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Minister of Justice affirmed during an interview that the consensus on Kuwait's report in Geneva reflects the achievements the country has made

Minister Al-Sumait: We will not compromise on human rights

- We are racing against time to achieve the lofty goals set for the government when it was sworn in.
- We are working day and night to make Kuwait a leader in human rights, and this requires tremendous effort.
- The Human Rights Council issued recommendations, and Kuwait fulfilled them before the session.
- The highest directives always emphasize guaranteeing the rights of everyone without any prejudice.
- Harming people's reputation and undermining the position of those in power are red lines that cannot be tolerated.



Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait

- Freedom of opinion and expression has been protected in Kuwait on clear foundations for centuries, not decades.
- Some legislation issued long ago is currently being amended.
- We are considering repealing the article related to bounced checks to eliminate criminalization and imprisonment.
- Serious steps are under consideration regarding the 'cancellation of sponsorship' file that do not affect sovereignty or deprive workers.
- Yes, there are new crimes, unprecedented in Kuwait that require deterrent legislation.

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: "Human rights in Kuwait are protected under the Constitution and existing laws. New legislation is being developed to ensure that Kuwait remains a pioneer, as it has long been," said Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait in an exclusive interview.

He expressed his satisfaction with the unanimous approval of Kuwait's national report during the recent session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, which was attended by representatives from approximately 115 member states.

Minister Al-Sumait said, "The unanimous approval of Kuwait's fourth national report reflects the extent of progress made recently, especially within the short tenure of the current govern-

ment, regarding important issues included in the report, particularly those concerning citizenship, and civil and human rights, which Kuwait will never compromise.

Kuwait succeeded in fulfilling the Human Rights Council's recommendations ahead of the final session. The country is currently working to develop legislation related to other recommendations, in line with the directives of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who always emphasizes the importance of ensuring that everyone enjoys their rights without discrimination.

Kuwait has taken note of the Human Rights Council's observations regarding freedom of opinion and expression. It is well known that media and expression freedoms are fully guaranteed in Kuwait under existing laws. However, there are red lines that cannot be crossed, such as

harming individuals' reputations or offending His Highness the Amir. Kuwait does not allow anything that contradicts Islamic law or is otherwise prohibited by law. Aside from these exceptions, freedom of opinion and expression is protected in Kuwait, and is based on firm and longstanding foundations that date back centuries, not merely decades.

Work is currently underway to amend some outdated laws, particularly those related to financial issues, most notably, the penalties for issuing bounced checks. There is an ongoing effort to either repeal or amend the relevant article to protect the human rights of individuals involved, including abolishing criminalization and imprisonment, as these are seen as restrictions on personal freedom.

The report also includes guarantees that the civil rights and freedom of work for individuals whose citizenship has been revoked will not be affected.

Measures are being taken in this regard under the directives of the supreme leadership. His Highness the Amir is keen about ensuring that no one is subjected to injustice. This matter is being closely and directly followed by His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, and His Highness the Prime Minister.

Kuwait has recently seen the emergence of new types of crimes that were not seen previously, and these require firm and effective legislation. For this reason, we are working with the relevant institutions to draft practical laws that reflect current realities as well as uphold human rights."

Regarding the Human Rights Council's recommendation to abolish the sponsorship (kafala) system, Minister Al-Sumait said, "Serious steps are being taken in that direction. These efforts aim to preserve national sovereignty, as well

as ensure workers enjoy their full rights, and to support the development of commercial, industrial, and service sectors."

Minister Al-Sumait affirmed that positive steps have already been taken in response to the Human Rights Council's recommendation to strengthen legislation for combating domestic violence and to intensify efforts against intolerance, prejudice, and discrimination, particularly toward foreigners.

He added that a great deal of work is ongoing to meet the objectives of these recommendations.

Minister Nasser Al-Sumait concluded by stressing that, "We are working tirelessly to position Kuwait as a leader in the field of human rights. This mission requires great effort, and we are racing against time to meet the high standards and goals set by His Highness the Amir for the government upon taking the Constitutional oath."



PM Diwan photo

Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting on Thursday.
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Kuwait's tax vacuum hurts future stability

Curb waste, grow revenues: expert

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Dr. Jumana Al-Sayrafi, an expert in public financial laws and tax legislation at the College of Law in Kuwait University, emphasized the importance of diversifying sources of income in light of regional and global economic changes.

Al-Sayrafi pointed out to the newspaper in a recent interview that "financial sustainability is emerging as a national necessity, not just an option; especially since Kuwait relies on oil for more than 85 percent of its public revenue. At the same time, ensuring long-term financial stability requires a radical shift in economic policies that enhance the State's ability to fulfill its obligations and prevent the burden from being passed on to future generations."

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Solar shift fuels green goals

Kuwait's sun-driven production powers 16m gas cylinders a year

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kuwait Oil Tankers Company (KOTC) Sheikh Khaled Al-Sabah has announced that Kuwait is now producing 16 million gas cylinders annually using solar energy through the Umm Al-Aish and Shuaiba plants, which have a combined production capacity of seven megawatts without using electricity from the national power grid.

This is considered a significant move

towards using solar energy to generate electricity in order to reduce reliance on electricity loads.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony for the conversion of production in both plants to solar power, Sheikh Khaled Al-Sabah affirmed that this step is in line with the strategic plan of the country to reduce carbon emissions and achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. He described the project as a vital part of the ongoing effort to reduce reliance on conventional energy and limit environmental impact.

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Newswatch

DOHA: President Donald Trump said Thursday that the United States and Iran have "sort of" agreed to terms on a nuclear deal, offering a measure of confidence that an accord is coming into sharper focus.

Trump, in an exchange with reporters at a business roundtable in Doha, Qatar, described the talks between American envoy Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi as "very serious negotiations" for "long-term peace" and were continuing to progress.

Still, throughout his visit with Arab Gulf leaders this week, the president has underscored that military action against Iran's nuclear facilities remains a possibility if the talks derail.

"Iran has sort of agreed to the terms: They're not going to make, I call it, in a friendly way, nuclear dust," Trump said at the business event. "We're not going to be making any nuclear dust in Iran." (AP)

20 years ... countless wins

Kuwaiti women drive 60% of gov't workforce: Al-Huwailah

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: "Kuwaiti women have proven over the past two decades that they are a fundamental pillar of national development, achieving remarkable successes that have placed them at the forefront of excellence and benevolence," says Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah.

Al-Huwailah made the statement at the Kuwaiti Women's Day celebration, organized by the Ministry of Social Affairs at the St. Regis

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KUNA photo

Kuwait's Minister of Social Affairs and Minister of Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah attends the Kuwaiti Women's Day event titled 'Strategies for Supporting Kuwaiti Women According to Sustainable Development Goal 5,' alongside fellow dignitaries.

Panel urges online submission as grievances climb

Over 14,000 file appeals on citizenship revocations

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Chairman of the Cabinet's Grievance Committee for Withdrawal, Revocation, and Loss of Kuwaiti Citizenship Counsellor Ali Al-Dhubaibi announced that the committee has received 14,360 grievances from the start of the submission period up to Wednesday, May 14, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He told the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that the grievance submission period is 60 days, starting from Sunday, May 4.

Al-Dhubaibi explained that the committee continues to accept grievances throughout the week, including official holidays, to ensure the process remains accessible and convenient for all.

It reviewed a presentation submitted by its secretariat, which included an overview of the submitted grievances, compiled statistics, and the measures taken to review the grievances submitted through the committee's electronic portal.

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Kuwaitis among top tourists

Tourism sector powers Oman's economic diversification: envoy

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: "The tourism sector is one of the pillars and drivers of economic diversification in the Sultanate of Oman, in accordance with Oman Vision 2040," says Am-

bassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Kuwait Saleh Al-Kharousi.

Al-Kharousi made the statement at a press conference held Thursday in cooperation with the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism and Dhofar

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Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Kuwait Saleh Al-Kharousi (third from left) addresses attendees at a press conference held Thursday.

8 Gulf Bank announces Platinum Sponsorship of the third Kuwait Public Private Partnership Conference

8 NREC reports a net profit of KD 1.2 million for Q1/2025



9 KIPCO reports a net profit of KD 5.1 million for Q1 2025

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:27	Asr	15:20
Sunrise ..	04:56	Maghrib ..	18:31
Zohr	11:44	Isha	20:00

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Hot with light to moderate freshening at times north-westerly wind, with speeds of 15-50 km/h causing rising dust and some scattered clouds will appear.

Weather
By Night: Rather hot weather with light to moderate freshening at times over coastal areas northwesterly wind, with speeds ranging from 15-50 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait Airport	41	24
Abdaly	42	26
Jahra	42	28
Salmiyah	37	29
Jal Aliyah	41	27
Nuwaisib	40	25
Wafra	40	21

Kuwait Amir congratulates UAE Prez. on assumption of power anniversary

KUWAIT CITY, May 15, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of congratulations to the President of the UAE Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, on the third anniversary of his assumption of power.

His Highness the Amir lauded the historical deep-rooted ties between the two countries.

His Highness applauded

the UAE's developmental achievements in all fields, wishing Sheikh Mohammad a long healthy life and more development and prosperity for the UAE under his leadership.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of congratulations to the President of the UAE Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, on the third anni-



HH the Amir



HH the Crown Prince



HH the PM

versary of his assumption of power.

His Highness the Crown Prince lauded the historical

deep-rooted ties between the two countries.

His Highness applauded the UAE's developmental achievements in all fields, wishing Sheikh Mohammad a long healthy life and more development and prosperity for the UAE under his leadership.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah then sent a cable of congratulations

to the President of the UAE Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, on the third anniversary of his assumption of power.

His Highness the Crown Prince also lauded the historical deep-rooted ties between the two countries.

His Highness wished Sheikh Mohammad a long healthy life and more development and prosperity for the UAE under his leadership.



A group photo of the guests at the luncheon.



Editor-in-Chief of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah pictured with Abdulaziz Al-Ghannam.



Ahmed Al-Jarallah and Abdulaziz Al-Ghannam exchange pleasantries.



Sheikh Ali Al-Jaber Al-Sabah talks to the renowned businessman Abdulaziz Al-Ghannam.

Businessman Al-Ghannam hosts guests of IOMS organized international confab

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Businessman Abdulaziz Al-Ghannam hosted a luncheon in honor of the guests of the 17th International Conference, organized recently by the Islamic Organization for Medical Sciences (IOMS) with the theme, "Genetic Imprinting and Gene Editing in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: An Islamic Perspective."

Kuwait hosted the conference under the patronage of His Highness the Crown

Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah.

The luncheon was held at Al-Ghannam's diwaniya in Abdullah Al-Salem District, with a number of prominent scientific and religious figures in attendance, as well as members of the conference delegations representing an elite group of experts and specialists in the fields of Biomedicine, Islamic Jurisprudence and Medical Ethics from various Islamic countries.

Speaking at the event, IOMS President Dr. Mohammad Al-Jarallah affirmed that the conference is an important scientific platform for discussing the latest developments in the fields of genetic engineering and artificial intelligence in line with the Islamic values and principles.

He said the participants include influential figures like scientists, thinkers and decision-makers.

'Economy, free trade, investment basis of partnership with the US'

Cabinet reviews Amir's speech at Gulf-US Summit

KUWAIT CITY, May 15, (KUNA): The Cabinet held its regular weekly meeting on Thursday chairmanship of the Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah, re-examining His Highness the Amir's speech at the Saudi-hosted Gulf-US Summit, largely devoted to the strategic alliance with the United States of America.

Following the session, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheridah Abdullah Al-Mousherji stated that the Cabinet praised the statement by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah during the Gulf-US Summit, in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday, where His Highness expressed deep gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud for the elaborate welcome arrangements and the generous hospitality.

The ministers expressed sincere admiration of the distinctive arrangements for holding the Summit,



The Cabinet session in progress.

masterminded by the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud and gratitude to US President Donald Trump for his keen concern to meet leaders of Arabian Gulf Cooperation Council member states for bolstering cooperation within the framework of the mutual partnership, for the joint vision of a future predominated by peace, stability and development.

The Cabinet statement, citing some main excerpts of His Highness the Amir's speech at the Gulf-US Summit, quoted him as indicating that the economy is a basis of the partnership with the US, expressing aspiration to launch joint initiatives for investment

in the smart infrastructure, support innovation, business leadership, as well as boosting fair free trade, stimulating small and medium enterprises, while lauding the existing cooperation between Kuwait and the US in investments, hoping to increase the volume of investments with the US as a strategic ally for Kuwait.

Citing more details in his speech, the Cabinet statement noted that His Highness affirmed Kuwait's commitment to act within the GCC framework for attaining common GCC-US goals through understandings that aim at attaining the GCC states' peoples.

On regional challenges, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal had

expressed his hope that the summit would be a gateway to tackle the region's issues and problems, hoping to see a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian cause according to the international legitimacy resolutions and the Arab peace initiative to ensure establishing the independent Palestinian state with the 1967 borders and East Jerusalem as its capital.

Moreover, His Highness the Amir had welcomed President Trump's declaration of lifting the sanctions on Syria.

Meanwhile, the ministers were briefed about outcome of the official visit paid to the country by the Lebanese President Joseph Aoun and the official talks' session where His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal headed the Kuwaiti side while Aoun led the Lebanese delegation -- with attendance of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah and senior officials from the two countries.

The Cabinet statement noted that the discussions dealt with the distinguished and brotherly relations between the two brotherly countries and peoples, means of backing them up in various spheres, while affirming the necessity of solidifying the mutual cooperation, in addition to discussing conditions in Lebanon and affirming that the country stand in front of a historic opportunity to determine its future, overcome past challenges and start reconstruction.



Photo by Mohammad Morsi
GCC Ministers of Municipal Affairs pose for a picture at the opening of the meeting.

Expertise future asset: Al-Mishari

Call to strengthen municipal work among GCC countries

KUWAIT CITY, May 15, (KUNA): Municipality and Housing State Minister Abdullatif Al-Mishari stressed the importance of strengthening joint municipal work among the GCC countries and achieving further accomplishments under the wise leaderships.

In his opening remarks at the 28th GCC Ministers of Municipal Affairs meeting Thursday, Al-Mishari said that the experience and expertise "we possess today are an asset to overcome future challenges, with plans aimed at building a sustainable environment that meets our societies' goals."

Further goals in the field of joint Gulf municipal work in urban planning, urban environment, legislative mechanisms, municipal oversight, and the development of Gulf national cadres in the field of municipal work

are in pursuit, the minister of state said.

He explained that during the committee's meeting in 2024, several outcomes were achieved, most notably the approval of the use of solar panels in buildings, procedures for the removal of abandoned, damaged vehicles and broken-down machinery in GCC countries.

Al-Mishari explained that there is a unique opportunity to translate the contents of the Joint Gulf Municipal Work Plan for the years 2024-2030 into tangible results that contribute to enhancing municipal performance and developing services on the ground.

He noted the distinguished role played by Qatar during its presidency of the previous session for 2024, extending his sincere thanks and appreciation.

‘Kuwait and developing world need statesmen renaissance’

“AS pressures on nations intensify and the gap between principle and interest narrows, there is a growing need to distinguish between a “politician” and a “statesman.” This distinction is not merely semantic but it is a developmental necessity that can shape the destiny of nations at critical historical junctures”, columnist Major General Engineer **Faisal Musaad Al-Jazzaf** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“A “politician” is often a product of the political marketplace, skilled at seizing the moment, shifting between masks, and adjusting his rhetoric to suit the prevailing winds. He excels at turning crises into personal opportunities and is more focused on engineering realities to fuel his own rise than on ensuring the stability and progress of his nation.



Faisal Al-Jazzaf

“The politician elevates polls to a sacred status, thriving on division and propaganda, because his measure of success lies in the applause he receives. He is uninterested in the accuracy or long-term impact of his decisions.

“In contrast, a statesman is a rare figure in a world often dominated by political opportunism. The statesman does not negotiate the core principles of the state, nor does he bargain over established values. He does not rush toward power, but rather moves toward it only when duty calls, not when personal gain beckons.

“The statesman sees crises as a revelation of the underlying problems, not as an opportunity for personal advancement. He digs deeper, exposes corruption, and confronts the facts, even if it means bearing the cost alone.

“The statesman invests in building trust, a trust that remains unshaken when challenges arise. He is not concerned with public displays or self-promotion but works quietly in the background to protect the national vision from erosion.

“The statesman understands that division can never serve his nation’s true interests. He sees it as a crack in the state’s foundation, which can only be healed with honesty, integrity, and unwavering resolve.

“The statesman is often rejected, not because he has failed, but because his presence is uncomfortable and threatens to expose the false masks that others hide behind, as his honesty is too much for the political scene to bear.

“What Kuwait, and indeed the entire developing world, need most is not an abundance of politicians, but a renaissance of statesmen.

“States are not built through evasion, but through sound management. They are not preserved by empty slogans, but by effective governance, competence, and a long-term vision.

“History does not record the number of handshakes in front of cameras. It immortalizes those who saved an idea on the brink of failure, and those who prioritized the state’s well-being over their own personal future. That is the essence of a statesman. Everything else, no matter how brilliant the slogans, remains mere superficiality and is unable to endure for long.”

Also:

“Since gaining independence in 1947, India and Pakistan have been locked in a persistent cycle of tension and conflict that continues to this day. The historic partition of India, carried out under the supervision of the British colonial administration, was marked by immense bloodshed and suffering. Nearly one million people were killed, and more than 14 million were displaced in one of the largest forced migrations in modern history”, Iraqi politician **Dr. Aid Al-Hilali** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“Since then, hostility between the two nations has manifested in three major wars. The first, in 1947–1948, was fought over the disputed region of Kashmir. It ended with the United Nations’ intervention and the establishment of a ceasefire line that divided Kashmir between India and Pakistan, without achieving a final resolution.

“The second war, in 1965, also broke out over Kashmir and ended with the Soviet-brokered Tashkent Agreement, though it failed to achieve a comprehensive resolution of the conflict.

“The third war, in 1971, was even bloodier and resulted in the secession of East Pakistan from West Pakistan, leading to the creation of Bangladesh with Indian support. This further complicated the already strained relationship between the two neighboring countries.

“However, despite these periods of conflict, relations between the two countries have also seen moments of détente, including:

■ The 1972 Simla Agreement, which established a framework for peaceful dialogue following the 1971 war.

■ The 1999 Lahore Process, a diplomatic initiative between Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, which expressed a genuine desire to move beyond past hostilities. However, these hopes were quickly dashed by the Kargil military operation later that same year.

“The official acquisition of nuclear weapons by both countries in 1998 added a new and more dangerous dimension to their long standing rivalry.

“Thanks to mutual nuclear deterrence, a full-scale war has been avoided. However, this has not prevented ongoing tensions, frequent skirmishes along the border, or terrorist incidents attrib-

uted to militants from both sides.

“Amid this backdrop, important questions arise: Where are the voices of reason? Is there still space for wisdom to salvage what remains of the relationship between the two nations? The answer lies with a significant segment of intellectuals, thinkers, and civil society organizations, who have long advocated for moving beyond the complexities of the past.

“In India, many recognize that true national security cannot be achieved through endless hostility. In Pakistan, more voices are calling for a shift in focus toward economic development and education, rather than military armaments and conflicts.

“The truth is that both countries face common challenges, including rising unemployment, climate change, terrorist threats, and declining quality of life in many rural areas.

“These pressing issues call for regional cooperation, not prolonged conflict. And perhaps, new opportunities are on the horizon.

“In an increasingly interconnected world, economic crises are pushing governments to prioritize stability and development. As awareness grows among the youth in both nations, a new generation may emerge, one that believes cooperation, not confrontation, is the path to a better future.

“With all this in mind, the question remains: Will voices of reason play a role in reaching a settlement? The answer depends on the willingness of political leaders to listen to their people, and on their courage to rise above the wounds of the past in order to build a shared, peaceful, and prosperous future.”

□ □ □

“The ability to handle difficult and embarrassing situations with good manners requires shrewdness, intelligence, and quick wit. These qualities become even more necessary when displayed by rulers, dignitaries, or older individuals”, Doctor of Law and Kuwaiti Lawyer **Dr. Nayef Al-Adwani** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily

“In such cases, the response requires even greater caution and consideration in different social or legal environments where it can easily be misinterpreted or could provoke anger. Sometimes, silence, ignoring the situation, or distancing oneself may be the best course of action to avoid embarrassment and negative consequences.

“One of the difficult and embarrassing situations faced by a prominent Kuwaiti, known for his leadership and intelligence, occurred during a summer business trip to Britain.

“While waiting at a pedestrian crossing for the traffic light to turn green, an elderly British woman stood next to him. She gave him a suspicious look and asked where he was from. He politely replied, “I’m from Kuwait, on the Arabian Gulf.” She angrily responded, “You brought the heat with you.”

“He responded politely and wisely, saying, “You colonized the region for more than 50 years, but you never brought us any cold.”

The elderly woman laughed, realizing she was face-to-face with a wise man. She apologized and walked away.

“It is said that Caliph Suleiman ibn Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan once asked one of Hajjaj ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi’s officers, Yazid ibn Maslama: “Do you think that Hajjaj is currently in the lowest depths of Hell?”



Dr. Al-Adwani

the grandfather, who appointed Hajjaj as governor of Iraq, and he continued in that position during the reign of his brother, Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik.

“Caliph Sulayman ibn Abd al-Malik fell silent and made no further comment.

“One day, while the Umayyad Caliph Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz was walking through the market, a man in a hurry pushed him aside and asked, “Are you blind?” One of the guards attempted to strike the man, but Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz stopped him and calmly replied, “No, I am not blind.”

“When the Caliph returned to the palace, the guard asked why he had prevented him from retaliating against the man who had insulted him. Umar replied, “He asked me, ‘Are you blind?’ I simply answered, ‘No.’” And that was the straightforward response to his question.

“When Dr. Saleh al-Ojairi, the renowned Kuwaiti astronomer, was asked why Kuwait was so cold in winter compared to other countries in the region, he explained that it was due to an air passage coming from Siberia. One of the attendees, in an attempt to embarrass him, asked, “Why doesn’t this passage come to Kuwait in the summer to relieve the intense heat?”

“Al-Ojairi responded immediately, “The reason is the Indian hot air passage, which blocks the cool air and causes the intense heat in Kuwait.”

