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KUWAIT BORDER OFFICER HONORED AFTER BIOMETRIC CHECK EXPOSES IMPOSTOR



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Ali al-Zubaidi, welcome to governing Iraq

WITH the political forces agreeing to appoint Ali al-Zubaidi as Prime Minister, Iraq has ended the period of vacancy in the head of the executive branch, which exceeded the deadline permitted by the Iraqi constitution for appointing a figure to form a government.

This delay was caused by the insistence of pro-Iranian parties on clinging to Nouri al-Maliki as their sole candidate, a position rejected by local political forces as well as international objections, particularly from the United States.

The delay in appointing the Iraqi Prime Minister consequently postponed the filling of other vacant constitutional positions.

Finally, there is an official tasked with forming the government, which means that the institutions of this large country are functioning properly.

This indicates that matters are beginning to be resolved for the sake of reconciliation among the Iraqi people, who have suffered from political, economic, and social instability since 1958.

Although Iraq possesses immense wealth that could make it a great nation on all levels, the tyranny it endured for 68 years led to the impoverishment of its people and the emigration of millions, especially those with scientific, technical, and cultural expertise.

Iraq's geography grants it multiple land routes and some sea access points, enabling it to play

a pivotal role in the Arab region. Iraq serves as a link between the Arabian Gulf and Europe via Türkiye, through Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, as well as with Asia via Iran.

Iraq's land borders with Jordan and Syria place it at the heart of the Arab world and make it an important international logistics hub.

Throughout those decades, Iraq's rulers disregarded these vast resources, instead engaging in hostile political ventures with their neighbors following the fall of the monarchy and Abdul Karim Qasim's attempt to seize Kuwait.

Later, the Ba'ath Party came to power and continued this trajectory, culminating in Saddam Hussein's invention of the "defense of the eastern gate" doctrine, which led to a war with Iran through which he attempted to blackmail the Gulf states.

The Iran-Iraq War impoverished the Iraqi people and redirected state resources toward the militarization of the regime.

Saddam Hussein culminated

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121 residency violators caught in traffic sweep



Ministry of Interior photo
First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah honors Saad Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, a Salmi border officer, for vigilance in foiling an illegal entry attempt.

16,265 citations

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah honored Saad Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, an employee at Salmi Border Department in the Borders Security Sector at the Interior Ministry, in recognition of his vigilance and dedication to his duties.

These qualities led to the discovery of an attempt to enter the country illegally through Salmi border. The traveler arrived at the border, where he tried to enter the country using a Kuwaiti

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Kuwait imposes peak-hour industrial pause May 15 until Sept 15 as heat drives demand

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Public Authority for Industry (PAI) announced that industrial facilities must cease operations during peak heat hours, in coordination with the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy.

The designated peak hours will be from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm.

PAI explained that this measure comes in light of the increased electrical loads resulting from high temperatures, and within the framework of shared national responsibility to maintain uninterrupted electricity service.

The decision will be implemented starting May 15, and will continue until September 15, 2026.

PAI allowed facilities operating on a single or double-shift system to resume operations

during the evening period after peak hours, ensuring continued production without impacting grid stability.

It affirmed that it will cooperate with the relevant authorities to take the necessary legal action against any facility that violates this regulation, stressing the importance of the industrial sector in fulfilling its role in supporting the state's efforts during this period of high demand.

Day by Day

SOMEONE once asked the late Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi, "Who is dishonorable?"

"The dishonorable is the one who grew up, was educated, and lived off its bounty, then slandered it and flattered another," Gandhi responded.

Dear Mr. Gandhi, it seems as if you foresaw what our times would bring. Yes, they abandoned their country and praised the enemy instead. This is a clear image of a dishonorable person.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



Ministry of Defense photo
Defense Minister Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah departs Kuwait International Airport for an official visit to Türkiye, accompanied by senior military officials.

Defense Minister departs for Turkiye

Kuwait's Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah departed the country on Monday heading to the Republic of Türkiye on an official visit at the invitation of his Turkish counterpart.

In a statement, the Ministry of Defense said the minister is accompanied by Deputy Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General Pilot Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-

Sabah, along with several senior officers from the Ministries of Defense and Interior, as well as the National Guard.

He was seen off at Kuwait International Airport by Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian and Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Meshal Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. (KUNA)

Fire in FOIZ

UAE air shield foils Iran attack

ABU DHABI, May 4, (Agencies): The UAE Ministry of Defence announced Monday that it had detected four cruise missiles launched from Iran toward the country, confirming that three of them were successfully intercepted over international waters, while a fourth missile fell into the sea.

In a statement, the ministry said the sounds heard in several areas across the country were the result of successful interception operations targeting aerial threats.

It added that the situation was brought under control without any damage reported, reaffirming the effectiveness of the country's air defense systems.

The ministry urged the public to rely only on official sources for information, avoid spreading rumors,

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Zhelotov lauds press for bridging Kuwait-Moscow dialogue

Al-Jarallah, Russian envoy discuss media exchange

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Dean of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times Ahmed Al-Jarallah had a meeting with Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Kuwait Vladimir Zhelotov and Diplomatic Attaché Alexander Andreev at his office on Monday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Jarallah warmly welcomed the visiting ambassador and his companion, while highlighting the strong relations between Kuwait and Russia.

The discussions underscored the necessity of fortifying media collaboration and the mutual exchange of professional insights.

Al-Jarallah pointed out that such partnerships are vital for adapting to

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Photos by Rezk Tawfiq
Ahmed Al-Jarallah receives Russian Ambassador Vladimir Zhelotov and Diplomatic Attaché Alexander Andreev, with Arab Times Managing Editor Marlon Aquino Malinao in attendance, during talks on Kuwait-Russia media cooperation and cultural dialogue.

7 years jail, KD 316,000 fine in citizenship forgery ruling

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Al-Dhuwaih Al-Dhuwaih, with Judges Salem Al-Zayed and Ibrahim Khuraibat as members, concluded one of the most prominent cases of Kuwaiti citizenship forgery, spanning from 1993 to 2025, by issuing deterrent sentences against the defendants.

The court sentenced a Saudi de-

fendant, a member of the military, to seven years' imprisonment with hard labor and fined him KD 316,000, after convicting him of forging Kuwaiti citizenship in exchange for KD 35,000.

The defendant had unlawfully claimed to be the son of a person whose citizenship had been revoked by decree after it was confirmed that it had been obtained fraudulently.

Continued on Page 5

Five-day bank complaint rule

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) announced that the Central Bank of Kuwait has issued directives to banks to reduce the response time for customer complaints from 15 days to just 5 working days, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In its official X account, KBA stated that the directive also mandates banks to develop periodic performance indicators to measure

Continued on Page 5

Newswatch

RIYADH: Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Al-Budaiwi stressed the importance of accelerating the implementation of joint Gulf projects, in line with directives issued by GCC leaders during the 19th consultative meeting.

In a statement on Monday, the GCC General Secretariat said Al-Budaiwi made the remarks during a meeting with senior officials at the Secretariat's headquarters in Riyadh. (KUNA)

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Hindu nationalist party on Monday wrested control of the state of West Bengal, an opposition stronghold, in a key election.

The Election Commission of India released partial results showing the Bharatiya Janata Party won at least 124 seats in the 294-member West Bengal assembly, and was leading in 83 others. Final results are expected Monday evening.

It would be a significant breakthrough for Modi's party, which had tried for years to dislodge the All India Trinamool Congress government led by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. (AP)

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8 National Investments Company Reports Negative Net Results of KWD 5.2 Million for Q1 2026, Impacted by Geopolitical Volatility

10 Burgan Bank wins Euromoney Award for 'Best for High-Net-Worth' in Kuwait



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:37 Asr 15:21
 Sunrise .. 05:04 Maghrib .. 18:26
 Zohr 11:45 Isha 19:50

Amiri Diwan, Crown Prince Diwan receive Malta, Malaysia envoys



Amiri Diwan/Crown Prince Diwan photos
 Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Head of the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, received Dr. George Said-Zammit, Ambassador of Malta to Kuwait. The ministers also received the Ambassador of Malaysia to Kuwait Alauddin Mohd Nor (right).

KUWAIT CITY, May 4, (KUNA): Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Head of the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, received Dr. George Said-Zammit, Ambassador of Malta to Kuwait.

During the meeting, they discussed the strong relations between Kuwait and Malta and ways to enhance and develop them in all fields, they also explored opportunities to expand cooperation in a way that supports bilateral relations and

serves the common interests of the two friendly countries.

The ministers also received the Ambassador of Malaysia to Kuwait Alauddin Mohd Nor.

During the meeting, they reviewed the historical ties that bind Kuwait and Malaysia and ways to elevate them in various fields and emphasized the mutual commitment to continuing and developing existing cooperation that reflects the strength of the relations between the two friendly countries.

'Int'l Firefighters Day highlights sacrifices'

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Director for Public Relations and Media at Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) Brigadier General Mohammad Al-Gharib said the International Firefighters Day, observed on May 4 annually, is an important occasion that aims to highlight the immense sacrifices and heroism of firefighters in their various roles.

Al-Gharib explained to the newspaper that the International Firefighters Day was declared on May 4, 1999, after the tragic incident in Australia where five firefighters lost their lives while battling a forest fire in Linton. This date was officially adopted as a global recognition of the tremendous efforts that firefighters exert to protect the public.

He praised the heroic role played by firefighters in all stations, emphasizing that they are the first line of defense in fire incidents, accidents and disasters.

He affirmed that firefighters embody the highest ideals of courage and dedication in protecting lives and properties despite the grave dangers they face whenever they perform their humanitarian and national duties.

KOTC offers jobs as fleet of oil tankers sees climb

Applications to continue till May 21

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Kuwait Oil Tankers Company (KOTC) announced job opportunities for Kuwaiti citizens with maritime qualifications and experience to work on board oil tankers.

Applications started being received on Sunday, May 3, and will continue until Thursday, May 21.

According to official data, KOTC's Maritime Agency branch received 1,521 oil tankers last year, including 175 Kuwaiti tankers and 1,346 non-Kuwaiti tankers, representing a 4.97 percent increase compared to the previous year.

KOTC achieved several milestones during the last fiscal year, from April 2025 to the end of March 2026, most notably a zero rate of fatalities, lost-time injuries, and oil spills.

The company completed its tanker environmental index and a comprehensive database program that includes information on ship hulls, defects, inspections, and paint conditions.

KOTC implemented a system to reduce the release of cargo vapors from tanks into the atmosphere. It adopted a plan for each tanker to monitor vessels and minimize emissions, in addition to focusing on maintaining and operating pressure control valves for each tank.

A system was also implemented to collect vapors and safely return them to the oil facility during loading.

The company has completed a program to ensure its fleet is free of ozone-depleting substances. KOTC has completed the Ship Energy Efficiency Management (SEEMP) system with NKK. This service includes two programs - EEOL, a system for calculating and analyzing the operational energy efficiency index on board tankers, and data entry via the internet.

Implementing the SEEMP program will help encourage the reduction of fuel consumption and carbon emissions that impact the global environment.

KOTC is currently installing fixed and mobile equipment to monitor emissions (sulfur oxides and nitrogen oxides), in order to ensure that exhaust gases and fuel emissions comply with international, local, and regional standards and con-

trols, with the aim of reducing harmful emissions.

The company is also currently completing emissions monitoring in accordance with the requirements of the Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (CPMP) on all its vessels that consume one percent sulfur fuel in the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) zones.

In European ports, the pollution rate is even lower, reaching 0.01 percent.

The company continues to use silicone coating to reduce friction losses and to decrease fuel consumption, energy use, and air pollution.

It is worth noting that the company's fleet comprises 31 tankers, including 11 Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs) dedicated to transporting crude oil, 15 tankers for petroleum products, and 5 tankers for liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

During the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025, these tankers transported approximately 25.5 million metric tons of crude oil, 5.2 million metric tons of petroleum products, and 2 million metric tons of LPG.

Meanwhile, KOTC announced the awarding of a tender for the supply of all types of nautical charts, navigational notices, and publications for its fleet vessels to a bidder for £3.658 million.



PM Diwan photo
 His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the meeting.

PM orders review of State buildings, boost reserves

KUWAIT CITY, May 4, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired a meeting Monday to review restructuring of government bodies and public institutions.

His Highness directed a review and reorganization of government structures to optimize state resources and build an advanced administrative system marked by efficiency, transparency, and readiness for future

changes.

The meeting was attended by Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Abdulaziz Nasser Al-Marzouq, Prime Minister's Diwan Advisor Dr. Khaled Ali Al-Fadhel, Director General of KDIPA Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Acting Head of the Prime Minister's Diwan Sheikh Khaled Mohammad Al-Sabah, and Cabinet Secretary-General Saleh Al-Mulla.

Other Voices

The alternative homeland

IN recent months, discussions about nationality, homeland, immigration, and patriotism have intensified. But what is a homeland? Can it be relinquished, or can it simply become a memory?

The philosophical concept of homeland goes beyond the simple linguistic definition of "the place where a person is born or lives," becoming an emotional and moral bond that encompasses identity, loyalty, and sacrifice.

Nationalism is a relatively modern concept, rivaled in importance by loyalty to nationalism or religious doctrines, as seen in some movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood, where the concept of homeland is absent.

Some philosophers consider the homeland an abstract, sacred idea deserving of loyalty. Others view it as a negative concept when it transforms into a sense of moral superiority over others, as seen in the ideologies of Nazism and Fascism.

Professor Qasim Al-Habashi from Aden asks what drives a person to seek an alternative homeland, especially when they are over eighty, as in the case of a friend of his.

It is not easy for anyone to be uprooted from their roots, from the land of childhood, memories, and language. A homeland is not merely a geographical area, yet we see millions of people leaving their countries in search of a place that offers security, dignity, and work.

The root cause of this often lies in the absence of the state in its true sense. Migration, especially at an older age, is not a voluntary decision or a fleeting desire to improve one's standard of living; rather, it is a gradual uprooting from one's land and a difficult attempt to re-establish oneself in a new land.

By nature, humans are beings who feel loyalty, and the homeland is a psychological and existential extension, a collective memory of small details such as the streets of childhood, the faces of neighbors, the sounds of markets, and even shared sorrows.

Therefore, abandoning all of this only occurs when the cost of staying becomes greater than the cost of leaving, and when the homeland

itself transforms from a source of security into a source of danger.

Here we can identify the core wound of the tragedy of state absence, not as an administrative apparatus, but as the framework that gives life its possible meaning. When the state is absent, society as a whole enters a state of precarious instability.

At that point, there is nothing left to rely on. It is important to understand the basic human needs described by psychologist Abraham Maslow (1970) in his "Hierarchy of Needs."

Before reaching self-actualization, individuals must first ensure their survival needs are met, which include food, water, shelter, and security. When these needs are threatened or unstable, thinking about anything else becomes a luxury. Security is not a psychological luxury but a fundamental condition for sustaining life.

When security is absent, humans are placed in a constant state of alert and anxiety, unable to plan or achieve stability. This naturally leads to the need for belonging, a sense of being part of a community, recognition, a defined role, and stable relationships.

We observe that in societies torn apart by conflict, these bonds gradually erode, families disintegrate, communities drift apart, and identity itself becomes contested.

At this point, the homeland is no longer capable of embracing its children; rather, it becomes a space that psychologically expels them before it does so physically.

We all live on one planet, breathe the same air, drink the same water, cultivate the same land, and face the same end.

There is no real difference between people except in the extent to which they build just systems that preserve human dignity and protect human rights. Only then can we understand the true meaning of distinctions between societies.

The difference is not between races, religions, or peoples, but between just and stable states that protect their citizens and grant them security and freedom, and chaotic, fragmented systems.

A just state does not mean perfection, but rather the existence of stable and predictable rules, where a person does not need intermediaries or narrow affiliations to obtain their rights. This is what we enjoy in Kuwait, and it is what we must preserve and further strengthen.

□ □ □

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Visiting hours on site

PAHW back to normal as Gulf crisis finishes

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) resumed normal operations on Sunday, including the resumption of housing projects as per the approved plans and an accelerated pace of completion during the current phase.

The authority also announced its reception hours for citizens through various channels. On its official website, the authority confirmed its commitment to ease procedures and provide services in an efficient manner through in-person visits or electronic means.

It clarified that receiving visitors at the main building (Reception Department), along with the Sahel application booth, are in the morning hours - from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm Sunday to Thursday. It added that external centers - including those in The Avenues, Jahra, Qurain and Liberation Tower - are also operating from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm.

It stated that telephone services are available from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm, while video conferencing services are available from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm, providing multiple options for communication and transaction processing.

It affirmed the allocation of the evening period for receiving visitors from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm for transactions not included in the Sahel application.

Sources emphasized that electronic transactions are accepted throughout the day through Sahel, thus, enhancing digital transformation and facilitating service completion without the need for in-person visits.

Sources said the authority is keen on completing projects without delay, stressing that the field and supervisory teams continued their work during the past period to ensure the continuity of operations and maintain timelines, particularly in new housing developments.

Sources stated that the authority strengthened coordination with relevant government agencies to expedite infrastructure and service procedures, keeping pace with the increasing demand for housing.

Sources disclosed that the next phase will focus on accelerating the allocation and distribution process, along with monitoring the progress of ongoing projects.

Sources added the authority keeps on developing its operational mechanisms and performance efficiency to reduce waiting times and achieve sustainability in the housing sector. They affirmed that fulfilling housing demands is a priority in the development plan of the country.

Mol marks '26 Gulf Traffic Week saying 'Cross Safely'

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Ministry of Interior posted a video on its social media accounts on Sunday to mark the 2026 Gulf Traffic Week, held under the slogan "Cross Safely," reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry highlighted a number of guiding slogans such as "a moment of attention makes a big difference," "your safety is your responsibility," and "commitment is your path to a better life."



The moon brightened the sky of Kuwait, replacing the darkness with a magnificent, serene and cool atmosphere. The view was so simple but outstanding. There were no stars to catch the eye, only the moon shining clearly and reflecting off the water. (KUNA)

MoE opens supervisor jobs for semester '25/'26 exams

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Ministry of Education announced the opening of online applications for the position of "National Supervisor" for the second semester examinations of the 2025/2026 academic year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This is based on Ministerial Resolution No. 115/2025, which aims to regulate the selection process and ensure efficiency in supervising examination committees in schools.

The ministry clarified that applications will be available through its official website from May 4 to May 11.

It explained that the shift to an online platform is part of its comprehensive digital transformation strategy and is intended to streamline procedures for educational staff wishing to undertake this national duty, thereby enhancing the speed and accuracy

of the nomination process.

The requirements include that the applicant must be a Kuwaiti citizen, have less than six years of professional experience (calculated up to January 9 of the current academic year), have received an "Excellent" performance rating for the last three consecutive years, and have no outstanding disciplinary penalties during the last three years, unless they have been expunged in accordance with Civil Service Commission's regulations or canceled by a final court ruling.

Applicants must also submit a criminal record certificate through the government's Sahel application.

They must not have first-degree relatives in grades 10, 11, or 12 to avoid any potential conflict of interest. The selection process will include personal interviews with candidates.

Women's housing panel urges data refresh to secure benefits

PAHW opens two-month update window

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Women's Housing Affairs Committee at the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) called on all female citizens with pending applications for rented housing to update their information, starting May 3 until July 2, to ensure the completeness of their data and the continuous processing of their applications.

In a press statement, the authority disclosed that the update process is conducted at the Citizen Service Department in the main building in the morning and evening hours. It clarified that in-person visits are available only during morning hours at the external centers located in Liberation Tower, Jahra, Qurain, and The Avenues.

It stressed the need for the applicants to submit the required documents to complete the update process, such as copies of the civil identification card, nationality certificate, marriage certificate for married women, divorce certificate for divorcees, death certificate of the husband for widows, and school certificates for children covering the

last two academic years, as well as a certificate from the General Directorate of Ports covering the last three years (2023/2024/2025), certificate from the Real Estate Registration Department regarding the property ownership of the applicant and her spouse, and a certificate from the Commercial Registry Department for the applicant and her family members.

It also emphasized the need to submit a certificate from the Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA) if a family member has moderate or severe disability, in addition to providing a salary certificate or a certificate from the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) or from the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Al-Sadu wool unit approved in Al-Rai

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, May 4: During its eighth meeting of the fourth session, chaired by Dr. Hassan Kamal, the Capital Committee of the Municipal Council approved the allocation of 2,130 square meters for the establishment of a wool production unit for the Al-Sadu Handicrafts Association.

The unit will be located within the waiting area of the Capital Slaughterhouse and Central Livestock Market in Al-Rai (Block 2), based on a request from the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN).

The committee approved the technical requirements stipulated by Kuwait Municipality, which restrict the use of the space to production activities and traditional crafts. The display of products will be permitted free of charge, but no direct commercial activity will be

allowed on site.

The conditions also include obtaining approval from the Environment Public Authority (EPA) prior to issuing licenses, as well as approval from the Public Authority for Industry (PAI), the competent regulatory body.

This project comes within the framework of supporting traditional Kuwaiti crafts, most notably Al-Sadu weaving, which is considered one of the most prominent elements of Kuwait's intangible cultural heritage and is registered on UNESCO's lists.

The wool production unit is expected to contribute to enhancing the utilization of raw materials available in the Central Livestock Market and slaughterhouse facilities, transforming them into hand-crafted products such as carpets, tents, and heritage textiles, thereby supporting the creative and craft economy.

50 homes delivered to Taiz families

Kuwait-backed housing village expands in Yemen's highlands

ADEN, May 4, (KUNA): The latest phase of a residential village, comprised of some 50 units, in the flood-hit southwestern Yemeni Governorate of Taiz has been completed to accommodate displaced families affected by the downpour, its governor said on Sunday.

The residential complex, called, "Abu Halifa,"

funded by Kuwait's Al-Najat charity, represents a "turning point" in humanitarian relief efforts through providing safe shelter to families affected by the natural disaster, Nabil Shamsan told reporters as he unveiled the completion of humanitarian project's second phase.

He went on to express his appreciation for the copious amounts of aid Kuwait has provided Yemen with, underlining that such gracious initiatives are instrumental in improving the lives of impoverished families.

On the intricacies behind the project, its chief organizer Abdulrauf Al-Yousifi said that the second phase sees the addition of some 50 residential units, all of which are fully equipped and furnished, in addition to new facilities such as a school and a farm loaded with fresh produce, he added.

This gracious initiative would leave an indelible mark in the lives of Yemenis, all of whom appreciate the "limitless" support Kuwait has given them at all times, the official underlined.



The Abu Halifa residential village in Taiz Governorate, Yemen, was inaugurated with Kuwaiti funding.

KUNA photos



The governor of Taiz, Yemen, inaugurates the Abu Halifa residential village, funded by Kuwait.

Al-Fajjam praises staff efforts

PAAET chief inspects final exams

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Director General of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam, conducted a tour of several examination halls at colleges and institutes on Sunday to follow up on workflow and ensure the readiness and organization of in-person final exams, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement issued following the tour, Dr. Al-Fajjam said PAAET has taken all necessary measures to enhance

security and safety in cooperation with relevant authorities, in order to guarantee the safety of students and staff and ensure the smooth continuation of the educational process.

He emphasized the importance of adhering to the regulations and guidelines governing the examination process, and praised the efforts of academic and administrative staff in organizing committees and ensuring efficient operations.



PAAET Director General Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam while inspecting several examination committees.



A snapshot from the Director of Applied Studies' tour.

PAAET photos

KU sets e-registration dates for grade 12 academic aptitude test

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Kuwait University, represented by the Office of the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs for Assessment and Measurement, announced the dates for online registration for the academic aptitude tests for grade 12 students at Sabah Al-Salem University City, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press release issued on Sunday, the university explained that the unified national test will be held on Saturdays, May 23, June 6, and June 13. This includes the third-chance test and the test that was postponed from April 4 due to the war. Students who postponed the test will be able to register on Monday at 10:00 am without any additional fees.

