



HH Amir, Italian PM discuss area scenario Page 2



Scan the QR code to access the Arab Times WhatsApp Channel

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2026 / DHUL-QADAH 19, 1447 AH

emergency number 112

NO. 19198

16 PAGES

150 FILS

CABINET IN CONTINUOUS SESSION AS REGION TEETERS

Kuwait reaffirms full solidarity with UAE amid rising tensions

Iran signals 'secure' Hormuz transit as Trump turns up heat

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (Agencies): Kuwait's Cabinet reaffirmed full support and solidarity with the UAE following recent Iranian attacks targeting civilian sites.

This came during the Cabinet's meeting, chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, reviewing regional developments, diplomatic efforts, and several legislative and service-related matters.

Following the meeting, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Abdullah Al-Maousherji said the Cabinet was briefed on the letter sent by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The letter was delivered by Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah during his official visit to Ankara.

The Cabinet also reviewed the outcomes of the foreign minister's talks with his Turkish counterpart, Hakan Fidan.

On regional developments, the Cabinet strongly condemned recent Iranian attacks targeting civilian sites in the UAE, reaffirming Kuwait's full solidarity with the UAE and support for measures to safeguard its security, stability, and sovereignty.

The Cabinet was also updated on the Foreign Ministry diplomatic efforts, including re-

cent communications with counterparts in friendly and sisterly countries, as well as a letter received from South Korean Foreign Minister Jo Hyun on regional developments and efforts to boost stability.

It further reviewed the latest regional military developments, particularly in light of recent attacks affecting Kuwait and Gulf countries.

On the legislative front, the Cabinet approved a draft decree-law on maritime facilities and floating units, aimed at modernizing Kuwait's maritime legislation, and referred it to His Highness the Amir for final approval.

The Cabinet also endorsed several draft decrees and memoranda of understanding with various countries to strengthen Kuwait's international relations across multiple sectors.

In addition, it approved initiatives under the Green Urban Development program, including beautification and greening projects supported by private sector contributions, aimed at enhancing public spaces and promoting sustainable urban development.

The Cabinet reviewed reports from government agencies on measures taken to raise preparedness levels to ensure the safety of citizens and residents and secure essential supplies amid ongoing regional developments.

Continued on Page 5



HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Juha shares the flogging award with the greedy guard

Juha decided to present the fish to the Sultan, hoping for a generous reward

The security guard said, "I won't let you see the Sultan unless you give me half of the reward he gives you"

Juhu said, "Stop, executioner! I have a partner in this reward; he must receive his share"

Those who pursue what is not theirs risk losing what they already have

The student, "What do you think, Sir, if we play a trick on this worker and hide his shoes to see what he does?"

The wise scholar replied, "We should not amuse ourselves by harming others"

The scholar, "My son, you are wealthy and can bring happiness instead"

The worker fell to his knees and looked up at the sky in tears

3

Stronger ties hailed

\$5 billion trade goal for Türkiye, Kuwait

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Sönmez expressed her satisfaction over the development of Turkish-Kuwaiti relations, stressing that this progress is an embodiment of the political will of the leaders of both nations and the aspirations of their friendly peoples.



Sönmez

In a press statement on Wednesday, Sönmez pointed out that the visit of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to Kuwait in October last year was pivotal in reinforcing the strategic dimension of bilateral ties. She said the upcoming visit of Foreign Affairs Minister Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber is expected to further

propel these relations toward wider horizons in multiple sectors.

She stressed that the decision of Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber to make Türkiye his first destination outside the Arab world after assuming office underscores the depth and strength of ties between the two countries.

She added this aligns with the first overseas visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah beyond the Arab world, which was also to Türkiye, reflecting the significance of the partnership.

She disclosed that discussions during the visit focused on major regional developments,

Continued on Page 5



PM Diwan photo

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs a high-level meeting on Wednesday to enhance groundwater resources and reinforce Kuwait's water security system, in the presence of senior ministers and officials from the energy and research sectors.

Prime Minister leads strategic review

Kuwait taps urgent action to fortify water security

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired a meeting on Wednesday to discuss ways to enhance groundwater resources.

The meeting came within the framework of supporting water security system and preserving the strategic water

reserves.

The meeting was attended by Minister of Oil Tareq Al-Roumi, Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Sabeeh Al-Mukhaizeem, Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Boodai, Advisor at the Prime Minister's Diwan Dr. Khaled Al-Fadhel, Acting

Head of the Prime Minister's Diwan Sheikh Khaled Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, and a number of officials from KPC, Kuwait Oil Company, and Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research.

Europe Day marked in Kuwait with message of unity, security

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The European Union (EU) Delegation to Kuwait commemorated Europe Day on Wednesday.

On this occasion, EU Ambassador to Kuwait Anne Koistinen pointed out "we are not only commemorating the historic Schuman Declaration - the foundation of the European Union, as this occasion is a valuable opportunity to reaffirm our international partnerships, particularly our strong strategic alliance with Kuwait."

She disclosed that immediately after the start of the Iranian aggression against Kuwait, Foreign Affairs Minister Sheikh Jarrah Al-Sabah received



Anne Koistinen, EU Ambassador to Kuwait

a phone call from High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas, affirming the EU's condemnation of the Iranian attack on Kuwait and the region.

Continued on Page 4

Day by Day

SCIENTISTS say that when milk spoils, it can turn into yogurt, which can be more beneficial than milk. If yogurt ferments further, it becomes cheese, which is more valuable than both yogurt and milk. Grapes can turn into juice, but if they ferment, they become wine, which is more expensive than juice. Making mistakes does not make you a bad person. Experiences add more to your value. Don't let mistakes discourage you... Learn from them. ... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



Kuwait's Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah in a group photo with other attendees at the opening of SAHA EXPO 2026 in Türkiye, marking Kuwait's participation in the international defense and aerospace exhibition.

Kuwait Defense Minister attends SAHA EXPO 2026 in Türkiye

Kuwait's Minister of Defense Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah attended the opening of SAHA EXPO 2026 in Türkiye on Wednesday, accom-

panied by an official delegation.

In a statement, the Kuwait Ministry of Defense said the minister toured several pavilions, reviewing the latest defense systems

and military technologies, and was briefed on key innovations and projects in the defense and security industries.

Continued on Page 4

Mubarakiya gold shops fined, flagged in Kuwait AML push

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Department at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry conducted a field inspection tour in Capital Governorate, targeting gold and precious metals shops in Mubarakiya.

A total of 84 shops were inspected during the campaign, leading to the discovery of several violations and legal action was taken against all those proven to have committed

violations.

Fines were imposed for 47 violations, which included failure to verify the identity of the beneficial owner of purchases, failure to comply with due diligence and enhanced due diligence procedures, and conducting cash transactions.

This is in addition to 28 suspicious cases, including the failure of establishments to notify the Financial Intelligence Unit and lack of awareness among some shop employees regarding anti-money

Continued on Page 5



NBK launches 'Youth Training and Development Programs' for Summer 2026... The largest of its kind in Kuwait

Food subsidies reach KD 80m

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Data issued by the Supply Department of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry showed that total government subsidies allocated for food supplies during the first quarter of 2026 (January, February and March) reached KD 80 million.

Continued on Page 5

Food safety checks run 24/7

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Director of

the Food Safety Department at the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) Faisal Al-Rashidi said the regulatory bodies are working round the clock to



Al-Rashidi

monitor food products in the local market.

In an interview with Kuwait Radio, Al-Rashidi revealed that the inspection teams continuously collect and analyze food and beverage samples to ensure compliance with health regulations and food safety standards.

He stressed that PAFN deals firmly with violating establishments, applying the gradual system of penalties based on the type and severity of the violation.

Continued on Page 4



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:34 Asr 15:20
 Sunrise .. 05:02 Maghrib .. 18:28
 Zohr 11:45 Isha 19:53



Sheikh Meshal



Giorgia Meloni

HH Amir, Italian PM discuss area scenario

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a phone call Wednesday from Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, during which they reviewed the strong bilateral relations between the two countries and peoples.

The call also covered several topics of mutual interest, as well as the latest regional and international developments, particularly in light of current conditions in the region.

Meloni reaffirmed Italy's support for Kuwait and its people, expressing her country's backing for all efforts aimed at preserving Kuwait's sovereignty, security, and stability.

In turn, His Highness the Amir expressed his sincere appreciation to the Italian prime minister, wishing her continued health and the Italian people further progress and prosperity.

Kuwait's PM receives GCC Chief Al-Budaiwi

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received on Wednesday Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Al-Budaiwi on the occasion of his visit to the country.

Other Voices

New Kuwait and the non-Arab migration

POLITICAL and social activism in Kuwait was active since the 1920s, and became even more vibrant in the 1950s, with the presence of literary, sports, and political clubs, as well as charitable and public benefit societies, until a decision was taken to close them for security reasons.

Among these societies were the "Guidance Society," which later became the "Society for Social Reform," the mouthpiece of the Muslim Brotherhood, and the "National Cultural Club," the voice of the nationalists, which published "Al-Iman Magazine," edited by Dr. Ahmed Al-Khatib and others.

In the April 1953 issue, the following appeared under the title "Failaka and the Immigration of Non-Arabs": "It appears that the danger of the immigration of non-Arabs to Kuwait will not end easily."

The methods used by these individuals to enter Kuwait are numerous and varied. One method recently reported involves their arrival in small boats landing on Failaka Island, where they stay briefly before moving into Kuwait via fishing vessels, later gathering in shops, warehouses, or the homes of their compatriots.

Officials must be vigilant about this imminent danger to this Arab country and strengthen the Coast Guard's measures to combat smuggling activities described as a threat to the country's security, health, morals, national identity, and future.

We note from the names of the newsletter's editors that they were politically opposed to the Guidance Society and expressed concern about the demographic threat emanating from Iran at that time. I do not believe that the majority of those editors held the same view decades later, after witnessing the true dangers that threatened the nation, its very existence, and its civil nature.

A large percentage of those who came to Kuwait in the 1950s and 1960s from the Persian coast were Iranians or Persians, many of whom were not Shiite, and had easily integrated into society. As for others referenced in the publication's warnings, they were largely skilled workers who practiced their professions for a while before returning to their countries after saving money.

Undoubtedly, many entered Kuwait illegally at the time and later returned in the same manner. A limited number among them obtained citizenship. Recent revelations regarding cases of manipulation of national identity have made us believe any naturalization scandal.

I see no convincing reason for some people to refuse speaking openly about such topics.

Kuwait was a country of immigrants. No one was born here, as people arrived from various regions, including Najd, Zubair, southern Arabia, Oman, Iran, Ottoman Turkiye, Iraq, and Bahrain, and formed a community that later became an independent state.

Kuwaiti Nationality Law No. 15/1959 states that a Kuwaiti citizen is anyone who was living or present in Kuwait in 1920 or earlier, regardless of origin, religion, sect, or ethnicity, whether they arrived on foot, on camel, or as a refugee by sea from ports or cities in Persia.

Kuwait is our homeland, and preserving its freedom and borders is a duty upon us all, regardless of origin. Kuwait has finally returned to us, thanks to our wise leadership, and we must not allow anyone to disrupt our social harmony or undermine our national unity. Our national unity has always been the bulwark that protected Kuwait from past dangers, and it will protect us from the danger coming from the north.

All those who came to this blessed land arrived for specific purposes, and those who arrived earlier should not boast or consider themselves superior simply because they came to Kuwait earlier.

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw

Hunt for alternate routes

Railroad key in sustainable Kuwait, Saudi supply lines

JEDDAH, May 6, (KUNA): With rising regional tensions following outbreak of Iranian attacks, supply chains have faced major challenges, including disruptions to shipping and transportation operations, and increased logistics costs. This has negatively affected the flow of trade and the availability of goods.

As these challenges intensified in maritime corridors, particularly after the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important sea passages through which more than 30 percent of global trade passes, it has become necessary to diversify logistics routes and seek strategic alternatives to ensure continued flow of goods and secure market needs.

Joint efforts between the State of Kuwait and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have helped mitigate impact of the crisis and turn challenges into opportunities that support market stability.

This has been achieved by leveraging the two countries' strategic geographic location, Saudi Arabia's advanced infrastructure and ports on both the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea, along with Kuwait's logistical and investment capabilities. These factors have enhanced prospects for deeper integration, improved supply chain efficiency, and facilitated regional and international trade flows.

Reinforcing this direction, a recent visit by a delegation from Saudi Arabia's NEOM Port to the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) highlighted importance of strengthening partnerships in import and export sectors, building an integrated supply chain system, and developing more efficient and sustainable trade routes.

Logistics

In this regard, the Director General of KCCI, Rabah Al-Rabah, told KUNA emerging features of logistics integration between the two countries go beyond merely facilitating the movement of goods. "They aim to build a comprehensive regional logistics system combining seaports, land and air transport, with future plans for railway connectivity." Al-Rabah added that the future of this partnership would not be limited to facilitating trade flows, but will reshape trade patterns and redistribute logistical roles in the region, potentially transforming both countries into a central hub within a more flexible and adaptive regional trade network.

He noted that this integration was reflected in the growing role of Saudi ports as regional redistribution centers, improvements in land border efficiency and streamlined customs procedures, all of which reduce transit time and enhance trade flow.



Rakan Al-Otaishan



Rabah Al-Rabah

He explained that the bilateral logistics partnership has helped reduce the impact of supply chain disruptions by mitigating immediate shortages through rerouting goods when certain maritime routes are disrupted. It has also reduced the risk of sharp cost increases by expanding access options and lowering reliance on a single channel, in addition to easing market panic.

Al-Rabah added that cooperation with Saudi ports would open new trade routes for Kuwait as a strategic shift, placing Kuwait within a broader regional trade network with greater efficiency and multiple pathways.

Trade routes

He emphasized that diversifying trade routes was now a necessity rather than a choice, especially in light of global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

He stressed that the full impact of logistics cooperation would become more evident as railway connectivity projects between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia progress.

Rail transport is a key factor in enhancing trade corridor efficiency, reducing costs, and increasing cargo capacity. Once completed, this connection will transform current alternative routes into primary trade corridors that reshape regional trade flows.

He also affirmed a potential to expand this bilateral cooperation into a broader Gulf model for supply chains by establishing an integrated institutional framework at the regional level.

This, he continued to say, would involve unifying and coordinating customs procedures, linking digital systems for data exchange between ports, simplifying transit requirements to reduce clearance time and strengthening physical connectivity through shared logistics corridors.

He said that the success of the Kuwaiti-Saudi model could form the foundation of a wider Gulf logistics system based on integrated infrastructure, unified procedures, and strengthened joint governance, turning the region into a comprehensive logistics platform.

He projected this partnership to deepen in the coming years, driven by the need to enhance supply security,

reduce disruption risks and benefit from Saudi Arabia's rapid expansion in logistics infrastructure, offering Kuwait opportunities to integrate into a broader regional network, particularly through Red Sea ports.

For his part, the Chairman of the National Logistics Committee at the Federation of Saudi Chambers, Rakan Al-Otaishan, told KUNA the future of logistics partnership between the two countries was promising and significant.

Integration

Al-Otaishan pointed to the potential for achieving strategic integration across all levels, especially in logistics, through rail, land, sea and air connectivity.

He also highlighted investment opportunities in logistics zones in the Eastern and Western regions to serve as logistics hubs and storage facilities for the private sector, including Kuwaiti investors, helping address future supply chain challenges.

He said that Gulf Cooperation Council countries have demonstrated clear proactive steps toward supply chain sustainability through comprehensive plans to address possible disruptions, reflecting a high level of readiness.

He added that one of the key lessons learned was the importance of not relying on a single route, but rather establishing alternative channels particularly through Red Sea ports supported by logistics centers and strategic storage facilities.

He noted that investment in warehouses, food security, and storage by Gulf private sector companies in Red Sea ports and Saudi regions would help reduce costs and address future challenges affecting supply chains in the Arabian Gulf or the Strait of Hormuz.

On another note, signs of bilateral cooperation highlight the increasing efficiency of land border crossings. Statistics from Saudi Al-Ikhabariya Channel on April 10 showed heavy truck traffic between February 28 and April 9.

Al-Khafi crossing recorded 19,511 trucks, while Al-Reque crossing saw 9,417 outbound trucks, underscoring the vital role of these crossings in facilitating supply chains.

Alongside land transport, air transport has emerged as a complementary route strengthening the bilateral logistics system.

The aviation and air cargo sector demonstrated high efficiency in addressing recent challenges by activating alternative routes for Kuwait Airways and Jazeera Airways via Dammam and Qaisumah airports in Saudi Arabia, ensuring smooth travel and cargo operations.

The multifaceted integration across sectors represents a model of strategic partnership, utilizing the capabilities of both countries to build a system attractive to major global companies and supportive of regional and international economic stability.

Digital transformation to promote transparency, governance – MoE

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaie held an expanded meeting Wednesday with educational leaders and officials from the General Administration of Development and Growth and the General Administration of Technology and Information Systems.

This comes as part of ongoing efforts to develop administrative procedures and enhance institutional efficiency in line with the state's direction toward digital transformation and the promotion of governance and transparency across various sectors, Ministry of Education said in a statement.

The meeting began with a comprehensive presentation on the digital transformation platform for training courses at the Ministry and covered key initiatives to improve administrative systems and mechanisms, as well as plans to shift from traditional procedures to integrated digital systems that support faster completion and more accurate follow-up.

Minister Al-Tabtabaie reviewed the working mechanisms in the General Administration of Development and Growth, particularly regarding the transition of teacher training programs from in-person to virtual training under current circumstances, the statement noted.

He stressed the importance of keeping procedures simple and streamlined to ensure fair access for employees to professional development opportunities.

Furthermore, he instructed the governance of procedures for requesting specializations for scholarships for the Ministry's employees, by establishing a clear regulatory framework aligned with Civil Service Commission regulations.

He concluded that digital transformation is not merely about shifting to electronic systems, but about enhancing transparency and improving overall performance efficiency.



Al-Tabtabaie

PAHW seeks property valuation

Quote prices, real estate firms told

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) has announced a call for price quotations from real estate appraisal firms accredited by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to assess its property portfolio in order to update the market value of its assets and raise overall management efficiency.

On its official website, PAHW disclosed that the scope of the call for quotations includes the valuation of 303 different types of properties -- 245 vacant plots, 53 houses and five apartments. It indicated that interested parties can find details about these properties through its website. It clarified that applicants must submit a formal request to obtain the data, accompanied by a set of required documents, such as a copy of the latest real estate appraisal accreditation certificate issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as signed declarations, which include acknowledgment of the terms and conditions, a confidentiality agreement, and

a valid power of attorney if the applicant is acting on behalf of another party.

The period for submission of bids is on May 3-14, until 12:30 pm. Bids must be submitted in sealed envelopes containing all required documents and bearing the signature of the authorized representative. Each bid must include a summary of the experience of the firm in property valuation, along with official documents like the license, authorized signatory and civil identification card.

A deposit is also required, either in the form of a certified check or an unconditional letter of guarantee issued by a bank approved in Kuwait. Any bid that fails to meet this requirement will be excluded.

Bids must be delivered to the PAHW headquarters in South Surra area, specifically to the Investor Relations and Marketing Department. Bids that are incomplete or submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

The authority retains the right to accept or reject any bid, as well as to amend or suspend the process at any stage without providing justification, in accordance with the regulations.



Abdulaziz Al-Saedi

KUNA photo

'Peaceful nuke sharing right of every country'

NEW YORK, May 6, (KUNA): Kuwait on Tuesday underlined the importance of boosting cooperation in transferring nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and capability building, mainly in the developing countries to help them benefit from nuclear applications in vital areas like health and food security.

This came in a speech delivered by Third Secretary of Kuwait's Permanent Mission to the UN Abdulaziz Al-Saedi before the Main Committee III at the Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Al-Saedi affirmed that the peaceful use of energy constitutes a main pillar of the NPT and an inalienable right of all state parties to the treaty, in accordance with Article Four, in a manner that contributes to backing the efforts of sustainable development and boosting national capabilities.

He elaborated that the balance between this legitimate right and the requirements of non-proliferation is a main factor to ensure the treaty credibility and continuation.

In the name of Kuwait, Al-Saedi extolled the pivotal role by the International Atomic Energy Agency in this regard, mainly through the technical cooperation program, the main tool to transfer knowledge and technology and enhance peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Sustainable

He called for providing enough and sustainable financial resources to this program in a way that ensures effectiveness to keep implementing the agency's mandate.

He urged the agency to halt all types of cooperation with the Israeli occupation, saying it's illogical that there is collaboration in this field with a party practicing an ambiguous nuclear policy.

On Iran's nuclear file, Al-Saedi stressed the significance of resuming cooperation with the agency and addressing concerns related to transparency in a manner that ensures full commitment to nuclear security and safety standards.

He pointed to Iran's Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant, some kms away from Kuwait and GCC countries, warning that any radiation danger of this reactor will negatively affect the whole region and cause dangerous environment impacts.

Al-Saedi said that it is paramount to provide guarantees required to the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program mainly amid dangerous developments in the region to build confidence and enhances regional stability.

Concluding the speech, Al-Saedi underlined that enhancing the pillar of peaceful use requires an international environment based on cooperation and mutual respect as well as full commitments to the treaty in a way that guarantees empowering countries to achieve sustainable development without prejudice to the requirements of security and non-proliferation.

Smooth start to educational process eyed

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah recently met with acting Director for Educational Affairs at the Farwaniya Educational District Dr. Musaed Al-Shammari and Maintenance Director Eng. Jamal Al-Aiban, at his office in the Farwaniya Governorate headquarters.

The meeting coincided with the return of secondary school students to their classrooms.

During the meeting, they discussed ongoing preparations to ensure school readiness, particularly routine maintenance and facility preparation, to ensure the smooth start of the academic year and provide a suitable and safe learning environment for the students.

The Governor confirmed his com-



Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah meets the higher education officials.

mitment to support the educational sector, stressing the importance of integrated roles among various entities to ensure the smooth educational process, especially during this crucial academic period.

On the other hand, the visit-

ing academic sector officials expressed gratitude to the Governor for his support and attention, affirming their continuous work and coordination to provide the best educational services in the governorate.

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



Juha shares the flogging award with the greedy guard

IT is said that Juha once caught a large, rare fish and was overjoyed. He decided to present it to the Sultan, hoping for a generous reward.

When he arrived at the palace, a guard stopped him from entering and said greedily, "I won't let you see the Sultan unless you give me half of whatever reward he gives you."

Juha thought for a moment and reluctantly agreed.

He entered the Sultan's court and presented the fish, which greatly impressed the Sultan. Pleased, the Sultan said, "Ask for whatever you wish, Juha."

Juha replied firmly, "Your Excellency, I ask for one hundred lashes."

The Sultan was astonished by the unusual request and tried to persuade him to ask for money or a position, but Juha insisted on being flogged.

The Sultan agreed and ordered the executioner to administer the punishment lightly, taking into account Juha's age and the fact that he had not committed any crime deserving of punishment. The executioner began striking him gently until he reached fifty lashes. At that point, Juha suddenly cried out, "Stop ... stop, executioner! I have a partner in this reward; he must receive his share!"

The Sultan looked at him in surprise and asked who his partner was.

Juha replied, "He is your guard, the one at the palace gate, my lord. He demanded half of whatever I would receive from you, otherwise he would prevent me from entering."

The Sultan laughed at Juha's cunning and ordered the guard to be brought before him immediately. He then instructed the executioner to administer the remaining fifty lashes, this time more firmly, as punishment for the guard's greed.

The Sultan ordered that the guard be dismissed and imprisoned as a warning to others. He also

● Juha decided to present the fish to the Sultan, hoping for a generous reward

● The security guard said, "I won't let you see the Sultan unless you give me half of the reward he gives you"

● Juha said, "Stop, executioner! I have a partner in this reward; he must receive his share"

● Those who pursue what is not theirs risk losing what they already have

● The student, "What do you think, Sir, if we play a trick on this worker and hide his shoes to see what he does?"

● The wise scholar replied, "We should not amuse ourselves by harming others"

● The scholar, "My son, you are wealthy and can bring happiness instead"

● The worker fell to his knees and looked up at the sky in tears

granted Juha a generous financial reward in recognition of his intelligence and resourcefulness.

