Africa and England were due to compete.

PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi, who is also interior minister in the Pakistan government, held meetings with foreign cricketers and six franchise owners of the PSL before initially saying the tournament was being moved to Dubai.

England cricketer Sam Billings, New Zealand's Colin Munro, South African Rilee Rossouw and Jason Holder of West Indies were among 43 foreign cricketers competing in the PSL.

"We have sincere regard for the mental well-being of participating players and the sentiments of our foreign players, and we respect the concerns of their families who want to see them back home," the PCB said.

The PSL, in its 10th edition, started in the UAE in 2016. UAE hosted the first two editions of the PSL, except for the final in 2017, and also some of the games in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Munro's Islamabad United is the defending champion in the six-team league.



Workers ride on a motorcycle inside the premises of closed Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium after organizers suspended the Indian Premier League for one week following the escalating military tensions with Pakistan, in Lucknow, India. (AP)

Rossouw's Quetta Gladiators leads the points table and has already qualified for the playoff stage while Multan Sultans, led by Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan, was eliminated after losing eight of its nine league games.

The three other teams are Peshawar Zalmi, captained by Babar Azam; Karachi Kings, skippered by Australian David Warner, and Lahore Qalandars.

Sunderland beats Coventry to boost bid for return to PL



Sunderland's Eliezer Mayenda, right, gets set to score their side's second goal of the game against Coventry City during the Sky Bet Championship playoff semifinal, first leg soccer match at the Coventry Building Society Arena in Coventry, England. (AP)

‘It’s not over’ for Coventry after losing at home to Sunderland in playoffs’

COVENTRY, England, May 10, (AP): Sunderland struck late to beat host Coventry 2-1 in the first leg of the Championship semi-final playoffs.

Goals from Wilson Isidor in the 68th minute and Eliezer Mayenda two minutes from time - either side of Jack Rudoni scoring for Frank

Lampard's Coventry - put Sunderland in the driver's seat ahead of the return leg at its own Stadium of Light on Tuesday.

Northeastern side Sunderland is seeking promotion from England's second tier and a return to the Premier League for the first time since being relegated in 2017.

Lampard said "it's halftime," with the Coventry manager looking forward to the second leg.

"I've played many two-legged games - Champions League football - so I understand that this was never going to be over (after the first leg) and it's not over, that's for sure," Lampard said.

"Sunderland will know it's not over. It's halftime - we go again. Football's not easy, it's not meant to be easy. We're one behind and they're favorites, which is fine. It will be a good challenge."

The winner of the tie will play either Sheffield United or Bristol City at Wembley on May 24.

Sheffield won the first leg 3-0 away and the teams face off again at Bramall Lane on Monday.

Milan van Ewijk's wayward back pass allowed Mayenda to break free, round goalkeeper Ben Wilson and score the winner at the Coventry Building Society Arena.

Van Ewijk was distraught at full time, leaving the ground in tears.

"I'll speak to him," Lampard said. "He's been brilliant for us this season. Mistakes happen in football."

Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi set for epic finale

By Hassan Mosa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The curtain falls tonight on the 63rd edition of the Zain Premier League, with Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium set to host the highly anticipated title-deciding clash between Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi at 8:20 pm in the final round of the championship group.

Earlier in the evening, Qadsia will face Al-Fahaheel at Jaber Al-Mubarak Stadium, and Salmiya will take on Al-Tadamon at Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium. Both matches kick off at 5:40 pm.

While Qadsia has already secured third place with 38 points, Salmiya (33 points) and Al-Fahaheel (32 points) are in contention for fourth place - a position that guarantees a spot in the Super Cup and possibly a berth in a foreign tournament. Al-Tadamon sits at the bottom with 20 points.

At the top of the table, Kuwait Club leads with 57 points, just ahead of Al-Arabi on 55 points. A draw or win will secure Kuwait Club's 20th league title



A file photo of players challenging for the ball.

and fourth consecutive championship. Meanwhile, Al-Arabi must win to clinch its 18th title - and only its second in the last 24 years, the last coming in the 2020-2021 season.

This will be the third meeting between the two sides this season. Kuwait Club won the first leg 2-0, while the second ended in a goalless draw. The two sides are also set to face off again next week in the Crown Prince Cup final.

Kuwait Club enters the match with the league's most potent attack (65 goals) and strongest defense (14 goals conceded). Al-Arabi ranks second in both categories, with 44 goals scored and just 15 conceded.

