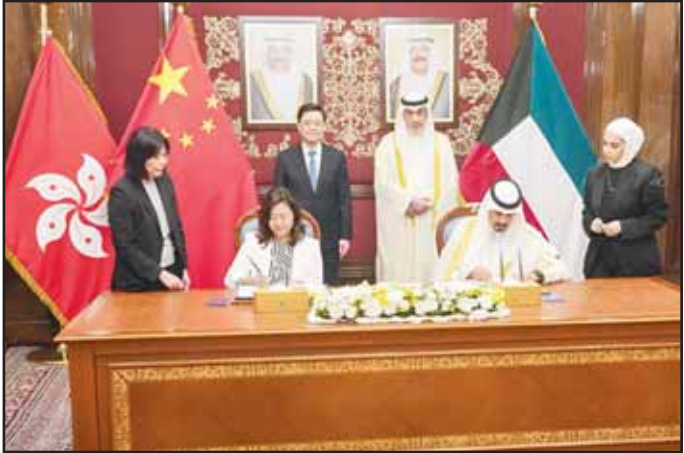




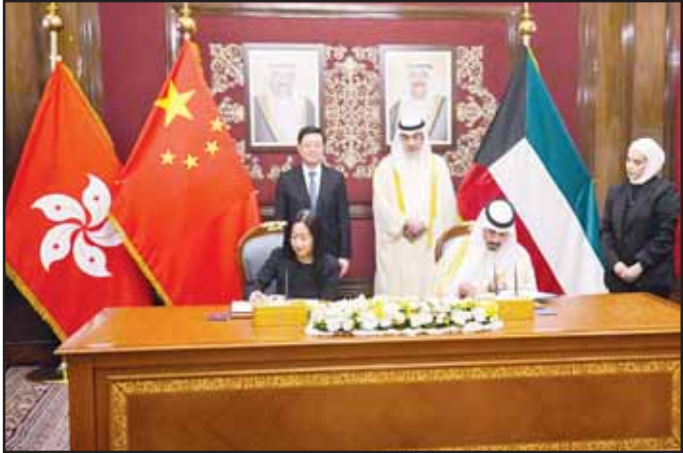
Amir heads to Saudi Wednesday for Gulf-US Summit

KUWAIT CITY, May 13, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the accompanying delegation will

head to Saudi Arabia on Wednesday to partake in the Gulf-US Summit in Riyadh.



Kuwait's Acting Prime Minister during the signing of MoUs between Kuwait and Hong Kong.



PM Diwan photos

Kuwait, Hong Kong boost ties with investment MoUs

Kuwait Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah on Tuesday held official round table discussions with Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region John Lee Ka-chiu at Bayan Palace.

During the session, they reviewed the bilateral ties and ways to boost them, in addition to exchanging visions and opinions on regional and international issues of common interest.

Following the official talks, the two sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding in direct investment promotion, inked

on the Kuwaiti side by Director General of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and on behalf of the Government of Hong Kong by Executive Director of the HKTDC Margaret Fong.

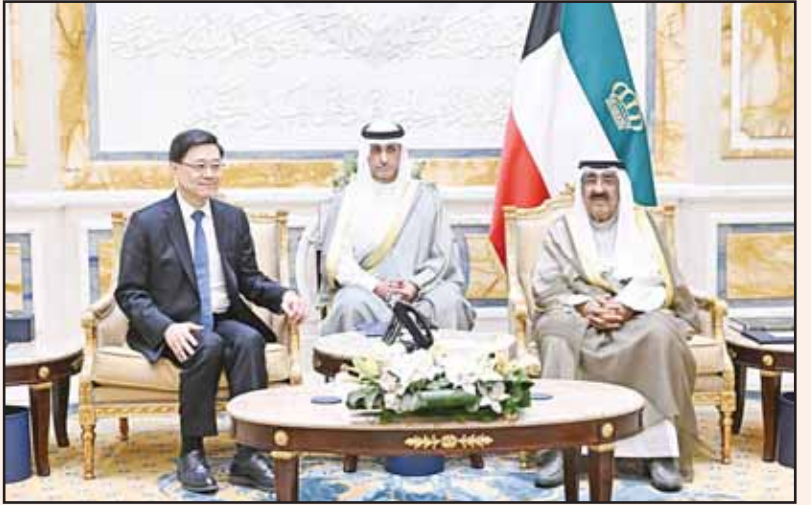
The meeting was attended by senior Kuwaiti officials including Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Public Works and Minister of Commerce and Industry.

The Acting Prime Minister hosted an official luncheon in honor of the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and his accompanying delegation. (KUNA)

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Amiri Diwan photo

HH the Amir receives Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Amir hosts Chief Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

KUWAIT CITY, May 13, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Tuesday at Bayan Palace John Lee Ka-chiu, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and his accompanying delegation, on the occasion of his visit to the country.

Senior state officials, including in Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, attended the meeting.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Tuesday at Bayan Palace John Lee Ka-chiu, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and his accompanying delegation, on the occasion of his visit to the country.

The Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah attended the audience.

Continued on Page 5



Opinion

■ Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

President Trump: Examine closely what's happening to the Arabs of the Middle East

MR. DONALD TRUMP, welcome to the capital of Gulf and Arab decision-making, Riyadh.

The region has a distinct understanding of its historical experiences since 1917; specifically its partition between Britain and France, and the consequences for its populations.

The establishment of the Jewish State exacerbated existing challenges, while the Palestinian issue was exploited by certain factions seeking to destabilize existing regimes in their respective nations.

Since 1952, the region has been encountering a period of instability marked by abortive revolutions. These movements, originating in Egypt and extending to other Arab countries, were endorsed by the Soviet Union in its effort to acquire strategically vital maritime routes,

which were known as 'warm waters'.

The Soviet Union aimed to propagate communist ideology -- overtly and covertly -- to advance Moscow's objectives and ultimately prevail in the Cold War; while Arab nations failed to capitalize on the opportunities for advancement presented since the 1947 partition resolution.

Continued on Page 5

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9 get jail over Mangaf blaze

Trio convicted of manslaughter

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: The Misdemeanor Court, presided over by Judge Anwar Bastaki, has sentenced three defendants in the Mangaf fire case to three years in prison on charges of manslaughter.

Two additional defendants received one-year prison sentences for perjury, while four others were each sentenced to one year in prison for harboring a fugitive.

The Public Prosecution referred the case -- related to a fire incident at a workers' housing facility belonging to a company in Mangaf -- to the General Department of Investigations at the Ministry of Interior.

The case was classified as a misdemeanor, not a felony, based on technical reports confirming that the fire was unintentional.

Earlier, the detention renewal judge ordered the release of eight defendants on bail of KD300 each -- one Kuwaiti, three Indians and four Egyptians.



US President Donald Trump and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman speak during a coffee ceremony at the Royal Terminal of King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on May 13. (AP)

Trump, Saudi Crown Prince initial landmark agreements

RIYADH, May 13, (AP): U.S. President Donald Trump signed a host of economic and bilateral cooperation agreements in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday as he kicked off a four-day Middle East trip with a focus on dealmaking with a key Mideast ally while shared concerns about Iran's nuclear program and the war in Gaza dragged on in the background.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud warmly greeted Trump as he stepped off Air Force One at King Khalid International Airport in the Saudi capital. The two leaders then retreated to a grand hall at the Riyadh airport, where Trump and his aides were served traditional Arabic coffee by waiting attendants wearing ceremonial gun belts.

"I really believe we like each other a lot," Trump said later during a brief appearance

with the crown prince at the start of a bilateral meeting.

They later signed more than a dozen agreements to increase cooperation between their governments' militaries, justice departments and cultural institutions. Additional economic agreements were expected to be inked later Tuesday at a U.S.-Saudi investment conference convened for the occasion.

Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman has already committed to some \$600 billion in new Saudi investment in the U.S., but Trump teased \$1 trillion would be even better.

The pomp began before Trump even landed. Royal Saudi Air Force F-15s provided an honorary escort for Air Force One as it approached the kingdom's capital - an exceptionally rare sight.

Continued on Page 5

KFF warns public

180 lives lost to fires, accidents

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Director of the Public Relations and Media Department at Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Gharib revealed that the number of deaths resulting from fires and traffic accidents reached 180 last year and 44 in the first quarter of this year.

Al-Gharib said the main causes of fire during summer are high temperatures, misuse of electrical appliances, and unsafe storage of flammable materials.

In an interview with the newspaper, he affirmed that KFF and all of its centers are fully prepared to deal with various reports; citing the continuous upgrading of equipment and machinery.

Continued on Page 5

Bid to ease patient costs

Kuwait reprints 69 medications

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi issued Ministerial Resolution No. 93/2025, stipulating the pricing structure for 69 medications and pharmaceutical preparations in private pharmacies.

This decision aims to ensure the safety and quality of treatment, while

achieving balance between economic efficiency and the standard of health-care provision.

Based on the recommendations of the Drug Pricing Committee, this resolution complements Ministerial Resolution No. 74/2023. Its principal objective is to heighten the ongoing regulatory oversight of the pharmaceutical market and to control prices;

Continued on Page 5

Day by Day

DEAR government, what prevents people whose nationalities have been withdrawn from keeping their properties, funds, and companies that are in their names? After all, they are in Kuwait, and their homes will not be relocated from one place to another.

In all countries of the world, residents are allowed to own homes, companies, and investments. They are even granted certain privileges. So let us get rid of such narrow-mindedness.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



8 Mohammed Al-Othman participates in Dubai FinTech Summit 2025



10 AI Ahli Bank of Kuwait Group holds Q1 2025 analyst conference call

Newswatch

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan military on Tuesday confirmed that Indian attacks killed 40 civilians while 11 security men embraced martyrdom in defending the country, said military.

A press release by Pakistan military's media wing Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) confirmed that 40 civilians, including seven women and 15 children, were killed while 121 others injured in unprovoked and reprehensible dastardly recent Indian attacks.

"While defending the motherland with exemplary valour, 11 personnel of the Pakistan Armed Forces embraced martyrdom and 78 were wounded," it added.

The ISPR further said that the noble sacrifice of martyrs is an enduring symbol of courage, devotion and unwavering patriotism, etched forever in the nation's memory. (KUNA)

US, Kuwait deepen food security ties at regional nutrition summit

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi affirmed that Kuwait has taken measures to strengthen its food security and safety systems, starting with the launching of the National Food Security Strategy and updating the regula-

tions for imported foods and school cafeterias.

In his opening remarks at the Fourth Annual Food Safety and Nutrition Summit that started Tuesday in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Al-Awadhi revealed the abovementioned measures are part of comprehensive national efforts to

Continued on Page 5



Kuwait's Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi (left) and US Ambassador to Kuwait Karen Sasahara (right) speak at the launching of the National Food Security Strategy on Tuesday.

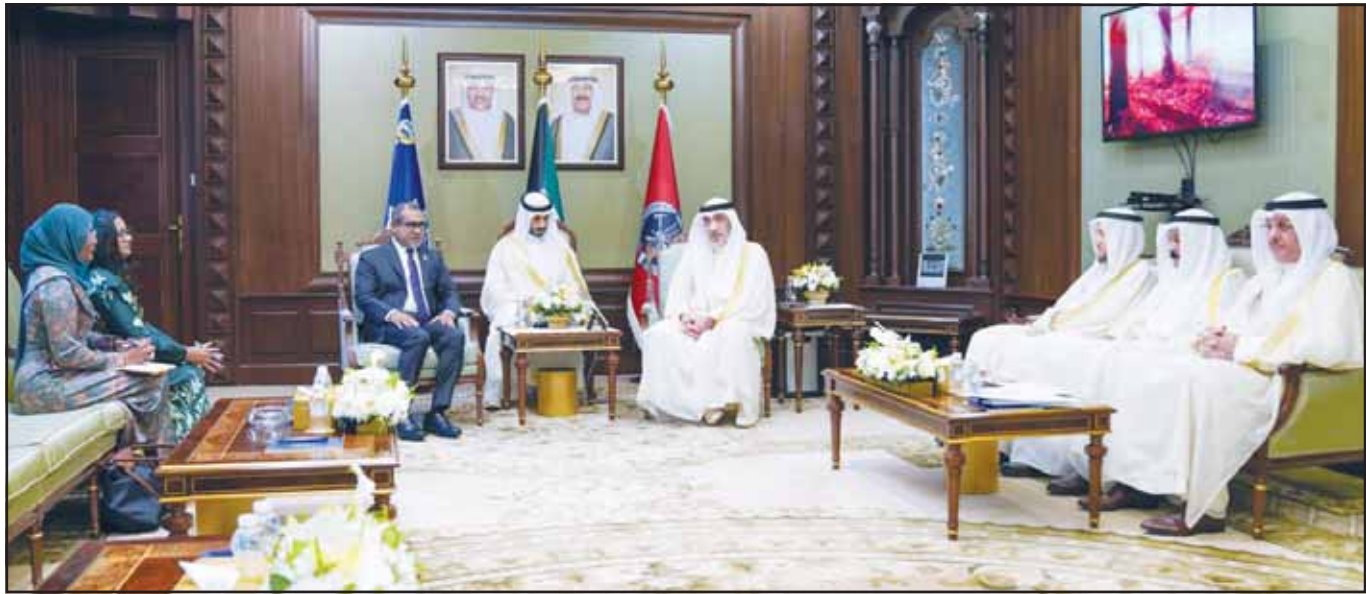
KUNA photos

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:28	Asr	15:20
Sunrise ..	04:57	Maghrib ..	18:31
Zohr	11:44	Isha	19:58

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 10-38 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.
By Night: Rather hot, relatively

Weather			
humid over coastal areas and partly cloudy with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 06-30 km/h with a chance for airborne dust.	Abdaly	43	25
	Bubyan	33	28
	Jahra	44	27
	Failaka Islana	39	30
	Salmiyah	33	26
	Ahmadi	31	24
	Nuwaisib	41	24
	Wafra	42	21
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait Airport	43	24	



PM Diwan photo
Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah receives visiting Maldives Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullah Khaleel and the accompanying delegation.

Acting PM receives Maldives FM

Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace on Tuesday visiting Maldives Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullah Khaleel and the accompanying delegation. The meeting discussed ways to boost bilateral ties and it also touched on the latest regional and international developments.

Present at the meeting were Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Abdullah Al-Mousherji, head of His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan Abdulaziz Al-Dakheel, and Assistant Foreign Minister for Asia Affairs Ambassador Sameeh Hayat. (KUNA)



KUNA photo
Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya received his visiting Maldives counterpart at the airport .

FM welcomes Maldives counterpart

KUWAIT CITY, May 13, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya received his visiting Mal-

dives counterpart Dr. Abdullah Khaleel and his accompanying delegation at Kuwait International Airport on Monday.

‘Leadership keen to empower Kuwaiti women’

Support pledged in all fields: Ahmadi Governor



Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Homoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah speaking at the event.

By Salman Al-Mutairi

KUWAIT CITY, May 13, (KUNA): Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Homoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah affirmed the political leadership’s continued commitment to empowering Kuwaiti women and supporting them in various fields, promoting their rights and active participation in society.

The Ahmadi Governor’s statement to KUNA came Tuesday, as he sponsored a celebration marking Kuwaiti Women’s Day (which falls on May 16 of each year) under the slogan “A Glorious Past... A Sustainable Future.” Sheikh Homoud Al-Sabah said that this celebration came in appreciation of the efforts and contributions of Kuwaiti women and to reinforce their role in building society, as they are an essential element in the country’s development and progress.

He added that Kuwaiti women have held advanced positions regionally and internationally, participating in decision-making, and are now among the most powerful female figures in the world.

Sheikh Homoud Al-Sabah praised the efforts of the Kuwait Oil Company and “Fazaa Al-Dahiya” team for

organizing this event and highlighting the contributions of Kuwaiti women.

He stressed that the Ahmadi Governorate seeks to cooperate and participate in any constructive initiatives aimed at highlighting the pioneering roles of Kuwaiti women and every active element in Kuwaiti society.

For her part, Chief Executive Officer of Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), Wadha Al-Khateeb told KUNA that being honored on this occasion is not only a personal honor for her, but also a tribute to the contributions of Kuwaiti women working in the oil sector in general.

Al-Khatib said that the role of Kuwaiti women extends back to the pre-oil discovery period, as there is a long list



Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Homoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah awards a diligent worker.



KUNA photos
Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Ambassador Sheikhha Jawaher Ibrahim Duaij Al-Sabah meets President of the International Olympic Committee Kirsty Coventry.

of Kuwaiti women who have left a distinct mark on Kuwait and the region.

She said that the gains achieved by Kuwaiti women reflect the state’s belief in the capabilities of its men and women, which has been effectively translated into providing all citizens with equal opportunities in education and career development, based primarily on ability and competence.

Head of “Fazza Al-Dahiya” team, Sara Al-Azmi, told KUNA that this celebration represents a golden opportunity to empower Kuwaiti women and highlight their active

and pioneering role.

Al-Azmi explained that the celebration will include three sessions; National Identity, Life Balance, and Cre-



Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Homoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah with government officials and staff members.

ating Generations.

She added that the pioneering roles of Kuwaiti women came under the support and assistance of Kuwait’s leadership and official sponsoring bodies.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Ambassador Sheikhha Jawaher Ibrahim Duaij Al-Sabah Monday reiterated Kuwait’s commitment to supporting women’s sports empowerment and presence in regional and global technical, administrative and field aspects.

She made the statement to KUNA after welcoming the newly elected President of the International Olympic Committee Kirsty Coventry, who is in Kuwait to attend the General Assembly of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA).

She added that Kuwait attaches paramount significance to women’s empowerment in all fields, including sports, under the direction of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and in line with relevant nationals laws and international agreements.

The Kuwaiti official congratulated Kirsty Coventry on having been elected as President of the International Olympic Committee, saying that her visit reflects the depth of international sports relations and Kuwait’s status in this field.

GCC municipal officials nod proposals, before Thursday meeting

KUWAIT CITY, May 13, (KUNA): The 41st meeting of the Committee of Senior municipal officials in the GCC countries approved several important proposals in preparation to the 28th ministerial meeting scheduled to be held on Thursday.

In their meeting on Tuesday, chaired by Director General of Kuwait Municipality Manal Al-Asfour, they approved the guide to waste management system, which was submitted by Kuwait in preparation for presenting it to the 28th ministerial meeting.

During the meeting, they also discussed urban environment, the guide to integrated waste management system towards a circular economy in the GCC, as well as the guide to afforestation of cities and sustainable mobility options.

The committee approved the Urban Design Guide in GCC States as a guide and assigned the General Secretariat to submit it to the ministerial meeting for adoption, in addition to approving the adoption of a report on sustainable mobility options.

The committee urged Member States to adopt guide for the use of solar panels in the GCC, and agreed to adopt the manual of the mechanism of classifying contractors in its second edition for the year 2024 as a guide and assign the General Secretariat to brief the ministerial meeting.

The committee also approved the establishment of the GCC Urban Research Center, which was sponsored by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and hosted at the College of Architecture and Planning at King Saud University in Riyadh.

Proposals

The meeting concluded with the adoption of many other recommendations and proposals.

Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi said on Monday the 28th GCC information ministers’ meeting was held amid accelerated international variables and important regional developments that necessitate further coordination, integration and cooperation among GCC media.

Chairing the meeting, Al-Mutairi conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to the conferees.



KUNA photo
A group photo of the GCC officials who took part in the meeting. Inset : (Left) , Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi and Jassem Al-Budaiwi (right).

Media has become an effective factor in formulating paths and public opinions, and defending “our Gulf identity, security and stability”, he said.

Thus, developing joint Gulf media action is a top priority and a strategic necessity implied by the current challenges, topped with the accelerating digital transformation and knowledge spreading, he noted.

“We have achieved, thanks to Allah and then the GCC leaders, tangible steps in developing media cooperation mechanisms,” he noted.

He hoped that the meeting would be a new phase in boosting cooperation through backing common initiatives and projects, and unifying media messages as well increas-

ing joint training and cooperating in technical legislations. The minister reiterated the importance of the Gulf media’s role in raising awareness of societies and transferring truth in a manner that shows “our principled” stances and embodies solidarity values.

He expressed congratulation on the re-launch of common application of GCC news agencies, an advanced move toward bolstering joint Gulf media action.

Al-Mutairi expressed appreciation to Qatar represented in head of Qatar Media Corporation Sheikh Hamad bin Thamer Al-Thani to the outstanding presidency of the previous period that showed Qatar’s constant commitment to backing and boosting common efforts for

recovery in all fields.

He also thanked GCC General Secretariat, topped with General Secretary Jassem Al-Budaiwi, for outstanding efforts made in preparing and organizing this meeting, and the staff of the Information Ministry.

Meanwhile, GCC chief Al-Budaiwi expressed great thanks to His Highness the Amir, the current President of GCC Supreme Council, for Kuwait’s support to the joint Gulf action, and to the minister for hosting this gathering.

GCC states have a prestigious position on international and regional media map, thanks to the directives of GCC leaders who have paid much attention to Gulf media to be a tool and a bridge for communication, Al-Budaiwi pointed out.

Challenges

This comes in light of accelerated technical and media challenges in the world that require keeping pace with these developments through expanding the horizons of integration and cooperation among GCC media institutions, and building partnerships with international and regional media platforms, he stated.

The meeting was held, within the framework of the GCC leaders’ directives, to enhance the pivotal role of common Gulf media in highlighting the council’s achievements over four decades, he said.

Media challenges facing GCC States require closer collaboration and integration than ever, he said, referring to systematic media campaigns and false information that target the security of “our states, undermine their societies’ cohesion and seek to drive a wedge among our nations”.