The moral of the story is that whoever covets what belongs to others unjustly may find that greed leads to humiliation and loss. Those who pursue what is not theirs risk losing what they already have and failing to achieve their goal.

Comforting the poor

It is said that a wise scholar was walking with one of his students through the fields. As they walked, they saw an old pair of shoes and as-

sumed they belonged to a poor man working in a nearby field who would return to collect them after his work.

The student said to the scholar, "What do you think, Sir, if we play a trick on this worker and hide his shoes to see what he does?"

The wise scholar replied, "We should not amuse ourselves by harming others. My son, you are wealthy and can bring happiness instead. Place some coins inside the poor man's shoes, then hide and observe his reaction."

The student liked the idea and placed some coins in the shoes. He and his teacher then hid nearby to watch the worker's response.

After a few minutes, the worker, dressed in shabby clothes, arrived after finishing his work in the field to retrieve his shoes. He was surprised when he put his foot inside a shoe to find something inside it. After realizing it was money, he checked the other shoe and found more. Confused, he looked at the coins repeatedly, making sure he was not imagining it. He looked around but saw no one nearby.

He placed the money in his pocket, then fell to his knees and looked up at the sky in tears. He prayed, "Thank You, Lord, for knowing that my wife is ill and my children are hungry and have no food. Thank You for saving me and my children from hardship."

He remained there for some time, overwhelmed with gratitude for what he believed was a gift from heaven.

The disciple was deeply moved, and his eyes filled with tears.

"Aren't you happier now than if you had followed my suggestion?" the wise man asked the disciple.

The disciple replied, "You have taught me an unforgettable lesson. Now I understand the meaning of words I never truly understood before: it is more blessed to give than to receive."

O wise President of Syria, many of those who harmed the Syrian people during Bashar al-Assad's term also harmed citizens in the GCC states. Some of the stolen funds were laundered, while others were used to finance terrorist activities.



O President of Syria, place your trust in God and pursue these murderers, thieves, and criminals, and bring them to justice.



No one will pay attention to you until you say something wrong. The truth you speak is not always accepted by everyone.



People's needs will surely be fulfilled. When God chooses you as a means to help meet those needs, it is a great divine blessing. The best among people in God's eyes is the one through whom the needs of others are fulfilled.



Denying a mistake means committing two mistakes - first, the wrongdoing itself, and second, the denial of it.



Farwaniya Governorate photo Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah meets Farwaniya Governorate Traffic Director Colonel Raed Mohammad Al-Sulaiman in his office.

Traffic chaos remains top priority: Governor

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah met with Farwaniya Governorate Traffic Director Colonel Raed Mohammad Al-Sulaiman at his office on Wednesday.

They talked about various transportation issues at the meeting.

Sheikh Athbi Nasser pointed out the impact of traffic on the daily routines of residents and citizens, affirming that addressing the road congestion issue remains on top of the priority of the governorate.

They also explored ways to strengthen collaboration among the concerned agencies, intensify field operations, and lay down actionable strategies to ease vehicle movement and reduce bottlenecks, in order to ensure the safety of roads throughout the governorate.



KUNA photo Road maintenance teams at work in Dasma area.

Road repairs underway in Kuwait Dasma area

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Under the directives of Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, maintenance teams are carrying out road works in Dasma as part of a comprehensive plan to develop the road network and improve infrastructure efficiency in various regions.

Dr. Al-Mashaan affirmed the importance of expediting completion rates while maintaining high-quality execution in line with approved technical standards.

The ongoing works include asphalt paving and maintenance, which will enhance road efficiency, improve safety levels, and meet the highest quality standards.

Kuwaiti to hang for killing mom

Nepalese death ruling upheld

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Court of Appeals, presided over by Judge Abdullah Al-Othman, upheld the lower court's ruling which sentenced to death a Kuwaiti citizen convicted of killing his mother and attempting to kill his brother, reports Al-Seyassah daily.



Al-Othman

A dispute arose in the family home after the individual demanded money to buy drugs. When his mother refused, an argument ensued, during which he pulled out a knife and stabbed her repeatedly, resulting in her death.

The perpetrator then attacked his brother when he attempted to intervene, causing serious injuries. Security forces later apprehended the accused, who confessed to the crime.

Medical and forensic reports confirmed that the injuries were consistent with the weapon used and indicated that the accused was under the influence of

drugs.

□ □ □ **Death penalty upheld:** The Court of Appeals, presided over by Judge Dr. Fahad Bouslaib, upheld the lower court's ruling to impose the death penalty on a Nepalese expatriate convicted of killing a woman in Abu Halifa.

The case involved a dispute that escalated after objections were raised regarding the defendant's relationship with the victim's niece. The situation escalated into a violent altercation during which the defendant stabbed the victim multiple times, resulting in the victim's death at the scene.

The Public Prosecution charged the defendant with premeditated murder.

□ □ □ **Blogger gets 2 years:** The Court of Cassation, presided over by Judge Saleh Al-Murshid, upheld a two-year prison sentence for a social media user convicted in a State Security case for posting on his account content deemed offensive to the rights of His Highness the Amir, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

State Security forces apprehended the defendant after monitoring online activity linked to the account in question. Technical investigations confirmed that he authored the content and was responsible for managing the account.

Appeals cuts prison sentence against citizen in terror case

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The State Security Court of Appeals, presided over by Judge Abdullah Al-Sanea and with Judge Mohammed Jaafar and Judge Hamoud Al-Bader as members, amended a ruling against a citizen accused of financing Hizb ut-Tahrir and harming national interests, in addition to publishing statements inciting violations of the law on the X platform, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The court reduced the prison sentence from five years to three years and six months with hard labor.

In another case, the Court of Appeals overturned a ruling of refraining from punishment against a citizen accused of interfering in the authority to revoke citi-

zenships under Article 8.

The court sentenced the defendant to two years' imprisonment, suspended, with bail set at KD 3,000.

Furthermore, the court overturned a ruling of non-pronouncement of punishment against a citizen accused of insulting Iraq via TikTok, and acquitted him of the charges.

The court also upheld a ruling of non-punishment against a citizen accused of offending the Amiri position during a phone call to the customer service department of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy. The court ordered him to pay a bail of KD 5,000 and to provide a pledge of good conduct for two years.

Legal Dept staff quit en masse

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: "A 'wave of resignations' has swept through the Legal Department at Kuwait Municipality, as around 30 employees recently submitted requests to end their service - an unusual and unprecedented development within this vital sector," say reliable sources.

Sources told the newspaper that most of those who resigned are experienced

personnel nearing retirement age, in line with the current thresholds of 55 years old for men and 50 years old for women.

Sources pointed out that this is the trend among employees keen on benefiting from existing retirement privileges, ahead of any legislative changes.

They attributed these resignations to the prevailing sense of anticipation among employees regarding government proposals to reform the retirement system.

Since 1985

1800 188 / 5501 1985

www.mughalmahal.com

Cabinet moves to overhaul Municipal Council structure

All members to be appointed under new amendments

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff
KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Cabinet is moving toward approving amendments to Municipal Law No. 33/2016.

Among the most notable changes is restructuring the Municipal Council, such that all 16 members will be appointed by the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs for a term of two years.

This move is being described as the most comprehensive in years, paving the way for a reconfiguration of the municipal work system and the activation of its regulatory tools to meet the demands of the upcoming development phase.

Sources confirmed that the Cabinet approved the amendment related to the mechanism for the council in its first reading.

The official announcement of the

new Municipal Council members for the 2026-2028 term is expected to be made within this month, coinciding with the conclusion of the current term (2022-2026), which was established under the previous law with 10 elected and six appointed members.

With the end of this term, a chapter in the history of traditional municipal work comes to a close, giving way to a new phase characterized by a different approach to urban management.

This new approach prioritizes direct appointments and puts greater emphasis on technical and specialized expertise rather than electoral representation.

Sources disclosed that the selec-

tion process will be based on stringent criteria aimed at improving the quality of planning decisions.

These criteria include professional competence, vast experience in various fields such as engineering, planning, environmental studies, urban economics, and relevant legislation and regulations, in addition to the ability to support and implement the goals of Kuwait Vision 2035 and advance sustainable development.

This step is viewed as an effort to restructure municipal decision-making by forming a council better equipped to deal with contemporary challenges, particularly urban expansion, traffic congestion, and the efficient use of land.

Kuwait appears to be on the verge of a qualitative transformation in municipal governance, shifting from the traditional dual (elected-appointed) model to a more specialized framework.

This transition is intended to raise the efficiency of urban planning and

accelerate progress in accordance with the requirements of the upcoming development phase.

Meanwhile, constitutional expert Dr. Mohammad Al-Faili, Professor of Public Law at the College of Law in Kuwait University, affirmed that the constitutional principle is that laws take effect immediately upon issuance, stressing that the absence of implementing regulations does not necessarily suspend their application.

In a statement to the newspaper, Al-Faili explained that some legislation may include general provisions or references to unspecified regulatory details, making full implementation dependent on the issuance of implementing regulations that complete these aspects.

He added "the matter becomes clearer when the law stipulates the suspension of certain articles or provisions until the regulations are issued, creating a state of 'temporary legal suspension' until the regulatory framework is finalized."



Dr. Al-Faili

Strengthening social stability

Kuwait's 1st integrated Family Protection Program approved

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Minister of Justice and Chairman of the Cabinet's Legal Affairs Committee, Counselor Nasser Al-Sumait, announced the committee's unanimous approval of the government's Family Protection Program, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The committee decided to submit the program to the Cabinet, describing it as the first comprehensive government initiative of its kind for family protection in Kuwait.

Speaking to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Monday, Counselor Al-Sumait explained that the program aims to build a more effective national system for protecting families and children, supporting social stability, and enhancing coordination

among relevant government agencies.

The committee's approval marks an important step toward shifting from fragmented approaches to family issues to a comprehensive government framework based on prevention, protection, and rehabilitation. The system integrates legislative development, digital transformation, community awareness, and improved efficiency of agencies dealing with family and child-related matters.

The program includes 83 government initiatives distributed across 12 government entities within a unified framework, reflecting the shift of family protection efforts from scattered initiatives to a structured national program.

Counselor Al-Sumait stated that submitting the program to the Cabinet reflects the State's commitment to protecting Kuwaiti families and strengthening family and social stability through a measurable and monitorable institutional approach.



Al-Sumait

CMA hosts SHIFT program to boost youth financial readiness

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Participants in the SHIFT program visited the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) on Tuesday.

The program, organized by National Investments Company (NIC), is part of the ongoing efforts of CMA to support national initiatives aimed at developing young talent and raising their professional readiness to enter the financial and investment sector.

During the visit, CMA organized a comprehensive program that included a presentation on its role and responsibilities, highlighting its main regulatory and supervisory functions in overseeing capital market activities. It also emphasized its role in promoting transparency, building trust, and protecting investor rights.

Various departments at CMA showcased their contributions to supporting the institutional framework. The presentation included an overview of the responsibilities of CMA departments and their role in carrying out regulatory and supervisory tasks.

The visit is considered highly productive, as it provided the participants with the opportunity to learn about the practical aspects of working at CMA and to familiarize themselves with the institutional work environment and its requirements. This experience helped them understand career paths in the regulatory and supervisory sector.

It also focused on equipping participants with the necessary skills to work in this field and strengthen their connection with relevant national entities in

this vital sector.

It affirmed the commitment of CMA to shoulder its social responsibility in disseminating financial knowledge, supporting training initiatives, and enhancing communication with educational and training institutions, in line with its goal to invest in human capital.

CMA is keen on supporting national talent by providing with the necessary knowledge and skills to keep pace with rapid developments in the financial markets.

The visit concluded with an interactive discussion session, during which participants exchanged views and their inquiries answered, thus, making the experience valuable.



Participants of the SHIFT program pose for a group photo during their visit to the Capital Markets Authority.

CAPT logs 915 transactions in April

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) presented a summary of its Board of Directors meetings in April -- a total of 11 meetings attended by 952 representatives of 56 entities, with a cumulative attendance time of 79 hours.

CAPT revealed that 915 transactions

were completed last month as follows: 64 complaints and grievances, 16 registrations, 136 direct contracting procedures, 77 tenders issued, 120 bid openings, 51 summonses, 119 recommendations, eight penalties imposed, five extension/change orders, 85 extension orders, 10 change orders, 139 initial guarantees and 74 publications, with zero implementation failure.

Continued from Page 1

Food safety

He emphasized that the primary objective is to protect consumer health, while guiding establishments to comply with the regulations.

He added that grave violations, particularly those affecting food safety, are addressed through immediate measures that may include administrative closure or referral to the competent authorities, while minor violations, such as those related to sanitation regulations, are addressed through warnings or escalating penalties before further action is taken. He pointed out that some violations may result in hefty fines or imprisonment if proven to be a risk to consumer health, reiterating that the severity of the penalty is determined based on the assessment of the level of risk.

Regarding the role of consumers, he asserted that they are a key partner in the regulatory system, urging them to report observations or violations identified in the markets through the official communication channels of PAFN -- the hotline or electronic platforms. He confirmed that all reports are treated seriously and that the necessary measures are taken accordingly.

He indicated that improper storage practices like exposing food or water containers to sunlight are considered grave violations due to the harmful reactions they may cause, thereby, affecting product safety.

He also warned that PAFN is strictly enforcing regulations about appropriate temperatures for transportation and storage, and that any establishment failing to comply will face penalties.

Regarding the mechanism for handling complaints, he explained that reports received from citizens or international organizations are evaluated based on scientific principles and risk assessment criteria. "Immediate action is then taken to withdraw non-compliant products from the market, destroy them or rectify their condition, depending on the case," he added.

He also confirmed the ongoing coordination with the Ministry of Health, particularly in cases of suspected food poisoning, where joint teams are formed to investigate and quickly take the necessary measures. He added that PAFN continues to develop its regulatory system and strengthen cooperation with various entities.

He appealed to the owners of food establishments to fully comply with health regulations, and the consumers to remain vigilant and report violations to ensure a safe and healthy food environment for everyone.

Europe Day

She emphasized the right of states to take all the necessary measures to protect

their sovereignty, indicating that EU Special Representative for the Gulf region Luigi Di Maio visited Kuwait on March 29 to confirm this commitment. "During his visit, he affirmed the support of EU for Kuwait in facing the unjustified aggression and commended the air defense systems of the country for their role in protecting all Kuwaitis and residents, including more than 5,000 EU citizens. The EU and its member states stand in solidarity with Kuwait, considering its national security a fundamental pillar of their shared vision for a stable and peaceful region."

She explained that Europe Day is a celebration of peace and unity in Europe, as the Schuman Declaration was a powerful statement that launched the European integration process, in addition to the longest peace project in history.

She said the EU Delegation to Kuwait serves as the main coordinating body for the 27 EU member states (17 of which currently have embassies in Kuwait) in line with a unified approach known as 'Team Europe'. "Through concerted efforts and expertise, the EU Delegation and member states work in harmony with the Kuwaiti government and people, especially during challenging times. This year, we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between the EU and Kuwait. Four decades ago, we established a partnership that has evolved into one that is based on trust, stability and shared progress. Last February, I was happy to attend the celebration of 65th National Day of Kuwait in Brussels, where Kuwaitis and their EU counterparts celebrated four decades of constructive cooperation based on mutual respect, dialogue and shared values."

She is hoping that negotiations for a strategic partnership agreement with Kuwait will begin this year. "The agreement aims to establish an ambitious, modern, comprehensive and effective framework for bilateral cooperation, aligned with the shared priorities and objectives of the EU and Kuwait. It will be a turning point in the relationship, as such partnership addresses common challenges and capitalizes on available opportunities," she concluded.

Kuwait Defense

The ministry noted that Kuwait's participation reflects its commitment to keeping pace with global developments and exploring opportunities for cooperation and exchange of expertise with specialized entities and companies.

The minister was accompanied by Kuwait's Ambassador to Türkiye Abdulaziz Al-Adwani, Deputy Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Pilot Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and several senior officers from the Ministries of Defense and Interior and the National Guard. (KUNA)



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

LOCAL

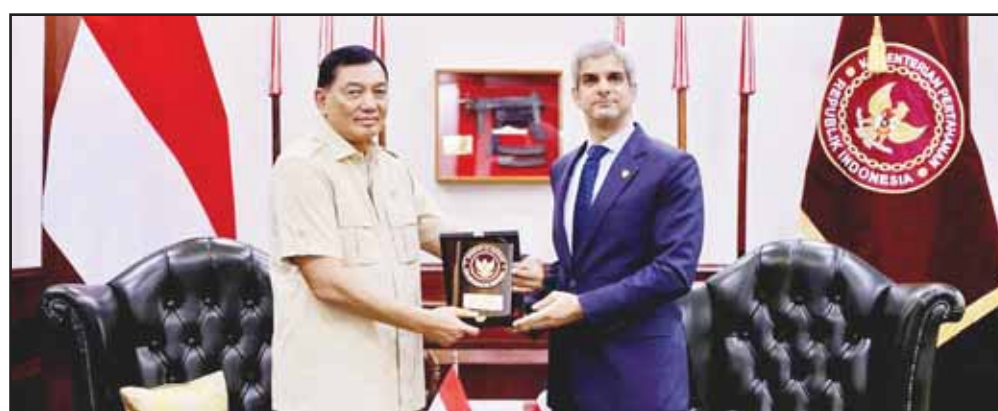
Kuwait, Indonesia explore stronger defense co-op

KUALA LUMPUR, May 6, (KUNA): Ambassador of Kuwait to Indonesia Khaled Al-Yaseen explored on Wednesday, with Indonesian Minister of Defense Sjafrie Sjamsjoeddin means of enhancing military and defense cooperation between the two countries.

A statement issued by Kuwait Embassy in Jakarta said the meeting also reviewed bilateral relations and the latest regional developments.

Sjamsjoeddin affirmed the strength of Kuwait-Indonesian relations, expressing Indonesia's readiness to enhance defense and military cooperation with Kuwait, stressing the importance of all parties adhering to international law principles.

For his part, Al-Yaseen affirmed that the Iranian attacks on Kuwait constitute a violation of the UN Charter and international law, warning of threats to security and movement in Gulf and Strait of Hormuz affecting supply chains.



Kuwait's Ambassador to Indonesia, Khaled Al-Yaseen, with Indonesian Defense Minister, Sjafrie Sjamsjoeddin.

Al-Habashi emphasizes institutional commitment

Jahra Governorate honors retiring officials



Jahra Governorate honors retiring officials in a ceremony recognizing their contributions to public service, in the presence of Governor Hamad Al-Habashi.

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Jahra Governorate recently hosted a celebratory event on the occasion of the retirement of several prominent officials, under the patronage and in the presence of Governor Hamad Al-Habashi.

Officials who were honored during the ceremony included Director of the Office of the Governor Ahmed Abdullah Al-Lafi, Supervisor of the Jahra Mosques Department Nayef Al-Aslab, and Jahra Governorate Council member Eng. Mohammad Fahad Al-Enezi.

This gathering was aimed at recognizing the dedication and professional contributions that each individual provided throughout their careers in various public service capacities.

Al-Habashi lauded the retirees for their distinguished efforts, indicating that their commitment and professional journeys stand as models of community engagement and national service. He affirmed the positive impact of their cooperation on the development of Jahra Governorate.

He said the governorate has a policy of acknowledging national talent and those who made great contributions within their respective professional fields.

The honorees expressed deep gratitude to the Governor for this initiative, confirming pride in their years of national service and appreciation for a gesture symbolizing reciprocal loyalty and professional respect.

Kuwait and Egypt FM's discuss latest regional developments

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): Kuwait Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received a phone call Tuesday from Egyptian Foreign Minister Bader Abdelatty during which they discussed the latest developments in the region and ongoing efforts to address them.

Kuwait condemns attack on Khartoum Int'l Airport, affirms Sudan sovereignty

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait strongly condemned Wednesday an attack of Khartoum International Airport, considering it a violation against Sudan's sovereignty, international law and UN Charter.

The State of Kuwait categorically rejects the attack against civilian areas and vital facilities, the foreign ministry said in a statement.

It asserted importance of compliance with the Jeddah Declaration, which stipulated pledges of protection of civilians and staying away from civilian facilities.



PACA Director General with Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait.

PACA chief and Egyptian envoy discuss cooperation in aviation

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): Kuwait's Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) Director General Sheikh Humoud Mubarak Al-Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met on Tuesday with Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Abu Al-Wafa to discuss cooperation in the aviation sector.

In a statement for KUNA, PACA said that during the meeting both sides displayed joint cooperation between Kuwait and Egypt and ways to enhance relations in the field of aerial transportation and aviation services which reflect on supporting travel movement.

It added that both sides also affirmed the importance of coordination and experiences exchange which boosts the civil aviation sector in both countries.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait reaffirms

Given the rapidly evolving situation, the Cabinet affirmed it remains in continuous session to monitor local and regional developments and take necessary measures.

On Tuesday, UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan said that his country has pursued prosperity and development for its people and the world since its founding, while remaining firmly committed to confronting any threat to its sovereignty, security, and the safety of its citizens, residents, and institutions.

In remarks carried by the Emirates News Agency (WAM) on the 50th anniversary of the unification of the UAE Armed Forces, Sheikh Mohammed said the country is capable, through the efficiency of its military, the cohesion of its society, and the strength of its national model, of responding to any aggression.

He described the unification of the armed forces as a historic milestone reflecting the vision and foresight of the UAE's founding leader, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, and the rulers of the Emirates.

Sheikh Mohammed stressed that strengthening defense capabilities will remain a strategic priority within the UAE's comprehensive development vision, ensuring that the armed forces remain a shield of protection, a deterrent force, and a safeguard for the country's future progress.

He noted that the UAE Armed Forces have demonstrated courage and efficiency in responding to recent attacks, which he said targeted civilians and civilian infrastructure, praising their professionalism and dedication.

UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed discussed Tuesday with several Arab officials the implications of the blatant Iranian missile and drone attacks on UAE civilian sites and facilities.

This came during phone conversations with Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq Masrour Barzani, Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Al-Safadi, Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr. Badr Abdelatty and Bahraini Foreign Minister Abdullatif Al-Zayani, as reported by the UAE's official news agency (WAM).

During their phone conversations, they expressed their strong condemnation of the renewed treacherous Iranian attacks on the UAE as a clear violation of the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and a direct threat to the country's security, stability and territorial integrity.

They stressed the UAE's full and legitimate right to respond to these attacks in a manner that ensures the protection of its sovereignty, national security, territorial integrity, and the safety of its citizens, residents and visitors, as per international law.

The United Nations on Tuesday expressed deep concern over the missile and drone attacks launched by Iran against the UAE on Monday, which injured three people and caused a fire at a Fujairah oil industrial zone facility.

Speaking at a press conference, UN Spokesman Stephane Dujarric said several recent strikes in the region targeting vessels in and around the Strait of Hormuz, reflecting the increasing risk of a resurgence of hostilities amid rising tensions.

Dujarric called on all parties to exercise maximum self-restraint and avert any ac-

tions that could escalate tensions or undermine ongoing diplomatic and mediation efforts.

The UN spokesman underlined the peaceful settlement of international disputes as per international law, including the Charter of the United Nations.

Elsewhere, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said Wednesday that safe and sustainable passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be ensured following what it described as the end of "threats."

In a statement, the IRGC said that "with the end of threats and under new mechanisms, safe and sustainable transit through the Strait of Hormuz will be provided."

The statement also expressed appreciation for what it called the cooperation of shipowners operating in the Gulf waters and the Sea of Oman, saying their compliance with Iranian procedures has contributed to enhancing maritime security in the region. (end)

In latest development, U.S. President Donald Trump threatened Iran with more bombing Wednesday if it doesn't reopen the Strait of Hormuz after a report that an agreement is emerging to end the war.

Trump posted on social media that the war with Iran could soon end and oil and natural gas shipments could restart. But that all depends on Iran accepting a reported agreement that the U.S. president did not detail.

"If they don't agree, the bombing starts," Trump wrote.

Trump's threats came after China's foreign minister called for a comprehensive ceasefire in the Iran war following a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who was visiting Beijing for the first time since the war with the U.S. and Israel started Feb. 28.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Wednesday his country was "deeply distressed" by the conflict.

