



Amir visits National Guard, Ministry of Defense on occasion of Ramadan Page 6



Happy National/Liberation Days to all

There will be no issue of the Arab Times on Thursday and Friday. The next issue of the Arab Times will appear on the news-stands on Sunday morning.

Kuwait's Amir, Crown Prince receive greetings on National, Liberation Days

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Tuesday a congratulatory cable from the His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on occasion of the 65th National Day and 35th Liberation Day.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince wished the Amir good health and the people of Kuwait further progress and prosperity.

He recalled the sacrifices of those who gave their lives for their country and for its development.

His Highness the Crown Prince renewed vows and determination to continue working towards expanded horizons, and more achievements under the astute leadership of His Highness the Amir.

His Highness the Amir sent a response cable to the Crown Prince, thanking him for his sincere sentiments.

His Highness the Amir evoked the memory of the martyrs, whose sacrifices will remain immortalized in history.

He wished His Highness the Crown Prince good health and well being, and for the state of Kuwait safety, security and affluence, as well as further ambitious developmental achievements.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also received cables of congratulations on Tuesday from senior sheikhs and local officials on the 65th anniversary of the National Day and the 35th Anniversary of the Liberation Day.

The cables were addressed to His Highness the Amir by His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Chief of the National Guard Mubarak Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and His Highness Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

The officials expressed sincere wishes that His Highness the Amir enjoy good health to continue the march of goodness and giving for the homeland and achieve further prosperity.

His Highness the Amir reciprocated with cables, expressing gratitude and appreciation for the sincere sentiments on the two national occasions, wishing them good health and beseeching, hoping to see further development achievements.

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



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

How long will Iraq's greed towards Kuwait continue?

SINCE the establishment of Iraq as a political entity in 1921, Kuwait has been suffering from baseless Iraqi claims, as if Baghdad has no other business than dominating Kuwait and inciting hostility between peoples.

Today, on the eve of the anniversary of Kuwait's liberation from the Iraqi invasion on Feb 26, and the National Day (Feb 25), Iraqi media outlets circulated a poisonous report about sending marine maps and location coordinates to the United Nations. This comes at a critical time when the region is on a knife's edge due to the US-Iranian tensions. It seems that some Iraqi politicians are rushing to add fuel to the regional fire.

We must deal with the current problem calmly, because the Iraqi claims are flimsy and have no basis in political or geographical reality.

The documents that have been deposited with the United Nations since 1963, reinforced by Security Council Resolution no. 833/1993, adopted unanimously under Chapter VII and ratified by the Iraqi National Assembly in 1994, have refuted any claims regarding the maritime and land borders. These claims may serve as political propaganda for domestic consumption or to create the basis for a new Iraqi dispute with Kuwait.

Therefore, the statement issued by the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, claiming that Baghdad "considers negotiation as the best way to address the issue," is just a fabrication intended to create a problem out of nothing. It is self-evident that reopening closed files constitutes a political infringement on the sovereignty of states.

We must acknowledge that geography has been unfair to Kuwait. Its northern neighbor has caused much harm, particularly after 2003. This is

in addition to the presence of sectarian militias linked to Tehran, which have caused numerous problems for Kuwait and other Gulf states for 23 years.

Hence, creating claims regarding a settled matter is not only infringement on Kuwaiti sovereignty, but also a direct threat to its national security and that of the entire Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

Thus, the firm stances declared by Gulf, Arab and international capitals refuted the flimsy arguments of Iraqi parties attempting to divert attention from what awaits the region in the coming days and weeks, as new spheres of influence begin to be drawn amidst the US-Iranian conflict.

In the eyes of reasonable people, the Iraqi claims appear to be nothing more than a futile summer night dream.

International resolutions were issued with the consent and recognition of Baghdad, both before and after 2003. Based on this, laws were enacted, and the game is over.

Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be Upon Him) spoke the truth when he said, "The pens have been lifted and the ink has dried."

Following the principle that every harmful thing has a beneficial outcome, political missteps reveal what is concealed in dark rooms and expose the secret plans.

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Security on high alert for Kuwait festivities

Zero tolerance for reckless celebration acts

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: As part of the Ministry of Interior's preparations for national holidays and celebrations, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Major General Abdulwahab Ahmad Al-Wuhaib chaired a security meeting on Tuesday with the heads of the relevant security sectors to discuss final arrangements for securing the national holiday celebrations, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The meeting began with Major General Al-Wuhaib welcoming the attendees and conveying the greetings and appreciation of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef.

He stressed the importance of continuing joint efforts and strengthening coordination among the various sectors to ensure that the national celebrations reflect the civilized image of the State of Kuwait.

During the meeting, Major General Al-Wuhaib reviewed the precautionary security plans and the level of readiness and coordination among the participating agencies.

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Landmarks and institutions across Kuwait have been adorned with the national flag in celebration of National Day and Liberation Day. Government buildings, commercial centers, and main streets have been illuminated in the colors of the Kuwaiti flag as part of nationwide celebrations. The annual occasion reflects

national unity and commemorates key milestones in the country's history. Prominent landmarks, including Kuwait Towers and various sites across Kuwait City, have been lit in green, white, red, and black, reflecting the nation's enduring pride, unity, and attachment to its land. (KUNA)

Private medical center shut over grave violations

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi issued a decision on the closure of a private medical center, and imposed financial, administrative and technical penalties on the center for committing grave violations.

This action is in accordance with Law No. 70/2020 regulating the practice of medicine and allied health professions, the relevant ministerial decrees, and the findings of the technical committees formed under the Medical Liability Authority.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Health confirmed that measures were taken based on the reports of a joint inspection committee, followed by intensive technical and legal investigations.

These investigations uncovered serious violations of occupational

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Ramadan Timings

Imsak	Wednesday	04:59
Iftar	Wednesday	17:44
Imsak	Thursday	05:58
Iftar	Thursday	17:45
Imsak	Friday	04:57
Iftar	Friday	17:46
Imsak	Saturday	04:56



5 Al-Jarallah hosts Coptic church leader

Breaking New Ground: Ambassador Nabeela Al Mulla who shaped Kuwait's voice on the global stage

MoH greenlights HIV tests at rehab centers

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24, (KUNA): Health Minister Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi on Tuesday issued a decision mandating HIV testing as a basic health requirement at rehabilitation and addiction treatment centers in both public and private sectors.

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Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced that all food supply branches in all governorates will remain open during the National Day holiday on Wednesday and on Thursday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud discussed on Monday developments in the Gaza Strip and other regional and international issues.

During a meeting in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, they stressed the necessity for all parties to adhere to the ceasefire agreement to stop the war and implement the peace plan for Gaza, the Egyptian Presidency said in a statement. (Xinhua)

Qatar's ambassador salutes Kuwait's leadership, legacy

By Fares Ghaieb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Qatari Ambassador to Kuwait Ali bin Abdullah Al-Mahmoud extended heartfelt congratulations to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, the government and the people of Kuwait on the occasion of the 65th National Day and 35th Liberation Day.



Al-Mahmoud

He conveyed his sincere wishes for the continuous advancement and prosperity of Kuwait under its wise leadership.

Ambassador Al-Mahmoud affirmed that the leadership, government and people of Qatar share in the joy of these two important national occasions with Kuwait.

He affirmed pride in the deeply rooted historical relations between the two countries and their brotherly peoples, ties built on a shared destiny and long-standing bond of brotherhood.

He pointed out that the National Day of Kuwait is a valuable milestone, reminding successive generations of the tremendous efforts exerted by their forefathers to build and develop the nation, enabling it to attain global respect and appreciation.

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Kuwait digitizes drive permissions via Sahel

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24, (KUNA): The Ministry of Interior, on Monday, launched the "Vehicle Driving Authorization" service through the unified government e-services application Sahel.

According to a ministry statement, the service allows users to issue authorizations for others to drive their vehicles, with the ability to inquire about or cancel the authorization at any time.

It also enables setting the validity period of the authorization online via the application.

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Prayer Timings

Fajr	05:00	Asr	15:17
Sunrise ..	06:19	Maghrib ..	17:44
Zohr	12:01	Isha	19:01

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: A significant decrease in temperature, warm and dust will subside gradually with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speed of 15-50 km/h.

Weather

By Night: Rather cold with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speed of 10-38 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait Airport	34	17

Abdaly	35	17
Jahra	35	16
Salmiyah	24	19
Jalaliyah	33	16
Nuwaisib	33	13
Salmiyah	34	15



HH Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad and other members of the Royal family.

Photos by Rizk Taufiq



HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah with the host.



Editor-in Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times Ahmed Al-Jarallah at the occasion. Colleagues Saud Al-Farhan, Mohammad Al-Farhan and Bas-sam Al-Qassas attended.



Oman Ambassador to Kuwait Dr Saleh Al-Kharousi at the event.



Sheikh Dr Abdullah Al-Mishal and members of the Royal family.



British Ambassador to Kuwait Qudsi Rasheed and Defense Attache Neil Marriott



Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait and his family.

Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah: Ramadan renews bonds of compassion and communication

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah recently received well-wishers at his diwan on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

A number of ruling family members, ministers, senior officials and citizens came to exchange greetings on this blessed occasion.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah attended the event, offering his congratulations on the holy month.

During the reception, Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah affirmed that he is proud of this blessed occasion, emphasizing that Ramadan is a spiritual milestone that renews the bonds of compassion and communication among the people of the

nation and strengthens the values of solidarity and unity for which Kuwait is known.

He also extended his warmest congratulations and blessings to the political leadership, praying to Almighty Allah that the holy month returns to Kuwait and its people with permanent security and stability.

China embassy extends best wishes to HH Amir, Kuwaitis

On behalf of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the State of Kuwait and my own behalf, I wish to extend warmest congratulations and best wishes to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as the Government and friendly people of the State of Kuwait, on the occasion of the 65th Kuwait National Day and the 35th Kuwait Liberation Day.

This year also marks the 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the People's Republic of China and the State of Kuwait. Over the past 55 years, through every shift in the international landscape, our two countries have always upheld mutual respect and support, setting a prime example of equality between countries regardless of their size. In recent years, with the personal support of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, China and Kuwait have made significant progress in major project cooperation, and practical collaboration between the two countries across various fields has continued to deepen.



Yang Xin

As we mark this milestone in our bilateral relations with pride, we reaffirm our full readiness and sincere desire to work closely with the Kuwaiti side to fully implement the important agreements reached between the heads-of-state of our countries, further enhance bilateral cooperation, and elevate the China-Kuwait Strategic Partnership to broader horizons.

This year, the Chinese New Year coincides with the start of Ramadan. At this memorable occasion, I extend my best wishes to His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for abundant health and well-being, as he continues to lead Kuwait toward greater progress and development. May Kuwait and its friendly people achieve continued progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir, and enjoy enduring security, safety, and stability under his noble guidance and auspicious reign. May it remain a luminous beacon of stability and progress in the region and the world, and continue to be radiant Pearl of the Gulf.

Yang Xin
Ambassador of China

Kuwait, Korea share strong and long-standing relations

On behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic of Korea, I extend my warm congratulations to His Highness Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and to the Government and people of the State of Kuwait on the occasion of Kuwait's National Day and Liberation Day.

Korea and Kuwait share a long-standing, deeply rooted friendship built on trust, mutual respect, and shared values. During the darkest time following Iraq's invasion, Korea stood firmly with the international community in support of Kuwait's sovereignty and independence. Korea provided financial support, humani-



Hyejin Kim

tarian aid, and air transport assistance, helping deliver relief and aid to those affected. In the years that followed, Korea continued to support Kuwait's reconstruction and development, reflecting solidarity in both hardship and progress.

Our peoples share the experience of overcoming external aggression and rebuilding stronger, forming the foundation of an excellent partnership based on trust, resilience, and cooperation.

Today, our relations continue to flourish across energy, infrastructure, healthcare, investment, and innovation. I am confident that the bonds between Korea and Kuwait will continue to deepen, bringing lasting benefits to both nations.

Hyejin Kim
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
Embassy of the Republic of Korea

National, Liberation Days marked

Pakistan envoy congratulates Amir, gov't & Kuwaiti people

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff



Dr. Zafar Iqbal

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the State of Kuwait Dr. Zafar Iqbal congratulated the political leadership, the wise government and the Kuwaiti people on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, 65th National Day and 35th Liberation Day.

In a press statement on Monday, Iqbal pointed out that these historic occasions exemplify the courage, dignity and resilience of the Kuwaiti people. He said Kuwait witnessed a remarkable transformation into a modern and dynamic State, adding that this transformation is a strong testament to the wise leadership and national unity.

He added that Kuwait, under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, remains a model of stability, generosity and balanced progress in the region. He stated that the visionary leadership and the persevering spirit of the people of Kuwait are the true foundations of its success.

He affirmed that Pakistan values its fraternal relations with Kuwait, rooted in shared faith, mutual trust and unwavering goodwill.

He said the Pakistani community in Kuwait made a valuable contribution to the development in various sectors through their competence, integrity and dedication, forming a vital bridge between

the two countries. He indicated that his country views Kuwait as a valuable economic partner, welcoming enhanced cooperation in investment, trade, energy, infrastructure, food security and emerging sectors, in line with the development vision of Kuwait.

He emphasized the significant untapped potential and commitment of Pakistan to generate more opportunities for mutually beneficial economic cooperation.

He added that Pakistani-Kuwaiti relations will continue to grow in the coming years, praying to Almighty Allah to grant His Highness the Amir continuous good health and a long life, and to bestow upon the State of Kuwait and its brotherly people the blessings of prosperity, progress and stability.

Follow rules, charities told

Suspension warned in foreign deals

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: The Ministry of Social Affairs has stressed the need for charitable organizations to strictly comply with the regulations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in signing cooperation agreements with international entities.

This is stated in a letter that the ministry, represented by the Department of Charitable Societies and Foundations, sent to the heads of the boards of directors of charitable organizations regarding the mechanism for signing cooperation agreements with international entities.

It emphasized the need to limit future agreements to United Nations organizations or foreign entities accredited by the electronic humanitarian action system. It added that the necessary measures will be taken to suspend

the operations of any non-compliant entity abroad.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs earlier indicated that a number of Kuwaiti charitable organizations expressed the desire to sign cooperation agreements with international organizations that are not affiliated with the United Nations.

It clarified that foreign agreements must be conducted only through these channels -- United Nations organizations and foreign entities accredited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within the approved electronic framework for humanitarian action.

It pointed out that if the United

Nations organizations need to use foreign entities to implement their projects abroad, such entities must be listed in the approved system, and this must be stated in the clauses of the agreements.

If these restrictions are not followed, the necessary measures will be taken, such as suspending the violating entity's operations abroad.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as stated in the letter, affirmed the continuation of the implementation of the Cabinet decision issued on Oct 6, 2001, regarding oversight of Kuwaiti humanitarian and charitable work outside the country.

Boost services for people with disabilities – minister

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, chaired a meeting of the Public Authority for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities to review workflow and mechanisms aimed at enhancing services provided to persons with disabilities.

In a press statement on Monday, the ministry said the meeting discussed progress on mechanization and digital transformation, highlighting steps taken to streamline procedures and modernize services.

The meeting was attended by the Director General of the authority Dalal Al-Othman, along with deputy direc-

tors of various sectors, at the authority's headquarters.

According to the statement, Al-Huwaila stressed the need to facilitate procedures for persons with disabilities and remove any obstacles they may face. She also underscored the importance of improving performance efficiency and upgrading the quality of services provided.

Participants further reviewed the stages of implementing ongoing measures and the latest developments related to simplifying transactions and accelerating their completion, as part of broader efforts to advance digital transformation and enhance service delivery.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Hope self-sponsor, timely pay move enforced quick

"We followed the press conference in which the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, discussed several issues related to corruption, as well as pressing matters on the economic, security, and social levels," Kuwaiti journalist **Salem Al-Wawan** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Sheikh Fahad spoke frankly about bribery in some government institutions. He addressed the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) and the residency affairs departments, placing some of the blame on citizens who lease commercial licenses to expatriates.

"He discussed money laundering crimes and emphasized the importance of rotating inspectors in PAM's Labor Needs Assessment Department and some residency affairs employees every six months.

"In all honesty, the First Deputy Prime Minister tackled extremely serious security issues that require strict enforcement of laws to eliminate corruption and combat money laundering, which has worsened in recent years.

"The proposal revealed by Sheikh Fahad to grant free residency to skilled workers in exchange for fees ranging from KD 750 to KD 1000 was noteworthy. This step would allow the expatriate worker to become their own sponsor, protect the labor market from human trafficking, and eliminate bribery and the residency permit trade.

"We look forward to the quick implementation of this step.

"The First Deputy Prime Minister clarified that there are no restrictions on workers from any country, but those who do not respect the country's laws will be punished and may face deportation.

"He also clarified the matter of paying the salaries of expatriate workers employed by private sector institutions. In the event of delayed salary payments, the company owner is obligated to pay them to maintain Kuwait's reputation abroad.

"The meeting was attended by a large number of government officials from various sectors. Has the message reached the manipulators? Have they realized that Kuwait enforces a serious system applied to everyone without discrimination?"

Also:

"The state budget for the fiscal year of 2026/2027 reflects a worrying picture of the economy's reality and future trends. It does not merely represent a periodic deficit linked to fluctuations in oil prices, but it clearly reveals a chronic structural flaw in the existing economic model," Kuwaiti lawyer **Dr. Abdullah Mohammad Al-Turajji** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The estimated deficit of approximately KD 9.8 billion cannot be explained as a passing circumstance. It is a direct result of the continuous rise in current spending, weak non-oil revenues, and the absence of genuine tax and development reforms that would create new and sustainable sources of income for the state. The continuation of this level of deficit means that the budget structure is no longer aligned with the reality of the oil market or with the requirements of long-term development. It also confirms that the economy is fragile and dependent on a single, uncontrollable variable.

"More concerning than the size of the deficit is the nature of the budget itself, which appears, in essence, to be a traditional accounting document focused on arranging figures and achieving formal balance, without being based on a clear development vision, coherent national priorities, measurable performance indicators, or defined reform timelines.

"In its current form, the budget resembles an account statement reflecting the past rather than outlining the future. It is managed as a reaction to events rather than as a tool to guide the economy toward a specific, measurable, and trackable path.

"Despite repeated rhetoric over the years about diversifying income sources, oil revenues still account for the overwhelming majority of the state's resources, while non-oil revenues remain marginal and limited in impact. This reality deepens dependence on a single, highly volatile commodity, and confirms that the state has yet to succeed in building alternative engines of income based on industry, advanced services, or a knowledge-based economy.

"Diversifying revenues is not a mere formality or temporary political choice, but it is a fundamental requirement for the sustainability of public finances and the long-term stability of the state.

"On the expenditure side, the budget continues to allocate a large share to salaries and current expenses, compared to investment spending directed toward productive infrastructure, growth-supporting projects, and human capital development.

"This spending pattern reflects an expansion of unproductive sectors rather than investment in enhancing economic productivity. It turns public spending from a driver of growth into a growing burden on public finances, making the budget more vulnerable to pressure during every economic cycle.

"The budget also reveals a clear

weakness in the reform tools the Kuwaiti economy needs at this stage, whether in labor market reform, restructuring the subsidy system, developing education, reforming the tax framework, or stimulating the private sector. These areas are neither clearly articulated in the budget's allocations, nor reflected in specific implementation programs.

"As a result, the budget is rendered incapable of addressing the root causes of the deficit, perpetuating a symptomatic approach and postponing fiscal pressures instead of confronting their underlying causes.

"This coincides with the limited role of the private sector in contributing effectively to growth. The budget lacks clear and serious mechanisms to incentivize it to become a genuine economic partner; instead, the state continues to assume the leading role in spending and investment. This model reproduces a government-led economy and fails to generate productive job opportunities or build a diversified economic base. The more the state relies on itself to drive the economy, the smaller the market's role becomes, and the narrower the opportunities for private sector expansion.

"The subsidy system remains a significant financial burden on the budget, lacking a clear vision for restructuring or intelligent allocation. Current subsidies do not effectively target the most deserving groups, are not linked to enhanced productivity, and do not reduce waste or excessive consumption. Instead, they entrench inefficient spending patterns and weaken sound economic incentives. Untargeted subsidies ultimately result in widespread expenditure with no sustainable impact.

"The 2026/2027 budget is alarming because it reveals a structural flaw in the economy, not merely an annual fluctuation in revenues. It reflects a chronic deficit unaccompanied by a clear reform roadmap, perpetuates an accounting approach devoid of a development strategy, and maintains dependence on oil without genuine diversification of revenue sources.

"A budget is not simply a collection of figures, but it is a direct reflection of the state's vision for shaping the future. The current budget is less a financial crisis caused by declining oil prices and more a consequence of failing to use previous boom years to build a resilient economy. Since the budget alone cannot transform the economic model, genuine reform must begin with a transparent reform plan, clear timelines, measurable performance indicators, meaningful private sector participation, comprehensive restructuring of subsidies and taxation, and true alignment between education and labor market demands."

"Some people believe that the law restricts freedom and limits a person's ability to express themselves, confusing freedom with chaos and expression with transgression. In reality, the law was not created to confiscate freedom but to protect it from harming others or attacking their dignity," Kuwaiti writer **Abdullah Al-Hajri** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"True freedom does not mean saying whatever one wishes without regard for others' feelings, nor attacking others under the guise of opinion or criticism.

When dialogue turns into abuse, and criticism becomes slander, freedom loses its noble meaning and becomes a tool for harm rather than reform. This is where the law plays a vital role in terms of setting clear boundaries that protect human dignity and safeguard the right to respect.

"The law regulates freedom of expression so it remains within the bounds of civility and responsibility. It guarantees a person's right to express opinions while preventing defamation, ridicule, or incitement. This balance allows for a conscious freedom that builds rather than destroys, that engages in discussion rather than abuse, and that critiques ideas or behavior without infringing on the individual or their dignity.

"Furthermore, the law reinforces a culture of dialogue based on respect, encouraging disagreement without animosity and debate without hostility. Society does not advance through shouting and exchanging accusations, but through a diversity of opinions within a framework of values and regulations that preserve everyone's dignity and psychological security. The law, therefore, is not an enemy of freedom, but it is a safeguard that protects it from misuse and prevents it from becoming a cover for abuse or transgression.

"It reminds us that our freedom ends where the dignity of others begins, and that responsible expression is the path to building a cohesive society grounded in mutual respect.

"In short, the law is the guardian of freedom, giving it its true human meaning, preventing it from degenerating into verbal chaos or moral assault, and transforming it into a tool for constructive communication and thoughtful criticism. In this way, freedom is realized in its highest and most meaningful form."

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



KFF personnel sealed many facilities in West Abu Fatira safety raids.

KFF photos

KFF shuts down 38 facilities in West Abu Fatira

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) conducted an inspection campaign Monday evening in the West Abu Fatira Industrial Area to identify buildings violating safety and fire prevention regula-

tions, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The campaign led to the administrative closure of 38 buildings and the issuance of several warnings for safety violations.

CAPT deletes company

Municipality unveils tent setting up rules

By Inaas Awadh/Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Kuwait Municipality has introduced comprehensive requirements and regulations governing the installation of temporary event tents.

This initiative, which applies to tents constructed from fabric or other lightweight, fire-resistant materials designed for easy assembly and dismantling, intends to regulate the activity while ensuring public safety and maintaining public order.

The Municipality set minimum distance requirements for tent placement: 200 meters from any other wedding hall, 500 meters from high-voltage power lines, one kilometer from gas stations, and two kilometers from oil and military facilities as well as landfill sites.

The regulations strictly prohibit the construction of earthen berms or any other barriers surrounding the tent, obstruction of traffic or disturbance of nearby residents, and use of the tent for activities that violate public morals or public order.

To obtain a license, applicants are required to comply fully with these regulations and pay the prescribed fees through KNET, including a licensing fee of KD500 and a refundable security deposit of KD500.

One company deleted: The Board of Directors of the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) approved the application of Article 85, Clause C of Public Tenders Law No. 49/2016 by permanently removing one company from the register.

This brings the total number of companies recently barred from participating in tenders to 12.

The decision of CAPT is in accordance with the law and includes punitive measures against companies that fail to meet the requirements and deadlines for completing work on development projects contracted by ministries and government entities through the agency within the specific frameworks and contractual terms.

Article 85 stipulates the penalties that CAPT imposes on contractors, suppliers or service providers. These penalties include a warning, downgrading of classification, removal from the register, ban on participation for a period not exceeding five years, or permanent removal from the register.

These penalties do not prejudice the contractual rights of the contracting entity, as stipulated in the contract terms.

The newspaper published a report on Jan 4, stating that 11 companies were barred from tenders and the number has now risen to 12.

