

**RENEWAL OF ATTACKS ON GULF COUNTRIES THREATENS FRAGILE CEASEFIRE****Kuwait intercepts barrage of drones**

UAE slams attack on Kuwait; Kuwait condemns hit on Qatar cargo ship

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (Agencies):** Kuwait's Armed Forces detected several hostile drones inside Kuwaiti airspace at dawn Sunday and dealt with them in line with approved procedures, the Ministry of Defense said.

Ministry spokesperson Colonel Staff Saud Al-Atwan affirmed the Armed Forces' full readiness to safeguard the country's security and ensure the safety of citizens and residents.

The UAE on Sunday condemned in the strongest terms the heinous drone attacks targeting the State of Kuwait.

In a press release, the Emirati Ministry of Foreign Affairs underlined that these heinous attacks constitute a violation of Kuwait's sovereignty and a threat to its security and stability.

The ministry expressed the UAE's full solidarity with the State of Kuwait and its support for all measures aimed at

safeguarding its security and stability.

The Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry on Sunday strongly condemned and denounced a drone attack on a Qatari cargo ship in a blatant breach of international law and relevant UN resolutions, particularly UN Security Council Resolution 2817.

In a press release, the ministry warned that such an attack would escalate tensions in the region and put regional security and stability in jeopardy.

It underlined that the State of Kuwait stands side by side with the State of Qatar in safeguarding its security, stability and sovereignty on its territory and territorial waters, stressing the significance of exerting concerted international efforts to preserve regional and international security and stability and safeguarding the safety and freedom of regional navigation.

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**Opinion****Ahmed Al-Jarallah**

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

**O' Chinese and Russians ... hold on!**

LET'S talk numbers, which are, of course, based on national interests. Trade between China and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries reached \$287 billion, while trade between China and Russia stood at \$50 billion. These figures would suggest the need to strengthen political relations and expand mutual interests accordingly.

However, the reality appears different, as though there is a disconnect between trade relations and political positions on the international stage. This is reflected in the stances of Beijing and Moscow in the United Nations Security Council. Every time the crisis of the Strait of Hormuz, which is controlled by Iran, is raised, China and Russia use their veto power, despite the fact that the closure of the Strait would disrupt global economic activity and increase inflation worldwide.

On the other hand, trade between Russia and Iran amounts to \$4.8 billion, while trade between China and Iran reaches \$13.37 billion. This indicates that trade relations between Russia and China on one side, and the GCC countries on the other, are significantly larger compared to their trade with Iran.

Why prioritize Iranian interests over those of the GCC

countries? Are China's major projects in the Arabian Gulf states less important than its relationship with Iran?

These questions, and others similar to them, lead to a necessary ethical consideration of the positions taken by Russia and China. Beyond commercial interests, is it not essential for both countries to uphold humanitarian principles by facilitating the flow of goods such as food supplies, fertilizers, oil, and gas to global markets to help alleviate the current global crisis?

I will not discuss the crimes committed by the Iranian regime against its own people and towards the peoples of the region. Nor will I focus on the crimes perpetrated by Iranian proxies to destabilize security and peace in several Arab countries and threaten global stability. This is a fact that is well known to the international community.

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**Horde of deals with 'Limak' to expedite T2 completion**

Left: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, attended the signing of contracts between three government entities and Turkish company Limak to complete the final phases of the new Kuwait International Airport passenger Terminal (T2). Right: First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah at the signing of the agreements.

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA):** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, attended the signing of contracts between three government entities and Turkish company Limak to complete the final phases of the new Kuwait International Airport passenger terminal (T2).

The step reflects the state's commitment to continuing major development projects and accelerating work on one of the country's most strategic and vital projects.

The signing ceremony was attended by First

Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah, Defense Minister Sheikh Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, Public Works Minister Dr. Nora Mohammad Al-Mashaan and Amiri Diwan Undersecretary Sheikh Abdulaziz Al-Mishaal Al-Sabah, along with senior officials.

Completion of the new airport terminal comes within the state's direction to develop vital facilities and enhance infrastructure efficiency in line with Kuwait's future development vision.

The project is expected to significantly increase Kuwait International Airport's capacity, improve

travel experience and passenger services, and strengthen cargo and logistics capabilities to support trade, tourism and investment.

The project also represents a major development in Kuwait's civil aviation sector and reinforces Kuwait's position as a regional hub for air transport and logistics connectivity.

It is also expected to contribute to economic and development opportunities, support economic diversification plans, attract investments and create jobs in line with the state's aspirations for a more advanced and sustainable future.

PM Diwan photos

**Spending on development projects stable despite oil revenue pressure**

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10:** Amid the financial pressures resulting from the war in the Middle East and their impact on the financial situation in Kuwait and other Gulf states, particularly due to disruptions in oil production and exports, questions are being raised about the implications of declining oil revenues in the 2026/2027 budget on the spending rates for ongoing development projects.

Will the situation necessitate postponing some projects and initiating

new ones that have become essential under the circumstances of the war?

In this context, economist and former advisor to the Ministry of Finance, Mohammad Ramadan, explained that the impact of any halt in Kuwaiti oil production since the beginning of the American-Israeli war against Iran is not expected to create a major financial challenge for capital expenditures on development projects included in the new budget.

The funds allocated for development projects in the 2025/2026 budget amounted to around 1.3 billion dinars, of which approximately 805 million dinars were spent, repre-

senting an expenditure rate exceeding 60 percent of the total allocated funds.

Projections are sometimes overstated in anticipation of potential fluctuations, particularly since Kuwait holds substantial financial reserves capable of sustaining inactivity for several years without relying primarily on the oil sector.

Even if spending on development projects exceeds one billion dinars in the current budget, it would remain modest relative to the state's overall financial capacity, especially in light

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**'Kuwaiti teams to monitor hitches faced by pilgrims'****KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA):** Acting undersecretary of Kuwait's Ministry of Islamic Affairs Dr. Eng. Suleiman Al-Suwailim said preparations for the 1447 Hajj season were nearing completion.

Al-Suwailim told KUNA the ministry had finalized organizational, administrative, health and guidance plans to provide services befitting Kuwaiti pilgrims.

He said housing arrangements in the holy sites, transportation, medical services and accompanying guidance teams had been completed.

Preparations for the season began

immediately after the previous Hajj season through coordination with Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, he added.

Kuwait also participated in the Fifth Hajj Conference and Exhibition and signed arrangements for the upcoming season with the Saudi side.

Al-Suwailim said field teams would supervise Kuwaiti Hajj campaigns around the clock and address difficulties faced by pilgrims, alongside providing medical clinics and a central emergency committee.

He noted the ministry launched Hajj registration through the unified government application "Sahel," followed by pilgrim selection and completion of procedures through the "Nusuk Masar" platform.

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**Kuwait's import financing declines 9.52% in Q1, '26**

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10:** The Central Bank of Kuwait reported a notable decline in financing for Kuwaiti imports during the first quarter of this year, reflecting economic uncertainty and regional geopolitical tensions, particularly those affecting maritime traffic in the Arabian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

According to data published on the website of the Central Bank, total financing for Kuwaiti imports during the first three months of the

year reached approximately 2.4 billion Kuwaiti dinars, compared to 2.6 billion dinars in the fourth quarter of last year, a decrease of 254.6 million dinars, or 9.52 percent.

The decline is attributed to rapidly evolving political and security developments in the region, which have impacted global trade flows and supply chains.

A comparison between the first quarter of 2026 and the fourth quarter of 2025 highlights the extent of the slowdown in import financing activity.

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**Road repairs on in 31 areas in 5 governorates**

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10:** The Ministry of Public Works announced the implementation of major road maintenance works under new contracts from May 9 to 14, covering 31 areas in five governorates, in addition to several vital locations on major highways.

The ministry explained that the maintenance works include seven areas in the Capital Governorate, six areas in Farwaniya Governorate, eight areas in Hawally Governorate, seven areas in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, and three areas in Ahmadi Governorate.

The major highway maintenance works cover eight

locations, including Abdali Road, the intersection of the Fourth Ring Road with the Maghreb Expressway, Fahaeel Road (opposite the Mishref and Salwa areas), the overpass at the Fourth Ring Road intersection towards Salmiya, Subiya Road, the extension connecting the Fourth Ring Road and the Maghreb Highway intersection to Damascus Street, and Salmi Road and the Seventh Ring Road from Kilo 24 mark to Kilo 27 mark in both directions.

The Ministry of Public Works confirmed that these works are part of an ongoing plan to address road deterioration and improve traffic safety.

It called on road users to follow instructions and adhere to traffic diversions to ensure safety and facilitate the completion of the road works.

**Janitor, customs staff in cigarette smuggling**

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10:** The Criminal Court, presided over by Judge Jarrah Al-Daihani, sentenced seven defendants, including Kuwaitis and two Americans, to life imprisonment, fined them KD98 million and ordered them to pay KD49 million for embezzling funds from an investment fund, in which the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFFS) and Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA) owned stakes.

The Public Prosecution charged the defendants, including the director of the Ports Investment Fund, with deliberately harming public funds by executing sham transactions and filing fabricated lawsuits and arbitration proceedings in Dubai, the United States of America and the Cayman Islands in order to seize the assets of the fund and generate illicit gains.

The investigation revealed that the defendants exploited an investment management agreement signed in 2016 to file lawsuits at the Dubai International Financial Centre courts, claiming unjustified sums, fees and interest as part of a scheme to misappropriate the assets of the fund.

Continued on Page 4

**Kuwaitis, 2 foreigners get life in jail for fraud**

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

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**HH Amir appoints MoH's top official****KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA):** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah signed a decree Sunday appointing Sheikh Dr. Salman Khalifah Abdullah Al-Sabah as Health Ministry Undersecretary.

The decree stipulated that the Health Minister should comply with this decree, which would take effect once published in the official gazette.

**MoH takes big leap in digital conversion**

By Marwa Al-Bahravi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10:** The Ministry of Health witnessed a qualitative leap in its digital transformation through the implementation of a series of electronic projects and systems in the first four months of 2026.

These initiatives aimed to enhance government integration and improve medical care in line with the goal of Kuwait Vision 2035 to build a smart and sustainable healthcare system using modern technology and comprehensive electronic connectivity.

The digital projects of the ministry include the development of the school health record, electronic link for student sick leave, 'Wafid' program update, expansion of 'Salem' application services, and strengthening integration with 'Sahel' application and other government entities.

The ministry launched the Sustainable Health Record System for students, linking school clinics, health centers and hospitals for monitoring the health conditions of students starting from their enrollment until graduation.

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**9 NBK - Egypt delivers net profit of EGP 2 bin in 1Q2026****10 Kuwait Finance House ranks among the top five MEA banks with a market cap of \$44.69 billion**



Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:30	Asr	15:20
Sunrise	04:59	Maghrib	18:30
Zohr	11:44	Isha	19:56

Kuwait leadership holds high-level meetings

Amir, Crown Prince receive senior State officials

KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah and Defense Minister Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah.

Crown Prince

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ah-



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



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



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah

mad Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince also received First Deputy Prime

Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah and

Defense Minister Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah.

Private sector expected to play bigger role in Kuwait economy

Calls grow to remove obstacles

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The number of companies in the private sector reached 181,134 by the end of 2025, while 25,926 companies remain under review and 7,289 companies hold expired licenses, according to the latest statistics issued by the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI).**

The newspaper obtained a copy of the PACI statistics, showing that the number of Kuwaitis employed in the private sector reached 67,224 by the end of December, compared to 395,385 in the public sector.

Finance Minister Dr. Yaqoub Al-Rifai said the government is relying on the private sector to help diversify sources of income in view of the continuous State budget deficits.

The private sector is also expected to contribute to addressing employment issues.

This raises the question of whether diversifying income sources requires a competent and productive private sector capable of adding real value to the national economy and increasing gross domestic product (GDP).

When economic experts were asked about the extent to which the private sector is prepared to play a central role in the plan of the government, as well as the most difficult challenges and obstacles it faces, they said "government agencies must activate this sector and enable it to boost non-oil revenues."

Economist Bader Al-Arbash stressed that the approach of the Ministry of Finance toward stimulat-

ing the private sector and enabling it to contribute to diversifying income sources entails first addressing all obstacles to its growth. He said foremost among these is eliminating bureaucracy by simplifying procedures related to obtaining commercial and industrial licenses.

He also emphasized the need to expand import and export opportunities for the private sector and eliminate monopolistic practices in the importation of goods.

He called for attracting foreign and Arab tourists to the country in order to revitalize the private sector.

He argued that the small population of Kuwait does not encourage the sector to expand its local activities, pointing out that limited population growth led to the stagnation of shopping centers due to low commercial activity. He asserted that overcoming this challenge is possible through the development of domestic tourism, which he described as a "magic wand." He explained that revitalizing tourist facilities and public parks throughout the country will push the private sector toward greater expansion and growth. He added that if tourism expansion is achieved through simplified entry procedures governed by clear regulations, the local private sector could emerge from its current stagnation through increased consumer spending. He believes such growth will also encourage the opening of more hotels, resorts and entertainment facilities. He stressed that tour-



Dr. Al-Rifai

ism growth will lead to an increase in food processing plants and other manufacturing industries. "It will also encourage the private sector to establish factories producing gas stoves, chairs and other restaurant supplies," he elaborated.

He went on to say that diversifying income sources necessitates easing access to industrial plots for serious small, medium, and large industrial enterprises, in addition to providing marketing support to the private sector.

Agricultural and food security expert Mohammad Al-Furaih called for expanding private sector activities, particularly through diverse investment projects, to contribute to diversifying State revenues.

He affirmed the vital role of the sector in addressing employment issues and reducing disguised unemployment, especially in light of the need to increase budget revenues and boost the economic contribution of the private sector to reduce employment burdens on the State budget.

He acknowledged shortcomings in private companies, including weak initiative, limited production expansion, and several other issues resulting from insufficient government cooperation with the sector.

He indicated that the agricultural marketing sector continues to suffer from disorder and inefficiency, depriving farmers of fair compensation for their produce. He proposed establishing a unified center for receiving, sorting, packaging, and distributing produce in order to eliminate intermediaries.

He stressed the importance of supporting livestock and poultry production projects by increasing feed subsidies within the budget of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR)

to meet the needs of breeders and prevent increasing the prices of sheep, cattle, milk and dairy products.

He also expressed surprise over the high price of corn and called for allowing the private sector to establish feed mills at northern and southern ports, including Shuaiba Port and Mubarak Port, with a production capacity of not less than 100 tons per hour and storage facilities capable of holding raw materials for at least four months.

Economist Ahmed Al-Khashnam underscored the need to revitalize the private sector to help reduce the State budget deficit amid declining oil revenues.

He pointed out that the sector has the capacity to address employment challenges that the university and high school graduates are facing, thereby, easing pressure on the first chapter of the State budget.

He confirmed the availability of expertise and financial liquidity within the private sector, in addition to its culture of initiative, risk-taking, innovation and creativity.

On the role of the government in stimulating the private sector, he stressed the need to create an investment environment that encourages growth, modernize economic and commercial legislation, and provide the private sector with the information needed to support decision-making.

He confirmed the importance of accelerating import and export activities without administrative obstacles and facilitating access to industrial land to encourage industrialists to expand their projects.

He added that strengthening partnership between the public and private sectors will contribute more effectively to the State budget.

Crown Prince, PM extend wishes

Kuwait Amir congratulates Canada Governor General on appointment

KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to Canada's Governor General Louise Arbour on the occasion of her appointment.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished her success in her duties and expressed hopes for continued progress and prosperity for Canada and its people, as well as further development in bilateral relations between the two friendly countries.

His Highness the Crown

Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to Canada's Governor General Louise Arbour on the occasion of her appointment.

His Highness the Crown Prince wished her success in her duties and further progress and prosperity for Canada and its people.

His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to Canada's Governor General Louise Arbour on the occasion of her appointment.

24/7 care at Mina and Arafat

MoH confirms full readiness of Kuwait medical mission for Hajj

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Ministry of Health confirmed the full readiness of the medical services unit of the Kuwaiti Hajj mission for the Hajj season this year.

This was after the completion of preparations and the outfitting of clinics and medical facilities at the mission headquarters and the holy sites, ensuring the provision of healthcare and preventive services to Kuwaiti pilgrims round the clock.

Head of the medical team for the Kuwaiti Hajj mission Dr. Bassam Al-Batahi stated in an interview with Kuwait TV that the clinics in Mina and Arafat are fully prepared. He said the medical team consists of distinguished doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and emergency response and preventive medicine teams.

He pointed out that the operational plan this year emphasizes preventive and awareness measures, while providing the latest medical equipment to monitor pilgrims suffering from chronic illnesses and the elderly.

He affirmed that medical teams will always be present to serve pilgrims throughout the Hajj rituals.

Pharmacist Talal Al-Enezi said that preparations included the establishment of isolation rooms, specialized clinics, and a fully equipped pharmacy, contributing to a safe and reassuring spiritual journey for all Kuwaiti pilgrims.

Pilgrims were urged to follow health guidelines, drink plenty of fluids, and avoid heat exhaustion during the Hajj rituals to ensure their safety and well-being.