China's close economic and political ties to Tehran give it a unique position of influence. The Trump administration is pressing China to use that relationship to urge the Islamic Republic to open the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump said Tuesday that he was pausing his short-lived U.S. effort to guide stranded commercial vessels out of the Strait of Hormuz in hopes that a deal could be finalized. A shaky ceasefire has been largely holding, despite exchanges of fire during the U.S. push to reopen the strait on Monday.

Iran's effective closure of the strait, a vital waterway through which major oil and gas supplies, fertilizer and other petroleum products passed before the war, has sent fuel prices skyrocketing, rattled the global economy and put enormous economic pressure on countries, including major powers like China.

Food subsidies

The subsidies covered basic commodities, construction materials, milk, and infant formula, amid a gradual decline in monthly allocations toward the end of the quarter.

The data revealed that January recorded the highest subsidy value at approximately KD 32 million, representing 40 percent of the total subsidy. This was followed by February at KD 27 million (33.75 percent), while March saw a decrease to around KD 21 million (26.25 percent).

Basic commodities distributed through ration cards accounted for the largest

share, at 51.25 percent of total subsidies during the quarter, amounting to approximately KD 41 million.

Subsidies for basic commodities were distributed as follows: KD 16 million in January, KD 15 million in February, and KD 10 million in March.

Subsidies for construction materials ranked second at 42.5 percent, totaling approximately KD 34 million during the quarter, with KD 14 million allocated in January, KD 11 million in February, and KD 9 million in March, making it the category most affected by the decline.

Subsidies for milk and infant formula ranked third at approximately KD 5 million during the first quarter, distributed as KD 1 million in January, KD 2 million in February, and KD 2 million in March.

The cumulative number of ration cards issued by the end of February 2026 reached approximately 275,323, while the number of beneficiaries stood at about 2,349,436 individuals, reflecting an expansion of the beneficiary base.

Supply Department data for the first quarter indicates continued demand for basic commodities, milk, and infant formula, along with a decline in demand for construction materials. This suggests a shift in consumption patterns influenced by regional geopolitical developments and heightened tensions in the region due to the Iranian-American war.

\$5 billion

including the ongoing tensions in the region, situation in Palestine, Gulf security, and challenges related to maritime navigation in the Strait of Hormuz. She stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation between the two countries in light of the current regional situation.

Regarding bilateral matters, she affirmed that both sides explored avenues to strengthen cooperation in trade, investment, defense, energy and logistics.

She pointed out that trade volume between the two countries rose by 52 percent in 2025, reaching about \$1.08 billion and surpassing the \$1 billion threshold for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic.

She stated that there is an agreement at the leadership level to raise trade volume to \$5 billion in the coming period, expressing confidence that outcomes from these efforts will begin to materialize soon.

She confirmed the ongoing cooperation in military training and education through signed protocols between the two countries, stressing that Türkiye remains committed to expand collaboration with Kuwait in the fields of defense and security, as well as increasing reciprocal visits to consolidate bilateral relations.

She added that Türkiye will continue to work closely with Kuwait to overcome challenges and solidify their partnership in various fields.

Mubarakiya gold

laundering and counter-terrorism financing laws and procedures.

This campaign is in line with the efforts of the ministry to guarantee compliance with regulations and legislation, and raise awareness among business owners to protect the national economy from illegal practices.

Commerce Ministry boosts AML controls

New risk-based penalty system adopted

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): Kuwait Ministry of Commerce and Industry has been intensifying efforts to combat money laundering and terrorism financing, acting Undersecretary Marwa Al-Juaidaan said, reflecting a clear commitment to protect national economy and strengthening investor confidence in Kuwait market.

In an interview with Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Al-Juaidaan said the ministry continued to develop regulatory mechanisms by updating evaluation and classification procedures and enhancing coordination with relevant authorities.

"This ensures rapid detection of violations and thus take necessary measures, contributing to a business environment based on integrity and compliance with laws," she added.

In this context, she noted that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry issued in March Ministerial Resolution No. (25) of 2026, regulating the matrix of violations and penalties related to anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorism financing (CTF) for designated non-financial businesses and professions.

She explained the resolution was based on Law No. (106) of 2013, establishing a framework for classifying violations according to risk level (low, medium and high), with corresponding administrative and financial penalties for each category.

Al-Juaidaan added the resolution included warnings and varying financial fines for low-risk violations, with escalating penalties for medium-risk violations that may reach suspension or revocation of licenses.

High-risk violations, she said, carried stricter penalties such as large fines, suspension of activity, or license withdrawal especially in serious cases like dealing with sanctioned individuals or failing to report suspicious transactions.

She stated that the 2025 report of the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Department showed increased effectiveness of the oversight system, with a total of 930 violations distributed across the jewelry



Al-Juaidaan

sector and real estate brokerage activities.

She added that the ministry continued to intensify monitoring and expand awareness efforts to achieve the highest levels of compliance across sectors, noting that the diversity of violations and measures taken reflected a comprehensive risk-based regulatory approach targeting the most vulnerable activities.

Al-Juaidaan pointed out that the jewelry sector accounted for the largest share of violations, with 544 cases, including 517 written warnings, 15 financial fines, and 12 compliance orders, reflecting stricter oversight of precious metals and gemstones trading.

She said 386 violations were recorded in real estate brokerage, including 370 written warnings, nine financial fines and seven compliance orders, emphasizing close monitoring of this vital sector.

She noted that total penalties included 887 written warnings, 24 financial fines, and 19 compliance orders, highlighting the range of regulatory tools used to enhance compliance.

In a related context, she said that oversight statistics for the jewelry, gemstones and precious metals sector showed 52 cases in the first quarter before adopting risk classification. High-risk cases reached 348, including 250 comprehensive classifications and 98 thematic classifications.

She added that medium-risk cases in the same sector totaled 485, compared to 185 low-risk cases, reflecting the breadth of evaluation and classification tools.

In the real estate brokerage sector, she stated that 37 cases were recorded in the first quarter before classification, while high-risk cases reached 264, medium-risk 560 and low-risk 188.

She also noted that the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) praised in February the progress made and the "significant efforts" undertaken by Kuwait in combating money laundering and terrorist financing, according to a statement by the National Committee for AML/CTF.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired, on April 30, a meeting regarding FATF observations and requirements.

The meeting discussed ways to enhance integration and strengthen coordination and follow-up mechanisms among relevant government entities, ensuring compliance with AML/CTF systems.

It also reflects a coordinated institutional approach to this vital issue and underscores Kuwait's commitment to international standards and completing all requirements within specified timelines.

Strengthening regional consumer protection

Kuwait joins pan-Gulf Arab talks

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): Kuwait on Wednesday participated in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)-wide talks over food safety held through a video link, with a delegation headed by Minister for Development and Sustainability Affairs Dr. Reem Al-Fulaj.

The talks come as part of efforts to bolster cooperation within the six-member bloc on food

security and safety, which subsequently helps protect consumer health, Kuwait's Public Authority for Food and Nutrition said in a statement.

A draft law dealing with a "unified system" over food safety across Gulf Arab states took precedence over the rest of the matters on the agenda, added the statement.



Construction on the new White House ballroom is seen from the Washington Monument on May 5, in Washington. (AP)

GOP bill would fund \$1b in White House security upgrades for Trump's ballroom

WASHINGTON, May 6, (AP): US Senate Republicans have added \$1 billion in White House security upgrades to legislation that would fund immigration enforcement agencies, a proposed boost for President Donald Trump's ballroom project after a man was charged with trying to assassinate him at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner last week.

The GOP bill released late Monday would designate the money for the US Secret Service for "security adjustments and upgrades" related to the ballroom project, which Trump and Republicans have been pushing since Cole Tomas Allen allegedly stormed the April 25 media dinner at the Washington Hilton with guns and knives. The legislation says the money would support enhancements to the ballroom project, "including above-ground and below-ground security features," but also specifies

that the money may not be used for non-security elements.

White House spokesperson Davis Ingle praised Republicans for including the money for the "long overdue" project, saying it would "provide the United States Secret Service with the resources they need to fully and completely harden the White House complex, in addition to the many other critical missions for the USSS."

The money is part of a larger bill to pay for Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Border Patrol, as Democrats have been blocking funds for both agencies since mid-February. Congress passed bipartisan legislation to fund the rest of the Homeland Security Department on April 30 after a record-long shutdown, but Republicans are using a partisan budget maneuver to push through the ICE and Border Patrol dollars on their own. The

House has not released its bill yet, but the Senate is expected to start voting on its version of the legislation next week.

It is unclear exactly how the \$1 billion would be used, and the amount far exceeds the proposed \$400 million for construction of the ballroom. The White House has said in court documents that the East Wing project would be "heavily fortified," including bomb shelters, military installations and a medical facility underneath the ballroom. Trump has said it should include bulletproof glass and be able to repel drone attacks.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has sued to block construction of the project, but a federal appeals court said last month that it can continue in the meantime.

The White House has said that private money would pay for the construction but public money would be used for security measures.

Ramaswamy wins nomination for Ohio governor

Trump-backed candidates win majority of GOP primary races for Indiana Senate

COLUMBUS, Ind., May 6, (AP): A majority of Republican Indiana state senators whose opponents were endorsed by President Donald Trump lost on Tuesday, a display of the president's enduring influence over his party after lawmakers rejected his redistricting plan five months ago.

Of the seven challengers endorsed by Trump, at least five won. One incumbent prevailed and the seventh race was too close to call.

"Big night for MAGA in Indiana," US Sen Jim Banks wrote on social media, adding that he was "proud to have helped elect more conservative Republicans to the Indiana State Senate."

The president's allies spent at least \$8.3 million on races that rarely get much attention from Washington. It's been a costly and unprecedented intraparty battle that has exacerbated tensions among Republicans ahead of the November midterm elections that will determine control of Congress.

State Sen Travis Holdman, one of

the incumbents to lose his primary, said he was at peace with his defeat. He voted against redistricting and faced more than \$1.3 million in attack advertising funded by organizations tied to Banks and Gov. Mike Braun.

"I did what my constituents asked me to do and it cost me my job," he says. "But that's OK."

Holdman warned that a more aggressive style of campaigning was arriving in his state.

"Welcome to D.C. politics in Indiana because this means that's what's coming," he said.

The race that was too close to call was the most expensive of the seven primaries.

The superpacs led by Banks and Braun combined to spend more than \$2.2 million on advertising attacking Sen. Spencer Deery, according to the ad-tracking firm AdImpact. Deery spent roughly \$815,000 on advertising, according to AdImpact, having only spent a combined \$142,000 on the 2022 primary and general election when he was first elected.



Republican Ohio gubernatorial candidate Vivek Ramaswamy, alongside his sons, Karthik and Arjun, and his wife, Apoorva Ramaswamy, speaks during a watch party at the Spruce St Sporting sports bar after winning the party's nomination for governor on May 5, in Columbus. (AP)

Trump began leaning on Republican-led states last year to redraw their congressional maps to make it easier for his party to hold its thin

majority in the U.S. House. Although redistricting is normally done once a decade, after a new census, Trump wanted to abandon tradition

to gain a political edge.

Texas was the first to follow through, and the White House pressured Indiana to go along too. Vice President JD Vance met with state politicians in Washington and Indianapolis, and Trump weighed in by conference call.

However, Indiana senators rebuffed the effort, one of the president's first significant political defeats of his second term.

The redistricting fight divided Republicans in Indiana, a state Trump won three times by no less than 16 points. Braun, Banks and organizations such as Turning Point Action have worked alongside Trump to unseat the incumbents.

Jim Bopp, a prominent Indiana attorney who leads a political action committee aligned with Braun, predicted that Trump's support would carry the day for the challengers.

"Republican voters overwhelmingly support Trump and when they find out Trump has endorsed a particular Senate candidate, they swing

their support behind them," he said.

In the governor's race, biotech billionaire Vivek Ramaswamy clinched the Republican nomination over internet personality Casey Putsch to face Dr. Amy Acton, the COVID-era health director, this fall. Acton was unopposed in the Democratic primary.

A newcomer to state politics, Ramaswamy aggressively positioned himself for the job early with the help of an endorsement from President Donald Trump - who praised him on social media Tuesday as "Young, Strong, and Smart!"

"We have an historic opportunity to lead Ohio to be the top state in the country - to raise a young family, to give our kids a world-class education and to be the state where we will revive this quaint idea that we call the American Dream," Ramaswamy told supporters in Columbus.

Acton, speaking at her victory party, said she is running because people are struggling, working harder than ever and still not getting ahead.

Trump again assails Pope Leo, potentially complicating Rubio's visit to Vatican

WASHINGTON, May 6, (AP): US President Donald Trump has renewed his criticism of Pope Leo XIV, potentially complicating a fence-mending visit that Secretary of State Marco Rubio plans to make this week to the Vatican.

In an interview with conservative commentator Hugh Hewitt, Trump said the first American-born pontiff is helping Iran and also making the world less safe with his comments about the importance of not treating immigrants with disrespect.

"The pope would rather talk about the fact that it's OK for Iran to have a nuclear weapon," Trump said in the interview on Monday. "And I don't think that's very good. I think he's endangering a lot of Catholics and a lot of people."

The pope, however, has not said Iran should obtain nuclear weapons. He's called for more peace talks, and criticized war with Iran generally and Trump's specific threats of mass civilian strikes. The pope also has emphasized that he's reflecting biblical and church teachings, not speaking as a political rival to Trump.

Leo responded to Trump's latest criticism by calling out the US president's misrepresentation of his views. Speaking to reporters Tuesday, the pope said the Catholic Church "for years has spoken out against all nuclear weapons, so there is no doubt there."



Pope Leo XIV talks to journalists as he leaves his residence in Castel Gandolfo, on the outskirts of Rome, to return to the Vatican on May 5. (AP)

He also doubled down on his insistence that his call for peace and dialogue in the US-Israeli war in Iran is biblically inspired.

For his part, Rubio, a practicing Catholic, said Trump's recent criticisms were rooted in his opposition to Iran potentially obtaining a nuclear weapon, which he said could be used against millions of Catholics and other Christians. Rubio said the whole world should be opposed to that.

Trump "doesn't understand why anybody - leave aside the pope - the president and I, for that matter, I

think most people, I cannot understand why anyone would think that it's a good idea for Iran to ever have a nuclear weapon," Rubio told reporters at the White House.

Still, Trump's latest comments may make Rubio's task more difficult when he sees the pontiff on Thursday. Rubio has often been called on to tone down or explain Trump's harsh rhetoric as it relates to Europe, NATO and the Middle East, but the president's dispute with the pope has domestic political implications in the US with midterm congressional elections approaching.

Local elections could hasten exit of Britain's embattled prime minister

LONDON, May 6, (AP): British voters will cast ballots Thursday in elections that could hasten the end of Prime Minister Keir Starmer's troubled term and confirm that an increasingly fractured United Kingdom has entered an era of messy multiparty politics.

Starmer's center-left Labour Party is expected to take a battering in elections for local authorities across England and for semiautonomous legislatures in Scotland and Wales.

With the prime minister's popularity in the doldrums from a weak economy and repeated questions about his judgment, rival parties are framing Thursday's votes as a referendum on Starmer and his 2-year-old government. "Vote Reform, Get Starmer Out" is the campaign slogan of the hard-right party Reform UK.

The next national election does not have to be held until 2029, but a wipeout on Thursday could tip a restive Labour Party into revolt against its unpopular leader.

Less than two years after winning a landslide election victory, "Keir Starmer has become a vessel for people's disappointment (and) disillusionment," said Luke Tryl of pollster More in Common.

Starmer's popularity has plunged after repeated missteps



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer gestures to supporters during a visit to All Saints Hall in south London on May 5, whilst campaigning for the upcoming local elections. (AP)

since he became prime minister in July 2024. His government has struggled to deliver promised economic growth, repair tattered public services and ease the cost of living - tasks made harder by the U.S.-Israeli war with Iran, which has choked off oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz.

The prime minister has been further hurt by his disastrous decision to appoint Peter Mandelson, a scandal-tarnished friend of Jeffrey Epstein, as Britain's ambassador to Washington.

Forecasters suggest Labour will lose well over half of the 2,500 seats it is defending on English local councils. It is expected to lose votes to parties on both left and right - especially to the Green Party in London and Reform UK in working-class, former Labour strongholds in England's north.

"These elections are a perilous, perilous moment for Keir Starmer," said Tony Travers, professor in the Department of Government at the London School of Economics.

Missile strikes kill 27, injure 120

Russia snubs Ukraine unilateral ceasefire, fires drones

KYIV, Ukraine, May 6, (AP): Russia fired dozens of drones at Ukraine in nighttime attacks, Ukrainian officials said Wednesday, disregarding a unilateral ceasefire announced by Kyiv that began at midnight.

The Russian Defense Ministry claimed that Ukraine hadn't abided by its own ceasefire, saying that air defenses shot down 53 Ukrainian drones over Russian regions, the illegally annexed Crimean Peninsula and the Black Sea between Tuesday evening and dawn Wednesday.

Five people were killed by a Ukrainian drone strike on the city of Dzhankoi in Crimea, according to Russia-installed Gov. Sergei Aksyonov. He reported the casualties just after midnight, but posted about the attack itself more than 90 minutes earlier.

There had been no official sign from Moscow that it would heed Kyiv's ceasefire, and there was little hope for a pause in hostilities as the war stretches into its fifth year following Russia's all-out invasion of its neighbor. US-led diplomatic efforts to stop the war over the past

year have come to nothing.

On Tuesday, Russian drone and missile strikes on Ukraine killed 27 people and wounded 120 others, all of them civilians, according to Ukrainian Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko. The war has killed more than 15,000 civilians, according to the United Nations.

"After yesterday's savage strikes against our cities and communities ... the Russian army continued active hostilities and terrorist shelling throughout this day as well," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Wednesday on X. "Russia's choice is an obvious spurning of a ceasefire and of saving lives."

Despite Kyiv's open-ended suspension of hostilities, Russia has continued shelling, with aerial strikes using drones and powerful glide bombs, and has attempted to break through Ukrainian defenses on the front line, Zelenskyy said.

"Russia must end the war it is currently waging," he said, urging Moscow to call off its invasion. "The Russian side has our diplo-

matic proposals, and the only thing needed is Russia's willingness to move toward real peace."

Both sides have kept up long-range strike campaigns. On the roughly 1,250-kilometer (800-mile) front line, meanwhile, Russia's bigger army remains engaged in a slow-moving and costly slog against Ukraine's drone-heavy defenses.

Zelenskyy had announced the unilateral ceasefire after Russia said it would hold its own pause of hostilities over two days later this week while it marks the 81st anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II. The Ukrainian leader said any breach of the ceasefire would trigger a military response.

European officials had welcomed Ukraine's unilateral move as a goodwill gesture illustrating its readiness for a peace settlement.

Russian forces launched 108 drones and three missiles overnight, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said, with attacks continuing throughout the night and into

Wednesday morning.

"Moscow once again ignored a realistic and fair call to end hostilities, supported by other states and international organizations," Sybiha said in a post on X.

Moscow's proposal to stop fighting on Friday and Saturday follows a pattern of Russia declaring short unilateral ceasefires during the war timed to coincide with various holidays, most recently Orthodox Easter.

Those suspensions of combat don't produce any tangible results amid deep mistrust between the warring sides.

Sybiha said Russia's actions exposed its calls for a separate ceasefire around May 9 as insincere. "Putin only cares about military parades, not human lives," he said.

The diplomat called for increased international pressure on Moscow, including new sanctions, diplomatic isolation, accountability measures for war crimes and expanded military and civilian support for Ukraine.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, emergency services personnel work to extinguish a fire following a Russian drone attack in Kharkiv region, Ukraine on May 6. (AP)

Fragile ceasefire agreed in late December

Thailand scraps 2001 maritime territory deal with Cambodia after years of deadlock

BANGKOK, May 6, (Agencies): Thailand's government on Tuesday terminated a 2001 Memorandum of Understanding with Cambodia that was meant to provide a bilateral framework for resolving overlapping maritime territorial claims.

Cambodia said it regretted the Thai Cabinet's decision but would continue trying to resolve the issue.

The two governments signed the agreement to peacefully pursue maritime boundary delimitation and provide a framework for jointly managing marine resources in accordance with international law. But they failed to make any progress after five rounds of talks over the past two decades.

The decision to terminate, which does not legally take effect until Thailand sends a formal notification letter to Cambodia, ended hopes in both countries that resolving the competing claims would allow exploitation of offshore oil and gas resources in the disputed area.

Thailand's decision to abrogate the agreement comes after a sharp deterioration of relations and armed combat with Cambodia last year. The countries fought over competing claims to territory along the land border in July and December. Several dozen civilians and soldiers on both sides were killed and hundreds of thousands of people displaced.

A fragile ceasefire was agreed in late December, but tensions continue with sporadic incidents and large-scale deployment of military forces.

The fighting triggered renewed interest in border issues and safeguarding Thai territory, making nationalism a major issue affecting domestic Thai politics. Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and his Bhumjaithai Party included terminating the agreement among its promised policies in this year's election campaign.

The memorandum termination is unrelated and will not impact the current border situation, Anutin said after the Cabinet meeting Tuesday, adding that negotiations over the maritime territory issue are expected to continue in other frameworks such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Thai government spokesperson Rachada Dhnadirek likewise stressed the



Thailand's Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul speaks during a news conference in Bangkok, Thailand on May 5. (AP)

termination represents an adjustment of the framework for cooperation, not a termination of relations or negotiations.

Thailand will continue discussions with Cambodia, but proposes to shift to mechanisms under the UN Convention, which is clearer and more comprehensive and systematic to allow maritime disputes to be resolved effectively, she said.

Cambodia Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn, speaking in the capital Phnom Penh, expressed regret and called the Thai decision "a departure from the spir-

it and political will that enabled our two countries to establish a framework for peacefully resolving these issues in accordance with international law."

Prak Sokhonn declared Cambodia will pursue compulsory conciliation under the UN framework, which "reaffirms its commitment to resolving maritime disputes peacefully and in accordance with international law."

Prime Minister Hun Manet said in a social media post, "Cambodia's decision reflects our sincere hope that both countries can reach a just and lasting solution in line with international law, allowing our peoples to live together in peace, stability, and harmony."

Also:

BANGKOK: The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) issued its most severe heat advisory recently, with the heat index in Thailand's capital forecast to hit "extremely dangerous" levels for the first time this summer.

According to the BMA, the heat index is expected to reach or exceed 52 degrees Celsius on the day, prompting a warning to all residents to refrain from any outdoor activities, as exposure to these conditions poses a serious threat to public health.

The heat index calculates what the temperature "feels like" to the human body by combining air temperature and relative humidity. It is considered a critical indicator of heat risks, which range from exhaustion and dizziness to life-threatening heatstroke.

Health officials stressed that immediate medical attention should be sought if any abnormal symptoms occur, particularly among vulnerable groups such as young children, the elderly, pregnant women, and individuals with underlying medical conditions or obesity.

The Thai Meteorological Department forecast maximum temperatures in the capital on Thursday to range between 34 and 38 degrees Celsius, with a 40 percent chance of thunderstorms in the greater Bangkok area.

To provide relief, the BMA has introduced "Heat Escape Rooms" at more than 300 designated cooling centers citywide.

Asia

Japan, Philippines agree to weapons pact talks:

Defense chiefs from Japan and the Philippines expressed renewed alarm on Tuesday over what they say is China's intensifying coercive actions in disputed waters, and agreed to start talks on a weapons transfer pact that will allow Tokyo to provide used destroyers to Manila's navy.

Japanese Defense Minister Shinjiro Koizumi held separate talks with his Philippine counterpart, Gilberto Teodoro Jr., and President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in Manila to broaden defense ties between the two nations, which are both treaty allies of the United States.

On Wednesday, Koizumi will be among representatives from 17 countries, including India and Australia, who will travel to Paoay, in northwestern Philippines, for an annual combat exercise called Balikatan in which US, Philippine, Japanese and Canadian firepower will be used in a mock allied assault to sink a ship about 40 kilometers (25 miles) off the coast.

The location for the live-fire drill faces the disputed South China Sea, which has been claimed virtually in its entirety by Beijing. The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have also been involved in the long-simmering territorial standoffs, but confrontations have spiked in recent years between Chinese and Filipino coast guard and naval forces.

