



Kuwait condemns again attack on US President Page 2



Scan the QR code to access the Arab Times WhatsApp Channel

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026 / DHUL-QADAH 11, 1447 AH

emergency number 112

NO. 19191

16 PAGES

150 FILS

AMIR REPRESENTATIVE LEADS KUWAIT AT KEY G.C.C. TALKS

Jeddah summit powers unity push



Saudi Press Agency photos

Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Prince Mohammad bin Salman receives (left to right) Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, and Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani at the King Abdulaziz International Airport on Tuesday.

Saudi Crown Prince thanks leaders for joint action

JEDDAH, April 28, (KUNA): Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, arrived in Jeddah on Tuesday to lead Kuwait's delegation to the extraordinary

GCC consultative summit. Upon arrival at King Abdulaziz International Airport, His Highness was received by Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, GCC Secretary-General Jassem Al-Budaiwi, and Deputy Governor of the Makkah Region Continued on Page 5



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Iraq needs to govern itself

A SUCCESSFUL state is built on institutions, the most important of which are the armed forces, which represent its backbone.

The condition of the army is an indicator distinguishing failed states from successful ones where the armed forces operate under unified command.

Since 2003, Iraq has faced challenges in maintaining internal and external security, due to the absence of a force capable of ensuring strategic security decision-making.

Therefore, the measures taken by the Iraqi National Security Council can be seen as a first step toward establishing a mechanism to restrict weapons to the state, unify security and military decision-making, and end the fragmentation of authority among militias, some of which operate on behalf of the Iranian regime. This has contributed to numerous crises for the Iraqi people and neighboring countries over the past 23 years.

This step not only establishes the authority to enforce internal decisions but also contributes to building sound relations with neighboring countries,

especially in light of attacks launched from Iraq targeting Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE, and other neighboring states, amid the absence of an Iraqi deterrent force to prevent such attacks.

During regional tensions involving the United States, Israel, and Iran, statements attributed to the Popular Mobilization Forces were reported warning Syria against retaliatory actions for the attacks carried out by Hezbollah through terrorist cells or missile launches from Syrian territory.

Such actions led to strained relations between Iraq and the Gulf states, Syria, Jordan, and Turkey. Furthermore, they highlighted the absence of official Iraqi armed forces to prevent attacks carried out by these militias.

Continued on Page 5

Follow me on:

@Ahmedaljarallah

Ahmed aljarallah

ahmed@aljarallah.com



Scan QR code to visit the website: aljarallah.com



Crown Prince Diwan photo

His Highness the Amir's Representative, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, waves farewell before departing Riyadh following the GCC consultative summit.

Kuwait aviation authority strengthens passenger rights with 15-day limit for ticket, hotel refunds

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): The Public Authority for Civil Aviation has imposed stricter penalties on violators in the air transport market, obliging them to fully comply with Circular No. 12 of 2026 on refunding ticket and hotel bookings within a period not exceeding 15 working days, to safeguard passengers' rights.

In a press statement, the Complaints and Arbitration Committee Rapporteur Hamad Al-Arada said that the sixth meeting of the current year resulted in penalties against those violating laws, regulations, decisions and circulars issued by the authority.

He added that the committee emphasized the

need for market entities to cooperate with passengers at the present time regarding ticket and booking refunds in line with regulations governing the air transport sector in Kuwait.

He noted that the meeting also reviewed the outcomes of inspection campaigns to ensure compliance with approved procedures.

DM tours Air Force sites

Kuwait-UK talks reinforce military cooperation drive

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): Kuwait's Defense Minister Sheikh Abdullah Ali Al-Salem Al-Sabah held talks on Tuesday with visiting British Minister for Defense Readiness and Industry Luke Pollard, focusing on efforts to ratchet up military and defense relations.

The talks also looked into Kuwait's "long-standing" ties with London, in addition to matters of mutual concern, which include defense readiness and pushing forward bilateral cooperation, said a Kuwaiti defense ministry statement.

Continued on Page 5



Ministry of Defense photo Kuwait's Defense Minister receives visiting British Minister for Defense Readiness and Industry.

Day by Day

CALIPH Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz once accidentally stepped on a man's foot. The man asked him, "Are you blind?" Umar replied, "No."

Those accompanying Umar moved to discipline the man, but Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz stopped them and said, "He asked, and I answered him. That is all."

Dear friend, brave is the one who avoids quarrels rather than wins them. Wisdom lies in avoiding disputes rather than seeking victory in them. ... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Justice Ministry seeks full return to 100% attendance

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

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Ministry of Justice requested the Head of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to approve increasing employee attendance at all its facilities to 100 percent, instead of the previously set rate of 30 percent.

In its letter dated April 27, 2026, the ministry affirmed that the request stems from the need to operate its facilities at full capacity to ensure the smooth and uninterrupted flow of work.

The ministry emphasized that the nature of its work requires full employee attendance to guarantee the quick completion of judicial and administrative transactions and to ensure the smooth delivery of services to the public.

Meanwhile, the Public Prosecution issued Administrative Circular No. 13/2026, mandating the resumption of full operations in all its sectors, including the District Attorney's offices, specialized offices, and the Public Prosecution Office.

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait, Spain explore deeper aviation sector collaboration

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): President of the Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Sabah discussed Tuesday with Spain's Ambassador to Kuwait Manuel Hernandez Gamallo ways to enhance bilateral cooperation in civil aviation.

In a statement to KUNA, the authority said the meeting reviewed bilateral cooperation and explored means to further develop it in support of air transport and technical and operational expertise exchange.

The discussions also covered prospects for expanding collaboration across various civil aviation fields, contributing to strengthening bilateral relations and advancing the air transport system.



Civil Aviation photo Public Authority for Civil Aviation Chief receives Spain's Ambassador to Kuwait.

Both sides stressed the importance of continued coordination and expertise exchange to enhance the efficiency of the civil aviation sector and support its growth in both countries.

Gulf energy shakeup as UAE quits OPEC

ABU DHABI, April 28, (KUNA): The United Arab Emirates announced on Tuesday its decision to withdraw from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and OPEC+, with the move set to take effect on May 1, 2026.

The Emirates News Agency (WAM) said the decision aligns with the country's long-term strategic and economic vision and the development of its energy sector, including accelerating investment in domestic energy production and strengthening its role as a responsible and reliable producer, anticipating the future of global energy markets.

The decision follows a comprehensive review of the country's production policy and current and future capacity, and aligns with national interests and its commitment to meeting market needs amid geopolitical fluctuations and disruptions

in the Arabian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz that affect supply dynamics. At the same time, global energy demand continues to grow, WAM added.

It noted that the stability of the global energy system depends on the availability of flexible, reliable, and affordable supplies, adding that the UAE has invested to efficiently and responsibly meet evolving demand while prioritizing supply stability, cost, and sustainability.

The agency said the decision comes after decades of cooperation, noting that the UAE joined OPEC in 1967 and maintained its membership following the country's establishment in 1971, contributing throughout this period to supporting oil market stability and enhancing dialogue among producing countries.

Continued on Page 5

2 Evil designs fail to gag voice of truth



KD 85.3 mn stc's revenues first three months ended 31 March 2026 with KD 9.2 mn net profit

9



NBK's 1Q 2026 performance underscores the resilience of its diversified business model in effectively mitigating the impact of geopolitical volatility



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:44 Asr 03:21
 Sunrise .. 05:09 Maghrib .. 06:22
 Zohr 11:46 Isha 07:45

Kuwait condemns again attack on US President



Sheikh Sabah Khaled



JD Vance

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Monday conducted a phone call with US Vice President JD Vance.

During the phone conversation, His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to US President Donald Trump.

His Highness the Crown Prince reiterated Kuwait's condemnation of the terrorist attack targeting the US President on Saturday, underlining that this cowardly act would only make him more determined to address all challenges to serve the US.

For his part, the US Vice President reaffirmed US support for the State of Kuwait regarding all measures it may take to safeguard its security and stability.

They also exchanged views on the latest regional and international developments and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz as well as relevant challenges and serious economic problems affecting global maritime navigation and trade, and energy supply security.

They further reviewed historical and distinguished bilateral relations between the State of Kuwait and the US, and military and security ties, stressing the ironclad strategic alliance between both friendly countries.

At the end of the phone call, His Highness the Crown Prince commended unwavering US support for the security and territorial integrity of the State of Kuwait, wishing the US President good health, and the US and its friendly people unending progress and welfare.

Schools, colleges role eyed to up human rights record

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Ambassador Sheikh Jawaher Ibrahim Al-Sabah stressed the importance of sustained cooperation with academic institutions to bolster Kuwait's human rights record.

Chairing a meeting of the national committee with representatives of academic and scientific institutions, she underscored the need for regular consultations to advance Kuwait's voluntary pledges, particularly within its UN Human Rights Council membership.

Participants included the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies, Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute, colleges of the Ministries of Defense and Interior, Kuwait University, and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training.

The meeting coincided with Kuwait's third year of membership in the UN Human Rights Council and aimed to follow up on international commitments and promote human dignity in



Sheikha Jawaher Al-Sabah

line with Kuwait Vision 2035.

Discussions covered training and capacity-building, including updating academic curricula to reflect international developments and align with relevant standards and obligations.

Sheikha Jawaher said the meeting forms part of ongoing efforts by the national committee, in coordination with state bodies, to strengthen institutional alignment and fulfill international commitments.

Turkish envoy lauds Kuwait relief efforts

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): Kuwait has set a distinguished example in humanitarian work through its continued efforts and generous initiatives in supporting affected populations worldwide, said Turkish Ambassador to the country Tuba Nur Sonmez.

Speaking to KUNA, following her meeting with Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society Khaled Al-Mughamis, Sonmez said Kuwait, represented by the KRCS, plays a prominent humanitarian role at both regional and international levels, praising the society's initiatives and ongoing engagement with various humanitarian causes.

The ambassador noted that the meeting provided an important opportunity to explore prospects for future cooperation and enhance joint coordination in humanitarian and relief fields, affirming Turkiye's keenness to strengthen cooperation with the society in a way that serves shared humanitarian goals.

In turn, the KRCS Chairman affirmed the society's commitment to strengthening international partnerships with various humanitarian entities to help address growing global challenges.

Al-Mughamis said humanitarian work represents one of the key bridges that enhance international cooperation and open broader horizons for joint coordination, noting that cooperation with the Turkish side spans years of joint work in several humanitarian and relief initiatives.

He added that the society has implemented several humanitarian projects in Turkiye in recent years, including support for Syrian refugees and the provision of assistance to them, alongside other development programs, reflecting the depth of humanitarian ties between the two countries.

He also noted that the meeting reviewed Kuwait's key humanitarian efforts to provide relief and assistance to affected populations worldwide, as well as ways to enhance bilateral cooperation and exchange expertise in humanitarian work.



Sonmez

Evil designs fail to gag voice of truth

Prominent figures express solidarity with Al-Jarallah on 41st 'versary of murder bid

By Bassam Al-Qassas

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The 41st anniversary of the assassination attempt on Dean of Kuwaiti journalism and Editor-in-Chief of the Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah, who is a prominent writer, serves as a poignant reminder of the major trials that free expression has been facing throughout the Arab world.

More than a personal assault, that day was a strike against the professional journalistic ethos, tackling regional and national concerns with courage and accountability.

Commemorating this event underscores the enduring presence of independent voices, which persist in spite of efforts to suppress them. It highlights the power of dedicated journalism to rise above hardship and secure a meaningful, permanent influence.

Ongoing tributes continue to mark this date, positioning it as a testament to the strength of free speech and as a celebration of a career in media that essentially shaped the Arab and Gulf media landscapes.

On this occasion, Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah stated "we stand before a painful event etched in our national and media memory. Nevertheless, it also reflects the deep impact of the free word when it is aligned with the truth and the nation. It was an assassination attempt on an outstanding journalistic voice that expressed the concerns of his country, facing challenges with unwavering faith in his journalistic mission. For decades, Ahmed Al-Jarallah has remained a model of the responsible national journalist, one who never wavered in the midst of adversity, as he rather continued to perform his role with courage and professionalism. This anniversary affirms that those who uphold principles leave an indelible mark, and that the honest word remains stronger than all attempts to silence it."

Diwanias

Secretary General of Kuwaiti Diwanias Fahad Abdulrahman Al-Muajil said "today marks 41 years since the assassination attempt on Dean of Kuwaiti journalism Ahmed Al-Jarallah. This incident was a litmus test for the value of free speech in facing the forces of darkness. The assassins wanted to silence an influential voice, but in reality, they confirmed that the honest word is stronger than violence and that the role of those who convey a national message cannot be extinguished by intimidation. Throughout his long career, Al-Jarallah proved that responsible media is a partner in protecting the homeland and defending its causes, and that journalism is not just a profession but a message and a stance. This anniversary is an occasion to recall the value of professional courage and genuine belonging, and to reaffirm the position of Kuwaiti journalism in serving the nation and society."

Ambassador Abdulrahman Al-Otaibi, a seasoned diplomat, pointed out that the anniversary of the assassination attempt on Al-Jarallah is not just a passing incident in the annals of time, as it is a watershed moment revealing a critical juncture in the history of the region, a time when free speech paid a heavy price.

"At that moment, the target was not really an individual, but the idea, profession and role that are always at the heart of tension between truth and power. Recalling this incident after more than four decades opens the door to reflection on the value of steadfastness in facing violence and on the ability of societies to overcome attempts to silence dissenting voices. The incident, along with the shock and widespread expressions of solidarity, served as a profound lesson that words can be targeted, but they cannot be assassinated. It also solidified in the collective memory the understanding that freedom of expression is not a privilege to be taken lightly, but a responsibility that is preserved through perseverance and sacrifice. For the present genera-



Fahad Al-Jarba



Faisal Al-Jazzaf



Fahad Al-Muajil



Abdulaziz Al-Dughhaishim



Robert Fares



Abdulrahman Al-Otaibi



Hamad Al-Baseis



Saud Al-Babtain



Sattam Al-Jalal



Mohammad Al-Sabr



Saud Al-Roumi



Fahad Al-Rish

tion, this anniversary serves as a dual call: a call to understand the contexts of the experience of the region, where conflicts sometimes translated into violence, and a call to embrace dialogue and openness as a civilized alternative to confrontation. It is a reminder that the stability we enjoy today did not arise from nothing, because it is the product of accumulated resilience and awareness. This anniversary stands as a testament to the fact that history is not read solely through the lens of events, but also through their lasting impact -- a belief that words carry weight and that protecting them is not the responsibility of one individual, but the commitment of an entire society," he added.

Veteran diplomat Ambassador Saud Al-Roumi asserted that the assassination attempt on Al-Jarallah was an attempt to silence the truth, extinguish the voice of the free pen, and undermine the mission of the media to uncover the truth. "It was an attempt to steal the Arab pen, before it was an attempt to steal the pen of Al-Jarallah. The present generation views him as an Arab knight defending the truth, while the future generations will consider him a guiding light, affirming that truth always triumphs," he stressed.

United Nations Ambassador and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al-Awazem Charitable Foundation Hamad Zaid Al-Baseis stated that the assassination attempt on Al-Jarallah in 1985 was a painful event and a turning point in the history of Kuwaiti journalism, affirming that the free word endures.

"Today marks a painful anniversary, yet it embodies resilience and steadfastness. The incident proved that free media in Kuwait is deeply rooted and that its people are capable of facing challenges, no matter how severe. We commemorate this anniversary not only to grieve, but also to renew our commitment to protect freedom of speech and the truth. We, at Al-Awazem Charitable Foundation, confirm that what happened 41 years ago will not be forgotten and will remain a lesson for future generations about the importance of adhering to national principles and values, and the necessity of supporting every voice that seeks to uphold the truth and serve the nation. We ask Allah to protect Kuwait and its people, to perpetuate the blessings of security and stability

upon it, and for it to remain a beacon of freedom and responsible media," he added.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Retired Officers Association Brigadier General Faisal Al-Jazzaf said "we stand at a pivotal point embodying the heavy price that advocates free speech may pay in defense of the truth. This occasion is not only a historical event, but a reaffirmation that targeting the press is an attack on the consciousness of societies and their right to know. Based on this perspective, we commend the career of Al-Jarallah, who remains a prominent figure in the media landscape with a bold vision and an influential voice, shaping public awareness and defending the causes of his nation and people. The association affirms its deep pride in its media and intellectual icons, and its unequivocal rejection of all forms of violence against free speech."

Opinions

Abdulaziz Al-Dughhaishim stressed "we reaffirm that targeting those who express their opinions freely has never been able to silence their message or diminish their impact. Al-Jarallah represents a complete media school, one keen on defending the causes of the nation and the courageous stances that made him one of the most important journalism figures in Kuwait, the Gulf and the Arab world. This anniversary is not merely a historical event, considering its importance in protecting freedom of expression and preserving the role of responsible journalism in shaping public awareness. Therefore, we reaffirm our appreciation for his illustrious career and his contributions that cemented his position as an influential national and media voice for decades."

Businessman Sattam Al-Jalal stated that Al-Jarallah is an activist and political expert who serves his country with integrity and honor. He indicated that such anniversary proves that those who speak the truth face challenges with steadfastness and faith, wielding the power of the word in completing their mission.

He pointed out that throughout his career, Al-Jarallah proved that journalism is a national responsibility and a stance, not just a profession. "He is an example of courage

and clarity, which made him one of the major media figures in Kuwait and the region. We commemorate this anniversary with utmost appreciation for his career. He always emphasizes the importance of protecting freedom of speech and supporting all those who contribute to the advancement of the nation," he asserted.

Fahad Al-Jarba revealed that "in the memory of Kuwaiti journalism, April 1985 is an unforgettable milestone, not only because it witnessed a serious security incident, but also because it clearly revealed the value of the word when it is truthful and its price when it is impactful. On that day, the esteemed journalist and writer, Al-Jarallah, was subjected to an assassination attempt in front of his office in Shuwaikh, where several bullets were fired at him in an attempt to silence a voice that was accustomed to writing without hesitation. That incident was not trivial, it was clear message that the word expressing a stance can be disturbing and even targeted.

Steadfast

"Nonetheless, what happened afterward was more significant, as Al-Jarallah did not only survive, he emerged from that assassination attempt even more present and steadfast, as if the bullets made him more determined. Through his editorship of the Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers, he has been known for his outspoken style, clear political analysis, and boldness in addressing sensitive issues without ambiguity. He does not write to please anyone, but to express his convictions, putting him at the forefront of the media landscape and made him the target of those who could not accept this kind of perspective. Six bullets struck his body, but they did not break his resolve. Instead, that moment became a testament to the fact that words spoken out of conviction are not easily silenced. After the incident, Al-Jarallah continued his journalistic work, maintaining his approach and affirming that retreat has never been an option.

"Recalling this incident today is not just a historical narrative, as it is the reaffirmation that journalism is not only a profession but a responsibility and that those who wield the power of the written word must understand its weight and impact. It also serves as a reminder that Kuwait, despite all the challenges it faced, remains a land that embraces freedom of opinion and protects the space for expression.

"Al-Jarallah remains an example of a journalist who was neither changed by pressure nor deterred by threats. Experience strengthened his resolve. This is a message for everyone working in the field of journalism -- that the honest word could be costly, but its impact remains the truest and most lasting. Words are fought against, but they never die."

Robert Fares, a journalist and a novelist on the Islamic Movements and Minorities Portal, pointed out that "the assassination attempt on Al-Jarallah is no longer just a security event in the annals of history, because it has become a defining moment in the national memory. It embodies the implications of political conflict, the price of words, and the limits of disagreement when it descends into violence. In the collective memory, the incident was a shocking moment that revealed the instability then, yet at the same time, it revived fundamental questions about freedom of expression, responsibility, and rejection of the elimination of opponents outside the purview of the law. For the present generation, it is a historical lesson that disagreement does not justify violence, and that a nation is built only through dialogue and the rule of law. It is an event from the past, yet it still conveys a moral and political message at present."

Fahad Al-Rish emphasized that "Al-Jarallah was born for journalism and politics. He is a wellspring of enlightened and bold political thought, so he is unique in terms of his articles and his daring arguments, which almost cost him his life. He never wavered, even an inch, from his convictions against obscurantism. He is a distinguished figure in the region, so he deserves the title, 'Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism'. He focuses on the issues of the nation and the Arab world. He does not compromise with anyone. He almost paid a heavy price when he was targeted for assassination 41 years ago, yet he never wavered from his patriotic stances. He became a school of thought in the world of journalism and patriotism. Young media professionals must enroll in the school of Ahmed Al-Jarallah."

Stick to rules, upgrade systems to expedite citizens', expats transactions: Al-Wuhaib

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Ministry of Interior Undersecretary Major General Abdulwahab Al-Wuhaib visited the Nationality and Residency Affairs Sector, the Citizens Service Center in Ardiya, and Residency Affairs Department in Hawally Governorate to assess the workflow and quality of services.

Head of the Nationality and Residency Affairs Sector Brigadier General Fawaz Nasser Al-Roumi, along with several officials, warmly welcomed Al-Wuhaib.



Al-Wuhaib

During the visit, Al-Wuhaib conveyed the greetings of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef to the employees, praising their efforts and underscoring the importance of teamwork, as well as adherence to the highest standards of accuracy and discipline.

He was briefed on the operational mechanisms and electronic systems in use, and their role in improving performance and raising efficiency.

He also toured the reception and transaction processing sections in the center, where he reviewed the readiness of the technical and administrative staff, their compliance with regulations and instructions, and procedures followed within the service facilities.

He stressed the importance of continuously improving service quality, addressing obstacles faced by clients, and raising performance levels in all sectors.

He emphasized the need to strictly abide by the regulations and procedures to ensure the highest level of accuracy and speed in processing transactions for citizens and residents.

He added that the ministry remains committed to supporting digital transformation and upgrading electronic systems to expedite transaction processing and improve service quality.

He also highlighted the importance of continuous performance development and achieving institutional excellence.

On the other hand, Al-Roumi expressed his appreciation to the Undersecretary for his unwavering support, while commending his close follow up of the workflow and his commitment to improve performance and services.

Anti-Gulf regime in Iran faces imminent collapse

"IN 1969, 57 years ago, I was studying economics and political science when I learned the definition of an underdeveloped country as one characterized by two main features - a large population and dependence on a single commodity, such as bananas, cocoa, or oil," columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Later, the term shifted from 'underdeveloped countries' to 'developing countries.'"

"I do not find this definition sufficient. In my view, another characteristic often seen in such countries is poor relations with their neighbors.



Ahmad Al-Dawas

"Some apply this description to Iran, as it does not seek positive relations with the peaceful Arab Gulf states. Look at the level of development and progress achieved by Gulf countries and the strong connection between their people and their rulers.

"The opposite is happening in Iran - worsening living conditions, widespread corruption, and authorities suppressing protests, ignoring the demands of protestors for a decent life, and subjecting them to torture since the overthrow of the Shah in 1979.

"In recent weeks, Iran activated terrorist cells, which were apprehended by security authorities in Kuwait and the UAE. It also mobilized allied groups in Iraq that hold significant influence there. These groups launched missiles and drones toward Gulf countries, claiming to target American bases and interests, but in reality, the attacks targeted an oil refinery, a power plant, and a desalination facility in Kuwait.

"Kuwait's Ministry of Defense announced that Kuwait had come under attack from Iran. A gas facility in the UAE was also hit, resulting in deaths and injuries. Iranian attacks on Gulf states continued.

"The true nature of Iranian backwardness was on full display when Iran tried to frighten countries in the region with the possibility of a radioactive leak.

"In early April, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi warned that any leak from the Bushehr nuclear power plant on the Gulf coast could threaten lives not only in Tehran but also in the Gulf states. What kind of neighbors are these?

"I would like to blame Iraq. How have pro-Iranian armed groups gained such influence within Iraq? How have they been able to control political decisions and acquire such quantities and types of weapons?

"At the same time, Iranians in the UAE receive good treatment despite their country's aggression.

"An Emirati hospital provided free medical care to an Iranian visitor who was stranded due to the war. The visitor said her mother received comprehensive treatment, including examinations, care, and medication, all free of charge. She described the UAE as a place filled with humanity, respect, and compassion, and expressed a desire to repay the kindness and generosity she experienced from the UAE society.

"I always say that nothing stays the same forever.

