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150 FILS

GCC, ASEAN, China reaffirm support for Palestinians





Crown Prince Diwan photos

HH the Crown Prince and his accompanying delegation arrive in Japan on an official visit Wednesday.

Kuwait Crown Prince in Japan on official visit

TOKYO, May 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation arrived in Japan on an official visit Wednesday.

His Highness the Crown Prince was received by Japanese Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs and Director-General for Middle East and African Affairs Toshihide Endo, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Japan Sami Al-Zamanan, and Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah visit to Japan represents a milestone in the history of bilateral relations and strategic partnership between the two countries, said Kuwaiti Ambassador to Japan Sami Al-Zamanan Wednesday.

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KUWAIT BOOSTS DEPORTATIONS

2,700 expats out in swift April exit

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Deportation and Temporary Detention Affairs Department at the General Administration of Correctional Institutions in the Ministry of Interior deported 2,700

expatriates of various nationalities in April.

This is part of the efforts of the department to deport expatriates against whom administrative or judicial deportation orders have been issued.

A security source confirmed that the department is facilitating the departure of deportees at an accelerated pace.

UK envoy talks stability at Kuwait Command College



Command and Staff College.

Ministry of Defense photo UK Ambassador to Kuwait Belinda Lewis delivers a lecture at the Mubarak Al-Abdullah Joint

(KUNA): The UK Ambassador to Kuwait, Belinda Lewis delivered a lecture on Wednesday at the Mubarak Al-Abdullah Joint Command and Staff College, addressing students of the Joint Command and Staff Course No. 29.

The lecture focused on the challenges of such missions and ways to provide humanitarian support during stability operations.

According to a statement by the Ministry of Defense on Wednesday, the lecture is part of the college's ongoing program of inviting speakers from diverse academic and military fields, both from within Kuwait and

Continued on Page 5

Push for peace

KUALA LUMPUR, May 28, (KUNA): Leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and People's Republic of China reaffirmed their commitment to protect Palestinian civilians in Gaza, calling for an immediate and lasting cease-

This call came in the final statement issued on Wednesday at the conclusion of their trilateral summit held in Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday.

The leaders condemned all attacks targeting civilians in Gaza and stressed the need for the swift and unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid and essential services, including electricity, water, fuel, medicine, and food.

The statement urged all parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law, particularly The 1949 Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of

It also acknowledged the advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice on July 19, 2024, which called for an end to the Israeli occupation's illegal presence in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The leaders expressed their support for the re-lease of all hostages and arbitrarily detained individuals, and emphasized the need for a peaceful resolution to the conflict through a two-state solution based on pre-1967 borders, in accordance with international law and UN resolutions, including the one concerning Palestine's membership in the UN.

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His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the weekly meeting at Bayan Palace on Tuesday.

Cabinet lauds Wafra oil find

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): During its weekly session, the Kuwaiti Cabinet hailed on Tuesday the newly oil discovery in the northern part of Wafra, a partitioned zone between Saudi Arabia and the State of Kuwait, as a positive outcome for future cooperation in the energy

The Council of Ministers held its weekly meeting at Bayan Palace, chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Following the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sherida Abdullah Al-Muasherji made the following statement:

At the beginning of the meeting, His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Prime Minister, expressed his sincere thanks and deep gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, and the ministers for their kind sentiments towards him.

His Highness also expressed his sincere thanks to all citizens and all those who inquired about his health and for their sincere wishes, praying to God Almighty to grant everyone good health and

In this regard, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah delivered a speech in which he welcomed His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Prime Minister.

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HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

From the Ambassador to the **Security Guard,** the poor man's money was stolen ... the latter received nothing but 'May Allah help you'

The beggar said to the tourist, "For God's sake," but the latter did not understand what he meant.

Finally, the beggar despaired of ever getting anything from the tourist.

Before he left, he took a picture of the beggar... as a souvenir.

When the Arab friend explained the meaning to the tourist, the latter's heart softened.

The ambassador said, "This amount is so big, only one half of it is enough for the poor beggar."

When the governor received the money, he said, "\$20,000 is enough for the

The police chief officer said to himself, "\$200 is too much for a beggar."

The soldier stole \$20, and so it happens in the Arab

world.

Day by Day

YOUR Excellency, the Minister of Information and Culture,

As far as I know, the editorsin-chief of the daily newspapers wish to meet with His Highness the Prime Minister or the First Deputy Prime Minister. Let the meeting be off the record so that His Highness the Prime Minister or the First Deputy Prime Minister can hear the concerns of the people and, in turn, explain what is actually taking place in the

In many parts of the world, heads of state are often accompanied by newspaper owners, editors-in-chief, or senior journalists, through whom leaders stay informed about what is happening in their countries, and in turn the journalists report what is happening in those countries

... Yet tomorrow is another day. **Zahed Matar**

4 constitutional appeals rejected

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Appeals Review Committee at the Constitutional Court on Wednesday rejected four constitutional appeals -- against the decision to grant social allowance and the laws governing employment in the private sector, rights of persons with disabilities and establishment of the Capital Markets Authority (CMA).

of Article One of Cabinet Resolution No. 390/2001on granting social and children allowances to employees in government agencies and wholly State-owned companies.

She objected to the decision not to register her in the National Employment Support Program pursuant to Cabinet Resolution No. 390/2001, despite meeting all the conditions. This is a violation of the principle of equality, as financial benefits are disbursed to males only, in violation of articles 7 and 29 of the Constitution.

appellant failed to cite the constitutional provisions she claimed were violated, the grounds for violation and the constitutional challenges

Continued on Page 5

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

The first appeal was filed by a female citizen against Paragraph Four

The court based its ruling to reject the appeal on the fact that the

In the same manner, the Appeals Review Committee did not provide evidence that it clarified these provisions before the trial court; thus, negating the ambiguity and ignorance surrounding the objection.

Kuwait included in China's visa-free entry list

introduce a visa-free travel policy for citizens of Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, and Bahrain starting June 9, 2025. The policy will remain in effect for one year, until June 8, 2026.

BEIJING, May 28: China announced on Wednesday that it will

According to Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning, the new policy will allow ordinary passport holders from the four Gulf countries to enter China without a visa and stay for up to 30 days. The exemption applies to travel for business, tourism, family visits, cultural exchanges, and The move expands China's visa-free access to all six

member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The United Arab Emirates and Qatar were previously granted



Al-Jarallah receives **Iraqi Ambassador** and media personality Hamid Abdullah

National Bank of Kuwait issues **2024 Sustainability** Report



Kuwaiti, Saudi media delegations visit spotlights northern Türkiye travel treasures

Saudi, Kuwait bolster energy cooperation with new reserve

RIYADH, May 28, (KUNA): The Saudi Cabinet on Tuesday lauded the new oil discovery in in the partitioned zone between Saudi Arabia and State of Kuwait as a positive step towards a further cooperation in the energy

This came during the Saudi Cabinet's meeting, chaired by Crown Prince and Prime Minister Prince Mohammad bin Salman, according to the kingdom's official news agency.

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Kuwait, Qatar discuss boosting ties

Kuwait's Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan met Wednesday with Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani in Doha to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation between both sides.

According to a statement by Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in their meeting, they discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation and other shared interests. (KUNA)



Kuwait's Minister of Public Works meets with Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.



Expected weather for next 24 hrs: By Day: Very hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-32 km/h.

By Night: Hot to rather hot with light to moderate northwesterly

Weather			
liaht	variable	wind	١٨/

wind to Bubyan speeds of 08-38 km/h and some Jahra scattered clouds will appear. Salmiyah Ahmadi Station Max Exp Nuwaisib **Kuwait City** Wafra **Kuwait Airport**



PM Diwan photo

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives the Secretary-General of the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) Dima Al-Yahya.

Kuwait PM receives DCO chairman

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and in the presence of the Minister of State for Communications Affairs, Omar Al-Omar received Secretary-General of the Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO)

and member of the Board of Directors of the Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property, Dima Al-Yahya, on the occasion of her visit to the country.

The meeting was attended by the Head

of the Prime Minister's Office, Abdulaziz





Amir congratulates Azerbaijan leader on Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable Wednesday, to Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev on the occasion of his country's independence day.

His Highness praised the bilateral ties between the two countries and wished the president long-lasting health, and Azerbaijan and its people further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a congratulatory cable, to Azerbaijan President IIham Aliyev on the occasion of his country's independence day.

His Highness praised the bilateral ties between the two countries and wished the president long-lasting health, and Azerbaijan and its people further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah then sent a simislar cable to Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev on the occasion of his country's independence day.

KU, EU ambassador eye education, training ties

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Kuwait University President Dr. Dina Al-Mailem recently met with European Union Ambassador to Kuwait Anne Koistinen and her accompanying delegation.

Acting Secretary General of the university Dr. Bader Al-Rajhi and Vice President for Medical Sciences Dr. Noura Al-Suwaih were also present at the meeting.

They discussed different ways for the university and the European Mission to cooperate in the fields of education, training and scientific research; as well as the transfer of expertise through student and academic exchange.

They also reviewed strategic partnerships with international universities to support the academic and research plans of Kuwait University.



Koistinen

Al-Mailem confirmed that the university is keen on supporting knowledge acquisition, empowering women, promoting environmental sustainability, and focusing on the fields of space and artificial intelligence.

She stressed the importance of strategic partnerships with international universities in supporting the plans of Kuwait University; and advancing the levels of education and scientific research.

In another development, Al-Mailam had a meeting with Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) Chief Major General Talal Al-Roumi; during which they talked about various ways of cooperation between the university and KFF in the areas of training, technical support and institutional development; utilizing the Kuwait University Hospital.

Al-Jarallah receives Iraqi Ambassador and media personality Hamid Abdullah



Editor-in-Chief Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Iraqi Ambassador Manhal Al-Safi and colleague



From left: Saud al-Farhan, Sami Al-Nisf, Ambassador Manhal Al-Safi, Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Dr Hamid Abdullah and Major General (retd) Faisal Al-Jazzaf.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah met with Iraqi Ambassador to Kuwait Al-Munhal Al-Safi and media personality Dr. Hamid Abdullah at his residence on Wednesday.

Writer Sami Al-Nisf, retired Major General (retd) Faisal Al-Jazzaf and Saud Al-Farhan also attended the meeting.

Al-Jarallah welcomed the guests and exchanged friendly conversations. They discussed a number of media and cultural issues, in addition to some general affairs and current issues.

Al-Jarallah stressed the importance of "continuing these types of meetings, which contribute to strengthening bridges of communication and exchanging views between media and diplomatic figures. These meetings enhance understanding and shared visions, while enriching purposeful and constructive dialogue."

'Domestic tourism on rise as more people stay in Kuwait'

Messilah Beach Project to open in September

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governor Sheikh Sabah Bader Al-Salem on Wednesday inspected the Messilah Beach Project (Plage 2) -- one of the most important projects of the Tourism Enterprises Company (TEC).

Members of the company's board of directors and executive management, along with representatives of the United Projects for Aviation Services Company (UPAC), were present during the inspection tour.

The tour was aimed at reviewing the progress of the project, the implementation stages and finishing touches.

This is part of TEC's efforts to support and develop the tourism sector, with the aim of shedding light on this vital project; which is considered one of the most important family entertainment destinations developed by the company covering an area measuring 70,000 square meters.

The project was built according to the highest international standards in design and implementation, keeping pace with the latest concepts in family entertainment and providing an exceptional experi-



ence for visitors of all ages. It is scheduled to officially open in the coming months adding to the list of leading entertainment destinations in the country.

During the tour, the company reviewed the project's main components; which include swimming pools, water play areas, a multipurpose event hall, spaces designated for restaurants and cafés, commercial and

Sheikh Sabah

service facilities, and parking for 350 vehicles. Governor Sheikh Sabah Badr Al-Sabah said "the field visit to the project aims to assess the latest developments in the project, inspect the facilities, amenities and buildings, and view a visual presentation that includes all the project details. Domestic tourism has been witnessing an increasing demand from citizens and expatriates, as more

and more want to spend holidays and vacations in Kuwait." He pointed out there are a large number of tourism projects keeping pace with the growing demand for tourism facilities; such as the Winter Land, Key Land and Sabahiya projects.

He stated that Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate will witness development in a number of tourism and entertainment projects, citing the recent formation of a governorate council to discuss and study all development proposals for tourism facilities within the governorate, which will support domestic tourism.

Abdullah Al-Jaafar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of TEC, asserted that "the governor's visit to the Messilah Project aims to review the facilities and amenities. The project will be ready for opening in the coming period.'

He clarified that the project's goal is to develop domestic tourism for the benefit of citizens and expatriates throughout the year -- whether in winter or summer.

Eng. Ahmed Sadiq, General Manager of the project, disclosed that developments added to the Messilah Beach Project include cafés and restaurants with distinctive designs on par with international architecture.



Ambassadors of various countries, diplomats and prominent personalities at the

Embassy marks Independence Day

'Kuwait-Azerbaijan ties witness

Farwaniya Gov receives Saudi province official

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah recently met with founder of the 'Sustainable Energy for a Beautiful Future' initiative Yousef Mohammad Al-Mail at his office in the Farwaniya Governorate headquarters.

He also met a number of educational supervisors, parents and students participating in this initiative, as part of efforts to support awareness initiatives in the academic community

Moreover, the Governor also received in his office Secretary General of Asir Province in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ahmad bin Ayed Al-Asiri and Director of the Office of the Mayor of Rijal Almaa Governorate in Asir Moath Al-Asiri, who are currently in the country on a friendly and fraternal visit.

Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser warmly welcomed the visitors; describing the visit as fraternal and friendly, embodying the close and historical relationship with our brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

At the conclusion of the meeting, the guests thanked Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Sabah for his generosity and hospitality; wishing him success in his work and more progress and prosperity for the State of Kuwait.

Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah

honored Al-Mail, the supervisors, parents and students; appreciating their efforts in promoting positive behavior, spreading the culture of rationalizing electricity and water consumption, contributing to the success of this initiative, and enhancing the values of solidarity and community cooperation.

He praised the tremendous efforts they exerted. emphasizing the importance of instilling the concepts of sustainability and resource conservation in the students, wishing them continued success in serving the community.

At the end of the meeting, all those present expressed their gratitude to the Governor for his support and encouragement of such national initiatives.





Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receives people from different walks of life.

rapid growth in multiple fields' **By Fares Ghaleb**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Kuwait Emil Karimov has affirmed that relations between his country and the State of Kuwait are witnessing rapid growth and close cooperation in various fields.

He pointed out that the official launching of these relations dates back to the first meeting between the national leader of the Azerbaijani people -- Heydar Aliyev, and HH the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, during the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Summit in Casablanca in 1994, followed by important meetings in Copenhagen and New York in 1995.

Karimov made the statement at a ceremony organized by the Azerbaijani Embassy in Kuwait on the occasion of the Republic of Azerbaijan's Independence Day.

The ceremony was held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel recently, in the presence of Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, a number of heads of diplo-

matic missions and public figures. Karimov disclosed that the visit of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev to Kuwait in 2009 marked the beginning of a new phase in relations between the two countries; followed by reciprocal high-level visits, including the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister's visit to Baku twice in 2023, and participation in Non-Aligned Movement conferences.

He also cited the visit of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah to Azerbaijan to participate in the COP29 Summit, which he described as the first visit of this level and opened new horizons for bilateral cooperation.

He thanked Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the attendees for their participation in the ceremony; indicating that May 28, 1918 witnessed the proclamation of Azerbaijan as the first democratic republic in the Islamic world. He said his country regained its independence on Oct 18, 1991; following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

He then talked about the challenges that Azerbaijan faced in the early stages of independence, including the chaos and political and economic crises. He pointed out that national leader Heydar Aliyev, who assumed the presidency in 1993, restored political and social stability and put the country on the path to development.

On the milestones in recent political cooperation, he cited the first round of political consultations hosted by Kuwait on Feb 13, 2025; which brought together the two countries' deputy foreign ministers.

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

From the Ambassador to the Security Guard, the poor man's money was stolen ... the latter received nothing but 'May Allah help you'

THERE are countless studies on corruption and how to combat it. Corruption itself has been defined in various ways, including that of the World Bank: "A form of breach of trust or crime committed by a person or organization entrusted with a position of authority to obtain an illicit advantage. Corruption can be the abuse of that position for personal gain and includes practices that are legal in many countries."

Another definition focuses on political corruption, describing it as the illegal actions of any government official or individual in position of power for personal gain.

Some countries -- or rather, regimes -- have earned the notorious label of being 'countries ruled by thieves'.

The following story defines corruption better than all other definitions and articles written on this subject.

It is the story of the beggar and the tourist, retold here with slight editing:

A beggar sat near the door of a national museum in an Arab country. As a foreign tourist passed by, the beggar called out, "For God's sake."

Confused, the tourist responded, "What?"

The beggar repeated, "For God's sake."

The tourist replied once more, "What?"

In the end, the beggar despaired of getting anything from the tourist, and the latter despaired of knowing what the beggar wanted, so he walked on. Before leaving, however, the tourist snapped a souvenir photo of the beggar.

Later, when the tourist returned to his country, he showed the photo to an Arab friend who worked at a university. Curious, he asked, "What was this man trying to say to me when he said,

The beggar said to the tourist, "For God's sake," but the latter did not understand what he meant.

- Finally, the beggar despaired of ever getting anything from the
- Before he left, he took a picture of the beggar...as a souvenir.
- When the Arab friend explained the meaning to the tourist, the latter's heart softened.
- The ambassador said, "This amount is so big, only one half of it is enough for the poor beggar."
- When the governor received the money, he said, "\$20,000 is enough for the poor."
- The police chief officer said to himself, "\$200 is too much for a beggar."
- The soldier stole \$20, and so it happens in the Arab world.

'For God's sake'?"

The friend replied simply, "That poor man was asking for charity."

Filled with compassion, the tourist sent a large sum of money in a bag through the ambassador of the beggar's country. Inside, he put a picture of the beggar and the place where he met him.

When the ambassador saw this large sum of mon-

ey, he said that half of it would be enough for the poor beggar and his family. He then put the other half in his pocket. The ambassador sent the bag to the governor.

When the governor received the bag, he said to himself: "\$20,000 is too much for a beggar." The governor took half and sent the other half to the district manager. When the latter received the money, he said to himself: "\$2,000 is more than enough for the beggar." He sent it to the chief of the police station.

When the money reached the chief of the police station, he said: "\$2,000 is too much; \$200 is enough for the beggar and his family."

The chief of the police station sent the money to his deputy, who said to himself: "\$200 is too much for a poor beggar. \$20 is enough for the beggar to have breakfast, lunch and dinner at a restaurant."

The deputy chief of police sent \$20 through a security guard to the beggar at the museum and gave him his photo so that he could identify him.

The security guard went to the beggar and asked him: "Do you remember the tourist to whom you said, 'for God's sake' and took a photo of you?"

The beggar said, "Yes, I remember him well."

The security guard said to him: "The tourist sent a message to you saying, "May Allah help you."

The security guard stole the \$20!

This happens in most Arab countries when senior officials steal aid, project funds, grants allocated to the poor and needy, and even service projects. Each of these officials takes his share, and then in the end they say to the people, "May Allah help you."

At the same time, why do other countries give us aid and assistance, while our countries are richer than them?

■ Do not be deceived by the talkative and those with big mouths. Pharaoh said to the people of Egypt, "I am your almighty Allah" and in the end, we discovered that he did not know how to swim.

■ In cemeteries, people watch out to avoid stepping on any grave by mistake, while they do not care if they step on living people mercilessly.

■ Both Fahd Al-Shalimi and Ayed Al-Manna stood firmly to defend Kuwait and reply to its haters. The least the government can do is say "thank you" to them.

■ Kuwait will be filled with Bedouns, in addition to those whose citizenship was revoked. May Allah help our nation. Is there no solution?

■ What is preventing His Highness the Prime Minister from holding a monthly meeting with the editors-in-chief of the daily newspapers to inform him about what is happening and convey to him the public demands, both logical and illogical? Ultimately, he is the one who makes the

decision.

■ There are three devils: the first fears the

Throne Verse (Ayat Al-Kursi), the second fears losing the Throne, and the third flatters whoever is sitting on the Throne.

■ It is said that a jennet can never give birth to a human, but a woman could give birth to a foal.



KUNA photo Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Al-Sabah honors Navy Captain Engineer.

Minister hails navy officer's feat

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Al-Sabah lauded the global achievement of Navy Captain Engineer Yousef Al-Shatti after achieving the title of "fastest marathon in full military uniform" in Guinness World Records, held in Aveiro, Portugal.

The minister on Wednesday received

Al-Shatti in recognition of his global achievement, said the ministry in a state-

During the meeting, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Sabah expressed his support to the members of Kuwait army, during their participation in various activities at a local and international level.

Couple 'steals' cash from ATM

Domestic worker commits suicide

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The body of a domestic worker was transferred to the Forensic Department at the Interior Ministry after he was found to have committed suicide by hanging, reports Al-Anba daily.

A security source revealed that the Operations Unit at the ministry received information from an elderly citizen who said he had been unable to contact his domestic worker. After several unanswered calls, the citizen went to the worker's room, where he heard the phone ringing inside without a response.

Security personnel from Taima Police Station responded to the report and proceeded to the citizen's residence in Al-Oyoun. Upon arriving, they broke down the door to the room and discovered the worker hanged himself.

A case was registered and investigations are ongoing to determine the circumstances surrounding the death of the worker.

'Money is not yours': Police officers have launched an investigation to identify a man and a woman accused of unlawfully getting KD800 from an ATM at a shopping mall, reports Al-Anba daily. The suspects took the money after an expatriate attempted to withdraw the amount, but thought the machine malfunctioned when it failed to dispense cash.

According to a security source, the complainant stated he inserted his card, typed his PIN and initiated the KD800 withdrawal. However, the machine did not dispense the money, so he assumed it was out of service. Shortly afterward, he received a message confirming the transaction and that the amount was deducted from his account. He reported the issue to his bank, which confirmed the withdrawal was processed successfully. He then returned to the mall and requested access to surveillance footage through the mall management. Upon reviewing the footage, he saw a man and a woman who went to the ATM. The man retrieved the cash and handed it to the woman before proceeding to make his own withdrawal.

The case was filed at the Hawally Police Station. Detectives are now coordinating with the bank to obtain the identity of the person who used the ATM following the initial transaction, as part of their efforts to apprehend the suspects.

'Royal's' jail term suspended, ban on travel, next hearing on June 23

Maximum penalty sought in murder trial

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Court of Cassation has suspended the prison sentence issued against Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled and adjourned the case until June 23, as well as imposed a travel ban.