Japan and China have separate disputes over uninhabited East China Sea islands known as Senkaku in Japan and Diaoyu in China. (AP)

□ □ □

Japan traffic accident kills 1, injures 26: A traffic accident involving three vehicles on Wednesday

morning left one high school student dead and 26 others injured on an expressway in Fukushima Prefecture, northeast Japan, local media reported.

According to public broadcaster NHK, at around 7:30 am local time, a minibus carrying more than 10 high school students collided with roadside crash cushions on the Banetsu Expressway in the prefecture, triggering a chain-reaction crash that involved two other vehicles, resulting in a three-vehicle accident. One male student who was thrown from the minibus died.

Up to 26 people, including high school students on the minibus and occupants of the other vehicles, were injured, with several in serious condition, NHK reported, citing local firefighters and police.

Police are investigating the details and cause of the accident. (Xinhua)

□ □ □

Medical efforts underway after China blast: Central China's Hunan Province is pooling top-tier medical resources to treat people injured in a fireworks factory explosion in the city of Liuyang on Monday, which has left 26 people dead and 61 others injured, including six with severe injuries.

Right after the blast, Hunan provincial and Changsha municipal health authorities immediately mobilized a multi-disciplinary expert team from leading medical institutions, covering intensive care, burns, orthopedics, emergency medicine, neurosurgery and respiratory, to guide treatment work at hospitals in Liuyang, a county-level city under the jurisdiction of Changsha, the capital city of Hunan.

Most of the injured are suffering from head injuries and fractures. Among the six severely injured patients, a middle-aged woman with a penetrating chest injury received emergency external fixation surgery. "We managed to stabilize her blood pressure and vital signs, and her condition is now stable after meticulous treatment," said an intensive care physician involved in the rescue. (Xinhua)



Koizumi



Vietnam's President To Lam, (center), accompanied by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Droupadi Murmu, inspects a joint military guard of honor in New Delhi, India on May 6. (AP)

Vietnamese president arrives in India

Vietnamese President To Lam arrived in India on Tuesday on a three-day state visit on the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This was his first state visit to India after being elected as the Vietnamese president last month.

Before arriving in New Delhi, To Lam visited the famous Buddhist pilgrimage site Bodhi Gaya in the eastern state of Bihar.

The visiting president was accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising several ministers and senior government officials, as well as a strong business delegation.

Also:

NEW DELHI: An IndiGo airliner launched an emergency evacuation of passengers after a power bank on board caught fire at an

airport in northwestern India's Chandigarh on Tuesday afternoon, local media reported.

The incident took place when IndiGo flight 6E 108 from India's Hyderabad was stationary after landing at the airport, read an official statement from IndiGo Airlines. It noted that the incident involved "a customer's personal electronic equipment catching fire." (Xinhua)

Boko Haram militants kill 23 soldiers in attack on military post, says Chad

N'DJAMENA, Chad, May 6, (AP): Boko Haram militants have killed 23 soldiers in an attack on a military post in the Lake Chad region, Chad's armed forces said Tuesday.

The region has long been threatened by the Nigeria-based Boko Haram militant group, which is known for carrying out attacks in neighboring countries.

Chad's military said another 26 soldiers were injured in Monday night's attack on Barka Tolom island. In a statement, it said "a significant number of sect members were neutralized" and the attackers eventually were repelled.

President Mahamat Idriss Deby in a separate statement called the attack "cowardly."

A number of armed groups compete in the resource-rich, four-country Lake Chad region to fund their operations by imposing what they call taxes on local communities. Boko Haram in the past decade and a half has killed several thousand people and displaced millions, according to the United Nations, and continues to carry out operations across parts of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger.

Also:

DAKAR, Senegal: Burkina Faso's authorities secretly held and abused a prominent investigative journalist and dozens of others in a makeshift detention facility in the capital, an international advocacy group said Wednesday, in the latest crackdown on political dissent in the West African nation.

Reporters Without Borders said Atiana Serge Oulou, editor of the newspaper L'Evenement, was taken from his home in June 2024 by several armed men in civilian clothes. Burkina Faso's military junta later said he had been conscripted into military service.

Instead, according to the advocacy group, former detainees said Oulou and up to 40 other people were being held in a heavily guarded house in the capi-



In this photo, released by Reporters Without Borders, Burkinabe journalist Atiana Serge Oulou speaks at a news conference in Dakar, Senegal, on April 3, 2023. (AP)

tal, Ouagadougou, as of late 2025, contradicting the government's claim. They reported sleeping on bare floors, having to drink toilet water and being beaten by guards wielding ropes and tree branches.

Oulou's current location is unknown. Reporters Without Borders said it had shared its findings with Burkina Faso's government, which didn't respond.

The group said Oulou had been in the junta's crosshairs since 2022, when he released an investigation accusing an army captain of embezzlement. The group called for the journalist's immediate release.

The advocacy group said the junta's inner circle appears directly involved in the detentions, with a security officer for junta leader Capt. Ibrahim Traore personally briefing detainees before their release and warning them not to speak out.

Since seizing power in a 2022 coup, Burkina Faso's junta has cracked down on political dissent and journalists, shutting down independent media outlets and forcibly conscripting dissidents into the army to fight Islamic militants.

Costa Rica's president to keep immunity as minister in successor's government

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica, May 6, (AP): Costa Rica's outgoing President Rodrigo Chaves will remain a top official in his successor's government, the country's president-elect announced on Tuesday, granting the outgoing populist and Trump ally ongoing immunity in the face of corruption allegations.

Chaves will hold the posts of Minister of the Presidency and Minister of Finance in the incoming administration, Chaves' political ally and president-elect Laura Fernández announced on Tuesday.

Such a move is unprecedented in Costa Rican politics and will offer the outgoing leader incredible sway over the next government. It marks another bold move by Chaves' political movement that has tested the Central American nation's democratic norms.

Fernández, set to take office on Friday, pitched herself as a figure of "continuity" in the lead up to February elections - so much so that many ministers and leaders of Chaves' government will also remain in their previous posi-



Costa Rica President Rodrigo Chaves, accompanied by his wife Signe Zeiccate, waves as he arrives for the inauguration ceremony of Chile's new president, in Valparaiso, on March 11. (AP)

tions or swap roles. Fernández herself once acted as Minister to the President to Chaves, the role the outgoing leader will now assume.

"Just as we have done since the

first day of your administration, we will continue working very well as a team," Fernández said to Chaves at a public event Tuesday in capital San José.

Guatemala leader Arévalo replaces attorney general

GUATEMALA CITY, May 6, (AP): Guatemalan President Bernardo Arévalo on Tuesday appointed a new attorney general and head of the prosecutor's office, putting an end to a fierce, years-long struggle between the anti-corruption progressive and former top prosecutor Consuelo Porras, who has been sanctioned by 40 countries for obstructing anti-corruption efforts.

He appointed lawyer Gabriel Estuardo García Luna to the position, marking a win for the Guatemalan president who has often clashed with prosecutors he accuses of rotting Guatemala's justice system and making politically motivated arrests.

Porras' prosecutor's office repeatedly tried and failed to block Arévalo from entering office, sparking international rebuke and a fierce struggle with the president.

In Guatemala, the attorney general holds an independent office that is not supposed to be allied to any given president, meaning that presidents can be effectively stuck with rivals as chief law enforcement officers. The office has been plagued by corruption allegations for years.

In a national address, Arévalo said he decided to entrust García Luna with the position starting May 17, when Porras' term ends.



Guatemalan President Bernardo Arevalo speaks to reporters in Guatemala City on March 5. (AP)

Antigua and Barbuda swears in new Cabinet

ST JOHN'S, Antigua and Barbuda, May 6, (AP): The twin island nation Antigua and Barbuda swore in a new Cabinet on Tuesday, days after incumbent Prime Minister Gaston Browne led the Antigua and Barbuda Labor Party to an unprecedented fourth consecutive electoral victory.

For the first time, elected officials swore an oath of allegiance to the country, setting aside a more than 40-year tradition of pledging loyalty to the British sovereign in the former colony.

In December 2025, Parliament approved a constitutional amendment formally removing loyalty to the British monarch, King Charles III, his heirs and successors from the oath of allegiance. The oath now pledges allegiance to the state of Antigua and Barbuda, its consti-

tution and its laws.

"Whereas your success at the polls has earned you the confidence and trust of the people; that confidence and trust collectively, is not a gift to be enjoyed, or trust to be betrayed. It is a burden to be carried, a duty to be performed, a trust to be honored every single day," Browne said to those gathered.

The ABLP secured 15 of the country's 17 parliamentary seats, while Jamaica Pringle of the main opposition United Progressive Party was left as its lone standard-bearer after his party's seat count collapsed from five to one. He will be joined on the opposition bench by returning member of Parliament Trevor Walker, who has won on the Barbuda People's Movement ticket in every election (except 2014) since 2004.

Triggered two years ahead of the constitutional deadline, the snap election followed a campaign dominated by the rising cost of living and infrastructure development.



Browne

In partnership with LOYAC, Creative Confidence, and SOLVE

NBK launches 'Youth Training and Development Programs' for Summer 2026... The largest of its kind in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: In a tangible demonstration of its unwavering conviction that investing in youth is the most vital investment in the future of nations, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) convened a press conference at its headquarters to announce the launch of the "Youth Training and Development Programs" for Summer 2026, the largest and most comprehensive initiative of its kind in Kuwait – in partnership with three strategic collaborators: LOYAC, Creative Confidence, and SOLVE.

This initiative reaffirms NBK's position as a national institution leading the youth empowerment agenda in Kuwait through a structured and sustainable approach, driven by its deep conviction that nation-building begins with investing in people, and that equipping a generation with awareness, skills, an innovative mindset, and genuine readiness for the labor market constitutes the cornerstone of sustainable economic and social development.

The press conference, moderated by Ms. Manal Al-Mattar, Executive Vice President & Head of Group Corporate Communications, was attended by Mr. Emad Al-Ablani, the Group Chief Human Resources Officer, alongside representatives of the Bank's strategic partners: Ms. Fetouh Al Dalali, Board Member at LOYAC, Ms. Sumayah Al-Jasem, Chief Executive Officer at Creative Confidence; and Mr. Mohammed Al-Rifai, Founder of SOLVE and a trainer specializing in youth development, creativity, and innovation.

A Forward-Looking Vision
Al-Ablani emphasized during the press conference that the launch of this largest-of-its-kind training platform in Kuwait reflects NBK's deeply embedded vision for investing in human capital, underscoring that the Bank has long stood at the forefront of national institutions that recognize qualified national youth as the true engine of sustainable growth and long-term resilience.

"What we are launching today should not be viewed as a set of standalone training programs, but rather as a fully integrated ecosystem, meticulously designed to keep pace with the rapidly evolving labor market and to address the needs of youth across every stage, from early childhood, through the various phases of education, and into the post-graduation stage," Al-Ablani said.

He further noted that this integrated platform represents a practical translation of the Bank's long-term strategy, highlighting that the Human Resources function at NBK Group plays a pivotal role in advancing the Group's strategic direction, anchored in fostering a culture of continuous learning, developing national talent, and building genuine readiness for future requirements.

"We have been keen to design this summer's programs as a comprehensive professional journey, one that instills financial awareness and core values, while developing personal and leadership skills, and offering participants the opportunity to gain hands-on experience within a real working environment at Kuwait's largest banking institution," Al-Ablani added.

He also underscored NBK's commitment to amplifying the impact of these training programs through strategic partnerships with leading national institutions that possess deep expertise in youth empowerment, such as LOYAC, Creative Confidence, and SOLVE. He noted that these partnerships are rooted in a shared vision that recognizes collaboration as the most effective path to delivering sustainable and far-reaching impact in the development of Kuwaiti youth.

Furthermore, Al-Ablani spotlighted a number of programs included in the "Youth Training and Development Programs" for Summer 2026, explaining that the "NBK Aspire" and "NBK Strive" programs form the cornerstone of this package, given the distinguished training content they offer in support of youth empowerment.

He noted that the "NBK Aspire" program provides a training experience for students aged 15 to 18, focusing on building professional awareness, reinforcing institutional values, and developing personal and life skills. This contributes to broadening participants' perspectives and familiarizing them with the requirements of the modern work environment, particularly within the banking sector.

Meanwhile, the "NBK Strive" program represents an advanced stage in this developmental journey,



Emad Al-Ablani, Manal Al-Mattar, Fetouh Al Dalali, Sumayah Al-Jasem, and Mohammed Al-Rifai



A scene from the dialogue session on the sidelines of the press conference.

■ Al-Ablani:

At NBK, we firmly believe that qualified national youth talent is the primary driver of growth and sustainability

We offer an integrated ecosystem of programs, thoughtfully designed to keep pace with the rapidly evolving labor market

A comprehensive professional journey that combines financial literacy, skills development, and hands-on experience within a real work environment

■ Al-Mattar:

Empowering youth is not a choice, but a national responsibility and a long-term strategic investment

Investing in youth today is a direct investment in Kuwait's future tomorrow

■ Al-Dalali:

The partnership between LOYAC and NBK represents a well-established model of impactful institutional collaboration in empowering youth

■ Al-Jasem: The collaboration between Creative Confidence and NBK reflects a genuine national role in bridging the gap between academic education and labor market requirements

■ Al-Rifai: Through its partnership with NBK, SOLVE seeks to provide children with the opportunity to discover their potential early and build their self-confidence

targeting fresh graduates and young national talents aged 19 to 21 through integrated hands-on training programs. These programs enable participants to effectively integrate into the workplace, gain practical experience, and refine their professional and leadership skills, enhancing their readiness for sustainable entry into the labor market and their contribution to supporting the bank's strategic objectives.

Empowering Youth

Meanwhile, Al-Mattar stated: "It is a privilege to gather once again to reaffirm NBK's enduring commitment to the Kuwaiti community through sustained investment in its most critical driver of progress: its youth. We believe that empowering young people is not a discretionary priority, but a national imperative and a long-term strategic investment that underpins a sustainable future."

"At NBK, we go beyond the conventional concept of training programs. We are committed to designing a comprehensive journey enriched with practical experiences and high-value exposure, starting from an early

age and evolving across each stage of a young person's development, ultimately leading to genuine readiness for the labor market," She added.

Al-Mattar emphasized that these efforts are fully aligned with the Bank's forward-looking vision, as NBK continues to reinforce its leadership as one of the most prominent national institutions driving youth empowerment, while contributing to the development of a sustainable, capable, and confident Kuwaiti workforce equipped to navigate challenges and compete in an ever-evolving labor market.

She further underscored that investing in youth remains a core pillar of the Bank's social responsibility framework, stating: "Investing in youth is fundamental to sustainable development. Our investment in today's youth is a direct investment in Kuwait's future and in building a stronger, more resilient economy."

A Deep-rooted Partnership

Al-Dalali stated that the strategic partnership between LOYAC and NBK stands as a well-established model of high-impact institutional collaboration in

advancing youth empowerment, emphasizing that this long-standing alliance is grounded in a shared vision that recognizes investment in youth as the most sustainable pathway to building resilient and future-ready societies.

She explained that NBK's continued support for LOYAC's programs has enabled the organization to reach thousands of Kuwaiti youth and create a tangible impact on their personal and professional development, noting that the collaboration within the "Youth Training and Development Programs" for Summer 2026 reflects a mutual belief that young people are active partners in driving change, and that preparing the leaders of tomorrow begins today.

She added that this summer's programs, including the "KON" entrepreneurship program for participants aged 11 to 16, alongside the "Young Leaders" program (YLP), are grounded in a shared conviction between LOYAC and NBK on the importance of building confidence, developing leadership capabilities, and fostering a spirit of initiative and social responsibility from an early age, in alignment with the needs of Kuwaiti society and its future aspirations.

High-Impact Initiatives

Al-Jasem stated that the growing collaboration between Creative Confidence and NBK has resulted in high-impact initiatives with clear and measurable outcomes, reflecting a genuine national role in empowering youth post-graduation and bridging the gap between academic education and labor market requirements. She emphasized that this partnership represents a practical model of institutional integration across national entities.

"At Creative Confidence, we take pride in our strategic partnership with NBK, which is built on a shared belief that Kuwaiti graduates possess significant potential that requires structured development and practical guidance."

She explained that one of the flagship training initiatives this summer is the "NBK Aspire", which will be held in two phases – from June 7 to 18 and from June 21 to July 2 – and focuses on building students' self-confidence from an early age, while developing their communication and teamwork skills.

In addition, the "NBK Strive" program, designed for university students, will run over a three-week period, offering an advanced hands-on training experience that places students at the heart of the banking work environment, granting them a real competitive advantage ahead of graduation.

Al-Jasem noted that the objective of these programs goes beyond training alone, aiming to transform graduates into effective, competitive contributors who are capable of creating value and supporting the growth of the private sector.

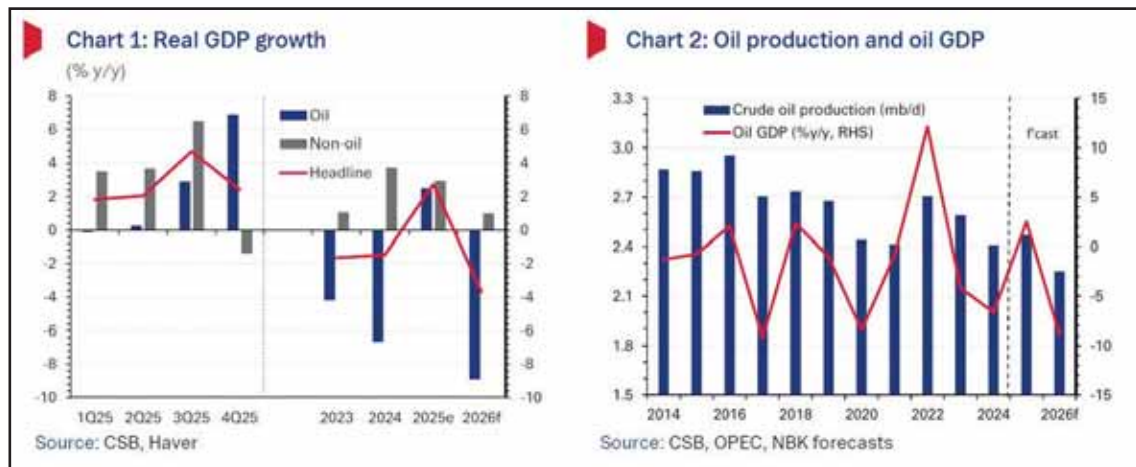
Fostering Innovation

Mr. Mohammed Al-Rifai, Founder of SOLVE and a trainer specializing in youth development, creativity, and innovation, noted that his personal journey reflects the tangible impact of NBK's investment in youth. He stated: "Having been a graduate of the third cohort of the 'Tamakan' program, I return today through SOLVE as a training partner within NBK's programs. This stands as a powerful testament to the fact that investing in youth goes beyond training, creating new pathways for empowerment and leadership. For me, this return represents a greater responsibility to pass on what we have learned to the next generation."

Addressing the significance of the ALT program delivered by SOLVE as part of the "Youth Training and Development Programs" for Summer 2026, Al-Rifai explained: "The ALT program has been specifically designed for the age group ranging from 11 to 15 years, and will be delivered across two sessions, from July 19 to 30 and from August 9 to 20. We selected this age group based on our belief that innovation, digital intelligence, and creative thinking should be nurtured from an early stage, within an interactive and safe learning environment that encourages curiosity and experimentation."

"In collaboration with NBK, we aim to provide children with the opportunity to discover their potential early, build self-confidence, and understand that innovation is not an elite skill, but a mindset that can be cultivated from a young age. This is the first step toward building a generation capable of shaping and leading the future," Al-Rifai concluded.

Kuwait: GDP returned to growth in 2025, though non-oil GDP ended year on weaker note



By National Bank of Kuwait

Preliminary official estimates show GDP growth easing to 2.4% in Q4 2025, due to a contraction in non-oil GDP linked to reduced manufacturing and refining activity. Meanwhile, oil GDP growth accelerated for the third consecutive quarter, as OPEC+ continued to hike crude oil production quotas. For 2025 as a whole, total GDP grew by 2.7%, reversing two years of decline to put in the best performance since 2022, helped by the normalizing oil sector performance. Prospects for the 2026, however, are challenged by the onset of the US-Iran war, which has brought oil sector activity to a virtual standstill.

Oil sector GDP in Q4 expands at the fastest rate since 2022
Oil GDP expanded by 6.9% y/y in Q4 2025, a third consecutive quarter of positive growth and the fastest in two years. (Chart 1.) Oil output had been constrained in recent years by Kuwait's participation in OPEC+ production cuts since Q4 2022 through to Q1 2025, after which the oil producers' group entered the current cycle of raising output at an accelerated pace. Kuwait's crude oil production reached 2.58 mb/d by end-2025, which resulted in an annual average of 2.47 mb/d, a rise of 2.4% y/y. (Chart 2.)

The outbreak of hostilities between the US/Israel and Iran in late February and the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz by the Iranians in response has brought activity in Kuwait's oil sector to a virtual standstill. Disruptions to shipments through the Strait have led oil exports to halt,

causing inventories to fill, and oil production to be reduced to levels sufficient to cover domestic demand only. Indeed, according to OPEC secondary sources, Kuwait's oil production fell to 1.21 mb/d in March, with April's figures likely lower.

OPEC+, though, continues to raise output quotas, with Kuwait's production target increased to 2.63 mb/d for June. While production remains shut-in, this is then largely symbolic, but useful as a statement of intent.

Non-oil economy shrinks in Q4, but solid performance recorded in 2025

Non-oil GDP fell 1.4% y/y in Q4 2025, sharply deteriorating from Q3's multi-year high reading of 6.5% amid a broad-based sectoral slowdown and pronounced contraction in the manufacturing sector (-9.8% y/y). Excluding manufacturing, non-oil growth was roughly flat, with notable decelerations in annual growth in hotels & restaurants, telecommunications, real estate, and construction – sectors that had driven growth in the previous quarter. On a quarterly basis, the non-oil economy grew 6.7%, sharply underperforming the seasonal increase usually observed in this quarter (which has averaged 11.9% q/q over the last ten years), with output surging in construction (+29% q/q), but declining sharply in electricity and gas (-39%) and, unexpectedly, in real estate (-2% q/q). On a full year basis, non-oil GDP grew by 2.9% in 2025, down from 3.7% in 2024. At the sector level, public administration (+1.6%), financial intermediation (+1.5%), and manufacturing (+0.8%) recorded the sharpest slowdowns,

while hotels & restaurants (+9.7% y/y), construction (+7.4%) and transport & storage (+5.9%) led with the strongest gains. (Chart 3.)

GDP growth returns to positive territory in 2025, though fortunes expected to sour in 2026

Total GDP rose 2.4% y/y in Q4 2025, helped by the outperformance of oil output but it was nevertheless a deceleration from 4.7% in the previous quarter amid a slide in non-oil economy activity. Overall economic growth stood at 2.7% last year, reversing a two-year dip into contraction territory, helped by a recovery in oil output and positive – albeit weaker – non-oil activity. Economic performance is expected to suffer in 2026 as the closure of the Strait of Hormuz due to the US-Iran war leads to oil production shut-ins. In our base case, under which the conflict ends around Q2 of this year, we expect oil production to average 1 mb/d between March-May 2026, leading to at least a 9% contraction this year. The non-oil economy is also expected to grow much more slowly this year, by about 1%, as supply chains are disrupted from the near cessation of maritime shipping activity and heightened uncertainty. Nonetheless, the government is seen exerting a stabilizing role in the economy with liquidity buffers robust. Prospects for 2027 are better. Oil production is expected to surge once shipping activity normalizes, helped by the expectation that OPEC+ will continue to accelerate the unwinding of supply cuts. A solid rebound is also expected for the non-oil economy, buoyed by an acceleration in project activity and the recovery in consumer and business confidence.

Reinforcing support for Kuwait youth programs

Zain and LOYAC's 23-year journey continues to inspire Kuwait's next generation of leaders

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Zain Kuwait is continuing its strategic partnership with LOYAC for the 23rd-consecutive year, reaffirming its commitment to supporting impactful initiatives that invest in young people's potential, inspire innovation and creativity, and strengthen the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Kuwait.