Registration for Kuwaiti students wishing to take the aptitude tests for the third opportunity will open on Thursday, May 7 at 10:00 am, and will continue until all available seats are filled. Registration will be open to all categories starting May 11 until all available seats are filled.

Kuwait University encourages grade 12 students or their equivalents, as well as high school graduates, to register via the website <https://portal.ku.edu.kw/placement>. It confirmed that this step comes as part of its commitment to streamlining admission procedures and enhancing the efficiency of its electronic services.

The university also urged students to stay updated on the latest information and instructions via email at cen.measku.edu.kw and through the website <https://cem.ku.edu.kw>.



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Hotel & Resort | فندق ومنتجع

Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	Price
One night stay in a Queen Bed Cabana for 2 persons with inclusive of Breakfast	BHD 46.000
One night stay in a Two Bedroom Chalet for 4 persons inclusive of Breakfast	BHD 102.148 / Net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	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

Terms & conditions apply



Photos from the UAE's 'Make it in the Emirates 2026' platform in Abu Dhabi, showcasing advanced manufacturing, AI-driven growth, and investment opportunities.

KUNA photos

Partnerships key to sustainable energy future: Al-Zamel

Kuwait eyes innovation, collaboration at UAE industrial platform

ABU DHABI, May 4, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy underlined Monday the importance of strengthening regional cooperation and exchanging expertise in power, water, and renewable energy to support sustainable development and keep pace with global energy transformations.

Undersecretary of the Ministry Dr. Adel Al-Zamel said in remarks to KUNA, on the sidelines of his participation in the "Make it in the Emirates 2026" platform in Abu Dhabi, that the ministry's involvement reflects its commitment to enhancing collaboration and exploring new opportunities in vital sectors.

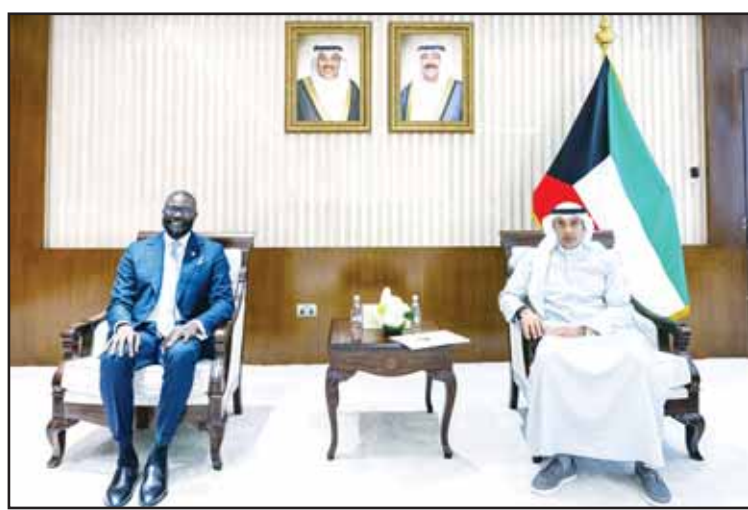
Al-Zamel, who is heading Kuwait's delegation to the event, noted that participation in the prominent industrial platform offers a valuable opportunity to review the latest innovations and technologies in manufacturing and energy, as well as to discuss avenues for cooperation with relevant entities in the UAE and other participating countries.

He praised the UAE's efforts in organizing the event, describing it as a leading platform that brings together decision-makers, experts, investors, and industry leaders from around the world.

Al-Zamel affirmed the ministry's commitment to expanding strategic part-

nerships and boosting cooperation with regional and international stakeholders to advance the energy sector, promote innovation, and achieve sustainability in line with Kuwait's vision for a more efficient and sustainable future.

The fifth edition of "Make it in the Emirates 2026" kicked off Monday at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC) under the theme "Advanced Industry.. Stronger Together," with the participation of ministers, business leaders, investors, industrialists, and innovators from across the region and beyond. Kuwait's delegation includes officials from the sectors of public works, electricity, and housing.



KUNA photo

Kuwait deputy FM receives ICRC regional head marking end of tenure.

Kuwait deputy FM meets outgoing ICRC GCC head

KUWAIT CITY, May 4, (KUNA): Kuwait's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan, received on Monday the Head of the Regional Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for the GCC, Mamadou Sow, on the end of his tenure.

CAPT backs tender award for key Doha desalination project

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) dismissed the complaint of a bidder on the validity of the award decision for the tender to supply, install, operate and maintain the Doha Seawater Reverse Osmosis Desalination Plant, including equipment to increase the alkalinity of the produced water (Phase Two).

The tender was awarded to the lowest bidder -- KD114,280.

The aim of the project is to produce drinking water for all consumers and supply surrounding areas by increasing potable water by 60 million imperial gallons per day.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy intends to issue a tender to develop and support the financial sector.

In its meeting on April 29, the ministry requested CAPT to float the tender to classified companies in order to develop plans, mechanisms and regulations for

development within the sector.

CAPT decided to postpone its decision until it receives a letter from the ministry about the discussed amendments within five working days.

The tender aims to support and develop the sector by supervising its work, coordinating with other sectors, and implementing budget rules and principles according to financial regulations.

Meanwhile, the ministry referred the tender for constructing and completing an emergency management building -- including electricity, storage facilities and a service building -- in Fahheel at a cost of KD1.517 million -- to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) for auditing and review before contracting with the bidder selected by CAPT.

The ministry is committed to provide its services to all citizens and residents in different areas, decentralize service delivery, and expedite emergency response, particularly in dealing with outages and disruptions during the summer months due to high temperatures and increased energy demand.

Council rejects grace period for non-compliant telecom towers

Food security hub and addiction treatment center approved

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Municipal Council Chairman Abdullah Al-Mahri presided over the session of the council on Monday.

During the session, the council approved the following:

- Implementation of Cabinet Resolution No. 3030/2026 on allocating a site measuring 250,000 square meters for the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) to establish a logistics and food security warehouse in South Shaddadiyah.

- Request of the Ministry of Health to reallocate the Sulabiya Youth Camp building and its adjacent land, totaling 37,582 square meters, to the ministry for use as a health facility for addiction treatment.

- Several logistical, health and regulatory decisions.

- Reorganization of plots 432 to 457 in Block One in Al-Siddiq suburb to form a single regulatory plot.

- Request of the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) to utilize land measuring 2,130 square meters for a wool production unit in the waiting area of the Capital Slaughterhouse and Central Livestock Market in Al-Rai (Block Two), for the benefit of Al-Sadu Handicrafts Association. This approval is granted on the condition that the activity is limited to production and traditional crafts, along with product display but there should be no commercial activity, and that approvals are obtained from the relevant authorities.

- Final version of the amendment to Schedule No. 10 concerning private hospital buildings, including the requirements related to areas, building ratios, parking and licensing regulations.

- New regulatory provisions, such as excluding basements and technical/service areas from building ratios, while requiring adherence to the Kuwaiti Code for General Design approved by the Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA).

On the telecommunications towers issue, the council rejected the proposal to grant a new grace period for regularizing non-compliant towers after nearly an hour of discussion due to differing viewpoints among the concerned parties.

Chairperson of the Technical Committee Eng. Munira Al-Amir pointed out that the council exerted tremendous efforts for more than two years to approve the telecommunications regulations and grant non-compliant towers a year and a half to rectify their status, with the possibility of a six-month extension. She emphasized that the regu-



Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Municipal Council Chairman Abdullah Al-Mahri presides over a council session at the Municipal Council headquarters, where members discussed and approved key development, health, and infrastructure projects.

lations must be amended after their implementation, not before.

She revealed there was lack of consensus among the relevant authorities, particularly between the Public Authority of Civil Aviation and Ministry of Health. She said the discussion of the committee focused on reducing the distance between towers and residential areas from 20 meters to 12 meters, with some demanding further reduction to seven meters -- a proposal that raised technical and health concerns.

She added the Ministry of Health previously approved the requirements and deemed them safe, but in the last committee meeting, the ministry presented a document dating back to 2002, warning against constructing towers near healthcare facilities due their impact on medical equipment. She stated that this prompted the committee to maintain its refusal to extend the grace period.

Council Member Eng. Alia Al-Farsi confirmed that the regulations had been discussed repeatedly in committees and council sessions. She questioned the usefulness of reintroducing them without implementation, calling for a pilot program (case study) in one area, followed by evaluation and amendment based on the results. She added

that the regulations permit installing towers on various sites, such as light poles and transformers.

She indicated that the organization of these towers is linked to several technical factors like radiation intensity, transmission angle and antenna height, emphasizing the need to balance network efficiency with the safety of the residential environment.

Council member Fahad Al-Abduljader stressed that the deadline is sufficient, indicating that the continuous request for an extension entails lack of seriousness in terms of implementation. He warned about the dangers posed by illegal towers, especially those located near schools and hospitals.

Vice Chairman of the council Khalid Al-Mutairi reiterated that regulations are evaluated after their implementation, not before. He pointed out that the previous deadline was set for site studies and the regulation of towers, which was not achieved.

In another development, council member Waleed Al-Dagher submitted a request to open a discussion on the requirement for municipal inspectors to be granted access to rented apartments, warning about the legal and constitutional issues related to the sanctity of residences.

Continued from Page 1

Ali al-Zubaidi,

his crimes with the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, thereby severely damaging what remained of the possibility of Arab solidarity.

I recount these historical events so that observers may understand that Iraq (Mesopotamia), which possesses some of the largest oil reserves in the region, is rich in agricultural resources, and has a large educated class that has endured more than seven decades of upheaval.

The most recent blow to the intellectual class was the systematic campaign carried out by sectarian militias aligned with Tehran, aimed at deepening ignorance among the population. This campaign became more apparent after the American invasion of Iraq and is often described as the result of an indirect alliance between Washington and Tehran.

The prime minister-designate has several opportunities to help lead his country out of this cycle of failure, especially given his economic expertise and his awareness of the risks associated with Iranian influence in exploiting Iraq's natural resources and transforming the Iraqi economy into a shadow economy subservient to the Iranian regime, which is struggling to circumvent international sanctions.

It must be emphasized that Iraq has

a real opportunity to set itself free from Iranian hegemony and prevent the realization of the ambitions of Tehran's leaders at the expense of the Iraqi people.

The Iraqi prime minister has much to accomplish, foremost among which is restoring relations with neighboring countries, particularly the Gulf states, Jordan, and Turkey, and returning them to their proper footing.

Any misstep, tolerance of Iranian practices, or acquiescence to the demands of its affiliated militias will only perpetuate Iraq's cycle of state weakness, further impoverish the people, and increase tensions with its neighbors.

121 residency

emergency entry document, which is issued exclusively to Kuwaiti citizens. After verification and biometric fingerprinting, the authorities discovered that the traveler is registered in Kuwait under a different name and holds a passport from a foreign country, contrary to his claim of being a Kuwaiti citizen.

The accused was referred to the concerned authorities for legal action and to investigate all aspects of the incident.

The recognition of Al-Mutairi is in line with the commitment of the

ministry to support and motivate outstanding national talent, and promote the culture of vigilance and discipline in the workplace, thereby, maintaining national security.

Acting Director of Salmi Border Brigadier Ali Yousef Al-Tammam attended the ceremony in honor of Al-Mutairi.

Meanwhile, the General Traffic Department continued its campaigns in various governorates.

The campaigns carried out last week resulted in the issuance of 16,265 traffic citations, while 218 vehicles were impounded and 46 individuals were detained at traffic police stations.

According to the weekly traffic patrol statistics, the officers apprehended seven minors for driving without a license, 121 individuals with outstanding arrest warrants, and 121 individuals found to have violated the Residency and Labor laws.

All those arrested were referred to the concerned authorities.

Five-day bank

customer satisfaction levels and the quality of complaint handling, thereby enhancing the efficiency of banking services and improving the customer experience.

7 years jail,

Investigations by the Nationality Investigations Department revealed that the defendant's biometric fingerprint matched his photograph on his Saudi identity card, confirming the forgery.

The court sentenced the father of the forger in absentia to seven years' imprisonment.

Investigations also revealed that the accused exploited his forged citizenship to secure two government positions. He was appointed as a corporal at the Ministry of Defense and also worked as a police officer at the Ministry of Interior. As a result, he unlawfully obtained salaries, financial benefits, loans, and pension entitlements totaling over KD 105,000.

Al-Jarallah,

the dynamic shifts within the media industry, reiterating the commitment of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers to advance international networks and maintain media transparency.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Zheltov expressed his appreciation for the meeting. He lauded the role of the Kuwaiti press in promoting cultural and media dialogue between Kuwait

and Moscow.

He reaffirmed the commitment of his country to strengthen its ties with local media entities, and expressed optimism regarding the development of productive partnerships through reciprocal visits and expertise sharing, aimed deepening mutual understanding.

Managing Editor of the Arab Times Marlon Aquino Malinao attended the meeting.

UAE air shield

and adhere to safety instructions and alert notifications issued by competent authorities.

Meanwhile, authorities in the Emirate of Fujairah confirmed that a fire broke out at a developed facility in the Fujairah Oil Industry Zone (FOIZ) as a result of a drone strike originating from Iran.

Civil defense teams in Fujairah immediately began responding to the incident and continue efforts to bring it under control.

Authorities also urged the public not to spread rumors and to rely solely on official sources for information.

Elsewhere, the U.S. military said Monday that two American-flagged merchant ships had successfully transited the Strait of Hormuz after it launched

a new initiative to restore traffic.

Iran has effectively controlled the strait since the U.S. and Israel launched the war in late February. Breaking Iran's chokehold would ease global economic concerns and deny Tehran a major source of leverage in talks aimed at ending the war. But U.S. President Donald Trump's latest effort also risks reigniting full-scale fighting as the U.S. and Iran steadily ramp up pressure.

An explosion and fire meanwhile broke out aboard a South Korean-operated ship anchored in the strait, though its cause was unknown, the South Korean government said.

In another sign of possible escalation, Iran claimed to have struck a U.S. Navy vessel near the strait. The U.S. denied the claim.

Iran's effective closure of the strait, which runs between Iran and Oman, has caused a spike in worldwide fuel prices and rattled the global economy. The U.S.-led Joint Maritime Information Center is now advising ships to cross the strait in Oman's waters, saying it set up an "enhanced security area."

It was unclear whether shipping companies, and their insurers, will feel comfortable taking the risk given that Iran has fired on ships in the waterway and vowed to keep doing so. Iran has said the new U.S. effort is a violation of the fragile ceasefire that has held for more than three weeks.

INTERNATIONAL



Police block off near S. Air Depot boulevard in Edmond, Okla., after a campground shooting at Lake Arcadia on May 3. (AP)

America

Giuliani hospitalized in critical condition: Former New York City mayor **Rudolph Giuliani** is hospitalized in critical but stable condition, his spokesperson said Sunday, days after the Republican hoarsely told his talk show audience that his voice was "a little under the weather."

The spokesperson, Ted Goodman, didn't say what sent Giuliani, 81, to the hospital, how long he's been there or what his prognosis is.

"Mayor Giuliani is a fighter who has faced every challenge in his life with unwavering strength, and he's fighting with that same level of strength as we speak," Goodman said in a statement. He said that Giuliani "remains in critical but stable condition."

Giuliani's eight-year tenure as the mayor of the nation's largest city was punctuated by the 9/11 attack in his final months in office, and he became celebrated as "America's mayor" for his leadership after the 2001 al-Qaeda terrorist attack that felled the World Trade Center twin towers. (AP)

□ □ □

Oklahoma shooting injures 12: A shooting Sunday night at a party at a lake near Oklahoma City sent at least 12 people to hospitals, according to police and hospital officials.



Giuliani

Edmond police spokesperson Emily Ward said authorities received reports of shots being fired at about 9 p.m. at a gathering of young people near Arcadia Lake. She said late Sunday that no arrests had been made yet.

"This is obviously a very terrifying situation and we understand the concern from the public and those involved and we are working extremely hard to find the suspects," she said.

"We're kind of all over the metro speaking with victims and witnesses," Ward said.

She said that 10 people were taken to hospitals and others drove themselves. She said victims were in "various conditions." (AP)

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United flight strikes pole on NJ Turnpike: A United Airlines passenger jet carrying 221 passengers from Venice, Italy, struck a light pole on the New Jersey Turnpike on Sunday afternoon as it was coming in for a landing at Newark Liberty International Airport, authorities said.

The airline said none of the passengers or 10 crew members aboard United Airlines Flight 169 were injured.

The New Jersey State Police said a landing fire and the underside of the plane also hit a truck, and the light pole then struck a Jeep that was on the highway. The driver of the truck was taken to the hospital with minor injuries and was released, said the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which operates the airport.

The Federal Aviation Administration said the Boeing 767 aircraft landed safely after it "came into contact with a light pole" on its final approach to Newark. (AP)

Maine Gov Mills drops Senate bid against Platner

Dems challenge party establishment while trying to loosen Trump's grip on Washington

NEW YORK, May 4, (AP): Maine just sent a blunt message to the Democratic Party's national leaders.

Democratic Gov Janet Mills was forced to abandon her US Senate campaign, unable to generate sufficient fundraising or enthusiasm to compete against Graham Platner, an oyster farmer who has never served in elected office. The announcement marked a stinging defeat for Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer, who recruited Mills to lead the party's decades-long quest to defeat Republican Sen Susan Collins.

The swift defenestration of a two-term governor by a political neophyte highlighted a stark reality that has begun to take hold at a pivotal moment - Democratic voters are rejecting their party's establishment and embracing new risks, even as their confidence grows that a blue wave is coming in November's mid-term elections.

Sometimes Democrats seem almost as angry at their own party's aging and entrenched leadership as they are at President Donald Trump. "Rank-and-file Democrats don't want the Democratic Party as we know it," said Ezra Levin, co-founder of the Democratic resistance group Indivisible. "Rank-and-file Democrats want fighters."

Local Indivisible chapters, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who's

an independent but caucuses with Democrats, and other leaders from the party's progressive wing had already lined up behind Platner, who is now almost certain to be the Democratic nominee in one of the party's best Senate pickup opportunities in the nation.

Platner on Friday insisted he would continue to speak out against his party's leadership, including Schumer, although he acknowledged that the two spoke privately the night before.

"The fact that we've been able to do all of this without the help of the establishment, it puts us in such an amazing position," Platner said on MS NOW's "Morning Joe." "My criticisms of the party leadership, my criticisms of the party, they have not changed, and I've been very vocal about that since the beginning. But we will absolutely take the help that we can get."

Republicans, meanwhile, are giddy - and some moderate Democratic strategists are worried - that the anti-establishment shift may undermine the party's effort to claw back control of Congress in November.

"Chuck Schumer has officially lost the first battle in his proxy war with Bernie Sanders," said Bernadette Breslin, spokesperson for the Senate Republicans' campaign arm. "As Sanders hits the campaign trail



Maine Gov Janet Mills attends a dedication of the Picker House Lofts in the Continental Mill on March 26, in Lewiston, Maine. (AP)

to prop up progressives in messy Democrat primaries in Michigan and Minnesota, Schumer's chances of getting his preferred candidates through look grim."

Maine is far from alone. Prominent anti-establishment clashes are playing out in high-profile Senate races across Michigan, Minnesota and Iowa, along with House races in several states.

Sanders, a self-described democratic socialist, continues to promote Platner and other critics of the

to see it."

Indeed, McMorrow is actively working to remind voters that she would not support Schumer as Democrats' Senate leader if given the chance.

"Frankly, I was the first person in this country to say no," McMorrow said in a video she posted Thursday on social media. "It is a different moment. This is no longer a Republican Party we're dealing with, it is a MAGA party that has been taken over by Trump loyalists. ... You need to respond in a very different way."

Veteran Democratic strategists like Lis Smith, who works with candidates across the country, tied the anti-establishment shift to the party's painful losses in 2024, when President Joe Biden was forced to abandon his reelection bid and Vice President Kamala Harris went on to lose to Trump.

"After 2024, voters are sick of the gerontocracy, sick of the status quo, and Chuck Schumer has completely misread that," Smith said.

Privately, Schumer's allies downplay the impact of the anti-establishment backlash.

The Senate Democratic leader's preferred picks in North Carolina, Ohio and Alaska haven't faced the same challenges as Mills did in Maine. The four states represent the party's most likely path to a major-

ity in the chamber, which has 53 Republicans, 45 Democrats and two independents who caucus with the Democrats.

Mills is the oldest of the candidates and, at 78, would have been the oldest freshman senator in history. She promised to serve one term if elected. Platner is only 41.

Schumer's team is unwilling to make any apologies for backing Mills over Platner.

"Leader Schumer's North Star is taking back the Senate," Schumer spokesperson Allison Biasotti said. "When no one thought a Senate majority was possible just a year ago, he made it a reality by recruiting great candidates across the country and laying out an agenda for lower costs and better lives for Americans."

Some in the Democratic Party's moderate wing are worried.

Matt Bennett, co-founder of the center-left group Third Way, said that Platner's emergence in Maine "without a doubt" will make it harder for Democrats to defeat Collins in November. He warns that it could be the same elsewhere if Democratic primary voters rally behind anti-establishment candidates.

"Our message is if you would like to beat Donald Trump's Republicans, you better nominate people who can win," Bennett said.

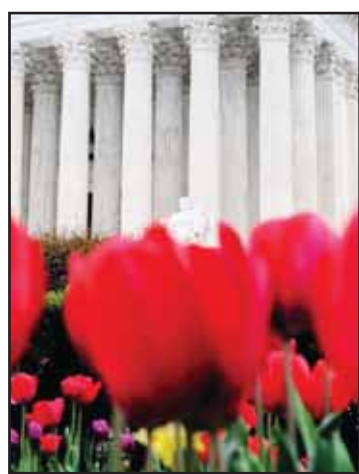
Alabama, Tennessee move to draw new congressional districts in wake of SC ruling

MONTGOMERY, Ala., May 4, (AP): Republican governors in Alabama and Tennessee have summoned lawmakers into special sessions this week seeking new congressional districts after the US Supreme Court weakened a key provision of the Voting Rights Act.

Republican Alabama Gov Kay Ivey has called legislators back to Montgomery starting Monday to approve contingency plans for special primary elections in hopes that the Supreme Court will allow the state to switch congressional maps ahead of the November midterms. It's a move that Republicans legislative leaders said would "give our state a fighting chance to send seven Republican members to Congress." The seven-member delegation currently has two Democrats.

In Tennessee, Republican Gov. Bill Lee also announced a special session starting Tuesday for the GOP-controlled Legislature to break up the state's one Democratic-held House district, centered on the majority-Black city of Memphis.

The Supreme Court decision striking down a majority-Black congressional district in Louisiana said the drawing of the district map relied too much on race. The ruling began reverberating through statehouses across the South as Republicans



The US Supreme Court is seen in Washington on April 3. (AP)

eyed the possibility of getting new lines in place for the 2026 midterm elections, or at least 2028.

President Donald Trump encouraged the latest round of redistricting in a post on social media on Sunday, saying his party could gain 20 seats in the House.

"We should demand that State Legislatures do what the Supreme Court says must be done," Trump said. "That is more important than administrative convenience."

Florida approved new districts the day of the Supreme Court ruling, and Louisiana moved quickly to postpone its May 16 congressional primary, drawing lawsuits from Democrats and civil rights groups. The state's Republican leadership started planning for a redraw that could eliminate one or both of its congressional districts now represented by a Black lawmaker. South Carolina's governor suggested his state might also reconsider its congressional map.

Sen. Raphael Warnock, a Georgia Democrat, described the court decision and the redistricting scramble as an attempt to roll back the Civil Rights Movement.

"They said we're going to allow partisan politicians to gerrymander you, so that even when you show up, your voice won't have as much impact because we'll play with the lines," he said Sunday from the pulpit at Ebenezer Baptist Church, where Martin Luther King Jr. once served as pastor. "That isn't a new method. That's an old method. That's a Jim Crow method."

The Supreme Court ruling boosted an already intense national redistricting battle by providing Republican officials in some states potential new grounds to redraw voting districts.