During the court session, Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled assured the court that he holds himself to the law before anyone else. Also, his lawyer requested his release.

Today, the Court of Cassation held the first session of Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled's trial in two cases involving embezzlement of funds from the Ministries of Defense and Interior. He had been sentenced to 14 years in prison, ordered to repay KD 10 million, and fined KD 20 million.

The Ministerial Court's ruling, issued in January 2025, in the first case concerning the Ministry of Defense's budget filed against former minister Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled and an expatriate, sentenced Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled to seven years in prison, ordered restitution of KD 500,000, imposed a fine of KD 1 mil-

lion, and dismissed him from his position. The court sentenced the second defendant, the expatriate, to four years in prison, fined him KD 294,000, and ordered his deportation after serving the sentence.

In the second case, concerning the Ministry of Interior budget, Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled was sentenced to seven years in prison with hard labor, ordered to repay KD 9 million, fined KD 19 million, and had the vehicles involved in the case con-

Maximum penalty sought: The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Nayef Al-Dahoum, has adjourned to June 16 the trial in the murder case of citizen Hani Al-Mousawi.

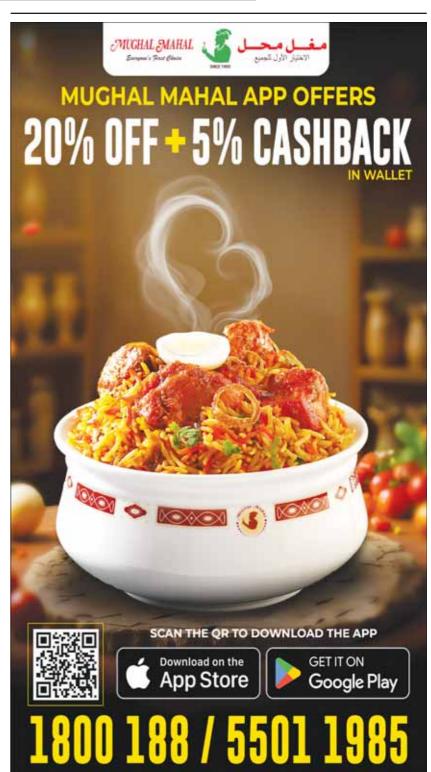
During the last session, the Public Prosecution, represented by Deputy Director of Jahra Prosecution Fahd Nayef Al-Mutairi, demanded the maximum penalty for the accused, describing the act as a brutal and premeditated crime with no justification.

The Prosecution stated that the accused not only plotted and ambushed the victim but also chased him into his home and murdered him in front of his helpless mother. It stressed that such a crime poses a serious threat to public

safety, and instills fear even within the sanctity of one's own

Exam cheats jailed: The Misdemeanor Circuit of the Court of Appeals upheld a sentence issued by a lower court which issued a three-year prison sentence with hard labor against the head of the secret printing press of the Ministry of Education, a female employee at the press, and a teacher, on charges of leaking high school exams for the 2023/2024 academic year in both the science and arts sections.

In February 2025, the Misdemeanor Court issued the sentence against the trio after the Public Prosecution charged the head of the secret printing press with disclosing confidential Ministry of Education information concerning the second-term exams for 11th-grade students in the science and arts sections, in direct violation of specific instructions derived from anticheating regulations and ministerial decisions.









Amir congratulates Ethiopia President on 'National Day'

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable Wednesday, to Ethiopian President Taye Atske Selassie on the

occasion of his country's national day. His Highness praised the bilateral ties between the two countries and wished the president long-lasting health, and Ethiopia and its people further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a congratulatory cable to Ethiopian President Taye Atske Selassie on the occasion of his country's national day.

between the two countries and wished the president long-lasting health, and Ethiopia and its people further progress

Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad then sent a similar cable to Ethiopian President Taye Atske Selassie on the

fairs Major General Ali Misfer Al-Adwani as Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of

Interior, in addition to his current duties, re-

Major General Ali Misfer Al-Adwani

will be succeeding Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf

following its third meeting of 2025, reports

PAFN explained that the committee rec-

ommended lifting the ban on the import of

all types of poultry meat - fresh, chilled,

processed, and frozen - along with related

products, derivatives, and table eggs from

34 regions across 22 U.S. states, due to the

declared end of the highly pathogenic avian

ports Al-Seyassah daily.

in this role.

Al-Seyassah daily.

SJC approves 112 applicants for **Junior Legal Researcher course**

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: According to informed sources, the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) has approved the admission of 112 male and female applicants for the position of Junior Legal Researcher, qualifying them for the role of Prosecutor (Class C).

They said the accepted applicants will enroll in a one-year course at the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies, and upon successful completion and passing of the course, the applicants will be appointed as public prosecutors.

Al-Adwani takes charge: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef issued a ministerial decision to appoint Assistant Undersecretary for Nationality and Residency Af-

His Highness praised the bilateral ties

His Highness the Prime Minister occasion of his country's national day.

for violating family visa rules **KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The** earnings exceeding KD 800 and subsequently

'Revoked licenses same as driving without license'

Mol summons expat sponsors

Residence Affairs Investigation Department at the Interior Ministry recently summoned dozens of expatriates who brought their families (wives and children) to Kuwait under the revised ministerial regulations, reports Al-Anba daily.

These regulations, issued under Article 22 of the Family Reunification Law, allow expatriates to sponsor their immediate family members provided they earn a monthly salary of at least KD 800.

The expatriates were granted a one-month grace period to either rectify their residency status or repatriate their families, after it was found they violated or circumvented the terms of the ministerial decision.

A reliable source revealed that many of the summoned individuals initially met the salary requirement by securing jobs with monthly

applied for and received family reunification visas. "However, after some time, their salaries fell below the required amount, putting them in violation of the law. These individuals were asked to sign pledges committing either to meet the requirements or return their families to their home countries," the source added.

The source explained that the KD 800 salary cap was established based on studies, indicating that this income level is essential for a household head to provide a decent standard of living for the family.

Qualification

The source confirmed that the ministry allows all expatriates-- regardless of nationality or educational qualification -- to bring their families to Kuwait, as long as the salary requirement is met.

The source also highlighted the role of automated systems linking various government agencies, which have been instrumental in detecting violations involving residency or traffic records. "These systems help

prevent fraudulent activity by monitoring data in various departments, including the Residency Affairs General Department and the General Traffic Department," the source added.

The source also touched on traffic regulations, stating that the General Traffic Department revokes any driver's license if the holder no longer meets the eligibility requirements. The automated system helps enforce this rule, and expatriates are urged to regularly verify their license status through their civil identification card or the Sahel platform.

"Anyone caught driving with a license that has been revoked will be treated as driving without a license and referred to the competent authorities. Ignorance of a revoked license does not exempt violators from legal consequences," the source warned.

It is worth noting that a separate ministerial decision was issued to govern the issuance of driver's licenses; including exemptions from salary, residency duration and educational qualification requirements for certain catego-

Kuwaiti Hajj Mission inspects camps in Saudi

'Safety, comfort of Kuwaiti pilgrims top priority'

By Mohammad Al-Enezi

Call to lift poultry ban: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) an-Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff nounced the latest recommendations from the Supreme Committee for Food Safety

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: As part of its preparations for the Hajj season, the Kuwaiti Hajj Mission inspected the camps designated for Kuwaiti pilgrims in the holy sites of Arafat, Mina and Muzdalifah to guarantee their compliance with the approved technical and health requirements; thereby, ensuring the highest safety standards and providing maximum comfort for Kuwaiti pilgrims.

Director of the Hajj and Umrah Affairs Department at the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Head of the ministry's Hajj Mission team Sattam Al-Muzain participated in the inspection tour, along with delegations from the Ministry of Health and Kuwait Fire Force

They reviewed the ongoing preparations at various pilgrim accommodations and ascertained the readiness of essential ser-

Al-Muzain told Al-Akhbar TV that the inspection tour was conducted in coordination with the representatives of the Ministry of Health and KFF; covering the pilgrims' accommodations in Arafat, Muzdalifah, and Mina.

He disclosed that the readiness rate at the sites is "very high," exceeding 90 percent. He said the camps are almost ready to receive pilgrims and that numerous improvements and upgrades have been implemented, particularly in Arafat.

He cited one of the most notable additions this season -- the allocation of eight new public service sites for Kuwaiti pilgrims in order to better serve them and guarantee that they perform the rituals smoothly and easily.









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Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Ambassador Sadiq Marafi, Georgian Ambassador to Kuwait Noshrevan Lomtatidze and Undersecretary Defense Ministry Sheikh Abdullah Mubarak Al-Sabah.



Photos by Mohammad Morsi

Georgian women performing a traditional dance. 'Invest in hotel business, real estate'

Kuwaitis, residents can visit Georgia without visa: envoy

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Ambassador Sadiq Marafi praised the distinguished relations between Kuwait and Georgia, stressing that the two countries are keen on strengthening their ties in various fields.

In a statement on the sidelines of his participation in the Georgian Embassy's celebration of Georgian National Day on Tuesday, Marafi said "this year we celebrate the 33rd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Georgia. These are distinguished relations and we look forward to developing them in all areas."

He revealed that "arrangements are underway for high-level reciprocal visits before the end of this year. We intend to sign cooperation agreements during the upcoming visits.'

He expressed happiness over the increasing number of Kuwaiti tourists visiting Georgia, especially with the direct flights between the two friendly countries.

On the other hand, Georgian Ambassador to Kuwait Noshrevan Lomtatidze affirmed in his speech that the State of Kuwait is the main international partner of Georgia. "Georgia and Kuwait are bound by a close, multi-dimensional friendship and cooperation," he stressed.

He stated "it has been a year since I arrived in this beautiful country, Kuwait, which I believe is the jewel of the Gulf. I am deeply grateful to the Kuwaitis for their

wonderful friendship and kindness. I love Kuwait and I truly feel like I am in my second home. I extend my sincere thanks to all of Georgia's friends in Kuwait.'

He continued "I would like to take this opportunity to express my special gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, whom I was honored to hear personally during my meeting with him, which pushed our bilateral partnership to new heights, thanks to his wise guidance.

He added "given his proven record in foreign policy and his distinguished global experience; allow me to express my sincere appreciation to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled for Kuwait's continuous support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia."

He also expressed his deep gratitude to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah; describing his meeting with the Georgian Prime Minister in February as wonderful, while praising the vital role of Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Abdullah Al-Yahya.

Regarding tourism, he said "we are witnessing an increase in the number of Kuwaitis coming to Georgia, thanks to the direct flights of Kuwait Airways and Jazeera Airways to Tbilisi and Batumi, in addition to the visa exemption for Kuwaiti citizens

and residents of Kuwait.' He asserted "I welcome Kuwaiti businessmen and citizens in general to visit Georgia and explore the opportunities it offers in the hotel, real estate and agricultural sectors.'

Tech-driven wildlife protection highlighted in Singapore

Kuwait's 'Falcon Passport' poster wins global honor at CITES Youth Summit

By Zahraa Al-Kazemi

CITY, May (KUNA): The Global Youth Summit of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) honored Kuwait, represented by the Environment Public Authority, on Tuesday for its project poster titled "Falcon Passport in Kuwait."

The poster was selected as one of the top four submissions among entries from 38 countries world-

Director of the Public Relations Department at the Authority Sheikha Al-Ibrahim, told KUNA that the youth summit, currently being held in Singapore from May 27 to 31, featured a special tribute to Kuwait.

The Kuwaiti project poster, submitted by Shouq Al-Hai from





Left: Shouq Al-Hai of Kuwait's Environment Public Authority presents the award-winning 'Falcon Passport' project poster to Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam, in the presence of Kuwait's Ambassador to Singapore Ahmad Al-Shuraim. Right: CITES Youth Summit participants in a group photo.

the Authority, was given a formal presentation in front of the President of Singapore Tharman Shanmugaratnam, and was supported by the Ambassador of Kuwait to Singapore Ahmad Al-Shuraim.

Al-Ibrahim added that this recognition reflects Kuwait's prominent international standing in the

field of natural heritage protection, highlighting its leading role in combating illegal wildlife trade.

It also underscores the country's commitment to building youth capacity and encouraging their active participation in implementing international environmental agree-

She explained that the summit is a prestigious international platform aimed at empowering youth and enhancing their involvement in efforts to protect wildlife by developing their skills in negotiation, legislation, and environmental innovation.

She affirmed that Kuwait's participation strengthens its efforts to represent environmental issues on the global stage and contributes to preparing a conscious national generation capable of continuing the state's mission in environmental protection and biodiversity conservation, in line with Kuwait's commitments to the CITES agree-

Transparency priority: AI-Fassam

Gulf bloc eyes stronger anti-graft cooperation

VIENNA, May 28, (KUNA): The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is committed to throwing weight behind international initiatives to prop up transparency and good governance, said Kuwait's Ambassador in Austria and its Permanent Representative to the UN in Vienna Talal Al-Fassam.

Al-Fassam, who doubles as the current chief of the Council of GCC Ambassadors in Vienna, made the remarks to KUNA on Wednesday following the council's periodical gathering, which included a fruitful meeting with Dean of the International Anti-Corruption Academy Prof. Slagjana Taseva.

He said that the meeting came in the context of continued diplomatic efforts to consolidate bilateral and multilateral relations and broaden areas of multilateral cooperation in order to serve mutual interests and

He elaborated that the meeting had focused on ways of developing cooperation between the GCC and the academy in the fields of training, capacity-building and exchange of expertise in the area of fighting corruption and promoting integrity.

Al-Fassam underlined that the GCC attaches much significance to this vital domain as being a core pillar of attaining sustainable development and establishing confidence in institutions.

He spoke highly of the International Anti-Corruption Academy's pioneering anti-corruption role and its status as a prestigious global platform for training personnel and building effective anti-corruption partnerships.



KUNA photo

Council of GCC Ambassadors in Vienna during the periodic

Kuwait backs global health, Palestine at WHO gathering

Elderly care in focus, as Kuwait earns recognition

GENEVA, May 28, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait emphasized on Tuesday firm commitment to supporting international health organizations and initiatives aiming to promote and upgrade healthcare worldwide.

This statement was made by Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen to KUNA following the conclusion of the 78th World Health Assembly which was held in Geneva during period from May 19 to May 27.

He cited Kuwait's high-caliber delegation to the event, headed by Health Minister Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi, as a proof on its full commitment to working with the World Health Organization and other international organizations to provide high-quality healthcare to people in need everywhere. Ambassador Al-Hayen commended

the special ceremony held at the Assembly to distribute the award of His Highness the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the winners.

This prestigious award embodies



KUNA photo

Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen.

pioneering role in supporting healthcare, especially for the most vulnerable groups, he clarified.

He expressed pride that the Elderly Services Department at the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health has jointly won the 2025 His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Prize for Research in Health Care for the Elderly and in Health Promotion. This achieveal efforts to serve the elderly, he noted. The Kuwaiti diplomat congratulated Chinese professor Huali Wang who shared the same award with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health in recognition for significant contributions to China's national healthy ageing and

national dementia action plans. He pointed to Kuwait's pivotal role in the WHA's adoption of several resolu-

Kuwait's efforts are driven by its firm and principled position in defending the rights of the Palestinian people and their just cause in international forums, said Ambassador Al-Hayen.

He disclosed that the State of Ku-

wait participated, as part of the Arab Group, in submitting a draft resolution calling for raising the Palestinian flag at the World Health Organization headquarters, with the aim of upgrading Palestine's representation in the WHO to be in line with its status at the United Nations.

He referred to the Assembly's adoption of a resolution submitted by the Arab Group, including the State of Kuwait, calling on the Director-General of the World Health Organization to inform the State of Palestine of the international health regulations as a preliminary step to its accession as a party to these regulations.

Ambassador Al-Hayen affirmed the State of Kuwait's full support for the Assembly's demands for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in the occupied Palestinian territories, ensuring unfettered access to healthcare, restoring vital services, addressing malnutrition and disease outbreaks, providing psychological support, accelerating medical evacuations, and ensuring continued international support for the

Continued from Page 1

2,700 expats

The source reiterated that security campaigns are ongoing in all governorates to arrest those proven to have violated the Residency Law, the illegal workers, those working for third parties, and those outside the purview of the law.

Moreover, the ministry announced in a press statement last week that 1,084 violators of the Residency Law were deported on May 11-18, after taking the necessary legal

The ministry affirmed that it will pursue anyone who dares violate the laws and regulations governing work and residency, stressing that accountability applies to both the employee and the employer.

He said various sectors at the ministry continue to carry out security campaigns in a bid to apprehend violators of the Residency Law and illegal workers who are then referred to the Deportation Department, taking into account humanitarian considerations during their detention.

UK envoy

These lectures aim to enrich students' knowledge across a wide range of military, political, and strategic topics.

Saudi, Kuwait

The cabinet said that recent oil discovery would lead to promoting Saudi-Kuwait cooperation in energy and continuing joint discovery and development efforts.

The Governments of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia on Monday declared a new oil discovery in the partitioned zone, said the Kuwaiti Ministry of Oil.

They announced that Wafra Joint Operations had made a new oil discovery in (North Wafra Wara-Burgan) field, located five kilometers north of Wafra field.

Crude oil flowed from the Wara reservoir in the North Wafra (Wara-Burgan-1) well at a rate exceeding 500 barrels per day, with an API gravity of 26 to 27 degrees. API gravity is a scale that defines the gravity or density of liquid petroleum products.

Kuwait Crown

In remarks to KUNA, Ambassador Al-Zamanan noted that the "historic" visit of His Highness the Crown Prince is the

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culmination of a long history of constructive cooperation and mutual understanding, and bears significance for the depth of relations between the two friendly countries and peoples.

Kuwait and Japan have a strong friendship spanning nearly 64 years, embodied through ongoing cooperation and communication, and based on the principles of mutual respect and shared interests, he added.

He said that Kuwaiti-Japanese ties have witnessed significant growth in recent years thanks to the keenness and interest of the two wise leaderships, expressing his confidence that this high-level visit will contribute to opening new horizons that will achieve the aspirations of both leaderships. During the official visit, His Highness the Crown Prince

is scheduled to meet with Emperor Naruhito and the Crown Prince of Japan. An official summit will also be held between the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Ishiba to discuss ways to enhance cooperation between Japan and Kuwait and to address regional and international developments.

4 constitutional

The second appeal was filed by the owner of a treatment center, based on Article 55 of Private Sector Labor Law No. 6/2010, which defined the phrase "the wage received by the employee.'

She explained that the agreement for the worker to receive a percentage of the income as an incentive bonus entails, under the contested text, receiving this bonus twice: the first upon achieving the agreed percentage and the second upon the end of service. This is inconsistent with the principles of social justice and violates articles

16, 20 and 22 of the Constitution. The court stated in its ruling that the contested determination of an employee's wage as a share of net profits does not violate the principles of social justice, as long as the financial benefits are agreed upon between the employer and the employee. It added "the determination and calculation of end-of-service gratuity fall within the jurisdiction of the trial court and outside the scope of the

Constitutional Court's oversight." Meanwhile, the third appeal was filed by a citizen against Paragraph Two of Article 42 of Law No. 8/2010 on the rights of persons with disabilities.

He claimed that the article was subject to suspicion of unconstitutionality, as it stipulated that the length of service required for pension entitlement must be 20 years for males and 15 years for females in order for the insured or beneficiary legally charged with caring for a person with a moderate or severe disability to receive a retirement pension equivalent to 100 percent of the salary

This violates the principle of equality and entails unjustified discrimination between males and females, in violation of Article 29 of the Constitution.

The court stated in its grounds for rejection that the contested text in no way discriminates between the genders. It did not limit the eligibility for a retirement pension in the circumstances specified by it to one gender or another, but rather set a condition related to the length of service of the pension claimant, setting it at 20 years for males and 15 years for females.

The fourth appeal was filed by an import-export company against Articles 9-13 and 9-14 of Document Eleven of the Executive Regulations of Law No. 7/2010 on establishing the Capital Markets Authority and Regulating Securities Activity.

These articles stipulate that if the mortgagee is a bank

or financial institution and the debtor or mortgager is a professional client, it is permissible to agree, at the time of concluding the mortgage contract or thereafter, on the right of the mortgagee "in the event of the debtor's failure to fulfill his obligations" to take possession of the mortgaged property, without being bound by the articles 231-233 of the Commercial Code.

Cabinet lauds

Minister of Health, on behalf of himself and the ministers, expressed sincere congratulations on His Highness the premier's return to the country.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet listened to a briefing by Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmed Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi, on his participation in the meetings of the 78th session of the World Health Assembly, which was held at the WHO headquarters in Geneva last Friday.

Al-Awadhi presented the Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Global Award for Promoting Health of the Elderly for the year 2025, which was won by the Department of Health Services for the Elderly at the Ministry of Health in the State of Kuwait.

The minister stressed that Kuwait's winning of this award is the culmination of its national efforts in building an integrated care system that cares for the health of the

elderly according to the best international standards. This win also confirms the position of the State of Kuwait in the health field and its commitment to the noble humanitarian approach.

Al-Awadhi explained that this honor from the World Health Organization raises the name of the State of Kuwait in global health affairs.

The minister noted that the award embodies the lofty values in which the late Amir, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, believed, and reflects the commitment of the State of Kuwait, its leadership, government, and people, to continue this noble humanitarian approach.

GCC, ASEAN,

The statement praised the Saudi-Norwegian-European initiatives supporting the Palestinian state and highlighted Qatar's role in mediating the ceasefire and facilitating aid delivery, and it also recognized China's efforts in fostering Palestinian reconciliation through the Beijing Declaration in July 2024.

The leaders welcomed the UN General Assembly resolution of December 11, 2024, which called for a permanent and unconditional ceasefire and urged the facilitation of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East's (UNRWA) mandate across all areas of its operations, in line with principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence.

The leaders emphasized the importance of strengthening supply chains, establishing a regional business council, exploring cross-border payment cooperation using local currencies, and implementing consistent anti-cor-

On regional connectivity, the statement underlined support for the Belt and Road Initiative, the development of sustainable infrastructure and logistics corridors, and maritime cooperation for security and ocean resource uti-

— See Also Pages 7 & 10

Army pumps life into blood drive

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): The Kuwait Central Blood Bank lauded on Monday the Kuwaiti Army for its important role in society, particularly its contribution to raising awareness about the importance of blood donations, and its support in stockpiling various blood types.

