



Scan the QR code to access the Arab Times WhatsApp Channel



Opinion

Firmness is necessary to protect the homeland

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

KUWAIT enjoys an era of security and stability, where public affairs proceed smoothly for everyone.

At the same time, there is firmness and strict punishment for anyone who breaks the law, regardless

of their position. Vigilant oversight of security does not overlook any matter, no matter how small, that may threaten the nation and its citizens. The relevant authorities take prompt action to counter any harmful attempts.

The Ministry of Interior announced the foiling of a plot to finance terrorist entities and undermine Kuwait's security, and the arrest of 24 citizens who were involved in illegally collecting funds.

This was expected given the ongoing brainwashing operations that have succeeded in ensnaring a number of individuals who have lost loyalty to their nation and fallen prey to movements, parties, or groups working for hostile foreign agendas.

The sensitive circumstances facing Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, including Kuwait, require everyone to maintain a high level of vigilance to confront any attempts at destabilization that could harm national security.

The government, through all its agencies, is committed to ensuring national security. Accordingly, laws have been strengthened to close loopholes that could be exploited by individuals or groups with malicious intent.

On this occasion, I would like to express my gratitude to the security services, especially the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, who exerts

tremendous efforts to deal firmly with anyone who attempts to harm Kuwait's stability.

I also extend my appreciation to the Minister of Justice, Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait, who is working on amending laws and legislation to address the sensitive circumstances Kuwait is experiencing.

Continued on Page 5

Follow me on:

@Ahmedaljarallah

Ahmed aljarallah

ahmed@aljarallah.com



Scan QR code to visit the website:

aljarallah.com

Gulf condemns plot

Kuwait adds 25 to national terror list

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a circular to all companies and financial institutions on the inclusion of 25 individuals -- 24 Kuwaitis and one non-Kuwaiti -- on the national terrorism list.

Some of these individuals are former members of the Parliament.

This decision is based on Ministerial Resolution No. 176/2025 on the Executive Regulations of the Committee for the Implementation of Security Council Resolutions issued under Chapter VII on combating terrorism and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The ministry emphasized the need to take the necessary steps to implement the inclusion decision as stipulated in articles 21, 22 and 23 of the executive regulations.

Article 21 stipulates freezing funds and economic resources wholly or partially owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by the aforementioned individuals without prior notification.

Article 22 states that the obligation to freeze, as per Article 21, covers all funds and economic resources derived from or resulting from the aforementioned funds.

Article 23 states that it is prohibited for any person within the borders of the country or any Kuwaiti citizen outside the country to provide or make available funds or economic resources to a listed person or to provide financial or related services for the benefit of a listed person, whether directly or indirectly, wholly or partially, or through an entity that is owned or controlled directly or indirectly by or operates at the direction of a listed person.

Meanwhile, the Kingdom of Bahrain on Saturday expressed its "vehement condemnation" of a subversive terrorist plot aimed at destabilizing the security and sovereign integrity of the State of Kuwait, orchestrated and financed by illicit entities.

In an official communiqué, the Bahraini Ministry of Foreign Affairs lauded the "professionalism and high-level vigilance" exhibited by the Kuwaiti security apparatus in pre-emptively thwarting the criminal scheme and identifying those implicated in the dismantled cell.

Continued on Page 5

No threats detected, Kuwait stays vigilant



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister visits the Supply and Catering Authority at the Ministry of Defense, accompanied by Minister of Defense.



National Guard photo
KNG Deputy Chief conducts an inspection visit at the KNG site targeted by hostile drones to review the implemented procedures.

Deadlock sparks Trump Hormuz blockade threat

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Ministry of Interior reassured the public on Sunday that no threats or risks affecting the airspace of the country were reported over the past 24 hours, while the Kuwait Armed Forces continue to be fully prepared and vigilant in safeguarding the nation.

In a media briefing, Director General of the Public Relations and Security Media General Department at the ministry and its spokesperson Brigadier Nasser Bouslaib disclosed that the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams handled 10 reports about the fall of remnants linked to previous defensive interception operations, in-

creasing the total number of such reports since the start of what he described as the "Iranian attacks" to 821.

Bouslaib affirmed that the security and military units continue to closely monitor the regional security situation, while maintaining strong coordination and full preparedness with other relevant state entities to ensure the safety of the country, citizens and residents.

He also stressed the need for citizens and residents to make sure that all donations are made strictly through official and approved channels in the country, including government bodies and licensed charitable organizations, as well as using verified bank transfers and links. He asserted that cash transfers are strictly prohibited to ensure that donations reach the rightful beneficiaries safely and to prevent exploitation for illicit activities.

Continued on Page 5



Ministry of Defense photo
Senior officers from Kuwait and GCC during defense meeting.

Kuwait hosts GCC defense talks

KUWAIT CITY, April 12. (KUNA): Chief of General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant-General Khaled Al-Shuraiaan, held talks on Sunday with Commander of the Unified Military Command of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Major General Abdulaziz Al-Balawi, and Commander of the Peninsula Shield Force, Major General Mohammed Al-Ruwais, on key issues of mutual interest aimed at enhancing joint Gulf military cooperation.

In a press statement, the General Staff said Lieutenant General Al-Shuraiaan received Major General Al-

Balawi and Major General Al-Ruwais earlier on Sunday, where cordial discussions were exchanged.

The meeting addressed a number of key topics of shared interest that contribute to strengthening joint Gulf military action and enhancing integration across various sectors among the armed forces of the GCC member states.

The statement added that the meeting was attended by Kuwaiti Army Deputy Chief of Staff, Air Vice Marshal Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah along with a number of senior officers from both sides.

Day by Day

WISE people say we often tend to forget what made us happy and remember what made us sad. A deeply rooted tree never fears storms. Hence, let us focus on what makes us happy and avoid what makes us sad. Let us live with happiness and grace. ... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Other Voices

The predicament of Iranian strategy: When doctrine reproduces crisis



By Abdulaziz Alotaibi

Amid the recent regional escalation and Iranian attacks on the Gulf, much is said about Iran: is it a troubled ideological regime, or a state seeking survival at any cost? Yet this question, in its simplified form, misleads more than it clarifies. Iran today can only be understood as a national security state—one that

Abdulaziz Alotaibi is Director of the Political Affairs Unit at the Reconnaissance Research. He specializes in political thought and Middle Eastern politics. He holds an MPhil in Political Science from the University of Cambridge and is a PhD candidate in Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania. He has published in peer-reviewed journals including Cambridge Review of International Affairs, Giornale critico della filosofia italiana, and Manuscript Studies. He has taught at the University of Pennsylvania and delivered public lectures at the University of Cambridge. He has also presented his research at major academic conferences in political science and philosophy, including the American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting and the Harvard Islamic Philosophy Annual Conference.

views the world through the lens of threats and constructs its policies on that basis above all other considerations.

This security-oriented outlook is not incidental; rather, it is the product of a long history of shocks and interventions that have deepened mistrust in the international system and instilled a firm conviction that reliance on external actors constitutes an existential

risk. From this perspective, "resistance" does not appear merely as an ideological slogan, but as a framework used to justify expansionist policies under the guise of survival.

Through this lens, the behavior of the Iranian regime in the region—including toward the Gulf states—becomes intelligible.

Continued on Page 4

Kuwait logs first brain bypass surgery, saving stroke patient

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Ministry of Health, represented by the Surgery Department at Ibn Sina Hospital, announced the success of the first delicate brain revascularization surgery in Kuwait, which saved a patient from recurrent strokes.

Dr. Faisal Al-Bader, a neurosurgeon at Ibn Sina Hospital, confirmed in a statement to Kuwait TV the success of a specialized medical team in performing a complex and delicate operation on a woman in her fifties who was suffering from severe cerebral ischemia, which had caused recurrent strokes.

Continued on Page 5



8 Zain Kuwait clinches triple titles from Ookla® Speedtest®



8 Warba announces new management structure to boost position as leading Islamic Bank serving customers and Kuwaiti economy



9 KFH ranks first in Kuwait on Forbes' 2026 List of The Middle East's 100 Most Valuable Companies



Registration opened for vacant Hajj seats: MoIA

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Ministry of Islamic Affairs (MoIA) announced that registration is now open for citizens registered on the Hajj platform for the 1447 AH season who have not yet been nominated, and that this opportunity applies to Hajj campaigns that have

vacant seats, reports Al-Seyassah daily. In a press release issued on Saturday, the ministry explained that registration for these vacant seats requires submitting applications to Hajj campaigns within five days of the announcement date. Priority will be given to

those who complete the required procedures and pay the non-refundable fees first. These conditions are due to current circumstances, the approaching deadline for Hajj permit issuance, and the availability of vacant seats in Kuwaiti Hajj campaigns.

'Mitigate losses caused by flash floods'

Build reservoirs, make use of rainfall: Al-Jada'an

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: Municipal Council member Nasser Al-Jad'aan submitted a proposal to study and allocate sites for rainwater harvesting, develop a water harvesting system, and mandate the Kuwait Municipality to coordinate with the Ministry of Public Works and other relevant authorities.

The proposal includes allocating sites for constructing deep and advanced underground reservoirs to store rainwater in areas most prone to flooding. It also calls for upgrading

existing collection basins and converting them into environmental areas or green parks that utilize the harvested water.

It includes establishing pre-treatment units at collection points to ensure water quality before its use for irrigation or industrial purposes.

Al-Jad'aan pointed out the heavy rainfall the country witnessed in recent years, which led to water accumulation in urban areas and on highways. He explained that this proposal is part of the commitment to maximize the use of natural water resources and minimize waste.

He stated that the proposal aims to reduce

pressure on drainage networks and mitigate losses resulting from flash floods, given the increasing climate challenges. He believes this will strengthen water security and limit the discharge of unused rainwater into the sea.

He identified three expected strategic effects of implementing the proposal -- provide an alternative source of non-traditional water for agricultural irrigation and city greening, protect infrastructure by reducing water accumulation on main streets and the resulting traffic congestion, and develop groundwater reserves by naturally replenishing them through directing excess water to the reservoirs.

Jail, acquittals in cash fraud & forgery cases

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Fourth Criminal Circuit at the Court of First Instance acquitted one defendant in a money laundering and forgery case.

On the other hand, the court sentenced another defendant to four years in prison with hard labor, followed by deportation, as his involvement in the crime was proven.

The court refrained from sentencing another defendant, requiring him to sign a pledge of good conduct for two years with bail of KD5,000.

The Public Prosecution charged these three individuals with forging official documents related to the transfer of ownership of two luxury vehicles from a commercial company to another person without the latter's presence or signature, with the intention to create the impression that the transfer is valid. This charge is based on the money laundering suspicion linked to a previous case.

During the trial, the defendants denied the charges against them. Attorney Ali Jawhar, lawyer for the acquitted defendant, argued that the elements of the crime of forgery were absent and that no harm occurred. He asserted that the incident was nothing but an "administrative error," which the court accepted and then decided to acquit his client.



Appeal accepted: The Court of Cassation, presided over by Judge Sultan Boursli, accepted the appeal of the Public Prosecution against Mohammad Al-Juheil who breached the court-ordered pledge to maintain good conduct, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The court issued the decision after it was proven that the defendant verbally abused a female citizen, a violation of the pledge of good conduct that he signed. It considered this action a breach of the conditions under which the execution of his sentence was suspended. It then revoked the suspension and activated the ruling of a lower court that sentenced him to two years and four months in prison for violating the National Unity Law and insulting the Al-Ajman tribe.

CAPT extends deadline to build Sulaibiya juvenile court edifice

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) extended the deadline for submitting the initial bid bond for companies participating in the tender for studying and designing the Juvenile Court building in Sulaibiya from April 15 to July 15, as per Article 46 of Public Tenders Law No. 49/2016.

The Construction Projects Sector at the Ministry of Public Works will oversee the study and design tender, as it is the entity responsible for implementing government projects according to the highest engineering standards. This ensures the construction of sustainable and environmentally friendly buildings that meet the requirements of the beneficiary -- the Ministry of Justice.

After the study and design tender, another tender will be issued for the construction of the court building, which will occupy an area of 21,430.4 square meters in Sulaibiya. The building will house the main court with several administrative departments and courtrooms, in addition to the detention renewal building that shall consist of two halls.

The project aims to develop the justice system, ease access to investigations and hearings for juveniles, and expedite the adjudication of their cases.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Public Works has bolstered its maintenance sector with advanced equipment to deal with rainwater drainage blockages in all gov-

ernorates, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a move reflecting its commitment to enhancing field performance and raising the level of preparedness, the ministry continued implementing its plan to train technical staff and modernize its equipment fleet. This ensures a rapid response to complaints and their resolution throughout the country for serving citizens and residents alike.

In this context, the ministry announced the provision of 24 specialized vacuum and flusher units to the Maintenance Engineering Sector. These highly efficient vehicles are designed to remove water and deal with blockages in rainwater and sewage drainage networks.

The ministry emphasized that this equipment features advanced technical specifications that meet the demands of field operations. It will enhance the efficiency of specialized teams and improve their ability to respond quickly, thereby supporting the ministry's efforts to maintain infrastructure efficiency and improve the quality of services provided.



'Don't abandon cars': Kuwait Municipality has issued a warning against leaving cars, boats, prefabricated houses, chalets, and similar items in streets, sidewalks, and public squares, reports Al-Anba daily.

It emphasized that parking or storing such items in public squares and open areas is strictly prohibited.

The municipality instructed owners to remove any violating vehicles or structures within 24 hours of being officially marked.

'Scope for scholarships in new fields to be expanded'

Kuwait committed to keep foreign studies on track: Dr Al-Adwani

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) has intensified its efforts to monitor the situation of Kuwaitis studying abroad in view of the current circumstances.

Assistant Undersecretary for Scholarships, Equivalencies and Cultural Relations Dr. Faisal Al-Adwani shed light on the flexible mechanisms that the ministry has adopted, taking into consideration the different policies of international universities.

He said the ministry reached agreements to extend enrollment dates and facilitate the return of some students to their universities, coinciding with the opening of registration for the Advanced Medicine program. He pointed out that this is in line with the commitment of the ministry to maintain the stability of the academic progress of students under all circumstances.

In an interview with the newspaper, Al-Adwani affirmed that the ministry is moving towards a well-planned expansion of scholarships in fields related to digital transformation, artificial intelligence and modern technologies. He said this expansion aims to keep pace with global changes and support the national drive towards a knowledge-based economy and the development of national talent capable of leading technological transformation.

Following are the excerpts of the interview:

Question: How has the ministry been dealing with the situation of scholarship students since the beginning of the crisis?

Situation

Answer: From the beginning, the ministry has been monitoring the situation of Kuwaiti students -- those studying abroad and those who are currently in the country. We determined their actual number and communicated with them through cultural attachés and email, in addition to establishing WhatsApp channels to receive their inquiries and update their information.

Q: Did you classify the students based on their situation?

A: Yes, students were dealt with as per their classifications. These included students who were able to return to their host countries and resume their studies normally, others who had ticket reservations and whose return was coordinated with the concerned entities, and those who were unable to travel due to flight cancellations or the closure of airspaces.

Q: How did direct communication with students contribute to managing the crisis?

A: Direct communication was a crucial element, as it enabled us to understand each student's situation accurately and deal with their respective universities appropriately, especially since university policies vary from one country to another.

Q: What about the differences in university policies in the countries where Kuwaitis are

studying?

A: Some universities allowed the continuation of studies through distance learning, while others stipulated in-person attendance. Some universities set deadlines for the students' return and failure to comply will result in the temporary suspension of studies.

Q: How did the ministry handle these varying requirements?

A: We negotiated with the universities to explain the exceptional circumstances faced by Kuwaiti students, especially those who were unable to travel on time. Some universities requested official documents, such as canceled flight tickets or proof of the students' presence in Kuwait, to support their case with the relevant authorities, particularly regarding student visa procedures.

Q: Are the universities dealt with collectively or individually?

Systems

A: In many cases, each student is dealt with individually, given the large number of universities and their varying systems. The countries where Kuwaitis are studying have hundreds of universities, which necessitated examining each case separately before negotiation began.

Q: Have you reached agreements with the universities?

A: We were able to reach agreements with a number of universities to extend student enrollment deadlines in view of the exceptional circumstances.

Q: What about the number of students currently in Kuwait?

A: We continuously update statistics on the number of students in Kuwait, which helps us make appropriate decisions and deal with each case flexibly.

Q: What about the Advanced Human Medicine program?

A: The ministry opened registration for the Advanced Human Medicine program (Graduate Entry) for Bachelor's degree holders to obtain a four-year Bachelor of Medicine degree. Registration continues until April 30. We encourage those interested to take advantage of this opportunity and fulfill the required conditions within the specified period.

Q: What are the important features of the strategy of the ministry regarding scholarships in the current phase?

A: The strategy focuses on building a comprehensive scholarship system based on the informed selection of academic specializations, raising the quality of academic outcomes, and aligning scholarships with national development needs and the labor market. The ministry is continuously updating scholarship policies by expanding the range of priority specializations, strengthening quality standards and academic accreditation, and guiding students toward prestigious and internationally recognized educational institutions.

Q: How does the ministry balance students' aspirations with labor market needs in determining the required specializations for scholarships?

A: The ministry is committed to achieving a delicate balance between students' academic inclinations and aspirations on one hand, and the needs of the labor market and national development requirements on the other hand. This is accomplished through an integrated methodology based on continuous coordination with relevant government agencies and institutions. The guidance program for Grade 12 students launched by the ministry this year, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, helps familiarize these students with the specializations available within the scholarship plan and their academic and professional prospects.

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) also participates in the national campaign to highlight future employment opportunities and the needs of government agencies for various specializations to raise the students' awareness and help them make informed decisions.

Q: What are the criteria for selecting universities and recommending specializations for study abroad?

A: The ministry uses the standards adopted by the National Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education, which is responsible for accrediting higher education institutions and programs, to determine the universities and specializations recommended for study abroad. These standards include official recognition of the university and program in the host country, availability of accredited academic accreditation, adherence to regular attendance, quality of the academic plan and content, academic standing and ranking of the university, level of its educational programs, and alignment of specializations with labor market needs and national development requirements.

Academic

Q: How does the Certificate Equivalency Department expedite the accreditation of degrees and ensuring their academic quality? What is the average processing time?

A: The department expedites the process while maintaining the highest academic quality standard. This is achieved by developing regulatory procedures, implementing digital transformation, standardizing application requirements, and streamlining paperwork. These measures raise efficiency and improve user experience. The department verifies the certificates and academic qualifications, ensuring they meet the approved standards. This guarantees that qualifications comply with the equivalency systems and regulations adopted in the State of Kuwait to preserve the quality of academic outcomes.

Regarding the timeframe, the average completion time for certificate equivalency varies depending on the completeness of the documents, nature of qualification, and the issuing university.

Q: Are there updates to the equivalency regulations and systems to keep pace with global developments in higher education?

A: The ministry continuously reviews and

updates the certificate equivalency regulations and systems to align with global developments in higher education systems and enhance their compatibility with international best practices, while maintaining the quality of academic qualifications and accreditation standards.

Q: What is the role of the Cultural Relations Department in strengthening academic partnerships with international universities and institutions?

A: The department plays a vital role in fostering international academic partnerships by building effective communication channels with prestigious universities and educational institutions worldwide. This helps expand opportunities for academic collaboration, exchanging expertise, and opening new horizons for Kuwaiti students. The department coordinates academic agreements and memoranda of understanding, monitors their implementation, and ensures their compliance with the policies and regulations.

Conditions

Q: How does the ministry monitor the academic and living conditions of scholarship students during their studies?

A: The ministry pays close attention to monitoring the academic and living conditions of scholarship students through a comprehensive monitoring system, which aims to ensure the academic and living stability of the students and improve their chance for academic success. This monitoring is carried out through the cultural attachés in the host countries. They play a direct role in monitoring students' academic performance, communicating with universities, and addressing academic challenges that the students may face.

Q: Up to what extent does scholarship contribute to meeting the needs of vital sectors in the country?

A: Scholarships abroad contribute directly and effectively to developing specialized national talent and meeting the needs of vital sectors in the country. This is achieved by guiding students towards specialized fields that align with national development priorities and labor market demands.

The ministry is committed to aligning scholarship plans with the needs of vital sectors, particularly medical, paramedical and technical fields to improve the efficiency of national human capital. This is achieved through ongoing coordination with government agencies and other relevant institutions to monitor current and future job gaps and update lists of required specializations based on realistic indicators.

Q: Is the ministry moving towards expanding scholarships in specialized fields related to digital transformation and artificial intelligence? Is there a move towards discontinuing scholarships in certain specializations?

A: The ministry is looking into a well-considered expansion of scholarships in specialized fields related to digital transformation, artificial intelligence and modern technologies in order to keep pace with global changes and

Grip tightened on 'traffickers'

New strategy implemented

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: Minister of Justice Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait, in his capacity as Chairman of the National Standing Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, chaired



Nasser Al-Sumait

the committee's meeting to begin implementing the recommendations of the National Strategy approved by the Cabinet, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Sumait explained that the committee has initiated the necessary executive steps to activate the approved rec-

ommendations, thereby strengthening prevention efforts, providing greater protection for victims, enhancing their rights, and improving the efficiency of monitoring and prosecution. This will also bolster coordination among relevant authorities, in accordance with a structured national approach aligned with international standards.

He stressed that the committee will submit quarterly reports to the Cabinet on the progress made in implementing the recommendations.

Al-Sumait said these reports will ensure continuous monitoring and enhance the effectiveness of national efforts in combating trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.

Legal notices shunned

MoSA set to dissolve, liquidate assets of five charities & NGOs

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) is preparing to dissolve and liquidate the assets of five public benefit associations, of which three are charitable and two are non-profit, due to legal violations and a lack of community benefit, with some having nearly exhausted all warning notices without taking corrective action, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This step is part of the ministry's ongoing review of public benefit associations, both charitable and non-profit, aimed at identifying those that are ineffective or failing to comply with regulations and requirements.

According to sources at the Ministry of Social Affairs, some of these associations have nearly exhausted all warnings issued by the ministry to their boards of directors to rectify their situations and address their violations.

The ministry emphasized that if serious action is not taken to correct the violations before the end of the third and final legal deadline, it will proceed with dissolution and liquidation procedures after presenting the matter to the Committee for the Registration, Evaluation, and Dissolution of Public Benefit Associations and Charities, reviewing their bylaws, and obtaining its approval.

The sources indicated that the directives of the Minister Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila are clear in this regard - to take the necessary legal measures against any public benefit association that violates the provisions of Law No. 24/1962 concerning clubs and public benefit associations, and that is proven not to have conducted any activities on the ground, provided any real services to the community, failed to submit estimated budgets or financial reports for previous years, or had its bank accounts closed for an extended period.

They pointed out that audits of the associations' operations revealed that some of them had not used their designated automated messaging accounts to access the system linking them to the ministry even once, which confirms their ineffectiveness and lack of seriousness.

Regarding the funds deposited in these associations' accounts, the sources stated that they will be transferred to the ministry after liquidation, in preparation for determining their allocation, as stipulated in Article 25 of the model bylaws.

The ministry affirmed its commitment to enforcing the law against associations that do not provide genuine benefit to society or deliver real services to citizens.



Dr. Faisal Al-Adwani

support the direction of the country towards a knowledge-based economy, as well as building national talent capable of leading technological transformation in various vital sectors.

The ministry conducts periodic reviews of the scholarship plan. These reviews include assessing certain specializations that are experiencing job saturation or limited employment opportunities based on realistic labor market indicators. It is done in coordination with the relevant government agencies to ensure that students are guided towards academic paths with future viability and to achieve optimal use of scholarship resources.

Q: What role do cultural offices abroad play in monitoring the affairs of scholarship students? How do they contribute to overcoming the academic and administrative challenges that students face?

A: Cultural offices abroad play a crucial role in monitoring the affairs of scholarship students, serving as the direct link between students, universities and official bodies in their host countries. Through these offices, the ministry is keen on monitoring the academic performance of students, ensure their regular attendance, and maintain continuous communication with educational institutions to address any academic issues or challenges they may encounter. The ministry emphasizes that this integrated role of cultural offices reflects its commitment to support scholarship students throughout their academic journey and provide a supportive environment that contributes to their academic and psychological well-being.

Q: What are the plans to develop the performance of cultural offices and raise their efficiency in terms of digital transformation or expanding the scope of their services?

A: The ministry is implementing an integrated development plan aimed at restructuring the cultural offices, while raising the efficiency of performance and enhancing their role in serving scholarship students, in line with modern developments in higher education systems and with the aim of improving the quality of services.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Iranians missed target..., drones won't win friends

"SHOULDN'T the Iranians use reason instead of launching terrifying missiles at their peaceful Gulf neighbors, especially when millions of their own citizens live in these countries and work to earn a living?" Kuwaiti journalist **Hasan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"I am certain that if the Iranian leadership had not miscalculated by directing missiles and drones toward their peaceful Gulf neighbors instead of their declared adversary Israel, they would have gained the sympathy of all Gulf states, and indeed the entire Arab world. Moreover, they would have found these countries standing by their side, supporting them in their current predicament, which is a war imposed upon them.



Hassan Ali Karam

"Iran's battle is with the Americans and Israelis, yet they clearly missed their mark when they aimed their missiles and drones at their peaceful neighbors, mistaking a peaceful brother for an aggressor. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi issued statements that served as a warning to the Gulf states, telling journalists, "If America launches a war against us, we will strike its bases in the Gulf."