Al-Budaiwi underlined the need of intensifying joint efforts to confront these hostile campaigns, and fake and offensive accounts that target Gulf unity, extolling the key and valuable endeavors of member states in supporting Gulf media initiatives and projects seeking to raise awareness, education, strengthen common Gulf identity, and highlight achievements.

He elaborated that the meeting’s agenda included many deep and key topics, including joint Gulf media themes and initiatives formulated and presented by GCC States’ media agencies committees.

Al-Budaiwi congratulated the GCC states on the re-launch of the new joint application of GCC States’ news agencies.



KUNA photo
Kuwaiti Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi receives Saudi Information Minister Salman Al-Dosari.



KUNA photo
Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi receives Chairman of Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) Sheikh Hamad bin Thamer Al-Thani.

Kuwait discusses ways to boost media cooperation with Saudi Arabia ,Qatar

KUWAIT CITY, May 13, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi and Saudi Information Minister Salman Al-Dosari on Monday discussed ways of promoting Kuwaiti-Saudi media co-operation.

The Saudi minister is in Kuwait to partake in the 28th meeting of the information ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member countries, held in Kuwait.

During the meeting, both sides also tackled how to consolidate the media partnership and share professional and technical experience in the traditional and digital

media in a way that contributes to buttressing the joint media message and bolstering its regional and international presence.

They, further, looked into mechanism of cooperation in the areas of media training and qualification and share of media delegations, as well as joint programs and workshops that contribute to upgrading the efficiency of national staff and developing media content.

The Minister of Information also received Chairman of Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) Sheikh Hamad bin Thamer Al-Thani upon his arrival in Kuwait to participate in the 28th GCC Ministers of Information Meeting.

Speaking to KUNA after the reception, Al-Mutairi said the meeting reflects the strong ties between GCC states.

He noted the prominent role and contributions of Qatari media and emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation to support a unified Gulf media voice.

Al-Mutairi affirmed the significance of such meetings in recognizing media as a pillar of development and cultural dialogue, stressing that joint efforts and the exchange of experiences among GCC media institutions can enhance content development and broaden its positive impact.

MoSA, CSC join hands to up output, cut expenses

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi has commended the fruitful cooperation with the Civil Service Commission (CSC), confirming the adoption of the new organizational structure of the ministry.

This step is in compliance with government directives on strengthening governance, rationalizing expenditures and improving institutional performance.

Al-Ajmi affirmed that the ministry is among the first government entities to proactively streamline its administrative structure; demonstrating its commitment to cost reduction, procedural simplification, and expedited administrative and technical operations; especially in the context of digital transformation and evolving national priorities.

He described the restructuring as a qualitative shift in the ministry's operational efficiency; such that the number of sectors was decreased from six to two: Social Welfare and Development Sector and the Financial, Administrative and Cooperative Affairs Sector; while the total number of departments went down from 35 to 25 by merging or eliminating 10 main departments -- Technical, Councils and Committees, Research and Statistics, Psychological Counseling, Legal Studies, Activities and Media, Membership Affairs, Citizen Service, Administrative Affairs, and Women and Childhood.

He revealed the new structure includes a director general position, with five directors overseeing administrative groups based on their specializations. He said only two assistant undersecretaries will remain, each managing one of the two main sectors.

He said these reforms were developed through a detailed study in cooperation with the CSC, ensuring alignment with best practices in effective governance.

He added the ministry has started implementing the new structure, redistributing responsibilities in preparation for the issuance of final regulatory decisions that are in line with the CSC regulations and suit the modern requirements of government work.

He disclosed that under the new framework, only two departments will report directly to the Office of the Minister and four will fall under the Office of the Undersecretary -- an approach designed to achieve greater administrative flexibility and accountability.

He affirmed that this comprehensive administrative transformation supports the government's vision for institutional rationalization and improved service delivery. He concluded that, as one of the country's largest service agencies, the ministry is committed to providing fast, efficient and high-quality services to a wide range of societal groups.

95% schools get smart meters

Move to help prevent energy waste

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: According to informed sources from the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, smart electricity meters have been installed in approximately 95 percent of Kuwait's schools and mosques.

They said the installation in the re-

maining facilities is expected to be completed soon.

The sources explained that the installation of these meters enables the ministry to better manage electricity consumption by controlling power cuts in schools after school hours and in mosques after each prayer, helping to prevent unnecessary energy waste.

Meanwhile, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Adel Al-Zamel participated in the first session of the Kuwait Sustainable Energy Conference, titled "High-Level Di-

alogue on Regional Policies: Collaborative Pathways for Renewable Energy Solutions and Gateways for Hydrogen Trade."

The session highlighted Kuwait's national priorities in developing renewable energy sources and exploring hydrogen applications. Discussions also covered the ministry's agreement signed with the government of the People's Republic of China, represented by the Chinese company SPIC, to develop the Shagaya and Abdali Renewable Energy Projects, which aim to generate more than 3,000 megawatts of power.

Al-Zamel explained that the targeted pro-

duction capacity is expected to reach 4,800 megawatts by 2029 through the integration of various renewable energy systems.

He emphasized that the energy transition must be in line with the goals of prosperity and economic development in the region, without compromising the legitimate interests of its countries.

Al-Zamel highlighted the development of green and blue hydrogen industries as one of the most promising opportunities for maximizing the use of available renewable energy resources in the region, along with its hydrocarbon wealth.

MAY

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BHD 57.173	BHD 128.000/-net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
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NOW	NOW
BHD 65.000/-net	BHD 145.000/-net

Promo period from 1st May to 31st May 2025 Terms & conditions apply*



KUNA photo

KCCI team meets the delegation from Maldives.

Significant increase in Kuwait exports to the Maldives: KCCI

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) received a delegation from the Republic of Maldives, led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Abdulla Khalil on Tuesday, May 13 in the presence of several Kuwaiti business owners.

According to a press release issued by KCCI, the meeting began with KCCI expressing its appreciation for the delegation's visit, as it underscores the growing ties between Kuwait and the Maldives, founded on friendship, mutual respect, and shared aspirations for economic and cultural cooperation.

It explained that the trade relations between the two countries have significantly strengthened over the past decade, with a notable increase in

Kuwaiti exports to the Maldives. The partnership between the two countries is further strengthened by their distinct strengths, particularly the excellence of Maldivian companies in the tourism and maritime industries, which attract the interest of Kuwaiti investors. At the same time, Kuwaiti companies excel in sectors such as finance, logistics, healthcare, and energy, providing a solid foundation for productive cooperation and investment.

Meanwhile, Maldives Foreign Minister Dr. Abdulla Khalil outlined the most prominent investment opportunities available in his country, mainly in sectors such as tourism, investment, alternative energy, logistics, ports, housing cities, agriculture, and fisheries.

News in Brief

Restrictions on charities

India woos Kuwaitis for higher studies

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Adarsh Swaika confirmed that India and Kuwait are keen on strengthening cooperation in the field of higher education in order to ease procedures for Kuwaitis who intend to study in Indian universities, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Speaking to the daily by telephone after his meeting with Minister of Education Dr. Adel Al-Tabtabaei, Swaika revealed "we discussed various avenues to deepen bilateral collaboration in the education sector."

He said the meeting also touched on the development of educational partnerships between the two countries; including a review of the Indian school network in Kuwait, which currently consists of 26 schools serving more 60,000 students.

He affirmed that both sides underscored the importance of continued cooperation to serve mutual interests in education and cultural exchange. He added "we are working together to include Indian universities on Kuwait's National Bureau for Academic Accreditation and Education Quality Assurance (NBAQ) list, which will pave the way for Kuwaiti students to enroll in Indian institutions. It will also allow Kuwaiti universities to recruit qualified professors from India."

In a related development, Swaika

disclosed that following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a Hindi language seat at a private university in Kuwait, a professor from New Delhi specializing in Hindi is expected to join the faculty by September; marking the official start of teaching Hindi language.

Restrictions on charities: A total of 84 charitable societies, with branches throughout the country, have signed new rent contracts for their branches in commercial buildings, reports Al-Jarida daily.

These charities informed the Charitable Societies and Endowments Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs about the new addresses of their branches after receiving eviction notices as per Ministerial Resolution No. 206/2009, which prohibits the use of buildings located in private residential and model housing areas for any purpose other than private housing.

This happened after the ministry instructed the Kuwait Municipality to strictly enforce the aforementioned ministerial resolution.

Sources pointed out that expanding branches is now a thing of the past for charities due to rising rents in commercial buildings.

Other Voices

Kuwait and India can achieve more together

By Nasser Al-Hajeri

India and Kuwait share a long-standing relationship rooted in historical trade links, cultural affinities, and the presence of a substantial Indian expatriate community in Kuwait. Over the years, this bond has grown stronger through economic co-operation, people-to-people ties, and diplomatic engagements. The recent visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Kuwait in December 2024 marked a significant milestone, setting the stage for a deeper and more strategic partnership between the two nations.



Al-Hajeri

Prime Minister Modi's visit to Kuwait was historic, as it was the first by an Indian Prime Minister in 43 years. During the visit, both countries agreed to upgrade their relationship to a 'Strategic Partnership,' a move that reflects their mutual commitment to expanding cooperation across various sectors. This decision paves the way for enhanced collaboration in defense, trade, investment, energy, and cultural exchanges. A major outcome of the visit was the establishment of the Joint Commission on Cooperation (JCC), which will be co-chaired by the Foreign Ministers of both countries. This institutional mechanism is designed to monitor and strengthen the overall bilateral relationship, ensuring regular high-level dialogue and cooperation.

Defence cooperation has emerged as a key pillar of India-Kuwait relations. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Defence Cooperation was signed, providing a framework for joint military exercises, training of defense personnel, coastal security collaboration, and the development of defense technologies. This agreement underscores the shared commitment to regional stability and maritime security in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean regions.

Trade and investment remain a cornerstone of the bilateral relationship. In the fiscal year 2023-24, bilateral trade between India and Kuwait reached \$10.47 billion, with Indian exports witnessing a 34.7% increase from the previous year. Kuwait continues to be a key energy partner for India, supplying crude oil and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), fulfilling approximately 3% of India's total energy requirements. The strong presence of the Indian diaspora in Kuwait, which exceeds one million, has played a crucial role in fostering India-Kuwait relations. During his visit, Prime Minister Modi addressed the Indian community at the 'Hala Modi' event, acknowledging their contributions to Kuwait's economic and social development.

To further strengthen cultural ties, both countries signed a Cultural Exchange Programme (2025-2029) and an Executive Programme on Sports Cooperation (2025-2028). These initiatives aim to enhance cultural understanding and promote sports collaborations between the two nations. The elevation of the India-Kuwait relationship to a Strategic Partnership is a promising development, yet there remains significant potential for further collaboration. Building on existing ties, both nations can explore new avenues in technological innovation, education, renewable energy, and cultural exchange. Strengthening cooperation in these areas will not only bolster economic growth but also foster deeper societal connections, paving the way for a more interconnected and prosperous future.

Additionally, increased collaboration in healthcare, agriculture, and digital transformation could address shared challenges while creating opportunities for innovation and sustainable development. Moving forward, it is essential for both countries to continue building a resilient partnership that adapts to global changes and benefits both societies for generations to come.

Over 1,800 Kuwaiti firms flourish in UAE

KUWAIT CITY, May 13, (KUNA): President of the Kuwaiti Business Council in Dubai and Northern Emirates Feras Al-Salem said that the council supported more than 1,800 Kuwaiti companies registered in the UAE.

The Kuwaiti Business Council advocates boosting presence of the Kuwaiti companies and business people

in the UAE through facilities and guidance, said Al-Salem in an interview with Kuwait News Agency (KUNA). He has affirmed that the council tackles hindrances and challenges facing the Kuwaiti entrepreneurs, coordinates with the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Dubai, the UAE Ministry of Economy and other government departments. Elaborating, Al-Salem has revealed that value of the Kuwaiti businesses in the UAE amounts to USD 55 billion; mostly in real-estate, financial markets and other sectors. The UAE hosts more than 44,000 Kuwaiti investors in the

financial markets and 22,000 in the realty sector, Al-Salem told KUNA. Moreover, there are non-estimated Kuwaiti stakes in the UAE commercial companies. On incentives luring the Kuwaiti entrepreneurs, he mentioned "a good legislative environment," early government response to emerging economic challenges and a diverse local economy. There are 750 Kuwaiti companies registered in the Dubai Chamber, 250 at the Investment Administration in Sharjah and others in the free trade zones, in addition to a number of

firms operating in Ajman, Ras Al-Khaimah and Abu Dhabi. The UAE is the number one trade partner and the second one at the global level to the State of Kuwait, with the trade exchanges estimated at USD 13.5 billion, Al-Salem said, predicting sustainable growth of the commercial exchanges between Kuwait and the UAE. Furthermore, the chairperson of the Kuwaiti Business Council has indicated that Kuwait-UAE agreements partly support the council, aim at averting double taxation and ensure that custom tariffs on the two countries traded products remain stable.

Continued from Page 1

President Trump:

Furthermore, certain Arab states imitated the nationalization movement prevalent in socialist bloc countries, without realizing that this action would precipitate a significant conflict that they were ill-equipped to endure. President Jamal Abdul-Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956 proved insufficient, leading to a tripartite invasion of Egypt by the United Kingdom, France and Israel. The intervention faltered due to the Soviet Union's lack of support. Subsequently, US President Dwight D. Eisenhower, acting on the advice of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, leveraged the crisis to reinforce American influence in the Middle East and counteract Soviet ambitions. Consequently, President Eisenhower mandated an immediate cessation of hostilities, threatening US intervention. This ultimatum averted Egypt's potential collapse and precipitated the resignations of British Prime Minister Anthony Eden and French President Guy Mollet. American power became undoubtedly evident, leading Israel to recognize the centrality of Washington's influence, coinciding with the latter's utilization of Jewish financial resources and political leverage in various sectors; including the media, finance, economics and political establishments. Conversely, the Arab nations did not fully utilize their potential to impact the decisions of major powers -- notably the United States -- whose objective since 1953 has been to transform the Middle East, particularly the Arab region, into an industrial and service base while securing consistent oil exports. Prior to 1967, specifically before what is referred to as the 'setback', there existed a potential for Arab nations to engage in negotiations and achieve favorable outcomes had they heeded the advice of Habib Bourguiba. However, Abdul-Nasser instead propagated the aggressive slogan, "Throw the Jews into the sea," and the ensuing Six-Day War decisively dispelled these impractical aspirations. At the same time, the Soviet Union passively observed, anticipating a strategic advantage through the Arab states' dependence on their armaments and support, akin to the pursuit of an illusory expectation. Your Excellency, the US President, successive initiatives aimed at establishing peace with Israel -- including the Rogers Plan of 1970, the King Fahad Peace Plan presented at the Fez Arab Summit, and the King Abdullah Plan proposed at the Beirut Summit -- have consistently been met with rejection by Israel. The rejection is predicated on Israel's assessment that Arab states lack significant concessions and its adherence to the Levi Eshkol Doctrine, which states: "Every 10 years we will be forced to fight so that the Arabs will give up the land they claim and demand new lands that we will occupy." This doctrine has consistently guided Israeli administrations. Concurrently, Arab actors, particularly leaders of radical organizations and movements rooted in communist and nationalist ideologies, as well as more militant factions, persistently maintained the rhetoric of "throw the Jews into the sea." However, their objectives remained unrealized, failing to impede Israel's territorial expansion. Nonetheless, the October 7 events significantly worsened the situation, effectively dispelling the remaining optimism generated by the 'Abraham Accords' and the two-state solution. Divergent perspectives among Arab nations persisted, with 21 distinct viewpoints, each driven by unique motivations and interests. Therefore, a

unified position has remained elusive since 1948, and the collective power has not been leveraged for common goals, instead it is being utilized in internal conflicts. Mr. President, during your first visit to the region, specifically to Riyadh, you concluded important political and investment deals and established the principle of a two-state solution through Washington's sponsorship of the 'Abraham Accords'. As for investment contracts, the total amounted to \$460 billion and only \$13 billion of which was implemented for weapons. This was because the Biden administration worked to obstruct the development of relations between the GCC and the United States, and disrupted these investments. This contributed to the tension between Washington and the Gulf capitals. Today, Your Excellency is currently in the capital of Arab decision-making. During engagements with regional leaders, numerous observations will be on point. Decisions of profound consequence are imperative to uphold the Palestinian cause and preclude its commodification. Moreover, measures must be taken to restrain Tel Aviv, whose military actions you in the recent past characterized as "savage," and to advance the 1953 project. As Your Excellency's statements clearly indicate, you seek peace in the world and a Middle East free of crises. Thus, hopes are pinned on the outcomes of the summits and on Your Excellency's expression of your desire for "zero problems" in the region.

180 lives

He added KFF also launched awareness campaigns targeting various segments of society to prevent fire incidents. He disclosed that KFF typically receives reports on fire incidents in homes, vehicles, warehouses, farms and pile of waste; as well as people trapped in elevators or vehicles due to high temperatures. He stressed that KFF works hard in order to respond quickly to such reports, indicating that the response time ranges between four to eight minutes. He affirmed this range is within global averages. Following is an excerpt of the interview: **Question:** What are the latest preparations of KFF for the summer season? **Answer:** Preparations are comprehensive; including increasing the readiness level at all centers, maintaining and upgrading equipment and machinery, and intensifying training programs for firefighters. We have also launched awareness campaigns targeting various segments of society to prevent fire incidents. **Q:** What are the most common causes of fire during summer? **A:** The most common causes of fire during the summer include high temperatures, misuse of electrical appliances, unsafe storage of flammable materials, negligence in industrial facilities, dry grass and waste. **Q:** Are there locations where fires are more prevalent, such as Naeem Scrapyard and others? **A:** Yes, some locations have higher fire incidence rates like Naeem Scrapyard and some industrial areas and warehouses due to the nature of their activities and the accumulation of flammable materials. **Q:** What are the usual reports that KFF receives during summer? **A:** Reports vary from house, vehicle, warehouse, farm and waste fire incidents. We also receive reports about people trapped in elevators or vehicles due to high temperatures. **Q:** How long does it take to respond to such reports? **A:** Our response time ranges from four to eight minutes in urban areas,

which is within global averages. We are constantly working to develop this aspect in order to increase efficiency and expedite arrival time. **Q:** Has there been a decrease in the number of fire incidents in the first quarter of this year compared to last year? **A:** The number of fire incidents in the first quarter of this year is almost the same as that of last year. We have intensified the public awareness campaigns and preventive monitoring to reduce the accident rate this year. **Q:** Tell us about the fire statistics, as well as reports dealt with in 2024 and the first quarter of this year. **A:** In 2024, we handled 16,144 reports -- fire incidents, rescue operations and humanitarian missions. In the first quarter of this year, the number of reports reached 3,398 -- a large percentage of which are on home and vehicle fire incidents. **Q:** How prepared are the fire stations in dealing with such reports and how long is their response time? **A:** All fire stations are fully equipped and ready to handle any report. This readiness includes personnel, modern equipment and technology; in addition to operations units that monitor reports in real-time. **Q:** Is it true that filling a car's fuel tank to full capacity in the intense summer heat exposes it to fire? **A:** This is a misconception. Completely filling the fuel tank does not cause fire, but it is important to ensure the tank cap is tightly closed and to refrain from smoking or using flame near gas stations. **Q:** Do perfumes and power banks cause car fire in high temperatures? **A:** Yes, leaving perfumes or portable phone batteries (power banks) in the car under direct sunlight may cause them to explode or catch fire. Therefore, we advise against leaving them inside the vehicle, especially during summer. **Q:** Will there be new vehicles soon? **A:** Yes, a number of new firefighting and rescue vehicles will be operational soon. They are equipped with modern technologies to enhance efficiency. **Q:** Is there a plan to open new fire stations? **A:** Several new fire stations will soon open in various areas like Jaber Bridge and Al-Qairawan, with the aim of covering urban expansion and expediting response times. **Q:** How many deaths were caused by accidents -- fire or traffic accidents? **A:** In 2024 and the first quarter of this year, we recorded 180 deaths due to fire and traffic accidents; while in the first quarter of this year, 44 cases were recorded. We are working hard to reduce these numbers through prevention and rapid intervention. **Q:** What is your awareness message to citizens and expatriates now that summer is approaching? **A:** We would like to emphasize the importance of everyone adhering to safety and fire prevention measures in order to protect lives and properties. The use of certain electrical appliances usually increases in summer; hence, the need for all of us to be careful and to strictly follow preventive guidelines. Important tips include avoiding leaving flammable materials such as gas cylinders or perfumes in vehicles exposed to direct sunlight, not overloading electrical connections, ensuring their serviceability and safety on a regular basis, maintaining air conditioning units and kitchen vents, and supervising children and preventing them from playing with matches or other sources of fire. If you are traveling during the summer vacation, it is necessary to ensure that all electrical and gas appliances are turned off before leaving your home. Do not make fire in desert areas or beaches except in designated areas, and ensure that the fire is completely extinguished after use. It is also necessary to put a fire extinguisher in your vehicle and at the temporary accommodation.

