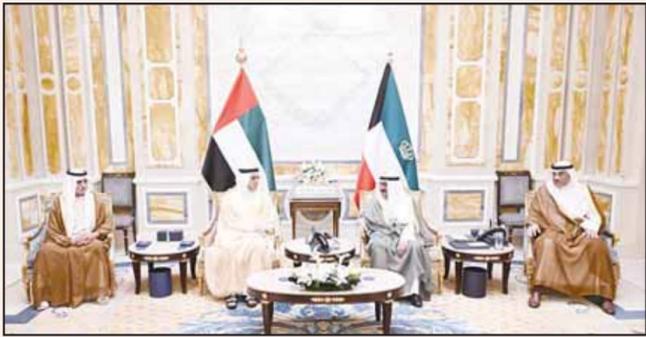




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Amiri Diwan photo

His Highness the Amir receives UAE Vice President, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Presidential Court.

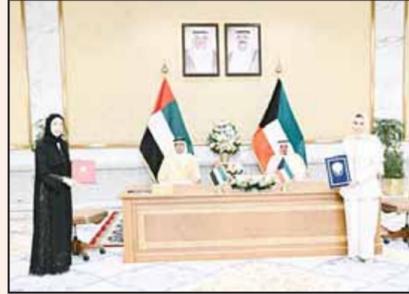
## Kuwait-UAE ties get major upgrade

### New era in relations

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and in the presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received UAE Vice President, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Presidential Court Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, on the occasion of his official visit to the country.

Sheikh Mansour conveyed to His Highness the Amir the greetings the UAE President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan and UAE Vice President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, and their wishes for His Highness of good health and continued well-being, and for the people of Kuwait further progress and prosperity.

Continued on Page 5



Part of the signing ceremony of memorandums of understanding between the State of Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

Amiri Diwan photos

### Opinion

#### Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

## Kuwait has lived for 400 years with the slogan, 'The Best Always Makes It Easy'

YOUR HIGHNESS the Prime Minister, certain questions are being raised among citizens. Is everyone required to be disinterested -- whether they are affected by the recent measures or not? Should things be allowed to happen, even if they are on the wrong track, or is it better to prioritize essential issues?

These questions are also directed to the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior who is responsible for various matters. I ask Allah to grant him the strength to continue this activity in a way that serves the interests of the State, which are inseparable from the interests of the people.

Everyone sees that the Cabinet and the ministers are preoccupied with trivial matters. This is not beneficial for the future, especially at a time when all other countries are working tirelessly to establish a foothold in the new global order that is beginning to take shape. Any country that does not occupy a place in the current global order will not have an effective role in the future.

On several occasions, you have spoken about the citizens' demands, particularly regarding the purification of national identity; which is a matter of belongingness before anything else. Everyone supported the measures taken against those who forged citizenship and held dual citizenship. However, there are still calls to hold accountable those who facilitated the commission of these crimes and participated in manipulating this sensitive issue, because the consequences are serious and thorny.

I, along with many others, also pointed out the need to study the repercussions of these measures on society as a whole. For example,

what is the fault of the children and grandchildren in a forgery case committed by a grandfather who died and whose children had nothing to do with this crime?

On the other hand, this undoubtedly led to obstacles that the official executive branch must resolve; such as those related to the real estate properties of those whose citizenship was revoked, their social status like marriage and childbirth among others, their jobs and livelihoods.

It is true that the Council of Ministers has allowed some of them to travel on passports valid for some months, but not all countries grant visas to those whose passports will expire within a year or six months. What is the Council of Ministers' plan to resolve this problem?

Your Excellency, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, I hope you understand the true pulse of the people and how they react to these measures. You have the tools to do so. You have the candor and courage to speak the truth. This is how we have known you since you assumed your position, as you have never deviated from the truth.

Continued on Page 5

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# 112 fall in narco net

## Security campaigns at full throttle

By Munif Naif  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Rescue patrols arrested 112 people of various nationalities in May for the possession of suspected narcotics and in an abnormal condition.

A security source confirmed that patrol officers, through security checkpoints in various areas, apprehended several individuals in possession of suspected narcotics and drug paraphernalia. He stated that all those arrested were referred to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) at the Interior Ministry.

Continued on Page 5

## Kuwait acts to protect consumers

### Eid market oversight intensifies

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

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry affirmed the availability of a sufficient number of sacrificial animals of various types, sizes, and prices in the markets to meet the demands of citizens and residents during Eid al-Adha.

Director of the Department of Commercial Control and Consumer Protection Faisal Al-Ansari said the department's emergency teams conducted intensive market campaigns to monitor prices and ensure the availability of adequate quantities of sacrificial animals.

Continued on Page 5

## Energy ministry eyes Gulf power to meet peak needs

By Mohammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Coinciding with the heat wave and the challenges of the current summer season; the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy has asked the State Audit Bureau (SAB) to review its request to import 800 megawatts from the Gulf Interconnection Network in June, at a total cost of KD18.805 million.

Sources confirmed that the ministry is committed to obtaining the approval of SAB in this regard after the review and audit of the contract. Sources said this will enable the ministry to conclude the contract with the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority in accordance with the accounting and oversight procedures in order to support the local grid by leveraging cooperation agreements between member states.

Continued on Page 5

### Day by Day

THE plants we had so proudly planted during the visit of the GCC leaders to Kuwait are now wilting and dying due to lack of proper irrigation and care. We admired them for just a few days, and now they are withering away.

What a shame!  
Is zakat truly fulfilling its intended role? Are its funds reaching the poor and those in debt, or more of it being consumed by administrative staff? Are those in need who are nearby being helped, or are the funds going to those in need in distant countries?

Interestingly, some members of the committees overseeing zakat distribution appear to be in excellent financial standing themselves.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



Photo by Rezk Tawfik

Cars navigate through fierce dust storms as visibility drops dangerously low on Kuwait's highways on Tuesday.

### 'Mask up'

## Dust chokes Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): Kuwait has been affected by northwesterly winds, which are active and sometimes strong, exceeding 60 kilometers per hour, causing dust storms and reducing horizontal visibility to less than 1,000 meters, said Acting Director of the Meteorology Department, Dherar Al-Ali.

In remarks to KUNA Tuesday, Al-Ali noted that wind activity is expected to continue with the possibility of dust storms on Wednesday at varying intervals, with relative calm prevailing in wind speed from Thursday afternoon due to the country being under the influence of an extension of a surface low pressure system accompanied by a hot and dry air mass.

He urged citizens and residents with asthma and allergies to wear masks when going out, warning beach-goers to be careful of waves as high as seven feet, and warned highway users to beware of sudden reduced visibility.

Continued on Page 5



Diplomats gather for a group photo at Italy's National Day celebration.

## Italian envoy highlights strong Kuwait-Italy ties

By Fares Ghaleb  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Lorenzo Morini has stressed that Kuwaiti-Italian relations are an exemplary model of partnership based on mutual trust, fruitful cooperation, and shared values and principles.

In a speech delivered during his country's National Day celebration with Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in attendance, Morini affirmed that "political dialogue between Italy and Kuwait is distinguished. Our cooperation in the field of security and our economic relations are excellent. Italy and Kuwait are committed to playing an active role on the international stage to promote peace, dialogue and pluralism; and to support developing countries."

Continued on Page 5



Photos by Rezk Tawfik

Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Lorenzo Morini and Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah mark the occasion with a ceremonial cake-cutting.

## Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 03:15 Asr ..... 15:20  
 Sunrise .. 04:49 Maghrib .. 18:44  
 Zohr ..... 11:46 Isha ..... 20:15

# Local

## Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Hot with light to moderate freshening at times north-westerly wind, with speeds of 15-55 km/h causing rising dust.

**By Night:** Hot to rather hot with light to moderate freshening at

## Weather

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec			
Kuwait City	41	31	times over coastal areas north-	Jahra	42
Kuwait Airport	41	31	westerly wind, with speeds of 12-	Failaka Island	40
Bubyan	42	27	40 km/h.	Salmiyah	40
				Ahmadi	40
				Nuwaisib	41
				Wafra	41
				Salmiyah	41
					29
					24



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives the UAE Vice President, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Presidential Court Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.



## Amir congratulates Polish Pres. on winning elections

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a congratulatory cable to the newly-elected Polish President Karol Nawrocki on winning the presidential elections.

In his cable, His Highness the Amir wished the Polish president success in assuming office, progress and everlasting health.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent on Tuesday a congratulatory cable to the newly elected

Polish President Karol Nawrocki on winning the presidential elections.

In his cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished the Polish president success in assuming office, and further progress and everlasting health.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah then sent a similar cable to the newly elected Polish President Karol Nawrocki on winning the presidential elections.

In his cable, His Highness the Prime Minister wished the Polish president success, progress and prosperity.



UAE officials meeting Kuwait's Crown Prince His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



Kuwait's Minister of Public Works Dr Noura Al-Mashaan shakes hands with the UAE Vice President.

## Crown Prince holds banquet in honor of visiting UAE VP

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah held a banquet in honor of UAE Vice President, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the

Presidential Court Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, on the occasion of his official visit to the country.

## Amir offers condolences to Indian Pres. over flood loss

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, sent on Tuesday a cable of condolences to the President of India Droupadi Murmu over the floods victims.

In the cable, His Highness expressed his sincere condolences and heartfelt sympathy for the victims of the floods resulting from the heavy rains that struck several states in northeastern India, which led to numerous casualties and injuries, as well as the destruction of public facilities and property.

His Highness wished for fast recovery for the injured and expressed hope that Indian officials are able to overcome the effects of this natural

disaster.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of condolences to the President of India Droupadi Murmu over the floods victims.

In the cable, His Highness expressed his sincere condolences for the victims of the floods resulting from the heavy rains that struck several states in northeastern India, resulting in several casualties, injuries and property destructions.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a similar cable of condolences to the President of India Droupadi Murmu over the floods victims.

## Monitoring teams on prowl

## No violations recorded on the first day of midday work ban

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: No violations were recorded on the first day of the annual midday outdoor work ban, which took effect on Sunday, reports Al-Anba daily quoting a source from the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM).

The source told the daily that inspection teams have been actively monitoring compliance from the early hours each day, underscoring the commitment of the authority to protect workers from the dangers of direct sun exposure during peak heat hours. He confirmed that the ban reflects the guiding principle of the authority: "Humanity is a principle and a law."

He clarified that the primary objective of the ban is not to reduce working hours but to mitigate health risks, encouraging employers to reschedule work to early

morning or evening hours. He said the authority is hoping that all employers will continue to comply with the regulation and avoid legal consequences.

As part of its annual awareness efforts, PAM has launched a campaign under the slogan, "Their Safety is Most Important," which is being promoted through its official social media platforms.

In addition, a dedicated hotline has been made available for the public to report violations. Reports about workers being employed in open areas during the restricted midday hours can be submitted through WhatsApp No. 24936132.

The authority reaffirmed its commitment to guarantee worker safety and will continue its inspection campaigns throughout the summer period.

# 'Kuwait-China inked MoUs, projects on steady track'



Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ambassador Samih Johar Hayat and Chinese ambassador at the cake-cutting ceremony.



Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ambassador Samih Johar Hayat presents a memento to the outgoing Chinese ambassador.

## Mubarak Port well underway, outgoing China envoy

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ambassador Samih Johar Hayat confirmed that the implementation of the agreements and memoranda of understanding signed by Kuwait and China is proceeding steadily.**

Hayat made the statement to reporters on the sidelines of an official farewell ceremony to mark the end of the tenure of Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei.

A number of senior officials, ambassadors and diplomats, including Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Noura Al-Fassam and Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Al-Sabah attended the event.

Hayat disclosed that cooperation, consultation and coordination between the governments of the two countries continue on a daily basis -- both with the Chinese leadership and the Chinese ambassador to Kuwait -- and that things are progressing well.

### Mega Projects

He revealed there are six major development projects called the 'Mega Projects,' which are being implemented jointly by the government and the Chinese companies. "These are government-to-government projects. We are moving forward to implement all the agreements signed with China," he confirmed. He said His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad and the

concerned ministers fully support these projects. He added that daily reports regarding any step taken with China are submitted to the leadership.

On the possibility of Kuwait reciprocating China's one-year visa waiver for Kuwaitis, he asserted "this is not new. We signed an agreement with China in 2014 exempting holders of Chinese diplomatic, special, official and service passports from visa requirements, while Kuwaitis hold diplomatic and special passports."

He disclosed that His Highness the Crown Prince was informed about the new Chinese initiative during his meeting with the Chinese Premier on the sidelines of the GCC-ASEAN-China Summit. He stated that His Highness met with the heads of delegations at the summit, where the Chinese Premier told His Highness: "Given the daily growth of our strategic relations, we would like to offer this exemption to Kuwaitis for a trial period of one year." He said Kuwait is studying this matter to have a memorandum of understanding to regulate the exemption for ordinary Kuwaiti and Chinese passports.

Regarding His Highness the Crown Prince's visit to Japan, Hayat stressed "it was a historic visit that embodied the mutual trust between the leaderships and governments of the two countries. During this visit, bilateral relations were elevated to the level of comprehensive strategic relations."

He believes this will open the door for the two governments to develop their relations and implement the five agreements signed on the sidelines of the visit. He disclosed there are more than 30 memoranda of understanding signed with Japan that will be implemented soon.

Addressing those present at the event, Hayat said "we bid farewell to the Chinese Amba-

sador after a busy period in serving the bilateral relations between the two countries. I am honored to convey the greetings of Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, whom I represent at this ceremony, as well as the greetings of Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the assistant foreign ministers, and all the Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff."

### Progress

On the other hand, Jianwei stated "over the past three years, bilateral relations with Kuwait have made tangible progress, especially in the implementation of agreements. We will work with the Kuwaiti side to implement these agreements, especially since we have noted with pleasure that some projects, such as Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, have made significant progress and are now well underway, thanks to the close cooperation between China and Kuwait."

On whether construction has resumed at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, he disclosed "the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port has entered the design and construction phase, and work will continue, because this is a very large project that requires a feasibility study. The designs are precise. Now, the first phase of the designs has begun. We are optimistic about the future of our cooperation on projects and in other sectors."

About the timing of the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project, he pointed out "major projects take time and years to implement. I believe that through close cooperation between the two countries, the project will proceed smoothly."

He also expressed his happiness over China's recent decision to exempt Kuwaiti citizens from entry visas, describing it as good news that reflects the strength of the relationship.



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah receives acting Director General of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) Engineer Khaled Dhawi Al-Otaibi.

## Talks held on PART plan for roads

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah received the acting Director General of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) Engineer Khaled Dhawi Al-Otaibi on Tuesday at his office in the governorate.

According to a press release issued by Farwaniya Governorate, they reviewed the most prominent road development projects in Farwaniya Governorate and discussed PART's plans for developing public roads in the coming period.

Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser praised PART's efforts in road development

and maintenance, calling for the completion of projects with the highest quality and safety standards.

Al-Otaibi in turn thanked the governor for his support and emphasized PART's commitment to aligning with the country's comprehensive development plans.

Al-Otaibi expressed his gratitude to the governor for the warm welcome, ongoing cooperation, and support for the relevant authorities' efforts in implementing projects and improving public services.

He affirmed PART's commitment to keeping pace with the country's comprehensive development plans.

# diwaniya

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## Specter of 'third world war' grows as global battles rage

"A SERBIAN student named Gavrilo (Gabriel) Princip played a pivotal role in triggering the outbreak of World War I. Rejected by Serbian military groups due to his short stature, Princip was determined to prove his courage. On June 28, 1914, during a visit to Sarajevo, Bosnia, Princip assassinated the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne Archduke Franz Ferdinand, and his wife," columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Ahmad Al-Dawas

"At the time, Bosnia and Herzegovina were under Austro-Hungarian rule. This assassination set off a chain reaction of events:

1. Austria declared war on Serbia.
2. Russia, which was allied with Serbia, grew angry at Austria.
3. Germany, allied with Austria, became angry at Russia.
4. France, allied with Russia, was angered by Germany's stance; Germany then declared war on France and invaded Belgium.
5. Belgium and Britain responded with anger toward Germany.
6. The Ottoman Empire sided with Germany in opposition to these countries.
7. The United States, Italy, Greece, Romania, and Portugal opposed the Ottoman Empire.

"Thus, World War I broke out in 1914 and continued until 1918. The war resulted in the deaths of 20 million soldiers and civilians, with eight million missing and 20 million wounded, in addition to massive material losses.

"Three major empires were involved in the war, and the consequences set the stage for World War II twenty years later, which claimed the lives of 60 million people. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was dismantled. Germany was defeated and suffered severe hyperinflation, creating conditions that brought a socialist dictator, Hitler, to power. Tsarist Russia collapsed, leading to the rise of communism and a brutal civil war.

"The Ottoman Empire disintegrated. What began as a minor dispute in southeastern Europe over an assassination escalated into a war among empires that resulted in the near-total devastation of Europe.

"Unwilling to accept defeat, Hitler triggered World War II, during which alliances shifted. Russia allied with the Western powers and joined the United States in opposing Hitler's ambitions and expansionism, ultimately defeating him. Japan surrendered after being struck by two atomic bombs, bringing the war to an end.

"In the aftermath of World War II's devastation, the United Nations was established with the primary goal of maintaining world peace.

"After millions of lives were lost, Europeans recognized the gravity of their past mistakes. Europe chose a new path - one that rejected the return to conflict and instead aimed for a better future.

"Today, however, there is growing concern about the possibility of a third world war. Three years ago, Russia launched an attack and occupied parts of eastern Ukraine. President Putin grew increasingly suspicious of NATO's intentions, viewing the alliance's expansion toward Russia's western borders as a threat. In an effort to halt NATO's advance and establish Ukraine as a buffer zone between Russia and a united Western front, including both European countries and the United States, he launched a war against Ukraine.

"In Asia, China continues to issue periodic threats of invading Taiwan and annexing the island. In response, the United States has issued military warnings, vowing to intervene if such an invasion occurs. Just a few days ago, a terrifying prophecy surfaced, warning of the possible outbreak of World War III, perhaps as soon as mid-2025.

"Currently, China, North Korea, and Iran are aligned with Russia. On the opposing side, Europe stands with the United States against Russia, and against China, should it move to occupy Taiwan. The present global tensions bear an unsettling resemblance to the alliance structures that preceded both World War I and World War II."

**Also:**

"His Highness the Crown Prince has strengthened the people's confidence in the wisdom of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. It is my honor to extend heartfelt congratulations to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah on the first anniversary of his assumption of office. I wish him continued success in serving Kuwait and its people under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah (may God protect him)," Major General Eng. **Mohammad Hashem Al-Saber** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"His Highness the Crown Prince has proven over the past year that his appointment to this senior position

was a resounding success, thanks to his wisdom, political insight, and clear vision in managing Kuwait's affairs, as well as his distinguished diplomatic and administrative career.

"We, the people of Kuwait, closely follow His Highness's dedicated efforts to strengthen the foundations of stability, promote transparency and cooperation, and consistently involve all segments of society in building Kuwait's bright future. On this cherished national occasion, we reaffirm our complete confidence in His Highness the Crown Prince and our united support for the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

"On this occasion, we renew our pledge of loyalty to our beloved country, praying to God Almighty to sustain Kuwait's security, safety, stability, growth, and prosperity. May God protect you, grant you good health, and bless you with continued wellness."

"The confessions of Iraqi judge Wael Abdul Latif might have gone unnoticed if they had not come at an exceptional time. He said, "There are Iraqi families who do not approve of the attack on Kuwait; they are in Basra, Baghdad, and other areas." What may bring us joy as Kuwaitis is that this admission comes from the mouth of someone who was known for launching unjust, unconfirmed, and undocumented campaigns that are recorded neither in history nor in official government records," Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Wael Abdul Latif was a judge during the era of the dictator Saddam Hussein, then rose to become a member of the Interim Governing Council after the fall of the Baathist regime. He had the opportunity to visit Kuwait in his capacity as a council member.

"As a judge, Abdul Latif is obligated to speak the truth, whether it is for or against him. However, his transgressions, distortions, and historical falsifications form an endless saga. Even now, with an upcoming election season, he does not hesitate to blame Kuwait for everything that befell Iraq during the era of the fallen Saddam regime.

"The duo - Wael Abdul Latif and Amer Abdul Jabbar - never spoke about anything other than Kuwait, claiming it was part of Iraqi territory, and rarely engaged in conversation or daily life beyond this obsession.

"This judge who once sat behind the bench, ruling according to what pleases God, as He says, "And when you judge between people, judge with justice." What kind of justice is there in violating the rights of a state, its people, and its government? Yet, when you defend your own country by attacking a neighboring one, do you really think no one will challenge you? When you slander others, you abandon the conscience of an honest judge and the dignity of the judicial seat.

"I say to this judge - Kuwait was never a village, nor were its borders as claimed by Al-Mutlaa. And, my brother, what is wrong if its borders are at Al-Mutlaa, or if it was once a village? Which country did not start as a village?"

"I say this: If the ignorant address you, Your Honor, the judge ignored the Neutral Zone that once separated Kuwait from Iraq. This zone was removed and divided between the two countries after Kuwait declared independence.

"There is a saying, "Speak the truth or remain silent." You claim there are Iraqi families who do not accept the attack. I say this is not unusual for two countries connected by many ties, one of which is perhaps blood relations.

"By the way, the late Aqila Al-Hashimi, whom you surely know, was a member of the Governing Council. She admitted in an interview with a Kuwaiti newspaper that she had family ties with Kuwaiti families and that she visited her relatives in Kuwait.

"The late Al-Hashimi is neither the first nor the only Iraqi with blood, genealogical, or familial ties to Kuwaiti families. Do not think that attacking Kuwait will secure your success in the upcoming November elections. Truth remains truth, even if you try to hide it behind an iron curtain. Iraqi voters are not naive enough to believe such nonsense. People have minds that think and eyes that see. Peace be upon Iraq from those who seek to climb on the shoulders of its people for personal gain.

"Greetings come sincerely, from the brotherhood that unites our two countries, and peace be upon the blood shed on the streets of Baghdad, Basra, and the southern and northern governorates. When I see on Baghdad TV the Kuwaiti screen icon Hayat Al-Fahad, standing on stage despite her pain to receive her award, it is not just an award for her, but an honor for Kuwait, for Kuwaiti artists, for Kuwaiti art, and its noble people. May those hostile to Kuwait be silenced."