"Isn't this a warning directed at the Gulf states, even though they had anticipated such remarks and collectively moved to neutralize foreign bases on their soil and close their airspace to American aircraft and drones? Despite this, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, which directs the war effort, has persisted in treating the Gulf states as adversaries rather than neighbors seeking peace, security, and stability for Iran, despite occasional disagreements.

"Iran's missiles have caused casualties and damaged vital infrastructure, including power stations and water desalination facilities in Kuwait and other countries that depend on such plants. Have the Iranians achieved any real objectives against Israel and the United States by striking the Gulf, or have they merely vented their anger?

"At the beginning of the war, President Masoud Pezeshkian appeared on Iranian television and apologized to the Gulf states, only to be suspended from his presidential duties. Meanwhile, former Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif wrote in an opinion article published in the American magazine "Foreign Affairs" - "Tehran should use its advantage (?) not to continue fighting, but to declare victory and reach an agreement that ends this war and prevents the outbreak of another."

"Former Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber responded to Zarif, saying, "You have lost a significant number of friends, and trust has eroded. We in the Gulf live in a tense region, one that is coveted by both friends and enemies." If the Iranians are willing to listen, they must understand that missile strikes launched from their territory toward the Gulf will not bring victory, but will instead deepen hatred, resentment, and hostility between the two shores of what was once a peaceful and beautiful sea.

"Wars are not celebrations, nor are they songs and slogans. They are calamities, immense losses, and the taking of innocent lives. And I say to the Iranians - the Gulf Arabs are not enemies, but neighbors with whom you share water, faith, and bonds of proximity. Their war is not with the Gulf Arabs; they have missed their target. No more bloodshed. What is needed is an end to the violence and the spread of peace and love."

Also:

"In recent years, new behavioral phenomena have emerged that can be described as behavioral decline," Kuwaiti writer **Shaikha Al-Asfour** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"These patterns begin with a gradual deviation from natural behavior, distorting or reshaping it into virtual habits under the guise of digital transformation. This leads to social interaction patterns that may threaten human nature, shifting from traditional forms to unfamiliar ones.

"Among these behavioral and psychological phenomena are "brain decay" and "bed decay," which are associated with excessive consumption of trivial short-form videos and video games. This has contributed to social isolation at the expense of natural human interaction, resulting in a weakening of social responsibility, intellectual and moral decline, and reduced mental well-being.

"The effects of these phenomena are reflected in the weakening of human bonds, particularly within families, the decline in the value of cooperation and family solidarity, and the rise of individualism. This, in turn, makes individuals more vulnerable to psychological and social alienation, while also reinforcing excessive materialism. Behavioral decline is reflected in the social environment and in individuals' mental health, leading to abnormal consumption patterns that disregard the ethical dimension in handling data within interactions and transactions.

"This coincides with the emergence of new psychological and behavioral phenomena, including "religion phobia," which leads to the erosion of religious values. The continuation of these phenomena without addressing them will lead to increasingly fragile

societies, vulnerable to moral and structural decay, where individuals become mere consumer machines, stripped of their human essence. However, growing awareness of the risks associated with these transformations opens the door to restoring balance, promoting the positive aspects of technology, and effectively addressing its complex challenges.

"Confronting this decline is the responsibility of targeted and purposeful media, the promotion of a culture of responsible consumption, the integration of technology-related concepts into educational curricula, and the preservation of identity and values to ensure both social and cyber security. To meet these challenges, practical approaches are required, based on strengthening the concept of community partnership, i.e., raising societal awareness of challenges that have grown beyond the control of families alone.

"Institutional cooperation is essential for developing strategies to protect individuals from the phenomenon of behavioral decline, within the framework of efforts led by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the Ministry of Information, the Public Authority for Youth, and committees concerned with the protection of children, women, and families. This includes developing curricula and enacting appropriate regulations to protect individual behavior, while also encouraging initiatives that restore individuals' active role in serving society.

"Investing in purposeful media is an investment in culture and critical awareness. It is necessary for confronting behavioral decline by helping individuals distinguish between healthy behavior and harmful patterns. Preserving human nature is a shared societal responsibility that requires coordinated efforts between individuals, institutions, and the state within a framework of community partnership, ensuring that people remain fully human rather than reduced to passive consumers in a digital world."



"In a world where positions shift rapidly and many platforms fade under political pressures and shifting interests, only long-standing newspapers remain as witnesses to the enduring power of the honest word, and to the resilience of institutions built on principle, no matter how circumstances change," Egyptian writer **Bassam Al-Qassas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Celebrating 57 years since the founding of **Al-Seyassah** newspaper is not merely a passing media occasion, but a tribute to a long history of struggle, courage, and patriotic stances. "Al-Seyassah has never been just a newspaper printed on paper; it has been a vibrant voice at the heart of the Arab scene, committed to stability, defending the nation-state, and writing with clarity in times of uncertainty.

"For decades, this distinguished institution has maintained its standing as one of the most prominent Gulf media outlets, simply because it chose to stand for truth, away from the noise, and aligned with the nation rather than narrow interests.

"The name of **Al-Seyassah** newspaper is closely linked to that of its founder, the renowned writer and journalist **Ahmed Al-Jarallah**, the Dean of Kuwaiti journalism. He has long represented the model of a courageous journalist who does not hesitate to speak the truth, even under the most challenging circumstances.

"Al-Jarallah built a long career in journalism, during which he faced dangers, pressures, and attempts to target him, yet he remained steadfast in his belief that freedom of expression is the first line of defense for the nation.

"What distinguishes Al-Jarallah's experience is not only his boldness, but also his wide Arab and international reach. He conducted interviews with numerous kings, presidents, and rulers throughout the Arab world, as well as with a number of international and religious leaders, including the late Pope John Paul II, in addition to prominent political and economic figures. These high-level interviews gave **Al-Seyassah** newspaper a strong presence in both decision-making circles and public opinion.

"Al-Jarallah's relationships extended to prominent international figures, forming a broad network that made **Al-Seyassah** a platform present at the heart of events, closely attuned to the pulse of the region and its developments.

"On the 57th anniversary of **Al-Seyassah** newspaper, its premises were filled with bouquets of flowers, congratulatory messages, and gifts from senior government officials, leaders, and public figures.

"Institutions that truly make history through the written word deserve recognition. Newspapers that defend stability and protect public awareness earn the respect of all.

"**Al-Seyassah** newspaper has attained this status through a long history of commitment, clarity, and dedication to the nation, supported by journalistic leadership that believed journalism is more a responsibility than a profession, and a mission rather than a job.

"Therefore, **Al-Seyassah's** continued publication for 57 years stands as a rare testament to success in the Arab media scene."

— Complied by Simi K. Kutty

'Heightened police presence to up security'

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Public Relations and Security Media General Department at the Ministry of Interior has been monitoring the activities of field sectors, providing live coverage at the checkpoints and security deployments to control the situation and implement the law under the slogan, "Your Security is Our Goal."

Under the leadership of Director General of

the general department Brigadier General Nasser Bousulaib, Director of the Security Media Department Colonel Othman Al-Mansouri and Director of the Public Relations Department Colonel Faisal Al-Daihani, the officers and personnel are exerting tremendous efforts through daily media briefings and coverage of the heroic actions of the Ministry of Interior, Kuwait Army, Kuwait National Guard and Kuwait Fire Force during the Iranian aggression.



Col Al-Mansouri

Other Voices

Wonders of 'iodine'

By Ahmad alsarraf

SALT has played a crucial role in human life, to the extent that even the finest foods lose their nutritional value when salt levels are too high or too low.

Most table salt contains iodine, and its addition helped solve a problem that had plagued humanity for millennia, with effects that became evident within a single generation.

The story of iodine dates back to 1811, when the French chemist Bernard Courtois was searching for a new way to produce potassium nitrate, the essential ingredient in gunpowder, amid France's shortage of wood, the traditional source of potassium obtained from ash.

Finding an alternative was of paramount importance. Seaweed, abundant along the Normandy coast, suddenly appeared promising.

Courtois used sulfuric acid to clean his tanks, and after using a large quantity, he noticed a purple vapor rising from them.

As the vapor condensed, it left behind blackish-purple crystals that glistened on the sides of the tanks. Unbeknownst to him, Courtois had discovered a new element, which he named iodine, meaning "violet" in French. He published his discovery in 1813 in the journal *Annales de Chimie*.

Within months, two prominent scientists - the English chemist Humphry Davy and the French chemist Joseph Louis Gay-Lussac - independently studied Courtois's samples.



alsarraf

They claimed to have isolated and identified the element. A scientific dispute arose over who had made the discovery, but Courtois was ultimately credited. Iodine was officially listed among the chemical elements in 1813, and its biological importance soon became clear.

A few years after Courtois announced his discovery, the Swiss physician Jean-François Coindet found that small doses of iodine could significantly reduce the size of goiter. Coindet suspected that the old folk remedy of using dried or burnt seaweed to treat goiter pointed to iodine as an effective treatment, and his hypothesis proved correct.

Courtois and Coindet jointly received a prize from the French Academy of Sciences in 1831 for their contributions to medicine. This was before anyone fully understood how widespread iodine deficiency was, or how essential iodine is for brain development and overall health.

Around the same time, in a groundbreaking study, the Ohio physician David Marine proved that iodine significantly reduced the incidence of goiter in school-aged girls. He also found that iodine was essential not only for preventing goiter, but also for the production of thyroid hormones, which regulate metabolism, support heart and digestive function, and play a vital role in fetal and infant brain development.

Once this was established, attention turned to how iodine could be delivered cheaply and at scale to entire populations.

Salt, being inexpensive and widely available, was identified as an ideal solution. Switzerland became the first country to adopt iodized salt in the early 1920s.

In the United States, pediatrician David Cowie of the University of Michigan advocated a similar approach, insisting that iodizing table salt could eliminate simple goiter caused by iodine deficiency.

His efforts succeeded, and iodized salt appeared in Michigan stores on May 1, 1924. Although there were some setbacks, including cases of iodine-induced hyperthyroidism in adults with long-standing nodular goiter, the overall benefits were overwhelming.

Within a generation, goiter rates declined dramatically in all iodine-deficient regions.

However, an estimated two billion people worldwide still suffer from iodine deficiency.



email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Rules to 'obtain' housing revised

Minister sets conditions

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Minister of State for Municipal Affairs, Minister of State for Housing Affairs, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), **Abdul Latif Al-Meshari**, issued **Ministerial Resolution No. 6/2026** that amends certain provisions of the **Housing Welfare Regulations**, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Article 1 of the resolution, published in the official gazette "Kuwait Al-Youm," states that Article 95 of the Housing Welfare Regulations shall be replaced with the following text:

The conditions required to register, obtain, or continue housing applications are as follows:

1. Neither spouse may own a property that provides suitable housing for the family, or have previously purchased property sufficient to provide such housing. In both cases, the controls and standards stipulated in the law and regulations shall apply.

2. The family must not have previously received housing from the state, or have previously rented a residence that was

administratively vacated and reclaimed due to violations of established rules and regulations.

3. The head of the household or their spouse must not be receiving housing or a cash allowance from any other entity.

4. The family must be permanent and continuous residents of the State of Kuwait, in accordance with Article 2 of the regulations.

5. The applicant must not hold a valid commercial registration, except for licenses related to micro-enterprises, special-purpose businesses, and freelance work.

6. The applicant's salary must not exceed KD 1,500 per month. Special cases exceeding this amount, up to a maximum of KD 2,000 per month, may submit a case study request if they have health or educational obligations. If the request is reviewed and rejected, another request may not be submitted until one calendar year has passed from the date of rejection.

Article Two stipulates that this decision shall be published in the official gazette and shall come into effect from the date of publication. The competent authorities shall implement it.



Al-Meshari

Court staff acquitted of forgery

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Misdemeanor Court acquitted an employee of forging a document connected to a client's subscription contract with the company where he is employed.

The ruling was issued after the defense team presented several arguments, including the absence of material and moral elements of the forgery offense, lack of criminal intent, inconclusive investigation, and absence of definitive evidence to substantiate the charge.

In its reasoning, the court stated that the case file did not contain conclusive proof linking the defendant to the alleged act.

It stressed that criminal verdicts must be

founded on certainty, and that any doubt must be interpreted in favor of the accused, resulting in acquittal.

Anti-mom case dismissed: The Family Circuit in the Court of First Instance dismissed the lawsuit filed by a citizen against his mother.

The citizen demanded to put his mother under guardianship and appoint him as her financial guardian, citing her advanced age and inability to manage her assets. This ruling was issued after Attorney Nawaf Al-Wuhaib presented reports and documents proving that his client is mentally capable, asserting that she can manage her financial affairs and dispose her property independently.

SINCE 1985
مغل محل
MUGHAL MAHAL

THANK YOU KUWAIT
FOR KEEPING US SAFE

شكراً ياكويت
على حفظ أمننا وسلامتنا

SCAN. COMMENT. SHARE. SURPRISE.

SHARE YOUR SCREENSHOT ON WHATSAPP 55011985

PIFSS rejects rumors of new investment scheme

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) denied the existence of a new investment program for retirees and employees, confirming that what is being circulated on social media regarding this matter is completely false, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In a statement on its official account on X on Saturday, the institution warned individuals against sharing any personal data with any person or entity, in order to protect the security of their data and rights. It urged the public to rely solely on its official channels and accounts to obtain accurate information.

Arab Imam acquitted of negligence, causing fire

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: The Misdemeanor Court acquitted an Arab Imam of negligence and unintentionally causing fire in the rest area for Imams and Muezzins inside a mosque, resulting in material damage without injuries.

The verdict was issued after Attorney Bader Al-Dalak, lawyer for the defendant, argued for his client's lack of criminal responsibility, asserting that no negligence in the performance of his duties was proven, and that there was no criminal intent in the incident.

Other Voices

When charity crosses the line: The legal risks of unregulated donations

By Dr. Fawaz Khaled Alkhateeb

In today's interconnected world, acts of charity are often immediate, personal, and driven by genuine compassion. A donation can be made in seconds, sometimes without a second thought.

But recent developments in Kuwait serve as a powerful reminder that even the most well-intentioned acts can carry serious legal consequences when they fall outside the boundaries of the law.

At its core, the issue is frequently misunderstood. This is not a matter of religion. It is not a matter of discouraging charity. Nor is it a challenge to long-standing traditions such as Zakat or Khums. Rather, it is a matter of legal compliance and financial accountability.

A Structured Legal Framework

For decades, Kuwait has maintained a clear and consistent legal position on public fundraising. Beginning with the 1959 law regulating the collection of funds for public purposes, reinforced by Law No. (24) of 1962 governing public benefit associations, and further developed through modern ministerial regulations, particularly those issued in 2021 the framework is unequivocal:

Funds collected from the public must be channeled exclusively through licensed entities, regulated financial systems, and under official supervision. This is not a procedural formality. It is a protective mechanism designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and lawful use of funds.

Where the Risk Begins

The legal risk does not arise from



Dr. Fawaz Khaled Alkhateeb

the act of giving itself. It arises when donations are:

- Collected informally
- Transferred through unregulated channels
- Or redirected away from their declared purposes

At that point, what may have started as a charitable act can quickly evolve into a legal issue, potentially

involving regulatory violations or more serious financial implications. Importantly, this transformation does not depend on malicious intent. It is triggered by the absence of compliance.

A Critical Distinction

There is a fundamental distinction that must be clearly understood: Religion encourages giving. The law governs how that giving is executed. This principle applies universally.

Whether the donation takes the form of:

- Zakat
- Khums
- General charity
- Or contributions from any faith tradition

No exception exists outside the legal framework.

Beyond Compliance: A Matter of National Interest

In the current regional and global context, the issue extends beyond regulatory discipline. Unregulated financial flows, even when originating from legitimate intentions, can create vulnerabilities within the financial system. For this reason, adherence to the legal framework is not only a matter of personal compliance.

It is also a matter of:

- Protecting public trust
- Preserving the integrity of charitable institutions
- And safeguarding national stability

Presumption of Innocence

As with any matter under investigation, it is essential to reaffirm a core principle of justice: Every individual remains presumed innocent until proven guilty through a

fair and transparent legal process. This principle must remain intact, regardless of public discourse or speculation.

The Broader Lesson

Beyond the specifics of any individual case, the broader message is clear. Good intentions, while essential, are not sufficient. From a legal standpoint, individuals are accountable not only for the purpose of their donation, but also for the path it takes, from collection to final use.

Final Word

A donation is not defined solely by its intent. It is defined by its compliance and in that distinction lies the line between lawful charity... and unintended legal exposure.



Fawaz@tahergprp.org

Initiative boosts national capacity in crisis response

Kuwait wraps up 1st, 2nd GIS training phases

KUWAIT CITY, April 12, (KUNA): Kuwait concluded Sunday the first and second phases of a Geographic Information Systems training course to enhance emergency management readiness.

The Public Authority for Civil Information said in a statement that this was in cooperation with the national emergency center team (AMAN), mandated by the Supreme Defense Council.

The authority said the step reflects strengthened national preparedness through adopting modern technologies to improve efficiency in risk management and response. It added the course, held on March 24 at Esri, saw broad participation from multiple government entities.

These included the ministries of defense, interior, education, oil, public works, electricity, water and renewable energy, communications, and other national bodies.

The authority said the program aims to develop national GIS capabilities and enhance spatial data analysis to support decision-making and improve coordination and response speed.

The initiative aligns with efforts to build an integrated national system for emergency, crisis and disaster management. It also implements Cabinet Resolution No. 1511 of 2024 designating the authority as Kuwait's central GIS body.



Group photo of participants from government entities during a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) training program.

KUNA photo

Continued from Page 1

The predicament

Iran, as it sees itself, operates in an unreliable environment, without permanent allies. This perception is invoked to justify the expansion of its security sphere through what is known as "forward defense" and "strategic depth"—that is, the displacement of tensions beyond its borders through indirect tools and networks of influence. Here, a vicious cycle takes shape: a doctrine that presumes constant threat produces policies of expansion and escalation, and these policies, in turn, reaffirm and reinforce that very doctrine.

In the same context, another important paradox emerges: in terms of its security logic, the Iranian case shares more with the Israeli case than is often assumed. Both stem from a deep perception of geographic or strategic vulnerability and transform this perception into a doctrine that reinterprets the world as a domain of constant threat, thereby justifying preemptive or extraterritorial policies. Yet this similarity remains limited and does not imply equivalence in tools or international position. Iran relies heavily on networks of non-state actors—such as militias—and on indirect warfare, whereas Israeli doctrine is grounded in direct military superiority and preemptive strikes within a firmly rooted Western alliance structure, even if that structure has shown signs of strain recently. Moreover, the former tends toward a logic of attrition and long-term patience, while the latter emphasizes decisive and rapid deterrence. Nevertheless, the parallels in threat perception are sufficient to generate a mechanism of mutual escalation, whereby each side reproduces and reinforces the fears of the other. The conflict between them thus appears not merely as a clash of interests, but as an interaction between two security doctrines—similar in logic, yet divergent in practice.

For the Gulf states, and Kuwait in particular, a complicated equation arises. On the one hand, Tehran views Gulf territory as being used, militarily or intelligence-wise, against it, thereby rendering these states part of the threat in its perspective. On the other hand, the Gulf states see themselves in a defensive position, rejecting these accusations and affirming their sovereignty. While the broader picture may suggest that Iran is acting reactively, recent developments reveal a deeper shift in the balance of initiative. With its capacity to disrupt or threaten navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, Tehran has moved from a position of constraint to one of agenda-setting. Indeed, this shift takes Iranian behavior beyond merely posing a threat to maritime traffic, toward attempting to use the international waterway itself as a tool of political and economic pressure.

Yet the ability to set the tempo does not necessarily entail the ability to endure over time. The paradox is that, although Iranian strategy is fundamentally oriented toward a logic of attrition and long-term patience, in moments of acute escalation it relies on tools designed to produce immediate shock and rapidly raise costs—not to sustain a prolonged conventional war at the same pace. Tehran, despite possessing effective disruptive capabilities, does not share the same structural vulnerabilities as the Gulf states. The latter are more exposed to coercion targeting coastal infrastructure and vital maritime routes, whereas Iran faces a different set of pressures, most notably a limited capacity to absorb prolonged disruptions. Accordingly, a protracted conflict could transform Iran's advantage in disruption into a self-imposed burden, as cumulative costs begin to work against it rather than its adversaries.

On another level, the traditional instruments of influence available to the Gulf states no longer translate into political leverage with the same effectiveness under the current turbulence. Instead, other, more direct tools have come to the fore: control over the operational space of major powers, direct exposure to risk, and the capacity for diplomatic mediation, as they remain among the few actors able to communicate with multiple sides. It is important here to correct the angle of analysis: a state's endurance in war is not measured by the size of its economy, but by its ability to continue financing vital imports. By this measure, the Gulf states hold a clear advantage—not only due to the strength of their current economies, but also because of the financial reserves that allow them to "buy time." Iran, by contrast, is far weaker in this regard, making time itself more of a pressure factor against it than a tool in its favor. In an increasingly fragmented international context—as

recently reflected in sessions of the UN Security Council—Iran's room for maneuver is further enhanced. The absence of international consensus limits the possibility of imposing lasting stability and allows Tehran to operate within an environment that enables the management of crisis rather than its resolution.

In this context, former Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, in a recent article in Foreign Affairs, offers a notable reading that merits attention. He calls on Iran's leadership to transform what he considers a "success in resilience" into a political gain through a comprehensive settlement with the United States, based on the principle of reciprocity: nuclear constraints in exchange for sanctions relief, a non-aggression agreement, and the reintegration of Iran into the global economic system. What is striking in his proposal, however, is not only what he says, but what remains unsaid after all. Interestingly, absent is any discussion of "forward defense" and the network of regional allies that has formed the core of Iranian strategy for decades. This silence reflects an attempt to reframe Iran as a state capable of integration into formal arrangements, rather than as a power reliant on transnational instruments of influence. Recent developments, however, reveal the limits of this approach. The current trajectory does not point toward a comprehensive settlement so much as it reflects a conditional and temporary management of the crisis. A two-week ceasefire, brokered by Pakistan, was announced and tied directly to the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and assurances of safe passage. At the same time, Tehran conditioned the arrangement on the cessation of U.S. strikes, guarantees against their recurrence, and compensation for damages—while also reaffirming its rejection of any temporary de-escalation that does not lead to a permanent agreement.

This contradiction suggests that what is unfolding does not amount to a strategic transformation in Iranian behavior, but rather a repositioning aimed at consolidating the gains of resilience and managing negotiations from a position of disruption, rather than exiting that logic. Within this framework, a key question remains open: can Iran transition from a logic of "strategic depth" to one of "cooperative security" without losing one of its most important deterrent tools? Or will this duality persist, with settlements articulated in the language of the state, while instruments of influence are maintained in the language of networks—thereby reproducing the same dilemma rather than resolving it?

In light of this divergence, two possible future trajectories can be envisioned. The first is tension followed by gradual containment, driven by geography, which ultimately imposes coexistence. The second—and more dangerous—is the Gulf's descent into an arena of competition among major powers. Yet, at its current stage, this possibility remains primarily visible at the level of political alignment rather than an actual shift toward direct conflict within the region. This scenario, however, is not inevitable. The Gulf states, despite their alliance with the United States, are also connected through broad networks of interests with other international powers, granting them room for maneuver: to act as mediators rather than arenas, as players rather than battlegrounds. Here, Kuwait's particularity stands out—its history of mediation and its reputation as a balanced actor provide it with the capacity to play a diplomatic role that exceeds its relative size.

In the end, the essence of the crisis does not lie in the balance of power alone, but in the nature of the logic through which it is managed: a conflict that is continually reproduced through temporary de-escalation rather than addressed at its root. What we are witnessing is not a settlement, but a recurring cycle of tension, fundamentally driven by a strategy that externalizes crises and expands the security sphere at the expense of regional stability. Accordingly, any genuine resolution cannot be achieved merely by managing escalation, but requires a rethinking of this very logic—one that turns security into a constant source of instability. By contrast, the Gulf states offer a different model: one that, despite its challenges, prioritizes stability, integration into the global economy, and the use of diplomatic tools rather than the export of crises. This grants them not only the capacity for resilience, but also the ability to shape the direction of the crisis.



albander | البندر
Hotel & Resort | فندق ومنتجع



Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)		Price
One night stay in a Queen Bed Cabana for 2 persons with inclusive of Breakfast		BHD 53.361 / Net
One night stay in a Two Bedroom Chalet for 4 persons inclusive of Breakfast		BHD 119.173 / Net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)		Price
One night stay in a Queen Bed Cabana for 2 persons with inclusive of Breakfast		BHD 61.000
One night stay in a Two Bedroom Chalet for 4 persons inclusive of Breakfast		BHD 136.198 / Net

Terms & conditions apply



Faisal Al-Sayer



Ahmed Behbehani



Khaled Al-Shamroukh



Fahad Al-Rish



Rashid Al-Hajri



Ahmed Al-Mulaifi



Ali Hassan



Suleiman Joudeh

Leading voices praise a legacy of credibility and national responsibility

Media, business figures mark Al-Seyassah's 57th anniversary

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: Chairman of the Board of Directors of Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons Company, Faisal Bader Mohammed Al-Sayer, and the board members extended their congratulations to Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah newspaper, as well as to the editorial team and all staff members, on the occasion of the newspaper's 57th anniversary, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Sayer stated that Al-Seyassah has established itself as a prominent media platform in Kuwait through a journey marked by significant contributions and achievements.