Europe

Spain PM's plane makes emergency landing: The official plane carrying Spanish Prime Minister **Pedro Sanchez** had to make an emergency landing in the Turkish capital of Ankara due to a technical issue, according to Spanish media reports.

The Spanish prime minister and his accompanying delegation were traveling to Armenia to participate in the Eighth European Political Community Summit when the incident occurred, as reported by Spain's official news agency (EFE).

The technical failure was not so serious, but precautionary measures should have been taken in the Turkish capital, where Sanchez must spend a night before traveling to Armenia early Monday, it added. (KUNA)

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4 injured in London shooting: A man was in critical condition after four people were injured in a shooting in south London on Saturday, Sky News reported Sunday.



Sanchez

The incident happened in the early hours of Saturday on Coldharbour Lane in Brixton, where shots were reportedly fired from a vehicle. The four victims, aged 25, 21, 47 and 70, were taken to hospital, according to the report.

A 25-year-old man remained in a life-threatening condition, while the other three suffered injuries that were not life-threatening, the report said.

Police said they were investigating whether a stabbing nearby about an hour later was linked to the shooting. No arrests had been made, and officers were working to identify those responsible. (Xinhua)

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House explosion in Bristol kills 2: Two people died after an explosion at a residential address in Bristol, southern England, local police said on Sunday.

Police were called to Sterncourt Road on Sunday morning, before they cordoned off the area and evacuated nearby residents, according to a statement by Avon and Somerset Police.

The cause of the incident is being treated as suspicious, and a major incident has been declared. "Given the recent change to the UK threat level, we would like to reassure the public from the outset we are not treating this as a suspected terrorist incident," said the statement. (Xinhua)



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, (second right), sits opposite Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer, (second left), and France's President Emmanuel Macron, (third left), during the Ukraine multi-lateral meeting, co-chaired by UK and France at the European Political Community summit in Yerevan, Armenia on May 4. (AP)

EU leaders see Trump's troop drawdown from Germany as new proof they must go it alone

YEREVAN, Armenia, May 4, (AP): European leaders on Monday said that US President Donald Trump's snap decision to pull thousands of US troops out of Germany came as a surprise but is a fresh sign that Europe must take care of its own security.

The Pentagon announced last week that it would pull some 5,000 troops out of Germany, but Trump told reporters on Saturday that "we're going to cut way down. And we're cutting a lot further than 5,000."

He offered no reason for the move, which blindsided NATO, but his decision came amid an escalating dispute with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz over the US-Israeli war on Iran, and Trump's anger that European allies have been reluctant to get involved in the conflict in the Middle East.

Asked about the decision to pull out 5,000 troops from Germany, Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store said: "I wouldn't exaggerate that because I think we are expecting that Europe is taking more charge of its own security."

"I do not see those figures as dramatic, but I think they should be handled in a harmonious way inside the framework of NATO," he told reporters in

Yerevan, Armenia, where European leaders are holding a summit.

The European Union's foreign policy chief, Kaja Kallas, said "there has been a talk about withdrawal of US troops for a long time from Europe. But of course, the timing of this announcement comes as a surprise."

"I think it shows that we have to really strengthen the European pillar in NATO," she said.

Asked whether she believes that Trump is trying to punish Merz, who said that the US has been humiliated by Iran in talks to end the war, Kallas said: "I don't see into the head of President Trump, so he has to explain it himself."

Over the weekend, NATO spokesperson Allison Hart said that officials at the 32-nation military alliance "are working with the US to understand the details of their decision on force posture in Germany."

European allies and Canada have known since just after he came to office again last year that Trump would pull troops out of Europe - indeed some left Romania in October - but US officials had pledged to coordinate any moves with their NATO allies to avoid creating a security vacuum.

NATO Secretary-General Mark

Rutte played down the move, saying that "there has been at this point disappointment on the U.S. side" about European support for the war on Iran.

Notably France, Spain and the U.K. have declined to give US forces free rein to use bases on their territory to attack Iran. Spain has denied them the use of its airspace and bases there for the war.

But Rutte, who has championed Trump's leadership at NATO despite the US president's criticism of the majority of the allies, said: "I would say the Europeans have heard a message. They are now making sure that all the bilateral basing agreements are being implemented."

Rutte added that European nations "have decided to pre-position assets, key assets, close to the theater for the next phase."

He provided no details, but the Europeans have insisted they would not help police the Strait of Hormuz, a key energy trade route, until the war is over.

French President Emmanuel Macron said "if the United States is ready to reopen Hormuz, that's great. That's what we've been asking for since the beginning."

Takaichi reaffirms intention to revise Constitution

Japan and Australia agree to deepen cooperation on energy security, defense

MELBOURNE, Australia, May 4, (Agencies): The prime ministers of Japan and Australia agreed to deepen cooperation in a wide range of areas including energy security, defense and critical minerals as the Iran war threatens global supply chains.

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi met her Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese at Australia's Parliament House on Monday during Takaichi's first visit to the country as national leader.

Takaichi said they held strategic discussions on China, Southeast Asia, Pacific Island countries, nuclear issues and abductions by North Korea.

"The effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz had been inflicting enormous impact on the Indo-Pacific. We affirmed that Japan and Australia will closely communicate with each other in responding with a sense of urgency," Takaichi told reporters through an interpreter.

Australia provides almost half of Japan's liquefied natural gas. Japan is one of Australia's top five suppliers of refined gasoline and diesel.

Albanese traveled to Singapore, Brunei and Malaysia in recent weeks to shore up supplies of gasoline and diesel following disruptions caused by attacks on Iran by the United States and Israel beginning in February.

The bilateral agreements reached Monday would benefit the populations of Japan and Australia, Albanese said.

"For Australians, it will mean we are less vulnerable to global shocks like we are seeing right now because of conflict in the Middle East," Albanese said.

"Our joint statement on energy security reaffirms our commitment to navigate the current energy crisis together and maintain open trade flows of essential energy goods including liquid fuels and gas," he said.

The statement on economic security cooperation commits to consulting on contingencies "including those related to geopolitical tensions, economic coercion or other significant market interruptions."



Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, (left), and Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese shake hands after signing a Joint Declaration on Economic Security Cooperation at Parliament House in Canberra, Australia on May 4. (AP)

The agreements also take aim at China's control and manipulation of the global production of heavy rare earths, which are used for making powerful, heat-resistant magnets in industries such as defense and electric vehicles.

"We express our strong concerns over all forms of economic coercion, and the use of non-market policies and practices that are leading to harmful overcapacity and market distortions, as well as export restrictions, particularly on critical minerals," the joint statement by the two countries said.

The two prime ministers "announce the elevation of critical minerals as a core pillar of our economic security relationship," the statement said.

Australia would provide up to 1.3 billion Australian dollars (\$930 million) to support critical minerals projects involving Japan.

The prime ministers also announced new steps to enhance Japan-Australia defense and security cooperation.

Takaichi's visit comes two weeks after the Japanese and Australian defense ministers signed contracts to deliver the first three of a AU\$10 billion (\$6.5 billion) fleet of Japanese-designed warships.

Also:

TOKYO: Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, on Sunday, the country's Constitution Memorial Day, reaffirmed her intention to revise the Constitution, local media reported.

Speaking in a video message to a gathering of revision proponents, Takaichi stressed that the postwar supreme law, which serves as the foundation of the country, "should be periodically updated in accordance with the demands of the times," Kyodo News reported.

Takaichi said that her ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) would "advance discussions in the Diet (Japan's parliament) aimed at reaching decisions while securing the cooperation of other parties."

Japan's Constitution, which took effect in 1947, is often referred to as the pacifist Constitution because its Article 9 renounces war as a sovereign right and prohibits Japan from possessing "war potential."

More than 300 families evacuate in Philippines due to ashfall from volcano

MANILA, Philippines, May 4, (Agencies): More than 300 families have been evacuated after massive amounts of ash billowed from the Mayon volcano over the weekend due to the collapse of lava deposits from its slopes, officials said Monday.

There was no explosive eruption from Mayon, which has been erupting mildly on and off since January, but huge deposits of lava on its southwestern slope suddenly cascaded down in a pyroclastic flow - an avalanche of hot rocks, ash and gas - before nightfall on Saturday, said Teresito Bacolcol, director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

No deaths or injuries were reported, but massive clouds of ash scattered over 87 villages in three towns, catching many by surprise and slowing down motorists due to poor visibility, officials said.

"The ashfall was just so thick and there was zero visibility even in our

national road," Mayor Caloy Baldo of Camalig town, which lies near the volcano's foothills, said.

"Some villagers panicked but we advised them to calm down," Baldo told The Associated Press.

Vegetable farms were damaged by the ashfall, which also killed four water buffaloes and a cow in Camalig, Baldo said, adding that a cleanup was underway in his town of 8,000 people in Albay province.

"It's calm again now but the danger is always there," Bacolcol said of Mayon's condition Monday.

The 2,462-meter (8,077-foot) volcano is one of the Philippines' top tourism draws because of its near-perfect cone shape. But it's also the most active of the country's 24 volcanoes.

Authorities raised the five-step alert around Mayon to level 3 in January after a series of mild eruptions that caused intermittent rockfalls, some as big as cars, from its peak crater along with deadly pyroclastic flows.

Alert 5 means an explosive and life-threatening eruption is underway with deadly volcanic lava and pyroclastic flows and heavy ashfall.

Also:

MANILA: A 6.1-magnitude earthquake jolted Eastern Samar Province in the central Philippines, at 2:09 pm local time on Monday, said the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

The epicenter, with a depth of 10.0 km, was initially determined to be at 11.76 degrees north latitude and 125.37 degrees east longitude, according to the institute.

Residents have evacuated to open outdoor areas, and no casualties have been reported so far, according to local media.

The Philippines experiences frequent seismic activity due to its location along the Pacific "Ring of Fire," a zone of major tectonic plate boundaries known for earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.



Mayon volcano spews ash as seen from Camalig, Albay province, Philippines on May 2. (AP)



People cross a flooded portion of the road following heavy rains in Nyakach, Western Kenya on March 24. (AP)

Flash floods kill 18 in Kenya amid heavy downpours

Recent flooding during ongoing heavy rains in Kenya left 18 people dead over the past week, police said Sunday, with most of the deaths attributed to drowning.

More than 54,000 households have been affected by

the flooding countrywide, with 6,000 of those being in the capital, Nairobi, according to the Interior Ministry.

Dozens of schools and hospitals across the country have flooded, and 17 roads have been cut off.

Mudslides have also forced thousands to move from the western Rift Valley area, while people living downstream of the Tana and Athi rivers have been urged to move to higher ground as water levels in the country's hydroelectric dams rise. (AP)

Armed men abduct former minister and junta critic in Mali, says family

BAMAKO, Mali, May 4, (AP): A former Malian minister and critic of the ruling junta was abducted from his home by armed, hooded men, one of his family members told The Associated Press Sunday, as fallout spreads from a wave of armed attacks against the government in the conflict-battered West African nation.

Mountaga Tall's home in the capital, Bamako, was stormed shortly before midnight on Saturday, his relative Mahmoud Touré told AP. The men did not identify themselves, nor did they say why they were seizing Tall, but Touré said they were from the armed forces.

"They did not explain why and did not present an arrest warrant," he said. "The soldiers mistreated Mountaga Tall's wife and took his phone."

Tall served as Mali's education and science minister from 2016 to 2017 and is the president of the National Congress for Democratic Initiative, a political party opposed to the military government. As a lawyer, he represents politicians and other individuals who have been arrested for criticizing the junta.

Mali was struck on April 26 by one



Soldiers wait for the start of the funeral for Mali's former defense minister Sadio Camara at the Military Engineering Parade Ground in Bamako, Mali on April 30. (AP)

of the biggest coordinated attacks on its army in Bamako and several other cities by jihadis and rebels who seized several towns and military bases. Several people were killed in the attack including the defense minister, Sadio Camara.

The Islamic militant group Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin

(JNIM) and the Azawad Liberation Front, a Tuareg-led separatist group, jointly launched the heaviest attack on the government since 2012.

On Friday the military government said it had evidence that soldiers collaborated with the groups to launch the attacks. It has since carried out a wave of arrests.

Indian PM's party set to take control of West Bengal in key election

NEW DELHI, May 4, (AP): Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Hindu nationalist party is poised to wrest control of the state of West Bengal, an opposition stronghold, in a key local election.

The Election Commission of India released partial results showing the Bharatiya Janata Party ahead in at least 190 seats in the 294-member West Bengal state legislature. Final results are expected Monday evening.

It would be a significant breakthrough for Modi's party, which had tried for years to dislodge the All India Trinamool Congress government led by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. The BJP has never governed West Bengal, a politically influential state, where Banerjee - one of Modi's most prominent critics - has held power since 2011.

Opposition parties have sharply criticized the polls in West Bengal after the election commission removed millions of voters from electoral rolls.

Three other states are also taking



Bharatiya Janata Party members shout slogans and react to earlier results in a recently held state election, in Kolkata, India on May 4. (AP)

part in the latest election.

The South Asian country of more than 1.4 billion people has 28 states and eight federal territories. Staggered state elections are held at different times across India, with a few state polls scheduled almost every year.

The outcome in West Bengal is expected to boost Modi's standing and strengthen his political position midway through his third term in office after the 2024 national election forced his ruling party to rely on regional allies to form a government.

UN votes to cut peacekeeping force in South Sudan from 17,000 to 12,000

UNITED NATIONS, May 4, (AP): The UN Security Council voted to reduce the ceiling for the peacekeeping force in conflict-torn South Sudan from 17,000 to 12,000 troops with a mandate to prevent a return to civil war in the world's newest nation.

The vote on the US-drafted resolution was 13-0 with Russia and China abstaining. It extends the mandate of the force until April 30, 2027.

US Ambassador Mike Waltz told the council the resolution seeks to get the force "back to basics" - keeping the peace, protecting civilians and supporting access to humanitarian aid.

There were high hopes when oil-rich South Sudan gained independence from Sudan in 2011 after a long conflict. But the country slid into a civil war in December 2013, largely based on ethnic divisions, when forces loyal to Salva Kiir, an ethnic Dinka, battled those loyal to Riek Machar, an ethnic Nuer.

More than 400,000 people were killed in the war, which ended with a peace agreement in 2018 and a national unity government with Kiir as president and Machar as vice president. But Kiir's government put Machar under house arrest in March 2025,



South Sudanese women line up for food rations at a World Food Programme (WFP) distribution point organized by Catholic Relief Services in Jonglei state, South Sudan, on Nov 13, 2024. (AP)

accusing him of subversive activities, and he now faces treason charges.

Machar's removal coincided with a sharp increase in violence and a breakdown of the 2018 peace deal, though a long-delayed presidential election is still scheduled for December.

Waltz said the US is concerned that Kiir's government is "exploiting international support and obstruct-

ing those that are genuinely trying to help."

For example, Waltz said, between October and March the UN force recorded more than 480 incidents where peacekeepers were blocked, humanitarian access was denied, repatriation flights were obstructed, bases were forced to close "and millions of dollars were lost and wasted."

Boursa Kuwait ends session lower

KUWAIT CITY, May 4, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Monday's session in negative territory, with the general index slipping 15.01 points, or 0.17 percent, to close at 8,893.29 points. Trading activity saw 650.2 million shares exchanged across 32,386 cash transactions, totaling KD 125.4 million (around USD 410.1 million).

The main market index declined by 13.99 points, or 0.16 percent, settling at 8,591.07 points. A total of 394 million shares were traded through 18,689 transactions, with a value of KD 54.6 million (approximately USD 178.5 million).

Business



شركة الاستثمارات الوطنية
National Investments Company

National Investments Company Reports Negative Net Results of KWD 5.2 Million for Q1 2026, Impacted by Geopolitical Volatility

Trolley listing exceeded expectations, with over 15x over subscription and demand surpassing USD 2.25 billion
The Company maintained a prudent approach aligned with prevailing regional and global conditions



Khaled Waleed AlFalah

- Q1 2026 results were directly impacted by geopolitical developments across global and regional markets, while the Company maintained a cautious and disciplined approach in response to evolving regional and global conditions
- Continued focus on portfolio diversification and performance efficiency is strengthening the Company's ability to navigate current challenges and gradually restore its growth trajectory
- Despite regional tensions affecting financial markets and supply chains, the Company has preserved a strong financial position and continued to progress steadily, supported by a balanced approach and disciplined strategy

The Board of Directors of National Investments Company (NIC) approved the Company's consolidated financial statements for the first quarter ended 31 March 2026, which reflected a decline in financial performance compared to the same period last year. This was driven by recent developments that led to heightened volatility across financial markets and increased investment uncertainty, while the Company maintained a prudent approach in response to global market fluctuations. The Company recorded a net loss of KWD 5.2 million during the first quarter of the year.

In its statement, NIC noted that total shareholders' equity attributable to the parent company stood at KWD 189.4 million as of the end of Q1 2026, while total assets reached KWD 357.3 million as of 31 March 2026.

Challenging Start to the Year

In this context, Khaled Waleed AlFalah, Chairman of National Investments Company, stated that the Company's Q1 2026 results were directly impacted by geopolitical developments across global and regional markets during the quarter, alongside a cautious approach adopted in response to prevailing conditions. These factors were reflected in liquidity levels and investor confidence, leading to volatility across several investment sectors.

AlFalah noted that the Company responded by adopting more conservative investment policies, with a strong focus on risk management and operational resilience to safeguard its assets while maintaining a balanced risk-return profile.

He further emphasized that the current environment requires a high degree of investment discipline, reaffirming the Company's commitment to developing differentiated investment solutions and pursuing selective, high-quality opportunities that support recovery and enhance performance in the periods ahead.

AlFalah added that the Company continues to execute its long-term strategy, focused on portfolio diversification and performance optimization, strengthening its ability to navigate current challenges, gradually restore growth momentum, and deliver sustainable value to its shareholders.

Comprehensive Strategic Outlook

AlFalah emphasized that National Investments Company continues to execute its operating strategy through a disciplined and well-considered approach focused on adapting to evolving market conditions. He noted that the Company's performance was influenced by a range of economic challenges and external factors, prompting a stronger focus on operational resilience and the recalibration of certain priorities. He also highlighted the Company's continued commitment to embedding institutional sustainability through adherence to governance standards, enhanced transparency, and the development of an integrated risk management framework that supports its ability to navigate volatility and maintain stability over the medium to long term.

He added that the Company places strong emphasis on enhancing internal efficiency and strengthening its operating environment, while maintaining a balanced approach between

measured expansion and regulatory compliance, reinforcing its market position. He further noted that the strength of the Company's capital base provides the flexibility to execute future plans and capitalize on promising investment opportunities across both local and regional markets, driving sustainable returns and long-term value creation for shareholders.

AlFalah also highlighted the Company's commitment to its societal role through a range of initiatives across humanitarian, social, and charitable areas, as well as its continued support for public-benefit institutions. This reflects an integrated approach that aligns economic performance with positive social impact, underscoring the Company's belief in investing in people as a cornerstone of building a more cohesive and sustainable society.

In closing, AlFalah expressed his appreciation for the continued support and confidence of the Board of Directors, commending the executive management team for its expertise and professionalism, as well as the strong sense of teamwork across NIC's employees, which has collectively strengthened the Company's ability to navigate challenges and deliver positive outcomes. He noted that this performance comes amid a rapidly evolving global environment shaped by geopolitical developments and international events, including regional tensions and their impact on financial markets and supply chains, creating increased complexity across investment sectors. Despite these challenges, he affirmed that the Company has maintained a strong financial position and continued to progress steadily, supported by its balanced approach and disciplined strategies.

He concluded by emphasizing that the alignment between institutional support and operational efficiency has been instrumental in enabling the Company to adapt to changing conditions and capitalize on emerging opportunities. He reaffirmed NIC's commitment to upholding the highest standards of governance and transparency, while continuing to deliver sustainable value to its shareholders and advancing confidently toward broader growth and future success.

Strong Investment Performance

Commenting on the Company's performance during Q1 2026, Fahad Abdulrahman AlMukhaizim, Board Member and Chief Executive Officer of National Investments Company,

highlighted the dynamic investment activity across its various sectors.

He noted the successful execution of the private placement and the listing of Trolley General Trading Company during the first quarter of 2026. The offering was oversubscribed by 15x the initial offering size, with total demand exceeding USD 2.25 billion, attracting thousands of subscribers. The Company was listed on Boursa Kuwait's Premier Market, with the transaction drawing significant interest from international institutional investors, including strategic investors from the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. This transaction also represented the only IPO in Kuwait in 2026, underscoring NIC's leadership in structuring and executing transactions within a selective market environment. This followed the Company's successful private placement of Action Energy Company in Q4 2025. Notably, Trolley's share price increased by 30% as of the close on 31 March 2026, despite ongoing geopolitical challenges in the region.

AlMukhaizim added that the Company maintains a strong pipeline of capital markets transactions, including a planned private offering in the education sector targeted for Q4 2026, advisory mandates for preparing three entities for listing across various sectors, as well as a capital increase transaction in the transportation sector.

Within Alternative Investments, the division continued to pursue attractive opportunities, successfully closing a key transaction during the quarter while advancing due diligence on two additional deals. This reflects continued progress in capital deployment and underscores the division's commitment to value creation, effective asset management, and disciplined investment strategies that deliver long-term benefits to shareholders.

In Institutional and Wealth Management, the sector delivered strong performance, increasing assets under management by more than USD 400 million during the quarter, representing growth of approximately 10.2% compared to Q1 2025, despite prevailing economic and geopolitical challenges across Kuwait and the region. During the same period, the division established hundreds of new investment portfolios, reflecting sustained investment activity and strong client confidence. The sector also successfully managed the Trolley IPO subscription process and enhanced shareholder services through a dedicated team to address investor inquiries, improving overall service efficiency during the subscription period.

In Asset Management, AlMukhaizim commended the strong performance of the Company's investment products, with several funds delivering positive returns during the first quarter. GCC portfolios also recorded positive performance over the same period, despite market pressures driven by geopolitical developments and heightened uncertainty impacting investor sentiment and liquidity flows.

Meanwhile, the Trading and Financial Instruments team expanded its market-making services by adding three new listed companies on Boursa Kuwait, bringing the total number of companies served to 19. This reflects growing confidence in the Company's capabilities and reinforces its position as a leading provider of market-making services in the Kuwaiti market.

AlMukhaizim further noted that the Real Estate Sector delivered stable performance during the quarter, supported by a measured expansion of its portfolio and higher occupancy rates across owned and managed assets, with several properties reaching full occupancy. Looking ahead, the sector has initiated the sourcing, evaluation, and structuring of new investment opportunities, including participation in both public and private tenders, as part of its strategy to expand the real estate portfolio and strengthen the Company's institutional presence both locally and regionally.

Driving Future Business Growth

Within the framework of National Investments Company's vision to shape future business growth, AlMukhaizim highlighted the solid progress achieved by the Strategy and Corporate Development sector during Q1 2026, including advancement of the transformation strategy in partnership with McKinsey, alongside the rollout of performance management initiatives and enhancements to the operating model.

On the sustainability front, he noted that the Company completed its ESG readiness assessment in collaboration with "Accountability", establishing baselines, identifying gaps and improvement priorities, and activating sustainability ambassadors. This supports a more integrated strategic direction under the "Wejha" identity, while sustaining momentum in driving transformation with efficiency and agility. He also commended the successful implementation of the disaster recovery site at ZainTECH, with all systems tested within an isolated network environment.



Fahad Abdulrahman AlMukhaizim:

- The Company is focused on reinforcing sustainable growth and advancing its digital capabilities in line with market developments, meeting the evolving expectations of clients and shareholders
- Assets under management increased by USD 400 million during the first quarter, reflecting growth of approximately 10.2% compared to the same period last year, bringing total assets under management to nearly USD 4 billion

environment.