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



Brigadier Meshal Fahad Al-Sabah meets Deputy Commander of the Qatari interior force (Lekhwiya), Major General Mohammad Al-Shahwani.

## Kuwait, Qatar seek security cooperation

DOHA, June 3, (KUNA): The chief of military inspection at the Kuwaiti Army, Brigadier Meshal Fahad Al-Sabah, on Monday discussed with the deputy commander of the Qatari interior force (Lekhwiya), Major General Mohammad Al-Shahwani, security cooperation, exchange of technical and field experience.

A statement by the Kuwaiti military indicated that the meeting was held during Brig. Fahad's visit to the Lekhwiya Camp, as part of an official visit to Qatar.

Brig. Fahad toured the military base, inspecting the various sections and the employed equipment.

# Al-Khalidi denies charges, refuses to appoint lawyer

Deportation for 6 expat restaurateurs

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, June 3: During a session at the Criminal Court on Monday, Salman Al-Khalidi denied charges of insulting Saudi Arabia and offending the Amir via his X social media account.**

When the court requested that he hire a lawyer for his defense, Al-Khalidi declined, saying, "I do not have a lawyer and I do not want one."

Despite his refusal, the court stressed the importance of legal representation and proceeded to appoint a lawyer on his behalf to review the case files.

The court scheduled the next hearing for June 16, during which the appointed lawyer will present Al-Khalidi's defense.

**6 expats for deportation:** Six expatriates were referred to the Administrative Deportation Department at the Interior Ministry, reports Al-Anba daily. Officers from the Residency Affairs Investigation Department apprehended these expatriates inside a restaurant in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh that was administratively closed by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF).

According to the detained individuals, they accessed the restaurant through a rear entrance that did not bear the official closure sticker. They claimed they only entered the premises to retrieve food and prevent it from spoiling.

A security source reported that the Operations Unit at the ministry received a tip-off that the sealed restaurant was unlawfully reopened. The information was relayed to the Residency Affairs Investigation

Department, which responded promptly and apprehended the six workers on-site.

A KFF representative emphasized that an administrative closure sticker strictly prohibits anyone from entering the premises under any circumstances, regardless of which door is used. The official warned that any expatriate found violating such orders will face administrative deportation, while citizens will be referred to the judiciary for legal action.

**Gov't cables stolen:** The Deputy Public Prosecutor has instructed forensic technicians to collect evidence left behind by unidentified thieves who stole high-value electrical cables from a government facility, reports Al-Anba daily.

The Criminal Investigation Department at the Interior Ministry has also been instructed to identify and arrest the perpetrators.

A theft case, classified as felony, was registered at Mutlaa Police Station.

According to a security source, a citizen born in 1986 and employed as a legal researcher at the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy reported the theft to the police station; where he presented an official mandate to do so from the ministry. He stated that the ministry detected a disruption in the electrical supply and dispatched technicians to investigate. Upon inspection, it was discovered that unidentified individuals stole power cables from Station No. 200, located in Mutlaa N2, Block 4.

The station houses four electrical transformers, each connected by seven cables -- totaling 28 cables. Each cable is 630 millimeters thick and seven meters long, with an estimated cost of KD154; bringing the total loss to around KD4,300.



KFF photo  
KFF personnel seals one of the facilities.

## Safety rules violated

## KFF shuts down many facilities in Al-Riggae

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) carried out an inspection campaign in Riggae on Monday evening in cooperation with the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN), the Environment Public Authority (EPA), and the Kuwait Municipality.

According to a press release issued by KFF, the campaign was aimed to monitor buildings and facilities that violate safety and fire prevention regulations.

The campaign resulted in the issuance of citations and the administrative closure of several facilities due to their failure to comply with the requirements of KFF and other entities.

Meanwhile, fire broke out in workers' housing chalets at the South Sabah Al-Ahmad Housing Project on Sunday afternoon, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Firefighters from Al-Kout, Arifjan, Nuwaiseeb, and Al-Isnad fire stations rushed to the location and controlled the fire. No casualties were reported.

## Cleaning up surroundings

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Public Relations Department at Kuwait Municipality announced the latest achievements of the Public Sanitation and Road Works Department at the Ahmadi Governorate branch, highlighting steps aimed at preserving the urban landscape and ensuring public safety, reports Al-Anba daily.

These achievements -- in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior -- include the removal of abandoned vehicles, mobile vendors, generators and any other items that obstructed roads or negatively affected the aesthetic appearance of the area. The campaign is part of ongoing field inspections in the entire governorate.

## Lawyers found in violation of rules face law

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: President of the Kuwait Lawyers Association (KLA) Adnan Abul affirmed that any lawyer found to have committed professional misconduct or violated the law governing the legal profession and its code of ethics will be held accountable.

He highlighted the society's pride in the vast majority of distinguished and competent lawyers.

Abul explained that legal action had been taken against one lawyer following a final criminal conviction. KLA filed a disciplinary case against this lawyer more than seven months ago, based on a recommendation from the Admissions Committee and due to the lawyer's failure to meet one of the requirements for registration with the society. Additional disciplinary cases are currently pending before the same committee due to professional violations.

He said the Admissions Committee regularly reviews all lawyer registrations, in line with the powers granted under the law regulating the profession, and the committee takes prompt and firm action when violations are confirmed.

Abul expressed the society's appreciation for the commitment of the Minister of Social Affairs, Family, and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, as well as the ministry's leadership, for their continued cooperation and coordination with KLA.

## Illegal shops, cafes closed

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Public Relations Department at Kuwait Municipality said the inspection teams in the Audit and Services Follow-up Department at the Municipality branch in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate recently carried out an intensive inspection campaign under the direct supervision of Director of the branch Eng. Hamoud Al-Mutairi, reports Al-Anba daily.

The department revealed that the campaign included the verification of shop and advertisement licenses, taking regulatory measures against those proven to have committed violations, and ensuring compliance with the relevant rules and regulations.

In this context, Al-Mutairi stated that the goal of the intensive inspection campaign is to uncover violations and take legal action against those who committed violations. He affirmed that his inspection team is focusing on violations in areas under their responsibility.

He added the supervisory team, which monitors shops and advertisements, carried out a field tour that resulted in the administrative closure of four shops and two cafes in Abu Al-Hasaniya as they were found to be operating in a manner that disrupted public order; in addition to two car dealer shops in West Abu Futaira Industrial Area due to their unlicensed use of an area in front of the shops.

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# Upward trend in salaries of Kuwaitis, residents: report

Considerable increase in public, private sectors

**KUWAIT CITY, June 3:** The average salary of Kuwaiti males increased by 0.5 percent -- from KD1,882 in 2023 to KD1,892 in 2024; while that of females increased by 0.8 percent -- from KD1,323 to KD1,334; reports Al-Rai daily quoting the most recent labor force statistics.

In the public sector, the average salary of Kuwaiti males increased by 0.1 percent -- from KD1,951 to KD1,953; while that of females increased by 0.65 percent -- from KD1,366 to KD1,375.

In the private sector, the average salary of males increased by 2.68 percent -- from KD1,600 to KD1,643; while that of females rose by 2.3 percent -- from KD1,042 to KD1,066.

According to the statistics, the average monthly salary of expatriates increased by 0.9

percent in 2024, rising to KD340, compared to KD337 in 2023. The rate increased by 1.33 percent in the government sector -- from KD752 to KD762 and by 0.94 percent in the private sector -- from KD317 to KD320.

The average salary of expatriate males increased by 0.63 percent -- from KD318 to KD320, while that of females increased by 0.8 percent -- from KD475 to KD479. In the public sector, the average salary of expatriate males rose by 1.38 percent -- from KD794 to KD805; while that of females increased by 1.4 percent -- from KD711 to KD721.

#### Private sector

In the private sector, the average salary of expatriate males increased by 0.98 percent -- from KD305 to KD308; while that of females increased by 0.47 percent -- from KD421 to KD423.

Moreover, the average monthly salary of Kuwaitis increased by 6.3 percent over the past five years -- from KD1,474 in 2020 to KD1,568 in 2024. In the public sector, their average salary increased by 4.8 percent,

compared to 13.27 percent in the private sector.

In general, the average salary of Kuwaiti males increased by 5.8 percent, while that of females increased by 7.14 percent.

In the government sector, the average salary of Kuwaiti males increased by 4.3 percent, while that of females increased by 5.6 percent.

In the private sector, the average salary of Kuwaiti males increased by 11.46 percent, while that of females increased by 13.64 percent.

On the other hand, the average monthly salary of expatriates within the same period increased by 6.9 percent -- KD318 in 2020 to KD340 in 2024. This rate increased by six percent in the government sector, while it increased by seven percent in the private sector.

The average salary for male expatriates increased by 6.3 percent and 3.67 percent for females. In the public sector, the average salary of males rose by 6.3 percent and for females by 5.8 percent. In the private sector, the average salary of males rose by 6.57 percent and for females by 5.22 percent.



KUNA photo  
Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah meets Kuwait embassy staff in Singapore.

## Diplomacy to serve interests of Kuwait, S'pore – minister

**KUALA LUMPUR, June 3, (KUNA):** Kuwait's Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah hailed on Monday Kuwait Embassy's diplomatic mission in Singapore, and its role in representing the country and boost cooperation.

A statement by the Ministry of Defense said, Sheikh Abdullah asserted, after his meeting with the diplomatic mission yes-

terday, on the importance of diplomacy, which would in turn serve joint interests of the two countries.

The statement noted the minister visit to Singapore comes as part of official visit to Singapore, and to partake in Asia 22nd security summit. The statement added Kuwait Ambassador to Singapore hosted a dinner banquet in honor of the minister's visit and his accompanying delegation.

Article-8 women get passports

## Number of traffic deaths drop by 55%; 83% lesser violations

**KUWAIT CITY, June 3:** The Ministry of Interior announced yesterday that traffic-related fatalities have decreased by 55 percent as per official statistics issued by the General Traffic Department, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

According to the statistics, traffic cameras recorded 28,464 violations in May 2025, compared to 168,208 violations (an 83 percent decrease) in the same month of 2024 prior to the implementation of the new traffic law. The recorded violations include speeding and running red lights. The statistics also showed a 75 percent drop in violations related to not wearing seatbelts and using mobile phones while driving, with 22,574 violations recorded in the first month of the law's enforcement, down from 89,153 the previous month.

Also, ten traffic-related deaths were recorded in May 2025, compared to 22

deaths in May 2024, which is a 55 percent decrease. In a separate development, the General Department for Nationality and Travel Documents has begun issuing passports to women whose Kuwaiti nationality was revoked under Article 8 of the Nationality Law. This measure will facilitate travel between June 1 and September 30 and allow them to regularize their status within a one-year grace period.

The department confirmed that passports are being issued by appointment only, which must be booked in advance through the Meta platform or the Sahel app.

Sources said women who have not previously surrendered their passports to the department may still travel with them during the four-month period specified by the Ministry of Interior.

'No parking at place for disabled'

## 1 month jail, driving license pulled

**KUWAIT CITY, June 3:** The Traffic Misdemeanor Court issued several rulings on the imprisonment of motorists found guilty of parking in spaces designated for persons with disabilities in violation of traffic regulations and the rights of individuals with special needs, reports Al-Anba daily.

In one important case, the court sentenced a citizen to one month in prison and suspended his driver's license for the same duration, despite it being his first offense. The violation was parking illegally in a disabled-designated space.

A source from the legal sector clarified that the court applied the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law No. 8/2010 rather than the newly enacted Traffic Law, as the offense occurred prior to the latter's implementation on April 22.

It is worth noting that:

■ Article 63 of Law No. 8/2010 states that anyone who unlawfully uses a parking space designated for persons with disabilities may face up to one month in prison, a fine of up to KD100 or both penalties.

■ Article 33 bis of the amended Traffic Law -- which took effect on April 22 -- stipulates harsher penalties; such as imprisonment ranging from one to three years and a fine between KD600 and KD1,000 or one of these two penalties, for similar violations. This is applicable without prejudice to any stricter penalties outlined in other laws.

The above-mentioned rulings affirmed the judiciary's commitment to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and enforce the appropriate legal consequences for traffic violations that impede their access and mobility.

## Mexican ambassador's message



Mexican Ambassador Eduardo Patricio Peña Haller in his office .

## 'Eid mubarak to Amir, Kuwaiti people'

ON behalf of the Government and the people of Mexico, I have the honour to extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes to His Highness Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Crown Prince, His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister, the Government and the friendly people of Kuwait on the blessed occasion of Eid Al-Adha coupled with our best wishes for continued well-being and success, and the friendly people of Kuwait further prosperity, progress and stability.

This sacred celebration is a time of reflection, generosity, and unity. It is a moment to honor shared values of compassion, solidarity, and peace. May this Eid bring joy to all Kuwaiti families and strengthen the bonds of friendship and understanding among our nations. Mexico and Kuwait enjoy a relationship founded on mutual respect, cooperation, and shared interests. Over the years, our two countries have strengthened ties through diplomatic dialogue, economic collaboration, and cultural exchange. We look forward to continuing this positive momentum and exploring new avenues to further deepen our partnership. Eid Mubarak!

"Wa Kullu Aam Wa Antum Bekhair"

**Eduardo Patricio Peña Haller**  
Ambassador

## More than 100 million transactions completed via 'Sahel'

**KUWAIT CITY, June 3:** Yousef Kazem, official spokesperson for the unified government e-services app (Sahel), revealed that more than 100 million e-transactions have been completed through the app since its launching on Sept 15, 2021, reports Al-Rai daily.

Kazem explained in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that this number reflects the growing demand for the app and users' confidence in government digital services. He indicated that the total number of notifications sent through the app has exceeded 282 million.

He added that 'Sahel' currently provides 454 e-services with the participation of 39

government agencies, indicating this is a qualitative shift that confirms the integration of agencies and their race towards digitization and facilitating procedures for citizens and expatriates.

He thanked the government agencies for their cooperation in launching services through the app and ease transactions for the public, reflecting a collective commitment to digitize government services and develop governmental performance.

He cited the huge support of Minister of State for Communication Affairs Omar Al-Omar and his commitment to monitor the application's development on a regular basis.

He said 'Sahel' is undergoing continuous development at the technical and service levels, with the aim of providing a seamless and integrated experience for users.

He stressed the need to improve the user experience by technically developing the application and expanding its scope to include integrated stages of an individual's life; such as marriage, residency and the process of obtaining a lifetime home document. He added this step aims to provide a comprehensive and effective digital experience that contributes to enhancing the efficiency of government performance according to the highest standards of security and reliability.

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## INTERNATIONAL



The south side of the Texas Capitol is seen on Jan 5, in Austin, Texas. (AP)

## Congressional Republicans push for proof of citizenship to vote proves tough sell in states

AUSTIN, Texas, June 3, (AP): US President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans have made it a priority this year to require people to prove citizenship before they can register to vote. Turning that aspiration into reality has proved difficult.

Trump's executive order directing a documentary, proof-of-citizenship requirement for federal elections has been blocked by a judge, while federal legislation to accomplish it doesn't appear to have the votes to pass in the Senate. At the same time, state-level efforts have found little success, even in places where Republicans control the legislature and governor's office.

The most recent state effort to falter is in Texas, where a Senate bill failed to gain full legislative approval before lawmakers adjourned on Monday. The Texas bill was one of the nation's most sweeping proof-of-citizenship proposals because it would have applied not only to new registrants but also to the state's roughly 18.6 million registered voters.

"The bill authors failed spectacularly to explain how this bill would be implemented and how it would be able to be implemented without inconveniencing a ton of voters," said Anthony Gutierrez, director of the voting rights group Common Cause Texas.

Voting by noncitizens is already illegal and punishable as a felony, potentially leading to deportation, but Trump and his allies have pressed for a proof-of-citizenship mandate by arguing it would improve public confidence in elections.

Before his win last year, Trump falsely claimed noncitizens might vote in large enough numbers to sway the outcome. Although noncitizen voting does occur, research and reviews of state cases has shown it to be rare and more often a mistake.

Voting rights groups say the various proposals seeking to require proof-of-citizenship are overly burdensome and threaten to disenfranchise millions of Americans. Many do not have easy access to their birth certificates, have not gotten a US passport or have a name that no longer matches the one on their birth certificate - such as women who changed their last name when they married.

The number of states considering bills related to proof of citizenship for voting tripled from 2023 to this year, said Liz Avore, senior policy adviser with the Voting Rights Lab, an advocacy group that tracks election legislation in the states.

That hasn't resulted in many new laws, at least so far. Republicans in Wyoming passed their own proof-of-citizenship legislation, but similar measures have stalled or failed in multiple GOP-led states, including Florida, Missouri, Texas and Utah. A proposal remains active in Ohio, although Gov. Mike DeWine, a Republican, has said he doesn't want to sign any more bills that make it harder to vote.

In Texas, the legislation swiftly passed the state Senate after it was introduced in March but never made it to a floor vote in the House. It was unclear why legislation that was such a priority for Senate Republicans - every one of them co-authored the bill -- ended up faltering.

"I just think people realized, as flawed as this playbook has been in other states, Texas didn't need to make this mistake," said Rep. John Bucy, a Democrat who serves as vice chair of the House elections committee.

Bucy pointed to specific concerns about married women who changed their last name. This surfaced in local elections earlier this year in New Hampshire, which passed a proof-of-citizenship requirement last year.

## San Diego Mayor Gloria 'deeply upset' by operation

## ICE head defends tactics against criticism of heavy hand as arrests rise nationwide

BOSTON, June 3, (AP): The head of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Monday defended his tactics against criticism that authorities are being too heavy-handed as they ramp up arrests toward US President Donald Trump's promises of mass deportations.

San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria said he was "deeply upset" by an ICE operation at a popular Italian restaurant just before the dinner rush on Friday. A chaotic showdown unfolded outside as customers and witnesses shouted, smoke filled the air, and agents wore heavy tactical gear to face an angry crowd.

Todd Lyons, ICE's acting director, turned emotional when asked to explain why officials wear masks. He said some have received death threats and been harassed online.

"I'm sorry if people are offended by them wearing masks, but I'm not going to let my officers and agents go out there and put their lives on the line, their family on the line because people don't like what immigration enforcement is," he said at a news conference in Boston to announce nearly 1,500 arrests in the region as part of a month-long "surge operation."

Lyons was leaving the room when a reporter asked him about the masks. He returned to the podium.

"Is that the issue here that we're just upset about the masks?" he asked. "Or is anyone upset about the fact that ICE officers' families were labeled terrorists?"

Lyons may have been referring to comments by San Diego Councilman Sean Elo-Rivera, who called ICE officers "terrorists" after Friday's restaurant raid. "This isn't safety. It's state-sponsored terrorism," Elo-Rivera wrote on Instagram.

The Department of Homeland Security reposted Elo-Rivera's message, saying that likening ICE to terrorists was "sickening." The councilman stuck by his comments on Monday.

Other elected officials, such as Gloria and US Rep Scott Peters of San Diego, both Democrats, were more muted but also sharply critical of ICE and the Republican White House.

"Federal actions like these are billed as a public safety measure, but it had the complete opposite effect. What we saw undermines trust and creates fear in our community," Gloria said.

ICE said Monday that the operation at Buona Forchetta, an anchor of San Die-



US Immigration and Customs Enforcement Acting Director Todd Lyons announces that his agency took nearly 1,500 immigrants into custody in Massachusetts over the month of May during a news conference at the John Joseph Moakley US Courthouse in Boston on June 2. (AP)

go's trendy South Park neighborhood, resulted in four arrests of people in the US illegally. Authorities executed criminal search warrants for illegal hiring and making false statements when the crowd "became unruly," prompting them to use flash-bang devices.

"When gatherings like these are formed, it not only places law enforcement in danger but also the demonstrators/onlookers attempting to impede law enforcement activity," ICE said in a statement.

The owners said they were closing their restaurants in Southern California for two days.

"We wish we could find stronger words, but the truth is we are heartbroken," the owners said in a statement. "The traumatic incident involving a federal enforcement operation at our original and beloved South Park location has left a mark on all of us. A wound that is still raw, still echoing in our kitchens, our dining rooms, and our hearts."

Lyons said in an interview on Fox & Friends Sunday that ICE was averaging about 1,600 arrests a day, a sharp increase from previous data that showed 78,155 arrests between Jan. 20 and May 19 - a daily average of 656. He said ICE can and will do more.

Stephen Miller, the key architect of Trump's immigration policy, last week set a goal of 3,000 arrests a day and said the number could go higher. That pace would be a huge challenge with current funding. ICE housed an average of more than 46,000 detainees during the first half of May, already above its budgeted capacity.

Lyons said operations like the surge in Massachusetts wouldn't be necessary if "sanctuary cities would change their policy." There's no legal definition for sanctuary city policies, but they generally limit cooperation by local law enforcement with federal immigration officers. Homeland Security published a list of more than 500 sanctuary jurisdictions but removed it from its website after criticism that it contained inaccuracies, even from its allies.

Lyons stood near a poster board with mug shots of unnamed immigrants. A full list of those arrested was not available, nor was information about the crimes specific individuals are accused of committing.

Lyons called them "dangerous criminals" who are "terrorizing family, friends and our neighbors."

State, local and federal authorities participated in a raid Saturday at a South Carolina nightclub that officials said was popular with drug dealers, resulting in the arrests of 66 people who were in the country illegally. Cardell Morant, special agent in charge of Homeland Security Investigations in South Carolina and North Carolina, said the 3 a.m. operations came during a "cartel after-party."

Officials did not release additional details about the charges being faced by those who were arrested during the raid in Charleston County.

## Poland's PM Tusk says confidence vote on government to take place June 11

WARSAW, Poland, June 3, (AP): Poland's Prime Minister Donald Tusk said Tuesday that parliament will hold a confidence vote on his government on June 11, as the country faces a "new political reality."

He called for the vote after his political ally, the liberal Warsaw mayor, lost Poland's weekend presidential election to conservative Karol Nawrocki.

"We are starting the session in a new political reality," Tusk said, at the start of a Cabinet meeting in Warsaw. "The political reality is new, because we have a new president. But the constitution, our obligations and the expectations of citizens have not changed. In Poland, the government rules, which is a great obligation and honor."

Tusk's government runs most of the day-to-day matters in Poland. It also exists separately from the presidency, but the president holds power to veto laws and influence foreign policy, and Nawrocki's win will make it extremely difficult for Tusk to press his pro-European agenda.