He expressed his wishes for the newspaper's continued progress and prosperity, and for it to achieve further success, affirming his confidence in its bright and distinguished future.

Ahmed Ismail Behbehani, Editor-in-Chief of Al-Khaleej newspaper, also sent a congratulatory message to the Dean of Kuwaiti journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah newspaper, Ahmed Al-Jarallah, on the occasion of the 57th anniversary of the first issue of Al-Seyassah.

He praised the newspaper's pioneering media journey, built on professionalism, commitment, and national responsibility.

Behbehani emphasized that Al-Seyassah has, for decades, been a landmark in the Kuwaiti journalistic field and a free platform that has conveyed national concerns and Arab issues with boldness and balance.

He affirmed that Al-Seyassah newspaper has contributed to strengthening the position of Kuwaiti journalism at the local, Arab, and international levels.

Behbehani commended the ongoing efforts of the newspaper's management, led by Al-Jarallah, in promoting responsible media discourse and reinforcing the values of national unity.

He noted that Al-Seyassah's presence and influence reflect a solid professional experience and a conscious editorial vision.

Behbehani concluded by praying that God grant success to those in charge of the newspaper to continue its journey of giving, and that He perpetuate Al-Seyassah's distinction and leadership in serving the State of Kuwait and enhancing its media standing.

Media advisor Khaled Al-Shamroukh affirmed Al-Seyassah newspaper's position as a firmly established media institution that has contributed to shaping journalistic awareness in Kuwait and the Arab world.

He said, "Since its inception, Al-Seyassah newspaper has been committed to truthfulness, boldness, and dedication to the issues of the na-



Bouquet of flowers from Faisal Al-Sayer.

tion and its citizens, serving as a national platform present at various pivotal moments."

Al-Shamroukh affirmed that Al-Jarallah has solidified the newspaper's identity, based on clear positions and the defense of Kuwait's interests, with a belief that journalism is a national responsibility more than a profession.

Businessman Fahad Al-Rish also congratulated the Al-Seyassah newspaper family and its editor-in-chief, emphasizing that the newspaper represents a model of influential professional media in Kuwait and the Gulf, having established credibility and built readers' trust over decades of continuous journalistic work.

Businessman Rashid Al-Hajri praised the historical role played by Al-Seyassah newspaper, affirming that it has been, and remains, a true reflection of the pulse of the Kuwaiti public and a platform for Arab thought.

He noted the newspaper's success in achieving a balance between professionalism and boldness, and its contribution to shaping political and cultural awareness in Kuwait and the Gulf.

Advisor Ahmed Al-Mulaifi affirmed that Al-Seyassah newspaper has left a distinctive mark on local, Arab, and international affairs, pointing out that what distinguishes it is the clarity of its editorial line and the consistency of its approach since its founding, which has strengthened its credibility and the trust of its readers.

Al-Mulaifi commended Al-Seyassah newspaper's commitment to presenting diverse viewpoints with wisdom and insight.

Former Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Middle East News Agency, Ali Hassan, stated that Al-Seyassah newspaper has been a destination for Arab intellectuals for decades, thanks to its high professionalism and credibility in covering local, regional, and international events.

He praised Al-Seyassah's historical stances in supporting Arab causes and exposing the challenges facing the region.

Journalist Suleiman Joudeh believes that Al-Seyassah is a strong and dynamic newspaper by professional standards.

He affirmed that it has attained its distinguished position as a result of a long journey led by Editor-in-Chief Ahmed Al-Jarallah and a seasoned team, who have succeeded in providing innovative journalism that combines experience, vitality, and a commitment to earning readers' trust.

Continued from Page 1

Firmness is

This significant effort, appreciated by all, is based on the directives of the highest political leadership, headed by His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who is vigilant in ensuring the country emerges from this crisis unscathed.

We must acknowledge the role of our armed forces, which confront the brutal Iranian aggression and Iran's proxies targeting Kuwait from Iraq on a daily basis.

Today, with the exposure of the terrorist financing network, we must remain fully vigilant. The recently uncovered cells indicate a well-organized terrorist plot involving funding networks, sabotage efforts, and attempts to incite discord among citizens.

The aim is not merely to support a party, movement, or group, but rather a collective effort to destabilize national and economic stability, thereby weakening Kuwait's internal front.

This undoubtedly requires considering key points, most importantly the fact that those who donated to these networks were unaware of where their funds were going. As stated in the statement of the Interior Ministry, the donors gave the money to the suspicious networks in "good faith", but those responsible for collecting the donations exploited the trust that donors put on them, diverting the money for purposes other than those declared when it was collected.

Nevertheless, the good intention does not mean that the financing is not harmful. As the saying goes, "The road to hell is paved with well-intentioned people." Investigating this issue requires a high degree of vigilance, unless we wake up one day to find the gates of hell open before us.

No threats

He prayed for the continuous protection of Kuwait, its leadership, citizens and residents from all forms of harm.

Moreover, the Kuwait Army General Staff announced that the EOD team at the Land Forces Engineering Unit dealt with unexploded ordnance and shrapnel from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon on Sunday.

In a press statement, the General Staff confirmed that explosions heard during this period were the result of the EOD operation.

In a related development, the Public Relations and Security Media General Department at the ministry exerted tremendous efforts, and proved its dedication, efficiency and competence during the Iranian aggression against Kuwait.

Under the leadership of Bouslaib, the general department handled the situation with utmost professionalism and responsibility. It prevented the spread of rumors and provided the public with comprehensive information in a transparent manner, thereby, boosting public trust in the Armed and Security forces.

The general department showcased the heroic acts of the Armed Forces and security authorities in intercepting drones and missiles, while handling shrapnel and other incidents in a quick and decisive manner.

It ensured the timely dissemination of news through Kuwait TV and other official channels. Its efforts extended to raising public awareness, counter-

ing rumors, and boosting trust between citizens, residents and security agencies, thus, confirming its commitment to fulfill its duties.

Since the beginning of the brutal and heinous Iranian attacks, the general department has been committed to transparency and speed in disseminating information. It has so far issued 21 official statements and presented 41 daily media briefings on Kuwait TV, which serves as a reliable source of information and helps curb the spread of inaccurate news that could cause public anxiety. It also intensified its efforts in warning the public about the dangers of spreading rumors, especially under the current circumstances. Its messages emphasized the importance of obtaining information only from official sources. It also highlighted the dangers of photographing attack sites, whether with mobile phones or using drones, due to the security threat this action poses.

These efforts resulted in a heightened public awareness, as citizens and residents strictly comply with the instructions of the ministry now. This is an indication of the success of the awareness campaigns and the ability of the general department to convey messages effectively.

The role of the general department is not limited to raising public awareness, as its tasks include monitoring and tracking social media content, addressing rumors immediately, and referring the donors behind the rumors to the authorities in coordination with the Cybercrime Department.

The general department contributed as well to raising public awareness on the initiative to surrender unlicensed weapons without legal repercussions within the specified period.

Prominent figures in this role include Security Media Department Director Colonel Othman Al-Mansouri and Public Relations Department Director Colonel Faisal Al-Daihani. Through their media appearances, they conveyed informative and clear messages that raise public awareness and unify the media discourse with efficiency, determination and a strong sense of responsibility.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah visited the Supply and Catering Authority at the Ministry of Defense, accompanied by Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and Assistant Chief of Staff for Supply and Catering Major General Eng. Salah Saud Al-Azmi.

During the visit, His Highness the Prime Minister chaired a meeting attended by the Minister of Defense and the Assistant Chief of Staff, conveying the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as their appreciation for the tremendous efforts exerted by all sectors at the Kuwait Armed Forces.

His Highness also visited several vital facilities in the unit, including the warehouses for military vehicles, supplies, logistical support and food provision for the Kuwait Army. He was briefed on the distribution and storage mechanisms, and the safety and security procedures.

He commended the efforts and sacrifices made by the military and security institutions throughout the recent exceptional period, stressing the importance of enhancing readiness to deal with various challenges and emergency situations.

On the other hand, Deputy Chief of Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah conducted an inspection visit in the KNG site targeted by hostile drones to review the procedures implemented in dealing with the incident.

A press statement issued by KNG on Sunday revealed that during the visit, Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf underscored the importance of ensuring readiness and raising the level of vigilance at all sites.

He lauded the competence of the KNG personnel and their rapid response in terms of dealing with incidents to protect vital facilities and maintain national security.

He issued a directive on the immediate restoration of the damaged site to full operational readiness in order to ensure the continuity of operations.

Moreover, Ambassador of Kuwait to South Africa Salem Al-Shebli has affirmed that the State of Kuwait maintains a policy of non-alignment in regional and international conflicts, asserting that the nation has not, and will not, permit its territory to be utilized for military aggression against any country. Speaking at a dialogue session on maritime navigation during the Ninth Indian Ocean Conference (IOC 2026) in Mauritius, Al-Shebli affirmed the commitment of Kuwait to foster regional and international peace, adhere to international law, and uphold the freedom of navigation.

In a press statement issued by the Kuwaiti Embassy in South Africa, Al-Shebli confirmed that Kuwait supports the ceasefire agreement between the conflicting parties, hoping for a sustainable resolution that guarantees regional security.

He warned that actions aimed at obstructing international navigation through the Strait of Hormuz are considered a threat to maritime security. He stressed that the strait is not just a regional waterway, but an essential artery for global energy security and international trade. He pointed out that the transit of a huge percentage of global oil and gas supplies through the strait makes its protection a collective international responsibility.

He reiterated the call for strict compliance with international maritime law and the protection of civilian and commercial vessels, urging for stronger cooperation to ensure uninterrupted passage.

He also affirmed that Kuwait remains committed to freedom of navigation as per the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), specifically Article 38 on the right of transit passage. He said any disruption to these waterways is a grave violation of international law and a destabilizing factor for the global economy.

He added that Kuwait welcomes the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2817/2026, which condemns unlawful attacks on the country and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states.

He disclosed that the resolution also denounced measures for the closure of the Strait of Hormuz or impede international shipping.

Kuwait reiterated its categorical rejection of provocative and irresponsible actions that defy international law and undermine regional stability.

The Indian Ocean Conference serves as a multilateral platform for littoral states and maritime partners to delib-

erate on shared interests, cooperative frameworks, and collective responses to security threats. The theme of the current session is, "Collective Governance of the Indian Ocean."

In latest developments, President Donald Trump on Sunday said the U.S. Navy would "immediately" begin a blockade to stop ships from entering or leaving the Strait of Hormuz, after historic U.S.-Iran ceasefire talks in Pakistan ended without an agreement or next diplomatic steps in sight.

In his first public comments after the 21-hour talks, Trump sought to exert strategic control over the waterway that was responsible for the shipping of 20% of global oil supplies before the war, hoping to eliminate Iran's key source of leverage.

A U.S. blockade could further rattle global energy markets and prices for oil, natural gas and related products. It was not immediately clear how it might be carried out, but Trump told Fox News the goal was to ensure all ships could transit: "It's going to be all or none, and that's the way it is."

Trump said he has "instructed our Navy to seek and interdict every vessel in International Waters that has paid a toll to Iran. No one who pays an illegal toll will have safe passage on the high seas." Other nations would be involved in the blockade, he said, but did not name them.

During the talks, the U.S. military said two destroyers transited the strait ahead of mine-clearing work, a first since the war began. Iran's state media said the joint military command denied that.

Trump stressed that Tehran's nuclear ambitions were at the core of the failure to end the war, and the U.S. was ready to "finish up" Iran at the "appropriate moment." In comments to Fox News, he again threatened to strike civilian infrastructure and said he was fine with his widely criticized threat shortly before the ceasefire announcement that a "whole civilization will die tonight."

The face-to-face talks that ended earlier Sunday were the highest-level negotiations between the longtime rivals since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Both delegations later left Islamabad.

Neither indicated what will happen after the 14-day ceasefire expires on April 22. Pakistani mediators urged all parties to maintain it. Each side said their positions were clear and blamed the other.

"We need to see an affirmative commitment that they will not seek a nuclear weapon, and they will not seek the tools that would enable them to quickly achieve a nuclear weapon," Vice President JD Vance, leading the U.S. side, said afterward.

Iran's parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, who led Iran's side, said it was time for the United States "to decide whether it can gain our trust or not." Iranian officials earlier said talks fell apart over two or three key issues, blaming what they called U.S. overreach.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said his country will try to facilitate a new dialogue in the coming days. Iran said it was open to continuing the dialogue, Iran's state-run IRNA news agency reported.

The European Union urged further diplomatic efforts. The foreign minister of Oman, on the Strait of Hormuz' southern coast, called for parties to "make painful concessions." And

the Kremlin said Russian President Vladimir Putin "emphasized his readiness" to help bring about a diplomatic settlement in a call with Iran's president.

Iran's nuclear program had been at the center of tensions long before the U.S. and Israel launched the war on Feb. 28. The fighting has killed at least 3,000 people in Iran, 2,020 in Lebanon, 23 in Israel and more than a dozen in Gulf Arab states, and caused lasting damage to infrastructure in half a dozen Middle Eastern countries.

Tehran has long denied seeking nuclear weapons but insisted on its right to a civilian nuclear program. The landmark 2015 nuclear deal took well over a year of negotiations. Experts say Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium, though not weapons-grade, is only a short technical step away.

An Iranian diplomatic official, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of closed-door talks, denied that negotiations had failed over Iran's nuclear ambitions. "Iran is not seeking to acquire nuclear weapons, but it has the right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes," the official said.

Kuwait logs

He explained that examinations revealed that the patient's carotid arteries were almost completely blocked, leading to reduced blood flow to the brain and reliance on an insufficient secondary supply. This condition resulted in recurrent clots and symptoms including hemiplegia and speech difficulties.

A decision was made to perform a unique surgical procedure, the first of its kind in Kuwait, in which an artery was taken from the scalp and directly connected to one of the brain's arteries through a small opening in the skull, with the aim of creating a new pathway for continuous and stable blood flow.

The procedure involved pre-identifying the appropriate artery using X-rays, then tracing it from the area in front of the ear, extracting a section of it, making a small surgical opening in the skull, and precisely connecting the artery to one of the cerebral arteries.

Anesthesiologist Dr. Mohammed Zakaria stated that the anesthesia team played a pivotal role in the success of the operation.

He affirmed that they carefully controlled blood pressure levels before, during, and after the surgery, in addition to using advanced devices to continuously monitor oxygen levels in the brain.

Dr. Zakaria confirmed that the patient's condition showed significant improvement after the surgical intervention, noting that this achievement reflects the level of advancement reached by medical professionals in Kuwait and their ability to handle complex cases using the latest surgical techniques.

It is worth highlighting that this intervention represents a valuable addition to the healthcare system and sends a reassuring message that the local medical sector possesses the capabilities and expertise necessary to meet the most delicate challenges and save patients' lives in the most difficult circumstances.

Kuwait adds

The Ministry reaffirmed the Kingdom's "unwavering solidarity" with

the State of Kuwait, pledging full support for all legal and security measures undertaken by Kuwaiti authorities to safeguard national stability, enforce the rule of law, and neutralize terrorist organizations.

The statement underscored that Bahrain's stance is rooted in the "deep-seated historical and fraternal bonds" shared by the leaderships and peoples of both nations.

It further emphasized that the security of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states is "indivisible," asserting that any threat to one member is a threat to the collective stability of the region.

The Bahraini Foreign Ministry concluded by extending its wishes for the continued security, prosperity, and peace of the State of Kuwait and its citizens.

Separately, UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan also denounced the terrorist plots seeking to undermine Kuwait's stability and incite chaos.

In remarks broadcast by the official Emirates News Agency (WAM), Sheikh Abdullah reaffirmed the UAE's complete solidarity with Kuwait and its steadfast support for all actions taken to preserve the country's sovereignty and safety.

He praised the efficiency and vigilance of Kuwaiti security forces in exposing and thwarting the plot, reiterating the UAE's categorical rejection of terrorism and extremism in all forms.

The UAE foreign minister underscored the need to enhance regional and global cooperation to counter such threats, stressing that Kuwait's security is an integral part of the UAE's own, and pledging continued support to maintain the state's stability and protect its citizens and achievements.

Meanwhile, Arab Parliament Speaker Mohammed Al-Yamahi issued a statement condemning the terrorist plot against Kuwait's security and stability, commending the vigilance of its security forces for preventing the scheme.

Al-Yamahi affirmed the Arab Parliament's total solidarity with Kuwait and support for measures aimed at protecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity, while reiterating its absolute rejection of terrorism targeting Arab nations.

Embassy dismisses

In an official statement issued Sunday, the embassy stressed that this information is "false and baseless," urging everyone to be accurate and refrain from spreading such rumors, which could mislead those who intend to travel.

The embassy stressed the importance of obtaining information regarding visa requirements and consular services only from official sources, such as its official website and social media accounts, the Italian government, and channels approved by the Italian government.

The embassy designated the email address -- alkuwait.visti@esteri.it -- for responding to inquiries about visa applications to ensure the provision of accurate and up-to-date information to the public.

INTERNATIONAL

Washington's mayor unveils last budget, proposing to cut spending

WASHINGTON, April 12, (AP) — Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser on Friday unveiled her last budget before she steps down later this year, a \$21.2 billion gross operating spending plan that is sure to spark battles on the District Council and Capitol Hill, where Republican lawmakers have shown a growing willingness to interject themselves into local affairs.

Bowser's proposal makes education and health care spending — especially for Medicaid — priorities but would cut funding for several areas, including \$127 million set aside for future collective bargaining agreements and non-union pay increases for city employees.

Notable in the proposal is the decrease in the proposed general funds budget to \$12.7 billion, a 3.3% cut from 2026. General funds are what pay for city services. Bowser said the cuts are necessary because of a drop in revenue due in part to federal workforce reductions and rising costs, including higher Medicaid expenses and higher administration costs for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), because of a change in federal law that shifted some costs to states.

Bowser, speaking to the Council, assured members the city is "not broke" as she walked them through what she called the three periods of her tenure, the days of growth, the COVID-economic years and post-COVID.

"We are adjusting to what DOGE has done to our workforce and com-



District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser speaks at a news conference ahead of severe storms that are expected to impact Washington in the afternoon on March 16. (AP)

mercial corridor," she said, referring to the Trump administration's efforts to shrink the federal government. She said the rising costs and decreased revenue have left the city with an estimated budget gap to address.

"I think we all have to be clear-headed about where we are and what it will take to keep growing," said Bowser, who has served as mayor since 2015 and has announced she will not be running for reelection this year.

Members of the council questioned

Bowser and members of her staff on proposed targets, including taking aim at programs intended to help defray the cost of child care in a city where a family pays on average more than \$25,000 a year for infant care, according to the advocacy group Child Care Aware of America.

The plan would cap the District's child care subsidy program, which helps the city's poorest families afford care, at 6,000 children. Families currently receiving the subsidies would continue to receive them. And it would eliminate a program that supplemented the wages of child care providers, a measure passed during the pandemic to help attract and retain workers to a field with historically low wages.

Council Chairman Phil Mendelson said the council would likely vote on the budget in June.

Washington's budget has been complicated in the last two years. In 2025 the House passed a federal government funding bill that would force the district's government to revert to its 2024 budget parameters, effectively cutting \$1.1 billion from its previously balanced budget midway through the financial year.

The remaking of the federal workforce by the Department of Government Efficiency heavily impacted the Washington region. Terry Clower, director of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University, estimated more than 50,000 jobs were lost in the region.



Police investigate the scene after a reported stabbing and shooting at the Grand Central subway station in New York on April 11. (AP)

3 stabbed, suspect fatally shot in NY major subway station

Three people were stabbed on a subway platform of Grand Central Station in Manhattan of New York on Saturday morning, and the suspect was fatally shot by police officers, according to the New York Police Department.

The violence happened at around 9:50 am ET, local media reported.

The suspect, carrying a machete, was ordered to drop the weapon

before threatening the officers, who opened fire, a law enforcement official said. The suspect died later from his injuries, sources said.

Police said the three victims — two men aged 84 and 65 respectively and a 70-year-old woman — were hospitalized and are expected to survive.

The suspect had multiple arrest records, including for menacing and slashing at people with a sharp

object, according to two law enforcement sources.

Chief of Transit Joseph Gulotta said the attacks appear to be random acts.

New York Gov Kathy Hochul said on social media that she was "grateful to our brave officers who acted quickly to stop the suspect. We're working closely with the NYPD as the investigation unfolds." (Agencies)

'We're trying to push this stuff forward as fast as possible'

Trump approves disaster requests for 7 states and others await aid decisions

WASHINGTON, April 12, (AP) — The Trump administration approved major disaster declaration requests for at least seven states this week, according to information released Saturday by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, allowing affected communities to access federal support. About 15 requests for assistance from other states and tribes for extreme weather events this year and last seem to be pending, along with three appeals of previous denials.

Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota and Washington were granted major disaster declarations, which can unlock federal support and funding for recovery needs such as public infrastructure repairs and aid for survivors.

The announcement, in a FEMA daily briefing document, comes weeks into Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin's tenure overseeing the disaster relief agency and is the latest signal that the former Republican senator from Oklahoma could ease some of the turmoil from the leadership of his predecessor, Kristi Noem,

who was fired by President Donald Trump in March.

Nonetheless, FEMA's work could be undermined by the ongoing DHS shutdown, now eight weeks long. While disaster response and recovery can continue through a shutdown because FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund does not lapse, that money is running low as the funding impasse drags on. The DHS appropriations bill would replenish the fund with more than \$26 billion.

Mullin said Tuesday that he planned to brief Trump that day on the pending declaration requests, affirming his intention to speed up work on past disasters in the run-up to Atlantic hurricane season, which begins June 1.

"We're trying to push this stuff forward as fast as possible," Mullin said after surveying Hurricane Helene recovery work in North Carolina on his first official visit as DHS secretary, acknowledging that "disasters are happening constantly."

White House spokeswoman Abigail Jackson said Saturday that Trump responds to such requests "with great care and consideration, ensuring



US Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin, (center left), listens to a briefing on hurricane recovery efforts on April 7, in Lake Lure, NC. (AP)

American tax dollars are used appropriately and efficiently by the states to supplement — not substitute — their obligation to respond to and recover from disasters." She said an adminis-

tration goal is having state and local governments "invest in their own resilience before disaster strikes, making response less urgent and recovery less prolonged."

While Mullin assured fellow senators during his confirmation hearing that he believed in FEMA's mission, the agency's future is uncertain. Trump has expressed a desire to push more responsibility for disasters down to states. The FEMA Review Council he appointed last year has not released a recommendation report expected to include sweeping changes to how the federal government supports disaster resilience, response and recovery.

It was not immediately clear whether other states or tribes had also been told of approvals or denials that were not yet announced publicly. Hawaii Governor Josh Green, a Democrat, said Wednesday his state had received a disaster declaration for devastating March flooding.

Trump also amended past disaster declarations for Tennessee and Mississippi, adding more counties for individual assistance after a severe winter storm in January.

Some communities have experienced unprecedented long waits for answers on their disaster requests during Trump's second term. An analysis

by The Associated Press in September found approvals were taking more than a month on average.

It took less than two weeks on average for a governor's disaster declaration request to be granted by presidents in the 1990s and early 2000s. That rose to about three weeks during the past decade under presidents from both major parties.

Arizona has been waiting nearly three months for an answer to its appeal after being denied support for severe storms and flooding that occurred in September.

Some Democrat-led states have complained about being denied disaster declarations despite proving need. Maryland Gov. Wes Moore called Trump's decision "deeply frustrating" after the president twice denied the state's request for support for May 2025 flooding despite a FEMA assessment showing over \$33 million in damages.

While FEMA assesses damage and uses a specific formula to analyze the possible impact on states and local jurisdictions, disaster declarations are ultimately at the president's discretion.



People queue up at a polling station during the Hungarian parliamentary election in Budapest, Hungary on April 12. (AP)

Hungary decides in key election that could unseat populist Prime Minister Orbán

BUDAPEST, Hungary, April 12, (AP) — Hungarians were casting ballots Sunday in what is widely seen as Europe's most consequential election this year, a vote that could unseat populist Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, an ally of US President Donald Trump, after 16 years in power.

It's a key moment for Orbán, the European Union's longest-serving leader and one of its biggest antagonists, who has traveled a long road from his early days as a liberal, anti-Soviet firebrand to the Russia-friendly nationalist admired today by the global far-right.

Polls opened at 6 a.m. and were scheduled to close at 7 p.m. Orbán and his top challenger, Péter Magyar, arrived at separate polling stations in Budapest at the same time to cast their votes.

Speaking to reporters outside, Orbán, 62, said the campaign had been "a great national moment on our side" and thanked activists and supporters for their work. "I'm here to win," he said.

The election was being closely watched in countries around Europe and beyond, which is a testament to the outside role Orbán occupies in far-right populist politics worldwide.

Members of Trump's "Make America Great Again" movement are among those who see Orbán's government and



Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán addresses supporters during the electoral campaign closing rally of the governing Fidesz in Budapest, Hungary on April 11. (AP)

his Fidesz political party as shining examples of conservative, anti-globalist politics in action, while he is reviled by advocates of liberal democracy and the rule of law.

After casting his vote, Magyar told reporters that the election was "a choice between East or West, propaganda or honest public discourse, corruption or clean public life."

"I urge all Hungarian citizens to ex-

ercise their right to vote," he said.