“During King Faisal bin Abdulaziz’s visit to Britain in his youth, he was seated at a dinner table with several dignitaries. The British Foreign Secretary asked him about the political situation in Saudi Arabia. King Faisal replied, “I understand that the British do not discuss politics at the dinner table.”

— Compiled by Mahmoud Attiyyeh/
Simi K.Kutty



KUNA photo

Major General Riyadh Tawari, Assistant for Financial Affairs and Resources Management, met with Dr. Ahlam Al-Muwail, Assistant Undersecretary for the Information Technology and Statistics Sector at the Ministry of Justice, along with Dr. Mishari Al-Safran from the sector’s technical office.

KNG launches ‘Marriage Journey’ project for personnel

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: In a move aimed at supporting its members, the General Presidency of the National Guard and the Ministry of Justice have agreed to strengthen cooperation – particularly to accelerate the processing of marriage-related procedures for National Guard personnel. This initiative is part of the Ministry of Justice’s “Marriage Journey” project.

ect.

According to a press release issued by the National Guard, Major General Riyadh Tawari, Assistant for Financial Affairs and Resources Management, met with Dr. Ahlam Al-Muwail, Assistant Undersecretary for the Information Technology and Statistics Sector at the Ministry of Justice, along with Dr. Mishari Al-Safran

from the sector’s technical office.

The discussions focused on enhancing electronic integration and data exchange between the two institutions, specifically through the electronic marriage certificate system. This collaboration is intended to facilitate and simplify the completion of marriage-related transactions for members of the National Guard.



KFF photos

The training in progress.

KFF concludes firefighting, rescue ops course

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) successfully concluded its Middle Leadership Course in firefighting and rescue operations at the Arifjan Training Center.

According to a press release issued by KFF, the course aimed to qualify and train all officers at the

middle leadership level, specifically department heads in fire stations, on managing and leading incidents, disasters, and crises through both practical field and office-based training.

Meanwhile , Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) confirmed that firefighting teams from Farwaniya

and Subhan fire stations extinguished the fire that broke out in an apartment building in Khaitan recently.

KFF disclosed that the fire was declared under control within a short period and no injuries were reported.

Al-Saeed acquitted in libel case

Bid to smuggle 110kg drugs foiled

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The Criminal Court has acquitted media personality Fajr Al-Saeed of insulting the Iraqi Prime Minister.

In February 2025, the court released Al-Saeed on bail of KD 1,000 in connection

with the case. This followed a waiver submitted by Lawyer Hassan Al-Mousawi, representing the Iraqi embassy, in accordance with directives from the Iraqi Prime Minister, after Al-Saeed issued an official apology.

However, Al-Saeed remains in prison in execution of a separate Criminal Court ruling, which sentenced her to three years of hard labor for promoting normalization with Israel.

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110 kg drugs seized: Kuwaiti security forces on Wednesday foiled a plot to smuggle some 110 kilograms of cannabis onboard a cargo ship, saying that two individuals have been arrested in connection with the incident.

The substances seized include some 6,000 Captagon tablets and some five grams worth of methamphetamines, according to an interior ministry statement, saying the two men arrested have been referred to authorities, pending legal action.



KFF photo

Smoke emanates from the barn house.

Camels escape injury as fire engulfs Kabad barn

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Fire engulfed a camel barn in Kabad area on Wednesday afternoon, but the animals remained safe.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from Kabad and Istiqal fire stations rushed to the location and quickly brought the fire under control.

Meanwhile, fire broke out in a vehicle on Fahaeel Road on Wednesday evening. No casualties were reported.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from Salmiya fire station rushed to the location and extinguished the fire before handing over the site to the relevant authorities.

Kuwaiti loses big amount in fake investment offer

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: An investigator at Hawally Police Station has ordered the inclusion of an expatriate on the wanted list and be banned from traveling due to the complaint filed by a Kuwaiti who alleged he was defrauded of KD11,000, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

According to the complainant, the suspect stopped communicating with him when he demanded the return of his money.

The case, classified as a breach of trust, involves a citizen, born in 1956, who reported that he met an expatriate, born in 1974, who claimed to be involved in auction investments. The expatriate allegedly convinced the citizen to invest in what was described as a lucrative business opportunity.

The complainant disclosed “I believed him. He told me the money would double within a year. Based on that, I gave him KD7,000 in cash and two Rolex watches valued at KD4,000 on Feb 9. Weeks and months went by without receiving any of the promised profits. When I reached out, he gave me a small amount and then disappeared, blocking all forms of contact.”

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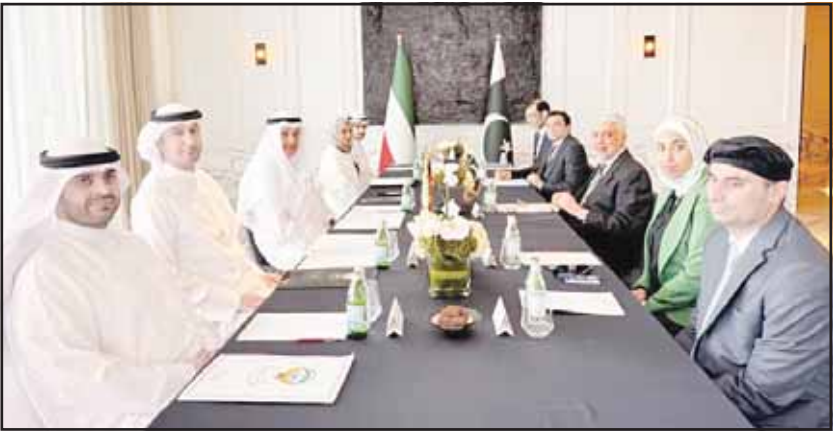
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Pakistan Embassy photo
Kuwaiti and Pakistan Embassy delegations during the talks.

Pakistan, Kuwait discuss trade, plethora of items in BPC talks

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The 4th round of Pakistan-Kuwait Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) was held on May 14, 2025 in Kuwait.

Mr. Shehryar Akbar Khan, Additional Foreign Secretary, (Middle East) led the Pakistan delegation while the Kuwaiti side was headed by Mr. Sameeh Essa Johar Hayat, Assistant Foreign Minister (Asia Affairs).

The two sides reviewed the entire spectrum of the bilateral relations including trade, investment, human resource collaboration, consular and people-to-people con-

tacts with a view to further enhance bilateral cooperation. Both sides also exchanged views on regional and international issues and reaffirmed commitment for continued cooperation and consultation.

While expressing satisfaction over the upward trajectory in bilateral relations and the momentum of high-level interactions and exchanges, both the sides agreed to further deepen engagement in diverse areas of mutual interest. The next round of Pakistan-Kuwait Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) will take place in Islamabad on mutually agreed dates.

MoE sets date to submit bonuses

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The Ministry of Education has started preparing budget estimates under Chapter One (Employee Compensation) of the draft budget for fiscal 2026/2027.

The ministry confirmed that no bonuses will be included in the draft budget for the next fiscal year if they are not submitted on or before the deadline -- May 31, 2025; which is the final date for receiving responses from the concerned authorities.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the letter of Assistant Undersecretary for Administrative Affairs and Administrative Development Mansour Al-Dhafiri to the Public Education Sector, urging departments to submit their proposed bonus allocations

using a standardized model. This model requires categorizing bonuses into the following types: additional work, excellent performance, training, teaching and supervision, committee work and other work.

Al-Dhafiri stressed the importance of specifying the names of all committees and work teams expected to be formed in the upcoming fiscal year, along with the necessity of providing the Administrative Affairs Sector with a separate breakdown of the estimated cost for each committee or team, and a copy of the decision to form each committee or team immediately upon its issuance.

He also requested a detailed statement regarding 'other work' bonuses, if any, to be clearly included in the designated bonus table. "This is necessary to facilitate budget analysis and ensure the proper inclusion of these amounts in the draft budget," he clarified.

Amir congratulates Paraguay on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, May 15, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Thursday a congratulatory cable to President of Paraguay Santiago Pena on his country's Independence Day, wishing him good health, and

Paraguay and its friendly people further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent Thursday a congratulatory cable to President of Paraguay Santiago Pena on his country's

Independence Day, wishing him good health.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah then sent a congratulatory cable to President of Paraguay Santiago Pena on his country's Independence Day.

Legal experts views differ over execution of 'land usage' law

Constitutional Court set to issue ruling

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The Law on Combating the Monopoly of Vacant Lands, Law No. 126/2023, has once again come into the spotlight, as the Constitutional Court is set to rule on appeals No. 15/2024 and 18/2024 filed against the Prime Minister and others, regarding the constitutionality of the law's provisions.

Amid rapid developments, the daily met with several constitutional and real estate experts to gauge their opinions on the law in light of recent events, and to gain closer insight into the legal and constitutional perspectives surrounding it.

Constitutional expert Dr. Mohammad Al-Faili confirmed that the issue has been brought before the Constitutional Court on several occasions, and the court upheld the law's constitutionality based on both substantive and procedural considerations.

He explained that the objective consideration is rooted in the fact that the Kuwaiti Constitution acknowledges the right to ownership in Article 18, while Article 16 emphasizes that this right carries



Dr. Al-Faili

a social function. The Constitution's explanatory memorandum clarifies that the social role of ownership right includes the right to build capital, and that the right to work allows imposing restrictions, not to abolish the right entirely, but to regulate it.

The constitutional right to ownership is not absolute; rather, it is subject to regulation in order to fulfill its intended social purpose. The question is - "Does the legislator still maintain a balance between the right to ownership and the reduction in owned land area?" This matter falls within the discretion of the Constitutional Court.

Meanwhile, real estate legal advisor Iman Al-Hashash stated that Law No. 126/2023, which aims to combat the monopoly of vacant lands, reflects a legislative effort to curb unproductive real estate speculation and encourage the effective utilization of residential land.

Al-Hashash explained that the law was introduced in line with several clearly defined state objectives, most notably combating the monopolization of vacant residential plots, which has contributed to inflated real estate prices and worsened the housing crisis. The law also seeks to motivate landowners to develop and make optimal use of their properties, thereby supporting urban growth.

The legislation aims to ensure justice in land distribution and prevent the concentration of land ownership among a small group of merchants. It also intended to strengthen the public budget through fair and progressive fees imposed on landowners.

Despite the legitimacy of its objectives, the law has sparked several constitutional concerns. Main among them is the argument that imposing progressive fees on unused vacant lands that generate

no income places a financial burden on the owner and may conflict with the right to property as outlined in Article 16 of the Kuwaiti Constitution.

Some constitutional experts, including Dr. Ibrahim Al-Hamoud, Professor of Public Law at Kuwait University, believe the law may be unconstitutional. They believe that it imposes financial obligations on a non-income-generating asset, which violates the concept of taxation as defined in Article 48 of the Constitution.

Al-Hashash said the law raises legal debates regarding its lack of differentiation between various cases, for example, between those who own undeveloped plots but are unable to build due to delayed municipal planning or the lack of infrastructure. This, she stressed, may contradict the principle of equality before the law as guaranteed by Article 29 of the Constitution.

In addition, legal researcher Imad Khamis Al-Iqab stated that the law in question presents several constitutional concerns, most notably the provision stipulating its retroactive application.

He explained that retroactive legislation is a contentious issue in constitutional jurisprudence, as it undermines the ability of citizens to anticipate the laws that will govern their future actions.

From a constitutional standpoint, retroactive application may conflict with the principles of legal security and Islamic legitimacy, both of which are fundamental pillars of constitutional governance. Constitutional doctrine emphasizes that the legislature should refrain from enacting laws with retroactive effect, except in rare and exceptional cases justified by extreme necessity and clear public interest. Even in such cases, strict controls must be in place to prevent any misuse of legislative authority.



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KUNA photo
Work at progress on the Fourth Ring Road at night.

Extensive repairs continue on 4th Ring Road: Dr Al-Mashaan

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan announced the continuation of comprehensive maintenance work on the Fourth Ring Road as part of new contracts for highway and internal road upkeep.

She highlighted the ministry's commitment to completing projects on schedule while ensuring the highest standards of quality and engineering supervision, aimed at enhancing road efficiency and sustainability.

Dr. Al-Mashaan stressed that these maintenance efforts help mitigate the effects of environmental factors, such as rain and heat, which often damage asphalt surfaces.

Al-Mashaan affirmed the ministry's dedication to quality and sustainable maintenance practices, stressing that road upkeep plays a vital role in supporting the national economy.

Legal action taken: KFF

'Don't tamper with gov't seal, sticker'

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Director of the Public Relations and Media Department at the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) Brigadier General Mohammed Badr Ibrahim revealed that a video circulating on social media shows an individual removing an official Kuwait Fire Force sticker and seal without legal justification.

In a press release issued by KFF, Brigadier General Ibrahim stressed that the individual's actions are criminalized under the country's laws and regulations, and constitute a violation of official property and documents, which are classified as legally protected symbols.

He confirmed that the relevant authorities have already initiated legal action against the perpetrator.

Brigadier General Ibrahim explained that tampering with any official logo or seal is a criminal offense punishable by law, as it undermines the authority of the official entity and constitutes a serious violation of regulations. Kuwait Fire Force will not tolerate such actions and will confront them firmly within the legal framework.

Brigadier General Ibrahim concluded his statement by stressing the importance of adhering to the laws in force.

He urged everyone to act responsibly, comply with regulations, cooperate in protecting official logos and seals, and report any similar violations.

5 years in terror case: The Criminal Court sentenced a citizen to five years in prison with hard labor for violating the State Security Law, reports Al-Anba daily. The citizen was referred to trial after security investigations revealed that he joined



KFF photo
A government sticker is tampered with.

the terrorist organization, ISIS.

Asians smuggling liquor: The Drug Control General Department (DCGD) has arrested three Asian expatriates for attempting to smuggle 1,120 bottles of imported liquor, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Ministry of Interior explained that the suspects attempted to smuggle the liquor into Kuwait in a professional manner via the country's maritime borders, specifically through a Kuwaiti port. The suspects, along with the seized items, have been referred to the concerned authorities for necessary legal action.

Bid to steal ATM?: Farwaniya detectives are actively searching for two unidentified individuals who attempted to steal an ATM from a local bank in Ishbiliya, reports Al-Anba daily.

Authorities are reviewing surveillance footage to identify the suspects and the vehicle used in the failed robbery.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait’s tax

She stated that despite the budget surpluses achieved by the State in recent years due to rising oil prices, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reports confirmed that this abundance does not necessarily mean long-term stability.

“Fluctuations in oil prices and production, along with the global shift toward clean energy, entail that Kuwait must quickly adopt new mechanisms to diversify its sources of income and reduce its sensitivity to external shocks,” she explained.

She said achieving financial sustainability requires a package of interconnected reforms; foremost of which is diversifying sources of income through the development of non-oil sectors, such as industry, tourism and digital services.

“Second, there is a focus on increasing the efficiency of government spending by reducing waste and re-directing the budget toward development projects with a sustainable impact. Third and the most important, is the establishment of a modern and fair tax system that contributes to generating sustainable revenues, especially since taxes in Kuwait represent only a very small percentage of gross domestic product (GDP),” she elaborated.

She cited IMF reports to support her view; indicating that non-oil tax revenues remain the lowest among GCC countries, as the State relies primarily on investment profits, not taxes. “The reports warned that this situation should not continue. In addition, Kuwait is not saving enough for future generations, which reinforces the need for financial and structural reforms that support long-term justice and stability,” she revealed.

She added that recognizing the magnitude of the challenges, the State has adopted a package of important legislation to support sustainability; most notably Decree-Law No. 60 of 2025 on Financing and Liquidity, which allows the government to borrow up to KD 30 billion over 50 years to finance the general budget, manage debt and fulfill obligations.

She clarified that this step is considered a financial pillar to secure liquidity without compromising wealth funds or resorting to short-term solutions.

“As part of the tax reform, the State, through the Ministry of Finance, announced the preparation of a selective tax law, which will be imposed on goods considered harmful to health like tobacco, energy drinks and sweetened beverages,” she stated.

She mentioned statistics from the Gulf Health Council, pointing out that implementing this tax at a moderate rate could generate revenues for Kuwait of approximately K 639 million between 2025 and 2029, while reducing cigarette consumption by around four billion cigarettes and sugary drinks by 220 million liters. “Revenues could reach KD 997 million if the tax is implemented at a higher rate,” she hinted.

“The Ministry of Finance is also preparing a draft law to impose a tax on local business profits, a move aimed at expanding the tax base and promoting financial fairness, especially since Kuwait currently does not impose a profit tax on most local companies. This comes in parallel with the implementation of a global minimum tax on multinational companies. Decree-Law No. 157/2024 was issued regarding the imposition of a tax on multinational entities, known as the Domestic Transfer Tax (DMTT), in line with the second pillar of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) initiative. This legislation aims to limit tax evasion by large companies by shifting their profits to low-tax countries. It is expected to generate annual revenues estimated at approximately KD 250 million starting in fiscal year 2027-2028, according to Ministry of Finance estimates,” she added.

Regarding tax challenges in the digital age, Al-Sayrafi asserted that despite the legislative momentum, the tax system in Kuwait continue to face big challenges, especially with the acceleration of digital transformation and the emergence of new economic models that are not subject to traditional tax frameworks.

She said these challenges include the proliferation of cross-border digital services, which are provided without the need for a permanent physical presence or fixed headquarters in the country. “These services include streaming platforms, electronic applications, cloud software as a service (SaaS), and digital advertising,” she revealed.

She affirmed that these activities generate profits from the local market without being subject to tax accountability, creating a clear gap in tax justice and reducing the revenue base.

“This is in addition to the widespread use of cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin and Ethereum, which represent decentralized assets that are difficult to track and are used in trading and investment without direct banking oversight,” she asserted.

She explained all these aspects open the door to tax evasion and money laundering, as well as to challenges in asset classification. “Are they treated as currency, capital assets or commodities? There are practical complications in accurately determining their tax base.

“In the absence of a clear legal and regulatory framework in Kuwait to regulate these digital and virtual activities, there is an urgent need for modern, specialized legislation, accompanied by an integrated electronic infrastructure that links tax authorities with financial and technology service providers. This ensures transparency, compliance and closing loopholes in tax evasion in the digital age,” she added.

She said Kuwait is currently facing a pivotal moment, as it possesses the

sovereign reserves and financial capabilities that qualify it to implement comprehensive tax and structural reforms from a position of strength, not under the pressure of crises.

“The IMF has warned that delaying these reforms increases the fragility of the financial system and undermines confidence in its ability to withstand future challenges,” she stressed.

She went on to say that building a modern tax system is not just about collecting revenues, but also about achieving social justice and establishing an effective partnership between the State and society in financing development and securing the future of future generations. “It is a national responsibility that requires conscious political will, clear legislation and societal confidence that reform today guarantees stability tomorrow,” she concluded.

Over 14,000

He referred to the decrees and decisions issued regarding the withdrawal, revocation, or loss of Kuwaiti citizenship, as well as those whose citizenship certificates were revoked between February 20, 2024, and April 30, 2025, as published in the official gazette “Kuwait Al-Youm”.

Al-Dhubaibi emphasized that the committee will not consider any grievances previously submitted or those submitted through methods other than the method recently announced.

He urged individuals wishing to file a grievance against a decree or decision related to the revocation, cancellation, or loss of Kuwaiti citizenship, or the annulment of a citizenship certificate, to complete the official form available at the following link - <https://nationalitygrievances.cmg.gov.kw/>.

Al-Dhubaibi affirmed the committee’s full readiness to assist anyone facing difficulties in submitting a grievance through the online platform, adding that support is available via the committee’s contact numbers.

Kuwait’s sun-driven

He also highlighted the aspiration of the company to expand its oil tanker fleet, which currently includes 31 vessels. He revealed a comprehensive strategy is being developed and will be announced soon, reaffirming that KOTC continues to meet all marketing demands and remains a key player in the energy logistics of the country.

He added the shipping operations of KOTCH remain stable, even amid global trade tensions, thanks to strategic planning for crisis scenarios. He confirmed that the current trade war has not affected the markets of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC). “Our distribution and marketing operations are built on long-term, strategic relationships,” he asserted; while stressing the commitment of the country to fulfill all international contracts.

He added Kuwait maintains a strong overseas presence with seven million barrels of oil stored in Asia -- three million in Japan and four million in South Korea. He disclosed that KPC has a comprehensive strategic plan to study markets and market needs, determine development capacity and increase vessels based on market data.

Asked about the merger of the two gas plants into the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), he confirmed that the integration of the Umm Al-Aish and Shuaiba gas plants into KNPC is moving forward as per an ambitious plan. He said KNPC currently provides gas to KOTC tankers, highlighting the synergy between national entities.

On the other hand, Director of the Projects and Maritime Agency Group at KOTC Yousef Al-Khamis stated that the solar energy conversion project cost around KD1.9 million; indicating this investment is expected to save about 16,000 barrels of oil annually and generate 11,000 megawatts of clean energy; thereby, easing pressure on the national electrical grid.

Al-Khamis also unveiled the plan to establish a third gas cylinder factory in Kabad, while the two existing plants can meet domestic demand until 2030. He said the expansion is part of the company’s long-term strategy.

He also addressed concerns about misuse of household gas cylinders by restaurants. “We are coordinating with the Cooperative Societies Union and the Ministry of Commerce to implement mechanisms that prevent restaurants from using cylinders designated for residential use, instead of commercial cylinders,” he added.

Tourism sector

Municipality to promote tourism in the Sultanate and unveil details of the Dhofar Khareef 2025 season.

Present at the press conference were representatives of various travel agencies.

Al-Kharousi stated that the tourism sector has achieved remarkable growth over the past years, with nearly four million tourists visiting the Sultanate in 2024-- 1.2 million of whom were from the Gulf.

He added “the hotel sector generated revenues exceeding OMR 240,000,000 from 3- to 5-star hotels, with an occupancy rate of nearly 50 percent and a growth rate of six percent compared to 2023 -- around 2,000,000 hotel guests and 3,000,000 hotel nights.”

On the tourism activity in Dhofar Governorate during the Khareef season -- from June to September each year, he confirmed the increase of tourism activity in the governorate; exceeding the 1,000,000 visitor mark in 2024. “It is the highest number to date. The Sultanate is considered one of the tourist destinations that attracts Kuwaiti tourists throughout the year,

ranking third after Emirati and Saudi tourists. More than 34,000 Kuwaiti tourists visited the Sultanate of Oman in 2024, with an average stay of four to six days. During the first quarter of this year, around 7,000 Kuwaiti tourists visited Oman -- a growth rate of seven percent compared to the same period in 2024,” he narrated.