There are already questions about whether Tusk's fragile coalition can survive until the next scheduled parliamentary election at the end of 2027. Some of his political opponents are calling for him to step down.



The liberal presidential candidate Rafal Trzaskowski (front left), waves as he and Polish prime minister Donald Tusk, front right, take part in a march one week ahead of a decisive presidential election in Warsaw, Poland on May 25. (AP)

The decision to call a confidence vote is apparently an attempt by Tusk to try to reassert authority in a shifting political situation where some of his coalition partners might be less likely to want to stick with him.

Tusk oversees a coalition of several parties spanning an ideological divide, from left-wing progressives to centrists to agrarian conservatives. The divided coalition has failed to agree on some issues and

the government has failed to fulfill some of Tusk's key promises, including a liberalization of the restrictive abortion law.

Nawrocki, who was supported by US President Donald Trump, won 50.89% of votes in a tight race against Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski, who received 49.11%.

The election revealed deep divisions in the country along the eastern flank of NATO and the European Union.

## Zelensky condemns 'brutal' Russian rocket attack after three killed in Ukrainian city

KYIV, Ukraine, June 3, (AP): A Russian attack on the Ukrainian city of Sumy on Tuesday, in which at least three people were killed and many others injured, was described by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as "brutal."

According to authorities, a barrage of multiple rockets struck apartment buildings and a medical facility in the center of the northeastern city a day after direct peace talks made no progress on ending the 3-year war.

Zelenskyy said one of the rockets fired at Sumy pierced the wall of an apartment building but failed to detonate.

"That's all you need to know about Russia's 'desire' to end this war," Zelenskyy wrote in a post on Telegram. "It is clear that without global pressure, without decisive action from the United States, Europe, and everyone in the world who holds power, (Russian President Vladimir) Putin will not agree even to a ceasefire."

At talks in Istanbul on Monday, delegations from the warring countries agreed to swap dead and wounded troops. But their terms for ending the war remained far apart.

The war has killed more than 12,000 Ukrainian civilians, according to the United Nations, as well as tens of thousands of soldiers on both sides along the roughly 1,000-kilometer



In this photo provided by Ukraine's 127th Separate Brigade of the Territorial Defence press service, soldiers fire a canon towards Russian army positions near Kharkiv, Ukraine on June 2. (AP)

(620-mile) front line where the war of attrition is grinding on despite US-led efforts to broker a peace deal.

Though Russia has a bigger army and more economic resources than Ukraine, a spectacular Ukrainian drone attack that Ukrainian officials said damaged or destroyed more than 40 warplanes at air bases deep inside Russia was a serious blow to the Kremlin's strategic arsenal and its

military prestige.

Both Zelenskyy and Putin have been eager to show US President Donald Trump that they share his ambition to end the fighting, thereby aiming to avoid possible punitive measures from Washington. Ukraine has accepted a US-proposed ceasefire, but the Kremlin effectively rejected it. Putin has made it clear that any peace settlement has to be on his terms.

## Europe

**Baerbock elected UN General Assembly prez:** Former German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock was elected President of the General Assembly's 80th session on Monday. She assumes the role at a challenging time, with ongoing conflicts, faltering development goals, mounting financial pressures, and the upcoming selection of the next Secretary-General.

Baerbock received 167 votes following the secret ballot. Write-in candidate Helga Schmid (also from Germany) received seven. Fourteen delegations abstained.

She becomes the first woman from the Western European group to hold the post and the fifth woman overall to lead the General Assembly. The presidency rotates among the world body's five regional groups.

At 44 years, Baerbock is also one of the youngest leaders to secure the top job.

Baerbock's election comes at a critical juncture for the multilateral system, spearheaded by the United Nations.

With the Security Council deadlocked - especially on moves to help end the wars in Ukraine and Gaza - the Assembly has become a vital forum for diplomatic engagement and consensus-building, even without binding authority on peace and security issues. As conflicts rage, the Assembly has passed a series of resolutions calling for ceasefires, humanitarian access and the protection of civilians.

Many now see the Assembly as an essential platform

for accountability and maintaining international focus on intractable crises, especially through the "Veto Initiative" adopted in 2022 which ensures that issues blocked by permanent members on the Security Council are debated in the Assembly as a priority.

A power wielded by the five permanent members - China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States - a veto (or negative vote) can block Council action even when all other members support a motion. (KUNA)

**'Abuse in int'l adoptions dating back decades':** A Swedish commission recommended Monday that international adoptions be stopped after an investigation found a series of abuses and fraud dating back decades.

Sweden is the latest country to examine its international adoption policies after allegations of unethical practices, particularly in South Korea.

The commission was formed in 2021 following a report by Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter detailing Sweden's problematic international adoption system. Monday's recommendations were sent to Minister of Social Services Camilla Waltersson Grönvall, who said her department would review the report.

"The assignment was to investigate whether there had been irregularities that the Swedish actors knew about, could have done and actually did," Anna Singer, a legal expert and the head of the commission, told a news conference. "And actors include everyone who has had anything to do with international adoption activities."

"It includes the government, the supervisory authority, organization, municipalities and courts. The conclusion is that there have been irregularities in the international adoptions to Sweden." (AP)



Baerbock

## Dutch prime minister to lead caretaker administration until new elections

THE HAGUE, Netherlands, June 3, (AP): Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof said Tuesday his coalition government will become a caretaker administration after far-right lawmaker Geert Wilders pulled his ministers out of the Cabinet in a dispute about a migration crackdown.

The announcement completed a day of political turmoil in The Hague sparked by Wilders' decision to turn his back on the ruling coalition.

Schoof said he would offer the resignation of ministers from Wilders' Party for Freedom to the Dutch king. He and the other ministers will remain in office in a caretaker capacity, he told reporters.

The decision means the Netherlands will have a caretaker government when it hosts a summit of NATO leaders in three weeks.

No date for a new election has been set, but it is unlikely before the fall. Schoof, a career civil servant who was handpicked by Wilders a year ago to lead the government, said he had repeatedly said to coalition leaders



Far-right lawmaker Geert Wilders after pulling his party out of the four-party Dutch coalition in The Hague, Netherlands on June 3. (AP)

in recent days that bringing down the government would be "unnecessary and irresponsible." "We are facing major challenges nationally and interna-

tionally and, more than ever, decisiveness is required for the safety of our resilience and the economy in a rapidly changing world," Schoof said.

Wilders announced his decision early Tuesday in a message on X after a brief meeting in parliament of leaders of the four parties that make up the fractious administration.

Wilders told reporters that he was withdrawing his support for the coalition and pulling his ministers out of the Cabinet over its failure to act on his desire for a clampdown on migration.

"I signed up for the toughest asylum policy and not the downfall of the Netherlands," said Wilders, whose Party for Freedom is still riding high in Dutch opinion polls, though the gap with the center-left opposition is negligible. Coalition partners rejected that argument, saying they all support cracking down on migration.

Dilan Yesilgöz, leader of the right-wing People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, said before the meeting that Schoof urged the leaders to act responsibly.

1 killed in sewing factory fire

## Joint exit poll shows Lee forecast to win South Korean snap presidential election

SEOUL, South Korea, June 3, (Agencies): Liberal candidate Lee Jae-myung is forecast to win South Korea's snap presidential election, a joint exit poll on Tuesday showed, two months after his archival and then conservative President Yoon Suk Yeol was removed from office over his short-lived imposition of martial law.

The exit poll by South Korea's three major TV stations -- KBS, MBC and SBS -- showed Lee projected to obtain 51.7% of the total votes cast, beating main conservative candidate Kim Moon Soo on 39.3%.

Pre-election surveys also suggested Lee, the Democratic Party candidate, appeared headed for an easy win, riding on deep public frustration over the conservatives in the wake of Yoon's martial law debacle. Kim has struggled to win over moderate, swing voters as his People Power Party remains in a quagmire of internal feuding over how to view Yoon's actions.

As the exit poll was announced, Democratic Party members cheered and applauded in jubilant scenes at a party hall, chanting Lee's name. At Kim's party headquarters, lawmakers sat in silence.

Voting began at 6 a.m. local time at 14,295 polling stations nationwide and closed at 8 p.m. Nearly 80% of the country's 44.4 million eligible voter cast ballots, according to an ongoing tally. That's one of the highest turnouts for a presidential election in South Korea and reflected public eagerness to move past the political turmoil.

The election serves as another defining moment in the country's resilient democracy, but observers worry a domestic divide worsened after Yoon's martial law stunt is far from over and could pose a big political burden on the new president.

The past six months saw large crowds of people rallying in the streets to either denounce or support Yoon, while a leadership vacuum caused by Yoon's impeachment and ensuing formal dismissal rattled the country's high-level diplomatic activities and financial markets.

The winning candidate will immediately be sworn in as president Wednesday for a single, full term of five years without the typical two-month transition period.

The new president will face major challenges including a slowing economy, U.S. President Donald Trump's America-first policies and North Korea's evolving nuclear threats.

In a Facebook posting earlier Tuesday, Lee, whose Democratic Party led the legislative effort to oust Yoon, called for voters to "deliver a stern and resolute judgement" against the conservatives over martial law.

In one of his final campaign speeches Monday, Lee argued that a win by Kim



Former South Korean president Yoon Suk Yeol arrives to cast his vote for the presidential election at a polling station in Seoul, South Korea on June 3. (AP)

would mean the "the return of the rebellion forces, the destruction of democracy and the deprivation of people's human rights." He also promised to revitalize the economy, reduce inequality and ease national divisions. He urged the people to vote for him.

Kim, a former labor minister under Yoon, warned that a Lee win would allow him to wield excessive power, launch political retaliation against opponents and legislate laws to protect him from various legal troubles, as his party already controls parliament.

Lee "is now trying to seize all power in South Korea and establish a Hitler-like dictatorship," Kim told a rally in the southeastern city of Busan.

Lee, who served as governor of Gyeonggi province and mayor of Seongnam city, has been a highly divisive figure in South Korean politics for years.

As a former child laborer known for his inspirational rags-to-riches story, Lee

came to fame through biting criticism of the country's conservative establishment and calls to build a more assertive South Korea in foreign policy. That rhetoric has given him an image as someone who can institute sweeping reforms and fix the country's deep-seated economic inequality and corruption.

On foreign policy, Lee has not made any contentious remarks recently and has steadfastly vowed to pursue pragmatic diplomacy. He has called South Korea's alliance with the US the foundation of its foreign policy and promised to solidify a trilateral Seoul-Washington-Tokyo partnership, a stance that is not much different than the position held by South Korea's conservatives.

Experts say there aren't many diplomatic options for South Korea as it tries to address Trump's tariff hikes and calls for South Korea to pay more for the cost of the US military presence, as well as North Korea's headlong pursuit of nuclear weapons. Experts say that has made both Lee and Kim avoid unveiling ambitious foreign policy goals.

Lee's government still could become engaged in "a little bit of friction" with the Trump administration, while Kim's government, which prioritizes relations with Washington, will likely offer more concessions to the US, said Chung Jin-young, a former dean of the Graduate School of Pan-Pacific International Studies at South Korea's Kyung Hee University.

Chung predicted Lee won't be able to pursue overly drastic steps on foreign policy and security, given the country's foreign exchange and financial markets are very vulnerable to such changes.

Lee has preached patience over Trump's tariff policy, arguing it would be a mistake to rush negotiations in pursuit of an early agreement with Washington. Kim has said he would meet Trump as soon as possible.

On Monday, South Korean trade officials held an emergency meeting to discuss a response to Trump's announcement that the US will raise tariffs on steel and aluminum products to 50% beginning June 4.

### Also:

**SEOUL:** One woman was killed in South Korea's sewing factory fire in the capital Seoul on Tuesday, according to Yonhap news agency.

The fire broke out at about 9:35 am local time (0035 GMT) from the sewing factory on the second floor of a five-story building in Seoul for an unidentified reason.

One woman was killed and seven others were rescued from the flames. The fire authorities mobilized 15 vehicles and 55 firefighters to extinguish the fire.



Then China's Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) Xu Qiliang speaks to then German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen during their meeting at the Ba Yi Building in Beijing on Oct 22 2018. (AP)

### Former top Chinese general dies

Xu Qiliang, a former air force general who was reportedly close to Chinese leader Xi Jinping, has died at age 75, according to the Defense Ministry.

Xu had been a vice commissioner of the body that oversees the People's Liberation Army, the military branch of China's ruling Communist Party, during Xi's first few years in government.

China's ultimate leader was at the time incorporating the army and navy into leadership bodies long dominated by the land forces.

Xu was an "excellent Communist Party of China member, a time-tested and loyal communist soldier, a proletarian military strategist, and an outstanding leader of the People's Liberation Army," said a statement issued by the ministry. Xu joined the PLA in 1966 just as China was plunged into the violent decade-long Cultural Revolution under Communist China's founder Mao Zedong. (AP)

## Cambodia to take border dispute with Thailand to top UN court

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, June 3, (AP): Cambodia said it plans to seek a ruling from the UN's International Court of Justice over border disputes with Thailand, one of which triggered a fatal military clash last week.

Cambodia's National Assembly, where Prime Minister Hun Manet's ruling Cambodian People's Party holds all but a handful of seats, voted on Monday to support the government's decision.

In 1962, the ICJ awarded to Cambodia the disputed territory on which a historic temple is located, rankled Thailand and to this day remains a major irritant in bilateral relations. The ICJ reaffirmed its ruling in 2013.

Speaking on Monday at a meeting of the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Thailand's Foreign

Minister Maris Sangiampongsa said Cambodia has the right to file a case with the court, but that would not affect talks between the two countries under existing mechanisms. He said Thai officials will meet later this week to issue a clear stance on the matter.

Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai, who is also defense minister, said in a post on Facebook that both countries are working to resolve the crisis by avoiding further confrontations and violence.

"I'd like to assure that we will avoid escalation of the conflict that would only result in losses for both sides in every aspect," he wrote.

A border dispute near Morokot village, in Cambodia's northwestern province of Preah Vihear, on May 28 left one Cambodian soldier dead. It began when Cambodian troops were conducting a routine patrol along the border when the Thai side opened fire, according to Cambodian officials.

The Thai army says that Cambodian soldiers entered a disputed patch of land and opened fire when Thai soldiers approached them to negotiate.



Hun Manet



Mongolian Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai walks past journalists as he arrives to vote at a polling station in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on June 28, 2024. (AP)

### Mongolia's premier resigns

Mongolia's prime minister resigned early Tuesday after he failed to receive enough support in a vote of confidence in parliament, Mongolian media reported. The country's embassy in Washington confirmed it.

Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai received 44 votes, well short of the 64 needed, according to news site ikon.mn.

The vote followed weeks of protests sparked by reports of lavish spending by the prime minister's son. Some called for the prime minister to step down.

Before the vote, Oyun-Erdene warned that the vote could lead to instability and shake Mongolia's fledgling democracy.

"If governance becomes unstable, the economic situation deteriorates, and political parties cannot come to consensus. It could lead the public to lose faith in parliamentary rule and potentially put our democratic parliamentary system at risk of collapse," he said. (AP)



Cars drive along a highway as a cloud of dust from the Sahara Desert blankets most of the Caribbean, in Cataño, Puerto Rico on June 2, (AP)

### Colossal cloud of Sahara dust smothering Caribbean en route to US

A massive cloud of dust from the Sahara Desert blanketed most of the Caribbean on Monday in the biggest event of its kind this year as it heads toward the United States.

The cloud extended some 2,000 miles (3,200 kilometers) from Jamaica to well past Barbados in the eastern Caribbean, and some 750

miles (1,200 kilometers) from the Turks and Caicos Islands in the northern Caribbean down south to Trinidad and Tobago.

"It's very impressive," said Alex DaSilva, lead hurricane expert with AccuWeather.

The hazy skies unleashed sneezes, coughs and watery eyes across the Caribbean, with local forecast-

ers warning that those with allergies, asthma and other conditions should remain indoors or wear face masks if outdoors.

The dust concentration was high, at .55 aerosol optical depth, the highest amount so far this year, said Yidiana Zayas, a forecaster with the National Weather Service in San Juan, Puerto Rico. (AP)

## 2 suspected terrorists dead in Uganda bomb explosion

KAMPALA, June 3, (Xinhua): Ugandan police have urged the public to remain calm and continue with their normal activities as security forces investigate a bomb explosion that occurred Tuesday near a church in Munyonyo, a suburb of the capital, Kampala. Inspector General of Police Abbas Byakagaba told reporters at the scene that various security agencies had been deployed to conduct a thorough investigation. He confirmed that no civilians were injured or killed in the incident, apart from the two suspected terrorists who were riding a motorcycle.

"It is too early to give anything tangible. We ask our people to remain alert, to be conscious of the environment around them. The situation is under control and let them continue with celebration of Martyrs' Day and all other activities. We assure them of security," Byakagaba said.

Earlier, military spokesperson Chris Magezi told Xinhua by telephone that the army had killed two suspected suicide bombers, one of them a woman. Magezi said an explosive device went off during an attempt to intercept the suspects.



Detectives and forensic investigators work at the scene of a suspected explosive attack in Kampala, Uganda on June 3. (AP)

## 7 terrorists killed in military operations

### Over 100 inmates escape from Pakistan jail

KARACHI, Pakistan, June 3, (Agencies): More than 100 inmates escaped from a prison and at least one was killed in a shootout in the southern Pakistani city of Karachi overnight after they were temporarily moved out of their cells following mild earthquake tremors, officials said Tuesday.

Kashif Abbasi, a senior police official, said 216 inmates fled the prison in the capital of Sindh province before dawn. Of those, 78 had been captured. No one convicted or facing trial as a militant is among those who fled, he said.

One prisoner was killed and three security officials were wounded in the ensuing shootout, but the situation has been brought under control, Abbasi said, adding that police are conducting raids to capture the remaining escapees.

Ziaul Hassan, the home minister of Sindh province, said the jailbreak occurred after prisoners were evacuated from their cells for safety during the earthquake. The inmates were still outside of the cells when a group suddenly attacked guards, seized their weapons, opened fire and fled.

The superintendent of Malir prison, Arshad Shah, said the inmates fled toward a nearby residential area. According to residents, police later used mosque loudspeakers to alert them to the jailbreak and seek help in arresting



Police officers and paramilitary soldiers stand guard outside the district Malir prison, from where more than 100 inmates escaped overnight, in Karachi, Pakistan on June 3. (AP)

the escapees.

### Also:

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan's security forces killed seven terrorists in two separate intelligence-based operations (IBOs) in the country's southwestern Balochistan province, the military said on Tuesday.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistan army, said that five terrorists

were eliminated in the Mach area of Kachi district of the province.

Troops launched a swift operation and engaged the militants' hideout, eliminating all five after an intense exchange of fire.

In another operation conducted in the Margard area of Kalat district, two more terrorists affiliated with the same group were killed when their hideout was located and destroyed by security forces.

### Lat/Am

**'Arrest Colombian officials':** A Guatemalan court ordered Monday the arrests of Colombia's attorney general and a former Colombian defense minister who led a UN anti-corruption mission in Guatemala.

Guatemalan prosecutor Rafael Curruchiche, who himself has been sanctioned by the United States and other countries for allegedly interfering in corruption investigations, had requested that an appeals court issue the arrest orders for Colombia's top prosecutor Luz Adriana Camargo Garzón, who was the chief of investigations of the Guatemala mission, and Iván Velásquez, who had led the mission and later was Colombia's defense minister.

Curruchiche said Camargo and Velásquez had committed illicit association during their investigation into bribes paid to Guatemalan officials by Brazilian construction giant Odebrecht.

Along with former Guatemalan prosecutors working with the UN mission, Velásquez and Camargo were part of "a criminal structure led by the former CICIG commissioner," using the Spanish initials of the U.N. mission, Curruchiche alleged.



Velásquez

Curruchiche had long ago focused his investigation on an agreement the anti-corruption prosecutors had signed with Odebrecht that would offer reduced penalties in exchange for the company's cooperation in the investigation. His boss, Prosecutor General Consuelo Porras, has also been sanctioned by the U.S. and other governments for blocking corruption investigations. Last week, a U.N. expert warned her office was using criminal law to pursue enemies.

Velásquez responded via X after learning of the accusations. (AP)

**Morena headed toward control over SC:** Mexico's ruling Morena party appeared to be heading toward control over the Supreme Court, preliminary vote tallies of the country's first judicial election indicated.

While votes were still being counted for the majority of the 2,600 federal, state and local judge positions up for grabs in Sunday's judicial elections, results rolled in for the nine Supreme Court positions.

The majority of the newly elected justices share strong ties and ideological alignments with the ruling party, shifting a once fairly balanced high court into the hands of the very party that overhauled the judicial system to elect judges for the first time. Experts warned the shift would undercut checks and balances in the Latin American nation: The governing party would now be close to controlling all three branches of government, and President Claudia Sheinbaum and her party also would have an easier path to push through their agenda. (AP)

## Kuwait crude oil rises 95 cents to \$64.56

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil gained 95 cents during Monday's trading to reach USD 64.56 per barrel compared with 63.61 pb last Friday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said Tuesday. Brent futures rose USD 1.85 to USD 64.63 pb and West Texas Intermediate increased by 1.73 to USD 62.52 pb.

# Business

In partnership with Kuwait News, Kuwait Times, INJAZ Kuwait, and V-Thru

## Sixth season of the Zain Summer Program kicks-off

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Zain announced the kick-off of the sixth season of its Youth Summer Program, one of the company's flagship initiatives under its community strategy to empower the next generation of national talent in the private sector and prepare a creative workforce capable of succeeding and excelling in today's dynamic job market.

This year's edition comes in partnership with the Kuwait News media organization, Kuwait Times English daily, INJAZ Kuwait, and for the first time, V-Thru, Kuwait's leading virtual drive-thru platform, offering participants new hands-on training experiences in digital marketing, smart operations, and the logistics sector.

The program will host 35 university students from various majors in a one-month journey that combines fieldwork, hands-on training, and workshops focused on personal and professional skills, all within an interactive environment designed to reflect the needs of the fast-evolving digital job market.

Commenting on the launch, Hamad Al-Musaibeeh, Corporate Relations Department Manager at Zain Kuwait, said: "We're proud to launch a new season of our summer program, which has become a highly anticipated annual milestone for ambitious youth. It's not just a training opportunity, but a holistic platform for developing professional and leadership skills and guiding participants toward careers aligned with their talents and ambitions. Our growing partnerships with leading local organizations reflect our



Scan the code to sign up.

commitment to expanding the program's scope and impact year after year."