60th anniversary of the Central Blood Bank, with the attendance of the Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi. Al-Awadhi praised the prominent role of the Kuwaiti

This came in a statement by the Kuwaiti Army during the

Army in promoting blood donations through its national initiatives, quoted the statement. He emphasized the importance of cooperation between state institutions to ensure health security and to meet the

needs of the health sector. Earlier, Kuwaiti Health Minister Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi said that Kuwait Central Blood Bank could draw more than 90,000 donors last year, who donated 190,000 blood prod-

ucts, including platelets, blood plasma, and red blood cells. The minister made the remarks while addressing a celebration marking the 60th anniversary of the Central Blood Bank, World Blood Donor Day, and honoring blood donors.

The minister added that roughly 150,000 blood units were also provided last year to support healthcare for cancer, thalassemia and emergency patients in various hospitals

He noted that the bank was established in 1965 to be the first integrated national blood transfusion center in the region and a launch pad for an integrated institutional sys-



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US president's clash with nation's oldest university intensifies

Trump administration moves to cut \$100 million in federal contracts for Harvard

WASHINGTON, May 28, (AP): The Trump administration asked federal agencies Tuesday to cancel contracts with Harvard University worth about \$100 million, intensifying the president's clash with the nation's oldest and wealthiest university.

The government already has canceled more than \$2.6 billion in federal research grants for the Ivy League school, which has pushed back on the administration's demands for changes to several of its policies.

A letter sent Tuesday from the General Services Administration, which oversees contracting and real estate for the federal government, directed agencies to review contracts with the university and seek alternate arrange-

The New York Times first reported on the letter.

President Donald Trump has railed against Harvard, calling it a hotbed of liberalism and antisemitism. The school filed a lawsuit April 21 over the administration's calls for changes to the university's leadership, governance and admissions policies. Since then, the administration has slashed the school's federal funding, moved to cut and threatened its tax-exempt status.

The administration has identified about 30 contracts across nine agencies to be reviewed for cancellation, according to an administration official who was not authorized to speak publicly and provided details on the condition of anonymity.

The contracts total roughly \$100 million, according to a senior administration official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe internal deliberations. The contracts include executive training for Department of Homeland Security officials, research on health outcomes related to energy drinks and a contract for graduate student research services.

Agencies with contracts that are deemed critical are being directed not to halt them immediately, but to devise a plan to transition to a vendor other than Harvard.

The letter applies only to federal contracts with Harvard and not its remaining research grants.

Trump laid into Harvard on social media over the weekend, threatening to cut an additional \$3 billion in federal grants and give it to trade schools



Ryan Enos, a government professor at Harvard University, speaks at a protest against US President Donald Trump's recent sanctions against Harvard in front of Science Center Plaza on May 27, in Cambridge, Mass. (AP)

across the United States. He did not explain which grants he was referring to or how they could be reallocated.

The president also accused Harvard of refusing to release the names of its foreign students. In a new line of attack, he argued that students' home countries pay nothing toward their education and that some of the countries are "not at all friendly to the United

International students are not eli-

vard offers its own aid to foreign and domestic students alike.

"We are still waiting for the Foreign Student Lists from Harvard so that we can determine, after a ridiculous expenditure of BILLIONS OF DOL-LÂRS, how many radicalized lunatics, troublemakers all, should not be let back into our Country," Trump said on social media.

It was not clear exactly what the president was referring to. The federal government already has access to visa information and other records on foreign students at Harvard and other

The Department of Homeland Security has demanded that Harvard turn over a trove of files related to its foreign students, including disciplinary records and records related to "dangerous or violent activity."

Harvard says it complied, but the agency said its response fell short and moved to revoke the university's ability to enroll foreign students. A federal judge in Boston temporarily blocked the move after Harvard sued.

Trump administration officials have said some of Harvard's international campus. But the ban on international students has "nothing to do with combating antisemitism," said Jacob Miller, a former president of Harvard Hillel, who is graduating this week with math and economics concentrations.

"Antisemitism is a real problem. It's a problem at Harvard. It's a problem in our country," Miller said Tuesday at a rally outside Harvard Yard. "These policies will do nothing to combat this age-old hatred. Instead, they are designed to divide us. ... The Jewish community rejects this administration's narrative. We will not allow our identities to be invoked to destroy Harvard."

Harvard President Alan Garber earlier this month said the university has made changes to its governance over the past year and a half, including a broad strategy to combat antisemitism. He said Harvard would not budge on its "its core, legally-protected principles" over fears of retaliation.

Harvard's international students await further court rulings to find out whether they can enroll in summer or fall classes. Some say they're discussing backup plans.



Get ready for several years of killer heat, top weather forecasters warn

WASHINGTON, May 28, (AP): Get ready for several years of even more record-breaking heat that pushes Earth to more deadly, fiery and uncomfortable extremes, two of the world's top weather agencies forecast.

There's an 80% chance the world will break another annual temperature record in the next five years, and it's even more probable that the world will again exceed the international temperature threshold set 10 years ago, according to a five-year forecast released Wednesday by the World Meteorological Organization and the UK Meteorological Office.

"Higher global mean temperatures may sound abstract, but it translates in real life to a higher chance of extreme weather: stronger hurricanes, stronger precipitation, droughts," said Cornell University climate scientist Natalie Mahowald, who wasn't part of the calculations but said they made sense.

"So higher global mean temperatures translates to more lives lost.'

With every tenth of a degree the world warms from human-caused climate change "we will experience higher frequency and more extreme events (particularly heat waves but also droughts, floods, fires and human-reinforced hurricanes/typhoons)," emailed Johan Rockstrom, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany. He was not part of the research.

And for the first time there's a chance -- albeit slight -- that before the end of the decade, the world's annual temperature will shoot past the Paris climate accord goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) and hit a more alarming 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) of heating since the mid-1800s, the two agencies said.

There's an 86% chance that one of the next five years will pass 1.5 degrees

Merz offers to help Ukraine develop

own long-range missiles to hit Russia

and a 70% chance that the five years as a whole will average more than that global milestone, they figured.

The projections come from more than 200 forecasts using computer simulations run by 10 global centers of scientists.

Ten years ago, the same teams figured there was a similar remote chance - about 1% - that one of the upcoming years would exceed that critical 1.5 degree threshold and then it happened last year. This year, a 2-degree Celsius above pre-industrial year enters the equation in a similar manner, something UK Met Office longer term predictions chief Adam Scaife and science scientist Leon Hermanson called "shocking."

"It's not something anyone wants to see, but that's what the science is telling us," Hermanson said. Two degrees of warming is the secondary threshold, the one considered less likely to break, set by the 2015 Paris agreement.

Fracture in key relationship

Musk criticizes US president's 'big beautiful bill'

WASHINGTON, May 28, (AP): Elon Musk is criticizing the centerpiece of President Donald Trump's legislative agenda, a significant fracture in a partnership that was forged during last year's campaign and was poised to reshape American politics and the federal government.

The billionaire entrepreneur, who supported Trump's candidacy with at least \$250 million and has worked for his administration as a senior adviser, said he was "disappointed" by what the president calls his "big beautiful bill."

The legislation includes a mix of tax cuts and enhanced immigration enforcement. While speaking to CBS, Musk described it as a "massive spending bill" that increases the federal deficit and "undermines the work" of his Department of Government Efficiency, known as DOGE.

"I think a bill can be big or it could be beautiful," Musk said. "But I don't know if it could be both."

His CBS interview came out Tuesday night. White House officials did not immediately respond to questions. Republicans recently pushed the legislation through the House and are debating it in the Senate.

Musk's comments come as he steps back from his government work, rededicating himself to companies like the electric automaker Tesla and rocket manufacturer SpaceX. He's also said he'll reduce his political spending, because "I think I've done enough."

At times, he's seemed chastened by his experience working in government. Although he hoped that DOGE would generate \$1 trillion in spending cuts,



Elon Musk looks on as US President Donald Trump meets South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in the Oval Office of the White House on May 2. in Washington, (AP)

he's fallen far short of that target.

"The federal bureaucracy situation is much worse than I realized," he told The Washington Post. "I thought there were problems, but it sure is an uphill battle trying to improve things in D.C., to say the least.'

Musk had previously been effusive about the opportunity to reshape Washington. He wore campaign hats in the White House, held his own campaign rallies and talked about excessive spending as an existential crisis.

He was also effusive in his praise of Trump. "The more I've gotten to know President Trump, the more I like the guy," Musk said at one point. "Frankly,

Trump repaid the favor, describing Musk as "a truly great American." When Tesla faced declining sales, he turned the White House driveway into a makeshift showroom to illustrate his

It's unclear what, if any, impact that Musk's comments about the bill would have on the legislative debate. During the transition period, he helped whip up opposition to a spending measure as the country stood on the brink of a federal government shutdown.

But Trump remains the dominant figure within the Republican Party, and many lawmakers have been unwilling to cross the president when he applies pressure for his agenda.

Chancellor Friedrich Merz pledged Wednesday to help Ukraine develop its own long-range missile systems that would be free of any Westernimposed limitations on their range and target options as the Kyiv government

BERLIN, May 28, (AP): German

Some of the advanced weapon systems that Kyiv's Western partners have supplied to Ukraine during the more than three-year war were subject to range and target restrictions. The limits have been a fraught political issue, stemming from fears that if the weapons struck Russia, the Kremlin might retaliate against the country that provided them and suck NATO into Europe's biggest conflict since World

Merz said in Berlin, alongside visiting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, that under an intensified cooperation agreement Germany "will strive to equip the Ukrainian army with all the capabilities that truly enable it to successfully defend the country," including upgraded domestic missile

Germany has been the second-biggest supplier of military aid to Ukraine after the United States.

"Ukraine will be able to fully defend itself including against military targets outside its own territory" with its own missiles, Merz said at a joint news con-

Merz's pledge came as the past few months of intense U.S.-led peace efforts have brought no significant breakthrough and with analysts saying Russia is poised to launch a major summer offensive.

German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul was set to meet in Washington with U.S. Secretary of State Marco



German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, (front left), welcomes Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, front right, with military honors for a meeting in Berlin, Germany, on May 28. (AP)

Rubio later Wednesday.

Merz declined to say whether Germany will supply its advanced Taurus long-range cruise missile to Ukraine long a request by Kyiv and a step that Berlin has resisted.

Asked about Germany's offer to fund long-range missile production in Ukraine, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov responded that the move was an obstacle to reaching a peace agreement.

Both Merz and Zelenskyy criticized the Kremlin's effective rejection of an unconditional ceasefire proposed by the U.S., which Kyiv accepted, and its delay in responding to proposals for a settlement.

Merz said last Monday that Germany and other major allies were no longer imposing range limits on weapons they send to Ukraine, though he indicated their use was limited to Rus-

sian military targets. Then U.S. President Joe Biden late last year authorized Ukraine to use U.S.-supplied missiles to strike deeper into Russia.

The decision allowed Ukraine to use the Army Tactical Missile System, known as ATACMS, against Russia.

In Berlin, Zelenskyy called for deeper defense cooperation across Europe and with the United States, stressing the need for long-range capabilities and sustained military funding to ensure Ukraine's resilience.

"We need sufficient long-range capabilities. That's why we must be certain of the financing of our army and the stability of Ukraine," he said.

He said the cooperation projects already exist. "We simply want (the missiles) to be produced in the quantity we need," Zelenskyy told the news

Europe

Albanian ex-president Meta charged: Former Albanian president Ilir Meta was formally charged on Tuesday with corruption, money laundering, tax evasion and hiding property from authorities, his lawyer said.

The charges were communicated to Meta in a 192-page report from anti-corruption prosecutors, lawyer Kujtim Cakrani told journalists. The prosecutors belong to the Special Structure Against Corruption and Organized Crime, or SPAK, which handles cases involving senior political and state

Meta, the 56-year-old founder of the leftist Freedom Party, was arrested in October.

Meta wrote on his Facebook page that "I can hardly wait for the start of the trial which will be public and will show to the world" that SPAK is a pupper of Prime Minister Edi Rama. Meta also said that he considers the agency to be Rama's "anti-opposition task force."

Rama's governing Socialist Party achieved a landslide win in the May 11 parliamentary election, getting 83 seats in the 140-seat parliament. (AP)

Bear attacks woman in Slovenia: A woman was in critical condition on Wednesday after a bear attack

Meta

in a forested area outside Slovenia's capital, Ljubljana, police said.

The attack on Tuesday occurred at the edge of the forest in Skofljica, some 10 kilometers (6 miles) southeast of the capital, police said.

The bear retreated into the forest after the attack and police have advised Skofljica residents to stay away and

The incident came just days after authorities approved the culling of 206 brown bears, whose population in the area has grown to around 1,000 bears.

The small Alpine nation of just over 2 million people is widely forested with many protected nature zones. Authorities occasionally approve bear or wolf culls despite strong opposition from animal rights groups. (AP)

7 dead as boat sinks off Canary Islands: Spanish

emergency services say four women and three girls died when a small boat carrying migrants capsized while arriving to port at one of Spain's Canary Islands on Wednesday. Spain's maritime rescue service, which located the boat some 6 miles (9.6 kilmoters) from shore, said the

boat tipped over as rescuers started removing minors as it arrived at a dock on the island of El Hierro. The movement of people on the boat caused it to tip and then turn over, dumping the occupants into the water, the service said.

Emergency services for the Canary Islands said four women, a teenage girl and two younger girls perished in the accident. One of the girls was found by a rescue

Noem urges Poles to elect Trump ally as CPAC holds first meeting in Poland

WARSAW, Poland, May 28, (AP): The Conservative Political Action Conference, the United States' premier conservative gathering, held its first meeting in Poland on Tuesday, just five days before a tightly contested presidential election between a liberal mayor and a conservative backed by US President Donald The two candidates vying to replace

Polish President Andrzej Duda offer starkly different visions for Poland: Rafał Trzaskowski, the pro-European Union liberal mayor of Warsaw, and Karol Nawrocki, a conservative historian backed by the Law and Justice party who is skeptical of the EU. "We need you to elect the right leader," Kristi Noem, the US Homeland Se-

ally, said in a speech at the event. "You will be the leaders that will turn Europe back to conservative values. Noem described Trzaskowski as "an absolute train wreck of a leader" and

curity Secretary and a prominent Trump

Nawrocki as someone who would lead Poland in a style similar to Trump. She opened her speech saying: "I just had the opportunity to meet with Karol and listen: he needs to be the next presi-



US Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem speaks at the Conservative Political Action Conference, CPAC on May 27, in Jasionka, Poland. (AP)

dent of Poland. Do you understand me?" She also implied that electing Nawrocki would strengthen the US-Poland

"If you (elect) a leader that will work with President Donald J. Trump, the Polish people will have an ally strong that will ensure that you will be able to fight off enemies that do not share your values," she said.

"You will have strong borders and protect your communities and keep them safe, and ensure that your citizens are respected every single day," she said. "You will continue to have a U.S. presence here, a military presence. And you will have equipment that is American-made, that is high quality.'

The United States currently has some 10,000 troops stationed in Poland, a mission aimed at reassuring the frontline NATO nation worried about Russian aggression.

"Donald Trump is a strong leader for us, but you have an opportunity that you have just as strong of a leader in Karol if you make him the leader of this country," Noem said. CPAC chairman Matt Schlapp opened the proceedings with a speech claiming that conservatives around the world are locked in a battle against "globalists," whom he described as enemies of faith, family and freedom.

Asia

Fire breaks out in S.Korea's old building: A fire broke out on Wednesday in an old commercial building in South Korea's capital Seoul, according to multiple media outlets.

The accident took place at about 3:25 pm local time (0625 GMT), with no casualties confirmed. A dense plume of black smoke was seen rising in central Seoul, TV footage showed.

Firefighters allegedly had difficulty extinguishing the blaze as shops crowded the commercial building. (Xinhua)

Australian conservative parties reunite: Australia's two largest conservative political parties have reformed their partnership days after splitting for the first time since the 1980s. The Liberal and National parties on Wednesday reached an agreement on a deal to reunite as a coalition and serve together as the opposition in the 48th federal parliament. Addressing a press conference in Canberra, Liberal leader Sussan Ley said it would be a "great partnership going forward."

It comes eight days after Nationals leader David Littleproud announced that the party had voted not to enter a coalition partnership with the Liberals for the 48th parliament following the May 3 general election, which the governing center-left Labor Party won in a landslide. That marked the first time since 1987 that the two parties had split. (Xinhua)

Search efforts continue at China chemical plant: Six people remained missing and search and rescue efforts continued Wednesday after an explosion at a chemical plant in eastern China shook nearby buildings, killing at least five people and injuring 19

people and injuring 19.

The blast on Tuesday, occurring in an industrial park in the city of Weifang, in Shandong province, knocked out windows at nearby buildings and spewed a



This photo taken with a mobile phone shows firefighters at the fire site in Seoul, South Korea, May 28. (Xinhua)

thick plume of white smoke, according to videos shared on social media. It was not immediately clear what caused the explosion.

Zhang Liyou, who runs a restaurant about 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) away from the explosion site, was serving lunch when the blast occurred, shattering the restaurant's windows and causing part of its ceiling paneling to collapse. (AP)

2 Malaysian ministers resign: Malaysia's Economy Minister Rafizi Ramli

announced his resignation here on Wednesday, ending a career that began in December 2022.

Rafizi, who was the deputy president of the ruling People's Justice Party, known by its Malay acronym PKR, lost his seat in party elections last week and cited this loss of mandate as the reason for his resignation in a statement.

"As is the practice in countries that uphold democratic principles, leaders who lose in party elections should make way for those who have won to take their place in government." (Xinhua)

Thai, Cambodian soldiers clash kills 1: A Cambodian soldier was killed when Thai and Cambodian troops briefly fired at each other in their disputed border area Wednesday, officials said.

Cambodian army spokesperson Mao Phalla said the Cambodian troops were

conducting a routine patrol along the border when the Thai side opened fire.

The Thai army's statement said the Cambodian soldiers entered a disputed area and Thai soldiers approached the area to negotiate but due to misunderstanding, the Cambodian side opened fire and the Thai soldiers then retaliated.

Fukushima soil to be used in PM flower beds: Japan said Tuesday it plans to use some slightly radioactive soil stored near the tsunami-wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant on flower beds outside Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba's office to show it is safe to reuse

ba's office to show it is safe to reuse.

The soil was removed from across the Fukushima prefecture as part of decontamination work following the 2011 nuclear disaster and has since been in interim storage. Some of it has since reached levels safe enough for reuse, officials say.

Using the soil at Ishiba's office in Tokyo is aimed at reassuring the public it is safe. The government said that it plans to reuse the soil for flower beds and other purposes within the grounds of government agencies. The plan is based on guidelines set by the Environment Ministry in March and endorsed by the International Atomic Energy Agency. (AP)

French leader Macron presses ahead on South Asia tour with talks in Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia, May 28, (AP): The French president met with his Indonesian counterpart on Wednesday as Emmanuel Macron continued his weeklong trip to Southeast Asia focused on strengthening regional ties in an increasingly unstable global landscape.

Macron and France's first lady Brigitte Macron arrived in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, on Tuesday evening for the second stop in his tour after Vietnam, where Macron signed a deal to sell Hanoi 20 Airbus planes.

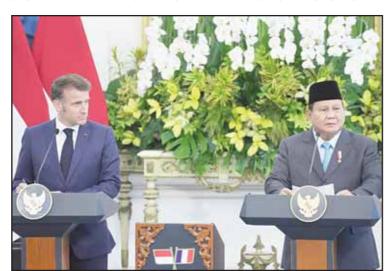
On arrival, Macron had warm words for Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, describing him as a brother and "a great friend of mine."

Military cooperation between Indonesia, Southeast Asia's largest economy, and France grew in recent years, starting in 2019 when Subianto became defense minister. He and Macron met last November on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Brazil, where they discussed Indonesia's plans to buy fighter jets and submarines from France.

Indonesia finalized an order for 42 French Dassault Rafale fighter jets in January 2024, with the first delivery expected in early 2026. The Asian nation also announced the purchase of two French Scorpene Evolved submarines and 13 Thales ground control interception radars.

Five of the radar systems are expected to be installed in Indonesia's new capital. Nusantara.

Indonesian Defense Minister Sjafrie



French President Emmanuel Macron, left, listens as Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto speaks during a joint press conference after their bilateral meeting at Merdeka Palace in Jakarta, Indonesia on May 28. (AP)

Sjamsoeddin told reporters after welcoming Macron that the visit is aimed at strengthening "defense cooperation between Indonesia and France,"

On Wednesday, Subianto hosted the Macrons in a ceremony at Merdeka Palace in Jakarta before the two leaders went in for a bilateral meeting.

Afterward, the two presidents oversaw the signing of more than a dozen agreements, including a letter of intent for Indonesia to purchase of strategic weapons systems, especially fighter planes and submarines.

The developments "can open a new perspective with new orders for Rafales, Scorpènes, and light frigates, along with consolidated joint exercises," Macron said at a joint news conference.

Subianto said that France is one of Indonesia's main partners "in the modernization of defense equipment, including in the development of the defense industry through joint production and technology transfer."

Leaders express deep alarm at conflicts

ASEAN calls for lasting truce in Myanmar

KUALA LUMPUR, May 28, (Xinhua): ASEAN leaders on Tuesday positively eyed a temporary truce in Myanmar and called for rendering the resort to calm as permanent.

In the final statement of the 46th ASEAN Summit, leaders of the member states called for extending the truce, due to expire by the end of this month, and pave the way for halting violence on sustainable basis, ensure aid delivery and begin a national conciliation dialogue, based on the 2021 concord.

The ASEAN conciliation plan for Myanmar, known as the Five-Point Consensus (FPC), was articulated in April 2021. It outlines a framework for addressing the crisis following a military coup, encompassing an immediate end to violence, constructive dialogue among all parties, and appointment of a special envoy for mediation, humanitarian assistance provision through ASEAN, and a visit by the special envoy to Myanmar to meet with all parties.

Moreover, in today's ASEAN statement, member states' leaders expressed deep alarm at the escalatory conflicts and deterioration of the humanitarian conditions in Myanmar that worsened with the 7.7 degree earthquake that struck the country on March 28, 2028.

The ASEAN leaders affirmed commitment to aid Myanmar to reach a peaceful and sustainable solution,

China's Premier Li Qiang, front right, and Malaysia's Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, front left, attend the ASEAN - Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) - China Summit after the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on May 27. (AP)

stressing that the aspired reconciliation must be among the local powers. They renewed the call for instant cessation of violence and delivery of the humanitarian assistance supplies provided by ASEAN.

Moreover, they urged the warring parties to seek to rebuild internal confidence for holding the national dialogue aimed at reaching a political solution.

aimed at reaching a political solution.