He affirmed that Oman is distinguished by its unique geographical diversity; placing it on the regional and international tourism map, with its towering mountains, picturesque beaches, authentic Omani heritage and culture, and the hospitality and welcoming nature of the Omani people.

He asserted that “the tourism sector in Oman is witnessing rapid growth. Hotel projects and tourist resorts provide an unforgettable tourist experience on the mountaintops and beaches, extending across various governorates. The St. Regis Hotel and the Mandarin Oriental Hotel opened recently. The Royal Opera House, National Museum, and Oman Through Time Museum are also among the most preferred tourist destinations that enrich the tourist experience.”

He pointed out that Oman has been keen on developing adventure tourism by licensing and regulating this type of tourism through specialized companies licensed to practice adventure activities according to the highest international safety and security standards.

On the other hand, Assistant Director of Tourism Market Development at the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism Yousef bin Khalaf Al-Majizi confirmed the ministry’s readiness for the 2025 Dhofar Khareef season by implementing numerous programs as part of the plan to promote the season, in cooperation with all the concerned authorities. He said Dhofar Governorate has 83 licensed hotel establishments providing 6,537 rooms and it is fully prepared to receive visitors during the season.

He confirmed that the ministry, in cooperation with Dhofar Municipality, is committed to expand the scope of events and activities to include the entire Dhofar Governorate in Khareef season, with a variety of cultural and sporting activities.

Amin Al-Amri, from Dhofar Municipality, revealed that the Municipality is implementing development projects through the coordinated efforts of government and private entities; including the development of natural landscapes and some tourist sites, paving internal roads, and beautifying cities with the aim of enhancing the visitor experience and improving tourism infrastructure.

It is worth noting that Dhofar Khareef season is witnessing a significant growth in the number of visitors. The number of visitors to the governorate exceeded one million last year, a steady increase compared to previous years, ensuring the unique tourist destination status of Dhofar Governorate.

According to data issued by the National Center for Statistics and Information, the number of visitors to Dhofar during the 2024 Khareef season increased by nine percent; reaching about 1,048,000.

Kuwaiti women

Hotel on Thursday, in cooperation with the United Nations Permanent Office; with the theme, “Strategies for Supporting Kuwaiti Women According to Sustainable Development Goal 5”.

She pointed out that Kuwaiti women now constitute 60 percent of the national workforce in the government sector and around 48 percent in the private sector. She said women hold 28 percent of the leadership positions in the country.

She added “this year marks 20 years of achievements and service since Kuwaiti women were granted full political rights on May 16, 2005. Today, we stand at a shining historical milestone, proudly recalling a long journey of challenges, aspirations and successes; crowned by Kuwaiti women’s determination and perseverance, thereby, affirming their position as true and effective partners in the renaissance and progress of the State of Kuwait in various fields.”

She stated “this blessed journey would not have been possible without the deep faith and wise vision of our political leadership, represented by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah -- may Allah protect him. He has always emphasized the need to support and empower women, and enhance their role as essential partners in building the State and society.

She asserted that the Kuwaiti women’s impact has also been evident in the judiciary, diplomatic corps, civil and military institutions, and in the oil and financial sectors. “Kuwaiti women comprise 54 percent of the leadership positions at Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and 41 percent at the Central Bank of Kuwait,” she revealed.

She also cited numerous figures that have propelled the country’s reputation to 62 places on the Women and Peace Index and 10 points in reducing the global gender gap. She highlighted the status of Kuwait as the first Gulf country to adopt the Women’s Empowerment in the Private Sector Initiative for 2023. “These figures are not just statistics, but rather shining evidence confirming the tangible shift towards enhancing the status of women and empowering them in various sectors,” she asserted.

She added that “on this occasion, we proudly review some of Kuwait’s pioneering legislative steps, such as the abolition of articles 153 and 182 of the Kuwaiti Penal Code. These articles were considered a flaw in criminal treatment, with harshness and severity based on gender; thus, detracting from women’s rights. Such legislative steps strengthened the protection of women and enshrined the principles of justice and equality, in line with articles 8, 9 and 29 of the Kuwaiti Constitution, which affirms the dignity of women and justice in the family and society.”



KUNA photo
CITRA delegation in a group photo during an international gathering of the UN's technology agency ITU in Geneva.

CITRA committed to accelerate digital drive

Kuwait's communications regulator on Wednesday underlined its commitment towards pushing forward a national digital drive, saying the measure was in line with a global trend.

International cooperation was imperative to limit any potential “digital gap” and push forward sustainable development goals,

a delegation from the Kuwaiti Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) told an international gathering of the UN's technology agency ITU in Geneva.

Illustrating the progress of national initiatives aiming to develop digital infrastructure at home, which include employing the latest technologies, the CITRA delegation said that such measures were an integral part of Kuwait's Vision 2035.

Kuwait stands to gain from its participation in such international gatherings, allowing it to parlay global experience into successful national digital practices, they underlined. (KUNA)

Awareness key in colon cancer fight, says CAN

582 cases in Kuwait prompt alarm

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The Cancer Aware Nation (CAN) has launched the ‘Your Health, Your Decision’ campaign to raise public awareness about colon cancer and highlight the risk factors that may lead to this disease; considering it ranks first among men and second among women in Kuwait after breast cancer, with a total of 582 cases — 326 Kuwaiti women and 256 expatriates.



Chairman of CAN Board of Directors and Head of the Colon Cancer Awareness Initiative Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh stated that holding such campaigns is good for the targeted groups, indicating that the majority of colon cancer cases occur in those over the age of 50.

He explained that the disease has seen progress in the past two decades in terms of prevalence among cancer types in the Gulf countries, including Kuwait. He stressed the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle that includes a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables, as well as maintaining a physically active lifestyle.

He pointed out that awareness is the cornerstone of prevention and early detection of cancer, stressing that CAN is exerting tremendous efforts to change the misconception about cancer as a fatal disease and to raise awareness on the importance of early detection.

He revealed the recent statistics in Kuwait showed that the total number of cancer cases has reached 2,775 — 53.3 percent of whom are citizens (1,478 cases) and 46.7 percent are expatriates (1,297 cases).

He added that CAN trained about 1,729 doctors and 2,973 nurses on self-examination and early detection of breast cancer for female students in the final year of high school in all educational districts in the country; indicating the number of beneficiaries reached about 172,000 female students since 2010.



KUNA photos
Photos during CAN's ‘Your Health, Your Decision’ campaign to raise public awareness about colon cancer.

Event highlights women’s role in green innovation

EU-KISR unite to empower women

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Ambassador of the European Union (EU) to Kuwait Anne Koistinen has affirmed the commitment of the EU to empower women and promote climate action.

Koistinen made the statement at the event that Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) organized recently, in cooperation with the EU Delegation, Embassy of the Kingdom of Spain and the EU-GCC Green Transition Cooperation Project.

With the theme, “Empowering Women in the Green Transition: Science, Society and Skills,” the event is part of the Europe Month activities, held ahead of the Kuwaiti Women’s Day. It brought together prominent speakers from Kuwait, EU and Spain to celebrate the role of women in driving the green transformation through scientific research, education, entrepreneurship and community engagement.

The event opened with the ‘GEAS - Women Studying the Earth’ exhibition, organized by the Geological Society of Spain. It featured women’s contributions to Earth sciences and environmental leadership.

Koistinen pointed out that empowering women in Science, innovation and policy is the main focus of the European Green Deal and the global partners of the EU. “By supporting women’s leadership; we are contributing to building a sustainable future not only in Europe and Kuwait, but also globally,” she asserted.

On the other hand, Spanish Ambassador to Kuwait Manuel Hernandez Gamayo confirmed the pioneering role that women play in scientific research, entrepreneurship and environmental policymaking.

He also commended Spain’s participation in the joint dialogue.

Acting Director General of KISR Dr. Faisal Al-Humaidan stressed that the institute is keen on supporting and empowering female researchers and innovators in environmental fields. “We believe that strengthening the role of women is integral to building sustainable solutions for the future,” she asserted.

The event included dialogue sessions on women’s leadership in the fields of Science, green innovation, entrepreneurship and community work; with the participation of several students, academics, decision-makers and entrepreneurs from Kuwait and Europe.

It concluded with a networking lunch that generated opportunities for building partnerships to support women’s contributions to achieving sustainability in and outside Kuwait.

Kuwait chairs Arab security media meeting

TUNIS, May 15, (KUNA): Kuwait chaired the 16th Arab Conference of Heads of Security Media Agencies in Tunisia, organized by the Council of Arab Interior Ministers on Wednesday.

In his inaugural speech, Colonel Othman Al-Mansouri, a Kuwaiti, stressed the need for joint Arab efforts to enhance security awareness and prevent crime, especially in light of rapid digital transformations.

The conference aimed to leverage modern technologies for addressing security risks such as cybercrimes and drug issues, while improving coordination among Arab media against extremist ideologies.

The Kuwaiti delegation, which also included Colonel Mishari Al-Samhan, presented a memorial gift to the Secretary-General of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers for his support of Arab security initiatives.

efforts to enhance security awareness and prevent crime, especially in light of rapid digital transformations.

The conference aimed to leverage modern technologies for addressing security risks such as cybercrimes and drug issues, while improving coordination among Arab media against extremist ideologies.

Colleagues criticize decision

Democratic congressman pushes articles of impeachment against Trump

WASHINGTON, May 15, (AP): A Democratic lawmaker is launching a renegade effort to impeach President Donald Trump, pushing past party leaders on Wednesday with an attempt to force a procedural vote in the US House that is expected to fail.

Rep Shri Thanedar of Michigan announced his intention to charge ahead, saying that as an immigrant he wants to do all he can to protect America's Constitution and its institutions. His resolution contains seven articles of impeachment against the Republican president.

"Donald J. Trump has been committing crimes since day one - bribery, corruption, taking power from Congress, creating an unlawful office in DOGE, violating First Amendment rights, ignoring due process," the congressman said earlier from the House floor.

It would be the historic third time Trump has faced impeachment efforts after being twice impeached during his first term as president - first in 2019 on charges related to withholding military aid to Ukraine as it confronted Russia and later on a charge of inciting insurrection over the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol by a mob of his supporters. Trump was acquitted both times by the Senate.

Thanedar is not the only Democrat who has signaled impeachment efforts against Trump. But his decision to go it almost alone, without backing from party leadership, comes as he faces his own political challenges at home, with several primary opponents looking to unseat him in his Detroit-area congressional district.

Rep Pete Aguilar of California, chair of the House Democratic Caucus, said Democratic leadership would vote to sideline any effort to bring Thanedar's impeachment articles to a full vote, calling impeachment "not the right approach we should be taking."

"Right now, our focus is on health care being stripped away from the American people," Aguilar said. "That is the most urgent and dire thing that we could be talking about this week."



US Rep Shri Thanedar, D-Mich, listens to comments before the NAACP Detroit branch Fight for Freedom Fund dinner in Detroit, May 19. (AP)

Aguilar added that Trump "is no stranger to impeachment" but said Thanedar's proposal is "not ripe and

not timely" given the negotiations over Republicans' budget reconciliation package.

Democrats who streamed out of their weekly caucus meeting were critical of the impeachment effort. They said the focus should not be on impeachment but on Republican efforts to cut spending on important programs that Americans rely on, such as Medicaid and nutrition assistance.

"There's no support for an impeachment resolution. There have been no hearings on compiling a record for which impeachment can be based. And this is just a procedure that's meaningless at this point," said Rep. Hank Johnson, D-Ga. "The sponsor is out of sync with the mood and the trajectory of House Democrats."

"The work that we need to focus on is that Republicans are stripping away access to health care, stripping away nutritional assistance for hungry kids, and giving tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans and large corporations," said Rick Larsen, D-Wash. "This resolution has nothing to do with that."

Timing is also key. Thanedar's resolution claiming Trump committed "high crimes and misdemeanors" comes as Trump is traveling in the Middle East in his first major trip abroad of his second term, violating a norm in American politics of not criticizing the president once he leaves the US waters' edge.

But Thanedar said he was pressing ahead in part because of Trump's trip abroad and the potential conflicts of interest as the president appears to be mixing his personal business dealings with his presidential duties and is considering accepting a lavish gift of an airplane from the Qatari government.

"My constituents want me to act," Thanedar told The Associated Press late Tuesday.

Thanedar is using a procedural tool to force a vote Wednesday on whether to proceed to the issue or shelve the matter.

Militarized border zone spurs nat'l security charges against immigrants

SANTA FE, NM, May 15, (AP): Several hundred immigrants have been charged with unauthorized access to a newly designated militarized zone along the southern U.S. border in New Mexico and western Texas since the Department of Justice introduced the new approach in late April.

President Donald Trump's administration has transferred oversight of a strip of land along the US-Mexico border to the military while authorizing U.S. troops to temporarily detain immigrants in the country illegally - though there's no record of troops exercising that authority as US Customs and Border Protection conducts arrests. The designated national defense areas are overseen by U.S. Army commands out of Fort Bliss in the El Paso area in Texas and Fort Huachuca in Arizona.

The novel national security charges against immigrants who enter through those militarized zones carry a potential sentence of 18 months in prison on top of a possible six month sentence for illegal entry. The full implications are un-



Army soldiers look at the border wall next to a surveillance vehicle during the visit to the U.S. and Mexico border by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth in Sunland Park, NM on Feb 3. (AP)

clear for migrants who pursue legal status through separate proceedings in federal immigration court.

The Trump administration is seeking to accelerate mass removals of immigrants in the country illegally and third-country deportations, including Venezuelans sent to an El Salvador prison amid accusations of gang affiliation. The administration has deployed thousands of troops to the border, while arrests have plunged to the lowest levels since the mid-1960s.

Harvard joins colleges moving to self-fund some research to offset fed funding cuts

WASHINGTON, May 15, (AP): Harvard University is putting up \$250 million of its own money to continue research efforts amid a federal funding freeze imposed by the Trump administration, but the school's president warns of "difficult decisions and sacrifices" to come.

The university joins a growing number of colleges moving to self-fund research as a way to compensate for at least some of the money lost to federal funding cuts.

Johns Hopkins University has started offering grants of up to \$150,000 a year to faculty facing "unexpected federal research funding disruptions." Northwestern University said it's covering the cost of research projects that received stop-work orders from the federal government in April.

In a campus message Wednesday, Harvard President Alan Garber laid out a plan to maintain some research operations affected by the university's loss of more than \$2.6 billion in grants. Harvard has been fighting the government in court over the cuts.

Harvard's plan will redirect \$250 million as an initial stopgap for the coming year while officials explore



People walk between buildings on Dec 17, 2024, on the campus of Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass. (AP)

other options, Garber wrote. He called it a transition period for critical research programs, noting the Ivy League school "cannot absorb the entire cost of the suspended or canceled federal funds."

In light of the school's financial challenges, Garber will take a voluntary 25% pay cut during the upcoming fiscal year, a Harvard spokesperson said. Garber's current salary has not been made public, but Harvard presidents in the past have earned more than \$1 million annually, the Harvard Crimson student newspaper reported.

Some struggle to meet current goal

NATO weighs US demand to hike defense spending

ANTALYA, Turkey, May 15, (AP): NATO foreign ministers on Thursday debated an American demand to massively ramp up defense investment to 5% of gross domestic product over the next seven years, as the US focuses on security challenges outside of Europe.

At talks in Antalya, Turkey, NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte said that more investment and military equipment are needed to deal with the threat posed by Russia and terrorism, but also by China which has become the focus of US concern.

"When it comes to the core defense spending, we need to do much, much more," Rutte told reporters. He underlined that once the war in Ukraine is over, Russia could reconstitute its armed forces within three to five years.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio underlined that "the alliance is only as strong as its weakest link." He insisted that the US investment demand is about "spending money on the capabilities that are needed for the threats of the 21st century."

The debate on defense spending is heating up ahead of a summit of US President Donald Trump and his NATO counterparts in the Netherlands on June 24-25. It's a high-level gathering that will set the course for future



NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte talks to journalists as he arrives for NATO's informal meeting of foreign ministers in Antalya, southern Turkey on May 15. (AP)

European security, including that of Ukraine.

In 2023, as Russia's full-scale war on Ukraine entered its second year, NATO leaders agreed to spend at least 2% of GDP on national defense budgets. So far, 22 of the 32 member coun-

tries have done so.

The new spending plan under consideration is for all allies to aim for 3.5% of GDP on their defense budgets by 2032, plus an extra 1.5% on potentially defense-related things like infrastructure - roads, bridges, airports and seaports.

While the two figures add up to 5%, factoring in infrastructure and cybersecurity would change the basis on which NATO traditionally calculates defense spending. The seven-year time frame is also short by the alliance's usual standards.

Rutte refused to confirm the numbers under consideration, but he acknowledged that it's important to include infrastructure in the equation, "for example to make sure that bridges, yes, are there for you and me to drive our cars but also if necessary to make sure that the bridge will hold a tank. So all these expenditures have to be taken into account."

It's difficult to see how many members would reach a new 3.5% goal. Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Italy, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain are not even spending 2% yet, although Spain does expect to reach that goal in 2025, a year past the deadline.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy walks down the stairs from his plane upon his arrival at Esenboga airport in Ankara, Turkey on May 15. (AP)

Ukraine's Zelenskyy arrives in Turkey for peace talks but Putin stays away

ANKARA, Turkey, May 15, (AP): Russian President Vladimir Putin didn't show up Thursday for proposed direct peace talks in Turkey with Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who was waiting for Putin in the capital Ankara after challenging him to face-to-face discussions on ending their countries' more than three-year war.

With Putin absent, the Russian delegation was in Istanbul and it wasn't clear whether the sides would meet for their first talks since March 2022, following Russia's full-scale invasion of its neighbor the previous month.

Zelenskyy said the Russian delegation appeared to be merely "decorative." Speaking at the airport in the Turkish capital, Ankara, he said the next steps for talks would be decided after his upcoming meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Putin's absence punctured hopes of a breakthrough in peace efforts given a push in recent months by the Trump administration and Western European leaders. It also raised the prospect of intensified international sanctions on Russia that have been threatened by the US and European leaders.

"Now, after three years of immense suffering, there is finally a window of opportunity," Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said at a NATO meeting taking place separately in Turkey. "The talks ... hopefully may open a new chapter."

The war of attrition has killed tens of thousands of soldiers and more than 12,000 Ukrainian civilians, according to the UN, and continues along the roughly 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line. Russian forces are also preparing to launch a fresh military offensive, Ukrainian government and Western military analysts say.

The Kremlin never gave a response

to Sunday's challenge from Zelenskyy. That challenge came after Putin had proposed direct talks with Ukraine.

Zelenskyy will sit at the table only with Putin, Ukraine's presidential adviser, Mykhailo Podolyak, said.

US President Donald Trump said he was not surprised that Putin was a no-show. Trump had pressed for Putin and Zelenskyy to meet but brushed off Putin's apparent decision not to attend.

"I didn't think it was possible for Putin to go if I'm not there," Trump said in an exchange with reporters as he took part in a business roundtable with executives in Doha, Qatar on the third day of his visit to the Middle East.

Vladimir Medinsky, an aide to Putin, is leading the Russian team that will also include three other senior officials, the Kremlin said. Putin also appointed four lower-level officials as "experts" for the talks in Istanbul.

Worries grow about future

Poland votes for new president Sunday

WARSAW, Poland, May 15, (AP): A war next door in Ukraine.

Migration pressure at borders. Russian sabotage across the region. Doubts about the US commitment to Europe's security.

In Poland's presidential election Sunday, security looms large. So do questions about the country's strength as a democracy and its place in the European Union. One of the new president's most important tasks will be maintaining strong ties with the United States, widely seen as essential to the survival of a country in an increasingly volatile neighborhood.

Voters in this Central European nation of 38 million people will cast ballots to replace conservative incumbent Andrzej Duda, whose second and final five-year term ends in August.

With 13 candidates, a decisive first-round victory is unlikely. Some have appeared unserious or extreme, expressing openly pro-Putin or antisemitic views. A televised debate this week dragged on for nearly four hours. There are calls to raise the threshold to qualify for the race.

A runoff on June 1 is widely expected, with polls pointing to a likely showdown between Rafal Trzaskowski, the liberal mayor of Warsaw, and Karol Nawrocki, a conservative historian backed by the Law and Justice party, which governed Poland from 2015 to 2023.

Poland's geography gives the elec-



Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski, a liberal candidate in Poland's presidential election, speaks to supporters during a campaign stop, in Lodz, Poland on May 9. (AP)

tion added importance. Bordering Russia's Kaliningrad exclave, Belarus and war-torn Ukraine - as well as several Western allies - Poland occupies a critical position along NATO's eastern flank and serves as a key logistics hub for military aid to Ukraine.

Fears are rising that if Russia prevails in its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, it could target other countries that freed themselves from Moscow's control some 35 years ago. Against that backdrop, the election

will shape Warsaw's foreign policy at a moment of mounting strain on trans-Atlantic unity and European defense.

Both leading candidates support continued US military engagement in Europe. Trzaskowski puts greater emphasis on deepening ties with the European Union, while Nawrocki is more skeptical of Brussels and promotes a nationalist agenda.


When Law and Justice held power, it repeatedly clashed with EU institutions over judicial independence, media freedom and migration.

Europe

Albania's PM Rama thanks voters: Albania's prime minister on Wednesday thanked hundreds of thousands of voters who supported his Socialist Party in the last parliamentary elections, backing his pledge to take the country into the European Union in five years.

Edi Rama, leader of the left-wing Socialist Party, held a celebratory rally in Tirana's main Skanderbeg Square. The event, attended by thousands of supporters waving Albanian and EU flags, took place in front of a big poster prepared for Friday's European Political Community summit, or EPC, a forum that gathers European leaders with the aim of boosting security and prosperity across the continent.

With only diaspora ballots remaining to be fully counted,



Rama

the ruling Socialists achieved a landslide victory, winning 83 seats in the 140-seat Parliament in the May 11 polls, according to the Central Election Commission. With those numbers, the Socialists are likely to govern alone. (AP)

Extreme wind blamed for superyacht sinking: The superyacht of British tech magnate Mike Lynch, which capsized last August off the coast of Sicily at the cost of seven lives, was knocked over by "extreme wind" and could not recover, British investigators said Thursday.