He further highlighted the strong performance of the Human Capital Sector, supported by positive hiring momentum and high employee retention. Employee engagement levels exceeded regional benchmarks, reflecting a positive work environment and a strong corporate culture. From a performance and development perspective, strategic initiatives, as well as leadership and professional development programs, were activated. These efforts were complemented by initiatives focused on employee wellbeing and internal engagement, reinforcing the Company's foundation to support the achievement of its strategic objectives for 2026.

In closing, AlMukhaizim reaffirmed the Company's commitment to sustained execution and continued development throughout 2026, emphasizing its focus on strengthening sustainable growth and advancing its digital capabilities in line with market developments and stakeholder expectations. He also underscored the Company's ongoing role in supporting Kuwait's economic development through integrated investment solutions that reflect its deep expertise and leading market position.

S&P GCC composite index gained by 1.1% in April 2026

Kuwait markets rebounded sharply in April signaling confidence in an economic recovery: Markaz report

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Kuwaiti equities recovered sharply in April, signaling confidence in the domestic markets after the easing of geopolitical tensions and the reopening of trade through the St. of Hormuz. The Kuwait All Share Index gained 5.3% in April 2026, with the banking sector index rising 3.1%. The performance of Banking stocks was mixed, with National Bank of Kuwait declining 1.5% m/m, while Gulf Bank and Kuwait Finance House gained 8.2% and 5.0% m/m, respectively, underpinned by robust Q1 2026 earnings. Among premier market stocks, Aayan Leasing and Investment Company and Mabaneer Company were the top gainers, with monthly gains of 19.2% and 17.3%, respectively. Aayan Leasing and Investment Company's subsidiary, Aayan Real Estate Company, entered into a 15-year investment agreement to design, construct, and operate an undisclosed property in Kuwait, with an estimated annual investment of around KD 336,000 (\$1.1 million).

Kuwait's real estate sales fell by 31% q/q in Q1 2026, driven by the geopolitical escalation during March. Residential sales declined by 33% q/q to reach KD 396 million, compared to KD 591 million in Q4 2025. Commercial and investment sales also declined by 21% and 33% q/q, respectively, in Q1 2026, amid heightened uncertainty in the region.

All GCC equity indices, except Saudi Arabia, ended the month in green, with Dubai's DFM index gaining the most at 6.1%. Overall, the S&P GCC Composite index gained 1.1% over the month. Temporary easing of geopolitical tensions earlier in the month, resulting from a ceasefire agreement and reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, lent support to regional equities. UAE equity markets recovered in April after the resumption of trading, with Real Estate stocks rebounding. Dubai-based Emaar Devel-



opment gained 8.0% amid robust real estate activity and new project launches. Qatar, Oman, and Bahrain equities rallied, with monthly gains of 2.9%, 2.5%, and 3.8%, respectively, amid easing tensions.

According to Fitch Ratings, the GCC economies have been resilient despite the escalation of regional tensions since March 2026, supported by robust fiscal and external buffers, high sovereign wealth assets, and policy flexibility. However, prolonged instability could weigh on growth, fiscal positions, trade, and tourism, as well as on weaker sovereigns with less robust balances. In response, GCC authorities have introduced targeted support measures, including liquidity relief, business support packages, SME financing, rent waivers, loan deferrals, and wage support.

The MSCI World Index and the S&P 500 gained 9.4% and 10.4%, respectively, during April 2026. The performance reflected easing tensions between the U.S. and Iran, improving economic activity, and robust earnings. The Nasdaq Composite index gained 15.6% amid AI-led earnings growth despite energy price concerns. Emerging Markets, as measured by the MSCI EM Index, gained 15.8% during the month, primarily due to gains in heavily weighted blue-chip stocks. Samsung Electronics and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing, which together account for roughly 18.4% (as of Mar 2026) of the index, increased by 22.8% and 11.8%, respectively. Among EM markets, South Korea and Taiwan gained 30.6% and 22.7%, respectively. Meanwhile, China's Shanghai Composite Index increased by 5.7%

for the month, driven by robust manufacturing activity in April, with S&P Global reporting a PMI of 50.3 for the month, beating estimates.

The yield on the 10-year U.S. Treasury notes increased by 10 bps during the month to 4.40%, reflecting heightened concerns about near-term inflation. This increase was primarily driven by sustained high energy prices and prolonged tensions in the Middle East.

Oil (Brent) prices declined over the month, settling at USD 114.0/bbl., reflecting a 3.7% monthly drop. During the month, markets experienced extreme volatility, with Brent surging to an intraday high of USD 126.0/bbl. on April 30, amid stalled ceasefire talks between the U.S. and Iran and the UAE's exit from OPEC. The UAE's announcement brings renewed focus to the GCC's geopolitical dynamics. The move could allow the country to raise production from its low-cost reserves while simultaneously challenging OPEC cohesion.

Against this backdrop, the IMF in its World Economic Outlook (WEO) April 2026, maintained its 2026 real GDP growth at 3.1% y/y, similar to estimates in WEO October 2025. IMF also revised the GDP forecast for the GCC downward by 230 bps to 2.0% in 2026, from 4.3% previously estimated in the Regional Economic Outlook in October 2025, citing inflationary pressures and trade disruptions.

The key driver of market movements in May 2026 is expected to remain ongoing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, with markets focusing on the conflict's resolution and fallout. GCC equity markets may remain sensitive to capital-flow risks, inflation concerns, and sector-specific pressures in real estate, aviation, tourism, and logistics. Globally, markets are likely to remain highly reactive to energy prices, inflationary concerns, and signs of either escalation or de-escalation in the Middle East.

Warba Bank launches internal audit awareness campaign

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Warba Bank launched an extensive awareness campaign to mark Global Internal Audit Awareness Month, in line with its commitment to strengthening corporate governance and promoting a culture of compliance and transparency across the organization.

The initiative is part of the bank's ongoing efforts to reinforce effective oversight as a key pillar supporting sustainable growth and institutional performance.

Enhancing Governance and Institutional Efficiency:

The campaign highlights the role of internal audit in supporting the bank's governance framework by evaluating control procedures, reviewing compliance systems, and assessing the effectiveness of risk management processes. These efforts provide decision-makers with data-driven insights and performance indicators that support operational improvements and enhance efficiency.

The bank said internal auditing has evolved beyond its traditional role of review and evaluation, becoming a strategic partner in building a resilient business environment able to respond to regulatory and operational challenges in a rapidly changing banking landscape.

Strengthening a Culture of Professional Awareness:

Hanan Ghanem Hamada, Acting Chief Internal Audit at Warba Bank, said the campaign included a series of internal initiatives and awareness activities aimed at enhancing employees' understanding of internal auditing and its role in protecting institutional per-

formance and promoting professional integrity.

"The campaign also highlights international best practices in governance, risk management, and internal control," Hamada said.

She added that the initiative provided a platform to emphasize the importance of cross-department collaboration and shared responsibility in adhering to policies and procedures, contributing to a disciplined and transparent work environment.

Internal Audit as a Strategic Partner:

Hamada noted that the modern role of internal auditing extends to supporting value creation by providing forward-looking insights, identifying improvement opportunities, and enhancing the reliability of operations.

She added that internal audit also supports the bank's strategic objectives through an advanced oversight framework characterized by independence, efficiency, and objectivity. Commitment to Sustainable Growth:

The bank said the campaign reflects its ongoing commitment to promoting institutional awareness and strengthening the role of internal audit as a strategic tool that supports resource protection, performance improvement, and sustainable growth.

This aligns with the bank's broader vision of delivering a banking model based on trust, governance, and long-term value.

About Warba Bank:

Warba Bank is a leading Islamic bank in Kuwait with a strong focus on Sharia-compliant digital banking. With one of the largest shareholder bases in the country, the bank continues to deliver innovative financial products and services, reinforcing its position as a digital-focused institution under its slogan "Own the Future."



Hamada

Panel explores geopolitics, inflation dynamics, and disciplined investment decision-making

Kuwait Finance House organizes Private Banking Panel on Navigating Market Volatility & Investment Strategy in 2026

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) hosted a high level panel discussion themed “Navigating Markets through Geopolitical Uncertainty”, bringing together KFH’s Private Banking clients, senior investment professionals, and regional experts to assess the global and regional forces shaping the current investment landscape.

The panel discussion featured Deputy Group CEO of Private Banking, Wealth Management and Business Excellence at KFH, Alex Liddle, Head of Group PBWM Client Investment Strategy at KFH, Alan Higgins, Chief Asset Management Officer at KFH Capital, Abdullah Al Ali, Economic Adviser Strategic Planning at KFH, Dr. Naser Alziyadat, and Deputy CEO at KFH UK, Julie Azharian.

Deputy Group CEO of Private Banking, Wealth Management and Business Excellence at KFH, Alex Liddle, said in his opening remarks at the panel discussion that the session was held against a backdrop of heightened global and regional un-

certainty, shaped by geopolitical tensions, evolving inflation dynamics, and continued market volatility. He also conveyed prayers for the safety, peace, and wellbeing of communities worldwide, and for the sustained stability and prosperity of Kuwait and the wider region.

“Markets continue to experience increased volatility, shifting inflation trends, and changing investor sentiment,” Liddle said, reaffirming KFH’s steadfast commitment to its clients, underscoring the Bank’s disciplined approach to wealth management and long term value creation.

“Our responsibility remains unwavering: to protect and grow our clients’ wealth, to navigate change with prudence, and to identify sustainable long term opportunities grounded in strong fundamentals,” he said, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a clear and measured investment strategy in increasingly complex market conditions.

Liddle further noted that the panel was designed to deliver practical insights and foster informed dialogue, providing per-



Alex Liddle

spectives on the key forces shaping markets in 2026. He explained that the discussion aims to support disciplined investment decision-making and encourage constructive engagement between KFH clients and experts. By sharing expertise and diverse viewpoints, he affirmed, KFH is well positioned to help clients navigate the year ahead with confidence and resilience.

The panel underscores KFH’s commitment to providing clarity and perspective

during a period defined by geopolitical uncertainty, shifting inflation dynamics, and heightened market volatility. By convening senior investment professionals and regional specialists, the discussion translated complex global developments into actionable insights, helping investors better interpret market signals across asset classes, regions, and sectors.

A central theme of the discussion was the importance of distinguishing short term market noise from long term, market moving fundamentals. Panelists emphasized that markets respond not to geopolitical events themselves, but to their economic consequences – particularly their impact on inflation, monetary policy, and growth. This disciplined perspective plays a vital role in helping investors avoid emotionally driven decisions and remain focused on long term investment objectives, especially during periods of elevated volatility.

The session also provided valuable guidance on portfolio construction in an evolving macroeconomic environment. Discus-

sions around potential inflation scenarios, the role of real assets, and the strategic positioning of gold as a long term portfolio diversifier highlighted the need for diversification strategies that extend beyond traditional frameworks. These insights reflected KFH’s research driven approach to asset allocation, aimed at capital preservation, risk management, and enhanced risk adjusted returns over time.

Additionally, a focused segment on UK real estate demonstrated KFH’s responsiveness to client interests and its ability to combine global reach with localized expertise. Insights from KFH UK showcased how selective opportunities emerge following a period of market repricing, reinforcing the importance of asset quality, income stability, and long term investment discipline.

Overall, the panel reaffirmed KFH’s role as a trusted partner to its clients – committed to informed dialogue, prudent strategy, and resilience in helping investors navigate an increasingly uncertain global investment environment.

Regional conflict upends otherwise positive economic momentum

By National Bank of Kuwait

Kuwait has been caught in the crossfire of the US/Israel-Iran conflict, with economic activity severely disrupted by Iranian strikes on local and regional infrastructure and blockage of the vital Strait of Hormuz shipping conduit. With trade curtailed, much oil production has been shut-in, pushing oil prices above \$100 for the first time since 2022. Economic outcomes are expected to weaken, to a degree that reflects the intensity and duration of the conflict. Up until the outbreak of hostilities, economic growth had been accelerating, on the back of upbeat economic readings including strong credit growth, rising real estate activity, higher project awards, above-trend PMI readings and relatively strong non-oil GDP growth on average in H2 25. Government policymaking was also gaining traction, with strong project approvals and a substantial jump in capex in the budget for FY26/27. That said, the current conflict is expected to have a deleterious effect on liquidity and the public finances, with oil revenues down to a trickle even as oil prices soar and business and consumer activity impaired, while supply chain disruptions put upward pressure on input costs. We believe the non-oil economy can escape a recession, though the outlook naturally depends upon how the conflict plays out.

Latest developments

- Kuwait’s economy caught in Iran-US/Israel crossfire; oil prices spike but oil output shut in. The outbreak of hostilities between the US/Israel and Iran on February 28 was followed by a series of Iranian retaliatory actions on US interests in the region including Kuwait and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, severely disrupting regional trade, tourism, and broader economic activity. Brent futures surged to nearly \$120/bbl in early March before easing back to \$114 by end-April. The halt in tanker traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has forced oil production shut-ins as storage tanks filled up. According to OPEC secondary sources, Kuwait’s crude output fell 53% m/m in March to just 1.2 mb/d. OPEC-8 announced that it would restart production quota hikes by 207 kb/d per month from April after pausing increases in Q1, with a similar increment agreed for May. However, physical supply is likely to lag materially, particularly in Kuwait, where production is expected to fall well short of its 2.6 mb/d quota in both April and May due to prolonged operational shut-ins.

- Non-oil private sector activity declined sharply in March, with the PMI falling to 46.3, the first contraction since August 2024, weighed by the conflict. Weaker demand conditions amid a suspension of flights and shipping saw both output and new orders subindices drop to multi-year lows. (Report here.) Firms’ input prices recorded the first decline since April 2020 on a decrease in purchase prices and staffing costs. Nevertheless, prices charged rose, albeit at a slower pace, likely reflecting dwindling supplies of available goods amid supply chain disruptions. Meanwhile, business sentiment 12-months ahead fell to a 31-month low. The figures if sustained would clearly point to sharply weaker official non-oil GDP growth in H1 26; the most recent official preliminary figures for Q3 25 show non-oil growth at a robust 6.5% y/y, when the PMI averaged 53. (Report here.)

- CPI inflation rose to 2.1% y/y in March (February 1.9%), breaking a four-month easing streak amid trade disruptions stemming from the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. (Report here.) The increase was moderate, however, revealing a limited pass-through effect from the regional conflict, helped by a government ban on food exports and the enforcement of price controls. The reading may also have been influenced by seasonal effects including Ramadhan and Eid. Prices in the housing services component were steady, but prices in the food & beverages category rose 1.2% m/m, the highest since mid-2022, likely reflecting import disruptions. Excluding food and housing, core inflation ticked up to 1.7% y/y from 1.6%, with the increase largely tied to higher precious metals prices.

- Real estate activity in Q1 2026 remained relatively resilient despite a sharp late-quarter slowdown driven by the US-Iran conflict. (Report here.) Property sales fell in Q1 by 31% q/q to KD899 million with the decline broad-based and across all segments. The pullback was driven by an abrupt fall in March, weighed down by the US-Iran conflict and the seasonal slowdown associated with Ramadan and the Eid holiday. Residential and commercial sales logged quarterly declines of 33% and 21%, respectively, though registering solid positive growth on a yearly basis while investment sales declined 33% q/q and 16% y/y reflecting a pullback in investor sentiment.

- Strong project awards momentum continued in Q1 2026, surging 300% y/y, according to MEED Project figures. Total project awards reached KD1.8 billion, notching the second highest reading since 2016. The bulk of activity was concentrated in January and February, with 2025’s strong momentum carrying over. March saw activity slow sharply, with awards at just KD100 million amid regional turmoil. On a sectoral basis, power and water sector awards accounted for roughly 70% of total awards, boosted by the North Kabd water treatment plant (KD991 million) contract. Meanwhile, positive performance in the oil and gas sector persisted, thanks to the awarding of crude oil pipeline contracts by KOC. Activity across the other sectors, however, remained largely muted.

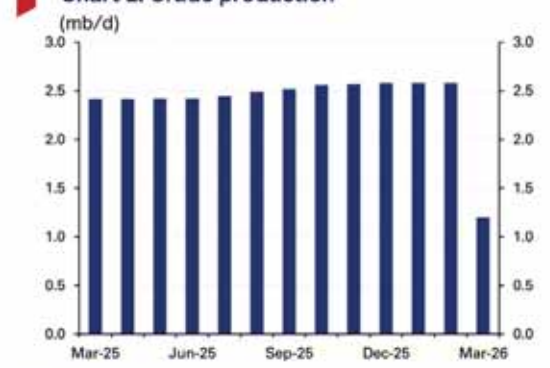
- Public finances have also faced severe disruption

Table 1: Key macroeconomic indicators

		2023	2024	2025f	2026f
Nominal GDP	\$ billion	165	161	157	174
Real GDP	% y/y	-1.6	-1.5	2.7	-3.7
- Oil sector	% y/y	-4.2	-6.7	2.5	-8.9
- Non-oil sector	% y/y	1.1	3.7	2.9	1.0
Fiscal balance*	% of GDP	-3.1	-2.1	-6.5	-10.3
Current account	% of GDP	31.1	29.0	26.5	24.5
Inflation (avg.)	% y/y	3.6	2.9	2.4	2.5
Oil price (KEC, avg.)	\$/bbl	84	81	71	90
Oil production (avg.)	mb/d	2.59	2.41	2.47	2.25

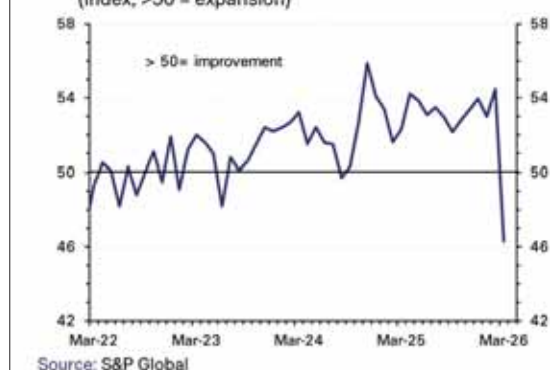
Source: Official sources, NBK estimates; *fiscal year

Chart 1: Crude production*



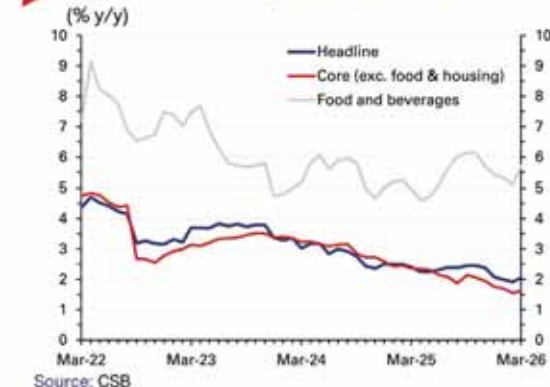
Source: OPEC. *Direct communication production figures

Chart 2: Purchasing manager's index



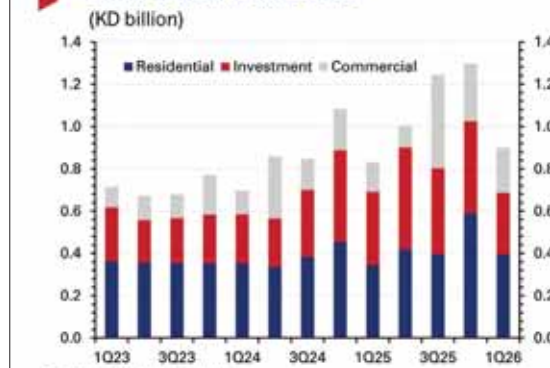
Source: S&P Global

Chart 3: Consumer price inflation



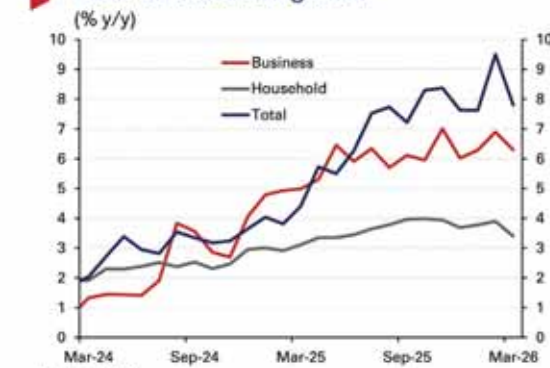
Source: CSB

Chart 4: Real estate sales



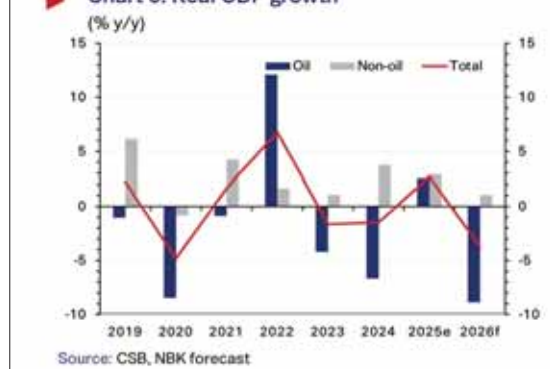
Source: Ministry of Justice

Chart 5: Bank credit growth



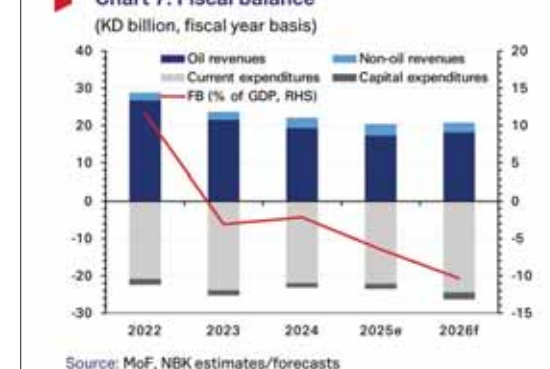
Source: CBK

Chart 6: Real GDP growth



Source: CSB, NBK forecast

Chart 7: Fiscal balance



Source: MoF, NBK estimates/forecasts

from the regional conflict, especially given the halt to oil exports. The scale of the disruption means that projections in the government’s draft budget for FY26/27 released in early February are more outdated. The budget had projected a huge deficit of KD9.8 billion deficit (19% of GDP) with revenues based upon an assumed oil price of \$57/bbl and average oil production of 2.6 mb/d – both of which seem unlikely to be met. Spending was projected up 6% b/b to KD26.1 billion, incorporating a large non-recurring transfer to the social security fund and a sharp 37% jump in capex. At the current juncture, we still think the deficit will come in narrower than the official budget projection (but less so than previously, see forecast below). Nevertheless, the government has tapped debt markets in recent weeks, which will help address any near-term liquidity shortfall. It issued a total of KD500 million in across maturities of 2, 3 and 5 years, in addition to a \$2 billion private issue. This brings the total debt issued so far in 2026 to KD1.4 billion, on top of KD5.65 billion in 2025. The public debt-to-GDP ratio remains very low at 17%.

- The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) unveiled a targeted stimulus package aimed at reinforcing banking sector resilience during the US-Iran conflict. The measures include a temporary easing of key ratios, with the minimum Liquidity Coverage Ratio and the Net Stable Funding Ratio both reduced from 100% to 80%, and the minimum Regulatory Liquidity Ratio lowered from 18% to 15%, enhancing banks’ short-term liquidity flexibility. The CBK also raised the Maximum Lending Limit to 100%, expanding banks’ capacity to extend credit to households and businesses. In parallel, the CBK authorized the release of 1% of the Capital Conservation Buffer, lowering the total regulatory capital requirement from 13% to 12%, to support banks’ balance sheets and

sustain lending activity.