In addition, Amiri Hospital organized a comprehensive health awareness campaign for pilgrims as

part of the preparations for the Hajj season.

The campaign aimed to raise pharmaceutical awareness, enhance health preparedness, and encourage proactive prevention measures to guarantee the safe and healthy performance of the rituals.

Pharmacist Fatima Al-Khader stated that the Pharmacy Department continues to provide proactive care for pilgrims through its elderly clinics.

She urged pilgrims to visit the clinics before traveling in order to simplify treatment plans and organize medications according to their health needs during the journey.

She also highlighted a number of digital services designed to help pilgrims access medication information quickly and accurately while utilizing technology to strengthen direct communication with healthcare providers.

Pharmacist Fatima Al-Sulaimi confirmed that the 'Darwazat Al-Amiri' program enables pilgrims to communicate with specialists through a messaging service using a username and password before traveling and while abroad.

She explained that the service provides responses to various inquiries related to medications, health symptoms and appropriate dosages.

Pharmacist Sami Al-Mutawa pointed out that a specialized clinic for the elderly is available to review travelers' medication schedules before departure, complementing the elderly clinics already operating at primary healthcare centers.

Al-Mutawa stated that the clinics provide intensive awareness sessions covering medication dosage management and simplified treatment plans, in addition to distributing medications according to clear schedules that help pilgrims adhere to treatment times throughout their journey.

He stressed the need for pilgrims, particularly the elderly, to visit clinics and elderly care centers before traveling.



Al-Batahi

Other Voices

Body language and hand gestures

By Ahmad alsarraf

Human beings naturally use small gestures while speaking and interacting, yet there is no universal agreement on what each gesture means.

For example, shaking the head from side to side typically signals disagreement for most people around the world. However, in parts of the Indian subcontinent, the same gesture can indicate agreement or acceptance.

Similarly, placing a finger on the temple is often interpreted as a sign that someone is thinking, while in other contexts it may carry an entirely different meaning.

A report published in The Times highlighted that many everyday gestures have long and fascinating histories, gradually evolving into the meanings we recognize today. Some date back thousands of years, while others have only become widespread in recent decades through travel, globalization, and media influence.

Here are five familiar examples of how we communicate without words:

1. The Thumbs-Up Sign: This gesture is widely used to indicate approval, endorsement, or that everything is fine. It is also commonly used as an icon in mobile messaging applications.

It is often believed to have originated in ancient Rome, where crowds supposedly used thumbs-up or thumbs-down gestures to decide the fate of defeated gladiators. However, this interpretation is widely disputed and considered inaccurate. The modern meaning of the thumbs-up gesture developed later, emerging in English-speaking countries in the early 20th century as a sign of approval.

It became especially widespread during the two World Wars, when Allied pilots used it to mean "ready" or "fully prepared." Since then, it has become one of the most recognizable hand gestures in the world, although it is still considered inappropriate in some cultures.

2. The Peace Sign (V Gesture): This gesture, made by raising the index and middle fingers in a "V" shape, is today commonly used as an informal sign of peace, friendliness, or greeting. However, its meaning has evolved significantly over time.



alsarraf

It first gained widespread popularity during World War II, when British Prime Minister Winston Churchill popularized it as a symbol of "victory." Media coverage and wartime propaganda helped reinforce this meaning, and it came to represent resilience and triumph.

Later, in the 1960s, the same gesture was reinterpreted by anti-war movements, particularly in the United States during the Vietnam War era. It became associated with peace rather than military victory, reflecting a broader cultural shift toward nonviolence.

3. Waving: The act of waving, whether to greet someone or say goodbye, is almost instinctive, though its exact origins are difficult to trace. It may have developed from early human signals used to indicate peaceful intent. The underlying idea is the display of an open hand to show that a person is unarmed and poses no threat.

Today, waving is used across the world as a friendly gesture, although its style and frequency can vary from one culture to another.

4. The Handshake: The handshake is one of the most common gestures in both professional and social settings. It is used to greet others, confirm agreements, and express mutual respect. Its history dates back thousands of years and it is widely regarded as a symbol of trust, agreement, and equality.

Today, handshakes remain common across the world, although customs vary significantly. The strength, duration, and accompanying gestures differ across regions and cultures. In some societies, the handshake is light or paired with a bow, while in others it is firmer and held for longer.

5. Shrugging or Raising the Shoulders with Palms Up: Shrugging is a common nonverbal gesture used to express uncertainty, lack of knowledge, indifference, or resignation. It is often paired with phrases such as "I don't know" or "Who knows?" to reinforce the meaning.

Its purpose is to visually reinforce that the person does not have an answer or a definite position. As a purely nonverbal gesture, and more common in Western cultures, it is often described in English as a "shrug," derived from the idea of drawing the shoulders upward in a small, contracted motion.



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New contracts drive comprehensive upgrades

Mubarak Al-Kabeer roads undergo major rehabilitation

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Ministry of Public Works continues road rehabilitation and maintenance works in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate as part of a comprehensive plan aimed at developing the road network and improving infrastructure efficiency across various areas, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Minister of Public Works, Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, emphasized the importance of completing the works according to the highest quality standards.

She noted that the current maintenance projects include both main and internal roads under the new contracts dedicated to road development in various governorates.

Dr. Al-Mashaan explained that field teams are continuing the removal of old asphalt, repaving, and technical repairs, in addition to as-



Ministry of Public Works photo  
Major road maintenance work continues in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate as part of the development plan.

phalt paving on main roads in several areas of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, in accordance with a structured schedule. The ministry is

intensifying its field efforts during this phase to ensure rapid progress and to minimize disruption to traffic flow.

PAAAFR approves animal feed distribution plan

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) has approved the regulations for distributing animal feed for the 2026/2027 fiscal year, covering the period from May to July, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In its decision, PAAAFR explained that feed subsidies will continue within the limits approved by the Ministry of Finance and in line with the allocated budget. The distribution of feed for poultry and cattle will remain unchanged, along with continued support for the main feed materials such as mixed feed, corn, and sorghum.

The decision also includes a redistribution of the proportions and types of feed allocated for sheep and camels, taking current conditions into account, supporting livestock breeders, and strengthening the national food security system.

Eligible beneficiaries include sheep and goat breeders with a minimum of 50 head, with feed distributed at 55 percent mixed feed and 45 percent sorghum.

Camel breeders are eligible for support with a minimum of 15 camels, receiving 50 percent mixed feed, 30 percent wheat bran, and 20 percent barley.

Cattle breeders will continue to receive support for herds of 15 or more head, according to previously approved ratios, with no changes introduced.

The new regulations aim to ensure fairness in the distribution of support and improve the efficiency of resource use. Certain categories will not be eligible for support, including Arabian horse breeders, breeders whose livestock numbers fall below the minimum eligibility threshold, those who do not adhere to approved grazing areas, and those whose holdings violate allocation conditions.

PAAAFR emphasized the importance of breeders complying with the approved requirements and regulations to maintain eligibility for support.

It reaffirmed its commitment to developing and sustaining the livestock sector, which it said will have a positive impact on food security in Kuwait.

# diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## The 'exhausting' modus operandi at the airport

"A FEW days ago, I left Kuwait aboard a beautiful Kuwait Airways flight. When I say beautiful, I truly mean it. Reservations were easy to secure, the service was excellent, and even in economy class, you felt as though you were flying first class," columnist Eng. Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.



Adel Al-Kharafi

"This is something we should take pride in. The 'Blue Bird' represents us in the global aviation industry. On the way to the departure lounge, you are greeted by reassuring faces. The personnel from the Ministry of Interior welcome travelers warmly, and you can sense their complete cooperation.

"Some things have certainly changed since the recent war began, but the security procedures themselves do not seem to have changed much, or at least that was my impression.

"However, the requirement for passengers to arrive at the airport two hours before departure has now been extended to four hours, which can be extremely exhausting. The reason for this change remains unclear.

"Previously, passengers could step out of their cars directly in front of the departure lounge. Now, however, travelers must disembark in the Terminal 4 parking area, carry their luggage up the stairs to the long walkway, and then descend again to the ground floor. After that, they must wait for the elevator to return to the same lengthy corridor.

"Naturally, this leads to delays, as the elevators are often overcrowded, especially when several flights are departing around the same time.

"All of this only adds to the exhaustion of travel. At other airports - including those in Saudi Arabia - such difficulties did not exist, even amid the war. Passengers were only required to arrive two hours before departure, and the procedures moved smoothly and efficiently.

"Passengers also continue to ask why non-Kuwaiti airlines are not being allowed to operate. Many travelers have questions about these restrictions and the reasons behind the complicated procedures.

"Things need to return to normal, because sometimes a simple mistake can lead to serious consequences."

**Also:**

"We are continuing to cultivate the land, and we intend to do so for most of the coming summer months despite all climatic and human challenges, taking into account the difficult circumstances our country is experiencing due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which we hope will not last much longer," farmer Sa'ad Mohammad Al-Ratam wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"However, Kuwaiti farmers in all agricultural sectors, especially those in the plant sector, need a practical and scientific plan prepared by the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) to regulate agriculture during the upcoming summer months.

"I suggest that PAAAFR consult with farmers, represented by the Kuwaiti Farmers Union, so that Kuwaiti farmers can produce the maximum possible quantity of fresh vegetables and fruits throughout the sweltering summer months in Kuwait.

"This plan is essential to ensure that consumers have access to agricultural products at reasonable prices, while producers are able to make a fair profit, thereby contributing to a degree of food security.

"The summer agricultural plan must be based on accurate statistics regarding consumer demand for crops that can be cultivated. It should take into account the actual needs of the population for agricultural produce, which would help reduce the challenges of marketing local products. It is also important that the plan includes the provision of refrigerated storage facilities to preserve local fruits and vegetables at reasonable prices.

"The Kuwaiti Farmers Union market in Ardiya should be equipped with air conditioning. In addition, the summer agricultural plan should include establishing a 'farmers' corner' in every cooperative society to market local produce daily in all residential areas of Kuwait, even if this requires the creation of a large national agricultural company, with half its shares owned by the state and the other half by Kuwaiti farmers. This company would purchase high-quality produce from farmers and distribute it in all governorates of Kuwait."



"Every nation has exceptional figures who lead great transformations, alter the course of history, and remain alive in the memory of peoples throughout the centuries. Yet only a few individuals transcend the limits of time and place to become universal human models whose

lives are studied with admiration and respect by nations around the world," Kuwait lawyer Dr. Abdullah Mohammad Al-Turajji wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"Among such individuals is Umar ibn al-Khattab, a leader who was not merely a caliph who ruled for a few years, but an extraordinary statesman who helped build a civilization, established the foundations of just governance, and introduced administrative principles that were centuries ahead of their time.

"The French thinker and philosopher Roger Garaudy expressed his admiration for the greatness of this historic figure when he proposed that Muslims annually commemorate the anniversary of Umar ibn al-Khattab's accession to the caliphate on August 23, 634 CE, corresponding to the 22nd of Jumada al-Thani, 13 AH.

"Garaudy believed that Umar ibn al-Khattab deserved recognition as one of the greatest leaders in human history. He was not merely a military commander, although the Islamic state expanded unprecedentedly during his reign, encompassing the Levant, Iraq, Persia, Egypt, Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, Azerbaijan, Nahavand, and Jurjan. Rather, he was a builder of institutions and a visionary statesman with a comprehensive civilizational outlook. He understood that the strength of a state lay not in the sword alone, but in justice, sound administration, and the protection of people's rights.

"During the reign of Umar ibn al-Khattab, the foundations of the modern state, in both its administrative and organizational sense, began to emerge. He was the first to be given the title 'Commander of the Faithful' and the first to adopt the Hijra, the migration of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as the starting point of the Islamic calendar.

"He also established the diwans, or administrative departments, to organize state affairs, and founded the Bayt al-Mal, the public treasury, to manage state finances and safeguard people's rights.

"Umar implemented a rigorous system of oversight and accountability for governors and military commanders, persistently questioning them about their wealth and possessions, famously asking, 'From where did you acquire this?'

"He understood early on that power is a responsibility, not a privilege, and that a true ruler is one who remains accountable before every citizen. For this reason, he never hesitated to hold even his closest relatives accountable, nor did he allow any governor or official to oppress another person, regardless of lineage or origin.

"Umar ibn al-Khattab stood with the oppressed, even when they were not Muslim. Among the most remarkable statements attributed to him is his famous statement, 'When did you enslave people when their mothers bore them free?'

"This statement is considered one of the most profound expressions in the history of justice and human rights, preceding modern international conventions by many centuries.

"His focus was not merely on expanding influence or territory, but on building a strong and just society. He founded new cities such as Basra and Kufa, developed roads, organized markets, and ensured the provision of supplies and social welfare. He allocated portions of the public treasury to the poor and needy, extended care to the elderly, the infirm, and even impoverished members of the People of the Book, reflecting the highest ideals of justice, compassion, and citizenship.

"Umar ibn al-Khattab transformed the army during his reign into a highly organized institution with official registers, fixed salaries, reserve forces, supply depots, secured borders, and precise accounting for soldiers' rights and responsibilities. He even set limits on the length of soldiers' absence from their wives, ensuring that no soldier remained away from his family indefinitely.

"He also believed that the authority of the state was incomplete without a just and independent judiciary. Accordingly, he established a formal system of justice, appointed judges, and ensured their independence, so that the judiciary became a refuge for the weak and a true embodiment of fairness.

"It is therefore unsurprising that the French thinker Roger Garaudy expressed deep admiration for this unique historical experience, asking rhetorically, 'What is the value of Napoleon compared to the achievements of Umar? What is the value of George Washington compared to the justice of Umar? What is the value of Columbus compared to Umar's civilizational project?'

- Compiled by Simi K. Kuty

## Decree promotes 110 judges, advisors, prosecutors

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Decree No. 69/2026 on the promotion of 110 advisors, judges, and public prosecutors was published in the official gazette "Kuwait Al-Youm" on Sunday, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The decree includes the promotion of

29 judges from the Court of First Instance to the rank of advisor at the Court of Appeal, effective April 1, 2026.

It also promotes 50 judges and public prosecutors to higher ranks, effective April 13, 2026. In addition, one judge was promoted to second-grade judge effective

March 1, 2026.

Furthermore, the decree promotes 17 members of the Court of Cassation effective and 13 members of the Public Prosecution to the ranks of Chief Prosecutor (Grades A and B), effective March 31, 2026.



Damage caused by the fire on the roof of the building. KFF photo

### Roof fire probed

## KFF experts free worker's hand caught in shredder

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Liberation and Search and Rescue Unit of the Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) successfully freed a worker's hand that became trapped in a shredder on Saturday afternoon, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a post on its X account, KFF stated that the Liberation and Search and Rescue Unit responded to an incident at Jahra Hospital, and managed to free the worker's hand, after which he was handed over to medical staff for further treatment.



**Fire on building roof:** Fire broke out in a room on the roof of a building in Farwaniya on Saturday afternoon but no casualties were recorded, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) stated in a post on its X account that firefighters from the Farwaniya and Subhan fire stations rushed to the location after receiving information about the fire, and battled the blaze, extinguishing it without any reported casualties.

Investigations were launched to determine the cause of the fire.

## Dead man's records used to get Kuwaiti nationality

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Investigations conducted by the relevant authorities and the Nationality Investigation Department have uncovered a complex case involving the exploitation of loopholes in death registration and civil data systems prior to the introduction of the civil ID number and civil card system in Kuwait during the 1980s, reports Al-Rai daily.

It was revealed that an individual had continued to use the identity of a deceased citizen since 1977, taking advantage of the absence of a unified electronic linkage between government agencies at the time.

According to informed sources, the Kuwaiti citizen, born in 1947, had a valid legal identity and established lineage. He joined the Ministry of Defense at the age of 18 and passed away in 1977. At that time, the deceased's family obtained an official burial permit, and he was buried in accordance with standard procedures.

At the time, there was no unified system for reporting deaths, and the civil ID number and card system had not yet been introduced in Kuwait.

According to the investigation, another individual later exploited this gap, accessing the deceased citizen's records and continuing activities under his identity (as if he had brought him back to life), taking advantage of the lack of a centralized system linking official entities for death verification.

The sources explained that the investigation revealed the citizen who died in 1977 was unmarried and had no children at the time of his death. The impersonator later appeared in state records starting in 1993, following the liberation of Kuwait after the Iraqi invasion.

The sources revealed that all files showing sudden administrative activity after the invasion period, particularly those involving birth dates preceding it, are subject to extensive security and legal review by the relevant authorities and the Nationality Investigation Department.

The investigation revealed that all official transactions related to this individual began only after the invasion period. He also registered his children after that time, despite claims that they were born before the invasion, which raised suspicions and prompted further inquiry.

Investigators also found the existence of a Gulf national with the same name, with children bearing identical names registered within the Kuwaiti records.

The suspected Kuwaiti brothers were summoned for questioning and confirmed that their eldest brother had died in 1977. They also denied any knowledge of the individual whose photograph was shown to them. To support their statement, they presented their brother's official death certificate issued in 1977.