They affirmed support for the ASE-AN leadership's efforts to narrow the

gap among the foes in Myanmar and acclaimed UN efforts in this respect.

Myanmar has been witnessing a political-humanitarian crisis since a military junta seized power in February 2021.

ASEAN leaders had adopted the five-point plan in April 2021 to resolve the crisis, calling for a truce, cessation of violence and providing aid to the needy. However, trivial progress has been seen at these levels.

Trump's immigration crackdown unnerves Cuban exiles long shielded from deportation

MIAMI, May 28, (AP): Immigration officials said Tomás Hernández worked in high-level posts for Cuba's foreign intelligence agency for decades before migrating to the United States to pursue the American dream.

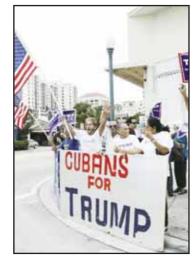
The 71-year-old was detained by federal agents outside his Miami-area home in March and accused of hiding his ties to Cuba's Communist Party when he obtained permanent residency.

Cuban-Americans in South Florida have long clamored for a firmer hand with Havana and the recent apprehensions of Hernández and several other former Cuban officials for deportation have been extremely popular among the politically powerful exile commu-

nity.

"It's a political gift to Cuban-American hardliners," said Eduardo Gamarra, a Latin American expert at Florida International University. But many Cubans fear they could be next on Trump's list, he said, and "some in the community see it as a betrayal."

While President Donald Trump's mass deportation pledge has frightened migrants from many nations, it has come as something of a shock to the 2.4 million Cuban-Americans, who



Cuban-Americans chant pro-Trump slogans as they show their support for Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump in Miami on Oct. 28, 2016. (AP)

strongly backed the Republican twice and have long enjoyed a place of privilege in the US immigration system. Amid record arrivals of migrants from the Caribbean island, Trump in March revoked temporary humanitarian parole for about 300,000 Cubans. Many have been detained ahead of possible deportation.

Among those facing deportation is a pro-Trump Cuban rapper behind a hit song "Patria y Vida" - "Homeland and Life" - that became the unofficial anthem of anti-communist protests on the island in 2021 and drew praise from the likes of then Republican Sen. Marco Rubio, now Secretary of State. Eliéxer Márquez, who raps under the name El Funky, said he received notice this month that he had 30 days to leave

Thanks to Cold War laws aimed at removing Fidel Castro, Cuban migrants for many decades enjoyed almost automatic refugee status in the US and could obtain green cards a year after entry, unlike migrants from virtually every other country.

Support for Trump among likely Cuban-American voters in Miami was at an all-time high on the eve of last year's election, according to a poll by Florida International University, which has been tracking the Cuban-American community since 1991.



People fill water containers at a distribution point due to water outages in Khartoum, Sudan on May 25. (AP)

Sudan's humanitarian crisis deepens as fighting continues: United Nations

UNITED NATIONS, May 28, (Xinhua): The humanitarian crisis in Sudan is deepening as fighting, displacement and health emergencies fuel needs, the world body warned Tuesday. In North Darfur state, artillery shelling continues to affect residential areas of El Fasher city and the Abu Shouk camp for internally displaced people. Daily civilian casualties are reported, and recent days have seen an intensification of nighttime bombardments, said the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Humanitarian partners on the ground

report that access to education remains severely constrained in North Darfur. Since the conflict began in April 2023, a quarter of a million children have lost access to learning, said OCHA.

In South Kordofan state, the International Organization for Migration reported last week that about 2,800 people, primarily women and children, fled renewed fighting in the town of Dibebad. The situation in the state capital of Kadugli has also seriously deteriorated in recent weeks, with intense shelling and humanitarian access largely cut off, said the office.

In Northern state, authorities report that about 6,000 people who fled from North Darfur, Khartoum and West Kordofan states due to insecurity arrived in Ad Dabbah locality between May 12 and 22, it said.

Meanwhile, the cholera outbreak in Khartoum state is worsening at an alarming rate. Humanitarian partners in the state report an 80 percent increase in suspected cases over the past two weeks, bringing the total to more than 8,500, it said. In Blue Nile state, some 8,500 Sudanese refugees have returned from South Sudan since late April.

Subcontinent

Zia supporters rally to call for general election:

Bangladeshi political party rallied in the capital, Dhaka, on Wednesday, calling for a general election in December as discontent grows with the interim government appointed after the ouster of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina in August.

Activists from three groups linked to the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, or BNP, headed by former prime minister **Khaleda Zia** gathered on the

streets outside its party headquarters, under heightened security.

Wednesday's rally was held after weeks of political tensions after interim leader and Nobel Peace laureate Muhammad Yunus threatened to quit and the influential military chief publicly declared his support for an election in December. (AP)

Road accident kills 2 in east Afghanistan: At

least two commuters lost their lives and four others sustained injuries in a road mishap in eastern Afghanistan's Ghazni province, the state-owned Bakhtar news agency reported on Wednesday.

The traffic accident occurred when an over-speeding passenger vehicle veered off the road and turned turtle in Gelan district, along the highway connecting the capital Kabul to southern Kandahar province, leaving two travelers dead on the spot and four others injured, Bakhtar reported, citing provincial police spokesman Khalid Sarhadi.

Without disclosing further details, the official blamed reckless driving for the incident, saying all the injured passengers were taken to a nearby health center. (Xin-

South Africa president says relations with United States successfully 'reset'

CAPE TOWN, May 28, (Xinhua): South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said on Tuesday that the country has successfully "reset" its relationship with the United States following his meeting with US President Donald Trump in the White House last week. Ramaphosa made the remarks during an oral question-and-answer session at the National Assembly in Cape Town, the legislative capital of South Africa. Ramaphosa said it is important for relations, which have become strained in recent years, to be mended. "(This) was an issue that occupied many people's minds in our country.

We realized the impact on our economy would be adverse unless we were able to repair or reset the relationship." According to the South African president, a phone call with Trump -- initially focused on the Russia-Ukraine conflict -- led to the decision to meet in person.

Ramaphosa noted that the initial meeting with media presence was followed by a succession of productive private meetings. "Despite what we could have seen on television, we were able to have a much more meaningful discussion and meeting with President Trump and his representatives (in) the quiet room where we had lunch togeth-



US President Donald Trump meets South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in the Oval Office of the White House on May 21, 2025, in Washington. (AP)

er," he said.

Ramaphosa outlined three key objectives for his visit to the United States, namely strengthening trade ties, reestablishing formal government engagement channels, and reinforcing both countries' roles in the Group of 20 Summit to be held later this year.

A fourth goal is to possibly encourage greater investment between American and South African companies, he added. "We believe we achieved those objectives," he said. "There are discussions happening in relation to tariffs, in relation to investment, and we believe we have reset the relationship."

Kuwait oil price up 24 cents to \$64.26 pb

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 24 cents to USD 64.26 per barrel on Tuesday as opposed to USD 64.02 pb the day before, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Wednesday.

The prices of the Brent crude and West Texas Intermediate globally went down with the former decreasing by 65 cents to USD 64.09 per barrel, the latter declined by 64 cents to reach USD 60.89



Company supported graduation ceremony of 47th cadet class at Saad Al-Abdullah Academy

Zain recognized by Mol for empowering national security cadres

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Zain received a special recognition from the Ministry of Interior for its role in supporting the graduation ceremony of the 47th class of cadet officers at Saad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences. The recognition comes as part of Zain's longstanding strategic partnership with the Ministry, which has led to numerous joint initiatives aimed at raising public awareness around key national security issues

The honor was presented by the Academy's Education and Training Affairs Sector, represented by the Director General of the Academy, Brigadier General Ali Al-Wuhaib, and attended by Zain Kuwait's CEO, Nawaf Al-Gharabally, Acting Director of the Supply and Equipment Department, Colonel Khaled Al-Saqer, and officials from both parties.

Zain's support of the ceremony, which was held under the gracious patronage of His Highness the Amir and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, reflects its ongoing commitment to supporting national institutions and its active participation in events that embody the values of citizenship and patriotism, especially those celebrating the graduation of future national security leaders who will play a key role in safeguarding the



Brigadier General Ali Al-Wuhaib honors Zain Kuwait CEO Nawaf Al-Gharabally.

country's stability.

This recognition also builds on a series of impactful collaborations between Zain and the Ministry of Interior, most notably the recent production of the awareness TVC Salute to the Police Officer, which was launched during the 38th Unified GCC Traffic Week. The campaign, which aimed to educate the public on the new traffic law, received widespread positive feedback – particularly from youth and children – for its creative and engaging delivery of important safety messages, further reinforcing Zain's role as a responsible community partner.

Zain expressed its pride in receiving this honor, which affirms the success of its partnership with the Ministry of Interior and the impact of their joint efforts in serving the community and promoting a culture of security. Both parties look forward to continuing this fruitful collaboration through new initiatives that further enhance public awareness and reinforce the principles of public safety.

As one of the country's leading economic entities, Zain remains committed to aligning with Kuwait's national development goals across social, economic, and security domains. The company is proud to be among the first organizations to actively collaborate with the Ministry of Interior on a number of life-saving initiatives.

Boursa Kuwait closes higher

General index gains 49.32 points

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Wednesday's session on a positive note, with the General Index rising 49.32 points (0.61%) to close at 8,119.30. Trading saw 301.5 million shares exchanged

in 19,203 transactions, totaling KD 90.2 million (approx. USD 276.9 million).

The Premier Market Index gained 63.9 points (0.73%) to settle at 8,808.1, with 153.7 million shares traded through 10,403 deals valued at KD 68.9 million (USD 211.5 million).

The Main Market Index edged up 0.53 points (0.01%) to 6,966.32, with 147.8 million shares changing hands via 8,800 transactions worth KD 21.3 million (USD 65.3 million).

In contrast, the Major 50 Index declined by 48.61 points (0.67%) to 7,251.35, on a volume of 106.5 million shares across 5,869 trades totaling KD 16.8 million (USD 51.5 million).

Showcasing strategic vision and growth

Markaz launches first annual report for MREF

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" has launched the first annual report for Markaz Real Estate Fund (MREF), offering stakeholders a transparent and credible overview of the Fund's strategic direction, institutional growth, and market leadership. The report provides detailed insights into MREF's market positioning, risk management practices, and long-term investment approach, highlighting its proactive management and alignment with evolving investor priorities, such as income stability, inflation resilience, and long-term value creation. These elements collectively reinforce MREF's standing as a mature and market trending investment vehicle.

Available to all nationalities, both Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti investors, MREF, a Shariah-compliant product, offers several competitive features, including monthly cash distributions, and flexible dividend reinvestment options, to benefit from the compounding effect.

Mr. Milad Elia, Executive Vice President, MENA Real Estate at Markaz, commented: "The launch of our first annual report for the Markaz Real Estate Fund (MREF) reflects the expertise, strategic insight, and dedication that drive the fund's performance, providing investors with a clearer understanding of the Fund's strategic direction and long-term growth potential. As the first Fund of its kind in Kuwait, MREF has built a track record of solid returns through a carefully managed portfolio of high-quality assets, disciplined investment strategies, and proac-



Milad Elia

tive asset management. Our team's focus on delivering high-quality solutions has enabled MREF to consistently achieve strong returns, positioning it as a valuable choice for those seeking stability and long-term financial growth, in addition to being a Shariah-compliant product."

Mr. Khaled A. Al-Mubaraki, Senior Vice President, MENA Real Estate at Markaz added: "We are keen to feature in the report a comprehensive analysis of the strategic steps that have shaped MREF's sustained performance. The report highlights the Fund's ability to maintain steady returns even in challenging economic and market environments. It emphasizes MREF's diversified approach, balancing investment and commercial real estate assets to drive long-term value. The report also captures the importance of disci-



Khaled Al-Mubaraki

plined asset management, focusing on proactive property enhancements and strategic decisions to strengthen the Fund's market position."

Markaz continues to set the standard for transparency and innovation in the regional investment landscape, consistently delivering smart, forward-looking solutions that empower clients to achieve their financial goals. As the first institution in Kuwait to introduce a sustainability report, well before ESG became a mainstream focus, Markaz remains committed to shaping the market through responsible investment practices and innovative financial products. This forward-thinking approach, combined with a deep understanding of market dynamics, positions Markaz and its clients to stay ahead in an evolving investment landscape.

New strategy seeks to align board vision with market goals

CMA begins work on Fourth Strategic Plan (2027–2031)

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Since its establishment, the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) has sought to develop the legislative and regulatory framework, diversify investment instruments, boost investor confidence, strengthen governance principles, and enhance the level of disclosure and transparency in the capital markets.

According to a press release issued by CMA, it has adopted an integrated institutional approach to strategic planning in order to achieve these goals, and in an effort to position itself as a leader in the field of strategic planning.

In line with this, CMA has begun preparing its fourth strategy, covering the period 2027/2028 to 2030/2031. An internal team of specialized CMA staff was formed to prepare and design the next strategy.

CMA held an internal workshop for its employees, in the presence of the Chair of the Board of Commissioners and CEO, who emphasized the importance of continuing to pursue excellence and evolving in line with current changes.

He indicated that the CMA's fourth strategic plan represents a pivotal opportunity to unify

visions and align the Board of Commissioners' aspirations with the strategic directions for the upcoming phase.

He stressed the crucial role played by CMA leaders and all stakeholders in implementing the plan according to the approved timeline.

Meanwhile, the head of the fourth strategy preparation team noted that this step aims to ensure continuity and consistency in implementing the CMA's di-

rectives through interconnected plans, enabling a smooth transition from the current strategy to the new one without any time or implementation gaps.

As part of CMA's efforts in the first phase of preparing the fourth strategy, which includes internal analysis and defining strategic ambitions, CMA has launched a comprehensive communication plan with its stakeholders. This plan aims to understand their aspirations and



Photo during the workshop

needs, ensuring these are reflected in CMA's strategic priorities. CMA plans to publish a public

CMA plans to publish a public opinion poll on its website, inviting all registered users on its electronic portal to participate. The poll will also be promoted on the website's homepage and CMA's social media channels.

Currently, CMA is coordinating with relevant government agencies, including the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Central Bank of Kuwait, the Kuwait Financial Intelligence Unit, the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, the Insurance Regulatory Unit, and Kuwait Finance House.

Consultations are also ongoing with the Kuwait Stock Exchange, Kuwait Clearing Company, and other supervisory bodies such as the Supreme Council for Planning and Development and the Government Performance Follow-up Agency to gather insights on CMA's role.

CMA's outreach also includes the Union of Investment Companies, the Kuwait Economic Society, the Financial Analysts Society, and the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) for seeking their opinions and feedback on their needs and expectations from CMA.

1 million registered users in Q1

WAMD real-time payment system achieves rapid transaction growth

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (BUSINESS WIRE): ACI Worldwide (NASDAQ: ACIW), an original innovator in global payments technology, and KNET, Kuwait's national electronic banking company, today announced that WAMD, Kuwait's real-time payment system, recorded significant growth in the number of transactions processed since its launch in June of 2024, making WAMD one of the world's most rapidly adopted real-time payment initiatives.

KNET utilized ACI's Digital Central Infrastructure solution to build the central payment infrastructure of WAMD, an interoperable, countrywide scheme that enables account-to-account (A2A) payment transfers via a bank's mobile app or internet banking service by using a phone number. WAMD was implemented in less than 15 months, redefining the pace for rapid digital transformation and innovation. Banks in Kuwait have lauded the scheme for delivering a seamless and user-friendly differentiated customer banking experience. With 100% of the country's banks now on board with WAMD, this extraordinary growth in realtime payments is expected to con-

"As real-time payments become ubiquitous in Kuwait, consumers have gravitated toward secure, real-time payment methods, reshaping habits around convenience and efficiency while reducing reliance on cash. KNET's primary strategic focus is to provide a safe and reliable payment environment by enhancing existing infrastructure, developing innovative payment systems, and improving service efficiency domestically and regionally," said EsamAlkheshnam, KNET's Chief Executive Officer.

Alkheshnam added that "IPS in Kuwait was given the name 'WAMD,' which translates to lightning flash – an indication of the speed of the service. WAMD, which is available on the banking application of all local banks, has gained traction from the start with one million registered users during the first quarter of the launch of WAMD.

"As soon as we introduced the service to Kuwait, we began outlining the next phase of IPS in Kuwait, which will build on the success of phase one. Together with ACI Worldwide, being one of our strategic partners, KNET is committed to adopting state-of-the-art technologies in digital payments, adhering to the highest global standards."

Aligned with KNET's mission

Aligned with KNET's mission of supporting Kuwait's national vision for digital transformation, longer-term strategic initiatives include the integration of Kuwait's fintech players to WAMD and enabling A2A real-time payments in their Electronic Fund Transfer Point-of-Sale terminals using dynamic QR codes. KNET is also looking at implementing the "Request to Pay" service to streamline payment operations for web merchants and provide a safer, enhanced e-commerce shopping experience for Kuwaitis.

Kuwait's evolution into a realtime payment powerhouse is set to further propel the Middle East's position as a leader in payments modernization. According to ACI's Prime Time for Real-Time 2024 report, which tracks global realtime payment volumes and growth forecasts, the Middle East has been recognized as the fastest-growing real-time payments market in the world for two consecutive years. Additionally, real-time payments are a powerful enabler for eco-



KNET logo

nomic advancement and inclusion. ACI's Real-Time Payments: Economic Impact and Financial Inclusion report indicates that by 2028, real-time payments are forecast to create more than 167 million new bank account holders and generate \$285.8 billion of additional global GDP growth.

"Kuwait's rapid adoption of real-time payments has been impressive and stands out as one of the fastest adoption rates around the globe. The rising demand for real-time payments drives innovation in payments, forges new use cases that stimulate economic growth, promotes financial inclusion, and meets customers' evolving expectations," commented Craig Ramsey, global head of account-to-account payments at ACI Worldwide. "Together, ACI and KNET have created one of the most secure and future-proof real-time payment systems in the world - one that puts Kuwait at the forefront of the global realtime payments revolution."

ACI Worldwide has a strong track record of powering real-time schemes around the world as well as helping banks, fintechs and other payment service providers in the ecosystem to connect to the schemes and offer new, innovative financial services for consumers and businesses. ACI currently powers 26 domestic and pan-regional real-time schemes across six continents - including 11 central infrastructures. Globally, ACI serves all 10 of the world's largest financial institutions by asset value and provides solutions that move trillions of dollars through more than one billion transactions daily.

About KNET

The Shared Electronic Banking Services Company (KNET), a pioneer in electronic payments in Kuwait, was established in 1992 through a partnership of local banks to connect their systems and enable a wide range of banking services through an advanced network. KNET is committed to adopting state-of-the-art technologies in various fields of electronic banking and payments, adhering to the highest global standards. The company's targeted sectors include commercial, banking, and governmental sectors in Kuwait.

About ACI Worldwide

ACI Worldwide, an original innovator in global payments technology, delivers transformative software solutions that power intelligent payments orchestration in real time so banks, billers, and merchants can drive growth, while continuously modernizing their payment infrastructures, simply and securely. With 50 years of trusted payments expertise, we combine our global footprint with a local presence to offer enhanced payment experiences to stay ahead of constantly changing payment challenges and opportuCelebrating a year of leading with purpose and pioneering sustainability in finance

National Bank of Kuwait issues 2024 Sustainability Report

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: In line with its pioneering role and institutional commitment to embedding sustainability across all aspects of its operations, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) released its ninth annual Sustainability Report for 2024. The report outlines the Bank's most prominent ESG-related achievements and contributions over the past year, reinforcing its dedication to sustainable growth.

The report outlines the strategic ESG initiatives undertaken in 2024, highlighting NBK's continued efforts to tackle key sustainability challenges, explore emerging opportunities, and build on the sustainability journey it began in 2016. It also demonstrates the Bank's progress in embedding climate risk into its enterprise risk management framework.

Providing a comprehensive overview of NBK's strategic sustainability roadmap, the report reflects the Bank's ambition to create a lasting positive impact on the communities it serves, while fostering long-term growth and operational resilience.

The report is structured around four main ESG pillars - Governance for Resilience, Responsible Banking, Capitalizing on Our Capabilities, and Investing in Our Communities – each encompassing key issues, milestones, and initiatives undertaken in 2024.

Governance For Resilience

The report pointed out that NBK made significant strides in 2024 in strengthening governance for resilience as part of its ESG strategy.

It highlighted NBK's role as a pioneer in advancing sustainability, becoming the first financial institution in Kuwait – and one of only 15 in the MENA regionto join the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF). This global initiative provides financial institutions with standardized methodologies to measure and disclose greenhouse gas emissions associated with their portfolios across all asset classes, including lending and investment activities such as listed equities and bonds, corporate loans, private equity, project finance, commercial real estate, mortgages, auto loans, guarantees, and sovereign debt. The report also noted that in 2024, NBK continued its engagement with the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative, which it joined in 2023. As part of this alliance, NBK submitted its first progress report in 2024, affirming its commitment to transparency and responsible business practices that support the sustainable development of Kuwait's economy.

Furthermore, it emphasized that 2024 marked the release of NBK's first report aligned with the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) framework. As part of its continued progress toward a more sustainable future, the report noted that NBK developed and implemented a comprehensive bank-wide Environmental and Social Risk Management (ESRM) framework in 2024. This milestone reflects the Bank's commitment to embedding climate governance at the core of its operations, strengthening its ability to anticipate and manage emerging environmental risks. Additionally, NBK developed an ESG scorecard that supports the assessment and integration of ESG criteria into the credit rating process for both existing and new corporate clients.

Responsible Banking

With regard to the Bank's achievements under the second pillar of its ESG strategy – Responsible Banking – the report highlighted that the value of NBK's sustainable assets reached US\$ 4.97 billion by the end of 2024, representing nearly 50% of its US\$ 10 billion target set for 2030

The report also noted a key milestone in 2024: the successful issuance of NBK's first green bonds, valued at US\$ 500 million. Issued under the Global Medium-Term Note Programme as senior unsecured green bonds with a six-year maturity and a call date after five years, this marked the first issuance of its kind by a Kuwaiti financial institution.NBK recently published its first Green Bond Allocation and Impact report, highlighting the environmental benefits of the bonds' proceeds.

Moreover, the report emphasized that this significant milestone reflects NBK's broader vision to lead the transition toward a low-carbon economy, promote sustainable finance across the region, and channel capital into climate-resilient infrastructure.