Billionaire entrepreneur Lynch, 59, and his daughter Hannah, 18, were among the dead when the 56-meter (184 feet) Bayesian sank Aug. 19 last year. The boat trip was a celebration of Lynch's acquittal in a fraud case in the US in June.

In an interim report on the disaster, Britain's Marine Accident Investigation Branch said the boat was "vulnerable" to winds that were even lighter than the ones that tipped it over. The report was based on "a limited amount of verified evidence" as a criminal investigation by Italian authorities has restricted its access to the wreck and other pieces of evidence, it said. (AP)

‘This was a very serious incident’

NZ’s Parliament to debate suspending Maori lawmakers

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, May 15, (AP): A New Zealand parliamentary committee has recommended the unprecedented suspensions of three Maori lawmakers for performing a protest haka in the debating chamber last year.

The haka is a chanting dance of challenge of great cultural importance in New Zealand, and the three lawmakers from Te Pati Maori, the Maori party, performed one to oppose a controversial bill that would have redefined the country’s founding document.

A committee Wednesday recommended record suspensions and severe censure - the harshest penalties ever assigned to New Zealand parliamentarians - after finding the trio in contempt of Parliament.

Government bloc lawmakers, who hold the majority, are expected to endorse the penalties in a vote Tuesday. But Parliament’s Speaker Gerry Brownlee took the unusual step Thursday of saying he would first allow unlimited debate before the vote due to the severity of the proposed punishments.

The recommendations were the latest twist in the fraught saga over the bill, now defeated, that opponents said would have provoked constitutional havoc and reversed decades of progress for Maori, New Zealand’s Indigenous people.

Video of the legislators in full cry drew global attention last November. The bill they opposed was vanquished at a second vote in April.

However, some lawmakers from the center-right government objected



Hana-Rawhiti Maipi-Clarke, right, and her colleagues from Te Pati Maori, talk to reporters following a protest inside Parliament in Wellington, New Zealand on Nov 14, 2024. (AP)

to the Maori Party legislators’ protest during the first vote and complained to parliament’s speaker. At issue was the way the trio walked across the floor of the debating chamber towards their opponents while they performed the haka.

“It is not acceptable to physically approach another member on the floor of the debating chamber,” Wednesday’s report said, adding that the behavior could be considered intimidating. The committee denied the legislators were being punished for the haka, which is a beloved and sacred cultural institution in New Zealand life, but “the time at and manner in which it was performed” during a vote, according to the findings.

The committee deciding the fate of the lawmakers has members from all political parties. The government’s opponents disagreed with parts or all of the decision but were overruled.

“This was a very serious incident, and the likes of which I have never seen before in my 23 years in the debating chamber,” said the committee’s chair, Judith Collins.

The three legislators didn’t appear before the committee when summoned in April because they said Parliament doesn’t respect Maori cultural protocol and they wouldn’t get a fair hearing.

“The process was grossly unjust, unfair, and unwarranted, resulting in an extreme sanction,” Maori party spokesperson and lawmaker Mariameno Kapa-Kingi said in a statement. “This was not about process, this became personal.”

Subianto praises Australia

Australian PM Albanese visits Indonesia seeking deeper economic, defense ties

JAKARTA, Indonesia, May 15, (AP): Australia’s newly reelected Prime Minister Anthony Albanese met with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto on Thursday in a visit aiming to strengthen his country’s economic and defense ties with its closest major neighbor.

Albanese arrived in the capital, Jakarta, on Wednesday evening, a day after his new government was sworn in to a second three-year term following an emphatic election victory May 3.

“I am here in Indonesia because no relationship is more important to Australia than this one,” Albanese said in a joint press statement with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto after a meeting.

Albanese did not comment on media reports that Russia had told Indonesia it wants to base its long-range warplanes in Papua, the most eastern Indonesian province, a plan that was raised as a security issue during the Australian election campaign. Indonesia has told Australia that no such Russian base would be allowed.

“This is the fastest growing region of the world in human history and Indonesia is central to that growth,” Albanese said, adding that Indonesia is projected to be the fifth largest economy by the end of the next decade.

Subianto praised Australia’s support for Indonesia to become member of The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Newly elected Australian prime ministers typically make their first bilateral visit to Asia, usually Indonesia.

In his first visit to Indonesia after his inauguration in 2022, Albanese also visited Makassar, the capital of South Sulawesi province with close ties to Indigenous Australians.

Given their geographical proximity, Indonesia and Australia have traditionally maintained close ties with each other, including in matters of security and defense, despite the fact that each country has chosen to respond differently to the rivalry between the U.S. and China in the region.

The two neighbors last year signed a historic Defense Cooperation Agreement, or DCA, that will allow more complex joint activities and exercises. Canberra hailed the agreement as the “deepest and most significant” defense deal in the two countries’ bilateral ties.

“This is how we can build our shared prosperity and advance our national and regional security,” Albanese said, “This treaty-level agreement, underpinned by



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, (left), shakes hands with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto after their joint press statement at Merdeka Palace in Jakarta, Indonesia on May 15. (AP)

the Lombok Treaty, will enable new cooperation in maritime security, counterterrorism, as well as humanitarian and disaster relief.”

Albanese will head on to Rome on Friday morning to attend the inauguration of Pope Leo XIV on Sunday.

Meanwhile, an Australian local government has decided against repairing an often-vandalized monument to renowned British explorer James Cook because it would be destroyed again. But the mayor on Wednesday rejected accusations that the vandals have won.

Statues and monuments to the 18th century naval officer are common in Aus-

‘China-Singapore joint maritime exercise promotes cooperation’

BEIJING, May 15, (Xinhua): A Chinese defense spokesperson said Thursday that the ongoing joint maritime exercise between China and Singapore is significant for further promoting practical cooperation and strengthening joint maritime operations capability between the two sides.

Jiang Bin, a spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defense, made the remarks in response to a media query about the China-Singapore Exercise Cooperation-2025 joint maritime exercise being held in Changi Naval Base and in the waters and airspace to the east of Singapore from May 9 to 16. With joint command and planning, the two sides conducted live exercises on naval gun fire, replenishment-at-sea, joint search and rescue and other subjects, Jiang said, adding that the exercise tested tactical command coordina-



Jiang

tion and joint operations capability of the participating forces. During the exercise, the 4th edition of its kind, the troops also engaged in professional seminars, on-board visits, as well as cultural and sports activities, he said. Enditem

Also:

BEIJING: The Chinese military stands ready to work with the Russian side to further deepen strategic mutual trust, step up strategic communication, and expand practical cooperation, in order to strengthen the sound momentum of military-to-military relations, a Chinese defense spokesperson said Thursday.

Jiang Bin, the new spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defense, made the remarks in response to a media query regarding the future of **China-Russia** military-to-military relations. Jiang said that in recent years, the China-Russia military ties have been operating at a high level, characterized by frequent high-level exchanges, joint strategic air patrols and maritime exercises, and support to each other in holding important commemorative celebrations.

tralia and are often defaced by opponents of Britain’s settlement of the country without a treaty with its Indigenous people. In 1770, then Lt. Cook charted the Australian east coast where Sydney would become the first British colony on the continent.

The granite and bronze monument to the master navigator and cartographer in an inner-city Melbourne park was vandalized days after the anniversary of the first British settlers’ arrival at Sydney Cove was commemorated on Jan. 26. Opponents of Australia Day celebrations denounce the public holiday as “Invasion Day.” There are growing calls for the country to find a less divisive national day.

The monument in Melbourne’s Edinburgh Gardens was snapped at its base and spray painted with the words “cook the colony.”

Mayor Stephen Jolly, head of the Yarra City Council, which is a municipality near the heart of Melbourne, said his fellow councilors had voted unanimously on Tuesday night against spending 15,000 Australian dollars (\$9,700) on repairing the monument, which remains in storage.

Jolly said the decision to permanently remove the monument, which included an image of Cook’s face cast in bronze, was about economics rather than taking a position in Australia’s culture wars.

“It’s about being economically rational. It’s AU\$15,000 a pop every time we have to repair it and it’s persistently getting either demolished or vandalized or tagged,” Jolly told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

“It’s just a waste of ratepayers money. We can’t afford to do that,” Jolly added.

But Victoria state’s Melbourne-based conservative opposition leader Brad Battin condemned removing such memorials as surrendering to vandals.

“We need to stand strong and remember the fact that this is part of our history,” Battin told reporters.

“If you start to remove the history of our state and our country because of activists, then you’re actually giving in to those that are campaigning against it,” Battin added.

Jolly disagreed that his council had given the vandals what they wanted.

“No, I think they would’ve loved for us to put it back up and then they could’ve just tagged it again or destroyed it again and just had this ongoing sort of little war going on in Edinburgh Gardens,” Jolly said.

“I think they’re probably the most disappointed people that it’s not going to be there anymore,” Jolly added.



Colombian senators discuss a referendum proposal on labor reform, in Bogota, Colombia on May 13. (AP)

Colombian lawmakers reject president’s labor reform referendum

Lawmakers in Colombia on Wednesday once again blocked President Gustavo Petro’s efforts to overhaul the country’s labor laws, this time by rejecting a referendum that would have asked voters whether workdays should be limited to eight hours and whether workers should receive double pay if they work during holidays.

Petro asked Congress earlier

this month to approve the 12-question referendum to give voters a chance to decide on the changes that lawmakers themselves had already rejected twice. He had warned lawmakers against blocking the referendum, saying before thousands of people gathered for a Labor Day demonstration on May 1 that if they did not approve it, Colombians would punish them at

the polls during the 2026 legislative elections.

After an intense debate Wednesday, 49 senators voted against the measure and 47 in favor.

Petro, Colombia’s first leftist president, characterized the vote as fraudulent. He has repeatedly accused lawmakers of blocking his social initiatives and ignoring the demands of Colombians. (AP)

Bid to reset strategic relationship

S.African leader, Trump to meet next week

CAPE TOWN, South Africa, May 15, (AP): US President Donald Trump and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa are scheduled to meet at the White House next week following allegations by Trump - and denied by South Africa - that “genocide” is being committed against white farmers in the majority Black country.

The meeting, announced Wednesday by the South African government and set for May 21, also comes after the US welcomed 59 white South Africans as refugees this Monday, the start of what the Trump administration said is a larger relocation plan for minority Afrikaner farmers who Trump has claimed are being persecuted in their homeland because of their race. South Africa denies the allegations and says whites in the majority Black country are not being singled out for persecution.

Ramaphosa’s office said he will be in the US from Monday to Thursday of next week, and will meet with Trump on Wednesday at the White House. Ramaphosa’s trip would aim to “reset the strategic relationship between the two countries,” his office said.

The White House had no immediate comment on the meeting, which would be Trump’s first with the leader of a nation in Africa since he returned to office in January.

Trump has criticized South Africa’s Black-led government on multiple fronts and issued an executive order Feb. 7 cutting all US funding to the country as punishment for what he said were its anti-white policies at home



South African President Cyril Ramaphosa addresses the opening session of the G20 foreign ministers meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa on Feb 20. (AP)

and anti-American foreign policy.

The Republican president has singled out South Africa over what the U.S. calls racist laws against whites and has accused the government of “fueling” violence against white farmers. The South African government says the relatively small number of killings of white farmers should be condemned but are part of the country’s problems with violent crime and are not racially motivated.

Trump said Monday - the same day that the first batch of Afrikaner refugees arrived at Dulles International Airport in Virginia - that there was “a genocide taking place” against white farmers that was being ignored by international media.

The US criticism of what it calls South Africa’s racist, anti-white laws appears to refer to South Africa’s affirmative action laws that advance opportunities for Black people, and a new land expropriation law that gives the government power to take private land without compensation. Although the government says the land law is not a confiscation tool and refers to unused land that can be redistributed for the public good, some Afrikaner groups say it could allow their land to be seized and redistributed to some of the country’s Black majority.

Argentina orders immigration crackdown with decree to ‘make Argentina great again’

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, May 15, (AP): Argentina’s right-wing President Javier Milei issued a decree on Wednesday curbing immigration to the South American nation, a move coinciding with the immigration restrictions put in place by the Trump administration.

Milei’s abrupt measures and declaration that newcomers were bringing “chaos and abuse” to Argentina - a country built by millions of immigrants that has long prided itself on its openness - drew criticism from his political opponents and prompted comparisons to US President Donald Trump.

Milei’s government welcomed those comparisons to its close American ally, with presidential spokesperson Manuel Adorni saying it was “time to honor our history and make Argentina great again.”

Wednesday’s executive order tight-



Argentina's President Javier Milei greets supporters during the closing campaign rally for Manuel Adorni, a contender in the upcoming elections for the Buenos Aires city legislature, in Buenos Aires, Argentina on May 14. (AP)

ens restrictions on citizenship, requiring immigrants to spend two uninterrupted years in Argentina or make a significant financial investment in the country to secure an Argentine passport.

Immigrants seeking permanent residency must show proof of income or “sufficient means” and have clean criminal records in their home countries.

Africa

Mauritania ex-prez sentenced to 15 years: An appeals court in Mauritania handed down a 15-year prison sentence and a \$3 million fine to former President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz on Wednesday after he appealed a five-year sentence.

Aziz helped lead two coups before serving two terms as president of the northwest African country and becoming a counterterrorism partner to Western nations.

He was sentenced in 2023 after being found guilty of money laundering and self-enrichment. According to investigators, he accumulated over \$70 million in assets while in power. He has been in custody since the verdict.

The trial marked a rare instance in which an African leader was tried for corruption. Aziz’s lawyers have framed the trial as score-settling between him and current President Mohamed Ould Cheikh Ghazouani.

Wednesday’s verdict cleared six senior officials from the former president’s administration, but sentenced Aziz’s son-in-law to two years in prison for influence peddling. The court also ordered the dissolution of the “Errahma” (Mercy) Foundation led by Aziz’s son and the seizure of his assets. (AP)

□ □ □

France expels Algerian diplomats: France said Wednesday it will expel Algerian diplomats in response to Algeria’s decision to do the same, escalating a diplomatic standoff.

The Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs said in a



In this Jan 20, 2019, file photo, Mauritania's President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, (center), attends the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, in Beirut, Lebanon. (AP)

statement it had summoned Algerian officials to inform them of the decision, describing it as “strict reciprocity” after 15 French officials were expelled from Algiers on Sunday.

France did not say how many Algerians holding diplomatic passports had been expelled. It called on Algerian authorities to “demonstrate responsibility and to return to a demanding and constructive dialogue that had been initiated by our authorities, in the interest of both countries.”

“The Algerians wanted to send back our agents; we are sending theirs back,” French Foreign Minister Noël Barrot said on Wednesday, speaking Wednesday to French broadcaster BFMTV. (AP)

Kuwait crude rises 84 cents to \$66.53 pb

KUWAIT CITY, May 15, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil gained 84 cents during Wednesday’s trading to reach USD 66.53 per barrel compared with USD 65.69 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Thursday. Brent futures dropped 54 cents to USD 66.09 pb and West Texas Intermediate lost 52 cents to USD 63.15 pb.

Subsidiaries hit 30% in local contribution

KPC boosts local spending to over 44% in the previous year

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiaries have increased their spending on materials, services, projects and other items sourced from the local private sector -- reaching more than 44 percent over the past year, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting a reliable source.

The source pointed out that this increase reflects the strategic focus of the corporation on maximizing local oil sector activities by relying more on local suppliers and contractors.

The source confirmed that this approach is in line with the major strategy of KPC, which emphasizes several key pillars; most notably, expanding the role of the local private sector in supplying materials, executing contracting and engineering works, and providing support services to meet the demands of oil projects. “In some subsidiaries, local contribution levels have reached up to 30 percent,” the source revealed.

The source added that KPC and its subsidiaries are continuously reviewing and enhancing the process of qualifying and developing local suppliers and manufacturers. “The goal is to provide them with the neces-

sary tools and conditions for success; enabling them to play a more active role in the national development plan, which is driven by economic reform, industrial localization, and stronger public-private partnerships,” the source elaborated.

The source affirmed that the strategy encourages innovative and stimulating initiatives for the local private sector, particularly national manufacturers, suppliers and contractors. “One of the key components is the introduction of oil investment opportunities specifically designed for local stakeholders, giving priority to those who meet quality standards and offer competitive pricing,” the source added.

“As part of its commitment to boost the national economy; specifically in the oil sector development projects, KPC is rolling out several initiatives aimed at strengthening collaboration with the private sector. These include increasing the share of national products and services in total procurement for the oil sector, and supporting initiatives that create both direct and indirect job opportunities for Kuwaitis,” the source concluded.

Refinery seeks to increase Kuwaiti workforce

Duqm Refinery to boost capacity to 270,000 bpd within two years

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: In a bid to strengthen cooperation and partnership for the largest joint project between two Gulf states in the field of refineries and petrochemicals, the management of Duqm Refinery -- owned by Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI) and the Omani OQ Oil Group -- intends to increase the refining capacity of Duqm from 255,000 to 270,000 barrels per day in the next two years, say Omani sources.

Sources disclosed that the management is considering increasing capacity without the need for investment or financing; given the strong demand for Duqm Refinery products as its products are clean and high-quality like diesel, jet fuel, naphtha, liquefied petroleum gas, sulfur and petroleum coke.

Sources stated that the management welcomes the recruitment of the largest possible number of Kuwaiti youths -- both male and female -- to work at the refinery. They revealed that around 32 to 40 Kuwaitis are currently working at the refinery -- out of a total of 750 employees from 32 nationalities. They are hoping that the number of Kuwaiti employees will increase, considering Kuwait is a key partner of the refinery. They said the Kuwaiti employees at the refinery have proven their compe-

tence and dedication to their work. “To fulfill the demand to attract more Kuwaiti employees, the management recently opened recruitment opportunities for fresh Kuwaiti graduates in the fields of Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Chemistry, Accounting, Finance, Human Resources Management, Business Administration and Computer Engineering,” sources confirmed.

Sources said the requirements for Kuwaiti job applicants are as follows:

- Must not be registered with the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) as an employer;
- Copies of the civil identification nationality cards;
- Certificate of military service, postponement or exemption for males;
- Age must not exceed 28 years;
- Not more than four years must have passed since graduation.

Sources stressed that applicants, who do not meet the conditions, will be excluded; adding that in case of the same results between more than one candidate for the job, the criteria for comparison will be oldest age, first to obtain the qualification, and a married person is preferred over the single person, provided they meet the required general graduation average, and pass the English language test and aptitude test. Sources said the refinery management opened the door for receiving applications until May 24.

Business

Event held under patronage of Finance Minister Noora Al-Fassam

Gulf Bank announces Platinum Sponsorship of the third Kuwait Public Private Partnership Conference



Faisal Al-Adsani



Faisal Al-Gharabally



Shamayel Al-Marzouq

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Gulf Bank has announced its participation as a Platinum Sponsor of the third Kuwait Public Private Partnership (PPP) Conference, taking place on May 18 and 19, 2025, at the Jumeirah Hotel. The event, themed “Partnership Projects: A Promising Start to a New Era,” is organized under the patronage of Her Excellency Eng. Noora Al-Fassam, Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs, and Chair of the Higher Committee for PPP Projects.

The conference acts as a strategic platform to enhance collaboration between the public and private sectors, highlighting best practices and sharing expertise in financing and executing major projects that support the New Kuwait 2035 vision. It brings together government leaders and private sector representatives to discuss ways to drive sustainable development across the country.

As part of the conference agenda, Mr. Faisal Al-Adsani, General Manager of Corporate Banking at Gulf Bank, will deliver a keynote speech on the first day. On the second day, Mr. Faisal Al-Gharabally, General

Manager of International Banking, will join a panel discussion titled “Shaping the Future of Partnership Projects in Kuwait to Ensure Success” while Ms. Shamayel Al-Marzouq, Assistant General Manager of Corporate Banking, will speak on “Beyond Financing: How Banks Can Lead the Digital Future of Public-Private Partnership Projects.”

The Third Kuwait PPP Conference is anticipated to promote increased cooperation among stakeholders, offer a platform for knowledge sharing, and play a key role in advancing sustainable development goals while driving economic growth.

Gulf Bank’s ongoing participation in this annual conference highlights its steadfast commitment to supporting Kuwait’s key development projects. The Bank has been actively involved in numerous strategic initiatives and remains dedicated to enhancing public-private partnerships, driven by the strong belief that collaborative efforts are essential for achieving sustainable progress.

Since its establishment, Gulf Bank has been an integral part of Kuwait’s urban, cultural, and economic development. As a key

player in the country’s past, present, and future, the Bank has contributed to financing numerous major development projects, either through direct funding or partnerships with other banks. It has further supported Kuwait Vision 2035 by investing in various projects across key sectors, especially oil, construction, and infrastructure.

Gulf Bank aims to be Kuwait’s leading bank, fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace to deliver exceptional customer service while contributing sustainably to the community. Through its extensive branch network and innovative digital services, the Bank empowers customers to conduct banking transactions conveniently and efficiently, ensuring a seamless experience.

In alignment with Kuwait Vision 2035, “New Kuwait,” and its commitment to fostering collaborative partnerships, Gulf Bank is dedicated to driving robust sustainability initiatives across environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions. The Bank is committed to implementing strategically selected and diverse sustainability programs both internally and externally.

Boursa Kuwait’s general index gains 0.05%, closes at 8,088.70

Main market index gains 0.18%

KUWAIT CITY, May 15, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Thursday’s trading session on a positive note, with the general index gaining 3.70 points, or 0.05 percent, to settle at 8,088.70 points. A total of 459.9 million shares were traded through 22,606 cash transactions,

with a total value of KD 102.4 million (approximately USD 314.3 million).

The Main Market Index advanced 12.28 points, or 0.18 percent, closing at 7,014.29 points. Trading volume reached 282.16 million shares through 12,943 transactions valued at KD 42.9 million (USD 131.7 million).

Meanwhile, the Premier Market Index re-

corded a marginal increase of 1.75 points, or 0.02 percent, to close at 8,756.47 points, with 177.7 million shares exchanged via 9,663 transactions worth KD 59.4 million (USD 182.3 million).

The Major 50 Index posted the strongest performance, rising 63.64 points, or 0.88 percent, to 7,283.71 points. It saw 204.7 million shares traded through 9,234 transactions, amounting to KD 35.9 million (USD 110.2 million).