He added: "This year, the program offers four core training tracks. The first is the field track at Zain's retail branches across Kuwait, where participants will be trained in customer service, marketing, sales, and teamwork. The second is the media track in collaboration with Kuwait News and Kuwait Times, where participants will explore content creation, editing, journalism, and photography & videography."

Al-Musaibeeh continued: "In addition, we have the career skills track in partnership with INJAZ Kuwait, which includes intensive workshops on leadership, communication, career planning, and job market readiness. Finally, the new technical and operations track in collaboration with V-Thru offers students practical experience in a startup environment, with exposure to digital marketing and logistics opera-



Hamad Al-Musaibeeh, Jana Al-Naqeeb, Jaber Ashkanani, and Abdullah Al-Shalabi announce the launch of the program.

tions."

Jana Khaldoun Al-Naqeeb, Director of PR and CSR at Kuwait News and Kuwait Times, commented: "Our continued collaboration with Zain in this program for the second year running stems from our belief in the importance of involving youth in shaping media messages and providing them with the tools to understand the media's impact. This season, we'll focus on nurturing creativity and initiative among students through editorial and field experiences that reflect their authentic voices."

Jaber Ashkanani, Director of Business Development and Strategic Partnerships at INJAZ Kuwait, stated: "We are pleased to continue this strategic partnership with Zain, which spans over 20 years of collaboration aimed at

preparing a well-informed generation capable of facing future challenges and the job market."

He added: "This year, we are especially delighted to collaborate on delivering the 'My Career Path' program for enrolled youth, which focuses on developing leadership skills, creative problem-solving, as well as verbal and written communication skills, among other competencies that help young people become qualified, professional contributors to the workforce."

"At V-Thru, we believe it's our responsibility to pass on the knowledge, experience, and values we've gained through building one of Kuwait's fastest-growing tech startups," said Abdullah Al-Shalabi, Co-Founder and CEO of V-Thru. "This initiative reflects our commitment to investing

### Hamad Al-Musaibeeh:

"The program is an annual platform to develop youth skills and guide them toward career paths that match their talents and ambitions."

### Jana Al-Naqeeb:

"We believe in involving youth in shaping media messaging and understanding the media's role in influence and change."

### Jaber Ashkanani:

"Through our partnership with Zain, we aim to prepare a generation capable of facing future challenges and the job market."

### Abdullah Al-Shalabi:

"Together, we are building a base of future leaders who will contribute to advancing Kuwait's innovation ecosystem."

in local youth and preparing them to thrive in a digital-first economy."

"In turn, we gain valuable insights from this generation, their perspectives help us understand the evolving needs of tomorrow's market. The program also serves as a strong recruitment channel: several of our top-performing employees started as interns."

He added: "This partnership with Zain allows us to scale our impact by reaching even more students and fresh graduates, giving them hands-on exposure to real-world challenges in technology, operations, marketing, and customer experience. Together, we're not just creating internship opportunities, we're building a pipeline of future leaders for Kuwait's innovation ecosystem."

Zain's Summer Program is held under the umbrella of its youth empowerment platform Future University Network (FUN), one of the company's longest-running sustainable initiatives launched in 2008. Hundreds of students have benefited from the program over the years, many of whom later joined Zain's workforce after graduation as full-time employees.

In the program's last edition, participants completed over 90 training hours across various fields. The program achieved remarkable success, reflected in the valuable feedback shared by students and Zain's partners, further underscoring the importance of continuing and expanding this initiative to meet the evolving aspirations of future generations.



Over 50 students engaged in traffic safety awareness.

Empowering the next generation for safer roads

## ALSAYER Group fosters road safety education at Bayan Bilingual School

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: As part of its unwavering commitment to promoting safety, sustainability, and community well-being, ALSAYER Group has once again taken the lead by delivering an impactful road safety awareness session at Bayan Bilingual School. The initiative, which engaged and inspired more than 50 students, underscores the Group's dedication to fostering a culture of responsibility & care among Kuwait's youth.

Recognizing that traffic accidents remain one of the leading causes of injury and death worldwide, ALSAYER Group designed the session to emphasize the critical importance of following road safety rules, both as pedestrians and passengers. The program not only highlighted the life-saving benefits of responsible behaviors, such as reducing accidents, preventing fatalities, and promoting safer communities, but also addressed the harsh consequences of ignoring traffic regulations, including injuries, legal penalties & long-term societal costs.

A standout feature of the session was its focus on empowering children to become ambassadors of safety within their families and social circles. We have emphasized how young people can positively influence their parents and loved ones by encouraging them to respect traffic laws, wear seatbelts & adopt safe driving habits. This "child-to-parent" influence creates a ripple effect, amplifying the reach & impact of road safety messages beyond the classroom.

To ensure that the learning experience was engaging, educational, and enjoyable, the Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility (CSR) team at ALSAYER organized an

interactive quiz. Students eagerly participated, answering questions that tested their knowledge of road safety rules and best practices. The lively interaction not only reinforced key messages but also made the session memorable and fun for all involved. Every student proudly took part in the Road Safety Pledge, publicly committing to always follow the rules, buckle their seatbelts, and encourage those around them to stay vigilant and cautious on the roads. This collective promise marked an important moment, reinforcing the students' roles as responsible, attentive & safety-conscious young citizens.

Eng. Nehad Al-Haj Ali, Group Manager of Corporate Excellence at ALSAYER Group, confirmed that "Raising awareness among young people is not just about teaching them the rules, it's about planting the seeds of responsibility and care. When children become advocates for safety, they influence their families and communities, creating a ripple effect that strengthens positive behavior and helps build a safer, more conscientious society. These programs are essential for driving long-term cultural change."

ALSAYER Group has long been a champion of youth-centered initiatives, believing that today's young people are tomorrow's leaders. We continue to demonstrate our strong corporate values and deep commitment to making a lasting difference across Kuwaiti society and to support the well-being of the community, working hand in hand with schools, families, and public institutions to create a safer, healthier & more sustainable future for all.

## Weway Bank reactivates digital Eidiya on its app using 'Wamd' & 'Eidiya Link'

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: In keeping with its tradition of bringing a modern, digital touch to customers' various needs, Weway Bank, Kuwait's first digital bank, provides its digital Eidiya service for its customers, just in time for Eid Al-Adha. This service allows users to effortlessly send and receive Eidiyas via the Weway Bank's app, leveraging the convenience of "Wamd" by KNET and "Eidiya Link".

This initiative underscores Weway Bank's commitment to simplifying daily financial transactions for its customers and delivering a seamless, innovative digital banking experience that meets their diverse needs. Using the Weway app, the days of cash Eidiya are over; Eidiya can now be sent from anywhere, at any time, making celebrations even more convenient and joyful. A Seamless Digital Gifting Experience via "Wamd" and "Eidiya Link".

Weway Bank stands out by enhancing its digital Eidiya service through two flexible and rapid options:

■ Eidiya via "Wamd": Weway customers can send Eidiya instantly using the "Wamd" service. This feature provides a unique experience, ensuring speed and security in transferring Eidiya directly between bank accounts, with funds arriving in a matter of seconds.

■ Eidiya via "Eidiya Link": For the third consecutive year, Weway Bank continues to offer its "Eidiya Link" service. This allows senders to request Eidiyas from their loved ones via a secure link generated directly from the Weway app. Senders can personalize the link with a custom greeting message, and the link recipient can easily decide the Eidiya amount to be given.

Empowering the Next Generation Digitally

Weway Bank places significant importance on equipping future generations with essential digital financial skills. For this



Weway Bank launches digital Eidiya for Eid Al-Adha.

reason, the Eidiya service is also available to "Jeel" cardholders, catering to children aged 8 to 14 years old. This step aims to foster digital financial literacy from a young age, enabling them to confidently interact with digital payment tools. This contributes to building a financially savvy generation for the future. Moreover, the "Jeel" card offers exclusive deals and benefits tailored to this age group, covering various categories like restaurants, toy stores, and entertainment venues, which are perfect for enjoying time during the Eid holiday and the upcoming summer break.

## Boursa Kuwait ends in red

General index falls 33 points

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Tuesday's session in the red, with the General Index dropping 33.01 points (0.41%) to 8,114.85. Trading volume reached 385.4 million shares across 22,290 deals, totaling KD 100.9 million (approx. \$1 million).

The Main Market Index declined 52.12 points

(0.75%) to 6,906.31, with 138.7 million shares traded in 7,909 transactions worth KD 16.3 million (approx. \$50 million).

The Premier Market Index shed 29.88 points (0.34%) to close at 8,817.26, as 246.7 million shares changed hands in 14,381 trades, totaling KD 84.5 million (approx. \$259.4 million).

The Major 50 Index slipped 12.55 points (0.18%) to 7,140.94, with 122.9 million shares traded in 6,169 deals worth KD 14.4 million (approx. \$44.2 million).

### UK leads Arab pharma investments with \$811 mln

## Arab pharma sector attracts \$5.4 billion FDI, 25K jobs since 2003: Dhaman report

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Arab Investment & Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (Dhaman) revealed that the Arab pharmaceutical sector attracted 184 foreign projects with Capex of more than \$5.4 billion and created over 25,000 new jobs, during the period from January 2003 to December 2024.

In its first sectoral report for 2025 regarding the Arab pharmaceutical sector, issued from its headquarters in the State of Kuwait today, the Corporation said that four Arab countries, namely UAE, Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Egypt attracted 141 foreign projects with a share of 77% of the total with Capex of around \$3.9 billion, making up 71%. These projects created some 18,600 new jobs with a share of 74% of the total.

The report is based on four main pillars: I- evolution and future of pharmaceutical sales until 2030, II- foreign trade for 2023, III- FDI projects in the pharmaceutical sector, IV- assessment of investment and business risks in the pharmaceutical sector during 2025. It showed that the UK led the region's list of investors in terms of Capex, with 26 projects during the period from 2003 to 2024 with Capex of \$811 million and more than 3,000 new jobs.

It indicated that the top 10 companies held about 26% of newly implemented projects, 48% of the Capex and 49% of new jobs overall. Britain's AstraZeneca and France's Sanofi came in the lead in view of foreign pharmaceutical projects (nine projects each, making up 5% of the total), as Egypt's PharmaOverseas led the list in the Capex (\$500 million or 9%). South Korea's Raha Industry Company ranked first in number of jobs (3,000 jobs or 12%).

It added that six Arab countries, notably Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Egypt, Jordan and Morocco, invested in 25 inter-Arab projects in the pharmaceutical sector, accounting for roughly 14% of its total foreign projects over 22 years, with their Capex exceeding \$1.6 billion, or roughly 30% of the total, and creating over 5,000 new jobs, implemented by 23 Arab companies.

Based on Fitch's assessment of risks and rewards of investment and business in pharmaceutical sector in 14 Arab countries through two main indicators risks and rewards, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar came in

the forefront as the most attractive Arab countries in the pharmaceutical sector. They were followed by Morocco, Bahrain, Algeria and Egypt respectively.

The report expected the pharmaceutical sales of 19 Arab countries to rise by 5% to roughly \$48 billion by the end of 2025, and to keep surging to exceed \$59 billion by 2030. It noted that pharmaceutical sales are geographically concentrated in 5 countries: Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Algeria and Kuwait by holding 70% of the Arab region's total pharmaceutical sales by the end of 2025.

It also forecasted pharmaceutical sales per capita in Arab countries to go up by 2.8% to exceed \$197 by the end of 2025.

The ratio of pharmaceutical sales to the Arab GDP is projected to drop to around 1.4% by the end of 2025, and could keep falling to 1.3% by 2030, it said, expecting the share of pharmaceutical sales in the region's total health spending to decline to about 27% by the end of 2025, and to keep dipping to roughly 23% by 2030.

The report added that the Arab countries' pharmaceuticals trade increased by 10.5% to \$23.4 billion in 2023, with five countries: UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait and Jordan having acquired 74% of the total. Still, Arab pharmaceutical exports are still modest though they increased by 20% to \$3.9 billion in 2023, compared to their imports, which rose by 9% to \$19.5 billion. So, the pharmaceutical trade deficit exceeded \$15.5 billion in 2023.

The report noted that the region's top 10 exporting countries made up around 68% of its overall medicine imports at a value of \$13.3 billion, with Germany leading the list with \$2.5 billion. The region's top 10 importing countries (including nine Arab countries) held 71% of its overall exports at a value of more than \$2.7 billion, with Saudi Arabia coming as the top importer with more than \$500 million or 14% of the total.

Based in Kuwait, the Arab Investment & Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (Dhaman) was established in 1974. It comprises as members all Arab countries and four joint Arab financial institutions. It provides specialized insurance services against credit and political risks with a view to facilitating the inflow of foreign direct investments into Arab countries and promoting Arab exports and imports.

'Partnership marks regional leadership'

## KIA joins AI partnership with UAE's MGX

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): Kuwait Investment Authority joined AI Infrastructure Partnership (AIP) with UAE firm MGX in a strategic move to expand global collaboration and accelerate digital transformation.

The partnership reflects growing international commitment to investing in advanced infrastructure essential for sustainable AI development, Kuwait Investment Authority said in a statement to KUNA on Tuesday.

This move underscores a rising international commitment to fund cutting-edge systems that power future AI applications and highlights the pivotal role of leading regional and global investors in driving innovation, it added.

MGX, a UAE-based tech investment company founded in 2024, focuses on AI and related advanced technologies.



KUNA photo Kuwait Investment Authority joined AI Infrastructure Partnership (AIP) with UAE firm MGX.

US administration will likely stick with its plans to impose taxes

# Global economy remains vulnerable to US tariff policy as a new layer of uncertainty is added

By National Bank of Kuwait

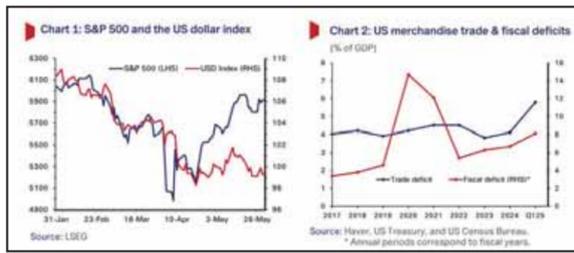
The global economy remains vulnerable to US tariff policy with the recent US court developments injecting a new layer of uncertainty. In effect, as long as tariff cases are in front of the courts, not much progress can be expected in terms of US trade negotiations with trading partners. In the US, irrespective of court developments, the administration is sticking with its plans to impose tariffs, utilizing, if need be, other routes. In the Eurozone, the ECB is set to cut rates again while the EU's trade negotiations with the US will likely be very difficult. In the UK, despite positive deal-making with the US/EU/India, the outlook is shaky amid limited policy support and global trade uncertainty. In Japan, soaring bond yields further complicate the BoJ's job and bring the public finances to the limelight. Finally, despite the recent heightened China-US tensions, a resumption of the de-escalatory bias between them will not be surprising.

US to find new ways to impose tariffs but Trump's leverage eroded as long as cases are with the courts

Irrespective of how the current tariff-related legal developments will unfold, the US administration will likely stick with its plans to impose tariffs, utilizing, if need be, several other routes. However, until the courts' final say on the current cases is clear,

President Trump's bargaining power in his ongoing negotiations with the US's key trading partners is weakened substantially. Importantly, this means that not much can be expected from the US's trade negotiations with its main trading partners as long as the cases are in front of the courts. And while policy uncertainty has already been very high since Trump took office, another layer of court-related legal uncertainty has now been added. Court developments aside, a key date is July 9, which is the date when the pause on the "reciprocal" tariffs would end. Earlier, the US and China had diffused their trade war, but negotiations have since stalled, and tensions re-escalated recently. While further escalation following the 90-day window is possible, we think the more plausible scenario is that a de-escalatory bias will resume as the world's two largest economies get a feel of the enormous economic damage that will ensue from a full-blown trade war.

Meanwhile, the House passed the GOP's "Big, Beautiful Bill", which is a step in the wrong direction given that it worsens an already unsustainable debt trajectory, although it is positive for economic growth in the short term. The bill is now in front of the Senate, where it is expected to undergo some amendments although it will very likely remain a debt-increasing bill. Meanwhile, GDP contracted in Q1 on tariff frontloading, but the labor market remains broadly resil-



ient with three-month average job gains at 155K/month. Hence, the Fed will likely remain in a wait-and-see mode while markets are currently pricing-in around two 25 bps rate cuts by year-end. In our view, a US recession will be avoided on condition that a major tariff escalation does not get re-ignited. The prior tariff de-escalation drove a V-shaped rebound in the S&P 500 index although the US dollar index remains 10% below a recent high reached in January.

ECB to cut again while the EU's trade negotiations with the US will likely be very difficult

The Eurozone economy started the year on a good note, growing by a higher-than-expected 0.3% q/q in Q1, strengthening from 0.2% in the previous quarter. Meanwhile, headline inflation is almost at target, standing at 2.2% y/y although further progress is needed in terms of core and services inflation. Nevertheless,

more recent indicators are starting to reflect the tariff-related headwinds with the PMI dropping below 50 (49.5 in May) for the first time this year. The ECB has carried on with its easing policy, cutting rates seven times since June 2024, and near certain to cut again in its meeting this week. Despite the bank, back in March, dropping reference to their policy remaining "restrictive", the futures market is still indicating additional one-to-two cuts in the second half of the year, reflecting the magnitude of the trade-related uncertainties ahead.

Obviously, the EU's (US's largest trading partner) trade-related developments are a key factor shaping the outlook, especially following Trump's threat to hike the "reciprocal" tariffs on the EU to 50%. Even if the courts upheld the initial ruling of blocking Trump's reciprocal tariffs, sectoral tariffs on autos and steel/aluminum (soon

doubling) remain in place, while many other sectoral tariffs are in the pipeline, meaning that the Eurozone will not be immune to further trade-related shocks. Irrespective of the court rulings, Trump's statements, on several occasions, exhibited high animosity towards the EU, which coupled with a high merchandise trade imbalance in favor of the EU, mean that US-EU negotiations will likely be very difficult. The structure of the EU, and its generally slow decision-making process, is another factor making these negotiations challenging. Having said that, EU officials have exhibited a strong preference not to escalate matters with the US.

Despite positive deal-making, UK's outlook shaky amid global trade uncertainty and limited policy support

Notwithstanding an above-consensus GDP growth in Q1 (0.7% q/q), UK's outlook remains uninspiring as the rise came mainly on manufacturing and exports front-running US tariffs, while domestic consumption remained stagnant. The UK managed to strike a trade framework with the US, which should benefit UK auto exporters among others, but the 10% baseline tariff remained in place, the status of which is in front of the courts now. Talks are continuing to finalize details with still several key sticking points. In other positive develop-

ments, the UK successfully reset its post-Brexit trade ties with the EU and signed a long-awaited trade agreement with India. Despite these favorable trade-related developments, the Bank of England (BoE) warned of US's tariff policies and their indirect impact through disruptions to global supply chains. A continued subdued growth outlook would further pressure the public finances, noting that Chancellor Reeves, in March, had reduced some welfare and other spending items to help maintain her fiscal rule. Moreover, the hike in employers' national insurance contributions could continue to adversely impact employment levels. Accordingly, the BoE, in May, trimmed its growth forecast for the coming quarters, to only 0.1% q/q in Q2 and around 0.3% in Q3/Q4 while cutting the policy rate by 25 bps to 4.25%, but simultaneously guiding for "a careful and gradual approach" and anticipating "temporary" spikes in inflation over the coming months. CPI inflation jumped to a 15-month high of 3.5% y/y in April from 2.6% in March mainly on higher utility and other government fees, which the BoE does not expect to persist next year. Amid an uninspiring economic landscape but still elevated wage growth (5.6% y/y) and slow progress on services inflation (5.4% y/y), markets are currently pricing-in one to two 25 bps rate cuts by end-2025.



Workers pack dumplings at a production line at a food factory in Suqian city in east China's Jiangsu province on Jan. 21, 2025. (AP)

Data shows signs of improvement

## China's factory activity contracts in May: survey

BEIJING, June 3, (AP): China's factory activity contracted in May, according to an official survey released on Saturday, although the decline slowed from April as the country reached a deal with the U.S. to slash President Donald Trump's sky-high tariffs.

China's purchasing managers index rose from 49.0 in April to 49.5 in May, the National Bureau of Statistics said. PMI is measured on a scale from 0 to 100, where 50 marks the cutoff between expansion and contraction.

Meanwhile, the manufacturing index showed growth in the sector, although the index measuring new orders remained under 50 despite some improvement.

National Bureau of Statistics senior statistician Zhao Qinghe said some companies with U.S. business reported accelerated resumption of foreign trade orders, and there was an improvement in import and export conditions.

The U.S.-China deal, reached earlier this month, cuts Trump's tariffs from 145% to 30% for 90 days, creating time for negotiators from both sides to reach a more substantive agreement. China also reduced its taxes on U.S. goods from 125% to 10%.

But the remaining tariffs are still higher than they were before Trump took office, and businesses and investors face uncertainty about whether the truce will last.

Trump said Friday that he will no longer be "Mr. NICE GUY" with China on trade, declaring in a social media post that the country had broken an unspecified agreement with the United States.

He later said in the Oval Office that he will speak with Chinese President Xi Jinping and "hopefully we'll work that out," while still insisting China had violated the agreement.

Over the past week, tensions between Beijing and Washington also intensified after the U.S. said it would start revoking visas for Chinese students studying in the country. China has lodged a protest with the U.S. over the matter, calling the decision unreasonable.

Markets in China advance

## World shares mixed after modest gains put Wall St close to records

NEW YORK, June 3, (AP): Asian shares were mostly higher Tuesday while European benchmarks gave up early gains.

The futures for the S&P 500 and the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.5%.

Markets in China advanced despite a report showing manufacturing activity slowed in May, even after China and the U.S. paused tariff hikes to allow time for talks.

In early European trading, Germany's DAX was nearly unchanged at 23,950.36, while the CAC 40 in Paris shed 0.4% to 7,709.40. Britain's FTSE 100 slipped 0.2% to 8,757.97.

Adding to uncertainty in a region already enduring war in Ukraine, Poland elected Karol Nawrocki, a conservative historian and staunch nationalist, Monday as its next president in a closely watched vote that signaled a resurgence of right-wing populism in the heart of Europe.