US, Kuwait

ensure everyone has access to safe and sufficient food, and to fortify the nutrition system as a fundamental pillar for achieving sustainable development at the local and international levels. He said the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) conducts periodic inspection and monitoring campaigns in various governorates in order to instill the culture of prevention and ensuring compliance with the highest safety standards. He stressed that human health and dignity occupy a central position in national and international policies, in line with the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; particularly with regard to eliminating hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. He added the relevant statistics confirm the urgent need to develop food safety systems locally and internationally, as well as to intensify awareness campaigns, particularly to protect children, as they are most vulnerable to diseases resulting from contaminated food. He also pointed out that investing in human resources and training personnel specialized in food inspection and laboratory analysis are considered an invaluable and strategic investment in achieving sustainable food security. Meanwhile, US Ambassador to Kuwait Karen Sasahara confirmed the strength of the economic and trade relationship between the United States of America and Kuwait. She revealed that bilateral trade in agricultural products reached \$275 million last year, while trade with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries reached \$3.6 billion. She said "the US Embassy is working closely with government agencies and farmers in Kuwait to discuss food security challenges and how American technologies can provide effective solutions." She explained that agriculture and food are not limited to being industries, but rather represent tools for communication and integration between peoples and engines of shared economic growth. She believes the summit is an opportunity to exchange best practices and enhance a shared understanding of food security, food safety and nutrition issues. She stated that "for the first time, we are adding food security to the summit agenda; because an effective food safety policy is the foundation of food security, given its role in protecting public health and ensuring the stability and sustainability of food supplies." She also pointed out that challenges such as obesity, diabetes and chronic diseases persist in Kuwait and the Gulf region; similar to those the United States is currently facing. Furthermore, Chairperson and Director General of PAFN Dr. Reem Al-Fulaij disclosed that the fourth edition of the summit is important not only because of the discussion on food safety, but also the inclusion of food security, especially in light of the challenges that food supply chains are facing now and the spread of food-borne diseases. She added the summit is a good opportunity to learn from different experiences; thereby, enhancing countries' ability to address risks when implementing food security policies.

Kuwait reprises

the interests of patients and reducing healthcare costs, without compromising the quality or efficacy of therapeutic interventions. The approved list consists of a diverse range of pharmaceutical cat-

egories including, but not limited to medications for oncological conditions (such as leukemia); glycemic management; hypertension; hyperlipidemia; anticoagulation; depression; epilepsy; infections of bacterial, fungal and viral origin; respiratory disorders; osteoporosis; thyroid dysfunction; dermatological applications; neurodegenerative diseases; obesity and migraine. This decision is integral to the ministry's broader strategy to optimize pharmaceutical pricing; hence, enhancing economic efficiency within the sector and promoting equity in healthcare expenditures. Earlier, the minister approved the price list for 146 medications, pharmaceutical products and nutritional supplements in March. Furthermore, Ministerial Resolution No. 92/2025, issued last week, mandated a 30 percent reduction in the price of Tirzepatide injections for diabetes and weight management. These initiatives follow previous price reductions for over 200 pharmaceutical products in July 2024 and the approval of pricing for 228 medications and pharmaceutical products in May of the same year. Through these measures, the Ministry of Health reaffirms its unwavering dedication to ensuring equitable access to medications, alleviating financial strain on patients, and fortifying the comprehensive and sustainable healthcare system in the country.

Trump, Saudi

Trump and Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman also took part in a formal greeting and lunch at the Royal Court at Al Yamamah Palace, gathering with guests and aides in an ornate room with blue and gold accents and massive crystal chandeliers. As he greeted business titans with Trump by his side, Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman was animated and smiling as he rubbed elbows with high-profile business executives -- including Blackstone Group CEO Stephen Schwarzman, BlackRock CEO Larry Fink and Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk - in front of the cameras. Later, the crown prince will fete Trump with an intimate state dinner at Ad-Diriayah, a UNESCO heritage site that is the birthplace of the first Saudi state and the site of a major development project championed by the crown prince. Saudi Arabia and fellow OPEC+ nations have already helped their cause with Trump early in his second term by stepping up oil production. Trump sees cheap energy as a key component to lowering costs and stemming inflation for Americans. The Republican president has also made the case that lower oil prices will hasten an end to the Russia-Ukraine war. But Saudi Arabia's economy remains heavily dependent on oil, and the kingdom needs a fiscal break-even oil price of \$96 to \$98 a barrel to balance its budget. It's questionable how long OPEC+, of which Saudi Arabia is the leading member, is willing to keep production elevated. The price of a barrel of Brent crude closed Monday at \$64.77.

Trump picked the kingdom for his first stop, because it has pledged to make big investments in the U.S., but he ended up traveling to Italy last month for Pope Francis' funeral. Riyadh was the first overseas stop of his first term. The three countries on Trump's itinerary - Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates - are places where the Trump Organization, run by Trump's two oldest sons, is developing major real estate projects. They include a high-rise tower in Jeddah, a luxury hotel in Dubai and a golf course

and villa complex in Qatar. Trump is trying to demonstrate that his transactional strategy for international politics is paying dividends as he faces criticism from Democrats who say his global tariff war and approach to Russia's war on Ukraine are isolating the U.S. from allies. He's expected to announce deals with the three wealthy countries that will touch on artificial intelligence, expanding energy cooperation and perhaps new arms sales to Saudi Arabia. The administration this month announced initial approval to sell \$3.5 billion worth of air-to-air missiles for Saudi Arabia's fighter jets. But Trump arrived in the Middle East when his top regional allies, Israel and Saudi Arabia, are far from neatly aligned with his approach. Before the trip, Trump announced Washington was halting a nearly two-month U.S. airstrike campaign against Yemen's Houthis, saying the Iran-backed rebels have pledged to stop attacking ships along a vital global trade route. The administration didn't notify Israel - which the Houthis continue to target - of the agreement before Trump publicly announced it. It was the latest example of Trump leaving the Israelis in the dark about his administration's negotiations with common adversaries. In March, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wasn't notified by the administration until after talks began with Hamas about the war in Gaza. And Netanyahu found out about the ongoing U.S. nuclear talks with Iran only when Trump announced them during an Oval Office visit by the Israeli leader last month. "Israel will defend itself by itself," Netanyahu said last week following Trump's Houthi truce announcement. "If others join us - our American friends - all the better." William Wechsler, senior director of the Rafik Hariri Center and Middle East Programs at the Atlantic Council, said Trump's decision to skip Israel on his first Middle East visit is remarkable. "The main message coming out of this, at least as the itinerary stands today, is that the governments of the Gulf ... are in fact stronger friends to President Trump than the current government of Israel at this moment," Wechsler said. Trump, meanwhile, hopes to restart his first-term effort to normalize relations between the Middle East's major powers, Israel and Saudi Arabia. Trump's Abraham Accords effort led to Sudan, the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco agreeing to normalize relations with Israel. But Riyadh has made clear that in exchange for normalization it wants U.S. security guarantees, assistance with the kingdom's nuclear program and progress on a pathway to Palestinian statehood. There seems to be scant hope for making headway on a Palestinian state with the Israel-Hamas war raging and the Israelis threatening to flatten and occupy Gaza. Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman last week notably hosted Palestinian Vice President Hussein al-Sheikh in Jeddah on the official's first foreign visit since assuming office in April.

Amir hosts

Also attending were the Head of the Prime Minister's Diwan Abdulaziz Al-Dekheel, the adviser at the diwan Sheikh Dr. Bassel Humoud Hamad Al-Sabah, Director of the Crown Prince Diwan (retired Lieut. Gen.) Jamal Al-Thiab, Foreign Affairs Undersecretary at the Crown Prince Diwan Mazen Issa Al-Issa and Assistant Foreign Minister for Asia Affairs Ambassador Samih Johar Hayat.



Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism Ahmed Al-Jarallah participating in the forum.



Yousef Al Jassem, Ali Al-Elyani, Ahmed Al-Jarallah and Dr Ali Al-Rumaihi.

Al-Jarallah participates in 20th Arab Media Forum

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah participated in the 20th edition of the Arab Media Forum held in Kuwait under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah and in the presence of Minister of Information, Culture, and State Minister of

Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi. Al-Jarallah’s participation received an outstanding response, where he met with several prominent Kuwaiti and Arab media figures. The camera captured moments of meetings and friendly conversations between Al-Jarallah and guests on the sidelines of the forum.



Health Minister Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, colleague Saud Al Farhan and Major General Eng. Faisal Al Jazzaf.



Ahmed Al-Jarallah talking to Dr Ali Al-Rumaihi.



Yousef Al-Jassem, Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Madhi Al Khamees and media figure Ahmed Al-Muslimani.



Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Ahmed Al Muslimani and colleague Muhammad Al Hamadi.



Major General Eng. Faisal Al-Jazzaf, Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Saud Al Farhan and Muhammad Al Farhan.



Dr. Nadin Al Fahd, Ahmed Al-Jarallah and Hamada Al Amir.



Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Dr Jamal Al-Suwaidi, colleague Adwan Al Ahmari and colleague Sami Al-Nisf.



Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism Ahmed Al Jarallah shaking hands with Attorney Noura Al Shuaibi.



Ambassador of United Arab Emirates Dr Matar Al-Neyadi, Saud Al Farhan and Ahmed Al-Jarallah.



Editor-in-Chief Ahmed Al-Jarallah and Shaima'a Al Tamimi.



Dr. Durriya Sharaf Al-Deen and Ahmed Al-Jarallah.

Detained Philippines ex-prez Duterte wins mayoral race in home city

MANILA, Philippines, May 13, (AP): Former Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte was elected as mayor in his home city by a landslide, official results showed Tuesday, despite his detention by the International Criminal Court.

The Davao election board proclaimed Duterte won the race for Davao mayor, with the official tally showing that he garnered over 660,000 votes, or eight times as many as his closest rival. Elated supporters chanted “Duterte, Duterte” when the result was announced.

His youngest son, Sebastian, the incumbent mayor of Davao, was declared Davao vice mayor. His eldest son, Paolo, was reelected as a member of the House of Representatives, and two grandsons won in local races, an indication of the family’s continued influence.



Former Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte is seen on a screen in the courtroom of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, Netherlands, March 14. (AP)

“Duterte landslide in Davao!” his youngest daughter Veronica posted on Facebook

Partial unofficial results showed at least five candidates backed by the Duterte family were also among those leading the race for 12 Senate positions, in a stronger-than-expected showing in Monday’s midterm elections. Pre-election surveys had indicated only two of them would

emerge victorious.

Also:

MANILA, Philippines: A restive volcano in central Philippines briefly erupted Tuesday, spewing a 4.5-kilometer (2.8-mile) ash plume and debris into the sky as its rumblings were heard nearby.

The Philippine Institute of Volca-

nology and Seismology said a moderately explosive eruption occurred at the summit crater of Kanlaon Volcano before dawn, lasting five minutes based on seismic and infrasound data.

“The eruption generated a greyish voluminous plume that rose approximately 4.5 kilometers above the vent before drifting to the southwest,” the institute’s bulletin added.

Bangladesh interim govt strips ex-ruling party of registration, barring it from polls

DHAKA, Bangladesh, May 13, (AP): Bangladesh’s Election Commission has cancelled the registration of the former ruling party of ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, preventing it from participating in the next national election, which is expected to be held by June next year.

The decision on Monday came hours after the country’s interim government headed by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus issued an official notification banning the Awami League party and its affiliated bodies from conducting activities online and elsewhere.

Monday’s formal notification from the Ministry of Home Affairs was issued two days after the interim Cabinet decided to ban all activities of the party under the country’s Anti-Terrorism Act until a special tribunal concludes a trial for the party and its leaders.

In the notification, the government said it outlawed all activities “including any kind of publication, media, online and social media” as well as “any kind of campaign, procession, meeting, gathering (or) conference until the trial of the leaders and activists ... is completed.”

It said the decision was effective immediately.

Separately, the Election Commission said Monday it would not allow



Protesters, some who were injured in protests against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina last year, demand a ban on her Awami League party, in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on May 11. (AP)

the Hasina-led party to contest the next election. Political parties must be registered with the Election Commission to take part in elections.

A government adviser said Monday that anyone who posts comments online in support of the Awami League party would face arrest.

On Sunday, the Awami League accused the interim government of “stoking division” and trampling on “demo-

cratic norms” by banning its activities.

“It’s very hard to fit a 2,000-year-old institution into the politics of 2025 America,” he said during an interview with conservative commentator Hugh Hewitt, adding that “it’s better for all of us if we allow the church to be about the saving of souls.”

“What both Francis and then Cardinal Prevost were doing was being bishops - teaching the Gospel, and reminding us the Gospel always is on the side of the poor, the afflicted, the suffering,” Millies said in an email. “That’s not Trump’s lane as a president, a reality TV star or a businessman.”

Leo’s decades in Peru - he is a citizen of both countries - can give him a broader view of humanity and power, and religion and politics, scholars say.

Beyond the obvious personality differences with Trump, Leo is expected to wield power differently - to the neediest people first, for example, whereas Trump cut off American aid. Leo did not mention his American roots during his first speech, nor did he speak in English - a sign, some Vatican watchers said, of his global priorities.

‘They lead in different roles and realms’

US President Trump and Pope Leo now Earth’s most powerful Americans

WASHINGTON, May 13, (AP): The motto of one newly elected American world leader: “Fight!” The other introduced himself to the world with his first public word as pope: “Peace.”

The contrast between US President Donald Trump and Chicago-born Pope Leo XIV couldn’t be more stark - politically, personally or in their world views. They lead in different roles and realms.

But Leo’s historic election last week to lead the world’s 1.4 billion Catholics as the first US-born pope means that the two most powerful people on the planet are Americans. That raises questions about American influence at a time when Trump’s tariff wars and “one way or the other” threats have upended eight decades of global order and sparked distrust among allies toward the United States.

The prospect of too much American power in geopolitics is widely considered one reason that the Catholic Church had not elected an American to the papacy across the country’s nearly 250-year history. Until, that is, the former Cardinal Robert F. Prevost of Chicago - Pope Leo XIV - was chosen last week to be the 267th pontiff.

“The irony of Leo’s election is that many in the rest of the world will view it as a sign of hope - as an American who can speak for them rather than act against them,” said David Gibson, director of Fordham University’s Center on Religion and Culture.

The shock and delight of the not-well-known cardinal’s election soon shifted into robust discussion about how the top of the global pecking order could be populated by two Americans.

Trump is known to not enjoy sharing attention or primacy, as his “America first” foreign policy approach makes clear. American Catholics chose Trump over his Democratic rival, Kamala Harris.

In one apparent appeal to them, Trump posted an AI-generated image of himself dressed as a pope during the days of mourning for Pope Francis, who died April 21. The move was not appreciated by some Catholics and Italians. Trump denied posting the image himself and said anyone who was offended “can’t take a joke.” He insisted that “the Catholics loved it.”

Even so, Trump wished Leo well and called it a “great honor” that the



This combination photos shows Pope Leo XIV at the central balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on May 11 (left), and US President Donald Trump during an event in the Roosevelt Room at the White House on May 12 in Washington. (AP)

new pope was American.

Pope Leo, meanwhile, is in some senses a politician as well, with a calm manner and the approach of talking to his fellow cardinals in small groups before the conclave, they said. Though

he was born in Chicago, Leo - then Prevost - spent two decades as a missionary in Peru before being appointed by Pope Francis in 2023 to lead the Vatican’s powerful office that vets bishops around the world.

He wouldn’t be the first pope to wade into world politics. Pope John Paul II, for example, is rightly credited with helping bring down communism. But Leo enters the papacy having already criticized Vice President JD Vance, the highest-profile Catholic in American politics, on social media.

Leo is at odds with the administration on such policy issues as immigration - Trump’s signature issue - and the environment.

Like Trump, Leo has turned his attention to the media. On Monday in Vatican City, he called for the release of imprisoned journalists and affirmed the calling for “all of us to safeguard the precious gift of free speech and of the press.” In contrast, Trump’s approach to journalists has been combative, from the White House to the courts.

Leo, speaking Italian to thousands gathered in St. Peter’s Square, described a different vision for the Church and human relations: “We have to be a church that works together to build bridges and to keep our arms open, like this very piazza, welcoming.”

Vance suggested the papacy is “big-

ger” than politics and social media.

“It’s very hard to fit a 2,000-year-old institution into the politics of 2025 America,” he said during an interview with conservative commentator Hugh Hewitt, adding that “it’s better for all of us if we allow the church to be about the saving of souls.”

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In this photo taken from video distributed by Russian Defense Ministry Press Service on May 12, Russian servicemen attend a combat training for assault units in an undisclosed location in Ukraine. (AP)

Zelenskyy will be waiting for Russia’s Putin in Ankara on Thursday for talks

KYIV, Ukraine, May 13, (AP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Tuesday that he will be waiting for Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in the Turkish capital this week to conduct face-to-face talks about the more than three-year war amid heavy pressure from the US and European leaders to reach a settlement.

Putin hasn’t yet said whether he will be at the talks, which US President Donald Trump has urged the two sides to attend as part of Washington’s efforts to stop the fighting.

Zelenskyy told reporters in Kyiv that he will be in Ankara on Thursday to conduct the negotiations. He will meet with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the two will wait for Putin to arrive, he said.

Zelenskyy said he would “do everything to agree on a ceasefire, because it is with (Putin) that I must negotiate a ceasefire, as only he can decide on it.”

Zelenskyy said that if Putin chooses Istanbul to hold the meeting, then both leaders will travel there from Ankara.

“If Putin does not arrive and plays games, it is the final point that he does not want to end the war,” Zelenskyy said.

The Ukrainian leader added that if Putin doesn’t show up, European and US leaders should follow through with threats of additional and heavy sanctions against Russia.

Trump has been invited to the talks, because “it would give an additional push for Putin to fly in,” but Trump hasn’t confirmed his presence, Zelen-



A pro-Russian rebel touches the MH17 wreckage at the crash site of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, near the village of Hrabove, eastern Ukraine, on July 22, 2014. (AP)

skyy said. The American president will still be on his four-day Middle East trip on Thursday.

Washington has been applying strong pressure on both sides to come to the table since Trump took office in January with a promise to end the war.

Military analysts say that both sides are preparing a spring-summer campaign on the battlefield, where a war of attrition has killed tens of thousands of soldiers on both sides along the roughly 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line. The Institute for the Study of War,

a Washington-based think tank, said Monday that Russia is “quickly replenishing front-line units with new recruits to maintain the battlefield initiative.”

International pressure has been growing to push Ukraine and Russia into finding a settlement.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz pressed again for an unconditional 30-day ceasefire as he met his Greek counterpart in Berlin on Tuesday.

Merz welcomed Zelenskyy’s readiness to travel personally to Istanbul, “but now it is really up to Putin to accept this offer of negotiations and agree to a ceasefire. The ball is exclusively in Russia.”

Overnight, Russia launched 10 Shahed and decoy drones at Ukraine, the Ukrainian air force said, in its smallest drone bombardment this year.

Also:

MELBOURNE, Australia: The Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization on Tuesday found Russia responsible for shooting down Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 over Ukraine with the loss of 298 lives more than a decade ago, in a ruling that raises the prospect of victims’ families being paid compensation.

A Dutch-led international investigation concluded in 2016 that the Amsterdam-to-Kuala Lumpur airliner was shot down on July 17, 2014, from Ukrainian territory held by separatist rebels using a Buk missile system delivered from Russia. Moscow denies any involvement in the MH17 tragedy.

United Nations chief pleads with nations to pay their share for peacekeeping

BERLIN, May 13, (AP): UN Secretary-General António Guterres told countries that the world body’s peacekeeping operation is “only as strong as member states’ commitment to it” as he pleaded with them Tuesday to pay their share.

The United Nations’ peacekeeping department currently leads 11 operations, in countries including Congo, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Lebanon, Cyprus and Kosovo. The budget for nine of those operations during the fiscal year that ends on June 30 totals \$5.6 billion, 8.2% lower than a year earlier. Each of the UN’s 193 member countries is legally obliged to pay its share toward peacekeeping.

Guterres argued that, with a budget “representing a tiny fraction of global military spending - around one half of one per cent - UN Peacekeeping remains one of the most effective and cost-effective tools to build international peace and security.”

“But it’s only as strong as member states’ commitment to it,” he added at the opening of a two-day, German-hosted conference of ministers to discuss the future of peacekeeping. “Unfortunately, peacekeeping operations



German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl, (left), Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres, (centre), and German Minister of Defense Boris Pistorius attend the opening of the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial 2025, in Berlin, Germany on May 13. (AP)

have been facing serious liquidity problems. It is absolutely essential that all member states respect their financial obligations, paying their contributions in full and on time.”

Guterres didn’t offer details of the problems, but acknowledged that

“these are tough times for the financing of our work across the board.”

More broadly, the UN has been scrambling to respond to funding cuts for aid operations from its biggest donor, the United States, under President Donald Trump’s administration.

Countries seek to bolster ties

Macron to travel to UK for state visit in July

LONDON, May 13, (AP): French President Emmanuel Macron will make a state visit to the United Kingdom in July, as the two countries seek to bolster ties to counter Russian aggression and the economic fallout from US President Donald Trump’s aggressive trade policy.

Macron and his wife, Brigitte, will stay at Windsor Castle for the visit, which will take place from July 8 to July 10, Buckingham Palace said Tuesday.

The dates mean that Macron will likely beat Trump to London. Charles in February invited Trump to make an unprecedented second state visit to Britain, but a date hasn’t yet been set.

Charles and Queen Camilla traveled to France in September 2023 in a visit that highlighted the historic ties between Britain and its closest European neighbor. The trip came after years of sometimes prickly relations strained by Britain’s exit from the European Union and disagreements over the growing number of migrants crossing the English Channel on small boats.



French President Emmanuel Macron, (center), speaks with Britain’s Prime Minister Keir Starmer during arrivals for a summit on Ukraine at the Elysee Palace in Paris, on March 27. (AP)

Speaking to French lawmakers in the Senate chamber in Paris on the second day of that visit, Charles said the alliance between Britain and France was more important than ever as he recalled how they

had worked together to defeat Nazi Germany.

Charles was a frequent visitor to France before becoming king, making 35 official visits to the country as heir to the throne.