"The stability of the Gulf countries, or even global stability, cannot continue indefinitely. What happened, happened. Countries go through phases similar to economic cycles - recession, recovery, growth, and then recession again.

"Iran has not learned enough from history and lacks competent economic ministers, which has contributed to its decline.

"Iranian officials have feelings of hostility towards Arabs. Based on the principle that 'nothing remains the same forever', the Iranian people will one day overthrow the regime."

Also:

"In light of the rapidly escalating challenges facing the region and the world, national unity in Kuwait stands out not merely as a slogan raised on special occasions, but as a deeply rooted principle and a strong barrier against which many trials and crises throughout history have broken," **Muzahim Al-Rumaij** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The true strength of this nation has never rested solely in the abundance of its resources, but in the sacred bond that unites the people with their political leadership, embodied by His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait.

"Rallying behind His Highness the Amir represents a fundamental pillar upon which Kuwaiti stability rests. This unique relationship between ruler and people is not merely a political arrangement, but a social and emotional bond that is renewed daily through trust and loyalty.

"His Highness the Amir's wisdom and insightful vision in governing the

state require that citizens and institutions stand united behind his directives, which places Kuwait's supreme interest above all else.

"Experience has shown that Kuwait's strength lies in its diversity, forged within the framework of citizenship. National unity means rejecting division and distancing oneself from hate speech, sectarianism, tribalism, and factionalism.

"In the halls of governance and within Kuwaiti diwanias, differences fade, and the Kuwaiti flag remains the umbrella under which all find shelter.

"A nation is not built by scattered efforts, but by hearts united in love for the land and loyalty to its leadership.

"The upcoming phase requires a high level of public awareness. Preserving the nation's security, as well as its economic and social stability, calls for a responsible spirit that understands the magnitude of the trust it carries.

"Rallying behind the leadership means working as one team to achieve Kuwait's future vision and supporting the reform and development process led by His Highness the Amir with firmness and determination.

"Kuwait will remain, God willing, a haven of security and stability, as long as national unity guides its people and loyalty to the leadership remains its guiding principle.

"Commitment to our national principles and unity behind our Amir is the most practical and powerful response to those who seek to undermine the security of this nation.

"May God protect Kuwait, its Amir, and its people from all harm."



"The cemetery witnessed a large turnout, including politicians, public figures, ambassadors, and many fans of the late actress Hayat Al-Fahad," Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The large crowd at her funeral on Monday was remarkable, extending beyond relatives and friends. All of Kuwait mourns the loss of its prominent figures, from princes and politicians to intellectuals, scholars, and artists.

"The strong public presence at Hayat Al-Fahad's funeral stemmed from both their personal affection for her and their appreciation for her artistic work and wit.

"The gathering was not only to bid farewell to Hayat Al-Fahad, but also a tribute to Kuwait, the country that gave rise to her and to many artists, writers, intellectuals, and athletes.

"Those who know Kuwait well do not need a description of its rich and vibrant culture, with all its diverse elements.

"Kuwait is not just land or a symbol but it is a nation with a unique identity. Societies share common traits, yet they also contain positive differences that reflect the nation's richness, along with individual qualities that set each person apart.

"Hayat Al-Fahad was an ordinary woman, like many Kuwaiti women who have left their mark on the world stage, each achieving success in her own field while sharing a common bond in Kuwait.

"Many distinguished Kuwaitis have passed away without receiving recognition, and local, Arab, and international media did not mention them, while media outlets around the world reported on the death of Hayat Al-Fahad. This shows that Hayat Al-Fahad was not just a local artist confined to Kuwait. She had fans and followers of her television, film, and theatrical work around the world.

"Many people do not shed tears at the passing of relatives or friends. I have personally witnessed cases where some show no visible grief and bury their loved ones with emotional detachment, as if they were burying a plastic toy manufactured in a Chinese factory. These people have hardened hearts.

"Hayat Al-Fahad's death showed that she was not just an artist for Kuwait or the Gulf, but for the entire Arab world, from Kuwait to the shores of Mauritania and Morocco. Her fame extended beyond the borders of the Arab world.

"When news of her passing appears on television channels and front pages along with major political developments, and is the lead story on television screens, it reflects her stature as a global artist.

"Kuwait has every right to take pride in its creative talents in various fields. It contributed art, culture, and journalism to the world long before it contributed oil.

"May God have mercy on Hayat Al-Fahad, who is no longer with us physically, but remains in the hearts of her admirers in Kuwait and around the world."

"His Highness the Amir's wisdom and insightful vision in governing the

— Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

Debtor fails to escape law

Reimburse two women's cash: court

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

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Court of Appeals overturned the ruling of a lower court that dismissed the case filed against a debtor residing in London.

The higher court ordered the defendant to pay two women a total of £69,900 (or its equivalent in Kuwaiti Dinars), plus court costs and attorney's fees.

The court also granted the plaintiffs the right to track the assets of the debtor and take



Al-Habib

enforcement measures against his holdings and shares abroad in accordance with the law.

The case was filed when the two appellants, who owned shares in a London-based company, agreed with the defendant to sell these shares to him.

However, he failed to fulfill his obligation to pay the agreed amount, prompting them to seek legal recourse to claim their rights.

The Court of First Instance dismissed the

case, but the Court of Appeals found the ruling flawed in terms of the application of the law and deficient in its reasoning.

The Court of Appeals affirmed the defendant's obligation to pay the value of the disputed shares, as per the signed contract and the documents related to the case.

The court also ruled the case inadmissible against the second respondent, because it was filed against an unauthorized party.

The two women were represented by Attorney Houra Al-Habib who presented arguments and submitted memoranda and documents affirming her clients' rights, which the court upheld in its final ruling.

Plaintiff's folly costs him KD 5,000 compensation

By Marlon Aquino

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Court of First Instance dismissed a compensation claim amounting to KD 5,000, rendering it void, as the plaintiff failed to comply with a court order to serve notice to one of the defendants, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The case was filed by the plaintiff who demanded that the defendants, including a commercial company, should pay KD 5,001 provisional compensation.

The claim was based on an earlier incident, when the parties were referred to the Criminal

Court for fraud. The case concluded with an acquittal, while the civil component was referred to the competent court.

During the proceedings, the court referred the case to the Experts Department at the Ministry of Justice.

Following submission of the expert report, the court instructed the plaintiff to serve notice to one of the defendants. However, the plaintiff did not comply despite being granted a reasonable timeframe to do so, prompting the court to suspend the case for one month.

When the proceedings resumed, the court

found that the plaintiff remained in violation of the suspension order.

Accordingly, the court applied Article 70 of the Civil Procedure Code and dismissed the case.

Meanwhile, defense lawyer, Attorney Israa Al-Haddad, closely followed up the litigation and submitted the defense memoranda. She argued for the enforcement of legal consequences arising from the plaintiff's procedural violations.

The court adopted this position in its ruling, emphasizing the importance of adhering to legally prescribed deadlines and procedures to uphold the integrity of the judicial process.

Other Voices

The colors of my life and the greatest breach

By Ahmad alsarraf

Crimes involving embezzlement of public funds witnessed a significant and unprecedented decrease during 2025, declining by 67 percent compared to 2024.

According to an article published in Al-Qabas daily, the number of such cases fell to 73, compared to 221 in 2024. This decline was not limited to public funds cases alone, but also extended to other corruption-related crimes.

Bribery and abuse of power cases decreased by 27.8 percent, while forgery in official documents dropped by 9.9 percent, reflecting a general improvement in indicators of legal compliance and transparency.

These positive and encouraging developments are the result of the firm enforcement of laws and the implementation of deterrent measures, something that had been lacking for years.

This article published by Al-Qabas daily reminded me of an article I wrote six years ago titled "... and the Colors of My Life," which I am republishing here in brief.

Like many others, I was influenced by the people I met, and I learned a great deal from most of them.

My grandfather and father played a significant role in forming my character, values, and the way I interacted with others, both professionally and socially.

Working at a private bank in my late teens allowed me to meet prominent and distinguished individuals, including members of foreign management, Indian colleagues, and board members.

I do not claim to be a paragon of virtue or integrity, but I acknowledge that I have been influenced by the good qualities of everyone who has entered my life, and I am grateful for their contributions.

However, I have always wondered about the mindset of a con artist while committing fraud. Do they truly consider the consequences of their actions? What happens if they are caught? Do they have a

backup plan? What about financial penalties, the possibility of imprisonment, and the damage to their reputation and that of their family?

The connection between this introduction and the subject of this article might be difficult to explain.

A wealthy citizen and his son, both former senior officials from a prominent family, carried out a forgery operation considered the largest and most unusual of its kind in Kuwait's history.

In 2004, they obtained a permit to construct a 20-story hotel with a total area of 24,000 square meters. They secured all the necessary approvals, electricity was connected, and everything appeared to be in order.

Later, they submitted a request for official approval for a copy of all project plans and building permits, claiming the originals had been lost. However, the municipality later discovered, likely by chance, that the citizen, his son, and the contractor had forged all municipal inspection documents, including supervision completion reports, the electricity connection approval, and the building permit itself.

They had falsified the signatures of all relevant government entities, engineers, and supervisors in order to conceal serious building violations.

The case was referred to court, and all three parties were sentenced to prison after being found guilty at all levels of litigation. The original permit was for a building with an area of 24,000 square meters, while in reality its size reached approximately 60,000 square meters.

The building still stands today, serving as a reminder of a period many hope will not be repeated.

The son avoided serving his sentence by fleeing abroad, as did the contractor. Due to special circumstances, the father was later pardoned.

We extend our congratulations to Ambassador Hamad Suleiman Al-Mashaan on the issuance of the decree that appointed him as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.



email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Surge of activity seen in Kuwait courts: statistics

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

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Statistics issued by the Statistics and Research Department at the Ministry of Justice revealed a surge in judicial activity at the First Instance and Appeals courts in February 2026.

The data showed that the total number of non-criminal cases pending in the Court of First Instance reached 41,052, compared to 10,280 new cases and 16,617 adjudicated cases or a completion rate of 40.5 percent.

Commercial/partial civil cases accounted for the largest share, while bankruptcy and sales cases recorded the lowest rates.

Geographically, the Capital Governorate Court recorded the highest number of new, pending and adjudicated cases, while the Jahra Governorate Court recorded the highest completion rate at 44.3 percent, and the lowest was the Financial Markets Court at 25.2 percent.

On criminal cases, 17,005 cases were received, 44,295 were pending, and 18,981 were adjudicated -- an overall completion rate of 42.9 percent.

Misdemeanor cases constituted the largest percentage, while the appealed misdemeanor cases reached the highest completion rate at 67.4 percent.

The Electronic Notification Department at the Court of First Instance recorded 26,435 incoming notifications and 23,599 of which were completed or 89.3 percent completion rate. The Capital Governorate Court had the highest completion rate with 96.6 percent.

The Court of Appeals had a remarkable performance, with a completion rate of 73.8 percent for non-criminal cases -- 3,394 new cases were registered and 3,626 cases were adjudicated.

The completion rate for criminal cases reached 75.8 percent, with felony cases in the Capital Governorate achieving the highest completion rate at 96.2 percent.

The Court of Appeals registered a total of 4,384 new cases and 6,125 pending cases, 4,543 of which were adjudicated or a completion rate of 74.2 percent. Farwaniya Court achieved the highest completion rate at 97.3 percent.

On electronic notifications in the Court of Appeals, the completion rate reached 83.4 percent of the total of 9,370 notifications, with Hawally, Jahra and Ahmadi courts achieving 100 percent completion rate.

Nazaha, Fatwa to strengthen anti-corruption cooperation

Officials explore legal integration to enhance governance frameworks

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Chairperson of the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha), Dr. Rana Al-Fares, met on Monday with the Head of the Fatwa and Legislation Department, Counselor Salah Al-Majed,

to discuss ways to enhance the integration of efforts to combat corruption and consolidate integrity, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This came in a statement issued by Nazaha following Dr. Al-Fares's visit to the headquarters of the Fatwa and Legislation Department, as part of a series of visits to entities concerned with law enforcement, promoting integrity and governance, strengthening the rule of law, and improving institutional performance in addressing corruption-related challenges.

According to the statement, Dr. Al-Fares affirmed that ways to enhance joint cooperation in protecting legislation and improving the efficiency of legal frameworks related to combating corruption were discussed, in addition to the role of legal entities in supporting corruption perception indices and improving Kuwait's ranking in international indicators.

She stressed that Nazaha's Board of Directors is moving forward with the implementation of a comprehensive national strategy aimed at eradicating corruption at its roots and promoting an environment of integrity and transparency, in cooperation with various government institutions.

Meanwhile, Counselor Al-Majed stressed the importance of integration between legal and regulatory bodies, noting that the Fatwa and Legislation Department is keen to support national efforts by developing legislation and closing legal gaps, in order to enhance the protection of public funds.



Nazaha photo

Dr. Rana Al-Fares, Head of the Public Authority for Combating Corruption (Nazaha), discusses with Counselor Salah Al-Majed, Head of the Fatwa and Legislation Department, ways to enhance efforts to combat corruption.

PAAET, PAM boost labor market cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Director General of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), Dr. Hassan Mohammed Al-Fajjam, received the Director General of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM), Rabab Abdullah Al-Osaimi, in the presence of senior officials from both sides, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the meeting, they discussed ways to enhance joint cooperation and align educational outcomes with the demands of the labor market. They also discussed ways to strengthen collabora-

tion, particularly in workforce testing and skills verification, and explored mechanisms to align education and training outputs with labor market requirements through the exchange of data on future job needs.

Both sides stressed the importance of enhancing field training opportunities for PAAET students in private sector institutions to provide them with practical experience before graduation, thereby strengthening their readiness to join the labor market directly.

The importance of encouraging Kuwaiti gradu-

ates to join the private sector was also emphasized, along with highlighting the professional and legislative advantages that support job stability.

They stressed the need to continuously monitor labor market requirements and guide students toward the most in-demand specializations.

Al-Fajjam emphasized PAAET's commitment to expanding partnerships with national institutions, noting that cooperation with PAM is a cornerstone for developing academic and training programs that align with development requirements.

Efforts to strengthen regional stability

Kuwaiti FM holds diplomatic talks with Canada, Egypt and Oman counterparts

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received a phone call Monday from Canadian counterpart Anita Anand.

The two sides touched on the latest regional and global developments and ways to enhance the region's stability.

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Monday a phone call from Egypt's Minister of Foreign Affairs,



Sheikh Jarrah

Immigration and Egyptians Abroad Dr. Bader Abdelatty.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the two sides discussed the latest regional developments and ongoing efforts in this regard, as well as ways to enhance regional and international security and stability.

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call on Monday with Oman's Foreign Minister Bader Al-Busaidi.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that the two sides discussed the latest regional developments and ongoing efforts in this regard, as well as ways to enhance regional and international security and stability.

Navigating regional maritime challenges

KCCI draft executive regulations finalized and awaiting approval

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Chairman of the Transitional Committee at Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Constitutional Law Professor Dr. Mohammad Al-Faili confirmed that the committee finalized the draft executive regulations for the new KCCI Law and submitted them to the relevant authorities about a year ago.

He told the newspaper that this step is one of the most significant accomplishments of the committee in restructuring the operations of KCCI and modernizing its legal and institutional frameworks.

He said "the committee carried out its core duties, foremost of which is the preparation of the executive regulations – a matter that has become widely known and discussed. These regulations were submitted, along with the technical recommendations aimed at easing and accelerating the implementation of the new law."

He clarified that setting the date for the board elections of KCCI does not fall within the mandate of the committee, as it necessitates legal and regulatory procedures under the jurisdiction of the concerned authorities.

He stressed that the new executive regulations include clear provisions that strengthen the principles of transparency and integrity.

He pointed out that "these principles are not optional, because they are considered the legal foundation for a successful institution. They are vital in institutional work and governance, especially in the economic sector, which requires the highest level of discipline and clarity."

He emphasized that the committee is not authorized at this stage to disclose de-

tails of the executive regulations, as this is the responsibility of official bodies tasked with their approval.

Nonetheless, he confirmed that the regulations were drafted in line with the best institutional practices and contribute to enhancing operational efficiency at KCCI.

He added that the work of the committee entails a dual function. "On one side, it assumes the role of the executive authority in managing the daily operations of KCCI, while on the other side, it remains committed to supporting and developing the business environment and improving its practices," he elaborated.

He stated that the committee's efforts are not confined to organizational matters, but also extend to activating the developmental and intellectual roles of KCCI by organizing events and workshops, addressing major economic issues amid the global economic transformations.

As an example of this role, he highlighted the initiative of KCCI to invite the management of NEOM Port in Saudi Arabia and organize a meeting with Kuwaiti importers, as well as the chief executive officers and managers of private companies.

He disclosed that the objective is to explore alternatives to traditional shipping routes through the Gulf in light of current challenges affecting maritime navigation due to regional tensions.

He reaffirmed that the committee is working hard to complete its tasks as quickly as possible, paving the way for the return of KCCI to its members and affiliates, so it can resume its role as the main representative of the Kuwaiti private sector both locally and internationally.

He then expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, commending their solidarity and cooperation in facing current economic challenges.

He asserted that "this cooperation reflects a shared awareness of the importance of maintaining economic stability in the region, and it enhances the ability of Gulf states to overcome crises through a responsible collective spirit."



Dr. Al-Faili



albander
البندر
Hotel & Resort



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

Tel: +973 17701201 - Ext. 351 | Email: reservation@albander.com | www.albander.com | @albanderhotelandresort

Possible cereulide contamination

MoCI recalls 'Danalac GOAT' infant formula after PAFN safety warning

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced a voluntary precautionary recall of several batches of "Danalac GOAT" infant formula, following a food safety warning issued by the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) on April 26, regarding the possible presence of the substance "cereulide."

The ministry confirmed in an official statement that the necessary procedures have been taken to withdraw the affected products from the market.

It also called on citizens who received the product through food supply to exchange it at the same distribution center where it was collected in April 2026.

Details of the products included in the recall:

Infant Goat Milk Formula (1) – 400g
Batch 3506 – Production Date: 9-12-2025 – Expiry Date: 9-12-2027
Batch 3463 – Production Date: 6-10-2025 – Expiry Date: 6-10-2027
Batch 3425 – Production Date: 19-8-2025 – Expiry Date: 19-8-2027



PAFN photo

Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) issues a food safety warning related to infant formula products.

Batch 3410 – Production Date: 19-7-2025 – Expiry Date: 19-7-2027

Batch 3434 – Production Date: 21-8-2025 – Expiry Date: 21-8-2027

Goat Milk Formula (2) – 400g
Batch 3423 – Production: 6-9-2025 – Expiry: 6-9-2027

Batch 3467 – Production: 9-12-2025 – Expiry: 9-12-2027

Batch 3400 – Production: 26-7-2025 – Expiry: 26-7-2027

Batch 3465 – Production: 5-10-2025 – Expiry: 5-10-2027

Batch 3443 – Production: 6-9-2025 – Expiry: 6-9-2027

Awaiting ministry amendments

KGAC main building tender on hold

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Construction Projects Sector in the Ministry of Public Works asked the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) to issue a tender for the study, design and supervision of the construction of the main building for Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) and a multi-storey parking.

However, during its meeting on April 22, the Board of Directors of CAPT decided to postpone making a decision until the ministry sends a letter on the discussed amendments within five working days.

According to the tender documents, the study and design phases of the project will be completed within 24 months, followed

by a tender for project supervision within 39 months.

This is one of several construction projects that the ministry is implementing for KGAC. It is part of a bigger project to construct buildings for various government entities, in accordance with the highest engineering standards and ensuring the creation of sustainable, environmentally friendly buildings that meet the needs of KGAC and align with the development plan.

The ministry is closely monitoring the design and implementation phases of the project, which includes the construction of the customs building in Shuwaikh Industrial Area, consisting of several sections, a reception hall, a customs museum and an attached multi-storey parking.

66 violations across 2 governorates uncovered

Commerce Ministry shuts down business, penalizes dozens for product misconduct

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The concerned teams from the Ministry of

Commerce recently carried out inspection campaigns that resulted in the issuance of 66 violation citations, along with three warnings and the closure of one establishment.

The Capital Governorate team inspected the Mubarakiya Market, including money exchange shops, perfume shops and ready-made clothing stores. The team recorded 42 violations, such as organizing promotional offers without obtaining a license from the ministry and failure to display the country of origin on products.

In Farwaniya Governorate, the inspection team issued 24 violation citations for the sale of goods of unknown origin and prohibited items like chewing gum, advertising services not provided, some pharmacies violated the ban on cash transactions, and illegal handling of gas cylinders and their accessories.

Three warnings were also issued -- two to establishments found to be operating without a license and one to a grocery store that failed to comply with regulations on the sale of energy drinks, while one establishment was shut down for operating without a license.



MoCI photo
Ministry of Commerce inspection teams during a field visit to commercial outlets, as part of ongoing campaigns to monitor compliance and curb violations.



Prime Minister Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

Continued from Page 1

Iraq needs

These stances revealed either the failure of the Iraqi state or, more accurately, its adoption of a policy favoring parties and militias linked to Iran.

This failure has cost Iraq dearly and will have negative repercussions in the future if the Iraqi government does not take appropriate measures, especially since the Gulf Cooperation Council countries are considering seeking compensation from the countries from which the attacks originated, namely Iran and Iraq.

Every country is responsible for attacks launched from its territory against other countries. This means that Iraq is liable to face further trouble as a result of its failure to maintain its sovereignty.

I have said it before, and I will say it again - failure is the destiny of any country whose decisions are controlled by terrorist groups working for the benefit of other countries. The situation becomes even more dire when the beneficiary is Iran, which has spent 47 years working to dismantle neighboring countries, especially Iraq.

The Iranian regime will never forget its defeat at the hands of Iraq in the Iran-Iraq War. The fact that some Iraqi

political forces are currently allied with Tehran will not change this fact.

Iranians are known for their tendency to seek revenge, even if it takes time.

We must acknowledge that the United States has been Iran's indirect ally in Iraq for the past 23 years. America has aided Iran to a great extent, as American forces controlled Iraqi airspace while the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, supported by sectarian militias, controlled the ground. This equation has fueled sectarian tensions, not only in Iraq but also with neighboring countries, which has contributed to the formation of armed groups.

This situation is what occurred in Lebanon, Yemen, and Syria. Syria was fortunate when the popular revolution toppled the Assad regime and saved it from this abnormal situation.

Recent official Iraqi measures provide a solid foundation upon which trust can be restored with neighboring countries, particularly the Gulf states.

Jeddah summit

Prince Saud bin Mishal bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. Also present were Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad Al-Saud and Kuwait Ambassador

to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Al-Sabah.

Leaders and heads of delegations from GCC member states also arrived in Jeddah to participate in the summit. According to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman welcomed Kuwait's Crown Prince, Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, and Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani upon their arrival. GCC Secretary-General Jasssem Al-Budaiwi also received the delegations.

Later, His Highness the Crown Prince attended a luncheon hosted by the Saudi Crown Prince in honor of the participating leaders and senior officials.

The GCC consultative summit, chaired by Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, addressed key regional and international developments and explored ways to enhance coordination among member states. SPA reported that Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan attended the session.

Following the summit, the Saudi Crown Prince expressed appreciation for the efforts of GCC leaders in strengthening consultation and joint action. In a statement cited by SPA, Minister of Media Salman Al-Dosari said the remarks came after a Cabinet

session chaired by the Crown Prince in Jeddah.

Kuwait-UK

Separately on Monday, Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah toured several Air Force sites to check workflow, readiness and combat preparedness.

During the visit, the minister conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, said the Defense Ministry in a press release.

The minister underlined the significance of maintaining responsibility and preparedness, applauding the efficiency, high morale and national defensive role of the Air Force's personnel, it added.

Justice Ministry

The circular was based on directives issued by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) regarding work organization during the recent excep-

tional period.

The relative stabilization of the situation allows for a gradual return to normal operations, while granting entities with special work requirements the authority to regulate working hours in a manner that serves the public interest.

The Public Prosecution emphasized in its circular the necessity for all members to adhere to official working hours, ensuring the uninterrupted flow of work, given the nature of its duties related to prosecuting criminal cases and conducting investigations.

It tasked senior public prosecutors, public prosecutors, and heads of prosecution offices, each within their respective jurisdictions, with monitoring the implementation of the decision and taking all necessary measures to ensure the smooth operation of work.