The survey of Chinese purchasing managers, or PMI, by the financial media group Caixin showed factory output, new export orders, purchasing activity and staffing all declined last month. Incoming new work contracted at the quickest pace in over two-and-a-half years, the report said.



Trader Edward Curran works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Thursday, May 29, 2025. (AP)

The situation is "a body blow to the backbone of China's economy: small and mid-sized exporters now caught in a brutal vice grip between faltering global demand and a Washington-led tariff regime that's more carrot-and-stick diplomacy than ceasefire," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

However, as is often the case, inves-

tors shrugged off the bad news with the assumption that it might raise the likelihood of more market support from Beijing.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng jumped 1.5% to 23,512.49, while the Shanghai Composite index rose 0.4% to 3,361.98.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 edged 0.1% lower to 37,446.81.

## US growth likely to slow to 1.6% this year, hobbled by Trump's trade wars

WASHINGTON, June 3, (AP): U.S. economic growth will slow to 1.6% this year from 2.8% last year as President Donald Trump's erratic trade wars disrupt global commerce, drive up costs and leave businesses and consumers paralyzed by uncertainty.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development forecast Tuesday that the U.S. economy - the world's largest - will slow further to just 1.5% in 2026. Trump's policies have raised average U.S. tariff rates from around 2.5% when he returned to the White House to 15.4%, highest since 1938, according to the OECD. Tariffs raise costs for consumers and American manufacturers that rely on imported raw materials and components.

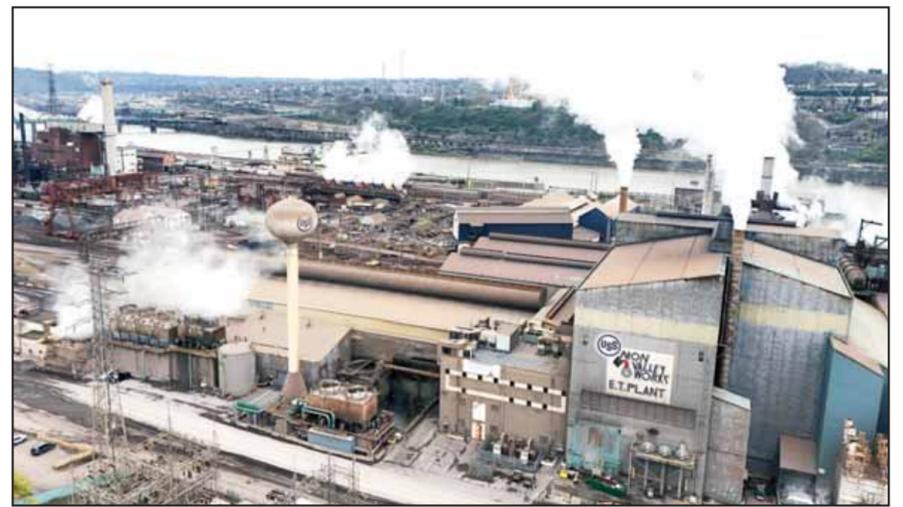
World economic growth will slow to just 2.9% this year and stay there in 2026, according to the OECD's forecast. It marks a substantial deceleration from growth of 3.3% global growth last year and 3.4% in 2023.

The world economy has proven remarkably resilient in recent years, continuing to expand steadily - though unspectacularly - in the face of global shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

But global trade and the economic outlook have been clouded by Trump's sweeping taxes on imports, the unpredictable way he's rolled them out and the threat of retaliation from other countries.

Reversing decades of U.S. policy in

OECD says slowdown to continue in 2026



The United States Steel Corporation's Edgar Thomson Plant in Braddock, Pa., on Friday, April 11, 2025. (AP)

favor of freer world trade, Trump has levied 10% taxes - tariffs - on imports from almost every country on earth along with specific duties on steel, aluminum and autos. He's also threatened more import taxes, including a doubling of his tariffs on steel and aluminum to 50%.

Without mentioning Trump by name, OECD chief economist Alvaro Pereira wrote in a commentary that accompanied the forecast that "we have seen a significant increase in trade barriers as well as in economic and trade policy uncertainty. This sharp rise in uncertainty has negatively impacted business and consumer confidence and is set to hold back trade and invest-

ment."

Adding to the uncertainty over Trump's trade wars: A federal court in New York last week blocked most of Trump's tariffs, ruling that he'd overstepped his authority in imposing them. Then an appeals court allowed the Trump administration to continue collecting the taxes while appeals worked their way through the U.S. courts.

China - the world's second-biggest economy - is forecast to see growth decelerate from 5% last year to 4.7% in 2025 and 4.3% in 2026. Chinese exporters will be hurt by Trump's tariffs, hobbling an economy already weakened by the collapse of the nation's

real estate market. Some of the damage will be offset by help from the government: Beijing last month outlined plans to cut interest rates and encourage bank lending as well as allocating more money for factory upgrades and elder care, among other things.

The 20 countries that share the euro currency will collectively see economic growth pick up from 0.8% last year to 1% in 2025 and 1.2% next year, the OECD said, helped by interest rate cuts from the European Central Bank.

The Paris-based OECD, comprising 38 member countries, works to promote international trade and prosperity and issues periodic reports and analyses.

## India, a major user of coal power, is making large gains in clean energy adoption

BENGALURU, India, June 3, (AP): One of the most carbon-polluting countries, India is also making huge efforts to harness the power of the sun, wind and other clean energy sources.

Most of the electricity in India, the world's most populous nation, still comes from coal, one of the dirtiest forms of energy. But coal's dominance is dropping, going from 60% of installed power capacity 11 years ago to less than 50% today, according to India's power ministry.

At the same time, India had its largest ever addition of clean power in the fiscal year between April 2024 and April of this year, adding 30 gigawatts - enough to power nearly 18 million Indian homes.

With a growing middle class and skyrocketing energy needs, how fast India can move away from coal and other fossil fuels, such as gasoline and oil, could have a large impact on global efforts to confront climate change.

Here is a snapshot of India's clean energy transition and some of the challenges.

Solar is now half the cost of power from new coal-powered plants. Availability of cheap components and many sunny days each year in India are some reasons experts say installed solar power increased 30 times in the last decade.

"Solar power is the cheapest it's ever been," said Ruchita Shah, an energy analyst at climate think-tank Ember. Shah added that dropping costs for energy storage, in the form of batter-

ies, means that renewable power will be the "new normal," even when the sun doesn't shine or the wind doesn't blow.

India has nearly 170 gigawatts of renewable energy projects in the pipeline, which are expected to be completed in the next few years.

"I have no doubt that India will reach its target of 500 gigawatts by 2030," said Raghav Pachouri, an energy expert at Vasudha Foundation, a New Delhi-based think-tank.

Experts say the growth in renewables is being spurred by India's plans to add approximately 50 gigawatts of non-fossil fuel power capacity every year for the next five years and for clean power to provide 50% of the nation's energy by the decade. When burned, fossil fuels let off greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, the main driver of climate change.

A 2022 law that made electricity cheaper for companies choosing to buy clean power, the federal government's recommendation that state utilities buy more renewable power and a 2023 government plan to invest \$452 million have all catalyzed investments in renewables.

India has the fourth highest amount of clean power installed in the world and government officials said \$81 billion has been invested in the renewable energy sector in the last decade. Multiple large-scale renewable power projects have begun operations or are under construction, including one of the world's largest wind and solar

power farms. "We've seen domestic manufacturing capacity, at least when it comes to modules for solar panels, increasing," said Madhura Joshi, a senior energy analyst at the European think-tank E3G.

Despite the rapid growth, challenges persist. While non-fossil fuel sources now comprise 45% of India's total installed capacity, their share in actual electricity generation stood at 24% last year. Coal remains the dominant source, accounting for 75% of electricity generation.

The share of solar, wind, small hydro power and biomass in India's electricity generation mix stood at 12%, double what it was in 2014 but still lower than expectations by this time, according to a report by New Delhi-based think-tank, the Centre for Science and Environment.

Installed capacity is growing, but power generation from renewables needs to be optimized and integrated effectively into the grid, the report found.

A recent report by the nonprofit clean energy think-tank, RMI, found that electricity demand is expected to triple by 2050 - driven by more electric vehicles, air conditioners and industrial growth.

Acquiring land for clean energy projects remains a challenge. India also needs to rapidly build robust electricity transmission infrastructure and energy storage facilities to continue increasing clean power capacity.



Photos during the grand opening.

## LOT – The Value Shop makes its debut in Kuwait at LuLu Center Fahaheel

Kuwait shoppers now have a new destination for unbeatable bargains with the grand opening of LOT – The Value Shop, officially launched on 3 June 2025 at LuLu Center Fahaheel. Spanning a spacious 2,500 square meters, the store promises an exceptional shopping experience, offering a wide range of products at remarkably affordable prices.

True to its name, LOT – The Value Shop is 'The Lowest Value Store,' where more items are priced below KD 1,900. It redefines value shopping by combining quality with affordability, ensuring that customers never have to compromise when it comes to their choices. One of the store's most attractive highlights is its impressive collection of products under KD 1,900, allowing everyone to discover great finds that fit any budget.

Designed to be the perfect shopping hub for families and individuals alike, the store features a vibrant variety of categories including garments, footwear, toys, ladies' bags, household essentials, stationery, jewelry, home furnishings, and travel accessories. The shelves are stocked with thoughtfully curated items to meet the everyday needs of modern shoppers.

In tune with the season, LOT also unveiled its trendy summer collection for men, women, and children, offering fashion-forward looks at unbeatable prices.

The inauguration ceremony was a grand affair, led by Mr. Ashraf Ali M.A., Executive Director of LuLu Group International, along with Mujeeb Rahman (Buying Director), Muhamed Haris (Director – Kuwait Region), Sreejith (Regional Director – Kuwait) and other officials. The event drew a distinguished crowd, including members of LuLuTop management and notable social media influencers, who explored the store's offerings and shared their excitement online.

Strategically located within LuLu Center Fahaheel, the store spans the ground floor, mezzanine, and first floor, offering customers easy access and a seamless shopping experience. With its unbeatable pricing, wide variety, and dedication to quality, LOT – The Value Shop is set to become Kuwait's go-to destination for smart shopping and exceptional value.



AmCham Kuwait hosts 'The Future of AI: Reimagining Kuwait's Legal & Logistics Systems' in strategic partnership with KFAS.

## KPA showcases AI-driven infrastructure upgrades

### AmCham Kuwait, KFAS host 3rd Future of AI Forum

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: Emphasizing Kuwait's commitment to digital transformation and innovation, the American Chamber of Commerce in Kuwait (AmCham Kuwait), successfully co-hosted with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) the third edition of the prestigious Future of AI Forum. Under the theme, "Reimagining Kuwait's Legal & Logistics Systems," the event convened high-level executives, policymakers, senior legal professionals, and global technology leaders on Thursday, May 22nd, at the KFAS headquarters in Kuwait City.

Generously supported by SAP as the Gold Sponsor and AI-Tamimi & Company as the Silver Sponsor, the forum provided an influential platform to discuss practical AI integration into critical infrastructure and regulatory frameworks, with a special focus on generative and agentic AI. These discussions are pivotal to achieving the objectives outlined in Kuwait Vision 2035 and the forthcoming National AI Strategy.

In his opening remarks, Alaeddine Karim, Chair of AmCham Kuwait's IT & Cybersecurity Focus Group, highlighted AI's critical role in enhancing operational efficiencies, improving decision-making processes, and fostering sustainable economic growth. He contextualized the forum's relevance to Kuwait's broader national agenda for digital transformation.

#### AI in Logistics: Breaking Bottlenecks and Digitizing Ports

The first panel, titled "Smarter Supply Chains: From Generative Planning to Agentic Execution," focused on AI-driven solutions addressing challenges in shipping, customs, and port management. Moderated by Naem Mirza, CEO of AI Doctrine and a regional leader in cybersecurity and digital transformation, the panel featured: H.E. Sheikh Fahad Khaled Al-Sabah, Acting Supervisor of Operations & Technical Support,

Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA), Dr. Tarek Shaalan, Regional Travel & Transportation Executive Advisor (SAP), Sudesh Chaturvedi, Managing Director (GAC Kuwait), and Ajish Thomas, Head of IT (DHL Express Kuwait).

Panelists examined AI-driven predictive forecasting, real-time analytics to prevent port congestion, streamline customs processes, and transforming legacy infrastructure, alongside collaborative initiatives between public and private sectors. Real-time case studies demonstrated transformative impacts, notably Kuwait Ports Authority's initiatives aimed at digitizing port operations and significantly reducing logistical bottlenecks.

Adding to the discussion, Sundus Bushahri, Managing Director of SAP Kuwait, noted:

"In light of Kuwait Vision 2035, AI is no longer a futuristic ambition – it is a present-day driver of transformation. In the logistics sector, business AI can accelerate customs clearance procedures, enhance fleet management, and improve coordination across ports, borders, and supply chains. At SAP, we closely collaborate with our partners in the public and private sectors to build intelligent, adaptable systems that elevate efficiency and drive economic growth. By working together, we can create a flexible, sustainable logistics network that is globally competitive."

#### AI in Law: From Legal Research to Digital Courtrooms

The second panel, "Law, Liability & Logic: Agentic AI in Kuwait's Legal System," explored generative and agentic AI's role in modernizing legal practices, compliance frameworks, and judicial processes. Moderated by Khaled Al-Rashed, CEO of Oqood.ai and a pioneer in legal tech solutions, the panel included: David Yates, Partner and Head of Digital & Data (AI-Tamimi & Company), Dr. Ammar Al-Husaini, Senior Director

in Strategic Partnerships (Impulse International), Abdulkarim Al-Mutawa, Member of the International Relations Committee (Kuwait Lawyers Association), and Ghassan Salha, Technology Lead (Microsoft).

Key discussions covered AI in contract review, legal research, regulatory compliance, and AI-driven innovations like digital courtrooms to improve access to justice while reducing administrative burdens, time, and costs. Panelists underscored the urgent need for robust legal frameworks addressing AI accountability, ethical guidelines, and standards for implementation, closely aligned with Kuwait Central Agency for Information Technology's draft Kuwait National AI Strategy 2025-2028.

#### A Collaborative Step Toward AI Readiness

Each panel included live polling and interactive Q&A sessions, allowing attendees to explore sector-specific adoption challenges, data governance concerns, and the readiness of institutions to engage with AI tools.

The event concluded with an official recognition ceremony, celebrating panelists, sponsors, and key contributors, followed by a networking reception. AmCham Kuwait reaffirmed its ongoing dedication to responsible AI implementation and collaboration between governmental and corporate stakeholders to further Kuwait's national innovation goals.

#### About ABCK-AmCham Kuwait

A non-profit organization operating since 1985, composed of Fortune 500 corporations, small and medium-sized companies, and prominent business leaders and entrepreneurs, both American and Kuwaiti. ABCK-AmCham Kuwait has acted as an advocate for American interests in Kuwait. For more information, please visit our website at [www.amchamkuwait.org](http://www.amchamkuwait.org) or follow us on our social media channel @abck1985.

## Tribute to IWG honorary President Sheikha Hanouf Al-Bader Al-Sabah

# IWG concludes 2024–2025 season with vibrant farewell celebration

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The International Women's Group (IWG) brought its 2024–2025 season to a memorable close with the IWG Farewell Event 2025, a heartfelt and vibrant celebration held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Under the powerful theme of unity, culture, and sisterhood, the event paid special tribute to the African continent while also honoring a year of shared accomplishments and unforgettable friendships.

With the rich rhythms and sounds of Africa playing, guests were welcomed into a ballroom beautifully adorned with iconic scenes of the African continent, immediately immersing them in an atmosphere of wonder, celebration, and connection.

The day began with an inspiring welcome speech by Mme Polina Dlamini, 2024–2025 IWG President and spouse of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Eswatini. In her passionate address, she took the audience on a stirring journey across Africa's 54 diverse nations, calling it "the cradle of humankind, the mother continent, a land of promise and power."

With captivating clarity, she described Africa's five regions and their unique cultures – from the Arab-influenced North to the richly traditional South – emphasizing the continent's essential place in the global community. "Africa is not just a land of history – it is a land of potential," she declared.

Immediately following the African welcome, Mme Polina invited IWG Honorary President Sheikha Hanouf Al-Bader Al-Sabah to the stage for a heartfelt surprise tribute. The audience applauded Sheikha Hanouf's steadfast support and contributions to IWG's mission, marking a moment of sincere admiration.

Africa then came to life in one of the day's most powerful segments, as the wives of African Ambassadors proudly took to the stage. One by one, they introduced their respective countries, shared reflections, and danced together to the joyful rhythms of Africa – enveloping the room in unity, pride, and vibrant energy. The collective presentation included: Burkina Faso, Egypt, Eswatini, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe.

Each participant wore her national colors, danced with joy, and embodied the cultural richness of her homeland.

Adding an interactive element, the crowd then took part in a lively African-themed quiz, "How Well Do You Know Africa?" The game sparked laughter, friendly competition, and a deepened appreciation for the continent.

The celebration continued with the globally beloved song "Waka Waka (This Time for Africa)," followed by a sing-along and dancing – blending cultures and voices in joyful harmony.

In a moment of pride and excitement, the IWG Board for 2025–2026 was introduced. The stage erupted in applause as a commemorative photo was taken – capturing the spirit of leadership, legacy, and continuity that defines the IWG.

A surprise tribute video followed, drawing both laughter and a few tears. The compilation celebrated the events, friendships, and efforts that shaped the season, with a special touching highlight honoring Mme Polina Dlamini's heartfelt presidency.

Mme Polina then returned to the stage for her farewell speech – an emotional and gracious reflection on her time as President. She spoke candidly of her initial

nervousness, the lessons she learned, and the profound connections she formed.

"I was never a solo player," she said. Speaking of the IWG Executive Board, she shared, "I was lifted by my 'Super 7' – Farah, Vera, Afi, Aziza, Layla, Kameilia, and Manar – and my 'Fantastic 4' – Baigal, Rana, Laura, and Sheikha Hanouf. Together, we created something meaningful, something magical."

She extended thanks to everyone who contributed behind the scenes – from the hardworking Crowne Plaza team and embassy staff to family members, drivers, photographers, and supporters. Welcoming the new leadership, she added, "You are inheriting something beautiful. I know you will lead with integrity, energy, and love."

The celebration continued with an exciting raffle draw, featuring generous prizes donated by participating countries. Cheers and laughter echoed through the hall as winners were announced.

In a final and deeply personal moment, Mme Polina took the stage once more. As the powerful song "Tigi" by Sands played, she offered a heartfelt presentation – a symbolic and emotional farewell to her IWG sisters, embodying the joy, unity, and unforgettable spirit of the year.

The afternoon concluded with a delicious African-inspired buffet lunch, where guests mingled, shared stories, and savored traditional flavors – a final nod to the continent and a fitting close to a remarkable season.

The IWG Farewell Event 2025 was not just the end of a season – it was the celebration of a journey, a commemoration of cultural pride, and a powerful reminder of the beauty found in unity.



Africa honored at IWG Farewell event through dance, culture, and unity.

## Band ditches expectations, delivers heart

# Old Dominion's 'Barbara' charts a fresh course

NEW YORK, June 3, (AP) — When Old Dominion's eighth group of the year victory broke the tie for consecutive wins at the Academy of Country Music Awards last month, it changed the record books — but not their perspective.

"They're certainly wonderful honors that we get, but that's not in any way how we really measure our success or think. We can't let that kind of stuff creep in to the creative process because that's when we'll start to get off course," said Matthew Ramsey, lead vocalist and guitarist. "We try to protect each other from those outside influences a little bit and just make sure that we're ... not chasing after some sort of reaction or award, or chasing after what we think the radio wants to play. We just have to make what we love."

Old Dominion has been celebrated for intertwining different musical styles while within country music. Along with Ramsey, the band includes Brad Tursi (guitar/banjo), Trevor Rosen (guitar/piano), Geoff Sprung (bass) and Whit Sellers (percussion). They have spent the last two years crafting "Barbara," out Aug. 22 via Columbia Nashville/Sony Music Nashville.

The project follows 2023's "Memory Lane" album and last year's "Odius But Goodies" compilation, which Ramsey says is even more eclectic than past works.

"We just write constantly. And we've had albums where we've kind of gone deeper into the well and picked out older

songs," explained the 47-year-old. "This one, not so much the case."

The 13-track album is not named after a real woman but is an imagined composite of a person who embodies many of the group's various personality traits. It includes the released singles "Me Most Nights" and "Making Good Time," along with the four-on-the-floor "Talk Country" and the R&B-infused "What Doesn't Kill a Memory." Just as introspection is a fundamental element of country music, it's also the sweet spot on this album.

"Miss You Man" is dedicated to friend and writing collaborator Andrew Dorff, who died in 2016 during a vacation, while "Goodnight Music City" reflects on the band's career.

"It has all the reverence about Nashville and a little bit of the jaded side to it, too. We've been through it in Nashville, as anyone goes through when they're trying to chase this crazy dream," said Ramsey, who revealed the song is inspired by the children's book "Goodnight Moon" by Margaret Wise Brown. "It's such a meaningful song to us all ... we've played it live one time at the Ryman Auditorium, and we were all crying by the end of it."

The band also looks within on "Man or the Song," as Ramsey questions, "If I put my guitar down, would I disappear?/Move back to my hometown, would you still be here?" Ramsey says it's his favorite song.

"That's kind of what it feels like once you get to this level and you're surrounded by all these people that are helping you make your dreams come true," he said. "Who's around for the right reasons can certainly creep into the conversation. It can be a lonely profession ... I hope you love me for me, and not for this crazy job I have."

Coinciding with the release of "Barbara," the band is preparing its "How Good Is That" world tour which launches Thursday at Credit One Stadium in Charleston, South Carolina.

Throughout the past decade, Old Dominion has earned a loyal fan base in a genre often criticized as rigid, with frequent debates about equal radio play, what determines pure country music and who should be allowed to participate. But while there's no denying the group is authentically country, the irony is not lost on them that they've been able to cut through the Nashville noise by not sticking to only traditional country sounds.

"Whenever we wrote a song and recorded it, we just wanted to make sure that we were not chasing anything other than the truest form of that song and what was going to deliver that message as clearly as we wanted it to be," said Ramsey. "Our fans now, I think, are coming to expect that from us: they're looking for the surprise that we're gonna throw in there, rather than the same old thing. ... We don't take that for granted. We know that's a rare thing in the genre."