The partnership was signed by Waleed Al-Khashti, Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer at Zain Kuwait, and Fadia Al-Marzouq, Vice Chairperson of LOYAC, marking a continuation of the long-standing collaboration between the two organizations. Over more than two decades, this partnership has resulted in programs and initiatives that have made a tangible impact across education, youth empowerment, and social entrepreneurship in Kuwait.



Waleed Al-Khashti and Fadia Al-Marzouq sign the partnership.



Al-Khashti and Al-Marzouq with Zain and LOYAC officials.

Commenting on the occasion, Waleed Al-Khashti said: "The shared journey between Zain and LOYAC continues into its 23rd year, a partnership we deeply value for the great impact it has made in investing in the talents of Kuwait's youth, inspiring their spirit of innovation and creativity, and strengthening the entrepreneurship ecosystem to prepare the leaders of the future."

He added: "Our support for LOYAC's programs, such as 'KON', 'KON-tinue', and more, is not a mere sponsorship. It stems from our belief that empowering young people is a direct investment in Kuwait's future, and that the private sector has a role to play in creating spaces for national talent to learn, innovate, and transform ideas into meaningful solutions that address real community challenges."

Al-Khashti continued: "As we look ahead to the next phase, this partnership will focus on keeping pace with the future skills Kuwait's youth need to lead tomorrow's economy, particularly in digital skills, AI, cybersecurity, and tech entrepreneurship. Today, youth empowerment goes beyond developing an entrepreneurial mindset. It also means equipping young people with the digital and knowledge-based tools that strengthen their future readiness and enable them to compete and innovate in a fast-evolving global digital economy."

Commenting on the partnership, Fadia Al-Marzouq said: "We're delighted to continue the strategic partnership between LOYAC and Zain, one of the region's leading telecom operators, in a step that reflects the depth of the long-standing relationship between both parties since the early years of LOYAC."

She said: "Zain is a key LOYAC supporter and strategic partner, having played an active role in supporting many of our initiatives aimed at developing young people's skills and empowering them across various fields. This continued collaboration represents a successful model of partnership between the nonprofit and private sectors."

Waleed Al-Khashti: "We look ahead to a new chapter of this partnership focused on developing AI skills and leadership in the digital economy"
Fadia Al-Marzouq: "This partnership highlights Zain's dynamic role in supporting LOYAC's mission to empower thousands of young people"

Al-Marzouq added: "Our collaboration is built on mutual trust and a shared commitment to serving the community. Continuing this partnership reflects the credibility and positive impact of our programs, which continue to empower thousands of young people in Kuwait. It also highlights the role Zain plays in supporting community and development initiatives, and its support for LOYAC's efforts to achieve its mission, driven by its belief in the importance of investing in youth potential and supporting projects that contribute to building a more aware and empowered society."

She concluded: "The continuation of this partnership comes as part of our shared efforts to achieve great goals, including expanding the scope of services and programs and reaching the widest possible segment of youth in Kuwait, enhancing their opportunities and keeping pace with their future aspirations."

Through this partnership, Zain continues to support the new edition of KON, one of LOYAC's flagship youth initiatives in social entrepreneurship, delivered in partnership with Babson College in the United States, one of the world's leading academic institutions in management and entrepreneur-

ship. The program targets students aged 12 to 16 through an educational and interactive journey that develops critical thinking, teamwork, and innovation skills, while encouraging participants to turn creative ideas into practical solutions that serve the community.

This year's partnership also extends to supporting KON-tinue, which complements this journey by empowering young entrepreneurs and startup founders to transform their ideas into scalable and impactful business models. The program offers a hands-on training experience focused on understanding market needs, building value, identifying target segments, and developing business models, alongside key areas such as attracting funding and investment, legal requirements, and team management. This contributes to supporting Kuwait's startup ecosystem.

In addition, the partnership covers several other initiatives, including Sawaed to empower female talent, the environmental Green Spaces program, the Darbinternship program, A.C. Milan Academy activities to develop sports talent, and more.

Zain places education, youth empowerment, and entrepreneurship at the heart of its community priorities. This partnership aligns with the company's role as an active partner in supporting human development, energizing the innovation ecosystem, and contributing to building a national economy rooted in knowledge and creativity.

Through impactful community partnerships like this one, Zain invests in initiatives that create a lasting impact in young people's lives, giving them the space to discover their potential, develop their skills, and shape innovative solutions to community challenges, reflecting Zain's belief that youth are the cornerstone of Kuwait's future and prosperity.

Sajwani tops Forbes list; Kuwait sees strong presence

Eight Kuwaitis on Forbes Middle East's most influential real estate leaders list

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: For the third consecutive year, Forbes Middle East has highlighted the region's most influential real estate company leaders, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ranking was compiled over several months using a range of criteria, including years of experience, the value of completed and ongoing projects, and company financials such as total assets and revenues (where available), in addition to the size of land portfolios and number of properties owned.

The list includes 47 leaders from the United Arab Emirates, followed by Saudi Arabia with 21, Egypt with 17, and Kuwait with 8. This reflects the continued concentration of real estate activity in these key markets.

Hussain Sajwani, founder and chairman of Damac Properties, tops the ranking for the second consecutive year.

The list includes 11 billionaires with a combined net worth of \$39.4 billion, underscoring the real estate sector's role as a major engine of wealth creation in the region.

The eight Kuwaitis included in the list are:

1. Waleed Khaled Al-Shuraian
Rank: 27



Waleed Al-Shuraian

Position: CEO of Mabane Company
Headquarters: Kuwait
Established: 1964

Al-Shuraian has held his current position since 2006. Mabane Company has been listed on Bursa Kuwait since 1999. The company has completed five projects in Kuwait, including The Avenues Mall, Hilton Garden Inn, and Waldorf Astoria, in addition to five projects currently under construction in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia.

In 2024, the The Avenues Riyadh project reached 65 percent completion. The project is valued at \$4.3 billion.

The company's total assets in 2024 were approximately \$5.1 billion, with revenues of \$431.1 million. Al-Shuraian previously worked at the Kuwait Public Transport Company (KPTC).

2. Talal Jassim Al-Bahar
Rank: 42

Position: Vice Chairman and CEO of Kuwait Real Estate Company (Aqarat)
Headquarters: Kuwait
Established: 1972



Talal Al-Bahar

Aqarat was the first real estate firm listed on Bursa Kuwait in 1984. It offers a diversified portfolio that includes residential buildings, office and commercial developments, as well as facilities management services.

In the first nine months of 2024, the company's assets reached \$1.4 billion, with profits totaling \$41.5 million. In January 2025, the company, through a partnership with IFA Hotels & Resorts, launched the Al Tay Hills project in the UAE. Spanning more than six million square feet, the development carries total investments of \$953 million and recorded real estate sales of \$571.8 million in a single week.

Al-Bahar also serves as Chairman of the Board of Directors of IFA Hotels & Resorts.

3. Mahmoud Daoud Al-Marzouq
Rank: 43



Mahmoud Al-Marzouq

Position: CEO of Tamdeen Real Estate Company
Headquarters: Kuwait
Established: 1982, and acquired by Tamdeen Group in 1996.

Tamdeen Real Estate Company's portfolio includes prominent projects such as 360 Mall, Al-Kout Mall, Al-Khiran Mall, Tamdeen Square, The Warehouse Mall, and Sama Centers.

In the first nine months of 2024, the company recorded operating revenues of \$59.1 million, with total assets reaching \$1.8 billion.

The company is a major shareholder in Tamdeen Investment Company, holding more than 57.7 percent of its shares as of August 2024.

4. Faisal Jameel Al-Essa
Rank: 44

Position: Vice Chairman and CEO of National Real Estate Company
Headquarters: Kuwait
Established: 1973

Faisal Jameel Al-Essa has held his current position since 2018.

The company operates in Kuwait, the UAE, Egypt, Jordan, and Libya. Its notable projects include Reem Mall in Abu Dhabi, which officially opened in May 2024, as well as Grand Heights, Palm City Residence, and the South Aqaba Investment Complex.



Faisal Al-Essa

In the first nine months of 2024, the company recorded revenues of \$56.8 million, with total assets reaching \$1.8 billion as of September 2024.

Al-Essa also serves on the board of directors of Agility.

5. Abdul Mutalab Marafie
Rank: 51



Abdul Marafie

Position: CEO of Commercial Real Estate Company
Headquarters: Kuwait
Established: 1968

Commercial Real Estate Company's portfolio in Kuwait includes major developments such as Commercial Tower, Symphony Style Hotel and Complex, Light Restaurant Complexes, Dine Zone, and Thatcher Residential Complex.

In 2024, the company recorded total revenues of \$101.6 million, with total assets reaching \$1.9 billion. Marafie also serves as a board member of Ammar Finance and Leasing Company.

6. Abdulaziz Ghazi Al-Nafisi
Rank: 56



Abdulaziz Al-Nafisi

Position: CEO of Al-Salhiya Real Estate Company
Headquarters: Kuwait
Established: 1974

Abdulaziz Ghazi Al-Nafisi assumed his current position in 2022.

Al-Salhiya Real Estate Company's portfolio includes Al-Salhiya Plaza, Al-Raya Mall, and Al-Sahab Tower, as well as the Biorma project in the UK and four nursing homes in Germany.

In 2024, the company's total assets reached \$1.7 billion, with

operating revenues of \$145.1 million from operations in the GCC and Europe. Its market capitalization stood at \$780.2 million in March 2025.

7. Khaled Al-Mashaan
Rank: 81



Khaled Al-Mashaan

Position: Vice Chairman and CEO of Argan International Real Estate Company
Headquarters: Kuwait
Established: 1994

Argan International Real Estate Company operates in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Lebanon, Egypt, and Morocco. Its real estate portfolio includes notable projects such as Argan Al-Bidaa Hotel & Resort, Argan Business Center, Al-Bustan Residences, and Saray.

As of September 2024, the company's assets totaled \$847.4 million, with net profits of \$6.9 million.

Al-Mashaan also serves as Chairman and board member of several non-governmental organizations, including the Kuwait Green Building Council and the Kuwait Hotel Owners Association.

8. Abdulrahman Hamad Al-Turkait
Rank: 97



Abdulrahman Al-Turkait

Position: Vice Chairman and CEO of Arkan Kuwait Real Estate Company
Headquarters: Kuwait
Established: 2003

Abdulrahman Hamad Al-Turkait joined Arkan Kuwait Real Estate Company in 2016. In 2024, the company recorded revenues of \$29.5 million. That same year, the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) and the Competition Protection Authority in Kuwait approved the merger between Arkan Kuwait Real Estate Company and First Real Estate Investment Company, which was completed in March 2025.

The company's project portfolio includes the SVN Health Resort, Arkan Clinic, and Arkan Residence. It is also developing a water park and a 20,000-square-meter shopping mall in Al-Khiran.

Table 1: Credit growth

Credit	Mar-2026		% growth		
	KD billions	q/q	YTD	y/y	2025
Business	26.3	2.9	2.9	6.3	6.0
of which Real Estate	11.0	2.8	2.8	5.5	5.2
Household	20.1	0.1	0.1	3.4	3.7
Securities	4.9	1.2	1.2	28.5	27.9
Banks & financial instit.	2.9	5.0	5.0	27.0	25.3
Total domestic credit	54.1	1.8	1.8	7.8	7.6
Non-resident credit	10.9	3.4	3.4	41.1	36.1
Total credit	65.1	2.1	2.1	12.2	11.5

Source: Central Bank of Kuwait

Table 2: Deposit growth

Deposits	Mar-2026		% growth		
	KD billions	q/q	YTD	y/y	2025
Private sector	40.5	0.0	0.0	1.8	3.8
of which Time dep.	23.7	-1.3	-1.3	2.0	5.6
of which CASA dep.	14.9	2.8	2.8	1.1	0.8
Public Institutions	8.6	13.2	13.2	48.1	30.8
Government	3.7	22.2	22.2	-2.5	-23.5
Total resident dep.	52.9	3.8	3.8	7.4	4.7
Non-resident deposits	6.3	1.9	1.9	58.3	89.3
Total deposits	59.2	3.6	3.6	11.1	9.9

Source: Central Bank of Kuwait

Domestic credit growth improved in Q1 despite onset of US-Iran conflict

By National Bank of Kuwait

Domestic credit growth ticked up to 1.8% q/q in Q1 2026 from 1.5% in the previous quarter, despite headwinds from the US-Iran conflict that adversely affected sentiment in March. This led to a first monthly contraction in household credit in two years in March, while lending to businesses slowed. However, stronger momentum earlier in Q1 helped cushion the overall impact and y/y credit growth was still a solid 7.8%. On the liabilities side, growth in residents' deposits actually accelerated in Q1 26 on a jump in government and public sector deposits. Private sector deposits growth remained weak, though, and registered a 1% m/m drop in March. While credit growth started the year on a strong footing and precautionary borrowing could support growth over the short term, these effects could be offset in the coming months if weaker non-oil activity and changes in consumer spending behavior weigh on demand.

Even as overall credit remained firm in Q1, growth diverged across key segments. Credit to banks and financial institutions grew by 5.0% q/q, significantly slower than the 8.8% expansion recorded in Q4 2025, as heightened volatility and weaker confidence following the outbreak of hostilities led to a sharp contraction in March. Similarly, credit for the purchase of securities expanded by 1.2% q/q, well below the 6.3% growth seen in Q4, reflecting softer risk appetite and a more cautious investment stance. Household credit growth slowed markedly, rising by just 0.1% q/q in Q1, compared with 0.7% in Q4 2025. The small 0.4% monthly contraction in March marked the first decline since March 2024, ending a prolonged period of steady expansion and underscoring increased caution by households in response to rising uncertainty. In contrast, business lending was the primary driver of domestic credit in Q1, accelerating to 2.9% q/q (+6.3% y/y) from 0.6% in Q4, though momentum weakened in conflict-affected March with a sharp decline recorded in trade-related credit (-5.5% m/m) and slower growth seen across the construction (+0.8%), public services (+0.3%), and oil & gas (+2.7%) sectors. These were partly offset by stronger lending to real estate (+1.3%), industry (+3.8%), and other sectors (+1.7%). Meanwhile, previously stellar credit growth to non-residents slowed in Q1 (+3.4% q/q) from the previous quarter (+8.0%), reflecting a sharp contraction in February and only a modest recovery in March. Non-resident credit accounts for 17% of all credit.

Private sector deposit growth remained weak in Q1 2026

On the funding side, residents' deposits saw strong growth of 3.8% q/q in Q1 (7.4% y/y), more than double Q4's rate, thanks to double-digit increases in public (+13.2% q/q) and government deposits (+22% q/q). In contrast, growth in private sector deposits was subdued (+0.1% q/q), barely improving on Q4. Non-resident deposit growth also slowed in Q1 (1.9% q/q from 18.6% in Q4), due to the monthly declines seen in February (-0.3% m/m) and March (-4.9%), with the weakness concentrated in foreign currency private sector deposits. This was partly offset by gains in KD-denominated deposits and continued increases in government and public non-resident deposits.

Secure, easy, and available 24/7

Kuwait Finance House launches banking services via WhatsApp

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched a suite of new banking services via WhatsApp, a first for the banking sector in Kuwait. This initiative is part of KFH's ongoing commitment to enhancing customer experience through digital channels that are accessible, secure, and available around the clock. The service was built in partnership with Infobip, a leading global provider of cloud communications and interactive services.



Meshal Mandani

Commenting on the new service, Executive Manager Digital Channels at KFH Meshal Mandani, explained that customers can now perform numerous banking transactions easily, quickly, and securely through a simple interactive interface, without needing to visit a branch or call the Contact Center. This significantly enhances customer convenience and aligns with today's fast-paced digital lifestyle.

He pointed out that the new services include internal account transfers, transfers to credit and prepaid cards, balance inquiries, six-month state-



ments, IBAN generation, financing applications, branch locator, and live chat with customer service representatives. All services are available 24/7 with the highest security standards to ensure complete data confidentiality and transaction safety.

"To access these services, customers should save KFH's number,

1803333, to their contacts and install WhatsApp. They can then begin using the service instantly," he added.

Mandani said that the new initiative reinforces KFH's digital leadership and its advanced digital transformation journey. "Providing banking services via a major social media platform allows KFH to expand its reach while maintaining the highest standards of security and data protection."

This launch further strengthens KFH's diverse digital ecosystem, which includes KFHonline app, KFH Go smart branches, ATMs, phone banking, and digital payment solutions such as WAMD and KFH PAY.

KFH continues to lead the digital transformation in Kuwait's banking sector through state-of-the-art infrastructure and integrated platforms, delivering secure, seamless, round-the-clock banking experiences. This is clearly demonstrated by the completion of more than 600 million electronic transactions in 2023 across its various channels, a strong testament to customer confidence and the effectiveness of its digital solutions.

KFH remains a pioneer in innovative digital banking, having introduced many market-first solutions including instant card printing, fully digital account opening, virtual cards, advanced card management, online gold trading, and seamless local and international transfers, along with specialized applications for retail and corporate customers.

Local suppliers gain ground in projects

KPC enhances private sector role in refinery investments

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) is encouraging private sector participation in various investments based on refined products produced by Kuwait's refineries.

According to informed sources, KPC aims to support the sector as well as reduce budgetary expenditures. It spent approximately KD 1 billion between 2024 and 2025 on goods and services procured from local suppliers and contractors.

This spending reflects KPC's commitment to enhancing local economic value by prioritizing national supply chains. In this context, KPC has strengthened its local capabilities by increasing the share of local suppliers and service providers in its projects to 65.8 percent, surpassing the 50 percent target.

As part of its efforts to stimulate the private sector, KPC launched the "K-Tendering" digital platform, designed to connect local suppliers with opportunities across the oil and gas sector. The platform also enables the publication of long-term supply and demand forecasts extending up to 2050.

The sources explained that KPC knows that the extensive supply chains in the oil and gas sector present unique opportunities to stimulate local industries and enhance national resilience.

Through its local content management strategy, KPC ensures that procurement practices not only meet operational requirements but also generate tangible benefits for Kuwaiti companies, SMEs, and contractors.

This approach is in line with the state's development agenda under New Kuwait 2035 vision, which aims to diversify the economy beyond hydrocarbons and enhance value addition in the local market.

To further enhance national value, KPC integrates local content requirements into downstream industry contracts, ensuring greater participation of local suppliers, the creation of job opportunities for citizens, and maximization of economic returns within Kuwait.

KPC is also conducting a comprehensive feasibility study for the establishment of a state-of-the-art petroleum industrial complex, which is expected to serve as a catalyst for industrial innovation and economic diversification beyond hydrocarbons.

Exploration and production activities further amplify this impact, as annual payments to contractors cover drilling, engineering, logistics, and other specialized technical services. These expenditures not only support the immediate execution of projects but also contribute to long-term capacity building by enabling local companies to adopt international standards, enhance technical expertise, and integrate into global supply chains.

The sources noted that KPC launched its 2025 strategy to support local products and attract private sector investment into domestic industries, thereby strengthening national industrial capabilities.

They said this initiative was not merely a financing mechanism but also laid the foundation for major projects such as the establishment of a regional industrial hub and the expansion of a new network of fuel stations.

KOTC to expand port services infrastructure

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) intends to develop its marine agency facility, measuring around 6,000 square meters, in Fahaaheel.

The newspaper obtained information that the project will include warehouses, workshops, support facilities, external works and administrative offices.

The design and supervision of the facility will be in accordance with Kuwait Municipality regulations, health, safety and environmental standards in the oil sector, international engineering codes, and the requirements of the Gulf Organization for Research and Development (GORD), with the aim of obtaining GSAS Gold certification. The tender for this major project is expected to be issued in the second quarter of 2026.

The activities of this agency depend on the number of tankers at Kuwaiti oil ports, which is linked to the volume of exports and the types of tankers used.

Accordingly, the management of the marine agency is considered a source of revenue for the company, while its performance is influenced by the oil production levels of the country.

It is worth noting that the marine agency provides oil tankers at various Kuwaiti oil ports with a range of services, for which the agency charges fees, in addition to the cost of the services provided.

In a related context and in recognition of the role played by the employees of the company in safeguarding the KOTC fleet during the war, acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company Khaled Ahmed Al-Sabah affirmed that KOTC maintained a high level of efficiency and an increasing pace of operations, with minimal disruption to official working hours. He considers this a reflection of the strong sense of belonging and commitment of the employees to the nation and the company.

The newspaper obtained a copy

of the message of the acting CEO to the employees, in which he disclosed that since the start of the war, the Emergency Committee held meetings daily to monitor developments, assess the situation, and take the necessary decisions to ensure the continuity of operations.

He commended all employees for their cooperation, commitment and discipline, while giving special recognition to the officers, marine engineers and maritime crews.

He pointed out this highlights the loyalty and dedication of the staff, particularly since a number of retirees showed a high level of readiness to return to work and assume responsibilities under various circumstances, reflecting the highest standards of commitment and devotion.

He affirmed that the overall situation remains reassuring due to the qualified human resources of the company, integrated organizational and operational capabilities, and the State's provision of resources that ensure uninterrupted operations.

He asserted that the achievements realized during this period are considered a model of exemplary institutional performance, going beyond the metrics of profit and loss to embody a collective success story in which all employees participated.

He stated that the company not only reinforces its position as a leading entity in the transportation of crude oil and petroleum products, but also strengthens the values of cooperation and commitment that underpin the sustainability of this success.

He added that Kuwait, through its institutions and human resources, demonstrated a high level of preparedness and a shared sense of responsibility, with all parties working in harmony and integration in their respective roles to mitigate the effects of the exceptional circumstances at the psychological, economic and operational levels.

He also noticed the high level of public awareness, manifested in the discipline, commitment and decline in the spread of rumors among the public.

Multiple weekly and quarterly prizes

Warba announces 'Al Sunbula' campaign with Kuwait's highest number of winners

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Warba Bank announced the launch of its 2026 "Al Sunbula" account campaign, featuring updated operational and regulatory procedures. The initiative follows a comprehensive upgrade of the draw systems to align with regulatory directives, ensuring high levels of integrity, transparency, and customer trust.

The 2026 campaign introduces an updated operational framework designed to enhance transparency and equal opportunity. The new mechanism simplifies how draw chances are calculated, linking them directly to customer savings balances. Additionally, the "Al Sunbula Kids" account has been updated with dedicated draws to ensure fair competition for younger age groups while fostering a culture of saving.

Draw Schedule and Retrospective Implementation:

The bank plans to begin the 2026 draws in May. To ensure full coverage of the year, the initial draws will be conducted retrospectively to cover February (for January deposits), March, and April. Following this phase, the bank will return to its regular schedule, conducting draws on the second Thursday of every month under the supervision of audit authorities to ensure regulatory compliance.

Reinforced Oversight Mechanism:

Mohannad Essa Burhama, Direc-



Mohannad Essa Burhama

tor of Products and Segments – Retail Banking Group at Warba Bank, outlined a reinforced oversight mechanism for the new campaign.

Banking Group at Warba Bank, outlined a reinforced oversight mechanism for the new campaign.

"The bank has contracted two global audit firms to ensure neutrality and accuracy," Burhama said. "KPMG Al-Qanaei & Partners will conduct a comprehensive audit of data and terms, including a technical review of the software and algorithms to ensure randomness and integrity. Meanwhile, Grant Thornton will supervise the draw mechanism to ensure compliance with regulatory standards."

These firms work alongside Warba



Bank's Internal Audit Department to ensure all procedures align with regulatory requirements, reinforcing the system's credibility.

Investment Principles and Prizes:

Burhama added that the "Al Sunbula" account is a Sharia-compliant investment vehicle based on the Wakala Bil Istithmar principle. The bank invests customer funds in managed portfolios with quarterly profit distributions.

Customers earn one draw entry for every KWD 10 based on the lowest monthly balance. A minimum balance of KWD 100 is required for monthly draws, while KWD 500 is required for grand draws. The account features more than 1,000 winners annually.

Total Prizes of KWD 1.5 Million:

The total prize pool for the 2026 campaign reaches KWD 1,500,000, including grand prizes of up to KWD 250,000 for a single winner and 1,000 individual prizes of KWD 1,000 each. Draws will be broadcast live via the bank's official YouTube channel to enhance transparency, with winners' names published on the bank's website following official approval.