The circular is effective from the date of its issuance, and the Ministry of Justice has been informed of its contents.

Gulf energy

It stressed that the move reflects the evolution of the country's energy

policies, enhancing flexibility in responding to market dynamics while continuing to contribute responsibly to market stability, adding that the UAE remains a reliable oil producer in terms of cost and carbon intensity, supporting global growth and emissions reduction.

The UAE will continue to play a responsible role by gradually increasing production in line with demand and market conditions, while working with partners to develop resources in support of economic growth and diversification, WAM said.

It emphasized that the decision does not alter the UAE's commitment to global market stability or its cooperative approach with producers and consumers, but rather enhances its ability to respond to changing market requirements, while expressing appreciation for OPEC and OPEC+ efforts and their contributions over more than five decades.

The UAE reaffirmed its commitment to responsible production policies, focusing on market stability while considering global supply and demand, and continuing investment in the energy sector, including oil, gas, renewable energy, and low-carbon solutions to support the energy transition.



Hala Industrial Co.
— Custom Wooden Solutions —



Crafted Storage. Engineered Precision

- ✓ Premium Natural Wood
- ✓ Custom-Made Dimensions
- ✓ Factory Direct Quality

☎ 60660817 - 66448545
 📷 Hala_Industrial
 ✉ hala@halakw.com

Subhan Industrial - Block 10 - Street 5 - Plot 151

Bid to spotlight United Kingdom-United States ties

UK's King Charles III to meet US President Trump and address Congress

WASHINGTON, April 28, (AP): King Charles III will embrace some of Washington's most formal ceremonial trappings on Tuesday as he tries to emphasize a bond between the United Kingdom and the United States that is so strong it can withstand the political turmoil of the moment.

He will become the first British monarch to address the US Congress since his mother, Queen Elizabeth II, in 1991. Her speech highlighted the shared history of both countries and the importance of their democratic values, themes Charles will likely reinforce on Tuesday.

Such addresses are an opportunity afforded to only the most prominent world leaders, including Pope Francis, Václav Havel and Winston Churchill. It will likely mark the most extensive public remarks Charles will deliver during a four-day visit to the US that's intended to celebrate the country's 250th anniversary of independence from Britain.

House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., became the first sitting leader of his chamber to address the U.K. Parliament earlier this year. He attended a garden party with the king in Washington on Monday and said he told him he would be "well received" in Congress.

The king, accompanied by Queen Camilla, will begin his day with a meeting at the White House with President Donald Trump. The Oval Office encounter offers the potential for the freewheeling, sometimes controversial meetings with foreign leaders that have become routine during Trump's second term.

But given the expressly apolitical nature of the British monarch and Trump's fondness for the royal family, the likelihood of an awkward meeting may be reduced. Trump will host Charles on Tuesday evening for a state banquet at the White House.

The visit comes at a challenging moment for US-UK relations. Trump's up-



US President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump greet Britain's King Charles III and Queen Camilla as they arrive at the White House on April 27 in Washington. (AP)

and-down relationship with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has taken a particularly sour turn over the past several months as the Republican president has sought to rally international support for the war in Iran. Trump criticized

Starmer, who has largely resisted his overtures, by saying "this is not Winston Churchill that we're dealing with."

Trump has also imposed tariffs on the UK and warned of additional levies despite a Supreme Court ruling earlier this year that has made such unilateral moves more challenging. Trump threatened just last week to slap a "big tariff" on the UK if it doesn't scrap a digital services tax on US technology companies.

Trump has more broadly challenged the traditional trans-Atlantic alliance with efforts to annex Greenland and threats to walk away from NATO. He has repeatedly imposed tariffs on and taunted Canada, a member of the British Commonwealth.

Meanwhile, Charles has faced some calls on Capitol Hill to meet with victims of Jeffrey Epstein while he is in the US. There's no indication that he will do so even as the scandal involving the convicted sex offender has ensnared his brother, who was arrested in February over misconduct allegations, which he denies.

Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., urged the king over the weekend to at least address the issue during his congressional speech.

House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries of New York blamed Republican policies on Monday for straining the US-UK relationship.

"Hopefully, the king's visit is going to go a long way toward repairing the damage that this administration has done to one of our most important allies in the world," Jeffries said.

Charles and Camilla arrived at the nation's capital on Monday and held a tea with the president and first lady Melania Trump. The royal couple will continue their US trip later this week with stops in New York City and Virginia.

Fast-moving storms batter US Midwest, flooding streets and stranding commuters

KANSAS CITY, Mo., April 28, (AP): Fast-moving storms pummeled parts of the Midwest with hail, strong wind and heavy rain Monday, flooding streets, stranding commuters and downing many trees, including one in western Michigan that landed on a man and killed him.

More than 56 million people in the Midwest and parts of the South were at risk of severe storms, with tornado warnings posted in southeastern Missouri, southern Illinois and northern Arkansas, the National Weather Service said.

A thunderstorm that whipped through Kent County, Michigan, with powerful winds caused a tree to fall and kill a 39-year-old man who had been outside with friends, the sheriff's office said in a statement.

The friends said "the man warned them to move just before the tree came down, actions they believe likely prevented more of them from being struck," according to the sheriff's office. The storm resulted in dozens of downed trees and wires.

Across Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, Wisconsin and Michigan more than 250,000 people were without power Monday night. We Energies in Wisconsin said it had restored power for more than 35,000 customers but thousands more remained without electricity. Milwaukee said it had nearly 100 emergency calls for downed



A tree is uprooted by strong winds on April 27 in Milwaukee. (AP)

trees and branches. Trees uprooted by strong winds blocked streets.

In Kansas City, Missouri, the fire department responded to 11 water rescues from vehicles starting at shortly before 6 a.m., Battalion Chief Riley Nolan said in an email.

He said most "were in our typical 'high-water' areas following heavy rains." Nolan said no boats were required and no injuries were reported.

The weather service reported that 3.2 inches (8.1 centimeters) of rain fell

in a six-hour period ending shortly before 7 a.m. at the Kansas City International Airport.

Hundreds of schools in the St. Louis area closed early, and many after-school activities were canceled.

Temperatures near 80 degrees Fahrenheit (26 degrees Celsius) and other factors were contributing to "atmospheric instability," said Evan Bentley, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma.

Florida's redistricting fight puts gov back in Republican spotlight

TALLAHASSEE, Fla., April 28, (AP): Ron DeSantis was once the future of the Republican Party, a battle-tested conservative twice elected as governor of Florida. Then Donald Trump steamrolled him on his way back to the White House.

Now, more than two years after DeSantis ended his presidential campaign and endorsed Trump, the governor is returning to the national spotlight - at least for this week. He's pushing state lawmakers to redraw Florida's congressional map as part of a coast-to-coast redistricting battle ahead of November's midterm elections. His proposal would make it easier for Republicans to win four more seats, equivalent to Democrats' potential gains from last week's referendum in Virginia.

With DeSantis' second term coming to a close, the special legislative session that starts Tuesday is one of his final opportunities to remind Republicans that he could lead the party one day. But there are also plenty of risks ahead for the 47-year-old governor.

Some Republicans are worried that a new map will backfire and make it easier for Democrats to pick up seats. In addition, DeSantis wants lawmakers to increase regulations for artificial intelligence and loosen vaccine requirements,



Florida Gov Ron DeSantis is seen before a roundtable discussion on college sports in the East Room of the White House on March 6, in Washington. (AP)

two proposals that have previously stalled in Tallahassee.

Trump may be constitutionally barred from running for a third term in 2028, but that doesn't mean there's a clear path for DeSantis, who would likely have Vice President JD Vance or Secretary of State Marco Rubio to contend with in a Republican primary.

"The window for Ron looks reasonably narrow at this point," said

Whit Ayres, who served as DeSantis' pollster in his first campaign for governor in 2018.

DeSantis, for his part, is embracing the national fight. When House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., last week dared Florida Republicans to go ahead with their special session, the governor punched back with the kind of aggressiveness he showed in the early days of his failed White House bid.

Gunman opens fire at 2 locations in Greece, several people wounded

ATHENS, Greece, April 28, (AP): Police in Greece's capital were searching for a gunman, reportedly aged 89, who opened fire Tuesday in a social security office and a courthouse in central Athens, wounding at least four people.

Armed with a shotgun, the gunman initially opened fire at the social security office, wounding an employee, police said. Police officers who arrived at the scene treated the man, but the gunman fled the scene.

Local media aired security camera footage that it said was from a local store near the social security office, which showed a man walking calmly across the street carrying what appears to be a short-barreled shotgun in his right hand.

The same man was suspected of later opening fire on the ground floor of a court building in another part of central Athens, with several people wounded there, police said, adding that authorities had found the shotgun.

Television footage showed ambulance crews transporting at least three



People gather outside a courthouse after a gunman opened fire leaving several people wounded in Athens on April 28. (AP)

people from the courthouse to waiting ambulances.

The head of the Athens Judicial Employees Union, Stratis Dounias, said that

initial information indicated that the man had shot at the floor inside one of the offices in the court building. At least three female court employees were slightly wounded by ricocheting shotgun pellets, while media reports said that a fourth female employee was transported to a hospital without physical injuries.

The motive for the shooting was unclear. State broadcaster ERT said that the gunman had reportedly left envelopes with documents after the shooting at the courthouse, saying those were the reasons for his actions.

Alexandros Varveris, head of the National Social Security Fund known by its Greek acronym EFKA, said the gunman had gone to the fourth floor of the social security fund's offices in the Kerameikos area of central Athens and opened fire after calling out to an employee to duck. His shot hit another employee, who was wounded in the leg, Varveris said, adding that the gunman had been wearing a trenchcoat under which he had hidden the shotgun.



Construction on the new White House ballroom is seen from the Washington Monument, Monday, April 20, 2026, in Washington. (AP)

Democrats oppose construction

GOP in Congress push for WH ballroom

WASHINGTON, April 28, (AP): US Republicans in Congress launched new efforts Monday to approve and pay for President Donald Trump's proposed ballroom at the White House, arguing that it would help avert security breaches like the shooting at Saturday's White House Correspondents' Association dinner.

A new bill introduced by Republican senators would authorize \$400 million - roughly the cost of the project - for construction and security infrastructure underneath. Trump has said that private money would pay for the ballroom, but Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, one of the sponsors, said Monday that he believes those private dollars should only pay for "buying china and stuff like that."

Graham said at a news conference that some people may think the ballroom was Trump's "vanity project," but said it is necessary to allow the president to hold events safely and avoid much less secure venues like the Washington Hilton, where Saturday's event was held. The man who authorities say tried to storm the dinner with guns and knives had reserved a room in the hotel, according to an FBI affidavit filed in the case.

"It would be insane" to hold the dinner there again, Graham said, adding that he would advise any president not to do it, even as Trump has said he would like the dinner to be rescheduled.

Cole Tomas Allen appeared in court Monday to face federal charges of attempting to assassinate Trump after the encounter Saturday in which shots were fired outside the ballroom. The president was evacuated off the stage as thousands of guests dived under tables and ducked for cover.

Other lawmakers said they would push their own measures to approve the ballroom, including Rep. Lauren Boebert, R-Colo., and Republican Sens. Rand Paul of Kentucky and Tim Sheehy of Montana.

"It is an embarrassment to the strongest nation on earth that we cannot host gatherings in our nation's capital, including ones attended by our president, without the threat of violence and attempted assassinations," Sheehy posted on X.

It is unclear, though, whether the effort could get enough support. Democrats have opposed the ballroom's construction since Trump demolished part of the White House to make way for it without permission from Congress, and as it has faced lawsuits. House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries told reporters that the president should be focused on ending the war with Iran, healthcare and other measures to drive down living costs.

"These are the things that we should actually be focused on," Jeffries said.

Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer said Monday that Trump wants to seclude himself in a "walled

palace, literally."

He said Republicans should instead pass a spending bill that includes money for the U.S. Secret Service, which is part of the Homeland Security Department and has been shut down for more than two months. The House has yet to act on two spending bills for the department that were approved by the Senate.

"If Republicans truly want to improve security, they should join Democrats in funding the Secret Service, not Donald Trump's luxury ballroom," Schumer said.

Republicans also used the incident to call for the Homeland Security funding, blaming Democrats who have blocked money for immigration enforcement agencies since mid-February.

The chaos at the annual dinner came after Trump has faced two attempts on his life and as members of Congress in both parties have received an increasing number of death threats in recent years.

Graham said the times are unusual. "I've been up here a while now, and I've never felt the sense of threat that exists today," he said.

Alabama Sen. Katie Britt, who sponsored the legislation with Graham, said the bill is not just about Trump.

"This will not be done until the end of his term," she said. "This is about future presidents. This is about our nation having a place to gather."

Starmer's ex-chief of staff says sorry over Mandelson ambassador appointment

LONDON, April 28, (AP): The former chief of staff to UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer acknowledged Tuesday that he made a "serious mistake" by recommending Peter Mandelson be made British ambassador to the United States, but denied pressuring officials to ignore security concerns.

Morgan McSweeney told lawmakers on the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee that it had been "a serious error of judgment" to back Mandelson, whose ill-fated appointment has left Starmer fighting for his job. The committee is investigating how Mandelson, a scandal-tainted friend of Jeffrey Epstein, was given the key diplomatic job despite failing security checks.

The House of Commons is set to vote later on whether Starmer should be investigated by a parliamentary standards watchdog with the power to censure or suspend him.

McSweeney said that "the prime minister relied on my advice, and I got it wrong." He apologized to Epstein's victims, saying "I am sorry for any part this controversy has played in causing further hurt or distress."

But he insisted that he didn't "ask officials to ignore procedures, request that steps should be skipped, or communicate explicitly or implicitly that checks should be cleared at all costs."

Starmer fired Mandelson in September after new details emerged about



This is a screen grab of former No.10 chief of staff Morgan McSweeney appearing before the Foreign Affairs Committee about Lord Peter Mandelson's vetting process at the Houses of Parliament in London on April 28. (AP)

the ambassador's friendship with Epstein, a convicted offender who died in prison in 2019.

Police opened an investigation into Mandelson in February over allegations that he passed on sensitive government information to Epstein when he was a member of the UK government in 2009. He denies wrongdoing and hasn't been charged.

McSweeney resigned in February, saying he took responsibility for appointing Mandelson as ambassador. He is widely regarded as a protégé

of Mandelson, though he said that "I didn't think of him as my mentor."

He denied allegations by Olly Robbins, the former top civil servant at the Foreign Office, that Starmer's staff pressured officials to rush through the confirmation so that Mandelson could be in the post at the start of the second term of US President Donald Trump in January 2025.

McSweeney said that he felt Mandelson's experience as a former European Union trade commissioner would serve the UK well in striking a free trade deal with the Trump administration.

INTERNATIONAL

Asia

Heavy flooding in southern China forces evacuations: Heavy flooding from torrential rain left cars submerged and forced the evacuation of more than 200 residents in a southern Chinese city, state media reported Tuesday.

Rescue crews deployed inflatable boats to help relocate some residents trapped in their homes in Qinzhou city in Guangxi region, official news agency Xinhua reported. Video footage from Xinhua showed rescuers wading through chest-high water and firefighters carrying elderly residents in their arms.

Qinzhou authorities said the city's meteorological station recorded rainfall of over 270 millimeters (about 10 inches) during a 24-hour period ending at 8 a.m. on Monday. That was the highest amount recorded there on a single day in April.

The authorities quoted meteorological analyst Lin Nan in a WeChat post saying that such intense rainfall in South China's coastal regions typically occurs only after the arrival of the summer monsoon in mid to late May. It is rare to see such a heavy downpour in late April, Lin said.

On Tuesday morning, schools across the city resumed classes and traffic ran normally in most places, according to a news outlet operated by the Chinese emergency management authorities.

Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Guoqing on Monday urged rigorous efforts to prevent and defuse the risks of floods and drought, stressing the need to safeguard people's lives and property and maintain overall social stability.

Zhang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, made the remarks during a national video conference on flood control and drought relief work held in Beijing.

It is necessary to strengthen risk control at the source and the inspections and rectifications of hidden dangers, and improve the capabilities of early warning and response, he said.

The vice premier stressed the importance of timely relocation of individuals at risk and utmost efforts to prevent mass casualties. Zhang also called for enhancing the infrastructure resilience against disasters and the primary-level emergency response capacity.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, stranded residents are evacuated on a boat after flooding from heavy rainfall in Qinzhou in southern China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region on April 27. (AP)

Meanwhile, the vice premier called for coordinating prevention and relief work for typhoons and droughts, and preparing emergency rescue forces, materials and equipment in advance. (Agencies)

Northeast Japan wildfires 'largely under control': The wildfires in northeastern Japan are now largely under control as firefighting continued into a seventh day, local media reported.

Since breaking out last Wednesday in the town of Otsuchi Town, Iwate Prefecture, the fires have so far prompted local authorities to advise 3,257 people from 1,558 households to seek shelter, Kyodo News reported.

The wildfires have burned more than 1,600 hectares by Tuesday morning, despite the efforts of local firefighters and Self-Defense Forces personnel, as well as the mobilization of 14 helicopters.

Rainfall on Monday was reported to have helped bring the fires under control, while more rain is expected in the coming days. (Xinhua)

Japan's pharmaceutical plant explosion injures 5: Five people were injured after a storage tank exploded at a pharmaceutical plant in Japan's Hiroshima Prefecture on Tuesday, local media reported.

Of the five injured, two were seriously hurt, and all were taken to the hospital, according to Kyodo News.

The report said local emergency services received a call reporting the explosion in Miyoshi City at around 11:35 a.m. local time. Firefighters were still working to extinguish the blaze, and police have launched an investigation into the cause. (Xinhua)

Cambodian, Thai FMs discuss border issue in Brunei: Cambodia's Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn has discussed the border issue with his Thai counterpart Sihanak Phuangketkeow on the sidelines of the 25th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting in Brunei, said a Cambodian foreign ministry's news release on Tuesday.

Both sides held on Monday candid discussions on the border situation, including confidence-building measures and broader aspects of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

"Achieving lasting peace between our two countries -- thereby contributing to peace, stability, and unity within ASEAN -- requires genuine commitment and full respect for international law, the ASEAN Charter, as well as all existing treaties and agreements that bind us," Sokhonn said.

Cambodia and Thailand agreed to an immediate ceasefire on Dec. 27, 2025 after three weeks of armed conflict, which caused casualties on both sides. (Xinhua)

Prabowo reshuffles cabinet

Indonesia train crash kills 14, injures 84

BEKASI, Indonesia, April 28, (Agencies): Rescuers finished removing victims from a damaged commuter train car Tuesday, confirming that the crash outside Indonesia's capital killed 14 people, all of whom were women.

The crash occurred Monday when a long-distance train crashed into the rear car of the stopped commuter train at Bekasi Timur Station outside Jakarta. The car was one designated for women only, a common accommodation to stop harassment.

A total of 84 injured people were taken to hospitals for treatment, said Bobby Rasyidin, CEO of state-owned railway company PT Kereta Api Indonesia. The bodies of the dead were taken to a hospital for further identification.

Rescue teams completed the evacuation of all victims from inside the wreckage about midmorning. "There are no further casualties," said Mohammad Syafii, the head of the National Search and Rescue Agency.

All 240 passengers on the Argo Bromo Angrek long-distance train were

safe, officials said.

Police were investigating the cause of the accident, Jakarta Police Chief Asep Edi Suheri told reporters at the scene.

The Indonesian Ministry of Transportation said in a written statement that authorities believe the incident began when another commuter train hit a stalled taxi near Bekasi Timur Station.

That led staff to stop a second commuter train at the station, where it was struck by a long-distance commuter train.

"As for the chronology of events, we are leaving it to the National Transportation Safety Committee to investigate the cause of tonight's train accident in greater detail," Rasyidin said.

Accidents are common on Indonesia's aging railroad network. In January 2024, two trains collided in West Java province, killing at least four people.

Also:

JAKARTA: Indonesian President **Prabowo Subianto** carried out a cabinet reshuffle here on Monday, ap-

pointing six new officials in a move to strengthen his administration.

The newly appointed officials include **Jumhur Hidayat** as environment minister and **Hanif Faisol Nurofiq** as deputy coordinating minister for food.

Prabowo also appointed new officials to serve as chief of presidential staff, head of the government communications agency, special presidential adviser for communications, and head of the Indonesian quarantine agency.

Meanwhile, **Indonesia** plans a massive expansion of its railway network, aiming to add approximately 14,000 km of tracks across the archipelago to bolster connectivity and drive regional development, a senior official said Wednesday.

Coordinating Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development **Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono** said that the plan, which includes both new construction and the reactivation of idle routes, will prioritize areas outside **Java**, specifically **Sumatra**, **Kalimantan**, and **Sulawesi**.



Workers use a heavy machine to remove the wreckage of a train after a collision in Bekasi, Indonesia on April 28. (AP)

S.Sudan plane crash kills 14

JUBA, April 28, (Xinhua): At least 14 people were killed on Monday when a small aircraft crashed in the Luri area on the outskirts of Juba, the capital of South Sudan, aviation authorities confirmed.

The South Sudan Civil Aviation Authority (SSCAA) said all passengers on board the Cessna 208 Caravan aircraft, registration number 5Y-NOK, operated by CityLink Aviation Limited, died in the crash.

"There were 13 passengers and one pilot (captain) on board. Among them were two Kenyan nationals and 12 South Sudanese nationals. Unfortunately, there were no survivors," the SSCAA said in a statement.

The industry regulator said the aircraft departed from Yeil en route to Juba International Airport at 9:15 a.m. local time (0715 GMT) and lost communication at 9:43 a.m. local time (0743 GMT).

According to the SSCAA, preliminary investigations indicated that the aircraft may have crashed due to adverse weather conditions, particularly low visibility.

The regulator said its investigators and emergency teams are on-site in the Luri area to recover remains and secure the flight's technical records.



This image made from video shows the wreckage of a Cessna aircraft after it crashed southwest of Juba, South Sudan on April 27. (AP)

Sheinbaum rules out conflict with US

Mexico's military captures top cartel leader

MEXICO CITY, April 28, (AP): The Jalisco New Generation Cartel, Mexico's most powerful criminal enterprise, suffered another blow Monday when the Mexican military captured one of its top leaders in the northwest of the country, two months after the cartel's leader was killed.

Audias Flores Silva, also known as "El Jardinero," or The Gardener, was seen as a possible successor to the killed leader and the United States had a \$5 million reward out for information leading to his arrest.

The CJNG regional commander was captured while he was hiding in a roadside ditch near the community of El Mirador in the state of Nayarit, Mexican officials said Monday. No one was killed or injured during his arrest, according to Mexico's government.

Flores Silva was seen as a possible successor to Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes, or "El Mencho," who was killed in a dramatic military operation in February. The killing of "El Mencho" led to a surge of cartel violence with a wave of attacks on businesses by cartel gunmen, vehicle burnings and road blockades that killed more than 70 people, including 25 National Guard members.

Despite the violence, Oseguera Cervantes' killing was seen as a victory for Mexico's government at a time when Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum is cracking down on cartels with a heavier hand than her predecessors in an effort to offset threats of intervention by US President Donald Trump.

Last year, Trump designated the



Newspapers hang on display for sale in Mexico City on Feb 23, a day after the Mexican army killed Jalisco New Generation Cartel leader Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes, known as 'El Mencho.' (AP)

Jalisco New Generation Cartel and five other Mexican cartels as foreign terrorist organizations.

Flores Silva's capture marked another blow to a criminal enterprise that has quickly become one of the most powerful in the hemisphere. According to Mexican security officials, he was the head of security for Oseguera Cervantes, and helped lead the cartel's drug production and trafficking operations in the states of Nayarit, Jalisco, Mexico State, and Zacatecas.

Also:

MEXICO CITY: Mexican President

Claudia Sheinbaum on Monday ruled out a conflict with the **United States** over an incident involving two CIA agents who died in an accident in the state of **Chihuahua** - agents who, according to Mexico, were not authorized to operate in the country.

During her morning news briefing, Sheinbaum expressed her willingness to move past the controversy that surfaced last week, saying that while she hopes this remains an isolated case, the federal government expects the US to respect Mexico's constitution and national security laws moving forward.