This album cover image released by Sony Music Nashville shows 'Barbara' by Old Dominion. (AP)

## Variety

NEW YORK: MrBeast plans to turn the success of his Amazon Prime Video reality competition series into millions of dollars for charity.

YouTube's biggest creator is offering an exclusive weekend on the set of Beast Games Season 2 to the first 40 donors who make \$100,000 gifts to his registered nonprofit. The earliest contributors and up to two guests each will spend June 27-29 touring MrBeast's North Carolina studio, hearing from the production team in a private Q&A and visiting Beast Philanthropy's food pantry.

The invitation comes as Jimmy Donaldson's reported \$5 billion media empire surpasses 400 million subscribers on YouTube, where he had already set the record for the biggest following. But the call raises a question: Who among his following of young people and their parents can make a six-figure donation?



MrBeast

"I have some big charity projects I want to fund so I think it's a win/win," MrBeast said in a post on X.

Rallying his fervent fan base to make their own contributions marks a new fundraising strategy for Donaldson. He has long stated that his YouTube pages' featured charitable work is funded with his Beast Philanthropy channel's revenue.

The content has drawn a mix of praise from fans for working with local nonprofits to support previously unfunded projects and pushback from critics who accused Donaldson of exploiting vulnerable people for clickbait "inspiration porn." Campaigns have involved treating rheumatic heart disease in Nigeria and protecting endangered animals in Kenya. Other examples include building wells in countries across Africa and covering the cost of cataract surgery for 1,000 people. (AP)

NEW YORK: A former personal assistant who accuses Sean "Diddy" Combs of rape testified Monday that she continued sending the hip-hop mogul loving messages for years after her job ended in 2017 because she was "brainwashed."

The woman, testifying under the pseudonym "Mia," pushed back at defense lawyer Brian Steel's suggestions that she fabricated her claims to cash in on "the #MeToo money grab against Sean Combs."

Mia was on the witness stand for her third and final day at Comb's federal sex trafficking and racketeering trial in Manhattan, which is in its fourth week of testimony.

Combs, 55, has pleaded not guilty. His lawyers concede he could be violent, but he denies using threats or his music industry clout to commit abuse. (AP)



Annalise Basso, a cast member in 'The Life of Chuck,' arrives at the premiere of the film on Monday, June 2, at Hollywood Legion Theater in Los Angeles. (AP)

## Film



This image released by Focus Features shows Scarlett Johansson, center, and Benicio Del Toro in a scene from 'The Phoenician Scheme.' (AP)

'He was like a luminary inspiration'

# Cera's Anderson debut feels like fate

CANNES, France, June 3, (AP) — When Michael Cera was announced as joining the cast of a Wes Anderson movie for the first time, the prevailing response was: Hadn't he already been in a Wes Anderson movie?

So seemingly aligned in sensibility and style are Cera and Anderson that you could easily imagine a whole fake filmography. It is, for a slightly more corduroyed corner of the movie world, an actor-director pairing as destined as Scorsese and De Niro — even if "The Phoenician Scheme" is their first movie together.

"I would remember," Cera deadpans. "I would never have passed up the opportunity."

"The Phoenician Scheme," stars Benicio del Toro as the international tycoon Zsa-zsa Korda, who after a lifetime of swindling and exploiting has decided to make his daughter, a novice named Liesl (Mia Threapleton), the heir to his estate.

Cera plays Liesl's Norwegian tutor Bjørn Lund. And because of the strong leading performances, you couldn't quite say Cera steals the show, he's certainly one of the very best things about "The Phoenician Scheme" — and that's something for a movie that includes Tom Hanks and Bryan Cranston playing a game of horse. Bjørn is an entomologist, which means Cera spends a sizable portion of the movie in a bow tie with an insect gently poised on his finger.

### Breakthroughs

"He is sort of a bug, himself," Cera, speaking in an interview at the Cannes Film Festival shortly before the premiere of "The Phoenician Scheme," says with a wry smile. "And he sheds his skin and becomes his truth self."

If Cera's role in "The Phoenician Scheme" feels like a long time coming, it is. He and Anderson first met more than 15 years ago. Cera, 36, was then coming off his early breakthroughs in "Arrested Development," "Superbad" and "Juno." A comic wunderkind from Ontario who stood out even among the "Arrested Development" cast as a teenager, Cera had caught Anderson's attention.

"It was something arranged by an agent in New York and we went to a kind of cocktail party," Anderson recalls by phone. "We were with Harvey Keitel, too. So it was me and Harvey and Michael Cera — a totally unexpected combination. But I loved him. For years I've kind of felt like: Why haven't we already done something together?"

For Cera, the meeting was even more memorable.

"I remember being very excited to meet him," Cera says. "I remember him being very disarming. Obviously, he was like a luminary inspiration. He has had a huge impact on my general sense of taste. I discovered his movies when I was a teenager and watched them over and over."



Michael Cera, from the film 'The Phoenician Scheme' poses during the 78th international film festival, Cannes, southern France on Sunday, May 18, 2025. (AP)

They nearly did come together on a movie before "The Phoenician Scheme." Anderson had a small role for Cera in "Asteroid City," but when its production schedule got pushed, Cera had to drop out because of the coming due date for his first son with his wife Nadine.

"I was kind of worried that I blew it," says Cera, "that I missed the chance to sneak in."

But even though Anderson and Cera didn't work together until "The Phoenician Scheme," they developed a relationship. Cera, who aspires to write and direct his own films, would send Anderson scripts for feedback. "We became friends," says Cera.

"In the case of this movie, it was everything short of written for him," Anderson says. "As soon as we had the idea of the character, he was the guy who (cowriter Roman Coppola) and I started talking about. I think we talked to him about it before there was a script or anything."

"It seemed like it had already happened," adds Anderson. "And it was a very good fit, a natural thing."

### Adapted

Cera quickly adapted to Anderson's unique style of moviemaking, in which the cast collectively stay at a hotel, begin the morning in makeup together and remain on set without trailers to retreat to. "At first, you're kind of exhausted," says Cera. "At the end of the first day, you go: OK, I need to eat a bigger breakfast." As the production went along, Cera often sat right next to Anderson to watch him work.

One very notable characteristic of Bjørn is a Norwegian accent. If there's anything more fitting

than Michael Cera being a Wes Anderson movie, it might be Michael Cera doing a Norwegian accent in a Wes Anderson movie. It's also a bit that, in "The Phoenician Scheme," has a touch of spoiler to it. Cera calls it "sort of a jaunty, playful representation of an accent, not purporting to be a home run."

"When I brought up the accent to Wes, I said, 'How should we go about this accent?'" Cera says. "He was kind of caught of guard. I think he hears the movie in his head and maybe hadn't figured that in. It was something Wes had to compute."

As Anderson describes it, Cera was determined. "I, at a certain point, was a little reluctant, like, 'I don't know if we need it,'" says Anderson. "He was like: 'No, let me show you what I'm going to do.'"

A determination in absurdism has long marked Cera's best performances. Though a private person who has resisted all urges to get a smartphone, Cera is remarkably fearless when it comes to the most awkward moments. It's a seriousness of purpose that, whether singing "These Eyes" in "Superbad" or waving hello as Allen in "Barbie," that's made Cera a favorite of successive generations. Even in a billion-dollar blockbuster, Cera can be unassumingly hilarious.

### Disposition

"I feel like most people don't know I'm in that movie. I mean, not in a bad way. It was great for my personal disposition to get to be part of it," Cera says. "I can say I'm in it, but I can walk around. I'm nowhere near the center of the movie. I'm not on the poster, put it that way. (Laughs) My nephew went and saw the movie with my sister. Afterwards he was like, 'I thought Uncle Michael was going to be in this movie.' It was a nice lane for me."

Just before the premiere of "The Phoenician Scheme" in Cannes, it was announced that Cera, after writing a handful of scripts including an adaptation of Charles Portis' "Masters of Atlantis," will make his directorial debut with "Love Is Not the Answer," a film he wrote that has a cast including Pamela Anderson and Steve Coogan.

"You have a little more control over your destiny if you try to create something, even though it's hard to get it off the ground," Cera says. "But it's better than sitting around. You're like a hired contractor as an actor, and it's a great thing about it. But I think a lot of actors end up becoming frustrated directors because of how many opinions you have about the proceedings."

It may have taken many years for Cera and Anderson to finally team up, but it could have come at the right time, just as Cera is — ahem — shedding a skin. In any case, theirs remains an ongoing collaboration. Anderson tapped Cera for an ad they recently shot for Mont Blanc. Does that mean he's officially part of the troupe?

## People

### Press fallout

# Maron to end 'WTF' podcast

LOS ANGELES, June 3, (AP) — Comic and actor Marc Maron said Monday that he's ending his popular and influential podcast "WTF with Marc Maron" after nearly 16 years.

Maron said on a newly released episode that the last of the nearly 2,000 episodes he has hosted will be released later this year.

"Sixteen years we've been doing this, and we've decided that we had a great run," Maron said. "Now, basically, it's time, folks. It's time. 'WTF' is coming to an end. It's our decision. We'll have our final episode sometime in the fall."

The 61-year-old Maron said he and producing partner Brendan McDonald are "tired" and "burnt out" but "utterly satisfied with the work we've done."

Maron was a veteran stand-up comic who had dabbled in radio when he started the show in 2009, at a time when stand-ups were trying out the form in big numbers, and many listeners still downloaded episodes on to iPods. The show early on was often about Maron talking through his beefs with fellow comedians, but it soon stood out and became a widely heard and medium-defining show with its thoughtful, probing longform interviews of cultural figures.

It became a key stop on press tours for authors, actors and musicians and reached a peak when then-President Barack Obama visited Maron's makeshift Los Angeles garage studio for an episode in 2015.

Maron used a simple interview style to get guests to share stories they'd rarely told elsewhere. Seeking to know the biggest influences on their lives and careers, Maron would ask, "Who are your guys?"

Assigned to cover the Pentagon for the conservative outlet One America News Network, Gabrielle Cuccia didn't pretend to be an unbiased reporter. She describes herself as "a MAGA girl" who is unapologetically defiant in her support of President Donald Trump.

Yet days after publicly criticizing a Trump appointee, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, Cuccia found herself out of a job. In taking to Substack last week to express a personal opinion about a figure she covers, Cuccia did something that would be frowned upon in many legacy newsrooms. The message that she was sent, however, is most likely to resound in places where opinion is fine — but only a certain variety.

Cuccia's lengthy Substack post, "The Secretary of Defense," was posted three days after Hegseth issued new rules that banned reporters from accessing large areas of the Pentagon without being watched by his minders. She criticized him for limiting freedom of movement in the name of national security. "The Pentagon wants to paint a picture that journalists are freely roaming classified spaces, sneaking into (secure areas), and leaking top-secret information," she wrote. "And that is simply not true. There are security cameras everywhere, protocols in place and quite frankly, it would be painfully obvious if a reporter was in a space they didn't belong."



Maron



The Grand Mosque, Ulu Cami, in the Turkish city of Bursa from the outside.



Arabic calligraphy fills the Ulu mosque.



The name of Allah adorns the mosque.

KUNA photos

### Turkiye's historic Ulu Cami in Bursa: A museum of Arabic calligraphy

The Ulu Cami, Also known as the Grand Mosque, is located in Bursa, and stands as one of the city's most prominent landmarks as a lasting symbol of Ottoman architectural heritage.

Renowned for its stunning Arabic calligraphy, the mosque functions as a virtual museum and gallery, featuring beautifully inscribed verses of the Holy Quran, as well as the names of the Prophet Muhammad's companions, the four Caliphs, and the 10 companions who were promised paradise.

The intricate calligraphy and craftsmanship displayed throughout the museum is captivating, and is constructed in the Seljuk architectural style by the order of the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I, and it was built over a span of approximately four years between 1396 and 1400.

The calligraphic panels that cover the mosque's walls reflect the historical significance of Arabic script in Islamic culture and serve as an example of the artistic traditions preserved from the Ottoman and Seljuk periods. (KUNA)

### Tourism



The Al-Hala Island

### Kuwait's Al-Hala Island ... rare natural phenomenon with picturesque nature

KUWAIT CITY, June 3, (KUNA): Al-Hala Island in the southern part of the Kuwaiti Sea is a rare natural phenomenon with a different and picturesque nature, said Kuwaiti photographer and environmentalist Dr. Abdullah Al-Zaidan.

In a statement to KUNA Tuesday, Al-Zaidan affirmed that he was able to monitor and document Al-Hala Island, which is a temporary sand strip that appears in the sea during low tide and disappears completely during high tide, indicating that its unique nature makes it a favorite seaside destination for lovers of nature.

The island's unique transformation also makes it

a prime marine eco-tourism destination, with visitors seeking an unconventional experience amidst the clear waters of the Gulf, offering the opportunity to interact with pure nature, free from pollution and urban interference, he added.

Al-Zaidan stressed that visiting this island enhances environmental awareness and encourages sustainable tourism that maintains a balance between enjoyment and environmental protection.

He also stressed the need to preserve these areas and visit them in a conscious manner to contribute to protecting fragile marine life and ensuring the continuation of environmental balance for future generations.



Kuwaiti photographer Dr. Abdullah Al-Zaidan dives in Al-Hala Island. KUNA photos

### Obituaries

#### Joss shot dead

### Renée Victor, 'Coco's' voice star, dies at 86

LOS ANGELES, June 3, (AP): **Renée Victor**, who voiced the no-nonsense, sandal-throwing Abuelita in Disney's animated hit "Coco" and played the wisecracking Lupita on Showtime's "Weeds," has died. She was 86.

Victor's death was confirmed on Monday by a representative, Julie Smith, who said the actor had lymphoma for several years. She died Friday at her home in Sherman Oaks, California, Smith said, with family by her side.

A post on the Instagram feed of Pixar, which produced "Coco," said: "We are heartbroken to hear of the passing of Renée Victor, the voice (of) Abuelita in 'Coco' and an incredible part of the Pixar family. We will always remember you."

Victor appeared in 22 episodes of "Weeds" as sassy housekeeper Lupita between 2005 and 2012, among many other TV credits including "ER," "Matlock" and "The Addams Family." But she was perhaps best known for what she called the chancla-throwing grandmother in "Coco," the 2017 family-friendly movie that explored death through the journey of a young Mexican boy to the land of the dead.

"I play the part of 'Abuelita,' the chancla throwing grandma that preaches 'No Music!'" she wrote on Instagram, looking back several years ago. "Enjoy 'Coco' with your family this Dia de los Muertos and forever more!"

She also looked back at "The Apostle," the 1997 movie that Robert Duvall wrote, directed and starred in. "He took a chance on me with this film," Victor wrote on Instagram. "This is where I got my nickname 'one take Renée,'" she said, adding laughter emojis. "I had a small role but what a great one! Can somebody give me an amen?!"

Born in San Antonio, Texas, on July 25, 1938, Victor began her performing career as a singer and dancer. She moved to Los Angeles in the 1960s, according to biography material provided by her representatives, where she launched her career singing with prominent big band leaders Xavier Cugat and Pérez Prado. She also taught Latin dancing, including the salsa and tango.

She met her future husband, Ray, during that period, and from 1963 to 1973, they performed together as "Ray & Renée," a variety show took them around the world - including Australia, where "they enjoyed particular fame," the materials said.

In the 1970s, Victor hosted the "Pacesetters" public affairs show on KTLA, her representatives said, and by the '80s had moved into TV and film work.

Her film credits, other than "The Apostle," included the 2014 horror film "Paranormal Activity 5: The Marked Ones," "The Doctor" with William Hurt (1991), and "A Night in Old Mexico" (2013), also with Duvall. In 2004, she had a recurring role as Florina Lopez on TV's "ER," and the following year was cast in "Weeds." Other series credits included "Snowpiercer" (2020-2021), "Mayans M.C." (2022), "Dead to Me" (2020-2022), and Amazon's "With Love" (2021-2023).

Victor is survived by her daughters, Raquel and Margo Victor, Smith said.

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**Jonathan Joss**, a voice actor best known for his work on the animated television series "King of the Hill," was fatally shot near his Texas home, authorities said Monday.

Police were dispatched to a home in south San Antonio about 7 p.m. Sunday on a shooting in progress call. When officers arrived at the scene, they found the wounded 59-year-old near the street.

"The officers attempted life saving measures until EMS arrived. EMS pronounced the victim deceased," San Antonio police said in a statement.

Joss' husband, **Tristan Kern de Gonzales**, confirmed the actor's death to The Associated Press in a text. The two were married earlier this year on Valentine's Day.

In an email, San Antonio police did not immediately provide any information on what prompted the shooting.

In a statement, de Gonzales said he and Joss had previously faced harassment, much of it "openly homophobic." Joss' husband said the person who killed the actor yelled "violent homophobic slurs" before opening fire.

"He was murdered by someone who could not stand the sight of two men loving each other," de Gonzales said.

Before the shooting, de Gonzales and Joss were checking mail at Joss' home, which had been heavily damaged during a January fire that claimed the lives of their three dogs. A man approached the two and threatened them with a gun, de Gonzales said.

"Jonathan and I had no weapons. We were not threatening anyone. We were grieving. We were standing side by side. When the man fired Jonathan pushed me out of the way. He saved my life," de Gonzales said in a statement.

After the shooting, authorities arrested 56-year-old Sigfredo Alvarez Ceja and charged him with murder in Joss' death.

### 'Charlottesville' explores deadly 2017 rally, its roots

## Luo tells grim tale of Chinese exclusion in US

NEW YORK, June 3, (AP): The history of Chinese immigrants in America has always been about much more than one particular ethnic group. As Michael Luo's "Strangers in the Land: Exclusion, Belonging and the Epic Story of the Chinese in America" demonstrates, understanding America's efforts to keep Chinese laborers out, and the violence enacted against those who stayed in, is essential to understanding the evolution of America's immigration system as we know it today.

That's because restrictions against Chinese immigrants represented the first major flex in the modern era of the federal government's power to control its borders. Chinese laborers were the first group to be barred from the entire country based on national origin, and lawsuits involving this group were often major tests of constitutional liberties - most notably the Supreme Court case of Wong Kim Ark in 1898, which established the right to birthright citizenship.

Time and time again, the treatment of this minority group served as a test of America's ability to live up to its own ideals of equality. As Massachusetts Sen. George Frisbie Hoar noted when he spoke out against the exclusionary legislation of the 1880s: "We go boasting of our democracy, and our superiority, and our strength. The flag bears the stars of hope to all nations. A hundred thousand Chinese land in California and everything is changed.... The self-evident truth becomes a self-evident lie."

Luo's book covers over a century of history, from the 1840s to 1965. Immigration from China was largely unfettered at first, and Chinese laborers were essential to building the transcontinental railroad system - a truly epic part of the story, with thrilling descriptions of how men dangled in baskets off 2,000-foot precipices and set off charges that blasted open whole mountains. One witness wrote: "When the debris had ceased to fall, the echoes were still reporting among the distant hills."

However, unemployment crises in the

1870s led white workers to jump on Chinese labor as the ultimate economic scapegoat. Chinese workers faced near-constant hate and harassment, ranging from the daily humiliation of stone-throwing children to outright massacres by angry mobs. Luo spends chapter after chapter meticulously documenting the disturbing details of 19th-century pogroms and race riots against Chinese communities in places like San Francisco, Los Angeles, Denver and Seattle.

Despite the ugly violence, Luo also takes care to document the actions of good men and women who stood up to the mob. Take Charles Andrew Huntington, a 73-year-old reverend in Eureka, California, who helped stop a massacre against Chinese residents in 1885. He lectured an enraged crowd: "If

Chinamen have no character, white men ought to have some." Fanatics still ran every Chinese person out of town. A Chinese Christian, Charley Way Lum, had stopped by Huntington's house to pray before he left, when men burst in and put a rope around his neck. Another minister, C.E. Rich, intervened: "If you hang him, you'll hang him over my dead body." Lum escaped on a ship to San Francisco.

Anti-Chinese sentiment enjoyed widespread popularity among both parties and played a major role in national politics, as it was considered key to winning the electoral votes of the West Coast. Starting with the Page Act of 1875, Congress started passing Chinese exclusion laws that grew more draconian every year. The Page Act targeted

Chinese women, several years earlier than Chinese men, due to the widespread prejudice that most of them were sex workers.

Anti-Chinese fervor culminated in the 1892 Geary Act, which required every Chinese person in the U.S. to register with the government or be deported. Immigration restrictions began to ease only when China became an ally in World War II - showing how much the vagaries of the shifting geopolitical winds can blow back on people at home.

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Decades before the violent Unite the Right rally in 2017 in Charlottesville that drew white nationalists protesting the removal of a **Robert E. Lee** statue, the city was targeted by a white supremacist who hoped to ignite a race war.

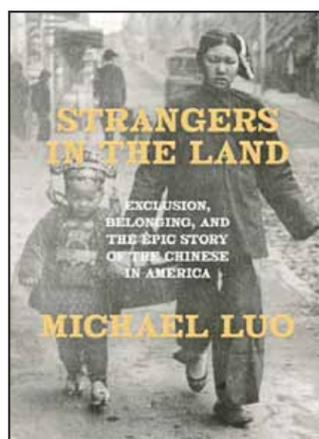
To understand the 2017 Unite the Right rally, **Deborah Baker** writes in "Charlottesville: An American Story," readers have to go back to 1956 and **John Kasper's** trip to Charlottesville to protest school integration.

That historical context combines with a vivid narrative of the 2017 demonstrations to give readers a better understanding of the combustible atmosphere that converged on Charlottesville.

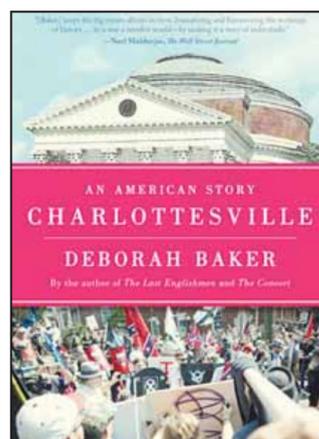
The narrative is the heart of Baker's comprehensive history, including details of **Heather Heyer's** killing by **James Alex Fields Jr.** - who kept a framed photograph of **Adolf Hitler** by his bedside and drove his car into a crowd of counter protesters.