## Mol launches paperless transactions thru Sahel

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Ministry of Interior has launched the 'Paperless Transactions' project to expedite and ease the processing transactions through the 'Sahel' application or service centers throughout the country.

The service centers have drive-through services for the elderly, people with disabilities, and those with health conditions.

Major Sultan Nayef Al-Adwani stated that the ministry upgraded its service centers to expedite the completion transactions. He said clients can complete their transactions at any service center without the need to provide their residential address.

Al-Adwani explained there is no need to print documents to complete transactions, thus, simplifying procedures. He emphasized that the ministry is "present and ready to serve you."



**11 people arrested:** The General Traffic Department at the Ministry of Interior continued its traffic campaigns in the governorates.

These campaigns resulted in the arrest of 11 individuals on Friday and all of them were referred to the traffic police station.

According to a security source, traffic officers apprehended seven individuals for illegally transporting Asian passengers, two motorists for reckless driving, one for driving a vehicle deemed unfit for road use, and another for running a red light.

# Rehab on anvil for jail inmates

Jobs offered by private sector

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA):** The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) discussed with correctional institutions and government agencies launching educational and rehabilitation programs for inmates to support reintegration into society.



Dr. Al-Fajjam

PAAET said in a statement Sunday that officials met to discuss education and training opportunities that could be offered to inmates during their sentences.

The initiative comes within the state's efforts to strengthen the humanitarian and rehabilitation role of correctional institutions and promote inmates' rights to education and training.

PAAET Director General Dr. Hassan Al-Fajjam said education and training were key tools for rebuilding individuals and helping them acquire skills for a more stable and productive future after release.

He added the authority viewed such initiatives as part of its national and social responsibility to support human de-

velopment and positive societal integration.

The meeting discussed introducing vocational, technical and rehabilitation programs suited to inmates' needs and abilities, alongside linking training outcomes to labor market requirements.

Representative of correctional institutions Brigadier Osama Al-Majed said the initiative aligns with directives by First Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Al-Sabah to strengthen rehabilitation programs for inmates.

Civil Service Commission representative Yaqoub Al-Refaei affirmed the commission's support for the project in line with applicable laws and regulations.

Public Authority for Manpower representative Bandar Al-Adwani said the private sector offered promising employment opportunities for former inmates after release.

Participants also discussed delivering courses and lectures inside correctional institutions through paaet academic and training staff to provide a suitable educational environment.

The meeting reviewed implementation mechanisms ahead of establishing a joint framework among the concerned authorities to support rehabilitation and sustainable social reintegration.

## Mol seizes heavy machinery

# 4 expats caught stealing sand

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Ministry of Interior, represented by the General Department of Criminal Investigation and the Jahra Investigation Department, in coordination with the Jahra Municipality, foiled an illegal exploitation of natural resources in Al-Salmi desert through the arrest of four suspects involved in using unlicensed heavy machinery to extract sand from state-owned land and sell it illegally, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a statement published on its official X account, the Ministry of Interior explained that it had received information regarding illegal sand dredging and extraction activi-

ties in the area. Specialized teams immediately launched search and investigation operations in coordination with the Jahra Municipality.

The operation resulted in the seizure of two heavy machines used for extracting and transporting sand. Four suspects were arrested, including one Syrian national, two Egyptian nationals, and one Bangladeshi national who was wanted by law under an outstanding arrest warrant and was reported as absconding.

The suspects were referred with the seized equipment to the competent authorities to complete the necessary legal procedures.



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# MEWRE unveils 4 projects to prevent summer power cuts

Ministry steps up regional imports

By **Mohammad Ghanem**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy is implementing four major projects to ensure stability of the power grid and avoid planned power outages.**

These projects aim to overcome challenges brought about by rising temperatures starting May 15, which signals the end of the Sarayat season and the start of summer, when temperatures reach more than 50 degrees Celsius.

The first project is importing energy from the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA). The ministry already ob-

tained regulatory approvals for this energy import contract, which is valid from April 2026 to March 2027, at a cost of KD298.587 million.

Second is the National Campaign for Electricity and Water Conservation, which will be launched soon under the patronage and in the presence of Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem.

This annual campaign is crucial in the efforts of the ministry to raise public awareness about the importance of conserving electricity and water, particularly regarding air conditioning units, which consume 70 percent of the electricity

generated by power plants.

Third is ensuring full coordination among government entities to rationalize energy consumption during peak hours -- from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, including the Ministry of Education, public schools and affiliated educational institutions, the Ministry of Awqaf (Endowments) through the mosques, and other government agencies.

The Public Authority for Industry (PAI) recently issued a circular to suspend operations at industrial facilities from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm starting May 15, to support ongoing efforts to stabilize the electrical grid.

Fourth is intensifying enforcement campaigns in cooperation with other government agencies to uncover violations in the facilities of the ministry and the electricity and water networks, especially the illegal mining of digital currencies.



Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem



Indonesian Ambassador to Kuwait Lena Maryana joins members of the Indonesian community and healthcare professionals during the celebration of International Nurses Day and Labor Day.

Embassy pursuing recruitment agreement

## Indonesia aims to expand nursing presence in Kuwait with new MoU

By **Fares Ghaleb**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10:** Indonesian Ambassador to Kuwait Lena Maryana said the celebration of International Nurses Day and Labor Day, organized by the Indonesian Nurses Association in Kuwait in cooperation with the Indonesian Embassy, is a manifestation of the appreciation of Indonesia for the vital role played by the Indonesian nurses and workers in supporting the health sector and labor market in Kuwait.

In a statement to reporters on the sidelines of the event, Ambassador Maryana disclosed that the number of Indonesian nurses in Kuwait reached about 450, adding that batches of Indonesian nurses have been arriving to the country since last year.

She stated that more than 1,000 Indonesian nurses have applied to work in Kuwait through the direct recruitment system approved by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health, emphasizing that they are subject to the selection and evaluation criteria set by the ministry.

She added that the Indonesian Embassy has been working hard since 2021 to strengthen cooperation with the Kuwaiti health sector, exploring the possibility of signing a memorandum of understanding to regulate the recruitment of Indonesian nursing staff, given the increasing need of Ku-

wait for medical professionals in line with its Vision 2035.

She pointed out that the Indonesian community in Kuwait consists of qualified and trained professionals in various sectors like oil and gas, hospitality and industries. She confirmed that Indonesia has a large pool of skilled workers capable of meeting the demands of the Kuwaiti labor market.

Regarding the size of the community, she revealed that the number of Indonesians residing in Kuwait is about 6,800. She said the embassy is keen on continuously monitoring their situation and address the issues they might be facing, in coordination with the relevant Kuwaiti authorities.

She praised the Kuwaiti government for its efficient crisis management, asserting that Kuwait showed a high level of preparedness and organization, particularly in the health sector. She said the Indonesian nurses experienced the rapid response and cooperation between official bodies and medical teams during exceptional times.

She also commended the Indonesian nurses for their commitment to fulfill their professional and humanitarian duties in the recent crises, affirming their dedication and responsibility in supporting the Kuwaiti healthcare system.

## Kuwait condemns Iranian attacks on UAE

# KNG Undersecretary inspects security sites

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA):** Kuwait National Guard Undersecretary Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas conducted an inspection tour Friday of several sites secured by duty forces to assess operational readiness and ongoing missions.

In a statement, the National Guard Directorate of Guidance said Al-Barjas stressed the importance of maintaining maximum vigilance, preparedness and field coordination to ensure efficient execution of security duties.

He praised National Guard personnel for carrying out their responsibilities with professionalism as part of efforts to strengthen security and protect vital facilities.

Meanwhile, the State of Kuwait on Friday vehemently condemned the Iranian ballistic missile and drone attacks on the UAE, which caused many injuries.



KNG photo

Kuwait National Guard Undersecretary Lieutenant General Hamad Al-Barjas conducted an inspection tour Friday of several sites secured by duty forces to assess operational readiness and ongoing missions.

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## Arab social work nominations open

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10:** The Ministry of Social Affairs announced on Thursday the opening of nominations for an award recognizing outstanding individuals in the field of Arab social work, in coordination with the General Secretariat of the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press release, the ministry stated that the award aims to highlight distinguished Arab role models in so-

cial work, promote a culture of social responsibility, and encourage social innovation in Arab countries.

The ministry called on those wishing to be nominated to complete the application form by scanning the barcode provided in the announcement.

For further inquiries, contact the External Relations Department at 22484823 and 22484875 or by fax at 22450763.

Continued from Page 1

### Janitor, customs

This case is based on a report submitted by Attorney Abdullah Al-Kandari, who unveiled the fictitious lawsuits and suspicious financial movements related to the fund's management, prompting the competent authorities to conduct extensive investigations, which ended with the referral of the accused to the Criminal Court.

### Kuwait's import

The last quarter of last year recorded higher activity, driven by a surge in financing in December, which reached KD 996.2 million, compared to KD 888.4 million in October and KD 789.5 million in November.

Data from the first quarter of this year indicates that March was the main contributor to the decline in import financing, which fell to KD 693.4 million, compared to KD 860.8 million in February and KD 865.3 million in January. This decrease occurred despite the coincidence of the holy month of Ramadan during the quarter, a period that typically sees increased import activity.

March also recorded a sharp year-on-year decline compared to the same month in 2025, when import financing stood at approximately KD 880.6 million, representing a year-on-year decrease of 21.25 percent.

International reports have highlighted growing global concern over the repercussions of disruptions to navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, warning of direct impacts on Gulf economies, supply chains, and global trade and energy markets.

The International Monetary Fund noted that Gulf economies face a dual challenge - disruptions to maritime trade, rising insurance and shipping costs, slower supply chains, increasing inflationary pressures, and negative effects on investment and trade flows.

The IMF further indicated that continued tensions in the region could lead to tighter global financial conditions and slower economic growth, particularly in economies that are heavily dependent on trade and energy.

The World Bank, in its "Commod-

ity Markets Outlook" report issued last April, confirmed that attacks on energy infrastructure and disruptions to shipping in the Strait of Hormuz caused "the largest oil supply shock on record," with oil prices rising by more than 50 percent compared to the beginning of the year.

In a joint statement, the heads of the World Bank, IMF, and the International Energy Agency emphasized that a return to normal shipping conditions would not immediately end the crisis, as global markets would require considerable time to restore commodity, energy, and fertilizer flows to pre-crisis levels.

### 'Kuwaiti teams

He added that the "Kuwaiti Pilgrim" application, recently launched by Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi, enables communication with pilgrims from departure until return to Kuwait.

The application also provides campaign information, contact details, locations, alerts and guidance related to Hajj rituals and transportation plans, he said.

Al-Suwailim said the ministry's infrastructure project would improve services next season, noting service providers increased from six companies to 25, enhancing competition and service quality.

He added Saudi authorities had significantly upgraded infrastructure in Arafat and Mina, including expanding capacity, improving tents, cooling systems, shaded walkways and public rest areas for pilgrims.

### Kuwaitis, 2

This case is based on a report submitted by Attorney Abdullah Al-Kandari, who unveiled the fictitious lawsuits and suspicious financial movements related to the fund's management, prompting the competent authorities to conduct extensive investigations, which ended with the referral of the accused to the Criminal Court.

## Al-Tabtabaei affirms ministry support for initiatives boosting quality and reading skills in nurseries

# Early childhood education a national priority: Education Minister

KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA): Kuwait's political leaders consider early childhood education a core priority given its importance towards future national investment and development plans, Education Minister Jalal Al-Tabtabaei said on Sunday.

The education ministry firmly backs any initiative or program that aims to improve the quality of early childhood education, the minister was cited as saying in a statement, as he feted the winners of a children's literary contest organized by his ministry.

On the purpose behind such literary contests, he said these activities aim to encourage reading amongst young children to enable them a chance to hone their skills in a bid to mold a future of "knowledge and competence," added the statement.

He went on to acknowledge the efforts of nursery teachers and their role towards "instilling" a culture of reading and knowledge in young children, hailing the scope of participation that the contest had garnered, in addition to the diverse categories it featured to support early childhood learning.



Minister of Education Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabai during his honoring of the winners of the top prizes in the 'A Child Reads' initiative, part of the Arab Reading Challenge.



Ministry of Education photos

### Clothing, food baskets distributed

## Namaa Charity delivers aid to vulnerable Gaza families

KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA): Kuwait's Namaa Charity, affiliated with the Social Reform Society (SRS), distributed clothing to over 1,100 of the most deprived families in the Gaza Strip, along with 220 vegetable baskets in northern Gaza, benefiting around 1,200 people.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Sunday, Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Namaa Charity Abdulaziz Al-Kandari said these initiatives come in response to the extremely difficult humanitarian conditions in Gaza, where families suffer from severe shortages of food and basic necessities.

The vegetable basket project aims

to provide fresh food to the most vulnerable families in northern Gaza, particularly children and the elderly, he explained.

Additionally, the clothing distribution project seeks to ease living burdens and bring some joy to Palestinian families amid the ongoing crisis, Al-Kandari mentioned.

Field teams delivered the aid through organized mechanisms to ensure it reaches those most in need, he added.

He underscored that the charity will continue its relief efforts in Gaza, thanks to the generosity of donors, and called for intensified support to help ease the suffering of the Palestinian people.



Namaa Charity photo

Namaa Charity provides clothing to more than 1,100 families and 220 vegetable baskets to the people of Gaza.

# Kuwait Judicial Institute and MoI sign landmark cooperation MoU

Agreement to boost legal training and national skills

**KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Interior to strengthen cooperation, exchange experience, expertise and information in training, and utilize the resources and capabilities available to each party to develop highly competent national personnel.**

Director of the institute First Attorney General Counselor Bader Al-Musaed, who signed the MoU with Undersecretary of the ministry Major General Abdulwahab Al-Wuhaib, affirmed that the memorandum aims to fortify frameworks for joint cooperation in areas of mutual interest, particularly in legal awareness, training and qualification.

He added that the MoU includes the exchange of scientific and practical expertise and organize programs, courses and workshops that support and develop academic and training roles.

On the other hand, Al-Wuhaib pointed out that the signing of the



Ministry of Interior photo

Director of the Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies, First Attorney General Counselor Bader Al-Musaed, signs a memorandum of understanding with the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, Major General Abdulwahab Al-Wuhaib.

MoU proves the commitment of the ministry to develop the training system and strengthen cooperation with specialized national institutions, which contribute to the exchange of legal and training expertise and raise the efficiency of national personnel.

He emphasized the importance of integration between educational and training institutions in preparing qualified personnel capable of

keeping pace with modern developments and supporting the progress of security and institutional work in the country.

He disclosed that the MoU will provide a cooperative framework through which both parties can develop training programs and activities and enhance the skills and efficiency of members of the judiciary at the Ministry of Justice and members

of the police force at the Ministry of Interior.

He said the memorandum covers the organization of scientific seminars, training courses and specialized conferences on topics of mutual interest, as well as exchanging publications, journals, research, bulletins, studies and legislation that improve the knowledge, training and qualification of personnel in both entities.

Institute officials present at the signing included Deputy Director for Continuing and Specialized Training Judge Saud Al-Sanea, Deputy Director for Relations, Communications and Research Judge Dr. Ahmed Al-Muqallad, Deputy Director for Foundational Training Attorney General Meshaal Al-Ghannam, and Judge Abdulaziz Al-Rabean and Judge Nawaf Al-Zoubi from the Technical Office.

The Ministry of Interior was represented by Head of the Education and Training Affairs Sector Brigadier General Ali Al-Wuhaib, Director General for Training Brigadier General Salem Ashour, and Director General of the Public Relations and Security Media General Department Brigadier General Nasser Abu-Sulaim.

Assistant Directors General for Training Brigadier General Dr. Anas Al-Qattan and Brigadier General Salem Al-Hattab were also present.

## Continued from Page 1

### O' Chinese

Chinese and Russian interests with Arab states are far greater than their interests with the rogue Iranian regime, which has never missed an opportunity to use terrorism as a tool to blackmail countries, including those with strong ties to Russia and China.

At times, tactical calculations by states may not fully align with their strategic interests. Accumulated mistakes can lead to a major crisis.

Because politics is the art of the possible, the constant use of the veto power in the Security Council to grant Iran more time to blackmail the world will ultimately weaken the Russian and Chinese positions within the Council.

Undoubtedly, the very tool used to bolster Iran's terrorist stance will be turned against Moscow and Beijing in the future, especially since Russia needs the support of the international community in its war against Ukraine, and China needs the major powers to resolve its trade disputes with the United States. This situation compels Russia and China to stand against the rogue, terrorist state, not to support it.

Moscow and Beijing should stand with the Gulf capitals, with which they have strong relations and significant trade ties.

The Gulf states possess substantial global energy reserves, estimated at approximately 511 billion barrels of oil and 44.3 trillion cubic meters of gas. Consequently, the Gulf states are best positioned in terms of meeting the long-term energy needs of China and global markets.

This reality should be reflected in the positions of Russia and China. Both countries must punish the Iranian terrorist regime by ceasing to use their veto power in the Security Council against UN resolutions and by refraining from providing Iran with intelligence and weapons.