Concerns about press freedom raised

Argentina's prez bars journalists from govt HQ

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, April 28, (AP): The president blocked accredited reporters from entering the government's headquarters. He took to social media, in all caps, to insult the country's news media as "filthy scum that claims to be journalists." He posted an AI-generated image that showed a local TV journalist in an orange prison jumpsuit.

The president in question was not the one you might think. It was Argentina's radical libertarian Javier Milei.

Milei's decision last week to expel the entire press corp from the Casa Rosada - or the Pink House, the Argentine equivalent of the White House - marked the latest escalation in a wide-ranging anti-media campaign that has become a hallmark of his tenure, much as it has for his ideological ally and fellow adversary of the media, US President Donald Trump.

"It's the culmination of the government's contempt for journalism and its value in a democracy," said Fernando Stanich, president of the Argentine Journalism Forum, a professional group.

In a nation that has long prided itself on a free and vibrant news media, rights watchdogs and lawmakers from across the political spectrum denounced the move as an attack on the press without precedent since the end of Argentina's military dictatorship in 1983.

"Argentina is still a democracy, but these are the actions of an autocrat," said Cristina Zahar, Latin America coordinator for the Committee to Protect Journalists, a watchdog group. "An autocrat who tries to curtail press freedoms, who tries to prevent journalists from reporting and keeping society informed about public interest matters."



Journalists stand outside of the Casa Rosada government headquarters after President Javier Milei blocked their access, in Buenos Aires, Argentina on April 23. (AP)

Milei's spokesperson, Javier Lanari, said Thursday that the government had blocked press access "as a preventative measure" after a local TV channel aired footage filmed with smart glasses from inside the Casa Rosada, allegedly without authorization.

Authorities in charge of security at the Casa Rosada are suing the Todo Noticias network, Lanari said, accusing it of "illegal espionage." He did not respond to a request for further comment.

On her program Sunday, Luciana Geuna, one of the journalists from Todo Noticias, said they had notified press officers of their filming plans in advance. Geuna said the footage showed easily accessible parts of the Casa Rosada that had been shown on TV before.

On the campaign trail in 2023,

Milei's brash style and propensity for provocative language solidified his outsider status, prompting comparisons to Trump and former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro and helping propel the former television commentator to the nation's top job on a pledge to slash state spending.

Far from moderating his rhetoric two years into his tenure, Milei has escalated his attacks on the media.

Over just four days this month, Milei, an avid user of X, wrote 86 posts taunting and insulting journalists, according to an analysis of his feed between April 2 and 5 by prominent Argentine daily La Nación. He re-shared 874 such attacks in that time, including one post asking that he designate the press a terrorist organization and many laced with sexual innuendo.

Uganda detains 231 foreigners

KAMPALA, Uganda, April 28, (AP): Ugandan authorities said Tuesday that they have detained dozens of foreigners in a crackdown on illegal migration that the internal affairs ministry suggested was linked to human traffickers and cyberscam operations.

At least 231 people have been detained since Monday in operations that targeted a group of Nigerians living in the country's north, as well as another group of foreigners living together in a closed compound in Kampala, the capital.

The second group included people from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Ghana, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Malaysia, all of whom were staying in "a highly restricted, self-contained apartment complex equipped with its own restaurant and internal facilities designed to restrict movement," according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Thirty-six of the 169 people found in the compound were women.

Authorities say they acted on intelligence showing large groups of foreigners living or working in Uganda without the necessary papers to do so. Many didn't have passports, the ministry said in a statement.



In this photo released by the Kebbi State Government, Governor Nasir Idris, (center), inspects a burned military vehicle following a late Tuesday ambush by armed militants in Shanga, Kebbi, northern Nigeria on March 25. (AP)

IS militants kill 29 in Nigeria

Militants with the Islamic State group attacked a village overnight in northeastern Nigeria, killing at least 29 people, authorities said Monday. It was the latest violence in Africa's most populous country that has long been battling a complex security crisis.

The attack took place late on Sunday in Guyaku, a village in the Gombi local government area in the

country's Adamawa state, according to the state governor.

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack in a message on the Telegram messaging app.

Adamawa State Governor Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri denounced the attack as tragic and unacceptable during a visit to the village on Monday. (AP)

Oil price down \$3.58 to \$103.79 pb

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went down by USD 3.58 to reach 103.79 per barrel in trading on Monday, compared to USD 107.37 pb last Friday, according to the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC)

on Tuesday. In global markets, Brent crude rose by USD 2.90 to reach USD 108.23 pb, and US West Texas Intermediate increased by USD 1.97 to reach USD 96.37 pb.

Business

A special report issued on the occasion of Arab Financial Inclusion Day

Gulf Bank highlights its efforts in advancing financial inclusion within the community

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: On the occasion of Arab Financial Inclusion Day, Gulf Bank has issued a special report outlining its leading role in supporting the State's efforts to promote financial inclusion and enable all segments of society to access financial services in a fair and secure manner, in alignment with the directives of the Central Bank of Kuwait and best practices in sustainable banking.

The report concluded that financial inclusion represents both a commitment and an opportunity for Gulf Bank. Financial inclusion initiatives are not treated as standalone activities, but rather as an integral component of the Bank's comprehensive strategic orientation, which aims to support economic and social development in the State of Kuwait, while adhering to local regulatory frameworks and guidelines. This is achieved through expanding access to services, encouraging responsible banking practices, and delivering high-quality, customer-centric services.

The report further addressed the Bank's efforts in developing comprehensive and innovative banking solutions focused on accessibility, driving effective use of services, and addressing the challenges faced by certain segments of society, including women, youth, low-income individuals, persons with disabilities, domestic workers, and small and medium-sized enterprises through facilitating account opening, providing digital solutions, payment gateways, financing services, and specialized financial advisory.

Effective and Sustainable Utilization

Gulf Bank is committed to facilitating the opening of bank accounts for all segments of society by simplifying procedures and reducing requirements, thereby ensuring equitable and secure access to financial services without discrimination, and enabling customers to benefit from banking services in an effective and sustainable manner. In this context, the following initiatives have been introduced:

Children: Gulf Bank launched the neo Children's Account with the aim of fostering a culture of saving within the community, available from birth up to the age of 14, with no minimum balance requirement for account opening and no issuance fees. The account provides a simple and secure means for parents to build their children's financial future, while also helping children develop the values of saving and financial responsibility from an early age.

Youth: The Bank offers the red Account, which is a dedicated savings account for students and young people between the ages of 15 and 25 with no minimum balance requirement, a red Plus prepaid card, a welcome gift of 5,000 Gulf Points upon transfer of the student benefit, redeemable through the "Gulf Points" program, a 50 Kuwaiti Dinar fuel voucher from an "Oula" station for new members, and an exclusive package of benefits including a 50% discount on cinema tickets daily,

Gulf Bank's Efforts in Supporting Financial Inclusion

We reaffirm our commitment to making our banking services closer, easier, and more accessible for you

- Neo Savings account for children
- Neo Gold Reward's Card credit card solution for women
- Neo Red Account for youth
- Gulf Bank App for personal banking services
- ATMs equipped to serve people with special needs
- Gulf Bank Corporate Banking Hub

- Dedicated accounts for children and youth, with multiple benefits for women, retirees, and entrepreneurs
- Specialized services for persons with disabilities across 6 branches, one in each governorate
- Support for domestic workers and low-income individuals to access banking services

as well as discounts at selected restaurants and stores.

Women: Gulf Bank offers the Rose Gold Credit Card, designed specifically to meet the needs of the modern woman. It is free for life and provides rewards and benefits programs among the highest in the local market, along with instant discounts at a wide range of stores, restaurants, and health clubs, concierge services, and the ability to instalment purchases for up to 12 months interest-free through the Easy Pay service.

Retirees: Gulf Bank places particular importance on serving retirees, offering them a welcome cash gift of up to 500 Kuwaiti Dinars upon pension transfer, in addition to a housing loan of up to 70,000 Kuwaiti Dinars with a grace period of 12 or 24 months, and a consumer loan of up to 25,000 Kuwaiti Dinars with a flexible repayment period of up to 5 years. Customers also receive a lifetime-free credit card with automatic enrollment in the "Gulf Points" program, exclusive discounts at leading car showrooms, and 0% interest on selected vehicles.

Persons with Disabilities: Gulf Bank provides distinguished services for persons with disabilities across 6 branches, one in each governorate, featuring wheelchair-accessible entrances and spacious interior layouts. ATMs have been equipped with appropriate heights, Braille keypads for the visually impaired, audio guidance speakers, and privacy booths

Enhancing Economic Participation

Gulf Bank recognizes that financial inclusion is a pivotal element in strengthening economic participation, protecting customers, and achieving long-term financial stability. The Bank's approach is fully aligned with the directives of the Central Bank of Kuwait; financial inclusion initiatives have been integrated within its institutional strategy, with periodic reports submitted in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Financial literacy constitutes a foundational pillar of the Bank's strategy, implemented through awareness campaigns in partnership with community and educational organizations such as INJAZ, as well as ongoing support for the "Let's Be Aware" campaign, which aims to raise the level of financial awareness, promote responsible banking practices, and educate the public on the risks of financial fraud and the safe use of banking services.

Financial inclusion is recognized as one of the key enablers for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, given its role in empowering individuals and communities to integrate into the economy, improve livelihoods, reduce poverty, and contribute to sustainable economic growth, a recognition explicitly reflected in a number of the SDG targets.

All indices decline

Boursa Kuwait ends lower

KUWAIT CITY, April 28, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Tuesday's session in negative territory, with all indices closing lower. The general index dropped 39.10 points, or 0.44 percent, to 8,869.35 points, as trading totaled 496.7 million shares across 30,671 transactions, valued at KD 109.3 million (around USD 357.3 million).

The main market index slipped 11.27 points, or 0.13 percent, to close at 8,508.97 points, with 352.3 million shares traded through 17,526 transactions worth KD 53.4 million (approx-

mately USD 174.6 million).

The premier market index recorded a steeper decline, falling 47.04 points, or 0.50 percent, to 9,406.29 points. Trading activity reached 144.4 million shares across 13,145 transactions, valued at KD 55.8 million (about USD 182.4 million).

The Main 50 Index posted the largest drop of the day, losing 103.12 points, or 1.09 percent, to settle at 9,316.55 points, with 251.9 million shares traded in 11,256 transactions valued at KD 38.4 million (roughly USD 125.5 million).

Nghi Son hits high output

KPC-backed Nghi Son Refinery generates \$7.13 billion revenue

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The Nghi Son Refinery in Vietnam, in which Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) holds a 35.1 percent stake, generated revenues of approximately 188 trillion Vietnamese dong (US\$7.13 billion) by the end of 2025.

According to informed sources, despite continued volatility in the global economy and energy markets, the refinery maintained safe and stable operations at a high operating rate, reinforcing its role as a major contributor to Vietnam's energy security.

Throughout 2025, the Nghi Son Refinery continued its operations safely and continuously at levels exceeding its design capacity.

The refinery processed approximately 12 million tons of crude oil from 45 shipments, supplying between 35 percent and 40 percent of Vietnam's domestic oil demand.

By the end of 2025, the refinery had achieved more than 24 million safe work hours without any work-related injuries causing downtime.

The Nghi Son Refinery received its first shipment of non-Kuwaiti crude oil in December 2025 and processed it after conducting comprehensive safety, maritime, and technical assessments in accordance with international standards.

On April 22, 2026, Nghi Son Refinery concluded its pioneering campaign in energy efficiency and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) compliance. The refinery achieved savings of \$16.7 million and reduced its carbon dioxide emissions by 152,000 tons over six months.

Similarly, official information

from Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI) revealed that the Duqm Kuwaiti-Omani Refinery achieved new milestones and promising prospects in 2025.

The Duqm Refinery, jointly operated by KPI and Oman's OQ, processed 11 types of crude oil - the highest number to date - ranging from light to heavy grades and with varying sulfur content.

By combining different types of crude oil, the refinery was able to maximize the unique characteristics of each type, ultimately improving efficiency, product yield, and profitability.

In a related development, KPC revealed in its 2024/2025 report that the Kuwaiti-Italian Milazzo refinery achieved four consecutive years without any incidents in May 2025.

This achievement reflects the efficiency of the RaM operational team, the strength of the adopted organizational model, and the effectiveness of the refinery's safety policy.

The refinery has modified its offloading unit to handle acid crude oils.

The modification of the refinery's offloading unit to process these types of crude oils has been successfully completed, enhancing its operational flexibility and its ability to refine multiple crude oil types.

In a previous statement during the inauguration of the Al-Zour refinery last June, the late Minister of Oil, Dr. Emad Al-Atteqi, confirmed that Kuwait's total refining capacity, including the output of the Al-Zour Refinery, currently stands at 1.83 million barrels per day from local and international sources. This includes the refining of 1.415 million barrels per day from other refineries, with the remainder coming from the three external refineries.

Zain launches landmark 'Regulatory Academy' with GSMA Advance to empower its policy & regulatory professionals

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Zain Group, a leading ICT and digital lifestyle provider across eight Middle East and Africa markets, has entered a landmark 'People Excellence Partnership' with GSMA Advance, the GSMA's learning and skills arm. This collaboration sees the launch of the 'Zain Regulatory Academy', an industry-first initiative that falls under Zain's Inclusion, Diversity & Equity University (IDEU), delivering accredited training to build world-class expertise among its groupwide policy and regulatory professionals.

The Academy provides Zain's policy, regulatory, legal, and compliance professionals access to GSMA Advance's globally recognized 'Best Practice in Public Policy & Regulatory Impact Accreditation'. This structured program blends self-paced online modules, expert-led seminars, practical assignments, and tailored regional content on critical topics like spectrum management, 5G evolution, IoT, mobile privacy, cybersecurity, competition policy, and digital-age fintech and more.

Falling under IDEU, the Academy advances Zain's strategic priorities of bolstering governance, fostering market alignment, building a sustainable talent pipeline, and positioning regulatory leaders as industry thought leaders. It equips Zain teams to navigate complex regulatory landscapes shaped by 5G, AI, cloud, IoT, and data-driven models, ensuring robust compliance, advocacy, and contributions to digital ecosystems.

Dr. Andrew Arowojolu, Zain Group Chief Regulatory Officer, said: "The Zain Regulatory Academy extends our people-first investment into a highly specialized capability area that is becoming increasingly central to the future sustainability of our industry. As operating environments evolve, this learning initiative strengthens governance, alignment, and sustainable growth through capability-building our teams with globally informed expertise, practical regulatory insight and the confidence to shape sector-defining conversations that support the economic visions of the nations we serve."

Dr. Drew MacFarlane, Head of GSMA Advance,



- Falling under Zain's Inclusion, Diversity & Equity University (IDEU), the academy will act as a strategic enabler of stronger governance, alignment and sustainable growth
- The 'People Excellence Partnership' with GSMA Advance provides an accreditation pathway for policy and regulatory talents across Zain Group, setting a benchmark for excellence across the industry

added: "We are delighted to welcome Zain Group as a GSMA Advance People Excellence Partner. This collaboration reflects a clear commitment to investing in people as a driver of organizational success. By supporting their policy and regulatory professionals through structured, globally recognized accreditation, Zain is not only strengthening its internal expertise but also setting a benchmark for excellence across the industry."

He continued: "As the regulatory landscape continues to evolve alongside new technologies and business models, organizations must ensure their

teams are equipped not just with knowledge, but with validated, industry-recognized capabilities. This partnership is a strong example of how leading operators are taking proactive steps to build those capabilities at scale."

The Academy builds on Zain's IDEU's flagship platform with Spain's IE University. Since 2023, IDEU has engaged 2,000 employees with digital transformation programs (including master's pathways), achieving a 92% course pass rate, 800+ active master's students, 10,000+ certificates, and 100,000+ training hours.

War disrupts Gulf petrochemical supply chains

Arab Energy report flags war's toll on petrochemicals

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The official report issued by the Arab Energy Organization (formerly the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries - OAPEC) highlighted the effects of the war on the petrochemical sector during the first quarter of 2026.

According to the report, the war's impact on Kuwait's petrochemical sector was mainly logistical disruptions, including the temporary closure of Shuaiba Port and limited operational disruptions at some industrial facilities linked to energy and service infrastructure. This temporarily affected export flows and operational continuity in some units, without leading to widespread production disruptions.

Direct production disruptions in Saudi Arabia were evident, with the temporary suspension of operations at the Sadara Chemical Company complex on March 31, due to disruptions in market supply chains.

The impact in Qatar was indirect, reflected in the declaration of force majeure on liquefied natural gas exports at Ras Laffan Industrial City. This led to reduced production in some related industries, particu-

larly ammonia and urea.

In Bahrain, the war affected the oil refining and energy sector. Bapco's declaration of force majeure following the attack on its refinery complex disrupted the supply of intermediate materials and feedstock. This indirectly impacted related chemical industries, highlighting the close link between refining and petrochemical activities.

Minor operational incidents also occurred in some industrial units and were contained without structural impact. However, these incidents led to an increased level of operational risk during this period.

In the UAE, the impact was twofold, combining logistical and operational dimensions. Disruptions to shipping traffic at Jebel Ali Port delayed trade flows, particularly polymer exports. The Bourouge complex in Ruwais experienced minor operational incidents involving localized fires caused by external factors. These incidents led to the temporary shutdown of some production units pending technical inspection and assessment, without any permanent structural impact on production capacity.

Regarding the impact of geopolitical instability in the Middle East on energy and petrochemical markets, the report noted the emergence of a sudden

supply shock that reshaped market priorities in the short term. At the beginning of the year, markets were primarily driven by oversupply conditions. The situation has since shifted sharply toward concerns over supply continuity amid rising risks to energy infrastructure and vital shipping routes.

Rising oil prices have led to increased energy and feedstock costs for petrochemical industries, particularly in energy-importing regions.

Naphtha prices recorded a significant increase of approximately 18-20 percent during the first week of March, driven by supply disruptions and a repricing of risks in the spot market.

The March 2026 shock extended to operational assets and value chains within member countries. The impact varied, ranging from direct production disruptions and feedstock supply bottlenecks to the emergence of indirect operational risks within industrial complexes.

Some countries continued to implement industrial expansion programs. This variability reflects the multiple channels through which shocks are transmitted within the sector, from production to transportation and export, further complicating the operational landscape during this period.

KD 85.3 mn stc's revenues first three months ended 31 March 2026 with KD 9.2 mn net profit

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers and enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced its financial results for the three months period ended 31 March 2026, highlighting the most significant achievements as well as the financial and operational performance.

In this regard, Eng. Muataz Abdullah Aldharrab, the company's CEO, stated: "With the grace of Allah, Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) continued to deliver positive financial and operational performance during the first quarter of 2026, supported by its updated corporate strategy, which focuses on strengthening the company's core operations and accelerating growth in new areas that contribute to sustainable value creation. Despite the challenges witnessed during this period, related to global economic changes and the recent geopolitical tensions in the region, stc successfully reinforced its leading position and maintained its market share within a highly competitive sector.

This performance underscores stc's ability to adapt and continue delivering positive results that reflect the strength of its business model and the efficiency of its strategic plans, which aim to generate added value and sustainable returns for its shareholders while sustaining its operations. stc has also been keen to expand its portfolio of integrated digital solutions and innovative products to meet the growing needs of both individual and enterprise customers amid the current situation. stc leverages the accelerating demand for digital services, advanced 5G technologies, and artificial intelligence, while confidently and proactively keeping pace with the rapid transformations in the business landscape."

Commenting on stc's key achievements during the first three months of 2026, Eng. Aldharrab, stated: "Amid the evolving challenges impacting various sectors, stc reaffirmed its strong commitment to supporting its customers and partners by ensuring business continuity without any compromise in service quality. This has been achieved through leveraging advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and cybersecurity solutions, enhancing operational resilience, enabling remote working, providing rapid technical support, and ensuring uninterrupted services through proactive measures to stand by both individual and enterprise customers.

Through the ongoing geopolitical tensions and surrounding challenges, stc continued to execute its projects without interruption, maintaining strong business momentum and operational efficiency, supported by its robust infrastructure and specialized workforce. The company did not deviate from its strategic trajectory, as it continued through its subsidiaries to sign strategic agreements with enterprise customers and proceeded with the execution and delivery of projects in line with approved timelines. This reflects stc's strong commitment to supporting its partners and enabling them to ensure business continuity efficiently, further demonstrating its ability to operate with high flexibility and operational stability under various conditions. stc remains committed to helping organizations overcome challenges and emerge stronger, more resilient, and better prepared for the future.

stc also continued to maintain and strengthen its corporate social responsibility initiatives during this period, reaffirming its commitment to the community through a range of programs. These included providing free internet hours to support remote working and distance learning, organizing blood donation campaigns in line with stc's commitment to its role in the community and offering free roaming services to enterprise customers outside Kuwait. In addition,



Eng. Muataz Abdullah Aldharrab



In the heart of Assima, stc

The financial results for the three months period ended 31 March 2026	
Revenues	KD 85.3mn
EBITDA	KD 23.1mn
Net Profit	KD 9.2mn
Earnings per share	9 Kuwaiti fils
Assets	KD 497.0 mn
Shareholders' equity	KD 210.9mn
Book value per share	211 fils per share
Customer base	2.3mn customers

stc ensured the uninterrupted availability of digital payment services, reflecting its role as an active digital partner in supporting the sustainability of essential services for the community.

Notably, stc collaborated with Kuwait Airways to support the operation of repatriation flights for citizens and participated in national awareness campaigns to express appreciation for frontline workers. The company also worked with various institutions to support and contribute to frontline efforts, reaffirming its commitment to standing alongside the community under all circumstances."

Commenting on the financial results for the period ended March 31, 2026, Eng. Muataz Aldharrab stated: "stc achieved good financial performance during the first quarter of 2026, supported by its flexible operating model. Total revenues reached KD85.3 million during the first three months of 2026, compared to KD 87.4 million in the period last year. This slight decline reflects a shift in the revenue mix toward better-margin activities, in line with the company's strategy to enhance revenue quality and ensure sustainable profitability.

The consumer segment accounted for 75% of total revenues, while the enterprise segment contributed 25% of total revenues. Furthermore, stc continues its efforts to enhance its business model by strengthening digital services and offering integrated technological solutions that meet the needs of various sectors, thereby supporting the diversification of revenue streams, enhancing sustainable growth, and rein-

forcing the company's ability to adapt to evolving market dynamics.

Aldharrab added: "These results led to a 3.5% increase in EBITDA, reaching KD 23.1 million during the first three months of 2026, compared to KD 22.3 million for the same period in 2025. This improvement was supported by the efforts of its teams to enhance operational efficiency and optimize the cost structure.

Net profit amounted to KD 9.2 million (earnings per share of 9 fils), reflecting a growth rate of 1.6% during the first three months of 2026, compared to KD 9.1 million (earnings per share of 9 fils) for the same period in 2025. This performance reflects the company's success in managing costs and striking a balance between improving revenue quality and continuing to invest in future growth opportunities, while also capitalizing on the accelerating pace of digital transformation in the local market and the wider region.

Furthermore, these results, together with the company's continued focus on efficiency and innovation, highlight stc's ability to enhance profitability and achieve sustainable growth. It is worth noting that stc's customer base reached 2.3 million customers by the end of March 2026."

Commenting on the company's financial position as of March 31, 2026, Aldharrab stated: "Total assets amounted to KD 497.0 million by the end of the first quarter of 2026, while total shareholders' equity stood at KD 210.9 million, reflecting the company's strong financial position and the stability of its capital structure.

- Revenue reached KD 85.3 mn
- EBITDA increased by 3.5% to reach KD 23.1 mn
- Net profit increased by 1.6% to reach KD 9.2 mn
- stc's customer base reached 2.3 mn customers

Amid the current economic uncertainty and ongoing geopolitical volatility, stc continues to steer its financial strategy towards capturing available market opportunities that contribute to creating added value and sustainable returns for its shareholders. The company also continues to review its financial priorities in alignment with its strategic direction and the evolving dynamics of the telecommunications and ICT sectors.

In line with its corporate strategy, stc's investment plans focus on strengthening its core operations and diversifying its financial and operational strategies to enhance efficiency and its ability to achieve sustainable growth. The company's strong financial position enables it to support the execution of its strategic projects and adapt to market dynamics, while maintaining the sustainability of its financial performance.

stc also continues to invest in its human capital, recognizing it as one of the key pillars of its success, by developing employees' capabilities and providing a supportive work environment. It also adopts best practices in governance and internal control, thereby enhancing transparency and institutional efficiency and supporting business continuity in a changing operating environment."