Elsewhere in the league, Kazma and Al-Nasr secured their Premier League status through the relegation round, while Yarmouk and Khaitan were relegated to the First Division, known as the "Op-pressors League."

Tonight's decisive encounter will be overseen by renowned Mexican referee César Ramos, an international official since 2014. Ramos, born December 5, 1983, has officiated in the CONCACAF Champions League, the 2018 World Cup qualifiers, and notably the 2017 FIFA Club World Cup final between Real Madrid and Grêmio.



In this file photo, British and Irish Lions' Maro Itoje gets away from South Africa's Eben Etzebeth during the third rugby union test between South Africa's Springboks and the British and Irish Lions at the Cape Town Stadium, in Cape Town, South Africa. (AP)

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AC Milan keeps Europe hopes alive

MILAN, Italy, May 10, (AP): Santiago Gimenez scored twice and had a goal disallowed as AC Milan rallied to beat Bologna 3-1 in Serie A and keep alive its hopes of European soccer next season.

It was the second game in row in which Milan has come from behind to secure three points.

Milan is eighth in the Italian league, a point above Fiorentina and two points behind a faltering Bologna. The top four will go into the Champions

League and the fifth- and sixth-placed teams qualify for the Europa League and Europa Conference League, respectively.

Juventus is fourth with 63 points, the same as the two teams behind it, Roma and Lazio.

Bologna was hoping to snap a two-game winless run and it took the lead after 48 minutes when Riccardo Orsolini cut in from the right and fired a low drive past Mike Maignan.

However, Gimenez equalized in the 73rd

minute with a cool finish after Christian Pulisic set him up inside the box.

The Argentina-born Mexican international had a second goal disallowed two minutes later but another goal seemed inevitable as Milan pushed forward. It came four minutes later and again Pulisic was involved.

Joao Felix's 79th-minute shot was blocked but fell perfectly for the American and he coolly slotted the ball home from 12 meters out.

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Zain celebrates Dawri Zain’s standout players



Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef and Waleed Al-Khashti with the winners.

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Zain presented its incentive awards to the most outstanding players in the local Premier League (Dawri Zain) during a ceremony held at its headquarters in Shuwaikh, where the Best Player of the Round awards were handed to the winners of the recent rounds of the league. The event was held in partnership with the Kuwait Football Association.

The awards were presented by Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, President of the Kuwait Football Association, and Waleed Al-Khashti, Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer at Zain Kuwait, in the presence of Dr. Saleh Al-Majroub, Secretary General of the Association; Thamer Enad, Head of the Technical Committee; members of the committee; and Zain officials.

Zain awarded the Best Player of the Round prize of KD 500 to each of the following players: Ali Khalaf of Al-Arabi for Round 9, Eid Al-Rashidi of Al-Qadsia for Round 10, Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi of Al-Arabi for Round 11, and Salman Al-Awadhi of Al-Arabi for Round 12.

Ahmed Al-Zanki of Al-Kuwait was awarded for Round 13, followed by Mohammed Daham of Al-Kuwait for Round 14, Salman Bouramya of Al-

Nasr for Round 15, and Fawaz Mbeleish of Al-Nasr for Round 16.

Mubarak Al-Funaini of Al-Qadsia won the award for Round 17, Jasem Al-Matar of Al-Qadsia for Round 18, Fawaz Ayed Al-Otaibi of Al-Salmiya for Round 19, Rashid Al-Dosari of Al-Qadsia for Round 20, and Mohammed Furaih of Al-Kuwait for Round 21.

Before the current season began, the Kuwait Football Association formed a technical committee comprising former international players with extensive experience to establish the criteria for selecting the winners of Zain’s incentive awards. The committee is chaired by Thamer Enad and includes Jamal Mubarak, Faisal Bourgba, Waleed Ali, and Mubarak Al-Wuqayan.

For the third consecutive season, Zain continues to fulfill its promise to support athletes, players, and fans through its incentive awards. The company offers the largest prize pool in the history of the local league, exceeding KD 60,000 per season. This initiative aims to encourage emerging athletic talent, motivate players to perform at their highest level, and present the league in the best possible light to loyal Kuwaiti fans.