### Kuwait intercepts

Meanwhile, the shaky ceasefire in the Iran war was tested again on Sun-

day when a drone set a small fire on a ship off the coast of Qatar, while the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait reported separate drones entering their airspace.

The UAE blamed Iran for the latest attack, the latest threat to a month-old ceasefire, which the Trump administration says remains in effect.

There were no casualties reported, and no one immediately claimed responsibility.

Iran and its armed allied groups possess a large fleet of drones and have used them to carry out hundreds of strikes since the war began. The events marked the latest threats to a month-old ceasefire, which the Trump administration says remains in effect.

The pause in fighting has faced difficulties, with Iran restricting traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic waterway key to the global flow of oil, and the U.S. imposing a blockade of Iranian ports.

Washington has been awaiting Iran's response to a new proposal for a deal to end the war, reopen the strait to shipping and roll back Iran's nuclear program. U.S. President Donald Trump has reiterated threats to resume full-scale bombing if Iran doesn't accept an agreement to reopen the strait and roll back its nuclear program. Iran has mostly blocked the waterway since joint strikes on Feb. 28 by the U.S. and Israel launched the war, which has caused a global spike in fuel prices and rattled world markets.

One of the main sticking points in the negotiations is the fate of Iran's stockpile of highly enriched uranium. The U.N. nuclear agency says Iran has more than 440 kilograms (970 pounds) of uranium that is enriched up to 60% purity, a short, technical step from weapons-grade levels.

In an interview with Iranian state media, a spokesman for the Iranian military said that forces were on "full readiness" to protect nuclear sites where the uranium is stored.

"We considered it possible that they might intend to steal it through infiltration operations or helicopter operations," Brig. Gen. Akrami Nia told the IRNA news agency late Saturday. He didn't offer further details.

The majority of Iran's highly en-

riched uranium is likely still at its Isfahan nuclear complex, International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi told The Associated Press last month.

The Isfahan facility was bombed by U.S.-Israeli airstrikes in the 12-day war last year, and faced less intense attacks in this year's war.

The UAE's Defense Ministry said Sunday it shot down two drones, blaming the attack on Iran.

In Kuwait, Defense Ministry spokesman Brig. Gen. Saud Abdulaziz Al Otaibi said that hostile drones entered Kuwait's airspace early Sunday, and that forces responded "in accordance with established procedures." The ministry didn't say where the drones originated from.

Meanwhile, Qatar's defense ministry said that a drone targeted a commercial ship coming from Abu Dhabi into a southern port, setting a small fire that was extinguished. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations Centre said that the attack happened 23 nautical miles (43 kilometers) northeast of Qatar's capital, Doha. It provided no details about the ship's owner or origin, and there was no claim of responsibility.

There have been several attacks against ships in the Persian Gulf over the past week. On Friday, the U.S. struck two Iranian oil tankers after it said that the vessels were trying to breach its blockade of Iran's ports.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard navy on Sunday reiterated its warning that any attack on Iranian oil tankers or commercial vessels would be met with a "heavy assault" on one of the U.S. bases in the region and enemy ships.

Pakistan is continuing to mediate during the ceasefire. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Sunday that he received a call from his Qatari counterpart, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, during which the two leaders discussed the evolving regional situation and reviewed ongoing peace efforts.

Sharif wrote on X that the countries shared "brotherly bonds" and said that he looked forward to an upcoming Qatari visit to Pakistan.

### MoH takes

In a statement to Kuwait TV, Director of the Information Systems Department at the ministry Eng. Khaled Al-Azmi explained that the new system eliminated the need to issue paper sick leave certificates for students. "Sick leave is now issued electronically by the clinic and sent directly to the Ministry of Education, while the parent receives approval notification through the 'Sahel' application. This streamlines the traditional procedures into a single step," he elaborated.

He added that the project includes an integrated school health system, through which students are registered electronically, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, and their data are then automatically transferred to the Ministry of Health for follow up through the school clinics.

He pointed out that the system provides a comprehensive digital health record for each student, including their medical history, vaccinations, allergies and previous diagnoses, with a direct link to the medical systems of the Ministry of Health and official medical files of the students.

Meanwhile, Haifa Al-Shatti, Head of the Projects Follow Up Section at the Information Systems Department, confirmed that the project aims to create a comprehensive health database for students. "This will give the school or hospital doctors immediate access to the complete medical history of a student for quick and accurate medical decision-making. The new system supports rapid response to emergencies in schools by providing healthcare staff with real-time medical information to improve the quality of preventive and curative care provided to students," she added.

Eng. Dana Malallah indicated that the system provides smart alerts for the parents and medical staff about the required vaccination and periodic checkup appointments.

In a related development, Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Abdulwahab Al-Awadhi approved the updated regulations during the 'Wafid' program in order to develop the medical examination system for expatriates and strengthen

health security in the country.

The new regulations, issued by the Health Council at the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), consist of 54 articles to update medical examination procedures for expatriates and improve oversight of accredited medical examination centers outside the country.

The Ministry of Health continued to expand its digital services through the 'Salem' application, announcing the activation of an electronic dietary supplement dispensing service in most hospitals. This service is facilitated through a direct link between the therapeutic nutrition departments and the electronic dispensing system.

Official spokesperson of the ministry Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad confirmed that this service saves time and effort, ensures the accuracy of information, and simplifies the electronic tracking of requests through the smart services mechanism provided by the application. He asserted that the ministry is keen on expanding its electronic services through the 'Salem' application in line with its vision to offer smart and integrated healthcare services that meet the aspirations of the community.

The recent period also witnessed increased integration between government health systems and official applications, notably 'Sahel', which has become a primary channel for health service notifications, sick leave, and decisions regarding treatment abroad.

The ministry also continued to develop health services related to sick leave, prescriptions and health reports, in addition to developing the platform for ministry employees.

Digital services include online registration and payment of health insurance, home visit requests, recruitment services for medical and nursing professions, virtual care services and remote medical consultations for some cases.

### Spending on

of Kuwait's strong fiscal buffers that can absorb any decline in oil revenues during production disruptions.

Any cash flow problem can be managed through the Public Debt Law,

which allows Kuwait and the Ministry of Finance to borrow up to 30 billion dinars, in addition to the option of drawing from the General Reserve.

Ramadan stated that the Minister of Finance's statements on proceeding with development projects represent a positive step for the Ministry of Finance, particularly in light of the current conditions since the onset of the war.

He stressed that these circumstances are likely to influence global markets, with oil prices likely to continue rising for an extended period, which could undoubtedly compensate, at least partially, for the periods of Kuwaiti oil production disruptions.

Regarding the stimulus packages provided by the Central Bank of Kuwait to the private sector, Ramadan explained that the Ministry of Finance's data was presented in aggregate form and should have been detailed. The positive aspects of these incentives helped reassure both markets and the private sector by confirming the continuation of capital spending plans as originally outlined prior to the outbreak of the war crisis.

About the possibility of postponing some projects to avoid additional pressure on the budget under current circumstances, Ramadan stressed that priority should be given to development projects that support the national economy in the long term, but this does not rule out reconsidering certain non-urgent projects that could be postponed until the current situation stabilizes.

He highlighted that the new project that should be proposed now is finding a way to export Kuwaiti oil without passing through the Strait of Hormuz during geopolitical crises that have disrupted Gulf oil supplies.

Ramadan expressed support for establishing pipelines connecting local oil fields to Saudi Arabia via the Arabian Sea in Oman or through the Red Sea corridor.

He added that the current circumstances highlight the importance of activating all channels of regional trade and economic connectivity among Gulf countries, especially since the current crisis has underscored the strategic importance of Gulf oil producers to global energy stability when the Strait of Hormuz was closed by Iran.

GOP needs to confront economic realities

## President of Parks and Recreation? Trump asserts authority over public spaces in DC

WASHINGTON, May 10, (AP): A federal judge weighing the future of an expansive Washington park insisted this week she had no intention of becoming Amy Poehler, the actress who spent seven seasons memorably playing the head of a local parks and recreation department.

But President Donald Trump might be interested in the role.

Shortly after the United States and Iran exchanged fire on Thursday, Trump made a quick jaunt to the National Mall to review the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool that he ordered repainted a color he describes as "American flag blue."

The project has been on his mind lately. During an hour-plus speech Monday to small-business owners, Trump spent about nine minutes talking about the paint job, detailing the granite floor and boasting that he whitened the renovation's cost to \$1.9 million from what he said was an initial \$350 million estimate.

Trump's next project might be East Potomac Park, home to an affordable, accessible public golf course with views of the Washington Monument.

The Republican president has talked of transforming it into a posh "US Open-caliber course." Signs were posted this week warning of a disruption and preservation advocates took the government to court as debris

dumped there from the White House East Wing demolition tested positive for lead.

By late Friday, the nonprofit that operates the course said it would continue managing the space until the National Park Service begins a "historic restoration."

Meanwhile, the White House told a planning agency that it would cost taxpayers at least \$7.5 million to follow through on Trump's plan to paint the granite Eisenhower Executive Office Building white.

And that was just this week in Washington's extreme makeover.

Over the past year, Trump has bulldozed the East Wing to make way for a ballroom. His name was added to the facades of the U.S. Institute of Peace and the Kennedy Center, which he plans to close for a two-year renovation. His face adorns a banner at the Department of Justice's headquarters, among others. He is pushing for a triumphal arch near Arlington Cemetery and has closed parks, including Lafayette Square across from the White House, for a rehab.

Trump is guaranteeing himself a lasting imprint on a city where he won just 6.5% of the vote in 2024. He is flexing extraordinary executive power and offering fresh insight into how he spends his time, perhaps a president's most valuable asset.



US President Donald Trump talks as he visits the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool to see the new blue protective coating being applied as part of a renovation project, on May 7 in Washington. (AP)

As the Washington projects unfolded this week, the ceasefire in Iran was at risk of unraveling, motor club AAA said the average price of a gallon of gas surpassed \$4.50 and elections provided new evidence of Democratic enthusiasm heading into the November elections.

"It's not a zero-sum game but obviously all presidents have limited amounts of capital they can use and

limited amounts of attention that they have to give," said presidential historian Julian Zelizer of Princeton University. "And he's deciding, in a moment of war, a moment of economic instability, that this is a priority."

Trump rejects such concerns. Asked at the Reflecting Pool why he was focused on the project given the US military action in Iran, he said, "Our country is about beauty, cleanli-

ness, safety, great people. Not a filthy capital."

For Republicans defending slim congressional majorities, it is not so simple. Many would prefer to talk about policy accomplishments, including tax cuts, rather than multimillion-dollar Washington construction projects.

While few directly criticize Trump, there is an acknowledgment that the party needs to confront economic realities.

"A lot of Americans are very worried about the cost of living and we need to address it," Sen. John Kennedy, R-La., said recently.

A Washington Post-ABC News-Ipsos poll conducted in late April found that 52% percent of Americans oppose Trump's planned arch. That includes about 6 in 10 independents. Some 51% of Republicans favor it.

Americans oppose the ballroom by a 2-to-1 margin, driven largely by Democrats and independents. About 2 in 10 Republicans oppose the project, according to the poll. The poll did not find a notable shift in support of the ballroom after a shooting at last month's White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. Trump has cited that incident in his push for a secure facility, something he did not mention when he initially ordered the demolition of the East Wing.

Trump is showing no sign of back-

ing away from any of the projects. In a sign of the GOP's loyalty to him, Republican senators added \$1 billion in White House security upgrades for the ballroom to an unrelated bill this week. Trump initially said taxpayer money would not be needed.

In a city where historic preservation is often sacred, the pace of change has been dizzying.

Rebecca Miller, the executive director of DC Preservation League, has spent 23 years at the organization, which sued to stop the golf course takeover and joined a coalition attempting to force the Kennedy Center to comply with preservation laws. She said her organization has worked with administrations of both parties and called the Trump moves "highly unusual."

"One of the problems that we have right now is an administration that seems to think that it can just plow ahead without any input," she said. "These assets are owned by the people of the United States. They're not anybody's personal portfolio."

White House spokeswoman Taylor Rogers said Trump is "laser-focused on lowering costs for working families, deporting illegal criminals, keeping our cities safe, beautifying our nation's capital, and protecting our national security by ensuring Iran can never possess a nuclear weapon all at the same time."



Federal agents block Grande Avenue on Dec 5, 2025, in Tucson, Ariz. (AP)

### 'It indicates the level of chaos'

## Community-built map tracks ICE activity across Tucson, Arizona

WASHINGTON, May 10, (AP): Tucson migrant advocates have designed a new tool to help track immigration-related enforcement in and around the city as arrests surge under President Donald Trump's mass deportation initiative.

Tucson Migra Map allows people to document and visualize enforcement activities by Immigration and Customs Enforcement and other federal agencies. While revealing patterns, the tool also raises questions about safety, transparency and the limits of public tracking tools.

"It indicates the level of chaos and how disruptive it is to our community," activist Lucia Vindiola said in a statement. Vindiola launched the mutual aid group La Bodega to provide groceries and other help to people affected by increased enforcement.

"We are seeing firsthand the impact on families, limiting them from shopping for groceries and supplies," Vindiola said.

In the year since Trump took office, immigration-related detentions have more than tripled in fiscal year 2025 - surging from less than 200 in late 2024 to more than 800 by June 2025. The response in communities nationwide has been swift, with groups such as the Tucson Rapid Response network organizing to monitor and track federal immigration action on the street.

Geographer Dugan Meyer, one of the map's creators, is a Ph.D. student at the University of Arizona who volunteers with Tucson Rapid Response and other related organizations.

"This project came out of the documentation work that Rapid Response is doing, but also around the city," Meyer said. "It is a community research project, community mapping project." The data is pulled from spreadsheets maintained since January 2025 that tracks and documents federal enforcement actions in greater Tucson such as raids, vehicle stops and aerial surveillance.

Included is the December raid at one of several targeted Taco Giro locations where US House Rep. Adelita Grijalva was pepper sprayed by federal agents.

Incidents on the map are vetted and classified as "confirmed" or "credible but unconfirmed" based on the level of evidence.

"If we have photographs of, say, an agent wearing a tactical vest that says ICE, that's confirmed," Meyer said. "Credible unconfirmed, we're very confident something happened."

Meyer said a trained Rapid Response observer witnessing an event, even if they had not photographed it, would be an example of a credible unconfirmed event.

"Their testimony about that would be enough for us," he said.

Hundreds of people, including non-citizens, have contributed their eyewitness accounts of immigration enforcement to the map and the database it draws from, according to the Tucson Migrant Map website. Information from the local news is included, along with reports collected by Rapid Response and other

neighborhood networks such as Migra Watch, and information shared on social media and in WhatsApp groups.

Rapid Response member Steven Davis has documented five incidents, including one in which he was pepper sprayed by law enforcement. He says having these incidents recorded and published furthers his efforts to better show people what ICE is doing in their community.

"The value of the observation is that we take this out of the shadows and get it out into the public," Davis said. "The Migra Map is a public facing map that makes visible this activity that is mostly behind the scenes."

Davis said knowing the data he collects will be used for Migra Map makes it more important for him to document diligently.

"There's the saying garbage in, garbage out. I want to make sure that the information that I'm providing is the most accurate information that I can possibly provide," Davis said.

Meyer said that as of late April, the team had reviewed around 562 incidents, with about 300 meeting the threshold to be included. The goal is to review reported incidents within a week, then add qualifying cases.

"We know that the map is an undercount by any estimation," Meyer said.

The map also includes police facilities and immigration detention facilities, along with flight paths of various federal agencies' surveillance flights.

## Russia ramping up its attempts to kill opponents in Europe: intelligence officials

MOSCOW, May 10, (AP): When Vladimir Osechkin wants to take his children to school or go to the supermarket, he calls the police.

The Russian activist has lived under protection since 2022 because French officials believe Russia is trying to kill him.

In April 2025, a crew of Russian men staked out Osechkin's home and the surrounding area in southwestern France for several hours, taking videos and photos in suspected groundwork for an assassination, according to court documents seen by The Associated Press that are not public. Several years earlier, Osechkin said, a red dot - which he thought was a laser sight for a gun - appeared on his wall.

Elsewhere in Europe, Lithuanian officials disrupted a plot last year to kill a Lithuanian supporter of Ukraine and another against a Russian activist. Officials in Germany have similarly broken up two plots: one to target the head of a German weapons company supplying Ukraine, the other against a Ukrainian military official. Polish authorities arrested a man in 2024 in what they said was a plot to assassinate Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. And that same year, a Russian helicopter pilot who defected was killed in Spain - with Russian operatives the prime suspects.

While Russian officials have long



Sergei Skripal, (left), is seen on a screen speaking to his lawyer from behind bars in Moscow on Aug 9, 2006. (AP)

been accused of silencing the country's enemies abroad, three Western intelligence officials from different countries told AP that a campaign of targeted killings has ramped up since President Vladimir Putin's 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

The officials said Russia's security services are now more brazen in their choice of targets, going after Russian activists and foreign supporters of Ukraine, in addition to the usual suspects like military defectors. All three officials spoke on condition of anonymity

to discuss sensitive information.