Boursa Kuwait index rises 0.23%

KUWAIT CITY, May 13, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed trading on Tuesday with its general index climbing 18.28 points, or 0.23 percent, to settle at 8,083.04 points.

A total of 435.4 million shares changed hands in 21,760 transactions, generating a turnover of KD 105.7 million (approximately USD 323.4 million).

The Main Market Index edged up 9.35 points, or 0.13 percent, to close at 7,007 points, with 237.1 million shares traded through 10,924 deals valued at KD 36.9 million (USD 112.9 million).

Business

Addressing a global audience of financial pioneers, investors, and innovators

Mohammed Al-Othman participates in Dubai FinTech Summit 2025

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Mr. Mohammed Al-Othman, CEO, Consumer and Digital Banking at National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), took part in Dubai FinTech Summit 2025, held under the theme “FinTech for All.” The event brought together global leaders from the financial sector, alongside investors and innovators, to examine emerging trends, pressing challenges, and transformative opportunities shaping the future of financial technology.

The third edition of the Dubai FinTech Summit 2025, the region’s premier event for the fintech sector, was held over two days from May 12 to 13. Organized by Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), the summit explored key topics including digital banking, the growing role of artificial intelligence in finance, open banking, sustainable finance, and regulatory frameworks.

The summit drew the participation of leading financial institutions, fintech start-ups, investors, regulators, decision-makers, and technology providers – gathered to explore breakthrough innovations, forge strategic partnerships, and shape the future of fintech and the broader financial landscape.

Al-Othman took part in a panel discussion focused on the transformation of the banking sector and the next wave of innovation, where he highlighted NBK’s leadership in driving digital transformation. He emphasized the bank’s role in launching a wide range of innovative services that have redefined the future of banking in Kuwait and across the region.

Al-Othman highlighted NBK’s pioneering role in adopting the latest technologies to deliver exceptional digital services tailored to customer aspirations – often surpassing expectations. He noted that NBK’s name has become synonymous with innovation and leadership in the realm of digital banking products and services.

Sharing his vision for the future and the role of AI in banking, Al-Othman emphasized: “We adopt a proactive approach that ensures continuous innovation and responsiveness to the rapid changes in the digital landscape. As part of our forward-looking strategy, we are committed to enhancing the banking experience for our customers by leveraging the latest technologies, with a strong focus on data analytics and AI-driven solutions to deliver greater value.”

Al-Othman emphasized that NBK remains firmly committed to redefining the banking experience, leveraging its advanced technological infrastructure and cutting-edge digital innovations to deliver increasingly sophisticated, customer-focused solutions. This sustained commitment not only elevates customers’ journey and keeps pace with rising expectations but also cements the bank’s leadership in digital banking and sets new benchmarks for the future of the financial industry.

Furthermore, Al-Othman highlighted NBK’s strategic approach to navigating the rapid evolution of the fintech landscape, emphasizing that the bank



Al-Othman discusses NBK’s leadership in digital banking at Dubai Summit.



views these developments not as obstacles, but as valuable opportunities to strengthen its competitive edge and deliver greater value to its customers.

He explained that NBK’s strategic approach is rooted in a deep understanding of evolving market needs and a deliberate investment in emerging technologies that support the bank’s long-term objectives. This approach is anchored in upholding the highest standards of security and reliability, while consistently striving to maintain superior levels of customer satisfaction across all services and products.

Commenting on the dynamic between banks and fintech startups in Kuwait, Al-Othman stated: “The relationship between banks and fintech companies is more complementary than competitive.

Moreover, Al-Othman emphasized the remarkable success of Weyay, Kuwait’s first fully digital bank, stating: “Since its launch in 2021, Weyay Bank has set new benchmarks in the banking industry, securing a leadership position in the digital banking sector. This achievement is attributed to the innovative products and services it offers, along with a seamless, round-the-clock banking experience that caters to a wide range of age groups, particularly the youth.”

He noted that Weyay Bank stands as a prime example of the success of the bank’s vision and strategic direction. Since its inception, Weyay has delivered exceptional performance, surpassing the initial plans in both customer acquisition and balance sheet growth.

He emphasized that Weyay represents a quantum leap in the banking sector, leveraging cutting-edge technologies to deliver a seamless, user-friendly experience that has played a key role in expanding NBK’s customer base. He further underscored that this success is rooted in a corporate culture spanning

over seven decades – one that consistently aspires to excellence and accepts nothing but the best.

Al-Othman also praised the pivotal role played by the regulatory initiatives led by CBK in enabling banks to adopt and implement digital initiatives more effectively, highlighting their contribution to creating a supportive ecosystem for innovation and transformation.

“Young customers increasingly seek fast and user-friendly digital banking services. That’s why we continuously strive to stay ahead of technological trends, developing products that cater to the evolving needs of the rising digital generation. Most recently, we launched the “Jeel” card – an innovative solution tailored specifically for youth aged 8 to 14. The card combines simplicity with smart digital features, empowering young users while fostering a sense of financial responsibility and literacy through a personalized banking experience and the usage of their banking mobile application,” he added.

Al-Othman concluded his remarks with an eye on the future, forecasting that the upcoming regulatory developments – particularly in the areas of data analytics, AI, and cybersecurity – will be pivotal in driving the next wave of banking innovation. He emphasized that NBK is well-positioned to play a leading role in this new era, backed by its steadfast commitment to delivering secure, cutting-edge banking solutions that align with customer expectations and contribute to economic growth in Kuwait and across the region.

Al-Othman was recently named MENA Retail Banker of the Year for the fourth consecutive year by MEED magazine, as part of the 2025 Banking Excellence Awards.

- We have redefined banking in Kuwait through a portfolio of innovative services
- Our digital strategy is designed to boost operational efficiency while consistently exceeding customer expectations
- We maintain a forward-thinking approach in embracing emerging fintech trends to stay ahead of evolving customer needs
- AI and data analytics are shaping the next frontier of banking innovation
- We don’t see rapid technological change as a challenge—but as an opportunity to sharpen our competitive edge
- Weyay is a testament to our strategic vision, standing out for its stellar performance and ability to attract a new generation of customers
- We view fintech firms not as rivals, but as partners in driving innovation across the financial ecosystem
- We are committed to delivering cutting-edge digital experiences that resonate across all age groups and customer segments
- The Central Bank of Kuwait has fostered an innovation-friendly environment that accelerated the momentum of digital transformation
- Delivering on our vision requires a keen understanding of market dynamics and strategic investment in future-ready technologies
- We remain steadfast in our mission to redefine the future of banking and set new industry benchmarks

In collaboration with Jefferies Financial Group

Boursa Kuwait and KCC hold roadshow in London to boost investment interest

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: As part of their ongoing efforts to support the development of the Kuwaiti capital market and elevate its position within the international investment community, Boursa Kuwait and Kuwait Clearing Company (KCC) organized a roadshow in London from May 12 to 13, 2025 in collaboration with Jefferies Financial Group, a world-renowned global investment banking and capital markets institution.

The roadshow provided Boursa Kuwait and KCC with a unique opportunity to conduct focused one-on-one meetings with ten leading global investment management firms and advisory institutions. The delegation was led by Mr. Mohammad Saud Al-Osaimi, Chief Executive Officer of Boursa Kuwait, and Mr. Duaij R. Al-Saleh, Chief Executive Officer of Kuwait Clearing Company, who were joined by senior executives, including Boursa Kuwait Head of Markets Sector Noura AlAbdulka-reem and Mr. Abdulkarim A. Al-Yaqout, the Director of Strategy and Product Development at KCC.

During the roadshow, representatives highlighted recent developments in the Kuwaiti capital market, promoting its growing range of investment opportunities and presenting updates on key infrastructure and service enhancements, to global investors from several world-renowned financial institutions, including progress on the forthcoming Central Counterparty (CCP) framework, which is set to launch alongside exchange-traded funds (ETFs) as well as a platform for fixed-income instruments including bonds and sukuk. The roadshow also served as a valuable forum for direct engagement with some of the world’s leading financial institutions, enabling the delegation to exchange views, gather investor feedback on their experience in Kuwait and gain a deeper understanding of their expectations and requirements.

“Boursa Kuwait remains focused on strengthening its ties with the global investment community, showcasing the progress of the Kuwaiti capital market and its growing range of opportunities to global capital. Over the past few years, the company has worked to build an integrated investment ecosystem with a solid market infrastructure, intro-



Mohammad Al-Osaimi



Duaij R. Al-Saleh

duce investor-centric services and financial products tailored to international standards, while streamlining foreign investor onboarding to ensure a seamless and secure experience. This roadshow serves as a vital platform to promote the Kuwaiti capital market and foster deeper engagement with leading financial institutions, in line with Boursa Kuwait’s efforts to position Kuwait as a prominent investment destination in the region,” said Mr. Mohammad Saud Al-Osaimi, the Chief Executive Officer of Boursa Kuwait.

In collaboration with its partners in the Kuwaiti capital market apparatus, Boursa Kuwait is working on the launch of the Central Counterparty (CCP) framework, a foundational step in strengthening market infrastructure. Designed to enhance the efficiency, transparency and security of post-trade processes, the CCP serves as the counterparty to all transactions, ensuring safe and orderly settlements between buyers and sellers and will play a vital role in mitigating counterparty risk and aligning Kuwait’s market operations with global standards in clearing and settlement.

Commenting on the roadshow, KCC CEO Mr. Duaij R. Al-Saleh said, “Our participation in this roadshow alongside Boursa Kuwait reflects our shared commitment to advancing the Kuwaiti capital market, elevating its stature in the region and the world and strengthening engagement with international investors. It provided a valuable platform to en-

gage with world-renowned financial institutions to highlight our clearing and settlement infrastructure and share updates on strategic initiatives, such as the CCP framework, which will enhance post-trade efficiency, reduce counterparty risk and serve as the foundation for more advanced financial instruments and services.”

As part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen market infrastructure and enhance the appeal of the capital market to foreign investors, the Kuwaiti capital market apparatus has introduced a series of enhancements and regulatory reforms to its clearing and settlement systems over the past few years, aligning them with the standards and expectations of leading global financial institutions.

These enhancements include the acceleration of trading account openings for foreign clients, which are now completed within a single business day. Similarly, the process for transferring accounts between custodians has been redesigned to match this time frame, improving operational efficiency and execution speed, while the introduction of partial settlement rejection has given foreign investors greater flexibility in managing their investment obligations.

In addition, the omnibus account mechanism was introduced to further streamline order execution and reduce transaction volume, allowing institutional and foreign investors to execute trades through a single consolidated account, with shares allocated to individual beneficiaries

immediately after settlement.

Furthermore, a fully automated and upgraded version of the electronic general assembly meeting (eAGM) system has been launched. This system, which is mandatory for all listed companies, enables investors to participate and vote through multiple convenient digital channels.

Other key developments include an enhanced mechanism for foreign investor participation in initial public offerings (IPOs), aimed at boosting cross-border investment, as well as the introduction of a Securities Lending and Borrowing (SLB) framework which broadens the range of financial instruments available in the market and offers investors increased flexibility and strategic options.

Boursa Kuwait and the KCC play a pivotal role in the development of the Kuwaiti capital market and the diversification of the national economy and have remained steadfast in their dedication to establishing a transparent, efficient and advanced exchange platform, which has led to the creation of a liquid capital market. Boursa Kuwait and the KCC’s unwavering commitment to promoting the Kuwaiti capital market and its participants through a series of Roadshows and Corporate Days has also helped provide prospective institutional investors worldwide with profound insights into the market’s opportunities.

Since Boursa Kuwait took over operations of the Kuwaiti stock exchange, the Kuwaiti capital market has undergone an unprecedented development, thanks to the diligent efforts of the capital market apparatus. Their focus on empowering participants and raising standards has resulted in several key initiatives, including the diversification of products and services, establishing an appealing investment platform, expanding the issuer base, and adapting rules and regulations to meet market demands.

The apparatus has also significantly enhanced the market’s infrastructure and fostered an attractive investment environment, which resulted in the Kuwaiti capital market’s reclassification to an Emerging Market by three prominent global index providers, and solidified Kuwait’s position as a leading financial center in the region.

New board of directors elected

Aayan Real Estate achieves KD 2.9 mln net profit in 2024

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Aayan Real Estate held its ordinary general assembly for the fiscal year ending Dec 31, 2024; which led to the approval of a cash dividend distribution to shareholders -- five percent of the nominal value of the share, equivalent to five fils per share.

During the assembly, the Board of Directors for the next session was elected, the board’s report and financial statements were approved, and all the agenda items were approved, with an attendance rate of 71.78 percent.

In his speech, the Chairman of the company Ali Al-Khamis affirmed that Aayan Real Estate has maintained its positive performance despite the challenges that the real estate market is facing by relying on its conservative policies and a balanced distribution of its investments in line with its strategic vision. “This has been reflected in the strengthening of financial performance during the year,” he asserted.

Al-Khamis revealed that the company achieved total revenues of estimated at KD7 million for 2024, while the net profit increased to KD 2.9 million, equivalent to earnings of seven fils per share, compared to 2023. Total assets reached KD 98.3 million, compared to liabilities of KD 16.3 million, and shareholders’ equity increased to KD 61.8 million by the end of the year.

On the other hand, CEO Ibrahim Al-Awadhi attributed the company’s positive results to its commitment to implement the strategic plan laid down by the Board of Directors. He confirmed that the company maintained its revenue level for the second year in a row, while net profit grew compared to 2023, which included an exceptional profit resulting from the return of provisions recorded in 2018.

Al-Awadhi stated that “the growth in 2024 profits reflects an actual improvement in operational performance, supported by higher rental revenues and improved performance of associate companies.”

Regarding real estate assets, he said the company remains committed to enhancing the efficiency of its assets and achieving high occupancy rates for its properties in the markets in which it operates; including Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

He went on to say that the company closely monitors the performance of its subsidiaries and associate companies; indicating that Anan Real Estate Investment Company achieved a net profit of KD 1.28 million, while Aayan Real Estate’s share of the profits of Hajar Tower Real Estate Company amounted to about KD 1.4 million by the end of 2024.

In terms of property management, Aayan Real Estate Company continued to strengthen its presence in this sector by attracting new real estate portfolios and also extending the management contract for a portion of the properties of the Secretariat General of Endowments.

The company is one of the largest real estate managers in Kuwait, with a total of more than 365 properties valued at about \$1.65 billion.

The general assembly elected Tawazun Holding Company represented by Mansour Hamad Al-Mubarak, Abdullah Mohammad Al-Shatti, Ibrahim Adeeb Al-Awadhi, Aayan Leasing and Investment Company represented by Ahmed Mishari Al-Fares and Ali Abdullah Al-Khamis as board members.

This is in addition to Adel Saad Al-Duaij and Abdul Wahab Mohammad Al-Rashid who were elected as independent members.

KOC showcases achievements at OPES & Sustainability Week 2025

MUSCAT, May 13 (KUNA): Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) Chief Executive Officer for Planning and Innovation Mohammad Abduljalil on Tuesday affirmed the company’s keenness on partaking in regional and international conventions and activities to bring into prominence Kuwait’s achievements in the oil and gas sectors.

Abuljalil was speaking to KUNA during Oman Petroleum and Energy Show (OPES) and Oman Sustainability Week 2025, scheduled May 12-14.

The Kuwaiti delegation taking part in the events groups experts and engineers who are presenting exhibitions and task papers shedding light on the KOC experience, its latest innovations and achievements in the sectors of oil, gas, public health, safety, security, environment, special responsibility and sustainability.

He indicated that the company’s efforts for boosting digital transformation, overhauling operational efficiency, in addition to its deep concern for environmental sustainability as part of its responsibilities toward the coming generations in support for “neo Kuwait vision 2035.”

Leap toward youth empowerment and digital banking excellence

‘Aligning graduates with market needs’

Gulf Bank launches ‘red Ma Yerdak’ campaign

KFH participates in the GUST Summit and 26th Career Fair

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: As part of its long-term vision to empower future generations, Gulf Bank has unveiled its latest marketing campaign, “red Ma Yerdak”, a bold initiative dedicated to strengthening the Bank’s relationship with Kuwaiti youth aged 15 to 25. This campaign is more than a product promotion; it is a strategic expression of the Gulf Bank’s deep-rooted belief in the potential of young people and its responsibility to support their journey toward financial independence. The campaign introduces a comprehensive suite of modern banking services and exclusive benefits tailored specifically to this demographic, developed through extensive field research and a deep analysis of youth behaviors and needs.

The red account is more than a banking product. It is a smart, youth-centric financial platform developed hand-in-hand with young people. It captures their ambitions, fast-moving digital lifestyles, and unique preferences.

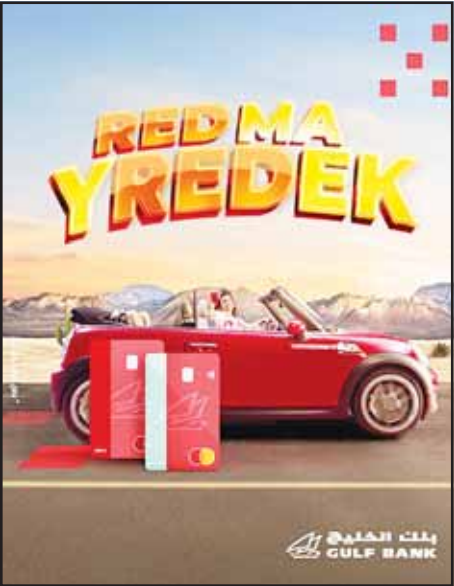
Banking That Listens, Learns, and Delivers

Gulf Bank’s approach is firmly grounded in a deep understanding of its customers’ financial needs. By conducting focus groups with university and college students, launching surveys, and analyzing data from current red cardholders, the Bank uncovered valuable insights that directly influenced the direction of its new campaign:

- Most of the youth segment value immediate, tangible rewards like cashback.
- Many students depend primarily on their student allowance and are looking for smarter ways to manage their finances.
- Daily spending among youth is largely focused on food delivery apps, cafés, cinemas, and telecom bills, all of which are now fully covered by the enhanced red program.
- The majority of Kuwaiti youth favor digital banking over visiting brick and mortar branches and seek fast, seamless, and simple banking experiences.

A Fully Digital Journey

To meet the growing demand for digital solutions, Gulf Bank has fully redesigned the red account and card application process to be entirely online. Students can now open a red account and apply for the prepaid red Plus card directly through the Gulf Bank app in just minutes. This seamless digital experience is a key part of the Bank’s ongoing digital transformation, aligned with its five-year strategic plan.



Advertisement in collaboration with the star Lulwa AlMulla and Daffy.

red Plus Prepaid Cashback Card: The Region’s First Cashback Card for Youth

The red Plus Prepaid Cachback Mastercard card is the region’s first prepaid cashback card designed specifically for youth. With a unique vertical design that reflects the modern aesthetic of today’s generation, the card offers the highest cashback rate in Kuwait.

red Plus Prepaid Cashback Card benefits include:

- 15% cashback (up to KD 300 annually) on cinema tickets, delivery apps, cafes, restaurants, and telecom bills, both locally and internationally.
- Free, international top-up through Gulf Bank’s payment portal, using any account.
- Global acceptance at over 33 million stores and 2 million ATMs worldwide.

A Complete Package for a More Balanced Life

In addition to the card, the new campaign also provides additional benefits, including:

- A 50% daily discount on cinema tickets at VOX and Cinescape.
- A free KD 50 fuel top-up voucher from Oula stations when transferring student allowance.
- The Oula voucher is valid at all Oula sta-



QR code

tions, covering fuel filling, car washing, Trolley services, and offering discounts of up to 20% at Portage and car wash stations.

A Campaign Created for and by Youth

The campaign’s launch was marked by the release of a vibrant and relatable TV commercial featuring popular artist Lulwa AlMulla and performer Daffy. This creative execution aims to reflect the spirit of today’s youth: bold, driven, and digitally empowered, reinforcing that red is not just a banking solution, but a lifestyle.

Leadership Perspective: Co-Creation at the Heart

Commenting on the campaign, Mrs. Najla Aleisa, Chief Marketing Officer at Gulf Bank, stated, “Since the launch of red, our goal has been to build a connection with the minds and hearts of Kuwaiti students and youth. We didn’t create this product behind closed doors; we actively engaged with them, listened to their stories, and understood what drives them. This campaign is the result of that effort.”

She added, “red Ma Yerdak is more than just a marketing message. It is a new banking philosophy that sees young people as co-creators, transforming every service into a truly valuable experience.”

Commitment to Financial Inclusion and Empowering the Next Generation

Mrs. Aleisa concluded, “At Gulf Bank, we believe that investing in youth is not just a choice, but a national responsibility. Financial empowerment must start during student years, equipping them with the right tools, early exposure, and smart guidance. We are dedicated to continually creating tailored solutions for the leaders of tomorrow.”



Ahmad Alhammad

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) participated in the 26th edition of the career fair held at the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) in addition to the G-Summit held during the event.

This participation underscores KFH’s continued partnership with GUST and highlights its sustained support for initiatives that empower students and graduates, improve employment prospects, and contribute to economic growth. Addressing the audience at the opening ceremony, KFH Acting Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Ahmad Alhammad, described the two events as a highly anticipated and crucial platform.

He further elaborated that the career fair offers a positive contribution by fostering employment opportunities and enabling students to grasp market needs, the dynamics of the private sector, and the graduate qualifications sought across diverse sectors.

Alhammad reaffirmed KFH’s keenness to attract, train and develop the distinguished national talents and graduates, turning them into well-rounded professionals able to perform under competent, innovative and efficient work environment that focuses on continuous development and driving growth and competitiveness.