DNA test forces Syrian forger to flee country

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: In a case dating back to the early 1970s, the Citizenship Investigation Department uncovered a long-running forgery scheme involving a Syrian national who obtained Kuwaiti citizenship in his 20s by falsely claiming affiliation with a Kuwaiti citizen under Article Five of the Nationality Law, reports **Al-Rai** daily quoting sources.

Sources said the forger remained in the country for decades before his sudden flight and DNA test results exposed the fraud.

Sources disclosed that the original holder of the file is now deceased. Out of the 16 children registered under his file from two wives (12 from one and four from the other), two were found to have falsified their citizenship in 2017, and the citizenship of a third was revoked in recent months. A fourth case is currently under review by the Higher Committee.

Sources said the case involves a man born in the early 1950s who obtained citizenship in his 20s – in the early 1970s. He has been a fugitive since mid-2025 and has 15 sons and daughters listed on his file, in which the total number of dependents reached 53.

Sources confirmed that the forger is of Syrian nationality. Investigations conducted with his alleged siblings proved that he is not their brother.

It was reported that the aforementioned individual has a DNA sample on record with the General Department of Criminal Evidence, obtained in connection with a prior transaction. This sample was compared with those of the alleged brothers, and the results conclusively and scientifically established that he is neither their brother nor their father's son. This finding confirms that he acquired Kuwaiti citizenship through fraud.

The sources indicated that the evidence in this case rests on three conclusive factors:

1. The admission by the alleged brothers that he is not their sibling.
2. His flight from Kuwait and his failure to respond to repeated summons.
3. The DNA test results, which scientifically and definitively resolved the matter.

Sources also cited a significant indicator – the fugitive remained in Kuwait for around one year, and according to his travel records, his trips abroad were previously limited to brief stays of only a few days. However, once investigations were initiated by the Citizenship Investigation Department, he departed the country and did not return. This is a clear evidence that he was aware of his legal situation and feared exposure.

The sources emphasized that "no matter how long the forgery lasts, the officers at the Citizenship Investigation Department will uncover it. There is no escaping the truth, and no forger enjoys immunity, regardless of how much time has passed or how hard they tried to hide."

Two get jail in docus forgery

Stick to rules in roundabouts

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: The Criminal Court sentenced a former department director and an engineer at Kuwait Municipality to four years in prison with hard labor for forging and approving property description certificates for properties in Jahra Governorate that falsely stated the number of floors and total areas.

The case is based on a report submitted by Kuwait Authority for Combating Corruption (Nazaha) about violations committed in 2020 and 2021.

The report disclosed that certificates were issued and approved with information that did not reflect the true condition of the properties, a breach of the applicable regulations and requirements.

According to the case details, an administrative investigation conducted by the Municipality substantiated the presence of violations and forgery in several certificates.

One of the defendants was subjected to disciplinary action in the form of a demotion, and both Nazaha and the Public Prosecution were formally notified to undertake the necessary legal measures.

Subsequently, the Public Prosecution launched its investigations, which led to the referral of the defendants to the Criminal Court.

Decision overruled: The Administrative Court overturned a ministerial decision on the dismissal of a member of the Board of Directors of Ishbiliya Cooperative Society.

In its reasoning, the court affirmed that the challenged decision is flawed, because it exceeded the bounds of legality. It clarified that administrative authority is not absolute, as it is subject to judicial oversight whenever it deviates from the law or abuses

its power.

Attorney Mohammad Ahmed Al-Ansari considers the ruling a new victory for the rule of law and in line with the role of the administrative judiciary in protecting rights and legal positions from administrative abuse. He stressed that justice prevailed and that legality is paramount.

He added "this ruling is a significant legal milestone in disputes related to the dismissal of members of cooperative society boards of directors. It confirms that administrative decisions are subject to judicial review to ensure the proper application of the law."

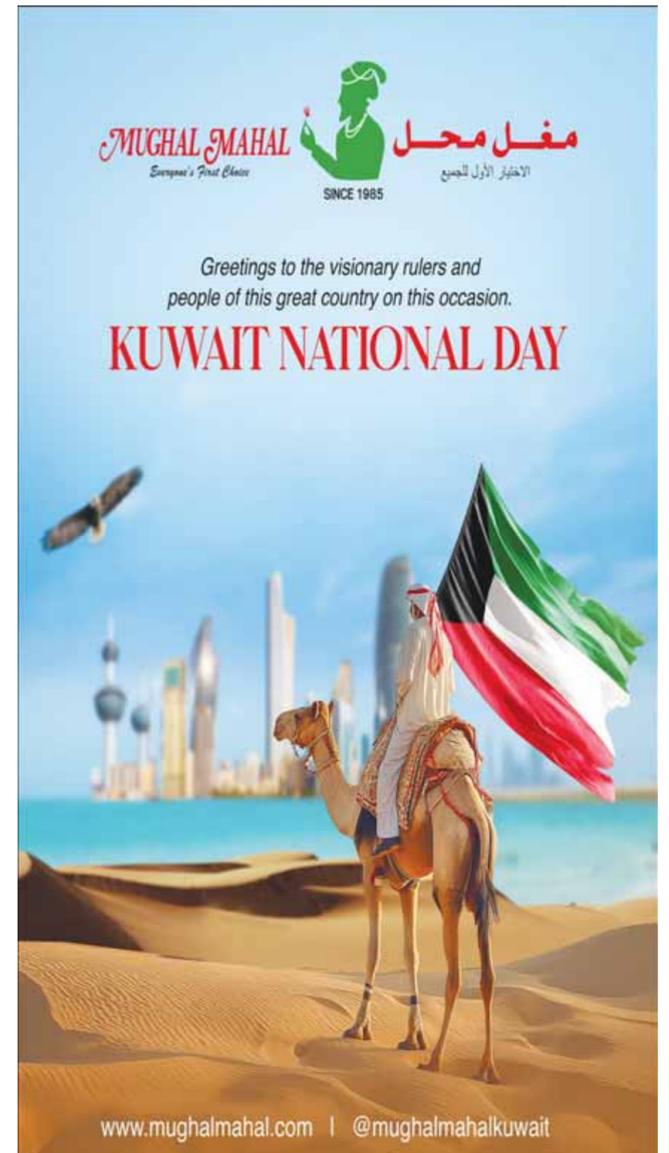
Stick to traffic rules: The General Traffic Department emphasized the importance of adhering to traffic regulations within roundabouts, given their crucial role in regulating traffic flow and reducing accidents, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

In an official statement, the department urged drivers to follow proper traffic rules to ensure smooth movement and the safety of all road users.

It explained that vehicles already at a roundabout have the right-of-way, due to which it is necessary to yield to these vehicles, avoid sudden entry, and remain mindful of vehicles approaching from the left. It is also important to select the correct lane before entering a roundabout. Drivers were advised to use the rightmost lane when taking the first exit or turning right, while other lanes should be used according to the direction of travel and the intended exit. It is essential to avoid lane changes within a roundabout unless absolutely necessary and only when it can be done safely. It is also necessary to activate the right turn signal before exiting the roundabout to alert other drivers and prevent collisions.

The General Traffic Department urged drivers to adhere to speed limits, maintain a safe distance, and avoid using mobile phones while driving.

It highlighted that traffic campaigns will continue to apprehend violators and take legal action against those who endanger road safety.





Late Amir's family upholds Kuwaiti traditions

Dar Jaber Diwan hosts Ramadan reception

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: The family of HH the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held a reception for well-wishers at the Dar Jaber Diwan in Zahra recently, on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled led the large group of attendees, including members of the ruling family, government officials,

businesspersons, media personalities, other prominent public figures and a huge number of citizens.

Sons of HH the late Amir, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Jaber and Sheikh Ali Al-Jaber, along with their brothers and children, warmly welcomed the guests.

In a deeply spiritual atmosphere fitting the occasion, greetings and blessings for the holy month were exchanged. This gathering upheld a cher-

ished and long-standing Kuwaiti tradition, passed down through generations.

This custom highlights a unique spirit of compassion, solidarity and kinship, continually affirming the strength of the social bonds and deep historical ties that unite Kuwaitis. It reinforces the identity of Kuwaitis as one family, bound by their shared sense of belonging to the nation and their unwavering loyalty to its leadership.



Family of late Amir Sheikh Jaber receives well-wishers alongside Crown Prince and senior figures.

Photos by Mohammad Morsi and Rezk Tawfiq

Kuwait University Robotics Team wins Excellence Award at VEX Championship

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

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: The Kuwait University Robotics Team recorded a remarkable achievement by winning the Excellence Award in the university category at the VEX Robotics competition, a flagship event within the Kuwait National Robotics Championship.

The championship, organized by the College of Science at the University, witnessed huge participation from educational institutions and student teams representing various academic levels.

This accomplishment affirmed the sustained scientific and technological commitment demonstrated by the students.

The team exhibited exceptional professionalism in robot design and programming, coupled with advanced capabilities in overcoming complex engineering challenges.

They further distinguished themselves through outstanding teamwork and collaboration, while fully complying with the stringent international standards governing educational robotics competitions.

Dr. Haider Behbehani, acting Dean of the College of Science, described the team's triumph as a national achievement that highlights the advanced caliber of the University students in the fields of science, technology and innovation.

The dean credited this success to the students' exceptional scientific and technical dedication.

Other Voices

Speak, so that I may see you

By Ahmad alsarraf

SOCRATES said to the young man who was strutting before him, boasting of his good looks and elegant attire, "Speak, so that I may see you."

A person's words act as a mirror, reflecting the truth of their thoughts, personality, and wisdom, rather than their physical appearance or clothing. Words reveal what is inside a person, while some secrets remain hidden, no matter how much they speak.



alsarraf

In an interview with the staunch Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, the interviewer Hadley Gamble asked him, "Didn't the October 7 actions disrupt normalization efforts with Arab countries?"

He replied that Hamas's goal was to disrupt that agreement with Israel, and they succeeded.

When asked about his reaction to what happened in Gaza, and whether it contradicted Christian values, since it included the killing of children, mothers, and tens of thousands of innocent people, Graham replied, "Frankly, I disagree with you. What Israel did in Gaza is similar to what we did in Germany during World War II. Back then, we did not think about the German children or women before bombing and burning the city to the ground. What happened in Gaza, in my view, is similar to World War II. The entire Jewish presence was then threatened with annihilation."

The interviewer interrupted him, "Did the response to what happened require leveling Gaza to the ground?"

Graham responded by saying, "This is what US forces did to the Japanese after the attack on Pearl Harbor. We leveled Hiroshima and Tokyo to end Japanese terrorism. If I were in the Israelis' place, I wouldn't hesitate to wipe Gaza off the face of the earth. What Israel is doing, or has done, to Hamas is exactly what we did to the Germans and the

Japanese."

No comment. Just speak, Mr. Graham, so I can see you.

Meanwhile, in an attempt to excuse or justify the actions of the Zionist and global pimp Epstein, someone posted on X account stating that Epstein did all his deeds without holding an official position, while Saddam and his sons held official titles.

He explained that those who attended Epstein's parties did so willingly, while those who attended Saddam's parties were brought by force. Epstein's parties featured music, while Saddam's parties involved gunfire and ended in death. Epstein committed suicide, while Saddam killed millions before he was hanged.

Some people had to speak up or write so we could see them for who they truly are. How can any rational person accept this logic? And how could they allow themselves to make such a flawed comparison?

There is no equivalence between the actions of the criminal Epstein and the actions of Saddam, his sons, and his cronies, who committed crimes against their neighbors and their people. The Epstein case is entirely different, and there is no comparison between the two, except perhaps to find an excuse for the latter.

It will take time to see the full extent of the political, moral, and human devastation that Epstein left behind. The snowball continues to roll and grow larger day by day, revealing new names, victims, and accomplices.

Perhaps this will ultimately lead to the biggest political scandal and the most dangerous case of blackmail and espionage in modern history, as the terrifying scale and the significant and dangerous positions of those who fell into Epstein's trap continue to be revealed. Although the Epstein case is still in its early stages, it has already shaken the governments of several countries, and much is still in its infancy.

Socrates was absolutely right - Speak, so that I may see you.

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw



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Sheikha Beebee Dajeej Al-Jaber Al-Sabah named Regional Director

Kuwait to chair first Arab States region of Global Craft Council

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24, (KUNA): The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters announced that Kuwait has been selected to chair the first cycle of the Arab States region under the Global Craft Council, with Director General of the Sadu Cooperative Society Sheikha Beebee Dajeej Al-Jaber Al-Sabah appointed as Regional Director.

The appointment reflects international confidence in Kuwait's leadership role in supporting crafts, preserving living heritage, and enhancing their presence within the global creative economy.

According to the council's statement to KUNA, the decision was made through an official resolution issued by the Global Craft Council during its Board of Directors and General Assembly meetings held in Kuwait this February, on the sidelines of the Global Craft Forum.

The resolution approved the restructuring of regions and the establishment of an independent Arab States region alongside Asia and Oceania regions to strengthen governance, regional representation, and program effectiveness.

The council noted that this appointment underscores Kuwait's regional standing as a hub for cultural dialogue and international cooperation in the craft sector, reinforcing the institutional dimension of crafts within developmental policies.

The statement also highlighted the forum's executive recommendations adopted under the "Kuwait



Participants of the 2nd World Crafts Forum in Kuwait gather for a group photo, showcasing international collaboration and Kuwait's leadership in promoting crafts, heritage, and the creative economy.

KUNA photo

Declaration," emphasizing the integration of crafts into national creative economy and sustainable development policies as a dynamic productive sector.

The recommendations called for empowering artisans, ensuring their professional and economic dignity, including social protection and intellectual property rights, developing fair markets, and creating equitable value chains with transparency and fair pricing.

They also included adopting clear ethical frameworks for digital and technological transformation, investing in education, knowledge transfer, long-term capacity building, and supporting crafts as environmentally sustainable and socially responsible solutions, including protecting livelihoods in times of crises and conflicts.

The Global Craft Council stressed the importance of enhancing multilateral partnerships among governments, institutions, civil society, and markets, moving from symbolic frameworks to actionable mechanisms that place artisans at the heart of development and ensure sustainable livelihoods within an inclusive creative economy.

The final statement emphasized that crafts are not merely traditional practices but knowledge and production systems capable of contributing to resilient economies, strengthening cultural identity, and achieving development based on human dignity and environmental sustainability.

'Kuwait a model of interfaith coexistence'

Al-Jarallah hosts Coptic church leader

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah met with Patron of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Kuwait Archbishop Bigoul Anba Bishoy at his office on Tuesday.

The Archbishop made the visit to offer Ramadan greetings.

Al-Jarallah warmly welcomed the guest, expressing his appreciation for the visit and emphasizing that "Ramadan is a great occasion to revive the spirit of love, communication and tolerance among the people of all religions, ethnicities and affiliations."

He pointed out that "Kuwait established a path of coexistence and respect for religious freedom, making it a model of openness and moderation."

On the other hand, Arch-



Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times, receives Archbishop Bigoul Anba Bishoy of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Kuwait, at his office.

bishop Bigoul Anba Bishoy expressed his sincere congratulations to Al-Jarallah and the staff of both newspapers, praying that the Almighty bestows upon Kuwait, its leadership and its people goodness, prosper-

ity and blessings during this holy month.

He also commended the role of national media in supporting the promotion of dialogue and tolerance, as well as strengthening social unity.



Ahmed Al-Jarallah and Archbishop Bigoul Anba Bishoy, exchanging Ramadan greetings and emphasizing dialogue, tolerance, and social unity.

Photos by Rezk Tawfiq

MEW boosts maintenance to meet summer peak demand

Electricity, desalination units set for completion

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy is expediting maintenance works in its electricity generation units and water desalination plants to fully prepare for the summer season.

Reliable sources revealed that the ministry aims to complete these crucial maintenance works by May. Sources said the six water desalination units at South Zour power station, which have a combined capacity of 50 million

gallons, are currently undergoing maintenance that might cause a slight, albeit temporary impact on overall water production.

To address any production shortfall, the ministry intends to utilize its strategic water reserves. Ministry officials are committed to finishing the work strictly according to the timeline.

The maintenance is part of a comprehensive technical program designed to improve the efficiency and operational readiness of the desalination units ahead of the peak summer season, when water consumption rates increase remarkably.

The ministry is adhering to a meticulously planned and defined schedule for all maintenance tasks, prioritizing the continuity of produc-

tion and preventing disruption to water supply.

Maintenance teams are working round the clock to ensure the quickest possible completion, while strictly observing the technical standards to guarantee stable operation once the units are brought back to operation.

The main priority is maintenance of strategic water reserves. Necessary operational measures are being implemented to prevent decrease in these reserves during the maintenance period.

This involves managing water loads and distributing production in various desalination plants to achieve the required balance, based on current freshwater consumption rates.

Namaa provides iftar to over 10k in Gaza

GAZA, Feb 24, (KUNA): Kuwait's Namaa Charity, affiliated with Social Reform Society (SRS), announced the implementation of its "Iftar for the Fasting" project in Gaza through the "Gaza Takiyas" (charitable soup kitchens) initiative.

Namaa's "Iftar for the Fasting" project via "Gaza Takiyas" initiative has benefited over 10,000 fasters in Gaza's humanitarian crisis over Ramadan's past three days, confronting rising needs, food shortages, and resource lacks, as stated in Namaa's Executive Vice President Abdulaziz Al-Kandari's Monday press statement.

Field teams handled daily distributions via over 10 takiyas in the most affected areas, he said.

The charity aims to operate more than 60 takiyas throughout



Field teams handle daily distribution in the most affected areas.

Ramadan as part of a relief plan to reach the widest possible segment of impacted families, he added.

Gaza's humanitarian situation reflects families' suffering from loss of income and rising needs, with high demand for takiyas confirming the crisis' scale and the urgency for increased sup-

port, Al-Kandari noted.

"Gaza Takiyas" project provides daily fresh iftar meals that preserve fasters' dignity and ease harsh living conditions, he pointed out.

Number of beneficiaries in the past three days exceeded 10,000, highlighting the real on-ground needs, Al-Kandari mentioned.

He urged philanthropists and supporters to continue backing iftar projects in Gaza, emphasizing that their contributions directly secure meals for deprived families and send messages of solidarity and hope amid bad circumstances.

Al-Kandari reiterated the charity's commitment to its humanitarian mission, utilizing its resources to aid the most vulnerable.

Continued from Page 1

How long

Today, despite all that Kuwait has done for its people since 2003, Iraq still supports shadowy figures operating against Kuwait and the GCC.

The international and regional rejection of Iraqi claims has affirmed Kuwait's standing in the world.

On this occasion, I say, "May Allah reward adversity, for through it, I learned to distinguish between my enemy and my friend."

Security on

He emphasized the need to work as a unified team and to exert maximum effort to ensure security and safety, as well as highlighted the importance of the field presence of security leaders to closely monitor the implementation of the established plans.

Major General Al-Wuhaib stressed that security personnel must be fully prepared and constantly vigilant in performing their duties, enforce the law firmly, and address negative phenomena to maintain public order and ensure the safety of all.

He emphasized the importance of addressing inappropriate practices that may occur during celebrations, such as spraying water, obstructing traffic, and placing large flags on vehicles that impede visibility.

Major General Al-Wuhaib stressed the need to treat the public with respect and provide assistance to those in need, especially the elderly and people

with disabilities.

He noted that celebrating National Day and Liberation Day reflects the joy of the citizens and their pride in their history, calling for these sentiments to be expressed in a manner that upholds the values of Kuwaiti society and its spirit of responsibility and commitment.

Kuwait's Amir,

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received cables of congratulations from senior state officials on the 65th anniversary of the National Day and the 35th Anniversary of the Liberation Day.

The cables were addressed to His Highness the Crown Prince by His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Chief of the National Guard Mubarak Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah His Highness Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah.

The officials expressed sincere wishes of safety, security and prosperity for the homeland under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince reciprocated with cables, expressing gratitude and appreciation for the sin-

cere sentiments on the two national occasions, and wishing further affluence and security for Kuwait under the wise leadership of the Amir.

Qatar's ambassador

About the Liberation Day, he pondered on the sacrifices made by the Kuwaiti people for the freedom of their homeland, which showed true loyalty and a profound sense of belonging. He also expressed pride in the honorable role played by Qatari forces in the battle for the liberation of Kuwait.

He explained that this participation stood as the highest manifestation of Gulf brotherhood, upholding truth and legitimacy and reinforcing the unity of the Gulf's shared destiny, where safeguarding Kuwait was synonymous with protecting the security and stability of the entire region.

He commended the exemplary and deep fraternal relations that unite the two nations and their peoples, affirming the advanced level of cooperation and joint coordination achieved on both regional and international fronts.

He reiterated the mutual determination to continue strengthening and expanding these close and distinguished ties in all sectors.

Private medical

and environmental safety standards, laboratory operation regulations,

and rules governing the dispensing of medicines and health-related advertising, hence, the need to take firm action within the legal framework.

The ministry indicated that the findings of the joint inspection committee revealed grave breaches of laboratory safety protocols, pharmaceutical oversight, and environmental compliance standards.

These violations were classified into five categories: breaches directly impacting patient safety, major technical and operational violations within the laboratory, environmental violations concerning safety and security requirements, pharmaceutical and regulatory infractions, and a complaint related to patient rights.

The ministry announced a series of measures, specifically the closure of the laboratory at the branch of the center in Hawally, immediate suspension of equipment and destruction of expired materials, dismissal of laboratory technicians found to have committed serious violations, and imposition of financial penalties exceeding KD12,000.

These sanctions include fines imposed on the medical director, several physicians, and laboratory technicians. Official warnings were also issued to healthcare personnel, the laboratory supervisor and a number of technicians.

The ministry added that the committee's work brought to light significant violations. It affirmed its continuous oversight of the private healthcare sector through routine

and surprise inspections, while emphasizing the need to enforce the law on all parties.

This approach reinforces the principle of justice and ensures the protection of public health, environmental safety, and the quality and integrity of medical practice.

In other developments, Al-Awadhi issued several decisions appointing administrative officials in the service, financial and health sectors.

These appointments, aimed at enhancing performance quality and aligning with current operational requirements, are in line with the vision of the ministry to modernize the work environment, strengthen leadership competencies, and empower national talents to assume key positions that contribute to higher efficiency, improved interdepartmental coordination, and the promotion of a culture of accountability and professionalism throughout the ministry.

The decisions included the appointment of Dr. Mona Abdul Samad as Director of the Citizen Service Department, Dr. Waleed Al-Basiri as Director of the Department of Persons with Disabilities Affairs, Dr. Afrah Al-Sarraf as Director of the Healthy Cities Department, Mughair Munawer Faisal as Director of Financial Accounting at the General Directorate of Financial Affairs, Aisha Al-Sharrah as Director of the Stores Department, and Abdulaziz Al-Haddeen as Director of the Budget and Control Department.

Kuwait digitizes

The ministry noted that the launch of this service aims to enhance procedural efficiency, save time and effort, and improve the quality of services provided, in line with the state's vision for a fully integrated digital government.

MoH greenlights

The Health Ministry said in a statement that the move aims to strengthen prevention and early detection among high-risk groups, citing increased infection risks linked to needle sharing and unsafe practices.

The decision requires all rehabilitation and addiction treatment centers to conduct HIV laboratory tests for patients upon opening a new medical file, with annual retesting throughout treatment or follow-up.

Testing must be carried out at accredited virology laboratories of the Health Ministry to ensure accuracy and compliance with approved technical standards.

The decision also obliges physicians in both sectors to immediately report confirmed cases inline with regulations governing notifiable diseases to reinforce public health surveillance.

The ministry affirmed that early detection and regular treatment can reduce transmission, protecting both patients and the wider community.

His Highness Sheikh Meshal commends KNG's dedication and readiness

Kuwait Amir visits National Guard on occasion of Ramadan



KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, accompanied by 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, visited the Kuwait National Guard (KNG) on Monday evening.

His Highness the Amir was welcomed by KNG Chief Sheikh Mubarak Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, KNG Deputy Chief Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and KNG Undersecretary Maj. Gen. Hamad Salem Al-Barjas.

Addressing the gathering, His Highness the Amir said he was honored to visit the KNG and meet with its leaders and personnel in order to congratulate them on the holy month of Ramadan.

His Highness appreciated the efforts of all KNG personnel, which have embodied utter dedication and sacrifice, and all those who have contributed to developing this great military fortress.

His Highness added that since its establishment by the late Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Salem Al-Sabah, the KNG has proven to be an invincible fortress and a trustworthy support for the nation and its institutions, defending its land, safeguarding its assets, and ensuring its security.

In this context, His Highness the Amir spoke highly of the KNG's accomplishments over the recent period in all fields, including comprehensive training and exercises as well as its national role in supporting state institutions.

Furthermore, His Highness the Amir instructed the KNG leaders to continuously monitor units, make surprise field visits to sites in a bid to bolster discipline and responsibility, assess performance efficiency, check work mechanisms, and ensure readiness, maintenance of weapons systems, and training, especially helicopter flight training.