"This campaign is not by accident or chance," said one of them, a senior European intelligence official. "There is political authorization."

The intelligence officials, a former senior British counterterrorism official and prosecutors in Lithuania see the campaign as connected to Russia's broader efforts to undermine European countries that support Ukraine, including 191 acts of sabotage, arson and other disruption linked to Russia by Western officials that the AP has mapped across Europe since the beginning of the war.

Many accused in that campaign are people who were recruited as cheap proxies for Russian intelligence operatives. Moscow is now using that model to target its perceived enemies abroad, according to the French court documents, officials and information from the Lithuanian prosecutor.

Putin's spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told AP he didn't see "any need" to comment. Russian officials have previously denied that Moscow is behind attempts to kill its opponents abroad.

The AP spoke to three of the people targeted: Osechkin; Lithuanian activist Valdas Bartkevicius; and Ruslan Gabbasov, who advocates for independence for the Russian region of Bashkortostan.



Hungary's new Prime Minister Peter Magyar delivers a speech after the inaugural session in Budapest, Hungary, Saturday, May 9, 2026. (AP)

## Hungary's Magyar sworn in as PM, ending Viktor Orbán's 16-year rule

BUDAPEST, Hungary, May 10, (AP): Hungary's Péter Magyar took his oath of office on Saturday to become the country's new prime minister, kicking off a fresh political era after 16 years of Viktor Orbán's autocratic rule.

Magyar's center-right Tisza party defeated Orbán's nationalist-populist Fidesz in a stunning blow last month, gaining more votes and seats in parliament than any other party in Hungary's post-Communist history.

The win, which gave Tisza a two-thirds parliamentary majority, will allow it to roll back many of the policies that gave Orbán a reputation among his critics as a far-right authoritarian.

In a speech to tens of thousands of supporters in a square outside the parliament building after being sworn in, the new prime minister told the crowd: "Today, every freedom-loving person in the world would like to be Hungarian a little."

"You have taught the country and the world that it is the most ordinary, flesh-and-blood people that can defeat the most vicious tyranny," Magyar said to roaring applause.

As Hungary's new leader, Magyar has vowed to restore democratic institutions and governmental checks and balances that were heavily erod-

ed during Orbán's rule, and to clamp down on alleged corruption.

His administration is expected to transform political dynamics within the European Union, where the former prime minister had upended the bloc by frequently vetoing key decisions, most recently concerning support for neighboring Ukraine.

On Saturday, Magyar, a 45-year-old lawyer who founded Tisza in 2024, entered the sprawling neo-Gothic parliament building alongside 140 of his party representatives.

Tisza now controls 141 seats in Hungary's 199-seat parliament. Orbán's Fidesz-KDNP coalition controls 52 seats, down from 135, while the far-right Mi Hazánk (Our Homeland) party holds six seats.

The 199 representatives took their oaths of office at around 11 a.m. Orbán was not among them for the first time since Hungary's first post-Communist parliament was formed in 1990.

Magyar earlier called on Hungarians to attend an all-day "regime-change" celebration on Kossuth Square outside parliament to mark his inauguration and the end of the Orbán era. Many of those gathered waved Hungarian and EU flags and wore Tisza T-shirts.

In his speech, Magyar delivered a message of unity, and promised to

help heal the deep social divisions he said Orbán's government had sown.

"Today is the fulfillment of the long journey that we have made together in recent years, the fulfillment of the common belief that Hungary is able to get back on its feet, is able to believe in itself and to once again be a common homeland for all Hungarians," he said.

Hungary's new National Assembly has 54 women lawmakers, most from the Tisza party - more than a quarter of the total and the most in Hungary's history.

One of them, Andrea Szepesi, an economist from Budapest, said it was "about time" that more women held seats in parliament. Under Orbán's rule, there were fewer women in government than in nearly all of the EU's other 26 nations.

"Finally, women are able to participate in this new, beautiful democratic system and the flourishing of the country," Szepesi told The Associated Press.

Magyar has promised to repair his country's ties with the EU, which Orbán had pushed to a breaking point, and to restore Hungary's place among Western democracies, whose standing had been called into question as Orbán drifted ever closer to Russia.

### America

**11 injured in Miami boat explosion:** About a dozen people were taken to hospitals with injuries Saturday after a boat explosion near Miami, the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue agency said.

The charter boat was in Biscayne Bay, near Haulover Sandbar, when the blast erupted on board, according to preliminary information from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

More than two dozen rescue units responded in the afternoon and "encountered multiple patients requiring medical attention," Miami-Dade Fire Rescue said in a statement. It said it transported 11 people to hospitals. (AP)

**One dies after being hit by plane:** A person who jumped a fence and was on a runway at Denver International Airport was struck and killed by a Frontier Airlines plane during takeoff, airport authorities said. The collision sparked an engine fire and forced passengers to evacuate.

The plane, on route from Denver to Los Angeles International Airport, "reported striking a pedestrian during takeoff at DEN at approximately 11:19 p.m. on Friday," according to a post on the airport's official X account. (AP)



Frontier Airlines jetliners sit on the tarmac outside the concourse of Denver International Airport Saturday on May 9, in Denver. (AP)

official X account. (AP)

**8 killed in mass shooting remembered:** Faith leaders and politicians paid tribute at a funeral Saturday to eight children who were killed in a mass shooting last month in Louisiana.

The victims of the April 19 shooting in Shreveport included seven siblings who were shot by their father in an attack that also killed their cousin. (AP)

## INTERNATIONAL

## Philippines to summon ex-nat'l police chief in probe into Duterte-era killings

MANILA, Philippines, May 10, (AP) — The former head of the Philippine National Police force will be summoned as part of a new investigation into alleged extrajudicial killings during anti-drug crackdowns ordered by ex-President Rodrigo Duterte, Interior Secretary Juanito Victor Remulla Jr. said Sunday.

Ronald dela Rosa, who is now a senator, will be summoned on Monday, Remulla said.

The thousands of killings of mostly impoverished drug suspects took place when Duterte was mayor of the southern city of Davao and after he became president in 2016. The killings during police raids alarmed human rights groups and Western governments led by the United States.

Duterte, 81, was arrested in March 2025 and taken to the Netherlands, where he is facing trial at the International Criminal Court for alleged crimes against humanity.

Dela Rosa, a former Davao city police chief who was appointed by Duterte to lead the national police force, has been summoned amid speculation that he faced imminent arrest on the order of the ICC.

He has not appeared at the Senate since November 2025 after reports surfaced that he would be arrested.

Duterte, dela Rosa and other police



Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte addresses the troops during the 82nd anniversary celebration of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in suburban Quezon City northeast of Manila, Philippines on Dec 20, 2017. (AP)

officials have denied authorizing the killings of drug suspects, who, they said, were shot dead after allegedly threatening law enforcers. Duterte openly and repeatedly threatened drug suspects with death while in office.

A 2024 congressional investigation recommended criminal charges to be filed against Duterte and key police officials involved in the crackdowns.

Dela Rosa "has never been person-

ally investigated," Remulla said. "All officers involved must be held accountable and, just to be clear, he was the tip of the spear in the extrajudicial killings drive, so we will start with him and investigate down further."

Remulla said the investigation into Dela Rosa will be "the start of the process to find accountability to everything that happened in those dark years where extrajudicial killings became a state policy."

### Asia

**Australia announces \$48.8m for security hub:** Australian Home Affairs Minister **Tony Burke** at a press conference announced 74 million Australian dollars (about 48.8 million US dollars) for a security center to crack down on online violent extremism and terrorism.

The newly created Counter Terrorism Online Centre will be led by Australia's security agency ASIO and the Australian Federal Police (AFP).

Burke said the AFP had put in 31 charges under new offenses on online extremism and radicalization, and 19 of them are minors.

"This feature of young people being radicalized fast online is real and the agencies, as is evident in those charges that have been brought to bear by the Australian Federal Police, have been acting on this," Burke said.

AFP Commissioner Krissy Barrett noted that terrorists are manipulating vulnerable and susceptible individuals at "rapid speed," in part because emerging technology has blurred the boundary between the virtual and real worlds.

"The speed and scale of radicalization is becoming one of our most significant challenges, especially when it comes to youth," she said.

Investigators and intelligence analysts will work together to monitor high-risk online spaces, assess threats and disrupt extremist activities, including through undercover online engagement. (Xinhua)

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**Reactor halted after steam leak in Japan N-plant:**

A reactor at a nuclear power plant in Fukui Prefecture, central Japan, was halted Friday morning fol-



Burke

lowing a steam leak near the unit's high-pressure turbine, local media reported.

The leak was detected at around 4:10 a.m. local time at the No. 3 reactor of the Mihama nuclear power plant, Kyodo News reported.

The reactor was manually shut down about 15 minutes later. Kansai Electric Power Co., the plant's operator, said the steam did not contain radioactive material and there was no impact on the external environment.

The No.3 reactor at the Mihama nuclear power plant began operation in 1976. It was temporarily taken offline following the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster and resumed operation in 2021. (Xinhua)

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**Bodies retrieved from Indonesian volcano:** Rescuers on Indonesia's remote island of Halmahera found the bodies of two Singaporean hikers on Sunday, two days after they were caught in a volcanic eruption on Mount Dukono, officials said.

The bodies of the men, aged 30 and 27, were located a few meters (yards) from where the first victim, an Indonesian female hiker, was found dead on Saturday, Abdul Muhari, the National Disaster Management Agency's spokesperson, said. All three had been about 50 meters (165 feet) from the rim of the main crater.

The men's bodies were covered by thick layers of volcanic material, Muhari said, adding that the densely packed material had complicated evacuation efforts and significantly slowed progress.

"The bodies were buried under deep, densely packed volcanic material that is difficult to dig through," Muhari said, "Rescue teams must proceed cautiously to ensure safety."

The trio were among 20 hikers who set out to ascend the 1,355-meter (4,445-foot) volcano, in North Maluku province, in defiance of safety restrictions. They became stranded when Dukono erupted early Friday, spewing a thick ash column that rose about 10 kilometers (6 miles) into the air. (AP)

### 2 killed, 6 injured in Chongqing car accident

## China and France shoulder important responsibilities for upholding int'l peace, stability: Wang

BEIJING, May 10, (Xinhua) — China and France, as permanent members of the UN Security Council and major independent countries, shoulder important responsibilities for upholding international peace, stability and development, China's top diplomat Wang Yi said on Friday.

Wang, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs, made the remarks when holding talks with Emmanuel Bonne, diplomatic adviser to the French president, in Beijing.

Noting that the strategic guidance of the two heads of state reflects the high level and special nature of bilateral relations, Wang said China stands ready to work with France to achieve greater progress in China-France cooperation and deliver more benefits to the two peoples.

China values the recent passage by the French Parliament of a bill to ease the return of colonial-era looted artifacts, and is ready to strengthen cooperation with France in this regard to enhance people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and mutual learning between civilizations, Wang said.

Against the backdrop of growing turmoil in today's world, it is necessary for both countries to strengthen strategic communication and coordination, jointly address global challenges, and advance the China-France comprehensive strategic partnership to achieve sound and steady development free from various types of interference, Wang said.

He stressed that the foundation of China-France relations lies in solid political mutual trust, and the key is mutual respect for each other's core interests. He expressed the hope that France will abide by the one-China principle in practice, refrain from any form of official interaction with Taiwan authorities, and not send any wrong signals to the "Taiwan independence" separatist forces.

Indicating that China and Europe are always partners, not rivals, Wang said it is hoped that France will play a positive and constructive role in encouraging the EU to adopt a correct and rational perception of China and pursue a practical and open economic and trade policy toward China.

Also:

**CHONGQING:** Two people were killed and six injured in a traffic accident in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality on Sunday, according to the municipal public security bureau.

The accident occurred at around 1:40 pm on Sunday. A 57-year-old female driver surnamed He lost control of her car at an intersection in **Qianjiang District, Chongqing**, and the car collided with other vehicles and pedestrians, killing two people and injuring six.

Police arrived at the scene promptly after receiving report of the accident and have helped send the injured to the hospital. The driver has been cleared of drunk driving, and the accident is under further investigation.



Wang Yi, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs, holds talks with Emmanuel Bonne, diplomatic adviser to the French president, in Beijing, capital of China on May 8. (Xinhua)



Police officers examine the site of overnight suicide bombing at a security post in Fatah Khel, in Bannu, a district in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan on May 10. (AP)

### Taliban splinter group claims blast

## Pakistan suicide attack kills 14 police officers

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, May 10, (AP) — The death toll from a suicide attack on a security post in northwest Pakistan rose to 14 police officers, authorities said early Sunday. A self-proclaimed breakout group of the Pakistan Taliban has claimed the attack.

A suicide bomber and several gunmen detonated an explosives-laden vehicle near the post in Bannu, a district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan, late Saturday, said senior police official Sajjad Khan. The attack triggered an intense shootout, and some officers were killed in the exchange, while others died later after the building collapsed.

Rescuers conducted an hours-long search operation using heavy machinery to retrieve bodies from under the rubble, Khan said, adding that three police officers were wounded in the attack.

Meanwhile, hundreds gathered Sunday at the police headquarters in Bannu to attend the funerals of the slain officers. Uniformed colleagues stood in silence as coffins draped in the national flag were carried past grieving families. Some relatives broke down upon seeing the coffins, as a Muslim cleric led funeral prayers under tight security.

Security forces have launched an operation to track

down the perpetrators.

A newly formed militant group, Ittehad-ul-Mujahideen Pakistan, claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement sent to reporters. While the group claims it was formed by splinter factions of the Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, authorities have accused it of being a front for the TTP.

Pakistan has witnessed a surge in militant violence in recent years, much of it blamed on the TTP, a separate group but an ally of the Afghan Taliban, who returned to power in Afghanistan in 2021. Islamabad often accuses Afghanistan's Taliban government of providing sanctuary to the TTP, a claim that Kabul denies.

President Asif Ali Zardari condemned the attack and offered condolences to the victims' families in a statement. He also instructed local authorities to assist the wounded and residents whose homes were damaged in the attack.

Zardari also said, "terrorists operating from sanctuaries in Afghanistan under the Taliban administration and supported externally are targeting civilians and law enforcement personnel in Pakistan." He also vowed to target "their facilitators and sponsors."

met during the trial. (KUNA)

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**Sri Lanka arrests over 168,000 suspects:** Sri Lanka has arrested over 168,000 suspects in anti-drug operations since October 2025 and President Anura Kumara Dissanayake has ordered legal reforms to strengthen the anti-drug campaign, the President's Media Division (PMD) said in a statement on Thursday.

Authorities have seized 5,437.4 kilos of cannabis, 1,936.3 kilos of heroin, 1,991.4 kilos of crystal methamphetamine, 271.7 kilos of cocaine, 1,574,895 narcotic pills and 629,988 illicit cigarettes since the operation began on Oct. 30, 2025, PMD said.

PMD said that drug-related raids had increased by 80 percent since the launch of the program. (Xinhua)

## M23 rebels accuse US of falling short as peace mediator in Congo's conflict

DAKAR, Senegal, May 10, (AP) — Rebels in Congo say the United States has fallen short as a mediator in efforts to end the conflict in the African country's mineral-rich east as the Trump administration seeks to open the region's critical reserves to the US government and American companies.

According to a letter to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio from Congolese rebel leader Corneille Nangaa, Washington has failed to pressure Congo's government over its alleged violations of peace commitments.

The letter, seen by The Associated Press on Saturday, was signed by the Congo River Alliance, which includes the Rwanda-backed M23 rebel group.

Congo and Rwanda agreed last year to a US-mediated peace deal aimed at ending the long-running conflict in eastern Congo, an accord that would define terms of economic partnership involving the three countries and unlock deals on rare earth minerals.

At the time, US President Donald Trump praised the leaders of the two nations - Presidents Felix Tshisekedi of Congo and Paul Kagame



Rebel leader of group of Alliance Fleuve Congo (AFC) including M23, Corneille Nangaa, addresses a news conference in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo on Jan 30, 2025. (AP)

of Rwanda. Trump has since often cited his success in negotiating the deal. However, fighting in the region continues, with both rebel and government forces accusing each other of violating peace terms.

The letter to Rubio also criticized the US for sanctioning "actors critical of the authorities in power" in

Kinshasa, Congo's capital - a reference to US sanctions on former Congolese President Joseph Kabila last week over his alleged role in funding and supporting to the rebels. Earlier this year, Washington also sanctioned Rwanda's military and four of its senior officials for supporting M23.

## Mexico denies consulates meddle in US politics

MEXICO CITY, May 10, (Agencies) — Mexican President **Claudia Sheinbaum** on denied claims that Mexican consulates in the United States are interfering in local politics and should come under scrutiny.

"This idea that Mexican consulates are engaging in politics in the United States is completely false," Sheinbaum said at a daily press conference, stressing that just like the US consulate in Mexico or those of other countries, the Mexican consulate's role is solely to "protect their citizens."

Her remarks followed a report broadcast by CBS News that the U.S. State Department is looking to investigate Mexican consulates, and possibly even close some of them, following the deaths of two American CIA officers after a counter-narcotics operation in northern Mexico last month.