About stc

Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is a Kuwaiti shareholding company incorporated pursuant to Amiri Decree No. 187 on 22 July, 2008, to operate and manage the third GSM mobile network in Kuwait as per Law No. 2 of 2007. Accordingly, stc launched its operations in December 2008 and was listed on Boursa Kuwait in December 2014. It is a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers and enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, and is a subsidiary of stc Group. stc has rapidly reached a leadership stance in the market through its customer and employee centric strategy.

stc offers an innovative range of world-class products, services and solutions with high quality, that cater to the customers' needs and demands, both for individuals and enterprises (solutions by stc). In 2019, stc acquired 100% of the share capital of the Internet Service Provider, Qualitynet General Trading and Contracting Company (solutions by stc) in Kuwait. In April 2022, stc acquired the entire share capital of e-portal Holding Company and its subsidiaries – the leading ICT services provider in Kuwait.

stc offers high internet speeds due to the implementation of the most advanced 5G network and deployment of the largest network nationwide.

stc seeks to support several initiatives within its social responsibility programme that support various initiatives in the areas of health, education, environment, sports and entrepreneurship that benefit society and employees.

Strikes cripple Iran's factories and exports

Iran's economy has been battered. Its leaders still think Trump will blink first

CAIRO, April 28, (AP): In the heartland of Iran's famed carpet-making industry, manufacturing has ground to a near halt. Dairies struggle to find packages for milk and butter. Giant steel mills that once drove Iran's economy have gone silent. Hundreds of thousands have lost jobs, and millions more are at risk.

Over more than five weeks of bombardment, U.S. and Israeli strikes hit thousands of factories. The damage is reverberating across Iran's economy, threatening increasing waves of layoffs, even as Iranians face skyrocketing prices. The cost of chicken is up 75% the past month, and beef and lamb jumped 68%. Many dairy products have increased by half.

It could get worse as the United States blockades Iranian ports, choking off many imports and oil exports that bring in billions of dollars. Economic woes sparked the mass protests that were crushed before the war and could again push Iranians into the streets.

Still, Iran has its own weapon pointed at the global economy, with its grip on the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's leaders say they will only reopen the key waterway for global energy if the blockade is lifted and the war ends. They are betting that an economy built to be self-reliant under decades of international sanctions can endure the pain longer than U.S. President Donald Trump.

Iran has lost at least 1 million jobs directly because of the war, Deputy Labor Minister Gholamhossein Mohammadi said, according to state media.

But the ripple effects put some 10 million to 12 million jobs at risk - half of Iran's labor force - warns Hadi Kahalazadeh, an Iranian economist.

Israel claimed to have struck the industrial base of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard. But the strikes went well beyond, hitting facilities not owned by the force.

Airstrikes damaged 20,000 factories, some 20% of the country's production units, according to Kahalazadeh, a research fellow at Brandeis University. The stricken facilities included Tofiq Daru, Iran's largest pharmaceutical holding, producing anticancer drugs among other things. Optics and chemical developers, and aluminum and cement factories, were also hit.

Perhaps most damaging, Israel hit Iran's biggest steel-making and petrochemical factories, most of them in a wave of strikes just before the April 8 ceasefire. The two biggest steel producers, Mobarakeh Steel and Khuzestan Steel, as well as smaller mills, halted production. More than 50 petrochemical complexes have been shut down, according to Iran's semi-official Jamaran news agency.

That has crippled Iran's two biggest non-oil exports, and higher prices have affected everything from plastics to pipes, to fabrics and packaging for groceries like milk, butter and cheese.

Strikes are not the only cause of economic woes. The internet has largely been shut down since the protests, gutting small and medium-sized businesses reliant on online sales. Even before the U.S. blockade, Iranian strikes on the United Arab Emirates, on which it relied for around a third of its imports, led that country to cut off trade.

Around 80% of rug and carpet manufacturers have stopped operations in the industrial zone of the city of Kashan, the center of Iran's rugmaking industry, said the son of a rugmaker. His family factory, which employs 20 to 30 people and used to machine-make hundreds of rugs a month, is among those that shut down, though his father still goes to the facility every day.

"Never have I heard my father so upset," said the son,

who lives in the United States and spoke on condition of anonymity for his family's security.

Kashan, home to hundreds of carpet manufacturers, "relies on the rug industry and unfortunately it's been crippled," he said. Exports plummeted since the war began, and domestic sales are almost zero. Prices for synthetic fibers have leaped 30%- 50% - partly a downstream effect of hits on petrochemical facilities, he said.

Mehdi Bostanchi owns a ventilation and air conditioning factory, and a second producing household fans, with a total of more than 1,130 employees. Both still operate. But the HVAC factory heavily depends on the construction industry, and "construction is facing a massive shock," he said.

Most new building is on hold, while the price of iron sheeting has more than doubled.

Bostanchi, a member of a council representing Iranian industrialists, said "all the country's industries in some way rely on our petrochemical industry." Even companies that don't directly need steel or petrochemical products have contracts with those that do.

A chemical engineer working at one of Iran's biggest private construction contractors said it laid off half of its 180 headquarters staffers and had to shut down a project with Mobarakeh Steel, costing 1,000 jobs.

A Tehran resident quit his job as a consulting engineer just before the war, and the new job he had lined up is now uncertain.

"I am at the top 1% (of society), and I am without a job. I am super worried about my future," he said, adding that people's savings will start to run out in the coming weeks.

Both he and the chemical engineer spoke on condition of anonymity out of security concerns.

Millions took to the streets in January's protests that were triggered by worsening inflation but turned into calls for the end of the Islamic Republic, bringing a bloody crackdown.

Officials are trying to reassure the public that Iran can withstand the economic pain. The government has promised to increase unemployment insurance. But the burden on Iran's social security system is rising even as its funding is gouged, since it depends heavily on its stakes in petrochemical companies and other key industries, Kahalazadeh said.

The U.S. blockade threatens to cut off export revenues: Iran sold some \$98 billion in exports in 2025, just under half of it from oil.

But a complete blockade is difficult; around half of Iran's non-oil trade goes overland or through Caspian Sea ports, according to Esfandyar Batmanghelidj, an economic expert.

Iran has also built up significant resilience and "readiness for worst-case scenarios," Batmanghelidj wrote for the Bourse and Bazaar Foundation, a research group he heads on economic development in West and Central Asia.

Iran maintains large reserves of vital supplies. At the end of 2025, Iran had stored up enough electrical machinery for nearly eight months, cement to last nearly six months and enough steel and iron for four months, he wrote, adding that supplies could be further stretched by rationing.

Bostanchi, the factories owner, said he believes Iran's economy could bounce back once the war ends. But how much depends on whether Iran can win an end to international sanctions.

"If we cannot lift the sanctions in any agreements, then no, the optimistic forecast ... will not happen," he said.

The Board of Directors of Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is pleased to announce the financial results for the three months period ended 31 March 2026.

-2.4%
Total Revenue

85.3
KD million

+3.5%
EBITDA

23.1
KD million

+1.6%
Net profit

9.2
KD million

+1.6%
EPS

9
Fils

Results are compared to the same period last year

On the sidelines of the analysts conference for the first quarter of 2026

NBK's 1Q 2026 performance underscores the resilience of its diversified business model in effectively mitigating the impact of geopolitical volatility

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Mr. **Isam Al-Sager**, Vice Chairman and Group CEO of National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), emphasized that the Group's 1Q2026 financial performance underscores the depth and resilience of its well-established diversification strategy across business segments and geographies, reinforcing its ability to effectively absorb and navigate the impact of recent geopolitical volatility while sustaining overall performance.

Al-Sager stated, on the sidelines of the Analysts' Conference Call for the first quarter of 2026 results, that NBK reported a net profit of KWD 135.5 million for the three-month period ended 31 March 2026, compared to KWD 134.1 million in the corresponding period of 2025, representing a year-on-year growth of 1%.

He further added that net operating income increased by 6.6% year-on-year to reach KWD 331.2 million, while key performance indicators remained robust, with Return on Average Assets (ROAA) standing at 1.20% and Return on Average Equity (ROAE) reaching 12.2%.

Al-Sager noted that the Group continues to execute against its defined strategic roadmap, with a clear emphasis on innovation and digital banking. This is being advanced through the ongoing development of digital platforms, the enhancement of mobile banking capabilities, and the expansion of its solutions offering, collectively driving deeper customer engagement and strengthening relationships with a growing segment increasingly reliant on digital channels.

"Building on this momentum, NBK reaffirms its confidence in sustaining its leadership position in the domestic market, underpinned by strong financial fundamentals and a resilient operating model. The strength of our client relationships continues to reinforce NBK's role as a key partner in delivering the government's infrastructure development programs and advancing the reform agenda," Al-Sager said.

He further emphasized that the Group continues to prioritize diversification as a core pillar of its strategy, leveraging its regional and international footprint to enhance operational efficiency, deepen client relationships, and further consolidate its positioning across markets.

Al-Sager highlighted that NBK Wealth, the Group's wealth management arm, continues to play a key role in broadening the Group's service offering through the delivery of a comprehensive suite of advisory and investment solutions. He added that Boubyan Bank, the Group's Islamic banking arm, remains one of the key core business segments contributing to overall performance, further reinforcing NBK's presence in the domestic market.

On the sustainability front, Al-Sager reaffirmed NBK's commitment to advancing its Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) agenda, noting that the Bank successfully exceeded its 2025 operational emissions reduction targets ahead of schedule, while also achieving 61% of its \$10 billion sustainable assets target set for 2030.

He emphasized that these achievements, alongside the notable improvement in ESG ratings, further consolidate NBK's standing among the region's leading banking institutions.

Implications of the War

Al-Sager noted that the first quarter of 2026 witnessed the outbreak of war in the Middle East, representing one of the more severe geopolitical scenarios previously assessed by the Bank as part of its forward-looking risk framework. He explained that the repercussions of this conflict are expected to be broad-based and prolonged, extending beyond the region to weigh on the global economy, particularly amid persistent tensions disrupting trade flows and energy supply chains.

Kuwait and GCC Economies

With respect to the Kuwaiti economy, Al-Sager indicated that economic activity demonstrated strong momentum at the start of 2026, prior to the escalation of regional tensions. However, the spillover effects of the conflict are expected to weigh on overall growth prospects, spanning both the oil and non-oil sectors.

Al-Sager added that, on the back of a strong January and February, project awards in the first quarter of 2026 reached around KWD1.8 billion; reinforcing the government's commitment to executing and advancing large-scale infrastructure development.



Isam Al-Sager

Al-Sager:

- NBK's 1Q 2026 performance underscores the resilience of its diversified business model in effectively mitigating the impact of geopolitical volatility
- The Bank continues to reinforce its leadership position in Kuwait, anchored by a resilient operating model and strong fundamentals
- We are advancing our strategic agenda with clear momentum, driven by innovation and an advanced digital banking proposition
- Our regional and international footprint remains a key differentiator, enabling greater efficiency and reinforcing our competitive positioning across markets
- NBK Reinforces Its Role as a Key Partner in Advancing the Government's Reform Agenda and Spearheading Major Infrastructure Initiatives
- NBK Wealth is playing an increasingly strategic role in expanding high-value advisory and investment capabilities
- Boubyan Bank continues to make a meaningful contribution to strengthening the group's positioning within the domestic market
- Key metrics remain robust, with ROAA at 1.20% and ROAE at 12.2%
- We successfully exceeded our operational emissions reduction targets for 2025 ahead of schedule
- 61% of the \$10 billion sustainable assets target for 2030 has been achieved

- A notable improvement in ESG ratings further reinforces NBK's standing among the region's leading banks
- The government's sustained focus on accelerating the execution of major infrastructure projects remains a key enabler of a more positive scenario
- The war in the middle east is expected to have prolonged adverse implications for the global economy
- Strong fiscal buffers across GCC countries are expected to support a relatively swift recovery once the war ends

Ronghe:

- 1Q2026 performance underscores the Group's agility and disciplined execution, ensuring operational continuity and resilience even under elevated volatility conditions
- Net Operating Income grew by 6.6% year-on-year, reflecting strong underlying business momentum and effective balance sheet deployment
- International and Islamic banking contributed 42% of Group profits, reaffirming the resilience and breadth of our diversification strategy
- The Group's balance sheet remains robust, underpinned by prudent risk management and a well-diversified, high-quality loan portfolio
- Liquidity and capital metrics continue to operate comfortably above regulatory thresholds
- We expect loan growth to be in the mid-to-high single-digit range for the year



NBK Headquarters

Furthermore, he noted that the outlook for project activity for the remainder of the year remains tied to geopolitical developments and constraints to materials and labor supply. While the government's affirmation to directing state authorities and stressing on execution progress remains a key for a more positive scenario.

Turning to the GCC, Al-Sager noted that, as the most directly impacted region by the recent geopolitical developments, economic activity slowed down while uncertainty continued to shape the short-term outlook. Nonetheless, over the medium to longer term, the region's robust financial buffers are expected to support a relatively swift and resilient recovery once the conflict subsides.

Business Continuity

Mr. Sujit Ronghe, Group Chief Financial Officer of NBK, stated: "The Group's performance in the first quarter of 2026 reflects the resilience and adaptability of its business model, ensuring uninterrupted operation even under elevated volatility conditions."

Ronghe noted that the 2026 began with a certain degree of optimism in the operating environment, supported by robust expectations for economic growth in Kuwait and across international markets. However, this momentum was swiftly disrupted by the sharp and unexpected escalation in geopolitical tensions since March, leading an overall unstable regional operating environment, with global implications.

He pointed out that these developments have increased macro-economic uncertainties, as fuller implications of the ongoing crisis are yet to unravel. Despite these unexpected challenges, NBK Group has continued to demonstrate robust operational and financial resilience, underpinned by its well-diversified business model, balanced geographic footprint, and multiple income streams.

Improved Operating Performance

Ronghe explained that the Group's net profit for the first quarter of 2026

reflects a year-on-year increase of KWD 1.4 million, while also exceeding the previous quarter's net profit by KWD 27.2 million. This performance was supported by stronger operating performance and lower net provision charge for credit losses & impairment losses.

Furthermore, Ronghe attributed the 6.6% year-on-year increase in net operating income during 1Q2026 to strong underlying business momentum, effective balance sheet deployment, and robust growth across both net interest income and non interest income. He further noted that the operating income mix continues to reflect a balanced composition between the two streams, with non-interest income contributing 25% of total operating income.

Ronghe noted that the International and Islamic Banking segments, both key pillars underpinning NBK Group's diversification strategy, collectively contributed 42% of the Group's total profits during the first quarter of 2026.

On the risk front, Ronghe stated that the cost of risk stood at 18bps in 1Q2026, compared to 40bps in 1Q2025, benefitting from recoveries of previously fully provided debts. He added that the Group's balance sheet remains firmly resilient, supported by stable asset quality, a strong capital base, and a solid capacity to generate operating earnings, providing substantial buffers to absorb potential credit losses.

Assets and Loans

Covering the balance sheet, Ronghe stated: "Total assets reached KWD 46.1 billion as at March 2026, reflecting a year-on-year growth of 10.7%, while gross loans and advances stood at KWD 27.3 billion, increasing by 10.9% year-on-year, despite the prevailing geopolitical headwinds."

He highlighted that the Group's asset base remains well-diversified across domestic and international operations, as well as between conventional and Islamic banking activities. He further noted that the sectoral composition of the loan portfolio reflects a high degree of diversification, with personal lending representing the largest segment at 28% of total gross loans. Notably, a substantial portion of this exposure is extended to a broad base of Kuwaiti nationals, predominantly employed within the government sector, comprising largely salary-assigned facilities characterized by strong credit fundamentals and consistently low default rates.

Ronghe emphasized that NBK Group continues to maintain a robust liquidity profile, with key Basel III metrics remaining comfortably above the original regulatory minimum thresholds. The Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) stood at 161% and the Net Stable Funding Ratio (NSFR) at 106%, underscoring the strength of the Group's funding and liquidity position. He added that the capital adequacy ratio reached 16.4%, reflecting a solid capital base well in excess of regulatory requirements.

Ronghe commended the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) for the recent introduction of supportive measures aimed at reinforcing the resilience of the Kuwaiti banking sector. He noted that NBK looks forward to further the government or the CBK's issuances, which would enable the Group to efficiently deploy its ample liquidity into interest earning during coming months.

Ronghe concluded by reaffirming NBK's cautiously optimistic outlook for a gradual improvement in the operating environment throughout 2026. He indicated that loan growth expectations for the year have been revised to the mid-to-high single-digit range, while the cost of risk is expected to remain broadly aligned with normalized levels over the medium term, notwithstanding the prevailing challenges.

New US tariffs may target forced labor, overproduction

Trump seeks new tariffs after Supreme Court ruling

WASHINGTON, April 28, (AP): When the Supreme Court killed his favorite tariffs in February, President Donald Trump promptly rolled out temporary import taxes to replace them. But those stopgap levies expire in less than three months.

Now the administration is scrambling to put more durable tariffs in place to keep revenue flowing into the U.S. Treasury and to shore up the president's protectionist wall around the American economy.

Starting this week, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative will begin hearings in two investigations that are expected to lead to a new round of U.S. tariffs - taxes paid by importers in the United States and usually passed on via higher prices to consumers who are already fed up with the high cost of living.

Trump's newest tariff push is sure to face more challenges in court but is likely to prove sturdier than the one the Supreme Court tossed out.

First up is a hearing Tuesday and Wednesday into whether 60 economies - from Nigeria to Norway and accounting for 99% of U.S. imports - do enough to prohibit the trade in products created by forced labor.

"For too long, American workers and firms have been forced to compete against foreign producers who may have an artificial cost advantage gained from the scourge of forced labor," U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said in March. The administration could punish scrofflaws with new tariffs.

Then, next week, the administration will hold hearings on whether 16 U.S. trading partners - including China, the European Union and Japan - are overproducing goods, driving down prices and putting U.S. manufacturers at a disadvantage. The economies being investigated account for 70% of U.S. imports, according to Erica York of the Tax Foundation. Again, the probe could result in new tariffs.

Most major economies, including China, the EU and Japan, are on both lists.

The administration has brought the cases under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, which authorizes tariffs and other sanctions against countries found to engage in "unjustifiable," "unreasonable" or "discriminatory" trade practices.

U.S. Trade Representative Greer, who is overseeing the investigations, has insisted he

won't prejudice them.

But importers and foreign countries have doubts the process will be fair. After all, Trump's Treasury secretary, Scott Bessent, did not wait for the investigations to be completed to proclaim that the U.S. government will replace its original tariff revenues with new import taxes, including ones to be imposed under Section 301. The president himself has said that new tariffs "are going to get us more money."

"If you believe the Treasury secretary and the president, then the cake is already baked," said Scott Lincicome of the libertarian Cato Institute's Center for Trade Policy Studies. "These investigations will result in tariffs that approximate what the Supreme Court overruled in February."

On Feb. 20, the high court ruled that Trump had overstepped his authority by invoking the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to impose double-digit tariffs on almost every country on Earth. Trump had used the act to plaster taxes on imports with eager abandon. For example, he conjured up a new tariff on Canada (though he never actually imposed it) because he didn't like a Canadian television ad criticizing his trade policies.

He used the threat of IEEPA tariffs to strong-arm top U.S. trading partners - including the EU, Japan and South Korea - into accepting lopsided trade agreements. The levies also brought in a lot of revenue -- \$166 billion - before the Supreme Court shut them down, ruling that IEEPA couldn't be used to impose tariffs. Now the federal government must refund money to importers who paid those tariffs.

Trump had a handy way to quickly recoup some of the lost revenue - which had been expected to hit \$1.6 trillion over the next decade - at least temporarily. Section of 122, also of Trade Act of 1974, allows the president to impose global tariffs as high as 15% for up to 150 days.

The administration wasted no time. Two days after the Supreme Court decision, it slapped 10% Section 122 tariffs on imports. Trump said he'd raise the levies to the maximum 15% but hasn't.

The clock runs out on those tariffs July 24. Congress could extend them. But lawmakers have little enthusiasm for approving what amounts to a big tax as November's midterm

elections approach: American voters are already furious about the high prices, for which tariffs are at least partly to blame.

Section 301 offers another opportunity to replicate the the protectionist impact of the IEEPA tariffs. There are no limits on the size of Section 301 tariffs. They expire after four years but can be extended.

Perhaps best of all, from the Trump administration's perspective after its Supreme Court defeat, Section 301 tariffs withstood legal challenges when the president used them in his first term to pound China in a dispute over Beijing's sharp-elbowed policies to promote its own tech companies.

Any new 301 tariffs are sure to be challenged again in court. But judges might not throw them out.

"Even if it is a veiled - or less-than-veiled - attempt to reinstate the IEEPA tariffs, he still has the cover of the process itself," said trade lawyer Joyce Aдетutu, a partner at law firm Vinson & Elkins.

Critics have latched onto the speed with which Trump's latest investigations are proceeding. Imposing the Section 301 tariffs against China in the president's first term took nearly a year of investigation and public comment. If the latest investigations produce new tariffs in time to replace the expiring Section 122 levies, the process will have taken less than half that long.

"It's such a short timeframe," said Kenya Davis, a partner at the law firm Boies Schiller Flexner who has done pro bono work on human trafficking and forced labor. "It's so condensed that it doesn't make a lot of sense that they can do it that quickly."

Importers bracing for the return of painful tariffs can take some comfort in knowing that Trump's Section 301 tariffs likely won't be as erratic as his IEEPA levies. He has to follow procedures before imposing them.

"One of the reasons Trump used IEEPA is because it was just a complete blank slate" - or seemed to be before the Supreme Court ruling, Cato's Lincicome said, describing it as "a little tariff switch in the Oval Office that Trump could flip on and off anytime he wants; he wakes up in the morning and he doesn't like a Canadian television commercial, he flips the switch ... You really can't do that with 301."

HONG KONG, April 28, (AP): China on Monday blocked U.S. tech giant Meta's acquisition of the artificial intelligence startup Manus, in an unexpected move to reverse a deal that apparently aroused Beijing's concerns about the transfer of advanced technology.

In a one-line statement, China's National Development and Reform Commission, the country's top planning agency, said it was prohibiting the foreign acquisition of Manus and had required all the parties to withdraw from the deal. It did not specifically name Meta Platforms, which owns Facebook and Instagram.

Manus, which has Chinese roots but is based in Singapore, provides a general-purpose AI agent that can autonomously carry out sophisticated tasks like coding an app, doing market research or preparing quarterly budgets.

The decision was made by the commission's Office of the Working Mechanism for Security Review of Foreign Investment in accordance with Chinese laws and regulations, the statement said. It came after Chinese authorities said they were looking into the deal earlier this year.

The commission did not elaborate on the reasons for the ban. The announcement came less than a month before U.S. President Donald Trump's planned visit to Beijing to meet Chinese leader Xi Jinping in May.

Meta announced in December that it was acquiring Manus, in a rare case of a major U.S. tech group buying an AI company with strong links to China. Its deal with Manus was expected to help expand AI offerings across Meta's platforms.

Meta had said there would be "no continuing Chinese ownership interests in Manus" and that Manus would discontinue its services and operations in China. But China said in January that it would investigate whether the acquisition would be consistent with its laws and regulations.

China's commerce ministry said at the time that any enterprises engaging in outward investment, technology exports, data transfers and cross-border acquisitions must comply with Chinese

law. Meta had said most of Manus' employees were based in Singapore.

Before the deal, Manus parent was Singapore-based Butterfly Effect Pte, but the AI startup traces its roots back to Beijing-registered entities with similar names that were established several years earlier.

Manus did not respond to a request for comment. Its website says the company "is now part of Meta," indicating that the deal had already been completed.

Meta said on Monday that the Manus transaction "complied fully with applicable law." "We anticipate an appropriate resolution to the inquiry," the California-based company said in a statement.

Analysts said the decision is a sign that China's communist leaders are tightening scrutiny of the AI industry amid intensifying geopolitical rivalry with the U.S. over the technology.

"China is showing the world that it is willing to play hardball when it comes to AI talents and capabilities, which the country views as a core national security asset," said Lian Jye Su, chief analyst at the technology research and advisory group Omdia. "It is strongly indicative of what Chinese authorities may do going forward regarding acquisitions involving Chinese deep-tech companies."