He pointed out that KFH prioritizes human capital as major assets for the organization’s success. “Investing in the development of their skills and capabilities is one



Kuwait Finance House team at the 26th Career Fair.

HUMAIN initiative signals Saudi’s big bet on AI future

Saudi-US Investment Forum kicks off in Riyadh

RIYADH, May 13, (KUNA): The Saudi Arabia-US Investment Forum kicked off on Tuesday in Riyadh with the attendance of senior officials from Saudi and US companies and investment institutions.

Saudi Minister of Investment Khaled Al-Faleh, in his opening speech, praised the level and quality of the US-Saudi investment delegation participating in the forum, which reflects the two countries’ keenness to strengthen their economic relations.

He stressed that this cooperation, which extends for more than 90 years, embodies a partnership based on mutual respect and the achievement of common interests and benefits the economies of both countries.

Al-Faleh reviewed the annual re-

port of the Kingdom’s Vision 2030 for the 2024, noting that it made significant strides in achieving the vision’s goals by diversifying and sustaining the national economy’s resources and opening up new areas for investment in promising sectors, including traditional and renewable energy, advanced technologies, artificial intelligence, tourism, health, biotechnology, logistics services, supply chains, and others.

He affirmed that the rapid economic and technological transformations witnessed by the world contributed to shaping new features of the international economy and opened broad horizons for expanding and strengthening the Saudi-US strategic partnerships, stressing the importance of building sustainable partnerships based on the

strengths of the economies of the two countries, especially Saudi and American companies.

Also:

RIYADH: Saudi Crown Prince, Prime Minister, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Public Investment Fund (PIF), **Prince Mohammad bin Salman**, announced the launch of HUMAIN, a new company aimed at advancing artificial intelligence (AI) technologies and attracting investment in the sector.

According to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), the PIF-owned company will focus on developing advanced AI applications, including a large language model, as well as building next-generation data centers and enhancing cloud infrastructure.

Kuwaiti oil experts welcome

US-China tariff suspension

Oil market confidence boosted by 90-day trade truce

KUWAIT CITY, May 13, (KUNA): Kuwaiti oil experts have welcomed the 90-days suspension of tariffs between the US and China, saying that the move has bolstered confidence in the global economy and could lead to increased demand for oil.

Experts told KUNA that oil prices had dropped significantly since the onset of the tariff dispute in April, driven by fears of a global economic slowdown, however, the recent agreement has triggered price increases and eased market concerns.

Expert Jamal Al-Gharabally described the suspension as a

positive step towards resolving trade tensions that have pressured oil markets, and noted that OPEC estimates potential one to two percent annual increase in oil demand if trade relations stabilize.

Dr. Abdulsamee Behbehani, another energy expert, said that although OPEC decided to increase oil production in May and June -which could have caused oil prices to drop- the positive impact of the US-China tariff agreement was stronger. He added that the agreement led to market optimism that led to oil prices to rise, pushing oil to USD 66 per barrel (pb), the highest price in two weeks, and that Iran’s agreement to continue indirect negotiations with the US will have a near-term impact on oil prices.

‘Operational growth strong despite higher costs and tax provisions’

Agility Global PLC reports Q1 2025 EBIT of \$92 mIn

ABU DHABI, May 13: Agility Global PLC, a multi-business owner and operator and long-term investor, today reported Q1 2025 earnings of \$21 million, or 0.21 cents per share. EBIT stood at \$92 million, EBITDA at \$173 million and revenue \$1,143 million.

As of March 31, 2025, Agility’s investment segment has a carrying value of roughly \$5.1 billion, bringing the balance sheet to \$11.8 billion in assets and \$5.3 billion in total equity attributable to the shareholders of the parent company.

Agility Global Chairman, **Tarek Sultan** said “The Group delivered good operational performance in Q1 2025, supported by organic growth across our core businesses. However, net profit was impacted by higher depreciation expenses from new operating leases required for business growth, and higher interest expense since the company was capitalized in May 2024 as part of the listing process as well as higher utilization of debt relative to Q1 2024. Furthermore, the company has taken tax provisions related to the implementation of Pillar Two (global minimum effective corporate tax rate). Despite this, the Group’s underlying operational momentum remains positive, and we continue to advance our strategic priorities. Our investment segment is managed with steadfast discipline, and we are focused on the long-term fundamentals of the assets.”

“We remain cautious of external uncertainties, which may introduce volatility in certain markets. However, the diversification of our businesses, combined with a disciplined and agile strategic approach, positions us well to capture emerging opportunities and deliver sustained value for our shareholders.”

Controlled Segment

For Q1 2025, the consolidated EBIT of the controlled businesses was \$79 million; EBITDA was \$160 million; and revenue was \$1,143 million.

Aviation Services: Menzies

Menzies Aviation revenue reached \$649 million in Q1 2025, representing 13% growth over the same period in 2024. This growth was mainly driven by an increase in volumes as a result of new operations in Portugal and Spain, expansion into Serbia, along with winter activity plus yield improvements. Over the same period, reported EBITDA grew by 4% with almost all material divisions and service lines showing growth. Adjusted for non-recurring items booked in 2024, adjusted EBITDA and EBIT for the quarter would have shown a 13% and 24% increase from same period last year.

Menzies recently agreed to acquire 100% of US-based G2 Secure Staff, an aviation service partner of choice for major airlines across the United States. The transaction is valued at \$305m plus a deferred consideration of \$10m payable in 2026, subject to G2 operations achieving certain agreed-upon performance targets. The deal strength-



Tarek Sultan, Chairman of Agility Global.



Agility logo.

ens Menzies’ position as the largest aviation services business globally, by number of countries, number of airports and aircraft turns.

Fuel Logistics: Tristar

Tristar, a fully integrated fuel logistics business, reported a \$340 million revenue increase of 35% from the first quarter in 2024. The top line increase was mainly driven by growth in the Fuel segment as a result of the new Sri Lanka retail fuel business, which began in the second half of 2024. EBITDA reached \$60 million, and EBIT was \$26 million, decreases of 7% and 33% respectively. This was driven by a one-off gain booked in 2024 and higher depreciation expense this quarter, from commitment to charter new vessels to activities intended to support business growth. The management is actively working on action plans to improve performance for the remainder of the year.

Tristar group has a healthy pipeline of growth opportunities, especially in infrastructure capacity building. Those opportunities are concentrated in the Maritime and Fuel storage businesses.

Industrial Real Estate: Agility Logistics Parks

Agility Logistics Parks (ALP), a leading develop-

Agility Global PLC Reports Q1 2025 EBIT of \$92 Million			
	Q1 2025 (Million USD)	Q1 2024 (Million USD)	Variance (%)
Revenue	1,142.5	979.4	+17%
EBITDA	172.9	164.5	+5%
EBIT	91.9	95.4	-4%
Net Profit for equity holders	21.2	30.5	-30%
EPS (cent)	0.21	0.3	-30%

er of warehouse parks and light industrial facilities, reported revenue of \$14 million, an increase of 8%. EBIT was \$9 million for the quarter. Strong demand for world-class warehousing is fueling the growth of ALP, especially in Saudi Arabia where occupancy rates remained high.

ALP continues to benefit from strong market fundamentals driven by ongoing economic diversification initiatives in Saudi Arabia. ALP is currently developing a total of 226k sqm of new warehousing space in Jeddah and Riyadh to be delivered during 2025 and early 2026, and revenue will be booked accordingly. ALP will continue to look for opportunities in the markets where it operates and in new potential markets.

Investment Segment

Agility Global holds non-controlling minority stakes in a number of businesses, both listed and non-listed. As of 31 March 2025, the carrying value of those stakes was roughly \$5.1 billion. The company’s largest holdings in this segment are in DSV and Reem Mall.

DSV is a Copenhagen-based logistics company that became the world’s number one freight forwarder following its recently approved acquisition of DB Schenker. DSV announced expected synergies of DKK 9 billion (around €1.2 billion), higher than most analysts’ expectations.

The share price has gained positive momentum following the announcement and continues to perform positively. Agility Global owns 19.3 million shares of DSV today, making it one of the Denmark-based company’s largest shareholders. Agility Global maintains a positive long-term view on its investment in DSV because of the company’s strong fundamentals, global

market position, and proven track record of value-accretive growth.

Reem Mall - Agility Global is an investor in Reem Mall on Abu Dhabi’s Reem Island. Agility Global’s stake in Reem Mall consists of equity and convertible debt. The mega-mall had a soft opening to the public in February 2023 and launched formally in May 2024. As of March 2025, 198 units were trading, and almost 80% of Gross Leasable Area (GLA) was committed. More tenants are expected to announce openings in coming months. The mall is one of the region’s first fully integrated omnichannel retail ecosystems with digital, e-commerce, and logistics capabilities. It brings together all consumer and retail services to ensure a seamless customer experience.

Recap of Agility Global Q1 2025 Financial Performance

- Revenue increased 17% to \$1,143 million.
- EBITDA increased 5% to \$173 million, with 15% margins.
- EBIT decreased by 4% to \$92 million, with 8% margins.
- Net profit for equity holders reached \$21 million, equivalent to 0.21 cent per share.
- Agility Global enjoys a healthy balance sheet with \$11.8 billion in assets and \$5.3 billion in total equity attributable to the equity holder of the parent company. Agility Global’s largest investment, which is DSV, represents around 32% of the total assets.
- The company’s net debt (excluding lease liabilities) was \$2.8 billion. Most of the debt is a result of a funded equity collar on the back of DSV shares.
- Operating cash flow was \$164 million for the first quarter of 2025. Agility Global spent \$60 million gross CAPEX and investments during the quarter.

Bank achieves a healthy net profit growth of 8%

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait Group holds Q1 2025 analyst conference call

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently hosted its Q1 2025 analyst conference attended by Abdulla Al Sumait, Acting Group Chief Executive Officer; Shiamak Soonawalla, Group Chief Finance Officer; Abdulaziz Jawad, Chief Strategy Officer; and Osama Ezzeldin, Assistant General Manager of Strategy and Follow Up.

Al Sumait began with discussing the financial highlights for Q1 2025. “ABK achieved a healthy net profit growth of 8% to KD 15.7 million. Earnings per share remained stable at 5 fils, and our capital adequacy ratio stood robustly at 16.78%.”

“On the lending side, ABK’s loan portfolio expanded by 10% year-on-year, supported by our disciplined credit underwriting standards. Asset quality remains strong, with our NPL ratio well controlled at 1.38%, reflecting our continued focus on maintaining strong asset quality,” Al Sumait said.

He added, “Our diversified footprint continues to drive our growth momentum. Our international operations, including our UAE branches and ABK-Egypt, contributed a solid 40% of operating income and accounted for 37% of total assets, highlighting the strength of our regional diversification strategy.”

Al Sumait shared that ABK launched key strategic initiatives during the quarter to reinforce its competitive advantage and enhance customer experience. Major achievements in Q1 2025 included the launch of its new mobile banking app in Kuwait, featuring enhanced features and a new design, the introduction of a free international call service for customer support, and an enhanced customer service model with virtual service available in branches.

He concluded, “As we look ahead, ABK remains focused on delivering sustainable, long-term value. We will continue to pursue strategic expansion opportunities, strengthen our regional presence, and introduce innovative financial solutions tailored to meet the evolving needs of our customers.”

Financial Indicators

On his part, Soonawalla discussed ABK’s financial highlights for Q1 2025. He said, “We achieved a healthy net profit growth of 8% year-on-year, with KD 15.7 million net profit attributable to shareholders. Earnings per share remained stable at 5 fils, and our operating income for the period reached KD 50.4 million,



Abdulla Al Sumait Acting Group Chief Executive Officer



Shiamak Soonawalla Group Chief Finance Officer



Abdulaziz Jawad, Chief Strategy Officer



Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait headquarters.

Abdulla Al Sumait:

- The results reflect our continued focus on sustainable value creation, operational excellence, and growth across all our markets

Shiamak Soonawalla:

- Our indicators highlight our solid profitability, disciplined risk management, and strengthened balance sheet and create enduring value for shareholders

Abdulaziz Jawad:

- Building on a strong start to 2025, we remain committed to accelerating momentum and executing our strategic agenda with discipline

while operating profit stood at KD 29.3 million. This was supported by proactive cost management and continued revenue momentum across business lines.”

ABK’s asset quality remains robust, with the Group’s non-performing loan (NPL) ratio maintained at a healthy 1.38%. The Group’s loan loss coverage ratio held firm at 433%, confirming strong credit quality. Furthermore, provisions exceeded the IFRS 9 requirements, in accordance with Central Bank of Kuwait guidelines, as ABK continues to apply a prudent provisioning policy.

Soonawalla added, “We managed to maintain our net interest margin at 2.1% levels, although operating income marginally declined due to funding cost pressures and lower fees and commission income. Return on Average Equity (ROAE) delivered a healthy 8.1%, underlining ABK’s strength in sustaining returns and driving long-term shareholder value. Liquidity continues to be a key strength for us, as evidenced by a liquidity coverage ratio of 255% and a net stable funding ratio of 109%, both comfortably above regulatory thresholds.

Customer deposits remained resilient, totaling KD 4.4 billion, which represents 66% of our total liabilities. This further reinforces the strength and stability of our funding base.”

He highlighted that the Group’s strong start to 2025 reflects ABK’s effective execution of strategic priorities and the leveraging of our core banking franchise alongside diversified income streams to drive sustainable growth. Notably, operating profit grew by 5%, highlighting the Group’s enhanced operational efficiency.

Commercial Banking remained the largest contributor to our operating income during the quarter, accounting for 49%, followed by Retail Banking at 39%, and Treasury and Investments at 12%. Our asset allocation remains strategically balanced, with 55% allocated to Commercial Banking, 12% to Retail Banking, and 33% to Treasury and Investments.

He added, “Our focus on operational excellence, digital transformation, and strategic investments continues to yield meaningful improvements. During Q1 2025, ABK’s cost-to-income ratio significantly improved to 41.9%,

down from 46.4% year-on-year, reflecting greater efficiency and disciplined cost management across the Group.As of Q1 2025, total assets expanded to KD 7.4 billion, delivering strong year-on-year growth of 13%. Net loans and advances increased by 10% to KD 4.7 billion, demonstrating healthy lending activity and prudent balance sheet expansion.”

Soonawalla closed, “Our Q1 2025 results highlight our solid profitability, disciplined risk management, and strengthened balance sheet. ABK remains firmly positioned to deliver sustainable growth and create enduring value for shareholders.With a strong foundation and a clear strategic focus, we are confident in our ability to sustain momentum throughout 2025.”

The Local and Global Economy

Jawad mentioned that the sharp escalation in trade tensions and high policy uncertainty are expected to weigh heavily on global economic activity. According to the latest IMF projections, global GDP growth is now projected at 2.8% in 2025 and 3.0% in 2026. This marks a downward revision from the earlier forecast of 3.3% for both years. Global headline inflation is expected to decline at a slightly slower pace than what was expected in January, reaching 4.3% in 2025 and 3.6% in 2026.

When it comes to Kuwait, the IMF has revised its 2025 GDP growth forecast for Kuwait to 1.9%. The adjustment reflects a more measured recovery pace, although domestic demand remains strong and oil output continues to recover. Inflation is expected to stabilize at 2.5%, supported by effective monetary policy by the Central Bank of Kuwait.

Jawad highlighted, “In March,

Kuwait introduced a new public debt law, setting a borrowing ceiling of KD 30 billion and permitting the issuance of financial instruments with maturities up to 50 years. The move aims to strengthen financial stability, support Kuwait Vision 2035, diversify funding sources, and enhance Kuwait’s position as a regional financial hub.”

Exceptional Results

Jawad continued, “Our strategic focus continues to be on salaried Kuwaitis and high-income expatriates, while placing growing emphasis on youth, who represent the future. We are continuously enhancing our youth offering to further strengthen our overall value proposition. As a result, our retail loan portfolio grew 1.75 times faster than the market in Q1 2025. We also enhanced our cards portfolio with a new prepaid card featuring a dual rewards program.”

Furthermore, he affirmed, “ABK maintains strong credit ratings of ‘A’ from Fitch and ‘A2’ from Moody’s, reflecting its robust financial position, prudent risk management, and commitment to long-term stability.”

Egypt and the UAE

Regarding Egypt’s macroeconomic landscape, the country is making progress on its macroeconomic reform agenda despite regional challenges. The IMF completed the fourth review of Egypt’s Extended Fund Facility (EFF), disbursing USD 1.2 billion and approved an additional USD 1.3 billion under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF). Although Egypt’s inflation rose slightly to 13.9% in April 2025, up from 13.6% in March, the rise remains in line with market expectations, reflecting stability despite seasonal demand pressure. GDP growth accelerated to 4.3% in Q2 FY 2024/25.

Moving on, Jawad shed light on the UAE stating, “ABK, through its DIFC branch, has successfully closed a landmark USD 1 billion global syndicated term loan facility for a period of over 3 years, marking its largest debt facility to date. This significant achievement affirms ABK’s robust standing in the financial markets.”

The syndication was initially launched at USD 750 million; however, due to excessive over subscription by 60%, the facility was upsize to USD 1 billion. This positive response highlights the strong liquidity position and confidence that both regional and international lenders, including those from the Middle East, US, Europe, and Asia, have in ABK.

Jawad affirmed, “This achievement reflects the trust and confidence that our lenders have in our financial stability and strategic vision. We are committed to utilizing these funds to enhance our service offerings and continue to foster sustainable growth.”

“Alongside our funding activities, ABK-UAE continued to advance its strategic agenda in the real estate sector. As a continuation of our Q4 2024 update, ABK-UAE successfully on boarded its first real estate escrow customer, marking a key milestone as the first Kuwaiti bank to offer this service in the UAE. With additional clients in the pipeline, we are now assessing the extension of these services to Abu Dhabi. This aligns with our strategy to strengthen our footprint and competitiveness in the UAE financial sector,”Jawad continued.

Complementing the real estate escrow rollout, a dedicated UAE mortgage service for Private Banking clients in Kuwait was also launched. To enhance this service, real estate brokers are being brought on board as key partners, ensuring a more streamlined client experience.

ESG

ABK continued to build momentum around its ESG agenda, laying the groundwork for future initiatives and enhancements. The Bank remains committed to further integrating ESG principles into key business areas. Looking ahead, ABK plans to publish its updated sustainability report, assess its ESG maturity, strengthen internal capabilities, and explore opportunities that support sustainable value creation.

Building on a strong start to 2025, ABK remains committed to accelerating momentum, executing its strategic agenda with discipline, and creating long-term shareholder value.

Inflation cooled again last month

Wall St dips as euphoria over China-US trade truce fades

NEW YORK, May 13, (AP): Wall Street is on track to open with losses Tuesday as the initial euphoria over the 90-day truce in the U.S.-China trade war faded and markets turned their attention to corporate earnings and new inflation data.

Futures for the S&P 500 slipped 0.2% while futures for the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.6%. Nasdaq futures ticked down just 0.1% ahead of the government’s latest report on inflation at the consumer level.

UnitedHealth Group shares tumbled more than 10% after it suspended its full-year financial forecast due to higher-than-expected medical costs. The nation’s largest health insurer also announced that CEO Andrew Witty was stepping down for personal reasons and that Chairman Stephen Hemsley will become CEO, effective immediately.

Boeing shares got a small boost on media reports that China had lifted a ban on airlines there taking deliveries of the U.S. aerospace giant’s planes. According to reports, China removed those obstacles as part of Monday’s trade truce with the U.S. Boeing shares rose close to 2% in premarket trading Tuesday.

Stocks soared Monday after the United States said in a joint statement with China that it will cut tariffs on Chinese goods to 30% from as high as 145%, for 90 days.

European markets edged higher, with Germany’s DAX and the CAC 40 in Paris each gaining 0.1%. Britain’s FTSE 100 was flat.

Beijing’s anger over the trade war remained apparent. Speaking to officials from China and Latin America on Tuesday, leader Xi Jinping reiterated China’s stance that nobody wins a trade war and that “Bullying or hegemonism only leads to self-isolation.”

Tokyo’s Nikkei 225 jumped 1.4% to 38,183.26. Automakers were among the big gainers after the U.S. dollar surged against the Japanese yen. Toyota Motor Corp. gained 3.5% and Suzuki Motor Corp. was



Specialist Michael Pistillo works at his post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Monday, May 12, 2025. (AP)

2.4% higher.

Nissan Motor Co. added 3% ahead of an announcement that it plans to lay off 20,000 of its workers as part of its restructuring efforts. The automaker said Tuesday that it racked up a loss of 670.9 billion yen (\$4.5 billion) in the last fiscal year.

The Kospi in South Korea was nearly unchanged at 2,608.42.

Hong Kong’s Hang Seng, which gained 3% a day earlier after Chinese and U.S. officials announced the agreement to pause tariffs and reduce them, fell 1.9% to 23,108.27 on heavy selling of technology shares.

The Shanghai Composite index edged 0.2% higher to 3,374.87 and Taiwan’s Taiex jumped 1%.

India’s Sensex fell 1.5%.

In Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 climbed 0.4% to 8,2769.00.

In energy trading, U.S. benchmark crude oil added 64 cents to \$62.59 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, gained 60 cents to \$65.56 per barrel.

Inflation cooled for the third straight month in April even after some of President Donald Trump’s tariffs took effect, though economists and many

business owners expect inflation will climb in the coming months.

Consumer prices rose 2.3% in April from a year ago, the Labor Department said Tuesday, down from 2.4% in March and the smallest increase in more than four years. On a monthly basis, prices rose modestly, increasing 0.2% from March to April after falling 0.1% the previous month, the first drop in five years.