Baker's writing style delivers an on-the-ground feel of what it was like in Charlottesville, including a harrowing account of the night torch-wielding white nationalists marched through the University of Virginia's campus.

But Baker also dives into the history of key players in the events that day, including white nationalist leader **Richard Spencer** and **Zyanna Bryant**, who initiated the petition to remove the statues of **Lee** and **Stonewall Jackson** from the city's parks.



This cover image released by Doubleday shows 'Strangers in the Land: Exclusion, Belonging, and the Epic Story of the Chinese in America' by Michael Luo. (AP)



This cover image released by Graywolf Press shows 'Charlottesville: An American Story' by Deborah Baker. (AP)

Kuwait hosts online forum on tobacco marketing and smoking risks

No safe alternative to smoking exists except quitting: Dr. Al-Saleh

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Kuwait Society for Combating Smoking and Cancer organized an online forum titled "Decision-Makers... Methods of Promoting Smoking" with the participation of a panel of experts and specialists in tobacco control, reports Al-Seyassah daily.



Dr. Al-Saleh

It began with a presentation by the Regional Advisor for the World Health Organization's Tobacco-Free Initiative Dr. Fatima Al-Awa, who discussed the deceptive marketing tactics used by tobacco companies to attract young people.

Meanwhile, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Society for Combating Smoking and Cancer Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh delivered a presentation titled "The Health Effects of Smoking and Its Alternatives," which included the latest statistics on the devastating health consequences of smoking.

Dr. Al-Saleh highlighted the strong link between smoking and the increased incidence of various types of cancer.

He pointed out tobacco companies' attempts to mislead consumers by promoting new products, such as e-cigarettes, as "less harmful" alternatives, stressing that these claims lack scientific evidence.

Dr. Al-Saleh emphasized that there is no safe alternative to smoking, and that complete cessation is the only effective way to protect health.

Furthermore, Chair of the Regional Alliance for Non-Communicable Diseases Dr. Ibtihal Fadel affirmed the importance of empowering civil society and non-governmental organizations to support health policies and implement effective awareness campaigns.

She highlighted the use of social media as a vital tool to reach young people, who are the primary targets of tobacco companies' advertising.

In addition, Rapporteur of the National Program for Tobacco Control Dr. Amal Al-Yahya presented the latest statistics on tobacco consumption, particularly among young people.



Gail Friedman holds her dog, Mr. Friedman, while Dr. Karen Woodard checks his ear for signs of allergies in Elmhurst, Ill. on May 13, 2025. (AP)

Medications help

Allergies affect pets too but 'care' options exist

NEW YORK, June 3, (AP): About five years ago, Gail Friedman noticed her Parson Russell Terrier was constantly licking his paws and seemed super uncomfortable.

"The poor dog. I would put baby socks on his feet so that he wouldn't lick them or bite at them," said Friedman, of Oak Brook, Illinois. "I was constantly changing the socks, washing his feet a lot. Nothing worked."

It turned out her canine companion, Mr. Friedman, had allergies. It's a common and tricky problem in pets - caused by various things such as pollen, dust, mold, chemicals and food - but veterinarians say there are several ways to ease their suffering.

Allergies happen when the immune system overreacts to a foreign substance. Cats and dogs react to many of the same things people do, as well as pests like fleas.

There are no definitive recent statistics on how many pets have allergies, but research suggests the problem is growing.

"I probably see allergic dogs and cats every single day, probably multiple times a day," said Dr. Karen Woodard, medical director at Thrive Pet Healthcare-Elmhurst in Illinois.

About 90% of allergic pets react to environmental triggers, Woodard said, and the rest have food allergies only.

Dog breeds that are especially vulnerable include various types of terriers, boxers and bulldogs; in cats, it's Persians, Siamese and Himalayans.

Pets can even be allergic to other animals - cats to dogs, dogs to cats and either to another species.

"It's possible for them to be allergic to us, just like we are to them," said Thrive's Dr. Anthea Elliott Schick of Scottsdale, Arizona, immediate past president of the American College of Veterinary Dermatology.

Allergic cats and dogs aren't as likely as humans to sneeze and cough. More often, they scratch and lick themselves, shake their heads and develop ear infections.

Woodard said her Yorkie mix, Teddy, had the classic signs - scratching around his shoulders and getting rashes and ear infections starting as a six-month-old puppy. She lived in the South at the time, and he tested positive for allergies to various trees and grasses there.

A common sign of allergies in her feline patients is "overdoing their grooming," said Woodard, who's on the Chicago Veterinary Medical Association's board of directors. "Cats shouldn't be pulling their hair out when they groom. So if you start seeing bald patches on your cat, even though the skin underneath it looks normal, that could be a sign of allergies."

Even food allergies, often to chicken, beef, lamb or other protein sources, frequently show up on the skin, although pets can have vomiting or diarrhea, too.

Rarely, pets can develop life-threatening anaphylactic reactions, perhaps after being stung by an insect. But most allergies are simply miserable for the animals.

"It breaks my heart because it gets to a point that not only do I have socks on poor Mr. Friedman - which is humiliating for him - he sometimes gets so bad he has to wear the cone of shame," Gail Friedman said. "And that's not fair because he can't move around right, he can't sleep right. It's terrible."

The first step is to get a diagnosis from the vet. This could involve allergy testing, or in the case of food allergies, an "elimination diet," which involves feeding limited ingredients the pet hasn't previously eaten.

If the allergy culprit is environmental, there are medications like anti-inflammatory drugs and newer oral and injectable medications for dogs to block chemical signals associated with itchiness. Food allergies may be treated with special diets such as "hydrolyzed" food, in which proteins are chemically broken down into tiny pieces.

DIY tests can't replace checkups: experts

At-home health tests are expanding, here's how to choose the right one

NEW YORK, June 3, (AP): The doctor is in - the mailbox, that is.

You can now do self-administered tests for everything from thyroid function to HIV in the privacy of your own home - and that list continues to grow, as the Food and Drug Administration recently approved the first at-home cervical cancer test.

While the tests can make it easier for people to access health care and can be helpful for those who have extreme anxiety about sensitive or invasive medical exams, experts warn that most of the tests cannot replace an actual in-person visit.

Here's what doctors say you can test for at home, and when you should make the trek to your physician's office.

There are two kinds of "at-home tests."

In one type, the patient collects the sample and sends it off to a lab; the new cervical cancer test is like this.

The other gives an instant result - think COVID-19 and pregnancy tests.

HIV home-testing kits can improve rates of diagnosing sexually transmitted infections in rural communities and help people who are nervous about going to the doctor to seek a sensitive test, said Dr. Joseph Cherabie, an infectious diseases specialist in St. Louis.

"You really want to get people to care as quickly as possible, but some people could be very anxious about that results as well," Cherabie said. "And they have very negative reactions."

Labs are required to report a positive HIV test, instead of putting the onus on the patient who took the test, Cherabie said, and, often, the patient is matched up with HIV support services.

"If you are part of a sexual and gender minority community, going to a doctor's office can be full of a lot of historical trauma, and you may prefer to just do testing at home without anyone judging you or asking you invasive questions about your sex life," Cherabie said.

The new cervical cancer test - which tests for strains of human papillomavirus, or HPV - involves a testing swab that's like a tampon, said Dr. Susan Modest, a gynecologic oncologist at Emory University in Atlanta.



This photo provided by Teal Health in May 2025 shows the company's Teal Wand self-collection device for at-home cervical cancer screening. (AP)

It is not, Modest said, a replacement for a Pap smear, the exam in which a metal speculum is inserted in the vagina to scrape cervix cells. A doctor's visit also involves a pelvic exam, a chance to talk about abnormal bleeding - a sign of endometrial cancer - and other symptoms and issues, like menopause or STIs.

"There are so many other reasons to see your doctor and get an exam outside of a cervical cancer screening," she said. The at-home cervical cancer test from Teal Health requires a prescription, and the company said that results are not left for the patient to interpret. Some at-home tests can replace a trip to the doctor's office. That's especially true in rural areas, where it can be difficult to get a colonoscopy.

"The colonoscopy requires a prep, and you have to drive maybe 70 miles for it," said Dr. Steven Furr, board chair of the American Academy of Family Physicians who practices in rural Alabama. "You get anesthesia. It's actually almost like a surgical procedure in many ways."

"So, for a lot of people, that's pretty arduous. That's where an at-home test can come in handy."

But, Furr said, if your test reveals issues, you need to go to your doctor. Plus, patients should always discuss test results with their physician instead of interpreting them on their own, he said.

If you have symptoms of what you're testing for, go to the doctor. At-home colon cancer tests aren't the right option for people with a history of colon cancer or high-risk conditions, such as inflammatory bowel disease, said Dr. Zachariah Foda, a gastroenterologist at Johns Hopkins. He added that they're also not recommended for people who are having GI symptoms.

While there are tests for many things - running anywhere from \$15 to \$400, depending on what is being evaluated - Furr said it's essential to make sure that your test is FDA-approved so you can better trust the results.

"Anytime we get people involved in their own health care and help them understand what's going on, I think that's a good thing and it gives us a chance to talk," he said. "Any kind of screening is better than no screening."

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Northern lights

Show unlocks cosmic secret

NEW YORK, June 3, (AP): Scientists have unlocked one of the solar system's many secrets from an unexpected source: a planetarium show opening to the public on Monday.

At the American Museum of Natural History last fall, experts were hard at work preparing "Encounters in the Milky Way," a deep dive into our home galaxy shaped by the movements of stars and other celestial objects.

They were fine-tuning a scene featuring what's known as the Oort Cloud, a region far beyond Pluto filled with icy relics from the solar system's formation. Comets can hurtle toward Earth from the cloud, but scientists have never glimpsed its true shape.

One evening while watching the Oort Cloud scene, scientists noticed something strange projected onto the planetarium's dome.

"Why is there a spiral there?" said the museum's Jackie Faherty.

The inner section of the Oort Cloud, made of billions of comets, resembled a bar with two waving arms, similar to the shape of our Milky Way galaxy.

Scientists had long thought the Oort Cloud was shaped like a sphere or flattened shell, warped by the push and pull of other planets and the Milky Way itself. The planetarium show hinted that a more complex shape could lie inside.

The museum contacted the researcher who provided the Oort Cloud data for the show, who was also surprised to see the spiral.

"It's kind of a freak accident that it actually happened," said David Nesvorný with the Southwest Research Institute.

Realizing they'd stumbled on something new, the researchers published their findings earlier this year in The Astrophysical Journal.

The spiral is "a striking shift in our understanding of the outer solar system," planetary scientist Andre Izidoro with Rice University, who was not involved with the study, said in an email.

The discovery, relying on data on how celestial objects move and using simulations, will be difficult to confirm with observations. But knowing more about the orbits of distant comets could give scientists some clues, Izidoro said.

Northern lights may be visible in parts of the US Monday night following weekend solar storms.

The sun burped out a huge burst of energy called a coronal mass ejection last week, prompting space weather forecasters to issue a rare, severe solar storm alert on Sunday, though it wasn't as strong as last year's record. Another one headed toward Earth on Monday could produce more aurora sightings.

Authorities are monitoring for possible disruptions, though the worst is already over. The weekend's storms may have caused brief disruptions to high-frequency radio, said Erica Grow Cei, a spokesperson with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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## Kentucky Derby winner Sovereignty is the 2nd choice

## Journalism opens as the Belmont Stakes favorite

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y., June 3, (AP) — Kentucky Derby runner-up and Preakness winner Journalism opened as the 8-5 favorite in the Belmont Stakes when post positions were drawn Monday for the final leg of the Triple Crown.

Derby winner Sovereignty was set as the second choice on the morning line at odds of 2-1 and drew the No. 2 post. Journalism, near the outside with the No. 7 post, is the only horse running in all three Triple Crown races.

"He's been kind of the same horse since July of last summer," trainer Michael McCarthy said. "He does everything you'd ask a good horse to do: He eats well,

trains well, acts well. I thought through the last six, seven weeks here, his energy's been the same throughout."

Sovereignty is back after owners and trainer Bill Mott opted to skip the Preakness and run the Belmont on five weeks of rest, and things have gone swimmingly since he arrived at historic Saratoga Race Course.

"We've been very lucky with everything that's gone on since he's been here," Mott said. "He's been moving well over the track."

Sovereignty and Journalism in the field set up this Belmont, the second at Saratoga while renovations are made to its usual home on Long Island, to be a rematch be-

tween the first two Triple Crown winners who were also first and second the Derby.

"He's improved, as I think as many of these horses have," Mott said of Sovereignty. "I think this entire group, if you look at their form and the way they've developed over the course of this year, I think they've made steady progress and it should be an interesting race."

No. 6 Baeza, who finished third in Kentucky on the first Saturday in May, opened at 4-1. Hall of Fame trainer Bob Baffert's Rodriguez, who was scratched from the Derby because of a minor foot bruise and held out of the Preakness, was next at 6-1 and will leave the starting gate

from the No. 3 post.

The field of eight horses also includes No. 8 Heart of Honor, tied for the longest shot on the board at 30-1 after finishing fifth in the Preakness. New to the Triple Crown trail are No. 1 Hill Road (10-1), No. 5 Crudo (15-1) and No. 4 Uncaged (30-1).

Journalism, who was favored in the Derby and the Preakness and at the moment is the top 3-year-old in the country, looks like the horse to beat.

"Saratoga is very good for horses," McCarthy said. "He seems a little bit re-energized up here. We're looking for a wonderful renewal of the Belmont here on Saturday."

## Pakistan to play all games of India-based Women's Cricket WC in neutral Sri Lanka



In this file photo, Pakistan's Sidra Ameen bats during the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 match between Pakistan and India at Dubai International Stadium, United Arab Emirates. (AP)

## Same hybrid model used in Champions Trophy

## DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, June 3, (AP) — All of Pakistan's cricket games in the 50-over Women's World Cup will be in neutral Sri Lanka.

India is staging the tournament from Sept. 30-Nov. 2, but political tensions mean Pakistan will not touch India soil, even if it reaches the final.

The same hybrid model was used in the men's Champions Trophy hosted by Pakistan in February-March. India played only in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where it also played and won the final.

Political ties between the neighbors have been particularly tense in recent months, with the countries stepping back from the brink of war in May.

Bengaluru, Visakhapatnam, Guwahati and Indore will host World Cup games in India, and Colombo, Sri Lanka, is the neutral venue, the International Cricket Council an-



In this file photo, Sri Lankan ground staff look at the pitch during a domestic cricket match at the R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo, Sri Lanka. (AP)

nounced on Monday.

The tournament will begin in Bengaluru with a game involving host India.

Bengaluru will also host the second semifinal on Oct. 30. Guwahati

has the first semifinal but Colombo will be on standby if Pakistan qualifies.

Bengaluru will also host the final, but if Pakistan reaches that stage, Colombo will be the venue.

The eight participating teams are India, defending champion Australia, England, South Africa, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Pakistan and Bangladesh took the last two spots in the qualifiers in Lahore after the West Indies narrowly missed out on net run-rate to Bangladesh.

The Oval in London will host both semifinals of the Women's T20 World Cup on June 30 and July 2 next year, and Lord's will stage the final on July 5.

The tournament begins on June 12 at Edgbaston. Manchester, Leeds, Bristol and Southampton are the other venues of the 24-day tournament.

There will be 12 teams, two more than last October's tournament in the UAE.

Australia, England, India, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, West Indies and defending champion New Zealand have qualified. The remaining four spots will be decided in a qualifying tournament next year.

## Player cites burnout

## Bright 'brave' to pull out of England camp: Bronze

LONDON, June 3, (AP) — Millie Bright's decision to withdraw from international duty for England's women's team because of mental and physical burnout was hailed as "brave" by teammate Lucy Bronze.

Bright made herself unavailable for England's final camp before the Women's European Championship, meaning she missed the 6-0 win over Portugal in the Nations League on Friday and will not play against world champion Spain in the same competition on Tuesday.

The Football Association's official reason for Bright's absence was that she was undertaking "an extended period of recovery" at the end of the season. The Chelsea defender expanded on that in a podcast with England teammate Rachel Daly last week, saying "mentally and physically I'm at my limits" and that "you need to value yourself and your mental health and body."

Asked about how Bright's absence was affecting the England team, Bronze — part of the same back four at Chelsea — said her friend was missed

for what she brought on and off the field and that England players have been speaking to Bright throughout the past week.

"We've offered her our support. We just want to make sure she's OK, both physically and mentally," Bronze said. "It's been a long season for everyone."

"Having spent every day with Millie, I know that she is someone who is quite tough and holds a lot in, but I think it's quite brave of her to come out and speak. Just from a friend perspective, I just want her to be OK and give her as much time as she needs to feel OK again."

The 31-year-old Bright is a regular for England, playing in the team that won the Euros in 2022 and captaining the side on its run to the World Cup final in 2023.

She has just helped Chelsea to win the Women's Super League-FA Cup-League Cup treble in the recently completed domestic season.

England's first game in its European Championship defense is against France on July 5.

## Case potentially set for next year

## More than 1,000 former rugby players in concussion lawsuit

LONDON, June 3, (AP) — The number of former rugby players taking legal action against sports governing bodies on claims they suffered brain injuries during their careers has grown to more than 1,000, a British law firm said.

Rylands Garth, based in London, said more than 520 ex-players from rugby union and rugby league joined the lawsuit by Friday last week, which was the deadline for new applicants set by a court ahead of a hearing in July and before the case potentially goes to trial next year.

It takes the total number of players who are part of the lawsuit to approximately 1,100, Rylands Garth said in a statement.

The former players contend, according to Rylands Garth, that "rugby governing bodies failed to take reasonable action to protect them from the impacts of concussive and sub-concussive blows during their playing careers, despite knowing of the risks."

Claimants are seeking compensation from World Rugby, the English Rugby Football Union and Welsh Rugby Union — governing bodies in 15-a-side rugby — and the English Rugby Football League and British Amateur Rugby League Association — from 13-a-side rugby league — for lost earnings, medical bills and care costs associated with their injuries, the firm said.

"Rylands Garth is also calling for urgent and substantive reform of the game to better protect the safety of current and future players — including the

creation of an independent brain health ombudsman for the sport," it said.

Among those to have previously joined the class action was World Cup-winning former England hooker Steve Thompson, former New Zealand prop Carl Hayman and former Wales flanker Alix Popham.

"This surge in claimants exposes the deep-rooted issues in rugby," Rylands Garth said, adding: "Players continue to play almost all-year round, with many elite players soon to embark on extremely physical summer tours across the rugby world. We will continue to fight for justice for those who gave so much to the game."

In a joint statement issued by World Rugby, the RFU and the WRU, the governing bodies said they "are aware of the latest update shared by the claimants' legal representatives with the final number of claimants."

"We now await full details of their diagnosis and the claims being made. Our thoughts are with any former player facing challenges."

"Across the game, we continue to build on a strong foundation of world-leading initiatives designed to make rugby union as safe as possible."

That includes "smart mouthguard technology in the elite game, trials of lower tackle height in the community game, and the continued rollout of brain health services to support former players."

## Case filed in U.S. District Court in Nevada

## Ex-UFC fighters file lawsuits, alleging MMA promotion restricts their earning potential

LAS VEGAS, June 3, (AP) — Two former UFC fighters have filed antitrust lawsuits against the mixed-martial arts behemoth, alleging it operates as a monopoly that restricts their ability to maximize earnings.

Phil Davis and Mikhail Cirkunovs, who fought under the name Misha Cirkunov, filed their lawsuits in U.S. District Court in Nevada against the Las Vegas-based UFC. Cirkunovs'

complaint was filed on May 23, and Davis' was filed six days later.

Philadelphia-based Berger Montague, which is represented locally by Las Vegas' Claggett and Sykes, is the law firm for both fighters. A message left with the Las Vegas firm on Monday was not immediately returned.

Cirkunovs is seeking \$75,000 in damages. Davis didn't specify how much money he is suing for. The UFC reached a \$375 million settlement in September in a class-action antitrust lawsuit brought by Cung Le, who filed his claim in 2014.

The UFC has not reached an agreement with Kajan Johnson, who filed his lawsuit in 2021. Both recent complaints made references to the Johnson case, with the Cirkunovs' suit saying they were similar.

"In previous hearings, Plaintiffs' own counsel expressed strong concerns

to the Court about the weaknesses of the Johnson claims," the UFC said in a statement. "This new complaint (Cirkunovs) confirms that the plaintiffs in the Johnson case lack the standing to represent the proposed classes."

"In addition, it confirms that the majority of fighters signed class-action waivers and agreed to arbitrate their claims instead of resorting to court procedures. We are confident that the facts and the law are on our side in opposing approval of both of these proposed classes."

Davis fought in the UFC from 2010-15 before signing with Bellator MMA, which became the Professional Fighters League this year. He argues that the UFC's presence prevents fighters who aren't even in the organization from receiving competitive wages.

Cirkunovs was in the UFC from 2015-22.

## Acerbi's refusal makes it unclear who will mark Haaland for Italy in key Cup qualifier

ROME, June 3, (AP) — Francesco Acerbi, the defender who was supposed to mark Erling Haaland, turned down the callup to the national team.

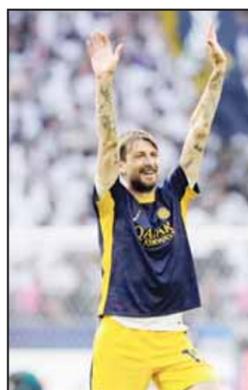
The other Inter Milan players are demoralized after getting routed 5-0 by Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League final.

Italy's preparations for a key World Cup qualifier at Norway on Friday have been anything but ideal.

Add in the extra pressure that the Azzurri are after failing to qualify for the last two World Cups and it's easy to understand why coach Luciano Spalletti says "it won't be a simple qualifier."

It's Italy's first qualifier and the Azzurri are already trailing group leader Norway, which has a full six points and a plus-seven goal differential after beating Moldova 5-0 and Israel 4-2.

Winning the group is the only way to ensure direct qualification to next year's tournament in North America. The second-placed team goes into the play-offs, the stage where Italy was



Inter Milan's Francesco Acerbi gestures during warmup before the Champions League final soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Inter Milan at the Allianz Arena in Munich, Germany. (AP)

eliminated by Sweden and North Macedonia and ruled out of the 2018 and 2022 World Cups, respectively.

Haaland scored against Mol-

dova and Israel and recently returned from a left ankle injury that kept him out for all of April.