Beijing's acquisition ban could deter similar acquisition plans by U.S. tech giants going forward, he said. "In the context of rivalry, it mirrors U.S. export controls, entity lists, and investment curbs on China," said Su.

Meta's interest in Manus reflects a broader tech industry race to lead in the development of AI agents that can go beyond a chatbot's capabilities to take computer-based actions on people's behalf. Meta last month acquired Moltbook after it attracted viral attention as a social network built for AI agents to make posts and interact with each other. That was after OpenAI, maker of ChatGPT, hired the creator of AI agent OpenCLAT, formerly called Moltbot and the technology upon which Moltbook was built.

China moves to restrict AI technology outflow

Box office smash meets viral sensation in Jackson biopic

Arab stars spin 'Michael' magic on social feeds

By Falah Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff



Kuwaiti artist Bashar Al-Jazzaf

In the Middle East, audiences are quick to latch onto any trend, and many celebrities and stars rush to be the first to adopt it, seemingly indifferent to the frenzy that sweeps social media platforms and intensifies the competition.

In line with the popular saying, "Go with the flow," social media platforms have been buzzing with a 'fresh' trend – recreating dance clips from the new film "Michael," which topped the box office, generated millions in revenue, and approached the billion-dollar mark within just one week of its theatrical release.

Stars and celebrities have appeared on social media, dressed in elaborate outfits and adopting a style reminiscent of the pop icon.

A number of artists and public figures used social media platforms to record and share these short clips, triggering a wide spectrum of reactions from the public, including support, bullying and outright rejection.

Some encountered severe criticism, often in the form of bullying and mockery, as it happened with Egyptian actress Asmaa Galal. She was subjected to consecutive waves of ridicule, yet she handled the situation with notable composure, avoiding confrontation with her critics. Instead, she welcomed the reactions, engaged with them, and responded with humor.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti artist Bashar Al-Jazzaf received a stream of humorous comments – both supportive and critical – af-

ter sharing a video of himself imitating the pop star.

Al-Jazzaf, despite his full figure, appeared light and witty as he mimicked Jackson's iconic dance moves. He refused to be drawn into disputes or arguments, choosing instead to simply observe the comments.

A video clip of Emirati artist Abdullah Belkhair, taken from one of his music videos, also circulated widely, showing him performing in the style of the pop star through both singing and dancing. The 'Michael Jackson imitation' trend continues to gain momentum at the time of writing.

On the other hand, the Michael Jackson biopic opened strongly, securing the top spot at the box office. It is expected to surpass \$90 million in weekend revenue, having already generated \$39.9 million.

From its first day of release on Friday in the United States, the film's success was clear, bolstered by \$12.6 million earned during pre-release screenings on Wednesday and Thursday.

The biopic grossed around \$314 million worldwide during its opening weekend, with projections suggesting it will exceed these figures within its first week.

The film has already drawn comparisons to "Straight Outta Compton," which holds the record for the highest-grossing opening weekend for a musical biopic in American history, earning \$60.2 million in 2015.

Forecasts indicate it could surpass \$700 million in total revenue.

Reports estimate the film's production

budget at between \$150 million and \$200 million, putting it among the most expensive musical biopics ever produced.

The film traces Michael Jackson's journey from a challenging childhood to the heights of global fame, highlighting both the human and artistic dimensions of one of most iconic musical figures.

Set in the 1960s, it portrays Michael Jackson as a gifted child within the Jackson 5, the group founded by his father, in which he underwent strict and demanding training. This discipline, imposed from an early age, shaped his personality, while depriving him of a typical childhood.

The film depicts the band's rise to success and their signing with Motown Records, marking the beginning of their ascent to fame, as the family's life transformed from modest beginnings to widespread stardom throughout the United States.

At the same time, it underscores how producers quickly recognized the extraordinary talent of Michael and his potential to pursue a solo career.

Michael launched his solo career with the album "Off the Wall" in the late 1970s, before reaching unprecedented heights with the record-breaking album "Thriller."

The film provides a behind-the-scenes perspective on this success, showcasing his artistic innovations in dance and music videos, as well as his relentless pursuit of excellence despite the psychological struggles tied to his relationship with his father and his own self-image.

Film



This image released by Universal Pictures shows, from left, Jimmy Gonzales as Cepheus, Matt Damon as Odysseus and Himesh Patel as Eurylochus in a scene from 'The Odyssey.' (AP)



This image released by Universal Pictures shows, from left, characters Ed, Henry and Goomi in a scene from Illumination's 'Minions & Monsters.' (AP)



This image released by 20th Century Studios shows Meryl Streep in a scene from 'The Devil Wears Prada 2.' (AP)

The Odyssey leads star-studded box office charge

Gods, not superheroes, rule summer screen

LOS ANGELES, April 28, (AP): The movies always feel bigger in the summer. The budgets. The ambition. The names. The stakes. This summer, Hollywood has many of the regulars on the lineup: "Spider-Man," "Minions," "Star Wars" and "Toy Story." But the most eagerly anticipated is not a superhero, toy, or franchise: It's a 3,000-year-old epic poem.

For filmmaker Christopher Nolan, "The Odyssey," out July 17, isn't just a story. It's the story: A foundational piece that deserved to be done on the biggest possible scale, with all the resources modern Hollywood had to offer.

"There's a massive amount of pressure," Nolan told The Associated Press. "Anyone taking on 'The Odyssey' is taking on the hopes and dreams of people for epic movies everywhere and that comes with a huge responsibility."

It's a familiar feeling, though. He did three Batman films after all. "What I learned from that experience is that what people want from a movie about a beloved story, a beloved set of characters, is they want a strong and sincere interpretation," Nolan said. "They want to know that a filmmaker has gone to the mat for it. I really tried to make the best film possible."

Three summers ago, "Oppenheimer" made nearly a billion dollars. "The Odyssey" has battles, gods, creatures and an army of movie stars - Matt Damon, Anne Hathaway, Zendaya and Tom Holland included. It's also the first movie shot entirely on IMAX film. Tickets for some IMAX 70 mm showings sold out in under an hour a full year in advance.

"The Odyssey" will be shorter than "Oppenheimer"; Three hours is the longest they've been able to get onto an IMAX film projector, after all.

"It's an epic film, as the subject matter demands," Nolan said. "But it is shorter."

Hollywood may not save all its blockbusters for the hottest months anymore, but the 18 week corridor running from the first weekend in May through Labor Day remains the industry's most important, accounting for around 40% of the year's box office. And it's only surpassed \$4 billion once since the pandemic, in 2023.

Marvel movies often kick off the season, but last year filmmaker David Frankel got a call from Disney: "Avengers: Doomsday" wasn't going to be ready by the first weekend in May; Could "The Devil Wears Prada 2" step up?

May 1 is just days before the Met Gala and it would give the movie a long runway to play, he figured. It would also require a bit of a sprint - they finished the film just weeks ago. But the enthusiasm was motivating, from fans snapping photos of Hathaway and Meryl Streep on the New York streets, to support from Anna Wintour.

Love for "Prada" isn't the only thing that's changed in 20 years; Magazines have also become an endangered species.

"How does Miranda Priestly deal with this changing world and what's her future?" Frankel said. "The same with Andy Sachs: If all your ambition has been funneled in this one direction, what happens when you have to pivot and how do you adapt?"

The movie industry is also adjusting to a new paradigm. Box office is down over 20% from pre-COVID levels. The rise in streaming, the pandemic and shifting theatrical windows altered people's moviegoing



This image released by Sony Pictures shows Spider-Man and Boomerang in a scene from 'Spider-Man: Brand New Day.' (AP)

habits, perhaps permanently. And there may be one less major studio if Paramount acquires Warner Bros.

But, as James Cameron said, "hope springs eternal." "We still have a very robust theatrical industry at a time when it was kind of almost pronounced dead," Cameron said.

The gap is not widening. Studios are committing to longer exclusive theatrical windows. Original movies and premium formats are drawing crowds. And the market continues to expand globally.

Cameron is behind one of those only-in-a-theater experiences with the 3D Billie Eilish concert film (May 8). Using new technology, they used 17 camera systems to capture four nights of her Manchester shows last year.

"Seeing it in 3D is astonishing," Cameron said. "You really feel an intimacy with her and yet you feel the scale of the spectacle."

Nolan isn't Universal's only giant of cinema on its summer roster: Steven Spielberg is also returning to one of his most beloved genres with "Disclosure Day" (June 12). There are superhero movies as well, with "Supergirl" (June 26), which DC Studios co-head Peter Safran said is "is something cool and original and we haven't seen before," and "Spider-Man: Brand New Day" (July 31). The last Spidey film, which made over \$1.9 billion, ended with Holland's Peter Parker erasing himself from everyone's memory.

"This is a blockbuster action movie with all the humor and emotion we love about Spider-Man," director Destin Daniel Cretton said. "But at its heart, it's a story about learning how to reconnect with the ones you love."

A lot of power recently has shifted to PG-rated offerings. This summer has "Toy Story 5" (June 19), "Minions & Monsters" (July 1) and a live action "Moana" (July 10), which could all very well hit a billion dollars

each.

One non-franchise family friendly film is "The Sheep Detectives" (May 8), in which the animals (Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Bryan Cranston) investigate the death of their beloved owner (Hugh Jackman). Writer Craig Mazin understands the hurdle: There have been a lot of stupid talking animal movies. But this one is different, he said, it's not just silly sheep doing silly things.

"There are some really beautiful moments and themes and things that parents can talk about with their kids," Mazin said. "And most importantly, it is legitimately a movie that is meant for everyone."

Then there's "Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu" (May 22), which is rated PG-13 but has an impossibly cute alien going for it. It's also one of several made for IMAX.

"People have got great TVs at home," said director Jon Favreau. "You've got to give them a reason to go out."

Movie studios also continue to lean into horror and this summer has both franchises, like "Evil Dead Burn" (July 10) and "Insidious: Out of the Further" (Aug. 21) and unnerving indies, including the "conversion therapy" horror "Leviticus," "Rose of Nevada" (both June 19), "Backrooms" (May 29) and a new Jane Schoenbrun, "... Death at Camp Miasma" (Aug. 7).

And then there is "Scary Movie 6" (June 5), which sees the return of Regina Hall and Anna Faris, as well as Marlon and Shawn Wayans, who haven't been involved in the franchise they helped create since the 2001 sequel. And there were so many movies ripe for parody, like "M3GAN," "Get Out," "Weapons," the just-released "Michael," and "Sinners," which Marlon Wayans was most excited about.

"Mockery is the greatest form of flattery," Wayans said. "Sending up their movie was definitely tipping our hat to them."

Audiences want more than brands and blockbusters though. This year moviegoers have already proven they'll turn out when the buzz is right, whether it's for a big crowd pleaser like "Project Hail Mary" or for something more challenging like "The Drama."

One that has the potential to break through is Olivia Wilde's "The Invite" (June 26), a chamber dramedy about two very different couples (Wilde, Seth Rogen, Penélope Cruz and Edward Norton) over one wine-filled night that sparked a bidding war at the Sundance Film Festival. Wilde was heartened that most studios were offering theatrical releases, and ultimately chose A24. They've even made a 35 mm print.

"The whole project for me is really tipping my hat to Mike Nichols," Wilde said. "We thought of the audiences that have always loved those films."

There are plenty of indies and originals to choose from throughout the summer, including Daniel Roher's "Tuner," about a piano prodigy turned safecracker, Boots Riley's colorful shoplifting movie "I Love Boosters," (both May 22) a John Carney musical with Paul Rudd ("Power Ballad," June 5) and David Wain's wholesomely raunchy comedy "Gail Daughtry and the Celebrity Sex Pass" (July 10).

As Wilde said, there's room for both originals and franchises. "The audience really likes to recognize risk," she said. "There's something exciting about that."

Travel



A border inspection police officer helps foreign tourists fill in entry information at Shanghai Pudong International Airport in Shanghai, east China, Feb. 11, 2026.



Dutch tourists David (left, front) and Pim (right, front) pose for photos with Chinese tourists at the Tiantan (Temple of Heaven) Park in Beijing, capital of China, Jan. 7, 2026.



A Chinese girl interacts with a tourist from Ireland at Jiefangbei, a business area, in Yuzhong District of Chongqing, southwest China, April 22, 2026.

Travel stories point to trust, order and peace of mind

China's quiet sense of safety shapes visitors' travel experience

SHANGHAI, April 28, (Xinhua): About 30 minutes after leaving a restaurant in downtown Shanghai, German tourist Lukas Schmidt realized he had left his phone behind. He turned back.

Restaurant staff had already set the device aside. After confirming it was his, they returned it without fuss.

The brief episode left a lasting impression. It makes people worry less about losing things, Schmidt said, adding that he finds it simply part of everyday life in China.

It is not the kind of takeaway travelers usually bring back from trips abroad. Foreign tourists still come for the expected attractions – historic landmarks, natural scenery, futuristic urban life, and a rich culture.

Yet a quieter observation is increasingly common in travel accounts: a strong sense of order and safety that is part of China's appeal.

This appeal is evident in short videos, travel diaries and live-streams under hashtags such as "ChinaTravel," which have multiplied as visa policies ease and inbound tourism recovers.

"I've been to 55 countries," Canadian traveler Dave Mani said in a YouTube video documenting his first visit to China earlier this year. "And this is probably one of the top three safest places I've ever been to."

Across these videos, certain details recur: deliveries sitting unattended outside apartment buildings, or personal belongings briefly left in public spaces, which are mundane scenes for locals but surprising discoveries for first-time visitors.

Nights are also full of surprises for foreign travelers. In many global cities, the hours after sunset are associated with caution. In China, however, visitors record something different: well-lit streets, midnight joggers and vibrant night markets.



Overseas tourists take photos of a drone light show at Nanbin Road in Nan'an District of Chongqing, southwest China, April 22, 2026. (Xinhua photos)

In a video posted by American backpacker Christian Grossi, he joined crowds in a public square in Chongqing on a Saturday night, where locals shopped, dined and raised their phones to film a drone light show.

"It feels super peaceful and super safe. Everyone has their phones out. I have never felt any sort of danger here. You can see there is no police, no security, just people enjoying their lives here," he said.

A closer look Perceptions of safety in China are reflected in international surveys. China ranks among higher-scoring countries globally in public feelings of safety and law and order index,

according to Gallup's 2025 Global Safety Report.

Official data show that in 2025, the number of criminal cases nationwide fell 12.8 percent year on year to its lowest level since 2000, while public

security cases declined by 3.5 percent. Analysts point to a mix of factors behind these figures, including technology-assisted public safety systems, which are widely used to improve emergency response.

Lu Jifeng, a professor at Shandong University of Science and Technology in eastern China, underscored the high level of public trust in law enforcement as a key factor.

"When people see police helping solve everyday problems, trust is built naturally," Lu said, noting that Chinese police are widely perceived as having a service-oriented approach.

That sense of trust is also reflected in the experiences of foreign travelers. Earlier this month, Katherine Taylor McCall, an American who teaches English in China, recovered a phone she had left in a ride-hailing car with help from police, who contacted the platform, identified the driver and retrieved the device.

"Thank you! Chinese police, amazing!" she said.

At a deeper level, observers said China's economic development has significantly reduced poverty-driven crime, while effective governance and voluntary public participation have helped strengthen the overall sense of safety.

Claude Brouir, a Belgian cycling enthusiast, experienced this firsthand during a trip across China last year. He said locals along the way volunteered help with translation, accommodation and introductions to local customs, making the journey easier and more enjoyable.

"In China, mutual trust and support are part of daily life," said Wang Dianli, a professor at Shandong University. He added that Confucian teachings of harmony and respect for diversity have shaped everyday behavior in Chinese society.

Arts

Brushwork classes link writing skills with cultural learning

Yangon students explore Chinese calligraphy

YANGON, April 28, (Xinhua): At the China Cultural Center in Yangon, a quiet rhythm fills the room as brushes sweep across paper. Students lean over white sheets, practicing Chinese calligraphy, an art that requires patience, control, and careful attention to each stroke.

For many participants, the class is not simply about improving handwriting. It is a doorway into language, culture, and a more thoughtful way of expression.

Aye Chan Thu, 23, a Chinese language major student at Yangon University of Foreign Languages, said she joined out of curiosity and a desire to refine her writing.

"I wanted to learn how to write calligraphy," she said. "My handwriting wasn't very neat before, so I hoped it would become more beautiful and organized."

Her interest, however, goes beyond penmanship. "I also like Chinese movies and traditional costumes," she added. "If you want to understand Chinese characters more deeply, calligraphy is worth learning."

For others, the practice is closely tied to their studies. Khin Cho Lwin, 24, sees it as a foundation for learning Chinese properly.

"When we study Chinese, calligraphy is very important. It helps us understand how to write correctly," she said. "Once you know the stroke or-



Participants attend a Chinese calligraphy class at the China Cultural Center in Yangon, Myanmar, April 23, 2026. (Xinhua)

der, writing becomes more structured. You know exactly how each character should be formed."

"I've been learning Chinese since childhood, so I've been interested in this culture for a long time," she added.

For Myint Myat Thu, 24, the appeal lies in the characters themselves. "I joined mainly because I like Chinese characters," she said. She is also drawn to cultural imagery seen in historical films. "I'm very interested in traditional Chinese clothing, espe-

cially Hanfu."

Others discovered the class through the center's wider activities. Su Win Latt, 23, said she first learned about the course through public events and online updates from the China Cultural Center in Yangon.

"I had visited the center before and followed their page. When I saw the announcement, I became interested and joined," she said.

The lessons have changed the way she approaches writing. "We learned

the strokes in detail and how to write carefully. Before, I didn't know these things clearly. Now I understand the full structure of Chinese writing."

The improvement is visible in her work. "My handwriting has become more careful and much more beautiful," she said.

The China Cultural Center in Yangon offered two calligraphy courses, one in brush and one in pen, this summer, both running from March 25 to May 29, with classes held three days a week.

Behind the summer program is a structured teaching approach led by instructor U Maw Li Shwe, 60, chairman of Myanmar-China Calligraphy and Painting Association, who said that calligraphy plays an essential role in understanding Chinese culture.

He described it as an important part of Chinese culture that helps learners grasp not only writing, but also its underlying art and principles.

He explained that beginners start with basic strokes, dots, horizontal and vertical lines, slanted strokes, hooks, and turns, before combining them into simple characters, a process that allows students to gradually see progress and build confidence.

He added that lessons also go beyond technique, introducing the development of different calligraphy styles and their cultural background.

Heritage

Tunisia's Dahar Geopark gains global UNESCO recognition

TUNIS, April 28, (KUNA): Tunisia received on Monday the official certificate for the inclusion of the (Dahar Geopark) on the Global Geoparks Network list of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

This took place during an official ceremony organized by the Global Geoparks Council in France, where the Tunisian delegation was formally handed the certificate, on UNESCO's Global Geoparks list during its most recent Executive Board meeting, The Tunisian News Agency (TAP) reported.

Tunisia launched the geopark project in 2016, covering an area of approximately 6,000 square kilometres.

Tunisia's Ambassador and Permanent Delegate to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) said that this designation is in line with the organization's criteria and its Global Geoparks Programme, which aims to enhance and protect geological heritage and promote the sustainable use of land for the benefit of society.

UNESCO's Global Geoparks list includes 229 geoparks as of 2025, distributed across 50 countries worldwide.



KUNA photo
The inclusion of the geological park Dhahar in Tunisia on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Rising enrolment reflects expanding education appeal

'Study in China': A catalyst for cross-cultural connection

BEIJING, April 28, (Xinhua): An emerging "Study in China" trend among international students embodies China's increasing confidence and openness to promote cultural exchange and common development.

China has become a major destination for international study. In the 2024-2025 academic year, more than 380,000 students from 191 countries and regions pursued degree programs, research, or training at various educational institutions across China, an increase of 15 percent over the previous year, official statistics show.

The advantage of studying in Chinese universities is evident in many aspects.

In recent years, China has made significant strides in modernizing its education system amid sustained

economic growth, steadily expanding its global network of educational cooperation, and enhancing the international competitiveness of its universities.

At the end of 2025, China had 373 cooperative educational institutions and programs offering post-graduate degrees or higher, including 69 that provide doctoral programs.

Efficient and convenient measures have supported the "Study in China" trend. China has optimized policies to streamline entry and stay procedures for international students.

Meanwhile, this attractiveness is further reinforced by the accelerating internationalization of Chinese cities, where multilingual services are available in administration and public services.

And another very important factor is that China is one of the world's safest nations.

"Study in China" has become a brand that China actively promotes to advance educational exchange. Studying in China provides a vital opportunity for global youth to engage with an authentic China that is increasingly open, confident and vibrant, and share in its development dividends.

In line with its strategy of building a leading country in education, China aims to become a globally influential education hub, fostering connection and integration across diverse civilizations and making fruits of educational development better serve the building of a community with a shared future for humanity.



Foreign students participate in a Chinese New Year event at the Feng Jicai Museum at Tianjin University, north China's Tianjin Municipality, Feb. 10, 2026. (Xinhua photo)

Baby on board: Paramedics help passenger give birth

WASHINGTON, April 28, (AP): Please fasten your seatbelt, make sure your tray table is in an upright and locked position, and prepare for delivery.

A passenger on a Delta Air Lines flight from Atlanta gave birth to a healthy 5 1/2 pound (2.5 kg) girl just before the Boeing 737 landed at Portland International Airport in Oregon on Friday night. Two paramedics who happened to be on the flight assisted, borrowing blankets from other passengers and using a shoelace to tie off the umbilical cord.

Baby Brielle Renee Blair came in about two weeks ahead of schedule; the plane, about 20 minutes.

Her mom, Ashley Blair, who is from Tennessee, was flying to Oregon to be with her own mother for the birth, but didn't quite make it. She went into labor about half an hour from Portland.

One of the paramedics, Tina Fritz, told The Associated Press on Monday that she and the other paramedic, Kaarin Powell, were returning home after vacationing



In this photo provided by Tina Fritz, Ashley Blair holds her daughter Brielle, who was born April 24, 2026, on a Delta Air Lines flight just as it was landing in Portland, Ore. (AP)

in the Dominican Republic. They had been helping a nurse attend to the medical needs of another passenger at the back of the plane when a flight attendant asked them to check on Blair.

'Vaccines are beneficial for all generations'

Kuwait joins WHO's World Immunization Week

By Marwa Al-Bahawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: The State of Kuwait joins the World Health Organization (WHO) in marking the World Immunization Week from April 24-30.

The theme this year, "Vaccines are beneficial for all generations," confirms the importance of continuing immunization programs and raising public awareness on their role in protecting individuals, families and communities, while supporting efforts toward a healthier and more sustainable future.

This event is being held as Kuwait continues to cement its standing in preventive healthcare through advanced and comprehensive immunization programs for various age groups, within a national strategy centered on prevention and proactive disease management.

The Ministry of Health is implementing an integrated national immunization program that begins at birth and extends to children, adults and high-risk groups.

The program is supported by an extensive network of primary healthcare and preventive health centers in all governorates.

It also relies on a unified national immunization schedule, precise epidemiological surveillance and monitoring system, and integration with school health services to ensure continuous coverage.

Official data showed that Kuwait achieved high coverage levels, successfully eradicating polio with vaccination rates approaching 99 percent, while maintaining high routine childhood immunization rates.

These efforts helped curb the spread of multiple infectious diseases, reflecting the effectiveness of a preventive health policy that eases pressure on the healthcare system and enhances its overall efficiency.

The school health program remains one of the pillars of the immunization framework of the country. It focuses on regular health monitoring of students, ensuring completion of vaccinations according to the approved schedule, and enabling early detection of infectious diseases.

As part of ongoing service development, the ministry introduced an inclusive electronic system for students. This system is designed to create a digital health record for each student from the moment of enrollment, allowing continuous monitoring of their health throughout their academic journey.

It includes standardized medical examinations, immediate issuance of health decisions, and the integration of vaccination records, medical history and allergy data on a unified platform.

This significantly improves healthcare efficiency in schools and accelerates medical response.

In addition, WHO affirms that vaccines are among the most effective public health interventions, having saved more than 150 million lives since 1974 and preventing over 30 serious diseases.

Modern vaccines continue to expand protection against illnesses such as malaria, cervical cancer and cholera, thereby, enhancing prevention efforts and reducing mortality rates, particularly among children.