- Domestic credit growth reversed course in March, contracting by 0.6% m/m after February’s robust expansion and easing y/y growth to a still solid 7.8% (Chart 5. Report here.) The fall was driven by a sharp pullback in credit to financial institutions (13% m/m) while business lending growth slowed to +0.6% m/m, slowing y/y growth to 6.3%. Credit to trade contracted by -5.5% m/m, while lending to construction, public services, and oil & gas sectors eased. Household credit fell by 0.4% m/m, its first monthly contraction since March 2024 and at 3.4% y/y it continues to lag business credit. On the liabilities side, residents’ deposits rose by 1.6% m/m (7.4% y/y), supported by a jump in public and government deposits while private sector deposits fell by 1.0% m/m, the steepest drop since December 2020, leaving private sector deposits growth at 1.8% on y/y basis.

Forecast

Conflict expected to hit growth in 2026
Ongoing geopolitical turmoil has put the brakes on the positive growth momentum seen in 2025, in which we estimate GDP to have risen by 2.7%. The extent of the impact clearly would depend on the intensity and duration of the conflict, as well as how it ends. In our baseline scenario where the conflict is resolved in Q2 and the Strait of Hormuz is soon reopened, resulting in a gradual normalization of shipping over subsequent weeks, GDP contracts by 3.7% in 2026 from a pre-conflict forecast of 4.5%. However, a recession in the non-oil economy is avoided, with downside risks curbed by the government’s large role in the economy as a stabilizing force, and by the limited exposure to tourism and foreign capital relative to GCC peers. Oil output is projected to fall 9% in 2026 due to the Strait of Hormuz closure which has resulted in a halt of oil exports, pushing down crude oil

production to an average of just 2.25 mb/d in 2026, from a preconflict expected output of 2.58 mb/d and incorporating a prompt recovery in oil production post-crisis. Meanwhile, lingering geopolitical risk, global stock re-balancing and damage to some major oil and gas facilities in the GCC are likely to keep oil prices elevated over the foreseeable future, even once the conflict concludes: we have therefore raised our forecast to \$90/bbl on average in 2026 from \$65 previously. We would expect prices to remain above pre-conflict levels through next year as well. The conflict has also interrupted the momentum that had been building in the non-oil economy, whose growth is now forecast to slow to 1% in 2026 from a pre-conflict forecast of 3.3%. Trade and travel has been severely disrupted, business supply chains have been squeezed, project activity will inevitably slow, and uncertainty is likely to hit spending at least in the short run. Shock mitigation however comes from a) price controls and subsidies, which reduce the pass-through effects to the private sector from higher international food and energy prices; b) stable employment levels in the public sector; and c) the potential provision of support and liquidity to the economy from the government’s vast financial reserves and stimulus measures by the central bank (see above). Based upon a near-term end to the conflict, we anticipate a strong rebound in economic growth in 2027 of 10% or more, led by the oil sector. As well as domestic oil production returning to pre-conflict levels promptly, we assume that OPEC may even proceed with further official output hikes, helping to recoup oil revenues lost during the conflict. In addition, the normalization of trade and travel patterns will see business and consumer sentiment improve while project activity fully resumes as the government presses on with development plan spending.

Fiscal deficit to widen sharply in FY26/27

Despite the near-term halt to oil exports, our forecast actually assumes that government oil revenues end up higher in FY26/27 than the previous year (although well down on previous years’ levels) as production recovers quickly and oil prices remain elevated. But higher spending on subsidies and post-conflict reconstruction, coupled with a decline in non-oil revenues, could push the deficit to just over 10% of GDP in FY26/27 (from 6.5% in FY25/26). We also take our cue from a 6% rise in spending in the official FY26/27 budget, which incorporated an extra KD0.7bn in non-recurring allocations to support the pensions fund. In the context, it is inevitable that the long-standing objective of fiscal reform takes a back seat to the immediate needs of responding to the conflict. The official budget had shown non-oil revenues rising 20% to a record level of KD3.5bn this year, or almost 22% of all revenues, incorporating measures to reprice service fees and the doubling of expat health insurance fees, a new vacant lands tax and corporate income tax on multinational firms. While some of these measures have been delivered, slower non-oil growth and collection lags are likely to defer the full gains until later on. Similarly on the expenditure side, underlying progress on consolidation may be obscured by the cost of the conflict. Excluding exceptional items, we note much slower current spending growth in the budget than in previous years, thanks in part to a lower planned public sector employee intake of less than 15k (versus 20k+ in the past), representing ongoing wage bill containment efforts. Although visibility is limited, we expect the deficit to narrow to under 3% of GDP next year as oil output recovers, oil prices remain elevated, and war-related spending abates. The IMF recommended in the latest article IV review that Kuwait should undertake about 10% of GDP in fiscal consolidation over the next decade, with measures to rationalize untargeted subsidies (around KD1bn) including fuel subsidies (KD300mn), and government restructuring to boost efficiency. Despite a wider near-term deficit, we do not foresee any meaningful financing issues. The government issued a larger than expected KD6 billion (12% of GDP) in debt through FY25/26, and a further KD1.1bn in April 2026, which has provided a major boost to liquidity on top of that already in the General Reserve. Public debt levels of 17% of GDP remain very low by international standards and both Moody’s and S&P have reaffirmed the sovereign credit rating at strong investment grade with a stable outlook since the conflict began.

Inflation seen steady despite war pressures

Inflation is forecast to average just 2.5% in 2026 (2.4% in 2025) as inevitable conflict-induced inflationary pressures are countered by government food price controls and subsidies, low housing inflation and disinflationary trends in other consumer items. US policy interest rates – often a guide to changes in Kuwaiti policy rates – are now expected to remain on hold this year or see only one cut versus three cuts at the start of 2026, given the spike in global energy prices due to the US-Iran war. The introduction of a 5% VAT could at some point add approximately 2% to the inflation rate for a year, but no firm date has yet been announced for its implementation.

Reforms still key to unlocking growth potential

The conflict has temporarily shifted the government’s near-term focus away from structural economic reforms to boost growth and diversify the economy, especially those related to the business environment, the labor market, fiscal policy, the public sector, and low investment levels – areas in which Kuwait had lagged behind some GCC peers due to political and administrative difficulties. The post conflict environment will offer the chance to approach these reforms with increased vigor, and pursue long-term goals outlined in the Vision 2035 plan while reassessing future needs given the regional backdrop.

Reaffirming its growing leadership in delivering sophisticated Private Banking and Wealth Management solutions

Burgan Bank wins Euromoney Award for 'Best for High-Net-Worth' in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Reinforcing its position as a trusted wealth management partner for Kuwait's high-net-worth clients, Burgan Bank announced that it has been awarded "Best for High-Net-Worth (HNW) in Kuwait" at Euromoney's Private Banking Awards 2026. This latest honor reflects the Bank's growing Private Banking and Wealth Management proposition, strong client service model, and continued investment in sophisticated digital capabilities for high-net-worth clients.

The recognition reflects Burgan Bank's deliberate strategy to deepen existing client relationships, strengthen wallet share, and broaden access to tailored investment opportunities across traditional and alternative asset classes. Euromoney highlighted the Bank's strong growth in HNW assets during the review period, rising client trust, and distinctive cross-border investment opportunities, including a German redevelopment programme and a European asset-backed leasing fund.

Commenting on the award, **Mr. Meshari Shehab**, General Manager – Private Banking and Wealth Management at Burgan Bank, said: "We are proud to be recognized by Euromoney, one of the world's leading authorities on banking and financial markets. This award is a testament to the trust our clients continue to place in Burgan Bank, and to the strength of a private banking model built around long-term relationships, tailored advisory, and a deep understanding of our clients' banking and investment goals."

He added: "At Burgan Bank, we continue to invest in the capabilities that matter most to our high-net-worth and ultra-high-net-worth clients, from specialized relationship management and advisory expertise to seamless digital delivery and faster access to liquidity. Our ambition is to provide clients with a holistic wealth management experience that supports their financial objectives across generations, while maintaining the prudence, discipline, and personal attention they expect from Burgan."

Euromoney's Private Banking Awards are among the most respected global recognition programmes for the private banking and wealth management industry. The awards recognize excellence across leading institutions worldwide, with Euromoney describing the programme as a benchmark for outstanding performance in private banking and wealth management. The 2026 Kuwait national results named Burgan Bank "Best for HNW," citing its sophisticated digital capabilities, strong client service, broadened HNW proposition, and integrated advisory model.

Burgan Bank's Private Banking and Wealth Management offering is designed to serve clients with increasingly sophisticated needs across wealth



Mr. Meshari Shehab, General Manager – Private Banking and Wealth Management at Burgan Bank



development, portfolio diversification, liquidity management, and succession planning. Through its collaboration with Kamco Invest, the Bank provides specialized portfolio management, fund access, and advisory services aligned with each client's long-term goals and risk appetite. Dedicated investment advisers work closely with relationship managers to deliver tailored asset allocation strategies, while the Bank's segmented coverage model ensures that ultra-high-net-worth clients are served by senior relationship managers and emerging HNW clients are supported by specialized mid-tier experts.

The Bank has also continued to enhance operational efficiency and improve turnaround time on credit transactions. In this regard, its wealth management programme, co-developed with Kamco Invest, offers an integrated experience, from portfolio reviews to trade execution, enabling clients to engage

more seamlessly with their advisors. In parallel, Burgan's fast-track lending programme has reduced approval timelines from a full month to just one to two weeks, accelerating clients' access to liquidity while maintaining the Bank's prudent approach to credit management.

It serves to note that this latest Euromoney recognition adds to a growing list of prestigious awards received by Burgan Bank for its Private Banking and Wealth Management offering over the past few years. These include winning three Global Private Banker MEA Awards, receiving the "Best Client Service" award at the MEED MENA Banking Excellence Awards 2025, and winning the "Excellence and Leadership in Wealth and Credit Management Services in Kuwait" award at WUAB's Arab Awards for 2025. The Bank has also received the J.P. Morgan Elite Quality Recognition Award for 2024 and the Visa "Best-in-Class Premium Active Cards Growth in Kuwait" 2024 award, further underscoring its continued commitment to delivering an exceptional banking experience for distinguished clients.

About Burgan Bank

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is a Kuwait-based conventional bank with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institution sectors. From its earliest days, the Bank has significantly sought to diversify its offering to cater to its growing retail and private banking customer base.

Burgan Bank has majority-owned subsidiaries, collectively known as the "Burgan Bank Group", in the MENA region. This Group is supported by one of the largest branch networks across the region and includes: Gulf Bank Algeria – AGB (Algeria), Tunis International Bank – TIB (Tunisia), Burgan Bank Turkey (Turkey) and United Gulf Bank (Bahrain). Furthermore, Burgan Bank has a presence in the UAE through its corporate office, Burgan Financial Services Limited.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years, through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Moreover, Burgan Bank's brand has been built on a foundation of real values – trust, commitment, excellence, and progression – which serve as a reminder of the high standards to which the Bank always aspires. In fact, the Bank's core philosophy of 'Driven by You' is the foundation on which its products and services are continuously developed.

Burgan Bank has achieved the LEED v4.1 O+M: EB Gold Certification for its Head Office in Kuwait City. The Bank has also obtained the ISO/IEC 27001:2022 Information Security Management Systems certificate (ISMS), ISO/IEC 27701:2019 Privacy Information Management Systems (PIMS), ISO/IEC 20000-1:2018 Information Technology Service Management System (ITSMS) and was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System (QMS), making it one of the few banks in the GCC and Kuwait to receive such certification for five consecutive times. At the same time, the Bank has the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twenty consecutive years. Moreover, in a testament to its dedication to the development of its human capital, Burgan Bank was the first bank in Kuwait to be certified as a Great Place to Work®, earning the distinct honor in 2023.

Labor Day protests erupt across continents

What to know about May Day demonstrations as workers face rising energy costs due to Iran war

PARIS, May 4, (AP): Activists worldwide held May Day rallies and street protests Friday, calling for peace, higher wages and better working conditions as many workers grapple with rising energy costs and shrinking purchasing power tied to the Iran war.

May 1 is a public holiday in many countries to mark International Workers' Day, or Labor Day, when workers' unions traditionally rally around wages, pensions, inequality and broader political issues. Demonstrations were held from Seoul, Sydney and Jakarta to many European capitals and cities across the United States.

"Working people refuse to pay the price for Donald Trump's war in the Middle East," the European Trade Union Confederation, which represents 93 trade union organizations in 41 European countries, said. "Today's rallies show working people will not stand by and see their jobs and living standards destroyed."

In the U.S., activists opposing President Donald Trump's policies are planning marches and boycotts.

Here's what to know about May Day:

Rising living costs linked to the conflict in the Middle East emerged as a key theme in Friday's rallies.

In the Philippine capital, Manila, large crowds demanded higher wages and lower taxes as protesters denounced the U.S. role in the Iran war. Protesters clashed with police blocking the way near the U.S. Embassy.

In Indonesia, President Prabowo Subianto joined a May Day rally in Jakarta, greeting tens of thousands of people. Workers called for stronger government protection from rising prices and difficulties in finding raw materials for key industries.

In Pakistan, May Day is a public holiday marked by rallies, but many daily wage earners cannot afford to take time off.

"How will I bring vegetables and other necessities home if I don't work?" said Mohammad Maskeen, a 55-year-old construction worker near Islamabad.

Rising oil prices have fueled inflation, which the government estimates at about 16%, in a country heavily reliant on financial support from the International Monetary Fund and allied nations.

On a main avenue in Casablanca, Morocco's largest city, taxi drivers honked their horns and bus drivers parked their vehicles to protest rising

fuel costs. "All my expenses have gone up, but my wages haven't budged," Akherraz Lhachimi of the Moroccan Labor Union said.

Turkish authorities in Istanbul detained hundreds of demonstrators for attempting to march in areas declared off-limits on security grounds, most notably central Taksim Square, the epicenter of 2013 protests. May Day rallies in Turkey are frequently marred by clashes with authorities.

In France, unions called for demonstrations in Paris and elsewhere under the slogan "bread, peace and freedom," linking workers' daily concerns to conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East.

In Italy, the government approved nearly 1 billion euros (\$1.17 billion) in job incentives this week, aiming to promote stable employment and curb labor abuses ahead of May Day. The measures extend tax breaks to encourage hiring young people and disadvantaged women, and seek to address exploitation tied to platform-based work. Opposition parties dismissed the package as "pure propaganda."

In Portugal, proposed labor law changes by the center-right government sparked a general strike and street protests last year. There is still no deal after nine months of negotiations with unions and employers. Unions say the proposals would weaken workers' rights, including by expanding overtime limits and reducing some benefits.

International Workers' Day was also widely observed across much of Africa.

Several rallies were staged in South Africa, where the head of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, Zingiswa Losi, said that workers were "suffocating" under the rising costs of food, electricity, transport and healthcare in "a crisis of dignity for the working classes."

May Day carries special meaning this year in France, after a heated debate about whether employees should be allowed to work on the country's most protected public holiday - the only day when most employees have a mandatory paid day off.

Almost all businesses, shops and malls are closed, and only essential sectors such as hospitals, transport and hotels are exempt.

A recent parliamentary proposal to expand work on the day prompted major outcry from unions and left-leaning politicians.

"Don't touch May Day," unions said in a joint statement.

Faced with the controversy, the government this week introduced a bill meant to expand May Day work to people staffing bakeries and florists. It is customary in France to give lily of the valley flowers on May Day as a symbol of good luck.

Tens of thousands of people joined marches across the country, including in Paris, where brief scuffles with police broke out.

"May 1 is not just any day," Small and Medium-sized Businesses Minister Serge Papin said. "It symbolizes social gains stemming from a century of building social rules that have led to the labor code we know in France. It is indeed a special day."

Activists and labor unions are organizing street protests and boycotts across the United States, where May Day is not a federal holiday.

May Day Strong, a coalition of activist groups and labor unions, has called on people to protest under the banner of "workers over billionaires."

Voicing strong opposition to Trump's policies, organizers listed thousands of May Day actions across the country and are seeking an economic blackout through "no school, no work, no shopping."

Demands include taxing the rich and putting an end to the Trump administration's immigration crackdown.

While labor and immigrant rights are historically intertwined, the focus of May Day rallies in the U.S. shifted to immigration in 2006. That's when roughly 1 million people, including nearly half a million in Chicago alone, took to the streets to protest federal legislation that would've made living in the U.S. without legal permission a felony.

May Day, or International Workers' Day, traces back more than a century to a pivotal period in U.S. labor history.

In the 1880s, unions pushed for an eight-hour workday through strikes and demonstrations. In May 1886, a Chicago rally turned deadly when a bomb exploded and police responded with gunfire. Several labor activists - most of them immigrants - were convicted of conspiracy and other charges; four were executed.

Unions later designated May 1 to honor workers. A monument in Chicago's Haymarket Square commemorates them with the inscription: "Dedicated to all workers of the world."

Wall Street futures fall

Markets waver as Gulf tensions lift oil prices

LONDON, May 4, (AP): Wall Street dipped and oil prices jumped early Monday on conflicting reports of a strike by Iran on a U.S. Navy vessel outside of the Strait of Hormuz.

Futures for the S&P 500 were down 0.2% before the opening bell, while futures for the Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 0.5%. Nasdaq futures dipped 0.1%.

Oil prices initially jumped 5% on the news that a U.S. ship had been hit, but is now trading between 2% and 3% higher after the U.S. military denied the attack.

The U.S. remains active near the Persian Gulf and President Donald Trump said the US would guide ships through the Strait of Hormuz, but offered few details.

Iranian news agencies - including the semiofficial agency Fars and the Iranian Labour News Agency - claimed that Iran had struck a U.S. Navy vessel southeast of the strait of Hormuz, accusing it of "violating maritime security and navigation norms."

The price of a barrel of U.S. benchmark crude was up \$2.18 at \$104.12 a barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, jumped \$3.06 to \$111.23 a barrel.

In corporate news, shares of eBay soared as Ryan Cohen's GameStop pursues an approximately \$56 billion takeover of company, seeing it as a vehicle to compete with online retail giant Amazon.

The national gaming retailer said that its approximately 1,600 U.S. stores could become drop-off and shipping locations.

GameStop shares were down 2.6% in premarket trading while eBay shares climbed close to 8%. GameStop said that it started accumulating shares in eBay beginning in February and currently has a 5% stake.

Attention in recent weeks has been split between the impacts of the

Middle East conflict and corporate earnings.

Much hinges, analysts say, on progress toward ending the war with Iran and unlocking the shipping bottleneck in the Strait of Hormuz.

The oil market "remains the fulcrum, with hundreds of tankers, bulk carriers, and cargo ships still stranded across the Gulf, idling as storage constraints force producers to shut ... production simply because there is nowhere left to store it," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary.

Thousands of seafarers, many on oil tankers or cargo ships, have been stuck in the Persian Gulf since the war began. Those aboard described to The Associated Press intercepted drones and missiles exploding over the body of water as their vessels run low on drinking water, food and other supplies.

Trump said his "Project Freedom," an effort to "guide" ships out of the strait, would begin Monday morning in the Middle East. The U.S. Central Command said it would involve guided-missile destroyers, more than 100 aircraft and 15,000 service members, but the Pentagon did not immediately answer questions about how they would be deployed.

Offsetting some of the stalemate in Iran are strong corporate earnings. U.S. companies have exceeded expectations for the first three months of the year despite rising inflation, soaring gas prices, and a sense of growing unease among Americans about the war and the U.S. economy.

Reporting earnings this week are Palantir, The Walt Disney Co., DoorDash, Uber and McDonald's.

A trove of labor market data is also scheduled for release this week, including job openings for March, the latest weekly layoffs report. The more comprehensive April jobs report lands on Friday.

AI integration transforms steel production at Guangxi plant

NANNING, May 4, (Xinhua): What transformation can emerge when traditional heavy industry meets artificial intelligence (AI)? In south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, an established steel plant has fully embedded the Xuantie AI model into its entire production process, leading to revolutionary changes.

Departing from the typical image of old steel plants shrouded in dust and noise, Guangxi Iron and Steel, a subsidiary of Liuzhou Steel Group, is clean, tidy and well-organized.

Operating smart equipment precisely and streaming data in real time have become the norm, and AI has been taking part in production control and scheduling, including scenarios such as intelligent ore blending and raw material optimization, smart transportation of molten iron, and predictive equipment maintenance.

At the ironmaking station, molten iron is precisely transported by autonomous trains to designated locations without any human intervention throughout the process.

The plant currently operates three blast furnaces, 10 locomotives and 51 molten iron tank carriages, with each locomotive transporting approximately 3,600 tonnes of molten iron per day, according to Mo Keyi, a train operator.

Since this intelligent molten iron transport system on the two-kilometer-long route was put into operation, the temperature drop of the molten iron has been reduced by 35 degrees Celsius, saving approximately 60,000 tonnes of standard coal and cutting carbon dioxide emissions by 262,000 tonnes annually.

On a thick steel plate production line, red-hot steel plates are repeatedly rolled and cooled to gradually become thinner. Even dozens of meters away, the intense heat can still be felt.

In the past, plate nesting relied heavily on manual input from engineers,

said Chen Peizhi, head of modeling technique at the plant, noting that finding the optimal solution among a vast number of combinations was difficult and time-consuming, leading to low raw material utilization.

"Now, the intelligent plate nesting algorithm powered by the Xuantie model transforms the manual experience into a model that can compute the plate nesting solutions for over 1,000 orders within minutes," Chen said.

On the smart cold rolling production line, robotic arms featuring 5G and AI, intelligent heavy-load transport robots and unmanned vehicles work together, enabling fully automatic, high-precision and remote control of heavy materials.

There is another important step in the steelmaking process known as "flame monitoring by AI," said Qin Jun, a manager at the manufacturing management department of Guangxi Iron and Steel.

High-definition cameras capture the color, shape and brightness of the flames inside the furnace. After rapid processing by AI algorithms, the system can accurately determine the conditions within the furnace, providing real-time guidance for the steelmaking, said Qin.

The Xuantie model, launched on March 31 and jointly developed by Liuzhou Steel Group, Huawei, China Mobile Guangxi and other partners, is the first industry-specific large model for the steel sector in Guangxi. It has been applied in key areas of steel manufacturing, including raw material purchase, ironmaking and steelmaking, steel rolling, quality management, equipment maintenance and supply chain coordination.

By applying AI technology, Liuzhou Steel Group has achieved an 8.5 percent increase in production efficiency and reduced the cost of producing crude steel by 5 yuan per tonne, said Shen Min, deputy general manager of the group.

Meanwhile, the steelmaker is optimizing its product mix through burgeon-

ing intelligence initiatives. The share of steel products for manufacturing purposes has jumped from 30 percent at the beginning of the 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025) to over 70 percent at present.

The intelligent transformation aligns with the country's government work report this year, which for the first time stressed the need to create "new forms of smart economy" and to continue deepening and expanding the "AI plus" initiative.

It also calls for the faster adoption of new-generation intelligent terminals and AI agents, large-scale commercial applications of AI in key sectors and fields, and the cultivation of new forms and models of AI-native business.

"We plan to achieve over 80 percent intelligent coverage across the whole production process within three years," said Li Bin, chairman of the group.

The application of AI technology has not come at the expense of labor interests at Liuzhou Steel Group, which has approximately 27,000 employees. In response to the intelligent transformation, it has taken systematic measures to help workers adapt to new technologies and new roles.

The steelmaker has launched low-code training programs and AI application competitions, ensuring that AI is no longer the exclusive domain of a few tech-savvy employees but has become a productivity tool for the entire workforce, said Lu Zhaogang, general manager of the digital and intelligent development center of Liuzhou Steel Group.

Its employees have spontaneously created over 2,000 AI assistants and more than 16,000 customized applications, covering a wide range of scenarios such as efficiency improvement, cost control, inspections and predictive maintenance.

All these efforts have facilitated the workers' gradual shift from traditional manual operators to designers and maintainers of the technological system, said Lu.



Designs in the 'Abstract Body' section are displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute exhibition, 'Costume Art,' on Saturday, May 2, 2026, in New York. (AP)

Couture celebrates what it once concealed

One of the first sights we see in "Costume Art," the new fashion exhibit to be launched at Monday's Met Gala, is a glittering column gown by Dolce & Gabbana, its shimmering gold sequins surrounding an image of Aphrodite.