It also revealed that in 2024, NBK Group extended sustainable loans totaling US\$ 2.52 billion to clients with environmental and/or social impact. The report noted the continued expansion of green product offerings, including electric vehicle loans and low-emission housing loans, alongside ongoing efforts to explore further environmental financing opportunities under the Bank's sustainable financing framework.

The report noted that in 2024, NBK took a significant step toward quantifying financed emissions under Scope 3 - emissions that originate from activities outside the Bank's direct operations but are associated with its value chain, such as supply chains, transportation, and other indirect sources, but most importantly, its financing activity. This development enhances the Bank's ability to manage the broader climate impact of its financing

According to the report, NBK completed the installation of solar panels across 18 of its local branches in 2024 as part of efforts to make its operations more sustainable and reduce its carbon footprint. The initiative aligns with Kuwait's Vision 2035, with plans to extend coverage to 24 branches

It also highlighted NBK's progress in minimizing its environmental footprint and enhancing resource efficiency, noting a 28.30% reduction in total greenhouse gas emissions compared to the 2021 baseline – surpassing its interim 2025 emissions reduction target ahead of schedule. Additionally, the report explained that in 2024, the bank successfully

reduced its electrical energy consumption by approximately 389,914 kilowatt-hours, cut water usage by 20.85% compared to the previous year, and



QR Code

recycled 86% of the total paper used during the year.

This reflects the Bank's ongoing efforts in line with its long-term ambition to reach carbon neutrality by 2060.

The report highlighted that in 2024, NBK introduced a sustainable procurement framework designed to promote environmentally and socially responsible sourcing across its supply chain. The initiative integrates ESG considerations into the Bank's procurement policy and includes the rollout of an updated supplier code of conduct that embeds environmental and social standards, requiring all suppliers to sign a declaration affirming their commitment to ESG principles and human rights.

Capitalizing On Our Capabilities

Covering the third pillar of its ESG strategy - Capitalizing on Our Capabilities – the report stated that NBK advanced its sustainability efforts in 2024 by reinforcing equal opportunity in the workplace. This included finalizing its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) statement, underscoring the Bank's commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable work environment.

The report explained that in 2024, the Bank launched several strategic initiatives and specialized programs aimed at supporting and developing women leaders, contributing to a notable increase in the number of women in leadership and supervisory roles across all levels. It noted that women represented 43.2% of NBK's workforce by the end of the year, with 27.4% holding senior management positions. Additionally, women accounted for 28.8% of the Bank's workforce in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, out of a total of 347 specialized employees.

The report highlighted that, through its digital transformation strategy, NBK successfully delivered a range of customer-centric digital solutions and large-scale projects in 2024. It noted the launch of over 90 new features and enhancements via the NBK Mobile Banking App, aimed at improving user experience, strengthening security and payment capabilities, and broadening the Bank's suite of innovative digital offerings – all designed to save customers time and effort.

It stated that Weyay Bank, NBK's digital arm, launched impactful ESG initiatives in 2024 aimed at enabling customers to experience a more responsible and innovative digital banking model.

It also underscored NBK's continued investment in the professional development of its workforce, highlighting a comprehensive suite of mandatory, leadership, and specialized training programs designed to enhance both personal and professional competencies across all levels of the organization. The report emphasized the Bank's ongoing commitment to empowering young national talent through various initiatives, most notably NBK Academy and NBK Tech Academy.

Touching on NBK's strategy to strengthen women's leadership across the organization, the country, the region, and globally, the report stated that the Bank launched the second edition of the NBK RISE program in 2024. As the first initiative of its kind in Kuwait, the program is designed to support women leaders, empower their advancement, and prepare them to assume top executive role

The report also highlighted NBK's ongoing commitment to investing in human capital. In 2024, the Bank signed an exclusive cooperation agreement with Coaches Circle Academy, based in Vancouver, Canada, to enhance the leadership and coaching capabilities of NBK's senior executives. As part of this initiative, a select group of senior employees participated in advanced leadership development programs in collaboration with IE Business School in Madrid, to cultivate and elevate the skills of the broader workforce

Investing In Our Communities

The report affirmed that, in line with the fourth pillar of NBK's ESG strategy – Investing in Our Communities – the Bank remained committed in 2024 to delivering exceptional service, safeguarding customer interests, and protecting their rights. It also continued to promote financial inclusion, expand access to banking services, and elevate financial literacy across all segments of society.

- 1. NBK becomes the first bank in Kuwait to join the PCAF initiative to support greenhouse gas emissions reduction
- First Kuwaiti financial institution to issue green bonds Developed and began implementing an Environmental and
- Social Risk Management (ESRM) framework Introduced a sustainable procurement strategy and updated
- its supplier code of conduct 5. Published first report aligned with the Task Force on Cli-
- mate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) framework
- Launched Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) Statement to reinforce equal opportunities in the workplace
- 7. Measuring financed emissions under Scope 3 leads to better
- manage the climate impact of its lending portfolio Sustainable assets reached US\$4.97 billion, nearly 50% of
- the Bank's 2030 target
- 9. Provided US\$2.52 billion in sustainable loans in 2024 to clients with positive environmental or social impact
- 10. Achieved a 28.3% reduction in total GHG emissions compared to the 2021 baseline, subsequently achieving its 2025 interim emissions reduction target
- 11. Achieved 389,914 kWh in electricity savings and lowered water consumption by 20.85% year-on-year
- 12. Recycled 86% of total paper consumed in 2024
- 13. Installed solar panels in 18 branches across Kuwait during the year, with more installations planned in the future
- 14. Maintains a national workforce with 78% Kuwaiti employees 15. Women hold 27.4% of senior management roles at the bank
- 16. Employs 347 STEM professionals, 28.8% of whom are
- women 17. Contributed KD 30 million in community investments during
- 2024, reflecting 9% year-on-year growth
- 18. Engaged with 61 Schools, +32,000 students and +7,200 teachers as part of its Bankee financial literacy program

Furthermore, the report explained that, reinforcing its position as the leading contributor to social responsibility in Kuwait, NBK's total community investments reached KD 30 million in 2024 – a 9% increase from 2023. It added that, as part of its continued support for entrepreneurs in Kuwait, the Bank extended loans to SMEs totaling KD 25.04 million last year, reflecting a 23.5% year-on-year growth.

The report noted that the Kuwaitization rate at NBK - Kuwait reached 78% in 2024, aligning with the requirements set by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK). This was achieved through targeted initiatives aimed at attracting and developing local talent. It underscored that NBK's Kuwaitization strategy is designed to broaden the recruitment of national talent and sustain their retention over the long term.

It also indicated that, as part of the Bank's ongoing commitment to community development – particularly in the field of education – interest in the Bankee program has continued to grow. This flagship initiative, aimed at enhancing financial awareness and literacy among school students in Kuwait, saw the participation of 61 schools, 7,230 teachers, and 32,257students during the 2024-2025 academic year, building on the remarkable success achieved in the previous year.

The report stated that, during 2024, NBK maintained its sponsorship of Kuwait Dive Team to support initiatives aimed at preserving Kuwait's coastal and marine ecosystems. It also renewed its partnership with Omniya for waste removal and management, which contributed to a reduction of 462.5 tons in carbon dioxide emissions. Additionally, the Bank extended its collaboration with the LOYAC Foundation to continue developing programs and events that empower youth, foster entrepreneurship, and promote environmental responsibility.

The report highlighted that the Bank continues to actively use its social media channels to educate customers on a wide range of topics. In 2024, NBK issued 2,320 social media posts and 42 press releases to boost customer awareness of banking products and services. The report also emphasized the Bank's ongoing strong support and participation in CBK's "Let's Be Aware" campaign, which aims to promote financial literacy across all segments of society.

A customer satisfaction rate of 90% was highlighted in the 2024 report. underscoring NBK's ongoing efforts to enhance its services and products, introduce innovative solutions, and solidify its standing as a leader in the banking sector.

Agreements & Partnerships

The report highlighted NBK's participation in the 2024 Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Baku, Azerbaijan, underscoring the Bank's commitment to supporting the transition to a sustainable, low-carbon economy in alignment with Kuwait's comprehensive sustainability vision and global climate action efforts.

It also noted NBK's involvement in the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) that took place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where global strategies to address desertification and land degradation were dis-

Oil export revenues fall, but services and investment incomes cushion impact

Kuwait's current account surplus shrinks to 29% of GDP in 2024

25

20

15

10

By National Bank of Kuwait

Kuwait's external current account surplus remained huge in 2024, despite narrowing for the second straight year to reach 29% of GDP, mainly on lower oil exports. A smaller trade surplus on goods was partially offset by improvements in the services and investment income balances – the latter surplus reaching 21% of GDP. Meanwhile, the financial account revealed a notable rotation toward debt instruments and rising hedging activity. Looking ahead, the current account is expected to remain in surplus but may moderate further due to lower oil prices, a stabilization in worker remittances, and evolving trends in investment allocations due to the prospects of lower interest rates. Financial account outflows may continue to favor investment in high-yield and lower-risk assets amid global macroeconomic uncertainty and elevated trade tensions.

The current account surplus narrowed to KD14.3 billion (29.1% of GDP) in 2024 from KD15.8 billion (31.1% of GDP) in the previous year. (Chart 1.) This moderation was driven primarily by weaker oil export revenues and a recovery in workers' remittances. Oil exports continue to dominate current account credits, accounting for 88.9% of total exports and 53% of total credits - though these shares declined from 92.7% and 58.6%, respectively, in 2023. Non-oil exports (domestic

40 30 20 10 -10 -20 Trade balance of goods -30 Primary income -CAB (% of GDP) Source: Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK). CSB exports and re-exports) saw a strong rebound, increasing by 40% in 2024 from a 2.7% decline in the previous year, which is mainly related to

higher exports of organic chemicals

(18% versus -25% in 2023), plastics

& thereof (66% versus 9%), and ve-

hicles, parts and accessories (112%

versus 6%). In addition, the services

account deficit narrowed by KD1.0

billion mainly due to the decline of

Kuwaiti's travel spending abroad

by KD0.6 billion - which also in-

cludes Kuwaiti students and state-

sponsored medical travelers. This

smaller services deficit helped par-

tially offset the impact of a smaller

goods trade surplus on the current

eased though remaining at a his-

Net investment income, which represents the returns on capital invested abroad, stood at an extremely strong KD10.2 billion in 2024, edging up by 2.3%. (Chart 2.) This increase came mainly on higher portfolio investment returns (KD6.1 billion), though these gains were partially offset by a fall of Kuwait's direct investment earnings from abroad (KD2.3 billion) and the increase in profits of non-resident direct investment in Kuwait, in line with a rebound in Kuwait's stock market last year. The small increase in net investment income last year follows a much stronger performance in 2023, which was supported by higher returns on deposits and short-term treasuries in response to elevated US policy rates, and strong growth in US equity markets especially. Investment income from abroad in 2024 was worth 57% of oil exports, up from 40% in 2019, signaling a growing and strategic role for external investment income in supporting Kuwait's current account surplus, especially amid fluctuations in hydrocarbon earnings.

Chart 2: Investment income (net)

Direct Investment

Other Investment

Reserve Assets

Investment income (net)

2021

2022

Portfolio Investment

(% of GDP)

2019

Source: CBK, CSB

2020

Workers' remittances rebound-

2024

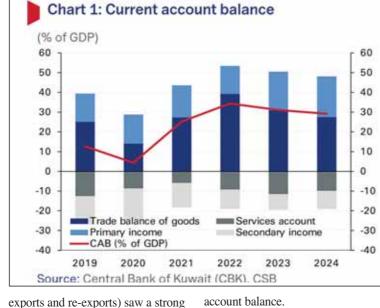
2023

10

ing from prior year's contraction The secondary income account, predominantly composed of workers' remittances, rose by 11.8% in 2024, reversing the steep 28.4% contraction in 2023. The recovery was likely supported by the relative stabilization of the Egyptian pound and Indian rupee since H2 2023 currencies of origin for nearly half of Kuwait's expatriate workforce. Nonetheless, remittance levels remain 24% below their pre-pandemic level (2019), suggesting that rising domestic living costs – amid the highest inflation rates among GCC peers in 2024 - and exchange rate concerns are prompting expatriates Financial outflows relatively

stable in 2024 On the other side of the balance

of payments, financial account outflows were broadly stable in 2024, declining slightly to KD15.3 billion (31% of GDP). Most of these outflows were within the portfolio investment segment with a notable shift toward investing in debt instruments, which increased to KD 10.1 billion, compared to a nearly balanced composition in 2023. This reallocation likely reflects heightened investor appetite for fixed-income securities, driven by attractive global yields and growing expectations of monetary easing in advanced economies. The decline in outflows also came due to lower direct investments abroad, which fell to KD3.2 billion (-7.9%) as well as a fall in reserve assets by KD0.9 billion to reach KD13.7 billion, underscoring Kuwait's robust external liquidity position (covering about 8.7 months of imports, well above the IMF's three-month threshold). It is worth noting that banks' assets of financial derivatives increased by almost tenfold in 2024, indicating a surge in hedging activity against global market volatility and changes in monetary policy. Furthermore, the "other/general government" liabilities saw a significant increase of KD1.4 billion, up from KD107 million in 2023, which could point to an increase in government related entities' debts.



Investment income growth torical high

Event organized in collaboration with Dar Al-Sabaek

ABK organizes empowering awareness workshop for females



Johair Marafi welcomes the attend-



Johair Marafi in the middle of the participants and the bank's team.



Participants of the event.

Johair Marafi:

■ This initiative reflects our commitment to providing banking solutions that promote financial incluKUWAIT CITY, May 28: As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance financial and investment awareness among its clients, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently organized a new awareness workshop in collaboration with Dar Al-Sabaek targeted its female customers in a distinct interactives educational.

The event focused on the topic of investing in gold. The session covered a range of key topics including investing in gold and precious metals, smart saving mechanisms, and practical guidance on effective financial planning tailored to the needs of Kuwaiti women and their influential role in financial management.

The workshop witnessed strong engagement from ABK's female clients, with lively discussions and interaction with the presenters. Attendees expressed their appreciation for the workshop's content and the high level of organization, emphasizing the importance of such events in empowering women and increasing their financial and investment awareness on various levels.

Commenting on the occasion, , General Manager of the Retail Banking Division at ABK, stated, "This initiative reflects ABK's commitment to offering banking solutions that support financial inclusion and empower women by boosting their confidence and ability to make sound investment decisions. Our partnership with Dar Al-Sabaek allowed us to deliver hands-on, practical content about investment tools in gold. We hope this workshop serves as a starting point for more financially aware and stable futures for all customer segments across Kuwait."

Cooperation aims to add value for customers and enhance the shopping experience

KFH offers customers complimentary 12-month talabat pro subscription

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: In a move to strengthen strategic partnerships and align with accelerated digital transformation, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched an exclusive campaign with talabat, the leading on-demand online ordering and delivery platform in the MENA region. This partnership offers KFH customers up to 12 months of free talabat pro subscriptions

Through this campaign, KFH customers who are not currently subscribed to talabat pro can enjoy exclusive benefits, including complimentary subscription vouchers for either a 6-month or 12-month



Talal AlArbeed

free subscription. To enjoy this offer, KFH customers will receive a code that can be easily activated through the talabat application under their profile settings. Once activated, they can enjoy free delivery of food orders, groceries, pharmaceuticals, electronics, and other items available on the talabat

Additionally, customers are able to earn points with every KD 1 spent. Cardholders of the Tier Black can earn 15 points for every KD 1, in addition to a 30% cashback from participating stores. Cardholders of the Tier Silver earns 10 points for every KD1 with a 20% cashback, and Tier Green customers are eligible for 5 points for every KD 1 with a 20% cashback.

Commenting on this exclusive partnership, KFH Deputy General Manager Cards, Talal AlArbeed said: "We are proud to partner with talabat to provide our customers with an exclusive offer. This partnership reflects our vision to offer comprehensive services that are beyond banking". "At KFH, we believe that true innovation is demonstrated in offering solutions that cater to customers aspirations and their lifestyle, which is reflected in this joint campaign."

In turn, talabat VP and Managing Director, Bader Al-Ghanim stated:



talabat logo

"It gives us pleasure to launch this initiative with KFH, offering more customers an opportunity to try talabat pro features and experience seamless and smart delivery solutions. This campaign reinforces our continuous commitment to provide innovative experiences that aligns with the digital lifestyle and enhances our partnerships with leading banks."

This exclusive initiative represents a strategic collaboration between the banking sector and the digital sector, driven by the accelerated growth of digital solutions in everyday life. With this cooperation, KFH cardholders can earn more reward points on their talabat orders. Whether ordering a favorite meal or shopping for daily essentials, paying for your talabat purchases with KFH cards grants you maximum benefit with every transaction. To start earning points, customers can simply use any of KFH banking cards when paying on talabat platform.

ASEAN leaders renew commitment to addressing global trade turmoil

46th summit concludes

KUALA LUMPUR, May rules of the international law and indiscrimination, the leaders stated **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** adopted a statement at the end of their 46th summit in Kuala Lumpur to reaffirm commitment to collective action to address the economic uncertainty and trade instability around the

They expressed concern over the increasing unilateral trade measures and punitive actions, including the reciprocal tariffs and protectionist restrictions on investment, which risk undermine the world economic system.

Those actions have direct adverse impacts on the ASEAN economies, according to the statement issued by the host Malaysian

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The leaders agreed to stand as up as one to protect the regional economic stability, enhance economic resilience and sustainable develop-

They stressed the importance of maintaining constructive dialogue and mutual respect based on the tion in Southeast Asia (TAC).

The leaders agreed to speed up the implementation of ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) and update the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) with a view to speeding up regional integration and creating a stable and competitive business environment.

They also agreed to update the ASEAN+one free trade agreements (AFTAs) with dialogue partners - such as China, India, Japan and South Korea, so as to boost bilateral trade, control instability in supply chains, and expand the prospects of cooperation with new partners, including the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member countries.

To support internal coordination, the leaders launched the ASEAN Geo-economics Task Force and tasked the competent ministers to keep watch on global economic developments and draw up a single strategy for response to emergencies.

Reaffirming commitment to a global multi-lateral trade system based on transparency, justice and

28, (KUNA): Leaders of the the Treaty of Amity and Coopera-readiness to engage in constructive dialogue with other members of the World Trade Organization and push for substantive reforms that could better preserve the credibility and resilience of the global trade system.

As the ASEAN Economic Community 2025 enters its final stage, the leaders adopted "the ASEAN Community Vision 2045: Our Shared Future.

The new ambitious 20-year vision and its strategic plans aim to ensure seamless coordination across pillars and sectors and cross-sectoral strategic measures.

The ASEAN leaders stressed the importance of cooperation with regional partners to ensure stability and peace in the Indo-Pacific region based on transparency and rule of law.

Founded in 1967, the ASEAN is made up of Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

Meet is in commitment to transparency and elevating experience

'Warba' hosts exclusive meeting with Royal Banking customers

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: As part of its ongoing commitment to providing a distinguished and personbanking experience. Bank hosted an exclusive meeting with Royal Banking customers with the Bank's senior management. The event offered an opportunity for open dialogue, allowing customers to share feedback, suggestions and challenges in an interactive, highend setting that reinforces the bank's dedication to transparency and customer-centric service.

The gathering, held at the Four Seasons Hotel, was organized by Warba Bank's Customer Experience Department in collaboration with the Royal Banking team, and is part of the Bank's wider strategy to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty by facilitating direct engagement and using customer insights to improve

banking services and products. Director of Affluent Department, Retail Banking Group at Warba Bank, Dalal Fawzi Al-Mutawa, said: "The initiative reflects our ongoing efforts to better understand the expectations of our elite customers and to strengthen our relationship with them through direct interaction. Guided by our motto, 'We Hear You, Let's Own Tomorrow', we see these gatherings as an essential opportunity to listen, respond and build lasting trust based on transparency



Dalal Al Mutawa

and respect."

Al-Mutawa added that Royal Banking customers have unique financial needs that require bespoke and flexible solutions, particularly around international travel and fastmoving investment decisions. She emphasized Warba Bank's commitment to providing a seamless banking environment tailored to this lifestyle, continually enhancing the customer experience to support their financial journey with trust and confidence.

The bank launched its Royal Banking services to serve high-networth individuals with exclusive access to experienced relationship managers offering tailored financial advice, priority service and fast-track

AI-Mutawa:

■ Meeting between Royal Banking customers and senior management reaffirms commitment to delivering an exceptional banking experience tailored to the aspirations of valued customers

■ Aim to listen to customer feedback, suggestions and requirements in an engaging setting that reflects dedication to service excellence

transactions. Customers also enjoy a suite of premium digital services and private banking lounges across eight locations in Kuwait designed for privacy and comfort.

Warba Bank is one of the fastestgrowing Islamic banks in Kuwait and was recently ranked among the Top 50 Banks in the Middle East by Forbes Middle East (2025) in terms of market value. With a strong digital presence and wide shareholder base, Warba Bank continues to lead in innovation and service excellence, earning the trust of all segments of

US and EU are in a showdown over trade. What does Trump want and what can Europe offer?

FRANKFURT, Germany, May 28, (AP): Top officials at the European Union's executive commission says they're pushing hard for a trade deal with the Trump administration to avoid a 50% tariff on imported goods. Trump had threatened to impose the tariffs on June 1, but has pushed back the deadline to July 9, repeating an oft-used tactic in his trade war.

European negotiators are contending with Trump's ever-changing and un-

predictable tariff threats, but "still, they have to come up with something to hopefully pacify him," said Bruce Stokes, visiting senior fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States. Stokes also sees more at play than just a disagreement over trade deficits.

Trump's threats "are rooted in frustration with the EU that has little to do with trade," Stokes said. "He doesn't like the EU. He doesn't like Germany." What exactly does Trump want? What can Europe offer? Here are the key

areas where the two side are squaring off. Over and over, Trump has bemoaned the fact that Europe sells more things to Americans than it buys from Americans. The difference, or the trade deficit in goods, last year was 157 billion euros (\$178 billion). But Europe says that when it comes to services - particularly digital services like online advertising and cloud computing - the U.S. sells more than it buys and that lowers the overall trade deficit to 48 billion euros, which is only about 3% of total trade.

The European Commission says that means trade is "balanced." One way to shift the trade in goods would be for Europe to buy more liquefied natural gas by ship from the U.S. To do so, the EU could cut off the remaining imports of Russian pipeline gas and LNG. The commission is preparing legislation to force an end to those purchases -- last year, some 19% of imports - by the end of 2027.