'We remain steadfast in our commitment to carbon neutrality by 2045'

Colombia climate conference highlights lack of financing for shift from fossil fuels

SANTA MARTA, Colombia, April 28, (AP): Lack of financing is one of the biggest barriers to moving away from fossil fuels, officials and experts said at a global conference Monday in Colombia aimed at speeding up the shift from fossil fuels to cleaner energy.

The gathering in the Caribbean city of Santa Marta comes as governments face mounting pressure to move beyond climate pledges and begin outlining how to phase out oil, gas and coal, the main drivers of global warming. While UN climate talks have acknowledged the need for a transition, they have produced few concrete mechanisms, leaving countries and regions to grapple with the economic challenges largely on their own.

While renewable energy such as solar and wind is often cheaper to generate than fossil fuels, experts say the cost of transitioning is driven by other factors. Governments must invest heavily in infrastructure, including power grids and storage, while replacing existing oil and gas systems that still underpin many economies. In developing countries, high borrowing costs and limited access to financing can also make clean energy projects significantly more expensive to build,

even if they are cheaper to run over time.

Experts say the problem is rooted in how the global financial system is structured.

Many countries and regional governments are not opposed to shifting away from fossil fuels, but are constrained by debt, limited fiscal space and the high cost of financing cleaner energy projects, said Amiera Sawas, head of research and policy at the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative.

"They aren't wedded ideologically to fossil fuels," she said. "They can access financing for fossil fuels more easily."

In many developing regions, borrowing costs for renewable energy can be several times higher than in wealthier economies - averaging about 15% in parts of Africa compared with roughly 2% in Europe and North America - making it cheaper to service debt and continue investing in oil and gas.

That dynamic can create what researchers describe as a "debt-fossil fuel trap," where countries rely on oil and gas income to service debt and maintain energy access, leaving them with little room to invest in alternatives.



Demonstrators participate in a Make Polluters Pay campaign along the Caribbean Sea demanding oil companies pay for the energy transition during a nearby conference aimed at transitioning away from fossil fuels on April 27 in Santa Marta, Colombia. (AP)

Against that backdrop, some governments are turning to fossil fuel revenues themselves as a way to help finance the transition.

In Brazil's Espírito Santo state, officials said money earned from oil and gas production is being used to help pay for the transition to cleaner energy, including funding projects that reduce emissions and attract private investors,

including a new fund aimed at attracting private investment into emissions-reduction projects - an example of how some governments are using fossil fuel revenues to help fund the transition away from them.

Officials said such revenues can provide a starting point in regions where alternative financing is limited and, in some cases, can help attract private

capital into cleaner energy projects.

But experts cautioned that the approach has clear limits. Fossil fuel revenues can be volatile, tied to global energy prices, and are expected to decline over time as countries reduce production and consumption.

"Climate finance is a challenge all over the world, but at the subnational level, it's even bigger," said Nicolas Lippolis, founder and executive director of the Centre for Energy, Finance and Development, who moderated a panel at the conference about the use of royalties for the energy transition.

Officials from wealthier regions said they are trying to fill part of that gap through policy and market mechanisms. In the United States, California, for example, has used carbon markets - systems that require companies to pay for or limit their emissions - and low-carbon fuel standards to generate investment and guide the transition.

"We remain steadfast in our commitment to carbon neutrality by 2045," said Sarah Izant, deputy secretary for climate policy at the California Environmental Protection Agency, which oversees the state's environmental and climate policies, adding the shift also brings public health and economic benefits.

She said California remains a "stable and reliable partner" on climate action and pointed to coalitions of US states continuing to pursue emissions cuts, even as federal policy has at times moved away from international climate commitments and regulations on fossil fuels. She acknowledged the transition has brought challenges, including disruptions in fuel supply as refineries close and the need to supplement with imports in the short term.

But not everyone at the conference agrees with that approach.

In a declaration released Monday evening at the conference, Indigenous groups said efforts to phase out oil, gas and coal must not rely on carbon markets or offset schemes - where polluters pay to offset their emissions instead of reducing them - arguing such approaches fail to address the root causes of climate change.

The Trump administration was not among those invited to the Santa Marta conference, which organizers said was focused on governments seeking to accelerate a transition away from fossil fuels.

In Canada, Quebec has taken a more direct approach, passing a law to halt new fossil fuel exploration and production altogether.

CDC warns of drug-resistant salmonella infections linked to backyard poultry

WASHINGTON, April 28, (AP): At least 34 people in 13 states have been sickened with salmonella poisoning traced to contact with backyard poultry, including some with infections resistant to common antibiotics, federal health officials said.

Backyard poultry include birds like chicken, ducks, geese, guinea fowl and turkeys. The animals can carry germs, including salmonella, that make people sick.

Illnesses were reported from Feb. 26 to March 31 and include 13 people who were hospitalized, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sick people range in age from 1 to 78, but more than 40% are children younger than 5, the CDC said last week.

Sick people have been reported in Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Ohio, Tennessee, Wisconsin and West Virginia. But more illnesses in more states could be possible, CDC officials added.



This Nov 19, 2013 file photo, shows a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention logo at the agency's federal headquarters in Atlanta. (AP)

Of sick people interviewed, nearly 80% reported contact with backyard poultry. Of people interviewed who

owned backyard poultry, more than 90% had obtained the animals since January. People got the poultry from

various places, including agricultural retail stores. Health officials are investigating the sources of the animals.

Bacteria from samples from 34 people showed they might be resistant to at least one drug used to treat salmonella infections. Of those, some also showed they might be resistant to four other common antibiotics. Infections that are unable to be treated with antibiotics can result in serious illness or death.

The CDC has investigated multiple salmonella outbreaks involving backyard poultry in recent years. In 2025, an outbreak sickened more than 500 people in 48 states, with 125 people hospitalized and two deaths.

Young children, older adults and people with weakened immune systems are most likely to get sick from these germs. The best way to prevent illness is to wash hands after handling poultry, their food or items in their environment. People should avoid kissing or snuggling with backyard birds, the CDC says.

Bid to save Darfur's children

UNICEF launches 'Child Alert'

GENEVA, April 28, (KUNA): The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Tuesday launched its new "child alert" to raise alarm about the catastrophic situation of children in Darfur, warning that five million children are facing extreme deprivation since two decades ago.

Speaking online from Port Sudan to journalists in Geneva, UNICEF Representative in Sudan Sheldon Yett said that "Some 33 million people in Sudan need humanitarian assistance. More than half of them are children" adding that "An estimated 15 million people have been uprooted including approximately 5 million children."

He said the situation echoed the crisis in Darfur two decades ago but is now deeper and receiving far less global attention.

"Children are at a breaking point across the region. Childhood is again defined by fear by loss" underlining that millions are living through extreme violence hunger and displacement.

Yett reported that Al-Fasher has been among the hardest hit.

Since April 2024 "more than 1500 grave violations against children have been verified" including the killing or maiming of over 1,300 children many by "explosive weapons and drones" in addition to sexual violence abductions and recruitment by armed groups.

He stressed that violence is not limited to Darfur adding that, "In just the first 90 days of this year at least 245 children were reportedly killed or injured" across Sudan, noting that the real toll is likely higher.

Yett also reported that "hunger has become another frontline threat" with famine confirmed in Al-Fasher in November last year while acute malnutrition rates among children have exceeded 50 percent in some areas.



A rare split-color lobster is seen at the WellFleet Shellfish Company, in Eastham, Mass on April 17. (AP)

Rare 2-colored lobster caught by fishermen donated to aquarium

WASHINGTON, April 28, (AP): It might be a divided lobster, but it has united New Englanders in fascination.

A Cape Cod seafood company has donated a rare two-colored lobster to a science center, sparing the critter from the kettle because of its remarkable coloration. The lobster found is the typical brown color on one side and bright orange on the other, and the two-toned pattern goes all the way from its head to its tail.

Representatives for Wellfleet Shellfish Company in Eastham, Massachusetts, said Monday they have been fielding inquiries about the crustacean for days. The company gifted the lobster to Woods Hole Science Aquarium in Falmouth, Massachusetts, and it will be put on public display when the aquarium reopens, the company said.

The lobster is now with Woods Hole Science Aquarium's animals currently being housed in holding tanks at the Marine Biological Laboratory during the aquarium's construction period. When the aquarium reopens, the lobster will be on display, offering visitors a rare look at one of the ocean's most striking natural anomalies," the shellfish company said in a statement.

Fishermen caught the lobster off Cape Cod on April 16. Oddly colored lobsters often make their way to New England's docks over the course of the spring and summer, but the two-colored specimen is rarer than most.

Opening up often builds trust, leads to stronger relationships

Is TMI really such a bad thing? Here's the case for oversharing

WASHINGTON, April 28, (AP): Many people know the sting of having said too much, a cringey feeling that bubbles up after sharing the wrong details at the wrong time. Now, imagine telling two of your superiors about the time you had a bathroom emergency onstage in front of hundreds of people.

Leslie John feared she had killed her career. Instead, it became an asset.

"Those two grand poo-bahs, they became my closest mentors," said John, a Harvard business professor and author of "Revealing: The Underrated Power of Oversharing." "And it's not in spite of my having shared my embarrassing story with them, because they've told me it's because of it."

John acknowledges that she may have gotten lucky, since her openness caused the professors to see her as different from other junior colleagues. But the experience illustrated a point.

Most people worry about the risks of oversharing, but in reality, opening up often builds trust and leads to stronger relationships, she said. (Her advice is for in-person relationships; sharing online is something different, carrying different risks.)

So, how do you know when it's TMI or if you're not sharing enough?

Kathryn Greene, a communications professor at Rutgers University, has been studying what's known in academia as "disclosure" since the 1980s. She said people may not realize how often they make decisions about whether to disclose something personal.

"We're constantly making these



A man and a woman sit in a cafe in Santiago, Chile, on Nov 6, 2025. (AP)

evaluations in all of our relationships and reassessing as it goes along," Greene said.

She said context is key. Telling your doctor about an infection is clearly different from telling your boss.

Being open about personal aspects of your life can bring people together, but if you reveal too much too soon, it will turn people away.

Greene offered the example of when two people getting to know each other. They first offer only a trickle of information to test if their values align.

"There's a pretty predictable pattern as we test for a positive rather than neutral or negative reaction," she said.

"It's going to lead to us potentially sharing more."

John suggested analyzing why you want to share and questioning if it's with the right person at the right time, which "requires a lot of self-honesty."

When she was pregnant during the pandemic, she told her landlord because she was dying for connection. The landlord, apparently wary of tenants with children, put the place up for sale the next day, and she had to move.

"If I had been honest with myself, why do I want to reveal this? Because I want love and excitement," she said. "Well, the landlord is not the right person to reveal to."

People rarely think of the risks of revealing too little information, however, John said. Without opening up to acquaintances, they'll never become close friends. If you don't tell the love of your life that you love them, it's a missed opportunity that's hard to recover from.

On the other hand, revealing too much is recoverable. John argues that the answer to feeling like you've overshared is to share more, not less.

For instance, if you think you may have offended someone at work, it presents an opportunity to stop by their office to clear things up.

"What feels like overcommunicating is just communicating," she said.

Greene said one kind of oversharing won't get you anywhere - the kind where someone dumps personal information on another person without letting them speak.

Over time, such an imbalance will degrade a relationship.

"Most people will try to distance themselves if they're finding time after time that this balance doesn't ever shift," she said.

Gossip is another. John's research includes examining what's called "spontaneous trait transference." Essentially, that means that when you share someone else's personal information, or if you speak badly about someone, the recipient of the information will implicitly associate those negative things with you and your character, John said.

"It happens automatically, outside of conscious awareness," she said. "Literally, it makes you look bad."

The Conversation

American exceptionalism at the World Cup

Why many soccer fans in the US will be cheering on another team, probably Mexico

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

By John M Sloop
Vanderbilt University

Soccer fans will turn their eyes to Qatar starting Nov. 20, 2022, as the World Cup gets underway. But in the U.S., the question of which team will be cheered on from afar isn't entirely straightforward.

You see, one of the anomalies of being a "typical" soccer fan in the United States - a group to which I belong - is that, you are not, in fact, a "typical" soccer fan.

For many team's supporters, the World Cup becomes an event to affirm one's national identity. This is true, as cultural critic Laurent Dubois notes, even among fans that are not jingoistic or nationalistic in any other environment.

Indeed, the nationalist fervor that emerges among crowds can boil over into xenophobic inter-national violence. As renowned soccer historian David Goldblatt noted in reference to English soccer crowds in the late 20th century, their "essential xenophobia" revealed a "rabid insular nationalism that was just a few notches more extreme than the foreign policy of the most Europhobic government since the Second World War."

For Americans, though, the experience can be very different. Factors ranging from the relatively low popularity of soccer compared with other sports, familiarity with overseas clubs and perhaps more importantly - especially to Americans of Mexican heritage - an attachment to countries deemed to be more traditional "soccer nations" mean that we Americans can find ourselves oddly divided over the nation we support in the global game.

Soccer has come a long way in the U.S. over the last few decades in terms of its domestic league and growing a support base.

Yet, outside of our national teams - both the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team (USWNT) and its male counterparts, the USMNT - Americans are more likely to be familiar with teams in Europe than in their own domestic league, Major League Soccer (MLS).

Indeed, 2020 research into the most popular clubs for Americans found that FC Barcelona topped the list, followed by Real Madrid - both from the Spanish La Liga. The next four teams - Manchester United, Liverpool, Chelsea and Arsenal - all play in the English Premier League (EPL).

You have to go down the list to 12th to find an MLS team, LA Galaxy.

They and Atlanta United are the only two American clubs in a list of the top 20 most popular teams - as seen by Americans.

What this means is that soccer fans in the U.S. are, in the case of the men's game, likely following players whose national identities are somewhere on the globe outside the U.S., given the relative lack of U.S. men's representation on Europe's biggest teams.

This whole "national identity thing" gets even messier when you dig deeper into what soccer games are actually the most watched in the U.S.

Both the MLS and European leagues have loyal followers in the U.S. Reviewing Thanksgiving sports-watching in 2020, reporter Connor Fleming noted that the 12 most popular EPL and MLS games during the period had television audiences of 203,000 to 744,000 viewers.

But those figures are dwarfed, Fleming noted, by the biggest overseas soccer match watched over the period: Chivas v. Club América. Mexico's El Súper Clásico, as the game is known, drew a total of 2.5 million viewers watching on Univision's TUDN - the self-proclaimed "home of soccer in the U.S."

And this wasn't a fluke. Data shows that Mexico's top league, Liga MX, has a total U.S. viewership in the U.S. bigger than the MLS and the EPL combined. From 2016 to 2018, it grew by 46%, according to analysis in December 2021.

What does it mean for American soccer identity at the World Cup that a majority of U.S. soccer fans prefer the Mexican league over the domestic league? And how does this translate into support, in particular, for the U.S. men's national team?

The unparalleled success of the U.S. women's team - an American exceptionalism of a different sort - has led to soaring television ratings for the National Women's Soccer League and a greater focus on the women's national team and "American" players.

Yet it is fair to say that hard-core support for both the U.S. men's and women's national teams among people living in America trails behind that of Mexico.

As sports writer Michael LoRé's observed in an article earlier this year, with 60 million fans in the U.S., Mexico is "the most popular soccer team in the U.S."

Jerseys of the Mexican national team outsold those of both the U.S. men's and women's teams in the United States. This was true even in 2019, the year that the U.S. women's team won the World Cup and their jerseys out-

sold that of the men's team for the first time.

Such is the popularity of the Mexican national team, especially in large West Coast cities, that it can play in front of a "home crowd" on foreign territory - perhaps the only national team that can claim to do so.

Games against the U.S. are now scheduled in the Midwest and South - in places like Cincinnati, Columbus, Ohio, and Nashville, Tennessee - to account for the imbalance in home support for the teams above and below the border.

Not all U.S.-based soccer fans are comfortable with the idea of Mexico being considered a "home nation." In 2018, after the U.S. men's team failed to qualify for the World Cup held in Russia, former U.S. national team star Landon Donovan took part in the "My Other Team is Mexico" campaign - aimed at marketing the sport in the U.S. despite the national team's absence.

"USA fans," Donovan wrote on Twitter, "our team may not be in Russia, but our neighbors to the south are. So join me and their proud #sponsor @WellsFargo to cheer on our other team, Mexico."

The response was mixed. "Nah man!!! Mexico is not 'my team.' Mexico is a rival" replied Donovan's former teammate Cobi Jones. Others expressed similar sentiments in what dissolved into a messy online debate.

Donovan's support of the Mexican team in the 2018 World Cup was seen by some as a cynical marketing move to keep U.S. fans tuned into the World Cup. And it should be noted that the Mexican and U.S. soccer federations were at the time marketed by the same organization - Soccer United Marketing - for all games played in the U.S.

Nonetheless, the debate that the "other team" campaign provoked opens up interesting questions concerning nationalism and patriotism.

Multiple soccer scholars such as Simon Kuper and Laurent Dubois have suggested that a country's soccer team can represent the nation's values. As such, it might be telling that a large segment of people living in the U.S. embrace another team.

Given the complexity of the U.S. soccer fan base - one with a large contingent loyal to either the Mexican team or elite players at European teams - and with the competition for attention from other professional sports, it's perhaps not surprising that supporter loyalty in U.S. is more divided than in other countries.

In a country that holds dear the notion that "Out of Many, We are One," what does it say that, in soccer at least, "Out of Many, We are Two." (AP)

Bengaluru pacers Hazlewood and Kumar raze Delhi for 75

I still cannot understand what happened: Patel

NEW DELHI, April 28, (AP): Fast bowlers Josh Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar Kumar routed Delhi Capitals for 75 and led defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru to a thumping nine-wicket win in the Indian Premier League.

Delhi made 264-2 against IPL leaders the Punjab Kings on Saturday but two days later was shot out for its third lowest total. Hazlewood picked 4-12 and Kumar 3-5.

"I still cannot understand what happened," Delhi captain Axar Patel. "In cricket ... you cannot take it easy for even one day."

Bengaluru avenged its home loss to Delhi by cruising to 77-1 in 6.3 overs. Virat Kohli, the only man to pass 8,000 IPL runs, passed 9,000 with an unbeaten 23.

Kohli capped a perfect night for Bengaluru as he raised the victory with back-to-back sixes against Thangarasu Natarajan. Devdutt Padikkal also hurried the run chase with 34 not out off just 13 balls that included two sixes and two fours in Kyle Jamieson's one over.

"Even I am surprised (at how the game went)," Bengaluru captain Rajat Patidar said.

Earlier, Hazlewood and Kumar ripped through the Delhi top order with impressive swing bowling and searing yorkers. The home team crashed to eight runs for six



Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Bhuvneshwar Kumar bowls a delivery during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Delhi Capitals and Royal Challengers Bengaluru in Delhi, India. (AP)

wickets within the first 23 balls of the game.

Impact player Abishek Porel top-scored with 30 and helped Delhi cross its previous lowest total of 66 from 2017.

"When that ball was nice and hard, it was tough to bat," Hazlewood said. "(Last year) we summed up conditions quickly and adapted

our games. Feel like we are hitting our straps again at the right time."

Kumar's perfect yorker uprooted debutant Sahil Parakh's middle stump off the second ball and Hazlewood made it 3-2 with the wickets of Saturday century-maker Lokesh Rahul and Sameer Rizvi off successive balls.

Delhi lost half the side in the space

of 16 balls with just five runs on the board when Kumar found the edges of Tristan Stubbs and Patel.

Hazlewood completed the top-order demolition when Nitish Rana gloved a catch in the fourth over to wide slip.

Bengaluru stayed second in the table after six wins from eight games. Delhi was seventh.

Nice impasse clouds plans

Organizers weigh Paris or Lyon for ice hockey

PARIS, April 28, (AP): French organizers of the 2030 Winter Olympics are looking at alternative locations for ice hockey outside of Nice, including in Paris and Lyon, because of a political deadlock involving the Riviera city's new mayor.

Like the Milan Cortina Olympics, the French Alps project has split snow sports in storied mountain resorts and skating in a snow-free city, the Mediterranean resort of Nice.

Nice was to turn the city's soccer stadium, Allianz Arena, into a temporary hockey rink.

But Nice far-right new mayor Eric Ciotti opposes the plan, refusing that the resident football club lose access to its stadium for months because of the Olympics. Ciotti, a former conservative allied with the National Rally of Marine Le Pen, was elected last month.

The 2030 Games organizers said on Tuesday they have worked with officials from Nice and its

wider region as well as the French government to find solutions for placing ice hockey within the Olympic hub in Nice. A temporary ice rink, intended as a replacement for the originally planned Allianz Riviera stadium, was studied at other stadiums, mainly for men's hockey matches.

"Technical, scheduling, and financial analyses highlighted the limitations of these options, particularly due to their very high cost and impact," organizers added.

"With a focus on efficiency and budget optimization, the (organizing committee) has decided to broaden its investigations by examining the use of existing facilities in other major metropolitan areas such as Lyon or Paris, particularly those offering a minimum seating capacity of 10,000," they added.

Results of their explorations will be presented to the organizing committee's executive board on

May 11. The final venues are expected to be confirmed in June when the IOC decides the list of sports and events.

"The analyses carried out are leading us to turn toward existing facilities that are better suited and more sustainable. Several options are being studied to ensure hosting conditions that fully meet our requirements," said Edgar Grosperon, the former Olympic champion freestyle skier who leads the organizing committee.

The Paris Entertainment Company, which operates Adidas Arena and Accor Arena in the French capital, said last week it submitted a bid to host ice hockey. Both venues were used during the 2024 Paris Summer Games.

French Alps Games organizers said a second competition ice rink for skating is still planned at Nice's exhibition center, and other ice events scheduled in Nice remain unchanged.

The attendance was more than 27,000. (AP)



Morales fires Juniors past Huracan: A second-half strike from Ivan Morales gave Argentinos Juniors a 2-1 away win over Huracan in Argentina's Apertura tournament on Monday.

The hosts opened the scoring through Facundo Waller, who pounced on a loose ball before firing a first-time effort into the far corner.

Tomas Molina equalized by timing his run to perfection to head in after Sebastian Prieto's floating diagonal cross.

Ivan Morales completed the turnaround just after the hour as he controlled Facundo Jainikoski's pass and finished clinically past goalkeeper Hernan Galindez.

Argentinos Juniors is now third in Group B with 29 points, four behind leader Independiente Rivadavia, while Huracan is seventh, eight points further back. (Xinhua)

Tradition has continued every four years

A bird leaves nothing behind: The lesson behind Japan's WC cleanups

Soccer fans will turn their eyes to Qatar starting Nov. 20, 2022, as the World Cup gets underway. But in the U.S., the question of which team will be cheered on from afar isn't entirely straightforward.

You see, one of the anomalies of being a "typical" soccer fan in the United States - a group to which I belong - is that, you are not, in fact, a "typical" soccer fan.

For many team's supporters, the World Cup becomes an event to affirm one's national identity. This is true, as cultural critic Laurent Dubois notes, even among fans that are not jingoistic or nationalistic in any other environment.

Indeed, the nationalist fervor that emerges among crowds can boil over into xenophobic international violence. As renowned soccer historian David Goldblatt noted in reference to English soccer crowds in the late 20th century, their "essential xenophobia" revealed a "rabid insular nationalism that was just a few notches more extreme than the foreign policy of the most Europhobic government since the Second World War."

For Americans, though, the experience can be very different. Factors ranging from the relatively low popularity of soccer compared with other sports, familiarity with overseas clubs and perhaps more importantly - especially to Americans of Mexican heritage - an attachment to countries deemed to be more traditional "soccer nations" mean that we Americans can find ourselves oddly divided over the nation we support in the global game.

Soccer has come a long way in the U.S. over the last few decades in terms of its domestic league and growing a support base.

Yet, outside of our national teams - both the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team (USWNT) and its male counterparts, the USMNT - Americans are more likely to be familiar with teams in Europe than in their own domestic league, Major League Soccer (MLS).

Indeed, 2020 research into the most popular clubs for Americans found that FC Barcelona topped the list, followed by Real Madrid - both from the Spanish La Liga. The next four teams - Manchester United, Liverpool, Chelsea and Arsenal - all play in the English Premier League (EPL).