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.

Destinations across 17 countries in the Middle East, South & Central Asia, & Europe

Jazeera Airways unveils 38 Eid destinations

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's leading low-cost carrier, today unveiled 38 destinations to choose from for the upcoming Eid break. Following a period of extended disruption, this holiday marks a renewed opportunity for passengers in Kuwait and across the region to travel and celebrate. Whether reconnecting with family, exploring new destinations, or simply taking the long-awaited break that was put on hold, Jazeera Airways is set to bring travelers closer to what matters most.

With a diverse network spanning 17 countries across the Middle East, South and Central Asia, and Europe, passengers can choose from a wide range of holiday experiences - from vibrant city escapes and cultural discoveries to relaxing beach getaways and adventure-filled journeys.

As part of the Eid offering, Jazeera will also launch its direct flights to Milan Bergamo for the first time on 22 May, so travelers from Kuwait can now also explore one of Italy's



Jazeera Airways

most vibrant regions.

Operating directly from Kuwait, Jazeera Airways offers a seamless, comfortable, and convenient travel experience, ensuring passengers can enjoy stress-free journeys from de-

parture to arrival.

Barathan Pasupathi, Chief Executive Officer of Jazeera Airways, said: "For Kuwait and people across the region, this Eid is a bigger cause for celebration. It is a time for recon-

necting, rediscovering, and making up for lost time. To mark the occasion, we are pleased to offer our passengers an extensive network of over 38 destinations across 17 countries and the convenience of direct connectivity from Kuwait. This includes our newest destination- Milan Bergamo in Italy. With the reopening of Kuwait International Airport, we are ready to support the strong return to travel and help our customers create meaningful experiences as we head closer into the holiday season."

Passengers can explore a wide selection of destinations across Jazeera's growing network including Italy, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Egypt, Jordan, India, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh, with flexible options designed to suit every type of traveler.

Passengers can book their seats through the Jazeera Airways website, mobile app, or through the customer relations at 177 in Kuwait and +965 2205 4944 from outside Kuwait.

Wall Street soars, oil plunges as China calls for comprehensive ceasefire in Iran-US war

LONDON, May 6, (AP): Markets on Wall Street soared overnight and U.S. crude prices plunged 13% after China's foreign minister on Wednesday called for a comprehensive ceasefire in the Iran war, the latest spark of optimism that the two-month war could end soon.

Futures for the S&P 500 rose 1% before the opening bell, while futures for the Dow Jones Industrial Average climbed 1.2%. Nasdaq futures jumped 1.7%.

Wang Yi, speaking after meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, said China was "deeply distressed" by the conflict. Araghchi was visiting Beijing for the first time since the war with the U.S. and Israel started Feb. 28.

China's close economic and political ties to Tehran give it a unique position of influence. The Trump administration is pressing China to use that relationship to urge the Islamic Republic to open the Strait of Hormuz.

News that Iranian officials were traveling to China ahead of a summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping lifted market sentiment.

Oil prices spiraled soon after Wang's comments, with prices for a barrel of U.S. crude falling more than \$13 to \$88.88 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, retreated \$12.66 to \$97.21 a barrel, extending declines that erased big jumps earlier in the week. The prices still remain well above their roughly \$70 price before the war with Iran began.

Sinking oil prices sent energy giants shares sliding overnight, with Chevron, Exxon Mobil and ConocoPhillips all seeing losses of close to 5%.

The prospect of lower jet fuel prices pushed major U.S. airlines up, with Delta, United and American all gaining more than 6% in premarket trading.

The Chinese minister's comments followed an earlier statement by U.S. President Donald Trump that he was pausing his short-lived U.S. effort to guide stranded commercial vessels out of the Strait of Hormuz in hopes that a deal could be finalized. A shaky ceasefire has been largely holding, despite exchanges of fire during the U.S. push to reopen the strait on Monday.

Also Tuesday night, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the major U.S. military operation against Iran is over but stopped short of saying the conflict is over or cannot be restarted.

"We're not cheering for an additional situation to occur," he said. "We would prefer the path of peace."

In order for that to happen, Iran must agree to Trump's demands on its nuclear program and reopen the Strait of Hormuz, Rubio said.

Iran's effective closure of the strait, a vital waterway through which major oil and gas supplies, fertilizer and other petroleum products passed before the war, has sent fuel prices skyrocketing, rattled the global economy and put enormous economic pressure on countries, including major powers like China.

Elsewhere, in Europe at midday, France's CAC 40 added 1.6%, while the German DAX rose 1.5%. Britain's FTSE 100 surged 1.9%.

In Asian trading, South Korea's Kospi gained 6.5% to 7,384.56, surpassing the 7,000 level for the first time. Samsung Electronics' stock jumped 14% in a rally driven by expectations of strong growth in artificial intelligence.

Revivals rise, new voices bite in

B r o a d w a y

Vampires, camp and chaos dominate Tony nods

The Broadway cast of 'The Lost Boys' appears during a performance in New York on March 25, 2026. (AP)

The Lost Boys' and "Schmigadoon!" each earned a leading 12 Tony Award nominations Tuesday, as nominators also made June Squibb the oldest Tony-nominated actor in history at 96. Danny Burstein is now the most-nominated male actor in Tony history.

"The Lost Boys," an adaptation of a 1987 teen movie vampire thriller, and "Schmigadoon!," an adaptation of an Apple TV series that gently mocks Broadway musicals, were followed by a revival of "Ragtime," a big, soaring musical celebrating early 20th-century America, with 11 nominations, and "Death of a Salesman," Arthur Miller's masterpiece that looks at the unraveling of the American Dream, starring Nathan Lane, which nabbed nine nods.

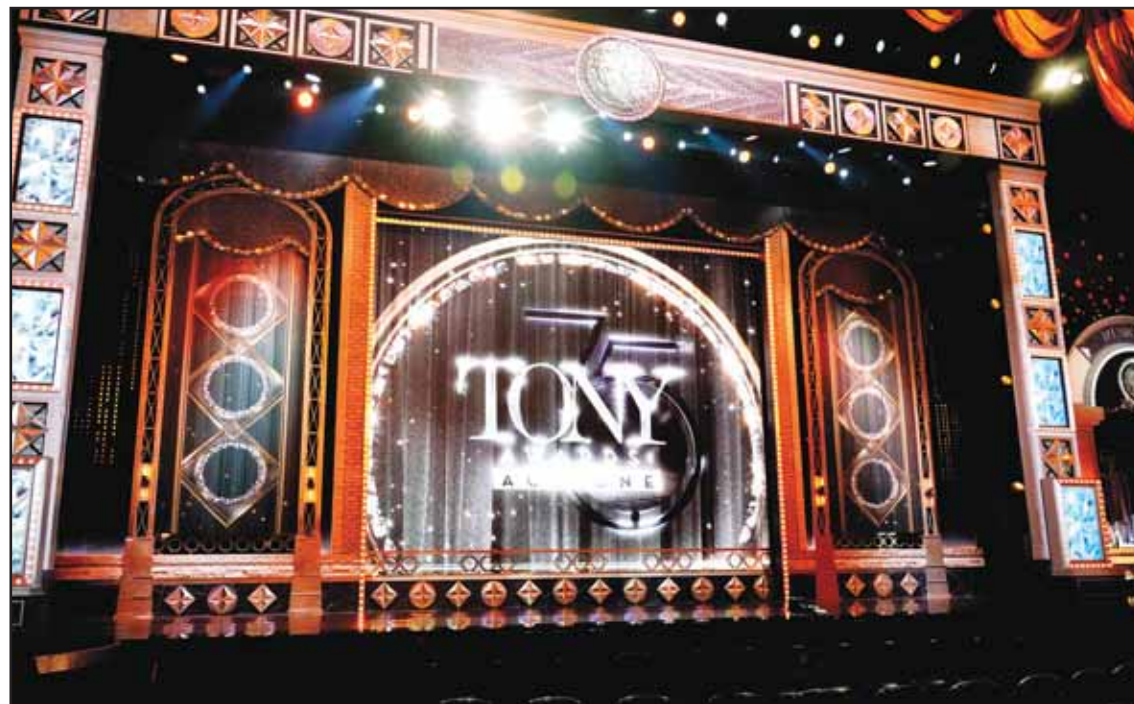
Twenty-four shows got at least one nomination across the 26 Tony categories, a revival of "Chess," the Cold War-set love triangle between two chess grand masters and the woman who loved both, and "Cats: The Jellicle Ball," which reimagines Andrew Lloyd Webber's classic feline musical into a celebration of queer ballroom culture.

"I'm over the Jellicle moon about this!" said Bill Rauch, who secured his first Tony nomination for co-directing the reimagined "Cats." "I've spent my whole career trying to connect the dots between classics and the place and time we're living in, and so to have 'Cats' have this life on Broadway right now just really feels like an affirmation of everything I've been trying to do for decades."

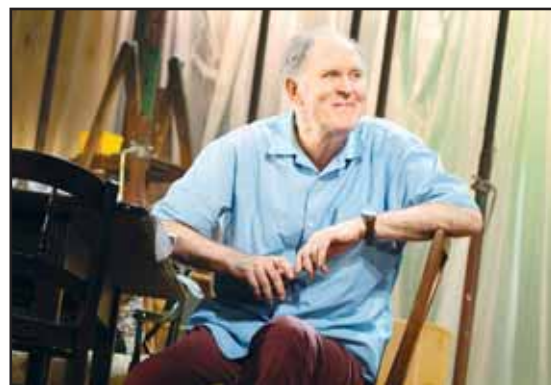
The best new musical crown will be between "The Lost Boys," "Schmigadoon!," "Titanique," a camp musical comedy that reimagines the 1997 megahit movie "Titanic," and "Two Strangers (Carry a Cake Across New York)," an opposites-attract rom-com set during a New York City weekend.

Ali Louis Bourzgui, nominated for best featured role in a musical playing a seductive vampire in "The Lost Boys," took a bite on why his show was so well received: "I think that people, including myself, love a villain that they can care for," he said. "Some of my favorite performances are technically villains on paper, but the person who's playing them actively makes them a full 3D person that you can root for. I think that's the most interesting kind of character."

The best new play nominees are the John Lithgow-led "Giant," which explores accusations of antisemitism



A view of the stage appears before the start of the 75th annual Tony Awards in New York on June 12, 2022. (AP)



John Lithgow appears during a performance of 'Giant' in New York on March 10, 2026. (AP)



Christiani Pitts, left, and Sam Tutty appear during a performance of 'Two Strangers' in New York on Oct. 31, 2025. (AP)



Ken Ard appears during a rehearsal for 'Cats: The Jellicle Ball' in New York on March 17, 2026. (AP)



Rachel Dratch appears during a performance of 'Richard O'Brien's The Rocky Horror Picture Show' in New York on March 25, 2026. (AP)

against children's author Roald Dahl; "Liberation," about a consciousness-raising women's group in 1970s Ohio that won the Pulitzer Prize for drama on Monday; "The Balusters," a wry comedy about a small-town neighborhood association that descends into chaos over whether to install a stop sign; and "Little Bear Ridge Road," about a struggling writer who returns to his rural hometown to settle his dead father's estate.

Playwright Mark Rosenblatt conceived of "Giant" in 2018 and started writing it in 2020, and it seems remarkably relevant in 2026, following the fallout from the war in Gaza and the spotlight on antisemitism in America.

"The ideas in the play, the concerns in the plays, the pain in the play, is perennial," he said. "But I could never have imagined that it would, when it finally was produced, would be playing against the backdrop of

what's happening now."

"The Fear of 13," the true story of a man who spent more than two decades on death row, didn't get any acting nods, despite starring Adrien Brody and Tessa Thompson in their Broadway debuts. Former "Glee" star Lea Michele will still be seeking her first Tony nomination after having missed out for her work on "Chess."

Squibb is now the oldest Tony-nominated actor in history, besting the record set by Lois Smith, who was 89 when she was nominated in 2020 for "The Inheritance." Squibb's Broadway resume reaches back to a stint in the original production of "Gypsy" in 1960 with Ethel Mer-

man, and she recalls rehearsing a musical by dancing on a concrete floor. It is her first Tony nomination.

In Jordan Harrison's play

"Marjorie Prime," a widow played by Squibb is brought an artificial companion who looks precisely like her dead husband. Premiering in 2014, the work in 2026 capitalizes on the recent frenzy over technological advancements like ChatGPT. Squibb said she saw the original, but only now fully comprehends the implications of things like AI.

As for her age, she said she doesn't really think about it: "I can't ignore my body is different than it was when I was young. And when I read a script now, I have to think can I physically do what they're asking me to do. And that's about it," she said. "As long as it's not dancing on concrete floors."

Burstein becomes the most-nominated male actor in Tony history with nine nods after his work in "Marjorie Prime," beating the record set by Jason Robards. Kelli O'Hara got her ninth career nomination for a revival of the comedy "Fallen Angels," tying her with Rosemary Harris for third on the all-time acting nominations list.

A trio of actors from the hit TV series "The Bear" struck out in their Broadway debuts this season - Ayo Edebiri in a revival of "Proof" and Jon Bernthal and Ebon Moss-Bachrach who both appeared in "Dog Day Afternoon," an adaptation of Sidney Lumet's 1975 bank robbing drama.

Others who missed out this year include Bobby Cannavale, who starred in a revival of "Art" with Neil Patrick Harris and James Corden that was snubbed by the nominators. "Bill & Ted" stars Keanu Reeves and Alex Winter reuniting for a revival of "Waiting for Godot," were also left off, although Brandon J. Dirden was nominated for a featured role. Laurie Metcalf was in a position to earn two but will have to settle with a featured role nod for "Death of a Salesman."

The best play revival category is stacked with well-received work: "Every Brilliant Thing"; "Death of a Salesman"; "Oedipus," a modern retelling of Sophocles' classic tragedy set on election night in a modern campaign office; "Becky Shaw," Gina Gionfriddo's dark comedy about a newlywed couple who decide to play matchmaker; and "Fallen Angels," Noël Coward's alcohol-fueled competition between two upper-crust ladies over the attention of a former lover.

Daniel Radcliffe secured a nomination for "Every Brilliant Thing," a one-person show that explores the antidotes to depression.

Rose Byrne, the "If I Had Legs I'd Kick You" star who plays one of those upper-crust ladies in "Fallen Angels," secured a nomination for best actress in a play, becoming the 22nd actor in history to be Oscar- and Tony-nominated in the same year. In addition to Byrne and O'Hara, Lesley Manville secured a nod for "Oedipus," Susannah Flood for "Liberation" and Carrie Coon for her work in her husband Tracy Letts' play "Bug."

O'Hara - winner for the 2015 "The King and I" revival - said there will be no chill descending between her and her co-star: "I'm moving with great bravery because of someone who's brave right next to me. And if she takes home that prize, it would mean we both win."

Lithgow, who has two Tonys already, will get his third if he beats leading actor in a play nominees Lane, Radcliffe, Mark Strong in "Oedipus" and Will Harrison from "Punch," which looks at restorative justice following the death of a man from a physical punch.

Best actor in musical nominees include Joshua Henry and Brandon Uranowitz, both from "Ragtime," Sam Tutty in "Two Strangers," Nicholas Christopher in "Chess" and Luke Evans from "The Rocky Horror Show."

On the women's side, the nominees are: Caissie Levy from "Ragtime," Marla Mindelle for "Titanique," Christiani Pitts from "Two Strangers," Sara Chase from "Schmigadoon!" and Stephanie Hsu in "The Rocky Horror Show."

The nominations also seemed to be an official welcome back to producer Scott Rudin, who scored nods for "Death of a Salesman" and "Little Bear Ridge Road." In 2021, Rudin said he was stepping back after allegations of bullying.

The Tony Awards will be handed out June 7 at Radio City Music Hall during a telecast hosted by Pink. The awards will air live on CBS and stream on Paramount+.

Last year's show - hosted by "Wicked" star Cynthia Erivo - drew 4.85 million viewers to CBS, its largest broadcast audience in six years, according to Nielsen. (AP)

Stage

Tech

AI for all, not just the rich

China's envoy urges responsible AI use for the benefit of all humanity

UNITED NATIONS, May 6, (Xinhua): In tackling the global governance of artificial intelligence, the international community should work together and promote AI for the greater good, said Sun Lei, China's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations, on Tuesday.

In remarks at the 2026 AI for Good Lab Side Event of the STI Forum, Sun said that AI, as a key driving force behind the new round of technological revolution and industrial transformation, is being increasingly integrated with the real economy.

AI is not only empowering a wide range of industries but also starting to affect every aspect of our daily lives, thus serving as a new engine of economic growth and holding profound significance for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, he added.

The risks and challenges brought about by AI, as well as the widening digital and intelligence divides, are also drawing widespread attention. "We must always bear in mind that AI should serve humanity and remain under human control. It should develop in a direction that is for good and for all, and become an international public good that ben-

efits all humankind."

In light of AI's empowering nature, the world should deepen international cooperation and promote openness in AI innovation, the ambassador said, calling for stronger communication, coordination, and talent exchanges to generate innovative outcomes and accelerate the adoption of AI applications.

"China stands ready to work with all parties to share the dividends of digital and AI, contribute to international cooperation on AI capacity-building, and support the development and deployment of AI applications within the UN system," he said.

The ambassador also underlined the need to balance development and security, strengthen governance rules and technical standards, and place prominence on the needs and aspirations of the Global South, noting that China supports the United Nations in playing a central role in global AI governance.

In addressing the widening AI divide, Sun said the international community should promote equitable and inclusive access to AI.

"AI must not become a game only for the rich countries and the wealthy," he said.



China's permanent representative to the United Nations, Fu Cong, speaks at a meeting on 'AI Empowering Engineering Capacity Building' at UN headquarters in New York. (Xinhua)

Travel

Trips increased

Visa-free tourism fuels surge in China's holiday inbound travel

BEIJING, May 6, (Xinhua): China saw a surge in cross-border travel during the May Day holiday, with nearly 11.3 million trips recorded, as an uptick in international visitors, including those entering visa-free, added to the increase.

Border crossings averaged about 2.26 million per day during the five-day holiday that began on May 1, up 3.5 percent from a year earlier and peaking on May 2, the National Immigration Administration said on Wednesday.

Trips by foreign nationals to and from China rose to 1.26 million during the holiday, a 12.5 percent increase from a year earlier. Among those entering China, 436,000 came visa-free, up 14.7 percent.



Foreign tourists pose for photos at Yuyuan Garden in Shanghai, east China. (Xinhua)

Silk road legacy lives on

15 new heritage sites identified in Afghanistan cultural survey

KABUL, May 6, (Xinhua): Afghanistan's Ministry of Information and Culture has reported substantial progress in documenting and preserving the country's rich historical heritage in the past year, the ministry announced on Wednesday.

Professional surveys of around 70 historical monuments across the nation led to the identification and official registration of 15 newly discovered heritage sites, the ministry said in a statement.

In a parallel effort, 23 important historical monuments were successfully restored in multiple provinces, while conservation work on several others continues.

Afghanistan possesses one of the world's richest and most diverse cultural heritages, a living testament to ancient civilizations along the Silk Road. From monumental Buddhist sites and Islamic architecture to historic citadels and archaeological treasures, these monuments represent the soul of the nation's identity.

Culture

Tradition replaces stereotypes

Restaurants redefine Cinco de Mayo with authentic flavors



Mexican restaurant owner-chef Marco Mendoza prepares a hot molcajete, a traditional Mexican dish, at Cuernavaca's Grill in downtown Los Angeles. (AP)

MEXICO CITY, May 6, (AP): Nayomie Mendoza has become accustomed to how Cinco de Mayo is celebrated in the U.S.: the platters of tacos, the pitchers of margaritas and the jubilant sounds of mariachi bands.

She is among a number of Mexican American business owners who've become more vocal about also honoring Mexican history and the significance of the holiday, as a way to combat anti-immigrant sentiments amid heightened immigration enforcement efforts that have targeted Latino communities.

Mendoza, owner of Cuernavaca's Grill in Los Angeles, said she prefers a celebration that reflects "everything that as a community we're enduring today." So, Mendoza will host Cinco de Mayo festivities at her restaurant that, along with traditional mariachi and Mexican cuisine, will include a nod to Mexican perseverance over the French in the Battle of Puebla over 160 years ago.

"Just looking at how much they did with very little resources," she said. "It just showed resilience. So, on Cinco de Mayo we always make it a testament of our resilience."

Restaurants owners aren't the first Latino community leaders to reclaim Cinco de Mayo in the U.S. - moving away from a flattening of Mexican culture toward highlighting history and community. This year, the celebrations are noticeably embracing traditional Mexican culture and focused on preservation, said Sehila Mota Casper, director of Latinos in Heritage Conservation.

"These are just incredible moments of educating and knowledge sharing," Mota Casper said. "The more we educate, the more knowledge we share, the better a community and people we become."

Hispanic-owned firms accounted for 8.4% of 5.9 million U.S. employers in 2024, according to the Census Bureau's annual survey of businesses. They also were approximately 18% of all restaurant businesses in the United States last month, according to the National Restaurant Association, which uses census data.



Erendida Arellano prepares hand-made corn tortillas at Cuernavaca's Grill downtown Los Angeles. (AP)

U.S. revelers hoping to crowd restaurants and toss back shots of tequila may find more wholesome and intentionally planned offerings, said Raul Luis, who owns the Birrieria Challo Mexican Restaurant, with locations in Los Angeles and Fort Worth, Texas. On Cinco de Mayo, he wants his customers to eat and drink the types of "guisados" - traditional Mexican braises or stews served as taco filling - that one would eat when invited into a Mexican family's home.

Well-made, traditional cooking will keep customers coming back, even if they aren't Hispanic, Luis said.

"It's the ultimate opportunity for restaurants to take advantage of that moment and bring them in and entice them to authentic Mexican food," Luis said.

Cinco de Mayo marks the anniversary of the 1862 victory by Mexican troops over invading French forces at the Battle of Puebla. The triumph over much larger French troops who were better-equipped was an enormous emotional boost for Mexican soldiers led by Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza.

In Mexico, historical reenactments are held annually in the central city of Puebla to commemorate the victory. Participants dress as Mexican and

French troops and as Zacapoaxtlan - the Indigenous and farmer contingent that helped Mexican troops win.

In the U.S., May 5 is seen as a day to celebrate Mexican American culture, stretching back to the 1800s in California. Festivities typically include parades, street food, block parties, mariachi competitions and baile.

Folklorico, or folkloric ballet, features whirling dancers in bright, ruffled dresses and their hair tied with shiny ribbons.

The day often is mistaken for Mexican Independence Day, which is on Sept. 16.

Latino activists and scholars say that disconnect in the U.S. is bolstered by the hazy history of Cinco de Mayo and marketing that plays on stereotypes that include fake, droopy mustaches and gigantic, colorful sombreros.

Since returning to the White House in 2025, President Donald Trump has continued to label Mexican immigrants as criminals and gang members, and Latino communities have been a target of his hard-line immigration tactics. Memes shared from official White House social media accounts perpetuate negative stereotypes about Latinos, while a federally led English-only initiative and ban on diversity, equity and inclusion programs all seem to target communities of color.

All together, it's generated a great deal of fear in Latino communities.

Mendoza, the Los Angeles restaurant owner, said it's also been a hard time for the restaurant industry because of rising costs. But in spite of it all, Cuernavaca's Grill will be celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

As part of the restaurant's Cinco de Mayo festivities, she'll invite customers to contribute to a food and toy drive meant to support those who are struggling in the current climate.

"This is a testament of our resilience," Mendoza said. "It's a testament of our hard work. It is pride to our community and everything that we've accomplished."

Art

Guided tours bring fans face-to-face with early art

Klimt art showcased on Vienna theater restoration tours

VIENNA, May 6, (AP): For more than a century, only conservators and experts could catch a close-up glimpse of early works by Austrian artist Gustav Klimt in Vienna, but Klimt fans are now getting that opportunity on daily guided tours high up on scaffolding.

The 10 oil paintings, which are on the 18-meter-high (60-foot-high) ceilings of the renowned Burgtheater in Austria's capital, are being restored because of water damage.