That would push European private companies to look for other sources of gas such as the U.S. However the shift away from Russia is already in motion and that "has obviously not been enough to satisfy," said Laurent Ruseckas, a natural gas markets expert at S&P Global Commodities Insights Research.

The commission doesn't buy gas itself but can use "moral suasion" to convince companies to turn to U.S. suppliers in coming years but "this is no silver bullet and nothing that can yield immediate results," said Simone Tagliapietra, an energy analyst at the Bruegel think tank in Brussels.

Europe could buy more from U.S. defense contractors as part of its effort to deter further aggression from Russia after the invasion of Ukraine, says Carsten Brzeski, global chief of macro at ING bank. If European countries did increase their overall defense spending - another of Trump's demands - their voters are likely to insist that the purchases go to defense contractors in Europe, not America, said Stokes of the German Marshall Fund. One way around that political obstacle would be for U.S. defense companies to build factories in Europe, but "that would take time," he said.

The EU could also reduce its 10% tax on foreign cars- one of Trump's longstanding grievances against Europe. "The United States is not going to export that many cars to Europe anyway ... The Germans would be most resistant, but I don't think they're terribly worried about competition from America," said Edward Alden, senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. "That would be a symbolic victory for the president."

The U.S. has long complained about European regulations on food and agricultural products that keep out hormone-raised beef and chickens washed with chlorine. But experts aren't expecting EU trade negotiators to offer any concessions at the bargaining table.

"The EU is unwilling to capitulate," said Mary Lovely, senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. "The EU has repeatedly said it will not change its sanitary rules, its rules on (genetically modified) crops, its rules on chlorinated chickens, things that have been longtime irritants for

Backing down on those issues, she said, would mean that "the U.S. gets to set food safety (standards) for Europe.' One of Trump's pet peeves has been the value-added taxes used by Euro-

pean governments, a tax he says is a burden on US companies.

Economists say this kind of tax, used by some 170 countries, is trade-neutral because it applies equally to imports and exports. A value-added tax, or VAT, is paid by the end purchaser at the cash register but differs from sales taxes in that it is calculated at each stage of the production process. In both cases, VAT and sales tax, imports and exports get the same treatment. The U.S. is an outlier in that it doesn't use VAT.

There's little chance countries will change their tax systems for Trump and the EU has ruled it out.

Trump's approach to negotiations has involved threats of astronomical tariffs - up to 145% in the case of China - before striking a deal for far lower levels. In any case, however, the White House has taken the stance that it won't go below a 10% baseline. The threat of 50% for the EU is so high it means "an effective trade embargo," said Brzeski, since it would impose costs that would make it unprofitable to import goods or mean charging consumers prices so high the goods would be uncompetitive.

Because the knottiest issues dividing the EU and U.S. - food safety standards, the VAT, regulation of tech companies - are so difficult "it is impossible to imagine them being resolved by the deadline," Alden said. "Possibly what you could have - and Trump has shown he is willing to do this - is a very small deal" like the one he announced May 8 with the United Kingdom.

Economists Oliver Rakau and Nicola Nobile of Oxford Economics wrote in a commentary Monday that if imposed, the 50% tariffs would reduce the collective economy of the 20 countries that use the euro currency by up to 1% next year and slash business investment by more than 6%.

The EU has offered the US a "zero for zero" outcome in which tariffs would be removed on both sides industrial goods including autos. Trump has dismissed that but EU officials have said it's still on the table.

Lovely of the Peterson Institute sees the threats and bluster as Trump's way of negotiating. "In the short run, I don't think 50% is going to be our reality."



Rize and shine



The Kuwaiti delegation included a distinguished group of media professionals:

- Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi
- Journalist Mohammad Al-Farhan
- Media personality Al-Bandari Al-AjmiTunisian journalist Sana Ouslati ■ Media figure Shaimaa Al-Tamimi
- The Saudi delegation, representing the "E'lamiyoon" (Media Professionals) Association, included:
- Dr. Saud Al-Gharbi ■ Journalist Shafaq Al-Otaibi
 - Photographer Haya Al-EneziPhotographer Khaled Al-Zahrani ■ Mr. Mohammad Al-Otaibi

Kuwaiti, Saudi media delegations visit spotlights northernTürkiye travel treasures

By Mohammad Al-Farhan

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: In a scene that reflects the deep-rooted ties and cultural closeness between Türkiye and the Gulf states, the provinces of Rize and Trabzon in northern Türkiye warmly welcomed media delegations from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The visit was organized by the Union of Tourism and Travel Agents in the Middle East, headed by Mr. Hussein Kark.

This visit served as a platform to promote mutual understanding, media and tourism cooperation, and to explore investment and promotional opportunities in the Black Sea re-

Distinguished delegations representing Kuwait and Saudi Arabia received a warm welcome from local officials and communities, with a packed program of official meetings, cultural exchanges, and field visits

During the meeting with Rize Governor Mr. İhsan Selim Baydaş, he reaffirmed that Türkiye welcomes all visitors from the Gulf with open arms, and that every tourist should feel as if they are in their second

The governor strongly condemned racist remarks and xenophobic sentiments occasionally seen on social media, emphasizing that Turkish society is built on hospitality and mu-

Governor of Rize, Ihsan Selim Baydas:

■ Türkiye is your second home - we reject racism and protect tourists

When asked about the global inflation and its impact on tourist pricing, Mr. Baydaş revealed that his administration is currently working on a standardized pricing mechanism across restaurants, cafés, and tourist services in the region.

A barcode pricing system is being implemented to ensure transparency and prevent tourists from being overcharged.

"Tourists are our guests and their protection is our responsibility," he

Ortahisar Mayor Ahmed Kaya:

■ We welcome all who wish to invest or reside in Tür-

In Trabzon, the delegations were received by Ortahisar Mayor Mr. Ahmed Kaya, who expressed his appreciation for the visit and emphasized his municipality's readiness to offer facilitation to Gulf investors and residents.

He also highlighted the impor-



Ortahisar Mayor Ahmed Kaya



Mr. Murat Iskender, Vice President of Trabzonspor Football Club



Rize Governor Mr. İhsan Selim Baydaş with Kuwaiti and Saudi media delegations.



Trabzon Journalists Association



Trabzonspor Football Club

tance of raising awareness on social media platforms and stressed the role of the media in countering misinformation.

Mr. Kaya thanked the visiting journalists for their high-quality and balanced media coverage.

Murat Iskender:

■ We welcome sports cooperation with Gulf nations

In the sports arena, the delegations met with Mr. Murat Iskender, Vice President of Trabzonspor Football Club, who expressed admiration



Ortahisar Mayor Ahmed Kaya with Kuwaiti journalist Mohammad Al-Farhan.

for the remarkable development of sports in the Gulf, particularly in Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

He welcomed the idea of future cooperation with Gulf clubs and national teams, offering training camps and potential investment partnerships.

"We are open to all forms of collaboration that strengthen ties between our peoples through sports," he said.

Osman Soks:

■ Turkish journalism is going digital - and we closely follow Gulf media

During a meeting with the President of the Journalists' Association in Trabzon, Mr. Osman Soks, the discussion focused on the transformation of Turkish journalism, particularly the rapid shift towards digital platforms and online readership.

Mr. Şoks noted that electronic media and social platforms now have wider reach and influence than traditional print, and praised Gulf journalism – especially from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia – for its growing presence and profession-

Hussein Kark:

■ Licensed travel agencies are the key to a safe and secure tourism experience

Mr. Hussein Kark, President of the Union of Tourism and Travel Agents in the Middle East, emphasized the importance of booking through officially licensed travel agencies in Turkey.

'Gulf tourists often prefer dealing with authorized agencies because they provide a more organized and reliable service," he said.

He added that licensed agencies are held accountable for the tourist experience, and any misconduct can lead to license revocation.

Mr. Kark strongly advised against dealing with unlicensed individuals, explaining that doing so might expose tourists to unpleasant situations or scams.

"Smart choices make for safe trav-

Kuwaiti delegation proposes joint cultural and musical events

As part of the cultural exchange, members of the Kuwaiti delegation proposed launching joint cultural activities between Türkiye and Kuwait, including diverse musical concerts featuring artists from both countries.

The Turkish side welcomed the idea, expressing readiness to collaborate on such artistic and cultural initiatives, which they described as powerful bridges of mutual understanding and people-to-people diplo-

Conclusion: A Multifaceted Visit with Promising Horizons

This high-level media visit combined tourism, culture, sports, and media dialogue in a unique initiative that reflects the growing ties between Türkiye and the Gulf

Participants from both sides expressed their enthusiasm for sustaining such visits and expanding them into long-term partnerships that foster regional integration and mutual





Mr. Murat Iskender, Vice President of Trabzonspor Football Club

Features



THURSDAY, MAY 29, 2025

Reality TV couple convicted of fraud and tax evasion

Trump set to pardon Todd and Julie Chrisley in fraud case

WASHINGTON, May 28, (AP): President Donald Trump announced Tuesday that he's planning to pardon TV stars Todd and Julie Chrisley, famous for "Chrisley Knows Best," a reality show that followed their tight-knit family and extravagant lifestyle that prosecutors said was boosted by bank fraud and hiding earnings from tax authorities.

The Chrisleys were convicted in 2022 of conspiring to defraud banks in the Atlanta area out of more than \$30 million in loans by submitting false documents. They were also found guilty of tax evasion, obscuring their earnings while showcasing a luxurious way of living that authorities said included high-priced cars, designer clothes, real estate and

Prosecutors said the couple walked away from their responsibility for repayment when Todd Chrisley declared bankruptcy and left \$20-plus million in unpaid loans. Julie Chrisley was sentenced to seven years in federal prison, and Todd Chrisley got 12 years behind bars. The couple was also ordered to pay \$17.8 million in restitution.

"Your parents are going to be free and clean and I hope that we can do it by tomorrow," Trump said in a call with their daughter, Savannah Chrisley, according to a video posted online by a White House aide. In a social media post, the aide declared, "Trump Knows Best!"

"They've been given a pretty harsh treatment based on what I'm hearing," the president added a few moments later of the couple.

A White House official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss decisions that hadn't yet been made public, said the pardons would be forthcoming.

The move continues a pattern of Trump pardoning highprofile friends, supporters, donors and former staffers. On Monday, Trump pardoned Scott Jenkins, a former Virginia sheriff who was sentenced to 10 years in prison after being convicted on fraud and bribery charges. The president posted online that Jenkins and his family "have been dragged through HELL by a Corrupt and Weaponized Biden DOJ."

The president has also moved to pardon Paul Walczak,

a Florida health care executive imprisoned on tax charges, whose mother helped expose the contents of a diary kept by Ashley Biden, daughter of former President Joe Biden. And, in April, he pardoned Nevada Republican Michele Fiore, who was awaiting sentencing on federal charges that she used money meant for a statue honoring a slain police officer for personal costs, including plastic surgery.

The Chrisleys' attorney, Alex Little, said the pardon "corrects a deep injustice and restores two devoted parents to their family and community."

"President Trump recognized what we've argued from the beginning: Todd and Julie were targeted because of their conservative values and high profile. Their prosecution was tainted by multiple constitutional violations and political bias," Little said in a statement.

Little's statement added, "Todd and Julie's case is exactly why the pardon power exists. Thanks to President Trump, the Chrisley family can now begin healing and rebuilding



Julie Chrisley, (right), and her husband Todd Chrisley pose for photos at the 52nd annual Academy of Country Music Awards April 2, 2017, in Las Vegas. (AP)

People

'Kidnapped me'

Combs plotted to kill Kid Cudi: former aide

NEW YORK, May 28, (AP): A former top aide to **Sean "Diddy" Combs** testified Tuesday that the hip-hop mogul threatened to kill her during her first day on the job and waved a gun as he kidnapped her years later in an angry rush to find and kill rapper Kid Cudi.

Capricorn Clark's account of Combs' volatility and violence launched the third week of testimony at his Manhattan federal sex trafficking trial.

Prosecutors called Clark, the former global brand director for Combs' Bad Boy Entertainment, to support a charge that he led a twodecade racketeering conspiracy that relied on



he got what he wanted. Combs, 55, has plead-

ed not guilty to an indictment alleging he abused his longtime girlfriend, R&B singer Cassie, and others. If convicted, he could face 15 years to life in prison.

Clark's tearful testimony came days after Cudi,

whose legal name is Scott Mescudi, testified that Clark called him from a car outside his home in December 2011 and told him Combs had forced her to accompany him to Cudi's

Combs was angry Cudi was dating Cassie, whose legal name is Casandra Ventura, Clark

Clark, referring to Combs as "Puff," said he came to her home holding a gun and demanded she get dressed because "we're going Her voice shaky, Clark recounted how they

rode in a black Cadillac Escalade to Cudi's Los Angeles home, where Combs and his bodyguard entered the residence while Clark sat in the SUV and called Cassie.

Clark testified she told Cassie that Combs "got me with a gun and brought me to Cudi's house to kill him.'

Clark said she heard Cudi in the background asking, "He's in my house?" She said she told Cassie, "Stop him, he's going to get himself killed." Cassie told her she couldn't stop Cudi, she recalled.

Returned

Combs returned to the Escalade and asked Clark who she was talking to, she said, then grabbed the phone and called Cassie back.

They next heard Cudi driving up the road, Clark said. Combs and his bodyguard got back in the SUV and chased after Cudi, finally giving up when they passed police cars that were heading to Cudi's house.

After the break-in, Clark said, Combs told her she had to convince Cudi "it wasn't me." "If you don't convince him of that I'll kill all you," he said, punctuating his threat with an expletive, Clark said.

Clark said she and Cassie then went to Cudi's home, telling jurors: "We needed to talk to him. We needed to make sure he wasn't going to make a police report about Puff."

After that, she said, she watched in shock as Combs viciously assaulted Cassie over her relationship with Cudi.

Combs kicked Cassie with "100% full force" to the legs and back as she curled on the ground outside his home in a fetal position

and wept silently, Clark said. Clark said her "heart was breaking from seeing her get hit like that" and that neither

she nor Combs' bodyguard intervened. The answer prompted an objection from Combs' lawyers, and Judge Arun Subrama-

nian told jurors to disregard it. Combs' lawyer Marc Agnifilo questioned Clark's recollection, leading her to reconsider certain details. She admitted some haziness about events that happened "such a long time

On Thursday, Cudi testified that he dated Cassie briefly in December 2011, believing she'd broken up with Combs, but they agreed over the holidays to break up.

Assistant US Attorney Mitzi Steiner questioned Clark about her off-and-on employment with Combs from 2004 to 2018, beginning with her first day when she said Combs and a bodyguard took her to Central Park after 9 p.m. and said he hadn't been aware of her past work for other rappers.

Clark testified that Combs told her that if that work became an issue, he'd have to kill

Clark said she was only weeks into the job when Combs tasked her with carrying diamond jewelry and it went missing. As a result, she said, she was repeatedly given lie detector tests over five-day stretch by a man who seemed five times larger than her own size.

"He said: 'If you fail this test they're going to throw you in the East River," she recalled, adding that they eventually let her return to work. Even the alleged kidnapping didn't scare Clark away, Agnifilo noted.

Film



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Kaitlyn Santa Juana in a scene from 'Final Destination Bloodlines.' (AP)

'Final Destination' is back with bloody, witty mayhem

'Bloodlines' makes everyday item terrifying

LOS ANGELES, May 28, (AP): A blender. A lawn mower. A ceiling fan. A garden rake. A vending machine. An MRI scan-

These mundane items are supposed to ease us through life, helping us eat, clean, keep cool, stay healthy. They're not supposed to be evil.

But in "Final Destination Bloodlines," as in the entire 25-year franchise, ordinary objects become fearsome tools of murderous mayhem. And they do it through intricate sequences akin to Rube Goldberg machines - those contraptions that make simple tasks complex through elaborate chain reactions. We doubt Goldberg intended for a nose ring to interact with a ceiling fan in quite the way seen here, but

There's some ingenious chaos cooked up here by codirectors Zach Lipovsky and Adam B. Stein, who said at the film's premiere recently that they hope people will be watching this, the franchises's sixth installment (and 14 years after the last), through their fingers - but with smiles

To which I must confess I muttered to myself: "No way I'm going to be smiling." I braced to feel jumpy and miserable for two hours.

But sure enough I was soon smiling, even giggling. Turns out, horror films are a lot easier to handle when they're funny. Even more so when they're witty. A spoonful of wit, as Mary Poppins might say, helps the bloody mayhem go

Part of the fun in these movies is that we all know what we know. The surprise is not whether people will die. Death is not to be cheated. The issue is HOW, and that's where creativity

The action starts with probably the most impressive sequence in the movie - an opening scene set in 1969 at the so-called Skyview tower, looking very much like the Space Needle (but filmed in Vancouver). It's opening night at the luxurious restaurant up top.

Lovely young Iris (Brec Bassinger) is brought here by her beau for a romantic evening and, though she doesn't know it, a proposal. In the elevator, Iris tries to calm her nerves. It doesn't help when the elevator guy boasts the project was completed months ahead of schedule.

Once upstairs, Iris' nerves persist, but she tries to quell them. When she nicks her finger and a bit of blood seeps out, she says with a smile, "I'll live."

Soon enough, rivets are popping and the place is crumbling. Then people start dropping dead on the ground, to the befuddlement of parking valets listening to "Raindrops Keep Fallin" On My Head" - written in 1969! - one of many musical jokes

And then a present-day college student wakes up. Turns out this has all been a recurring nightmare of Stefani, who's in danger of flunking out because all she can think of is

Skyview. Her sleep-deprived roommate urges her to go home and figure things out. Which Stefani (an appealing Kaitlyn Santa Juana) does,

determined to learn who Iris is. Turns out the woman is her grandmother. Uncle Howard tells her to stay away from the madwoman who years ago lost custody of her children.

Stefani suspects there's more to it. She tracks Iris down in the remote cabin where the reclusive woman has spent dec-

ades. She learns that Iris indeed survived a Skyview calamity - but thanks to her premonition, she actually saved many lives.

There's a catch, though. Every person who survived - thanks to Iris - ended up dying later. That's because they cheated Death, and became marked men and women. Their offspring are marked too - hence the movie's title - because they were never supposed to exist. "Death is coming for our family," Iris

What does this mean for Stefani? It means she has to save everyone. And that everyday life becomes very dangerous.

A family barbecue starts off happily, but then we see the spiked rake lodged just under the trampoline, and the huge glass shard in the blender. Someone will die. But who, and

And that's how the movie continues, upping the ante with

each kill. A tattoo parlor hosts one of the more creative Goldberg-ian catastrophes. Even wilder is a scene with an MRI scanner. You know that giant magnet? Yeah, that. Just as important are the non-deaths - the times you're sure

something terrible will happen, but it doesn't. I found this silly phrase scrawled later on my notepad: "Actually he doesn't

Some people hate horror films of any kind. They're not the intended audience here. But for those who don't, or are mixed, it's true: You may watch "Final Destination Bloodlines" through fingers covering your face. But chances are high you'll be smiling, too.

"Final Destination: Bloodlines," a Warner Bros release, has been rated R by the Motion Picture Association "for strong violent/grisly accidents, and language." Running time: 110

minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

Variety

MADRID: Serena Williams has been awarded Spain's Princess of Asturias Prize for Sports for her stellar tennis career, organizers said Wednesday.

The 43-year-old American won 73 career singles titles including 23 Grand Slams. She said in 2022 that she was stepping away from tennis to focus on

her family and business interests. The 50,000-euro (\$57,000) Princess of Asturias Award is one of eight annual prizes covering different areas, including arts, literature and science among others.

The awards ceremony, presided over by Spain's Princess Leonor, takes place each fall in the northern city of Oviedo.

Past winners of the sports prize include skier Lindsey Vonn, the IOC Refugee Olympic Team and the New Zealand rugby team.



SAO PAULO: Two Brazilian nuns have gone viral after

dropping an impromptu beatbox and dance session during a Catholic television program.

Sisters Marizele Cassiano and Marisa de Paula, members of the "Copiosa Redenção" congregation, were talking about a vocational retreat on Brazil's Pai Eterno - Eternal Father - TV channel when they brought up a song about being called to the religious life.

The duo stood up and launched into a routine complete with singing, beatbox and dance moves. Then the presenter, Deacon Giovani Bastos, joined in, matching Sister de Paula's moves in a performance that's now been seen by millions on social media in Brazil and abroad.

"That moment was very spontaneous, because with Sister Marisa, if you start a beat, she will dance. And I'm used to singing, to beatboxing, so for us it was very simple, spontaneous and at the same time very surprising to see that it went viral even outside Brazil," Sister Marizele Cassiano, beatboxing nun, told The Associated Press. The Sisters are dedicated to young people who are struggling with drug addiction. They say music has been a powerful tool to help those in need.

"Beatboxing, dancing, and the songs itself, are tools that God uses to reach the hearts of the people we work with. And it works! It's beautiful to see," said Sister Marizele

While Sister Marisa has no Instagram account, Sister

Marizele has surpassed 100,000 followers since her beatboxing went viral. (AP)

RIO DE JANEIRO: Rio de Janeiro's mayor on Tuesday loosened new restrictions on live music on the city's beaches after many people warned of a threat to the dynamic cultural scene

Mayor Eduardo Paes earlier this month introduced the measures and reinforced existing ones, citing the need to protect public safety and the environment and promote peaceful relations between tourists and residents.

The measures, due to come into effect on Sunday, outlawed food and drink sales, chair rentals, loudspeakers and live music in kiosks without official permits.

Critics warned of the threat to livelihoods of many musicians and local vendors.

Rio's city government rescinded parts of the decree including the strict regulation of live musical performances and the ban on glass bottles in kiosks. Owners of beach huts will be permitted to display names - not only numbers - as

"Music will return to the beaches," said Julio Trindade, who works as a DJ in the kiosks and campaigned against the measure. "Rio's beaches are known worldwide and they deserve a soundtrack." (AP)

long as they follow an established format.

Boost to emergency care

Health ministry to add portable sonar devices to ambulances

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Director of the Medical Emergency Department at the Ministry of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Shatti has announced the integration of portable sonar devices into ambulance equipment -- an advanced initiative aimed at enhancing the efficiency of emergency care and improving survival rates through on-site diagnosis of critical conditions, reports Al-An-

Speaking to the daily, Al-Shatti described this development as a significant leap forward for emergency medical services in the country. He said "the use of portable sonar technology will allow emergency teams to diagnose conditions such as internal bleeding, chest trauma and cardiac issues immediately at the scene. This rapid diagnostic capability is expected to improve treatment accuracy, reduce time lost in transportation and hospital-based diagnostics, and significantly increase the chances of saving lives."