This support reflects Zain’s belief in the importance of the Kuwaiti private sector’s role in supporting and developing local sports and elevating it to new levels. These incentives have contributed to the league’s strong performance in recent seasons, raising the level of play, adding more excitement and energy to the matches, and providing a renewed experience for fans and football lovers.

Zain’s incentive awards this season include KD 10,000 for the Best Player of the Season, KD 500 per round for the Best Player of the Round, KD 5,000 for the Top Scorer in the professionals category, and KD 5,000 for the Top Scorer in the locals category. The awards also include KD 5,000 for the Best Goalkeeper of the Season, KD 3,000 for the Best Coach, KD 2,000 for the Best Rising Star, and KD 1,000 for the Best Photo of the Season.

Zain is also awarding prizes exceeding KD 10,000 to winners of the Zain Fantasy League, an interactive digital competition that brings Kuwaiti football into the digital space and aims to engage fans in a creative and innovative way.



Awarding Al-Kuwait’s Mohammed Daham.



Honoring Al-Arabi’s Salman Al-Awadhi.



Recognizing Al-Qadsia’s Eid Al-Rashidi.

Nuggets bounce back in Game 3

Cavaliers cut series deficit to 2-1

DENVER, May 10, (AP): Jamal Murray scored 27 points and Michael Porter Jr. bounced back with 21 clutch points, leading the Denver Nuggets past the top-seeded Oklahoma City Thunder 113-104 in overtime Friday night for a 2-1 lead in the Western Conference semifinal series.

Nikola Jokic added 20 points and 16 rebounds, and Aaron Gordon had 22 points for the Nuggets, who led by no more than two points in regulation but went on an 11-2 run in the extra period.

Jokic went 8 for 25 from the field and missed all 10 of his 3-pointers but started the overtime flourish with a finger-roll layup and the Nuggets never trailed again.

The other NBA MVP front-runner, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, also had a tough night, missing 15 of 22 shots, going 1 for 6 from deep and finishing with 18 points. Jalen Williams led OKC with 32 points and Chet Holmgren chipped in 18.

Game 4 is Sunday at Ball Arena.

It was tied at 102 after regulation, and both Gilgeous-Alexander and Jokic missed potential winners in the closing seconds of regulation. SGA missed a 12-foot jumper with 3 seconds left, and Joker missed a 19-footer at the buzzer.

After getting blown out by 43 points in Game 2, the Nuggets knew



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Alex Caruso, center, drives to the basket as Denver Nuggets guard Russell Westbrook, left, and center Nikola Jokic defend in the second half of Game 3 in the Western Conference semifinals of the NBA basketball playoffs in Denver. (AP)

their path to victory on this night was staying close until the end when they could tap into their mix of experience, home environment and closing prowess.

The Nuggets trailed 83-80 after three quarters. They would have had the lead if not for back-to-back offensive goal-tending calls in the third quarter on Gordon and Jokic.

The Thunder took a 56-51 half-time lead thanks to Holmgren’s 16 points and seven boards. Porter, who was a combined 3-for-18 from the floor in Oklahoma City, made his first five shots, three from deep, to keep Denver close.

Reminiscent of last year when

and finally found Max Strus for another 3 and the Cavaliers went on to a 126-104 victory.

The road team has won all three games, and the Pacers will have another chance to break that trend Sunday in Game 4.

But Cleveland was desperate to avoid falling into a 3-0 hole and used everything in its arsenal to hold.

NBA Defensive Player of the Year Evan Mobley and key backup De’Andre Hutner returned from injuries after missing Game 2. All-Star guard Darius Garland also returned from a toe injury that kept him out of four straight games.

The Cavs also reverted more to the regular-season form by making 14 3-pointers, holding a 56-37 rebounding edge, even using zone defense to slow down the high-flying Pacers.

But it was Mitchell’s finishing punch that stood apart.

Strus made four 3s and had 20 points, seven rebounds and seven assists in a game the Cavs never trailed.

Bennedict Mathurin led the Pacers with 23 points. Pascal Siakam had 18 and Tyrese Haliburton finished with four points and five assists - his first career home loss in a postseason game he’s appeared.

The most physical game of the three resulted in players routinely hitting the floor. Hunter turned into a hard shoulder after making a basket early in the second quarter, a collision that nearly knocked him down, and Mitchell took a nasty spill into the front-row seats.

Kuwait secures historic seat on Board of Int’l Diving Federation

CAIRO, May 10: Kuwait marked a milestone in international sports by winning a seat on the Board of Directors of the International Diving Federation (IDF) for the first time. The election took place during the Federation’s General Assembly held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.