"The special thing about Klimt for me at least is that we only know about his later works," said Hannes Höllinger, 60, who went on one of the recent Klimt tours and said it "was very interesting to see that already at age 24 he made these very beautiful paintings which I myself had not seen before."

Klimt, famed for his bold, daring art nouveau paintings, was a key figure in artistic modernism at the start of the 20th century. His work has fetched some of the highest prices for any artist. Among his most famous paintings is "The Kiss" from 1907-1908, which shows a couple in a passionate embrace adorned with elaborate patterns and gold. The painting is on display at Vienna's Belvedere Museum.

"We were allowed to invest several hundred thousand euros to let Gustav Klimt shine in his original splendor again," Burgtheater commercial director Robert Beutler told The Associated Press. "Everything gets cleaned by hand with very fine cotton swabs and condensed water."

The biggest Klimt painting is about 35 square meters (375 square feet), "so you can imagine how long that takes when you remove dust and grime by piece and layer by layer," Beutler said.

Klimt painted the art at the theater from 1886-1888, together with his



People look at a restored painting of Gustav Klimt during a guided tour of the restoration of the ceiling paintings at the Burgtheater in Vienna, Austria. (AP)

brother Ernst and Austrian painter Franz Matsch. At age 24, it was Klimt's first big commission.

Conservator Thomas Mahr, who is responsible for restoring the stucco surrounding Klimt's early work, said the artists' pitch at the time was "we are young, we are fast, and provide great work at low cost" - and that's how they got into business."

The paintings depict different scenes from theater history. One of the biggest works displays a scene from 16th-century London, in which Queen Elizabeth I is shown watching a staging of "Romeo and Juliet" at the Globe Theatre. Right behind the queen, Klimt and his two fellow artists look on. It is Klimt's only known self-portrait.

Every day, hundreds of art lovers climb the scaffolding as part of guid-



A man takes a picture with his mobile phone during a guided tour of the restoration of Gustav Klimt's ceiling paintings at the Burgtheater in Vienna, Austria. (AP)

ed tours to view Klimt's work up close. Susanne Höllinger, who took the tour with her husband Hannes, said the early paintings already offer an idea of what Klimt's most famous later paintings would look like.

She especially enjoyed looking at the many details of the paintings that aren't visible from the floor of the theater such as finely painted, small figures or the cigarette in the fingers of Klimt's chain-smoking brother Ernst.

"To be so close to these freshly renovated paintings - just a unique experience," Höllinger exclaimed.

The special guided tours about Klimt's ceiling art will continue until August, after which the scaffolding will be removed. General admission tickets are available on the theater's website for 25 euros (\$29).

New case confirmed in Switzerland

Hantavirus on cruise ship may be transmitted among humans: WHO

GENEVA, May 6, (AP) — The cruise ship at the center of a deadly hantavirus outbreak and which is stuck off the coast of Cape Verde with nearly 150 people on board was waiting Wednesday to head to Spain's Canary Islands. Meanwhile, health authorities in South Africa and Switzerland identified a strain of the virus that can be transmitted between humans in rare cases.

Three passengers have died and several others have been sickened by hantavirus on board the Dutch-flagged MV Hondius cruise ship. Hantavirus usually spreads by inhaling contaminated rodent droppings.

The ship left Argentina on April 1 on an Atlantic cruise and was scheduled to include stops in Antarctica, the Falkland Islands and other locations. However, the itinerary appears to have changed because of the situation on board.

The head of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said three patients with suspected hantavirus cases have been evacuated from the ship and are on

their way to the Netherlands.

He said the U.N. health agency is working with the operators of the cruise ship to closely monitor the health of passengers and crew.

"At this stage, the overall public health risk remains low," he wrote on his X account.

Among the patients is the ship's doctor, Spain's health ministry has said. The ministry said on Wednesday that the doctor, who was initially scheduled to be flown to the Canary Islands, is now being evacuated directly home to the Netherlands "after his health had improved."

Authorities in Switzerland also announced Wednesday that a man who returned from a trip to South America and traveled on the cruise ship has tested positive for the virus and is receiving treatment.

Spain's health ministry said in a statement late Tuesday that it would receive the MV Hondius vessel in the Canary Islands after a request from the World Health Organization and the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control. Despite

some opposition from leaders in the region, the government insisted that it would ultimately make the call.

For now the luxury cruise ship remains marooned off the coast of Cape Verde, an island nation off West Africa in the Atlantic. The World Health Organization said passengers are isolating in their cabins.

South African health authorities said they identified the Andes strain of hantavirus in two passengers who were on the ship, and Swiss authorities said they identified the same virus in their affected patient.

The World Health Organization says the Andes virus, a specific species of hantavirus, is found in South America, primarily in Argentina and Chile.

The Andes virus can be spread between people, though this is rare and the spread of the disease is typically contained because it would spread only through close contact, such as by sharing a bed or sharing food, experts say.

The South African Department of Health said its results came from

tests performed on the passengers after they were removed from the ship and flown to South Africa.

One of the passengers, a British man, is in intensive care in a South African hospital. Tests were performed on the other passenger posthumously after she died in South Africa.

A statement from the Federal Office of Public Health said that the man "returned to Switzerland after traveling on the cruise ship on which there were a number of hantavirus cases." It said his case also involved the Andes virus.

The Swiss health office initially said the patient hospitalized in Zurich had "returned from a trip to South America" with his wife at the end of April, without specifying. Simon Ming, a spokesperson for the office, clarified in an email that the patient got off during its stop in St. Helena, in the South Atlantic Ocean.

It was not immediately clear when that was or how he was returned to Switzerland.



Health workers in protective gear evacuate patients from the MV Hondius cruise ship into an ambulance at a port in Praia, Cape Verde on May 6. (AP)

Health

'Melting landscape is rapidly changing'

Antarctica's tourism boom raises concerns about contamination and disease

BRUSSELS, May 6, (AP) — Driven in part by fears that the frozen landscapes of Antarctica may be irreversibly melting away because of climate change, tourism to the bottom of the world is soaring. And experts warn that with more visitors comes an increased risk of contamination, illness and other damage to the continent.

While visitor numbers are still small - in part due to the high costs and time it can take - they are growing so fast that scientists and environmentalists are sounding alarms.

A deadly outbreak of the rare hantavirus aboard a Dutch ship on a weeklong polar cruise has brought attention to the growing tourism trend.

Most expeditions head to the Antarctic Peninsula, one of the fastest-warming places in the world. From 2002 to 2020, roughly 149 billion metric tons (164 billion tons) of Antarctic ice melted per year, according to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

A common route is to voyage south from Argentina toward Antarctica before heading north up the coast of Africa - the same route taken by the cruise ship MV Hondius.

"The sites you will see in Antarctica are extremely unique and not replicable anywhere else on the planet - the whales, the seals, the penguins, the icebergs - it's all really stunning and it makes a huge impression on people," said Claire Christian, executive director of the environmental group Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition.



Passengers watch as a ship sails through the Lemaire Channel in Antarctica on Nov 24, 2025. (AP)

In 2024, more than 80,000 tourists touched down on the vast ice-cloaked continent and 36,000 viewed from the safety of ships, according to data collected by the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators.

The International Union of Concerned Scientists estimates that tourism to Antarctica has grown tenfold

in the past 30 years.

That number could rise further in the next decade as costs fall with more ice-capable hulls hitting the water and technological advances, said Hanne Nielsen, a senior lecturer of Antarctic law at the University of Tasmania. Her colleagues at the university estimate the annual figure could triple or quadruple to over

400,000 visits in that time.

Some tourists come to Antarctica for "last chance tourism," knowing the melting landscape is rapidly changing, Nielsen said.

Officials have not indicated any evidence of contamination from the MV Hondius.

However, flocks of migratory

birds brought avian flu from South America to Antarctica in recent years, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

That outbreak prompted the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators and others to harden rules for tourists' conduct and hygiene to protect visitors from being contaminated. To protect the fragile ecosystem from invasive species large and microscopic, visitors are told to stay away from animals and to avoid touching the ground with anything but their feet.

"There are rules that people are bound by when they're heading south," Nielsen said, describing her five voyages as a former guide. Crews and passengers use vacuums, disinfectants and brushes to scrub shoes and equipment clear of bugs, feathers, seeds and microbe-carrying dirt.

"Between the tongues and the laces of the boots you can find a lot of things," she said.

Cruise ships have been struck by outbreaks of diseases like norovirus, which can spread quickly in a ship's close quarters. In 2020, a COVID-19 outbreak on the Diamond Princess turned the cruise ship into an incubator for the then-mysterious virus.

Hantavirus usually spreads by inhaling contaminated rodent droppings.

The World Health Organization said Tuesday that MV Hondius left Ushuaia, Argentina, on April 1 and visited Antarctica and several isolated islands.

WHO is investigating possible human-to-human transmission on the cruise ship, said Dr. Maria Van Kerkhove, WHO's director of epidemic and pandemic preparedness. Officials suspect the first infected person likely contracted the virus before boarding, she said, and officials have been told there are no rats on board.

Antarctica is governed by the Antarctic Treaty, which in 1959 enshrined the territory as a scientific preserve used only for peaceful purposes. A series of rules that followed "aim to ensure that all visits, regardless of location, do not adversely impact the Antarctic environment or its scientific and aesthetic values," according to the treaty's secretariat.

Companies and scientific ventures voluntarily comply with biosecurity guidelines and submit environmental impact assessments for Antarctic operations.

The treaty was written when tourism numbers were much lower, Christian said.

"Activity needs to be regulated appropriately, as you would with any of the world's sensitive and precious ecological sites," Christian said from Hiroshima, Japan, where she was preparing for an Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting. There she'll join calls to strengthen protections for Antarctica's penguins, whales, seabirds, seals and krill - tiny creatures at the base of the food chain.

For now, the lure of the frozen frontier continues to draw visitors.

UK enacts tobacco law to create smoke-free generation

FDA announces first OK of fruit-flavored e-cigs for adults

WASHINGTON, May 6, (Agencies) — The Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday announced its first authorization of fruit-flavored electronic cigarettes intended for adult smokers, a major policy shift that comes after months of appeals to President Donald Trump from the vaping industry.

The decision is certain to be opposed by health groups and parent organizations that have long pointed to flavors as the driver behind underage vaping in the US. But the federal action comes as teen vaping rates have dropped to a 10-year low and manufacturers have pushed the Republican administration to loosen restrictions on their products.

Vaping companies have long made the case that their products can help blunt the toll of smoking among adults, which is blamed for 480,000 US deaths annually due to cancer, lung disease and heart disease. The battery-powered devices have been sold in the US since 2007, but their potential benefits have been overshadowed for years by uptake among middle and high school students.

The newly authorized e-cigarettes come in mango, blueberry and two



Flavored vaping liquids and devices are seen on display at the VapeNY.com store in New York, on Jan 2, 2020. (AP)

varieties of menthol. Los Angeles-based vaping company Glas Inc. plans to market the flavors under the names Gold, Sapphire, Classic Menthol and Fresh Menthol, according to the FDA release.

Previously the FDA had only granted permission to tobacco or menthol-flavored vaping products. Most e-cigarettes OK'd by regula-

tors come from large manufacturers, including Juul and Altria.

Tuesday's announcement is not an approval or endorsement, and the FDA reiterated that the Glas vapes are only intended for adults interested in quitting or cutting back on cigarettes.

The FDA suggested the company's digital age-verification system

makes it unlikely the products will be picked up by underage users. Users must first verify their age with a government ID on their cellphone. The e-cigarettes can then only be used when connected via Bluetooth to the phone of the verified user.

The FDA's OK of the new fruity products will be "a key test case," said Kathy Crosby of the Truth Initiative, an anti-tobacco nonprofit.

Also:

LONDON: Britain has enacted a landmark tobacco and vapes law aimed at creating the country's first smoke-free generation, the government said.

The Tobacco and Vapes Bill, which cleared Parliament last week after the House of Lords considered Commons amendments on April 20, received Royal Assent on Wednesday, making it illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 2009, according to a press release from the Department of Health and Social Care.

This legislation means today's children will never legally be sold cigarettes, breaking the cycle of addiction and disadvantage that has persisted for decades, the press release said.



The symbol of the United Nations is displayed outside the Secretariat Building on Feb 28, 2022, at United Nations Headquarters. (AP)

UN warns of 'digital pandemic,' calling for digital resilience

GENEVA, May 6, (Xinhua) — A new report jointly released by UN agencies on Tuesday warns of the potential risk of a "digital pandemic" triggered by disruptions to communication networks, and calls for coordinated action from countries to enhance digital resilience.

The report, titled "When digital systems fail: The hidden risks of our digital world," outlines risk scenarios on Earth, at sea, and in space, analyzing the fragility of interconnected digital systems and providing a roadmap for preparedness.

These risk scenarios and the resulting "digital pandemics" are described as follows: a severe solar storm could disable satellites, disrupt navigation systems, and destabilize energy grids, with recovery times potentially lasting months; extreme temperatures could overwhelm data centers, leading to mobile service

outages and malfunctions in healthcare systems and financial transactions; earthquakes or other natural hazards can sever vital Internet connections, slowing business operations and leaving entire nations offline for weeks.

The report also highlights another vulnerability: societies have grown dependent on digital systems without maintaining analogue skills and ensuring adequate fallback options. When big systems fail, offline alternatives are not always available anymore.

Resilience must be built into the DNA of the technologies we depend on," said Doreen Bogdan-Martin, secretary-general of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). "This report urges us to consider the systemic nature of risks and rethink how we protect the systems that connect and empower humanity."



Packets of insulin vials and pens are warehoused at a Kaiser warehouse in Downey, Calif., March 18, 2023. (AP)

New research says Type 2 diabetes caused by 'maladaptation'

JERUSALEM, May 6, (Xinhua) — New research is overturning the long-held belief that Type 2 diabetes is caused simply by cells wearing out, the University of Jerusalem said in a statement on Tuesday.

Instead, a study in Nature Metabolism reveals that our insulin-producing cells are "heroic" adapters that eventually push themselves to a breaking point.

By mapping the human pancreas from birth to old age, scientists found that cells naturally "turn up the volume" on insulin production

to cope with aging. In people with diabetes, however, the cells try to "sprint" even faster.



Measles: Uganda's Ministry of Health reported a surge in measles cases, with 20 districts confirming outbreaks so far this year.

Charles Olaro, director general of health services for Uganda's Ministry of Health, said in a statement that despite progress in controlling the disease, measles continues to affect communities, particularly unvaccinated children.

'China is a very important country to the IOC'

Snooker's Olympic push gets a jolt from China's back-to-back world champions

LONDON, May 6, (AP) — Snooker's bid to enter the Olympic Games will be boosted by having back-to-back world champions from China, the sport's top official said.

Wu Yize beat Shaun Murphy 18-17 in a dramatic world championship final to follow in the footsteps of compatriot Zhao Xintong, who became Asia's first ever world champion 12 months ago.

Britain has long been snooker's traditional stronghold but China - where there are around 300,000 recognized snooker clubs - is the growing force in the game, providing 11 of the 32 players in the main draw of the worlds over the last two weeks and five in the top 16 of the world ranking.

Snooker failed in bids to get onto the Olympic program for the first time for the Games in 2021 and 2024, and could launch another attempt ahead of the 2032 Olympics in Brisbane.

Jason Ferguson, chairman of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association, said the IOC "definitely has got eyes on our sport" and the recent successes of Chinese players at the Crucible Theatre can only help.

"It's vitally important," Ferguson told The Associated Press in a phone interview. "China is a very important country to the IOC - it has been a host of the Games on many occasions and they are heavily invested in sports, in IOC terms.

"So the fact that China is a key market for snooker is a really important part about any Olympic bid."

The growth of snooker in other markets - notably in eastern Europe, with Poland having its first player competing in the world championship in Antoni Kowalski this year - is highlighted by the fact there are almost 100 countries with some kind of national infrastructure for the sport, Ferguson noted.



China's Wu Yize celebrates after winning the World Snooker Championship defeating England's Shaun Murphy in Sheffield, England. (AP)

"When we started this idea of going to the Olympics, we only had a handful of countries playing," he said.

"But we are ready (to be in the Olympics). And that's an exciting proposi-

tion."

Ferguson said the WPBSA was working on making its final applications to get snooker into the Paralympics, too. Snooker was on that program from 1960-88.

The IOC will likely finalize its program of sports to be added to the 2032 Olympics and Paralympics by next spring, around the time of the next world snooker championship. Strong support from Brisbane officials should be crucial to any sport's ambitions to get Olympic status.

Australian snooker player Neil Robertson was the world champion in 2010 and is the current world No. 2.

At age 22, Wu became the second youngest player to win snooker's biggest prize and did so in a flamboyant style that has marked him out for many, including the great Ronnie O'Sullivan, as a likely world champion.

Six years ago, Wu relocated to Britain from his hometown of Lanzhou to pursue his dream of becoming a professional. He came across with his father - his mother stayed in China - and they shared a small, windowless flat that was in such "poor condition," Wu said, that it might have given him acne because of the poor air quality.

"If you really love snooker," he said, "it is the path you have to go through and fight through."

His victory at the Crucible Theatre was something of a surprise, as Wu had never won a match at the worlds before this year.

Like Zhao, Wu - the new world No. 4 - wants his journey to be an inspiration for all Chinese players back home.

"I hope younger players can stay true to their passion, be a bit braver, and go after their dreams," he said.

Samson anchors Chennai to 8-wicket win over Delhi



Chennai Super Kings' Sanju Samson plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals in New Delhi, India. (AP)

Super Kings sit No. 6 with 10 points

DELHI, India, May 6, (AP): Opening batter Sanju Samson smashed an unbeaten 87 off 52 balls and anchored Chennai Super Kings to an eight-wicket win over Delhi Capitals in the Indian Premier League.

Samson, who has scored two centuries this season for his new franchise, led Chennai to 159-2 with 15 balls to spare as the five-time champions continued a remarkable turnaround in the tournament with three wins in the last four games.

Delhi was limited to 155-7 with spinners Akeal Hosein (1-19) and Noor Ahmad (2-22) troubling the home team batters on a tricky wicket.

"They are calling me 'Cheetah' but I like Sanju more," said a smiling Samson after his match-winning knock. "I have been working a bit on my initial movement and it has been coming off. I had to be a bit too selfish to get a hundred so I thought let's win the game ... finishing not out, winning the game gives you more satisfaction."

Samson was slow off the blocks and scored run-a-ball 22 before cutting loose in the latter half of the chase and smashing six sixes and



Chennai Super Kings' Akeal Hosein, right, celebrates the wicket of Delhi Capitals' KL Rahul during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals in New Delhi, India. (AP)

seven boundaries. Kartik Sharma made an unbeaten 41 off 31 balls and together with Samson shared a match-winning partnership of 114 runs to leave Delhi at No. 7 with four wins in 10 games.

Chennai is at No. 6 with 10 points from five wins and five losses.

Lungi Ngidi had provided Delhi an early breakthrough when captain Ruturaj Gaikwad (6) couldn't time his flick well and was caught at deep square leg in the fourth over and

"We were 10-15 runs short and the wicket got a little better to bat on later in the game," Delhi skipper Axar Patel said. "It wasn't easy for new batters to get set, but with set batters they were able to take the game away."

Delhi struggled to get momentum when Mukesh Choudhary's off-cutter deceived Pathum Nissanka (19) and the Sri Lankan opener spooned an easy catch to Dewald Brevis. Lokesh Rahul (12) then misread Hosein's turning delivery and holed out at mid-off before Ahmad struck in his first over when Karun Nair (13) swept straight to short fine-leg inside the 30-yard circle.

Ahmad struck again in his second over when Nitish Rana (15) couldn't control his sweep shot and was caught at deep backward square before Delhi slipped further to 69-5 when Patel's below-par season with the bat continued as he spooned an easy catch to cover.

Ahmad dropped Tristan Stubbs on 2 at covers and the South African revived Delhi with 65-run partnership with impact player Sameer Rizvi, who top-scored with 40 off 24 balls with four sixes. Two of Rizvi's big hits came in the final over of Anshul Kamboj, who finished with expensive figures of 0-49 and conceded 20 runs in the last over.

British government targets possible bid for Oly in 2040s

LONDON, May 6, (AP) — The British government wants to get the country "event ready" to potentially host another Olympics.

Discussions are happening "about supporting potential bids" for the Olympics and Paralympics in the 2040s, as well as bids for the Ryder Cup and Solheim Cup in the 2030s, according to an announcement by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

"Initial work examining whether the UK could host the Olympic and Paralympic Games for the first time since London 2012 will assess key factors such as potential cost, socioeconomic

benefit and any bid's chance of success," the statement read.

London has hosted the Summer Olympics three times, most recently in 2012.

Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy said in the announcement that the government aims to "continue attracting the most prestigious events in sport."

The next two Summer Olympics are set: Los Angeles is hosting in 2028 followed by Brisbane, Australia in 2032.

There's a long list of countries interested in hosting the 2036 Games. It includes India, Qatar, Turkey, Hungary, Germany, and Chile.

Yiting wins women's skeet silver at ISSF Shotgun World Cup in Almaty

ALMATY, May 6, (Xinhua) — China's Jiang Yiting claimed silver with 30 hits in the women's skeet final at her first World Cup appearance of the season in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

After skipping the opening leg of the 2026 ISSF Shotgun World Cup because of the national championships, China's shotgun team returned for the second stop, with Jiang, the Olympic mixed team bronze medalist, the only Chinese shooter to reach the skeet final. She was one of five athletes to score

119 in qualification and advanced in fourth place under the revised format, which expands the final from six shooters to eight.

In the final, Jiang remained in contention through the elimination stages but ultimately fell short of Kazakhstan's Assem Orynbay, who won gold with 33 hits to equal the world record. Italy's Martina Bartolomei took bronze with 27.

Earlier in the men's skeet final, Italy's Gabriele Rossetti delivered a standout performance to win gold with a world-record 35 hits. Germany's Sven Korte pushed him all the way but settled for silver with 34, while Japan's Shotaro Toguchi claimed bronze with 30.

The men's and women's trap finals are scheduled for Saturday.



Yiting

England sticks with Borthwick for World Cup

LONDON, May 6, (AP) — A review into England's worst Six Nations in 50 years backed Steve Borthwick to keep his coaching job to the 2027 Rugby World Cup.

England reached 12 successive test wins when it thumped Wales in the first round in February. But it lost its remaining four games, including an historic first to Italy, and finished fifth.

England was guilty of indiscipline, over-kicking and not being clinical. After four Six Nations under Borthwick, England has yet to win in Scotland, Ireland or France.

The England Rugby Football Union wouldn't detail the team's issues because of "performance confidentiality in a competitive sporting environment" but chief executive Bill Sweeney said an unnamed panel of rugby figures undertook a "thorough and honest review."

"This is a young England team that is still growing and developing, and we understand progress in international sport is rarely linear," Sweeney said.

"Steve has engaged in this process with full openness and has clear plans in place to address these findings. We are all behind him and his coaching team going into the Nations Championship and the series of matches leading into Rugby World Cup 2027."

The RFU said Borthwick was given credit for the 12-match, year-long winning run.

"England's underperformance across the Six Nations was not the result of a singular failure or issue," it said. "Instead, it highlighted a number of interconnected performance areas, such as discipline, execution of opportunities and making the most of key moments, where improvement is required if England are to consistently perform at the level expected."

"(Borthwick) and his coaching team are already addressing issues identified."

England's next match is against world champion South Africa in Johannesburg on July 4 in the Nations Championship.

The World Cup in Australia is in 17 months.

Best of the Rest

Thousands at funeral for auto champ: Thousands of fans have attended the funeral for Alex Zanardi, the Italian auto racing champion-turned-Paralympic gold medalist who died last week at 59.

Zanardi's handbike was placed near the altar inside the basilica in Padua where the service was held on Tuesday, and his hand cycling teammates sat in the front row near his wife, Daniela, and son, Niccolò.

Also in attendance were Stefano Domenicali, the president and CEO of Formula One, skier Alberto Tomba, Paralympian Bebe Vio and a host of politicians and other officials.

In 2020, Zanardi was seriously injured in a handbike accident after crashing into an oncoming truck during a relay event in Tuscany. Zanardi suffered serious facial and cranial trauma in the crash and was put in a medically induced coma.