His Highness also directed them to adopt the latest technologies and upgrade specialized centers according to global standards, while making use of artificial intelligence, enhancing the capabilities of the operations center, and improving the efficiency of monitoring and control systems to support national security and promote international cooperation through joint training expertise exchange with sister and friendly countries.

For his part, KNG Undersecretary Maj. Gen. Hamad Salem Al-Barjas addressed the gathering by thanking His Highness the Amir for this visit to the KNG, which reflected the "one-family spirit".

He said this year's holy month of Ramadan coincides with the country's national celebrations, wishing His Highness the Amir good health and the dear national everlasting goodness and blessings.

He underlined the KNG's absolute commitment to discipline and high-combat readiness in order to protect the homeland under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir.

A documentary video showcasing the National Guard's achievements and national efforts was then displayed, while His Highness the Amir was presented with a commemorative gift.



Amiri Diwan photos
His Highness the Amir of the country, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, visits the General Headquarters of the National Guard.

HH Sheikh Meshal lauds military dedication, sets strategic directives

Kuwait Amir visits Ministry of Defense on occasion of Ramadan

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, accompanied by 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, met with the leadership, officers, and personnel of the Ministry of Defense.

In his address, His Highness the Amir extended greetings on the holy month of Ramadan, praying for the continued security, prosperity, and advancement of Kuwait.

He praised the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces for their unwavering dedication to protecting the nation by land, sea, and air, emphasizing the strategic role of the military in maintaining national security and stability.

His Highness highlighted the importance of continuing the Ministry's Strategic Plan 2025-2030, aimed at strengthening institutional work and modernizing the defense system to meet evolving regional and international challenges.

He noted achievements in international cooperation, joint operations, technology transfer, and the inauguration of the "Naif" light ammunition factory.

He also commended the continued integration of women into the armed forces, including the registration of the first female university graduate cohort.

His Highness outlined key directives for the Ministry of Defense leadership, including conducting surprise field visits to military units to monitor readiness and operational needs, enhancing military infrastructure and maintenance of equipment.

The Chief of Staff, speaking on behalf of Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and all personnel, conveyed appreciation for the Amir's presence and continued support.

He affirmed the Kuwaiti Armed Forces' commitment to enhancing defense capabilities, operational readiness, and the strategic development of military sectors, including unmanned aerial vehicles, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity, alongside programs to attract and train young Kuwaiti talent, including the first cohort of female officers.

The armed forces have strengthened domestic and international cooperation through joint exercises, training programs, and exchanges with allied and friendly nations to enhance operational integration and strategic partnerships, he added.

In conclusion, the gathering underscored the steadfast loyalty and dedication of the Kuwaiti Armed Forces under the Amir's wise leadership.



Amiri Diwan photos
His Highness the Amir of the country, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, visiting the Ministry of Defense.

American public increasingly concerned about economy

State of the Union offers Trump a chance to make case for foreign policy approach

WASHINGTON, Feb 24, (AP): US President Donald Trump's State of the Union address is expected to tilt heavily on domestic issues, but it's also a chance for the Republican to make the case for his foreign policy efforts to Americans who are increasingly demonstrating uneasiness about his priorities.

The president counts brokering a fragile ceasefire deal in Gaza, capturing autocratic leader Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela and pressing fellow NATO members to increase defense spending among his biggest wins.

At a moment when polls show the American public increasingly concerned about the economy, Trump's assignment Tuesday evening also is to cut through thickening skepticism that he's staying true to his "America First" philosophy after a year in which his focus was often far from home. It's a wariness shared by some who once counted themselves among Trump's closest allies.

"If you had put America FIRST from the start, instead of your rich donor class and foreign policy, you wouldn't have to strategize on how to gaslight Americans," former Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, a Georgia Republican who resigned from Congress last month after a bitter split with

Trump, grumbled on X as the White House prepared its messaging blitz around the address.

Sixty-one percent of US adults said they disapprove of how Trump is handling foreign policy, while 56% say Trump has "gone too far" in using the US military to intervene in other countries, according to surveys from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research conducted earlier this month and in January.

The growing unease comes as Trump weighs whether to carry out new military action on Iran. He last week warned Iran that "bad things will happen" soon if a deal is not reached over its nuclear program.

Trump envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner are scheduled to meet again Thursday in Geneva with Iranian officials as US warships and fighter jets mass in the Mideast.

The administration appears flummoxed that Iran has not blinked to the mounting pressure.

"He's curious as to why they haven't - I don't want to use the word capitulated - but why they haven't capitulated," Witkoff said of Trump in a weekend Fox News appearance.

Trump could use the moment to explain to Americans why military ac-



US President Donald Trump during an event to proclaim 'Angel Family Day' in the East Room of the White House on Feb 23, in Washington. (AP)

tion could be needed, just eight months after he claimed that US strikes had "obliterated" three critical Iranian nuclear facilities and left "the bully of the Middle East" with no choice but to make peace.

The pathway to a deal seems murky as the authoritarian clerics who rule Iran say they will only discuss the nuclear issue. The US and Israel also

want to address Iran's ballistic missile program and its support for regional armed proxies, including Hezbollah, Hamas and the Houthis.

Tuesday also marks the four-year anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

On the campaign trail, Trump boasted that he would be able to end Russia's war on Ukraine in one day, but he

has struggled to fulfill his pledge.

Russian and Ukrainian officials are negotiating in US-mediated talks but are at loggerheads over key issues, including Russian demands that Kyiv concede Ukrainian territory still in its control and who will get the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, the biggest in Europe.

Russian troops have moved only about 30 miles (about 50 kilometers) into eastern Ukraine's Donetsk region in the past two years.

Despite the slow pace, Russian President Vladimir Putin maintains his maximalist demands, saying Kyiv must pull its forces from four Ukrainian regions that Moscow illegally annexed but never fully captured.

Trump argues it's inevitable that Russia will win control of the Ukrainian territory and has pressured President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to make a deal to save lives.

"Russia wants to make a deal, and Zelenskyy is going to have to get moving," Trump said last week.

Trump appears eager for a peace deal before the U.S. midterm elections despite the challenges. Zelenskyy says the White House has set a June deadline for the war's end and will likely pressure both sides to meet it.

Ukraine, Russia and the rest of Europe will be listening closely to hear what Trump has to say about ending the war.

Expect Trump to once again celebrate last month's capture of the Venezuelan leader in an audacious military operation.

Maduro and his wife were whisked to New York where they are being held to face trial on federal drug conspiracy charges.

In the aftermath, Trump has called on US oil executives to rush back into Venezuela as the White House tries to quickly secure \$100 billion in investments to fix the country's neglected infrastructure and fully tap into its expansive reserves of petroleum.

Trump's action against Maduro, coupled with an increasingly aggressive posture in the Western Hemisphere aimed at eliminating drug trafficking and illegal migration, are a concern for many in the region - although they also have won support from some smaller countries.

Trump has likened the strategy to the Monroe Doctrine, with its rejection of outside influences and assertion of US primacy throughout what the administration considers to be "America's backyard."

Trade, Ukraine and new world order top concerns on German Chancellor Friedrich Merz visit to China

BEIJING, Feb 24, (AP): The first official trip to China by German Chancellor Friedrich Merz comes as his country's manufacturers face increasing pressure from Chinese competitors and as US President Donald Trump shakes up a post-World War II global order that Europe has long depended on.

Merz is set to arrive Wednesday for a two-day visit, the latest in a parade of world leaders to visit Beijing ahead of a trip by Trump in about five weeks.

Besides Germany's growing trade deficit with China, Merz is expected to raise Chinese backing for Russia's position in the war in Ukraine, though no change from the Chinese side is foreseen.

China is seeking support from other nations to push back against Trump's challenges to international rules and organizations, but Merz has signaled wariness about China's view of a 21st century order. Success may be measured by finding small ways to cooperate despite differences on major issues.

"As the world's second and third largest economies, sound China-Germany relations serve the interests of both sides and meet the expectations of the international community," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said Tuesday.

She added that "the Ukraine crisis is not and should not become an issue between China and Europe." China says it has "an objective and impartial position," which puts it at odds with Germany and much of Europe.

Merz opens his trip with talks



German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, right, shakes hands with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi as they meet during the Munich Security Conference (MSC) in Munich, Germany on Feb 14. (AP)

Wednesday with China's Premier Li Qiang and top leader Xi Jinping, whose reduced international travel means foreign leaders must travel to Beijing if they want to meet him. On Thursday, the German chancellor plans to visit a Mercedes-Benz facility and travel to Hangzhou, a high-tech city that is home to e-commerce giant Alibaba and leading robot developer Unitree Robotics.

He is bringing a delegation of business leaders looking to expand sales. China has long been an important

market for Germany, a major exporter of manufactured goods. But advances by Chinese companies in recent years have turned them into formidable competitors, notably in the automobile industry, where new electric vehicle makers are challenging Volkswagen and other leading brands.

Last year's foreign trade figures underlined concern over the imbalance in economic ties. German imports from China rose 8.8% to 170.6 billion euros (\$201 billion), helping Chinese manufacturers offset a decline in U.S.

imports because of Trump's tariffs. Meanwhile, German exports to China fell 9.7% to 81.3 billion euros.

The growing imbalance has stepped up longstanding German demands that China reduce its trade barriers and open its markets further to foreign competitors.

Merz's visit follows French President Emmanuel Macron in December and the leaders of Ireland, South Korea, Canada, Finland and Britain last month.

In an address to the German parliament in January, Merz said Europe needs to "learn the language of power politics" to assert itself in a changing world and become stronger economically and militarily. The emerging world order also opens opportunities for Europe, he said, as democracies with open and growing markets "seek what we have to offer them, namely partnerships on the basis of mutual respect, trust and reliability."

He also said recently that Germany should have no illusions about China, which he said "asserts the claim to define a new multilateral order according to its own rules."

Shortly after this week's China trip, Merz plans to make his second visit to Washington since taking office in May.

While some countries - notably Canada and the U.K. - seek to repair ties with China, Germany's goal is to maintain a relationship that has become more complicated in recent years.

Europe

'Putin has not broken Ukrainians': More than a dozen senior European officials were in the Ukrainian capital on Tuesday in a show of support on the fourth anniversary of Russia's all-out invasion of Ukraine - a grim milestone in a war that has killed tens of thousands of people and put European leaders on edge about the scale of Moscow's ambitions on the continent.

Ukrainian President **Volodymyr Zelenskyy** was defiant despite the devastating toll - insisting that Russia has not "broken Ukrainians" nor triumphed in the war. Zelenskyy said his country has withstood the onslaught by Russia's bigger and better equipped army, which over the past year of fighting captured just 0.79% of Ukraine's territory, according to the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank.

"Looking back at the beginning of the invasion and reflecting on today, we have every right to say: we have defended our independence, we have not lost our statehood," Zelenskyy said on social media, adding that Russian President Vladimir Putin has "not achieved his goals."

"He has not broken Ukrainians; he has not won this war," Zelenskyy said.

However, as the corrosive war of attrition enters its fifth year, a U.S.-led diplomatic push to end Europe's biggest armed conflict since World War II appears no closer to finding compromises that might make a peace deal possible. (AP)

Moscow blast kills 2, injures 2 others: An unidentified assailant detonated an explosive device next to a patrol vehicle in Moscow early Tuesday, killing himself and a police officer, and leaving two other officers injured, officials said. The attack happened minutes after midnight near the Savoyevskoy Train Station in the Russian capital's downtown, according to Moscow's branch of the Interior Ministry.

It said the assailant approached a traffic police vehicle and detonated an explosive device, killing an officer on the spot and injuring two others, who were hospitalized. (AP)

France ups ante in beef with US envoy: France's spat with the US ambassador to Paris took another turn Tuesday with the French foreign minister saying the top US diplomat in France must respond to a summons and won't have access to French government officials until he complies.

French authorities had summoned Ambassador Charles Kushner - the father of US President Donald Trump's son-in-law and adviser Jared Kushner - for a meeting on Monday evening over comments from the Trump administration that France objected to. French diplomats said Kushner did not show up. (AP)

7 dead in India air ambulance crash

NEW DELHI, Feb 24, (Agencies): An air ambulance crashed into a dense forest in eastern India, killing all seven people on board, authorities said.

The Beechcraft C90 aircraft operated by Redbird Airways Pvt. Ltd. lost control minutes after taking off from Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand state, on Monday, the country's aviation watchdog said in a statement.

The plane was carrying a critically ill burn patient to New Delhi for advanced medical treatment. He was accompanied by a doctor, a paramedic and two family members. The other two people on board were the pilot and co-pilot.

"All seven persons on board the air ambulance are dead and their bodies sent for postmortem," senior local official Keerthiresh G. told The Associated Press from the accident site Tuesday.

Also:

NEW DELHI: Four laborers were killed and two others critically injured Monday after a 50-meter-long concrete slab of a corporation-owned building collapsed in the southern Indian state of Kerala, officials said. Six workers were trapped under the concrete and were pulled out by the locals. Though they were immediately rushed to a nearby hospital by locals, four of them succumbed to their injuries, a police official said.



People watch wreckage of a Beechcraft C90 air ambulance aircraft after it crashed Monday into a forest near Ranchi, the capital of Indian state of Jharkhand on Feb 24. (AP)

Sudanese paramilitary forces kill 28 in Darfur attack, says group

CAIRO, Feb 24, (Agencies): An attack by the Sudanese paramilitary forces on a stronghold of a Darfur tribal leader left at least 28 people dead, a doctors group said on Tuesday.

The paramilitary Rapid Support Forces on Monday rampaged through the town of Misteriha in North Darfur province, according to the Sudan Doctors Network, which tracks the country's ongoing war.

The town is a stronghold of Arab tribal leader Musa Hilal who also hails from the Rizeigat Arab tribe as the majority of the members of the paramilitary RSF.

Also:

RABAT: Chad announced Monday the closure of its borders with Sudan until further notice, due to repeated incursions and violations by conflicting Sudanese forces into Chadian territory.



Refugees arrive at the border between Chad and Sudan before going to the Tine transit camp in Chad's Wadi Fara province on May 4, 2025. (AP)

Ousted S.Korean president appeals life sentence for martial law decree

SEOUL, South Korea, Feb 24, (AP): South Korea's jailed former president, Yoon Suk Yeol, has appealed his life sentence for rebellion over his brief imposition of martial law in December 2024, his lawyers said Tuesday.

The conservative leader, who faces multiple trials over his power grab, expressed defiance following his conviction at the Seoul Central District Court last week. He called the decision illogical, said his actions were "solely for the sake of the nation and our people," and accused the judge of being biased against him.

In a text message, Yoon's lawyers said they aimed to address the supposed "errors in fact-finding and misinterpretations of the law" contained in last Thursday's ruling. The case will now be sent to a specialized panel at a Seoul High Court established under a law passed in December to handle cases involving rebellion, treason and foreign subversion.

"We will never be silent about what we view as an excessive indictment by a special prosecutor, the contradictory judgment rendered by the lower court based on that premise, and its political circumstances," Yoon's legal team said.

Yoon's martial law decree, announced late at night on Dec 3, 2024, lasted about six hours until a quorum of lawmakers broke through a blockade of heavily armed soldiers and police at the National Assembly. They



South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol bows at the end of his announcement at the presidential office in Seoul, South Korea, on Dec 7, 2024. (AP)

then voted to overturn it, forcing his Cabinet to lift the measure.

Yoon was suspended from office on Dec 14, 2024, after being impeached by the liberal-led legislature and was formally removed by the Constitutional Court in April 2025. He was re-arrested in July and now faces eight criminal trials over the martial law decree and other allegations, with the

rebellion charge carrying the heaviest punishment.

Though brief, Yoon's martial law decree triggered the country's most severe political crisis in decades, paralyzing politics and high-level diplomacy and rattling financial markets. The turmoil eased only after his liberal rival Lee Jae Myung won an early presidential election last June.

Mexican security forces keep up clash with cartel gunmen

TAPALPA, Mexico, Feb 24, (AP): A day after the Mexican army killed the country's most powerful drug lord, the picturesque town where it happened was a study in contrasts.

Children whose classes had been suspended by the outbreak of violence played in cobblestone streets and tourist shops were open on Tapalpa's main plaza Monday. But gunshots also rang out, and just outside the town a dead man lay on the road next to a Jeep sprayed with bullets.

Meanwhile, heavily armed Mexican security forces kept up their battle with cartel gunmen following the killing that sparked a surge in violence and put the country on edge. Cartel fighters continued to block roads as smoke rose on the outskirts of the town in the state of Jalisco.

More than 70 people died in the attempt to capture Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes and the aftermath, authorities said Monday. Known as "El Mencho," he was the notorious leader of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, one of the most powerful criminal organizations in Mexico.



A soldier clears a roadblock on a road leading to Tapalpa, Mexico on Feb 23, a day after the Mexican army killed Jalisco New Generation Cartel leader Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes, known as 'El Mencho'. (AP)

Kuwaiti oil price falls to \$68.40 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti crude oil fell 67 cents to USD 68.40 per barrel on Monday, down from USD 69.07 on Friday, according to the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Tuesday.

On global markets, Brent crude dropped 27 cents to USD 71.49 per barrel, while West Texas Intermediate decreased 17 cents to USD 66.31 per barrel.

Business

An unprecedented innovative design

NBK issues limited edition of NBK KWT Visa Infinite Credit Card for Kuwait's 65th National Celebrations

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: As part of Kuwait's 65th National Day Celebrations, National Bank of Kuwait is launching a limited edition of its NBK KWT Visa Infinite Credit Card, with a unique design that echoes the season's festive spirit, in line of its commitment to sharing joyous occasions with its customers through products that combine Kuwaiti identity and modernity, while also providing developed banking benefits that suit their daily experiences.

The new version of the card features an innovative vertical shape in the form of a reflective mirror, the first of its kind in the Middle East in collaboration with Visa.

The card's design combines a metallic reflection with refined touches that embody the spirit of celebrating the National Day, making it not only a payment tool a means of payment, but a unique token of celebration for this national occasion.

Additionally, the card is available in two distinctive colors, silver and gold, in limited quantities while stocks last, making it an exceptional choice for NBK customers seeking exclusivity and distinction.

The card also offers its holder a comprehensive experience combining luxury and ease of use, benefiting from the range of advantages provided by the Bank through the NBK Rewards Program, including offers and discounts in collaboration with a wide range of distinguished partners across many sectors.

The NBK KWT Visa Infinite Credit Card allows its holders to benefit from rewarding opportunities, including the chance to earn up to 1,000 KWT points monthly, equivalent to KD 1,000 (each point is worth KD 1).

Customers can also choose the most convenient way to redeem their points, such as cashback on purchases, travel tickets, or digital vouchers, which gives them great flexibility



Bader Al-Janah

Al-Janah: A unique design that combines Kuwaiti identity with modernity for payment solutions.

NBK cards are no longer simply payment tools, but gateways to a comprehensive lifestyle.



NBK KWT Visa Infinite Credit Card

according to their needs.

The holder of the NBK KWT Visa Infinite Credit Card can also earn up to 10% KWT points from NBK when shopping using the card at many partner brands, as the card enjoys wide acceptance for use locally and internationally with advanced levels of protection for transactions online or via POS machines.

On this occasion, Bader Al-Janah, Vice President – Consumer Banking Group at NBK, commented: “We are proud to launch this limited edition of the NBK KWT Visa Infinite Credit Card in celebration of the 65th National Day, reflecting our commitment to sharing this occasion with our customers and our dedication to innovation and providing exceptional offers that meet their aspirations.

“We were also very keen to presenting the card with a unique and unprecedented design that combines Kuwaiti identity and modernity in payment solutions and suits the expectations of our customers seeking quality and distinction”.

“NBK cards,” Al-Janah added “are no longer just payment tools, but gateways to a comprehensive lifestyle that includes exclusive benefits and renewed offers throughout the year. We invite our customers to hurry and apply for this exclusive edition and enjoy the real value and unique experience that the NBK KWT Visa Infinite Credit Card provides”.

It is worth noting that NBK continues to reinforce its leadership in developing innovative payment solutions that keep pace with the future transformations of banking services and meet customer needs in a way that ensures greater convenience, flexibility and security, further affirming its commitment to providing a comprehensive banking experience that lives up to its customers' aspirations.

Premier and main markets slip

Boursa Kuwait closes lower as all major indices decline

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Tuesday's trading session on a weak note, with its general index slipping 70.35 points, or 0.81 percent, to close at 8,572.31 points. Trading activity saw 187.2 million shares change hands across 15,910 transactions, generating a total value of KD 75.14 million (around USD 230 million).

The Main Market Index fell 45.18 points, or 0.57 percent, to settle at 7,919.50 points. It recorded 57.3 million shares traded through 5,943 transactions worth KD 9.5 million (about USD 29

million).

The Premier Market Index also posted losses, dropping 79.42 points, or 0.86 percent, to close at 9,155.77 points. The index saw 129.8 million shares traded in 9,967 transactions, with a turnover of KD 65.5 million (approximately USD 200 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index retreated 40.36 points, or 0.48 percent, finishing at 8,350.92 points. Trading volume reached 53.5 million shares executed through 5,332 transactions valued at KD 8.9 million (around USD 27.15 million).

First electric station planned in Rome

KPI prepares major entry into Kuwait's fuel market

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Following the transfer of the local fuel station portfolio from Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) to Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI) and the ongoing preparations to redevelop these stations in line with its European models, KPI has formulated a comprehensive strategy to bring its advanced and innovative European expertise to fuel stations in Kuwait, say reliable sources.

Sources pointed out that this step comes at a crucial time, as KPI is currently preparing between eight and 10 fuel stations acquired from KNPC to mark its official entry into the local fuel station sector. Sources said these stations are expected to become the first of their kind in the Middle East and rank among the leading fuel stations in the world within the next five years.

Regarding its pioneering experiences in Europe, particularly in the fuel station sector, sources confirmed that KPI has allocated a substantial budget to invest in electric vehicle charging infrastructure throughout Europe over the next five years. They indicated that by 2025, KPI would have opened its first fully electric service station in Rome.

The newspaper obtained a copy of an official report outlining key aspects of the strategy of KPI to reduce carbon emissions as part of its external fuel station development plans.

The report stated that the company has been actively pursuing clean energy initiatives, installing solar panels at 644 stations to help curb carbon emissions.

This is in addition to equipping 296 service stations with electric vehicle charging points to enhance customer access to renewable energy solutions.

The company continues to explore opportunities to upgrade equipment at its service stations, phasing out outdated technologies and improving overall energy efficiency. This includes installing the latest cooling technologies at more than 120 of its retail locations in Benelux countries.

The report added that KPI has estab-

lished an extensive network of more than 4,500 service stations throughout Europe, offering conventional and high-performance fuels, such as Q8 High Performance Diesel and Q8 High Performance 100 Octane, as well as alternative fuels including Q8 HVO+, LPG, LNG and CNG.

The report also confirmed that KPI built a network exceeding 4,500 service stations all over Europe.

It explained that this massive network was designed to reduce customer emissions by using advanced infrastructure capable of hosting and supplying low-impact alternative fuels at each location.

The report highlighted that KPI made significant strides in expanding its electric vehicle charging operations, increasing the number of charging points operated by Q8 from 477 two years ago to 837 by 2025.

In addition, the network of charging points accessible through fuel and electricity card services has expanded to more than 780,000 points.

The report indicated that KPI installed 217 electric vehicle charging points at 174 service stations in Italy, including 66 high-capacity 300 kW charging poles, in cooperation with Enel X Way.

Similarly, in the Benelux region, 227 charging points were installed in 62 service stations. Furthermore, the company is developing a Q8-owned charging infrastructure network.

Public mobile charging points are also being rolled out in urban areas, alongside initiatives to provide specialized home installation services, all aimed at promoting and expanding electric mobility.

In Italy, the company launched a program last year to develop nine Greenpoint stations. These stations are dedicated zones within service stations, specifically designed for electric vehicles and equipped with fast-charging outlets and solar panels to power the charging process.

'We thank Mr. Bhatia and are confident of a smooth transition'

KIPCO Group CFO steps down for family reasons

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: KIPCO – Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) – announced that Mr. Sunny Bhatia, Group Chief Financial Officer, has decided to step down from his role effective March 31st, for family reasons.

Mr Bhatia has served as Group Chief Financial Officer of KIPCO since 2022, leading the Group's finance, treasury and capital markets activities. During his tenure, he supported execution of several high impact strategic projects, balance sheet strengthening, proactive liability management and value maximization and financial oversight across the Group's portfolio.