You have to go down the list to 12th to find an MLS team, LA Galaxy. They and Atlanta United are the only two American clubs in a list of the top 20 most popular teams - as seen by Americans.

What this means is that soccer

fans in the U.S. are, in the case of the men's game, likely following players whose national identities are somewhere on the globe outside the U.S., given the relative lack of U.S. men's representation on Europe's biggest teams.

This whole "national identity thing" gets even messier when you dig deeper into what soccer games are actually the most watched in the U.S.

Both the MLS and European leagues have loyal followers in the U.S. Reviewing Thanksgiving sports-watching in 2020, reporter Connor Fleming noted that the 12 most popular EPL and MLS games during the period had television audiences of 203,000 to 744,000 viewers.

But those figures are dwarfed, Fleming noted, by the biggest overseas soccer match watched over the period: Chivas v. Club América. Mexico's El Súper Clásico, as the game is known, drew a total of 2.5 million viewers watching on Univision's TUDN - the self-proclaimed "home of soccer in the U.S."

And this wasn't a fluke. Data shows that Mexico's top league, Liga MX, has a total U.S. viewership in the U.S. bigger than the MLS and the EPL combined. From 2016 to 2018, it grew by 46%, according to analysis in December 2021.

What does it mean for American soccer identity at the World Cup that a majority of U.S. soccer fans prefer the Mexican league over the domestic league? And how does this translate into support, in particular, for the U.S. men's national team?

The unparalleled success of the U.S. women's team - an American exceptionalism of a different sort - has led to soaring television ratings for the National Women's Soccer League and a greater focus on the women's national team and "American" players.

Yet it is fair to say that hard-core support for both the U.S. men's and women's national teams among people living in America trails behind that of Mexico.

As sports writer Michael LoRé's observed in an article earlier this year, with 60 million fans in the U.S., Mexico is "the most popular soccer team in the U.S."

Jerseys of the Mexican national team outsold those of both the U.S. men's and women's teams in the United States.

This was true even in 2019, the year that the U.S. women's team won the World Cup and their jerseys outsold that of the men's team for the first time. (AP)



Japanese fans clean the stadium's stand after Japan was defeated by Costa Rica in the World Cup, Group E soccer match between Japan and Costa Rica, at the Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium in Al Rayyan, Qatar. (AP)

Best of the Rest

Vancouver risks losing Whitecaps: World Cup host Vancouver risks losing its Major League Soccer club to another city.

MLS said late Monday it "will evaluate all options" for the future of the Vancouver Whitecaps including moving out of the city. The club was put on sale 16 months ago by an ownership group that includes former NBA star Steve Nash.

Uncertainty around the team is fueled by limited revenue options and a short-term lease at B.C. Place stadium that will host seven World Cup games in June and July, include Canada playing Qatar and Switzerland.

FIFA vice president Victor Montagliani, who is from Vancouver, said last year losing an MLS club "on the back of the World Cup would be a capital crime, in my opinion." Fans holding "Save The Caps" placards protested on Saturday at the team's last home game ahead of the stadium being taken over for the World Cup.

Chinese climber Zhao breaks men's speed world record

China storms sailing with five-gold haul at Asian Beach Games

SANYA, April 28, (Xinhua): China dominated the sailing competition at the 6th Asian Beach Games, collecting five gold, two silver and two bronze medals as all the events concluded on Tuesday.

China's Cheng Wenyu won gold in the girls' Optimist event, with Singapore's Anya Alessia Zahedi and Thailand's Pariyaporn Chantarawong taking silver and bronze, respectively. In the boys' Optimist, Thailand's Rachata Sadtrakulwattana won gold ahead of teammate Sorawit Naksuk, while Malaysia's Muhammad Yaasin Bin Syahrizan claimed bronze.

Cheng, a Hainan native, was delighted to win on home waters. "I'm very happy to win gold in my hometown," she said, adding that she's confident sailing will continue to grow if more people pay attention to the sport.

In the girls' ILCA4 event, 16-year-old Yan Guoguo of China won gold, followed by Thailand's Pailin Jaroenpon and Singapore's Nia Mehry Zahedi. Singapore's Ian Goh took gold in the boys' ILCA4, with Thailand's Hussaluk Srinakorn second and South Korea's Jun Choi third.

Foil windsurfing and Formula Kite, which made their Olympic debut at Paris 2024, have both been included in the sailing program at the Asian Beach Games. In the boys' foil windsurfing, 20-year-old Wang Yiguo of China won gold, with the Philippines' Dhenver John Castillo and Thailand's Wachirawit Thonup taking silver and bronze. On girls' part, China's Chen Yimin topped the podium and Li Qing took bronze, while Yuen Ching Suet of Hong Kong, China took silver.

Wang said his original goal was simply a podium finish. "Being able to compete at a major Asian event is very meaningful for me," he said, adding that he hopes to step onto a bigger international stage.

China's Ma Zilin, 18, won gold in the women's Formula Kite, with teammate Li Shuxuan taking silver and South Korea's Lee Youngeun bronze. In the men's Formula Kite, Thailand's Joseph Jonathan Weston claimed gold, while China's Xue Shiming and Yang Xinnuo secured silver and bronze.

Thailand finished second overall with two gold medals, while Singapore took one.

"The sailing event progressed in an orderly way according to plan," said David Brookes, chief referee for sailing at the Asian Beach Games, noting that the favorable weather conditions in Sanya Bay allow training and competition to be held throughout the year.

Meanwhile, Chinese speed climber Zhao Yicheng set a new men's speed world record of 4.58 seconds in the preliminaries at the 6th Asian Beach Games.

The previous mark of 4.64 seconds was held by American Samuel Watson, set at a World Cup event in Bali in 2025.

The 16-year-old opened with 4.73 seconds on his first attempt before slicing his time down to 4.58 on his second run.

The performance marks a dramatic breakthrough for the teenager, who had already sent warning signals to the climbing world before the Games. In March 2025, during a national team selection event in Baisha, Hainan, he recorded unofficial times of 4.68 and 4.65 seconds in one afternoon - both faster than Watson's then-world record of 4.74 set at the Paris Olympics.

"I just had to see what the view looked like from 4.6 seconds," Zhao said at the time.

Zhao's record led a strong showing by the hosts, as all four Chinese men and all four Chinese women advanced to the next round.



Gold medalist Cheng Wenyu (center) of China, silver medalist Zahedi Anya Alessia (left) of Singapore and bronze medalist Pariyaporn Chantarawong of Thailand pose during the awarding ceremony for the Optimist Girls race of sailing at the 6th Asian Beach Games in Sanya, south China's Hainan Province. (Xinhua)

Man United tightens grip on third



Manchester United's Noussair Mazraoui, left, and Brentford's Kevin Schade fight for the ball during the Premier League soccer match between Manchester United and Brentford in Manchester, England. (AP)

Brentford profligate in front of goal

MANCHESTER, England, April 28, (AP): Third-placed Manchester United put some daylight between itself and chasing Liverpool and Aston Villa with a clinical 2-1 win at home to Brentford in the Premier League.

United moved three points above its rivals and took a huge step toward ensuring it will play Champions League football next season for the first time since 2024.

Casemiro, just weeks before he departs the club, sneaked in at the back post to head United into the lead after 11 minutes. It was his 11th headed goal since he joined United in August 2022, a record bettered only by Erling Haaland (18), Ollie Watkins (16) and Chris Wood (13).

Although Brentford was equal to the host in an entertaining first half it was United which doubled its lead on the cusp of the break.

Benjamin Sesko took a simple pass from Bruno



Manchester United's Benjamin Sesko celebrates after scoring during the Premier League soccer match between Manchester United and Brentford in Manchester, England. (AP)

Fernandes to finish off a swift counterattack and assure the talismanic midfielder of his 19th assist of the season, a league high, and only one away from equalling the Premier League record.

"Me and Bruno Fernandes work a lot on the training pitch and it is paying off," Sesko said.

"Knowing I have a teammate with this quality is a pleasure and I have to use it."

Both sides had chances in a quieter second half but Brentford especially was profligate in front of goal.

Mathias Jensen's long-range strike in the 87th minute gave it some hope but United held on to ensure another disappointing result for Keith Andrews' men.

"Bitterly disappointed," Andrews told the BBC. "Overall our performance was very good. As a collective we went toe to toe with a good side and controlled large parts of the game. They were more clinical than us."

Brentford remained in ninth place, tied on points with Chelsea and Fulham, but it has not won in the league since February.

However, its hopes of clinching European football for the first time remain alive and Andrews was optimistic.

"There is absolute belief in everything we do," Andrews said. "We are not playing safe, I don't want us to be that team. We set up in a brave fashion against a top team tonight and unfortunately we couldn't quite get there."

Qatari brothers sail toward their dreams at Asian Beach Games

SANYA, April 28, (Xinhua): After adjusting their sails, brothers Thani and Tameem Shams pushed their boats into the water and waved to the volunteers on shore.

"Tameem, trust yourself. You can make it," elder brother Thani called as the younger boy headed out.

"You too, my brother, good luck," Tameem replied.

The Qatari siblings have encouraged each other before every race since arriving in Sanya. At the 6th Asian Beach Games in Sanya in south China's Hainan Province, the two competed side by side in different classes, united by the same sailing dream.

"It's my first time competing in China, and I've learned a lot about reading the wind and currents here," said 12-year-old Tameem, who finished 16th in the boys' Optimist (OP) event for athletes under 16.

Their coach, Khalid Bettithamou, explained that the OP boat, about 2.3 meters long and weighing around 35 kilograms, has a small hull and simple structure and "can be controlled without too much strength." "The Optimist naturally opens its doors to young children," Khalid said, noting that it is widely known as the cradle of Olympic sailing champions.

Tameem said both brothers fell in love with sailing under the influence of their father. "He loves sailing, and we've been inspired by that since we were little," he said.

In the Optimist class, young sailors must rig their own masts and launch their boats unaided. "It's a bit hard for me to push the boat because I'm not very big. But once I'm out on the water, I can sail steadily," Tameem added with a grin.

Fourteen-year-old Thani, who competed in the boys' ILCA4 class for athletes born in 2009 or later, finished 17th. The ILCA4 boat is slightly larger, with a sail area of about 4.7 square meters.

"I want to keep training and competing and become a professional sailor in the future," Thani said.

The brothers have trained for two years, mainly off the coast of Doha. Khalid said Qatar, surrounded by the sea on three sides and enjoying year-round sunshine, offers ideal conditions for the sport.

"The country is dotted with water parks and marinas. In winter, the temperature can reach 26 degrees Celsius," he said, adding that although sailing remains relatively niche in Qatar, the country's natural conditions are well suited to its growth.

Sanya has also left a strong impression. "Sanya is a beautiful place, and the sea here is perfect for sailing," said Tameem.

According to organizers, most competitions at the Games are being held along the 22-kilometer natural coastline of Sanya Bay. With clear waters and moderate winds, the bay is particularly well suited to sailing.

Watching the brothers head out one after the other, Khalid said he sees great potential in both. "They are very talented but still lack experience in big events. The Asian Beach Games provide a valuable platform for young athletes to pursue their dreams," he said.

The sailing program at the Asian Beach Games included four classes - OP, ILCA4, foil windsurfing and Formula Kite - with eight events for men and women. All gold medals were decided on Tuesday.

IOC Honorary President for Life Thomas Bach said the growing participation of young people bodes well for the future of sailing. "It's a very good development for sailing and for attracting new generations," he said.

"At an early age, they can already perform well, and the sport does not place excessive demands on them, either physically or mentally. Instead, it allows for a very natural development in line with their nature," Bach added.



Before departure, the younger brother Tameem Shams takes a photo with his boat. (Xinhua)

Stones leaving City after 10 years of being the 'very embodiment' of Pep's team

Militão undergoes surgery, set to miss World Cup

MADRID, April 28, (AP): Brazil and Real Madrid defender Eder Militão underwent surgery to fix a hamstring problem that is set to keep him from playing in the World Cup.

The recovery process for these types of surgeries is at least a few months, according to Spanish media reports. Brazil makes its World Cup debut on June 14, in less than seven weeks.

Militão was hurt in Madrid's 2-1 win over Alaves in La Liga last week.

Madrid said the central defender successfully underwent surgery "for the rupture of the proximal tendon of the biceps femoris in his left leg."

"Militão will begin his recovery work in the coming days," Madrid added, without giving a timetable for the player's return.

The 28-year-old Brazil international has been marred by injuries throughout his career, including serious knee issues.

England defender John Stones will leave Manchester City at the end of the season, bringing to a close his 10-year spell at the club that covers the entirety of Pep Guardiola's trophy-filled reign.

Stones joined City in the summer of 2016 as the second signing of the Guardiola era and the ball-playing center back has proved integral to City's possession-dominating, expansive style under the Spanish coach.

The 31-year-old Stones has

helped City win 19 major trophies, including six Premier League titles and a Champions League, but his career has been hindered by injury problems in recent seasons and he is no longer first choice.

His contract is due to expire at the end of this season and will not be renewed, with Stones and City confirming his imminent departure on Tuesday.

"They say all good things must come to an end," Stones wrote on Instagram, "but this thing we have had has been the greatest and it will remain a part of me forever."

Stones has made 293 appear-

ances, scoring 19 goals, and sometimes played in a hybrid role that saw him push up from defense to be used as an extra man in midfield.

The club described Stones as "the very embodiment of Pep Guardiola's City" because he is "armed with wonderful technique, a sublime passing range allied to a superb work rate and astute reading of the game."

Stones is still in the England squad and, injury permitting, will play at the upcoming World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

City recently announced captain Bernardo Silva will also be leaving

at the end of the season after nine years with the team.

□ □ □

New York City will hold a series of free events for soccer fans who hope to experience the excitement of the World Cup but can't afford the hefty ticket prices to the matches, officials announced.

The events - one in each of the city's five boroughs - will include watch parties for the matches and other festivities. They will be staged at Rockefeller Center in Manhattan, the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in Queens, Brooklyn Bridge Park in Brooklyn, a shopping center near Yankee Stadium in the Bronx and a minor league baseball stadium in Staten Island.

A separate fan event planned for Sports Illustrated Stadium in Harrison, New Jersey, where the New York Red Bulls play, will cost \$10.

World Cup matches will be played at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, where just getting to and from the matches on public transit could cost \$150.

New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani, a noted soccer devotee, announced the free events alongside New York Gov. Kathy Hochul, a fellow Democrat.

"Every fan should be able to watch the greatest tournament on earth without dipping into their savings," Mamdani said.

Similar fan events are being planned for other U.S. host cities.



In this file photo, Manchester City's John Stones celebrates with the trophy after winning the Champions League final soccer match between Manchester City and Inter Milan at the Ataturk Olympic Stadium in Istanbul, Turkey. (AP)

ARAB TIMES

Kuwait's No.1 English Newspaper

For Subscriptions and Complaints

Please Call

51508991
51526559





Jannik Sinner of Italy serves the ball to Cameron Norrie of Britain during their round of 16 match at the Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid. Sinner won 6-2, 7-5. (AP)

Sports

Al-Qadsia ends Ablai contract ... Al-Arabi lands Al-Qaisi

Salmiya's Ashour pushes to retain Lima, Sid Dia and Al-Aswad

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 28: Al-Salmiya returned to training on Tuesday at Thamer Stadium after resuming preparations that had been halted since late February, with all players present except Syrian Mahmoud Al-Aswad and Bahraini Sid Dia.

The session was overseen by Bahraini coach Ali Ashour, who arrived from Manama earlier that morning.

Ashour recommended keeping Brazilian Alex Lima for another season, along with Sid Dia and Al-Aswad, while advising against renewing Syrian professional Omar Midani's contract. He also

suggested resolving the situation of Tunisian Emad Al-Lawati, whose deal runs until next season.

The coach, whose contract runs through the end of next season, also called for recruiting local players to strengthen Al-Salmiya going forward.

Mubarak Al-Fannini is among the most notable players to return to Al-Salmiya after terminating his contract with Al-Qadsia.

Al-Qadsia has decided not to renew Senegalese striker Ablai Mbengue's contract, allowing him to leave the club following a technical recommendation from coach Nabil Maaloul.

The club is awaiting Maaloul's return from vacation to finalize decisions on other foreign players.

Meanwhile, Al-Qadsia has extended goalkeeper Hamid Al-Qalaf's contract for another season after his strong performances this campaign.

The club is also close to signing goalkeeper Saud Al-Qanai after his contract with Al-Shabab expired, while Rashid Al-Dosari has renewed his deal.

Al-Arabi has secured the services of former Kazma striker Talal Al-Qaisi after his departure from Al-Orangemen.

Head coach Nasser Al-Shatti is set to meet with the club's management to shape the next phase and define squad requirements, particularly regarding foreign signings and local reinforcements needed to strengthen the team.



Al-Salmiya players go through training drills at Thamer Stadium.

OKC outlasts Phoenix to complete 4-game sweep

Magic win away from knocking off Pistons

PHOENIX, April 28, (AP): Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 31 points, Chet Holmgren added 24 and the Oklahoma City Thunder beat the Phoenix Suns 131-122, capping a four-game sweep in the first-round series.

The Thunder - who have a 12-0 record in the first round over the last three seasons - will face the winner of the Los Angeles Lakers-Houston Rockets series in the Western Conference semifinals. The Lakers have a 3-1 lead, though the Rockets won Game 4.

Phoenix has a 10-game losing streak in the playoffs, dating to 2023.

The Thunder closed the series with an overwhelming offensive performance - making 17 of 34 (50%) 3-pointers - and their big men played particularly well. The 7-foot-1 Holmgren shot 9 of 16 from the field and grabbed 12 rebounds, while the 7-foot Isaiah Hartenstein added 18 points and 12 rebounds, including seven on the offensive end.

Ajay Mitchell added 22 points and made four 3-pointers. Alex Caruso finished with 14 points and hit three 3-pointers in the first quarter.

Gilgeous-Alexander was reliable as usual. Two days after scoring 42 points in Game 3, he had another efficient performance, shooting 10 of 17 from the field.

The Suns showed some fight in the second half, cutting a 15-point deficit to 106-98 entering the fourth. Devin Booker scored 12 points in the third quarter on 5-of-8 shooting.

But every time the Suns got within a few possessions, the Thunder responded. Cason Wallace hit a corner 3 with 5:54 left to extend the Oklahoma City lead to 120-106. Gilgeous-Alexander followed with a spectacular layup, somehow getting the shot to fall over three defenders.

Magic 94, Pistons 88

In Orlando, the Orlando Magic are one win away from knocking off a No. 1 seed and winning their first



Orlando Magic guard Desmond Bane (3) goes after a loose ball against Detroit Pistons guard Ausar Thompson during the second half in Game 4 of a first-round NBA basketball playoff series in Orlando, Fla. (AP)

playoff series in 16 years.

They're not celebrating yet.

Desmond Bane scored 22 points, Franz Wagner had 19 in three quarters and the Magic beat the Detroit Pistons to take a 3-1 series lead, putting the East's No. 1 seed on the brink of elimination.

Game 5 is Wednesday night in Detroit.

"We put our ourselves in position to try to get four, but right now it means nothing," Magic coach Jamahl Mosley said. "We have the advantage and now we have to try and make sure we keep that advantage."

Orlando, which had to win an elimination game at home in the play-in tournament, is on the verge of becoming just the seventh No. 8 seed to defeat a No. 1 in a series in league history. It's happened only four times since the playoffs were expanded to a best-of-seven series



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander drives to the basket during the second half of Game 4 in a first-round NBA playoffs basketball series in Phoenix. (AP)

for all rounds in 2003.

Nuggets 125, Timberwolves 113

In Denver, Nikola Jokic snapped out of his prolonged funk with a triple-double. Spencer Jones provided a key spark and Denver staved off elimination with a chippy win over injury-riddled Minnesota in Game 5 of their playoff series.

Jokic had 27 points, 16 assists and 12 rebounds for Denver, which trimmed its deficit to 3-2 in the best-of-seven series. Jamal Murray scored 24 points and Jones added 20.

Jokic posted his 23rd playoff triple-double, third on the career list, as the Nuggets stopped a three-game skid and played the way they did most of the regular season in securing the No. 3 seed in the Western Conference.

Game 6 is Thursday night in Minneapolis.

Young sailors find their sea legs in Sanya

Kuwait's Zakareya highlights rising youth talent at Asian Beach Games

SANYA, April 28, (Xinhua): Bare-foot and focused, 10-year-old Almheiri Hamad jumped off his dinghy and hauled it ashore.

Just six days earlier, the young sailor from the United Arab Emirates had celebrated his 10th birthday, making him the youngest competitor at the ongoing Asian Beach Games in Sanya.

After rinsing his dinghy with a hose, he carefully dismantled the mast and rolled up the sail. Though small in stature, his movements were already skillful.

"I'm not afraid at sea," Almheiri said. "I only feel a little nervous near the finish line, but I believe in myself."

Scenes like this are common at the sailing venue, thanks to the Optimist (OP) and ILCA4 dinghy events, which are open to athletes under 16 and 18 respectively. Despite their tender age, competitors are required to rig their own boats and launch them unaided.

With its small hull and simple structure, the OP dinghy in particular is considered a cradle for future champions. Li Quanhai, president of global governing body World Sailing, noted that more than 80 percent of Olympic sailing medalists began their careers in this class.

Kuwait's Bohamad Zakareya is one of them. Aged 10 years and two months, he has been training for two years and began competing internationally last year.

"It was a bit difficult to control the boat at first. But now I feel I can handle it," he said. "I want to become a professional sailor and compete in the Olympics one day."

China's youngest athlete at the

Games, 14-year-old Ni Yijia, is also racing in the OP dinghy. Having taken up sailing at seven, she finished runner-up in the OP Girls' A division at China's national sailing championships last year.

Competing on home waters in Sanya, Ni sees the Games as a milestone. "This is my first time at such a high-level multi-sport event, and it could be an important turning point in my career," she said.

Li emphasized that although OP and ILCA4 are not Olympic events, their inclusion in the Asian Beach Games gives young sailors across Asia a valuable platform to compete, learn from one another and build friendships.

At the same time, real racing conditions demand rapid growth. "They have to face changing winds and currents on their own," said Lai Huaxiang, coach of China's OP team. "It tests not only their skills and tactics, but also their mental strength, resilience and ability to respond under pressure."

It is this blend of challenge and accessibility that is helping to shape sailing's next generation.

Thomas Bach, Honorary President for Life of the International Olympic Committee, described the growing presence of young athletes as a positive sign for sailing's development.

"It's a very good development for sailing and to attract new generations," Bach said. "At an early age, they can already perform well, and the sport does not place excessive demands on them, neither physically nor mentally. Instead, it allows for a very natural development in line with their nature."



Kuwait's Bohamad Zakareya (center) waits for the start of his event. (Xinhua)



The delegations participating in the fourth edition of the tournament.

Intense preparations underway for fourth Gulf Games in Doha

DOHA, April 28: The working committees of the 4th Gulf Games "Doha 2026" have stepped up their preparations as the countdown begins for the upcoming regional sporting event, scheduled to be held from May 11 to 22 next year.

The preparations aim to deliver an exceptional edition that reflects Qatar's strong organizational and sporting reputation, and reinforces its capability to host major regional and international events in line with the highest global standards.

All committees are working in close coordination to complete logistical, technical, and organizational arrangements, ensuring a standout edition of the Games. The event will bring together elite athletes from GCC countries competing across 19 sports, including handball, table tennis, athletics, squash, padel, fencing, boxing, taekwondo, karate, swimming, billiards, snooker, basketball (5x5 and 3x3), shooting, archery, volleyball, equestrian, and bowling - highlighting the event's diversity and competitive appeal.

Mohammed Al-Fadala, head of the Sports Committee, said technical preparations are progressing according to plan to ensure competitions are delivered at the highest level. He stressed the committee's focus on providing ideal conditions for athletes by preparing venues to international standards and coordinating closely with sports federations to ensure a strong competitive environment.

Sheikh Abdullah bin Saud Al Thani, head of the Marketing and Communications Committee, confirmed the launch of promotional activities for the Games, noting that the marketing strategy aims to increase public engagement and attendance through innovative campaigns that highlight the event's significance and history, as well as showcase participating athletes.

The first edition of the Gulf Games was held in Manama, Bahrain, in 2011, followed by the second edition in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, in 2015, while Kuwait hosted the third edition in 2022.