Earnings per share drops to 0.64 fils

NREC reports a net profit of KD 1.2 million for Q1/2025

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: National Real Estate Company (NREC) has announced its financial and operational results for the quarter ended March 31, 2025. The Company reported a net profit of KD 1.2 million and earnings per share (EPS) of 0.64 fils, compared to a net profit of KD 2.9 million and an EPS of 1.55 fils during the same period in 2024.

The Company recorded operating revenue of KD 0.8 million for the period ended March 31, 2025, representing a 45% decline compared to the same period in 2024. As of March 31, 2025, total assets amounted to KD 551 million.

NREC Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Faisal Jamil Sultan Al-Essa, commented: “Our first-quarter results are in line with our expectations and reflect our continued alignment with strategic goals, even as market conditions change.”

“We continue to focus on strengthening our core portfolio, optimizing the performance of operational assets, and delivering long-term, sustainable value for our shareholders across the markets in which we operate.”

Board Recommendation to Increase Issued Capital

The Company’s Board of Directors has recommended an increase in the Company’s issued capital. This recommendation is subject to the approval of the Extraordinary General Assembly of Shareholders.

Strategic Investments and Key Project Highlights: Delivering Sustainable Returns across Our Markets

NREC’s Investment in Agility: Enhancing Shareholder Value

Sultan said, “NREC’s 22.3% stake in Agility Public Warehousing reflects our commitment



Faisal Jamil Sultan Al-Essa

to long-term value. Agility continues to lead in supply chain innovation, driving both growth and operational efficiency.”

He continued: “NREC is also an investor in Agility Global, both directly and through Agility Public Warehousing. Agility Global manages several prominent companies like Menzies Aviation, Tristar, and Agility Logistics Parks.”

Sultan concluded: “This strategic investment underscores our confidence in Agility’s ongoing growth and its alignment with NREC’s objective of creating sustainable, long-term value for our shareholders.”

Key Projects Update

Reem Mall – Abu Dhabi: A Leading Lifestyle Destination

Following its successful launch in 2024, Reem Mall continued to perform strongly in Q1 2025, with more retail units opening and consistent visitor footfall. “With attractions like Snow Abu Dhabi, along with a wide variety of

	Q1 2025 (Million KD)	Q1 2024 (Million KD)	Variance (%)
Operating Revenue	0.8	1.5	-45%
Net Revenue	0.6	0.9	-32%
EBITDA	3.4	4.8	-30%
Net Profit (Loss)	1.2	2.9	-58%
EPS (fils)	0.64	1.55	-59%

stores and restaurants, Reem Mall is fast becoming one of Abu Dhabi’s premier lifestyle and entertainment destinations,” said Sultan. NREC is a co-investor in the \$1.3 billion project, which features over 400 stores, 80 F&B concepts, Snow Abu Dhabi, and digital innovations that enhance the customer experience.

Grand Heights – Egypt: A Modern, Integrated Community near Cairo

Sultan said: “The Grand Heights project, developed by KUWADICO, continues to make steady progress in its development. This fully integrated, gated community is designed to provide residents with a modern, secure, and sustainable living environment. It combines residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, offering a balanced lifestyle in a prime location near Cairo.”

He added: “The development spans 3.8 million square meters and is being executed in phases to meet the growing demand for premium housing options in the area.”

South Aqaba Investment Park – Jordan

NREC’s logistics and industrial park in South Aqaba continues to perform steadily, maintaining full occupancy and generating stable rental income. “Even amid regional uncertainties, the park has maintained strong performance, highlighting its resilience and operational strength,” said Sultan, highlighting its contribution amid

broader regional challenges.

Strengthening the Portfolio to Support Long-Term Growth

“We continue to focus on optimizing our portfolio in line with NREC’s long-term strategic objectives,” said Sultan. “This includes enhancing the performance of our core assets, divesting from non-strategic holdings, and actively pursuing new local and regional investment opportunities that support sustainable growth and create long-term value for our shareholders.”

Commitment to Sustainability: Building a Responsible Future

Sultan said, “At the group level, sustainability is a core part of how we operate and grow at NREC. We’re committed to embedding responsible practices across our businesses, from minimizing environmental impact to promoting social inclusion and upholding strong governance. Through our ESG efforts, we aim to make a meaningful difference in the communities we serve and create long-term, resilient value for all stakeholders.”

Established in 1973 and listed in Boursa Kuwait, National Real Estate Company (NREC) is a real estate investment, development and property manager based in the Middle East and North Africa. The Company’s portfolio comprises a mix of retail, commercial, and residential properties in the region.

\$625 mln in eligible green assets exceeds bond size

NBK publishes first green bond allocation & impact report

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: In line with its leading and responsible role in the banking industry, National Bank of Kuwait continues to advance confidently towards building a sustainable future by implementing its environmental, social and institutional governance strategy and launching initiatives as per international standards and practices.

In light of this, NBK published its first allocation and impact report for its debut USD 500 million green bond issued in June 2024, which is the first issuance of its kind in Kuwait. The report provides relevant information that details the proceeds' allocation from the green bond as of 31 March 2025 and the estimated environmental impact during the reporting period.

NBK's green bond was issued in alignment with its Sustainable Financing Framework (or 'Framework'), which received a Second-Party Opinion (SPO) from S&P Global Ratings, an independent provider of sustainability ratings, confirming its alignment with the Green Bond Principles (GBP), Social Bond Principles (SBP) and Sustainability Bond Guidelines (SBG) published by the International Capital Market Association (ICMA), in addition to the green and social loans principles by the Loan Market Association (LMA).

The report highlights the value of NBK's eligible green assets portfolio, which reached USD 625 million as of 31 March 2025, exceeding the value of its USD 500 million debut green bonds. The Bank's eligible green assets portfolio is distributed among three categories: 76% for green buildings, 17% for renewable energy, and 7% for clean transportation.

Moreover, NBK's first green bond strongly supported the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), particularly goal 7 on guaranteeing that clean and affordable energy is accessible to all, and goal 11 on making cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. The Bank's first green issuance also promotes its ESG strategy and affirms its support to projects that protect the environment and reduce climate change impact.

- NBK's USD 500 million green bond is the first issuance of its kind in Kuwait.
- NBK obtains independent assurance confirming alignment of green bond use of proceeds with its Sustainable Financing Framework.
- NBK's issuance is consistent with the UN Sustainable Development Goals aiming to provide clean and affordable energy access for everyone and make cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
- NBK's inaugural green bond helped finance 18 green projects across the Middle East, Europe, North America, and Asia-Pacific.
- Investments in clean energy lower emissions, advance technological adoption, and enhance energy security.
- NBK supports clean transportation solutions by financing infrastructure and technological projects that enable electrification and shift toward low-carbon transportation.
- Financed emissions avoided of NBK's eligible green asset portfolio totaled 85,026 tons CO2 equivalent.

Green Buildings

According to the report, NBK owns a portfolio for financing green buildings, which reflects its essential role in accelerating the transition to a low-carbon economy by reducing emissions, improving energy efficiency and promoting urban development. The buildings and construction sector contributes significantly to global climate change, accounting for about 21% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

It also indicated that NBK's green building portfolio achieved sustainability certifications such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Certification by the U.S Green Building Council or an Excellent rating by the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM), which is a British rating system developed by the Building Research Establishment (BRE).

The report also mentions that through its green building strategic financing, not only does NBK support climate adaptability and asset value in this field in the long term, but also directly contributes to achieving local, regional and international climate goals.

Renewable Energy

At COP29, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, global leaders reaffirmed their commitment to accelerating the energy transition by pledging to triple renew-

able energy capability by 2030. This ambitious target underscores the urgency of addressing climate change. In line with the global shift towards accelerating the global transition to a low-carbon economy and reducing reliance on fossil fuels; the report sheds the light on NBK's key role in financing utility-scale solar PV, concentrated solar power (CSP) plants, as well as offshore and onshore wind farms, highlighting the Bank's commitment to supporting clean energy infrastructure, reducing emissions, achieving technological gains, and enhancing long-term energy security.

Sustainable Transportation

The report highlights the pivotal role of financial institutions in decarbonizing the mobility sector and accelerating the shift toward electrification, both of which are key pillars in building a low-carbon economy by channeling capital towards sustainable mobility solutions. With this established, the report highlights NBK's strategic efforts in promoting this transformation by financing infrastructure and technologies that enable electrification, including electric vehicles, railway expansion, and other sustainable transformation solutions.

NBK aims to update its green bond report on an annual basis to highlight any changes that occur to its eligible green asset portfolio.

It should be noted that NBK has



NBK's green bond supports UN SDGs and ESG strategy.

come a long way in the ESG field, as it launched its dynamic ESG strategy at the Group-level and made sustainability at the forefront of its priorities in all its operations and culture. NBK's ESG strategy aims to support economic development and stand out as a role model in the field through its four foundational pillars that include Governance for Resilience, Responsible Banking, Capitalizing on Capabilities, and Investing in Communities.

NBK's role in propelling sustainable change within the finance sector

is one it significantly acknowledges. NBK is focused on supporting its clients in the transition to a low carbon economy and a more sustainable and inclusive future across various business streams.

Key Highlights:

- The net value of NBK's eligible green bond asset portfolio reached USD 625 million as of 31 March 2025, exceeding the value of its USD 500 million debut green bond.
- 80% of eligible green assets are funded by the green bond.
- NBK supported 18 green projects

across Europe, North America, Asia-Pacific, and the Middle East.

- NBK's eligible green bond asset portfolio is distributed across three categories: 76% for Green Buildings, 17% for Renewable Energy, and 7% for Clean Transportation.
- The annual financed emissions avoided of NBK's eligible green asset portfolio are estimated at 85,026.40 tons CO2 equivalent.
- Total renewable energy generated of NBK's renewable energy portfolio reached approximately 3,808,759 MWh.

'We remain focused on creating greater value for our stakeholders'

KIPCO reports a net profit of KD 5.1 million for Q1 2025

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: KIPCO – Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) – announced a net profit of KD 5.1 million (aUS\$ 16.5million) for the first three months of 2025. Earnings per share for the first quarter of 2025 were 0.7fills (US\$ 0.2 cents).

The decrease in KIPCO's overall net profit from KD 5.8 million (US\$ 18.8 million) reported in the first quarter of 2024 is mainly attributed to the increase in credit provisions at banking subsidiaries.

In the first three months of 2025, operating profit increased 15% to KD 50.3 million (US\$ 163.1 million) from KD 43.7million (US\$ 141.7million) reported for the same period last year.

The increase reflects the enhanced performance of our banking business, petrochemical services and logistics.

In the first quarter of the year, KIPCO's total revenue from operations came to KD 383.6million (US\$ 1.24 billion), an increase of 9% from the KD351.8 million (US\$ 1.14billion) reported in the corresponding period of 2024.

Shareholders equity went up 1.1% to KD 641.0million (US\$ 2.08 billion) compared to KD 633.9million (US\$ 2.06 billion) at the end of 2024.

KIPCO's consolidated assets came to KD 13.3 billion (US\$43.1 billion) at the end of the first three months of 2025, up from the KD 13.0 billion (US\$ 42.1 billion) reported at the end of 2024.

Commenting on the results, Sheikha Dana Naser Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, KIPCO's Group Chief Executive Officer, said:

"In our recent Annual General Meeting, we underscored our commitment to achieve stable and growing positive cashflows through ensuring future sustainable dividend distributions from our businesses.

"The results for the first quarter of 2025 reflect KIPCO's continued efforts ensure sustainable growth through the streamlining of operations, enhancing the performance of portfolio companies and strengthening the holding company's capital structure as we continue to focus on creating greater value for our shareholders."



Sheikha Dana Naser Al Sabah

59 MoUs and announcements facilitated to enhance HK's role as superconnector and super value-adder

Business delegation concludes Middle East mission in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: A business delegation led by Mr John Lee, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), and organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) visited Kuwait City on 12-15 May, successfully concluding a five-day mission to Qatar and Kuwait.

A total of 59 MoUs and announcements were facilitated during the mission with the aim to cultivate deeper partnerships and create new opportunities for synergy between Hong Kong, the mainland, Qatar, Kuwait and the broader Middle Eastern market. The mission also successfully enhanced collaboration between Hong Kong and the mainland, enabling mainland companies to partner with Hong Kong businesses to expand into the Middle East and beyond.

Over the past few days, the delegation, comprising over 50 business leaders from Hong Kong and enterprise representatives from seven mainland provinces and cities, explored the Middle Eastern market and supported high-quality Belt and Road cooperation while promoting Hong Kong's unique role as a superconnector and super value-adder.

During the visit to Kuwait, 24 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and announcements were facilitated in trade and investment promotion, finance, law, transport and logistics, innovation and technology (I&T), agriculture, education and sport.

The delegation met with senior executives and key members of the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA), conglomerate Bukhamseen Group Holding and the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) to discuss investment opportunities and potential collaborations.

The delegation also met with several representatives from the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) to gain an in-depth understanding of the operations of Kuwait's free trade zones. The meeting explored potential cooperation opportunities in areas such as logistics, manufacturing, distribution, and technology.

The delegation visited the Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Cultural Centre to gain a comprehensive overview of Kuwaiti history, culture and achievements.

To foster cooperation, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (HKETO) and Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) organised a high-level business luncheon, which was attended by some 270 business leaders and key officials.

Concluding the Middle East mission, Mr Lee said the delegation, comprising Hong Kong and mainland business leaders, had achieved three key objectives: 1. To strengthen government-to-government relations; 2. To find new areas of collaboration; and 3. To make friends, and expand networks. "Over the past four days, I have observed that both Qatar and Kuwait are experiencing rapid development, supported by substantial investment and continually expanding economies. In meetings with leaders and officials, I appreciated their forward-looking vision and understanding of Hong Kong's unparalleled advantages under 'one country, two systems' as a bridge between the mainland and the world. As Middle Eastern countries seek diversification of risk and look for opportunities in China and the

Hong Kong SAR to join the tide of the global economic shift towards the East, Hong Kong has boundless opportunities."

He pointed out that this visit will elevate the relationship between Hong Kong and Qatar and Kuwait to a new level, bringing more business opportunities to Hong Kong, and noted, "We will continue to strive to explore new opportunities and frontiers for Hong Kong."

Dr Peter K N Lam, Chairman of the HKTDC, said: "Over the past few days, we engaged in high-level government and business meetings, hosted business luncheons and visited key development projects in Qatar and Kuwait. We explored how Qatari and Kuwaiti businesses can leverage Hong Kong's advantages in finance, innovation and technology and professional services to advance initiatives in finance, energy transformation and smart infrastructure projects, contributing to the Qatar National Vision 2030 and Kuwait Vision 2035."

"Following the visits, the HKTDC will continue to invite business leaders from the Middle East to visit Hong Kong. We welcome them participating in our international events, such as the Belt and Road Summit and Asian Financial Forum to explore opportunities in Hong Kong, Mainland China and beyond," Dr Lam added.

24 MoUs and announcements were facilitated in Kuwait by the government and the following members of the delegation:

1. Invest Hong Kong and Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA)
2. Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and Marine Science Centre of Kuwait University (Announcement)
3. Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and Public Authority of Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (Announcement)
4. Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department and Kuwait General Administration of Customs (Announcement)
5. Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) and Kuwait Airways (Announcement)
6. Belt and Road General Chamber of Commerce and Kuwait Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI)
7. Federation of Hong Kong Industries (FHKI) and Kuwait Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI)
8. Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce (HKGCC) and Kuwait Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI)
9. Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and Kuwait Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI)
10. Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA)
11. Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China and Olympic Council of Asia
12. The Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong (CMA) and Kuwait Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI)
13. The Law Society of Hong Kong and Kuwait Bar Association
14. Financial Services Development Council (FSDC) and Capital Market Authority in Kuwait (CMA) (non-delegate)
15. City University of Hong Kong and Ministry of Higher Education
16. City University of Hong Kong and Kuwait University
17. Templewater and Blue Ocean Company
18. Deloitte China and Baoye Hubei Construction Engineering Group Co., Ltd
19. Deloitte China and PCI Technology Co., Ltd
20. HSBC and PCI Technology Co., Ltd
21. HSBC and Meet social Group
22. Templewater and Shanghai Westwell Technology
23. Templewater and Shanghai Fengling Renewables Co., Ltd
24. Dongchao Information Technology (Shanghai) Co., Ltd and Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA)

Earlier during the mission, 35 MoUs and announcements were facilitated in Qatar:

1. Federation of Hong Kong Industries (FHKI) and Qatar Chamber of Commerce & Industry (QCCI)
2. Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce (HKGCC) and Qatar Chamber of Commerce & Industry (QCCI)
3. Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) and Qatar Airways
4. Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and Invest Qatar
5. Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and Qatari Businessmen Association (QBA)
6. Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and Qatar Chamber of Commerce & Industry (QCCI)
7. Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and Qatar Financial Centre (QFC)
8. The Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong (CMA) and Qatari Businessmen Association (QBA)
9. The Hong Kong Associations of Bank and Qatar Chamber of Commerce & Industry (QCCI)
10. The Law Society of Hong Kong and Qatar International Center for Conciliation and Arbitration (QICCA)
11. The Law Society of Hong Kong and Qatar Lawyers Association
12. Financial Services Development Council (FSDC) and Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) (non-delegate)
13. Hang Seng Indexes Company Limited and Qatar Financial Centre (QFC)
14. MTR Corporation Limited and Qatar National Bank
15. Belt and Road General Chamber of Commerce and Luyi Industrial Park
16. Hong Kong Productivity Council and Shanghai Westwell Technology
17. Hong Kong Productivity Council and EHang Intelligent Equipment (Guangzhou) Co., Ltd



Dr Peter K N Lam (second right), Hong Kong Trade Development Council Chairman, expressed his delight at the business delegation's success. He said HKTDC will continuously promote cooperation and support the Hong Kong and mainland business community in expanding into international markets.



Some 270 business leaders and key officials attended a business luncheon in Kuwait organised by HKETO and HKTDC, during which an exchange of MoUs took place.



The delegation met with several representatives from the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) to gain an in-depth understanding of the operations of Kuwait's free trade zones. The meeting explored potential cooperation opportunities in areas such as logistics, manufacturing, distribution, and technology.

Oil prices fall more than \$1 a barrel

Asian shares mostly lower after a mixed session on Wall Street

BANGKOK, May 15, (AP): Asian shares and U.S. futures slipped Thursday after U.S. stocks drifted to a mixed close on Wall Street.

Oil prices fell more than \$1 a barrel.

China moved to reverse some of its “non-tariff” measures against the U.S. as agreed with Washington in their temporary trade war cease-fire and most markets traded in a narrow range.

Japan’s Nikkei 225 index dropped 1.1%, however, to 37,705.74. Computer chip-related stocks were among the biggest decliners, with Disco Corp. falling 2.6% and Advantest down 1.8%.

Hong Kong’s Hang Seng was the outlier, picking up 0.2% to 23,691.67. The Shanghai Composite index lost 0.3% to 3,393.29, while Taiwan’s Taiex fell 0.2%.

In Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 was nearly unchanged at 8,278.30. South Korea’s Kospi edged 0.1% lower.

On Wednesday, a choppy day of trading on Wall Street ended with a mixed finish as gains by several big technology stocks helped temper losses.

The S&P 500 edged up 0.1% to 5,892.58 and

the Dow Jones Industrial Average slipped 0.2% to 42,051.06. The Nasdaq composite rose 0.7% to 19,146.81.

Super Micro Computer surged 15.7% after signing a partnership agreement with Saudi Arabian data center company DataVolt. Advanced Micro Devices gained 4.7% after announcing a \$6 billion stock buy-back program.

Nvidia rose 4.2% and Google parent Alphabet added 3.7%.

Other big gainers included eToro Group, a retail trading platform for stocks and cryptocurrency. It rose 28.8% in its first day of trading.

The U.S. will release its April report for inflation at the wholesale level on Thursday, and economists expect an easing of price pressures.

An update for retail sales is expected to reflect a sharp drop to 0.2% in April from 1.4% the previous month.

Retail giant Walmart will also report its latest financial results on Thursday and its financial forecasts will be closely watched.

The stock market has been relatively steady since

it surged Monday after the U.S. and China announced a 90-day pause in their trade war. The market gained more ground on Tuesday after the government reported that inflation unexpectedly cooled across the country in April. More updates on inflation and retail sales are expected on Thursday.

Trump has delayed a large swath of his most severe tariffs against America’s trading partners, but some import taxes remain in place. Uncertainty over the path ahead continues to hang over businesses and consumers. The on-again-off-again nature of Trump’s trade policy has left companies reluctant to make plans about investment and hiring and consumers nervous about spending.

Businesses continue to trim or withdraw their financial forecasts as they face unpredictable trade policy and cautious consumers.

American Eagle fell 6.4% after the retailer withdrew its financial outlook for the year citing “macro uncertainty.” General Motors, UPS, Kraft Heinz and JetBlue are among the many companies representing a wide range of industries that have warned about the impact of tariffs and a weakening economy.



Currency traders watch monitors near a screen showing the Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI) and the foreign exchange rate between U.S. dollar and South Korean won, top right, at the foreign exchange dealing room of the KEB Hana Bank headquarters in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, May 15, 2025. (AP)

World Trade Organization chief says global free trade is in crisis

Ngozi on visit to Japan

TOKYO, May 15, (AP): Global free trade is in crisis, the head of the World Trade Organization chief said Tuesday while meeting Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba on Tuesday.

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director-General of the World Trade Organization, told Ishiba that she has high expectations for Japan as a champion of open markets as U.S. President Donald Trump disrupts world commerce with his fast-changing tariffs and other policies.

“Trade is facing very challenging times right now and it is quite difficult,” she said. “We should try to use this crisis as an opportunity to solve the challenges we have and take advantage of new trends in trade.”

Japan, as “a champion of the multilateral trading system” must help maintain, strengthen and reform the WTO, the Japanese Foreign Ministry cited her as saying.

Later Tuesday, the WTO chief met with Japanese Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya and issued a joint statement, saying that “in a time of uncertainty and disruption, the value of the multilateral trading system is unquestionable.” Japan said in the same statement the current trade turmoil “would have a significant impact on the global economy and the entire multilateral trading system” and called for promoting WTO reforms, including its rule-making function, dispute settlement and monitoring of the implementation of



World Trade Organization (WTO) Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, left, meets with Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba at the latter's office in Tokyo Tuesday, May 13, 2025. (AP)

agreements.