The Greek goddess stands on a pedestal, holding a golden apple bestowed on her for her beauty - a classic ideal of beauty as old as, well, ancient Greece.

But the idea of "Costume Art," which examines the dressed body through centuries of art history, is not to celebrate the classical form. It is rather, says Andrew Bolton, long-time curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute, to use that form as a launch pad.

"Now, we go through and reclaim the body," he says, leading a reporter through the gleaming new Conde M. Nast galleries that the show will inaugurate.

The corpulent body. The disabled body. The pregnant body. The aging body. The new show, which gala guests will view before it opens to the public May 10, is the most consciously body-positive show the museum has attempted. Perhaps its most prominent feature is a group of new mannequins, based on real people with a wide variety of body types.

There is even, in the "aging body" section, an enormous gray hoodie, emblazoned with the phrase: "I'M RETIRED. (This is as dressed up as I get.)" Just in case you're tired of the whole glittery glamour thing.

Bolton took The Associated Press through the exhibit late last week as a huge team of installers was busy hammering,

nailing, posing and otherwise adjusting the 400 items on display. Here are some of the highlights.

Last year, the Met Gala, a fundraiser for the Costume Institute, brought in a record \$31 million. That gargantuan sum alone - it grows every year - can explain why the museum has granted its only self-funding department some prominent new digs, fashioned from former retail space on the museum's main floor, right off the Great Hall. "We're in the epicenter of the museum," notes Bolton, with evident pride. It will house all future fashion exhibits, making them easier to reach for guests and enabling shows to last longer; "Costume Art" will be up for 8 months.

The show travels through centuries of art history by pairing art objects with fashion garments, making the argument that not only is fashion art - that's indeed the gala dress code - but more profoundly, art is fashion. Its first main gallery bears the title "Bodily Being in its Diversity," and begins with flowing Grecian-style gowns, paired with images on Greek vases or flasks. But the display soon veers from classic forms into those that fashion has traditionally ignored.

Bolton argues that the pregnant body has either been ignored or stereotyped in art. Here, he presents designers - often female, working in the late 20th century or later - who have explored and accentuated the expectant form. The so-called "pregnancy dress" from British designer Georgina Godley, which appeared in her 1986 "Bump and Lump" collection, is a straightforward celebration of the extended pregnant belly. It is paired with a rare (for the time) 1920 sculpture by French artist Edgar Degas, "Pregnant Woman" - a nude figure holding her belly and seeming to

reflect on what's to come.

Garments on display here include the corsetry of designer Michaela Stark, who posed herself for three of the new mannequins. One of them displays the corsetry ensemble "Fat Not Fertile" - fighting the trope that a larger body represents reproduction and fertility. Stark uses corsets to bind the flesh and accentuate, not hide it - to "bring back power to the female form." The ensemble is paired with an ancient marble statuette resembling the same body type.

A striking subset of the Reclaimed Body section explores the disabled body, itself divided into different types of disability: physical, sensory and cognitive.

In one ensemble, a mannequin based on Paralympian athlete, model and actor Aimee Mullins wears a pair of Victorian-esque Alexander McQueen boots, which are really prosthetic limbs. The outfit is paired with a 1965 sculpture, "The Amputee," by John Gutmann.

Irish disability activist Sinéad Burke, who was born with dwarfism, also posed for two mannequins. One wears a Burberry trench coat, cut down for length - and including part of a discarded sleeve, refashioned into a headpiece. The other is a Vivienne Westwood M a l -

colm McLaren "Mickey and Minnie" dress, paired with an ancient Egyptian statue of a dancing dwarf.

Model and activist Aariana Rose Philip, who uses a wheelchair, also posed for a mannequin, placed in its own chair - wearing a pair of denim shorts and a shirt bearing the slogan: "Queer Capital." The display is accompanied by a work from artist

Lucy Jones, who, like Philip, lives with cerebral palsy.

Exploring a less visible disability is a coat by Scottish designer Nadia Pinkney, who paid homage in her "Remember Me Knot" collection to both her grandmother and great-grandmother, who had Alzheimer's. The coat's pattern - derived, according to curators, from brain scans - is

meant to reflect the "physiological tangles" the disease inflicts on the brain's structure.

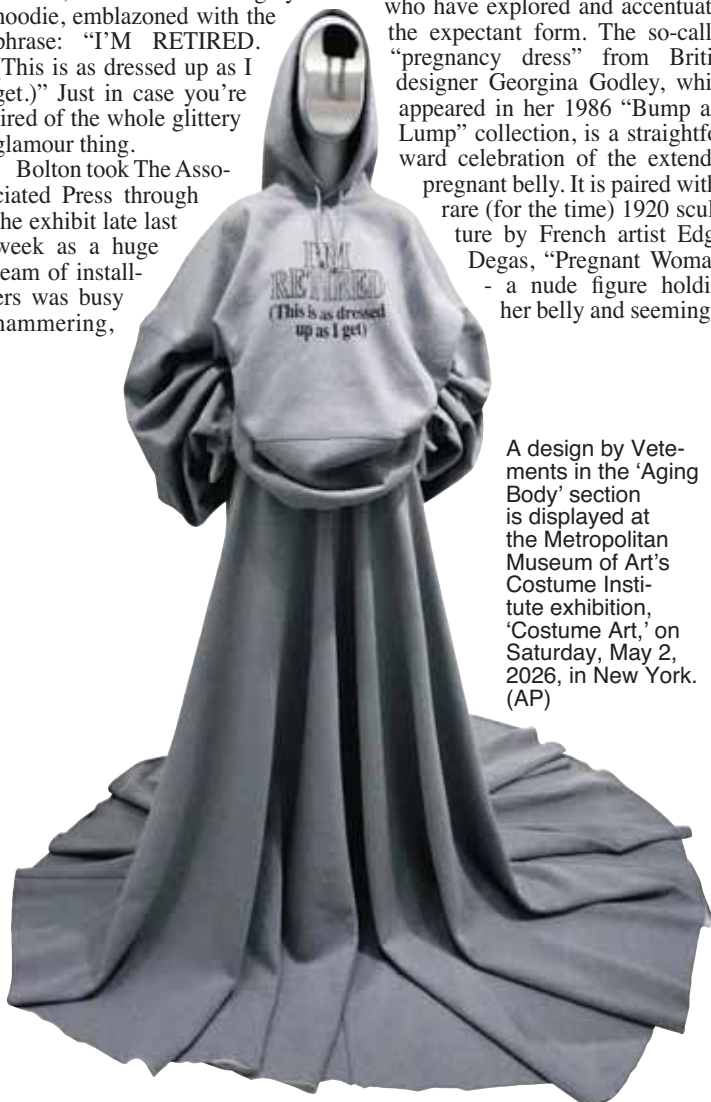
It's paired with a lithograph by Willem de Kooning, whose own experience with Alzheimer's affected his late-career work.

"Costume Art" opens to the public May 10 and runs through Jan. 10, 2027. (AP)



Designs by Yves Saint Laurent, left, and Loewe are displayed next to a painting by Vincent van Gogh at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute exhibition, 'Costume Art,' on Saturday, May 2, 2026, in New York. (AP)

Haute and human



A design by Vetements in the 'Aging Body' section is displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute exhibition, 'Costume Art,' on Saturday, May 2, 2026, in New York. (AP)



A walking dress is displayed next to a painting by Georges Seurat at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute exhibition, 'Costume Art,' on Saturday, May 2, 2026, in New York. (AP)



Designs by Rudi Gernreich are displayed next to a painting by Sonia Delaunay at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute exhibition, 'Costume Art,' on Saturday, May 2, 2026, in New York. (AP)

Film

Summer movie season kicks off without Marvel

‘The Devil Wears Prada’ struts to first place with \$77 million debut

LOS ANGELES, May 4, (AP): Twenty years after the original, the sequel to “The Devil Wears Prada” made a splash in its first weekend in theaters. Driven largely by women, “The Devil Wears Prada 2” earned \$77 million in the U.S. and Canada, and \$156.6 million internationally, according to studio estimates Sunday. It easily topped the box office and bumped “Michael” to second place, though the musical biopic held well in its second weekend, falling only 44%.

The Walt Disney Co.’s 20th Century Studios opened “The Devil Wears Prada 2” in 4,150 locations in North America. Women made up about 76% of the ticket buyers, according to PostTrak exit polls; 74% said they would “definitely recommend” the movie to friends. Critics were a bit mixed on the sequel, which finds Anne Hathaway’s Andy Sachs working once more for Meryl Streep’s Miranda Priestly at the fictional “Runway” magazine in a much-depleted media landscape.

The movie cost a reported \$100 million to produce - a significant boost from the first movie’s \$35 million production budget. But as filmmaker David Frankel told The Associated Press recently, “As it turns out, you know, by the time you finish paying all the biggest movie stars in the world, you still end up with basically the same budget for making the movie as we did the first one.”

Stars Streep, Hathaway, Emily Blunt and Stanley Tucci have been on a fashion-forward global publicity blitz for weeks, with glamorous stops in Tokyo, London and New York. Even Anna Wintour, the inspiration for the Prada-clad devil, has been involved this time, appearing with Hathaway on the Oscars stage and with Streep on the cover of “Vogue.”

The first movie opened in June 2006 and would go on to earn over \$326 million world-



Anne Hathaway, from left, Emily Blunt, Stanley Tucci and Meryl Streep pose for photographers upon their arrival at the ‘A Night With Runway: The Devil Wears Prada 2’ photo call in London, April 22, 2026. (AP)

wide, not adjusted for inflation. And perhaps more importantly, it firmly became part of the culture thanks in part to its ever-quotable lines (“gird your loins,” “groundbreaking,” “that’s all”). Legacy sequels are never a sure thing, but this time anticipation was high: According to Nielsen, streaming viewership for “The Devil Wears Prada” was up 428% from March 2026 to April 2026.

Second place went to Lionsgate’s Michael Jackson biopic “Michael,” which made \$54 million in its second weekend in North America, where it’s playing on 3,955 screens. Its running worldwide total is already \$423.9 million. Universal Pictures is handling the international release.

“This is on the great end of what we had speculated might happen, but we were very confident that we were going to have a great hold

even with the assumption that ‘Prada’ would do a lot of business,” said Lionsgate Motion Picture Group chairman Adam Fogelson. “The conventional wisdom that a new giant movie can knock out a movie that has planted itself is constantly proven inaccurate.”

This weekend marks the start of Hollywood’s summer movie season, a crucial 18-week corridor that runs through Labor Day and often accounts for around 40% of the

annual box office. There are often Marvel blockbusters programmed as the season’s kickoff, but the combined power of “The Devil Wears Prada 2” and “Michael” wasn’t a shabby substitute.

“This is a really solid weekend,” said Paul Dergarabedian, the head of marketplace trends for Comscore. “It’s this irresistible combination that more than makes up for the fact that there’s not a Marvel movie to kick off the summer

movie season.”

“Prada” alone actually did better business than last year’s summer kickoff Marvel movie, “Thunderbolts.” There were several other new films in theaters this weekend as well, including the Adam Scott-led horror movie “Hokum,” Andy Serkis’s animated adaptation of “Animal Farm” and the Aaron Eckhart- and Ben Kingsley-led survival movie “Deep Water.”

They all opened behind “The Super Mario Galaxy Movie,” which made \$12.1 million in its fifth weekend, and “Project Hail Mary,” which made \$8.6 million in its seventh weekend. Neon’s “Hokum” led the newcomers with \$6.4 million, rounding out the top five, followed by the very poorly reviewed “Animal Farm” with \$3.4 million. “Deep Water” opened to \$2.2 million.

In the top four movies, Dergarabedian has noticed a trend: “Over the past couple of months, moviegoers have really embraced pure, escapist entertainment,” he said.

The annual box office is currently running about 14% up from last year, with about \$2.8 billion in domestic ticket sales to date.

With final domestic figures being released Monday, this list factors in the estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore:

1. “The Devil Wears Prada 2,” \$77 million.
2. “Michael,” \$54 million.
3. “The Super Mario Galaxy Movie,” \$12.1 million.
4. “Project Hail Mary,” \$8.6 million.
5. “Hokum,” \$6.4 million.
6. “Animal Farm,” \$3.4 million.
7. “Lee Cronin’s The Mummy,” \$2.2 million.
8. “Deep Water,” \$2.2 million.
9. “That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime the Movie: Tears of the Azure Sea,” \$1 million.
10. “The Drama,” \$908,303.

Technology

Demand surges for new skills

AI drives new careers in China

SHANGHAI, May 4, (Xinhua): In a film and TV studio in Shanghai’s Lingang New Area, Lu Guozong sits alone before a computer screen, with no heavy cameras, lighting crews, or bustling set assistants in sight.

Yet, with a few keystrokes on an AI workflow platform, he turns a spark of imagination into a high-definition cinematic video with fluid camera movements. “AI is a productivity tool, but more importantly, it is a partner working alongside me,” Lu said.

Lu is part of a growing wave of “AI content creators,” one of the many new professions emerging as artificial intelligence reshapes China’s labor market. From humanoid robot “teachers” to “translators” bridging human language and machine code, these roles are redefining what it means to work in the world’s second-largest economy.

“Translators’ of intelligence

In 2020, China officially recognized “artificial intelligence trainer” as a new profession in its occupational classification code. These specialists act as “translators,” using data labeling, algorithm optimization, and system maintenance to help AI better understand human intent.

In Shanghai, the role has been classified as a “critically undersupplied high-skill profession.” Data shows that in 2025 alone, Shanghai saw 16,300 participants in AI trainer evaluations, with nearly 11,000 receiving vocational certificates.

Hu Shengxiang, a researcher at a Shanghai-based tech company, described himself as a “guardian of the last mile” for AI product implementation. His team has shifted focus from being “model-centric” to “data-centric.”

“Pure algorithm tuning has hit a ceiling,” Hu said. “High-quality data and refined feedback mechanisms are the keys to victory. My goal is to standardize human-machine collaboration to improve our research input.”

Li Na, general manager of the

Shanghai company, added that the demand for such roles in Shanghai is growing at over 30 percent annually. Supported by government subsidies, the “industry-training integration” model is strengthening ties between enterprises, research institutes and universities.

Collaboration bridging data, creativity

At the data collection center in AgiBot, an intelligent robot manufacturer in Shanghai, rows of humanoid robots perform tasks under the watchful eyes of young workers wearing VR goggles and holding remote joysticks.

These are “humanoid robot data collectors,” the “teachers” who manually guide robots through thousands of repetitions of pouring water or grasping objects under varying lights and weights.

“I took the job because the humanoid robot market is booming,” said Liu Genlin, a 22-year-old collector. “I wanted to see exactly how these machines learn and where they are headed.”

Peng Zhihui, co-founder and CTO of AgiBot, noted that the center has collected over a million high-quality data points covering home, catering, industrial and office scenarios.

“Technological progress is not about replacing humans, but about opening up more creative spaces,” said an intern at AgiBot.

For filmmakers like Chen Xiaoyu, AI is a tool for “returning to the essence of creation.” By delegating repetitive, mechanical tasks to AI, Chen can focus on narrative, aesthetics and emotion.

“AI can generate a frame quickly, but whether that frame expresses something meaningful depends on daily observation, thinking and reading,” Chen said. “AI is the executor, not the creator. It allows directors to regain creative autonomy, no longer constrained by limited budgets or on-site conditions.”



A trainer supervises the training of a humanoid robot in a catering delivery scenario at the Qingdao Humanoid Robot Data and Training Center in Qingdao, east China’s Shandong Province, March 23, 2026. (Xinhua)

Lifestyle

Late-night cafés draw diverse crowds

Yemeni coffee culture brews boom across US

SUNNYVALE, California, (AP): Hundreds of years ago, Yemen helped introduce the world to coffee. Lately, the mountainous, war-ravaged country that borders Saudi Arabia and Oman is exporting something else: its coffee culture.

Yemeni coffeehouses are opening at a rapid pace across the U.S. The number of cafes run by six major chains that serve Yemeni-style drinks grew 50% last year to 136, according to Technomic, a restaurant industry consulting company. The count doesn’t include the many smaller chains and independent cafes serving coffees and teas imported from Yemen.

Yemeni coffeehouses are meeting the moment for several reasons. They stay open late - sometimes past 3 a.m., especially during Ramadan - and provide a place to socialize for the growing number of Americans who don’t drink alcohol. Last year, a Gallup poll found that just 54% U.S. adults reported drinking alcohol, the lowest percentage in 90 years.

“Generally in the Middle East, our nightlife is coffee, right? People hang out at coffee shops, they play cards, they talk. We wanted to bring that here,” said Ahmad Badr, who owns an Arwa Yemeni Coffee franchise in Sunnyvale, California.

Another reason for the cafes’ popularity is the growing number of Americans of Arab descent. Between 2010 and 2024, the Arab American population in the U.S. rose by 43%, compared to around 10% growth for the U.S. population as a whole, according to the Arab American Institute.

While most Yemeni coffee shops are in places with high concentrations of Arab Americans, including Michigan, California and Texas, they’re also opening in locations as diverse as Alpharetta, Georgia; Overland Park, Kansas; and Portland, Maine.

Paris Almatrahi is the co-founder and owner of Texas-based Arwa Yemeni Coffee, a chain with 11 cafes across the U.S. and 30 more in development. He said an ongoing civil war in Yemen that began in 2014 has prevented Yemeni Americans like himself from visiting their homeland, so he has tried to evoke Yemen in his cafes.

Arwa locations are painted in natural desert tones, with archways that mimic mosques and lampshades shaped like the hats worn by Yemen’s coffee farmers.

“One of the ways to actually visit without traveling there was to bring that experience to the U.S., and that was a huge passion for



Franchisee Ahmad Badr serves a drink and treat sampler at Arwa Yemeni Coffee on April 6, 2026, in Sunnyvale, California.



Franchisee Samir Irani pours Adeni tea inside Arwa Yemeni Coffee on April 6, 2026, in Sunnyvale, California. (AP photos)

us when we opened our first location,” Almatrahi said. “It was extremely emotional for all of us due to the fact that it really transported us to Yemen.”

But Almatrahi noted that most of his customers aren’t of Arab descent. In fact, Americans of all backgrounds are seeking out new global flavors and authentic experiences, according to market research company Datassential. Food trends are also spreading quickly through social media.

Menus vary, but Yemeni cafes generally serve specialties like Adeni tea, a spiced tea similar to chai, and qishr, a traditional drink made

from the dried husks of coffee cherries. Familiar drinks like lattes might contain special spices or honey; at Arwa, lattes feature the outline of a camel stenciled in spices.

Bakery cases might contain khaliat nahal, or Yemeni honeycomb bread, a cheese-filled pastry drizzled with honey, or basboosa, a cake soaked in sugar syrup and often flavored with lemon or rose water. Many Yemeni menus also mix in more typical U.S. coffee-shop fare, like matcha lattes or berry refreshers.

Peter Giuliano, a researcher with the Specialty Coffee Association, a California-based nonprofit, said

culturally specific cafes have been a key growth driver in the U.S. coffee industry for the last few years. In addition to Yemeni cafes, he cited the Latin-style chain Tierra Mia in California and Nguyen Coffee Supply, a New York-based company that roasts Vietnamese beans.

A customer who visited Badr’s shop in Sunnyvale for the first time said an internet search brought her there on a recent weekday. Cindy Donovan said she’s always on the hunt for good coffee and was excited by Yemeni coffees she tried.

“I think they’re much more refined and mellow, and much more full of flavor than a regular cup of dark roast, for instance,” Donovan said. “The cardamom in the drinks is fantastic. Very, very flavorful, rich but not heavy.”

Most Yemeni coffee is sun-dried, which enhances its flavor and brings out undertones of chocolate and fruit, Almatrahi said. Yemeni cafes often mix coffee with special spice mixes - or hawaj - that may contain cardamom, ginger, cinnamon, cloves, coriander or nutmeg.

“Our coffee and teas are not just made through a fully automatic machine,” said Mohamed Nasser, the director of operations for Haraz Coffee House, a Dearborn, Michigan-based chain with 50 U.S. outlets and another 50 in development. “We have to manually blend and mix our coffee and tea, boil it with water and evaporated milk, make sure that it comes out (with the) perfect taste, perfect color.”

Coffee has a long history in Yemen. While the plant was likely discovered in Ethiopia, by the 1400s it was being cultivated in Yemen, where monks brewed it to stay awake during prayers, according to the National Coffee Association, a U.S. trade group. Yemen monopolized the coffee trade for around 200 years until Dutch merchants smuggled coffee seeds to Indonesia and began growing plants there.

Almatrahi said a revitalization of the Yemeni coffee industry over the last two decades, led by coffee companies, foundations and young entrepreneurs, helped make the current U.S. boom possible. Coffee is one of the most promising sectors for economic development in Yemen, where more than 80% of the population lives in poverty, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

“We are ambassadors for our culture and our people. So when we open these shops, we want to perform the outreach, to show the hospitality, to show what we have to offer,” Almatrahi said.

Eating a high fiber diet helps people feel more full

Fiber's structural integrity keeps plants strong, indigestibility keeps digestive system healthy

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

By Julie Pollock

University of Richmond

If you're over the age of 10, the World Health Organization recommends that you consume at least 25 grams of fiber every day. The best fiber-containing foods come from plants: fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, whole grains and legumes.

While it's sometimes overshadowed by other nutrients, such as protein, fiber plays a significant role in gastrointestinal health, digestion and nutrient absorption.

As a biochemist and someone who enjoys eating all types of foods, I find it remarkable that the structure of fiber, which is so similar to other carbohydrates, gives it all these unique functions. A tiny difference in the bonds that hold the molecules together allows your body to process a bagel differently from a raspberry.

In the biochemistry classes I teach, I emphasize that structure dictates function. If you're about to cross a bridge but notice the braces are falling off or the wood is rotting, you'll probably avoid stepping on it because the structure looks fragile.

This concept is true in the food you eat as well. The structures of the molecules that make up your food require them to be broken down in different ways in order to produce the energy that fuels your body.

Some foods contain vitamins and minerals that your body absorbs and uses for multiple functions. Other foods can keep your digestive system healthy and help your body absorb nutrients.

Food molecules consist of proteins, fats and carbohydrates. Each of these

classes of food molecules has unique structures that allow your body to process them differently. For example, fats are long chains of carbon atoms that do not dissolve in water, while proteins have large amounts of nitrogen due to their amino acids. In addition, subclasses of biomolecules have even more specializations in their structures and functions.

Carbohydrates, or sugars, are biomolecules made up of carbon, oxygen and hydrogen atoms. Simple carbohydrates include single sugars, such as glucose or fructose, and two sugars linked together, such as sucrose - table sugar - or lactose, milk sugar. These simple carbohydrates exist mostly in rings, although they sometimes open up into a linear form.

Complex carbohydrates, on the other hand, have a lot - hundreds to thousands - of sugar molecules linked in large sheets called polysaccharides. These carbohydrates are linked only in their ring forms.

Plants connect sugar molecules in two types of polysaccharides - starch and fiber. These molecules have similar structures because they contain only one type of sugar - typically glucose - linked together many times.

However, one tiny difference in the chemical bonds within starch and fiber translates to very different functions for the molecules.

Starch, also called amylose and amylopectin, is a polysaccharide with glucose molecules that are linked using alpha bonds. Fiber, which consists primarily of cellulose, is a polysaccharide with glucose molecules that are linked using a beta bond.

The types of bonds refer to how certain parts of the molecules are oriented. These slight differences mean the two polysaccharides' overall three-dimensional structures differ at the locations of these bonds.

The starch molecule is branched and doesn't pack together very tightly. Plants use starch as a long-term store of glucose that they can break down to use for energy. The fiber molecules, due to their beta bonds, pack together very tightly. The glucose molecules in fiber form the support structures of a plant's leaves, seeds and stems. The bonds of the starch enable the plants to

easily break down the sugar so they can access quick energy, while the bonds of the fiber are designed to last and add strength to the plant's architecture.