Commenting on the announcement, Sheikha Dana Naser Sabah Al



Sheikha Dana Naser Al Sabah, Group Chief Executive Officer



Sunny Bhatia, Group Chief Financial Officer

Ahmad Al Sabah, KIPCO's Group Chief Executive Officer, said:

“On behalf of the Board of Directors and the management team, I would like to thank Mr Bhatia for his dedication and contributions during his tenure at KIPCO. He played an important role in strengthening the Group's financial position, enhancing capital discipline and supporting the execution of key strategic initiatives across the portfolio. We wish him every success in his future endeavors and, with a strong leadership team in place, we are confident that the transition will be smooth and that the Group's strategic direction will continue as planned.”

In strategic partnership with the Kuwait Food Bank

Zain volunteers lead Iftar initiative in Souq Al-Mubarakiya

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Zain Kuwait organized a visit to Souq Al-Mubarakiya in the heart of Kuwait City to distribute Iftar meals to market workers, in strategic partnership with the Kuwait Food Bank. The initiative comes as part of the company's ongoing on-ground Ramadan efforts under its annual Zain Alshuhoor campaign.

The visit was led by the Zain Alshuhoor volunteer team, who took part in directly organizing the initiative and distributing the meals, in a scene that reflected the spirit of giving and solidarity that Zain is keen to embody during the holy month, while reaffirming the Zain family's commitment to active community engagement and hands-on volunteer work.

Zain volunteers with disabilities also played an active role in organizing the initiative, reaffirming Zain's vision that inclusion is not merely a policy, but a deeply rooted approach embedded in its workplace culture and daily practice.

This step also aligns with Zain's '4WARD - Progress with Purpose' strategy and its WE ABLE 2030 vision for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, reflecting the company's belief that accessibility and physical independence are fundamental rights for all, and that the true value of individuals is measured by the impact and contribution they make, not by the tools they use.

Zain is implementing this initiative in cooperation with its strategic partner, the Kuwait Food Bank and Relief, as part of an integrated program to distribute Iftar meals across a number of vital and densely populated areas throughout Kuwait, with the aim of reaching the widest possible segment of beneficiaries and providing support at the right time and place.



Zain officials and volunteers with Kuwait Food Bank officials in Al-Mubarakiya.



Zain volunteers with disabilities played an active role in organizing the initiative.



The campaign reflects the spirit of giving that Zain is keen to embody during the holy month.

This year, Zain is providing nearly 30,000 Iftar meals throughout the holy month, through the Iftar hall in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, in addition to meal distribution across different areas of Kuwait in coopera-

tion with the Kuwait Food Bank through trucks that depart daily to cover multiple locations across the country.

The initiative also embodies Zain's purpose of Better Lives,

Lasting Connections, as the company continues to translate its presence in the community into tangible impact that responds to people's needs and strengthens the spirit of unity during Ramadan.

BUSINESS

Main street outperforms Wall Street

Retail investors outshine index funds

LOS ANGELES, Feb 24, (AP): For years, retail investors were dismissed by some on Wall Street as “dumb money.”

That typically referred to those prone to trading on hype, or chasing trends rather than company or industry fundamentals, or responding late to big market moves.

That’s no longer the case. An analysis of where retail investors put their money last year shows they outperformed two of the most popular, professionally managed index funds, SPY and QQQ, whose goal is to mirror the performance of the S&P 500 and Nasdaq 100, respectively.

Retail investors accounted for \$5.4 trillion in trading activity in 2025 across stocks and exchange-traded funds, or ETFs, according to Vanda, an independent data and research firm. That’s a nearly 47% increase from the previous year and the most going back to at least 2014.

“I personally want to dispel the myth of retail being dumb money, because it’s not dumb money anymore,” said Joe Mazzola, head trading and derivatives strategist at Charles Schwab, at an investor education event held in Anaheim, California, last November that drew around 800 of the financial services company’s clients.

Many Americans have long invested in the stock market, although largely hands-off through managed funds in retirement plans, such as a 401(k). But over the last decade, the advent of mobile trading apps, zero-commission trading, stock market-focused communities on social media and on-line tools for education and research has helped usher in a new era of do-it-yourself trading in stocks, crypto and other investments.

The COVID-19 lockdowns were an inflection point. A new crop of investors, many young newcomers using investing apps like Robinhood, helped drive the “meme stock” frenzy that catapulted the price of GameStop, AMC Entertainment and other stocks.

Meme stocks aside, years of mostly uninterrupted, strong stock market gains provided an attractive backdrop for more people to take up investing. The benchmark S&P 500 has posted an annual loss only three times going back to 2015.

By early last year, the number of people moving money from checking accounts to investment accounts reached its highest levels since 2021, according to a report by JPMorgan Chase. Some may have been younger Americans who couldn’t afford to buy a house and instead put the money in stocks, the report suggests.

All told, money coming into the market from individual investors jumped about 50% from 2023 to early 2025, according to the report.

“I would say they are considerably more important as a force in markets right now,” said Steve Sosnick, chief strategist at Interactive Brokers. “Markets used to be really dominated by institutional investors, but if you put enough ants together, they can move a very big log.”

Frank Sabia from Encino, California, started dabbling in investing in 2018. Over the years, he’s leveled up his market and trading knowledge by joining private investor chat groups online or attending investing seminars like Schwab’s.

“I learned a lot more about options strategies and charting and everything from there,” he said in an interview in November. “Now I’m independent. I just look for my own trades. I have my own strategy. I hunt on my own.”

Sabia, a high school registrar, said he trades in cryptocurrencies and other assets, but that his “bread and butter” is options trading.

That involves trading contracts to buy or sell a stock at a specific price before a specified date. This can be less costly upfront than buying stocks, but can also be riskier, because options expire and a small move in a stock’s price can translate into a big swing in the value of options contracts.

Last April, Sabia opened a Roth IRA account and bought into the market as stocks tanked after President Donald Trump announced a sweeping set of tariffs that were more

severe than investors expected. The announcement sent the S&P 500 into a two-day tailspin of more than 10%, the type of plunge not seen since the 2020 COVID crash.

“I just bought the dip,” Sabia said. He was wasn’t alone. Retail investors seized on the market skid, buying more than \$5 billion in stocks over the two days, according to Vanda.

“In April, it was retail (investors) that bought the dip,” Mazzola said. “They were the ones that were willing to step in front. They saw the opportunity.”

Retail investors also had one of their biggest buy-the-dip days of the year on Oct. 10, when the market dropped 2.7% after Trump threatened a “massive increase on tariffs” on China.

Retail investors haven’t slowed down this year. Their trading activity hit an all-time high on a rolling monthly basis last month, according to J.P. Morgan. They were particularly active in the last week of January, coinciding with the S&P 500 climbing to an all-time high.

Retail traders also had a hand in turbocharging the price of silver last month to record highs by buying a record amount of silver ETFs, according to data from Vanda.

A recent analysis by Charles Schwab of trading and stock positions by its millions of retail investor clients found they were net buyers of stocks in January, with Microsoft, Netflix and Tesla among the most popular stock buys.

Many retail investors have gone beyond stocks or ETFs and into other investment vehicles. Options trading, which can expose them to higher risk, accounted for about \$650 billion of retail investors’ trading last year and has been mostly rising steadily going back to at least 2019, according to Vanda.

Noah Goodwin, a junior in high school in the L.A. suburb of Castaic, started options trading on Robinhood Markets early last year using in his mother’s custodial account. It paid off right away.

He bought \$148 worth of Nvidia options on Jan. 20, 2025, the same day shares of the tech giant plunged on news of AI advances by Chinese startup DeepSeek.

Goodwin sold his options later that day. “I made a \$200 profit. My very first trade!” Goodwin said in an interview in November.

Not all his trades have gone his way. In July, he thought he could capitalize on market volatility caused by more uncertainty over tariffs, but he miscalculated.

“I lost a lot of money, like probably like around \$600 to \$800,” he said. “So, a horrible month for me.”

“For the most part, with only some exceptions, buying the dip has tended to be a very profitable tactic for many retail investors,” said Sosnick. But he cautioned that the strategy had led to retail investors making trading decisions without giving full consideration to the risks and rewards.

“The risk to it is that for many of them it’s become sort of mechanical,” he said.

It’s not uncommon for retail investors to strike a balance between higher-risk moves and making trades to build out a long-term investment portfolio.

Andy Hu, a financial analyst in Los Angeles who attended the Schwab event in November, said he had 50% of his investment portfolio in the SPDR S&P 500 ETF Trust, a popular fund that aims to track the performance of the S&P 500.

For his short-term trades, he tends to buy micro-cap stocks, which are very small publicly traded companies that can see big swings in price because of small trading volume.

The approach had his active trading account up by around 20% through the first 11 months of last year, he said.

Hu stopped making trades toward the end of last year when a pullback in big tech companies helped drag the S&P 500 to a monthly loss in December, clouding sentiment on Wall Street.

“I haven’t made a single trade in the last two months,” Hu said.

Roth rule limits 401(k) catch-up tax breaks

Since 2002, retirement savers age 50 and over have had the option of making “catch-up” contributions to their 401(k) plans, which stack on top of the regular limits for employee contributions to tax-deferred retirement plans. The amounts were limited to \$1,000 per year when they first came out but expanded to \$7,500 by 2025.

In addition, contributions to tax-deferred retirement plans are excluded from adjusted gross income, resulting in a lower tax bill on income that would otherwise be taxed. For example, a 50-year-old employee who contributed the \$23,500 maximum to her retirement plan in 2025 plus the \$7,500 catch-up amount would have effectively shielded \$31,000 from current-year taxes, resulting in a tax break of \$7,440 for someone in the 24% tax bracket.

But starting this year, these tax breaks will be off-limits for some retirement savers. That’s because of a new provision from Secure 2.0 that went into effect on Jan. 1, 2026. Individuals who earned more than \$145,000 in prior-year wages from their current employer (indexed for inflation) will

only be able to make catch-up contributions to a Roth 401(k), meaning the contribution amount will be subject to taxes upfront.

For a higher-earning 50-year-old who contributes the \$8,000 maximum catch-up amount to a Roth 401(k) in 2026, those dollars won’t be deducted from adjusted gross income. As a result, taxes paid for this year would be about \$1,920 higher (assuming a 24% tax bracket) than they would have been if the catch-up amount had gone to a traditional 401(k). Paying taxes upfront makes these contributions less attractive than they were previously, especially for retirement savers who expect to be in a lower tax bracket in retirement.

Even without a tax break, you’ll probably still want to contribute the extra amount if you’re running behind on retirement savings. If you contribute the full catch-up amount (currently \$8,000) starting at age 50 and continue doing so through age 65, you could make total contributions of \$120,000 or more over that period. If you’re between 60 and 63, you can contribute even more as a

“super catch-up” of up to \$11,250 per year, with contributions for higher earners subject to the same rules as the regular catch-up contributions.

A 50-year-old who maxes out on catch-up and super catch-up contributions could end up with about \$200,000 (assuming a 5% annual return) in the Roth 401(k) by age 65.

It’s important to note that funds contributed to a Roth 401(k) may not be eligible for matching contributions from your employer. Employers were previously required to treat matching contributions as pretax contributions, meaning that matching contributions to a Roth 401(k) weren’t allowed. Secure 2.0 loosened up these restrictions, but not all employers have updated their plans.

On balance, though, I’d lean in favor of continuing to make catch-up contributions if you can, even though they no longer help reduce taxable income before retirement.

One final note: If you qualify as a higher earner but your employer’s plan doesn’t offer a Roth 401(k) option, you won’t be able to make these catch-up contributions. (AP)

\$1 million grants awarded to 24 global cities

Cities tap AI & innovation to improve core services

The winners of this year’s Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayors Challenge created innovative projects to improve their cities’ core services - many using some combination of artificial intelligence and the wisdom of their residents.

That’s what South Bend, Indiana, Mayor James Mueller did with his initiative that uses AI to interpret data about residents, like a family falling behind on paying its water bill, and to help offer them services and support that could prevent larger issues.

“Technology is not necessarily good or bad - it’s how it’s used and how you protect against abuses,” said Mueller, a Democrat who has been mayor since 2020. “We’re trying to use cutting edge tools to deliver city services in a proactive way that meets our residents’ needs.”

The twenty-four winners announced Tuesday range from Boise, Idaho, where they are using geothermal energy to lower residents’ heating bills, to Beira, Mozambique, where they are relocating fishermen and their families from flood-prone coastal homes to safer inland houses. Each will receive \$1 million to implement the program, as well as support from Bloomberg Philanthropies experts to help the new initiative succeed.

The hope, says former New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies and Bloomberg L.P., is that successful programs from Mayors Challenge

winners can be used in other cities. “The most effective city halls are bold, creative, and proactive in solving problems and meeting residents’ needs - and we launched the Mayors Challenge to help more of them succeed,” Bloomberg said in a statement.

James Anderson, head of government innovation programs at Bloomberg Philanthropies, said many of this year’s winners are integrating AI technology into their work in sophisticated ways, bringing municipal governments closer to the residents they serve.

“Testing and learning and adapting new ideas don’t generally get funded with public dollars,” Anderson said. “It is up to philanthropy to support experimentation.”

Vico Sotto, mayor of Pasig City in the Philippines, said becoming one of this year’s Mayors Challenge winners will speed up his project to build floating parks in the Pasig River that will become new community space and reduce flooding threats in the area. Without the support of Bloomberg Philanthropies, Sotto said the initiative wouldn’t be able to start for another year or two.

“The government doesn’t have a great reputation when it comes to maintaining infrastructure,” Sotto said. “So we will be creating a governance council, including people who live in the area, so definitely they’re not going to abandon these parks. They’re going to take care of

them because they’re using them as well.”

In Lafayette, Louisiana, the city-parish had the opposite problem. Lafayette wanted to update parts of its sewer system, but because some parts were on homeowners’ property the city wasn’t allowed to pay for it.

Mayor-President Monique Blanco Boulet said the Mayors Challenge encouraged her administration to figure out a solution that will now allow Lafayette to make the repairs and, as a result, encourage development in the city. The plan was also named a Mayors Challenge winner.

“Bloomberg Philanthropies, the staff, Michael Bloomberg - all of them - have such a global impact in ways that most people will never know,” said Boulet, a Republican elected in 2023. “They bring in a level of capacity and give you the space to really be creative and to come up with solutions that can change lives.”

South Bend’s Mueller said that the Mayors Challenge comes at a time when more and more global problems need to be solved at a local level.

“Trust in government is at an all-time low, but local governments consistently perform better in surveys about trust from their residents,” Mueller said. “It is critical for us to maintain that level of trust with our residents and build it even further. So that’s why we’re always looking at innovative ways of doing things better and making the city a better place to live.” (AP)

Kuwait Telecommunications Company

Kuwait Shareholding Company (Public)

stc

Announcement Reminder

Invitation to Attend the Ordinary General Assembly Meeting and Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting

The Board of Directors of Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is pleased to invite you to attend the Ordinary General Assembly Meeting for the financial year ended 31 December 2025, which will be held on Wednesday 04 March 2026 at 11:30 a.m., at the Company’s Headquarters – Al Murqab, Othman Bin Affan Street, Assima Tower, followed directly by the Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting, where Shareholders shall be able to attend by their physical presence or electronically through Kuwait Clearing Company’s platforms specified for holding Annual General Assembly Meetings to discuss the agenda of the Ordinary General Assembly Meeting and the Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting.

Ordinary General Meeting Agenda

Order	Description
First	Discussing and approving the Board of Directors’ Report of the company’s activity, financial position and business outcomes for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2025
Second	Discussing and approving the External Auditor’s Report on the results of the company’s financial statements and approving the dividable net profit for the fiscal year ended on December 31, 2025
Third	Presenting and approving the Sharia Supervisory Board’s report for the fiscal year ended on December 31, 2025
Fourth	Presenting and approving the Corporate Governance Report and the Audit Committee Report for the fiscal year ended on December 31, 2025
Fifth	Presenting any breaches monitored by the regulatory body/bodies and any penalties issued due to such breaches and led to (financial and non-financial) penalties against the company [if any], for the fiscal year ended on December 31, 2025
Sixth	Review and approve the financial statements and profit and loss accounts for the fiscal year ended on December 31, 2025
Seventh	Discussing the Board of Directors’ proposal to distribute cash dividends 38% of the company’s total capital for the fiscal year ended on December 31, 2025 (i.e. 38 fits per share), to shareholders registered in the company’s Shareholder Register as at the Maturity Date on Wednesday, April 8, 2026. The cash dividends shall be distributed to shareholders who are entitled to them, starting from Tuesday, April 14, 2026, while authorizing the Board of Directors to change the date mentioned in the previously specified entitlement schedule in the event that they are required to be changed [if necessary].
Eighth	Discussing the Board of Directors Members Remunerations, amounting to KWD 308,500 [Three hundred eight thousand five hundred Kuwaiti dinars] for the fiscal year ended on December 31, 2025.
Ninth	Authorizing the Board of Directors to deal in the company’s shares not exceeding 10% of the number of its shares, in accordance with the articles of Law No. 7 of 2010 and its Executive Regulations, and their amendments
Tenth	Discussing the executed related parties transaction during the fiscal year ended on December 31, 2025, and authorizing the company to deal with related parties during the fiscal year ended December 31, 2026.
Eleventh	Discussing the release and discharge of the Board of Directors Members and absolving them from all liabilities related to their legal, financial, and administrative actions for the fiscal year ending on December 31, 2025.
Twelfth	Appointing or reappointing the company’s External Auditor from the approved list of auditors at the Capital Markets Authority, taking into account their mandatory execution period for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2026, while authorizing the Board of Directors to determine their fees.
Thirteenth	Appointing or reappointing the Sharia Board Members for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2026, while authorizing the Board of Directors to determine their fees.

Extraordinary General Meeting Agenda

Approval of the amendment of Article No. (6) of the Memorandum of Association and Article (4) of the Articles of Association

Text before modification	Text after modification
The purposes for which the company was established are to provide all mobile communications services and the calling system in a manner that does not contradict with the provisions of Islamic Sharia and in accordance with the regulations set by the Ministry of communication, and for this purpose, the company may perform the following purposes:	The purposes for which the company was established are to provide all mobile communications services and the calling system in a manner that does not contradict with the provisions of Islamic Sharia and in accordance with the regulations set by the Ministry of communication, and for this purpose, the company may perform the following purposes:
1. Procurement, supply, purchase, installation, management and maintenance of wireless communication devices and equipment mobile phone services, calling system and other wireless services	# Activity Name Activity Code
2. Import and export of devices, equipment, and tools necessary for the company’s purposes.	1 Wired communications Activities 611000
3. Purchase or lease communication lines and facilities to provide the Company’s services in coordination and without interference or conflict with the services provided by the State.	2 Wireless Communications Activities 612000
4. Purchase of manufacturing concessions directly related to the company’s services from industrial companies or their manufacture in Kuwait after the approval of the Public Authority for Industry for Industrialization.	3 International Telecommunications Service 612001
5. Introducing or managing other services of a similar and complementary nature to wireless communications services for the purpose of developing or making these services integrated.	4 Telecommunication Materials, Systems and Devices 619006
6. Conduct technical research related to the company’s business for the purpose of improving and developing the company’s services, in cooperation with the competent authorities inside and outside Kuwait.	5 Call Center 619007
7. Establishing, purchasing, constructing and owning the lands and facilities necessary to achieve the Company’s purposes within the limits permitted by law.	6 Modern Communication Services 619010
8. Purchase all the materials and machinery necessary for the company to carry out its purposes and maintain it in all possible modern ways.	7 Provide modern communications services 619011
9. Exploit the company’s financial surpluses by investing them in financial portfolios managed by specialized companies and entities, and authorizing the Board of Directors to do so	8 Ancillary Services to Telecommunication Systems 619012
10. Providing wireless data transfer service.	9 Computer Programming Activities 620100
11. International telephone service through special cards	10 Systems Analysis 620101
12. Marketing, renting and purchasing electronic communication devices and internal communication networks.	11 Special Software Design & Programming 620102
13. Developing computer systems and software and localization systems for computers and accessories.	12 Software maintenance and web page design 620103
14. Selling, purchasing, renting, installing computer systems and software, electronic communication devices and internal communication networks, marketing them, and providing operating and maintenance services.	13 Computer programming, analysis and operation 620104
15. Building and operating computer communication networks connected to databases.	14 Computer Consulting and Facilities Management Activities 620200
16. Design and equip electronic computer centers and information systems for the benefit of the company.	15 Design and Setup of Data Centers 620210
17. Manufacturing, producing and operating smart cards to cover the demand in the field of communication and prepayment.	16 Computer Facilities Management 620211
18. Providing and implementing all works and networks in the field of wireless communications.	17 Computer Research and Studies 620212
19. Providing technical consultation, design, supervision, operation and maintenance for transportation and wireless communications and representing the companies executing these works.	18 Integrated Computer Solutions 620213
20. Import, export, sale and rental of telecommunications-related devices and equipment and their spare parts.	19 Technical Computer Services 620910
21. Buying and selling shares, securities and financial instruments for the Company’s account only.	20 Data processing and web hosting 631000
22. Manage, operate and provide public telecommunications services on: A. Terrestrial broadcasting facilities by fixed line. B. Terrestrial radio broadcasting facilities. C. Mobile base station facilities. D. Submarine cable facilities. E. International Gateway Services Facilities. F. Space Earth Station Facilities. G. Other satellite facilities located in the State of Kuwait that provide broadcasting capabilities for public telecommunications services.	21 Network Gateways 631200
23. Establishing, managing and leasing inactive infrastructures for the public telecommunications network.	22 Web Design 631201
24. Operating and leasing data centers, information centers, and cloud.	23 Provision of MVNO Services 631202
25. Providing and developing digital payment systems, payment services, and electronic money transfers.	24 Management of a Shareholding Company 821118
The Company may have an interest or participate in any way with entities that are engaged in business similar to its business or that may help achieve its purposes in Kuwait and abroad, and may purchase or merge such entities to them, and the Company may engage in works that are complementary, necessary or related to its purposes, after obtaining the approval of the competent authorities for such works.	25 Maintenance of Telecommunication Equipment 951240
	26 Repair and maintenance of fixed and mobile motors, systems, and information storage devices 951140
	27 Repair and Maintenance of mobile Devices 951210
	28 ICT Consultancy 7490342
	29 Export and Import Offices 461030
	30 Buying and selling shares and bonds for the company’s account 649917
	31 Ownership of long term assets & short-term assets for the benefit of the company 681091
	32 Buying and selling land and assets for the company’s account only 681011
	33 Investing financial surpluses in financial portfolios managed by specialized companies and entities 649918
	34 Installation of telecommunications equipment 332021
	35 Installation and Cabling of Computer and Telecommunication Networks 432122
	36 Satellite communications activities 613000
	37 Wholesale & Retail Trade 450000
	38 Wholesale Trade of Telephones and Telecommunications Equipment 465203
	39 Retail Trade of Mobile Phones 474130
	40 Telecommunication Equipment & Supplies 465208
	41 Wholesale Trade of Electronic and Telecommunications Equipment and Spare Parts 465200
	42 Selling Mobile Phone Accessories 474140
	43 Wholesale Trade of Electronic Parts and Components for Telecommunications, including Electronic Tubes and Integrated and Printed Circuits 465201
	44 Retail Trade of Information and Communication Equipment in Specialized Stores 474000
	45 Telecommunication Wire Extension 432112
	46 Construction, Installation, and Repair of Telecommunication and Radar Stations and Towers (Wired and Wireless) 422070
	47 Extension of networks 432113
	48 Retail Sale of Prepaid Cards of All Types 476130
	49 Wholesale Trade of Prepaid Cards 464963
	50 Project Management 821110
	51 Repair of telecommunications equipment 951200
	52 Establishing companies or participating with others to carry out the Company’s activities 642061
	53 Repair and maintenance of mobile phones. 951220
	The Company may have an interest in, or participate in any manner with, institutions and companies that carry out activities similar to its own or that may assist it in achieving its objectives, whether in Kuwait or abroad. The Company may also acquire such institutions and companies or merge them with it. Furthermore, the Company may engage in complementary, necessary, or related activities to its purposes, subject to obtaining the approval of the competent authorities for such activities

Electronic Attendance: Shareholders wishing to attend the meeting electronically are required to register their names using the electronic voting service eAGM by filing up the intended form available on the website of the Kuwait Clearing Company (www.aqagsa.com) in addition to providing the required documents in order to obtain the username and password which shall authorize them to attend and vote electronically on the agenda items of the Ordinary General Assembly. Participation and voting are now available until the conclusion of the reading of the agenda at the General Assembly meeting held on Wednesday, 04 March 2026, as per the Policies and Procedures Guidelines published on Kuwait Clearing Company’s website with regards to convening the general assemblies through the electronic systems.

Physical Attendance: Shareholders wishing to attend the meeting physically should visit the Investor Relations Department at the Company’s Headquarters – Al Murqab, Assima Tower. Shareholders shall bring with them their share certificates or the original transfer receipt in order to obtain the attendance invitations and the AGM agenda.