He emphasized that the suc-

cess of this initiative hinges on comprehensive field training for emergency medical personnel. "This training will be conducted in cooperation with hospital emergency departments, focusing on the development of hands-on skills in interpreting sonar imaging and responding to real-time results," he

He cited the proven success of this technology in advanced ambulance systems in other countries; such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom and United States of America (USE). He said these international experiences have demonstrated reduced rates of field-related errors and improved efficiency in transferring patients to appropriate healthcare facilities.

He added this initiative reflects a strategic move toward modernizing the emergency medical services in the country and enhancing the readiness of healthcare professionals to manage high-pressure, timesensitive situations effectively.



SpaceX's mega rocket Starship makes a test flight from Starbase, Texas, Tuesday, May 27. (AP)

Mega rocket setback

SpaceX's 9th Starship demo launch ends in another loss

TEXAS, May 28, (AP): After back-to-back explosions, SpaceX launched its mega rocket Starship again on Tuesday evening, but fell short of the main objectives when the spacecraft tumbled out of control and broke apart.

The 403-foot (123-meter) rocket blasted off on its ninth demo from Starbase, SpaceX's launch site at the southern tip of Texas. Residents voted this month to organize as an official city.

CEO Elon Musk's SpaceX hoped to release a series of mock satellites following liftoff, but that got nixed because the door failed to open all the way. Then the spacecraft began spinning as it skimmed space toward an uncontrolled landing in the Indian Ocean.

SpaceX later confirmed that the spacecraft experienced "a rapid unscheduled disassembly," or burst apart. "Teams will continue to review data and work toward our next flight test," the company said in an online statement.

Musk noted in a post on \hat{X} it was a "big improvement" from the two previous demos, which ended in flaming debris over the Atlantic. Despite the latest setback, he promised a faster launch pace moving forward, with a Starship soaring every three to four weeks for the next three flights.

It was the first time one of Musk's Starships - intended for moon and Mars travel - flew with a recycled booster. There were no plans to catch the booster with giant chopsticks back at the launch pad, with the company instead pushing it to its limits. Contact with the booster was lost at one point, and it slammed into the Gulf of Mexico in pieces as the spacecraft continued toward the Indian Ocean.

Then the spacecraft went out of control, apparently due to fuel leaks. "Not looking great with a lot of our on-orbit objectives for today," said SpaceX flight commentator Dan Huot. The company had been looking to test the space-craft's heat shield during a controlled reentry. Communication ceased before the

spacecraft came down, and SpaceX ended its webcast soon afterward.

The previous two Starships never made it past the Caribbean. The demos earlier this year ended just minutes after liftoff, raining wreckage into the ocean. No injuries or serious damage were reported, although airline travel was disrupted. The Federal Aviation Administration last week cleared Starship for another flight, expanding the hazard area and pushing the liftoff outside peak air travel times.

Besides taking corrective action and making upgrades. SpaceX modified the

Besides taking corrective action and making upgrades, SpaceX modified the latest spacecraft's thermal tiles and installed special catch fittings. This one was meant to sink in the Indian Ocean, but the company wanted to test the add-ons for capturing future versions back at the pad, just like the boosters.

Health experts call vaccine rollback confusing, alarming

US to drop COVID shots for healthy kids, moms-to-be

NEW YORK, May 28, (AP): US Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. on Tuesday announced that COVID-19 vaccines are no longer recommended for healthy children and pregnant women - a move immediately questioned by several public health ex-

In a 58-second video posted on the social media site X, Kennedy said he removed COVID-19 shots from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendations for those groups. No one from the CDC was in the video, and CDC officials referred questions about the announcement to Kennedy and the US Department of Health and Human

No other details were released, and HHS officials did not immediately respond to questions about how the decision was made.

Some doctors and public health leaders called the move concerning and confusing.

"There's no new data or information, just them flying by the seat of their pants," said Michael Osterholm, director of the University of Minnesota's Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy.

US health officials, following recommendations by infectious disease experts, have been urging annual COVID-19 boosters for all Americans ages 6 months and older.

The idea of changing the recommendations is not completely out of the blue. As the COVID-19 pandemic has waned, experts have increasingly discussed the possibility of focusing vaccination efforts



Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. speaks as Education Secretary Linda McMahon listens during a Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) Commission Event in the East Room of the White House, Thursday, May 22, in Washington. (AP)

on people 65 and older - who are among those most as risk for death and hospitalization.

A CDC advisory panel is set to meet in June to make recommendations about the fall shots. Among its options are suggesting shots for high-risk groups but still giving lower-risk people the choice to get vaccinated

But Kennedy, a leading anti-vaccine advocate before becoming health secretary, decided not to wait for the scientific panel's review. He said that annual COVID-19 booster shots have been recommended for kids "despite the lack of any clinical data" to sup-

Some physicians and public health leaders expressed concern that HHS officials disregarded a scientific review process that has been in place for decades, in which experts - in public meetings - review current medical evidence and hash out the pros

and cons of policy changes. "It's a dangerous precedent. If you can start doing that with this vaccine, you can start doing that with any vaccine you want - including mumps-measlesrubella," said Osterholm, referring to another vaccine that Kennedy has voiced doubts about.

He and others said the announcement raises an array of questions, including whether health insurance companies will keep covering COVID-19 vaccinations and how hard it will be now for people who want the shots to get them.

"The reason we give vaccines to healthy people is to keep them safe," said Dr. Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association.

More than 1.2 million people have died in the U.S. from COVID-19, most of them elderly. But children haven't been spared: The coronavirus has been the underlying cause in more than 1,300 childhood deaths since the pandemic began, according to CDC data. Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Dr. Marty Makary and Dr. Jay Bhattacharya, head of the National Institutes of Health, appeared in the video with Kennedy.

'Terminally ill'

France 'backs' end-of-life bill

PARIS, May 28, (AP): France's lower house of parliament adopted a bill Tuesday to allow adults with incurable illness to take lethal medication, as public demands grow across Europe for legal end-of-life options.

The National Assembly vote is a key step on the long-debated issue, though others remain before the bill can become law.

"I'm thinking of all the patients and their loved ones that I've met over more than a decade. Many are no longer here, and they always told me: Keep fighting," said Olivier Falorni, the bill's general rapporteur, amid applause from fellow law-

The proposed measure on lethal medication defines assisted dying as allowing use under certain conditions so that people may take it themselves. Only those whose physical condition doesn't allow them to do it alone would be able to get help from a doctor or a nurse.

The bill, which received 305 votes in favor and 199 against, will be sent to the Senate, where the conservative majority could seek to amend it. A definitive vote on the measure could take months to be scheduled amid France's long and complex process. The National Assembly has final say over the Senate.

Activists have criticized the complexity and length of the parliamentary process that they say is penalizing patients waitnd-of-life

In parallel, another bill on palliative care meant to reinforce measures to relieve pain and pre-serve patients' dignity was also adopted Tuesday, unanimously.

To benefit, patients would

need to be over 18 and be French citizens or live in France.

A team of medical professionals would need to confirm that the patient has a grave and incurable illness "at an advanced or terminal stage," is suffering from intolerable and untreatable pain and is seeking lethal medication of their own free will.

Patients with severe psychiatric conditions and neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease won't be eligible.

Health system strained

A new cholera outbreak in Sudan has killed over 170 in a week, officials say

CAIRO, May 28, (AP): A new cholera outbreak in Sudan has killed 172 people and sickened more than 2,500 over the past week, authorities said Tuesday as a leading medical group warned that the country's existing health facilities were unable to cope with the surge of

The bulk of the cases were reported in the capital, Khartoum, and its twin city of Omdurman, but cholera was also detected in the provinces of North Kordofan, Sennar, Gazira, White Nile and Nile River, health officials said.

According to Joyce Bakker, the Sudan coordinator for Doctors Without Borders - also known as Médecins Sans Frontières or MSF - the alarming spike began in mid-May, with MSF teams treating almost 2,000 suspected cholera cases in the past week alone.

On Saturday, Sudan's Health Minister Haitham Ibrahim said the increase in cholera cases just in the Khartoum region has been estimated to average 600 to 700 per week over the past four

Bekker said MSF's treatment centers in Omdurman are overwhelmed and that the "scenes are disturbing."

"Many patients are arriving too late to be saved," she said. "We don't know the true scale of the outbreak, and our teams can only see a fraction of the full

She called for a united response, including water, sanitation and hygiene programs and more treatment facili-

In March, MSF said that 92 people had died of cholera in Sudan's White Nile State, where 2,700 people had contracted the disease since late Feb-

The World Health Organization said that the water-borne disease is a fastdeveloping and highly contagious infection that causes diarrhea and leads to severe dehydration and possible death within hours when not treated. The disease is transmitted through the ingestion of contaminated food or wa-

The outbreak is the latest crisis for

Sudan, which was plunged into a war more than two years ago, when tensions between the Sudanese army and its rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces group, or RSF, exploded with street battles in Khartoum that quickly spread across the country.
Since then, at least 20,000 people

have been reported killed, though the number is likely far higher, and more than 14 million have been displaced and forced from their homes.

Sudan has also been engulfed by what the United Nations says is the world's largest humanitarian crisis, and disease outbreaks, famine and atrocities have mounted as the African country entered its third year of

Ibrahim, the health minister, attributed the cholera surge to the return of many Sudanese to the Khartoum region - people who had fled their homes to escape the fighting and are now coming back. Their returns have strained the city's dwindling water resources, he said.

11-year-old boy dies of bird flu

Cambodia sees 4th bird flu death this year

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, May 28, (AP): An 11-year-old contacts put them at risk and health education campaigns boy in Cambodia died from bird flu, the country's fourth victim of four confirmed cases of the infection this year, the Health Ministry announced Wednesday.

The ministry issued a statement saying laboratory tests from the Pasteur Institute of Cambodia confirmed the boy, who lived in a village in the western province of Kampong Speu, died Tuesday of H5N1 avian influenza, as the infec-

tion is formally called. An investigation found there were several chickens and ducks near the boy's house that had been sick and dying for a week before the child started feeling ill, the ministry said.

"Despite the care and rescue efforts of the medical team, the child died on May 2, 2025, dying at the hospital after arrival in a very serious condition, including fever, cough, shortness of breath and severe difficulty breathing," the ministry said.

A Health Ministry emergency response team has been working with local authorities to investigate the source of the village's bird flu outbreak and respond with the appropriate technical protocols to prevent further transmission to others in the community, the statement said.

The medicine Tamiflu will be distributed to people whose

Diabetic Retinopathy Screening

Foreign Body removal

will be conducted in the affected villages, the ministry said. 'We would also like to inform you that if you have a fever,

cough, sputum discharge, or difficulty breathing and have a history of contact with sick or dead chickens or ducks within 14 days before the start of the symptoms, do not go to gatherings or crowded places and seek consultation and treatment at the nearest health center or hospital immediately," the ministry warned. "Avoid delaying this, which puts you at high risk of eventual death."

Cambodia so far this year has recorded four human cases of H5N1 bird flu, all fatal.

All the victims were reported to have a history of exposure to sick or dead poultry prior to their illness. According to World Health Organization, as of Monday, before the latest Cambodian casualty, there were 10 confirmed human cases of bird flu reported worldwide so far this year, half of

Bird flu infections in humans are relatively rare and aren't considered a food safety risk. But as it hits other species, including some mammals, scientists fear the virus could evolve to spread more easily among people.

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Bueckers gets first win as a pro

Williams, Collier lead the way as Lynx topple the Storm in early West showdown

MINNEAPOLIS, May 28, (AP): Courtney Williams scored 23 points, Napheesa Collier had 16 points and 10 rebounds and the Minnesota Lynx held on to beat the Seattle Storm 82-77 on Tuesday night in a matchup of early season leaders in the Western Conference.

The Lynx extended their season-opening winning streak to five games and welcomed the return of Kayla McBride, who missed the first four games for personal reasons.

Minnesota led by double digits early before Seattle's Dominique Malonga scored to open the fourth quarter and pulled the Storm within 54-53. The Lynx maintained their lead and consecutive 3-pointers by Williams and Alanna Smith made it 70-64 near the

Williams hit a couple of pull-up jumpers for a 76-69 lead with two minutes left.

Seattle scored the next four points, and it was 76-73 with 27 seconds remaining. McBride added four free throws and Minnesota led 80-74 with 14 seconds remaining. Erica Wheeler hit a 3 for Seattle, Collier added two more free throws for the Lynx, and the Storm turned it over on their final possession.

Alanna Smith scored 16 points and McBride added

15 for Minnesota. Collier also had five rebounds and

Wings 109, Sun 87

In Uncasville, Paige Bueckers returned to a familiar place to get the first win of her WNBA career. The No. 1 pick in the draft by the Dallas Wings had lost the first four games as a pro and couldn't remember a longer losing streak in her storied basketball career. She wouldn't let it get to five.

Bueckers scored a season-best 21 points in the Wings' victory over Connecticut Sun.

"Felt great just to play like that as a team and obviously that environment is special to me," the former UConn star said. "To play like that as a team and put a full 40 minutes together. ... It felt good to be out there."

It's been a week of homecomings for Bueckers as the former UConn star played in the state of Connecticut for the first time since helping the Huskies win the school's 12th national championship nearly two months ago. Six days before the game in Connecticut, she played in Minnesota, where she grew up.

With the victory, Bueckers remained unbeaten at Mohegan Sun Arena, where the Sun plays their home games. She went 15-0 at the arena, including winning four Big East championships while playing for UConn Mercury 94, Sky 89

In Phoenix, Satou Sabally scored 20 points, rookie Kitija Laksa added a season-high 18 points and the Phoenix Mercury rallied from a 16-pointdeficit in the second half and beat the winless Chicago Sky.

Alyssa Thomas had 10 points, 15 assists, seven rebounds, three steals and two blocks for the Mercury. Thomas moved past Tamika Catchings (1,488) into 12th place in WNBA history with 1,503 career assists. The five-time All-Star became the first player in WNBA history with at least 10 points, five assists and five rebounds in each of the first five games of a season.

Kathryn Westbeld and Monique Akoa Makani who was a game-time decision due to illness - scored 13 points apiece and combined to hit five 3-pointers in the fourth quarter for the Mercury

Angel Reese had 13 points and 15 rebounds for the Sky. Ariel Atkins added a season-high 21 points, Kamilla Cardoso had 16 points and nine rebounds and Courtney Vandersloot finished with 15 points and 11 assists. Kia Nurse, who went into the game shooting 6.6% (1 of 15) from beyond the arc this season, scored 14 points, including four 3s.



New York Liberty center Jonquel Jones (35) and Indiana Fever guard Lexie Hull (10) go for a loose ball in the second half of a WNBA basketball game in Indianapolis. (AP)

Bengaluru clinches IPL qualifier 1 with 6-wicket win over Lucknow



Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Virat Kohli plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Lucknow Super Giants and Royal Challengers Bengaluru at Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow, India. (AP)

Pant's century goes in vain for Super Giants

LUCKNOW, India, May 28, (AP): Royal Challengers Bengaluru upstaged Rishabh Pant's century and stormed into the Indian Premier League's qualifier 1 with a monumental six-wicket win over Lucknow Super Giants.

Bengaluru, needing a victory to avoid playing an eliminator against Mumbai Indians, cruised to 230-4 and became the first team in IPL history

to win all its away games. Pant smashed unbeaten 118 off 61 balls with eight sixes and 11 fours in his first big knock of the season that carried Lucknow to a strong 227-3. Bengaluru will take on table-topper Punjab

Kings on Thursday. Gujarat Titans slipped to No. 3 and will meet Mumbai in the eliminator on Friday. The loser of qualifier 1 gets another chance to have a crack at next Tuesday's final in Ahmedabad

Lucknow finished seventh. Stand-in captain Jitesh Sharma's blistering unbeaten 85 off just 33 balls that featured six sixes and eight fours propelled Bengaluru to chase down the tall target with eight balls to spare after Virat

when it plays the winner of eliminator on Sunday.

Kohli's 54 off 30 balls had provided a brisk start.

Kohli kickstarted the chase with four successive boundaries against Will O'Rourke in the second over after Phil Salt (30) had started the over with a crisp cover driven boundary against the New Zealand fast bowler.

Despite Salt getting caught in the covers in the sixth over, Bengaluru finished the power play at a strong 66-1 with Kohli striking at better than run-

Pant turned back to O'Rourke soon after the power play and the fast bowler claimed the wickets of Rajat Patidar and Liam Livingstone off successive

balls which brought Lucknow back into the game. Kohli raised raised his half-century off 27 balls with his 10th boundary when he hit Akash Singh through extra cover but left Bengaluru at 123-4 in

the 12th over when he sliced a catch to long-off. But Mayank Agarwal (41 not out) and Sharma didn't hold back with their aggressive batting and bludgeoned 107-run stand off 45 balls to cruise

their team home with eight balls to spare. Agarwal smashed Akash Singh for three consecutive boundaries within the first five balls he faced while Sharma smashed six sixes and eight fours in

his blazing unbeaten knock. O'Rourke ended up with most expensive bowl-

Andrew Parsons, President of the International Paralympic Committee,

comments in Brisbane, while meeting with organizers of the 2032 Brisbane

ing figures by a Lucknow bowler in the IPL when he finished with 2-74, conceding nine boundaries and four sixes.

Pant's long struggle with the bat this season finally ended when the left-hander smashed a century after Bengaluru's stand-in captain Sharma had won the toss and elected to field.

Pant, batting at No. 3, was at his best after Nuwan Thushara had clean bowled Matthew Breetzke (14) in the third over.

Pant was quick out of his blocks and raised his half-century off 29 balls. Mitchell Marsh (67) brought up his sixth 50-plus score this season off 31 balls as he put on a strong 152-run stand off 78 balls with Pant.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar (1-46) broke the threatening partnership in the 16th over when Marsh was caught behind but not before the Australian had smashed the fast bowler for two successive sixes.

Pant reached his much-awaited century off 54 balls with a boundary off Kumar in the 18th over and celebrated it with a front-flip as Lucknow breached the 200-run mark.

Fast bowlers Yash Dayal (0-44) and Romario Shepherd (1-51) leaked further 26 runs in the final two overs with Shepherd getting the consolation wicket of Nicholas Pooran in the last over.

Former MVP spent 7 years with club

Carlos Vela retires after sterling career with LAFC

LOS ANGELES, May 28, (AP): Former Major League Soccer MVP Carlos Vela announced his retirement Tuesday.

The 36-year-old Vela spent the previous seven seasons with Los Angeles FC, which signed the Mexican forward as its first designated player in 2017 before the expansion club had played a game.

Vela became LAFC's leader in goals (78), assists (59) and games played (152) in a career highlighted by his MVP season in 2019, during which he set an MLS record with 34 goals. LAFC won the MLS Cup in 2022 and earned Supporters' Shield trophies in 2019 and 2022 during Vela's tenure.

"Helping to build LAFC and winning trophies for the club is a highlight of my career," Vela said in a statement. "This club means so much to me and my family, and I am proud of everything we have accomplished together with the great fans of Los Angeles. I am excited to begin this next chapter in my journey here in LA.'

Vela's contract with LAFC ran out after the 2023 season, and he remained unsigned until last September, when he rejoined the club for the playoff stretch. But Vela played only four minutes as a substitute in one playoff game, and LAFC did not re-sign him for the current sea-

Vela and his family live in Los Angeles, and the club named him its first Black & Gold Ambassador while announcing his retirement.

In his new role, Vela will "help us grow the LAFC brand, strengthen our connection with supporters, and continue to inspire the next generation of players," general manager John Thorrington said.

A Cancún native, Vela began his youth career with Chivas before moving to Arsenal as a 16-year-old prospect in 2005. He spent much of his Arsenal tenure on loan to several Spanish clubs before landing at Real Sociedad, where he played for six years before joining LAFC.

Vela was one of MLS' best players for his first several seasons with



Los Angeles FC forward Carlos Vela chases the ball during the second half of an MLS soccer match against the Real Salt Lake in Los Angeles.

LAFC, earning four All-Star selections and three spots in the MLS Best XI. He was the fastest player in MLS history to compile 75 goals and 50 assists in his career, and he is the top Mexican goal-scorer in league history.

From the beginning, Carlos has been more than just a player - he has been the heartbeat, the captain and the face of LAFC," Thorrington said. "Carlos arrived in Los Angeles with a shared vision of building something truly special, and he delivered on that promise in every way. From unforgettable goals to historic victories, Carlos helped make LAFC what it is to-

Vela played for Mexico at the World Cup in 2010 and 2018, but he also feuded with El Tri's management at times, leading to long stretches away from the national team. Vela declared himself retired from international football in 2020.

LAFC will honor the forward on Noche de Carlos Vela, to be held Sept. 21 at BMO Stadium during a match against Real Salt Lake.

Big surprise in sport

Sumo has new champion

TOKYO, May 28, (AP): Japan has a new sumo grand champion - or yokozuna - and the big news is he's

Onosato, the new grand champion, weighs 191 kilograms (421 pounds) and he is the first Japanese competitor to reach the top rank since 2017. By comparison, the average weight of an NFL lineman is about 140 kilos, or just over 300 pounds.

The sport has recently been dominated by Mongolians and prior to Onosato, six of the previous seven yokozunas have been from Mongolia.

"I'll devote myself to training so that I will not disgrace the title of yokozuna," Onosato said Wednesday, dressed in a formal kimono and bowing as he sat on the floor. "I will aim to become a one-and-only yoko-

Onosato, whose real name is Daiki Nakamura, is only 24 and was promoted Wednesday to sumo's top rank by the Japan Sumo Association. Onosato was promoted by winning last week's Summer Grand Sumo Tournament, which came after he won another prestigious tournament in March.

Onosato is from Ishikawa prefecture, which was hit on Jan. 1, 2024, by a devastating earthquake and tsunami that killed about 600 people in the prefecture and caused widespread damage. Much of the destruction was centered on an area known as the Noto Peninsula.

"I will work hard as a yokozuna to encourage and cheer up the Ishikawa prefecture and the Noto region," he

He then added: "I determined that yokozuna should be my goal once I entered the world of sumo," he said.



Onosato speaks during an interview with media members at his sumo training facility after winning a sumo wrestling tournament in Ami, northeast of Tokyo. (AP)

"It's not easy to achieve and I'm really delighted."

Sumo is regarded as Japan's national sport, or most sacred sport, and many of the ritual elements are connected to Shinto, Japan's indigenous religion.

Sumo's origins date back more than 1,000 years, and Japan is the only country where it is contested on a professional level.