Mexico's government has not received any official notification of a supposed review or possible closure of consulates, she said.

Mexico's more than 50 consulates in the United States provide assistance and protection to Mexican citizens abroad, in keeping with international law and standard diplomatic practices, said Sheinbaum. "They are very respectful of US policy."



Sheinbaum

### Africa

**Chad court jails 8 opp'n leaders for 8 yrs:** A Chadian court in the capital N'Djamena sentenced eight opposition leaders to eight years in prison Friday for convictions on charges including insurrection.

Leaders of the coalition opposition group Political Actors Consultation Group, or GCAP, were also found guilty by the High Court of N'Djamena for offenses including rebellion and disturbing public order. They were arrested last month.

The judge also fined them 500,000 Central African francs (\$897) each. The prosecutor had requested a 10-year sentence for each of the members. (AP)

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**Botswana mourns death of Mogae:** Festus Mogae, Botswana's former president who made a national priority of the fight against HIV and AIDS during his tenure from 1998 to 2008, has died at the age of 86, the government said Friday. No cause of death was given.

Botswana President Duma Boko said that under Mogae's leadership, the country earned international respect for principled, sound economic management and a commitment to democracy. He said the country would undergo three days of national mourning in honor of its former head of state.

Botswana, a sparsely populated and arid country in southern Africa, is the biggest producer of diamonds by value and the second biggest by volume behind Russia. Diamonds account for around 80% of Botswana's exports and a quarter of its gross domestic product, according to the International Monetary Fund. (AP)

### Subcontinent

**India successfully flight-tests Agni missile:** Indian defense authorities announced on Saturday the successful flight test of advanced Agni missile equipped with Multiple Independently Targeted Re-entry Vehicles.

The Indian Ministry of Defence said in a statement that the missile was flight-tested from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Eastern Indian state of Odisha. The missile equipped with multiple payloads was targeted to different targets spatially distributed over a large geographical area in the Indian Ocean Region.

Multiple ground and ship-based stations tracked the entire missile trajectory from lift-off till the impact of all payloads and all mission objectives were

## Bursa Kuwait ends session mixed

KUWAIT CITY, May 10, (KUNA): Bursa Kuwait closed Sunday's trading session on a mixed note, with the general index declining by 28.67 points, or 0.32 percent, to settle at 8,875.85 points. Trading activity saw 503.2 million shares change hands across 27,963 transactions, with a total value of KD 106.6 million (approximately USD 348.7 million). The main market index recorded gains, rising 53.24 points, or 0.62 percent, to reach 8,666.42 points. The segment witnessed trading of 341.9 million shares through 16,746 transactions, valued at KD 51.5 million (around USD 168.4 million).

### Amana field drives exploration success

## KUFPEC eyes new global oil and gas acquisitions

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC) is currently studying foreign investment opportunities, including potential new acquisitions in the oil and gas sectors.

The company is also seeking to divest unprofitable assets in an effort to streamline expenditures and focus on promising opportunities capable of delivering added value in exploration and development activities.

Meanwhile, official information obtained by the newspaper revealed that the average production of KUFPEC in Canada and Australia over past two years reached 59,573 barrels of oil per day.

The information stated that KUFPEC operates in 10 countries based on solid foundations and high operational standards, and its activities are not confined to a specific geographical region.

It revealed that the company manages a portfolio of 30 projects in five continents and maintains seven offices in Australia, Canada, Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, Netherlands and Pakistan.

Reliable sources indicated that KUFPEC achieved significant success in Indonesia, particularly through the Amana field in South Sumatra, where the company holds 30 percent stake.

Three exploration wells and five additional promising prospects have been identified within the concession area. Exploration Site No. 1 is regarded as the primary target, with estimated hydrocarbon reserves of around 46 million barrels and 43 billion cubic feet, alongside the possibility of further reserve growth.

Sources stated that KUFPEC recorded major milestones in recent years in diverse international assets and projects, particularly the Wheatstone project in Australia, its Canadian assets in North America, and its operations in Asia, Africa and Europe.

The company added that it continued its success in Canada in line with its 2040 strategy, highlighting that its Kaiboepo project has had remarkable achievements over the past decade.

KUFPEC's average production from the project reached 19,891 barrels of oil per day by the end of 2024, compared to 14,153 barrels per day the previous year.

The Kaiboepo-Duvernay project remains its sole venture in unconventional shale gas rich in liquids.

Sources also indicated that KUFPEC maintained world-class standards in health, safety and environmental performance over the past two years, recording no fatalities, leaks or spill incidents.

The company supported its technological transformation and information management systems by strengthening exploration and production applications, as well as corporate operations.

This included implementing major automation solutions, establishing a centralized data warehouse, completing its five-year digital transformation roadmap, and launching digital business intelligence platforms, all of which contributed to reducing overall operational costs.

Over the past two years, KUFPEC implemented additional initiatives aimed at enhancing reserves and resources, raising standards of excellence in all operational areas, providing technical support to various departments, and improving productivity throughout the its divisions.

KUFPEC explained that it continues advancing its energy transition journey by improving energy efficiency and launching emissions reduction initiatives aligned with the strategy of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

In addition, the company stated that it is steadily strengthening its environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance through value-added initiatives and sustainability-focused activities.

### Assets and equity rise

## NAPESCO posts strong profit growth for 2025

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The General Assembly of National Petroleum Services Company (NAPESCO) announced a record 95 percent cash dividend distribution for the fiscal year ending Dec 31, 2025, equivalent to 95 fils per share, with a total value of KD9.215 million.

The distribution indicates the strong financial position and robust cash flows of the company, along with a remarkable increase in operating profits during the same year.

This is part of a financial approach focused on sustainable profitability and reinforcement of a dividend policy aimed at maximizing shareholder value.

In the same context, Sheikh Sabah Mohamad Abdulaziz Al-Sabah, Chairman of the Board of Directors of NAPESCO, affirmed that 2025 was an exceptional milestone in the journey of the company. "This culminated in the approval by the Ordinary General Assembly, which convened Thursday with an attendance rate of 68.902 percent, of all items on its agenda. The most notable resolution was the approval of the record cash dividend distribution of 95 percent, equivalent to 95 fils per share, totaling KD9.215 million after excluding treasury shares," he revealed.

He stated that the exceptional distribution of the company for 2025 reflect absolute confidence in the strength of its cash flows and its ability to transform operational success into tangible value for shareholders.

He explained that the results proved the success of the company in implementing its strategy in enhancing operational efficiency, diversifying revenue streams, and expanding into new markets.

He said this strengthened the ability of the company to achieve balance between sustainable growth and maximizing shareholder returns. He affirmed the success in fulfilling expansion plans through the establishment of a subsidiary in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), following its qualification with major regional energy companies. He added this step opens new horizons for growth beyond the local market.

He indicated that the strong performance was driven by securing and extending a range of key contracts in the oilfield and environmental services sectors.

"We are proud of our achievements in 2025, which was a pivotal

year for NAPESCO. We look forward to building on these results through continuous expansion and revenue diversification, ensuring sustainable growth and reinforcing our position as a trusted partner in the regional petroleum services sector," he concluded.

On the other hand, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company Muhaimin Ali Al-Behbehani asserted that the strong performance in 2025 reflects the efficiency of the company's operating model and its ability to convert business growth into sustainable profitability.

He pointed out that operational momentum was supported by contract expansion, improved execution efficiency, and effective cost management. "During the year, we strengthened our contract portfolio by signing new agreements and extending existing contracts with strategic clients in the oil sector. This provides greater clarity and sustainability for our revenues in the coming years," he clarified.

He revealed the company made significant progress in specialized services, particularly in drilling and environmental services, including managed pressure drilling projects and environmental response services.

He stressed that these activities are considered the cornerstone for enhancing competitiveness and diversifying revenue streams.

He added that strong cash flows and improved working capital efficiency played a crucial role in supporting the dividend decision.

"We are committed to maintaining a careful balance between business expansion and preserving strong liquidity, enabling us to continue delivering attractive returns to shareholders without compromising our expansion plans," he asserted.

The Board of Directors of the company approved the consolidated financial statements for 2025, which showed remarkable growth in operating revenues, rising by 48.9 percent to reach KD61.08 million, compared to KD41.03 million in 2024.

Net profit reached KD16.9 million, supported by strong contracting activity and efficient project execution.

The financial statements also revealed growth in total assets of nearly 15 percent, reaching KD91.55 million, as well as an increase in shareholders' equity to about KD75.3 million. This clearly reflects the strength of the company's financial position and its ability to support future expansion plans.

# Business

### Dedicated to neo account customers

## Gulf Bank organizes entertainment day to promote financial literacy among children



Children enjoying the event with the neo account mascot.



Group photo of the Gulf Bank team.

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: As part of its ongoing efforts to reward its customers and promote financial awareness among younger generations, Gulf Bank organized a special entertainment day for children who are neo account customers, in collaboration with Funtiki, one of the largest entertainment centers in Kuwait.

The event witnessed strong participation from children and their parents, who took part in a variety of educational and recreational activities specifically designed to instill the values of saving among young children. The event also provided an opportunity to introduce them to the distinguished banking services offered by Gulf Bank to children through the neo account.

During the event, Gulf Bank's team highlighted the importance of saving, financial planning, and responsible money management. Children were also introduced to the basics of handling money in a simple and age appropriate manner, helping them build a healthy relationship with saving and spending. In addition, the event raised awareness about the objectives of the "Let's Be Aware" campaign, emphasizing the importance of protecting banking information and safeguarding it against fraud attempts.

Gulf Bank's neo account for children is one of the bank's key banking services designed for young customers. It provides parents with a safe and easy way to build their children's financial fu-

ture. The account is designed for all children up to the age of 14 and can be easily opened through all Gulf Bank branches, with no minimum balance requirement or additional fees. Through this account, children learn the value of saving and financial responsibility from an early age, marking the beginning of their journey toward saving and building their future.

Gulf Bank considers investing in future generations and equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to face future challenges with confidence as an essential part of its social responsibility. This contributes to building a more financially aware society that is capable of managing financial resources responsibly and sustainably.

### Bank warns against fraudulent investment offers

## Warba boosts fraud awareness under CBK campaign

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Warba Bank continues its fraud awareness and digital security efforts through an ongoing campaign highlighting the risks of fraudulent messages and suspicious calls. The initiative supports the "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) campaign, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait in collaboration with the Kuwait Banking Association, to promote financial literacy and secure digital banking practices.

### Raising Awareness Across Customer Segments:

Nasser Maher Al-Mutawa, Chief Digital Officer at Warba Bank, said the bank is committed to delivering clear and direct awareness messages tailored to different customer segments.

"Awareness is the first line of defense against financial and digital fraud," Al-Mutawa said. He added that the bank provides clear guidance to help custom-

ers identify evolving fraud methods and respond safely to suspicious communications. Al-Mutawa noted that these efforts also extend to bank employees as key partners in fostering a culture of digital security.

### Warning Against Identity Theft:

The bank's awareness messages focus on warning against fraudulent entities that contact customers via phone, email, or SMS, claiming that customer accounts have been suspended or require a data update. Al-Mutawa emphasized that these tactics are used to trick customers into revealing confidential information.

"Warba Bank never asks customers to share personal or banking information via phone, email, or SMS," Al-Mutawa said. He added that any such request is a clear indicator of a fraudulent attempt that should be ignored and reported immediately. He urged customers to verify the identity of any caller and avoid interacting with unknown links or messages that create urgency or promise cash rewards.

**Fake Calls and Fraudulent Investment Offers:** Al-Mutawa explained that common fraudulent methods currently include calls from individuals

impersonating well-known companies or fraudulent investment firms. These callers often offer high-return opportunities to entice individuals into transferring funds or sharing personal information on untrusted websites.

"Fraudsters are using increasingly sophisticated methods, such as impersonating major institutions or claiming customers have won cash prizes," Al-Mutawa said. He called on customers to remain vigilant and avoid falling for unrealistic promises.

### Strengthening Customer Protection:

Al-Mutawa noted that Warba Bank's role extends beyond awareness to providing secure banking and investment solutions as part of a broader strategy that prioritizes the financial and digital security of its customers.

The bank continues to share awareness content across its digital platforms, including materials from the "Let's Be Aware" campaign. Al-Mutawa concluded by emphasizing that prevention begins with following basic security guidelines, such as changing passwords regularly and never sharing them with any third party.



Nasser Al-Mutawa

## Jazeera Airways organizes first Kuwait tourism forum to unlock the country's tourism potential

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Jazeera Airways today hosted the first Kuwait Tourism Forum 2026, bringing together key tourism stakeholders, industry leaders, government representatives, hospitality partners, and aviation experts to spotlight Kuwait's tourism potential and explore opportunities to strengthen inbound tourism and support the country's Vision 2035 ambitions.

Attended by Dr. Nasser Muhaisen, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information, and supported by the Crowne Plaza Al Thuraya City Hotel, the forum marked a significant step in fostering dialogue and collaboration across the tourism ecosystem under the theme of unlocking Kuwait's tourism potential and positioning the country more strongly on the regional and global tourism map.

The event featured keynote addresses and presentations from leaders across aviation, tourism, hospitality, and economic research sectors, including Sleiman Algharib from Visit Kuwait, Mohamed Anis Najia, from the Kuwait Hotel Owners Association and Dominique Exmann from Oxford Economics. Discussions focused on Kuwait's tourism opportunity, the importance of connectivity and infrastructure, demand stimulation, hospitality readiness, and the role aviation can play in driving economic diversification and visitor growth.

Barathan Pasupathi, Chief Executive Officer of Jazeera Airways, said: "Kuwait has immense untapped tourism potential. Strategically located at the heart of the region, with strong connectivity, a rich cultural identity, growing hospitality infrastructure,

and access to a catchment of billions of people within a few hours' flying time, the opportunity ahead is significant. This forum is about bringing stakeholders together to not only start meaningful conversations and align priorities but also collectively shape the future of tourism in Kuwait."

Naser Aloibaid, Chief Executive Government Affairs at Jazeera Airways, highlighted the importance of public and private sector collaboration in enabling tourism growth and building a stronger inbound visitor economy that contributes to national development goals.

Paul Carroll, Chief Commercial Officer at Jazeera Airways highlighted "The Big Opportunity and How Airlines Can Support It", addressing connectivity and airline networks contributing to tourism growth.

The forum also featured a panel

discussion titled "Kuwait Tourism Potential and Unlocking It", moderated by Sarah AlBaker of KTV2, to discuss the opportunities, challenges, and practical steps required to stimulate inbound tourism and enhance Kuwait's attractiveness as a destination.

As part of the event, Jazeera Airways and the Kuwait Hotel Owners Association signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at strengthening collaboration between the aviation and hospitality sectors to support tourism development initiatives in Kuwait.

The Kuwait Tourism Forum 2026 reflects Jazeera Airways' continued commitment to supporting Kuwait's economic development, enhancing connectivity, and contributing to the growth of the country's tourism ecosystem.



Photos during the forum.

Operating income up 9% year-on-year

# NBK – Egypt delivers net profit of EGP 2 bln in 1Q2026

CAIRO, May 10: National Bank of Kuwait – Egypt (NBK-Egypt) reported a net profit of EGP 2 billion (Equivalent to KWD 12.9 million) for the first three months of 2026.

Net operating income reached EGP 4.2 billion in 1Q2026, compared to EGP 3.8 billion in the corresponding period of 2025, reflecting a growth rate of 9% year-on-year. Net interest income increased by 7% to EGP 3.6 billion, compared to EGP 3.3 billion in 1Q2025, while Net Operating Income (excluding interest) grew by 21% year-on-year to EGP 556 million, up from EGP 461 million in the corresponding period in 2025.

Income from financial investments rose by 36% to EGP 26 million in 1Q2026, compared to EGP 19 million in 1Q2025. The cost-to-net operating income ratio stood at 27.5% during the period. Total assets expanded to EGP 258 billion as at the end of March 2026, representing a growth of 15% compared to approximately EGP 225 billion at year-end 2025. Total loans and credit facilities increased to approximately EGP 133 billion, up around 10% from EGP 121 billion at the end of 2025.

Customer deposits grew to EGP 204 billion at the end of 1Q2026, compared to approximately EGP 180 billion at year-end 2025, reflecting growth of around 13%. Net Fees and Commissions to Net Operating Income increased to 10.3% in 1Q2026, compared to 9.8% in the same period of 2025. Return on Average Assets (ROAA) stood at 3.4% in 1Q2026, while Return on Average Equity (ROAE) reached 26.8%.

Commenting on the financial results announced by NBK-Egypt, Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer, National Bank of Kuwait, and Chairman of NBK-Egypt, said: “The financial results of NBK – Egypt for the first quarter of 2026 firmly underscore the strength of the Bank’s financial position and the resilience of its diversified business model, which continues to deliver sustainable profitability despite the operational challenges stemming from recent geopolitical developments in the region. While these headwinds have weighed on economic conditions both locally and regionally, they further reaffirm the soundness of NBK Group’s long-term strategic vision since entering the Egyptian market in 2007, and underscore the significant opportunities and strong potential offered by this promising market.”