In the absence of a quorum for the Ordinary General Assembly Meeting and the Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting another meeting with the same agenda items and same place will be held on Monday, 30 March 2026, at 10:30 a.m. whereby, the attendance and voting shall be either physically or electronically.

Board of Directors



Scan to view 2025 annual report

China urges US to drop tariffs following court ruling

US officials expect existing trade deals to remain valid

BANGKOK, Feb 24, (AP): The Supreme Court's ruling against U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs has countries like China and South Korea watching for Washington's next steps, while financial markets took the news in stride.

The decision announced Friday could potentially disrupt arrangements worked out in trade negotiations since Trump announced sweeping tariffs on dozens of countries in April 2025.

China's Commerce Ministry said it was conducting a "comprehensive assessment of" the ruling against the tariffs Trump imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, or IEEPA.

"China urges the United States to lift the unilateral tariffs imposed on trading partners," an unnamed ministry spokesman said in a statement.

The statement reiterated Beijing's stance that there are no winners in a trade war and that the measures Trump had announced "not only violate international economic and trade rules but also contravene domestic laws of the United States, and are not in the interests of any party," the official Xinhua News Agency cited the spokesperson as saying.

Trump responded to the Supreme Court decision by proposing a new 10% global tariff under an alternative law, Section 122 of the 1974 Trade Act, and later increased it to 15%.

For China and some other countries in Asia that were subject to higher import duties on their exports, that could potentially bring some relief. But for others such as Japan, the United Kingdom and other U.S. allies, tariffs could rise.

The U.S. plans to stand by its trade deals and expects its partners to do the same, U.S. Trade Repre-



Containers are stacked at the Port of Long Beach Friday, Feb. 20, 2026, in Long Beach, Calif. (AP)

sentative Jamieson Greer said in a CBS News interview Sunday.

"The deals were not premised on whether or not the emergency tariff litigation would rise or fall," said

Greer, Trump's top trade negotiator. "I haven't heard anyone yet come to me and say the deal's off. They want to see how this plays out."

Uncertainty may worsen if the Trump administra-

tion continues imposing new tariffs under alternative laws, South Korea's trade minister, Kim Jung-kwan, said Monday.

The South Koreans have agreed to hold "amicable" discussions with U.S. officials in order to minimize any negative impact on South Korean companies, he said. Major South Korean exports such as autos and steel are subject to tariffs under other trade laws.

"Given the uncertainty over future U.S. tariff measures, the public and private sectors must work together to strengthen our companies' export competitiveness and diversify their markets," Kim said.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent also said Sunday that he believed trading partners would abide by existing deals and that tariff revenues will remain steady.

"Tariff revenues will be unchanged this year and will be unchanged in the future," Bessent said in a Fox News interview, pointing to the new 15% global tariffs Trump has said he wants as a replacement.

The administration would defer to the courts on whether to give companies refunds for the import taxes already collected under the tariffs now declared unlawful, Bessent said.

"It's out of our hands and we will follow the court's orders," he said.

U.S. futures sank early Monday, with the contract for the S&P 500 down 0.6% and that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average falling 0.5%. Oil prices fell and the U.S. dollar weakened against the Japanese yen and the euro.

But share prices in Asia mostly advanced, with Hong Kong's Hang Seng gaining 2.4%.

EU delays trade deal vote amid confusion

Trade policies fuel inflation

Supreme Court blocks Trump's sweeping tariffs

Doug Ford says 'walls closing in' on Trump after court ruling

WASHINGTON, Feb 24, (AP): The Supreme Court's stunning rebuke of President Donald Trump's most sweeping tariffs means he can't conjure up new import taxes on a whim anymore.

But the justices' ruling on Friday is nonetheless unlikely to ease the uncertainty over Trump's trade policy that has paralyzed businesses over the past year. "It's only gotten more complicated for everybody," said trade lawyer Ryan Majerus, partner at King & Spalding and a former U.S. trade official.

Vexing questions remain: How will the president use other laws to reconstruct the tariffs the Supreme Court knocked down, and will those attempts withstand legal challenges? What does the decision mean for the trade deals Trump strong-armed other countries into accepting, using his now-defunct tariffs as leverage? Can importers collect refunds for the tariffs they paid last year, and if so, how?

Then there's Trump's own unpredictability. Even though he had weeks to prepare for an unfavorable Supreme Court ruling, his response was still chaotic: On Friday, he said he'd use other legal authority to impose 10% levies on imports from other countries. Saturday, he ratcheted it up to 15%.

Normally, lower tariffs arising from the Supreme Court's decision might be expected to give the economy a little lift. But "any benefit you would get from that is more than offset to a modest negative from the uncertainty front," said Mike Skordeles, head of U.S. economics at Truist, a bank.

Gone for good are the sweeping tariffs Trump justified under the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), mainly to combat America's persistent trade deficits. But that doesn't mean the president can't invoke other laws to rebuild much of his tariff wall around the U.S. economy.

"Tariff revenues will be unchanged this year and will be unchanged in the future," Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said in a Fox News interview Sunday.

Trump reached for a stop-gap option immediately after his defeat Friday at the Supreme Court: Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974 allows the president to impose tariffs of up to 15% for up to 150 days. But any extension beyond 150 days must be approved by a Congress likely to balk at passing a tax increase as November's midterm elections loom.

Section 122 has never been invoked before,

and some critics say the president can't use it as a stand-in for the IEEPA tariffs to combat the trade deficit.

Bryan Riley of National Taxpayers Union, for example, argues that Section 122 is meant to give the president a tool to fight what it calls "fundamental international payments problems," not the trade deficit.

The provision arose from the financial crises that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s when the U.S. dollar was tied to gold. Other countries were dumping dollars in exchange for gold at a set rate, putting alarming downward pressure on the dollar. But the U.S. currency is no longer linked to gold, so Section 122 has been "effectively rendered obsolete," Riley wrote in a commentary.

"Given the amount of money at issue for U.S. businesses, it is not hard to imagine a new wave of litigation attacking Section 122, and again seeking refunds of Section 122 duties collected," said trade lawyer Dave Townsend, a partner at Dorsey & Whitney.

A sturdier alternative is Section 301 of the same 1974 trade act, which gives the United States a handy cudgel with which to smack countries it accuses of engaging in "unjustifiable," "unreasonable" or "discriminatory" trade practices. In a statement Friday, in fact, U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said the administration was launching a series of 301 investigations after the loss at the Supreme Court.

Trump invoked Section 301 in his first term to impose sweeping tariffs on Chinese imports in a dispute over the sharp-elbowed tactics that Beijing was using to challenge America's technological dominance. Those tariffs were upheld in court and kept by the Biden administration.

"We're eight years in, and those China tariffs are still here," King & Spalding's Majerus said. "They're sticky tariffs."

The Supreme Court's decision also raises questions about the lopsided trade agreements Trump negotiated last year, using the threat of potentially unlimited IEEPA tariffs to squeeze concessions out of U.S. trading partners from the European Union to Japan.

Will countries try to back out of their commitments, now that the IEEPA tariff threat is gone?

The European Union's trade deal with Trump is already on hold amid confusion following the Supreme Court's ruling - and Trump's decision to respond to it with the 15% Section 122 global tariff.

European lawmakers on Monday delayed a vote on ratifying the pact to seek clarification. They are worried that Trump's new import tax will stack on top of the "most favored nation" tariffs the United States charges under pre-existing World Trade Organization rules - and lift U.S. tariffs on EU imports above the 15% the Europeans had agreed to last year.

"A deal is a deal," said commission spokesman Olof Gill. "So now we are simply saying to the US, it is up to you to clearly show to us what path you are taking to honor the agreement."

Then there's the United Kingdom, which had reached a deal with Trump last year for 10% tariffs on its exports to the United States. Will they really go to 15%?

Still, trade analysts largely expect U.S. trade partners to stick by the deals they reached with Trump last year. For one thing, the United States could wallop them with hefty Section 301 tariffs, which are potentially unlimited, for violating trade agreements.

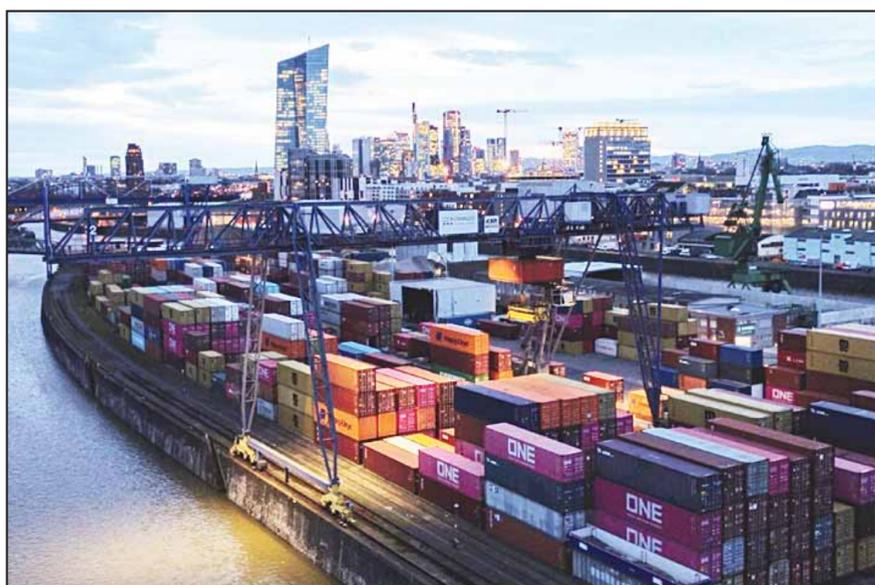
"They're going to pretty leery of rocking the boat on their deals," Majerus said. "Violations of trade agreements can be a basis for taking 301 action. So you could see Section 301 become an enforcement mechanism" for the United States.

"We are confident that all trade agreements negotiated by President Trump will remain in effect," U.S. Trade Representative Greer said in his statement.

In its ruling, the Supreme Court didn't bother to say what would happen to all the money collected from the IEEPA tariffs, \$133 billion as of mid-December. It left the messy issue of refunds to importers - but likely not to consumers - to lower courts and the Customs and Border Protection agency, which collects import taxes. But they're likely to be overwhelmed - hundreds of companies are already lined up to get their money back - and the refunds could take months or years to be paid.

"The whole thing's going to be a mess," Majerus said.

It's possible that Congress will order Customs to take an "easy 'one-click' approach to refunds," wrote strategists Thierry Wizman and Gareth Berry at the investment bank Macquarie. Otherwise, they warned, the Trump administration could "make the refund process as burdensome as possible, requiring every importer to file stacks of paperwork, if not file a lawsuit, to get its money back. That would be costly for businesses."



Containers are stored at a cargo terminal in Frankfurt, Germany, Monday, Feb. 23, 2026. (AP)

Questions surrounded other trade deals done with individual countries including Brazil, India and Britain. For instance, Britain agreed a 10% maximum tariff

with the US, while India settled on 18% and Vietnam accepted 20%. Although the Supreme Court decision did not directly affect bilateral deals, they were nego-

TORONTO, Feb 24, (AP): The leader of Canada's most populous province said Monday "the walls are closing in" on President Donald Trump after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down many of Trump's tariffs and said he's also looking forward to the U.S. mid-term elections in November which could further constrain Trump.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford said Canada is in an "economic war" right now and said no deal is better than a bad deal with Trump.

"It's very challenging right now. I just sit back some days, and I am not the only one. Everyone in the world sits back. How can one person, one man, create so much turmoil around the world? Not just here in Canada but around the world. It is pretty staggering. So I can't wait for the midterms," Ford said.

The court's decision Friday struck down tariffs Trump had imposed on nearly every country in the world using an emergency powers law. Trump now says he will use a different, albeit more limited, legal authority.

"It was a positive message from the Supreme Court," Ford said.

Most of Canada's exports to the U.S. are covered by the United States-Mexico-Canada trade pact, or USMCA, but some tariffs are taking a toll on certain sectors of Canada's economy, particularly aluminum, steel, autos and lumber.

Ford warned Trump could scrap the free trade deal that is under review this year.

Ford said other countries like Japan and the U.K. "rushed in to get a deal and all of a sudden, he turned on them like a rattle snake. We're going to be cautious."

Ford noted many Republican seats will be up for grabs in November's elections for control of the House and the Senate, including a number of them next door in Michigan.

The premier also noted the House voted earlier this month to slap back Trump's tariffs on Canada, a rare if largely symbolic rebuke of the White House agenda as Republicans joined Democrats over the objections of GOP leadership. The resolution seeks to end the national emergency Trump declared to impose the tariffs, though actually undoing the policy would require support from the president, which is highly unlikely. It next goes to the Senate.

"The walls are closing in on President Trump," Ford said. "You saw him lose the vote and six Republicans crossed the floor with Congress and then you saw the Supreme Court."

Ford said the tariffs are causing inflation.

"Down in the U.S. people are feeling the crunch. They don't see the prices going down with food and other goods. That all has come down to the uncertainty that he's put around the world and his number one customer in the world," Ford said.

Trump recently threatened to impose a 100% tariff on goods imported from Canada over that country's proposed China trade deal, intensifying a feud with the longtime U.S. ally and its Prime Minister Mark Carney.

"There is always a diplomatic risk for foreign politicians to criticize President Trump so bluntly and publicly, as his thin skin is now legendary," said Daniel Béland, a political science professor at McGill University in Montreal. "For instance, last fall, the president reacted very negatively to an Ontario's anti-tariff ad featuring Ronald Reagan by suspending trade talks between Canada and the United States."

Béland said Ford's comments are consistent with what Canadians think, noting Trump is highly unpopular in Canada.

EU hits pause on US trade deal as it seeks clarity over latest Trump maneuver

FRANKFURT, Feb 24, (AP): Frustrated European officials pushed Monday for clarification on how U.S. President Donald Trump's declaration of a 15% global tax on imports would affect the trade deal they struck with Trump this summer as EU legislators hit pause on the deal's ratification until they get clarity.

The European Parliament's trade committee postponed a committee vote on ratification after Trump said he would impose the new tariff, after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down his use of an emergency powers law to set new import taxes. Trump then turned to another section of trade law to justify his imposition of the 15% global rate, which take effect Tuesday.

The EU position is expressed in five words: "A deal is a deal," said commission spokesman Olof Gill. "So now we are simply saying to the US, it is up to you to clearly show to us what path you are taking to honor the agreement."

The US-EU deal called for a 15% cap on tariffs on most European goods imports, while tariffs on US industrial goods would be lowered to zero. While the deal burdened consumers and businesses with a tariff increase from the previous average of 4.8%, it also gave businesses certainty so they could plan - a factor credited with helping Europe avoid a recession last year.

Since the new 15% rate announced Saturday would be applied on top of the previous tariffs, it would break the agreed ceiling on tariffs, said Bernd Lange, chair of the parliament's trade committee. Legislators postponed a committee vote on the agreement scheduled for Tuesday.

tiated using threats of imposing the now-invalidated tariffs as leverage. However re-opening those deals could backfire because Trump has made clear he will pursue tariffs under other laws than the one the Supreme Court said he could not apply.

US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said Sunday on US network CBS' "Face the Nation" program that the administration had made clear to negotiating partners that Trump was intent on tariffs whether the Supreme Court ruled against him or not, that "whether we won or lost, there were going to be tariffs."

He said that the bilateral deals "are good deals, we expect to stand by them, we expect our partners to stand by them."

Moving from country-specific tariffs to the flat 15% global tariff "will have considerable implications elsewhere," said Atakan Bakiskan, US economist at Berenberg bank. The new tariff means a reduced rate for some countries, for example Brazil, which faces a reduction of nearly 15 percentage points and China, which sees a reduction of nearly 10 percentage points.

Under the law Trump relied on, these latest tariffs are in effect for only 150 days unless Congress votes to extend them. Trump could use that time to search for other legal provisions that would support his actions.

While uncertainty hits European companies, it puts pressure on the U.S. economy as well, where consumers and companies pay the tariffs on goods purchased from abroad. "Uncertainty around trade policy appears here to stay - putting continued pressure on the US economy," Bakiskan said.

Craig Renaud fulfills promise to keep filming after brother's death

Oscar run bittersweet for filmmakers behind Brent Renaud film

LOS ANGELES, Feb 24, (AP) — When Craig Renaud's big brother and collaborator in covering years of wars and humanitarian crises Brent Renaud was killed by Russian forces firing on his vehicle in the first weeks of the war in Ukraine, he was thrown into a world of horrible loss and uncertainty.

One thing was clear, though. He needed to keep filming. His brother would've expected nothing else.

"It was a conversation we had a lot. What would we do if somebody was killed? And it was a promise to each other that we would keep filming and telling the story," Oscar nominee Craig Renaud said in an interview with The Associated Press. "We have been covering this for almost 20 years in wars with other people. Why would it be any different when it happens to one of us?"

The result, three years later, was "Armed Only With a Camera: The Life and Death of Brent Renaud" and an Academy Award nomination for best documentary short film. It's brought mixed feelings for Craig Renaud and his producer and collaborator on the film Juan Arredondo, a photographer

seriously wounded in the attack who was working with Brent Renaud on a project about refugees for Time Studios.

"I don't think this is the documentary that we wanted to be celebrated for," Arredondo said. "I don't think I ever dreamed of doing a documentary about my friend dying."

Craig Renaud said he has lingering survivor's guilt for not being at his brother's side, and Arredondo, who desperately tried to keep Brent Renaud alive after they were shot, has more than enough of his own.

"It is unbelievably incredible to be able to honor him like this and have him immortalized and his name being in the name of the film and have people be talking about him at this level," Renaud said. But, he added, "every time we have a screening, we are reliving that trauma."

The film unsparingly shows Brent Renaud's dead body. We see it covered with a jacket in the immediate aftermath attack, and later in a coffin being sealed to ship back to the brothers' Arkansas home. We see his brother filming him up close, showing the war

scars on the lifeless face, and explaining why he needs to.

And we see the deeply emotional meeting in a Ukraine hospital between Craig Renaud and Arredondo, who would need 13 surgeries and two years of physical therapy to recover.

"I miss my friend," Arredondo says through tears. "I miss him too," Renaud says.

"The gift of this film," Arredondo told the AP four years after that moment, "is to heal in some way, to give closure to some of those questions that I had."

Despite its inevitable darkness, most of the film's 37 minutes celebrate the life's work of its subject, who won a Peabody and several other awards for his reporting with his brother before his death at 50. It opens quietly, with him thoughtfully and sympathetically interviewing a teen migrant from Honduras on his journey to the U.S. Another key scene comes at a hospital crowded with wounded people in Somalia, where a patient summons Brent to him.

"You are very honest and faithful, the way you hold that camera," the



This image released by HBO shows Brent Renaud in a scene from the Oscar-nominated documentary short film 'Armed Only With a Camera: The Life and Death of Brent Renaud.' (AP)

man says. "It is not just (that) you're just holding it, you are doing it from your heart."

Craig Renaud says he hesitates to tell the story behind that clip because people will think he made it up.

"Brent came to me in a dream and was like, 'You missed the right footage,'" he said. "I went back and I kept digging. And I found that moment. And to this day, that is my favorite moment of the film. I mean, when I first

discovered it and watched it, I just had chills all over my body."

The Russia-Ukraine war has loomed large among Oscar documentaries.

"20 Days in Mariupol" from The Associated Press won best documentary feature in 2024. Last year, "Porcelain War," about Ukrainian artists in the war, was a nominee. This year's feature category includes "Mr. Nobody Against Putin," in which a teacher pushes back against Russian President Vladimir Putin's control of information in Russia during the war.

The glitter of awards season has stayed secondary to the work Renaud and Arredondo have returned to. Renaud spoke to the AP from Panama. Arredondo was on assignment in Colombia, where he was raised. He was summoned by the New York Times when he was at the Oscar nominees luncheon, in a ballroom where he was being feted alongside Leonardo DiCaprio and Timothée Chalamet.

"I strongly believe that what we do matters," Arredondo said. "I think what happened to us, helped me think that this is my purpose and this is why I survived. I have to continue to do it."

'Deeply mortified'

BAFTA, BBC apologize for racial slur at awards show

LONDON, Feb 24, (AP) — The British Academy Film Awards and BBC apologized Monday for a racial slur that was broadcast during Sunday's show while two stars of the film "Sinners" were onstage.

The Tourette syndrome campaigner who shouted the slur said he was "deeply mortified" and what he said was "not a reflection of my personal beliefs."

The highly offensive word could be heard as "Sinners" stars Michael B. Jordan and Delroy Lindo, who are both Black, were presenting the award for best visual effects during Sunday's ceremony. Host Alan Cumming had earlier told the audience that Tourette syndrome advocate John Davidson was in attendance.

The incident prompted the British Academy of Film and Television Arts to apologize for "offensive language that carries incomparable trauma and pain for so many," adding "We would like to thank Michael and Delroy for their incredible dignity and professionalism."

Davidson, a Scottish campaigner for people with Tourette syndrome, who inspired the BAFTA-nominated film "I Swear," said in a statement Monday that he was "deeply mortified if anyone considers my involuntary tics to be intentional or to carry any meaning."

Tourettes Action - a Tourette syndrome charity - called for understanding of the condition.

"We deeply understand that these words can cause hurt but at the same time, it is vital that the public understands a fundamental truth about Tourette syndrome: tics are involuntary. They are not a reflection of a person's beliefs, intentions, or character," said Emma McNally, CEO of Tourettes Action.

Tourette syndrome, a neurodevelopmental disorder, is characterized by sudden, involuntary movements or sounds called tics that tend to wax and wane but can worsen with excitement or anxiety, according to the US National Institutes of Health. They may appear to be purposeful but are not, and the NIH's National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke's Tourette information page says people trying to suppress them often report a buildup of tension before a tic erupts.

The Tourette Association of America says about 10-15% of people with the syndrome experience a kind of vocal tic called coprolalia - involuntary swearing, slurs or other socially unacceptable words or phrases. Several shouts were audible during the first part of the ceremony, although what was said wasn't intelligible to an Associated Press reporter in the press room.

After the slur was shouted during Jordan and Lindo's presentation, Cumming apologized to the audience at London's Royal Festival Hall for the "strong and offensive language."

"Tourette syndrome is a disability and the tics you have heard tonight are involuntary, which means the person who has Tourette syndrome has no control over their language," Cumming said. "We apologize if you were offended."



Cumming

Public urged to step back

Volunteers scour desert for Guthrie despite warnings

TUCSON, Ariz., Feb 24, (AP) — The disappearance of "Today" show host Savannah Guthrie's mother three weeks ago has inspired a small number of volunteers to launch their own searches in the dense desert near her home in hopes of cracking the case.

The Pima County Sheriff's Department said while it appreciates the concern for Nancy Guthrie, it asked people inquiring about volunteering to give investigators space to do their jobs.

"We all want to find Nancy, but this work is best left to professionals," the agency said in a statement over the weekend.

Nancy Guthrie, 84, was last seen at her home just outside Tucson on Jan. 31 and was reported missing the following day. Authorities believe she was kidnapped, abducted or otherwise taken against her will. Drops of her blood were found on the front porch, but authorities haven't publicly revealed much evidence.

Despite the sheriff's request for people not to search on their own, volunteers have continued to look. A small group reported finding a black backpack on Sunday, but it wasn't the same brand as one identified in video surveillance that the FBI released of a masked person at Guthrie's home the night she disappeared.

A sheriff's spokesperson told Tucson television station KOLD that the bag and its contents didn't appear to be viable leads. The Associated Press

reached out to the sheriff's department for comment on Monday.

Two women from the group Madres Buscadoras de Sonora, or "Searching Mothers of Sonora," who were carrying digging tools Sunday outside of Guthrie's home, said they, too, would join the search. They posted fliers on Guthrie's mailbox with her picture and their contact information.

Lupita Tello, who joined the group after her son disappeared in Mexico in 2020, said Monday she and two other volunteers will continue to post fliers on bus stops and utility poles near Nancy Guthrie's home. Members of the group plan to do the same in Nogales, Mexico.

She said the group was contacted by a friend of one of Nancy Guthrie's daughters who asked them for help because of their experience. The group has found the remains of more than 5,000 people in Mexico since it was started 10 years ago by mothers with missing children.

"We know the soil. We know when someone has dug deep or when there is a shallow grave," Tello said. "We hope we can help because we understand the pain of having a missing relative."

She said group members have received training by Mexican forensic experts on how to conduct their searches.

The sheriff's department said in a statement late Monday that it's aware of differences in the masked person's clothing depicted in various images that were released, namely with and without a backpack.

"There is no date or time stamp associated with these images," the department said. "Therefore, any suggestion that the photographs were taken on different days is purely speculative."