They met a day after the United States and China said they had agreed to slash recent sky-high tariffs for 90 days to allow time for negotiations.

Japan is among many countries yet to reach a deal with the Trump administration on hikes to U.S. tariffs, including those on autos, steel and aluminum.

The WTO played a pivotal role in past decades as the U.S. and other major economies championed the trade liberalization that facilitated

the growth of global supply chains, many of which are anchored in China. By dismantling many protectionist barriers to trade, it has aided the ascent of Japan and China, and many other countries, as export manufacturing hubs.

Since taking office for a second time, Trump has prioritized higher tariffs to try to reduce U.S. imports and compel companies to locate factories in the United States, doubling down on a trade war that he launched during his first term.

Okonjo-Iweala and Ishiba agreed that WTO member countries should unite to restore the organization’s capacity to address challenges.

The trade chief visited Japan to strengthen cooperation between the east Asian country and the WTO to maintain and reinforce the multilateral trading system, Japanese officials said.

She also met with Finance Minister Katsumasa Kato and Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Yoji Muto.

Longer-term deal eyed

Chinese businesses view tariff pause with caution, uncertainty

BANGKOK, May 15, (AP): While U.S. President Donald Trump has talked of victory after reaching a weekend deal with China to reduce the sky-high tariffs levied on each others’ goods, businesses in China are reacting to the temporary deal with caution.

The U.S. and China have cut the tariffs levied on each other in April, with the U.S. cutting the 145% tax Trump imposed last month to 30%. China agreed to lower its tariff rate on U.S. goods to 10% from 125%. The lower tariff rates came into effect on Wednesday.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, announcing the reduction in tariff rates this weekend in Geneva, had said, “We do want trade.” While the markets have responded to the agreement with gusto, rebounding to the levels before Trump’s tariffs, business owners remain wary.

Businesses like one kitchen utensil factory in southern Guangdong province were eager to get back to work. The business said they put at least four orders from their American clients back into production on Tuesday after the tariff pause was announced.

“We thought the negotiation would bring the tariffs down a bit, but didn’t expect it would be so much,” said Margaret Zhuang, a salesperson for the utensil factory in Guangdong province, one of China’s manufacturing hubs.

The two countries are now planning to start negotiations for a longer-term deal.

Kahlee Yu, sales manager of Yangjiang Hongnan Industry and Trade Company, which also manufactures kitchen utensils, said he was reaching out to American customers again. “We’re a little bit optimistic about the trade deal between the two sides. But it is still possible the tariff policies will change again, resulting in no orders from our American clients,” he said.

However happy they were in the moment, the damage from tariffs announced in April has already been

done, Zhuang added, as they are seeing fewer orders. Currently, she has orders for products up until June. Earlier this year, before Trump’s trade war began, they had orders for production extending to August.

The uncertainty also means companies are less willing to make new investments. Kelvin Liao, sales director at Action Composites, a manufacturer of carbon fiber auto parts in Dongguan, a major city in Guangdong, said he was originally planning to buy a piece of land to build a new factory, but opted instead to rent because of the tariff situation.

“It is good to reach a trade deal between the two countries. But people have already lost confidence in Trump, and we will take a wait-and-see attitude,” he said. “We believe the signing a trade deal is just a pause and the ultimate goal of the US is to curb China’s development.”

Tariffs also remain in place for some industries, which are not part of the general deal. Hong Kong businessman Danny Lau, who owns an aluminum-coating factory, said his company still faces about a 75% tariff from tariffs levied at different points since 2018 by the U.S. Still he welcomed the news from the weekend, saying he would reach out to existing American customers to gauge their views.

“Although the policy change doesn’t cover our industry, we hope talks will continue and there will be better news during the 90-day pause,” he said.

In April, some Chinese businesses said they would focus their attention on exporting to other markets, given how high the American tariffs were. Analysts said previously that the tariffs could cause Chinese businesses to diversify their supply chains and move part of their manufacturing capacity abroad, including to the U.S.

Liao, the auto parts manufacturer, said his company already has a factory in Vietnam, and the products there were exported to the U.S.

‘Day with a lot of tears’

Microsoft lays off about 3% of its workforce

WASHINGTON, May 15, (AP): Microsoft began laying off about 6,000 workers Tuesday, nearly 3% of its entire workforce and its largest job cuts in more than two years as the company spends heavily on artificial intelligence.

Hard hit was the tech giant’s home state of Washington, where Microsoft informed state officials it was cutting 1,985 workers tied to its Redmond headquarters, many of them in software engineering and product management roles.

Microsoft said the layoffs will be across all levels, teams and geographies but the cuts will focus on reducing the number of managers. Notices to employees began going out on Tuesday.

The mass layoffs come just weeks after Microsoft reported strong sales and profits that beat Wall Street expectations for the January-March quarter, which investors took as a dose of relief during a turbulent time for the tech sector and U.S. economy.

“I think many people have this conception of layoffs as something that struggling companies have to do to save themselves, which is one reason for layoffs but it’s not the only reason,” said Daniel Zhao, lead economist at workplace reviews site Glassdoor. “Big tech companies have trimmed their workforces as they rearrange their strategies and pull back from the more aggressive hiring that they did during the early post-pandemic years.”

Microsoft employed 228,000 full-time workers as of last June, the last time it reported its annual headcount. About 55% of those workers were in the U.S.

Microsoft announced a smaller round



A Microsoft sign and logo are pictured at the company's headquarters, Friday, April 4, 2025, in Redmond, Wash. (AP)

of performance-based layoffs in January. But the 3% cuts will be Microsoft’s biggest since early 2023, when the company cut 10,000 workers, almost 5% of its workforce, joining other tech companies that were scaling back their pandemic-era expansions.

Microsoft’s chief financial officer, Amy Hood, said on an April earnings call that the company was focused on “building high-performing teams and increasing our agility by reducing layers with fewer managers.” She also said the headcount in March was 2% higher than a year earlier, and down slightly compared to the end of last year.

The layoffs are hitting all parts of Microsoft’s business, including the video game platform Xbox and the career networking site LinkedIn. Some

laid-off workers and the executives who made the cuts took to LinkedIn to talk about them.

“This is the first time I’ve had to lay people off to support business goals that aren’t my own,” wrote Scott Hanselman, a vice president of Microsoft’s developer community. “I often have trouble separating my beliefs with the system that I participate in and am complicit in. These are people with dreams and rent and I love them and I want them to be OK.”

He added: “This is a day with a lot of tears.”

The company didn’t give a specific reason for the layoffs, only that they were part of “organizational changes necessary to best position the company for success in a dynamic marketplace.”

Other company insiders have sold shares

Chair of Tesla sold stock worth \$230m while profits at carmaker plunged

NEW YORK, May 15, (AP): The chair of Tesla sold more than \$230 million of company stock since Elon Musk’s endorsement of Donald Trump triggered boycotts and protests against his cars, sending its profits and stock price plunging.

More than half of Robyn Denholm’s cash haul came from sales in the first four months this year as Tesla stock fell by one-third, according to filings reviewed by The Associated Press. In total, she unloaded hundreds of thousands of shares - more than half her holdings as dictated by a pre-arranged selling plan filed with regulators as Musk began embracing right-wing politics.

Denholm filed that plan on July 25, the day Musk endorsed Trump for president.

Denholm’s profits were likely oversized, too. That is because many of the shares she sold had been acquired through so-called options granted to her by Tesla years earlier that, given recent stock prices, allowed her to buy at a deep discount, according to data from research provider FactSet. Nearly a million shares acquired through options were bought for \$25, less than a tenth of the market price for much of the last nine months.

The AP reached out to both Tesla and Denholm but did not receive an immediate reply.

A Denholm statement to The New York Times, which earlier reported on the insider sales, said that the share value of holdings by Tesla directors



In this file photo, Model X sports-utility vehicle sits outside a Tesla store in Littleton, Colo. (AP)

has jumped because the stock itself has soared, creating “outsized returns” for all shareholders.

It’s not clear why Denholm decided to cash out so much of her stake.

Pre-determined selling schedules are used by executives and directors as a way of telling investors that their selling isn’t based on insider information, which is illegal, or necessarily a sign that they have turned pessimistic about a company.

Denholm isn’t the only Tesla insider who has been selling. The chief financial officer and other directors have unloaded \$189 million in stock in the

same nine-month period, according to FactSet data.

Tesla stock soared after Trump was elected in November on hopes that the president-elect’s close relations with Musk would translate to less regulatory scrutiny and bigger profits.

But Musk’s role as the government cost-cutting chief for Trump and his comments supporting extreme right-wing politicians in Europe have triggered a backlash among car buyers, and sales have sunk along with its stock.

Tesla reported last month that profits in the first three months of the year plunged 71%.

UK becomes fastest-growing G7 economy after strong first quarter

LONDON, May 15, (AP): The British economy grew at its fastest rate in a year during the first quarter of 2025, official figures showed Thursday, in a welcome boost to the Labour government, which has made lifting the country’s growth its top priority.

The Office for National Statistics said growth, as measured by gross domestic product, increased by 0.7% in the first quarter of the year from the final three months of 2024, with the country’s dominant services sector doing particularly well.

The first quarter increase makes the British economy the fastest-growing among the Group of Seven leading industrial nations.

Growth was modestly ahead of market expectations for a 0.6% increase. It was also the biggest increase since the first quarter of 2024, when the economy expanded by 0.9%.

Treasury chief Rachel Reeves welcomed the growth leap, and said the figures showed the choices made by Labour since it was elected last July were beginning to pay off.

“We’re set to be the fastest growing economy in the G-7 in

the first three months of this year and that’s incredibly welcome, but I know that there is more to do,” she said while on a visit to a Rolls-Royce factory in Derby, northern England.

Most economists think it is likely to slow down in the second quarter of the year, partly because of the global uncertainty generated by U.S. President Donald Trump’s tariff policies.

Though most tariffs were paused for 90 days following the ensuing market turmoil, including the 10% baseline tariff applied to U.K. goods entering the U.S., the backdrop for the global economy remains highly uncertain, particularly if the

U.S.-China trade war persists.

Some of that uncertainty, with regard to the British economy, lifted Thursday when both Trump and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer separately outlined details of a trade deal between the U.S. and the U.K. Though Trump kept the 10% baseline tariffs on U.K., he agreed to reduce the levies on British autos, steel and aluminum.

Sanjay Raja, chief U.K. economist at Deutsche Bank, said the growth uptick will likely be short-lived, especially during the second quarter when trade uncertainty will be at its peak.



ICSK students who competed for the Championship Trophy at the 27th CBSE Kuwait Cluster Athletics Meet.



ICSK students with the school banner during the start of 27th CBSE Kuwait Cluster Athletics Meet.

Trophy represents a win for school’s holistic growth and excellence

ICSK clinches 22nd consecutive championship at the 27th CBSE Kuwait Cluster Athletics Meet

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The Indian Community School, Kuwait has once again set an extraordinary benchmark in school athletics by securing its 22nd consecutive Championship Trophy at the 27th CBSE Kuwait Cluster Athletics Meet held on 29th, 30th April, and 1st May 2025 at Al Sahel Sports Club, Abu Halifa. Competing against 20 CBSE-affiliated schools from across Kuwait, ICSK athletes displayed outstanding talent, discipline, and determination, earning the top spot with a commanding lead of 84 points.

ICSK athletes bagged 26 gold, 20 silver, and 6 bronze medals. In addition, the school set 3 new meet records and won 6 individual championships. The new meet records were set in Long Jump for U-17 Girls by Diya She-

noy, 100m for U-19 Girls by Anugraha Susan Varghese and Long Jump for U-17 Boys by Christy Sabu.

ICSK dominated in three categories: Under-17 Girls, Under-19 Boys and Under-19 Girls. Notably, Laaibah Syed (U-14 Girls), Diya Shenoy (Under 17 Girls) Christy Sabu (Under 17 Boys) Anugraha Susan Varghese (U-19 Girls), Deon Daniel Lewis (U-19 Boys), Kiran Kumar (Under 19 Boys) and Shanaya Martin (Under 19 Girls) were crowned individual champions.

This phenomenal success was the result of meticulous planning, relentless training, and expert guidance by the Physical Education Department. The team was led by Dr. K. Shyam, Head of the Department and Track Events Coach, supported by Mr. Murali Manickam (Throws

Coach), and Mr. Sharafali Arangadon (Jumps Coach). The leadership and encouragement of Dr. V. Binumon, Principal and Senior Administrator of ICSK, played a vital role in motivating the athletes and supporting their journey to victory.

The triumph at the 27th CBSE Kuwait Cluster Athletics Meet stands as a powerful testament to ICSK’s holistic vision of education. With unwavering commitment to values such as leadership, perseverance, and integrity, ICSK not only dominates the athletics arena but also inspires its students to strive for greatness in every aspect of life. This victory reinforces the school’s dedication to shaping well-rounded individuals who are prepared to excel both on the field and beyond.



A section of the audience at the Goa Day 2025 event.

Memorable event honors the Goan heritage

Goa Day 2025 celebrated in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The vibrant spirit of Goa came alive in Kuwait as the Good Shepherds Cultural and Social Welfare Association successfully organized the much-anticipated Goa Day 2025 on Friday, May 2nd. Held amidst a lively and enthusiastic gathering, the event drew large crowds from the Goan and wider Indian community, celebrating the rich culture, traditions, and unity of Goa.

The occasion was graced by Shri. Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco, Honorable MLA of Curtorim Constituency, Goa, who was the Chief Guest of the event. His presence added significant prestige and highlighted the strong bonds between the Goan diaspora in Kuwait and their homeland. In his address, the MLA praised the association’s commitment to preserving Goan heritage abroad and emphasized the importance of cultural identity in global communities.

Adding to the grandeur, the evening featured performances by renowned artists Mark Revlon-Goa, Ester Noronha – Mangalore, Polly, Succoro and Ben Evangelist – UK along with Local Goan and Mangalorean artists in Kuwait creating a colorful tapestry of Goan music, dance, and artistic expression. Traditional Goan folk dances, live band performances, Konkani songs, and a showcase of regional cuisine made the event a vibrant celebration of multicultural talent.

The event was seamlessly anchored by the charismatic MC Mr. Sammy from Goa, whose professionalism and charm kept the audience engaged and the program flowing smoothly from start to finish.

The President of the Good Shepherds Cultural and Social Welfare Association expressed heartfelt gratitude to all supporters, sponsors, volunteers, and attendees, saying, “Goa Day 2025 is a testa-



Distinguished members honored during the Goa Day 2025 program.



The crowd revels in the festivities of Goa Day 2025.

ment to our unity, our love for our culture, and the unwavering spirit of the Goan community in Kuwait.”

The event also recognized notable community members for their service and contribution to cultural preservation and welfare activities. Community leaders and dignitaries from various Indian associations in Kuwait also attended, reflecting

strong cross-community support.

Goa Day 2025 was not just a celebration of heritage but a reminder of the values of community, solidarity, and pride in one’s roots. The success of this event has further solidified the role of the Good Shepherds Cultural and Social Welfare Association as a pillar of cultural unity for Goans living in Kuwait.

School celebrates academic achievements
FAIPS honors scholars at badge ceremony

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: FAIPS DPS, a leading educational institution in Kuwait since 1995, has been honouring its meritorious performers in the scholar badge award function every year. The prestigious Scholar Badge Ceremony, though briefly interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic was reintroduced last year with renewed enthusiasm. The ceremony made its return on 28th April 2025 to felicitate the academic excellence of the students of Grades 8, 9, 11, and IGCSE for the year 24-25. The glittering function, held in the school auditorium was graced by the presence of His Excellency Lakshitha Pradeep Ratnayake, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Kuwait.

After a respectful salutation to the nation followed by the Kuwait National Anthem, the recitation of the Holy Quran, and its translation, the Principal, Mr. Ravi Ayanoli led the prominent dignitaries to the ceremonial lighting of the lamp symbolizing the triumph of good over evil and dispelling of darkness. The co-ordinators of Grades VIII, IX and XI were also invited to do the honors, against the backdrop of the sublime melody of Veena recital by Moutika Manikandan and Mirudagam by Ramana Ramachandran.

The Head Boys of the Senior Council, Vyom Mehta and Khlood Nawaz, then took the center stage and extended a formal welcome to the esteemed guest, extolling His Excellency Lakshitha Ratnayake’s distinguished credentials, whose steadfast commitment to international relations, cultural exchange, and goodwill has earned him admiration far and wide.

The Principal, Ravi Ayanoli, addressed the gathering, offering words of encouragement to students and urging families to continue supporting their ward’s academic journey.

The ceremony gained momentum with a spectacular display of well-coordinated and synchronized items showcasing the rich and multifarious talents of FAIPS students. It began with a melodious blend of regional Indian songs, performed by our talented students, followed by a graceful classical dance performance re-



Photos from the event.

resenting storytelling tradition, and devotion. The cultural extravaganza concluded with an energetic and symbolic Sri Lankan dance, beautifully capturing the spirit of the nation.

Following this, the honourable Chief Guest, His Excellency, Mr Lakshitha Pradeep Ratnayake enlightened the audience with his words of wisdom, and was presented with a token of appreciation from Principal, Mr Ravi Ayanoli.

As the much-awaited segment of the award ceremony drew closer, the scholars lined up to receive their token of hard work as a testimony to their relentless efforts and dedica-

tion throughout the academic year. One by one, the awardees walked onto the stage, heads held high, as they received their scholar badge and certificate from the dignitaries Principal, Vice Principals and the coordinators. It was a proud moment for the parents to see their ward grow in academic stature.

To conclude the ceremony, Senior Council Heads Jatan Shah and Zoya Kulsum expressed their gratitude to the Chief guest, Principal, supportive parents and hardworking team members whose efforts brought the entire program to life. This remarkable event culminated in a resounding success.

Find your voice at Toastmasters Club

Mace Springs hosts Open House on May 16

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Toastmasters International is a nonprofit educational organization headquartered in the United States, dedicated to helping individuals develop communication, public speaking and leadership skills through a global network of clubs.

“When I first walked into Mace Springs Toastmasters Club, I never imagined how much it would change me. I used to hesitate to speak, felt very nervous in front of people. Now, I speak with confidence, express myself freely, and most importantly – I’ve learned to just be myself,” Toastmaster Hazel R. D’Souza, one of the prominent speakers from the Mace Springs Toastmasters Club said.

What made the difference? Speaking regularly in front of supportive club members. Not being afraid of making mistakes and having fun along the way!

We all join Toastmasters with different goals and this platform has the power, to help you achieve them.

Keeping your dreams and goals in mind, Mace

Springs Toastmasters Club is super excited to invite you to the Toastmasters Open House Day ‘Lights, Camera and Speak!’ On Friday May 16, 2025, at IBIS Hotel Salmiya from 4 PM to 6 PM. You will have fun activities such as standup comedy, games, snacks, great conversations and also a chance to see how a Toastmaster’s club operates.

So whether you’re shy, outgoing, curious, or just looking for something new – you’re welcome. Come hang out with us, meet some amazing people, and see what we’re all about. You never know you might just find the community that you always missed! So please don’t hesitate. Kindly register at the link <https://forms.gle/1HmJnDt658M2p2JL8> or call and message us at RSVP: Toastmaster Madhusudan Reddy 97263643 or Toastmaster Shyam Sundar 97219536 and we will get back to you.

We promise you will have fun.

Festival kicks off with a fierce race for the Palme d'Or

Cannes has already delivered drama – here's what's next



From left: Eva Longoria, jury member Halle Berry and Hannah Waddingham pose for photographers upon their arrival at the premiere of the film 'Mission: Impossible - The Final Reckoning' at the 78th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Wednesday, May 14. (AP)

CANNES, France, May 15, (AP): This year's Cannes Film Festival has barely started, but it's already been an attention-grabbing affair, from new rules for its red carpets, nerves about potential US tariffs and the return of Tom Cruise.

And that says nothing about the films, expected to be a strong slate as Cannes is seen as increasingly important to the Oscars' best picture hopefuls.

Even in a normal year, Cannes is a lot to keep up with. Here's a handy guide of what's happened so far, what to expect and what it may mean.

Cannes opened Tuesday with a starry tribute to Robert De Niro, 49 years after "Taxi Driver" won the festival's top prize, the Palme d'Or. De Niro used the platform to assail US President Donald Trump, a frequent target of his criticism.

He also basked in the adoration of some of film's

elite, including Leonardo DiCaprio and Quentin Tarantino.

Cannes debuted a complex 4K restoration of "The Gold Rush," one of Charlie Chaplin's most beloved silent masterpieces, timed to the film's 100th anniversary. "Our grandfather would be really proud to see this, a hundred years later, to see all you here and interested in seeing the film," said Kiera Chaplin to a packed screening Tuesday.

Tom Cruise took the spotlight on Day 2 with the latest "Mission: Impossible" installment, "Final Reckoning."

For such a high-flying franchise, Cruise kept his feet on the ground (so far) ahead of the film's premiere.

AP Film Writer Jake Coyle broke down some of the key things about the festival in a thorough prim-

er. Among the things to watch out for: any effects of Trump's talk about tariffs on foreign-made films at the world's largest film market. The festival serves as the start of Oscar season and there's a packed field vying for this year's Palme d'Or.

Outside of competition, there's some starry first-time directors: Scarlett Johansson with "Eleanor the Great," Kristen Stewart with "The Chronology of Water" and Harris Dickinson with "Urchin."

Their films are not in the main competition, but as Brazilian director Kleber Mendonça Filho told Coyle about debuting a film at Cannes: "You release a film into that Colosseum-like situation." He noted premiering a movie at the festival is akin to "a potential invitation to a beheading."

One of the buzziest moves by Cannes this year so far has been its proclamation that nudity is banned by

festivalgoers and so too are "voluminous" outfits, in particular those with a large train.

The move to ban nude looks comes amid the "naked dress" trend on red carpets, including Bianca Censori's Grammys look and many of the outfits worn by Vanity Fair party attendees after the Oscars.

Cannes press officers said earlier this week the festival "made explicit in its charter certain rules that have long been in effect."

So how did stars at Cannes respond?

Halle Berry, who is on the festival jury headed by Juliette Binoche, told reporters she would abide by it and had changed her opening night look.

While risque looks were in short supply Monday, there were certainly some "voluminous outfits," including dresses worn by Heidi Klum, Chinese actor Wan QianHui and others.