Grocery prices dipped 0.4%, pulled downward in part by a big 12.7% fall in the price of eggs. It was the biggest decline in food costs at home since September 2020, the government said.

The report suggests the tariffs haven’t yet impacted the prices of many items. Clothing costs fell 0.2% from March to April, while new car prices were unchanged. Furniture costs jumped 1.5%, however.

Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, core prices were also muted, rising 2.8% in April compared with a year ago, the same as in March. On a monthly basis, they increased a mild 0.2%. Economists watch core prices because they typically provide a better read on where prices are headed.

Memos aim at helping firms expand into Mideast markets

HSBC Hong Kong signs MoUs to support Chinese companies

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, through its Hong Kong Office (“HSBC Hong Kong”) has announced the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (“MoUs”) with leading Chinese companies - PCI Technology Group Co., Ltd (“PCI”) and Meetsocial Co., Ltd (“Meetsocial Group”). These agreements aim to support both companies in expanding their presence into promising Middle Eastern markets.

The MOUs were signed by Justin CHAN, Advisor to Asia and the Middle East Co-Chief Executives of HSBC, along with senior executives from the two companies, including Jiao CHEN, Chief Executive Officer of PCI Technology Group Co.,Ltd, and Chengang SHEN, Chief Executive Officer of Meetsocial Co., Ltd during a high-level delegation visit to Qatar and Kuwait.

The visit led by John LEE, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, brought together over 50 businesses from Hong Kong and mainland, including HSBC Hong Kong, PCI and Meetsocial Group.

PCI is a professional artificial intelligence technology product and service enterprise in China. Founded in 1992 with the mission of “Perfect City”, the group provides full-stack artificial intelligence technology products and solutions from basic theory, core algorithm to urban-scenes applications, focusing on urban agglomeration integrated traffic. Its solutions empower the modernisation and governance of global cities.

Meetsocial Group is a leading digital service expert of global marketing solutions. Founded in 2013, the company supports over 100,000 businesses from mainland China, Hong Kong, the Middle East, Japan, Singapore, and the United States,etc., including cross border e-commerce brands, gaming and app developers. Leveraging well-



Samer Alabed CEO of HSBC Kuwait.

known international digital platforms and advanced AI-driven data analysis, Meetsocial Group enables businesses to promote their products and services worldwide and expand their global reach through more than 50 global media resources management, cross-border marketing and martech service.

HSBC Hong Kong will leverage its extensive financial and market expertise, as well as global network to support the Chinese companies in navigating Middle Eastern markets. The collaboration seeks to tap into emerging opportunities in the Gulf region, driven by ongoing economic diversification, ambitious smart city initiatives, and growing inter-regional trade and investment between Asia and the Middle East. According to HSBC Global Research, Asia-Middle East goods trade is projected to grow from USD800 billion in 2024 to USD1.7 trillion by 2035.

Justin CHAN said: “There are strong incentives to deepen inter-

regional economic integration amid heightened global uncertainty. These MOUs reflect our commitment to strengthening Hong Kong’s role as a super connector and Asia’s leading international financial hub. With HSBC’s global network and financial expertise, we are proud to empower businesses in Hong Kong and mainland China to expand into dynamic new markets.”

Samer Alabed, CEO of HSBC in Kuwait said: “The relationship between Hong Kong and Kuwait has been built on mutual goals of economic diversification and financial cooperation. As Hong Kong strengthens its role as a gateway to Asia, it offers Kuwaiti businesses and investors unparalleled access to regional markets. In turn, Kuwait’s dynamic plans for growth and investment present significant opportunities for collaboration in finance, infrastructure, and innovation. With HSBC’s 160-year legacy in Hong Kong, and presence since 1942 in Kuwait, combined with our international network, we are well placed to identify opportunities for our clients to grow their business across this vibrant corridor.”

HSBC is the largest international banking organisation in the Middle East, North Africa and Türkiye (MENAT) region, with a presence across nine countries. Its deep-rooted heritage in Qatar and Kuwait dates back to 1954 and 1942 respectively. For the fourth consecutive year, HSBC has topped the 2024 Middle East Bloomberg league tables for both equity and debt capital markets.HSBC has led half of all equity raised in the region’s capital markets since 2021, and supported 90% of jumbo IPOs (over USD1billion). Combined with its 160-year legacy in Hong Kong, and 130-year presence in the Middle East, HSBC is uniquely positioned to support the international growth ambitions of our clients across this corridor.

‘Award marks milestone in responsible hospitality’

Four Seasons Kuwait awarded 2025 Green Key certificate for sustainable hospitality

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait at Burj Alshaya proudly announces that it has been awarded the prestigious Green Key Certificate for 2025, reinforcing the property’s ongoing commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

The certification was officially awarded by Ms. Mana El Rez Bassaj, Vice President of the Kuwait Water Association – the national operator of the Green Key program in Kuwait – during a ceremony recognizing the hotel’s exceptional efforts in sustainable hospitality. In a separate visit, Mr. Mohamed Najia, Secretary General of the Kuwait Hotel Owners’ Association and Vice Chairman of the Lebanese Business Council in Kuwait, extended his congratulations to the team on this achievement.

“We are honored to receive the Green Key Certificate for 2025,” said Martin Kipping, General Manager of Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait at Burj

Alshaya. “This milestone reflects our unwavering dedication to responsible hospitality and aligns with our broader goals to lead the industry in sustainable innovation.”

This achievement adds to the hotel’s growing list of environmental recognitions, including LEED Platinum certification, Forbes Verified Responsible Hospitality, and Forbes Five-Star ratings for both the Hotel and Spa.

As part of the Four Seasons for Good program, the hotel has implemented extensive sustainability measures such as AI-enhanced waste management, on-site water bottling, the elimination of single-use plastics, and the introduction of EV charging stations – setting new standards for luxury and environmental responsibility in Kuwait.

About Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait at Burj Alshaya:

Located in the heart of Kuwait City, Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait at Burj Alshaya is a modern architectural

landmark that blends refined luxury with a strong commitment to sustainability. With 284 rooms and suites, five restaurants, expansive wellness facilities, and state-of-the-art meeting spaces, the hotel is recognized as a leader in the region for both hospitality excellence and environmental leadership.

About Green Key:

Coordinated by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), Green Key is a global voluntary eco-certification programme. With more than 5,800 certified hotels and other establishments in over 60 countries, Green Key is the leading standard for excellence in the field of environmental responsibility and sustainable operation within the tourism and hospitality industry. The certification process evaluates the establishments’ environmental management, energy conservation, waste management, water conservation, and other sustainable practices.



Four Seasons Hotel Kuwait receives the prestigious Green Key Certification for 2025 recognizing its commitment to environmental stewardship and innovation.



The winning students with the university administration.

AU students secure seventh place at the prestigious GOTECH 2025 AI Hackathon II

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Petroleum Engineering students from the Australian University (AU) have achieved international recognition by securing 7th place at the prestigious GOTECH 2025 AI Hackathon II, held in Dubai. Organized by the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) in collaboration with Dragon Oil, the competition brought together 123 participants from leading universities and institutions around the world.

Representing AU under the mentorship of Dr. Mohammad Omar, Assistant Professor of Petroleum Engineering, students Manaris Morad and Fatemah Al Tannak demonstrated exceptional skills and innovation by developing an AI-based solution for

Surface Network Production Flow Behavior Prediction and Optimization. Advancing through a rigorous evaluation process, they secured 7th place globally and earned recognition among the Top 20 Honorable Finalists.

Commenting on the achievement, Dr. Mohammed Abdul Niby, Dean of the College of Engineering, stated: “This accomplishment is a clear reflection of the dedication of our students and faculty. It reinforces our mission to develop future leaders who are ready to drive innovation and sustainability within the evolving energy sector.”

Dr. Mortadha Alsaba, Head of the Petroleum Engineering Department,

also praised the students’ performance, adding: “We are incredibly proud of our students’ success on the global stage. Their achievement highlights the strength of our petroleum engineering program and underscores our commitment to fostering innovation, critical thinking, and real-world problem-solving skills among our students.”

This outstanding performance not only celebrates the students’ hard work but also demonstrates AU’s commitment to engaging students in impactful, real-world learning experiences that prepare them to thrive in the rapidly transforming global energy industry.



Photos from the FAIPS DPS Kuwait students’ educational tour of Japan.



Students explore Japan’s landmarks, technology and culture

Exploring the land of rising sun: FAIPS students discover Japan

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: FAIPS DPS Kuwait students returned recently from an enriching and culturally rich trip to Japan from March 19th to 27th March 2025. The eight-day trip allowed students to experience firsthand Japan’s aptly balanced mix of tradition and the modern world, its stunning landscapes, ancient landmarks, and technological marvels.

The journey started in Tokyo, where students witnessed the renowned Tokyo Skytree and strolled through the vibrant Asakusa and Nakamise Street. A visit to the Miraikan Science Museum provided an insight into Ja-

pan’s technological advancements, while the serenity of Ueno Park brought a fine blend of nature and culture. The expedition continued with a breathtaking ride on the Owakudani Ropeway, topped by the serene Lake Ashi Cruise, which offered a breathtaking sight of Hakone’s tranquil beauty.

One of the exhilarating experiences was riding on the legendary Shinkansen bullet train, reaching 320 km/h speeds, as the team moved on to Osaka. At Osaka, the students explored historic Osaka Castle, shopped at colorful Shinsaibashi district, and imbibed Nara’s charm

with visits to Nara Deer Park, Todai-ji Temple, and Kasuga Taisha Shrine. The trip to serene Yoshikien Garden was also part of the cultural exposure.

No trip to Japan would be complete without an experience of its top-notch entertainment. The team enjoyed a bashing day out at Universal Studios Japan, thrilling in its breathtaking rides and experiences. The trip was not merely a sight-seeing tour but an enriching educational tour as well that instilled cultural insight and appreciation amongst the students.

It provided them with a different perspective on the

country’s historical wealth, advancements in technology, and natural environments, making the trip an unforgettable experience. This amazing experience has definitely made a long-lasting impression on the students and motivated them to embrace world cultures and broaden their minds.

Mr. Ravi Ayanoli, Principal, FAIPS-DPS has said that the school organizes these educational trips to different destinations to make the students learn new things and valuable life lessons for them to become global citizens.

Ms Tamimi inspires young girls

IMA Ladies Wing celebrates Annual Day

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: “The definition of true beauty is an amalgamation of knowledge, confidence and character,” said Ms. Amina Tamimi (Daiya, Ministry of Islamic Affairs) while addressing the audience as the guest speaker on the occasion of Pearls of Islam (POI), Annual Day Celebration in Salmiya Kuwait.

At this juncture she motivated and inspired young girls on how a varied knowledge in respect to their lives and true beauty can be achieved and obtained by working on one’s inner self.

The event continued with a mesmerizing Nasheed by the young POI Students followed by speech on Waqf and its importance in Islam by Mariyam Afroz, a Member, IMA-LW who explained in detail about this act. Through her speech and a presentation, the speaker made the audience aware about the Waqf amendment 2025 and its implications on the Muslim and Indian Society as a whole and how important is to play our required roles and responsibilities at this crucial moment in order to make the people aware about it.

An interesting quiz session was also conducted covering the main topic of the event and its importance filling the hall with enthusiasm and excitement. Rewards and consolation prizes were given to the participants including both the



A photo from the event.

teachers and the students from IMA POI.

The event witnessed 65 girls and approximately 35 ladies who attended the program which came to an end by a vote of thanks to all the teachers, students and volunteers who worked hard behind the stage and the entire audience without whom the event would not have been such a success.

IMA POI is a subsidiary unit of IMA Ladies Wing, active among the young girls in Kuwait. Only with few girl students a journey started back in 2016 in different parts of Kuwait, is now playing an impactful role in bringing out the best and hidden talents of the soci-

ety and shaping these young minds to understand and stand firm with respect to their faith and morals in order to become a responsible one in the society.

Congratulations to all participants, and the entire IMA POI team!

May Allah accept their effort, guide us towards continued success, and keep them steadfast in serving their goal with sincerity and excellence. Aameen.

IMA Ladies Wing, mother umbrella of POI is a part of IMA Kuwait, playing an active role by providing a platform to the ladies and young girls mostly belonging to the Indian diaspora in Kuwait by inculcating the Islamic Spirit among the Muslim Ladies in Indian diaspora in Kuwait since day one of its existence.

Indian Muslim Organization (IMA) Kuwait is a prominent Indian socio-religious organization operating under the patronage of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Kuwait, continues to serve expatriates by organizing events that enhance their spiritual and social well-being. It looks forward to hosting more impactful programs in the future, catering to the needs of the Indian expatriate community in Kuwait.

For further information, guidance related to the event contact: 60001424 / 69901154



A photo from the Bengali Cultural Society’s annual ‘Anandamela’ event.

Bengali Cultural Society organizes annual ‘Anandamela’

The Bengali Cultural Society (BCS), Kuwait organized their annual ‘Anandamela’ at the Aspire Bilingual School, Abbasiya on Friday, May 2nd, 2025.

The fun-filled indoor fair included the much awaited culinary presentations by the highly creative and

innovative BCS family members that evoked lots of enthusiasm. The diverse platters dispensed from various stalls were excellent and received much appreciation.

Other Indian community groups were invited for the first time this year to showcase their various merchan-

dise like, ornaments, decorative items, apparels, books, etc., to mention a few, which generated fair interest.

The event was interspersed with in-house musical program with inauguration of BCS Theme song and drawing competition for the children and a fancy dress competition.

French movie giant gets 18-month suspended prison sentence

French actor Depardieu found guilty of sexual assault

PARIS, May 13, (AP): French movie star Gérard Depardieu's fall from grace is now complete.

Depardieu further moved down from the pinnacle of French cinema Tuesday as he was found guilty of sexually assaulting two women on the set of a movie in which he starred in 2021 and given an 18-month suspended prison sentence. He was also fined a total of 29,040 euros (around \$32,350), and the court requested that he be registered in the national sex offender database.

The actor, 76, has been convicted of assaulting a 54-year-old set dresser and a 34-year-old assistant during the filming of "Les Volets Verts" ("The Green Shutters"). The case was widely seen as a key post-#MeToo test of how French society and its film industry address allegations of sexual misconduct involving prominent figures.

Depardieu, who has denied the accusations, didn't attend the hearing in Paris. Depardieu's lawyer, Jérémie Assous, said that his client would appeal the decision.

"It is the victory of two women, but it is the victory of all the women beyond this trial," said Carine Durrieu Diebolt, the set dresser's lawyer. "Today we hope to see the end of impunity for an artist in the world of cinema. I think that with this decision we can no longer say that he is not a sexual abuser. And today, as the Cannes Film Festival opens, I'd like the film world to spare a thought for Gérard Depardieu's victims."



Actor Gerard Depardieu arrives to face trial for the alleged sexual assaults of two women on a film set in 2021, on March 24, 2025 in Paris. (AP)

Depardieu's long and storied career - he told the court that he's made more than 250 films - has turned him into a French movie giant. He was Oscar-nominated in 1991 for his performance as the swordsman and poet Cyrano de Bergerac.

In recent years, the actor has been accused publicly or in formal complaints of misconduct by more than 20 women, but so far only the sexual assault case has proceeded to court.

Some other cases were dropped because of a lack of evidence or the statute of limitations.

During the four-day trial in March, Depardieu rejected the accusations, saying he's "not like that." He acknowledged that he had used vulgar and sexualized language on the film set and that he grabbed the set dresser's hips during an argument, but denied that his behavior was sexual.

The court, composed of a panel of three judges, concluded that Depardieu's explanations in court were "unpersuasive" and "not credible" and stressed both accusers' "constant, reiterated and substantiated declarations."

The court also said that both plaintiffs have been faced with an "aggressive" defense strategy "based on comments meant to offend them." The judges therefore considered that Depardieu's lawyer comments in court aggravated the harm to the accusers and justified higher fines.

The set dresser described the alleged incident, stating that the actor blocked her path with his legs as she tried to pass through a narrow corridor.

The woman also testified that Depardieu made an offensive remark and a threatening suggestion of sexual violence. She told the court that the actor's calm demeanor during the incident was disturbing.

The other plaintiff, an assistant, said that Depardieu touched her inappropriately on three separate occasions on the film set.

Film



This image released by A24 shows Joaquin Phoenix, (left), and Pedro Pascal in a scene from 'Eddington.' (AP)

De Niro receives an honorary Palme d'Or

Cannes opens with 3-film tribute to Ukraine

CANNES, France, May 13, (AP): The 78th Cannes Film Festival is opening Tuesday with expectations running high for what could be a banner edition.

All of the ingredients - an absurd number of stars, top-tier filmmakers, political intrigue - seem to be lined up for the French Riviera spectacular. Over the next 12 days, Cannes will play host to megawatt premieres including those of "Mission: Impossible - The Final Reckoning," Spike Lee's "Highest 2 Lowest" and Ari Aster's "Eddington."

Things get underway Tuesday with the unveiling of Juliette Binoche's jury, a three-film tribute to Ukraine and the opening night film, Amélie Bonnin's French romance "Leave One Day." At the festival's opening ceremony, Robert De Niro will receive an honorary Palme d'Or, 49 years after "Taxi Driver" won Cannes' top prize.

Cannes is coming off a 2024 festival that produced a number of eventual Oscar contenders, including "Emilia Perez," "The Substance," "Flow" and the best picture winner, "Anora." Asked if he's feeling the pressure this time around, festival director Thierry Frémaux said the only kind of pressure he believes in is in beer. (Beer on tap in France is "bière à la pression.")

"Indeed last year was a beautiful year," Frémaux said Monday. "But at the very time when I was with (journalists) as the festival started, we didn't know if it was going to be a good year or not."

Cannes is kicking off the same day Gérard Depardieu, one of France's most famous actors, was found guilty of having sexually assaulted two women on a 2021 film set. In one of France's most prominent #MeToo cases, Depardieu was given an 18-month suspended prison sentence. The 76-year-old has long been a regular presence at Cannes.

This year's Cannes Film Festival, the premier international cinematic gathering, is also unspooling following US President Donald Trump's call for tariffs on movies made overseas. While Frémaux expressed sympathy for the cause of strengthening local movie production, he said it was too soon to comment on the still-unformed plans. "It's far too early in the game," said Frémaux. "But if I say one thing here at the Cannes Film Festival, we wouldn't want the American cinema to cease to be strong. And right now, it's very strong."

Cannes will follow up Tuesday's festivities with the return Wednesday of Tom Cruise to Cannes. Three years after he brought "Top Gun: Maverick" to the festival, he's back with the latest "Mission: Impossible" movie.

Twenty-two films will vie for Cannes' top prize, the Palme d'Or. Those films include Wes Anderson's "The Phoenixian



Jury member Halle Berry poses for photographers at the jury photo call at the 78th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Tuesday, May 13. (AP)

Scheme," Richard Linklater's "Nouvelle Vague," Lynne Ramsay's "Die, My Love," Joachim Trier's "Sentimental Value," Kelly Reichardt's "The Mastermind," Oliver Hermanus' "The History of Sound," Julia Ducournau's "Alpha" and Jafar Panahi's "A Simple Accident."

and both his lungs collapsed. The post said Lanez is breathing on his own.

"Despite being in pain, he is talking normally, in good spirits, and deeply thankful to God that he is pulling through," the post said, adding Lanez was stabbed in his back, torso, head and face.

Staff immediately gave Lanez medical aid and called 911, and he was taken to an outside hospital, Michel said. The prison's investigative unit and the Kern County District Attorney's Office are investigating, he said.

The prison is about 100 miles (160 kilometers) north of Los Angeles in the mountains of the Mojave Desert and houses about 1,700 medium- and maximum-security inmates. (AP)



NEW YORK: The R&B singer Cassie could testify as soon as Tuesday in Sean "Diddy" Combs sex trafficking trial, as the Bad Boy Records founder faces charges that he orchestrated a deviant empire of exploitation that forced women into drugged-up parties

called "freak-offs."

Testimony in the trial began Monday. Prosecutors told jurors that, for years, Combs used his status as a powerful executive to coerce women into abusive sexual encounters and became violent if they refused.

Lawyers for three-time Grammy winner argue that, though he could be violent, Combs never veered into sex trafficking and racketeering, telling jurors the sexual acts were consensual. Combs, 55, has pleaded not guilty.

Cassie, whose legal name is Casandra Ventura, has been at the center of Combs' stunning downfall. She sued him in 2023 alleging years of abuse.

A surveillance video made public last year showed Combs beating her at a Los Angeles hotel in 2016. CNN aired the video last year, leading Combs to apologize.

The video, which was played for jurors, shows Combs wearing only a white towel, punching, kicking and dragging Cassie in a hotel hallway. (AP)

'I need to live'

Kardashian testifies on 2016 Paris heist

PARIS, May 13, (AP): Kim Kardashian has arrived at a Paris courthouse to testify against the men accused of robbing her at gunpoint in 2016, an event that reshaped her life and redefined celebrity security in the age of social media.

This will be the first time she has faced the alleged assailants since that night, when she begged for her life as masked men bound her with zip ties and stole over \$6 million in jewelry.

Kardashian's appearance is expected to be the emotional centerpiece of a trial that has captivated France, where the suspects - mostly in their 60s and 70s - are nicknamed "the grandpa robbers."

Authorities say the group tracked her via her Instagram posts. Two defendants have admitted being at the scene. Her lawyers say she is ready to confront those who attacked her, with dignity.

Kardashian's childhood friend and then stylist told a Paris court Tuesday that she heard the celebrity beg for her life during a 2016 armed robbery that changed the star's sense of safety - and transformed the way the world viewed fame in the digital age.