Guthrie

Television



This image released by Disney shows, (from left), Donald Faison, Sarah Chalke, and Judy Reyes in a scene from 'Scrubs.' (AP)

Doctors older, wiser and now mentors in series revival

'Scrubs' revival brings back old goofy gang

NEW YORK, Feb 24, (AP) — Early in the first episode of the "Scrubs" revival, Dr. John Dorian jumps onto Dr. Christopher Turk for a piggyback ride down the corridor of Sacred Heart Hospital like nothing's changed in over a decade. But a lot has.

For one, Turk, now a father of four, suffers from sciatica, cutting the tomfoolery short as they tumble to the ground. And, two, Dorian needs reading glasses. Turns out plenty has changed in the 17 years since "Scrubs" last ended its run.

"They're still 12 years old every time they're together, but they're also still both leading very big, responsible adult lives," says Bill Lawrence, the show's creator who has returned for the revival. "It just felt like it was time to revisit the old gang."

"Scrubs" - whose first two episodes premiere back-to-back Wednesday on ABC and stream next day on Hulu - picks up with the same characters all these years later, but this time, in addition to some physical wear and tear, the onetime interns are the teachers to a group of rookie doctors.

"We were new and we were scared as interns and scared in this new element of medicine and insecure and unsure of what we were doing," says Sarah Chalke, who plays Dr. Elliot Reid. "So to get to come back, we really have grown and really become great leaders and great teachers."

The revival retains Lawrence's voice for "Scrubs" - pop culture-hyper-aware and surreal but always with sentiment. The cast admits the show became a little too cartoonish in later seasons, with an ostrich wearing a Kangol hat and J.D. stuffed into a backpack to sneak into a movie theater.

"Bill Lawrence would be the first to say that what he really wanted to do was sort of ground it again and start back with the based-in-reality thing

that we had in the first couple years of the show," says Zach Braff, who plays Dr. Dorian. "We still have a mix of drama and comedy, but reset to based completely in reality."

One thing that had to change was Dr. Perry Cox, the head of medicine played by John C. McGinley with stone-faced rage and fiery contempt. Back in the old days, he could humiliate and berate his interns.

That won't fly in 2026: "I can't work them crazy hours or even abuse them anymore," Cox complains in the revival, calling the new interns "fragile little Christmas ornaments." One of the new interns says to him: "You're giving mean football coach vibes."

Lawrence in anticipation of the relaunch consulted medical residents to find out how hospitals and medicine had changed over the years and was told that administrators would have no patience with a brutal Cox in 2026.

"All the residents we talked about told us that Dr. Cox would be fired immediately nowadays," says Lawrence. He also added Vanessa Bayer to the cast, playing an HR officer quick to suggest sensitivity training.

The first seven seasons of "Scrubs" originally aired on NBC, but after Season 7 - which was shortened due to a writers strike - the series moved to ABC for Season 8. A ninth season with J.D., Turk, and Cox was called "Scrubs: Med School."

Braff and Faison - real friends offscreen - kept the show in fans' minds with a string of T-Mobile commercials and a podcast that explored the episodes, "Fake Doctors, Real Friends."

The end of Season 8 - the following season is not considered "Scrubs" canon - had J.D. having all his fantasies come true - marrying Elliot, having children and keeping up his friendship with Turk, who is mar-

ried to head nurse Carla. That neat bow had to be jettisoned for 2026.

"We knew from the start that we couldn't live in a world that all of his fantasies had come true," says Lawrence. "Life throws you some blows and throws you to some victories. You drift from people you care about. Sometimes your world gets smaller. Sometimes things get harder and there still have to be mountains to overcome. So we really wanted to thematically show that journey of what the second stage of life looks like."

Central to the success of "Scrubs" is the bromance between J.D. and Turk, which doesn't end when the cameras are turned off. The revival arrives as the topic of male loneliness and friendship is being debated.

"It's a half hour comedy, but it takes head on the idea of the joy that you can still find in being silly and having love in your life that isn't just your romantic love - the joy and love you have with your friends as a man in 2026," says Braff.

Faison adds: "I value my friendship. I don't have many of them, but he's the one friendship that I do have that I know I can count on, at least right now. Maybe in 10 years, he might change his mind on how he feels about me."

"We'll see how you behave," Braff jokes. Lawrence says he often writes about male friendships because he grew up in a family that wasn't very demonstrative emotionally. His other current titles include "Shrinking" and "Ted Lasso," which also explore bonding and mentoring.

"I started very young writing about friendships and, maybe on some level, the wish fulfillment of how personal I truly hoped they could be," he says. "I craved those friendships and I craved that mentorship so I maybe write about them too much."

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Nick Reiner, the 32-year-old son of Hollywood luminary Rob Reiner and Michele Singer Reiner, pleaded not guilty Monday to two counts of first-degree murder more than two months after their deaths, denying for the first time that he fatally stabbed his parents.

Reiner's attorney, Deputy Public Defender Kimberly Greene, entered the plea on his behalf as he stood behind glass in an enclosed custody area of the packed Los Angeles courtroom.

The third of Rob Reiner's four children, Nick Reiner has been held without bail since his arrest hours after beloved actor-director Reiner and photographer and producer Singer were found dead on Dec.



Reiner

14 at their home in the upscale Brentwood section of Los Angeles.

Reiner appeared in court with a shaved head and light facial hair, wearing brown jail clothes. He talked to his lawyer briefly through the glass before the judge began the hearing. At one point a low door in the enclosure was opened and they crouched down and spoke face-to-face. During the hearing, he spoke only to answer yes when the judge asked if he waived his right for next steps of the case to proceed speedily.

Reiner was not wearing the suicide prevention smock he wore in his first court appearance in December days after his parent's killings. It was the third time he had been set to enter a plea, but issues surrounding the high-stakes, closely watched case, including a surprising change in defense lawyers, kept it from happening until Monday. (AP)

GALAXIDI, Greece: The Greek seaside town of Galaxidi exploded into a messy and colorful "flour war" on Monday for its annual end of carnival season festivities that mark the start of the Lent

season.

Galaxidi's main coastal road became a flour-strewn mess as revelers pelted each other with bags of dyed flour. Most of the town's residents, and many visitors, merrily took part, while the more prudent ones enjoyed the show from the safety of their balconies.

Within a couple of hours, the celebration was mostly over, but some diehards were determined to stretch it far into the night.

"This custom was brought here by (our ancestors) in their sailboats, in 1800. It only exists here," said Panayiotis Paphilis, a local resident.

It's an explosion of color that takes place every Clean Monday, an Orthodox Christian holiday marking the start of Lent, the 40-day period of fasting that ends on the Easter holiday, and the end of the carnival season that holds onto many of the country's pre-Christian traditions.

Many of the visitors were young people who had come to Galaxidi for the first time.

"We had a great time. We'll come back," said Stephanos Kapetanakis, 28, who was accompanied by several of his friends. (AP)

Books

Memoir offers blueprint for principled leadership

Breaking New Ground: Ambassador Nabeela Al Mulla who shaped Kuwait's voice on the global stage

By Chaitali B. Roy
Special to the Arab Times

On Kuwait's National Day, as we celebrate sovereignty, national unity and statehood, we also celebrate those who carried the weight of that sovereignty in moments of peril and promise. Few lives reflect Kuwait's journey onto the global stage more powerfully than that of Ambassador Nabeela Abdulla Al Mulla, whose memoir 'Breaking New Ground on the Global Stage' is both a personal testimony and material for the national archive.

When I profiled her in my first book, *Women of Kuwait: Turning Tides* in 2016, I wrote that she had "created history several times in her illustrious career, and she has done it not only for herself, but for her country and her region." Today, reading her memoir, one understands how much discipline, resilience and quiet defiance went behind those historic firsts.

In 1993, Nabeela Al Mulla became Kuwait's first woman ambassador and the first in the GCC. In 2002, she became the first woman from the Middle East and South Asia to chair the IAEA Board of Governors. In 2004, she became the first Arab woman to lead her country at the United Nations. These milestones are well known. What her memoir gives us is the inner story.

Nabeela Al Mulla's formative years at the American University of Beirut were intellectually electric. She recalls how a professor once dismissed her thesis proposal on nuclear non-proliferation as "presumptuous." The word stung, but it did not define her. Instead, it sharpened her resolve. She embraced what she later called the wisdom of "Plan B". She writes in her memoir: "Plan and prepare for Plan B to the same extent you strive for what you originally thought; it will prepare you better for the future. More often than not, an alternate goal can be just as rewarding and fulfilling as your original one." This philosophy would guide her entire career. What began as a default entry into diplomacy became a vocation.

In 1970, while still pursuing graduate studies, she attended the United Nations Youth Assembly in New York. It was her first exposure to global diplomacy. That early encounter with multilateralism foreshadowed the arena where she would later defend Kuwait's sovereignty. Even as a junior diplomat at the UN General Assembly in 1973, she was alert to the ways gender could be used to categorise and limit. Assigned to the Third Committee, often patronisingly referred to as the "Women's Committee", she writes candidly that she would have preferred the First Committee dealing with arms control and disarmament. Yet she accepted the assignment with pragmatic realism: "Being the only woman in the delegation, who better to represent Kuwait

on the Third Committee?" Already, one sees the diplomat emerging: measured, strategic, unwilling to be boxed in, but never theatrically rebellious.

Few passages in the memoir are as gripping as her account of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the diplomatic war that unfolded in New York. While oil wells burned and the world prepared for conflict, she describes the fragile alliances forming behind the scenes. Sympathy from some developing nations began to wane as anti-American sentiment grew. Kuwait had to tread carefully, even among friends. When the United Nations debated early resolutions, some delegates preferred the word "cease-fire." She and her colleagues resisted firmly. A ceasefire would have implied Iraqi forces could remain in Kuwait. The Kuwaiti delegation insisted instead on "withdrawal." Language mattered.

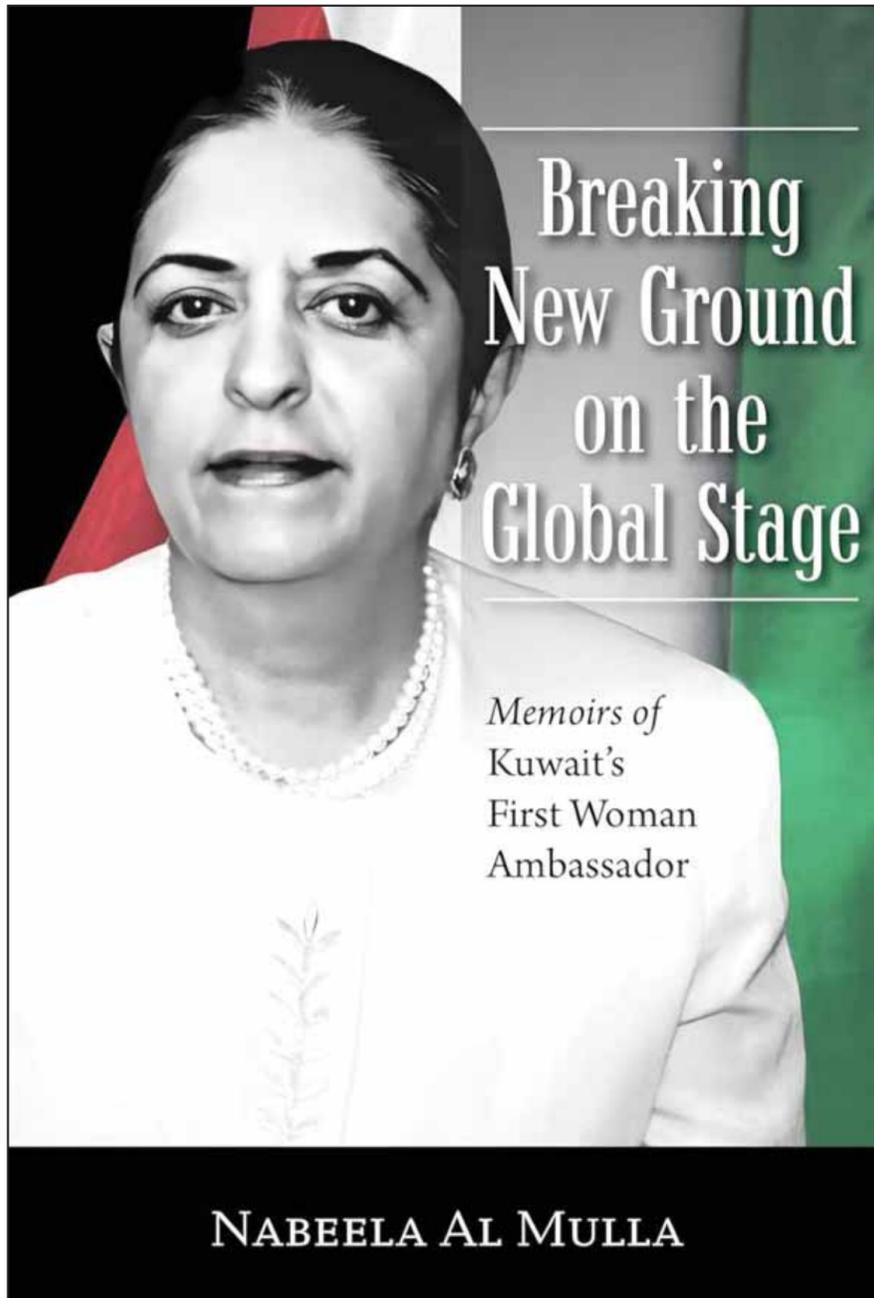
Sovereignty

Sovereignty depended on it. In my book *Women of Kuwait: Turning Tides*, "she recalls being asked, 'Why are you allying yourself with Satan?'" - a reference to cooperation with the United States. Her reply was unflinching: "Who else do we turn to? If our brothers in the north could invade us, who do we turn to?" Her memoir also recounts her diplomatic missions to Cuba, Venezuela and Argentina, including a memorable meeting with Fidel Castro. These episodes are not merely anecdotes; they reveal how Kuwait defended its legitimacy across ideological divides, even within the Non-Aligned Movement. This section alone makes the memoir essential reading for anyone interested in Kuwait's diplomatic history. It documents not only events, but temperament - the composure required to defend a small state in a polarized world.

Her years in South Africa are among the memoir's most compelling chapters. She writes of meeting Nelson Mandela, observing South Africa's transition after apartheid, and attending the opening of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. She identified deeply with newly independent nations navigating the weight of expectation. "Like the rest of my generation in the developing world, I identified with their struggle," she writes.

Her reflections are never romantic. They are analytical. She observed how liberation movements transformed into governing parties and how power complicated idealism. She understood that solidarity required realism. In *Turning Tides*, she once observed: "A lot depends on the person, the country and the opportunities available. Circumstances call the shot, and it depends on the person if she rises to the occasion or not."

Her memoir shows how often circumstances called the shot and how consistently she rose. When she



Book cover of the memoir 'Breaking New Ground on the Global Stage' by Ambassador Nabeela Abdulla Al Mulla.

chaired the IAEA Board of Governors in 2002-2003, she faced scepticism from some quarters not only because she was a woman, but because she represented a Non-Aligned country. During heated debates on

the Iranian nuclear programme, she refused bloc thinking. Her position was principled: "We are not always right and not always wrong. Each case has to be discussed on its own merit." That sentence may well be the

philosophical core of her diplomatic career.

Even in triumph, she remained understated. As she recalls in 'Turning Tides', upon becoming Permanent Representative to the UN, her Egyptian counterpart applauded, "Bravo Nabeela!" She quipped in return: "Whatever happened to the women of Egypt? We have not had a woman ambassador from Egypt in 60 years of the United Nations." Humour was her weapon.

On National Day, this memoir invites us to reflect on what sovereignty truly means. It is not only the liberation in February 1991. It is decades of preparation. It is intellectual discipline at the American University of Beirut. It is arguing over a single word in a Security Council resolution. It is refusing to allow gender to define capability. It is believing that patriotism and internationalism are not contradictions.

The memoir is rich with detail - from her early intellectual awakenings to her later engagements with NATO and the European Union. It is written with clarity, candour and quiet wit. It does not seek sympathy; it offers perspective. For younger Kuwaitis, especially young women, it offers something even more valuable: a blueprint for principled leadership.

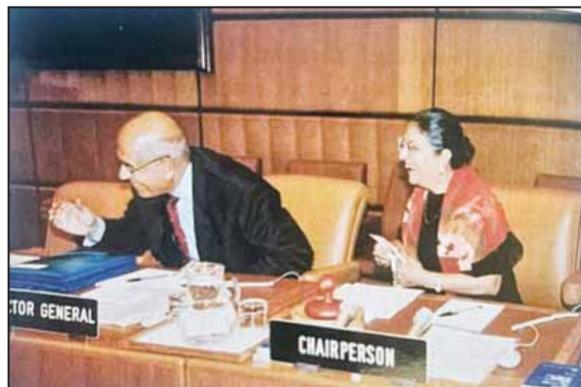
There is also something quietly poetic about the fact that, following the release of her memoir, Ambassador Al Mulla was invited to speak at Oxford. In the opening chapter of her book, she recalls that Oxford had once been her "top pick," an early academic aspiration that she could not pursue. Decades later, she stood not as a hopeful applicant but as a seasoned diplomat and author, addressing an audience in one of the world's most prestigious academic institutions.

Those who attended her Oxford talk remarked on the same qualities that define her memoir - intellectual clarity, wry humour, and an unwavering belief in independent judgment. She spoke not merely about being "the first" in various roles, but about the discipline of diplomacy, the importance of merit over rhetoric, and the necessity of engaging across ideological divides without surrendering principle.

Diplomacy

It was, in many ways, a full-circle moment: the young woman once described as "presumptuous" for wanting to study nuclear non-proliferation was now reflecting on decades of navigating precisely those global tensions.

As Kuwait continues to assert its place on the global stage, Ambassador Nabeela Al Mulla's memoir serves as both record and reminder. It reminds us that diplomacy is patience. It reminds us that conviction need not be loud. And it reminds us that a small state can speak with moral authority. For those who wish to understand Kuwait's modern diplomatic history and for those who believe in the power of women's leadership in the Arab world, *Breaking New Ground on the Global Stage* is essential reading. The memoir is available online and at That Al Salasil bookstores. On this National Day, there could be no more fitting tribute than to read the story of the woman who helped shape Kuwait's voice in the world. As Ambassador Nabeela Al Mulla once said, with characteristic lightness, "I may have retired from service, but not from life."



With Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), 2003.



Photo credits: Breaking New Ground on the Global Stage by Nabeela Al Mulla
'Family' photograph with the delegation from Kuwait to South Africa. Nelson Mandela (seated, left) Ali Al-Baghlhi, Minister of Oil, (seated, right), Cape Town, South Africa, 1993.



Presentation of my credentials to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, New York, 2004.

A writer with a personal and poetic style

Edward Hoagland, acclaimed nature-travel writer, dies at 93

NEW YORK, Feb 24, (AP) - **Edward Hoagland**, a prize-winning nature and travel writer who overcame badly impaired eyesight to explore the world and hone a conversational and digressive style that mirrored the spontaneous paths of his journeys, has died at age 93.

Hoagland's daughter, Molly Magid Hoagland, said that he died Feb. 17 at an assisted living facility in Manhattan. She did not give a cause of death.

With influences ranging from John Muir to Michel de Montaigne, Hoagland published dozens of books and magazine pieces and took in the most remote settings and extreme climates. Reading him was like being invited to come along. He might begin an essay with some thoughts on the personality of bears - "their piggishness and sleepiness and unsociability with each other" - move on to the daily routines of game wardens, detour through the history of animal tracking devices and come back around to bears' nesting habits.

"We watched a female preparing a small basket-shaped sanctum under the upturned roots of a white pine, from which she sneaked, like a hurrying, portly child, cycling downwind to identify us before clearing out," he wrote in "Bears, Bears, Bears," one of his more popular pieces.

He hiked the southern edge of Yellowstone National Park,

watched penguins fight for space near the Antarctic Peninsula and traced the evolution of hippies in the rural Vermont community where he spent half the year. His most acclaimed essay was likely "The Courage of Turtles," in which he found in his subjects a multidimensional system of communications and rituals: "Turtles cough, burp, whistle, grunt, and hiss, and produce social judgments. They put their heads together amicably enough, but then one drives the other back with the suddenness of two dogs who have been conversing in tones too low for an onlooker to hear."



Hoagland

His honors included National Book Award and National Book Critics Circle nominations, a Lannan Literary Award and membership in the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Open about his physical and other personal troubles, he was admired by Philip Roth, Joyce Carol Oates and Annie Proulx among others and was praised at length by Francine Prose in a 2017 essay in *The New York Review of Books*.

"Among the striking aspects of Hoagland's work," Prose wrote, "have been the honesty and fearlessness with which he has discussed his own heartbreaks, mistakes, and failures, the clarity with which he has argued his nuanced, complex opinions, and the apparent effortlessness with which he has portrayed creatures and habitats for which a less observant writer or less gifted stylist might have trouble finding language."

Hoagland's renown as an observer was notable in part because for much of his adult life he had a hazy sense of what he was seeing. Damaged cataracts left him with poor vision until his sight was corrected, at least temporarily, by eye surgery in his 50s.

"When the doctor took off my bandage there was no 'Eureka, I can see,' because I'd never been stone-blind," he wrote in the memoir "Compass Points," published in 2001. "Instead, just an abrupt, astounding discovery of how bright light actually is. Not at first the beauty of the world, but the brightness of the world, as my eye squinted and winced, shutting out most of the sights now hammering at the door."

His work appeared in such publications as *The Village Voice* and *The New York Times*, and he contributed the introduction to a Library of America edition of Henry David Thoreau's

"Walden." His own books included the essay collections "Walking the Dead Diamond River" and "Heart's Desire," the novels "Cat Man" and "The Peacock's Tail" and the travel work "African Calliope: A Journey to the Sudan." Despite a stutter that left him terrified of social interactions, he taught at several schools and was on the faculty of Bennington College from 1963 to 2005.

He was married twice, including for 25 years to Commentary magazine editor Marion Magid, with whom he had daughter Molly. The relationship ended in divorce; Hoagland confided his many infidelities in a highly personal 1995 *Esquire* essay, two years after Magid's death.

Hoagland nearly lost his job at Bennington in the early '90s because of an *Esquire* article in which he cited the "icy promiscuity" of gays. After Bennington initially decided not to rehire him, he appealed the decision to a faculty personnel committee, which ruled in his favor.

In recent years, he lived with his partner Trudy Carter, a social worker who died in 2025.

A New York City native who spent much of his childhood in New Canaan, Connecticut, he preferred nature and animal life to fellow humans and remembered hurrying from the school bus to the woods at the end of the day.

New guidelines aim to spur development of bespoke drugs

FDA proposes new system for customized therapies for rare diseases

WASHINGTON, Feb 24, (AP) - Federal health officials on Monday laid out a proposal to spur development of customized treatments for patients with hard-to-treat diseases, including for rare genetic conditions that the pharmaceutical industry has long considered unprofitable.

The preliminary Food and Drug Administration guidelines, if implemented, would create a new pathway for bespoke therapies that have only been tested in a handful of patients due to the challenges of conducting larger studies. The FDA announcement specifically mentions gene editing, although agency officials said the new approach could also be used by other drugs and therapies.

It's a shift long sought by patients, advocates and researchers focused on rare diseases, which often do not fit within the pharmaceutical industry's business model or the FDA's traditional drug-approval system.

"It is our priority to remove barriers and exercise regulatory flexibility to encourage scientific advances and deliver more cures and meaningful treatments for patients suffering from rare diseases," FDA Commissioner Marty Makary said in a release.

The announcement comes a week after Makary said the FDA would drop its decades-old standard of requiring two clinical trials for standard drug reviews. That was the latest in a series of changes to FDA norms and standards, many which have not gone through federal procedures traditionally used to update agency rules.

Senior FDA officials said the recent changes, including the pathway proposed Monday, don't constitute new FDA standards. The FDA will take comments on its draft guidance for 60 days, before beginning to finalize it.

In recent years, academic researchers have shown they can use emerging technology to correct individual defects in a patient's genetic code. Last year, a team at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the University of Pennsylvania designed a therapy using CRISPR, the Nobel Prize-winning gene editing tool, to treat a baby born with a rare disease that causes ammonia to build up in the blood.

Traditionally, the FDA requires drugmakers to demonstrate the safety and effectiveness of their experimental treatments in clinical studies that compare a set of patients getting the therapy with others taking a sham treatment or an alternative intervention. The more patients



President Donald Trump listens as Dr. Marty Makary, commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, speaks in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, Monday, Sept. 22, in Washington. (AP)

enrolled, the stronger the evidence. But for conditions that can affect a tiny fraction of peo-

ple worldwide, drug companies often have little incentive to invest millions of dollars needed to complete a study and bring it through the FDA approval process, which can take a decade or longer.