Engineer Talal Al-Sarhan, President of the Kuwait Diving and Rescue Federation, was elected to serve a four-year term on the IDF Board – an unprecedented achievement that reflects Kuwait’s growing presence in the global diving community.

Al-Sarhan emphasized that his election is the result of the Federation’s ongoing efforts to promote and develop diving and rescue sports, along with its commitment to positioning Kuwait as a key player in the international marine sports arena.

Expressing his pride in this accomplishment, Al-Sarhan affirmed his dedication to representing Kuwait effectively, while also advocating for the interests of Arab and Asian nations within the Federation.



Talal Al-Sarhan

He reiterated his commitment to elevating the status of diving as a vital global marine sport and cultural heritage.

Kuwait Club dominates Burgan in series opener



Kuwait Club and Burgan players battle for the ball.

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Kuwait Club’s first volleyball team took a commanding step toward the 2024-2025 Premier League title by defeating Burgan 3-0 in the opening match of the championship series, held in a best-of-three format. The match took place at the Volleyball Association Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex.

The second match is scheduled for next Tuesday. A win for Kuwait Club in that match will seal the league title in its favor. However, if Burgan manages to level the series, a decisive playoff will be scheduled at a later date.

Kuwait Club led the final round standings with 13 points, followed by Burgan with 11. Al-Arabi finished third, while Kazma came in fourth – both clubs securing nine points each.

Historically, Qadsia leads the league with 23 titles, followed by Kazma with 15 and Kuwait Club with 14. Al-Arabi and Al-Jahra have won the championship four and one times, respectively.

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Manchester City's Erling Haaland, center, attempts a shot on goal during their Premier League soccer match at St Mary's Stadium, Southampton, England. The match ended 0-0. (AP)

Sports

Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr: Asian aquatics poised for growth ahead of championships in India

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Executive Office of the Asian Aquatics Confederation (AAC) has officially approved India as the host of the upcoming Asian Aquatics Championships for National Teams, scheduled to take place in October. The event will feature competitions in four aquatic disciplines: water polo, swimming, diving, and synchronized swimming, with participation from all AAC member nations.

Following the Executive Office meeting held in Kuwait, AAC President Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr Al-Sabah announced the decision, highlighting the significance of the championships as a major gathering for the continent's top aquatic athletes. He emphasized that the event will provide a platform to showcase the growing talent across Asia in various aquatic sports.

Sheikh Khaled underscored the AAC's commitment to organizing its championships on a regular basis, noting that these events not only promote athletic excellence but also strengthen the bonds of friendship, solidarity, and unity among Asian nations.

He added, "Thanks to the ongoing efforts of the AAC and its member countries, Asia has emerged as a powerful force in aquatic sports at the World Championships and the Olympic Games, particularly in swimming and diving." He reiterated



Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr Al-Sabah with members of the Asian Aquatics Confederation.

Photo by Samer Shaqer

the AAC's dedication to further developing aquatic disciplines throughout the continent.

During the meeting, the Executive Office also approved the confederation's financial and administrative report for the past fiscal year. Sheikh Khaled expressed his gratitude to the committee members for their continued dedication to the advancement of Asian aquatics.

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Al-Qadsiya clinches U-19 youth league title

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Al-Qadsiya secured the U-19 Youth League championship after a 2-1 win over Khaitan in the final round of the tournament, held on Field 2 at Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium.

Following the match, Al-Qadsiya, as league champion, and Al-Nasr, who finished as runner-up, were crowned by Dr. Saleh Al-Majroub, Secretary-General of the Kuwait Football Association, in the presence of Dr. Hamed Al-Shaibani, Director of the Association's Competitions Department.



Al-Qadsiya crowned Youth League champion.

Shabab Al Ahli claims 11th President's Cup title

DUBAI, May 10: Shabab Al Ahli captured the UAE President's Cup title with a 2-1 win over Sharjah at Mohammed bin Zayed Stadium, home of Al Jazeera Club.

Youri Cesar was the hero for Shabab Al Ahli, scoring twice – in the 45+2nd and 64th minutes – while Marcos Meloni netted Sharjah's lone goal in the 14th minute.

With this triumph, Shabab Al Ahli now tops the all-time list of UAE President's Cup winners, claiming its 11th title and surpassing Sharjah, who remains on 10 titles in second place.