Nearly 20 years earlier, Zanardi lost both of his legs in an auto racing crash.

One fan inside the church held up a sign that said, "Farewell Alex, your legend will never die."

Zanardi won two championships in CART - 1997 and 1998 - in the United States, and also competed in F1.

He won four gold medals and two silvers at the 2012 and 2016 Paralympics, competed in the New York City Marathon and set an Ironman record.

Zanardi died on Friday. (AP)

Club punished after on-field mental health controversy

MELBOURNE, Australia, May 6, (AP) — Australian rules football club Carlton has been fined 75,000 Australian dollars (\$54,000) for its lapse handling of a player's on-field mental health episode.

Elijah Hollands played in Carlton's Australian Football League game against Collingwood on April 16, with film footage from the game causing concern for his welfare from fans and others.

The footage showed Hollands appearing confused and moving erratically, with some noting his unusual actions during the warm-up, including an attempted kick at goal which traveled only a few meters.

Hollands, 24, was admitted to hospital five days later. Elijah Hollands's father, former AFL

player Ben Hollands, pledged on social media to help his son and urged others to check on their friends if they are struggling.

Australian Football League chief Andrew Dillon on Tuesday said there were sufficient visual cues and performance data from the game, in addition to knowledge of Hollands' history, to know that "he should have been removed from play earlier than he was."

The failure to remove Hollands from play earlier brought the game into disrepute, Dillon said, adding that the charge was against the club rather than individuals. Carlton will pay the fine to the AFL's mental health partner, Headspace, which supports youth mental health.

"What transpired during the game was some-

thing we haven't seen before, and while Elijah did undergo checks, he should not have been left on the field for that period of time," Dillon said. "The incident has highlighted something important for our game: While our physical injury protocols are strong and well-understood, mental health presentations can be variable, and are complex."

Laura Kane, the AFL's executive general manager of football, said the AFL would introduce a number of measures, including setting up the employment of a full-time psychologist or the equivalent for all AFL and AFLW women's clubs.

"This has been about care, clarity and action," Kane said. "This is bigger than one club or one night."

OKC crushes Lakers in semifinal opener

Cunningham leads Pistons past Cavaliers

OKLAHOMA CITY, May 6, (AP): Chet Holmgren had 24 points and 12 rebounds, and the Oklahoma City Thunder routed the Los Angeles Lakers 108-90 in Game 1 of their Western Conference semifinal series.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and Ajay Mitchell each added 18 points for the Thunder. The defending champions improved to 5-0 in the playoffs, despite missing 2025 All-Star Jalen Williams with an injured left hamstring for the third straight game. The Thunder shot 49.4% from the field and made 13 of 30 3-pointers.

Oklahoma City will host Game 2 on Thursday.

Los Angeles struggled to find offense without scoring champion Luka Doncic, who has missed the past month with an injured left hamstring. LeBron James scored 27 points and Rui Hachimura added 18 for the Lakers. Austin Reaves, who averaged 23.3 points in the regular season, was held to eight on 3-for-16 shooting.

Oklahoma City won all four regular-season matchups by an average of 29.3 points, and this one was only slightly closer. The Thunder held the Lakers to 41.7% shooting and forced 17 turnovers.

The Lakers ran out to a 7-0 lead, with James scoring five of the points. Eventually, the Thunder shook off the rust from an eight-day break and went up 31-26 at the end of the first quarter, despite 12 points from James.

Holmgren's two-handed alley-oop dunk on a lob from Isaiah Hartenstein put the Thunder up 48-39. Lakers forward Jarred Vanderbilt injured the pinkie finger on his right hand on the play, left the game and did not return.



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Jared McCain (3) drives to the basket as Los Angeles Lakers' Rui Hachimura, left, defends in the second half of Game 1 in a second-round NBA basketball playoffs series in Oklahoma City. (AP)

Oklahoma City led 61-53 at halftime, despite 16 points from James.

Mitchell, who started in Williams' place, made a corner 3-pointer and was fouled by Marcus Smart in the final minute of the third quarter. His free throw put the Thunder up 84-72, a score that held up until the end of the period.

Alex Caruso's fast-break dunk early in the fourth put Oklahoma

City up 88-73, and the Thunder maintained control from there.

Pistons 111 Cavaliers 101
In Detroit, Cade Cunningham scored 23 points, Tobias Harris had 20 and the Detroit Pistons beat the Cleveland Cavaliers in Game 1 of their second-round series.

Duncan Robinson added 19 points for the top-seeded Pistons, who ended an NBA record-tying 12-game post-

season losing streak against a single opponent, a drought that dated to the 2007 Eastern Conference finals.

Game 2 is Thursday night in Detroit.

The Pistons forced 20 turnovers that led to 31 points in a strong performance against Cleveland's potent backcourt of Donovan Mitchell and James Harden.

Mitchell scored 23 points, ending

his NBA-record streak of scoring 30-plus points in nine straight series openers.

Harden had 22 points and Max Strus scored 19 for the No. 4-seeded Cavs, who pulled into a tie midway through the fourth quarter after trailing for most of the night and by as much as 18 points.

Harden committed seven turnovers and pointed the blame at him-

self.

Cleveland center Jarrett Allen was limited to two points and three rebounds, coming off a 22-point, 19-rebound performance in an elimination game against Toronto.

Two days after both teams won a Game 7, the Pistons started strong and led 37-31 after a quarter. Detroit took a 59-46 lead into the second half, when the cushion was no longer comfortable.

Cleveland pulled within three points late in the third and Ron Holland hit a buzzer-beating 3-pointer to end the quarter and put the Pistons up 83-76.

After the Cavs cut their deficit to three again early in the fourth, the Pistons responded with eight consecutive points to restore a double-digit lead.

Cleveland, though, wouldn't go away.

Harden, playing the Pistons for the first time since Cleveland acquired him, scored seven straight points to pull the Cavs into a 93-all tie with 5:28 left.

Jalen Duren blocked Harden's next shot and dunked on Detroit's next three possessions - each off Cunningham assists.

The Pistons won the Central Division this year by eight games ahead of the defending champion Cavs, splitting four games during the regular season.

Detroit earned 60 victories and the top seed in the East just two years after losing 68 games and setting a single-season NBA record with 28 straight losses.

The Pistons rallied from a 3-1 deficit in the first round against Orlando to advance in the playoffs for the first time since 2008.

Cleveland outlasted Toronto in seven games to reach the second round for the third straight year, a run that started with Bickerstaff, who was fired by the Cavs and hired a month later by the Pistons.

Hong Kong & Japan advance

Wang powers China into worlds last eight

LONDON, May 6, (Xinhua): Wang Chuqin claimed two wins as China rallied to beat Romania 3-1 on Wednesday and reached the men's team quarterfinals at the 2026 ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships Finals.

China fell behind early when Liang Jingkun lost 11-5, 11-7, 11-6 to Eduard Ionescu, the highest-ranked player in Romania's lineup.

"I was a bit tight at the start, and he performed better. After he had some excellent shots, my mentality was impacted and I failed to catch up with him afterwards," Liang said.

"As I don't have much advantage technically and tactically, I need to go all out against every opponent," he added.

Wang, the world No. 1, restored parity by beating Iulian Chirita in straight games. He took the first 11-5, then recovered from a 5-1 deficit in the second to level at 8-8 before edging it 12-10. He closed out the match



Wang Chuqin of China competes against Eduard Ionescu of Romania during the men's teams round of 16 match between China and Romania at the ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships Finals in London, Britain. (Xinhua)

11-5.

"I prepared fully for this match. After trailing in the second game, I managed to turn the tables, which boosted my confidence in the third," Wang said.

Lin Shidong put China ahead with an 11-9, 11-6, 11-4 win

over Ovidiu Ionescu in the third match. The 36-year-old Romanian called two TTR reviews in the second game, but both decisions went against him.

"The third match was quite crucial, but I didn't think too much about it. I was just focused

on every point," Lin said.

"I felt that I didn't truly brace for high-intensity competition in the group stage.

"Hopefully I will be more pumped up in the upcoming matches," he added.

Wang then sealed the tie against Eduard Ionescu. He led 8-2 in the opening game before the Romanian closed to within one point, but Wang held on for an 11-8 win. Ionescu took the second 11-8, but Wang responded to win the next two games 11-3, 11-4.

"Eduard is a strong player, and I expected it to be a tough match. Due to Lin's win in the third match, I felt more relieved on the court," Wang said.

China will face either South Korea or Austria in the quarterfinals.

Elsewhere, Chinese Taipei beat Denmark 3-0 in the men's team event. In the women's draw, Hong Kong, China edged Chinese Taipei 3-2, while Japan swept Luxembourg 3-0.

Neymar scores in draw

Palmeiras continues winning run with win over Sporting Cristal

BUENOS AIRES, May 6, (Xinhua): Jose Manuel Lopez and Ramon Sosa scored either side of halftime as Brazil's Palmeiras eased to a 2-0 away win over Peruvian side Sporting Cristal in the Copa Libertadores group stage.

Lopez put the visitors ahead when he timed his run to perfection, volleying in from 12 yards after Jhon Arias' cross from the left wing.

Sosa doubled the lead in the 50th minute by pouncing on an errant clearance and rolling the ball into an empty net.

Sporting threatened at times but couldn't find a way past goalkeeper Carlos Miguel, who made a series of sharp saves.

Palmeiras now leads Group F with eight points, two ahead of second-placed Sporting Cristal.

In other Copa Libertadores matches on Tuesday, Always Ready cruised to a 4-0 home win over Lanus, Barcelona SC won 1-0 at home to Boca Juniors, Universidad Central prevailed 2-0 at home to Independiente del Valle and hosts Rosario Central beat Libertad 1-0.

Neymar on target in Santos stalemate



Neymar

Meanwhile, Neymar struck a first-half goal as Santos drew 1-1 at Recoleta in the Copa Sudamericana group stage.

Making just his 12th appearance in an injury-riddled year, Neymar breached the Paraguayan side's defense just before halftime, combining with Benjamin Rollheiser and angling a first-time shot into the far corner.

Despite controlling less than a third of the overall possession, Recoleta pressed for a late equalizer and got its reward when Fernando Galeano fired in at the far post just moments after his introduction as a substitute.

The result leaves the Brazilian club last in Group D with three points, one behind third-placed Recoleta.

In Argentina, Gremio cruised to a 3-0 win over Deportivo Riestra, a result that left the Brazilian club top of Group F.

Carlos Vinicius converted a 30th-minute penalty before Francis Amuzu and Martin Braithwaite added second-half goals as Gremio claimed its second win of the campaign.

The Porto Alegre outfit now has seven points from four games, three points ahead of third-placed Deportivo Riestra.

Elsewhere in the Copa Sudamericana on Tuesday, Caracas FC won 3-2 at Independiente Petrolero, Atletico Mineiro drew 2-2 at Juventude and Puerto Cabello eased to a 3-0 home win over Cienciano.

Aces, Liberty, Fever lead title race

WNBA hits 30 years with expansion & power shift

NEW YORK, May 6, (AP): The WNBA is poised for a historic 30th season after a transformational new collective bargaining agreement was reached in March.

Now the league can focus on the play on the court which will feature the Las Vegas Aces looking for a fourth championship in five years, the return of Caitlin Clark after she missed most of last season with injuries, and the debut of expansion teams the Portland Fire and Toronto Tempo.

The Aces have their core intact from last season's title run, including four-time league MVP A'ja Wilson. She was picked by a national media panel as the preseason AP Player of the Year. She became the highest paid player in WNBA history, earning a \$5 million supermax contract extension over the next three years.

Las Vegas has won three of the last four championships with New York taking home the crown in 2024.

The Liberty look poised to challenge the Aces again with their Big Three of Breanna Stewart, Jonquel Jones and Sabrina Ionescu all returning. Ionescu will miss at least the first couple of weeks of the season with a foot injury she suffered in the preseason finale over the weekend.

The Liberty added All-Star Satou Sabally in free agency and made a coaching change after last season's first-round exit in the playoffs. They replaced Sandy Brondello with former Golden State Warriors assistant Chris DeMarco. He's one of five new head coaches in the league.

Brondello didn't stay unemployed long as she is the head coach of the Tempo - the league's first team outside of the United States.

Clark played in only 13 games last year after a series of injuries cut short her sophomore season. The Indiana Fever star spent the offseason getting healthy and stronger and is ready to go.

Here are a few other tidbits for the upcoming season:

While 80% of the players were free agents this offseason with the expected payday of the new CBA, a handful changed teams with coming home a major reason why.

Nneka Ogwumike returned to Los Angeles, Skylar Diggins went to Chicago, putting her closer to her hometown of South Bend, Indiana. Sabally came to New York where she



In this file photo, Indiana Fever guard Caitlin Clark (22) in action during a WNBA basketball game against the Chicago Sky in Indianapolis. (AP)

was born.

The Sun will play their final season in Connecticut as the franchise will move to Houston next year after the team was sold to Houston Rockets owner Tilman Fertitta. Connecticut has said that it will honor its past players and coaches over the course of the season. This will end a 23-year run by the team in New England after moving to Connecticut from Orlando in 2003.

Lynx star Napheesa Collier, who was the runner-up in MVP voting last year, will be out until at least early June while she recovers from ankle surgery she had in March. Collier also had surgery on her right ankle in early January.

"Right now, I'm just working as fast as I can with my doctors and my (physical therapy) staff, just trying to get back on the court," Collier told reporters in training camp. "But everything is going well, so you'll see me soon."

The Lynx will rely on rookie Olivia Miles, who was the No. 2 pick in the WNBA draft last month. She was picked as the AP preseason Rookie of the Year.

A record 216 WNBA regular-season games and events will be available on multiple broadcast platforms throughout the year. The league will have games on ABC/ESPN, CBS, Amazon Prime Video, ION, NBC, USA Sports and NBA TV.

Las Vegas was the preseason No. 1 team in the AP WNBA power poll, which is in its 10th season. The Liberty were second. New York was followed by Atlanta, Indiana, Los Angeles, Minnesota and Phoenix. Dallas was eighth with Golden State ninth. Chicago, Washington, Toronto, Seattle, Connecticut and Portland rounded out the poll.

ARAB TIMES

Kuwait's No.1 English Newspaper

For Subscriptions and Complaints

Please Call

51508991
51526559





Nottingham Forest's Murillo (right) during a training session at the Nigel Doughty Academy, Nottingham, England. (AP)

Sports

Kuwait reboots domestic sports with strict safety measures in place

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): Kuwait has approved the resumption of local sports competitions across all federations following a decision by the joint committee overseeing the return of sporting activity.

The move came during the committee's fifth meeting, chaired by Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma, as part of a gradual plan to fully restore sports events in the country.

Speaking to KUNA, Al-Jalahma said the committee reviewed the readiness of various federations to restart their domestic championships and competitions, including the possibility of allowing fans to attend.

He emphasized that strict adherence to health regulations and emergency measures – such as evacuation procedures and proper organization inside sports facilities – remains essential at this stage, noting that ensuring the safety of all participants and stakeholders continues to be the top priority.



Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Dr. Tareq Al-Jalahma chairs meeting of the joint committee tasked with studying the return of sports activity.

Arsenal reaches Champions League final

Saka ends Atletico dreams

LONDON, May 6, (AP): The last time Arsenal played in the Champions League final, Bukayo Saka was still four years away from joining the club's academy.

Now Saka, the winger who first signed for Arsenal at age 8, has put his club back onto the biggest stage.

Saka scored the only goal in a 1-0 win over Atletico Madrid to put Arsenal into its first Champions League final since 2006 – and only its second ever.

No wonder he was reluctant to stop celebrating with the crowd and his teammates after the final whistle and do a TV interview on the field instead.

"You're taking me away from the celebrations, man," Saka told Amazon Prime with a laugh. "It is so beautiful. You see what it means to us and what it means to the fans. We're so happy."

The 24-year-old Saka was on hand to slot in the rebound after Leandro Trossard's shot was saved by Jan Oblak in the 45th minute to put Arsenal up 2-1 on aggregate in the second leg of their semifinal.

The Gunners' stingy defense did the rest.

Arsenal has now kept a clean sheet at home in all three knockout rounds after conceding a competition-low four goals in winning all eight of its matches in the league phase.

It will be Arsenal's second final in Europe's premier competition, having lost the 2006 title match to Barcelona.



Atletico Madrid's Giuliano Simeone tries to score but falls to the ground with Arsenal's Gabriel Magalhaes, left, during a Champions League semifinal, second leg, soccer match between Arsenal FC and Atletico Madrid in London. (AP)

It could prove a special season for the London cub, which is now one game away from its first European Cup title and three games away from a first Premier League crown in 22 years.

The Gunners are guaranteed the domestic league title if they win their remaining three matches, after closest rival Manchester City was held to a 3-3 draw at Everton on Monday.

"Now we are in the final of the Champions League and we're fighting for the Premier League," Saka said. "It's a beautiful story and I hope it ends well in Budapest."

Fellow academy product Myles Lewis-Skelly hadn't been born yet when Arsenal was last in the final, but the 19-year-old again looked assured in midfield after being handed a surprise start by Arsenal

manager Mikel Arteta.

Atletico had a chance to equalize in the 51st when Giuliano Simeone chased down a poor backward header from William Saliba to round goalkeeper David Raya, but center back Gabriel did just enough to make him put his effort wide.

"Unbelievable," Arteta said about Gabriel's challenge. "That's probably the only action that (Atletico) had. But in the Champions League there are moments, and in those moments someone has to deliver a magic moment. And Gabriel again, he delivered that."

Atletico was then denied a possible penalty when Arsenal defender Riccardo Calafiori stepped on the foot of Antoine Griezmann in the area, as referee Daniel Siebert awarded a free kick to the hosts for an earlier incident instead.

Gianluca's Argentina role unclear

FIFA extends ban for Prestianni to World Cup for abusing Vinicius



In this file photo, Benfica's Gianluca Prestianni watches the ball during a Champions League opening phase soccer match between Juventus and Benfica in Turin, Italy. (AP)

GENEVA, May 6, (AP): FIFA confirmed a global ban for Gianluca Prestianni that will rule the Benfica winger out of two World Cup games in the United States if he is selected in Argentina's squad.

UEFA imposed a six-game ban – with three games deferred on probation – on Prestianni two weeks ago for his verbal abuse of Real Madrid's Brazilian forward Vinicius Junior in the Champions League. Prestianni covered his mouth with his jersey while using the insult.

FIFA has now, as expected, fulfilled UEFA's request to apply the ban beyond European competitions to the World Cup that starts next month.

"The FIFA Disciplinary Committee has decided to extend the six-match ban imposed by UEFA on Benfica player Gianluca Prestianni to have worldwide effect," the soccer body said in a statement.

It is unclear if Prestianni is still in Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni's plans to defend the World Cup title. Argentina starts against Algeria on June 17 in Kansas City and plays Austria five days later in Arlington, Texas. The group also includes World Cup debutant Jordan.

The 20-year-old winger made his first and only appearance for Argentina in a friendly in November. He was an unused substitute in Argentina's

most recent game, a World Cup warmup against Zambia on March 31.

When Scaloni called up Prestianni in March for the warmups, he did not address the ongoing UEFA investigation. Scaloni noted he needed the Benfica player because Paulo Dybala was unavailable.

UEFA had investigated Prestianni for a racist insult alleged by Vinicius with support from Madrid teammate Kylian Mbappé. They claimed Prestianni used the Spanish word for "monkey," which he disguised by raising his red jersey to cover his mouth.

UEFA could not prove the racial insult which Prestianni denied, though he admitted using a homophobic slur.

Prestianni already served the first game of his ban when UEFA barred him playing against Madrid in the second leg of their Champions League knockout playoff in February.

Last week, FIFA's push to make it a red card offense for World Cup players to cover their mouth when insulting an opponent was passed by soccer's rulemaking panel known as IFAB.

If Prestianni is not selected by Argentina, he will serve the rest of his ban in a UEFA-organized European competition next season.

Salwa Palace to host event

Salem Al-Dawsari set to take part in AFC Asian Cup draw ceremony



Salem Al-Dawsari

DIRIYAH, Saudi Arabia, May 6: The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has announced that Saudi Arabia international and Al-Hilal star Salem Al-Dawsari will be among seven prominent football figures assisting in the draw for the AFC Asian Cup 2027, scheduled for Saturday in Diriyah.

The ceremony will be staged at the historic Salwa Palace in the Al-Turaif district, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2010, giving the event a unique cultural backdrop.

The draw will feature leading names from across West and East Asia, including Al-Dawsari and Japan legend Hidetoshi Nakata.

According to the AFC, the group of seven assistants will support AFC General Secretary Datuk Seri Windsor John, who will oversee the official draw for the tournament's 19th edition, featuring 24 of Asia's top national teams.

Among the other participants is Jordan national team coach Jamal Selami, who made history by guiding Jordan to their first-ever FIFA World Cup qualification for 2026.

Saudi Arabia will also be represented by para-footballer Yazan Seifin, who has stood out for the national team and serves as an ambassador for the Saudi Football Federation's research institute.

Riders show strong development

Fourth round of Kuwait equestrian league promises intense competition

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The fourth round of the Kuwait Equestrian Federation League will kick off at 3:00 pm on Friday and continue until Saturday evening at the Police Sports Federation arena in Sulaibikhat, with fierce competition expected among a large field of male and female riders vying for top honors. The event is held under the patronage of the Police Sports Federation, Hawalli Sports and Equestrian Club, and KGL Company.

Kuwait Equestrian Federation Secretary-General and Kuwait Olympic Committee member Ghazi Al-Jirawi highlighted the depth of talent in Kuwaiti equestrian sport, noting that riders across all age groups – from beginners to advanced levels – are showing strong development. He said local clubs feature a number of promising riders who have achieved impressive results both locally and internationally, with several tipped for bright futures.

The competition will feature five rounds on the opening day, with obstacle heights set at 90, 105, 115, 125, and 135 cm. Action resumes on Saturday with rounds at 70, 100, 110, 120, and 130 cm, before con-



Kuwait Equestrian Federation Secretary-General and Kuwait Olympic Committee member Ghazi Al-Jirawi.

cluding with the Grand Prix at a height of 140 cm.

The event will be overseen by international judge Nidar Al-Mustafa as chief referee, along with Raghad Al-Dabbous, Lama Abdullal, and Ibtisam Al-Araori. The course design will be handled by Yaqoub Al-Nasserallah, assisted by Abdulaziz Al-Mutawa, Dr. Yahya Al-Hadban, and Bader Al-Hifi, while Asmaa Malallah will serve as field judge.

Carreras denies Real dressing-room bust-up reports

MADRID, May 6, (Xinhua): Real Madrid defender Alvaro Carreras has denied reports of a dressing-room bust-up, saying recent claims about him "do not correspond to reality." The 23-year-old, who joined from Benfica last summer, has fallen out of favor with coach Alvaro Arbeloa in recent weeks. Spanish radio station Onda Cero reported that Carreras had been struck by a teammate following an argument between La Liga games against Alaves and Real Betis.

Carreras responded with a statement on social media.

"In recent days certain insinuations and comments have arisen about me that do not correspond to reality," he wrote.

"My commitment to this club and to the coaches has been absolute from day one and will continue to be so.

"Regarding the incident with a teammate, it's a minor, isolated matter that's already been resolved. My relationship with the whole team is very good. Hala Madrid!" Carreras was overlooked in Sunday's 2-0 win away to Espanyol, with Fran Garcia preferred at left back after Ferland Mendy suffered a season-ending muscle injury.

Garcia is expected to retain his place when Real Madrid faces Barcelona in Sunday's Clasico, where anything other than a Madrid win would see Barcelona crowned La Liga champion.

Mendy had to leave the field after just 15 minutes of Sunday's game and was replaced by Fran Garcia.

"Following tests carried out today on our player Ferland Mendy by the Real Madrid Medical Services, he has been diagnosed with a tendon injury in the rectus femoris of his right leg," the club said on its official website on Monday.

It is the defender's fifth injury of a season in which he has made just nine first-team appearances. Injuries have been a constant problem for the left back since he joined from Olympique Lyon in 2019, limiting him to 210 appearances in seven years and preventing him from making more than 26 league appearances in a single season.