Casting her ballot in Budapest early Sunday, retiree Eszter Szatmári, 62, said she felt the election was "basically our last chance to see anything vaguely resembling ... democracy in Hungary."

"We all have to make real effort to show to the world that we are not who people thought we were in the past five to 10 years," she said.

Turnout after the first five hours of voting was 37.98%, according to the National Election Office. That is a record in Hungary's post-communist history, with around 876,000 more voters having cast their ballot by 11 a.m. than during 2022 elections.

During his 16 years as prime minister, Orbán has launched harsh crackdowns on minority rights and media freedoms, subverted many of Hungary's institutions and been accused of siphoning large sums of money into the coffers of his allied business elite, an allegation he denies.

He also has heavily strained Hungary's relationship with the EU, seeming to revel in using his veto power to stymie the 27-member bloc's important decisions. Most recently, he blocked a 90-billion euro (\$104 billion) EU loan to Ukraine, prompting his partners to accuse him of hijacking the critical aid.

Democrats embrace DEI as 'American values' at National Action Network

NEW YORK, April 12, (AP) — Ever since US President Donald Trump started purging diversity initiatives last year, the letters "DEI" have faded from corporate boardrooms and Democratic stump speeches.

But that wasn't the case for the past few days at the annual National Action Network conference in New York, where Democratic politicians and potential presidential candidates repeatedly made the case for diversity, equity and inclusion policies that seemed to have fallen out of favor.

"We have the high ground on this issue," House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries declared to a packed audience of Black activists. He criticized Republicans as "extremists" who "are trying to do an all-out assault on civil rights, on voting rights, certainly on diversity, equity and inclusion."

"They're not trying to celebrate merit, they're trying to elevate mediocrity," Jeffries contended. "They want to suggest that diversity, equity and inclusion are foreign values. They're not foreign values, they're American values."

DEI initiatives became widespread in workplaces, colleges and government agencies after Black Lives Matter protests over the murder of George Floyd in 2020.

But Republican leaders, including



Josh Shapiro, Governor of Pennsylvania, exits the stage of the National Action Network (NAN) Convention in New York on April 8. (AP)

Trump, have argued that DEI programs are divisive and discriminate against white people.

On his first day in office, Trump signed executive orders banning "illegal DEI" throughout the federal government. A March order went further by mandating that any companies that work with the federal government must also comply with the administration's anti-DEI platform.

"We ended DEI in America," Trump said in his State of the Union address in February.

Democrats had mixed and at times muted responses to the administration's anti-DEI crusade over the last year, with some in the party blaming a focus on diversity and identity as a reason why the party alienated many voters across racial and socioeconomic lines.

Russia, Ukraine accuse each other of violating ceasefire

KYIV, Ukraine, April 12, (AP) — Russia and Ukraine accused each other of violating a Kremlin-declared Easter ceasefire Sunday, as Christians gathered to celebrate the holiday despite Moscow's 4-year-long war against its neighbor.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday declared a 32-hour ceasefire over the Orthodox Easter weekend, ordering Russian forces to halt hostilities from 4 pm on Saturday until the end of Sunday. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy promised to abide by the ceasefire, but warned there would be a swift military response to any violations.

The General Staff of Ukraine's armed forces said in a statement Sunday that it had recorded 2,299 ceasefire violations by 7 am, including assaults, shelling and small drone launches. It said that the use of long-range drones, missiles or guided bombs had not been reported.

A Ukrainian military officer told The Associated Press on Saturday that Russian forces had continued to attack their positions.

Russia's Defense Ministry also said Sunday it had recorded 1,971 ceasefire violations by Ukrainian forces, including drone strikes. The head of Russia's Belgorod region, Vyacheslav Gladkov, said Sunday that rescuers uncovered the bodies of two civilians who were killed in a Ukrainian attack on Saturday afternoon.

Outside Kyiv, thousands gathered at an open-air national heritage park to celebrate Easter despite skepticism that a truce would hold.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Services on April 11, 2026, a rescue worker puts out a fire of residential house destroyed by a Russian drone strike on Odesa, Ukraine. (AP)

Beijing urges Washington to end blockade, sanctions on Cuba immediately

China says it will resume some ties with Taiwan after visit by opposition leader

BANGKOK, April 12, (Agencies): China said Sunday it would resume some ties it had suspended with Taiwan such as direct flights and imports of Taiwanese aquaculture products following a visit by the Beijing-friendly opposition leader of the self-ruled island.

The Taiwan Work Office under China's Communist Party issued a statement saying it would explore setting up a longstanding communication mechanism between the Communist Party and Taiwan's Kuomintang Party. It said it will facilitate the import of Taiwan's aquaculture products that it had previously banned.

Cheng Li-wun, the head of the Kuomintang, and China's President Xi Jinping held a high-profile meeting Friday during which they called for peace, without offering specifics. China claims the island as part of its territory and hasn't ruled out the use of force to annex it.

Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council, which oversees the relationship with China, said the measures that were announced, such as promoting a communication mechanism, were "political transactions" between the two parties that

circumvented the government of Taiwan.

"The government's position is clear: to ensure the interests of the nation and its people, all Cross-Strait affairs involving public power must be negotiated by both governments on an equal and dignified basis to be effective and truly protect the rights and well-being of the people," the Mainland Affairs Council said in response to the Chinese announcement.

Relations between China and Taiwan, which remain split since 1949, have been tense since the election of pro-independence President Tsai Ing-wen from the Democratic Progressive Party in 2016. Beijing cut off most of its official dialogue with Taiwan's government, and has started sending warships and fighter jets closer toward the island on a daily basis.

In the statement, China said it plans to resume direct flights between Taiwan and mainland cities like Xi'an or Urumqi, although it remained unclear how the measures will be implemented without the approval of the Taiwanese government.

China banned its citizens from individual trips to Taiwan in 2019. Taiwan's



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, Chinese President Xi Jinping, right shakes hands with Kuomintang (KMT) party leader Cheng Li-wun in Beijing on April 10. (AP)

rules now require Chinese visitors to hold a valid resident visa from another country, like the U.S. or the European Union, to apply for a visitor visa.

China also said it would work to-

ward construction of a bridge that would connect the mainland to Matsu and Kinmen, Taiwanese islands that are closer geographically to China. The project is a longstanding proposal that

Beijing has previously announced.

China banned the import of Taiwanese pineapples in 2021, and since then has extended it to other fruits and products including the grouper fish, squid and tuna.

After the initial ban on grouper, Taiwan's Ministry of Agriculture said it approached China about making adjustments to ensure it met import requirements. China replied with a limited list of individual companies that were allowed to sell to China, but without explanation.

Also:

BEIJING: The US government should heed the voice of justice and immediately cease its blockade, sanctions, and any form of coercion and pressure against Cuba, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said on Friday.

The Chinese side noted that some members of the US Congress expressed opposition to the US hostile policy toward Cuba following their recent visit to Cuba, Mao said at a regular news briefing.

"China is willing to work with the international community to firmly sup-

port Cuba in safeguarding its national sovereignty and security, and opposing external interference," she added.

BEIJING: A Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson on Friday urged Japan to abide by the four political documents between China and Japan and its own commitments, reflect on and correct its wrongdoings, and take concrete actions to uphold the political foundation of bilateral relations.

According to reports, the Japanese government has downgraded its description of the bilateral relations from the previous "one of the most important bilateral relations" to "an important neighboring country" in the newly released Diplomatic Bluebook.

Addressing a daily press briefing, spokesperson Mao Ning pointed out that the root cause of the current situation facing China-Japan relations is Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takachi's erroneous remarks on Taiwan, which constitute a breach of faith, undermine the political foundation of China-Japan relations, and challenge the post-war international order.



Myanmar newly-appointed cabinet ministers gather to take oaths during a sworn-in ceremony at Union parliament in Naypyitaw, Myanmar on April 10. (AP)

Myanmar president pledges to strengthen int'l relations

YANGON, April 12, (Xinhua): Myanmar's President Min Aung Hlaing pledged to strengthen international relations in accordance with the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, the state-owned Myanmar Radio and Television reported.

In the inaugural ceremony speech delivered at the Union Parliament in Nay Pyi Taw, Min Aung Hlaing said that Myanmar would maintain a balanced approach to international relations and enhance friendship with neighboring countries, the report said.

As a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Myanmar government would strive to restore normal relations with ASEAN, he added.

The government would cooperate with neighboring countries and regional partners in various political, economic, and social sectors, and would strengthen international relations in accordance with the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, he said.

He also emphasized building a federal union, promoting renewable energy to reduce fuel use, and establishing a new Ministry of Women's Affairs to enhance the capabilities of women in various fields.

His speech also addressed matters related to education, economic development through micro, small, and

medium enterprises, and national reconciliation, the report added.

Meanwhile, at the invitation of the government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Jiang Xinzhi, Chinese President Xi Jinping's special envoy and vice chairperson of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, attended the inauguration ceremony of Min Aung Hlaing.

Min Aung Hlaing met with Jiang on the same day.

Noting that the pauk-phaw (fraternal) friendship between China and Myanmar has a long history, Jiang said the two countries have long enjoyed a harmonious relationship and mutual assistance, which fully demonstrates the profound significance of the China-Myanmar community with a shared future.

China supports Myanmar in pursuing a development path that suits its own national conditions, Jiang said, adding that the country is willing to work with Myanmar to deepen high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, maintain stability along the China-Myanmar border, and ensure the safety of Chinese personnel and projects in Myanmar.

For his part, Min Aung Hlaing expressed gratitude for China's long-term and valuable assistance to Myanmar's economic and social development.

Peru election highlights lack of plans to tackle illegal mining despite growing environmental crisis

BOGOTA, Colombia, April 12, (AP): Peruvians head to the polls Sunday to elect a new president and Congress, but illegal mining - a major driver of deforestation and mercury pollution - has received little attention on the campaign trail, even as it spreads deeper into the Amazon and Indigenous territories.

Experts warn the gap reflects a broader failure to confront what has become the country's largest illicit economy, with growing impacts on the environment, public health and Indigenous communities.

"Political parties don't understand that illegal mining has become the country's main criminal activity and the one that moves the most money," said environmental lawyer César Ipenza. "There is either ignorance about what this represents for the country - or, in some cases, parties are already part of this economy."

According to projections by the Peruvian Institute of Economics, illegal mining generated more than \$11.5 billion in 2025 and over 100 tons of gold exports - rivaling the formal sector and surpassing drug trafficking.

Some candidates' proposals, including former ministers and technocratic candidates such as Jorge Nieto and Alfonso López Chau, include measures such as gold traceability, financial intelligence and protections for envi-

ronmental defenders, but these remain fragmented and fall short of a comprehensive strategy.

Others - including candidates from influential conservative and populist parties, such as Keiko Fujimori, Rafael López Aliaga and César Acuña - focus on security, economic growth or extractive development without directly addressing illegal mining or its links to corruption and territorial control in the Amazon. In some cases - including those of Ricardo Belmont and Carlos Álvarez, both media figures turned political candidates - plans omit the issue entirely.

"Illegal mining and illicit economies are not being prioritized in government plans," said Magaly Ávila, director of environmental governance at Proetica, a Peruvian anti-corruption group, noting that around 64% of party platforms fail to meaningfully address the issue, while only about 5% do so "clearly and explicitly."

A March analysis by Peru's Observatory of Illegal Mining reinforces those concerns, finding that only 12 of 36 registered political parties present specific proposals, while others offer only general statements without concrete measures or do not address the issue at all.

Peruvian authorities have previously announced operations and strategies to combat illegal mining, though experts

say enforcement remains limited. The Associated Press contacted several government entities for comment on the issue of illegal mining and Indigenous protections but did not receive a response by the time of publication.

Peruvian lawmakers have repeatedly extended a temporary registry that allows informal miners to continue operating while seeking formalization, a system critics say has been widely abused and has helped illegal mining expand.

At the same time, recent legislative changes have undermined the capacity of prosecutors and judges to pursue organized crime, including illegal mining networks, according to rights groups.

Analysts say the measures reflect political pressure from small-scale miners, who have staged protests to demand looser regulations, complicating efforts to tighten enforcement. The protests appear highly organized, suggesting the involvement of more powerful actors behind the scenes, said Julia Urrunaga, Peru program director at the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA).

Illegal mining has grown rapidly in recent years, fueled by soaring gold prices, which have climbed to around \$4,500 to \$5,000 per ounce - making even small amounts of gold highly valuable. Once concentrated in regions such as Madre de Dios, the activity has

spread into other parts of the Amazon and beyond.

"The price of gold has reached historic highs, and that has obviously driven illegal mining to expand," Ipenza said. "The state does not have the capacity to respond or pursue this activity."

Illegal mining operations often rely on mercury to extract gold, contaminating rivers and entering the food chain through fish.

"In Amazonian river communities, between 50% and 70% of the diet is fish," said Mariano Castro, Peru's former vice minister of environment. "So exposure increases exponentially, and mercury is highly toxic, with serious neurological impacts."

Environmental and health experts warn contamination in some regions already exceeds safety standards, posing long-term risks.

Expected expansion throughout the Amazon "will bring contamination, transnational criminal groups and direct impacts on Indigenous and local populations," Ipenza said.

Illegal mining already "puts at risk our health, biodiversity and ways of life," said Tabea Casique, a board member of AIDSESP, Peru's largest Indigenous organization.

"Most political parties are not taking this problem into account or presenting concrete proposals," she said.



Presidential candidate Jorge Nieto of the Good Government party talks with a group of supporters during a campaign rally in Lima, Peru on April 8, 2026. (AP)



Deforestation is visible from illegal gold mining in the Madre de Dios province of Peru's Amazon on Jan 17, 2018. (AP)

Benin votes for new president amid restriction on civil liberties

DAKAR, Senegal, April 12, (AP): Voters in Benin cast ballots Sunday to choose a successor to President Patrice Talon, who is stepping down after a decade in power, leaving a mixed legacy of economic growth, a growing jihadi insurgency in the north and the suppression of opposition critics.

Romuald Wadagni, the 49-year-old finance minister and governing coalition standard-bearer, is considered Talon's anointed successor. Wadagni is being challenged by Paul Hounkpe, the sole opposition candidate.

Nearly 8 million are registered to vote across more than 17,000 polling stations in the West African nation. Benin had over 15 million people in 2024, and like many sub-Saharan African countries, its population is overwhelmingly young. Polls are expected to close at 4 p.m. with the results expected within 48 hours.

Analysts widely expect Wadagni



Road users pass in front of a campaign billboard for presidential candidate Paul Hounkpe and his running mate, Rock Hounwanou in Cotonou, Benin on April 10. (AP)

to win after a parliamentary election in January, during which the opposition failed to cross the 20% threshold

required to win seats, leaving Talon's two allied parties in control of all 109 seats in the National Assembly.

Subcontinent

1 dead, 15 hurt in Afghanistan vehicle crash:

One person was killed and 15 others were injured when a vehicle crashed into a residential house in eastern Afghanistan's Logar province, a local police official said on Friday.

The accident occurred on the outskirts of Pul-e-Alam, the provincial capital, due to reckless driving, provincial police spokesman Mawlawi Ahmadullah Anas said.

The injured were taken to nearby health facilities, where their conditions were reported to be stable, he added.

In a separate incident in neighboring Nangarhar province on Wednesday night, one person was killed and 35 others injured in another road accident. (Xinhua)

Sri Lanka to roll out digital infrastructure:

The Sri Lankan government approved the rollout of a national digital public infrastructure framework alongside a GovTech app and service marketplace, in a bid to modernize public service delivery and accelerate digital transformation.

The planned infrastructure will include key components such as a digital identity system, data exchange platforms, and digital payment mechanisms. These systems are intended to serve as the backbone of a unified digital ecosystem, enabling more efficient and accessible public services. (Xinhua)

Lat/Am

Haiti tourist site stampede kills 30:

A stampede at a mountaintop fortress popular with tourists in northern Haiti Saturday has reportedly left at least 30 people dead. Haiti's government confirmed that the stampede took place and said it offered its condolences to the families of the victims.

"The Prime Minister of the Republic of Haiti, His Excellency Mr. Alix Didier Filis-Aimé, and the entire Government have learned with deep dismay the tragic incident that occurred this Saturday at the Citadelle Laferrière, in Milot, during a tourist activity bringing together many young people," the government said in a statement.

Local newspaper Le Nouvelliste said at least 30 people were killed and a search was underway for survivors. It cited Jean Henry Petit, the head of civil protection for Haiti's Nord Department. (AP)

Guyana launches search for pilot:

Special forces were searching dense jungle in a mountainous area of Guyana on Saturday for the pilot of a single-engine plane that crashed near the border with Brazil a day earlier.

The 13-seater Cessna Caravan was declared missing after it failed to land as expected at the gold mining district of Imbaimadai, in southwestern Guyana.

The local civil aviation authority said the pilot was the only person onboard the aircraft, which encountered heavy rain before crashing into a mountainside. (AP)

Boursa Kuwait ends Sunday trading mixed

KUWAIT CITY, April 12, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Sunday's session with a slight decline, as the general index slipped 3.33 points, or 0.04 percent, to finish at 8,623.64 points. Overall trading volume reached 250.2 million shares across 17,266 transactions, totaling KD 64.5 million (around USD 210.8

million).

The Main Market index posted the largest drop of the day, losing 50.99 points, or 0.64 percent, to settle at 7,920.53 points. A total of 150.5 million shares changed hands through 10,053 transactions, generating a turnover of KD 20.8 million (approximately USD 67.9 million).

Business

Fastest 5G Network, Best 5G Network, and Best Coverage in Kuwait

Zain Kuwait clinches triple titles from Ookla® Speedtest®

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: Zain Kuwait has added another major international win to its growing record of network leadership accolades, winning three prestigious awards from Ookla® Speedtest® – the world's leading platform for network intelligence, testing, and analytics. The recognition was made on the sidelines of the Mobile World Congress (MWC 2026) in Barcelona, Spain.

The company secured the titles of Fastest 5G Network in Kuwait, Best Coverage in Kuwait, and Best 5G Network in Kuwait, based on Ookla® Speedtest® Intelligence data for the second half of 2025 from millions of user-initiated tests in Kuwait. The recognition reinforces Zain's position at the forefront of network excellence in the Kuwaiti market and reflects the strength, consistency, and maturity of its connectivity infrastructure.

This reflects Zain's sustained investment in advanced network infrastructure, continuous coverage expansion, and ongoing optimization of the customer experience across the country. It also highlights the company's focus on delivering consistent 5G performance, strong network reliability, and high-quality connectivity through a long-term strategy centered on innovation, efficiency, and operational excellence.

Nawaf Al-Gharabally, CEO of Zain Kuwait, said: "This is a powerful validation of the long-term investments and disciplined execution behind our network strategy. Being recognized across 5G speed, network performance, and coverage reflects our commitment to delivering a reliable, high-quality experience that customers can feel every day, wherever they are in Kuwait."

He added: "This recognition reflects the progress of the '4WARD - Progress with Purpose' strategy, to build a customer-centric, future-ready, and impactful TechCo. We will continue investing in advanced infrastructure, digital capabilities, and innovation to raise the bar for connectivity in Kuwait and support the country's wider digital transformation ambitions."

"Presenting Zain with the Speedtest Awards for Best 5G Network, Fastest 5G Network and Best Mobile Coverage in Kuwait underscores their unwavering commitment to providing top-tier mobile services," said Stephen Bye, President and CEO of Ookla. "This recognition is based on comprehensive analysis of millions of consumer-initiated tests taken with Speedtest, reflecting real-world performance. Zain has demonstrated a willingness to invest in their network and focus on operational excellence, which are crucial for enhancing user experience and driving digital progress in Kuwait."

This recognition comes as Zain Kuwait continues to accelerate the evolution of its network and digital ecosystem through a broader transformation agenda that combines advanced infrastructure investments with customer experience, operational intelligence, and future-readiness. It also follows the company's recent 5G-Advanced launch in June 2025, which unlocked new horizons for Kuwait's digital economy and technological innovation.

Through this continued momentum, Zain Kuwait remains focused on delivering more than connectivity alone. The company is building an intelligent, scalable, and future-ready network environment that supports consumer digital lifestyles, enterprise needs, and Kuwait's national digital ambitions, while maintaining a strong emphasis on service excellence, innovation, and



Nawaf Al-Gharabally

Nawaf Al-Gharabally:

■ "Recognition reflects the progress of the 4WARD strategy to build a customer-centric, future-ready, and impactful TechCo"



Stephen Bye

Stephen Bye:

■ "Zain has demonstrated a willingness to invest in their network and focus on operational excellence, which are crucial for enhancing user experience and driving digital progress in Kuwait"



■ Based on Ookla® Speedtest® Intelligence data for 2H 2025 from millions of user-initiated tests in Kuwait



Zain officials at MWC Barcelona.



Zain Headquarters

meaningful customer impact.

Fastest 5G Network in Kuwait

According to Ookla's Q3 and Q4 2025 market analysis for Kuwait, Zain was ranked the Fastest 5G Network in the country with a Speed Score™ of 73.06, leading the market in the category during the evaluation period. The report also showed Zain delivering the highest median 5G download speed at 521.15 Mbps and recording the highest test count at 312,041, reflecting both the scale of network usage and the consistency of the experience delivered across Kuwait.

Ookla's Fastest 5G Network award is not based on raw speed alone, but on its Speed Score methodology, which measures overall network performance through a broader view of throughput and responsiveness. The methodology incorporates download and upload performance alongside latency, using 10th, 50th, and 90th percentile results, with weighted components of 70% for download speed, 20% for upload speed, and 10% for latency. This gives the recognition added significance as an independent reflection of real network quality across the market, rather than a single headline metric.

Best Coverage in Kuwait

According to Ookla's Q3 and Q4 2025 market analysis for Kuwait, Zain was ranked Best Mobile Coverage in the country with a Coverage Score™ of 46.06, leading the market in verified coverage during the evaluation period. The report also showed Zain recording the widest verified coverage area at 7,965 km², based on 39,433 devices and more than 42 million scan records, reflecting the breadth and consistency of its network footprint across Kuwait.

Ookla's Coverage Score is designed to measure the spatial extent of a provider's verified coverage through an independent, data-driven methodology built on billions of measurements and hundreds of millions of mobile coverage scans collected daily. After applying quality filters, the data is grouped into spatial bins and classified according to whether users were in service or successfully registered on a cellular network, giving the recognition added weight as a reflection of real coverage availability and service presence across the market, rather than a purely theoretical network claim.

Best 5G Network in Kuwait

According to Ookla's Q3 and Q4 2025 market

analysis for Kuwait, Zain was ranked the Best 5G Network in the country with a Speedtest Connectivity Score of 83.61, the highest recorded in the market during the evaluation period. The report also showed Zain leading in key components that shape the overall connected experience, including the highest Speed Score at 73.06 and the highest Web Browsing Score at 97.23, reinforcing the strength and consistency of its 5G performance across everyday digital use cases in Kuwait.

Ookla's Best 5G Network award is based on the Speedtest Connectivity Score, a broader measure of network experience that goes beyond standalone speed results. The methodology combines multiple real-world performance indicators, including speed, latency, web browsing, and video streaming, to provide a more comprehensive reflection of how users experience the network in practice. With weighting distributed across Speed Score at 50%, Web Browsing Score at 25%, and Video Streaming Score at 25%, the recognition carries added significance as an independent validation of overall 5G quality connected experience across the market.

Appoints two Deputy CEOs to lead Treasury and Investment, and Digital Transformation and Operations

Warba announces new management structure to boost position as leading Islamic Bank serving customers and Kuwaiti economy

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: In a strategic move aimed at strengthening its journey towards leadership, innovation and sustainable growth, Warba Bank announced a management restructuring at its executive level to align with its vision to deliver integrated banking solutions in compliance with Sharia principles, while actively contributing to supporting and developing the Kuwaiti economy.

The bank explained that the new structure divides responsibilities across two main sectors: the first covering Treasury and Investment, and the second leading Digital Transformation, Operations and Business Development. This direction reflects the bank's commitment to combining investment strength with operational efficiency, enhancing its ability to deliver innovative banking solutions and strengthening its competitiveness in local and regional markets.

As part of the leadership team guiding the bank's next phase, Warba Bank announced the appointment of Mr. Anwar Bader Al-Ghaith as Deputy Chief Executive Officer for Digital Transformation and Operations, and Mr. Thuwaini Khaled Al-Thuwaini as Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer for Investment and Treasury, pending completion of the required regulatory approvals.

Strong Growth and Accelerating Digital Transformation

This step is supported by the bank's strong financial performance which saw double digit growth in its 2025 profit, directly reflecting the success of its operating and expansion strategy. The bank also continues to invest heavily in digital and technological infrastructure, driven by



Hamad Al-Sayer, Shaheen Al-Ghanem, Anwar Al-Ghaith, Thuwaini Al-Thuwaini

its conviction that the future of banking depends on digital innovation and the delivery of smart, fast services that meet customer expectations in a world witnessing unprecedented technological acceleration.

A Strategic Vision for a Pivotal Stage

Commenting on the restructuring, Warba Bank Chairman Mr. Hamad Musaed Al-Sayer said: "The restructure marks a pivotal milestone in Warba Bank's journey, as we lay the foundation for a new phase of ambitious growth built on efficiency, agility and innovation, strengthening our ability to create sustainable value for our custom-

ers and shareholders, while reinforcing our role in the Kuwaiti economy."

For his part, Chief Executive Officer Mr. Shaheen Hamad Al-Ghanem said: "These changes reflect the bank's readiness for the next phase, particularly in light of its strategic expansion and direction towards greater integration and consolidation. The new structure will help accelerate decision-making, strengthen integration across sectors, and enhance overall institutional performance."