“NBK Group views the Egyptian market as a long-term strategic investment, given that Egypt represents one of the largest economies in the region and a key growth market where the Group remains committed to continued expansion.

The market is considered the Group’s second home market, with NBK – Egypt consistently ranking among the most profitable operations within the Group, delivering some of the highest returns on equity and assets,” Al-Bahar added.

She further highlighted that NBK – Egypt, one of the largest Kuwaiti investments in the country, has established a strong and steadily expanding presence within the Egyptian banking sector.

As one of the fastest-growing banks in the market, its solid financial



Shaikha Al-Bahar



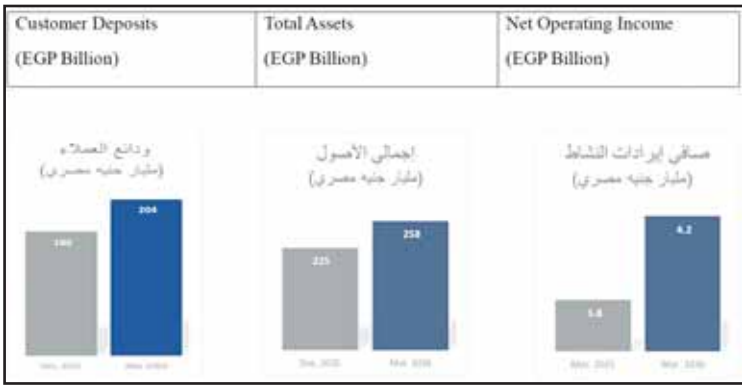
Yasser El-Tayeb

**Al-Bahar:**

- Solid financial performance and strong underlying indicators underscore the resilience of the Bank’s business model amid geopolitical headwinds
- We view the Egyptian market as a strategic long-term investment and remain firmly committed to sustained expansion
- NBK – Egypt ranks among the fastest-growing banks, with a well-established and increasingly prominent presence in the Egyptian market

**El-Tayeb:**

- The Bank continues to deliver strong performance, achieving balanced growth across all business segments
- We are focused on strengthening our position in both retail and corporate banking while accelerating our digital transformation journey
- We support the global shift toward sustainable finance and actively promote environmentally friendly projects



performance underscores its clear trajectory toward continued expansion and further strengthening of its market position.

Al-Bahar also noted that Egypt’s economic environment continues to gain momentum, supported by ongoing reform measures and exceptional policy actions undertaken by the government and the Central Bank of Egypt. These efforts have created significant opportunities for

investment and growth, expressing her optimism regarding the future outlook of the Egyptian economy.

Meanwhile, Vice Chairman, CEO, and Managing Director of National Bank of Kuwait-Egypt, Mr. Yasser El-Tayeb, said: “The financial results of NBK – Egypt for the first quarter of 2026 reflect the Bank’s sustained capacity to deliver robust and resilient performance, maintaining strong financial outcomes despite a complex and evolving operating environment across both local and global markets.”

El-Tayeb noted that the growth of NBK – Egypt continues to be well-balanced across all business segments, while maintaining efficiency levels and risk metrics aligned with both growth objectives and long-term sustainability. This reflects the Bank’s prudent strategy and disciplined business model, which remains agile in responding to evolving customer needs.

He added that the Bank’s income streams are predominantly driven by credit activities, led by the corporate banking segment, alongside the increasingly significant contribution of retail banking.

The Bank’s credit portfolio is highly diversified, encompassing large corporates as well as small and medium-sized enterprises, while its retail portfolio spans a broad customer base. This diversification underscores the strength and resilience of NBK – Egypt’s income structure.

Additionally, El-Tayeb stated that NBK – Egypt is focused on further strengthening its position in the retail banking segment through the introduction of advanced products and services tailored to diverse customer segments, alongside expanding its Islamic banking offerings to meet the needs of a broad client base.

He noted that the Bank remains committed to continuously enhancing its product suite, positioning itself among the leading institutions in the Egyptian market offering both Islamic and conventional banking solutions.

He further emphasized that, recognizing the critical role of technology and digital channels in shaping the future of banking and enhancing competitive advantage, NBK – Egypt has accelerated its digital transformation agenda through significant investments in electronic banking services.

This enables the Bank to deliver a seamless and differentiated customer experience, allowing clients to conduct the majority of their banking transactions anytime and anywhere, while also encouraging broader adoption of digital payment channels in alignment with the strategic direction of the state and the Central Bank of Egypt. El-Tayeb emphasized that NBK – Egypt is firmly committed to supporting the global shift toward sustainable finance and the transition to a green economy

The Bank continues to back environmentally responsible projects that promote sustainability, increasingly rely on renewable energy, and advance solutions aimed at mitigating the impact of climate change and reducing carbon emissions. He noted that sustainable finance has become a critical enabler of long-term financial stability and resilience.

## Fed stability and AI momentum lift global shares

# Markets swing between ceasefire hope and oil fears

By National Bank of Kuwait

Global markets experienced another extraordinary week as investors swung between optimism over a potential resolution to the US-Iran conflict and renewed fears following fresh military escalation near the Strait of Hormuz.

For much of the week, risk assets surged as easing geopolitical tensions, strong AI-driven earnings, and a broadly steady Federal Reserve fueled aggressive buying across global equities.

The S&P 500 pushed above 7,300 to fresh all-time highs, the Nasdaq extended its AI-fueled rally, Japan’s Nikkei briefly crossed 63,000 for the first time in history, and South Korea’s KOSPI delivered its strongest weekly gain since 2008 as semiconductor and infrastructure names continued to benefit from accelerating AI capital expenditure expectations.

Markets increasingly embraced the view that the AI supercycle remains fully intact despite the geopolitical backdrop, with Nvidia, Samsung, SK Hynix, and broader chipmakers leading global equity performance.

However, Thursday’s renewed tensions abruptly reversed sentiment, sending oil back above \$100. In FX, the yen dominated. Authorities reportedly deployed about \$32 billion in intervention after USD/JPY approached 160 post-FOMC hold, producing sharp intraday spikes but failing to hold beyond 155.

The pair settled near 156.85 by Friday. The structural pressure is clear: the BoJ cannot hike into an energy shock, and the rate differential with the US remains a persistent drag. EUR/USD held \$1.1726–1.1772 as the broad dollar softened mid-week before recovering on the Hormuz flare-up and NFP beat, while gold reclaimed \$4,728 Friday.

Heading into next week, markets remain focused on US CPI data and, more importantly, whether the fragile ceasefire can hold long enough for inflation pressures tied to energy to begin easing meaningfully.

### North America

#### US Services Activity Holds Firm as Inflation Pressures Persist

The ISM Services PMI for April came in at 53.6, essentially in line with the 53.7 consensus and slightly below March’s 54.0 figure, marking the 22nd consecutive month that US services activity has remained in expansion territory.

The services sector’s continued expansion confirms that the US economy retains genuine underlying resilience that has surprised many forecasters.

Business Activity rose 2 points to 55.9, reversing March’s softness, while Supplier Deliveries held broadly steady at 56.8, a relief given the supply chain disruptions stemming from the conflict.

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week’s Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.1733	1.1675	1.1796	1.1784	1.1650	1.1850	1.1832
GBP	1.3574	1.3509	1.3643	1.3632	1.3510	1.3700	1.3630
JPY	156.77	155.02	157.93	156.65	154.50	157.50	155.50
CHF	0.7766	0.7760	0.7848	0.7763	0.7600	0.7850	0.7690

The most significant concern within the report was the 7.1-point drop in the New Orders Index to 53.5, the sharpest monthly decline in three years, suggesting that the pull-forward ordering seen in February and March has now normalized, and demand growth is cooling.

The Prices Index held flat at 70.7 for the second consecutive month, the highest level since October 2022, confirming that inflationary pressure in the services sector remains acute and persistent.

The Employment Index contracted for the second month in a row at 48, though it improved from March’s 45.2 figure, reinforcing concerns about the labor market’s ability to absorb workers even as activity continues to expand.

#### US Payrolls Surprise Higher, While Wage Pressures Continue to Ease

April’s Non-Farm Payrolls came in at +115,000, well above the 62,000 consensus forecast and representing a meaningful beat that immediately signals continued US labor market resilience despite the war’s economic headwinds. Job gains were driven by health-care (+37,000), transportation and warehousing, and retail trade (+22,000), while federal government employment continued its structural decline (-9,000), reflecting the ongoing public sector contraction.

The unemployment rate held steady at 4.3%, matching both the forecast and the prior reading, with the number of unemployed little changed at 7.4 million. March payrolls were revised upward by 7,000 to 185,000, while February was revised down by 23,000 to 156,000, leaving the combined February-March net 16,000 lower than previously reported.

Average hourly earnings rose a modest 0.2% month-on-month, below the 0.3% expected, and bringing the annual pace to 3.6%, suggesting that wage growth is beginning to moderate even as the labor market holds firm.

The Greenback was last seen trading at 97.900.

### United Kingdom

#### BoE Maintains Hawkish Tone While Wage

### Pressures Continue to Ease

Bank of England Governor Andrew Bailey delivered remarks this week that continued to navigate the difficult policy environment the Bank faces, which are a combination of energy-driven inflation well above target and a growth outlook that is clearly deteriorating under the weight of the oil shock.

Bailey’s messaging has been consistent in recent weeks: the BoE acknowledges the inflationary pressures from elevated energy costs but remains data-dependent on whether to respond with further rate hikes, emphasizing that it will not allow energy inflation to become entrenched in wages and broader services prices.

The Bank voted unanimously to hold at 3.75% at its March meeting, a stark shift from February’s divided 5-4 split, removing its forward guidance on easing and warning that CPI could approach 3.5% in the coming quarters, as confirmed by March’s 3.3% reading released the prior week.

Bailey has been careful to avoid committing explicitly to the rate hike path that market pricing implies, markets have moved to price one to two hikes by year-end.

The GBP/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.3632.

### Asia-Pacific

#### RBA Tightens Again as Inflation Risks Intensify

The Reserve Bank of Australia raised the official cash rate by 25 basis points to 4.35% at its May meeting, its third consecutive hike this year and its most aggressive tightening cycle in years, in an 8-1 vote reflecting broad consensus that inflation must be contained even at the cost of growth.

The decision was widely anticipated, with all four major Australian banks having forecast the move.

The catalyst was clear: Australian CPI rose to 4.6% in March, its highest since 2023, driven largely by the surge in fuel prices tied to the recent war.

The RBA explicitly stated that inflation “was already too high before the Middle East conflict be-

gan” and that higher fuel prices have added further pressure, with material risk of second-round effects feeding into wages and broader services prices.

Governor Bullock characterized the three hikes so far as addressing the pre-existing inflation problem, noting that the tightening gives the RBA space to assess how the conflict plays out before its next move.

The Bank’s updated forecasts show trimmed mean inflation peaking at 3.8% in Q2 2026 and not returning to the 2.5% midpoint target until mid-2028.

The door remains firmly open to further hikes, with Westpac forecasting two additional increases in June and August.

The AUD/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 0.7244.

#### New Zealand Labor Market Shows Early Signs of Cooling

New Zealand’s unemployment rate eased to 5.3% in the March quarter, a slight improvement from the 5.4% recorded in Q4 2025, which had marked a 10-year high, and came in better than the 5.4% forecast by most analysts.

The number of unemployed fell to 163,000 from 165,000, and the employment rate stood at 66.7%. While the headline improvement is modestly encouraging, the underlying detail paints a picture of a labor market that remains slack rather than tight.

Employment growth of 0.2% quarter-on-quarter undershot the 0.3% forecast, and the participation rate dipped to 70.4% from 70.5%, suggesting some withdrawal from the workforce rather than genuine absorption of unemployed workers.

The broader underutilization rate, which captures unemployed, underemployed, and those in the potential labor force held steady at 12.9%, indicating that spare capacity in the labor market has not improved despite the headline rate edging lower.

Wage growth remains the key concern for the RBNZ: where private sector Labor Cost Index growth of 0.5% quarter-on-quarter was slightly above the 0.4% forecast, but annual wage inflation of just 2.0% lags the 3.1% CPI reading significantly, meaning real wages are declining, which might cap consumer spending going forward.

The NZD/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 0.5965.

### Kuwait

#### Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30620.

The ranking underscores the strength of Kuwait's banking sector

# Kuwait Finance House ranks among the top five MEA banks with a market cap of \$44.69 billion

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: In a new achievement, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) ranked among the top five banks in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) by market capitalization, reaching USD 44.69 billion at the end of Q1 2026, according to a rankings analysis conducted by S&P Global Market Intelligence on the top 20 MEA banks.

KFH is the only Kuwaiti institution to break into the region's top five banks. This achievement reinforces its position as a leading Kuwait-based global Islamic financial institution, with a strategy focused on entering the world's top 100 banks. It also underscores the strength and competitiveness of Kuwait's banking sector and its role in advancing Kuwait Vision 2035.

S&P Global Market Intelligence's analysis highlights

banks based on their total market capitalization in US dollars, using data from the last trading day of the relevant stock markets for each bank as of end of Q1 2026. The analysis was also benchmarked against the report issued at the beginning of January 2026.

KFH climbed to fifth place in Q1 2026, despite the geopolitical headwinds weighing on regional markets.

This milestone highlights KFH's leadership as the largest company on Boursa Kuwait by market capitalization and a dominant player in the Middle East. It stands as a testament to the bank's operational excellence, strong asset quality, and prudent risk management, demonstrating its ability to navigate global economic challenges and sustain growth across all its

operating markets.

This achievement is underpinned by the strength of KFH's business model and its ability to deliver sustained growth, recording the highest net profit in Kuwait's banking sector. It reflects the bank's excellence in embracing technology and digital transformation across its banking and operational functions, while embedding sustainability at the core of its operations. KFH's ongoing commitment to advancing its banking services has broadened its customer base, kept pace with evolving customer expectations, and reinforced their trust, all while driving greater synergy across the Group's operations spanning approximately 10 countries and a network of over 600 branches worldwide.



KFH head office

## Over 200 students highlight industry-ready solutions

# AU engineering students present cutting edge innovations at Graduation Project Exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The Australian University (AU) organized the Engineering Graduation Project Exhibition for final-year students during the Spring 2025/2026 semester. The exhibition took place at AU's campus and was attended by Prof. Isam Zabalawi, President of AU; Eng. Sager Al Sharhan, Assistant to the President for Support Services at AU; in addition to a distinguished group of professors, engineers and academics.

The event showcased the accomplishments of more than 200 engineering students from AU's different engineering programs. Students presented 50 graduation projects spanning Petroleum Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering.

The projects demonstrated students' ability to combine academic knowledge with practical application by delivering innovative and industry-oriented solutions. Many of the projects incorporated advanced and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, highlighting the students' readiness to address evolving industry challenges.

Speaking about the exhibition, Dr. Mohamed Abdul Niby, Dean of the College of Engineering at AU, stated that the event reflects AU's dedication to equipping students with the knowledge, technical expertise, and practical skills required for the future workforce. He explained that graduation projects play a key role in connecting classroom learning with realworld engineering applications.

Dr. Abdul Niby also noted that the quality and diversity of the showcased projects underline the



Photo from the exhibition opening

students' creativity, innovation, and ability to develop impactful engineering solutions that contribute to the advancement of technology and industry in Kuwait.

From his end, Prof. Isam Zabalawi commented on the importance of projects for engineering education, stating: "Institutions such as AU have dem-

onstrated how capstone projects can be positioned as a central pillar of engineering programs. By emphasizing practical relevance, interdisciplinary integration, and alignment with industry challenges, these projects become more than academic requirements, they become platforms for innovation and impact."

## Kuwait accountancy leaders attend CA Sri Lanka AGM

# CA Sri Lanka Kuwait Chapter elects new president

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: CA Sri Lanka Kuwait Chapter, the Sri Lankan Chartered Accountants' Association in Kuwait, ("The Chapter") held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the year 2025 at the Marina Hotel, Salmiya on the 1st May 2026 under the patronage of the Ambassador of Sri Lanka in Kuwait, His Excellency, Dr. Lakshitha Ratnayake. The event was graced by several distinguished guests, including Sabah Mubarak Al-Jalawi, Chairman of the Kuwait Accountants and Auditors Association, Rohit Agarwal, Chairperson of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India - Kuwait Chapter, and Salman Bin Khaled, Head of Audit at KPMG Kuwait.

Nandana Kalubowila was elected as the new President of the Chapter for the 2026/27 term, inducted by the outgoing President Riyaz Jamaldeen who served as the President for the 2024/25 term.

The following office bearers were unanimously elected for the 2026/27 term in accordance with the Chapter's constitution: President - Nandana Kalubowila, Vice President - Samson Fernando, General Secretary - Tharanga Perera, Treasurer - Sahana Ransinghe.

Executive Committee Members: Shafi Ul Farook, Gayan Chaturanga, Thilina Mavilmada, Virajini Jayasinghe, Lakmal Wickramasingha, Vishwa Malinda, Sandun Wijethunga.