Acerbi's relentless man-to-man lockdown efforts kept Haaland and scoreless both in Inter's Champions League opener at Manchester City in September, which ended 0-0, and the 2023 Champions League final.

But Acerbi informed Spalletti shortly after Saturday's Champions League final that he was turning down his first callup since March 2024.

Acerbi said on Instagram that he felt disrespected.

"I don't want to stay where I'm not really wanted and it's clear that I'm not part of the coach's plans," Acerbi wrote.

Since Alessandro Buongiorno, another center back, left Italy's training camp due to a right thigh injury, and Roma center back Gianluca Mancini was left out of the squad, it's unclear who will mark Haaland.

One option could be Federico Gatti of Juventus, although Gatti has played only eight minutes since breaking a bone in his left

leg in March. Another solution could be Matteo Gabbia of AC Milan. Or Alessandro Bastoni could be moved from left back to central defense in Spalletti's three-man back line.

Haaland has 40 goals in 41 matches for Norway.

"If they have one very good player, we should have 11," former Italy coach Arrigo Sacchi said in the Gazzetta dello Sport. "The problem isn't Haaland, it's us. We need to play as a team and start interpreting football as a collective effort."

Italy's goals came late in a Nations League quarterfinal loss to Germany in March, when Moise Kean scored twice and Giacomo Raspadori converted an injury-time penalty in a 3-3 second-leg draw that eliminated the Azzurri and sent them into a tougher qualifying group.

There was also an embarrassing goal conceded in Germany's 2-1 first-leg victory, when goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma and the entire Azzurri defense were protesting to the referee.

## Change Name

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'It's been a roller coaster'

## Gilgeous-Alexander, Haliburton rewrite script in showdown

OKLAHOMA CITY, June 3, (AP) — Oklahoma City's Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and Indiana's Tyrese Haliburton weren't expected to ever be starring in leading roles on the NBA Finals stage.

Well, at least not by many. "It's been a roller coaster," Gilgeous-Alexander said. "I had nights where I thought I wasn't good at basketball, had nights where I thought I was the best player in the world before I was. It's been ups and downs. My mentality to try to stay level through it all really helped me. Once I figured that out, I really saw jumps in my game."

Those jumps have made Gilgeous-Alexander the face of the Oklahoma City Thunder. This, after he was cut from his junior varsity team as a ninth grader. He came off the bench for most of the first two months of his freshman season at Kentucky, wasn't a top-10 draft pick, and was traded from the Los Angeles Clippers after his rookie year.

Haliburton has traveled a similar

road to NBA stardom.

Now a favorite son in the state of Indiana, Haliburton didn't get attention from major college programs until his senior year of high school when he led Oshkosh North High School (Wisconsin) to a state title. The slender guard visited schools such as Ohio and Indiana University-Indianapolis before Iowa State offered a scholarship. He wasn't a one-and-done, wasn't a top-10 pick, and got traded from Sacramento during his third year in the league.

"This is a franchise that took a chance on me, saw something that other people didn't see in me," Haliburton said of the Pacers. "Sometimes I think they saw more in me than I saw in myself."

Haliburton and Gilgeous-Alexander aren't the household names that casual basketball fans are accustomed to seeing in the Finals, like LeBron James or Stephen Curry. But they will be the engines for their squads when their teams meet in Game 1 Thursday night in Okla-

homa City - and for good reason.

Gilgeous-Alexander is this year's league MVP, and Haliburton is a two-time All-Star and an Olympic gold medalist.

Gilgeous-Alexander, the 6-foot-6 OKC guard, averaged a league-best 32.7 points per game in the regular season to claim his first scoring title. He has averaged 29.8 points, 5.7 rebounds, and 6.9 assists per contest in the playoffs. That's a long way from his formative days in Canada, or even four years ago when the Thunder were one of the worst teams in the league.

Gilgeous-Alexander seems to always be focused on the task at hand. He said the ups and downs of the journey flashed through his mind when he was named MVP.

"All the moments I got, like, cut, traded, slighted, overlooked," he said. "But also all the joy, all the things that my family has comforted me in, all the life lessons. Everything that's turned me into the man and the human being that I am today."

Haliburton spent two seasons at Iowa State and appeared in exactly one postseason game, a 62-59 first-round loss to Ohio State in the 2019 NCAA Tournament. He entered the NBA draft despite suffering a season-ending fractured left wrist in February 2020.

Sacramento made him the 12th overall pick, even with De'Aaron Fox already on the roster. But Haliburton never made the playoffs in 2 1/2 seasons with the Kings and their crowded backcourt led to Haliburton's trade to Indiana for All-Star forward Domantas Sabonis in February 2022.

The change of scenery didn't change his postseason misfortune - at least not immediately. The Pacers missed the playoffs in 2022 and again in 2023 as Haliburton sat out the final 2 1/2 weeks, costing him his first NBA assists crown.

The breakthrough finally came last season, when Indiana secured the No. 6 seed in the East and eliminated Milwaukee and New York be-

fore getting swept by Boston in the conference finals as the injured Haliburton watched the final two games from the bench.

This year, the Pacers have dispatched Milwaukee, Cleveland, and New York to reach the Finals. But even with his success, Haliburton has had his detractors. The Athletic published an anonymous player poll in April saying he was the league's most overrated player.

During the postseason, Haliburton is averaging 18.8 points, 9.8 assists, and 5.7 rebounds per game.

"What makes him very good is that he's very confident," Thunder All-Star Jalen Williams said. "So to be able to play as well as he's been playing through like a lot of the 'overrated' stuff ... you have to tip your hat to him for that. So he's just an extremely confident individual. And I think that, regardless of who you are, makes you dangerous."

It also makes for an intriguing backcourt matchup after a couple of winding roads to the NBA Finals.



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (2) dribbles down the court during the second half of Game 5 of the Western Conference finals of the NBA basketball playoffs against the Minnesota Timberwolves in Oklahoma City. (AP)



Brazil's Marta, right, and Japan's Narumi Miura battle for the ball during a women's friendly soccer match at Cicero de Souza Marques stadium in Braganca Paulista, Sao Paulo state, Brazil. (AP)

Jhonson scores the winning goal

## Marta back for Brazil, starts as captain in win over Japan

SAO PAULO, June 3, (AP) — Marta was given the captain's armband by Brazil for her first start for her country since last year's Paris Olympics in a 2-1 win over Japan in a friendly match in Sao Paulo.

The six-time world player of the year returned to Brazil's squad for a doubleheader against Japan and was a second-half substitute in a 3-1 victory last Friday.

Three days later, the 39-year-old Marta started - and was made captain for - the match at Estádio Cicero de Souza Marques and played 73 minutes before being substituted for Jhonson, who scored the winning goal six minutes later.

Marta, one of the best players in the history of women's soccer, announced last year that she would step down from the national team following the Olympics. The Brazilians went on to win the silver medal after losing in the final to the U.S. 1-0.

She carried on playing at club level for Orlando Pride, which won the National Women's Soccer League last season. The Pride has re-signed Marta through 2026. Brazil is preparing for the defense of its title in the Copa America Femenina, which opens in July in Ecuador.

□ □ □

The Matildas finally have a fulltime coach after Joe Montemurro's appointment Monday to guide the Australian women's national soccer team.

The World Cup semifinalists have been without a permanent head coach since Tony Gustavsson's contract expired after the Olympics in Paris last year, with Tom Sermanni working as interim manager.

Hours after Montemurro was announced as the team beat Argentina 4-1 in a friendly which was Sermanni's last game in the interim role.

Montemurro, who is Australian, started his coaching career in Melbourne and has had success in Europe.

Before joining French powerhouse Lyon last year, he won five trophies with Juventus following a successful stint at Arsenal, where he claimed the 2018 FA Women's League Cup and the Women's Super League in 2019.

The 55-year-old Montemurro signed a three-year deal with Football Australia for a span that includes next year's Asian Cup at home, the 2027 Women's World Cup and the Los Angeles Olympics in 2028.

## France, Spain, Germany & Portugal face off amid tiredness and injuries

No rest for winners

BERLIN, June 3, (AP) — No rest for the winners.

Sandwiched between the Champions League final and Club World Cup, the Nations League final four provides another opportunity to win a trophy for players who might have more need of a break.

Seven France players, four from Portugal, and one each from Spain and Germany were involved as Paris Saint-Germain defeated Inter Milan in the Champions League final on Saturday.

Germany defender Yann Arel Bisseck was injured playing for Inter and will miss the Nations League semifinal against Portugal in Munich on Wednesday.

PSG players Gonçalo Ramos, João Neves, Nuno Mendes and Vitorino will need to shake off any lingering effects from celebrations

before they play for Portugal.

France plays Spain in the other semifinal in Stuttgart on Thursday, when Spain's Fabián Ruiz is likely to start in midfield despite starring in midfield for PSG on Saturday.

France players Désiré Doué, Bradley Barcola, Ousmane Dembélé, Lucas Hernandez and Warren Zaïre-Emery all helped PSG end its long wait to lift the Champions League trophy. France players Marcus Thuram and Benjamin Pavard were on the losing side for Inter Milan.

While France coach Didier Deschamps will need to assess the impact of PSG's partying on his players, three of his preferred four-man backline are also injured. William Saliba, Dayot Upamecano and Jules Koundé are all out. Real Madrid midfielder Eduardo Camavinga is also injured as a long season takes its toll.

The winners of each semifinal will contest the final in Munich on Sunday. The losers won't get a break yet - they'll need to play in Stuttgart to decide third place.

The new competition was formed in 2018 to replace what UEFA called "meaningless friendlies" with competitive games pitting equally ranked teams against each other.

For this, it set up a league structure with four divisions containing groups of national teams, then - from this edition - a new knockout round after the group phase among the top division's group winners and runners-up to determine which play in the finals.

In the quarterfinals, Spain defeated the Netherlands on penalties, France also needed penalties against Croatia, Germany defeated Italy 5-4 on aggregate, and Portugal beat Denmark 5-3 on aggregate.

gate.

It ensured all three previous winners of the competition - Portugal (2019), France (2021) and Spain (2023) - qualified for the final four along with host Germany.

Spain used success in 2023 as a springboard for winning the European Championship in 2024, and France reached the World Cup final in 2022 after winning the Nations League the year before.

While fans might struggle to remember previous winners amid an increasingly packed schedule, coaches and players welcome the competitive edge it provides.

For Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann, it's a chance to win his first title. Though not comparable to winning a European Championship or World Cup, it would restore some pride in German soccer after the national team's decline following its 2014 World Cup win.

France's game with Spain is a repeat of their Euro 2024 semifinal, when the team starring Lamine Yamal got the better of Kylian Mbappé's France on its way to lifting the title.

Lyon attacking midfielder Rayan Cherki could make his debut for France.

Isco is back for Spain after a six-year absence. The 33-year-old former Real Madrid star enjoyed a stellar season at Real Betis.

Germany captain Joshua Kimmich would make his 100th national team appearance if he plays against Portugal.

With Jamal Musiala out injured, Bayer Leverkusen star Florian Wirtz will be under more pressure to create openings for Germany.

Porto star Rodrigo Mora was called up by Portugal for the first time. The 18-year-old attacking midfielder has been linked with a host of clubs including Manchester United, Barcelona and PSG.

The evergreen Cristiano Ronaldo, now 40, will lead Portugal again. He might not get a break after this tournament either.



Portugal's Francisco Trincao, from left, Cristiano Ronaldo, Joao Neves, Vitorino and Bernardo Silva, on the pitch during a Portugal soccer team training session in Oeiras, outside Lisbon, on the eve of the Nations League semifinal match with Germany. (AP)

### Best of the Rest

**Feilhaber hired as coach of Oakland:** Former U.S. national team midfielder Benny Feilhaber was hired Monday as coach of the Oakland Roots of the United Soccer League's second-tier Championship.

Coach Gavin Glinton was fired earlier Monday after the team opened its league schedule with three wins, seven losses and one tie. The Roots also lost their opening match in the U.S. Open Cup to Tacoma in the third round.

The 40-year-old Feilhaber scored two goals in 44 international appearances from 2007-17 and was part of the American team at the 2010 World Cup, appearing in three matches as a substitute.

His tiebreaking goal on a 22-yard volley broke a 73rd-minute tie and lifted the U.S. over Mexico 2-1 in the 2007 CONCACAF Gold Cup final.

Born in Brazil and a graduate of UCLA, Feilhaber played for Hamburg, Derby, Aarhus, New England, Kansas City and Los Angeles FC during a club career from 2006-19.

Since retiring as a player, he has been an assistant coach at UCLA, Kansas City under-17 coach and head coach of Sporting KC II in third-tier MLS Next Pro.

Feilhaber came out of retirement to play for the fourth-tier Omaha Menace when it beat Sporting KC II by 2-1 in the first round of the Open Cup on March 19, and he converted a penalty kick in a 2-1 loss to Union Omaha in the second round on April 2. (AP)

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Brazil's coach Carlo Ancelotti, second from left, leads a training session ahead of a World Cup 2026 qualifier soccer match against Ecuador, in Sao Paulo. (AP)

# Sports

Tickets on sale, public support vital

## Kuwait concludes preparations for must-win qualifier against Palestine

KUWAIT CITY, June 3: The Kuwait team concludes its training this evening at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, ahead of its crucial clash against Palestine tomorrow in the ninth round of Group B of the 2026 World Cup qualifiers, set to take place in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Kuwait began a training camp yesterday that will continue before traveling to Seoul this Friday to face South Korea in the tenth and final round of

the qualifiers next Tuesday.

Led by Argentine coach Juan Antonio Pizzi, the national team is determined to secure victories in both upcoming matches to keep its slim hopes of advancing to the playoffs alive. However, qualification is also dependent on Oman losing its two remaining matches, making Kuwait's path extremely difficult.

Currently, Kuwait sits sixth and last in Group B with five points, while South Korea tops the table with 16,

followed by Jordan (13), Iraq (12), Oman (10), and Palestine (6).

Coach Pizzi has been steadily raising the intensity of training to bring players to peak performance levels. The technical staff has emphasized focus and minimizing errors, while implementing some rotations due to recent changes in the squad compared to the lineup from last March's qualifiers.

A pre-match press conference will be held today, today at 12:00

pm at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, featuring the head coaches and a player from each team. The press conference will follow the technical coordination meeting scheduled for 11:00 AM at the same venue.

The Kuwait Football Association began selling tickets for the match earlier this week and is urging fans to show up in large numbers. Fan support will be critical, as the team clings to a last chance at qualification, despite the

difficulty of the task.

Meanwhile, the Palestine national team held its second training session at Thamer Stadium, home of Al-Salmiya Club, and will conduct its final training tonight at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium.

The Palestinian delegation also honored striker Wissam Abu Ali for winning the Egyptian Premier League title with Al-Ahly, celebrating his achievement ahead of the pivotal qualifier.



Players intensify training for the key qualifiers.



The Kuwaiti delegation.

### Delegation departs for Seoul

## Behbehani leads Kuwait's challenge at Asian Junior Gymnastics Championships

SEOUL, June 3: The Kuwaiti artistic gymnastics team is participating in the 18th Asian Junior Championships, taking place in South Korea from June 5 to 8.

Representing the team is rising talent Abdullah Behbehani, who continues to make strides on the international stage. Behbehani recently delivered strong performances at the West Asian Youth and Junior Championships in Amman, Jordan, and the Luxembourg International Open Artistic Gymnastics Championships – both held last May.

The Kuwaiti delegation departed for Seoul, led by team manager Khaled Al-Mazen. The traveling party also includes Ukrainian coach Vitaly Arsenyev, international referee Salah Askar, and athlete Abdullah Behbehani.

The Kuwait Gymnastics Federation extended its best wishes to Behbehani ahead of the tournament, noting the elevated level of competition at the Asian Championship compared to previous events. The federation, however, expressed full confidence in Behbehani's dedication and potential to represent Kuwaiti gymnastics with pride.

"This championship offers a valuable opportunity for Abdullah to engage with some of Asia's top gymnasts, test his skills under pressure, and continue his development," the federation stated.

The participation in this continental championship is part of a broader, long-term strategy to prepare Behbehani for future international milestones, including the 2026 Youth Olympic Games in Senegal.

## Inzaghi resigns as coach of Inter amid Saudi interest

MILAN, June 3, (AP): The 5-0 rout by Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League final was Simone Inzaghi's final match in charge of Inter Milan.

"The time has come for me to say goodbye to this club after a run of four years during which I gave everything," Inzaghi wrote in a letter to Inter fans on the club website Tuesday.

Saudi Arabian club Al-Hilal is reportedly trying to lure Inzaghi with an offer of more than 20 million euros (\$23 million) per season.

Inzaghi coached Inter to the Serie A title last year, and was also in charge when the Nerazzurri lost the 2023 Champions League title to Manchester City.

He was at Inter for exactly four years and had one more season remaining on

his contract.

It's unclear now who will coach Inter at the Club World Cup in the United States starting June 14. Inter opens against Monterrey on June 17 - a day before Al-Hilal opens against Real Madrid.

There has been speculation that Inter would go after Cesc Fabregas, who coached Como to a 10th-place finish in Serie A.

Inter finished second in the Italian league last month, one point behind champion Napoli.

Inter was in the running for a treble until it lost to city rival AC Milan in the Italian Cup semifinals in April. Having also been beaten by Milan in the Italian Super Cup final in Saudi Arabia in January, the Nerazzurri didn't win a trophy this season.

## Swiatek extends Roland-Garros win streak, sets up clash with Sabalenka

Svitolina and Zheng eliminated



Italy's Lorenzo Musetti plays a shot against Frances Tiafoe of the U.S. during their quarterfinal match of the French Tennis Open at the Roland-Garros stadium in Paris. (AP)

### PARIS, June 3, (AP): Four-time champion Iga Swiatek's 26th successive win at Roland-Garros set up a French Open semifinal clash against top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka on Tuesday.

Swiatek defeated Elina Svitolina 6-1, 7-5 to extend her impressive run. The consecutive wins record on the Parisian red clay is Chris Evert's 29.

Having been searching for her best form in recent months, Swiatek, who struggled in the previous round, was in total control in the opening set.

She was made to work harder by her 13th-seeded Ukrainian rival in the second set, dropping her serve in the fourth game after hitting two straight unforced errors into the net. But Swiatek broke back immediately and took advantage of Svitolina's poor service game to break again with a thunderous forehand return and move up 6-5. Swiatek sealed the win with a final ace.

Swiatek dropped outside the top

four before the French Open and has not won a title or reached a final since her victory at Roland-Garros last year. Sabalenka defeated Zheng Qinwen in straight sets to reach the semifinals for the second time.

Chasing her first title at Roland-Garros, Sabalenka overcame a shaky start and windy conditions to prevail 7-6 (3), 6-3 and extend her record against the Olympic champion to 7-1.

The score did not fully reflect the closeness of the quarterfinal, though, with so little separating the rivals. But Sabalenka demonstrated why she was No. 1, making the difference on big points, while Zheng struggled with her serve in tense moments.

Sabalenka will try to reach her sixth Grand Slam final, and first at Roland-Garros.

Sabalenka lost her most recent match against Zheng last month in Rome, having previously dominated their first six encounters. She said that loss was actually a good thing in the middle of an already exhausting season.

"I was actually glad I lost that match, because I needed a little break before

Roland-Garros," Sabalenka said. "Today, I was just fresher. I was ready to battle, I was ready to leave everything I had on the court to get this win."

Sabalenka, a three-time major cham-



Poland's Iga Swiatek celebrates as she won the quarterfinal match of the French Tennis Open against Ukraine's Elina Svitolina at the Roland-Garros stadium in Paris. (AP)

pin, has yet to drop a set in Paris.

Zheng started strong on Court Philippe-Chatrier, breaking early and dominating with aggressive play.

However, two double faults in the eighth game allowed Sabalenka to break back and shift the momentum.

A misjudged call by Zheng in the 12th game nearly cost her, but she fought off a set point to force a tie-breaker. Sabalenka remained more consistent and secured the set after Zheng hit long on a drop shot.

Zheng saved a break point with an overhead shot in the fifth game of the second set, but Sabalenka's powerful backhand return pinned her down on the next one, allowing the top-ranked player to move ahead 3-2. Zheng did not go down without a fight, though, and broke back immediately, only to drop her two last service games.

The loss ended a run of 10 consecutive match wins for Zheng at Roland-Garros, dating to last summer's Olympic Games.

Meanwhile, Lorenzo Musetti beat Frances Tiafoe 6-2, 4-6, 7-5, 6-2 to reach semifinal.

## Law on penalty kicks updated

ZURICH, June 3, (AP): The laws of soccer on taking a penalty kick were clarified on Tuesday after Julián Álvarez's accidental double touch helped to eliminate Atletico Madrid from the Champions League.

The update published by FIFA-backed rules panel IFAB means the kind of penalty Atletico forward Álvarez had disallowed after scoring in a shootout against Real Madrid in March should now be retaken.

Álvarez slipped and kicked the ball against his standing left foot in the shootout in the Champions League round of 16.

After the looping ball beat Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois for an apparent score, the goal was ruled out by a video review and Atletico ultimately lost the shootout.

The laws of soccer relating to the penalty kick and penalty shootout were seen as correctly applied in Madrid in March though too vaguely worded. The incident was widely judged to have been unfair as Álvarez did not deliberately slip and take the double touch to gain an advantage.

"This situation is rare, and as it is

not directly covered in Law 14, referees have understandably tended to penalize the kicker," IFAB said in a statement. "However, this part of Law 14 is primarily intended for situations where the penalty taker deliberately touches the ball a second time before it has touched another player."

IFAB clarified in a circular letter to soccer stakeholders that a penalty kick which is scored now after an accidental double touch should be retaken.

A double-touch penalty that is not scored will not be retaken. In a shootout, such a penalty "is recorded as missed," IFAB said, and during regulation time or extra time a free kick can be awarded to the defending team.

The clarified rule will apply at the Club World Cup which starts on June 14 in the United States. The 32-team lineup includes Atletico.

IFAB is comprised of FIFA plus the four British soccer federations. Rules can be changed with six of the eight votes which are distributed by four to FIFA and one each to the British.



In this file photo, Atletico Madrid's Julian Alvarez falls to the ground after taking a penalty kick during a shootout at the end of the Champions League round of 16, second leg, soccer match between Atletico Madrid and Real Madrid at the Metropolitano stadium in Madrid, Spain. (AP)