Leadership Backed by Experience

Both Al-Ghaith and Al-Thuwaini bring exten-

sive banking and investment experience. They have both contributed throughout their careers to leading high-impact initiatives and advancing the bank's business. They have also played a tangible role in enhancing operational efficiency and growing investment activities, in a way that supports the bank's strategic direction for the coming stage.

Empowering the Next Phase and Enabling Integration

The restructuring comes at a strategic time, supporting the bank's direction towards a more expansive and integrated phase. It is expected to contribute to smoother and faster execution of future plans, strengthen institutional integration and enhance the bank's readiness to capitalize on new opportunities at both the local and regional levels.

A Growth Journey... From Emerging Bank to Influential Player

Over the past 15 years, Warba Bank has succeeded in achieving rapid growth and major transformation, supported by the trust of its shareholders and customers. This was reflected in the strong success of its recent capital increase in 2025, which coincided with strategic steps that strengthened its financial position and opened broader horizons for growth and expansion.

The bank continues to solidify its position as one of Kuwait's leading Islamic banks through embracing innovation, advancing its digital services, and delivering integrated banking solutions that meet the needs of different customer segments.

The Bank placed twelfth regionally

KFH ranks first in Kuwait on Forbes' 2026 List of The Middle East's 100 Most Valuable Companies

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) ranked first in Kuwait and 12th regionally on Forbes' 2026 list of the 100 Most Valuable Companies in the Middle East and North Africa.

With a market capitalization of \$47.6 billion, KFH has cemented its position as Kuwait's largest company across all sectors.

The Forbes list features the region's largest, most valuable, and most profitable companies across sectors, including banking, energy, industrials, petrochemicals, telecommunications, transportation, and construction.

KFH Group Chief Executive Officer, Khaled Yousef AlShamlan stated that the bank's competitive advantages secured its top position among Kuwaiti firms on Forbes' 2026 list of the Middle East's 100 Most Valuable Companies. He attributed this to sustainable profitability, operational excellence, financial efficiency, and innovative services, alongside the seamless integration of the Group's global operations across 10 countries and more than 600 branches.

AlShamlan added that KFH's ranking reflects its broad customer base, diverse activities and services, leadership in digital transformation across banking and operations, and the integration of sustainability



Khaled AlShamlan

AlShamlan:

■ Top ranking reflects effective strategy, sustainable growth, and expanding customer base

across the Group.

He noted that the ranking is a testament to KFH's financial strength and its position as the most profitable bank in the sector. In 2025, KFH reported net profit of KD 632.1

million attributable to the shareholders of the bank; an increase of 5.0% compared to 2024. Net financing income reached KD 1.3 billion, up 11.5%, while net operating income rose to KD 1.2 billion, up 10.7%.

Forbes Middle East also said that KFH signed the largest Kuwaiti dinar-denominated credit facility agreement, valued at KD 1.5 billion, with KPC. The Islamic finance tranche totaled KD 675 million, with KFH contributing KD 405 million. The publication further highlighted KFH's successful \$1 billion senior unsecured Sukuk issuance, a key step in the Bank's strategy to strengthen its capital base, diversify funding sources, and expand its capacity to finance major development projects in Kuwait.

Methodology

The Forbes ranking is based on market capitalization data from 12 stock exchanges across 11 MENA countries. Companies were ranked using closing prices as of January 31, 2026, with currency conversions calculated based on exchange rates from the same date.



Hormuz closure costs Kuwait \$7.2 bln

Analysts urge debt over sovereign fund

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: How long will Kuwaiti oil remain under the control of the Strait of Hormuz? How much did the oil sector lose as a result of the declaration of force majeure and the halt in Kuwaiti oil exports? Which is better for covering the budget deficit after the decline in oil revenues - drawing from the Future Generations Fund or resorting to public debt?

These questions and others were addressed to the daily by two experts in the local and Gulf economies, who emphasized the need to diversify income sources so that Kuwait's economy does not remain indefinitely dependent on oil revenues.

Dr. Sadiq Al-Bassam, Head of the Accounting Department at Kuwait University, estimated the losses to the Kuwaiti oil sector resulting from the closure of the Strait of Hormuz during the 40-day war at approximately \$7.176 billion.

Dr. Al-Bassam based his calculations on the fact that Kuwait was exporting approximately 2.6 million barrels of oil daily before the war, according to its OPEC+ quota, amounting to 104 million barrels over the 40 days.

He also based his calculations on the price of Kuwaiti oil being approximately \$69 per barrel just hours before the outbreak of the war on February 28.

Dr. Al-Bassam explained that the losses would not stop there but would continue even after the war ended, especially since Kuwait might need several months to return to its usual production levels of approximately 2.6 million barrels of oil per day, according to statements issued by the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC). The losses were significant and would inevitably increase the current budget deficit.

In response to a question about whether it was better to draw from the Future Generations Fund or to borrow through public debt, he explained that although Kuwait's sovereign wealth fund maintains its fifth-place ranking globally, its returns would inevitably be affected this year. Profits would decline, as with other global sovereign wealth funds, due to the economic crisis that struck global markets as a result of the closure of the Strait of Hormuz throughout the war. It would be better to resort to public debt to cover the current budget deficit and preserve the assets of the Kuwaiti sovereign wealth fund.

Dr. Al-Bassam stressed the necessity of reaching a solution that would ensure that a scenario involving the closure of the Strait of Hormuz would not be repeated under any circumstances.

He stressed the importance of taking steps to diversify income sources so that Kuwait is not left dependent on oil markets and

their frequent fluctuations.

Dr. Al-Bassam highlighted that diversification of income sources should be achieved through the implementation of medium and large industrial projects, especially since Kuwait possesses the potential for industrial expansion.

He noted the anticipated role of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port in expanding Kuwaiti exports, and stressed the importance of expanding agricultural investments to strengthen food security, particularly in the event of future disruptions to food supply chains.

Dr. Al-Bassam emphasized the necessity of economic cooperation and coordination among the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to confront any future economic challenges.

He affirmed that Gulf economic integration is no longer merely a hope or aspiration, but an urgent necessity to strengthen common Gulf markets by increasing trade volumes and establishing joint projects that support Gulf economies.

Dr. Al-Bassam pointed to the importance of securing alternatives to ensure the continued export of oil, especially since the closure of the Strait of Hormuz has created the beginnings of a food crisis in the region.

He praised the role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in securing food supply chains for Kuwait, in addition to opening its airspace to allow the return of Kuwaitis stranded in other countries during the war, after operations at Kuwait International Airport were suspended.

On his side, Dr. Ibrahim Al-Shukri, Director General of the Gulf Center for Information and Documentation, stressed the need for Kuwait to learn from the experience of the 40-day war, which led to the cessation of Kuwaiti oil production and exports.

He emphasized the importance of seeking alternative export routes for oil that would not be subject to regional geopolitical tensions.

Dr. Al-Shukri proposed the establishment of an oil pipeline network encompassing all GCC countries, through which Gulf oil could be exported via the Arabian Sea through the Sultanate of Oman, or by sea through the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in the event of any future geopolitical tensions in the Strait of Hormuz or Bab el-Mandeb.

He stressed that Gulf economic integration has become a strategic necessity for strengthening the GCC system.

Dr. Al-Shukri pointed out that such integration will inevitably lead to the exchange of expertise and the diversification of income sources, so that Gulf economies are no longer dependent on oil as their primary and sole source of revenue.

He commended the Kuwaiti government's efforts to diversify income sources and increase non-oil revenues.

Khurais restoration underway

Saudi restores pipeline capacity, Manifa output

RIYADH, April 12, (KUNA): Saudi Arabia's Energy Ministry announced Sunday full restoration of pumping capacity through the East-West pipeline at around seven million barrels per day.

The ministry said affected output from the Manifa field, estimated at 300,000 barrels per day, has also been restored following technical and operational efforts.

It noted the swift recovery reflects the high operational flexibility of

Saudi Aramco and the Saudi's energy sector, ensuring reliable supplies to local and global markets.

Work is ongoing to fully restore production capacity at the Khurais field, with an announcement to follow upon completion.

On April 9, the ministry reported disruptions to energy facilities, including a loss of about 700,000 barrels per day in pipeline capacity and reduced output at Manifa and Khurais fields.

UAE to host World Bank and IMF annual meetings

RIYADH, April 12, (KUNA): Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary General, Jassem Al-Budaiwi, stated Sunday that the UAE winning the bid to host the 2029 annual meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), embodies the growing international confidence in its economy and its advanced investment environment.

Al-Budaiwi praised the UAE's high-level capabilities and extensive expertise in hosting major international economic events, which reflect the efficiency of its national economic institutions and its prestigious standing both regionally and internationally.

"The hosting of this prominent event by a GCC member state represents a qualitative addition that bolsters the economic standing of the Council states globally," he pointed out.

He extended his warmest congratulations and best wishes to President of the UAE Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, and Vice President, Prime Minister, and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al-Maktoum.

Al-Budaiwi concluded his statement by affirming that this hosting is a source of pride for all GCC countries, reflecting the advanced levels of development and economic cooperation the region has achieved.

Launched exclusively through the NBK Mobile Banking App

National Bank of Kuwait's eSavings account: A 100% digital savings experience that is smarter and easier

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: National Bank of Kuwait announced the launch of its eSavings Account, a fully digital savings account designed to help customers build effective savings plans and effortlessly achieve their financial goals.

This account is available exclusively through the NBK Mobile Banking App, offering an intuitive, personalized savings experience powered by a suite of smart tools that make saving more flexible and seamless, keeping pace with the evolving needs of customers in a rapidly digitizing banking world.

The eSavings Account relies on three innovative features that provide customers with a practical way to manage their savings. The Auto Saver option allows periodic transfers of specified amounts to the savings account. Additionally, the Save the Change service rounds up every purchase made at the point of sale or online using the selected debit card and transfers the difference directly to the account. Finally, the Tap to Save feature lets customers transfer a set amount with a single tap in the app.

These tools represent a comprehensive savings system that helps customers grow their savings effortlessly and in a way that suits their financial lifestyle. Whether customers are saving for a summer vacation, building an emergency fund, or planning for upcoming school fees, the eSavings Account offers tools that seamlessly fit into everyday life. For example, a young professional can use Auto Saver to automatically set aside part of their salary each month, ensuring consistent progress toward a financial goal without extra effort. Someone who frequently shops—both online and in stores—can enable Save the Change to turn small everyday purchases into meaningful sav-

ings over time, without even noticing the difference. And for those who prefer more flexibility, Tap to Save provides a quick way to move money into their savings whenever they feel they can spare a little extra. Together, these features empower customers to grow their savings organically and effortlessly, making it easier to stay disciplined and achieve short- or long-term financial aspirations.

Moreover, the new account offers flexible reward options, allowing customers to choose the most suitable way to use their savings. This includes receiving competitive monthly interest or earning loyalty points on the eSavings Account upon meeting target deadlines. These points can be redeemed for electronic vouchers or donated to the Kuwait Red Crescent Society. This flexible system enhances the overall experience and offers customers multiple options aligned with their future aspirations.

A Fully Digital Experience

The eSavings Account offers a 100% digital experience. Any customer aged 18 or older can open an account electronically, set up a savings plan, and track their progress step-by-step through an interactive and user-friendly savings journey. This can be done via the NBK Mobile Banking App, anytime and anywhere, without the need to visit branches or conduct any paper transactions.

The account also helps customers create a personal savings plan with a duration ranging from one month to five years, with the option to set a target amount starting from KD 200 up to KD 5,000, giving customers high flexibility in designing their financial plans.

The launch of this eSavings Account comes as part of NBK's strategy to enhance digital in-



Fahad Al-Baker

Al-Baker: A new step in NBK's journey towards enhancing digital innovation.

A comprehensive savings experience combining smart tools, flexible rewards, and a seamless digital experience.

novation and provide advanced banking solutions that meet the evolving needs of customers and keep pace with their aspirations for easier and smarter services.

In this context, Mr. Fahad Abdulrahman Al-Baker, Principal - Liabilities Products at NBK, said: "The eSavingsAccount represents a new step in the Bank's journey towards enhancing digital innovation and developing more advanced and user-friendly banking solutions. The account is designed to give customers a comprehensive savings experience that combines smart tools, flexible rewards, and a seamless digital experience, helping them plan their financial future with confidence and clarity".

Al-Baker also explained that customers today are looking for practical and user-friendly solutions, which is why NBK has been keen to develop innovative features such as Auto Saver, Save the Change, and Instant Tap to Save, to facilitate the saving process and make it a natural part of daily transactions.

Finally, he noted that through this new product, NBK reaffirms its unwavering commitment to developing innovative digital services that enhance the customers' experience and support



their financial vision, especially with the rapid shift towards digital banking services, which have become an essential part of modern financial lifestyles.

NBK will continue to invest in modern technology to ensure the provision of banking services that enhance the daily customer experience and meet their evolving needs, with a focus on developing digital products that contribute to promoting financial literacy, facilitating money management, and achieving customers' financial goals, which reflects the Bank's ongoing commitment to providing real and sustainable value to the community.

What's On

SPOTLIGHT

Got a birthday or event?

Share your story and snapshots with Arab Times!
Email your write-up and photos to
arabtimes@arabtimesonline.com
We'll feature it on our What's On page!



Central Bank, Commerce Ministry approve resumption of ABK Alfouz draws

ABK resumes Alfouz draws, rewarding 48 customers

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) has announced the resumption of the back dated draws for its Alfouz account, covering the period from April 2025 to March 2026, following approval from the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

The draws are scheduled to take place on 14, 15, 16 and 19 April 2026 to announce a total of 48 winners, ensuring transparency. This includes 36 weekly draws of KD 10,000, 8 monthly draws of KD 20,000, 3 quarterly draws of KD 100,000, in addition to one annual draw with the grand prize of a monthly salary of KD 5,000 monthly for 10 years.



Johair Marafi, General Manager – Retail Banking

The draws will be conducted under the supervision of external au-

dit firms including Grant Thornton Kuwait and Deloitte, and will be broadcast live on ABK's official YouTube channel, reflecting the Bank's commitment to transparency and fairness in line with regulatory requirements.

Commenting on the occasion, Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, said,

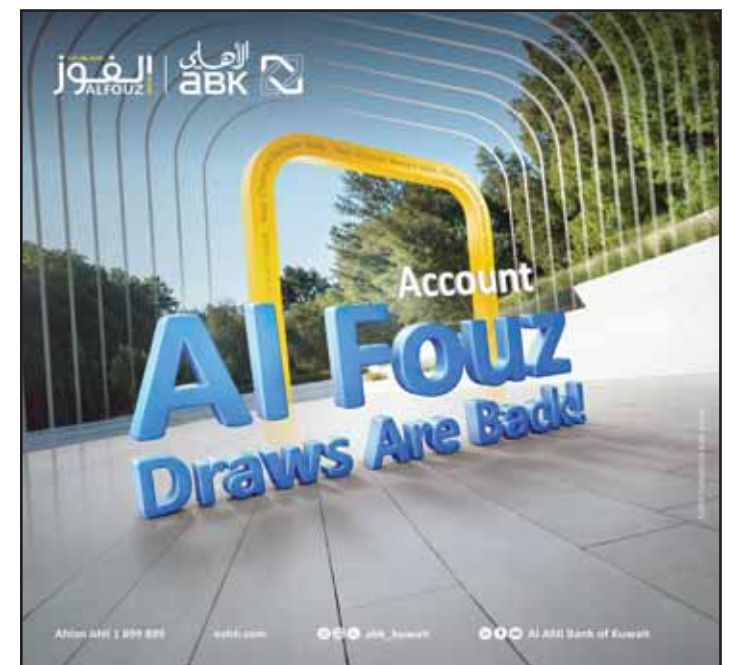
"Alfouz has always been more than just a draw account. It reflects our commitment to rewarding our customers' trust and building long-term relationships with them. We are pleased to bring back these special moments where we celebrate our customers and share in their success."

She added, "At ABK, we continu-

ously strive to deliver a simpler and more rewarding banking experience. Through offerings like Alfouz, we aim to provide meaningful value to our customers while supporting their financial aspirations."

"We remain committed to enriching our customers' banking journey through innovative solutions, rewarding offerings, and an overall simpler banking experience."

The resumption of the Alfouz draws comes as part of ABK's ongoing efforts to enhance customer engagement and deliver added value through products and initiatives designed to meet evolving customer needs, while strengthening the Bank's position in Kuwait's competitive banking sector.



Women empowerment highlighted at joint MMMEK–BDK Kuwait blood drive

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: Malayali Mums Middle East Kuwait (MMMEK), in collaboration with the Blood Donors Kerala (BDK) Kuwait Chapter, successfully organized a blood donation camp

Malayali Mums Middle East Kuwait (MMMEK), in collaboration with the Blood Donors Kerala (BDK) Kuwait Chapter, successfully organized a blood donation camp on 10/04/2026 at Jabriya Central Blood Bank, promoting the spirit of generosity and community service.

The camp was conducted

as part of the International Women's Day celebrations and witnessed an inspiring response from participants. The initiative was led by dedicated MMMEK members along with BDK Kuwait Chapter volunteers.

A remarkable number of mothers came forward selflessly to donate blood, showcasing their commitment not only as homemakers but also as active contributors to society through voluntary service. Their participation highlighted the growing involvement of women in humanitarian ac-

tivities.

MMMEK continues to serve as a strong platform that empowers women and fosters a sense of unity among Malayali mothers across the Middle East.

All donors were honored with certificates of appreciation, and refreshments were provided as a token of gratitude for their noble contribution.

Organizations, associations, or companies interested in conducting blood donation camps or awareness sessions are encouraged to get in touch at 69997588.



Photos during the event.



Photos during the event.



Volunteers and sponsors praised

Santhwanam Kuwait and BDK hold joint blood donation camp in Adan

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: A joint blood donation camp organized by Santhwanam Kuwait in collaboration with Blood Donors Kerala (BDK) Kuwait Chapter was successfully held on March 12 at the Adan Blood Transfusion Center. The event, conducted in the spirit of the holy month of Ramadan, saw enthusiastic participation from expatriates across Kuwait.

The camp was inaugurated by Dr. Ameer Ahmed (Advisory Board Member, Santhwanam Kuwait).

The opening ceremony included a welcome address by Camp Convener Mr. Bivin

Thomas and was presided over by Mr. NimishKavalam, General Convener of BDK Kuwait. Felicitations were also delivered by Santhwanam Kuwait General Secretary Mr. Anil Kumar K.S., Vice President Mr. Mathews Mammen, and BDK Kuwait Chapter representative Mr. RajanThottathil. The session concluded with a vote of thanks from BDK representative Mr. NalinakshanOlavara.

The event was coordinated by Santhwanam Kuwait Joint Secretary Mr. Arshad Sha-reef, along with a dedicated team of volunteers, including Shiny Frank, Jiji Ramesh,

Shasheendran T.S., Aby Philipose, Santhosh Kumar S., Prasad K.R., Sumesh T.S., and SaleemKomery.

The camp also saw the active participation of 15 student volunteers, led by Anjalita Ramesh, who were presented with certificates for their commitment and service.

Special thanks were extended to all the blood donors, the blood bank staff, volunteers, and parents, as well as to the sponsors Al Ansari Exchange and Al Babtian Auto, and the members of BDK Kuwait for their tireless support in making the camp a success.

Mothers step up for noble cause

Gulf Jana Sena Kuwait organizes successful blood donation event amid challenging times

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: A mega blood donation camp was organized in Kuwait under the auspices of Gulf Jana Sena Kuwait at Jabriya Blood Bank today, March 14, to celebrate the 13th formation day of the Jana Sena Party on the supervision of the Gulf Convener, Kanchana Srikanth

Kuwait Convener Pagadala Anjan Kumar and Akula Rajesh said that for the past eight years, many programs have been held in Kuwait on the occasion of the JSP Formation Day.

Co-Conveners Dandu Chandrasekhar, Jigelu Obulesu and Ummadisetti Surya expressed their gratitude to the Jana Sainiks who eagerly responded to our call despite the current war situa-

tion in Kuwait.

NDA alliance leaders Telugu Desam Kuwait President Madena Eeshwar Naidu and Kudaravalli Sudhakar & Anjaneyulu attended the event and congratulated the event by cutting a cake with bouquets of flowers.

Jana Sena Party Youth leaders Allamprem, Kommineeni Balaji and leaders Gangarapu Chandra Shekhar, Pradeep, Gidugu Rambabu, Gidugu Yesu Babu, Reddy mani, Kottidi Shiva, Kothuru Chalapathi, Chintala Pawan, Hemanth, Chaitu, Akkamagari Chalapathi, Uggu Penchalayya, Rajesh, Venkanna Babu, Eddula Nirmala, Billa Ramesh & family attended the program and donated blood.



Photos during the event.

IMA Kuwait opens admissions for weekend Islamic school 2026-'27

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Kuwait has announced the opening of admissions for the New Academic Year 2026-2027 of its IMA Weekend Islamic School (IMAWIS), an established initiative aimed at nurturing Islamic Knowledge, Moral Values & Character development among Children.

Designed as a Structured Online Learning Platform, IMAWIS provides a balanced and engaging Educational Environment where Students can strengthen their Faith, Identity & Ethical Understanding while continuing their regular Academic pursuits. The Program reflects IMA Kuwait's ongoing commitment to empowering the younger generation with values-based Education rooted in Islamic teachings.

Program Overview

The School will conduct Online Classes every Saturday via Zoom, ensuring accessibility and convenience for Families across Kuwait.

• Classes Begin: 18 April 2026
• Schedule: Every Saturday
• Timings: 9:00 AM – 12:00 Noon

• Mode: Online (Zoom)
• Eligibility: Boys & Girls aged 5 to 14 years
• Medium of Instruction: English
• Fee: 15 KD per quarter

Curriculum & Learning Areas

IMAWIS offers a comprehensive Curriculum designed to develop both knowledge and character, covering:

• Hifdh (Qur'an Memorization)
• Imaniyat (Faith & Beliefs)
• Seerah (Life of Prophet Muhammad)
• Islamic Manners & Etiquettes
• Tafseer (Understanding of Qur'an)
• Stories of Sahaba (Companions)
• Leadership Skills
• Duas & Daily Practices
• Urdu Language Basics

The Curriculum emphasizes the Principle that "Seeking Knowledge is a Duty upon every Muslim," encouraging students to grow into responsible, ethical, and confident individuals.

Admission Process

Parents are hereby invited to enroll their children by completing the online application form.

Legendary singer died of multiple organ failure in Mumbai

Asha Bhosle, one of India's most versatile singers, dies at 92

NEW DELHI, April 12, (AP): Asha Bhosle, one of India's most versatile Bollywood singers whose performances shaped the country's musical memory and modern cinema, has died. She was 92.

The legendary singer across genres died Sunday of multiple organ failure at Breach Candy Hospital in Mumbai, Pratit Samdani, a physician at the hospital said. Her son, Anand Bhosle, told reporters that her last rites will be performed on Monday.

Asha was admitted at the hospital on late Saturday with a chest infection and exhaustion, her granddaughter Zanai Bhosle said in a social me-

dia post.

Asha's timeless voice resonated across a film-obsessed India for nearly eight decades, recorded on about 12,000 songs. She boldly embraced cabaret and Western-influenced melodies to forge a distinct musical identity that stood uniquely apart from her sister, Lata Mangeshkar, herself a legendary voice revered as the "Melody Queen."

Asha's death was widely consoled. "I am deeply saddened" by her passing, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a social media post.

"Her unique musical journey spanning dec-



Indian Bollywood playback singer Asha Bhosle attends the Music launch of Bhosle's film 'Mai' in Mumbai, India, Jan. 22, 2013. (AP)

ades has enriched our cultural heritage and touched the hearts of countless people around the world," Modi said. "From soulful melodies to spirited compositions, her voice carried a timeless brilliance."

Born on Sept. 8, 1933, Asha Bhosle was initiated into music by her father Dinanath Mangeshkar, who was also a trained singer. All her four siblings became accomplished singers and musicians.

Asha's first marriage, in 1949, ended in separation in 1960. Her second marriage was to iconic music composer R.D. Burman in 1980. She is survived by a son and grandchildren.

Variety

NEW YORK: Megan Moroney leads the 2026 Academy of Country Music Awards with nine nominations.

That includes a first-time nomination for the top prize of the night, entertainer of the year, as well as director and artist-songwriter of the year. She's also received her third consecutive nominations for female artist and visual media of the year.

Women appear to dominate the nods: Moroney is followed by Miranda Lambert, the most-decorated artist in ACM Awards history, with eight, as well as Ella Langley and Lainey Wilson with seven.

Then it is Chris Stapleton with six, Zach Top with five and Cody Johnson with four.

The nominations for the 61st annual ACM Awards were announced Thursday. The awards ceremony will take place May 17 at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, leaving the Ford Center at The Star in Frisco, Texas, just north of Dallas, after three consecutive years. Performers will include Lambert, Wilson, Johnson, Kacey Musgraves, Little Big Town, Riley Green and more.