The sport is highly regimented with many wrestlers living in communal training facilities where food and dress are controlled by ancient traditions.

Onosato's promotion will set up an instant rivalry with Mongolia-born Hoshoryu, who is the other wrestler in Japan to hold the yokozuna title.

The Japanese news agency Kyodo said the two sumo stars are due to meet in a tournament in July in the central city of Nagoya.

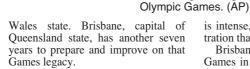
Paralympic chief challenges Brisbane 2032 organizers to top the success of Sydney BRISBANE, Australia, May 28, (AP):

There was no better day to urge the people of Brisbane to do better than the benchmarks Sydney set for the Paralympics. International Paralympic Committee President Andrew Parsons' visit to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic host city Wednesday coincided with

the start of the traditional rugby league grudge match that is the Origin series, one of the biggest annual fixtures on Australia's sports calendar. "Without doubt, the year 2000 was a gamechanger and provided the foundations from which we could advance the Paralympic Games and wider Paralympic movement," Parsons told a gathering at a Brisbane riverside restaurant, hyping Sydney's

Olympics and Paralympics almost 25 years ago. "After the tremendous success of Barcelona 1992, and the troublesome experiences of Atlanta 1996, the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games got the Paralympic movement back on track with a sensational showcase of sport.' Sydney is the capital of New South

overwhelming success in staging the



years to prepare and improve on that The sporting rivalry between the

neighboring eastern Australian states

is intense, and there's no better illustration than the Origin series.

Brisbane was awarded the 2032 Games in 2021 but it took more than 1,340 days before a new state government finalized the venue plans that aquatics venue built in a downtown parkland precinct.

What Sydney did to raise the profile of athletes, ticket sales and broadcast audiences for the Paralympics, Brisbane organizers aim to do in terms of setting new benchmarks for accessibility in the design of venues, buildings

"You've got to get to a point as a global look at accessibility, in other words people with disabilities, as being standard in the design. As First Nations, and including their culture, as standard in what we do. Environment, and certification of buildings and treating the environment well, as standard,' Andrew Liveris, president of the Brisbane 2032 organizing committee, said. "We're not there (yet), but we can set that standard. We will be, as an Olympic and Paralympic Games, the standard bearer.'

With the start of venue construction and the finalizing of the sports program not expected until late next year, Liveris said there's time to ensure the end results are accounted for in the plan-

Haliburton puts Pacers on cusp of NBA Finals

1st player with 30-15-10 and no turnovers

INDIANAPOLIS, May 28, (AP): Tyrese Haliburton finished with 32 points, 15 assists, and 12 rebounds without a turnover in a historic postseason performance to lead the Indiana Pacers past the New York Knicks 130-121 for a 3-1 lead in the Eastern Conference finals.

With his father, John, back in Gainbridge Fieldhouse, Haliburton became the first player to achieve such a stat line in the postseason since turnovers were first tracked in 1977-78, and he carried the Pacers within one victory of their second trip to the NBA Finals. Nikola Jokic and Oscar Robertson are the only other players to post 30 points, 15 assists, and 10 rebounds in a playoff game.

Game 5 is Thursday in New York.

"I'll look at that later and reflect on that at a different time. For me, it's just about winning," Haliburton said. "I wanted to prove I could respond when my back is against the wall, my team's back is against the wall. I feel like we responded the right way.

Pascal Siakam added 30 points while Haliburton had four steals in his second career postseason triple-double. Obi Toppin's 3-pointer with 46 seconds

Jalen Brunson scored 31 points. Karl-Anthony Towns had 24 points and 12 rebounds, and OG Anunoby finished with 22 points. But the Knicks couldn't rally from another double-digit deficit.

It marked the first time in the series that the home team won, leaving the Knicks one loss away from being eliminated for the second straight year by

"We've all got to be better. We've got to be better as a team," Towns said after shaking off a left leg injury with 2:11 to play to finish the game. "It's unfortunate we couldn't find a way tonight when we found a way in all the other series to do it. Nearly a dozen former Pacers players, including Jermaine O'Neal and

Lance Stephenson, joined Haliburton's father in the heavily gold-clad crowd. So did WWE Hall of Famer Triple H, rappers Rob 49 and 50 Cent, and singers John Mellencamp and Jelly Roll. Haliburton also brought New York firefighter Hans Perez, a Pacers fan, to the game and gave him a signed No. 0 John Haliburton had been forced to watch Indiana's previous eight postsea-

son games from afar after he ran onto the court and confronted Bucks star Giannis Antetokounmpo following his son's last-second shot to eliminate Milwaukee in the first round. The Pacers allowed him to return for Game 4,

Both teams were shooting at a clip of 70% long into the first quarter as the Pacers raced to a 43-35 lead. Haliburton helped Indiana close the half on a 6-0 run to make it 69-64 as he finished the half just two rebounds short of his third career triple-double.

"He was our leader tonight, and we had some difficult film stuff yesterday, not fun," Pacers coach Rick Carlisle said. "We allowed things to go a different direction than they needed to go in Game 3, and tonight we were determined



Indiana Pacers guard Tyrese Haliburton (0) shoots the ball past New York Knicks guard Miles McBride, left, during the second half of Game 4 of the Eastern Conference finals of the NBA basketball playoffs in Indianapolis. (AP)

to turn it back in our direction."

Indiana opened the second half with an even more aggressive style that spurred a 9-2 run and closed the quarter on a 9-4 spurt to extend the margin

to 102-91. Siakam scored the final five points of a 9-3 run early in the fourth to give Indiana a 111-96 lead.

New York got as close as six three times in the closing minutes but couldn't

Alcaraz overcomes a one-set blip

Borges stuns injured Ruud at Roland-Garros Slot pulls out of award ceremony

PARIS, May 28, (AP): Clearly hampered by a bad left knee, twotime French Open finalist Casper Ruud dropped 13 of the last 14 games and lost 2-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-0 to Nino Borges in the second round at Roland-Garros on Wednesday, then revealed he had been playing in pain off-and-on throughout the clay-court season.

seventh-seeded Ruud The reached at least the semifinals each of the past three years in Paris - he was the runner-up to Rafael Nadal in 2022 and Novak Djokovic in 2023 - and this exit is his earliest at the tournament since bowing out in the second round in his debut in

He's been taking pain-killing and anti-inflammatory pills the past several weeks, and did so again Wednesday. But Ruud said the knee began bothering him in the first set against Borges, who is ranked 41st and became the first Portuguese man to get to the French Open's third round.

Ruud said the worst shot for his knee is an open-stance backhand, in which he slides on his left foot, so he's been avoiding it in practice.

"Certain movements out there are kind of what makes it painful. Certain shots are painful to do. When you're playing matches, you can't really control it in the same way (as in practice). You do everything you can to get to every ball," said Ruud, who also reached the final at the 2023 U.S. Open. "Sometimes you kind of forget that this is a shot I shouldn't go for."

He was visited by a trainer and



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz returns the ball to Hungary's Fabian Maroszan during their second round match of the French Tennis Open, at the Roland-Garros stadium, in Paris. (AP)

took some pills during Wednesday's match, but nothing seemed

"It's a Slam. I love this tournament," Ruud said. "Looking back, I tried my best to continue (and tried) to avoid the shots that are hurting. But towards the end, there were also other movements that started hurting, so it wasn't ideal."

He said the problems began in his first clay event of the pre-French Open stretch, at Monte Carlo in

April, and that he had medical exams a couple of weeks later in Madrid - where he went on to win the title. Ruud pulled out of the Geneva Open, which was played last week.

Now he'll have more tests done. "I took five days completely off at home. It wasn't enough to make the pain go away," Ruud said. "I wish I could stay here longer."

Both defending champions were in action at Court Philippe-Chatrier. Carlos Alcaraz overcame a oneset blip to defeat Fabian Marozsan

6-1, 4-6, 6-1, 6-2. Other women's winners included 2024 runner-up Jasmine Paolini, Olympic gold medalist Zheng Qinwen and 18-yearold Canadian qualifier Victoria Mboko, while Olympic silver medalist and Wimbledon semifinalist Donna Vekic lost to unseeded American Bernarda Pera 6-2, 4-6, 7-6 (10-3). Men advancing included No. 8 Lorenzo Musetti and No. 25 Alexei Popyrin.

after Liverpool parade tragedy LIVERPOOL, England, May 28, (AP): Liv-

'Out of solidarity'

erpool manager Arne Slot opted against attending a ceremony in London where he was due to receive an award, saying he withdrew "out of solidarity" with those affected in the team's city-center parade tragedy

Slot was named both the Premier League's Manager of the Season and League Managers Association's Manager of the Year after guiding Liverpool to its record-tying 20th league title in his first season at the club.

Hundreds of thousands of fans lined the streets of Liverpool on Monday to celebrate with the players as they paraded the trophy on open-top buses, only for joy to turn to anguish when a man rammed his car into a crowd of people.

Sixty-five people were injured and 11 remained hospitalized Tuesday in stable condition. A 53-year-old British man has been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder, police said, and was also being held on suspicion of dangerous driving and driving on

On turning down the invitation to attend the LMA's award ceremony, Slot wrote in a letter: "This is not a decision I have taken lightly but it is one that I feel is absolutely right given the seriousness of the situation.

"Football," he added, "is and always should be a game built on rivalry, but it is also a great source of comradeship, especially at times like this."

Slot also paid tribute to the emergency services, the authorities in Liverpool and "supporters and bystanders who helped one another in an hour of need.

"I think everyone involved in the aftermath deserves the gratitude of all of us,'



Liverpool's manager Arne Slot poses with the winner's trophy after the English Premier League soccer match between Liverpool and Crystal Palace at the Anfield stadium in Liverpool, England. (AP)

Former Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp, who watched the parade from close to where the car-ramming occurred, said it destroyed "one of the greatest days in the history of the city."

Klopp, who was inducted into the LMA's Hall of Fame 1,000 Club on Tuesday, said the incident "showed the two faces of life."

'The most beautiful face for a long time: the parade was incredible, the mood was incredible," he said. "And from one second to another, everything changed and we learned again there are more serious things in the world than football."

Former Real Madrid defender Arbeloa takes over as 'B' team coach

Yamal signs contract extension to stay at Barca until 2031

BARCELONA, Spain, May 28, (AP): Teenage star Lamine Yamal has signed a contract extension to stay at Barcelona until 2031, the club announced Tuesday.
The 17-year-old Yamal helped

the Catalan club clinch a domestic treble - La Liga, the Copa del Rey and the Spanish Super Cup - with his goals, dribbling and playmaking. He scored the the decisive goal

to clinch Barcelona's 28th Spanish league title in a 2-0 victory at crosstown rival Espanyol nearly two weeks ago.

Barcelona also reached the Champions League semifinals this cam-

His big season - he scored 18 goals overall and led La Liga with 13 assists - came after he helped Spain win the European Championship last summer.

Yamal, who turns 18 in July, made his debut in April 2023 at Camp Nou and has already made 106 appearances for Barcelona.

"In 2031, Lamine Yamal is only gonna be 23," the club said in a post on X as a reminder of how young their global star is.

Yamal joined Barcelona's famous La Masia academy at age 7.

Meanwhile, former defender Álvaro Arbeloa is replacing Raúl González as coach of Real Madrid's "B" team, the club said Wednesday. Madrid announced that Arbeloa

was taking over, one day after former star Raúl said he was leaving after seven years coaching in the youth academy.

"Arbeloa is a legend at Real Madrid and in Spanish football, and one of our club's most iconic homegrown players," Madrid said. "Arbeloa has always been an exemplary representative of our club's values and has passed these on during his time as coach of our youth teams.

Arbeloa had been coaching Madrid's youth squads since 2020. With the under-19s he won the treble in 2022-23 - the Champions League, Spanish league and Copa del Rey.

The former right back came through Madrid's youth squads and played 238 matches with the first team between 2009 and 2016. In his seven seasons, Arbeloa helped Madrid win two Champions Leagues, one Club World Cup, one European Super Cup, one Spanish Super Cup, one Spanish league and two Copas del Rey. He made 56 appearances for Spain, helping it win the 2010



Barcelona's Lamine Yamal controls the ball during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Athletic Bilbao and Barcelona at the San Mames stadium in Bilbao, Spain. (AP)

World Cup and the 2008 and 2012 European Championships. Arbeloa joined Madrid's first

team from Liverpool, where he played 98 matches in three seasons. Řaúl spent seven years in the academy and coached several youth teams in the 2018-19 season. He helped the under-19s win the Youth League in 2020.

"Raul has informed the club of his decision to end his time as a coach at our youth academy," Madrid said

on Tuesday.
"Real Madrid is proud to have had one of the greatest legends in our history and world football as a coach and trainer at our youth academy. Raúl also exemplifies all the values of Real Madrid. Values that

he has also passed on as a coach."

Raúl said he enjoyed the job, which made him "grow as a professional and as a person."

"I want to thank the club of my life for the opportunity it has given me," Raúl said. "A new phase begins in my life as a coach outside of this club, with the certainty that I'll eventually return to this place that will always be my home.

Raúl starred for Madrid as a player from the late 1990s until 2010, and with Spain until 2006.

"Raúl will always be in the hearts of all madridistas, and Real Madrid will always be his home," the club



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China's Zheng Qinwen celebrates after beating Colombia's Emiliana Arango during their second round match of the French Tennis Open, at the Roland-Garros stadium, in Paris.

Al-Qadsia targets Amir Cup final as Kuwait Club eyes historic quadruple

Al-Arabi faces Al-Salmiya

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Soccer fans were eagerly anticipating the highly awaited Classico between Al-Qadsia and Kuwait Club at 8:30 pm on Thursday at Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium in the semi-finals of the Amir Cup.

The other semifinal will see Al-Arabi face Al-Salmiya, at 8:30 pm on Friday at the same

Kuwait Club reached this stage by defeating Al-Jazeera 3-0 in the preliminary round and edging Khaitan 1-0 in the quarter-finals.

Al-Qadsia advanced after a 3-2 win over Burgan in the preliminaries, followed by a dominant 3-0 victory against Al-Fahaheel in the quarters.

between the two rivals this season. In the Zain Premier League, Kuwait Club claimed two victories (3-1 and 1-0), while Al-Qadsia earned a 2-1 win. The two also met in the Super

This will be the fourth face-off

Cup final, where Kuwait Club lifted the trophy after a 1-1 draw and a 7-6 penalty shootout victory.

Having already won the league, Crown Prince Cup, and Super Cup, Kuwait Club aims to complete a remarkable season by reaching the



In this file photo, Al-Qadsia and Kuwait Club vie for the ball during a league match.

final and securing a fourth trophy.

Coach Nebojsa Jovovic acknowledges the challenge, noting Al-Qadsia's recent form improvement and determination to defend their title.

He will rely on a strong squad featuring: Meshari Ghannam, Yahya Jabran, Yousef Nasser, Ali Hussein, Reda Hani, Ahmed Al-Dhafiri, Amin Abu Al-Fath, Mohammed Marhoon, Mohammed Daham, and Ahmed Al-Zanki.

Reigning champion Al-Qadsia is determined to end the season on a high, return to the final, and defend its Amir Cup crown. Despite a rough patch earlier in the season, the team rebounded with an impressive quarter-final win over Al-Fahaheel, who had recently beaten it 7-4 in league play.

Coach Zeljko Petrovic, whose contract expires on Saturday, hopes to cap off his tenure with a title run-though he hinted at staying on if the team reaches the final. His key players include:Bader Al-Mutawa, Eid Al-Rashidi, Ismail Khafi, Hussein Dahiri, Mubarak Al-Fanini, Abdulaziz Wadi, Khaled Sabah, Al-Mahdi Barahma, Daniel Jibola, and Adhbi Shehab.

Kuwait's Al-Nasr Club makes historic debut at the Asian Women's weightlifting Masters



Al Nasr weightlifting delegation for the inaugural Asian Masters Championship in Doha.

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Al-Nasr women's weightlifting team is proudly representing Kuwait at the inaugural Asian Masters Championship, currently taking place in Doha, Qatar, and set to conclude this coming Saturday. This marks a historic milestone as Al-Annabi becomes the first Kuwaiti women's team to compete in an Asian-level weightlifting

The Kuwaiti delegation is led by Sultan Al-Mutairi, and includes delegation manager Asbih Al-Adwani, coaches Mashael Al-Dakhil and Aya Al-Haddad, and 11 talented athletes:

Amal Al-Sharifi, Abrar Al-Fahd, Nour Al-Abdullah, Haya Al-Mayas, Al-Zahraa Kamshad, Shahad Al-Otaibi, Maryam Abu Jabara,

Arwa Al-Atiqi, Sarah Al-Hawal, Hawra Al-Mousawi, and Hadeel Al-

Sultan Al-Mutairi expressed his appreciation for Al-Nasr Club's leadership and their unwavering support for women's sports, particularly the weightlifting program. He emphasized that the team is not just participating, but aiming to secure medals, backed by a strong lineup of experienced

Al-Mutairi also extended his best wishes to the players, expressing confidence in their ability to make Kuwait proud on the continental stage and elevate the reputation of Al-Nasr Club in this prestigious Asian competition featuring top champions from across the continent.

Handball's most memorable season

Al-Adwani nears 4th title

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: In a remarkable and rare feat in the world of handball, Kuwait Club star Saif Al-Adwani has made history by clinching league titles in three different countries within a single year. Al-Adwani began his journey by securing the Kuwaiti League title with Kuwait Club. He then played professionally for Al-Arabi in Qatar, where he won the league championship before joining Sharjah in the UAE, where he added another league title to his impressive record.

Now, Al-Adwani is on the verge of yet another milestone as the Kuwaiti Premier League title for the 2024-2025 season is within reach - Kuwait Club needs just one more win to claim its 13th consecutive league title.

Al-Adwani's success across multiple championships and countries has earned him the well-deserved title of the "Super Star" of Kuwaiti and Gulf handball. Taking to his personal account on the platform "X" (formerly Twitter), Al-Adwani described the season as "exceptional and unforgettable."

"Thank God, I was honored to



Saif Al-Adwani makes a goal attempt as opponents look on.

win three league titles in one season with three different clubs: Kuwait SC, Al-Arabi SC, and Sharjah SC," he wrote.

He went on to thank Kuwait Club Chairman Khaled Al-Ghanim, calling him an "icon" and expressing gratitude for his unwavering support and the opportunity to achieve such milestones.

"I am proud of this journey," Al-Adwani concluded.

Al-Arabi signs Sobirov ahead of new season

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Al-Arabi has strengthened its volleyball squad by signing Uzbekistani professional Islam Sobirov as part of its early preparations for the upcoming season. Standing at an impressive two meters, Sobirov is known for his powerful free-kicks and offensive prowess. This season, he earned the Best Striker Award in Oman and was also named Best Player in the 2023-2024 Thai League. Sobirov brings valuable international experience, having played professionally in Oman, the Czech Republic, and

In addition, Al-Arabi has bolstered its roster by signing Burgan players Yousef Mandeel and Abdulrahman Al-Mulla, along with new signings



Al Arabi welcomes Uzbek star to

Mishaal Al-Khawaled and Fahad Al-Kout. These strategic moves reflect the club's strong ambition to compete at the highest level in the upcoming season.

Best of the Rest

Judge steps down in Diego trial: One of the three judges in the trial of seven health professionals accused of negligence in the death of Diego Maradona stepped down from the proceedings Tuesday after becoming embroiled in controversy for having participated in the making of a documentary about the case.

Julieta Makintach withdrew from the San Isidro court handling the case after the prosecutor showed footage of a documentary that spans the first moments after the soccer star's death in 2020 to the start of the trial more than two months ago, in which the judge appears as one of its lead char-

Following Makintach's resignation, the other two judges will have to decide how the case will proceed.

The trial was suspended for a week after prosecutor Patricio Ferrari asked the court to review Makintach's role in allegedly allowing the documentary to be filmed during the trial

Leopoldo Luque, Maradona's primary physician at the time of the star's death and one of the main defendants, had requested Makintach's removal from the trial. (AP)

Wagner gets coaching job at Augsburg: The former Germany and Bayern Munich forward Sandro Wagner landed his first top-tier coaching job Wednesday as he took over at Augsburg.

Wagner has been working as assistant to Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann and will take charge of an Augsburg team which finished 12th in the 18-team Bundesliga this season.

Augsburg said the 37-year-old Wagner had signed a three-year contract. His only previous job as a head coach was with Unterhaching in the fourth division, where he achieved promotion but left in 2023 to join the national under-20 team. The German soccer federation previously said Wagner would remain an assistant on the national team until after next month's Nations League final four. Augsburg's statement Wednesday didn't clarify when he would start work.

Wagner's appointment comes five days after Augsburg's management fired coach Jess Thorup and sporting director Marinko Jurendić, arguing that the team needed a change of leadership to continue its development.

Augsburg was in contention to qualify for European competition for much of the season but its form dipped and it ended the Bundesliga campaign with four straight losses. (AP)

Suarez and Messi team up to launch a soccer club in Uruguay

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay, May 28, (AP): Luis Suarez and Lionel Messi have been partners on the pitch for several years. Now they're teaming up off it as busi-

Suarez announced on Tuesday he has founded a professional soccer team in his native Uruguay, and he is bringing his Inter Miami teammate along on the project. Suarez, the all-time scoring leader of Uruguay's national team, explained in a video posted on his social media accounts that the team formerly known as Deportivo LS will now be called LSM and will start playing professional soccer in the Uruguay's fourth

"Deportivo LS is a family dream that began in 2018. We have grown a lot with more than 3,000 members," Suarez said. "I want to offer Uruguayan soccer, the place I love and where I grew up as a child, opportunities and tools for teenagers and children to grow."

The 38-year-old Suarez retired from international soccer last September, played with Messi at Barcelona for six seasons, and they've been teammates the past two years with Inter Miami.

"I'm proud and happy that you chose me, so I hope to contribute everything I can to continue growing and, above all, to be by your side in this," said Messi, who was sitting alongside Suarez in the video.

It's still unclear what Messi's role will be in the project, although local media reported that he will be a partner. It was also reported that Álvaro Recoba, a former player for the Uruguay national team and Inter Milan, will be the team's coach.

The announcement also launched the club's Instagram account, which had over 40,000 followers two hours after its creation.

Suárez and his family opened an 20-acre sports complex in 2018 in Ciudad de la Costa on the outskirts of Montevideo. It has numerous activities for more than 3.000 members

The club has a synthetic turf stadium with a capacity for 1,400 spectators, among other fields.

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