The pathway announced Monday would create a standardized process for authorizing experimental treatments and, importantly, offering companies the possibility of commercializing them.

The FDA already authorizes the use of experimental drugs under what's called "compassionate use," for people with no other medical options. But the process is cumbersome to navigate and strictly prohibits companies or researchers from profiting from treatments that haven't been vetted by the FDA.

The new pathway's name - plausible mechanism - is a reference to criteria FDA regulators will require before greenlighting any experimental therapies.

FDA officials say the approach will be reserved for conditions that are well understood and where there is a plausible reason to think that the therapy will act on the underlying genetic or cellular biology of the disease. Researchers must also confirm that the therapy successfully targeted the patient's genetic or biological abnormality.

'Cardiovascular disease is No. 1 killer of women'

Women suffer heart attacks too, know the risks and warning signs

LOS ANGELES, Feb 24, (AP) - Lori Sepich smoked for years and sometimes skipped taking her blood pressure medicine. But she never thought she'd have a heart attack.

The possibility "just wasn't registering with me," said the 64-year-old from Memphis, Tennessee, who suffered two of them 13 years apart.

She's far from alone. More than 60 million women in the US live with cardiovascular disease, which includes heart disease as well as stroke, heart failure and atrial fibrillation. And despite the myth that heart attacks mostly strike men, women are vulnerable too.

Overall in the US, 1 in 5 women dies of cardiovascular disease each year, 37,000 of them from heart attacks.

Cardiovascular disease is "the No. 1 killer of women. It will affect you or someone you know," said Dr. Sharonne Hayes, a cardiologist at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. "Knowing what to do if you have symptoms of a heart attack and taking action if you do, that's really important."

There are several ways anyone can reduce their risks.

The American Heart Association has created a list called "Life's Essential 8": eat better, quit tobacco, get healthy sleep, be more active, control cholesterol, and manage weight, blood sugar and blood pressure.

Dr. Stacey Rosen, association president, advises getting regular checkups to talk about these preventive measures, keep tabs on your health and discuss any family history of heart problems.

Doctors also suggest discussing risk factors that uniquely or disproportionately affect women.

Women are more likely to have autoimmune conditions like lupus or rheumatoid arthritis, which cause inflammation that can raise heart disease risk. They're also more likely to suffer from depression, which is associated with inflammation and unhealthy behaviors like staying in bed.

Other conditions associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease are a history of high blood pressure or diabetes while pregnant, miscarriages or stillbirth. Hot flashes and night sweats during menopause have also been linked to a greater risk of high blood pressure and other cardiovascular risk factors.

When people think about heart attacks, many envision a middle-aged man suddenly clutching his heart and falling to the ground.

But in reality, Hayes said, "it's not going to probably be one of those Hollywood heart attacks."

Chest pain or discomfort is a usual symptom, but far from the only one.



This Dec. 2025 photo provided by Lori Sepich shows Sepich in Memphis, Tenn. (AP)

"What's different about women is that they are more likely than men to have other symptoms as well," Rosen said.

Those include back pain, shortness of breath, cold sweats, tiredness, nausea, lightheadedness, an anxious feeling, jaw pain and finger tingling.

Experts aren't sure exactly why symptoms differ between men and women, but some research suggests that physiological differences may play a role.

Another difference: Symptoms may come on a bit more subtly for women than men. Hayes hears a common refrain from patients: "I got the symptom and it waxed and waned a little bit over time, but I knew something wasn't right."

"If you think that there's even a chance that you're having a heart attack, that's when you call 911," Rosen said, adding that it's better to "err on the side of over-concern than err on the side of minimizing something that could be quite serious."

Doctors recommend taking an ambulance to the hospital, which is more equipped to handle emergency situations than urgent care centers or a doctor's office.

Any delays in getting the right care could be harmful or even deadly. "If you wait too long," Rosen said,

"the damage can be more significant."

When Sepich had her first heart attack, she waited too long. She had largely been in denial about her heart problems since being diagnosed with severe, hereditary high blood pressure at 17.

On Easter Sunday 2005, she woke up to extreme chest pressure, nausea and pain radiating down her arms.

"I chose to ignore those signs that day because I was absolutely in shock," she said. "I was scared."

She attended Mass and a family lunch and went to work the next day. She eventually went to the ER at her doctor's urging, where she wound up having six stents placed and spending a week in the hospital.

She acted more quickly when she had her second heart attack, and got another stent placed after her cardiologist found a nearly complete blockage in the heart's biggest artery.

Sepich now keeps her blood pressure under control, hasn't smoked in more than two decades and exercises almost every day.

She urges other women to be honest with themselves about heart disease.

"I could justify my actions from denial. I could just be like, 'Oh, it's not gonna hurt you,'" Sepich said. "Well, it does hurt you. It can kill you."

MAHA supporters slam pesticide policy

From opponent to supporter: RFK Jr. reverses stance on 'toxic pesticides'

NEW YORK, Feb 24, (AP) - For years as an environmental lawyer, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. crusaded against a controversial herbicide ingredient known as glyphosate, even winning a landmark case against chemical giant Monsanto by arguing that its Roundup weedkiller contributed to his client's cancer.

But now that he's the nation's top health official, Kennedy is falling in line with President Donald Trump after he issued an executive order that's aimed at boosting glyphosate's production. The order would also grant limited legal immunity to manufacturers if they're following federal directives.

Kennedy on Sunday evening posted a lengthy statement on social media that calls pesticides "toxic by design" but frames Trump's move as necessary for agricultural stability and national security.

"President Trump did not build our current system - he inherited it," Kennedy wrote. "I support President Trump's Executive Order to bring agricultural chemical production back to the United States and end our near-total reliance on adversarial nations."

It was a gesture of loyalty to the president who has enabled Kennedy's overhaul of vaccine policy at the federal government's highest levels, but it also opens a dangerous fault line in their political coalition ahead of the



Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. holds his wife, Cheryl Hines, during the National Governors Association dinner at the White House, Saturday, Feb. 21, in Washington. (AP)

midterm elections in November.

As Kennedy's Make America Healthy Again supporters grow impatient with a Republican-led administration that's largely resisted their calls to regulate pesticides, they're speaking up about what they view as a betrayal of their support.

"It's been a year. Not a single thing has been done by the EPA to reduce our children's and families exposure

to pesticides," Moms Across America founder Zen Honeycutt, a prominent MAHA activist, replied to Kennedy's post. "We love you Bobby but this administration needs to keep their word."

Critics of the executive order said it is part of a pattern that favors pesticide manufacturers, who defend their products as rigorously reviewed by regulators to ensure they don't threaten human health if used properly.

For example, a proposal from House Republicans would make it harder to sue pesticide companies for failing to warn about product dangers. The Justice Department in December also backed Monsanto owner Bayer in a Supreme Court case that could limit its future liability for Roundup.

"That is America Last, Anti-MAHA, and unforgivable," prominent activist Kelly Ryerson wrote on social media. Trump's executive order is intended to protect domestic production of elemental phosphorus, which is used in military devices as well as to make glyphosate-based herbicides. It also seeks to protect the production of glyphosate-based herbicides themselves, which the administration says are critical to agricultural supply chains.

Kennedy has repeatedly said that he believes glyphosate causes cancer, including as recently as January.

Earth's energy imbalance drives global warming

Scientists change El Nino label to keep up with temperature spike

WASHINGTON, Feb 24, (AP) - The natural El Nino cycle, which warps weather worldwide, is both adding to and shaped by a warming world, meteorologists said.

A new study calculated that an unusual recent twist in the warming and cooling cycle that includes El Nino and its counterpart La Nina can help explain the scientific mystery of why Earth's already rising temperature spiked to a new level over the past three years.

Separately, scientists have had to update how they label El Nino and La Nina because of rapid weather changes caused by global warming. Increasingly hot waters globally have caused the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration this month to alter how it calculates when the weather pattern has flipped into a new cycle. It's likely to mean that more events will be considered La Nina and fewer qualify as an El Nino for warming tropical waters.

Earth's average monthly temperature took a noticeable jump up from the long-term upward trend connected to human-caused climate change in early 2023, and that increase continued through 2025. Scientists have many theories about what's happening, including an acceleration of greenhouse gas warming, a reduction in particle pollution from ships, an underwater volcano eruption and increased solar output.

In a new study in Nature Geoscience this month, Japanese researchers look at how the difference in energy coming to and leaving the planet - called Earth's energy imbalance - increased in 2022. An increased imbalance, or more trapped heat, then leads to warmer temperatures, scientists said. The researchers calculate that about three-quarters of the change in Earth's energy imbalance can be attributed to the combination of long-term human-caused climate change and a shift from a three-year cooling La Nina cycle to a warm El Nino cycle.

El Nino is a cyclical and natural warming of patches of the equatorial Pacific that then alters the world's weather patterns, while La Nina is marked by cooler than average waters. Both shift precipitation and tempera-



A waste picker drinks water while working during a heat wave at a garbage dump on the outskirts of Jammu, India, June 19, 2024. (AP)

ture patterns, but in different ways. El Ninos tend to increase global temperatures and La Ninas depress the long-term rise.

La Ninas tend to cause more damage in the United States because of increased hurricane activity and drought, studies have shown.

From 2020 to 2023, Earth had an unusual "triple dip" La Nina without an El Nino in between. In a La Nina, warm water sticks to a deeper depth, resulting in a cooler surface. And that reduces how much energy goes out into space, said study co-author Yu Kosaka, a climate scientist at the University of Tokyo.

She compared it to what happens when people have fevers.

"If our body's temperature is high then it tends to emit its energy out, and the Earth has the same situation happening. And as the temperatures increase, it acts to emit more energy outward. And for three-year La Nina, it's opposite," Kosaka said.

So more energy - which becomes heat - is trapped on Earth, she said. La Ninas more typically correspond to a one- or two-year buildup of extra energy imbalance, but this time it was longer so the difference was more noticeable and included hotter tempera-

tures, Kosaka said.

"When there is a transition from La Nina to El Nino, it's like the lid is popped off," releasing the heat, explained former NOAA meteorologist Tom Di Liberto, who's now with Climate Central.

About 23% of the energy imbalance driving the recent higher temperatures comes from this unusually long La Nina pattern, with slightly more than half coming from gases from the burning of coal, oil and gas, the study authors said. The rest can be other factors.

Scientist Jennifer Francis of the Woodwell Climate Research Center, which wasn't involved in the study, said the research makes sense and explains an increase in energy imbalance that some scientists were attributing to accelerated warming.

For 75 years when meteorologists calculated El Ninos and La Ninas, it was based on the difference in temperature in three tropical Pacific regions compared to normal. An El Nino was 0.5 degrees Celsius (0.9 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than normal and La Nina was cooler than normal by the same amount.

The trouble in a warming world is what's considered normal keeps shifting.

'They whistle'

Scientists discover secret to horse's distinct neigh

NEW YORK, Feb 24, (AP) - Horses whinny to find new friends, greet old ones and celebrate happy moments like feeding time.

How exactly horses produce that distinctive sound - also called a neigh - has long eluded scientists.

The whinny is an unusual combination of both high and low pitched sounds, like a cross between a grunt and a squeal - that come out at the same time.

The low-pitched part wasn't much of a mystery. It comes from air passing over bands of tissue in the voice box that make noise when they vibrate. It's a technique similar to how humans speak and sing.

But the high-pitched piece is more puzzling. With some exceptions, larger animals have larger vocal systems and typically make lower sounds. So how do horses do it? According to a new study, they whistle.

Researchers slid a small camera through horses' noses to film what happened inside while they whinnied and made another common horse sound, the softer, subtler nicker. They also conducted detailed scans and blew air through the isolated voice boxes of dead horses.

The whinny's mysterious high-pitched tones, they discovered, are a kind of whistling that starts in the horse's voice box. Air vibrates the tissues in the voice box while an area just above contracts, leaving a small opening for the whistle to escape.

That's different from human whistling, which we do with our mouths.

"I'd never imagined that there was a whistling component. It's really interesting, and I can hear that now," said Jennifer Nadeau, who studies horses at the University of Connecti-



A horse whinnies in a barn at the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds in Oklahoma City, during a cutting horse competition, Monday, June 20, 2011. (AP)

cut. Nadeau was not involved with the study, which was published Monday in the journal Current Biology.

A few small rodents like rats and mice whistle like this, but horses are the first known large mammal to have a knack for it. They're also the only animals known to be able to whistle through their voice boxes while they sing.

"Knowing that a 'whinny' is not just a 'whinny' but that it is actually composed of two different fundamental frequencies that are created by two different mechanisms is exciting," said Alisa Herbst with Rutgers University's Equine Science Center, of the study in an email.

A big lingering question is how horses' two-toned calls came to be. Wild Przewalski's horses can do something similar, as can elk. But more distant horse relatives like donkeys and zebras can't make the high-pitched sounds.

'Control TB'

2 measles cases tied to travel: NZ

WELLINGTON, Feb 24, (Xinhua) - Two new measles cases linked to overseas travel and from the same household have been detected in Auckland, three weeks after New Zealand declared an earlier outbreak over.

Locations of interest include Singapore Airlines flight SQ281, which arrived in Auckland on Feb. 17, Auckland International Airport, and the Waitakere Hospital's emergency department waiting room, Health New Zealand said in a statement on Tuesday.

Public health officials are tracing contacts, particularly passengers seated near the cases on the flight, and urge anyone with measles-like symptoms to call healthcare providers before visiting in person.

New Zealand's previous measles outbreak, which began in September 2025, was declared over earlier this month, but health officials caution that the country remains at risk due to low immunization rates and international travel.

Tuberculosis: Sri Lankan health officials said on Tuesday that nearly 45 percent of the country's tuberculosis (TB) patients are in the Western Province, the most populous region, and that Colombo is the main driver of transmission nationwide.

Officials from the National Program for Tuberculosis Control and Chest Diseases made the remarks at a training program in Colombo.

They said many people contract TB in Colombo and then spread the disease to other parts of the country, making TB control in the capital an urgent priority. According to the officials, Colombo records 82 TB patients per 100,000 people.

They said adult men face a higher risk of TB than women. However, in areas under the Colombo Municipal Council, women and children also show a high rate of TB transmission, requiring special attention in control efforts.

SPORTS

Spurs humble Pistons in potential NBA Finals preview

Kings end 16-game skid

DETROIT, Feb 24, (AP): Victor Wembanyama had 21 points, 17 rebounds and six blocks, Devin Vassell scored 28 and the San Antonio Spurs beat the Detroit Pistons 114-103 in a potential NBA Finals preview.

The Spurs have won a season-high nine games in a row and trail only the defending champion Oklahoma City Thunder in the Western Conference.

The Eastern Conference-leading Pistons, who had won five straight, host Oklahoma City on Wednesday night in another test.

Detroit star Cade Cunningham struggled, missing 21 of 26 shots and finishing with 16 points and 10 assists.

In the opener of a five-game trip, San Antonio jumped out to a 14-2 lead and was ahead for much of the game. When the Spurs return home,



San Antonio Spurs guard Stephon Castle (5) and Detroit Pistons guard Cade Cunningham, right, scramble for the ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Detroit. (AP)

they will host the Pistons on March 5.

The Pistons rallied to lead by three after the first quarter, but the Spurs regained control by making 3-pointers while Wembanyama, their 7-foot-4 center, blocked and altered shots all night at the other end of the court.

San Antonio scored the first seven points of the fourth quarter to open a double-digit lead and didn't have trouble keeping a comfortable cushion.

Jalen Duren had 25 points and 14 rebounds for Detroit, playing for the second time after being suspended for two games by the NBA. Isaiah Stewart is still serving his suspension, stemming from a fight during a game at Charlotte this month.

Tempers flared in the second quarter when Cunningham was called for an offensive foul after extending his arms and knocking down Spurs guard Stephon Castle. San Antonio forward Keldon Johnson responded by pushing Cunningham, and then Duren pointed his right finger in Johnson's face.

After a review, Johnson and Duren were called for technical fouls.

Rockets 125, Jazz 105

In Houston, Jabari Smith Jr. had 31 points and nine rebounds and Amen Thompson scored 20 points as the Houston Rockets beat the Utah Jazz.

Smith hit his first five shots and matched a career-high with 14 points in the first quarter. He converted 12 of 17 shots overall and made six 3-pointers.

Thompson shot 8 for 9 from the field and finished with seven rebounds, three assists and two steals.

Kevin Durant scored 18 points and added a season-high 12 assists. Reed Sheppard scored 15 points off the bench.

With the win, the Rockets (35-21) into third place in the Western Conference, behind Oklahoma City and San Antonio.

Despite nine turnovers, Houston



Sacramento Kings guard Russell Westbrook (18) drives against Memphis Grizzlies guard Jahmai Mashack (21) in the second half of an NBA basketball game in Memphis, Tenn. (AP)

used runs of 11-2 and 10-3 to help build a 38-22 lead after a quarter. The Rockets shot 67% from the field and hit eight shots from long distance.

The Jazz opened the second quarter on a 13-2 run before Houston responded with an 18-2 outburst over the next six minutes and took a 68-47 lead into halftime.

Houston pushed its lead to as many as 33 points in the second half

and never led by fewer than 16.

The Rockets scored 29 fast-break points, one off their season-high, but committed a season-high 27 turnovers, leading to 34 points by the Jazz.

Lauri Markkanen's 29 points led the Jazz (18-40), who have lost three in a row. Brice Sensabaugh scored 26 points off the bench on 10-for-15 shooting.

Jazz forward Vince Williams Jr.

had to be helped to the locker room after suffering a left knee injury in the second quarter and did not return. Jazz coach Will Hardy said Williams will get an MRI.

Kings 123, Grizzlies 114

In Memphis, Russell Westbrook scored 25 points and Precious Achiuwa had 22 points and 12 rebounds as the Sacramento Kings snapped a 16-game losing streak - the longest in franchise history - with a 123-114

victory over the Memphis Grizzlies.

DeMar DeRozan and Daegwon Plowden finished with 19 points each, with Plowden scoring 10 in the fourth quarter. Sacramento has the NBA's worst record and hadn't won since beating Washington on Jan. 16.

Javon Smalls led Memphis with 21 points and nine assists. Olivier-Maxence Prosper had 17 points and GG Jackson added 16 points.

Vonn reveals surgery saved her leg after horrific Olympic crash

VAIL, Colo., Feb 24, (AP): American skier Lindsey Vonn says she nearly lost her left leg following a frightening crash in the women's downhill at the Milan Cortina Olympics.

Vonn shared in an Instagram post on Monday that her injuries went far beyond the complex tibia fracture in the leg she initially revealed after clipping a gate and sailing off course just 13 seconds into her run on Feb. 8.

The 41-year-old Vonn said the trauma from the crash led to compartment syndrome in the leg. Compartment syndrome involves excessive pressure building up inside a muscle, either from bleeding or swelling. High pressure restricts blood flow and can lead to permanent injury if not treated quickly.

"When you have so much trauma to one area of your body so that there's too much blood and it gets stuck and it basically crushes everything," Vonn said.

Vonn credited Dr. Tom Hackett, an orthopedic surgeon who works for Vonn and Team USA, for conducting a fasciotomy to salvage her leg.

"He filleted it open (and) let it breathe, and he saved me," she said.

Vonn noted that Hackett was only in Cortina because she was competing after tearing the ACL in her left knee shortly before the Olympics.

"If I hadn't had done that, Tom wouldn't have been there (and he) wouldn't have been able to save my leg," she said.

Vonn, who said she has been discharged from the hospital, also broke her right ankle in the crash.

"It has been quite the journey and by far the most extreme and painful and challenging injury I've ever faced in my entire life times 100," she said.

Vonn underwent multiple surgeries during a week-long stay at a hospital in Treviso, Italy, following the accident. She credited both Hackett and Italian doctors for their efforts to repair her leg, which she said was "in pieces" following the accident.



In this file photo, United States' Lindsey Vonn speeds down the course during an alpine ski, women's World Cup downhill, in Zauchensee, Austria. (AP)

Alaves shares spoils with Girona in entertaining draw

Fiorentina rises out of drop zone, Bologna sinks Udinese

FLORENCE, Italy, Feb 24, (AP): Moise Kean scored for the third match in a row to help Fiorentina beat Pisa 1-0 and climb out of the Serie A drop zone on Monday.

The result lifted Fiorentina into 16th place and out of the relegation zone for the first time in months. It has the same amount of points as Cremonese and Lecce but was above both on goal difference.

Pisa, which has still won only once all season, was second to last with the same points as last-placed Verona. Both clubs were nine points from safety with 12 games remaining.

Kean followed recent goals against Torino and Como with an early strike from close range after a blocked shot fell kindly at his feet.

Pisa goalkeeper Nicolas made several fine saves while Fiorentina's second win in a row was only its second clean sheet of the year.

Pisa has gone 15 matches without a league win.

Later, a second-half penalty gave Bologna a 1-0 win over Udinese and lifted it two places into eighth.

Federico Bernardeschi scored from the spot with 15 minutes left after Jesper Karlstrom was adjudged to have felled Santiago Castro inside the box. It was Bernardeschi's first goal since returning



Udinese's Nicolo' Zaniolo, right, and Bologna's Tommaso Pobega in action during the Serie A soccer match between Bologna and Udinese in Bologna, Italy. (AP)

from a month out with a collarbone injury.

Bologna avoided a fifth consecutive defeat at home in Serie A for the first time since 1991. It climbed above Lazio and Sassuolo.

Udinese, meanwhile, remained 11th.

Lucas Boye scored twice for Alaves to draw with Girona 2-2 in an end-to-end La Liga encounter at Estadio Men-

dizorroza.

The second straight draw for Alaves lifted it three points clear of La Liga's relegation zone.

Girona was three places and three points better off, although only six points separate Girona in 11th and Mallorca in the last of the three relegation spots.

The home side took the initiative after just five minutes when Girona goalkeeper Paulo Gazzaniga missed Yusi's low cross, allowing Boye to side-foot home from close range.

However, Girona came roaring back and 14 minutes before the break it was level, Axel Witsel's glancing header touched into the net by Vladyslav Vanat.

Girona took the lead in the 73rd minute when Azzedine Ounahi's superb reverse pass split the Alaves defense. Viktor Tsygankov showed a cool head to round the keeper and slot the ball into the empty net.

But Boye's header a minute from time gave Alaves a deserved draw that could be crucial in its fight against the drop.

"We're at home, and we know that to reach our objective as quickly as possible we have to pick up three points here, especially against direct rivals," Boye said. "We're frustrated by the draw and by not getting all three points."

Gallardo quits River Plate

Advocaat steps aside as manager of Curacao before World Cup

RIO DE JANEIRO, Feb 24, (Xinhua): Dutchman Dick Advocaat has stepped aside as manager of Curacao's national team, less than four months before its FIFA World Cup debut.

The 78-year-old said he had decided to prioritize time with his family, with Dutch media citing his daughter's ill health.

"I have always said that family comes before football," Advocaat said in a statement. "This is therefore a natural decision. That said, I will greatly miss Curacao, its people and my colleagues. I consider qualifying the smallest nation in the world for the World Cup one of the highlights of my career. I am proud of my players, staff and board members who believed in us." Advocaat, who also had spells in charge of the Netherlands, Belgium and South Korea, among other teams, spent two years as Curacao head coach.

Curacao, a Caribbean island of about 150,000 people, became the smallest nation to qualify for the World Cup after the team topped its qualifying group ahead of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Bermuda. Advocaat described the feat as the "craziest thing" he had achieved in a coaching career spanning more than 40 years. He would have become the oldest coach in World Cup finals history.

The Curacao Football Federation said Fred Rutten would take over the role with immediate effect.

"His decision commands nothing but respect," federation president Gilbert Martina said. "Dick has made history with our national team. Curacao will always remain grateful to him." Rutten, a former defender who was capped once for the Netherlands, has managed Feyenoord, PSV Eindhoven and Schalke 04 during a 26-year coaching career.

"Dick is an icon in world football," the 63-year-old said. "It is truly an honour to continue his work. I have spoken extensively with him and his staff and will continue along the same path. Curacao can expect the same dedication and commitment from me." Rutten's first match in charge will be a friendly against Australia in China on March 31.

Curacao will begin its World Cup campaign against Germany in Houston on June 14 before also facing Ecuador and Cote d'Ivoire in Group E.

River Plate manager Marcelo Gallardo tendered his resignation after a tumultuous second spell in charge of the Argentine club.

The 50-year-old said he would step down following River's home match against Banfield on Thursday. The club did not immediately name a replacement.

"I only have words of gratitude, especially to this great club and its people for the unconditional love throughout all these years, including in difficult moments like this one," Gallardo said in a video posted on the Buenos Aires side's website.

"Clearly things did not go as we planned. I am filled with emotion and pain in my soul for not achieving the objectives," Gallardo, who represented River in three separate stints as a player, guided River to 37 wins, 27 draws and 21 losses after returning to the club in August 2024.