In addition to Moroney, those competing for entertainer of the year will be Wilson, Johnson, Stapleton, Luke Combs, Jelly Roll and Morgan Wallen. (AP)

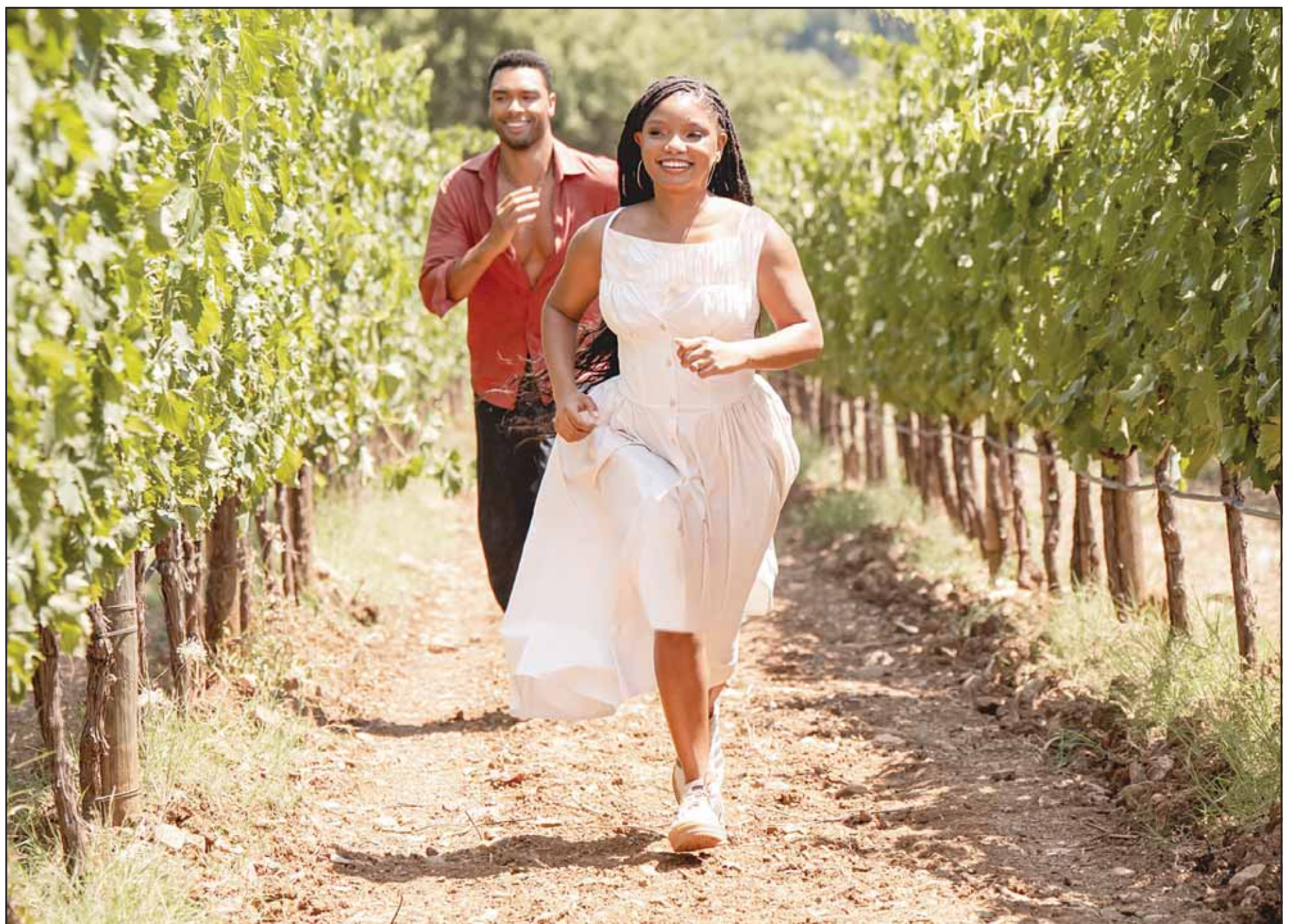
NEW YORK: A coalition of publishers and literary agencies are teaming with PEN America on an initiative meant to counter a growing trend of harassment against members of the literary community.

PEN America, the century-old free expression organization, announced Friday that it was launching the US Safety Program, which would provide safety training and other resources for authors amid a wave of censorship efforts around the country.

"We have heard from countless authors, illustrators, and translators who are under siege, fending off a steady stream of abuse and threats, online and at book events," said Clarisse Rosaz Shariyf, co-chief executive officer of PEN America. "Through this new program, the literary and publishing community is stepping up together because writers should not be forced to choose between their safety and their voice."

Viktorya Vilks, who directs PEN's digital safety efforts, told The Associated Press that she first noticed a rise in harassment against journalists a decade ago, around the time Donald Trump was first elected president, and has seen it spread to writers and educators over the past couple of years. Maia Kababe, Jon Evison and George Johnson are among the authors of censored works who have spoken out about being harassed and threatened and even physically assaulted. (AP)

Film



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Halle Bailey, foreground, and Regé-Jean Page in a scene from 'You, Me & Tuscany.' (AP)

Halle Bailey charms in Tuscan romance

'You, Me & Tuscany' is a frothy scenic rom-com

LOS ANGELES, April 12, (AP): OK, this may seem like a small nit to pick. But before we get started on "You, Me & Tuscany," can we ask this one nagging question: Why can't movies be realistic about luggage?

When Anna (Halle Bailey), our charming hero in this travel-porn rom-com, arrives in Italy for an open-ended stay, she's carrying a purse and a tote. You could fit maybe a water bottle, a paperback and one change of clothes in that tote. Much later, when she's preparing to leave, she's carrying the same miraculous, featherlight tote that allegedly held all her lovely outfits - plus shoes!

What is she, Mary Poppins with the carpet bag? We're not asking for gritty social realism here, people, but would it have hurt to give her a wheelee?

OK, rant over - but see, that weightless luggage is a perfect metaphor for "You Me & Tuscany," directed by Kat Coiro, a movie as frothy and insubstantial as the foam on a nice cappuccino. It's also about as believable as some of the woefully stereotypical Italian characters here. The gardener, Giuseppe, for example: He looks like Pavarotti and sings soaring arias each morning as he prunes the bushes. We rest our case.

But hey, we're in Tuscany. And it's gorgeous. And so is Regé-Jean Page, the love interest for Anna - but even the dashing "Bridgerton" star disappears next to those stunning rolling hills and vineyards. And then there's the visual gastronomy - including the most perfect bruschetta you've ever seen. But we'll get to that.

We begin in New York. Anna awakes in her chic apartment with a to-die-for view, makes a cappuccino, puts on designer duds and takes the upscale dog for a walk. But when she returns, the house's real owner (Nia Vardalos) is there, furious to see Anna in her clothes.

You see, Anna is merely the house-sitter. A professional house-sitter. It's her career! No, we didn't know that was a thing either.

Anyway! Anna ends up at a hotel bar, ordering a burger and a soda, eating her sorrows away. She meets Matteo (Lorenzo de Moor), a nice Italian in town on business. They connect, and he tells her about the (empty!) villa in Tuscany and large extended family he's left behind. Anna admits she always dreamed of going to Italy to be a chef, but had to drop out of culinary school to care for her sick mother. Still, she kept the plane ticket she once bought. (Don't ask why she didn't get a refund. This is a rom-com.)

Anna and Matteo end up spending a chaste night together, and he leaves a note the next morning telling her to chase her dreams. Notably, Matteo does not invite Anna to stay in his house. This is important.

Because, when Anna does fly to Italy and can't find a hotel because there's a festival going on, she goes to Matteo's villa, finds a key in the flower pot, and moves in. And makes more cappuccino.

When Matteo's mother and grandmother arrive, the latter a sprightly gray-haired lady wielding a broom as a weapon, it's assumed Anna is a criminal. Police are called. But then they see Anna's diamond engagement ring - she'd found it in the villa's junk

drawer - and everyone assumes she's Matteo's fiancée. Anna goes along with the lie.

Meanwhile, Anna has met dishy Michael (Page), Matteo's British-born adopted brother and also his cousin, and is improbably single. What's even more improbable is that he is "unlucky in love," as he tells Anna. OK, right.

The two have chemistry. But there's the whole Matteo wedding thing, remember? The women in the family are busy planning it. And then ... Matteo himself shows up. He's wondering why Anna is posing as his fiancée. Hijinks ensue, as they say.

Will Anna and Matteo actually get married, though they have zero chemistry? Or will Anna find the true love she deserves, both with a man and, fulfilling her cooking talents, behind a stove?

A big hint comes when she's hungry one evening and there is only, magically, a loaf of bread in the kitchen and some of the best-looking tomatoes in Europe.

A few drips of olive oil, some salt and pepper, maybe a touch of garlic - Anna produces a mean bruschetta. Magically, too, Michael drops by for a few bites. And for once, we're transported by this movie's dreams of Tuscan romance. All it takes is some really good bread and tomatoes.

A real suitcase might also be nice. "You, Me & Tuscany," a Universal Studios release, has been rated PG-13 "for some strong language, and sexual material." Running time: 104 minutes. Two stars out of four.

'We live in a sick care society'

Swisher examines business of living longer

PARIS, April 12, (AP): Are you feeling lucky? A raffle in France is offering the chance to win a portrait by Pablo Picasso for the price of a 100-euro (\$117) ticket, with proceeds going to Alzheimer's research.

The draw is on Tuesday at Christie's auction house in Paris. The inaugural "1 Picasso for 100 euros" raffle, in 2013, saw a NEW YORK, April 12, (AP): Journalist Kara Swisher begins her new, six-part CNN series about longevity and health in an interesting location - a cemetery.

It's the final resting place of her father, who died in 1968 at just 34. Swisher was only 5, and his sudden death had a deep effect on her career and view of life.

"My father's death has created an awareness of death that is very profound," she says in an interview. "I'm very aware of my death and I don't mean I'm going to die tomorrow. I just know the time is limited."

Swisher wades into the intersection of how health and tech can lengthen life for the series "Kara Swisher Wants to Live Forever," exploring everything from wellness influencers like

Gwyneth Paltrow to AI-powered robotic companions for the elderly. It premiered Saturday.

"I come to it pretty neutral and willing to listen to some stuff and willing to blow up other stuff," says Swisher, who has become synonymous with Silicon Valley since she began covering the tech industry in the 1990s. "All these health influencers always are going for a magic bullet. And I'm sorry to tell you there isn't one."

In the name of science, Swisher takes the powerful anesthetic Ketamine, undergoes sound therapy and steps into a hyperbaric chamber, which treats wounds and infections. She checks out concierge medicine for the rich and gets in a full-body red-light therapy pod ("I feel like I'm in an air fryer," she says).

Armed with her self-described "adorably surly" approach, Swisher talks to billionaire tech entrepreneur Bryan Johnson about his quest to extend human lifespan by undergoing blood plasma transfusion and injections of stem cells. She pricks herself repeatedly for home blood

tests that promise a look at her cellular health. ("I bleed for you, CNN," she jokes.)

Fads like collagen supplements and vibration plates don't impress Swisher, who chats with Amy Larocca, author of "How to Be Well," an expose of the wellness industry. Too often, they conclude, the hard science isn't there and charismatic peddlers are just getting rich on our gullibility. Swisher argues that they exploit the gap that opens when the American health care system kicks in only after an often bankrupting illness begins.

"We live in a sick care society, not a health care society," she tells the AP. "What we should be investing in is to make all of us healthier for a longer period of time rather than participate in what is a sick care industry here in this country."

Swisher finds brighter spots in medical-tech advances like gene editing, GLP-1s, VO2 max training, AI screening for cancer and the combination of AI and mechanics that promises to help revolutionize mobility with exoskeletons.



This image released by CNN shows Kara Swisher from the series 'Kara Swisher Wants to Live Forever.' (AP)



Delta Goodrem poses for portrait photographs on Thursday, April 2, in London. (AP)

'Music has the real power to unite and heal'

Goodrem follows in Dion's footsteps to Eurovision

LONDON, April 12, (AP) — With links to Celine Dion and Olivia Newton-John, Delta Goodrem is one of the best-connected contestants at this year's Eurovision Song Contest.

She's also one of the most successful participants, as the award-winning Australian singer-songwriter has sold over nine million albums and topped charts in eight countries.

Goodrem is representing her home country in the world's largest live music event, which takes place this year in Vienna. Even though it's way outside of Europe, Australia has been invited to compete since 2015.

In the 1990s Goodrem, who was a former star of Australian soap "Neighbours," wrote a track called "Eyes on Me" for Dion, who won Eurovision representing Switzerland in 1988.

She was also mentored by the late Newton-John, another global superstar who took part in the song contest on behalf of the United Kingdom in 1974, although not as successfully.

"Growing up, Olivia Newton-John and Celine Dion were two of my greatest loves in music," she said. "I don't think I would be the musician I am today without my influence from the two of them. And they have both been a part of that stage from different countries."

Goodrem also has a link to the entry representing the tiny country of San Marino. Boy George, who appears on SENHIT's entry "Superstar," used to be a judge and rival alongside Goodrem on Australia's hit TV talent show "The Voice."

"I've got my eyes on him. I'm watching him," Goodrem joked. "I was so excited and couldn't

stop laughing ... it's so playful that Boy George was like, 'I'm coming to Eurovision!'"

The Associated Press spoke to Goodrem in London about competing with her power ballad "Eclipse" in the Eurovision Song Contest.

This conversation has been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: When was the first time you ever heard about Eurovision?

Goodrem: It's been a bit omnipresent where you sort of heard it in the air. And I guess obviously Australia's been in for 11 years. So we became a lot more actively like Team Australia. But growing up, you always were, you know, enamored with this incredible iconic stage and it'd always find its way to us.

AP: I feel like you've been representing Australia your whole life.

Goodrem: I feel that as well and I've always been very patriotic and very true to the love I have for Australia and it feels like they're all celebrating, we're all sort of there together on this journey.

AP: How competitive are you?

Goodrem: Oh you know, I'm definitely here to give it my absolute all, yes.

AP: Did you watch last year?

Goodrem: So (last year) I was doing my couple of shows here (in London) and I had sort of got to experience the energy of Eurovision on the ground and I just thought it was palpable, it was incredible and I was watching all the programs and it was really exciting and somebody had asked me, 'would you do Eurovision?' And I said, 'I'm always open' ... You never know where your path's lead-

ing, just if it feels right.

AP: While Eurovision tries to keep out politics, it's always crept in. What do you think about the boycott this year?

Goodrem: I really am a true believer that throughout my career, coming to my show, I'm about unifying - music for me is a moment where we're all singing the same song. And I believe in that, and I have my whole life, that it's very healing, music has a real power.

So I sort of focus on the power of music being a unifying space and a place that can wrap around people's lives and their soundtrack and that's where it sits for me.

AP: What did you think about the news that they're doing Eurovision in Asia?

Goodrem: The more music the better. I think that's so exciting. That means I get to immerse myself in the music in September for Eurovision Asia.

AP: I need to ask you about staging. I see the video for this involves a lot of sand.

Goodrem: Yes, you're thinking I should bring Australian sand, you know, that's very patriotic. I start a little beach on stage, look up at the moon for "Eclipse." I definitely am really excited to bring it to life.

AP: If you win, can Eurovision go to Australia?

Goodrem: Sure. Yeah, yeah!

AP: Is it more likely that it'd be a co-host?

Goodrem: Look, I don't know those logistics yet but I'm open to the conversation ... If you would like to vote for me then I'm happy to talk about if we could like have it here or if, you know, I'm happy to do a deal.



From left: A member of Royal Collection Trust staff adjusts the dress worn by Queen Elizabeth II at London 2012 Olympics Opening Ceremony, (centre), alongside the one worn by her stunt double, (right); Cecilia Oliver, Textile Conservator at the Royal Collection Trust adjusts day wear worn by queen and a member of the Royal Collection Trust staff looks towards hats, bags and shoes worn by Princess Elizabeth, on display at 'Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life in Style' exhibition, to mark the centenary of the late queen's birth, at The King's Gallery at Buckingham Palace in London, Thursday, April 9. (AP)



Variety

LONDON: Cate Blanchett, Bryan Cranston and Paddington Bear are among the contenders on Sunday at London's Olivier Awards, which celebrate achievements in theater, opera and dance.



Blanchett

"Ted Lasso" star Nick Mohammed hosts the 50th anniversary edition of the awards at a star-studded ceremony at the Royal Albert Hall, where Ian McKellen, Helen Mirren, Vanessa Williams and Andrew Lloyd Webber will be among the trophy presenters.

Leading the nominations for Britain's equivalent of Broadway's Tony Awards, with 11 apiece, are homegrown heart-warmer "Paddington: The Musical" and a much-praised revival of Stephen Sondheim's twisted fairy tale journey "Into the Woods." (AP)

NEW YORK: The Zac Brown Band now has something in common with Carrie Underwood and Lenny Kravitz.

The three-time Grammy Award-winning southern rock band were to star in the opening for NBC's Sunday night coverage of Major League Baseball.

The band's opening segment will debut on Sunday when the Atlanta Braves host the Cleveland Guardians in the first "Sunday Night Baseball" game on NBC.

"It's humbling, honestly, to have our band's name mentioned in the same breath as theirs in this context means a lot. We've spent many years just trying to make music that connects with people, and something like this tells you that it's reaching further than you ever imagined," Brown said in an email to The Associated Press.

The Zac Brown Band sings a reimagined version of Emerson, Lake & Palmer's "Karn Evil 9, 1st Impression Part 2." (AP)

Exhibition

Landmark exhibition marks late monarch's centenary

Britain celebrates Queen Elizabeth II as a style icon

LONDON, April 12, (AP) — The late Queen Elizabeth II believed the monarch had to be seen to be believed. And she made sure that was true even when Britain's famously changeable weather intervened, pioneering the use of a clear plastic raincoat so that a stodgy black umbrella didn't obscure her from public view.

That raincoat is one of some 300 garments and other fashion artifacts that went on display Friday at the King's Gallery at Buckingham Palace in an exhibit that celebrates the late queen's life and reign as Britain prepares to mark the centenary of her birth. The most comprehensive exhibition of her style choices ever mounted, the show charts Elizabeth's story, and her impact on British fashion.

"I think she had a definite sense of what suited her," exhibition curator Caroline de Guitaut said. "She absolutely knew how she wanted to appear."

Some of the items are easily recognizable since Elizabeth was one of the most photographed people ever. But the ball gowns, tweed suits and trademark headscarves are sometimes strange to see on museum mannequins instead of the queen herself.

And then there are the items that are truly one-offs.

Like the dress, complete with bloomers, that Elizabeth's stunt double wore during the opening ceremony for the 2012 London Olympics, when the then-86-year-old queen appeared to parachute into the stadium alongside Daniel Craig in his James Bond persona. To complete the illusion, the queen soon emerged in the stands identically attired.

Both dresses, designed by Elizabeth's longtime dressmaker Angela Kelly, are displayed side by side, though the stunt double's version has large zipper in back to accommodate the parachute.



A member of Royal Collection Trust staff adjusts an evening gown from 1952 worn by Queen Elizabeth II, on display at 'Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life in Style' exhibition. (AP)



Queen Elizabeth II's Burmese Ruby Tiara on display. (AP)

The exhibition, drawn from some 4,000 items once owned by the queen, explores

how fashion became one of her most powerful tools of communication as she evolved from a young princess into Britain's longest-reigning monarch.

That could often be seen in her choice of color and decorative detail, as in the green and white Norman Hartnell gown she chose to wear for the state banquet during her 1961 visit to Pakistan, honoring her hosts by donning their national colors.

"The queen had an intimate understanding of how fashion could lend itself to diplomacy, a trait which, while its origins certainly lay in earlier reigns, the queen developed into nothing short of an art form," de Guitaut said. "Color or embellishment communicated messages of respect to her host nation before she had even uttered a word in her speech."

Particularly as she got older, Elizabeth opted to wear bright or distinctive shades during large public events so she could be easily spotted, and visitors could say they had seen the queen.

The exhibit also explores the queen's off-duty wardrobe. The tweed suits she wore at Balmoral Castle, the royal family's summer retreat in Scotland, are on display alongside clothes for riding, hiking and other outdoor pursuits. There's a thick woolen coat Kelly designed during Elizabeth's later years alongside items by Burberry and British designer Hardy Amies.

Clothes worn during the many milestones of the queen's long life are also on display, from her christening robe, commissioned by Queen Victoria for the baptism of the future King Edward VII, to dresses she wore for her wedding and coronation.

The exhibit also includes sketches and notes that show just how involved the queen was in designing her wardrobe.

Naomi Pike, commissioning editor for Elle UK, said the collection finally recog-

nizes Elizabeth's status as a fashion icon, even though other royals, including her younger sister, the late Princess Margaret, and her daughter-in-law, the late Princess Diana, stole the spotlight during her lifetime.

"I think we're very quick in this day and age to afford people icon status. ... It's thrown around so easily," Pike said. "But I think in the case of the queen, she was an icon and so much of that comes down to having a very strong sense of personal style."

While the gowns may be the exhibit's biggest draw, the show also provides a few surprises. With the task of showing us "what the monarch wore," the curators conjured up a somewhat battered fairy outfit made from a tutu with wings on the back.

The piece is a favorite of Cecilia Oliver, a textile conservator at the King's Gallery, who described it as the "cutest thing in the world."

"I think what I love most about it is that it was bought for Elizabeth as a child, and to think of her as this tiny little girl that then grew up into this magnificent woman with all this weight of responsibility on her shoulders, it just feels very, sort of sentimental," Oliver said.

Oliver grew almost wistful as she described the months of work on the exhibit and the privilege of handling so many things connected to a person familiar to so many but truly known by so few.

"As a conservator, I have a really intimate knowledge of these pieces. I've been able to touch them. I've been able to smell them. I've been able to understand them," she said. "And through that, I felt really close to her."

Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life in Style runs until Oct. 18 at the King's Gallery, Buckingham Palace.

How content creators plan for 'influencer Olympics'

Glamour meets strategy in influencer world of Coachella

LOS ANGELES, April 12, (AP) — Sam Minton had checked off everything she possibly could have from a long list of todos in preparation for the Coachella music festival. She crafted the best outfits, got her hair and nails done, booked a one-way ticket to Los Angeles and flew out on Tuesday with a spreadsheet full of ideas for videos she could post related to the festival.

The only problem was that just days before the Coachella kicked off on Friday, she didn't have a ticket - at least, not yet.

Minton is a content creator, and she was seeking an invitation from a brand to join them at the annual festival in Indio,

California, that is sometimes called an "influencer Olympics." She posted across her social media platforms about her ticket-less journey in hopes of landing a pass to Coachella in exchange for posting videos about the brand and experience.

"You never know what's going to happen," she said. "There's so many opportunities out there."

Coachella, rife with Instagrammable moments, is a mutually beneficial opportunity for creators and businesses alike. The social media content that comes out of the sprawling music festival screams spontaneity, but industrious planning is often buzzing be-

hind the scenes weeks, or sometimes even months, in advance. Securing brand partnerships, lining up sponsored content opportunities and building out a content calendar require patience, strategic thinking and business acumen.

Content creators are often the butt of jokes online for enterprising habits like shamelessly requesting access to events or free merchandise. But for some - including Minton - it works. She received an invitation to the festival from YouTube on Wednesday, just two days before the two-weekend-long event began.

Coachella, in its 25th edition this year,

has been an annual mainstay of internet culture. Both weekends of the festival are sold out, but global audiences can view a livestream on YouTube to see performances from headliners Sabrina Carpenter, Justin Bieber and Karol G, along with dozens of other artists. The video-sharing platform offers fans livestreams of seven stages simultaneously as well as creators' videos and other Coachella-related content.

Creators capture not only performance clips but everything else about their Coachella experience, from the glamorous brand events and freebies to the more mundane bathroom lines and food options.



David Byrne performs during the first weekend of Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival on Saturday, April 11, in Indio, Calif. (AP)

Tobacco is still one of the world's top killers

Can a tobacco-free generation end smoking for good?

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



By Marie Helweg-Larsen
Dickinson College

Smoking is really bad for you. Most people know that. Even smokers think smoking is bad for one's health. But most people don't know just how bad it is.

More people in the United States die every year from smoking than from alcohol, illegal drug use, car accidents, suicides and murders combined. Cigarette smoking costs an estimated US\$240 billion annually in health care costs, which harm not only smokers but also nonsmokers, communities and the economy. Smoking is the top preventable cause of death and disease in the US and worldwide.

The number of smokers in the US has declined from 41% in 1944 to 11% in 2024. However, over 25 million Americans still smoke.

This drop is partly the result of many smoking laws enacted in the past 50 years. They include national bans on cigarette advertising on television and radio (1971), smoking on commercial flights (2000), sale of fruit- or candy-flavored cigarettes (2009), and sale of cigarettes to people ages 18 to 20 (2019). New policies might seem as strange or unfamiliar as these measures did at the time.

One potentially transformative idea - creating a tobacco-free generation - would build on these past laws. It would phase out smoking by banning it permanently for anyone born after a specific date. For example, a law could make it



Cigarette butts sit in an ashtray on March 28, 2019 in New York. (AP)

illegal for anyone under 21 to ever buy cigarettes, whereas people age 21 or older at the time would not be affected. The focus would be on tobacco sales, which already require age verification in the US, not on criminalizing tobacco use.

As a psychological scientist, I have studied for decades how people think about smoking. In my view, the key obstacle to creating future generations of nonsmokers is that people do not fully understand how dangerous smoking is and do not realize the formidable influence of the tobacco industry.

The idea of creating a tobacco-free generation was first proposed by health researchers in 2010. In 2021 the town of Brookline, Massachusetts, became the first US community to adopt it. Brookline's ordinance prohibits tobacco and

vape sales to anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 2000. It has survived a legal challenge and has been emulated in 22 more Massachusetts towns.