Yelling

Simone Harouche, who was sharing their two-floor hotel suite during Fashion Week, said she heard a terrified Kardashian yelling: "'I have babies and I need to live.' That is what she kept on saying, 'Take everything. I need to live.'"

"I was scared that she was raped or violated. I thought the worst," Harouche said. Kardashian was "screaming with terror in her voice."

Kardashian is expected to take the stand later Tuesday, in what is likely to be the most emotionally charged moment of the trial. Her testimony will revisit the night she was zip-tied, held at gunpoint and locked in a marble bathroom while masked men stole more than \$6 million in jewels.

One of the most recognizable figures on the planet, Kardashian is set to face 10 men accused of orchestrating the 2016 heist - a crime that shook the fashion world and redefined the risks of being visible, female and famous in the Instagram era.

Harouche told the court the trauma "forever" changed her friend, whom she's known since age 12, robbing her of a basic human right: freedom.

"She now has a completely different lifestyle," she said. "In terms of security, she can't go alone, she doesn't go alone to places anymore. To lose your sense of freedom ... it's horrible."

Kardashian's testimony is expected to recount how the attackers demanded her ring and left her fearing she would never see her children again.

David De Pas, the lead judge, asked Harouche whether Kardashian had made herself a target by posting images of herself with "jewels of great value."

"No," Harouche replied. "Just because a woman wears jewelry, that doesn't make her a target. That's like saying that because a woman wears a short skirt that she deserves to be raped."



Kim Kardashian arrives to testify regarding a robbery of millions of dollars in jewels from her Paris hotel room in 2016, in Paris, Tuesday, May 13. (AP)

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Rapper Tory Lanez was hospitalized after an attack Monday at a California prison where he's serving a 10-year sentence for shooting hip-hop star Megan Thee Stallion in the feet, authorities said.

Lanez, whose legal name is Daystar Peterson, was attacked at a housing unit at the California Correctional Institution in Tehachapi, at about 7:20 a.m., Pedro Calderon Michel, spokesman for the state Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, said in an email. Michel did not specify how Lanez was attacked, but a message posted on the rapper's Instagram account Monday evening said Lanez was stabbed 14 times



Lanez

'Hunger, acute starvation and illness'

Half a million people in Gaza face catastrophic situation, WHO warns

GENEVA, May 13, (KUNA): The World Health Organization (WHO) warned on Tuesday that the ongoing blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip by occupation forces could result in "one of the worst humanitarian crises since World War II" with nearly half a million people facing a "catastrophic situation of hunger, acute starvation and illness."

Speaking from Gaza during a press conference in Geneva, WHO representative in the occupied Palestinian territories Rik Peeperkorn said that more than 55 children have died due to complications from malnutrition and related illnesses since March 2, according to WHO reports.

He added that approximately 71,000 children under the age of five are at risk of acute malnutrition in the coming months and more than 17,000 breastfeeding mothers are facing serious health risks due to continued food shortages and lack of healthcare.

He warned of long-term effects of malnutrition including stunted growth in children cognitive impairments and a general deterioration in health.

Peeperkorn described the situation in Gaza as a "deadly spiral of food insecurity malnutrition a collapsing health



Raed Zaharna, (right), and his sister Sally sit in their family tent after their mother, Ward, returned empty-handed from trying to receive donated food at a community kitchen in Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip, Friday, May 9. (AP)

system scarce clean water and deteriorating sanitation services" emphasizing that "nine out of ten people" are unable to access safe drinking water.

The WHO representative also expressed concern over shortage of medical supplies stating that WHO warehouses in Gaza now hold enough



A patient infected with chikungunya looks out from mosquito netting at the Clinicas Hospital in San Lorenzo, Paraguay, March 3, 2023. (AP)

Listeria alert

Older US travelers advised against chikungunya shot

NEW YORK, May 13, (AP): The US government advised American travelers age 60 and older not get a chikungunya vaccine as it investigates possible side effects.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration posted notices late last week on the vaccine, Valneva's Ixchiq.

Chikungunya, spread by the bites of infected mosquitoes, is a debilitating tropical illness marked by fever and joint pain. About 100 to 200 cases are reported annually among U.S. travelers.

Last year, the government began recommending the vaccine, which is made with weakened chikungunya virus, to US adults who travel to countries where chikungunya is a problem.

But last month, a panel of vaccine experts who advise the CDC heard about an investigation into six people 65 and older - most of them with other medical problems - who became ill with heart or brain symptoms less than a week after vaccination. More than 10 other similar cases have been reported in people from other countries.

European regulators are also looking into the issue.

The US advisers voted to issue a

precaution for people 65 and older about getting the vaccine.

They also recommended that a second chikungunya vaccine - Bavarian Nordic's Vimkungya - be made available for people age 12 and older who are traveling to countries where outbreaks of the mosquito-borne illness are occurring. CDC officials have not yet announced whether they will accept those recommendations.

Listeria: A Listeria outbreak linked to ready-to-eat sandwiches and snacks has sickened at least 10 people in the US, and a producer is voluntarily recalling dozens of products sold to retail stores, hospitals, hotels, airports and airlines, federal officials said.

Those who fell ill and were hospitalized were in California and Nevada. The outbreak has been simmering for many months: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said cases date to December 2023.

Listeria poisoning is caused by a particularly resilient type of bacteria that can survive and grow even during refrigeration. About 1,600 people are infected with it - and 260 die - each year in the US, according to the CDC.

Skin cancer

Experts call for safe-sun habits

MIAMI, May 13, (AP): Coolibar, the world's leading UPF 50+ sun protection apparel brand, has partnered with skin cancer survivor and advocate Dayanara Torres and the Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF), the largest independent patient advocacy organization devoted to eradicating melanoma, to promote Skin Cancer Awareness Month this May.

Coolibar is committed to sun safety, skin cancer prevention, and early detection, aiming to reach and resonate with communities that are often unaware of their vulnerability to melanoma, one of the most serious types of skin cancer.

By showcasing beautifully designed sun-protective apparel, the campaign empowers individuals to protect themselves stylishly while setting an example of strength and self-love for future generations.

Melanoma

Launching this Mother's Day, Coolibar's campaign, led by Torres, redefines the traditional black ribbon of melanoma awareness with a bold "Coolibar-blue" ribbon. The blue symbolizes a layer of protection to communicate healing, joy, and a life lived boldly under the sun, blending emotional storytelling with Coolibar's modern UPF 50+ clothing offerings. By showcasing beautifully designed sun-protective apparel, the campaign empowers individuals to protect themselves stylishly while setting an example of strength and self-love for future generations.

Born in Puerto Rico, Dayanara Torres, a former Miss Universe, actress, TV host and stage-three melanoma survivor, serves as an inspiring advocate for skin cancer awareness, with a particular focus on educating communities of various shades and skin types about their risks.

Sunburns, inflammation, and infections risk

Avoid sun during peak hours: experts

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Head of the Dermatology Department at Amiri Hospital Dr. Mohammed Al-Otaibi stressed the importance of avoiding sun exposure during peak hours, from 10 am to 4 pm, due to the significant damage it can cause to the skin, reports Al-Rai daily.

He said this during an awareness event organized by the Dermatology Department at Amiri Hospital on the harmful effects of the sun during the summer months.

The event was attended by Head of the Medical Staff at Amiri Hospital Dr. Mohammed Al-Jarallah.

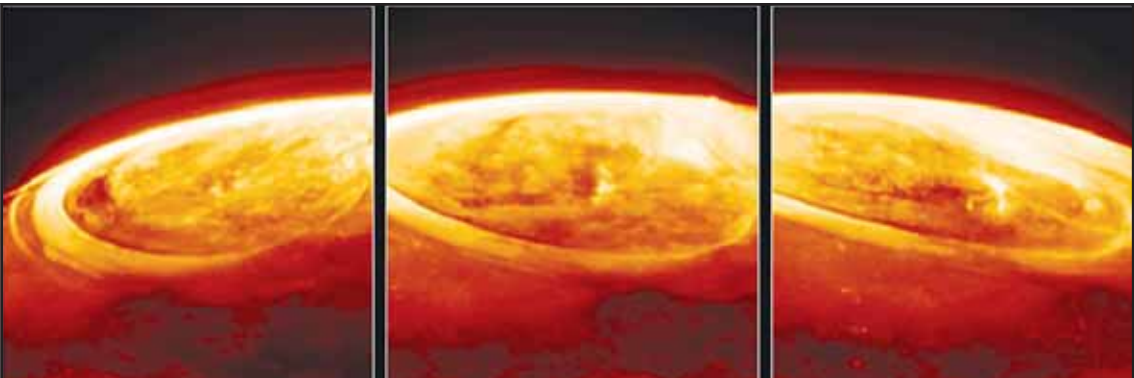
Dr. Al-Otaibi affirmed that the purpose of the awareness day was to educate patients and visitors about the

importance of sun protection, especially as temperatures rise.

He highlighted that more than 15 companies participated in the event and showcased products designed for sun protection.

Dr. Al-Otaibi outlined several harmful effects of sun exposure during the summer, including photosensitivity, sunburns, skin inflammation, fungal infections, and tinea versicolor.

He also elaborated on the risks associated with swimming pools and beaches, such as chlorine-related infections.



This image provided by NASA shows new details of the auroras on Jupiter captured by the James Webb Space Telescope. (AP)

Webb Telescope captures bright auroras on Jupiter

Jupiter's dazzling auroras are hundreds of times brighter than those seen on Earth, new images from the James Webb Space Telescope reveal.

The solar system's largest planet displays striking dancing lights when high-energy particles from space collide with atoms of gas in the atmosphere near its magnetic poles, similar to how the northern lights are triggered on Earth.

But Jupiter's version has much greater intensity, according to an international team of scientists who analyzed the photos from Webb taken on Christmas in 2023.

Webb previously captured Neptune's glowing auroras in the best detail yet, many decades after they were first faintly detected during a flyby of the Voyager 2 spacecraft. (AP)

The promise vs. reality of health tracking tools

Five essential tips for smartwatch users seeking better quality of life

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

By James Gilmore
Clemson University

Smartwatches and other wearable devices can feel almost magical. Strap on a Fitbit, Apple Watch or Samsung Gear and you're suddenly presented with a stream of data generated by - and about - your body: step counts, heart rate, blood oxygen level, calories burned and more.

Wearables offer tools that help people monitor and understand their bodies and, so the promise goes, improve their lives. Apple CEO Tim Cook has even said the technology company aspires to save your life.

As a professor who studies technology, I've spent the past decade researching smartwatches and other wearables. My new book, "Bringers of Order: Wearable Technologies and the Manufacturing of Everyday Life," considers the gap between what these products promise and what they actually do.

Wearables rely on complicated sets of sensors and computer systems to create data for each user. As these devices become more common - and more complex - I worry that people may be tempted to think less about how they work. As a result, they might accept data at face value without considering how it was generated, whether it's accurate, or even if it could put them at risk.

So to get the maximum value from wearable technologies, it's worth reflecting on the differences between what these devices seem to do and what's actually happening behind the screen. Here are a few key points to remember.

1. Steps aren't really steps

Wearable fitness trackers gained popularity in the early 2010s for their ability to count steps and measure things such as distance, calories burned and flights of stairs climbed. While it's tempting to think so-called step counts reflect the number of times a wearer's feet have completed the action of taking a step, that is not the case.

In reality, a combination of sensors and algorithms work together to produce a data point called "a step." In most instances, something called an accelerometer measures change in the wearable's velocity. This is checked against an algorithm, which provides an automatic assessment of whether enough velocity has been reached to count as a step. These

components measure how much the wearable moves, not the person. Shaking one's wrist very quickly can sometimes create a "step," while walking in place might not count steps.

2. Some skin tones don't 'work' as well as others

Blood oxygen sensors have become incorporated into many smartwatches. They use a process called photoplethysmography, which uses tiny green LED lights on the underside of a smartwatch to track how blood flows through your wrist.

In 2022, a lawsuit alleged Apple was perpetuating racial bias, as its blood oxygen sensors didn't work as well on darker skin. The case was dismissed, partly because these limitations of blood oxygen sensors have been known to researchers and medical practitioners for years.

3. Your location may not be a secret

There's an entire industry made up of people called data brokers who buy large datasets from technology companies and then sell them to advertisers, market analysts or other groups that may be interested in acquiring them.

While some companies have taken more steps to reduce or eliminate the sharing of data with third parties, and government agencies have offered strategies for users to limit location sharing, others may still share data among affiliates and service providers.

It's important to check all settings for options to reduce or eliminate data sharing. Otherwise, your private information might not remain private for long.

4. Wearables for consumers aren't medical grade

With wearables, as with other tech, it's important to look carefully at the terms of use.

Most devices include boilerplate language about how the data they provide the wearer should be used recreationally and not replace formal diagnostics from doctors. Even though Apple has received FDA clearance for some of its health testing features and they may be quite useful for monitoring purposes, if you're relying on data for health purposes, it's important to consult a doctor.

5. Wearables can't predict the future

OK, maybe this seems like it should be obvious. But it's not. Our Ring, which pioneered measurements such as "restfulness" that try to measure how well you sleep, recently added a "symptom radar" to try to detect when you might be getting sick.

These technologies use sensors such as heart rate monitors and thermometers to detect changes in a wearer's baseline. While these sickness forecasts may be helpful, they're like weather reports for the body, detecting changes in the body's internal atmosphere using available sensors and algorithms. (AP)

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‘Let the aura take over as we unite and celebrate the spirit of cricket’

Indian and Pakistan T20 Leagues resume after ceasefire

ISLAMABAD, May 13, (AP): The Pakistan Super League is set to resume this weekend after a ceasefire between Pakistan and India. The world’s most lucrative T20 league - the Indian Premier League - also announced the resumption of the tournament. The IPL will run from Saturday until June 3. “PSL X picks up from where it left off! 6 teams, 0 fear,” Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Mohsin Naqvi posted Tuesday on X. “Let the aura take over as we unite and celebrate the spirit of cricket,” he posted. “Get ready for 8 thrilling matches starting 17th May, leading up to the Grand Final on 25th May. Best of luck to all the teams!” Pakistan and India agreed to a truce last Saturday after talks to defuse their most serious military confrontation in

decades. The Pakistan-based Twenty20 league was suspended last Thursday after an Indian drone fell near the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, which was due to host a game featuring foreign players from Australia, England, South Africa, West Indies, New Zealand and Afghanistan. The organizers first proposed moving the tournament to Dubai but later decided to postpone it after foreign players showed their reluctance to participate in the tournament due to security concerns. Around 43 foreign cricketers - competing in six PSL teams - were flown out of Pakistan from an airbase in Rawalpindi. It was not clear how many foreign players will return to Pakistan for the remainder of eight games, which are likely

to be played at Rawalpindi and Lahore. Quetta Gladiators have already qualified for the playoffs and lead the standings with 13 points. Karachi Kings, Islamabad United, Lahore Qalandars and Peshawar Zalmi are in the running to fill the remaining three playoff spots. Multan Sultans, led by Mohammad Rizwan, are already out of playoff race after losing eight of their nine league games. IPL officials made the announcement, three days after the world’s richest Twenty20 league was suspended owing to military strikes by both countries at each other. No games will be lost. The Punjab Kings-Delhi Capitals game abandoned in Dharamsala in the 11th over on Thursday will be replayed. Chandigarh and Dharamsala, Punjab’s home and the near-

est venues to the border, have been ruled out for security and logistics reasons. Punjab will play its final two round-robin games in Jaipur. While the government has reopened 32 airports that were closed in India’s north-west corridor, the Board of Control for cricket in India is restricting the number of venues to six to be used when the IPL resumes. The final, originally scheduled for May 25, will be contested on June 3. The first two knockout matches will be on May 29 and 30. Qualifier 2 will be on June 1. The league will resume with Royal Challengers Bengaluru taking on Kolkata Knight Riders in Bengaluru. India superstar Virat Kohli will be in action for the first time since his test retirement announcement earlier.

Alcaraz sets up rematch with Draper in Italian Open last 8



Britain's Jack Draper returns a shot during a round of sixteen match against France's Corentin Moutet at the Italian Open tennis tournament in Rome. (AP)

Djokovic ends coaching partnership with Murray

ROME, May 13, (AP): Carlos Alcaraz was made to work for a 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 victory over Karen Khachanov that earned him a spot in the Italian Open quarterfinals on Tuesday and a rematch with Jack Draper - who beat him earlier this year.

Alcaraz saved two break points early in the third set then dropped his serve later on to waste an early break before improving to 5-0 in his career against the 24th-ranked Khachanov. “Physically I was struggling a little bit,” Alcaraz said. “Not any pain in any part of the body. I was just tired. I had to run a lot. I was really proud the way I fought (for) every ball.” The third-ranked Alcaraz wore a long black brace that covered the upper portion of his right leg and stretched down to just below his knee. Alcaraz withdrew from the Madrid Open last month due to an upper right leg ailment that bothered him during the Barcelona Open final. He also had a left leg injury. Alcaraz, who won the Monte Carlo



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz celebrates after defeating Russia's Karen Khachanov in a round of sixteen match at the Italian Open tennis tournament in Rome. (AP)

Masters in April, improved to 12-1 on clay this season. The four-time Grand Slam champion will next face No. 5 Draper, who rallied past Corentin Moutet 1-6, 6-4, 6-3 on the red clay courts of the Foro Italico. While Alcaraz holds a 3-2 career edge over Draper, the British player won their most recent meeting in the semifinals at Indian Wells, California,

in March. Alcaraz is playing the Italian Open for the second time. During the Spaniard’s debut last year, he lost to then-135th-ranked Hungarian qualifier Fabian Marozsan in the third round as he dealt with a bothersome right forearm issue. But Alcaraz then went on to win back-to-back Grand Slam titles at the

French Open and Wimbledon. Novak Djokovic is splitting with coach Andy Murray, just two weeks ahead of the French Open. Murray’s representatives said in a statement Tuesday that the two former No. 1-ranked players will “no longer be working together.” “Thanks to Novak for the unbelievable opportunity to work together and thanks to his team for all their hard work over the past six months,” Murray was quoted as saying. “I wish Novak all the best for the rest of the season.” Djokovic thanked Murray in a post on social media “for all the hard work, fun & support over last six months on & off the court.” “I really enjoyed deepening our friendship together,” Djokovic wrote. Djokovic and Murray joined forces ahead of the Australian Open in what initially was seen as an unlikely pairing. After Murray retired last year, Djokovic reached out with the coaching proposition. Djokovic said in February that Murray had agreed to stay on for an “indefinite” period, including “some clay-court tournaments” this season. Djokovic has yet to win a tournament this season, losing in the finals in Miami and Madrid to leave him one shy of 100th career title.

Course held in Singapore

Five Kuwaiti gymnastics referees earn international accreditation in Singapore

SINGAPORE, May 13: The Kuwait Gymnastics Federation announced that five of its national referees have successfully obtained international badges after passing the International Refereeing Studies Course held in Singapore under the supervision of the International Gymnastics Federation. The newly accredited international referees are Salah Askar, Mohammed Behbehani, Bader Al-Kandari, Hamad Al-Mousawi, and Haidar Al-Jaafar. In a congratulatory statement, the Federation praised the referees for their dedication and perseverance throughout the course, expressing pride in their achievement. It hailed the success as a significant milestone for Kuwaiti gymnastics and reaffirmed its ongoing commitment to developing the sport and empowering its members to represent Kuwait on the global stage.



International gymnastics referees.

World Test Champ’ship final

Cummins and Green set to return for Australia

BRISBANE, Australia, May 13, (AP): Pace bowlers Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood and allrounder Cameron Green have been recalled from injury and young batter Sam Konstas has been retained in Australia’s squad for the World Test Championship final against South Africa next month. Australia is the defending WTC champion and finished the league stage with an away win over Sri Lanka after a home series victory against India. “Those series capped a consistent performance across the two-year cycle and now presents us with the incredibly exciting opportunity to defend the World Test Championship,” Australia’s chief selector George Bailey said in a statement Tuesday. “It means a lot to the group to reach the final and they are very much looking forward to the challenge South Africa will present at Lord’s.” The same squad will head to the Caribbean for a three-test series against the West Indies following the June 11-15 WTC final. Green hasn’t played international cricket since September because of back surgery, but the 25-year-old allrounder is making a graduated return and currently batting at county level in England. Skipper Cummins missed the two-test series in Sri Lanka with an injured ankle and Hazlewood hasn’t played a test since developing a side strain in November, early in the series against India. Both veteran pacemen have been playing in the Indian Premier League, which was suspended last week because of the border tension between India and Pakistan but is set to resume this weekend. “We are fortunate and looking forward to having Pat, Josh and Cam back in the squad,” Bailey said. Opening batter Konstas made an impressive debut against India with a half-century in the Boxing Day test in Melbourne but was dropped ahead of the subsequent tour to Sri Lanka. Australia Squad: Pat Cummins (captain), Scott Boland, Alex Carey, Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Usman Khawaja, Sam Konstas, Matt Kuhnemann, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Beau Webster.