In his first spell as manager, which ran from June 2014 to December 2022, the former Argentina international midfielder oversaw two Copa Libertadores triumphs, a Copa Sudamericana crown and an Argentine league title.

River is currently 10th in Group A of Argentina's Apertura tournament with two wins from the first six games of the season.

La Liga struggler Mallorca sacked coach Jagoba Arrasate, a day after a 2-0 defeat at Celta Vigo left the club in the relegation zone.

Mallorca sit third from bottom with 24 points from 25 matches. Arrasate, the former Osasuna coach, was in his second season in charge and had a contract running until the end of June 2027.

"RCD Mallorca has ended Jagoba Arrasate's tenure as first-team coach," the club announced, adding that "the decision, made after an analysis of the team's performance, reflects the club's desire to begin a new chapter with the aim of reversing the current trend and facing the remaining challenges of the season with the best possible chance of success." Arrasate joined Mallorca in the summer of 2024 after leaving Osasuna and guided the club to 10th place last season with 48 points from 38 games.

This season has proved more difficult, with Mallorca managing six wins and suffering 13 defeats. The team has also relied heavily on striker Vedat Muriqi, who has scored 16 of the club's 29 league goals.

Arrasate also had a public falling-out with former captain Dani Rodriguez, who has since joined second-division Leganes.

Sunday's loss was among Mallorca's poorest performances of the campaign, with the visitors failing to register a shot on target before conceding two late goals to Celta striker Iago Aspas.



Embassy of India
Kuwait

Advertisement for recruitment of Local Clerk (01 Post)

Embassy of India, Kuwait invites application from suitable candidates for the local post of Clerk in the Embassy.

Qualifications Required: Bachelor's degree from a recognized university. Fluent in English (speak, read, write). Knowledge of Hindi and/or another Indian regional language is desirable. Working level knowledge of written and spoken Arabic. Proficient in MS Office applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint). Skills in image/video editing software such as Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator.

Additional Requirements: Must hold valid Kuwaiti residency (transferable). Between 25 and 40 years of age. Minimum of 2 years of prior experience in administrative or clerical roles (preferably in an Embassy, Consulate, or International Organization)

Emoluments: Starting Salary: KD 500/- + COLA (19.75%)

Interested candidates may fill the application form online before 14th March 2026 (1700 hrs) at <https://forms.gle/ozz66wcvmqcuXcD77> or by scanning the QR Code
For more details, please visit Embassy website <https://indembkwt.gov.in/index.php>



SPORTS

Burgan claims narrow win over Kazma

Al-Arabi ends Kuwait Club's perfect streak

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

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Al-Arabi brought Kuwait Club's perfect streak to a halt with a thrilling 37-35 victory in the closing match of Round 13 of the Handball Premier League. In the same round, Burgan claimed a narrow 36-34 win over Kazma.

Despite the setback, Kuwait Club continues to lead the standings with 23 points. Burgan climbed to second place on 18 points, while Kazma remains third, ahead on goal difference from Al-Arabi (fourth) and Al-Qadsia (fifth), all tied on 14 points. Al-Salmiya sits sixth with 10 points, followed by Al-Sulaibikhat in seventh with seven points, and Al-Nasr bottom with two points.

Kuwait Club was affected by the suspension of its main goalkeepers, brothers Ali and Hassan Safar. Even so, the Whites produced a solid attacking display, with Saif Al-Adwani, Montenegrin professional

Vladan, and Qatari star Frankis leading the charge through sharp penetrations and effective finishing from both backcourt and wing positions.

Al-Arabi, however, took full advantage of the goalkeeping absences. Guided by Tunisian standout Osama Al-Jaziri and Estonian sharpshooter Dener, the "Green" executed disciplined, well-structured attacks, with powerful long-range strikes proving decisive in sealing the win.

In the second encounter, Kazma's hopes were dented early after Tunisian professional Mohamed Farad and winger Ibrahim Al-Amir exited with injuries before the midway point of the first half. The disruption allowed Burgan to control proceedings and head into halftime with a 17-14 advantage.

Burgan later suffered an injury blow to its Croatian professional Stipe in the second half, which gave Kazma renewed momentum and helped it edge ahead 33-32 with five minutes left on the clock.



Al-Arabi player tries to find the net.

West Indies smash record 254, thrash Zimbabwe by 107 runs



West Indies' Shimron Hetmyer plays a shot during the T20 World Cup cricket match between Zimbabwe and West Indies in Mumbai, India. (AP)

Hetmyer shines with 85

MUMBAI, India, Feb 24, (AP): West Indies posted the second highest total in Twenty20 World Cup history and thrashed Zimbabwe by 107 runs in the Super Eights.

West Indies finished with a team record 254-6 after Shimron Hetmyer - dropped on 9 and 70 - bashed 85 off 34 balls with seven sixes, and Rovman Powell hit 59 off 35.

The West Indies batters hit 19 sixes, the joint most in a T20 World Cup innings. Their total was just six runs from the all-time World Cup high of 260-6 by Sri Lanka against Kenya in 2007.

Zimbabwe was all out for 147 in 17.4 overs. Left-arm spinners Gudakesh Motie (4-28) and Akeal Hosein (3-28) did most of the damage. No. 8 batter Brad Evans led with 43 off 21.

In all, 31 sixes were hit during this game, a record in men's T20 World Cups.

West Indies led Group 1 on net run-rate from

South Africa. Defending champion India and Zimbabwe have lost their first matches in the tournament.

West Indies next plays South Africa in Ahmedabad on Thursday, when India also takes on Zimbabwe in Chennai.

Hetmyer, batting at No. 3, would have gone in the fourth over but Tashinga Musekiwa failed to catch him out at the square leg boundary.

Hetmyer made Zimbabwe pay. He lost Shai Hope on 14 but was setting the pace with 50 off 19 balls with five sixes. He and Powell brought 100 up in only 9.1 overs. They added 122 off 52 balls, the third highest West Indies partnership for any wicket in T20 World Cups until Hetmyer fell in the 15th over to Graeme Cremer's wrist spin.

"I like batting at No. 3 and understand the role better because I have been doing it for a while now," Hetmyer said. "I know how the situations unfold and try not to overthink. It is just one game and there is still a long way to go (for us)."

Powell brought up his 50 off 29 balls.

Straight after his fourth six, he whacked a full toss that Zimbabwe captain Sikandar Raza stopped with his left hand. Raza needed bandaging and the players hugged. Raza said afterward he planned to have the hand scanned.

Sherane Rutherford added 31 not out off 13 balls, Romario Shepherd hit three sixes in 10 balls, and Jason Holder crunched two sixes in the four balls he faced. Zimbabwe also gave up 21 extras.

It added up to West Indies' third ever 250-plus total in T20s, and a target beyond Zimbabwe's reach.

That was certain after Hosein bowled a double-wicket maiden, bowling Zimbabwe heavy hitters Brian Bennett (5) and Ryan Burl for a three-ball duck in the third over.

Motie ran through the middle order, including the wicket of Raza.

"We thought when we batted (the pitch) will stay true but it started to turn," Raza said. "Motie's spell changed the game."

Evans, under no pressure with a T20 average of 8, improved his career-best score from 24 to 43 when he was the last man out.

'The fans have waited long enough'

Floyd Mayweather and Pacquiao agree to a rematch in September

LOS ANGELES, Feb 24, (AP): Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao have agreed to a rematch of their landmark 2015 bout.

Their second fight will be held Sept. 19 in Las Vegas, the boxing icons announced Monday. The rematch, which will be streamed on Netflix, will be the first boxing event to be held at Sphere, the immersive event venue east of the Strip.

Mayweather, who turns 49 years old on Tuesday, announced his intention last week to end his nine-year retirement from competitive boxing. The 47-year-old Pacquiao ended his own four-year retirement last year, and he is scheduled to meet Ruslan Provodnikov on April 18 in the second bout of his comeback.

Mayweather and Pacquiao didn't announce a weight class or length for their second bout.

The two most prominent boxers of their generation will meet again 11 years after Mayweather beat Pacquiao by decision in a fight that didn't live up to the decade of hype preceding it. The bout's promoters claimed it was still the most profitable fight in history, setting pay-per-view records and attracting worldwide attention.

"I already fought and beat Manny once," Mayweather said in a statement. "This time will be the same result."

Pacquiao later revealed he fought with a shoulder injury because he didn't want to postpone such an important event. He was unable to apply his usual offensive pressure to Mayweather, who employed his usual defense-first strategy while easing to victory.

"The fans have waited long enough - they deserve this rematch," Pacquiao said. "I want Floyd to live with the one loss on his professional record and always remember who gave it to him."

The fighters' first meeting happened more than a half-decade after fans first began to clamor for an obvious matchup between two similarly-sized greats. Both sides blamed the

other for the delay at times, but Mayweather always asserted he would fight whoever he wanted, whenever he wanted - leading many fans to believe Mayweather waited to accept the bout until he felt age had taken a bit of sting out of Pacquiao's famously vicious punches.

Both fighters are now much more than a decade removed from their primes, but Mayweather and Pacquiao remain two of the biggest names in boxing.

After Mayweather beat Conor McGregor in 2017 and retired with a 50-0 record, he spent much of his 40s competing in lucrative boxing "exhibitions" against YouTubers and fringe competitors while largely maintaining his lavish lifestyle outside the ring. He is currently in legal disputes with multiple alleged creditors over issues ranging from unpaid rent on a Manhattan apartment to outstanding jewelry bills.

Mayweather has announced another exhibition against 59-year-old Mike Tyson this spring, although the bout still doesn't have a location or date.

Pacquiao ran unsuccessfully for the presidency of his native Philippines and then lost in the Philippine Senate election last May. He returned to the ring two months after that political setback, fighting WBC welterweight champion Mario Barrios to a majority draw while trying to become the oldest 147-pound champion.

The rematch is the latest bout to land on Netflix as the platform continues to scoop up top fights for its live sports programming. The streamer showcased Terence Crawford's victory over Canelo Alvarez last year, and it will present heavyweight champ Tyson Fury's comeback bout in April.

The Sphere venue, which opened in 2023, hosted a UFC show in 2024. UFC President Dana White said the promotion had to pay roughly \$20 million to produce that show - about 10 times more than a normal UFC pay-per-view event - because of the venue's unusual capabilities and requirements.

Judge orders Hakimi to stand trial

PARIS, Feb 24, (AP): Paris Saint-Germain and Morocco defender Achraf Hakimi has been ordered to stand trial in a rape case, lawyers told the Associated Press on Tuesday.

Hakimi's lawyer Fanny Colin said she will appeal the judge's decision that followed recommendations from the Nanterre public prosecutor's office, which last August called for the player to stand trial.

Colin said a date for the trial has not been set.

Rachel-Flore Pardo, who represents the plaintiff, told the AP her client welcomed the order committing the case to trial "with relief," adding it "is fully consistent with the evidence in the file."

Hakimi, one of the best defenders in the world, has denied any wrongdoing and said on X he "calmly awaits" a trial that "will allow the truth to emerge publicly."

"Today, an accusation is enough to justify a trial, even though I contest it and everything shows that it is false. This is as unjust for the innocent as it is for genuine victims,"

he said on the eve of a crucial Champions League playoff against Monaco.

Hakimi was given preliminary charges in March 2023 after a 24-year-old woman accused him. She said she was raped by Hakimi at his home in a Paris suburb. In the French legal system, preliminary charges mean judges have strong reason to suspect a crime was committed but are allowing time for further investigation before deciding whether to send a case to trial.

"A trial has been ordered based on an accusation that rests solely on the word of a woman who obstructed all investigations, refused all medical examinations and DNA testing, refused access to her mobile phone, and refused to provide the name of a key witness," Colin said.

Colin claimed that two successive psychological assessments of the plaintiff "revealed a lack of clarity regarding the facts she claims to denounce, as well as the absence of any post-traumatic symptoms."

Juventus needs a comeback against Galatasaray

No Mourinho, Prestianni, Benfica takes on Madrid

MADRID, Feb 24, (AP): There won't be another confrontation between Vinicius Junior and Gianluca Prestianni in the Champions League this week.

Real Madrid and Benfica will meet at Santiago Bernabeu Stadium on Wednesday but UEFA banned Prestianni from the game following accusations he racially abused Vinicius in the first leg of the knockout round last week.

Madrid won 1-0 in Lisbon after Vinicius scored in the second half. But when the Brazil forward celebrated by the Benfica corner flag and upset the local fans and players, the game was halted for nearly 10 minutes. Prestianni confronted Vinicius, who accused the Argentine of calling him "monkey." Prestianni denied racially insulting Vinicius.

The anti-racism protocol was activated but no further action was taken during the match as there was no evidence against Prestianni, who covered his mouth with his shirt while talking to Vinicius. The Madrid forward was shown a yellow card after his celebration.

UEFA said the one-match suspension of Prestianni from its control, ethics and disciplinary body was related to discriminatory behavior.

"This is without prejudice to any ruling that the UEFA disci-

plinary bodies may subsequently make following the conclusion of the ongoing investigation and its respective submission to the UEFA disciplinary bodies," it said in a statement.

Benfica said in a statement that it lamented that Prestianni was suspended while the investigation was underway. It said it would appeal UEFA's suspension. Portuguese media said Prestianni was expected to travel to Madrid with the squad.

Prestianni did not play in Benfica's 3-0 win over AVS on Sat-

urday in the Portuguese league because of a yellow card suspension, but he was expected to be on the field along with Vinicius during Wednesday's match at the Bernabeu.

Vinicius scored Madrid's goal in a 2-1 loss at Osasuna on Saturday in La Liga.

Missing for Benfica on Wednesday will be coach José Mourinho, who was sent off late in the first leg for complaining to the referee. The former Madrid coach criticized Vinicius for celebrating his goal by the Benfica flag.



Benfica's Gianluca Prestianni fights for the ball against Real Madrid's Vinicius Junior during a Champions League playoff soccer match between SL Benfica and Real Madrid in Lisbon, Portugal. (AP)

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Argentina's Tomas Etcheverry holds the trophy after his victory over Chile's Alejandro Tabilo in the singles final match at the Rio Open tennis tournament in Rio de Janeiro. (AP)

Sports

Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr congratulates HH Amir on National holidays, highlights role in advancing sports

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr Al-Sabah, President of both the Kuwaiti and Asian Swimming Federations, extended heartfelt congratulations on his own behalf and on behalf of the boards and all members of the aquatic sports community in Asia to His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may God protect him; to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah; to His Highness the Prime

Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah; as well as to the government and people of Kuwait on the occasion of the National Day and the anniversaries of Independence and Liberation.

Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr highlighted that Kuwait's sports community uses this occasion to reaffirm their loyalty to His Highness the Amir, praying for the protection of Kuwait, its leadership, and its people, and for the nation to continue to thrive as a land of

security and stability under His wise guidance.

He added that this significant anniversary, filled with pride and honor, inspires all Kuwaitis to draw lessons and work toward a brighter future with determination, optimism, and unity. It also reinforces the importance of collective effort and shared vision in building a stronger Kuwait. Al-Badr emphasized that the Amir's directives provide a clear roadmap for advancing sports in the country and achieving

excellence at both national and international levels.

He further noted that His Highness's generous support and guidance for athletes place an important responsibility on sports officials to ensure full support, remove obstacles, and implement a comprehensive plan aimed at revitalizing Kuwaiti sports, restoring its achievements, and proudly representing Kuwait in continental and global competitions.



Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr Al-Sabah, President of both the Kuwaiti and Asian Swimming Federations.



Salmiya defender makes a clean tackle against Al-Arabi forward during the Zain Premier League match.

Whites inch closer to 21st title

Kazma rises to 2nd, Al-Arabi slips in Zain Premier League

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Kuwait Club is on the brink of clinching the Zain Premier League title, with its lead over closest rivals Kazma and Al-Arabi extending to 12 points with nine rounds remaining. Kuwait Club remains unbeaten this season, poised to claim its fifth consecutive title and the 21st in club history.

Kazma claimed second place after a dramatic 4-2 victory over visiting Al-Qadsia in Round 14 at the Friendship and Peace Stadium. Al-Qadsia led at halftime, but the home team staged a strong comeback to secure all three points.

In the first half, Kazma opened the scoring through Didier Lamkel in the 4th minute from a penalty. Al-Qadsia responded in the 31st minute with a goal from Mubarak Al-Fenini, and added a second in stoppage time via Abilal, also from a penalty.

Kazma dominated the second half, with Nasser Mohamoud

equalizing in the 48th minute, followed by Amir Abdullah's goal in the 55th minute. Nasser Faleh completed the comeback with a fourth goal in the 72nd minute, sealing the 4-2 win.

The victory moved Kazma to 24 points in second place, while Al-Qadsia remains fifth with 22 points. Coach Nabil Maaloul rested several players to prepare for upcoming matches against Burgan in the Amir Cup preliminary round on Friday and against Qatar's Al-Rayyan in the Gulf Club Champions League semi-final first leg midweek.

In another tight contest, Al-Salmiya handed Al-Arabi their third consecutive defeat, defeating it 1-0 at Thamer Stadium. The "Sky Blue" displayed a disciplined performance, with Imad Al-Lawati scoring the decisive goal in the 8th minute.

Al-Salmiya now rises to fourth place with 23 points, while Al-Arabi slips to third, remaining on 24 points.

Al-Qadsia strengthens second spot

Unstoppable Kuwait Club cruises

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 24: Kuwait Club delivered a commanding performance, defeating Al-Sahel 76-32 on Monday in Round 15 of the Basketball League. In the other matchup, Al-Qadsia overcame Al-Nasr 81-73.

With the victory, Kuwait Club maintained its perfect record, climbing to 30 points from 15 straight wins to remain firmly at the top of the standings. Al-



Kuwait Club player goes solo to basket as a rival looks on.

Sahel stays bottom with 16 points.

Al-Qadsia strengthened its hold on second place with 27 points, while Al-Nasr remains sixth on 18 points.

Kuwait Club, Al-Qadsia, Kazma and Al-Qurain have officially booked their places in the Final Four. The league follows a three-phase round-robin system, after which the top four teams advance to the semifinals, played in a best-of-three playoff format.

Despite resting its professional players, Kuwait Club had little trouble asserting control. The coaching staff gave opportunities to several young talents, including Ahmad Al-Rashid, Amir and Adam Assadallah, and Ammar Al-Eisa.

The youthful lineup rose to the occasion, with Amir leading the scoring with 14 points. Kuwait Club dominated every quarter — 36-9, 49-17, 64-17, and 76-32 — in a one-sided contest. Notably, Al-Sahel failed to score in the third quarter, underlining the vast gap between the two teams.

In the second game, Al-Qadsia took charge early against Al-Nasr and maintained its edge throughout, closing the quarters 23-16, 40-28, and 60-52 before sealing an 81-73 win. American professional DeQuan Jones starred for the "Yellow" side, finishing as the game's top scorer with 22 points.

Best of the Rest

'FA attempting to silence ex-players': An alumni group representing former Australian women's soccer players says Football Australia is trying to silence former Matildas players by instituting a membership program that limits criticism of the sport's governing body.

With the Women's Asian Cup hosted by Australia set to start this weekend, Football Australia is facing questions over the introduction of a platform called "Matildas FC" which provides former players with complimentary tickets.

The former players had previously received free tickets for internationals with no need to sign up to any platform.

Matildas Alumni, which represents former national team players, has raised concerns with the rules they must agree to in order to become members of Matildas FC and access complimentary tickets.

"The imposed code of conduct attached to the platform functions as a silencing mechanism, restricting Alumni from expressing views that may be critical of FA," a Matildas Alumni spokesperson said in a statement. (AP)

Torino appoints D'Aversa as new coach: Torino has fired Marco Baroni and immediately named Roberto D'Aversa as the new coach of the Serie A club.

Baroni was axed after Torino lost at Genoa 3-0 on Sunday, a fourth straight winless match in all competitions. Torino played the entire second half with 10 men.

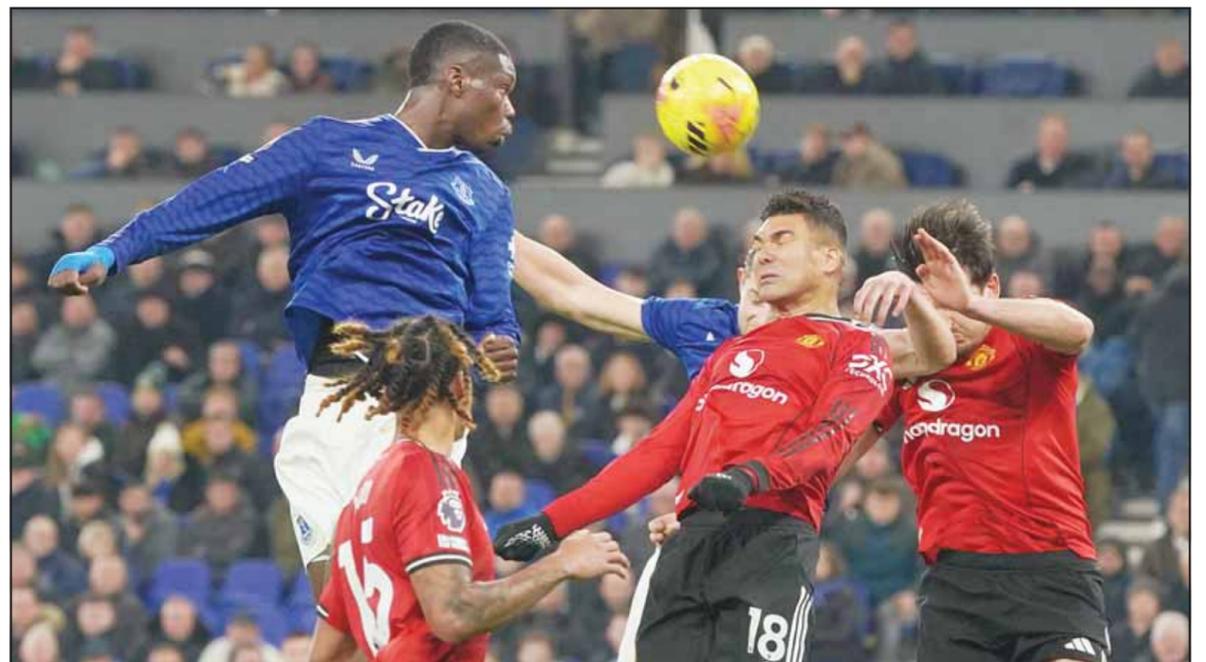
Torino sits 15th in the table, just three points clear of the drop zone.

The 50-year-old D'Aversa, an Italian who was born in Stuttgart, Germany, signed a contract to June 30, Torino said in a statement.

The former Serie A midfielder was previously in charge of Italian sides Empoli, Lecce, Sampdoria, Parma and Virtus Lanciano. (AP)

Supersub strikes again as Sesko gives Man United win at Everton

Carrick's unbeaten run extends to 6



Everton's Thierno Barry heads the ball during the Premier League soccer match between Manchester United and Everton in Liverpool, England. (AP)

LIVERPOOL, England, Feb 24, (AP): Manchester United supersub Benjamin Sesko scored 13 minutes after entering the field to give his side a 1-0 win over Everton in the Premier League.

It was the third time in four games that Sesko has scored after coming off the bench and secured points for United.

"I believe in me and so do the other players as well," Sesko told Sky Sports. "They know what they are going to get when I arrive in the game. It's up to me to deliver of course."

His goal with 19 minutes remaining finished off the slickest move of

an otherwise stodgy game.

Bryan Mbeumo controlled Matheus Cunha's superb long ball and played a perfectly weighted pass to the feet of Sesko, who steered the ball past Jordan Pickford with aplomb.

"It was a great finish," United interim coach Michael Carrick said. "It was a ruthless finish. I liked the way he put it away with real confidence. It was great play from Cunha and Mbeumo to set it up and we are dangerous on the break."

Until then defenses had been on top and the lack of attacking fluency was not helped by a heavy pitch that appeared to slow down both teams.

The result took fourth-placed United three points clear of Chelsea and



Manchester United's Benjamin Sesko celebrates after scoring during the Premier League soccer match between Manchester United and Everton in Liverpool, England. (AP)

Liverpool. United was three behind Aston Villa.

It also extended Carrick's unbeaten run to six games since he replaced Ruben Amorim on Jan. 13.

The defeat was a blow to Everton's hopes of a place in next year's European competitions and left it languishing in ninth, behind Brentford and Bournemouth and eight points adrift of Chelsea and Liverpool.

David Moyes' men have gone seven games without a win at their new Hill Dickinson Stadium.

"Generally we did very well in lots of bits," Moyes said. "We got done on the counterattack and they ran away and got the goal that was there. We put in a great effort to get the goal but lacked the quality to make it count."