As of early 2026, Hawaii and Massachusetts are considering statewide tobacco-free generation bills. Abroad, the Maldives enacted the first countrywide ban in 2025.

Similar proposals have faced pushback elsewhere. In New Zealand, a ban was adopted in 2022 but repealed in 2024. The United Kingdom is considering a similar bill after an earlier version was scrapped due to a snap election.

It is hard to visualize what exactly it means that 480,000 people in the US die from smoking every year or that each cigarette that you smoke shortens your life by 20 minutes. It is also easy to feel optimistically biased about one's personal risk as a smoker and believe that others are more likely to become addicted or die prematurely.

Studies show that nonsmokers, former smokers and current smokers underestimate smoking risks. One likely reason is messaging by the tobacco industry, which claimed for decades that cigarettes were safe, even though tobacco industry scientists knew as early as 1953 that smoking caused lung cancer.

Another factor is glamorization of cigarettes in movies. Fully half of the top films released in 2024 showed tobacco imagery, typically of cigarettes. Research shows that adolescents and young adults who watch smoking in movies are more interested in taking up smoking.

Finally, smoking deaths may seem to be unremarkable because some of the illnesses that cigarette smoking causes, such as heart disease or cancer, are commonplace. And unlike deaths from drug overdoses, we do not always see the consequences of a lifetime of smoking.

A common argument against laws that regulate personal

choices, such as whether to smoke or wear seat belts, is that people prize their autonomy and don't like governments telling them how to live. This isn't a new challenge for public health policies, which often restrict private citizens' freedom to do as they wish.

People can be persuaded that community action should trump individual choice if a behavior, such as smoking cigarettes or driving while drunk, harms others who don't engage in it. Many public health laws are designed to protect people who are innocent or vulnerable. For example, current smoking laws have been enacted in part to protect nonsmokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke, especially children. And smoking increases health care costs for everyone, not just smokers.

By preventing people in the US who cannot legally buy cigarettes now from ever doing so, generational smoking bans balance the rights of current adult smokers against the major public health benefits of a phased smoking ban that will eventually end the smoking epidemic.

The tobacco industry's attempts to undermine tobacco health policies are well documented and follow a predictable pattern. For example, when the UK government considered a generational smoking policy in 2023, tobacco companies and their supporters argued that smoking was a minor problem, that individuals should be responsible for their own choices, and that a nationwide ban would lead to illegal behavior or hurt business profits.

In a 2025 study assessing how Belgian politicians viewed generational smoking bans, researchers heard similar arguments. Respondents across the political spectrum valued personal freedom and informed individual choice more highly than protecting children. (AP)



From left: Jeremy Hansen, Christina Koch, Victor Glover and Reid Wiseman, the Artemis II crew, are welcomed on stage during a news conference following their mission orbiting the moon, in Houston, on Saturday, April 11. (AP)

Mission marks new era in deep space exploration

Artemis II crew returns home to cheers

HOUSTON, April 12, (AP): Still marveling over their moon mission, the Artemis II astronauts received a thunderous welcome home Saturday from hundreds who took part in NASA's lunar comeback that set a record for deep space travel.

The crew of four arrived at Ellington Field near NASA's Johnson Space Center and Mission Control, flying in from San Diego, where they splashed down just offshore the evening before.

After a quick reunion with their spouses and children, commander Reid Wiseman, pilot Victor Glover, Christina Koch and Canada's Jeremy Hansen took the hangar stage, surrounded by space center workers and other invited guests. They were introduced by NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman, among the first to greet them aboard the recovery ship Friday.

"Ladies and gentlemen, your Artemis II crew," Isaacman said to a standing ovation.

The jubilant crowd included flight directors and the launch director, Orion capsule and exploration system managers, high-ranking military officers, members of Congress, the space agency's entire blue-suited astronaut corps and even retired blues, and more.

Their homecoming was poignant:

They returned to NASA's Houston base on the 56th anniversary of the launch of Apollo 13, whose "Houston, we've had a problem" refrain turned a near-disaster into triumph.

"This was not easy," an emotional Wiseman said. "Before you launch, it feels like it's the greatest dream on Earth. And when you're out there, you just want to get back to your families and your friends. It's a special thing to be a human, and it's a special thing to be on planet Earth."

Added Glover: "I have not processed what we just did and I'm afraid to start even trying."

Hansen said the four of them embodied love "and extracting joy out of that" as the four joined together to stand in a row, embracing one another. "When you look up here, you're not looking at us. We are a mirror reflecting you. And if you like what you see, then just look a little deeper. This is you."

During Artemis II's nearly 10-day mission, the astronauts voyaged deeper into space than the moon explorers of decades past and captured views of the lunar far side never witnessed before by human eyes. A total solar eclipse added to the cosmic wonder.

On their record-breaking flyby, the astronauts reached a maximum

252,756 miles (406,771 kilometers) from Earth before hanging a U-turn behind the moon, eclipsing Apollo's 13 distance record.

The mission also revealed a new side of our planet with an Earthset photo, showing our Blue Marble setting behind the gray, pockmarked moon. The image echoed the famous Earthrise shot from 1968 taken by the world's first lunar visitors, Apollo 8.

"Honestly, what struck me wasn't necessarily just Earth, it was all the blackness around it. Earth was just this lifeboat hanging undisturbedly in the universe," Koch said. "Planet Earth you are a crew."

Despite the accomplishments, Artemis II astronauts had to contend with a more mundane problem - a malfunctioning space toilet. NASA promised a design fix before longer moon-landing missions.

Wiseman, Glover, Koch and Hansen were the first humans to fly to the moon since Apollo 17 closed out NASA's first exploration era in 1972. Twenty-four astronauts flew to the moon during Apollo, including 12 moonwalkers.

Apollo 13 commander Jim Lovell - who also flew on Apollo 8 - cheered the Artemis II crew on in a wake-up message recorded before he died last summer.

Earth's most vital ecosystems at risk

Climate change outpacing evolution, scientists are using DNA to catch up

SAN DIEGO, April 12, (AP): Evolution works over millennia. Climate change is moving far faster.

That mismatch is killing some of the planet's most vital ecosystems, from California's towering redwoods to the seagrass meadows along its coast, both of which store vast amounts of carbon and support complex webs of life.

Marine heat waves, record wildfires and coastal development are pushing these systems beyond their limits as climate change, driven by emissions of fuels like oil and gas, accelerates. An estimated 1 million species face extinction, many within decades, largely due to human activities such as habitat destruction, pollution and overuse of natural resources, according to a 2019 report by a United Nations-affiliated intergovernmental scientific body.

Scientists are working to close the gap with an emerging discipline called conservation genomics: sequencing an organism's complete genetic blueprint to pinpoint individuals with traits suited to survive drought, disease and other climate extremes, then using that information to guide restoration.

Coral reefs are among the first ecosystems where these genomic tools are being put to use. Repeated marine heat waves, which have caused mass bleaching, have devastated reefs worldwide. By sequencing corals and the algae that live inside them, researchers have identified colonies that naturally withstand higher temperatures and are beginning to test whether selectively breeding and growing those more resilient corals can support reef recovery.

In Southern California, researchers are applying the approach to eelgrass, a type of seagrass, as traditional restoration methods fail. The plant provides habitat for fish, crabs and plankton, feeds migratory birds and locks away carbon and methane - both heat-trapping greenhouse gases - in coastal sediments.

Conditions in San Diego's bays are changing. Waters are warming. King tides - the year's highest tides, which climate change is making more frequent and severe - stir up sediment



Todd Michael, a research professor at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies, works at his lab in San Diego, Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2025. (AP)

and reduce the light that reaches the seafloor. Development sends runoff into bays, further clouding the water.

As a result, efforts to replant what's been lost fail about half the time.

"Conservation genomics is becoming particularly important because right now, the climate is changing - a plant that was growing great in San Diego Bay, now San Diego Bay might be too hot for it," said Todd Michael, a research professor at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies.

In Mission Bay, Michael and his colleagues discovered a clue to improving those odds: a naturally occurring hybrid eelgrass that outperformed its parent species. The plant, a cross between shallow water eelgrass *Zostera marina* and deeper water *Zostera pacifica*, persisted where both parent species struggled.

Infants depend entirely on herd immunity

Too young for MMR shot, babies are 'sitting ducks' in measles outbreaks

LANDRUM, South Carolina, April 12, (AP):

With baby Arthur too young for the measles vaccine and a sibling due in June, the Otwells grew nervous when the threat of the highly contagious virus started factoring into their grocery run.

"We go to the Costco that was kind of a hotbed," said John Otwell, who knew about the state health department's warnings of public exposures at the store. "A lot of people just don't get it; they think it's just a cold. It's not."

By Arthur's 9-month checkup, the South Carolina outbreak had exploded into the nation's worst in more than 35 years, surpassing last year's in Texas. That meant that under state guidance, Arthur could get his first dose of the MMR vaccine - for measles, mumps and rubella - earlier than the usual 12 to 15 months old. Their new baby won't be able to get the shot until at least 6 months - a prospect that worries parents of infants wherever measles spreads.

Babies too young to be vaccinated are among the most vulnerable in a measles outbreak. The disease can wreak havoc on their fragile bodies, making them so sick they stop eating and drinking. They can develop pneumonia or brain swelling, and sometimes die.

Babies depend entirely on herd immunity - at least 95% of a community must be vaccinated to prevent measles outbreaks. But dropping vaccination rates have eroded protection in South Carolina and across the nation. In Spartanburg County, the outbreak's epicenter, less than 90% of students have gotten required vaccines.

"Babies become sitting ducks," said Dr. Deborah Greenhouse, a Columbia pediatrician. "The burden is on all of us to protect all of us."

But increasingly, some policymakers and officials push a view of vaccination as an issue of individual freedom and parents' rights, rather than one of public health to safeguard the population as a whole.

At the federal level, Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a longtime anti-vaccine crusader, has sought to remake vaccine policy and oversaw billions in public health cuts. And though a temporary ruling from a federal judge has slowed his momentum, a raft of bills has been introduced in states, including South Carolina, that threaten to further reduce vaccination rates.



Daren Chandler holds his 12-month-old daughter as she has blood drawn for testing, before receiving a measles shot at Tiger Pediatrics in Easley, S.C., on March 17, 2026. (AP)

South Carolina's measles outbreak, totaling about 1,000 cases, has slowed. But measles is spreading in many states, with 17 outbreaks this year and 48 last year, and the US on the verge of losing its status as a country that has eliminated measles.

Dr. Jessica Early never thought she'd have to deal with measles, but the pediatrician feared for her patients and her own baby when it popped up in her Greer community. She and other doctors began offering an approved infant MMR dose as early as 6 months old. Her practice also started giving the second MMR dose - usually for ages 4 to 6 years old - early.

To the chagrin of many doctors, no one knows how many South Carolina infants have gotten measles or been hospitalized by it.

State officials will disclose only that 253 of the 997 cases were among children 4 and younger; they say they won't break cases down further for confidentiality reasons. It's not uncommon to group statistics this way.

Officials also don't know exactly how many infants were hospitalized with the virus because, as in some other states, hospitals aren't required to report measles-related admissions.

Across the state, doctors said they got many questions about whether it was safe to bring infants to waiting

rooms or day care.

Thomas Compton - regional director of Miss Tammy's Little Learning Center, a child care network operating across the outbreak region - said 18 parents pulled children out of his facilities, though they had no confirmed cases. Some abandoned deposits days before their kids were scheduled to start, forcing the company to lay off a teacher.

Although licensed day cares must require vaccines under state law, families can easily get religious exemptions. About a fifth of Miss Tammy's 300 children have vaccine waivers.

When measles surged, Compton said state officials gave little guidance. His staff scrubbed down surfaces, as they did when COVID-19 was raging; tracked local measles cases on Facebook; and relied on Google for information about the disease.

"A lot of parents were really stressed out," Compton said. "Anytime that we had a little sickness going on or something, they were like, 'Do you think it's the measles?'"

Last year, an Associated Press investigation found that Trump administration officials were directing activists to push anti-science legislation in statehouses. Nationally, around 350 anti-vaccine bills were introduced as of late October, AP found, including at least eight in South Carolina.

Farm runoff threatens drinking water

Warmer winters fuel nitrate pollution

NEW YORK, April 12, (AP): When pollution gets bad enough in the rivers supplying Iowa's largest city with drinking water, it costs Des Moines around \$16,000 a day to run a special system to filter out dangerous nitrates. It's a fact of life in the agriculture-dependent state - and climate change is making the water quality problem even worse.

The nitrates come from fertilizer and pesticides that make their way into the soil and then waterways like the Raccoon and Des Moines rivers. It's not usually a problem in winter, but this year Iowa's capital had to filter in January and February - just the second time that's happened in more than 30 years. That's likely going to mean higher water bills for people who live in a state with some of the nation's waterways that are most vulnerable to nitrate pollution.

Experts blame weather conditions, including warming winters, for a costly problem they say will only grow across farm country.

When it comes to winter nitrate pollution events, "We are more apt to see these in the future. Are they going to occur every year? No. But the ingredients are there for them to potentially occur more often," said Justin Glisan, Iowa's state climatologist.

The fertilizers and pesticides that farmers use leave nitrogen and phosphorus in their fields. Rain or snow-melt then carries the chemicals into drinking water, which is dangerous. Ingesting too many nitrates can cause health issues like cancer or blue baby



University of Vermont graduate student Delaney Bullock gathers runoff samples from two agricultural fields to be analyzed for nutrient concentrations on March 12, 2026, in Bridport, Vt. (AP)

syndrome, low oxygen levels in infants.

As Earth warms due to human-caused climate change, the ground isn't staying frozen as consistently in many places, and snow is often melting or falling as rain on thawed ground. That all adds up to more winter days when nitrates are likely to reach unhealthy levels.

Scientists say one effect of Earth's warming is more frequent extreme weather events, including drought and intense bursts of rainfall from an atmosphere that now holds more moisture than in the past.

Intense dryness followed by intense wetness means massive amounts of

water moving through the soil, bringing farm chemicals like nitrogen with it, Glisan said.

And a warmer atmosphere is thawing Earth's polar regions and causing more of those winter flip-flops from frigid polar air to warmer, less snowy weather, he said.

Even though some storms brought a lot of snow this winter, it didn't stay on the ground for very long. Instead, snow insulated the soil in some areas from freezing too deep, and a quick thaw let melting snow, followed by pounding rain, travel down through the soil and eventually into streams.

Where the ground isn't consistently frozen, nutrients aren't as "locked in" to the soil frost.

"In central and southern Illinois, we've always dealt with a sort of ephemeral freeze-thaw, freeze-thaw process. What we're seeing is that's really tracking farther north," said Trent Ford, Illinois' state climatologist.

Nitrate pollution is a big problem for low-income, rural residents across the United States, said Samuel Sandoval Solis, a professor at the University of California-Davis and an extension specialist in water resources management.

While some communities already have the infrastructure to manage nitrate levels in drinking water, like filtration systems, many others don't. Around 15% of the U.S. population relies on drinking water wells that are private, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Nitrates can seep into those wells.

Benn shows class in comfortable win over Prograis

Fury dominates Makhmudov in latest comeback and calls out Joshua

LONDON, April 12, (AP) — Tyson Fury showed little rust in dominating Arslanbek Makhmudov for a unanimous decision victory Saturday and immediately challenged a ringside Anthony Joshua to fight him next.

"Let's give the fight fans what they want," Fury bellowed after going 12 rounds in his latest comeback.

A long-awaited Fury-Joshua heavyweight showdown would be one of the biggest fights in British boxing history.

Joshua sat ringside and appeared to be using his phone to film portions of the fight at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. He didn't commit to anything when Fury (35-2-1) yelled into the Netflix microphone: "Do you accept my challenge?"

Joshua said, "I'll punch you up," and "I'm the landlord. You work for me."

As for Saturday's fight, the self-described "Gypsy King" had a fairly slow start but otherwise dictated the pace with his left jab and in later rounds landed frequent lead uppercuts on Makhmudov (21-3). Two judges scored it 120-108 and the other 119-109.

The 36-year-old Joshua, a former world champion, later told Netflix in an interview: "Contracts will be sent over. You'll probably see us



Boxer Tyson Fury, right, punches Arslanbek Makhmudov during a heavy-weight bout at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London. (AP)

in the ring."

He noted he's still "sorting some things out" following the death of

two close friends in a fatal car accident in Nigeria. Joshua was a passenger in the vehicle.

The 37-year-old Fury, the former two-time heavyweight champion, called it quits shortly after losing to Oleksandr Usyk in December 2024 for a second time - his only two professional defeats.

"If AJ don't want it, then lets get Usyk in the trilogy," Fury said at Saturday's post-fight press conference.

At Fury's request, his ring walk was preceded by a tribute to the late Ricky Hatton, the Manchester native and former world champion who died last year at age 46.

The message "RIP Ricky" was stitched on the back of Fury's shorts. Conor Benn earned a 10-round unanimous decision over Regis Prograis to bolster his case for a title shot against WBC welterweight champion Ryan Garcia.

Benn (25-1, 14 KOs) took command in the middle rounds with punishing body shots against 37-year-old Prograis (30-4, 24 KOs), a former two-time world champion at super lightweight (140 lbs).

Saturday's bout was at a catchweight of 150 lbs.

All three judges scored it 98-92 for the 29-year-old Briton, who sustained cuts over both eyes from head clashes.

France blows away Italy

England beats Ireland in front of record Women's 6 Nations crowd

LONDON, April 12, (AP) — A record Women's Six Nations crowd of 77,120 watched new world champion England account for Ireland 33-12 at Twickenham on Saturday.

Attendance was only 4,700 shy of the women's rugby world record at the World Cup final in September when England beat Canada, also at Twickenham.

In its first match since then England was rusty but still too physical for Ireland and extended its world record winning run to 34 tests.

Momentum from the World Cup helped England ticket sales beat the previous Six Nations attendance record of 58,498 for England-France in 2023.

Overall attendance this year is set to easily surpass the 151,506 fans attracted to last year's Women's Six Nations.

England had the result in hand by halftime at 21-0 thanks to tries by front-rowers Amy Cokayne and Sarah Bern from lineouts.

Lock Morwenna Talling and scrumhalf Natasha Hunt finished the game on crutches but England finished in style when Jess Breach scored her 54th try in her 54th test in the 54th minute, and Ellie Kildunne rounded off a 60-meter counter-attack.

Ireland rallied with tries by Anna McGann and new captain Erin King for their narrowest loss to England in 10 years.

Center Megan Jones marked her first match as England captain with a brilliant player-of-the-match performance.

"There's always going to be nerves going into a big campaign off the back of an amazing World Cup," Jones said. "To have this crowd is phenomenal. We want to play but sometimes it gets a bit unstuck like that. But we found ways, that's what a winning team does."

France weathered a tough

first half then blew away Italy in Grenoble for a sixth straight time.

The six-try rout featured six debutants, three of them starters including tackle machine Mathilde Lazarko, but was marred by a serious-looking knee injury to center star Joanna Grisez.

France led only 5-0 at half-time after a try on debut for winger Anaïs Grando.

Then flyhalf Carla Arbez stepped too easily through the Italy line and skipped away, and the floodgates opened. Tries followed for props Yllana Broseau and Assia Khalfaoui, the player of the match.

France wrought the benefit of a 6-2 bench by pulverising Italy's scrum. New fullback Pauline Barrat set up winger Léa Murie then scored herself. Arbez was lethal off the tee to make it 40-0 after 76 minutes.

But there was enough time for Gaia Buso's consolation converted try, Italy's first points against France in 3 1/2 hours.

Scotland beat Wales 38-8 at the World Cup in August but trailed 12-10 at halftime in Cardiff. Barrelling tries by front-rowers Kelsey Jones and Sisilia Tuipulotu and rugged Welsh defense set back Scotland.

But Scotland spied gaps in the backfield and kicks in behind led to tries by Shona Campbell and Lucia Scott. Helen Nelson's goalkicking helped Scotland shoot in front 24-12.

Wales' bench lifted the tempo and Seren Lockwood set up a converted try by captain Kate Williams to close the gap to five.

As the clock turned red, Wales fought its way from out of its 22 to 35 meters from the tryline of Scotland, which was down to 14 players. Then a line-out trick play was dropped and Wales' dramatic fightback ended in the 87th minute.



England's Lilli Ives Champion, top left, wins a line-out during the Women's Six Nations Rugby 2026 match between England and Ireland, in London. (AP)

Nantes is closer to Ligue 1 relegation

PARIS, April 12, (AP) — Nantes slid closer to relegation after drawing at fellow struggler Auxerre 0-0 in Ligue 1.

Nantes was in 17th place and five points behind Auxerre in 16th, which is the promotion-relegation playoff spot.

Eight-time champion Nantes was one of France's most storied sides but has narrowly avoided relegation in recent seasons. Although Nantes has played one game less than Auxerre its game in hand is at leader Paris Saint-Germain.

In Saturday's other game, Rennes maintained its push for a Champions League place with a 2-1 home win over Angers.

Victory moved Rennes up to fifth place, with the top three earning an automatic spot in the Champions League and the side in fourth spot entering qualifying.

An own goal gave Rennes an early lead and Jordan forward Mousa Al-Tamari latched onto a long ball to lob the goalkeeper in the 25th minute.

Angers pulled a goal back midway into the second half through 18-year-old forward Peter Prosper.

The highly anticipated showdown between PSG and second-placed Lens was postponed by the league to give PSG better preparation for its Champions League quarterfinal against Liverpool.

PSG requested the postponement, which was opposed by Lens. PSG beat Liverpool 2-0 at home on Wednesday and plays the return leg at Anfield on Tuesday.

Lens will now play PSG on May 13.

Inter Miami extends unbeaten streak but drop points in Red Bulls comeback



Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi, front right, attacks with the ball as New York Red Bulls midfielder Emil Forsberg, front left, defends in the second half of an MLS soccer match in Miami. (AP)

Fire earns third straight victory

MIAMI, April 12, (AP) — Lionel Messi scored two goals in a Champions League match for Barcelona on April 8, 2009, which was two days after Adri Mehmeti was born.

Only 17 years later, they both had a say in the outcome for their teams.

Messi helped set up Germán Berterame for a second-half goal that gave Inter Miami its first lead in its new stadium, and Mehmeti's first MLS goal in the 77th minute pulled the New York Red Bulls into a 2-2 tie with Messi and the defending MLS Cup champions on Saturday night.

Mateo Silvetti also scored for Inter Miami (3-1-3), which is now unbeaten in its last six MLS matches. Jorge Ruvalcaba scored for the Red Bulls (3-2-2), who have one win in their last five matches but rallied to get a point out of this one after wasting an early 1-0 lead.

Berterame's goal looked like it would give Inter Miami some control.

There were no fewer than four defenders within a couple of yards of Messi - two of them squarely between him and the net - as he brought the ball toward the box in the 55th minute, and with all those eyeballs on him nobody seemed to be marking Berterame just to his left.

No shot, no problem. In fact, it was a bit of a bad break for the Red Bulls.

Maren Haile-Selassie scored early for Chicago and that was all Chris Brady needed to help the Fire earn a third straight victory, beating Atlanta United 1-0.

Haile-Selassie scored for the first time this season - with assists from Jonathan Bamba and Philip Zinckernagel - to give Chicago a 1-0 lead in the 13th minute. It was Haile-Selassie's 14th goal in 96 career appearances for the Fire.

Bamba's assist was his second after posting 10 last season - his first in the

league. Zinckernagel picked up his first assist after totaling 15 in 32 appearances last season - also his first in the league.

Brady finished with four saves in his 99th start in goal for the Fire (4-2-1), who moved into second place in the Eastern Conference - three points behind Nashville. Four of Brady's 24 clean sheets have come this season.

Kyle Duncan and Kelvin Yeboah each scored a goal Saturday night to help Minnesota United beat San Diego FC 2-1.

Owen Gene had two assists, the 23-year-old midfielder's first two goal contributions in MLS, for Minnesota (3-2-2). Drake Callender had five saves.

Yeboah tapped in a loose ball from point-blank range to make it 2-1 in the 40th minute. Yeboah has scored in back-to-back games and has four goals this season.

Christopher McVey was shown his second yellow card in the 46th minute and San Diego play a man down the

rest of the way.

Kosi Thompson had two goals and an assist in his debut for Colorado, Rafael Navarro also scored two goals, and the Rapids beat the Houston Dynamo 6-2.

Josh Atencio added a goal and Zack Steffen had six saves for the Rapids (4-3-0).

Thompson, acquired March 26 via trade from Toronto, scored two goals in his first four-plus MLS seasons. The 23-year-old defender has eight career goal contributions in 98 appearances, 57 starts.

Jack Skahan scored two goals - his first multi-goal game in MLS - to help the San Jose Earthquakes beat Sporting Kansas City 3-1.

San Jose (6-1-0) is off to the best start in club history. Niko Tsakiris had two assists for the Earthquakes.

Kansas City (1-5-1) has lost three in a row.

Alhassan Yusuf scored in the first half and Matt Turner made it stand up for the New England Revolution in a

1-0 victory over D.C. United.

Yusuf scored with a right-footed shot from the center of the box in the 35th minute to give New England a lead it never relinquished. Yusuf's second goal this season came with assists from Dor Turgeman - his second of the season - and defender Will Sands, his first. Yusuf has four goals in 47 career matches.