Best of the Rest

CAS rejects appeal from players: Sport’s highest court rejected an appeal by five Uruguay players against their bans for clashing with fans after a Copa America semifinal in North Carolina last year, dismissing their claim that they acted in self defense to protect their families. Five Uruguay players, including Liverpool forward Darwin Núñez, Barcelona defender Ronald Araújo and Atletico Madrid defender José María Giménez, were banned for between three and five games by South American soccer body CONMEBOL after the brawl. The players had clashed with fans in the stands at Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte after a 1-0 loss to Colombia last July. Tottenham midfielder Rodrigo Bentancur and Napoli defender Mathías Olivera also were involved and later banned. The Court of Arbitration for Sport said Tuesday its judges dismissed appeals by the players and the Uruguayan soccer federation.(AP)

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Pachuca wins first Femenil title: Pachuca won its first Liga MX Femenil Apertura championship 3-2 on aggregate over America despite a 2-0 loss in the return leg on Monday. Irene Guerrero, a midfielder who plays for Spain’s national team, and striker Scarlett Camberos scored goals for America but it wasn’t quite enough for the Aguilas to overcome a 3-0 deficit from the first leg of the final series. Pachuca had lost in its three previous appearances in finals series, in the Apertura 17 and the Clausura 2022 and ’23 tournaments. “It was fundamental to have won at home. We did not come here to defend the lead, but America played great and pushed us,” said Pachuca’s goalkeeper Esthefanny Barreras, who was voted the Player of the Match. “It’s a nice and historic moment to win the first title for us.” The women’s professional league in Mexico played its first season in 2017 and it has kept growing in popularity. America was trying to capture its third title. The Mexico City based team has lost four of the last six finals series. (AP)

Brazil squad mired in trouble as time ticks for new coach before the 2026 World Cup

SAO PAULO, May 13, (AP): Carlo Ancelotti faces myriad problems as Brazil coach and only about a dozen games to deal with them before the World Cup if he wants to have a decent shot at the 2026 title. The initial challenges will be solving the defensive woes, bolstering the midfield and fielding a lineup that won’t be over-reliant on Neymar, who has been struggling with injuries. Brazil’s soccer confederation on Monday said the 65-year-old Italian will leave Real Madrid one year before the end of his contract and take over Brazil’s national team on May 26, the day after the final round of the Spanish league. Details of the deal were not released. “Ancelotti’s impact goes beyond results; he is a strategist who turns teams into legends. Brazil, with its unique tradition, and Ancelotti, with his revolutionary vision, will make a partnership that will go down in history,” CBF President Ednaldo Rodrigues said. “He is the greatest coach in history and, now, he will be in charge of the biggest national team on the planet.” Rodrigues’ optimism doesn’t entirely ring true for those who’ve watched Brazil over the last two years. Ancelotti’s first challenge will be reigniting belief

in a squad sitting fourth in South American World Cup qualifying after a heavy 4-1 loss at archrival Argentina. After a series of poor performances Dorival Júnior was fired as coach, just like his predecessors Ramon Menezes and Fernando Diniz. Ancelotti’s tenure reportedly has already started in conversations with two key Brazil players of the previous World Cup campaigns: Neymar, still recovering at Santos following his ACL tear, and Manchester United midfielder Casemiro. There’s no standout successor to either player in the national setup. If Ancelotti wants to bring the pair of 33-year-old veterans back into the squad, he’ll need gameplans to play with and without them. Brazil’s creative midfield is also an issue, which has frustrated the team’s several top strikers. Lucas Paquetá, who seemed set to take that position in the starting line up, is facing charges by English soccer authorities amid allegations he had deliberately received cards during Premier League matches to influence betting markets. Paquetá denies any wrongdoing. Other players tested in that role, including Madrid’s Rodrygo, Fullham’s Andreas Pereira, Flamengo’s Gerson, haven’t so far delivered performances

to reassure fans. That lack of a high performing creative midfield has limited the scoring ability of strikers Vinicius Júnior, Raphinha, Matheus Cunha, and Endrick. Brazil’s defensive midfield is also expected to be an issue for Ancelotti - hence the call to veteran Casemiro, with whom he won several titles at Madrid. Newcastle’s Bruno Guimarães and Joelinton were the latest attempt for a change. There’s other players who could take that role but no clear choices for Brazil. Ancelotti will have to go looking. Brazil’s defensive woes are shocking compared with the six years under coach Tite, between 2016 and 2022. The Selecao has conceded 31 goals in 25 matches since Qatar. That is one more than in 81 matches under Tite. Even if the team’s stars don’t deliver, Ancelotti’s performance will be judged by how he fixes Brazil’s defense, as he has done in the clubs where he’s worked. Unlike Brazil’s attacking force, which has several top players and some good options for the bench, the team’s defense has lacked talent at right- and left-back for years. None of the players tested since 2022 have echoed Brazil’s tradition in those positions of attacking players who also know how to block opponents.

Company congratulates Kuwait SC on winning Zain Premier League for 20th time in its history

Zain proud strategic partner of KFA in driving the growth of local sports



The moment Kuwait SC was crowned Zain Premier League champions.



Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef and Waleed Al-Khashti crown the champions in the presence of Marzouq Al-Ghanim and Khalid Al-Ghanim.

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Zain participated in the crowning ceremony of Kuwait Sports Club as champions of the Zain Premier League (Dawri Zain) for the 2024/2025 football season, held on the sidelines of the final match of the Championship Group stage at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium.

The crowning of the champions was joined by the Chairman of the Kuwait Football Association, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, Zain Kuwait's Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer, Waleed Al-Khashti, the Honorary President of Kuwait SC, Marzouq Al-Ghanim, Club President Khalid Al-Ghanim, club board members, and officials from both Zain and the KFA.

Zain congratulated the players, management, and fans of Kuwait SC on securing the league title for the fourth consecutive year, reaffirming their status as the most decorated club in the history of the Kuwait Premier League with a total of 20 titles. The club clinched the championship during the final round of the Championship Group by defeating Al-Arabi SC 2-1.

Zain also congratulated Al-Arabi SC for securing second place and Qadisia SC for achieving third place, expressing its appreciation to all participating teams for demonstrating high sportsmanship and delivering a season full of excitement that entertained thousands of fans and followers.

This crowning comes as part of Zain's strategic partnership with the Kuwait Football Association, under which the company serves as the official



A season full of competition and excitement.

■ Zain extends thanks to all teams for an exciting season filled with strong competition and great sportsmanship that delighted fans

sponsor of the Association's activities and tournaments for the 2022–2026 seasons. The partnership includes support to the Zain Premier League (Dawri Zain), the Zain First Division League, HH the Amir's Cup, and HH the Crown Prince's Cup.

As the official sponsor of the KFA's activities, Zain offers seasonal prizes to players and fans, with a total value exceeding KD 60,000 per season — the highest prize value in the history of the Kuwaiti league. The company is currently preparing for its annual Excellence Awards ceremony to honor the top players and athletes of the season.

Zain firmly believes in the key role the Kuwaiti private sector plays in supporting youth and sports, and in encouraging athletes to excel and elevate Kuwait's name on both regional and international stages. The company continues to fulfill this role through its consistent presence in supporting and sponsoring major sporting events and local athletes.

Thrilling day of sportsmanship, energy, and women's empowerment

Kerala Tuskers clinch victory at KEA Ladies Throwball Tournament

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: The KEA Ladies Throwball League (KTL) 2025, held at Fahaheel Sports Club, delivered a thrilling day of sportsmanship, energy, and women's empowerment. Four formidable teams - Kerala Tuskers, Yelliminators, Beta House, and Venad Warriors – battled it out in a spirited contest.

In a gripping finale, Kerala Tuskers emerged as champions, defeating a determined Yelliminators side. One of the most intense matches of the day was the virtual semifinal between Beta House and Yelliminators, decided by a nail-biting one-point margin.

The tournament was inaugurated with a welcome address by Joint Secretary Mr. Steephen Podi Kunju, followed by the presidential address by Mr. Ebey Samuel, in the presence of KEF GC, GCD, and Alumni Presidents. A historic moment came with the first-ever ceremonial Throw Off by the First Ladies of KEF, adding a symbolic and celebratory start to the day.

The following players were honored with different titles after the finals:

Player of the Tournament: Jancy (Kerala Tuskers)

Best Server: Raheena Kamal (Venad Warriors)

Most Promising Player: Serin (Kerala Tuskers)

The event was marked by exceptional coordination from Sports Sec-



Participants pose for a group photo after the closing ceremony.

retaries Mr. Siby Thomas and Mrs. Athira Ajay, with vital support from Commissioner Mrs. Lintha, First Lady Auctioneer Mrs. Swapna, dedicated referees, volunteers, and the proactive EC-27 team.

Backed by the KEF community and alumni support, KTL 2025 reaffirmed KEA's commitment to promoting women's sports, community bonding, and inclusive participation. As the flagship women's event under KEA, it continues to inspire involvement, build connections, and create joyful, family-friendly memories.

KEA looks forward to many more such events under the KEF banner, championing fitness, friendship, and a stronger sense of togetherness.

Atalanta qualifies for CL as Venezia edges toward safety

Lookman nets 15th league goal

BERGAMO, Italy, May 13, (AP): Atalanta beat Roma 2-1 and secured a third-place finish in Serie A and a place in next year's Champions League.

The victory moved the Bergamo club seven points clear of Juventus and Lazio with only two rounds remaining. The top four qualify automatically for next season's Champions League.

Nigeria international Ademola Lookman put Atalanta ahead in the ninth minute with his 15th league goal.

Former Atalanta midfielder Bryan Cristante leveled with a header before halftime.

The clincher came from Ibrahim Sulemana. All was not lost for Roma. The capital club was sixth, one point behind Juventus and Lazio.

Venezia beat Fiorentina 2-1 and took a giant step towards securing its Serie A status for another year.

It rose out of the relegation zone and into fourth-from-last place. The last three teams go down and with two matches left to play Venezia holds its destiny in its own hands.

It is a point above Lecce and Empoli, and its two final games are at Cagliari and at home to Juventus.

Fali Cande on the hour mark and Gaetano



Atalanta's Odilon Kossounou, left, Roma's Artem Dovbyk, right, challenge for the ball during the Serie A soccer match between Atalanta Bergamo and AS Roma in Bergamo, Italy. (AP)

Oristanio eight minutes later put Venezia in the driving seat at Stadio Pierluigi Penzo. Rolando Mandragora pulled a goal back for the visitor with 13 minutes remaining.

The result was a massive blow to Fiorentina's hopes of securing European football next season. It remained ninth, three places and four points outside the European spots.

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NBA Deputy Commissioner Mark Tatum announces that the Dallas Mavericks won the first pick in the NBA basketball draft lottery in Chicago. (AP)

Sports

Saudi Crown Prince meets Al-Ahli after AFC Champions League win



Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud holds the Asian Champions League trophy as sports officials and Al-Ahli players look on.

RIYADH, May 13: Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud received, in Jeddah, Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al-Faisal, Minister of Sports and President of the Saudi Olympic and Paralympic Committee; Yasser Al-Mishehal, President of the Saudi Arabian Football Federation; Khalid Al-Ghamdi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al-Ahli Club; along with members of the technical and administrative staff and players of the football team. The meeting was held in celebration of Al-Ahli Club's triumph in the

2025 AFC Champions League. The Crown Prince congratulated the club's officials and players on this significant national accomplishment and praised their exceptional performance, which reflects the remarkable progress of the Kingdom's sports sector. He emphasized the importance of maintaining this momentum and continuing to work hard to elevate Saudi Arabia's presence and reputation on the global stage.

Wolves, Knicks take 3-1 leads

Tatum injured in final minutes

SAN FRANCISCO, May 13, (AP): Anthony Edwards scored 30 points for his second straight 30-point performance, Julius Randle had 31 points and the Minnesota Timberwolves beat the Golden State Warriors 117-110 on Monday night for a 3-1 lead in their Western Conference play-off series.

Now, it's back home to Minneapolis for the Wolves with a chance to clinch the best-of-seven Western Conference semifinal series in Game 5 on Wednesday night.

The Warriors will still be without Stephen Curry, who sat out his third game in a row and is scheduled to have his strained left hamstring re-evaluated that day.

Edwards made consecutive 3-pointers and scored 11 total points in a decisive 17-0 Minnesota run that put the Timberwolves ahead 85-68 late in the third. They led 97-77 going into the fourth and the Warriors couldn't catch up.

Edwards - coming off a 36-point performance in a Game 3 - hit a 30-foot 3 to beat the halftime buzzer and pull Minnesota within 60-58 at the break. And the Wolves delivered in the second half again after also trailing by two points at halftime in a 102-97 victory in Game 3.

Jonathan Kuminga came off the bench to score 23 points and convert 11 of 12 free throws for the Warriors, following up his 30-point performance in Game 3 with another gem.

Knicks 121, Celtics 113

In New York, Jalen Brunson and the New York Knicks had just taken control of the game with another fourth-quarter kick when Jayson Tatum fell to the court with a potentially severe right leg injury.

The specifics of Tatum's injury are uncertain but the situation in the Eastern Conference semifinals is clear.

The Knicks need one more victory to reach the conference finals for the first time in 25 years. The Celtics need to match the biggest comeback in NBA history to extend their title reign.

Brunson had 39 points and 12 assists, and the Knicks pushed the defending champions to the brink of elimination with a 121-113 vic-



Minnesota Timberwolves guard Anthony Edwards (5) shoots against Golden State Warriors forward Trayce Jackson-Davis (32) during the second half of Game 4 in the Western Conference semifinals of the NBA basketball playoffs in San Francisco. (AP)

tory Monday night in Game 4. Blown out in Game 3, the Knicks dominated the second half to become the first home team to win in this series.

The Celtics will have to make the NBA's 14th comeback from a 3-1 deficit and may have to do it without Tatum, who was carried off the court with a right leg injury with 2:58 left.

Mikal Bridges and Karl-Anthony Towns each added 23 points and OG Anunoby bounced back from two poor performances by scoring 20 for the Knicks, who can win the series Wednesday night at Boston. If not, they would come back to Madison Square Garden to try to do it Friday night.

"We have to turn that page quickly and do our first job, which is win on Wednesday. That's the mindset," Celtics veteran Al Horford said. "As a group, we just have to rally together because obviously we've lost our leader, the guy that gets us going."

Tatum scored 42 points, his high in these playoffs, before he was hurt when the Celtics turned the ball over and his leg gave out as he tried to lunge forward toward the loose ball.

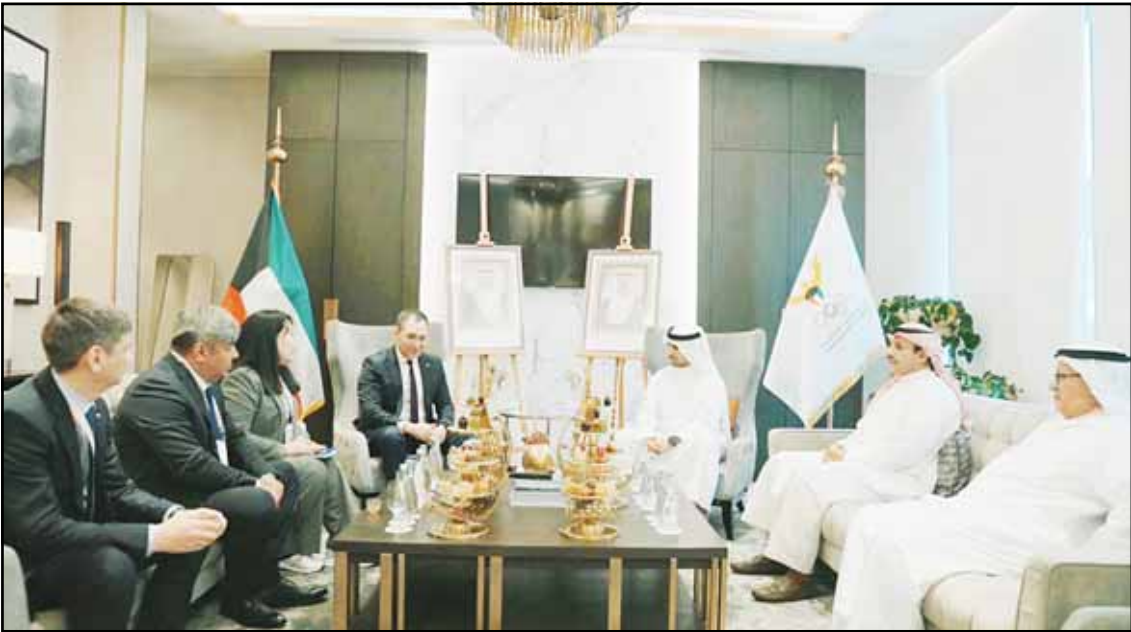
Nobody has come from 3-1 down since Denver did it twice in 2020 at the Walt Disney World resort. It hasn't happened when a team had to win a true road game since Cleveland rallied past Golden State in the 2016 NBA Finals.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Nasser meets key sports figures during OCA GA

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Sheikh Fahad Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad, President of the Kuwait Olympic Committee, welcomed several prominent sports officials and figures on the sidelines of the 45th General Assembly of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), held in Kuwait.

Among the distinguished guests received were Li Jing, Vice President of the Chinese Olympic Committee; Mahmoud Khosravi-Wafa, President of the Iranian Olympic Committee; Chen Weiqing, Secretary-General of the Asian Games Organizing Committee and Vice Mayor of Hangzhou, China; Vladimir Maksimov, President of the Children of Asia Organization; Sherzad Asatullayev, Vice President; along with their accompanying delegation.

The meetings focused on key sports programs and initiatives, while also exploring avenues for enhanced collaboration between the Kuwait Olympic Committee and regional counterparts. Discussions aimed to strengthen Kuwait's role in the Olympic movement and reinforce its presence on the international sports stage.



Sheikh Fahad Al-Nasser meets Asian leaders on the sidelines of the 45th General Assembly of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) in Kuwait.

Also present at the meetings were Sheikh Mubarak Faisal Al-Nawaf, Vice President of the Com-

mittee; Captain Ali Al-Marri, Assistant Secretary; Board Member Fatima Hayat; and Sheikh Bibi

Salem Al-Sabah, Member of the Women's Sports Committee of the Kuwait Olympic Committee.

Sulaibikhat wins First Division Volleyball League title

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 13: Saad Ennad, Chairman of the Board of Directors at Sulaibikhat Club, expressed his pride and joy following the first volleyball team's triumph in clinching the First Division League title.

The "Red North" secured the championship in dramatic fashion, edging out Al-Nasr 3-2 in a thrilling final-round clash held at the Federation Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex. In the same round, Al-Sahel defeated Al-Tadamon 3-2.

Sulaibikhat topped the league standings with 21 points, followed by Al-Nasr with 19. Al-Yarmouk placed third with 11 points, Al-Sahel came fourth with 8, and Al-Tadamon finished without any points.

The league's closing ceremony was attended by prominent sports figures, including Kuwait Volleyball Federation President Dr. Jaber Al-Marri, Assistant Secretary

Nayef Al-Khamili, Sulaibikhat Club President Saad Ennad, Club Secretary Nasser Mansi, and Al-Nasr Club President Khaled Al-Sharida.

Ennad praised his players' fighting spirit, describing it as a trademark of the Sulaibikhat squad. He announced that financial rewards will be granted to the team for their championship win, along with plans to organize an overseas training camp in preparation for the next season.

He extended his gratitude to the players, coaching staff, and administrative team for their efforts, and revealed that the club is in talks with the Kuwait Volleyball Federation to nominate Sulaibikhat for participation in an international tournament — whether in the Gulf, West Asia, or the Arab region.

The team is coached by Egyptian tactician Mohamed Mahran, with fellow countryman Ahmed Refaat serving as technical director.



The victorious Sulaibikhat team celebrates with the league title.

Sheffield routs Bristol to reach Championship playoff final

SHEFFIELD, England, May 13, (AP): Sheffield United eased past Bristol City 3-0 on Monday to qualify for the final of the Championship playoff.

Kieffer Moore's headed goal four minutes before halftime and another from Gus Hamer after the break killed the game off. A simple finish from Callum O'Hare late on confirmed Sheffield's dominance in what was a 6-0 aggregate triumph after their 3-0 win at Ashton Gate last week.

The Black Cats are favorites to

meet Sheffield in the final at Wembley on May 25 after winning the first leg 2-1 in Coventry last Friday.

Sheffield was relegated from the top tier 12 months ago. Sunderland was last in the Premier League in 2017, while Coventry has been absent from the top division since 2001.

A return to the top tier ensures promoted clubs an estimated revenue uplift of around \$180 million in projected matchday, broadcast and commercial revenue - and much more if they survive the first season back.

The playoff winner will join Leeds and Burnley in replacing relegated sides Southampton, Leicester City and Ipswich.

Nottingham Forest striker Taiwo Awoniyi has undergone "urgent" surgery on an injury that was the subject of a heavily debated on-field discussion between the club's manager and owner after a Premier League game at the weekend.

The Nigeria international was injured when colliding with the goal frame after coming on as a second-

half substitute during the 2-2 draw against Leicester on Sunday.

Forest didn't say Tuesday for how long it expects Awoniyi to be sidelined. The team has two games left in the Premier League - at West Ham and at home to Chelsea - as it seeks to qualify for the Champions League.

After the game against Leicester, Forest owner Evangelos Marinakis entered the field and remonstrated with manager Nuno Espirito Santo.

Espirito Santo said Marinakis was frustrated because of a miscommunication between the bench and medi-

cal staff after the injury to Awoniyi.

After receiving treatment, the striker signaled he was OK to continue so Espirito Santo left him on and immediately made his final substitution, taking off Elliot Anderson for Jota Silva in the first minute of stoppage time.

However, Awoniyi was in discomfort for the rest of the game, effectively leaving Forest down to 10 players and hampering its hopes of a winner.

Marinakis relinquished his position as a person with significant con-

trol of Forest in recent weeks as the club closed in on unlikely Champions League qualification.

UEFA has rules to bar clubs from its competitions in any season if owners have "decisive influence" over two clubs which qualify. Marinakis is also president of Olympiacos, which has qualified as Greek champion.

With two rounds of the season to go, Forest is seventh - one point behind fifth-placed Chelsea. The top five will qualify for the Champions League.