The structural differences between starch and fiber mean these molecules have different dietary functions when you consume them.

Human bodies easily digest starch. Your body uses an enzyme called amylase that breaks the alpha bonds to release glucose molecules, which cells break down further to use for energy. Starch's structure is perfect for fueling your cells. High starch foods include potatoes, pasta, rice, corn and bread.

Human bodies, on the other hand, cannot digest the beta bonds in the fiber we consume. They do not make enzymes that can release glucose molecules from the fiber, so most fibers pass through your digestive tract without being digested and absorbed. They contribute no energy to your diet. Foods with large amounts of fiber include peas, broccoli, oatmeal and pears.

The fiber does offer other health benefits. Fiber promotes bowel health by keeping your stools soft and moist, which reduces the risk of constipation, hemorrhoids and diverticulosis. Since the fiber stays intact in your gut, it gives your muscles something to push on to make it easier to eliminate stools, reducing pressure and inflammation in your intestines.

Some research has shown that consuming fiber reduces risk of inflammatory bowel diseases and protects against cardiovascular diseases. Fiber binds to bile acids that are excreted into your intestines, which helps with fat digestion. The fiber molecules interact with bile acids and dietary cholesterol, causing them to be excreted more easily and lower blood cholesterol levels.

Eating a high fiber diet also helps people feel more full. The fiber absorbs water and expands in your intestine, slowing the movement of food through the digestive system.

Learning about the structures of the carbohydrates you consume can help you understand their function in the body. Even though I think about biochemistry every day, I'm still amazed by how profoundly one bond can change the function of a biomolecule. (AP)

'Transition could deliver broader benefits'

Africa's cellphone towers turn to solar power

NAIROBI, Kenya, May 4, (AP): Rising diesel prices linked to the Iran war are adding urgency to a shift already underway across Africa to move cellphone towers off fossil fuels and onto solar power.

Diesel, which powers the majority of Africa's roughly 500,000 telecommunications towers, has become more expensive and sometimes harder to secure in recent weeks as global fuel markets tightened following the conflict. Several African countries that rely heavily on imported fuel have reported price spikes and supply disruptions, prompting governments and companies to reassess energy strategies.

The transition to cleaner power for the towers that provide cellphone service predates the latest price shocks, driven by cost pressures and climate goals. But the war in the Middle East has accelerated the push.

"Diesel has always been a major cost, but recent global events have made it even more volatile," said Lande Abudu, senior energy specialist for Africa at GSMA, a global industry organization representing mobile operators. "That strengthens the case for solar and hybrid solutions."

Across the continent, mobile network operators are increasingly adopting hybrid systems that combine solar panels, battery storage and limited diesel backup. Some are aiming for fully solar-powered sites over time, particularly in rural and off-grid areas where extending electricity grids is costly.

Cellphone towers in Africa have traditionally been powered by diesel generators, often large industrial units that require operators to manually refuel them. In contrast, solar-powered towers rely on sunlight, using solar panels to generate electricity and battery systems to store energy for continuous operation.

Globally, most telecommunication towers in developed markets such as the United States and India are connected to the electricity grid, with diesel generators used mainly as backup during outages. In parts of Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, operators have also relied heavily on diesel but are now pursuing similar transitions to renewable energy.

Last month, American-owned Atlas Tower Kenya said it was investing \$52.5 million to construct 300 new, solar-powered telecommunica-



A telecommunications tower stands in Kajjado, Kenya on April 25. (AP)

tion towers to serve major operators, including Safaricom, Airtel and Telkom Kenya. The firm currently has 82% of its 500 towers solar powered.

"It's a significant shift, but there's still a long way to go," said Abudu.

The economics are becoming increasingly compelling. Energy accounts for up to 60% of operating costs for telecom towers in off-grid areas. Diesel, once the default solution, has become more expensive and harder to manage, with challenges ranging from transport logistics to theft and maintenance.

Vodacom Africa said its energy costs rose 5% to \$300 million in 2025 from the prior year, citing higher electricity tariffs and fuel prices. The company operates in Egypt, South Africa, Congo, Mozambique, Tanzania and Lesotho, and owns subsidiaries in Kenya and Ethiopia through Safaricom. Sa-

faricom last year raised \$153.6 million in green bonds to help it transition its towers to solar power.

In countries like Nigeria, cost pressures have shifted sharply. The removal of fuel subsidies in 2023 triggered a surge in diesel prices, rising by as much as 200% within a year, and operators now spend \$400 million annually to keep towers running. Recent global price increases tied to the Iran conflict have added further pressure.

Companies are responding by accelerating clean energy deployments. Firms such as iSAT Africa are rolling out solar-powered towers backed by new financing models, while major operators including Orange, Vodacom, MTN Group and Airtel Africa are expanding solar and hybrid systems across their networks.

"By replacing diesel-powered tele-

com towers with fully solar-powered infrastructure, we expect to reduce the carbon emissions associated with mobile network operations," said iSAT Africa CEO Rakesh Kukreja in March, announcing new funding for clean energy tower projects.

Early results show significant savings. MTN operations in South Sudan have cut fuel spending by about 30% after adopting solar power, while Airtel Africa, working with ENGIE Energy Access, has reduced diesel use by more than half at sites in Zambia and Congo.

Vodacom Africa said in its 2025 sustainability report that connecting towers to national grids and rolling out more solar and battery were key parts of its strategy to replace diesel generators.

The benefits go beyond cost. Solar-powered towers are less vulnerable to fuel shortages and generator failures, improving reliability in underserved areas. In parts of northern Nigeria and Congo, cellular outages linked to fuel shortages predating the war have caused disruptions to services ranging from mobile money transactions to emergency communications.

Replacing diesel generators with solar energy could help close Africa's connectivity gap, where about 65% of people who could benefit from mobile internet remain unconnected, according to the GSMA.

"Renewable energy systems enable faster and more cost-effective expansion into underserved areas," Abudu said. In rural Kenya, residents in some off-grid communities say solar-powered towers have improved service stability, enabling more consistent access to mobile banking, education and health information.

"Before this telecommunication mast was installed, we struggled to process mobile money payment or even call for help during medical emergencies," said Martin Imwatok, a teacher in northern Kenya. "When these towers go off, business and life stop."

Africa's reliance on diesel is more pronounced due to weaker grid infrastructure, making the shift both more challenging and potentially more transformative. However, regulators say the transition could deliver broader benefits. In Nigeria, the telecom regulator has encouraged operators to integrate towers into solar minigrids that can also supply nearby communities.



Chinese doctors conduct tympanoplasty operation in Niamey General Reference Hospital in Niamey, Niger on April 27. (Xinhua)

Chinese docs conduct successful eardrum repair surgery in Niger

NIAMEY, May 4, (Xinhua): Chinese doctors have recently conducted a successful tympanoplasty operation in Niger, believed to be the first time that the eardrum repair procedure was done in the West African country.

Tang Xianglong, a member of the 25th Chinese medical team in Niger, carried out the landmark otologic surgery on a local patient in Niamey General Reference Hospital in the Nigerian capital.

The operation is considered a "zero-to-one" breakthrough in local ear medicine, a shift from predominantly conservative drug treatment.

Tang, from the First Affiliated Hospital of Guangxi Medical University in southern China, used the patient's own tragal cartilage to repair the perforated eardrum, with the help of anesthesiologist Lan Qixin and nurse Zhong Chengshan.

According to the team, the Nigerian patient had suffered from an ear condition for three years, with recurrent infections leading to a large perforation in the eardrum, accompanied by middle ear lesions, persistent ear discharge, and progressive hearing loss.

The patient had previously relied on medication to control symptoms, suffering from a cycle of "infection-remission-relapse," with the risk of developing severe complications such as intracranial infection.

In Niger, many patients with similar ear conditions are unable to get effective treatment due to a lack of surgical capacity.

During the operation, the Chinese doctors also gave detailed explanations to Nigerian colleagues, including key steps, the selection of graft materials, and perioperative management.

Suspected outbreak of rare hantavirus on cruise ship in Atlantic kills 3: WHO

CAPE TOWN, South Africa, May 4, (AP): A suspected outbreak of the rare hantavirus infection on a cruise ship in the Atlantic Ocean killed three people, including an elderly married couple, and sickened at least three others, the World Health Organization and South Africa's Department of Health said Sunday.

In a statement to The Associated Press, WHO said an investigation was underway but that at least one case of hantavirus had been confirmed. One of the patients was in intensive care in a South African hospital, the U.N. health agency said, and it was working with authorities to evacuate two others with symptoms from the ship.

The Dutch company that operates the cruise said the ship was now sitting off the coast of Cape Verde, an island nation off Africa's west coast, and local authorities were assisting but had not allowed anyone to disembark. It said the two sick people onboard requiring urgent medical care were crew members.

Hantaviruses, which are found throughout the world, are a family of viruses spread mainly by contact with the urine or feces of infected rodents like rats and mice. They gained attention after the late actor Gene Hackman's wife, Betsy Arakawa, died from hantavirus infection in New Mexico last year.

Hackman died around a week later at their home from heart disease.

Hantaviruses cause two serious syndromes, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, a severe disease that affects the lungs, and hemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome, a severe disease that affects the kidneys.

While rare, WHO said hantavirus infections can be spread between people. There is no specific treatment or cure, but early medical attention can increase the chance of survival.

"WHO is aware of and supporting a public health event involving a cruise vessel sailing in the Atlantic Ocean," the organization said. "Detailed investigations are ongoing, including



In this June 15, 2010 file photo, a rat wanders the subway tracks at Union Square in New York. (AP)



A woman works at her shop in Epuyen, Argentina on Jan 11, 2019, after an outbreak of hantavirus. (AP)

further laboratory testing, and epidemiological investigations. Medical care and support are being provided to passengers and crew. Sequencing of the virus is also ongoing."

Brain surgery effects extend beyond operation site, says study

MELBOURNE, May 4, (Xinhua): New research has found that the effects of brain surgery extend beyond the immediate site of operation, leading to changes in distant brain regions.

The findings show that the structural effects of surgery can extend further than previously thought, challenging the traditional view on how surgery affects the human brain, said a statement from Australia's Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health released.

Researchers used advanced MRI techniques and image analysis to track structural changes before and after neurosurgical procedures in epilepsy patients.

The study, published in the journal *Brain*, demonstrates that these brain changes occur at the endpoints of surgically disrupted pathways and onwards throughout the brain network.

"The surgical disruption of brain connections can lead to degeneration of cells at the endpoints of these connections, which then, in return, can cascade to other connected parts of the brain," said Florey PhD student Philip Pruckner, the study's lead author from the Florey Institute.



A subject's waist is measured during an obesity prevention study in Chicago on Jan 20, 2010. (AP)

Obesity: Australian child health experts have unveiled a nationally coordinated, multi-pronged strategy to tackle rising childhood obesity, targeting heart health, diet, exercise and sleep.

The initiative, known as GenHEART and led by Australia's Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI), will run over 10 years and aims to reverse alarming obesity trends among children and their parents, said an MCRI

statement released Monday. The program will draw on Generation Australia, a large-scale research platform combining two long-term cohort studies tracking about 60,000 children and families in the states of Victoria and Western Australia, it said.

"Good heart health in childhood is crucial to reducing the risk of chronic disease across a person's lifetime," said MCRI Professor Melissa Wake, who will help oversee Generation Australia.

Jannik favorite at Italian Open as Alcaraz withdraws

Sinner dominates Zverev to claim Madrid Open & historic 5th Masters crown

MADRID, May 4, (AP) — Top-ranked Jannik Sinner cruised past Alexander Zverev in the final of the Madrid Open to win the tournament for the first time and become the first man to win five consecutive Masters 1000 events.

Sinner beat the third-ranked Zverev 6-1, 6-2 for his 23rd straight win. He had already won Master 1000 tournaments in Monte Carlo, Miami and Indian Wells this year, and in Paris last year.

"I think there is a lot of work behind it," Sinner said. "A lot of dedication and sacrifice I put in every day. Obviously, it means a lot to me, seeing these results."

Zverev lost to Sinner in the semifinals of each of those tournaments. He won in Madrid in 2018 and 2021, and was runner-up to Carlos Alcaraz in 2022.

"He's very good, of course. But I think today I would have lost to anybody, to be very fair. I think today I played an awful tennis match," Zverev said.

Sinner converted all four break points he earned and did not face any break points himself in a comfortable win over Zverev at the Caja

Magica tennis complex in Madrid. Sinner had not been past the quarter-finals in three previous appearances in Madrid.

"I'm very happy that I've continued to believe in myself," Sinner said. "I'm showing up every day, at every practice session, trying to put in the right work with the right discipline. To do so, you need to have the right team behind you, which I have. I'm very happy about me, but also the team, and this means a lot to all of us."

Sinner next plays in Rome with a chance to lift the trophy in the only Masters 1000 tournament he is yet to win. The 24-year-old Italian is looking to join Novak Djokovic as the only man to complete the Career Golden Masters. The Serbian won all nine tournaments twice.

"It's quite simple," Zverev said. "I think there's a big gap between Sinner and everybody else."

In the women's final on Saturday, Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine beat Mirra Andreeva of Russia 7-5, 6-3.

Most tennis players - even some of the very best ones - have days where they struggle and don't feel the ball the way that they want to.

For top-ranked Jannik Sinner, those types of days are getting rarer and rarer.

And with Carlos Alcaraz sidelined due to a right wrist injury, it doesn't seem like anyone can beat the top-ranked Sinner as the heart of the tennis season approaches with the French Open and Wimbledon coming up over the next two months.

"He's very stable. He doesn't have dips. He doesn't have phases where he goes down," No. 3 Alexander Zverev said after getting routed by Sinner in Sunday's Madrid Open final for his ninth straight loss to the Italian. "That's why he's world No. 1."

Sinner's title in the Spanish capital made him the first player to win five consecutive Masters 1000 events - the top tournaments outside of the Grand Slams - and extended his winning streak to 23 matches.

Sinner hasn't lost since getting beat by Jakub Mensik in the Qatar Open quarterfinals on Feb. 19.

"There's a big gap between Sinner and everybody else right now," Zverev said. "It's quite simple."

And to think that at age 24, Sinner is still developing his game.



Jannik Sinner, of Italy, returns the ball to Alexander Zverev, of Germany, during their men's singles tennis final match at the Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid, Spain. Inset: Sinner holds the trophy after winning the final. (AP)

Elliott holds off Hamlin in Texas

Reddick finishes strong but misses podium repeat glory

FORT WORTH, Texas, May 4, (AP) — Chase Elliott went low, got a push from his Hendrick Motorsports teammate and held on to become only the second NASCAR Cup driver with multiple wins this season.

Elliott stayed ahead of Denny Hamlin for the closing four laps after a final restart at Texas on Sunday for his second victory this year. He finished just ahead of Hamlin in both of those wins.

On that final restart at the 1 1/2-mile Texas track, Elliott took the bottom line and had teammate Alex Bowman behind him. He cleared Hamlin going onto the backstretch and remained in front to the checkered flag.

"I just felt like, man, if I didn't get clear off of (Turn) 2, I was going to be in a lot of trouble," Elliott said. "So fortunately Alex gave me a great push. I was able to execute Turns 1 and 2, get clear, and then just kind of manage the last few laps."

Elliott, voted NASCAR's most popular driver each of the past eight seasons, got his 23rd career win and his second at Texas, where two years ago he ended a 42-race winless streak. He led five times Sunday for a race-high 87 laps, finishing 0.407 seconds ahead of Hamlin, closer than the 0.565-second margin when they finished 1-2 at Martinsville in late March.

Bowman, whose spin brought out a caution on lap 93, finished third. Tyler Reddick was fourth after winning five of the first 10 races this season for Michael Jordan's 23XI Racing.

Hamlin said the late push Elliott got from his teammate was the difference in Texas.

"It was just enough to slow my momentum and pick his momentum up," Hamlin said. "Good, decent day, just one (spot) short."

Elliott, who started 14th, had already taken the white flag when John Hunter Nemechek wrecked in the back of the field after contact



Chase Elliott, center, celebrates after winning a NASCAR Cup Series auto race in Fort Worth, Texas. (AP)

with Kyle Busch. The caution flag never came out since Nemechek was able to get his car to the apron.

Chris Buescher was fifth, his first top-10 finish in 17 starts at track less than an hour from his hometown of Prosper.

Carson Hocevar, the polesitter at Texas for the second year in a row, finished seventh, a week after his breakthrough win at Talladega. He also won the Truck Series race in the Lone Star State on Friday night. He finished a spot behind Daniel Suarez, his Spire Motorsports teammate.

Hocevar led the first 22 laps last year, three more than he did at the start of this 267-lap race, though he did get back in front for 18 more laps later Sunday.

Corey Heim, in only his third start this year for 23XI Racing, led 69 laps, but with 11 laps left brought out the final caution of the day, the fourth because of a

single-car spinout. The 23-year-old Heim was the Truck Series champion last year.

Christopher Bell, an Oklahoma native who considers Texas his home track, led 22 laps and was still near the front on lap 69 when he got clipped by Todd Gilliland, who spun ahead of him.

Bell bobbed and then slammed hard into the outside wall along the frontstretch, doing significant damage to the front right of the No. 20 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota. He finished last in the 38-car field.

"I thought that I could shoot the gap on the bottom," said Bell, who had led only six laps total his first seven starts in Texas. "I thought I did shoot the gap on the bottom but I got clipped."

Joey Logano, who won at Texas last year, was going about 180 mph when he just avoided hitting the spinning car of Byron on lap 93.

Going much slower on the ensuing yellow-flag stop, the front left of Logano's car was crushed when he was unable to avoid contact when Cole Custer stopped on pit lane with Ty Gibbs pulling out ahead of him. That knocked out Logano, whose winless streak is now 36 races.

During that same round of stops, Chase Briscoe got damage to his front right when pulling out of his box and getting hit by Kyle Larson. Hamlin was pulling out when he had a close call with Connor Zilisch.

The 2.45-mile road course at Watkins Glen in upstate New York, where last year Shane van Gisbergen of Trackhouse Racing became only the third driver to win four consecutive Cup races on road or street courses. In the first road race this year, Reddick held off van Gisbergen to win at the 2.4-mile Circuit of the Americas on March 1.

Lyon squeeze past Rennes to strengthen top-four bid

PARIS, May 4, (AP) — Brazil forward Endrick scored a fine goal as Lyon beat Rennes 4-2 in Ligue 1 on Sunday to move into third place in the race for a Champions League spot.

The top three earn an automatic place next season and the side finishing fourth enters qualifying. Lyon and Rennes both had the opportunity to go third after Lille drew 1-1 with Le Havre earlier Sunday.

Lyon is two points ahead of fourth-place Lille and four points ahead of fifth-place Rennes with two games left.

Jordan forward Mousa Al-Tamari gave Rennes a sixth-minute lead with a brilliant angled volley from Esteban Lepaul's cross.

Ukraine striker Roman Yaremchuk equalized with a downward header from Corentin Tolisso's cross in the 37th and Tolisso scored with a penalty five minutes later after lively winger Afonso Moreira was fouled.

Rennes was not done and Lepaul netted his league-leading 19th goal of the campaign with a close-range finish from Al-Tamari's left-wing cross. But moments after celebrating with a golf-style swing and look into the distance, he failed to read the play properly and carelessly gave the ball away in midfield.

Lyon broke forward quickly and Abner Vinicius fed Moreira near the penalty area for a good finish in the 52nd. Tolisso then set up the 19-year-old Endrick for a powerful shot into the roof

of the net in the 75th after he quickly switched feet.

It was a good weekend for Lyon's men's and women's teams, with OL Lyonnais on course for a record-extending ninth women's Champions League trophy after beating titleholder Arsenal on Saturday to reach the final. Lyon president Michele Kang celebrated in the crowd on Sunday.

Earlier, Lille midfielder Hakon Haraldson put away a neat pass from Matias Fernandez-Pardo in the 28th minute but 14th-place Le Havre equalized through striker Issa Soumaré.

Auxerre boosted its chances of staying up with a 3-1 home win over Angers, with striker Sékou Mara scoring twice.

Auxerre remains in 16th place - the relegation-promotion playoff spot with the team finishing third in Ligue 2 - but moved within three points of Nice in 15th. Auxerre's victory also pushed 17th-place Nantes closer to relegation. Rock-bottom Metz is already relegated.

Paris FC thumped Brest 4-0 at home to continue its fine form under coach Antoine Kombouaré, with 18-year-old midfielder Rudy Matondo scoring twice. Brazilian forward Emersonn grabbed a late winner for Toulouse in a 2-1 win at Strasbourg.

League leader Paris Saint-Germain remains six points ahead of second-place Lens with three games left after both drew on Saturday. Lens hosts PSG on May 13.



Gujarat Titans' Washington Sundar plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Gujarat Titans and Punjab Kings in Ahmedabad, India. (AP)

Washington seals win

Late heroics from Sundar power Gujarat past Punjab

HYDERABAD, India, May 4, (AP) — Indian Premier League leader Punjab Kings lost its second straight game in a four-wicket defeat to Gujarat Titans on Sunday.

Punjab recovered from losing two wickets in the opening three balls of the match to post 163-9 after being made to bat first by Gujarat, which reached 167-6 with one ball remaining.

Suryansh Shedge (57 runs off 29 balls) and Marcus Stoinis (40 off 31) shared a 79-run partnership for Punjab's sixth wicket. West Indies pacer Jason Holder took 4-24 in four overs.

Mohammed Siraj (2-28) did the early damage for Gujarat, claiming Priyansh Arya on the second ball of the game, and Cooper Connolly on the third. Punjab skipper Shreyas Iyer (19) denied India quick Siraj his hat trick.

Washington Sundar guided Gujarat's successful chase, finishing on 40 not out off 23 balls, after opener Sai Sudharsan hit a 41-ball 57.

Punjab, which lost its previous game to Rajasthan Royals, has a one-point

lead over Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Sunrisers Hyderabad, Rajasthan and

Stoinis and Shedge added 79 off 44 balls to give a fighting total for the Punjab bowlers, albeit very much under-par at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

Despite Shubman Gill's early dismissal for five, Gujarat never looked in any trouble. Sudharsan scored his third half-century of the season - he also has a hundred against Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

He added 53 off 40 balls with Jos Buttler (26), as well as key partnerships with Nishant Sindhu (15) and Sundar later.

Iyer marshaled his bowlers well - Arshdeep Singh and Vijaykumar Vyshak shared four wickets. But Sundar held the lower order together to ease Gujarat to its sixth win in 10 games. The Titans are fifth - trailing Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Rajasthan on net run-rate. All four teams are on 12 points.

Punjab is still top of the table with 13 points from nine games, despite its twin losses.

Korda crushes another LPGA field and wins by 4 shots

Young wins Cadillac Championship

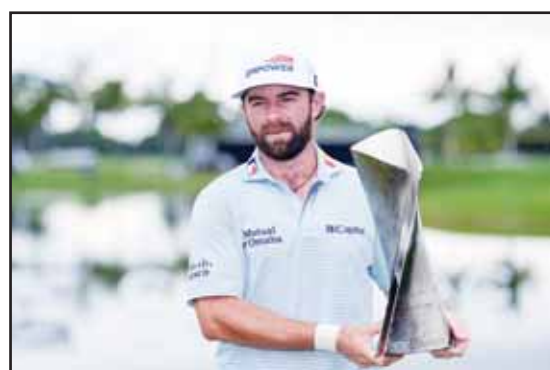
DORAL, Fla., May 4, (AP) — Cameron Young called a one-shot penalty on himself for his ball slightly moving in the second fairway and he still made par. It was that kind of week for Young, who closed with a 4-under 68 for a six-shot victory over Scottie Scheffler in the Cadillac Championship.

Young became the first wire-to-wire winner at Doral since Andy Bean in 1977, opening with a 64 on the Blue Monster and never giving anyone much of a chance, including the world's No. 1 player.