Shabab Al Ahli celebrates with the championship trophy.

Unity and growth in focus as OCA General Assembly opens in Kuwait

'One Asia' theme shines

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The 45th General Assembly of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) officially begins today in Kuwait, bringing together presidents and representatives from 45 Asian National Olympic Committees, officials from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and several leaders of Asian sports federations.

The two-day event opens with a sports and cultural celebration at the Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center, symbolizing unity among Asian athletes. The official assembly session is scheduled for Monday at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, where key items on the agenda will be discussed.

Dr. Thani Abdulrahman Al-Kuwari, Second Vice President of the OCA and a senior Qatari sports official, expressed deep appreciation for the generous patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, praising his unwavering support for Olympic sports across Asia – exemplified by Kuwait's continued hosting of the OCA headquarters.

He also commended the patronage of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, describing it as a strong endorsement of the continental sports movement. Dr. Al-Kuwari noted

that Kuwait's hosting of this event highlights its significant role in Gulf and

Highlighting the exceptional nature of this year's assembly, Al-Kuwari emphasized the presence of two IOC Presidents – current President Dr. Thomas Bach of Germany and incoming President Christy Coventry of Zimbabwe, who is set to assume office in June. Their participation underscores the growing influence of the Asian Olympic movement on the global stage.

He lauded the collaborative efforts of Kuwaiti authorities and the OCA team, led by Director General Hussein Al-Musallam, for their meticulous organization and preparations that ensured a successful launch of this high-profile event.

Al-Kuwari revealed that the opening ceremony would celebrate the rich heritage and cultural diversity of Asia's five sub-regions, from West Asia to the Far East. He promised a vibrant and surprise-filled event that reflects the meeting's theme, "One Asia," and celebrates solidarity among athletes across the continent.

He concluded by stating that the General Assembly will tackle key issues related to the development of Olympic sports in Asia and the empowerment of athletes of all genders and age groups. He expressed optimism that the outcomes will positively shape the future of sports across all OCA member nations.



Dr. Thani Abdulrahman Al-Kuwari



Olympic Council of Asia logo.

Kuwait battles Egypt for bronze

All eyes on Qatar-Bahrain final, 10th Arab Cup ends

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The curtain falls tonight on the 10th Arab Handball Cup for Men, as the highly anticipated final takes place at 7:00 PM at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex. The decisive clash will feature Qatar taking on Bahrain, with the Qataris aiming to claim their first-ever Arab Cup title, while the Bahrainis look to secure their second championship win.

Prior to the final, the third-place match will be held between host nation Kuwait and Egypt, who both fell short in the semi-finals.

The championship, which began on May 5, featured nine participating teams, divided into three groups. The top teams from each group and the best-performing runner-up advanced to the semi-finals.

In the semi-final matches: Qatar defeated Egypt 25-19 to book their place in the final while Bahrain overcame a determined Kuwaiti side 29-24 to advance.

In the classification matches for 5th-9th place:

The Tunisian "Carthage Eagles" beat the Moroccan "Atlas Lions" 35-32.

The Saudi "Green" topped the Iraqi "Lions of Mesopotamia" 25-20.

This is the 10th edition of the Arab Championship. Here's the golden record:

Egypt: 2 titles (1975, 1977)
Kuwait: 2 titles (1979, 1988)
Tunisia: 2 titles (1986, 1993)
Saudi Arabia: 1 title (1998)
Algeria: 1 title (2000)

Bahrain: 1 title (2002 – the last edition before the current revival)

Nabil Ashour, President of the UAE Handball Federation, extended heartfelt thanks to the



Kuwaitis defend as an opponent makes a goal attempt.

State of Kuwait, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti government, sports leaders, and the Kuwait Handball Federation for their excellent organization of the tournament.

He said, "We are thrilled to witness the return of the Arab Championship after 23 years. It was a tournament of outstanding technical level and flawless organization."

Ashour emphasized the hospitality shown by Kuwait:

"From the first day, we felt the warmth, love, and generosity of our Kuwaiti brothers. This tournament brought Arab nations closer together in a land known for its friendship and peace."

He concluded by saying that the championship's success will serve as a solid foundation for Kuwait's hosting of the 22nd Asian Championship in January 2026, which will also act as a qualifier for the 2027 World Cup.