People

Cannes

Abuse claims

Cassie testifies against Combs

NEW YORK, May 15, (AP): The R&B singer Cassie testified Wednesday that Sean "Diddy" Combs physically abused her when she ended their decade-long relationship, after he threatened to release degrading videos of her.

Addressing the Manhattan courtroom for a second day in Combs' federal sex trafficking trial, Cassie said Combs forced his way into her Los Angeles apartment and raped her on the living room floor after she said she was breaking up with him.



Cassie

Cassie also said she didn't feel she could refuse Combs' demands for her to have "hundreds" of encounters with male workers - which he watched and controlled for hours and even days - because he would make her "look

like a ..." if he made the videos public. "I feared for my career. I feared for my family. It's just embarrassing. It's horrible and disgusting. No one should do that to anyone," said Cassie, whose legal name is Cassandra Ventura.

Prosecutors showed the jury five still images from videos on Wednesday. Cassie said the images depicted her at various stages of what Combs referred to as "freak-offs." One juror's eyes widened, and another shook his head from side to side. She sued Combs in 2023, accusing him of years of physical abuse. Within hours, the suit was settled for \$20 million - a figure Cassie disclosed for the first time Wednesday - but dozens of similar legal claims followed from other women.

Accuse

Prosecutors accuse Combs of exploiting his status as a powerful music executive to violently force Cassie and other women to take part in sexual encounters. He is charged with crimes including racketeering and trafficking by force, fraud or coercion. Several other accusers are set to testify.

Combs denies all of the allegations. His attorneys acknowledge he could be aggressive at times but maintain that his actions were consensual and do not constitute a criminal enterprise.

Combs' lawyers were expected to begin cross-examining Cassie on Thursday, when they will get the chance to challenge her credibility or poke holes in her account of what happened.

Combs, 55, has been jailed since September. He faces at least 15 years in prison if convicted. The trial is expected to last about two months.

Cassie's testimony is exposing the dark underside of a relationship that, for years, played out publicly in pictures of the couple smiling on red carpets and celebrity events. She said she met Combs in 2005, when she was 19 and he was 37. Combs signed her to a 10-year contract with his Bad Boy Records label. Within a few years, they started dating, Cassie said.

They were photographed in 2016 attending the premiere of the film "The Perfect Match," only two days after Combs beat and kicked Cassie at a Los Angeles hotel - an attack captured on security camera footage. After the footage was leaked last year, Combs apologized. Jurors were shown that footage as well as photos of the couple at the premier.



Araya Hargate poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film 'Mission: Impossible - The Final Reckoning' at the 78th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Wednesday, May 14. (AP)

Actor won't bid 'Mission: Impossible' adieu yet

Cannes crowds go wild for Cruise, his 'Mission'

CANNES, France, May 15, (AP): Three years after flying into the Cannes Film Festival with "Top Gun: Maverick," Tom Cruise again kicked up a storm on the Croisette with Wednesday's premiere of "Mission: Impossible - Final Reckoning."

Christopher McQuarrie's latest "Mission: Impossible" installment was the biggest Hollywood tentpole wading ashore in Cannes this year. It, and Cruise, stirred a frenzy at the French Riviera festival, which again played eager host to the American movie star.

Just his arrival outside the premiere, beamed onto the screen in the Grand Théâtre Lumière, drew a response. When Cruise stepped out his car, oohs and applause reverberated through the theater. Cruise spent several minutes signing autographs for fans lined up on the Croisette.

Some had wondered whether Cruise might make a more daring arrival. When Cruise received an honorary Palme d'Or from the festival in 2022, the "Top Gun: Maverick" premiere included an impressively timed jet flyover. Instead, on Day 2 of the festival, he and the film's cast walked the red carpet accompanied by an orchestra performing Lalo Schiffrin's "Mission: Impossible" theme on the Palais steps. "Bravo!" cheered Cruise.

Though selfies are frowned upon on the Cannes red carpet, McQuarrie took several of the group, which included Hayley Atwell, Simon Pegg, Angela Bassett and Hannah Waddingham. "Final Reckoning," the eighth "Mission: Impossible" movie and a follow-up to 2023's "Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning Part One," is again a heaping serving of outlandish stunts in a globe-trotting, world-saving plot that greatly relies on Cruise's sheer force of will to propel it.

The film, which draws to a close McQuarrie's extended AI apocalypse tale, drew mostly good reviews following its screening and garnered a five-minute standing ovation.

"To be here in Cannes and have these moments, as a kid when we were growing up, I really can't even dream about something like this happening," Cruise said, addressing the audience. "I'm very grateful for 30 years to be able to entertain you with this franchise."



Tom Cruise poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film 'Mission: Impossible - The Final Reckoning' at Cannes, southern France, Wednesday, May 14. (AP)

Throughout much of the "Mission: Impossible" parade in Cannes, Cruise and McQuarrie lavished praise upon one another. Cruise told McQuarrie, who took over directing the franchise with 2015's "Rogue Nation" that he looked forward to making "a bunch of other kind of movies with you."

"When I was a kid growing up, I was one of those kids who didn't quite fit in. A lot of my life was imaginative play," said McQuarrie. "And I got to grow up and have my very own ac-

tion figure, who was actually willing to do just about every crazy thing I could think of."

Earlier in the day, Cruise joined McQuarrie midway through the director's masterclass talk. There was no press conference for the film, which meant Cruise and company faced no questions from reporters. But Cruise's surprise appearance allowed the 62-year-old star a moment to reflect on his 30 years with "Mission: Impossible." As to whether "Final Reckoning" is a last hurrah for him, he demurred, calling it "the culmination of three decades of work."

"I'd rather just people see it and enjoy," Cruise said.

Cruise, to no one's surprise, said he relishes the stunt work in "Mission: Impossible."

"I don't mind encountering the unknown. I like the feeling. It's just an emotion for me. It's something that is not paralyzing," Cruise said.

Cruise, McQuarrie and Paramount Pictures, which will release "Final Reckoning" in North American theaters on May 23, are hoping the installment returns the franchise to box-office heights.

"Dead Reckoning Part One" was considered a box-office disappointment, though it ultimately grossed \$571.1 million worldwide. Still, with production budgets close to \$300 million for these films, a lot is riding on "Final Reckoning." Cruise has been traversing the world - with stops in Japan, South Korea and England in the run-up to Cannes - to drum up excitement. Paramount chief executive Brian Robbins also attended the Cannes premiere.

Cruise and McQuarrie, as they did around the release of "Top Gun: Maverick" (which McQuarrie co-wrote and produced), have made themselves passionate pitchmen for the big-screen experience. McQuarrie on Wednesday granted: "I worry for the fate and survival of cinema."

"Streaming is in danger of driving the industry into extinction," said McQuarrie. "The advantage a filmmaker has entering the world is that he doesn't have the pressure of an opening weekend."

Diabetes research focuses on prevention and treatment solutions

Diabetes rate in Kuwait expected to reach 30 pct by 2050

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The Swiss Embassy in Kuwait, in cooperation with the Kuwaiti-Swiss Business Platform, organized a scientific conference entitled “Diabetes Research: An International Partnership” at the residence of Swiss Ambassador Tiziano Balmelli.

A group of experts and researchers from Switzerland and Kuwait attended the conference to discuss developments in diabetes research and strengthen scientific cooperation to curb its spread.

During the conference, Dr. Abdullah Al-Kandari revealed that the percentage of people with diabetes

in Kuwait has reached 20 percent and is expected to reach 30 percent by 2050 -- up from only seven percent in the 1990s.

He warned about the accelerating spread of the disease, especially among those over the age of 60, as about two-thirds of this age group is affected. He attributed the increase to unhealthy lifestyle; including inactivity, poor diet and smoking. He stressed the need to adopt effective prevention methods like regular exercise and a healthy diet. He also recommended that everyone aged 40 or 45 should undergo annual test for glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) or fasting blood sugar.

Regarding treatment methods, Al-Kandari stated that traditional medicine has been proven effective;

but he was quick to underscore the need to follow doctors’ recommendations and prescribed medications, rather than relying on alternative medicine as the primary option.

Medical Director of Dasman Diabetes Institute Dr. Ebba Ozeri gave a presentation on the institute’s ongoing research projects, affirming the fruitful collaboration with Kuwaiti Danish Dairy Company (KDD).

Executive Manager of Research and Innovation at KDD Wolfram Alderson shed light on the efforts of the company to develop nutritional products that support diabetes control in collaboration with the institute.

Professor Pedro Marques-Vidal announced a collaborative project between the University of Lausanne

in Switzerland and the institute to study genetic factors and their impact on the effectiveness of treatments. He is hoping that this collaboration will expand to include other medical fields.

Balmelli expressed his satisfaction with the level of the existing cooperation. “We are not just promoting improved management of diabetes; but also the effective bilateral cooperation between research institutions in both countries, such as Dasman Diabetes Institute, KISR and University of Lausanne,” he added.

He then emphasized the importance of building lasting institutional partnerships that contribute to providing innovative scientific solutions to common health challenges.

Study warns on food labels

Calorie counts don’t lead to healthier food choices

By Deidre Popovich
Texas Tech University

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

Knowing the calorie content of foods does not help people understand which foods are healthier, according to a study I recently co-authored in the Journal of Retailing. When study participants considered calorie information, they rated unhealthy food as less unhealthy and healthy food as less healthy. They were also less sure in their judgments.

In other words, calorie labeling didn’t help participants judge foods more accurately. It made them second-guess themselves.

Across nine experiments with over 2,000 participants, my colleague and I tested how people use calorie information to evaluate food. For example, participants viewed food items that are generally deemed healthier, such as a salad, or ones that tend to be less healthy, such as a cheeseburger, and were asked to rate how healthy each item was. When people did not consider calorie information, participants correctly saw a big gap between the healthy and unhealthy foods. But when they considered calorie information, those judgments became more moderate.

In another experiment in the study, we found that asking people to estimate the calorie content of food items reduced self-reported confidence in their ability to judge how healthy those foods were – and that drop in confidence is what led them to rate these food items more moderately. We observed this effect for calories but not for other nutrition metrics such as fat or carbohydrates, which consumers tend to view as less familiar.

This pattern repeated across our experiments. Instead of helping people sharpen their evaluations, calorie information seemed to create what researchers call metacognitive uncertainty, or a feeling of “I thought I understood this, but now I’m not so sure.” When people aren’t confident in their understanding, they tend to avoid extreme judgments.

Information

Because people see calorie information so often, they believe they know how to use it effectively. But these findings suggest that the very familiarity of calorie counts can backfire, creating a false sense of understanding that leads to more confusion, not less. My co-author and I call this the illusion of calorie fluency. When people are asked to judge how healthy a food item is based on calorie data, that confidence quickly unravels and their healthiness judgments become less accurate.

These findings have important implications for public health and for the businesses that are investing in calorie transparency. Public health policies assume that providing calorie information will drive more informed choices. But our research suggests that visibility isn’t enough - and that calorie information alone may not help. In some cases, it might even lead people to make less healthy choices.

This does not mean that calorie information should be removed. Rather, it needs to be supported with more context and clarity. One possible approach is pairing calorie numbers with decision aids such as a traffic light indicator or an overall nutrition score, which both exist in some European countries. Alternatively, calorie information about an item could be accompanied by clear reference points explaining how much of a person’s recommended daily calories it contains - though this may be challenging because of how widely daily calorie needs vary.

Our study highlights a broader issue in health communication: Just because information is available doesn’t mean it’s useful. Realizing that calorie information can seem easier to understand than it actually is can help consumers make more informed, confident decisions about what they eat.

In our studies, we found that calorie information is especially prone to creating an illusion of understanding. But key questions remain.

For example, researchers don’t yet know how this illusion interacts with the growing use of health and wellness apps, personalized nutrition tools or AI-based food recommendations. Future research could look at whether these tools actually help people feel more sure of their choices - or just make them feel confident without truly understanding the information. (AP)

Chronic heart blockages discussed in workshop

Kuwait hospital treats complex heart blockages with advanced techniques

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The Cardiology Unit at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital successfully dealt with seven complex cases to open calcified and chronically blocked coronary arteries during a workshop on such cases recently.

Doctors from the unit attended the workshop; which it organized in coordination with Consultant Cardiologist and Coronary Artery Diseases and Complex and Chronic Catheterization Procedures in the Kingdom of Bahrain Dr. Hussam Nour. This is under the supervision of Head of the Cardiology Unit at the hospital Professor Dr. Mohammed Zubaid.

Dr. Fahad Al-Hajri, Cardiologist and Therapeutic Catheterization Consultant at the hospital, stated that this type of operation requires the use of advanced techniques and specialized equipment -- different from conventional blockages. He pointed out that chronic non-communicable diseases; such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and

smoking are among the causes of arterial blockages. He said chronic blockages require drug treatment; and if the patient does not respond and the blockage persists, the doctor is forced to perform a catheterization procedure to try to open the artery.

Dr. Abdullah Ismail -- Internal Medicine, Cardiology and Interventional Cardiac Catheterization Consultant at the hospital -- praised the participation of Dr. Nour from Bahrain. He affirmed the importance of the visit for exchanging experiences and participating in difficult operations.

He said the hosting of the workshop reflects the efforts of the hospital’s Cardiology Unit to develop the skills of the Cardiac Catheterization Team and to review global developments related to this field.

Cardiology Consultant Dr. Ali Al-Sulaimi confirmed the high incidence of chronic calcified blockages in Kuwait and in other Gulf states; indicating that they constitute about 25 percent of all arterial patients due to the high incidence of chronic diseases like high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity and kidney failure.

Largest one-year decline ever seen

US overdose deaths fell 27% last year

NEW YORK, May 15, (AP): There were 30,000 fewer US drug overdose deaths in 2024 than the year before - the largest one-year decline ever recorded.

An estimated 80,000 people died from overdoses last year, according to provisional Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data released Wednesday. That’s down 27% from the 110,000 in 2023.

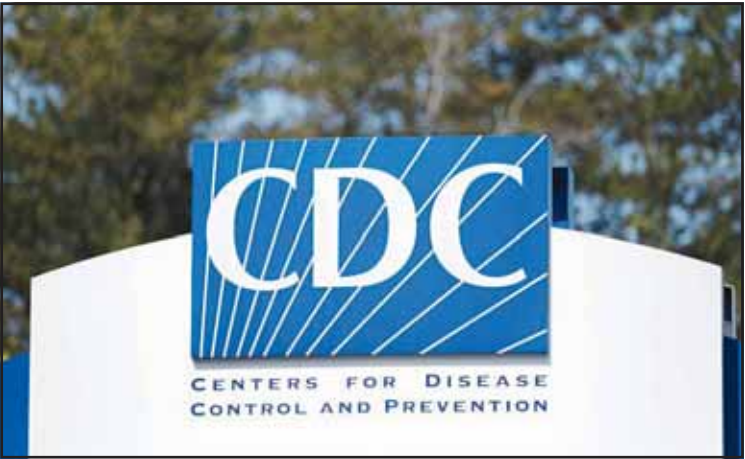
The CDC has been collecting comparable data for 45 years. The previous largest one-year drop was 4% in 2018, according to the agency’s National Center for Health Statistics.

All but two states saw declines last year, with Nevada and South Dakota experiencing small increases. Some of the biggest drops were in Ohio, West Virginia and other states that have been hard-hit in the nation’s decades-long overdose epidemic.

Experts say more research needs to be done to understand what drove the reduction, but they mention several possible factors. Among the most cited:

- Increased availability of the overdose-reversing drug naloxone.
- Expanded addiction treatment.
- Shifts in how people use drugs.
- The growing impact of billions of dollars in opioid lawsuit settlement money.
- The number of at-risk Americans is shrinking, after waves of deaths in older adults and a shift in teens and younger adults away from the drugs that cause most deaths.

Still, annual overdose deaths are higher than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. In a statement, the



This Tuesday, April 1, 2025 photo shows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention building in Atlanta. (AP)

CDC noted that overdoses are still the leading cause of death for people 18-44 years old, “underscoring the need for ongoing efforts to maintain this progress.” Some experts worry that the recent decline could be slowed or stopped by reductions in federal funding and the public health workforce, or a shift away from the strategies that seem to be working.

“Now is not the time to take the foot off the gas pedal,” said Dr. Daniel Ciccarone, a drug policy expert at the University of California, San Francisco.

The provisional numbers are estimates of everyone who died of overdoses in the U.S., including noncitizens. That data is still being processed, and the final numbers can sometimes differ a bit. But it’s clear that there was a huge drop last year.

Experts note that there have been past moments when U.S. overdose deaths seemed to have plateaued or even started to go down, only to rise again. That happened in 2018.

But there are reasons to be optimistic.

Naloxone has become more widely available, in part because of the introduction of over-the-counter versions that don’t require prescriptions.

Meanwhile, drug manufacturers, distributors, pharmacy chains and other businesses have settled lawsuits with state and local governments over the painkillers that were a main driver of overdose deaths in the past. The deals over the last decade or so have promised about \$50 billion over time, with most of it required to be used to fight addiction.

11 states hit

1,000 measles cases in the US

NEW YORK, May 15, (AP): Kansas logged eight more cases of measles in a week, as state health officials try to tamp down an multi-county outbreak that is linked to the large one in the Southwest.

The US surpassed 1,000 measles cases Friday, and Texas still accounts for the vast majority of cases in an outbreak that also spread measles to New Mexico, Oklahoma and Kansas.

Two unvaccinated elementary school-aged children died from measles-related illnesses in the epicenter in West Texas, and an adult in New Mexico who was not vaccinated died of a measles-related illness.

Other states with active outbreaks - which the CDC defines as three or more related cases - include Indiana, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Tennessee.

Outbreaks

North America has three other ongoing outbreaks. One outbreak in Ontario, Canada, has resulted in 1,440 cases from mid-October through May 6 - up 197 cases in the last reported week. Alberta, Canada, also has a growing outbreak that has sickened almost 400 as of May 14. And the Mexican state of Chihuahua had 1,194 measles cases and one death as of Wednesday, according to data from the state health ministry.

Measles is caused by a highly contagious virus that’s airborne and spreads easily when an infected person breathes, sneezes or coughs. It is preventable through vaccines, and has been considered eliminated from the U.S. since 2000.

As the virus takes hold in U.S. communities with low vaccination rates, health experts fear that spread could stretch on for a year. Here’s what else you need to know about measles in the US.

There are a total of 717 cases across 32 counties, most of them in West Texas, state health officials said Tuesday. The state confirmed only eight more cases since its update Friday. The state also added one hospitalization to its count, for a total of 93 throughout the outbreak.

State health officials estimated about 1% of cases - fewer than 10 - are actively infectious. Fifty-seven percent of Texas’ cases are in Gaines County, population 22,892, where the virus started spreading in a close-knit, undervaccinated Mennonite community.

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Saturday's nine games kick off at the same time

Dortmund, Frankfurt, Freiburg in Champions League shootout

DUESSELDORF, Germany, May 15, (AP): The final day of the Bundesliga season brings a Champions League shootout as Borussia Dortmund, Eintracht Frankfurt, and Freiburg battle it out for the last two qualifying spots for Europe's biggest club competition.

Bayern Munich secured the title two weeks ago, and its players were pictured partying on the Spanish island of Ibiza following the trophy presentation at last week's home game. Bayern may look at resting players bound for the Nations League and Club World Cup in the coming weeks. Bayer Leverkusen will finish second, no matter what happens in coach Xabi Alonso's last game.

All of Saturday's nine games kick off at the same time on a hectic final day.

Dortmund hosts already-relegated Holstein Kiel and a win will almost

certainly be enough for it to qualify for the Champions League. That would complete a remarkable comeback for a team which was 11th in mid-March.

Fourth-place Freiburg hosts third-place Frankfurt with a Champions League spot on the line. Freiburg will qualify for the first time ever with a win, while Frankfurt is safe with a win or a draw. Both qualify if Dortmund can't beat Kiel.

Alonso's Leverkusen was beaten by Dortmund in his last home game, but visiting Mainz offers the chance to sign off with a win.

After his emotional farewell to Bayern's fans at home last week, Thomas Müller can mark his 503rd - and possibly last - Bundesliga game at Hoffenheim. The experienced forward is leaving Bayern when his contract expires following the Club World Cup in the United States in June and July.

If Dortmund can qualify for the Champions League again, it will have striker Serhou Guirassy to thank. He's scored 20 Bundesliga goals this season and five in the last four games.

Ritsu Doan is the closest Freiburg has to a star in a team of hard-working, experienced players. His nine goals are the most of any Freiburg player in the league this season, and the Japanese winger has eight assists too.

Stuttgart's midfielder Angelo Stiller is out of Saturday's game against Leipzig with an ankle ligament injury. The club hopes he can return for next week's German Cup final.

Eric Dier is bidding farewell to Bayern after the England defender signed for Monaco on Wednesday. Forward Leroy Sané has just weeks left on his Bayern contract, though reports in German media indicate the forward may yet sign an extension.



Dortmund's players celebrate in front of their fans after the German Bundesliga soccer match between Bayer 04 Leverkusen and Borussia Dortmund in Leverkusen, Germany. (AP)

Messi makes Bay Area debut as Miami draws with Earthquakes



Inter Miami midfielder Lionel Messi, left, and San Jose Earthquakes defender Daniel Munie compete for possession of the ball during the second half of an MLS soccer match in San Jose, Calif. (AP)

LAFC uses 2nd half to throttle Sounders in 4-0 rout

SAN JOSE, Calif., May 15, (AP): Tadeo Allende scored twice and Inter Miami tied the San Jose Earthquakes 3-3 in Lionel Messi's first game in the Bay Area since joining MLS.

Allende scored once in the first half and then tied the game in the 52nd minute when he tapped in a pass Baltasar Rodríguez on a play that Messi helped set up.

Maximiliano Falcon also scored for Miami, which has allowed at least three goals in three of the last four games.

Cristian Arango, Beau Leroux and Ian Harkes scored for the Earthquakes, who are unbeaten in their last three games.

Messi had a chance late for the game-winner but was stopped from in close in stoppage time in the second half by Daniel De Sousa Britto. Messi was then tackled late outside the box with no call, leading to him arguing with the referee after the game and getting a yellow card before being escorted away by Earthquakes coach Bruce Arena.

LAFC had four-different players reach the back of the net and avenged an earlier-season loss to Seattle drub-

bing the Sounders 4-0.