He finished at 19-under 269 with President Donald Trump, who owns Trump National Doral, watching and giving the rising American star a thumbs-up and later a handshake.

Young now has three wins since last August, including The Players Championship. Scheffler, who closed with a 68, was a runner-up for the third straight time dating to the Masters. Scheffler has earned \$6.75 million for those three tournaments.

Nelly Korda delivered an early knockout punch Sunday and stretched her



Cameron Young holds the trophy after winning the Cadillac Championship PGA golf tournament Sunday in Doral, Fla. (AP)

lead to seven shots before cruising to the finish line with a 3-under 69 and a four-shot victory in the Riviera Maya Open at Mayakoba.

One week after Korda won her third career major with a five-shot win at The Chevron Championship, she was just as dominant at El Camaleon. Korda went 60 consecutive holes without a bogey, a streak that ended when it no longer mattered on the 18th hole. She made a 20-foot bogey putt after losing

her tee shot into tropical bushes.

Korda became the first player since Annika Sorenstam in 2001 to start a season with six straight tournaments finishing no worse than runner-up.

She finished at 17-under 271, four shots ahead Arpichaya Yubol of Thailand, who celebrated her 24th birthday with a 70 to finish alone in second. Yu Liu of China (69) was another shot back.

Stewart Cink pulled away with consecutive bird-

ies early on the back nine Sunday that stretched his lead to four shots, and he closed with a 3-under 69 for a three-shot victory in the Regions Tradition for his second major this year on the PGA Tour Champions.

Cink, who won the Senior PGA Championship two weeks ago in Florida, became the second player in two years to capture the first two majors on the 50-and-older circuit. Angel Cabrera won the Senior PGA and the Tradition last year in consecutive weeks.

He was staked to a three-shot lead going into the final round at Greystone Golf & Country Club, and Colin Montgomerie got within two shots of them heading to the back nine. The 52-year-old Cink responded with birdies on the 11th and 12th holes to build a four-shot lead, and Montgomerie failed to make birdie over his final 13 holes to shoot 71 and finish alone in third.

Scott Hend (65) was the runner-up.

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PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT

SPORTS

Vinícius double sinks Espanyol

Madrid's victory keeps Barcelona waiting for Spanish league title

MADRID, May 4, (AP): Vinícius Júnior scored two second-half goals and Real Madrid beat Espanyol 2-0 to keep Barcelona from clinching its second straight Spanish league title.

Barcelona beat Osasuna 2-1 earlier. Anything but a win by Madrid against Barcelona's city rival would have allowed the Catalan club to celebrate its 29th league title this weekend.

Barcelona will have a chance to clinch the title next weekend when it hosts Madrid in a "clásico" at the Camp Nou.

Barcelona's lead stayed at 11 points heading into the final four rounds of La Liga.

"We have a big game against a great rival and they have been playing well," Madrid coach Álvaro Arbeloa said. "It's a special game for the fans, for us. We are going to rest and prepare well for it."

The result kept Espanyol winless in 17 consecutive games this year, with 10 losses. It sits in 13th place, five points from the relegation zone.

It was a hard-fought match until Vinícius broke the deadlock in the 55th minute after a nice fake move to get past a couple of Espanyol defenders inside the area. The Brazil forward added to the lead in the 66th with a shot into the top corner after a beautiful back-heel set up by Jude Bellingham.

Espanyol defender Omar El Hilali was shown a straight red card for a foul on Vinícius in the first half but the call was changed to a yellow card after video review.

Madrid lost left back Ferland Mendy 10 minutes into the match because of an apparent muscle injury.

Rayo Vallecano prepared for its Conference League semifinal against Strasbourg with a 2-0 win at Getafe.

Rayo coach Iñigo Pérez was able to rest many of his first-choice players with the Conference League semifinal second leg on Thursday in mind. Rayo won the first leg 1-0 at home.

Sergio Camello and Randy Nteka scored in each half for the visitors, while Rayo goalkeeper Augusto Batalla also saved a penalty, to lift the team from the Madrid district of Vallecas to 11th ahead of the rest of the round.

Celta Vigo boosted its hopes of European qualification with a 3-1 win at home over Elche that left the promoted team among a host of clubs still in danger of relegation.

Celso moved above Getafe into sixth.

Cucho Hernández opened and concluded the scoring for fifth-place Real Betis in a 3-0 win at home over last-place Oviedo, a result that left the visitors on the verge of relegation.



Real Madrid's Dean Huijsen, left, and Espanyol's Omar El Hilali fight for the ball during the La Liga soccer match between Espanyol and Real Madrid in Barcelona Spain. (AP)

Inter seals Serie A title as San Siro erupts in long-awaited celebration

Milan and Juventus at risk of losing Champions League places

MILAN, May 4, (AP): Marcus Thuram scored one goal. Lautaro Martínez set up another.

The two players who have been at the heart of Inter Milan's success in recent seasons carried the club to the Italian league soccer title with a 2-0 victory over visiting Parma.

Inter, which needed only a draw to secure the trophy, moved an unassailable 12 points clear of 2025 champion Napoli with three rounds remaining.

It's Inter's 21st Serie A title, trailing only the record 36 held by Juventus, and third in six years. But Inter hadn't sealed the title before its home fans at the San Siro since the 1989 title - nearly four decades ago.

When the game was over, there were fireworks, dancing and plenty of celebrations.

Thuram scored just before the break with an angled shot placed just beyond the reach of Parma goalkeeper Zion Suzuki. Then 37-year-old Henrikh Mkhitaryan added another in the 80th after taking a pass from Serie A scoring leader Lautaro, who came off the bench to mark his return from an injury layoff.

Thuram was born in Parma while his father, Lilian Thuram, played there.

"Since I arrived at Inter, it's been a team that loves to stay together - on and off the field - and that's our strength," Thuram said.

For Cristian Chivu, Inter's first-year coach, the trophy was secured against the club he coached last season - having helped Parma avoid relegation.

Chivu, who was hired to replace the departed Simone Inzaghi nearly a year ago, played on the Inter team that won a treble under José Mourinho in 2010.

In the running for two trophies this season, Inter will face Lazio in the Italian Cup final in 10 days.



Parma's goalkeeper Zion Suzuki, right, makes a save against Inter Milan's Marcus Thuram during a Serie A soccer match between Inter Milan and Parma, in Milan, Italy. (AP)

The domestic success has come in sharp contrast to Inter's ouster from this season's Champions League playoffs by tiny Norwegian club Bodo/Glimt. Last season, Inter was routed 5-0 by Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League final.

Still, it's an improvement from last season's Serie A when Inter finished one point behind Napoli.

"(Chivu) did so well bringing fresh energy, enthusiasm," Lautaro said. "After four great years with Simone, perhaps we needed a change of scenery after that Champions League final. Chivu made sure everyone felt involved and could even train with a smile. That really helped."

Inter midfielder Nicolò Barella was reminded how he was a leader on the Italy team that failed to qualify for a third consecutive World Cup.

"That's football and life. There are difficult moments," Barella said. "For example, last season we came so close to everything and won nothing. In life you've always got to get back up on your feet."

While Inter was celebrating, AC Milan and Juventus were at risk of losing their Champions League places.

Milan was reduced to 10 men and beaten 2-0 at Sassuolo for its fourth loss in seven matches. Then Juventus drew 1-1 with relegated Hellas Verona.

Third-placed Milan was left only two points ahead of fourth-placed Juventus, which is just three points ahead of fifth-placed Como, which is trying to get into the top four and secure a Champions League spot.

Three rounds remain in the Italian league.

Domenico Berardi scored early on for Sassuolo for his 12th career goal against Milan and Fikayo Tomori was sent off before Armand Lauriente doubled the advantage after the break.

Milan has scored only one goal in its last five matches.

Christian Pulisic, who came on in the second half, extended his goalless streak to a career-high 17 league matches.

Juventus also dropped points at home against Verona but extended its unbeaten run to nine matches.

Kieron Bowie put Verona ahead after intercepting a pass from Juventus defender Gleison Bremer then Dusan Vlahovic equalized for Juventus with a free kick around Verona's wall for his first goal since October.

Also, Bologna was held 0-0 by Cagliari in a regional derby.

Arsenal faces Atletico test

PSG, Bayern set for second-leg thriller

MUNICH, May 4, (AP): Now for the encore, Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern Munich.

Two teams which produced a 5-4 instant classic last week will take center stage on Wednesday for the second act of their Champions League semifinal.

The return game in Munich surely cannot reach the same height of drama as the waves of fished attacks - and overwhelmed defenses - reached in Paris.

Still, coaches Luis Enrique and Vincent Kompany will aim for the stars.

"More, even more," Kompany said in Paris, when asked about his main message to Bayern's players for the decisive second leg.

Arsenal hosts Atletico Madrid on Tuesday with the score 1-1.

The rewards for a semifinal victory are a place in the final on May 30 at the Puskas Arena in Budapest.

Champions League semifinals are often more memorable than the title matches.

One year ago, an exciting Inter Milan-Barcelona contest was widely praised like the PSG-Bayern opener has been. A 3-3 first leg in Barcelona was just an appetizer for Inter's roller coaster 4-3 win in extra time at San Siro.

In 2022, Real Madrid somehow rallied in stoppage time of the second leg to deny Manchester City victory. Two Rodrygo goals forced extra time that was settled by Karim Benzema's penalty for a 3-1 win. The wild first leg had finished 4-3 to City in Manchester.

A vintage knockout phase in 2019 was capped by astonishing comebacks on back-to-back nights in the semifinal second legs by Liverpool against Barcelona and Tottenham at Ajax.

It is perhaps eight years since a truly compelling back-and-forth final, when substitute Gareth Bale's goals - the first an iconic bicycle kick - lifted Madrid to a 3-1 win over Liverpool in Kyiv.

While PSG excelled in the final last year, the 5-0 rout of Inter was never competitive.

Munich was the scene of PSG's finest game last season against Inter to fulfill its Qatari owners' quest to become European champion for the first time.

The Allianz Arena is also where

six-time champion Bayern won all six home games in the Champions League this season, scoring 20 goals including four past Real Madrid in a quarterfinals, second-leg thriller three weeks ago.

Munich is the only candidate to host the Champions League final again in 2028. UEFA should confirm that decision in September.

Coach Diego Simeone takes his Atletico team to north London for a third game this season. Third time lucky?

Atletico lost 4-0 at Arsenal in a league-phase game in October and survived a 3-2 loss at Tottenham in the second leg of the round of 16 that easily could have been a bigger margin. Atletico also started this Champions League campaign in England in September - and lost, 3-2 at Liverpool.

It all adds up to five games lost by Atletico in its 15-game Champions League campaign so far, while Arsenal has the last remaining unbeaten record.

Neither team has been European champion. It's 10 years since Atletico played in the last of its three finals, losing to Real Madrid, and 20 years since Arsenal lost its only final, against Barcelona.

All four semifinalists were awarded, and scored, a penalty kick last week. A fifth was awarded to Arsenal but then overturned after the referee was sent to his pitchside monitor to review replays.

Since the Video Assistant Referee system made its World Cup debut in 2018, the trend in top-tier games has been to award ever more spot-kicks.

None of the five decisions last week was universally praised, and the two handball incidents showed how UEFA's view differs to many coaches, players and fans.

UEFA's director of refereeing Roberto Rosetti has previously said "we don't like soft penalties" and cautioned against "microscopic VAR interventions" - which seemed to be happening last week.

For each handball, the ball first deflected from the body of, respectively, Bayern's Alphonso Davies and Arsenal's Ben White before contacting an arm which was not held tight to the side of their bodies. That is typically not a penalty in the English Premier League but almost certainly is in UEFA competitions.

Rosetti plans to meet soon with refereeing officials from Europe's main leagues to seek more clarity and consistency next season.

Allen ties playoff career high as Cavaliers beat Raptors to advance

Pistons complete jaw-dropping comeback to snap 18-yr drought

DETROIT, May 4, (AP): Cade Cunningham had 32 points and 12 assists, Tobias Harris added 30 points and the Detroit Pistons beat the Orlando Magic 116-94 in Game 7 to win a playoff series for the first time in 18 years.

Cunningham averaged 32.4 points for Detroit, which last won a postseason series by beating Orlando in the second round in 2008. The Pistons advance to play the Cleveland Cavaliers. Game 1 will be Tuesday at Little Caesars Arena.

The Pistons became the 15th team in NBA history to overcome a 3-1 deficit and the second in the last two nights, after the Philadelphia 76ers came back to eliminate Boston.

They trailed by 24 points in Game 6 in Orlando before rallying to take the series at home. Orlando only scored 113 points in the final six quarters of the series - an average of 18.8 per period.

Cunningham and Harris became the first Pistons teammates to score 30 points in a playoff game since Bob Lanier (33) and Howard Porter (30) against the Golden State Warriors on April 17, 1977.

Paolo Banchero scored 38 for the Magic. Each team needed a second scoring option in Game 7. Cunningham had carried the Pistons while Banchero was Orlando's only weapon after Franz Wagner was injured in Game 4.

Harris filled that role for Detroit, but Orlando only had one other player reach double figures in the first three quarters, as Desmond Bane had 10.

The Pistons also got a big game from All-Star center Jalen Duren. He was outplayed by Wendell Carter Jr. in the first six games, but put up his first double-double of the series with 15 points and 15 rebounds.

Harris scored 17 points in the second quarter as the Pistons finished the half on a 9-2 run to

take a 60-49 lead.

The Pistons' surge continued into the second half, as they opened the third quarter with a 11-2 run to go up 71-51. Nine of the points came from Cunningham and Harris.

The Magic finished the third quarter with 15 points - the third time in their last five periods they couldn't reach 20 points.

Daniss Jenkins hit a buzzer-beating 3-pointer to give Detroit a 83-64 lead going into the fourth, and the Magic never threatened down the stretch.

Cavaliers 114 Raptors 102

In Cleveland, Jarrett Allen tied his playoff career high with 22 points and grabbed 19 rebounds as the Cleveland Cavaliers advanced to the Eastern Conference semifinals with a 114-102 victory over the Toronto Raptors in Game 7 of their series.

Donovan Mitchell led the Cavaliers with 22 points and James Harden added 18 in a series



Cleveland Cavaliers guard Donovan Mitchell (45) shoots in front of Toronto Raptors forward Scottie Barnes (4) and center Jakob Poeltl, right, in the second half in Game 7 of a first-round NBA basketball playoffs series in Cleveland. (AP)

in which the home team won all seven games.

Cleveland, the No. 4 seed, will visit top-seeded Detroit on Tuesday night in Game 1 of the second round. The Central Division rivals split their four regular-season meetings.

Scottie Barnes had 24 points and nine rebounds and RJ Barrett scored 23 for the Raptors, who were in the playoffs for the first time since 2022.

All-Star forward Brandon Ingram missed his second straight game with a bruised right heel.

Allen had 14 points and 10 rebounds, including five on the offensive end, as Cleveland went on a 49-21 run during a 15-minute span over the second and third quarters where it turned a nine-point deficit into an 19-point advantage.

One of Allen's baskets during the third quarter was a fast-break dunk after Max Strus stole the ball from Barnes to make it 74-59.

Cleveland was 17 of 33 from the field, including five 3-pointers, during the run while converting seven of Toronto's turnovers into 14 points. The Raptors shot 6 of 23 and were 1 of 8 behind the arc.

The Cavaliers also had a 25-8 rebounding advantage during the spurt, and converted 10 offensive boards into 14 points.

Toronto led for most of the first half and had a 10-point lead midway through the second quarter before Cleveland began its comeback.

The Cavaliers were down 47-38 with 2:58 remaining before going on a 11-2 run to close the half and tie it at 49. The Cavs were 4 of 17 on 3-pointers before Harden, Strus and Jaylon Tyson connected from beyond the arc.

Cleveland took the lead with nine straight points to open the third quarter as Mitchell scored five and Mobley added four.

The Cavaliers are 6-5 in Game 7s, including unbeaten in five home games. Toronto fell to 3-4 in Game 7 and 0-2 on the road.

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Drivers steer their cars during the Miami Formula One Grand Prix auto race in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

Sports

Squash back in action as league restarts Sunday

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Squash Federation's Competitions Committee, headed by Secretary-General Hamad Al-Omran has approved the resumption of domestic activity with the remaining matches of the general league across all age groups, beginning next Sunday.

The decision was taken during a meeting held at the federation headquarters in South Surra, attended by federation president Walid Al-Sumaii, committee member Abdulhadi Al-Arian, and representatives of 11 clubs out of 14 in the General Assembly. Discussions focused on completing the current season's competitions.

Al-Omran confirmed that action will resume with youth categories and the women's league first, followed by the men's general league, which is scheduled to continue until the end of June.

He added that cup competitions have been postponed until September, ahead of the new season, while individual championships have been cancelled due to time constraints.



Group photo from the meeting between the squash federation and club representatives, where discussions were held on resuming the remaining league season and organizing the competition schedule.

The revised league schedule will be finalized on Tuesday and submitted to the Olympic Committee

in line with its recent directive to sports federations.

Al-Omran concluded by wish-

ing all clubs success in the remaining fixtures and the rest of the season.

Insufficient preparation cited

Kuwait Volleyball Federation withdraws from Gulf Games

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Kuwait Volleyball Federation has officially withdrawn from the 4th Gulf Games, scheduled to take place in Qatar from May 11 to 22, with the decision approved by the Kuwait Olympic Committee.

The federation said the move was made to protect players and avoid injury risks after a long suspension of training caused by recent regional developments, which halted sports activity in the country since February.

Secretary-General Talal Al-Nimash explained that the timing made participation unfeasible, as the gap between the decision to resume training on April 26 and the start of competition is only 14 days – an insufficient period for proper preparation and physical readiness.

He also noted that several key first-team players would be unavailable,



Secretary-General Talal Al-Nimash

further weakening the squad's ability to compete effectively in the tournament.

Al-Nimash stressed that the withdrawal decision prioritizes player welfare and aims to ensure Kuwait's national team continues to represent the country in a manner befitting its sporting reputation.

Hardie lights up final as Peshawar wins PSL title

Hyderabad dream run ends in defeat

LAHORE, Pakistan, May 4, (AP): Aaron Hardie's brilliant all-round performance led Peshawar Zalmi to its first Pakistan Super League cricket title since 2017 with a five-wicket win over newcomer Hyderabad Kingsmen in the final.

Hardie grabbed 4-27 to bowl out Hyderabad for a below-par 129 all out in 18 overs with Saim Ayub (54) scoring a fighting half century. Hardie then hit a fluent 56 not out off 39 balls and anchored Peshawar to 130-5 in 15.2 overs in front of a packed crowd at Gaddafi Stadium.

"It's a very big achievement for me, for Peshawar Zalmi and all the fans," said Peshawar captain Babar Azam after winning his first PSL title as skipper. "Throughout the tournament we've performed really well as a team ... every player executed the plans they were given in batting, bowling, and fielding. Our plan was to go match by match."

Peshawar, which won the toss and chose to chase, had slumped to 40-4 inside the first five overs after losing tournament top run-scorer Babar for a golden duck while Mohammad Haris, Kusal Mendis and Michael Bracewell also fell for single-digit scores.

But Hardie, who smashed nine fours, then combined in a match-winning stand of 85 runs with Abdul Samad (48), who missed out on his half century before holing out in the deep when Peshawar needed only five runs for victory.

"It was just a great game of cricket," Hardie said. "Kingsmen came out of the blocks really hard. They've certainly had a lot of momentum from the last couple of games and they carried that in, but I'm really proud of the way the boys were able to fight back."

Peshawar was favorite for the title after it lost only one game in the tournament with Babar, who scored two centuries, equaling Fakhar Zaman's PSL record of 588 runs in one edition of the tournament.

Hyderabad had a productive power play of 69-2 despite Hardie having captain Marnus Labuschagne (20) caught behind of a rising delivery and Maaz Sadaqat's early aggression was



Officials and players of Peshawar Zalmi celebrate as they pose for photo with trophy after winning the Pakistan Super League final cricket match against Hyderabad Kingsmen, in Lahore, Pakistan. (AP)

cut short to just 11 runs when he half-heartedly pulled pace bowler Mohammad Basit to deep backward square leg in the first over.

However, Hyderabad lost momentum and crashed to 73-6 in the space of nine balls after the power play for just two runs.

The slide began when Usman Khan, coming into the final with half centu-

ries in the last three successive games, was trapped leg before wicket by the tournament's leading wicket-taker Su-fyan Moqim (1-23).

Irfan Khan and Kusal Perera were run out to some sharp fielding by Bracewell and between those dismissals Glenn Maxwell was undone by Nahid Rana's (2-22) pace and got caught first ball while going for a pull against

the Bangladesh fast bowler.

Ayub stretched the total beyond the 100-run mark with a knock of 54 off 50 balls before he fell in Hardie's last over as he top-edged a pull to mid-on before the fast bowler wrapped up the innings by having No. 11 batter Akif Javed caught behind.

"As a batting group, we probably left a few runs out there," Labuscha-

gne said. "We showed once again that belief in the side and what we can do, putting them four for 40, but just not enough runs on the board tonight."

Hyderabad had a fairytale run in the tournament when it came back strongly after losing its first four league games and also knocked out both former champions Multan Sultans and Islamabad United in the playoffs.

"Tonight hurts," Labuschagne said. "But reflecting on what an amazing tournament we've put together, coming from four losses to winning four in a row, getting bowled out for 80 then winning by 100, and then winning two games to get into the final. We've made so many great memories and I'm just so proud of the team, it's been an awesome effort."

Norris pushes hard but settles for second

Antonelli delivers another statement victory in Miami

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla., May 4, (AP): Kimi Antonelli won the Miami Grand Prix on Sunday for his third consecutive Formula 1 victory as the 19-year-old Mercedes drivers continued to show he's a legitimate championship contender.

Antonelli started from the pole but had a slick start on a damp surface at the Miami International Autodrome. Threats of heavy rain led F1 to move up the start of the race by three hours, and there was an early morning heavy thunderstorm with lightning strikes directly over the Hard Rock Stadium, but it had cleared by the time the event began.

Still, the first 25 laps were attacked by the drivers as if the rain could return at any moment, and it led to early chaos, even for Antonelli.

Charles Leclerc of Ferrari had a spectacular start from third and surged to the lead when Antonelli went wide off course trying to defend. A split-second later, Max Verstappen spun trying to hold off Leclerc when the two cars made contact.

The contact caused Verstappen, who started a season-best second, to plummet to ninth after the spin.

Antonelli recovered and reclaimed the lead on the fifth lap, and the leaders briefly swapped positions as Leclerc moved back to the front before reigning world champion Lando Norris took over on Lap 14.

Verstappen worked his way through the field and briefly took the lead as others

pitted, but Antonelli beat Norris off pit lane and reclaimed the lead for good once everything cycled out.

Norris finished second, 3.2 seconds behind Antonelli, as the Italian and teammate George Russell have won the first four races of this season for Mercedes. Leclerc was going to finish third until Oscar Piastri of McLaren passed him on the final lap. Leclerc spun and settled for sixth.

Russell was fourth and Verstappen finished a season-best fifth for Red Bull. Lewis Hamilton of Ferrari was seventh.

Cadillac, in its first race in the United States, had an unimpressive weekend on the track even as it splashed its way through Miami with appearances and events. Sergio Perez finished 16th and Valtteri Bottas was 18th - the last car to finish in the 22-driver field.

Isack Hadjar had been disqualified after qualifying and started last, but his race lasted five laps before he drove his Red Bull into the wall. Hadjar was openly angry at the result as he pounded his helmet before climbing from his car and angrily stomping away.

Seconds later, Pierre Gasly and Liam Lawson made contact that caused Gasly's car to do a full rollover. The Frenchman's car ended stuck with its rear tires atop a barrier and he climbed from the half-suspended BMW on his own.



Mercedes driver Kimi Antonelli of Italy holds his trophy after winning the Miami Formula One Grand Prix auto race in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)