Turner totaled five saves in his 117th career start for New England (3-3-0) - three of them in the first half. Two of Turner's 26 clean sheets in 118 starts for the club have come this season.

Patrick Yazbek picked up a first-half assist before scoring in the second half and Nashville SC held on for a 2-1 victory over Charlotte FC.

Edvard Tagseth sent a left-footed shot from just outside the center of the box past Kristijan Kahlina in the 14th minute, putting Nashville up 1-0 with his first career goal. Tagseth had four assists in 33 appearances last season as a rookie.

Kevin Kelsy scored his first goal this season in the sixth minute of stoppage time, Kristoffer Velde added a goal and an assist, and the Portland Timbers beat Los Angeles FC 2-1 on Saturday to snap a five-game winless streak.

Mathias Laborda and Brian White each scored a goal on Saturday. Yohei Takaoka had his fourth shutout of the season, and the Vancouver Whitecaps beat New York City FC 2-0.

Loucius Deedson scored his first career goal in MLS and Michael Colodi had four saves for FC Dallas in a 1-1 tie with St. Louis City.

Dallas (4-1-2) is unbeaten in four straight.

The 25-year-old Deedson made his first start and put away a cross from Petar Musa to give Dallas a 1-0 lead in the 48th minute.

Timo Baumgartl scored his first goal in MLS to make it 1-1 in the 61st minute.

Roman Bürki had two saves for St. Louis (1-3-3), which is unbeaten in three consecutive games.



New York City FC's Nicolas Fernandez, left, and Vancouver Whitecaps' Cheikh Sabaly, right, vie for the ball during the first half of an MLS soccer match in Vancouver, British Columbia. (AP)

Diggins signs with Sky; Sabally joins New York Liberty

WASHINGTON, April 12, (AP) — Skylar Diggins is headed to Chicago while Satou Sabally is coming to New York as WNBA free agents can officially sign Saturday.

Diggins spent the past two seasons with the Seattle Storm before coming to the Sky - a move announced on social media. The seven-time All-Star gives the team another veteran guard and brings her closer to

where she grew up in South Bend, Indiana. She averaged 15.5 points and 6.0 assists last season.

Sabally's move to New York was confirmed by her agent Zack Miller. She joins an already stacked roster as Breanna Stewart and Sabrina Ionescu already said they'll be back in New York.

Sabally also looked at coming to the Liberty last season when she was also a free agent before land-

ing with the Phoenix Mercury. Sabally averaged 16.3 points, 5.9 rebounds and 2.5 assists to earn an All-Star spot - her third.

She raised her game in the postseason, averaging 19 points and seven rebounds before suffering a concussion in Game 3 of the series against Las Vegas that caused her to miss the final game of the series.

SPORTS

Ulberg delivers first-round KO, Trump takes spotlight

Hokit outlasts Blaydes in slugfest

MIAMI, April 12, (AP): **Hobbling on one leg, Carlos Ulberg refused to let an injured knee ruin the opportunity he earned at UFC 327.**

With President Donald Trump sitting cageside, Ulberg delivered a perfect left hook to Jiri Prochazka's chin and won the undisputed light heavyweight belt with a knockout at the 3:45 mark of the first round.

"I blew out my knee, but I never counted myself out," Ulberg said. "I knew all I needed was that one shot and I ended up getting it. So I knew that Jiri was hesitant to come forward. And as soon as I landed my left hand he's going."

"It's about getting those moments." Ulberg (15-1-0) appeared to tweak something early in the first round when he planted his foot and his right knee buckled awkwardly. Prochazka (32-6-1) immediately went to work on Ulberg's left leg, repeatedly landing leg kicks with hopes of taking both legs away, rather than attacking aggressively to end it.

"I felt sorry (for) him, and this is one of the biggest lessons in my life," Prochazka said. "That fight was won, I had it, it was in my hands. I saw his injury, and ... I will be back. Life is about that, learn and be better."

The matchup was made after former champion Alex Pereira vacated the belt to move up and challenge for the interim heavyweight crown at UFC Freedom 250 at the White House on June 14, on what will be Trump's 80th birthday.

Earlier, on his way to the arena, Trump's Truth Social account posted an advertisement for the event.

Trump entered the Kaseya Center shortly after 9 p.m., accompanied by UFC president Dana White and several members of the Trump family.

As a Kid Rock song blasted from the speakers, Trump walked to his seat, where Secretary of State Marco Rubio was waiting. Also nearby was Sergio Gor, the U.S. ambassador to India.

Trump, who shared several smiles with the cameras, shook hands with attendees on the floor and made a point of greeting the UFC broadcast team, including podcaster Joe Rogan.

A crowd of onlookers could be seen filming the presidential motorcade upon arrival.

In the co-main event, Azamat Murzakanov (17-0-0) used a right roundhouse to the head to drop Paulo Costa (15-5-0) and end the bout at the 1:23 mark of the third round.

Murzakanov stepped onto the apron of the Octagon after his victory to shake Trump's hand, and the president praised him. Murzakanov acknowledged Trump during his post-fight interview with Rogan.

Josh Hokit (9-0-0) and Curtis Blaydes (19-6-0) battered each other in the slugfest of the night, with Trump excitedly watching the heavyweights as fans chanted "This is awesome!" as the fighters bloodied each other's faces. Hokit won by unanimous decision (29-28, 29-28, 29-28).

White took to social media after Hokit's win to reveal that a matchup be-



President Donald Trump and Hunter Campbell watch as Paulo Costa, left, and Azamat Murzakanov fight during UFC 327 at Kaseya Center in Miami. (AP)

tween Hokit and Derrick Lewis had been added to UFC Freedom 250. According to White's video, Trump asked why Lewis wasn't on the White House card. White said he called Lewis and offered him a fight, and when Rogan jokingly asked during the broadcast if there was room for Hokit on the card, the match came together.

"President Trump built half of that fight, Rogan built the other half," White said in the video. "Both guys have agreed and accepted the fight."

In a light heavyweight clash, Dominick Reyes (16-5-0) defeated Johnny Walker (22-10-0) with a split decision (29-28, 28-29, 29-28).

Featherweight Cub Swanson (32-14-0) ended a celebrated career with a devastating first-round TKO of Nate Landwehr (18-9-0). The 42-year-old Swanson overmatched Landwehr with a bevy of punches to the head before referee Herb Dean stepped in to stop the fight with 54 seconds left in the opening round.

Sevilla punishes weakened Atlético side to climb away from danger

Yamal scores and sets up 2 by Ferran as Barcelona capitalizes on Madrid stumble

BARCELONA, Spain, April 12, (AP): Lamine Yamal secured Barcelona's 4-1 win over Espanyol after setting up Ferran Torres for a double and the La Liga leaders took another step toward retaining the title.

Yamal passed for Ferran to score in the 10th and 25th minutes before the teenage phenom ensured the victory in the 87th with Espanyol threatening to equalize. Marcus Rashford made it four for the hosts at Camp Nou in the 89th.

Barcelona capitalized on Real Madrid's 1-1 draw at home to Girona on Friday to increase its lead to nine points over its top rival with seven rounds remaining.

Barcelona and Madrid will try to overcome losses in the Champions League quarterfinals in their next games after Barcelona lost to Atletico Madrid 2-0 and Madrid fell to Bayern Munich 2-1 this week.

While Madrid will travel to Germany on a three-game winless streak, Barcelona's attack is clicking as it heads to Spain's capital needing a big win to advance to the European semifinals.

Barcelona's fans chanted "Yes we can!" after the match with its team playing at Atletico on Tuesday.

"The team is in a good place. We'll be ready. We want to go there and fight Atlético," Barcelona coach Hansi Flick said. "We don't need a miracle. We need to play our best football."

Barcelona's best play is coming from the 18-year-old Yamal, who leads the team both in goals (22) and assists (18) across all competitions this season.

Ferran started the season in good form, scoring 16 goals among more starts than aging star Robert Lewandowski. While lacking the clinical scoring touch of the Poland striker, Ferran provided more movement, speed and linked up well with Yamal and his midfielders.

But Ferran then hit a slump and had not scored since Jan. 31.

His goalless run stretched across



Barcelona's Lamine Yamal, left, and Espanyol's Tyrhys Dolan challenge for the ball during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Barcelona and Espanyol in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

13 games in all competitions and finally ended on Saturday when Yamal delivered a corner kick to the far post where Ferran leapt over Carlos Romero and nodded it home.

Ferran celebrated by gesturing with his hands as if they were talking, apparently in reference to the talk in the sports press and social media about his scoring troubles.

He made it a brace when he used a subtle touch to roll a pass by Yamal under on-rushing goalkeeper Marko Dmitrovic.

"A forward is always judged by the goals he scores," Ferran said. "It is true I hadn't scored in some time

but I believed in my efforts and that the payoff would come when least expected."

Espanyol midfielder Pol Lozano put the result in doubt when he used one touch to fire in a rebound of a loose ball to make it 2-1 in the 56th.

But Yamal finished off the Catalan derby when Dmitrovic tried to clear a long pass but ended up knocking it off Yamal, who only had to push the ball into the open net.

"The final score was too lopsided for the game we saw," said coach Manolo González, whose Espanyol remained in 10th. "We had our chances and their first three goals

were from our defensive mistakes."

Rashford got his goal when he was set up by fellow substitute Frenkie de Jong, who made his first appearance in over a month after the Netherlands midfielder recovered from a right leg injury.

An Atletico side with several second-choice players and member of its youth squad lost 2-1 at Sevilla, which moved away with the relegation zone with its first win under new coach Luis García.

Akor Adams and Nemanja Gudelj scored for Sevilla. Atletico defender Javier Boñar scored in his debut at age 20.

Delhi suffers second loss in four games

Samson ton leads Chennai to first IPL win

CHENNAI, India, April 12, (AP): Sanju Samson's first century for his new team helped Chennai Super Kings to their first win in the Indian Premier League as Delhi Capitals were beaten by 23 runs.

Samson blasted 115 not out off 56 balls in his fourth game for Chennai, helping the side notch 212-2.

After his onslaught of 15 boundaries and four sixes, Delhi was bowled out for 189. Jamie Overton picked 4-18 in four overs.

Delhi remained fourth in the table after its second loss in four games. Chennai was ninth in the 10-team league.

Earlier in Chandigarh, skipper Shreyas Iyer hit five sixes in scoring 69 not out off 33 balls as Punjab Kings beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by six wickets.

Punjab achieved its second highest successful chase in the IPL with 223-4 in 18.5 overs. Openers Priyansh Arya (57) and Prabhsimran Singh (51) gave Punjab a rollicking start.

Iyer then took center stage as Punjab won for a third time in four games.

Hyderabad racked up 219-6 on the back of Abhishek Sharma's 74 off 28 balls, with five fours and eight sixes.

Put into bat, Chennai scored a slow 62 before losing its first wicket. Skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad used 18 balls for 15 runs.

Teenager Ayush Mhatre compensated with 59 off 36 - his second half-century of the season - including three fours and four sixes. He added 62 off 38 with Samson, who reached 50 off 26 with nine fours. Samson then accelerated to his fourth IPL hundred off another 26 balls, this time hitting three sixes.

Mhatre retired so Chennai could find more momentum in the death overs. Shivam Dube added 20 off 10 but Chen-



Chennai Super Kings' Khaleel Ahmed bowls a delivery during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals in Chennai, India. (AP)

nai managed only 52 runs in the last five overs.

It was too much for Delhi though. Pathum Nissanka contributed 41 off 24 but Overton hit the middle order and took out Sameer Rizvi and David Miller cheaply. Skipper Axar Patel, at No. 4, fell for 1.

Tristan Stubbs raised hopes with 60 off 38 including three sixes but he waged a lone battle.

Beside Overton, Anshul Kamboj picked 3-35.

100,000 players from 100 nations chase glory at Esports Nations Cup qualifiers

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, April 12, (AP): The Esports Foundation (EF) today confirmed the complete 16-game lineup for the Esports Nations Cup 2026 (ENC), the global nation-based esports competition set to debut in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from November 2-29, 2026. More than 100,000 players are expected to compete in hundreds of qualification events across 100 markets throughout 2026 for the opportunity to represent their nation and territory at the global stage.

The ENC 2026 edition will feature 16 game titles, reflecting the diversity of the global esports: Apex Legends, Chess, Counter-Strike 2, Dota 2, EA SPORTS FC, Fatal Fury, Honor of Kings, League of Legends, Mobile Legends: Bang Bang, PUBG: Battlegrounds, PUBG MOBILE, Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Siege, Rocket League, Street Fighter 6, Trackmania, and VALORANT.

"The full ENC 2026 games lineup wasn't built around the biggest titles alone, but to create the broadest possible footprint," said Fabian Scheuermann, Chief Games Officer at the Esports Foundation. "No single game can do that - different titles reach different regions and communities, and bringing them together is what makes the ENC truly open. The same applies to national reach: some titles open pathways in a few countries, some extend across dozens. Working hand-in-hand with our partners, we're

creating a shared stage for millions of people, opening opportunities for talent to break through and giving communities a reason to rally behind their teams, bringing esports to every corner of the world."

The ENC introduces nation-based competition to the global esports calendar in a structured and recurring format. By enabling countries and territories to organize their teams, develop talent pathways and compete on a global stage, the ENC provides a structured framework for expanding participation and strengthening esports ecosystems worldwide.

The ENC is backed by a \$45 million funding commitment, including a \$20 million prize pool paid directly to players and coaches across 16 titles. With equal pay per player and coach for the same finishing position, first place awards \$50,000 per player, with \$30,000 for second place and \$15,000 for third place, ensuring a consistent and transparent prize structure across the competition.

Additional information about the Esports Nations Cup will be released in the coming weeks. To stay up to date, visit esportsnationscup.com, and follow ENC on X, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube, and follow the Esports Foundation on LinkedIn.

Event Organization & National Team Selec-

tion Notice Regarding EA Games (Apex Legends & EA SPORTS FC): The Esports Nations Cup Finals (ENC) are organized and conducted exclusively by the Esports Foundation. For the avoidance of doubt, Electronic Arts Inc. (EA) is not the organizer of these events and bears no responsibility for their execution.

Furthermore, the selection of teams representing their respective countries/territories and participating in ENC events utilizing EA titles is determined through dedicated qualifiers held by EA or through direct invitations, and is not associated with ENC National Team Partners.

About the Esports Nations Cup The Esports Nations Cup (ENC) is a biennial global esports competition created by the Esports Foundation (EF) that brings national pride to the world stage. Launching in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 2026, the ENC will feature the world's best players competing not for their clubs, but for their countries and territories, across a lineup of leading esports titles. Built in collaboration with game partners, clubs, and esports organizations, the ENC establishes the first recurring, large-scale platform for national teams in esports. Beyond competition, it aims to fuel fandom, inspire heroes, and provide sustainable pathways for nations, players, and partners to grow within the global esports ecosystem. esportsnationscup.com

ARAB TIMES
Kuwait's No.1 English Newspaper

For Subscriptions and Complaints

Please Call

51508991
51526559





Italy's Yemaneberhan Crippa crosses the finish line to win the men's race of the Paris Marathon, in Paris. Shure Demise of Ethiopia smashed a course record to win the women's race. Demise ran the 42.195 kilometers (26.2 miles) through the French capital in a personal-best time of 2 hours, 18 minutes and 34 seconds. (AP)

Sports

Champions League Elite KO stage begins in Jeddah

JEDDAH, April 12: The Round of 16 and final stages of the 2025-2026 AFC Champions League Elite kick off today in Jeddah, with the competition running until April 25. The decisive phase will be staged across King Abdullah Sports City and Prince Abdullah Al Faisal Sports City, as Asia's top clubs battle for continental glory in a high-intensity atmosphere.

The West Region Round of 16 matches are set to take place today and tomorrow in a single-match knockout format, featuring Saudi giants Al Hilal, Al Ahli, and Al Ittihad, alongside Qatar's Al Sadd and Al Duhail, UAE clubs Al Wahda and Shabab Al Ahli, and Iran's Tractor FC.

The tournament will then move into its centralized final stage from April 16 to April 25, promising a packed schedule of elite-level clashes and heightened competition as teams chase the coveted title. Quarterfinal action begins on April 16, continues on April 17 and 18, while the semifinals are scheduled for April 20 and 21. The final will be held on April 25 at King Abdullah Sports City Stadium.

The draw has produced several blockbuster encounters. The winner of Al Hilal vs Al Sadd will meet Japan's Vissel Kobe, while the victor of Al Ahli (defending champions) vs Al Duhail will face Malaysia's Johor Darul Ta'zim.

On the other side, the winner of Al Ittihad vs Al Wahda will take on Japan's Machida Zelvia, while Buriram United of Thailand will meet the winner of Tractor vs Shabab Al



The iconic 'JEDDAH' sign stands tall under clear blue skies, with a gleaming trophy sculpture in the foreground and palm trees lining the waterfront promenade, highlighting the city's vibrant and modern coastal identity.

All knockout matches will be played in a single-leg format, adding further drama and unpredictability to the race for Asia's top club crown.

Kuwait Club finalizes Dammam camp

Qadsia coach Maaloul fine-tunes squad ahead of Gulf Champions League semis

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

DOHA, April 12: Qadsia continue its preparations for a crucial Gulf Champions League semifinal against Al-Rayyan by taking on Qatar's Al-Bidda in a friendly match today at 6:45 PM in Doha.

The Kuwaiti side has been holding a training camp in the Qatari capital since last Friday after the Gulf Cup Federation decided to stage the remaining matches of the competition in Doha.

In the other semifinal, Saudi Arabia's Al-Shabab will face Iraq's Zakho on the same day, with the winners set to meet in the final on April 23 at Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium.

Head coach Nabil Maaloul is expected to give most players a run-out in today's friendly as he assesses the squad ahead of the decisive clash against Al-Rayyan.

However, Qadsia will be without several key players. Bader Al-Mutawa, Talal Al-Fadhel, and Khaled Ibrahim did not travel due to work commitments, while Abdulaziz Wadi is sidelined through injury. There are also doubts over the availability of Mubarak Al-Fanani.

Bahraini professional Mehdi Humaidan has rejoined the squad after a short break in his home country following the suspension of sports activities in Kuwait earlier this month.



Qadsia goalkeepers strike a pose during a training session, showcasing team spirit and readiness ahead of upcoming fixtures.

Due to time constraints, Qadsia will play only one friendly, after delays in visa processing for foreign players and staff postponed the team's departure to Doha.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Club will wrap up its training camp in Dammam on Tuesday, where the team has been holding twice-daily sessions in preparation for its AFC Challenge League

quarterfinal against Oman's Al-Shabab on April 19.

The team is scheduled to travel to Kyrgyzstan on Wednesday to begin the final phase of preparations, and is expected to play one more friendly before departure.

Kuwait Club opened its camp with an emphatic 6-1 win over Saudi side Al-Taraji in its first warm-up match.

Birmingham Albion brings in Kuwaiti coaches to scout talent for training stint

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: English club Birmingham Albion has appointed a group of Kuwaiti coaches to take part in selecting a promising Kuwaiti player for a fully funded training and development experience at the club in England.

The coaching committee includes Dr. Nawaf Al-Kandari, Adel Fadel, and Bader Dehiman, who will help evaluate and identify the standout talent eligible for the program.

Tawari Madlol Al-Dhafiri, a member of Birmingham Albion's development committee, said the initiative aims to

support emerging Kuwaiti players and provide them with opportunities to gain experience in a professional European football environment.

He emphasized that the project focuses on developing and refining young talent, helping them grow technically and gain valuable exposure that could shape their future careers.

"This is an important step in supporting Kuwaiti talent and giving players a real chance to develop in a more advanced football setting. We hope the program achieves strong success," he said.

Tottenham spirals closer to relegation

De Zerbi gets off to bad start

LONDON, April 12, (AP): Tottenham's Premier League survival fight took another blow on Sunday after a 1-0 loss to Sunderland that left the London club rooted in the relegation zone.

In coach Roberto De Zerbi's first game in charge, Spurs fell to a 16th league loss of the season. Its 14-game winless run in the league dates back to Jan. 1.

Nordi Mukiele's deflected shot sealed the game at the Stadium of Light and plunged Tottenham's campaign deeper into crisis.

Tottenham is two points adrift of safety with six games to go. Its plight wasn't helped by relegation-fighting Nottingham Forest drawing 1-1 with Aston Villa.

Crystal Palace came back from 1-0 down to beat Newcastle 2-1 at Selhurst Park.

The numbers just keep on getting worse for Tottenham.

Now on its third coach of the season, it's more than three months since its last league win and just one point from a possible 24. This was a seventh defeat in eight games.

If the hope was that De Zerbi would provide an immediate bounce in form after replacing Igor Tudor, it didn't come in a typically toothless display at Sunderland.

While the new coach could point to bad luck, given the nature of Mukiele's 61st-minute winner, which took a wicked deflection off Micky van de Ven, his team rarely looked like finding a way back into the match - even during 11 minutes of added time at the end.

Next up for Spurs in De Zerbi's former club Brighton.

Forest moved three points clear of Spurs after a draw at the City Ground. Neco Williams' long-range shot leveled the game after a Murillo own goal gave Villa the lead.

Jean-Philippe Mateta saw a January move to AC Milan fall through on deadline day and is now having a big say in Palace's bid to end the season on a high.

The France forward scored in Thursday's Europa Conference League win against Fiorentina and hit a double as Palace came back against Newcastle. Two late goals turned the game at Selhurst Park after William Osula had given Newcastle a halftime lead. Mateta leveled in the 80th and then fired a winner from the penalty spot in the fourth minute of added time.

Palace leapfrogged Newcastle on goal difference to move up to 13th.



Nottingham Forest's Neco Williams, left, and Aston Villa's John McGinn battle for the ball during the Premier League soccer match between Nottingham Forest and Aston Villa, in Nottingham, England. (AP)

Union makes history with Marie-Louise as first woman to lead Bundesliga men's team

BERLIN, April 12, (AP): Union Berlin has appointed Marie-Louise Eta as the first female head coach in the men's Bundesliga as it bids to ensure its league survival.

She becomes the first woman to take charge of a men's team across the top divisions of Europe's "big five" soccer leagues. The 34-year-old Eta takes over from Steffen Baumgart, who was fired late Saturday with his assistants Danilo de Souza and Kevin McKenna after the team's 3-1 loss at last-place Heidenheim, Union announced just before midnight.

Eta, who was coaching Union's Under-19 men's team and agreed earlier this month to take over as coach of Union's women's team next season, has five games to secure the K\u00f6penick-based club's Bundesliga survival.

"Staying in the Bundesliga is not yet



In this file photo, Union Berlin's co-coach Marie-Louise Eta leads a soccer training session. (AP)

guaranteed given the point-differences in the lower half of the table. I'm happy that the club entrusts me with this challenging task," Eta told the club website. "One of Union's strengths has

always been our ability to pull together in such situations. And of course I'm convinced that we'll get the decisive points with the team."

Eta already made history with Union in 2023 as the first female assistant coach in the Bundesliga and across the top divisions of the "big five" leagues. She had to step in for media duties for head coach Nenad Bjelica when he was suspended for three games in 2024.

"I'm delighted that Marie-Louise Eta has agreed to take on this role on an interim basis before she becomes head coach of the women's first team as planned in the summer," Union sporting director Horst Heldt said in a statement.

Baumgart, a former Union player, was appointed during the 2024-25 winter break but Heldt said recent re-

sults prompted the club to take drastic action.

"We've had a completely disappointing second half of the season so far and we're not letting the table fool us - our situation remains precarious and we desperately need points to secure our place in the league."

Defeat in Heidenheim left Union in 11th place in the 18-team division, just seven points clear of St. Pauli in the relegation zone with five rounds remaining.

"Two wins out of 14 games since the winter break and the performances shown in recent weeks do not give us the confidence that we can turn things around with the current setup. We have therefore decided to make a fresh start," Heldt said. Union next hosts Wolfsburg, which is also fighting for survival, next weekend.

Milan booted after shock defeat

MILAN, April 12, (AP): After falling out of the Serie A title race, AC Milan is looking nervously at the teams behind it following a shock 3-0 loss at home to Udinese.

The Rossoneri are just three points above fourth-placed Juventus, which won at Atalanta 1-0.

AC Milan was loudly jeered off the field after its third defeat in four matches.

"It's part of the game: When you win you're good, when you lose you're not. Tonight the whistles are right, even if the team worked hard," Milan coach Massimiliano Allegri said. "Now we have to look at the (next) match, and this defeat must represent the opportunity to do better in the next one."

"The team must react. ... This defeat must make us understand that the Champions League place is at risk."

Nicol\u00f2 Zaniolo starred for Udinese at San Siro. He counterattacked from deep inside his own half and rode a couple of challenges before spreading it to the right for Arthur Atta,

whose cross was deflected in by Davide Baresaghi - going down as an own goal by the young Milan defender.

Zaniolo also set up Udinese's second in the 37th minute with a sensational cross from the right for Jurgen Ekkelenkamp's header.

Moments earlier, Keinan Davis had an effort pushed onto the crossbar by Milan goalkeeper Mike Maignan and Baresaghi had to clear an attempt off the line on the stroke of halftime.

The boos had already started by then and Milan was also roasted by its supporters at the break.

The Rossoneri's hopes of clawing something from the match all but evaporated in the 71st when Atta netted Udinese's third, feinting to shoot into the far corner before slotting into the bottom left.

Juventus coach Luciano Spalletti marked his recent contract extension by steering his team to a vital win against a direct rival.