With the win, LAFC (6-4-3) extended its unbeaten streak to six games. Its last loss was a little more than a month ago (April 9) in the CONCAF Champions Cup. Miami beat LAFC, 3-1.

The Sounders beat LAFC, 5-2 on March 8.

Cengiz Ünder started LAFC's scoring spree with a left-footed shot from the center position from just outside the box at 26 minutes. In stoppage time, the Sounders just missed the

chance to tie it when Osaze De Rosario's header from the center of the box ricocheted off the top of the post to end the first half.

Anders Dreyer had a first-half assist and a second-half goal to propel expansion side San Diego FC to a 2-0 victory over the Colorado Rapids.

CJ dos Santos finished with five saves in the shutout for San Diego (7-4-2). It was his fifth clean sheet in 13 starts in his first full season in the league.



Toronto FC forward Theo Corbeanu (right) jumps to reach the ball as FC Cincinnati defender Gilberto Flores (3) slides along the ground during first half MLS soccer action in Toronto. (AP)

Defender Christopher McVey used assists from Jeppe Tverskov and Dreyer to score in the 33rd minute and San Diego took the 1-0 lead into halftime.

McVey has two goals in 13 appearances - all starts - this season. He had one goal last season in 27 appearances with D.C. United and one with Inter Miami in 50 appearances over two seasons. T

Hany Mukhtar scored the game winner just minutes after the match was leveled and Nashville SC beat the New York Red Bulls 2-1 for its third consecutive win.

It was the first time in Nashville's seven-year history they've beaten the Red Bulls. Nashville entered the match 0-3-4 against the Red Bulls., Nashville's (7-4-2) unbeaten games streak now stands at five.

Mukhtar scored with the right foot from the right side of the box at the 63rd minute on assists from Alex Muyl and Sam Surridge; Surridge's second distribution of the night. Muktar got more than enough on the shot and sent a low laser past sprawling keeper Carlos Miguel Coronel.

Rookie defenders Pablo Ortiz and Felipe Andrade scored goals in the first starts of their careers, and Jonathan Bond posted his second clean sheet in five starts to help the Houston Dynamo cool off Minnesota United with a 2-0 victory on Wednesday night.

Naples will host next America's Cup in 2027

MILAN, May 15, (AP): The next America's Cup will be held off Naples, Italy, in 2027, holder Team New Zealand announced on Thursday.

It will be the 38th edition of the world's most famous regatta and the first time it has been held in the Mediterranean country.

New Zealand had the right to pick the venue after winning its third straight cup in Barcelona last year.

The cup holder said the races will

be staged in the spring and summer of 2027. In its statement, the team said the races "will take place under the watchful shadow of Mt Vesuvius and just off the waterfront of the vibrant city."

Italian yachts have reached the final match race three times, most recently Luna Rossa in 2021. Luna Rossa fell one step short in Barcelona, where the beachfront was teeming with Italian fans. Britannia beat Luna Rossa

to reach the final, where it lost to the Kiwis.

Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli won the first Women's America's Cup in Barcelona and its youth team also won the event for young sailors.

Many New Zealand fans were angered when team boss Grant Dalton took the cup away from Auckland, citing financial difficulties, after the local boat hosted the event and successfully defended its title in 2021.

Dalton left open the possibility of returning home for the 38th regatta if the money was there, but he discarded that option last month after the team failed to secure what it considered sufficient backing from the government.

Barcelona's municipal government opted not to bid to host another cup just days after Team New Zealand culminated its three-peat, citing costs and amid a protests against so-called "overtourism."

Boxing great to fight Barrios

Pacman returning to the ring after losing senatorial race

MANILA, Philippines, May 15, (AP): Boxing great Manny Pacquiao is coming out of retirement to fight Mario Barrios for the WBC welterweight crown in July.

Pacquiao's team made the announcement on Thursday, just hours after he conceded defeat in a bid for another seat in the Philippines Senate.

"His comeback aligns with his scheduled induction into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in June, capping a storied sports legacy that continues to inspire millions of Filipino people," the press statement said.

It was not clear if the fight at a Las Vegas venue to be decided is a one-off or if 46-year-old Pacquiao is coming out of a four-year retirement to box full-time. Asked to clarify, his communications officer Joey Hernal said the media should wait for Pacquiao's own press conference.

In the statement, Pacquiao promised to continue serving the country despite losing in the mid-term elections.

"I may not have won in my run for the Senate, but I am totally grateful for each vote, each prayer and support," Pacquiao said in Filipino.

He even thanked voters who did not choose him because "you were part of the process to strengthen our democracy."

He said he remains committed to serve the country. "The fight continues. Service continues. For God. For the country. For each Filipino," he added.

Pacquiao previously served as a senator from 2016-22. He then made a bid for the presidency in 2022 elections but failed. In the mid-term elections on Monday, Pacquiao vied for a second stint in the Senate but finished 18th in voting when only the top 12 made it.

He joins the Canastota, New York-based Hall of Fame next month as one of the most decorated boxers in history.

A world champion in eight divisions from flyweight to super welterweight, he appeared to end a 26-year career in 2021 with a record of 62-8-2 (39 KOs).

Barrios retained the WBC welterweight belt with a draw against Abel Ramos last November in Arlington, Texas.

Kuwait Club & Burgan clash again

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Kuwait Club and Burgan will meet for the third time in just one week when they face off today at 5:00 pm in the Federation Cup quarterfinals. The match will be held at the Federation Hall at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex. Later, at 7:00 pm, Qadsia will take on Al-Arabi in another high-stakes quarterfinal at the same venue.

The two sides previously met on May 9 in the Premier League playoff final, where Kuwait Club secured a dominant 3-0 victory. They repeated the same scoreline on May 13 to clinch their 16th Premier League title in club history.

The Federation Cup quarterfinals began yesterday with two matches: Al-Shabab vs. Al-Nasr and Kazma vs. Al-Sulaibikhat. Winners from both match days will advance to the semifinals, scheduled for Sunday. The tour-

namment – and the 2024-2025 volleyball season – will conclude on May 20.

Kuwait Club is aiming to complete a treble this season, having already won the Super Cup and Premier League. Burgan, however, is determined to upset the "Sons of Kaifan" and deny them a third title while securing a place in the semifinals.

The second quarterfinal between Al-Arabi and Qadsia is equally significant. Al-Arabi, Super Cup runner-up and third-place finisher in the league, are hunting for its first title of the season. Qadsia, meanwhile, is looking to rescue a trophy-less campaign with a strong showing in the Federation Cup.

In a separate development, the Kuwait Volleyball Association announced a one-year suspension and a KD 1,500 fine for a Burgan player involved in incidents during the recent Premier League final against Kuwait Club.



A file photo of players battling for the ball.

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Etienne faces must-win match to avoid relegation

PARIS, May 15, (AP): With Paris Saint-Germain already crowned champion and Marseille and Monaco assured of Champions League spots next season, Ligue 1's attention turns to the race to avoid relegation on the final matchday.

At the bottom of the standings, last-placed Montpellier has been demoted. Who joins Montpellier will be decided between Saint-Etienne and Le Havre.

Saint-Etienne dominated French soccer during the 1960s and '70s. Having just returned to the top flight, the 10-time French champion has struggled despite brilliant individual

efforts from Zuriko Davitashvili and Lucas Stassin.

Le Havre has won three French championships, the last in 1919. It has been in the top flight for two seasons and sits in the relegation playoffs spot at 16th.

Le Havre is one point ahead of Saint-Etienne, and finishes at Strasbourg on Saturday. At the same time, Saint-Etienne is home to Toulouse.

"We can win this last match and still be relegated," Saint-Etienne coach Eirik Horneland said. "We're going to have to create an incredible atmosphere and take the

fans with us."

Two others, Reims and Nantes, have yet to secure their place in the elite. Both are two points ahead of Le Havre. Nantes hosts Montpellier, and Reims travels to Lille.

PSG striker Ousmane Dembélé is in a good position to succeed his former teammate Kylian Mbappé as the league's top scorer.

Dembélé has 21 goals, two more than Marseille's Mason Greenwood. Behind them, Rennes forward Arnaud Kalimuendo has 17.

Company official sponsor of the 10th Arab Handball Cup hosted in Kuwait

Zain renews commitment to supporting sports locally and regionally



Fouad Al-Bloushi honors Hamad Al-Musaibeeh for Zain's support of the championship.

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: Zain announced its official sponsorship of the 10th Arab Handball Cup Championship, which was hosted in Kuwait and organized by the Kuwait Handball Federation.

The tournament saw the participation of 9 Arab national teams who competed over a full week in a vibrant sports atmosphere and a strong fan presence.

The championship concluded with Qatar winning the title, Bahrain coming in second, and Kuwait taking third place.

At the closing ceremony, President of the Kuwait

■ Zain congratulated Qatar for winning the championship title and Kuwait for securing third place

Handball Federation, Fouad Al-Bloushi, honored Hamad Al-Musaibeeh, Corporate Relations Department Manager at Zain Kuwait, in recognition of Zain's support for the championship. The company's sponsorship came as part of its ongoing strategy to support major tournaments that enhance Kuwait's presence in both local and international sports arenas.



Kuwait's National Team players celebrate their third-place finish.



The tournament featured an electric atmosphere and remarkable fan attendance.

The company is keen on supporting high-profile competitions hosted in the country that reflect diversity and excellence across various sports disciplines, including handball,

which enjoys a wide fan base and a record of notable achievements by the Kuwaiti national team.

The 10th edition of the championship was held at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Indoor Sports Complex and featured 9 strong Arab teams: Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE, Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, and the host nation Kuwait. The Kuwaiti national team achieved third place following a commendable performance that received praise from fans and spectators, reflecting the significant progress of handball in Kuwait.

Zain expressed its pride in being part of this major sporting

event that brought together top Arab handball talents. The company affirmed that its sponsorship of the tournament aligns with its vision to empower young athletes, showcase national talent, and promote a culture of fair competition within a healthy sports environment that positively contributes to society.

Zain continues to support sports and athletes through its strategic partnerships with official sports bodies and its belief in sports as a key driver of social and youth development. The company emphasized that such tournaments help reinforce Kuwait's position as a vibrant sports hub in the region.

Ground breaking announcements on the horizon

Kuwait men's cricket team awarded annual contracts

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The Kuwait National Men's Cricket Team came together for a landmark ceremony where players were officially awarded their annual contracts, in a proud moment led by KCC President Mr.Haider Farman and Director General Mr.Sajid Ashraf.

The event celebrated not only the contractual recognition of the players but also the team's stellar recent performance – notably, their historic victory over Nepal in Hong Kong.

This triumph secured Kuwait the championship title in the Hong Kong Men's T20I Quadrangular Series 2025.

Addressing the squad, Mr. Haider Farman applauded the team's grit, growth, and commitment, calling the series win a defining moment in Kuwait's cricketing journey.

Mr. Sajid Ashraf emphasized the Board's continued support and vision for elevating the national side on the global stage with ground breaking announcements on the horizon.

The ceremony also had the participation of Mr. Robert



Players pose with officials after the landmark ceremony.

Dsouza (Head of Operations), Mr. Saud Qamar (Head of PR)

and Mr. Tahir Khan (Venue Manager & Lead Coach Juniors)

and concluded with the players posing proudly

with their contracts, symbolizing both reward for past ef-

forts and promise for the road ahead.

'We need to finish well and get a trophy'

Haaland calls City season horrific as FA Cup final offers redemption

MANCHESTER, England, May 15, (AP): As "horrific" seasons go, Manchester City's could still end on a high note.

While English soccer's most dominant force for the past decade has been dispossessed of the Premier League crown, City's campaign could finish with the FA Cup and the title of world champion.

City plays Crystal Palace in the FA Cup final at Wembley on Saturday, looking for some shine on a season that spectacularly unraveled late last year.

"This season has been tough," striker Erling Haaland told the BBC. "It is not nice to lose so many games, it is boring and not fun. That's why we need to finish well and get a trophy."

"We have the FA Cup final to play for, and in a horrific season, we still managed to do this and that says it all."

City's form has been so bad by its own remarkably high standards that Champions League qualification is still not certain with two rounds to go. But second place in the standings is still up for grabs, and the expanded Club World Cup kicks off in the United States next month and provides another opportunity for

major silverware.

But the club that won six of the previous seven Premier League titles – including an unprecedented four in a row and the Champions League as part of a trophy treble in 2023 – is not in the mood to celebrate.

Manager Pep Guardiola said recently neither he nor his players deserve a bonus even if they win the Club World Cup, which has a prize pot of \$125 million for the champion. He also suggested no trophy would salvage the campaign after how his team surrendered the Pre-

mier League title, sitting 18 points adrift of champion Liverpool.

City is in its third FA Cup final in a row.

It is Palace's third FA Cup final ever. It lost to Manchester United in the previous two – in 1990 and 2016.

So while the cup would be only a consolation prize for City, for Palace, it would mean everything as the London club's first major trophy.

"Everybody needs to win this final," Palace forward Ismaila Sarr said. "I'm working hard every day. I know it's not easy, but in my mind we're going to win this final. Yeah, Palace have never won this cup, but maybe this is the first time."

The teams last played last month, when Palace led 2-0 at City but lost 5-2. Their previous match in December ended 2-2.

"They are a team that can cause problems, so we have to be prepared and focus on ourselves," City midfielder Mateo Kovacic said.

"At this club, you take it (success) for granted because we have been on top for so many years consistently. This season, although it's not been good, we can end it in a positive way, which could give us a big push for the Club World Cup."



Manchester City's Erling Haaland, right, controls the ball from Southampton's Jan Bednarek during their Premier League soccer match at St Mary's Stadium, Southampton, England. (AP)

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NEWS



Italy's Lorenzo Musetti returns to Germany's Alexander Zverev during a quarter-final tennis match at the Italian Open in Rome, Italy. Musetti won 7-6, 6-4. (AP)

Sports

Bologna ends 51-year wait for major trophy

Milan beaten in Italian Cup final

ROME, May 15, (AP): Bologna ended a 51-year wait for a major trophy when it beat AC Milan 1-0 to win the Italian Cup.

Dan Ndoye returned from injury to score the only goal and help Bologna to its first Italian Cup since 1974. The club, which is owned by Canadian Joey Saputo, has only won two second-division titles in between.

It was also coach Vincenzo Italiano's first win in a final, having lost back-to-back Europa Conference League finals while in charge of Fiorentina and finishing runner-up in the 2023 Italian Cup.

The result secured Bologna a spot in next season's Europa League and left Milan with the very real likelihood of missing out on European competition.

It could spell the end of Sérgio Conceição's short stint in charge of the Rossoneri, with Milan eighth in Serie A after a disappointing season.

Both teams came to Rome looking to end an Italian Cup drought, as Milan last lifted the trophy 22 years ago - losing two finals in the intervening years.

The match was played at a high tempo from the start and both goalkeepers were called into making impressive saves in the opening 10 minutes.

Tension threatened to boil over toward the end of the first half and Bologna captain Lewis Ferguson



Bologna's team players celebrate with the trophy after the Italian Cup final soccer match between AC Milan and Bologna at Rome's Olympic Stadium. (AP)

was left bloodied with what looked like a broken nose after a sliding tackle on Rafael Leão, who caught him on the face with his leg as he

was upended.

Bologna broke the deadlock eight minutes into the second half. Riccardo Orsolini was tackled by

Theo Hernández in the area but the ball fell to Ndoye, who carved out some space before curling into the right side of the net.

The 24-year-old Switzerland international had missed Bologna's previous three matches with a thigh injury. Milan had fought back from a goal

down to beat Bologna 3-1 in the Italian league on Friday, but there was to be no such comeback in Rome.

Kuwaiti gymnasts aim for glory in Jordan, Poland



The female gymnasts ready for action.

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The Kuwait Gymnastics Federation has announced the participation of two national team delegations in major upcoming events: the West Asian Artistic Gymnastics Championships for Youth and Girls, currently underway in Amman, Jordan, and the International Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships for Girls, which begin today in Poland.

Fahd Al-Soula, Chairman of the Federation Council, confirmed that the artistic gymnastics delegation comprises 24 athletes — 8 male and 16 female gymnasts. The male athletes include Abdullah Muqdad, Musa Al-Sahaf, Saud Al-Rudaini, Ahmed Al-Rudaini, Saud Al-Sanawi, Khaled Al-Dahham, Hussein Abdulhadi, and Ali Abdulhadi.

The female artistic gymnastics participants are Nawal Al-

Zamel, Sarah Al-Qattan, Dina Al-Jouan, Nour Al-Loughani, Dana Al-Shalfan, Maryam Al-Khalifa, Shahah Al-Mulla, Mai Al-Awadhi, Dana Ali, Dima Al-Anjari, Yasmine Al-Awadhi, Fatima Al-Nama, Dalal Al-Sayrafi, Adwa Al-Babtain, Lulwa Bahman, and Lian Al-Shabib. The delegation is led by the Federation's Treasurer, Nasser Al-Hilfi.

Meanwhile, the Rhythmic Gymnastics National Team will compete in Poland under the leadership of Federation Administrator Noura Al-Marshed. The team features four athletes: Fawzia Al-Abdulkarim, Sarah Al-Bannai, Nabila Al-Kharafi, and Raya Al-Qassar.

Al-Soula expressed his confidence in the athletes and wished both delegations success, hoping they achieve outstanding results in their respective competitions.

Unbeaten Kuwait Club looks to extend lead, Premier Handball League returns

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 15: The Premier Handball League returns today after a 25-day break, with three thrilling matches lined up in the second round of the second division. All matches will take place at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex.

The action kicks off at 4:30 pm with Kazma facing Sulaibikhat, followed by a showdown between Kuwait Club and Salmiya at 6:00 pm. The day's fixtures will conclude at 7:30 pm as Burgan takes on Al-Arabi.

The league was temporarily paused on April 20 to allow the national team to participate in the 10th Arab Cup, which recently concluded in Kuwait. The national team, known as the Blues, secured third place in the tournament.

Currently, Kuwait Club leads the Premier League standings with 38 points, followed by Burgan with 31



Al-Qallaf unmarked as he goes for a goal.

points. Kazma sits in third place with 26, ahead of Salmiya with 21, while Sulaibikhat and Al-Arabi are tied with 18 points each.

Kuwait Club aims to extend its unbeaten streak and move one step closer to clinching the league title for yet another season, having maintained a perfect record since the 2012-2023 campaign. On the other hand, Salmiya hopes to climb the standings with a stronger second-half performance.

In today's opener, Kazma enters as the favorite against Sulaibikhat, but the latter won't go down without a fight. Sulaibikhat used the league break to hold a training camp in Cairo and bolstered their squad with French-Algerian player Nouri Benhalima after Estonian professional Tom Karl sustained an injury.

The final match between Burgan and Al-Arabi promises intensity, as Burgan looks to build on recent strong performances, while Al-Arabi aims to bounce back and improve its position in the league and with their fans.

Meanwhile, in the First Division League, Saturday's fixtures will see Khaitan take on Al-Fahaheel, while Al-Qurain faces Al-Tadamon.

Celtics stave off elimination

Timberwolves reach Western finals for second straight year

MINNEAPOLIS, May 15, (AP): Anthony Edwards approached for a handshake during Julius Randle's postgame TV interview, the duo putting a seal on another dominant series for Minnesota in these NBA playoffs.

Randle scored 29 points on 13-for-18 shooting to send the Timberwolves to the Western Conference finals for the second straight year with a 121-110 victory over the Golden State Warriors in Game 5.

Edwards had 22 points and 12 assists for the sixth-seeded Wolves, who will face the Denver-Oklahoma City winner next. They could get five days off, if the Nuggets beat the Thunder on Thursday to force a Game 7 in the other West semifinal series.

Brandin Podziemski had a playoff career-high 28 points for the Warriors, who again played without star Stephen Curry because of the hamstring strain that forced him out of the second quarter in Game 1 and took the heat out of their entire offensive operation.

Jonathan Kuminga provided another energy boost off the bench with 26 points, but Podziemski's performance came too late and the production from Jimmy Butler and Buddy Hield was consistently too little after they led the series-opening win.

Golden State presented far more of a defensive challenge than the Los Angeles Lakers did for Minnesota during their five-game series in the first round, but the collection of every-level scor-



New York Knicks guard Miles McBride, left, battles for a loose ball with Boston Celtics guard Payton Pritchard, right, during the first half of Game 5 of an NBA basketball second-round playoff series in Boston. (AP)

ers the Wolves can throw at an opponent when they're moving the ball and pushing the pace simply wore down the Warriors over the course of the series.

Rudy Gobert was a force around the rim with 17 points, Mike Conley had 16 points and eight assists, and Donte DiVincenzo snapped out of a slump with 13 points as the Wolves shot a staggering 77% on 2-pointers (36 for 47). They set franchise postseason records for assists (36) and field goal percentage (62.8%).

Series close-out games can sometimes be the toughest to win, but the Wolves played with a ferocity paired with their shooting touch that all but portended victory. Randle kept up his superb postseason, providing a constant source of energy and production.

Celtics 127, Knicks 102

In Boston, Before the Boston Celtics took the floor without their biggest star on a night they had to win, Joe Mazzulla implored his players to just pour everything they had into winning one game.

They did, and the defending NBA champions earned another chance to extend their season.

Derrick White had 34 points, including seven 3-pointers, to lead the Celtics to a 127-102 Game 5 win over the New York Knicks on Wednesday night that kept them alive in the Eastern Conference semifinals.

The Celtics connected on 22 3-pointers to post their first home victory of the series and first without Jayson Tatum following his season-ending Achilles tendon injury.

The Knicks will try again to win the series Friday in New York. If the Celtics win, Game 7 would be in Boston on Monday.

Jaylen Brown added 26 points and 12 assists. Payton Pritchard had 17 points and five 3-pointers. Luke Komet finished with 10 points, nine rebounds and seven blocks. He started the second half for Kristaps Porzingis, who played just 12 minutes. Mazzulla said Porzingis was having trouble breathing as he continues to deal with a lingering viral illness.

The Celtics are looking to become just the 14th team in NBA history to come back from a 3-1 deficit in 294 attempts.



Golden State Warriors forward Draymond Green (23) reaches for a rebound as Minnesota Timberwolves center Rudy Gobert (27) defends during the first half of Game 5 of an NBA basketball second-round playoff series in Minneapolis. (AP)