Tokens of appreciation were awarded to the AGM Sponsors, including, Bank of Ceylon, Al Mulla Exchange, KPMG Kuwait, Commercial Bank of Ceylon, Grant Thornton, RECAFCO, Al Maillem Tires, Warba Medical Suppliers Co., Global HR Solutions, DFCC Bank.

The AGM proceedings were conducted by the General Secretary, Sachini Ariyawikrama. The Annual Report for the term 2024/25 themed "Empowered Intelligence - AI & Automation Era" was presented by Nandana Kalubowila, on behalf of Nilanthi Asurununi, the Chief Editor. The AGM was compered by Sajad Abdul Cader, an Inaugural President of the Chapter, and the vote of thanks was delivered by the committee member, Tharanga Perera.

CA Sri Lanka Kuwait Chapter was established in November 2014 under the patronage of the Sri Lankan Embassy in Kuwait and was later admitted formally as the official chapter in Kuwait by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka ("CA Sri Lanka") on 17 February 2015. Currently the Chapter comprises of 70 members working in esteemed positions in the public and private sector organisations in Kuwait. The Chapter primarily facilitates continuous professional development for its members and strengthening their professional skills. The Chapter further collaborates with many institutions to support and contribute to building the Sri Lankan community in Kuwait.

CA Sri Lanka, the parent body of the Chapter is the apex body of accounting in Sri Lanka, providing continuous professional development for the accounting and finance professions. Members of CA Sri Lanka are globally recognized as a distinctive and versatile cadre of professionals, equipped to guide organizations across diverse industries toward sustained success. To date, CA Sri Lanka has produced over 8,000 members, distinguished by their professional integrity, strong technical and analytical expertise, financial discipline, and innovative thinking, qualities that enable them to consistently add strategic value to their organizations.



Induction of the New President



Incoming President Nandana Kalubowila addresses the gathering



Executive Committee for 2026/27



CA Sri Lanka Kuwait Chapter AGM 2026

## Other Voices

# Bonds are back in focus

By Hassan F. Beidas

In today's evolving investment landscape, bonds are once again proving their value - not only as a source of stability, but increasingly as a meaningful source of income. After years in which equities dominated investor attention, the current macroeconomic environment is creating a compelling case for high-quality fixed income investments, particularly short-duration bonds that offer attractive yields without excessive risk exposure.

Elevated interest rates have transformed the fixed income market into a far more attractive opportunity set than investors have seen in over a decade. High-quality bonds are now offering yields that provide a strong starting point for long-term portfolio construction, while also delivering a level of income that, in many cases, competes favorably with equities. At the same time, global economic conditions continue to support nominal growth, driven by resilient corporate earnings, healthier balance sheets, and the effects of easier monetary and fiscal policies.

Despite expectations for economic moderation, many economists believe the U.S. Federal Reserve will likely remain on hold during the first half of the year. As a result, short-term yields are expected to stay elevated as markets continue pricing out aggressive near-term rate cuts. This environment particularly benefits investors positioned in high-quality, low-duration fixed income strategies, where yields remain attractive while exposure to interest rate volatility is more limited.

Importantly, investors are also becoming increasingly selective about risk. Credit spreads between investment-grade and high-yield corporate bonds are hovering near historically tight levels, meaning investors are receiving limited additional compensation for taking on significantly greater credit risk. In such conditions, maintaining higher credit quality becomes essential. Investors do not appear to be adequately rewarded for moving down the credit spectrum, reinforcing the preference for investment-grade exposure over lower-rated debt.

At the same time, the traditional role of Treasuries as a reliable hedge against equity market declines has weakened in the current rate environment. Bond yields in the lower end of the recent 3.5%-4.5% Treasury trading range have shown only limited protection during periods of equity market weakness. Historically, the correlation between equities and interest rates

tends to turn negative only once the 10-year Treasury yield rises above 4.5%. At those levels, duration becomes more attractive again, as higher yields improve both return potential and portfolio diversification benefits.

Globally, the higher-rate environment appears even more pronounced across developed markets, many of which continue carrying substantial duration exposure. Meanwhile, select emerging market sovereign bonds continue offering attractive risk-adjusted yields, especially until developed market interest rates begin to stabilize or reverse course.

Generally, high-quality bond indices remain near the upper end of their 15-year yield ranges, presenting a rare and attractive entry point for fixed income investors. Focusing on shorter-duration strategies helps reduce downside risk should interest rates move higher, while maintaining higher-quality exposure protects portfolios from unnecessary credit deterioration.

For now, the prudent strategy remains clear: stay selective, prioritize quality, and maintain a cautious stance on duration until the broader macroeconomic backdrop shifts more decisively.

Meanwhile, equities continue benefiting from a resilient earnings environment, although performance remains heavily concentrated in technology. According to analysts, the technology sector continues to lead global markets, generating approximately 26% earnings growth, while the broader market is growing closer to 6%. Despite concerns surrounding the concentration of market leadership within large U.S. technology companies, the underlying earnings backdrop remains robust, supported by both secular growth trends and ongoing capital expenditure investment.

Encouragingly, earnings revisions are also broadening globally in early 2026. Japan currently demonstrates some of the strongest and most diversified momentum, with upgrades spanning industrials, financials, information technology, and communication services. China is also experiencing meaningful upward revisions, particularly within communication services, financials, and industrial sectors. Europe, while improving, remains more uneven, with communication services and healthcare showing strength while consumer discretionary sectors continue facing pressure.

In conclusion, investors in this environment are increasingly recognizing that disciplined portfolio construction matters more than ever. Balancing selective equity exposure with high-quality fixed income may offer the most effective path forward - combining income generation, resilience, and risk management in a world where volatility and uncertainty are likely to remain elevated.



Hassan F. Beidas

# Oman to build EV and battery plant in Duqm

MUSCAT, May 10, (KUNA): Oman's Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones signed an investment agreement on Sunday with South Korean company AIP&T to establish an electric vehicle and battery cell production project in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, valued at approximately USD 250 million.

The project is part of Oman's strategy to localize advanced industries, attract investment in the automotive sector and support green manufacturing in line with Oman

Vision 2040 and the country's clean energy transition goals.

According to Omani authorities, the project will be implemented in two phases, with production capacity expected to reach 60,000 electric vehicles annually, alongside 1.6 million battery cells upon completion of the second phase.

Commercial production is scheduled to begin in March 2028, initially targeting Oman's domestic market before gradually expanding to Gulf, Middle Eastern and North African markets.

## Music

Singer says songwriting helped her recover after traumatic brain injury

# Amy Grant reflects on her new album, resisting labels and writing dark songs

LOS ANGELES, May 10, (AP): In the nearly 50 years she's been working as a musician, Amy Grant has repeatedly resisted the labels others have sought to put on her. It's difficult to overstate the influence the crossover Christian-pop artist had on culture - evangelical and otherwise - in the late 1980s and early '90s. Throughout the Grammy winner's career and personal life, many Christians have embraced and then rejected her at various points - be it her divorce, her move into secular music or her more recent decision to host her niece's same-sex wedding.

Her new album, "The Me That Remains," out Friday, was in part a way of processing a serious bicycle accident in 2022, which resulted in a traumatic brain injury, and the long recovery that followed.

In a wide-ranging conversation with The Associated Press, Grant, 65, reflected on how the accident changed her, her willingness to go dark in her music and why she keeps turning back to her faith. The interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

**Grant:** Two summers ago, I just started writing. It felt so good to write. I used to write as really a therapy process, and I had kind of lost touch with that a little bit, just because I was in other kinds of therapy - like physical recovery. And it was just magical reengaging in my creative self. I was far enough along in my physical healing journey that it was just like, "Oh my gosh, it's all lining back up."

I think that the entrance into my creative self to go, "You're not who you used to be, but you are somebody" - everybody is - and that was the first lyric. I don't know. It was just like, "Oh God, that felt good." And then one song led to the next.

**Grant:** I mean, there are things that are different. I have a niece that said, "God, I think I like you better now."

**Grant:** She's in her 40s. (Laughs) I've known her since birth. But yeah. My processing is different. And there are areas where I have to be patient with myself, but I feel like I'm in great physical health. Just in the last year my balance is so much better. I got back on a bicycle in a very safe environment two weeks ago and it was very emotional for me. Everybody is in recovery of some kind.

**Grant:** To me, the superpower of music is that it connects you, first and foremost, to yourself, and then to others, to God. Why pretend?

I go dark sometimes. But I think everybody does. I'm so, so glad for the world of creativity and how I first put my toe in it because that honesty in songwriting has been a constant invitation every day to show up as who I am. God, that's what you want for everybody. I don't want somebody's exterior, like their presentation, to be 180 degrees from what's in here.

**Grant:** There are a few songs on the record that I didn't write but I love that song and I've known the songwriter for a long time. Her name's Sandy

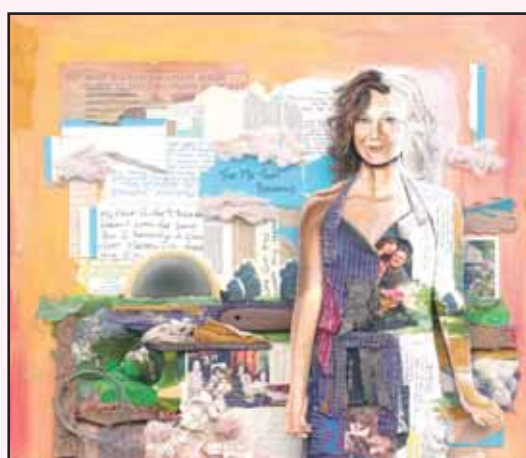


Singer Amy Grant poses for a portrait in New York on Thursday, April 16, 2026. (AP)

Lawrence. She worked on that song for 15 years. But it wasn't until after the Jan. 6 experience at the U.S. Capitol that turned the creative juices for her and she was able to point that song in that direction. But all along it was about unrest.

**Grant:** There's a lot going on, which, by the way, as a global community, there's always a lot going on. There have always been pockets of people that were experiencing man's inhumanity to man that is unspeakable. That's always happening. And so I try every day to remind myself of the amazing power that every one of us has to affect the world by the daily choices we make. And however a people group is being treated, that treatment can be different through you. It can be different through me.

You have to take a lot of deep breaths. And sometimes just sit in the unrest and know that the pendulum swings back and forth, and sometimes at the cost of a lot of life. In the middle of awfulness,



This album cover image released by Thirty Tigers shows 'The Me That Remains,' by Amy Grant. (AP)

there's always something good happening.

**Grant:** I've always been compelled by curiosity and I think sometimes a potential listener can lose interest because of how something is pegged. Sometimes the way I'm introduced, I'm on the side of the stage waiting to go out and just the verbiage, I'd go, "Whew, I wouldn't stay for that show." Nothing about that interested me. Curiosity is such a great thing. Curiosity makes us lean in.

Everybody's faith journey is unique. I am staking everything on the fact that it's God who finds us. And I trust that. And I think how we let that exhibit in our lives might make somebody else curious to lean in. As a person of deep faith, I have stood outside under stormy skies, under a full moon at different times in my life and said, "Am I just talking to the ceiling? Are you really there?" And I don't know, I come away and go, "I don't know where else to turn." But that's my journey.

## Film

Global auteurs, premieres and Oscar buzz collide

# Cannes 2026 set to unveil year's biggest films

LOS ANGELES, May 10, (AP): For 12 days this week, the eyes of the movie world will be on the Cannes Film Festival.

The Cote d'Azur spectacular will play host - starting on Tuesday - to some of the most anticipated movies of the year in a constant parade of red carpets and megawatt premieres. This year, Hollywood studios are mostly on the sidelines. But for more than 78 years, Cannes has been an unparalleled showcase, and sun-dappled circus, for some of the best in cinema.

Last year that included Oscar nominees like "Sentimental Value," "The Secret Agent" and "It Was Just an Accident." This year is just as likely to produce a crop of contenders. In recent years, movies like "Parasite" and "Anora" have launched at Cannes and gone on to win best picture at the Academy Awards.

Presiding over the jury deciding the Palme this year is South Korean filmmaker Park Chan-wook. At the opening ceremony Tuesday, Cannes will also bestow an honorary Palme d'Or on Peter Jackson. Later, Barbra Streisand will get one, too.

So there will be much to keep an eye on at this year's Cannes, including "The White Lotus." The HBO series has come to the Croisette - the Mediterranean city's famous promenade - to shoot its fourth season.

On the screen, these are some of the movies that should stir Cannes.

Na Hong-jin isn't as well known as some of his fellow Korean filmmakers, but he may be poised for a breakout moment this year. His latest is a long-gestating sci-fi thriller that Cannes artistic director Thierry Fremaux said "constantly changes genres." The cast has both Korean and Hollywood stars, including Hwang Jung-min, Zo In-sung, Jung Ho-yeon, Michael Fassbender, Alicia Vikander and Taylor Russell.

Though not initially announced as part of the festival competition slate, James Gray's latest Queens-set drama was subsequently added. And it instantly became one of the



This image released by Neon shows Hoyeon in a scene from 'Hope.' (AP)

most anticipated and star-studded American films at the festival. Gray, the filmmaker of "Armageddon Time" and "The Immigrant," tells a story about two brothers (Adam Driver, Miles Teller) who become mixed up with the Russian mafia. Scarlett Johansson co-stars.

The Romanian director Cristian Mungiu is a heavyweight of European cinema because of films like the 2007 Palme d'Or winner "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days" and 2022's "R.M.N." Sebastian Stan and Renate Reinsve star in his latest as a Romanian-Norwegian couple who move to the wife's remote Norwegian hometown.

Jane Schoenbrun has quickly established themselves as a vital voice in contemporary American film with 2024's "I Saw the TV Glow" and 2021's "We're All Going to the World's Fair." Playing in the Un Certain Regard section, Schoenbrun's new one stars Hannah Einbinder and Gillian Anderson in a movie about the making of a slasher film.

Polish filmmaker Pawel Pawlikowski is best known for a pair of black-and-white, powerfully succinct period dramas: "Ida" and "Cold War." His latest makes it three. It stars Hanns Zischler as the German author Thomas Mann on a road trip following World War II. Accompanying him is his daughter, played by Sandra Hüller.

The Japanese auteur Ryusuke Hamaguchi makes his French-language debut. Hamaguchi's 2021 opus "Drive My Car" made history as the first Japanese film nominated for best picture. His 2023 follow-up, "Evil Does Not Exist," was also acclaimed. "All of a Sudden," starring Virginie Efira and Tao Okamoto, is about a nursing home director and a terminally ill Japanese playwright.

Long revered for his delicate humanism, the Japanese filmmaker Hirokazu Kore-eda will unveil his latest. Kore-eda has already won the Palme d'Or, for 2018's "Shoplifters." But his three decades-of-moviemaking have made him a never-to-be-missed film-

maker of exquisite tenderness. The sci-fi "Sheep in the Box" is about a couple, grieving the loss of their son, who adopt an infant humanoid robot.

Before Gray's film entered the competition, Ira Sachs' "The Man I Love" was the sole American selection. Coming quickly on the heels of Sachs' "Peter Hujar's Day," with Ben Whishaw, "The Man I Love" stars Rami Malek as an actor with a life-threatening illness in 1980s New York, preparing for what could be his final performance.

The French filmmaker Arthur Harari three years ago co-wrote the Palme d'Or winner "Anatomy of a Fall" with his partner, Justine Triet. In "The Unknown," Harari directs and cowrites a film about a photographer who, after photographing a woman at a party and then following her, wakes up in her body. Starring Léa Seydoux.

The Russian filmmaker Andrey Zvyagintsev has been behind some powerfully potent dramas, including 2014's "Leviathan" and 2017's "Loveless" - both of which were Oscar nominated. After a near-death experience during the pandemic, Zvyagintsev returns to Cannes with a business executive in crisis in rural Russia.

Steven Soderbergh's documentary about John Lennon's final interview, granted at the Dakota in New York just before he was killed, drew headlines after Soderbergh acknowledged using artificial intelligence to illustrate some of Lennon's more philosophical musings. But the film, playing in Cannes as a special screening, promises to lend unparalleled intimacy with the great Beatle.

Pedro Almodovar is among the most regular filmmakers in Cannes. This festival, he'll debut "Bitter Christmas," a multilayered melodrama about filmmaking, grief and aging. After making his English-language debut with "The Room Next Door," starring Tilda Swinton and Julianne Moore, Almodovar is back in his native Spain with one of his most personal films yet.

## Variety

**PHILADELPHIA:** Spike Lee had a bag seemingly made out of a basketball slung over his shoulder - even his fashion sense got



Lee

game - and took his front row seat ahead of yet another Knicks' playoff game. The Oscar winner leveled up in his play-

off seats for Game 3 on Friday night between the Knicks and the 76ers from a more famous Knicks postseason game on the same date.

Spike Lee wanted to teach a history lesson.

"Today is May 8," Lee said. "I was at Madison Square Garden, May 8, year of Our Lord, 1970. Game 7 versus the Lakers. I was 13. I was there."

Where did you sit, Spike? "NOT COURTSIDE," he said as he burst into laughter. (AP)

**ROME:** Naomi Osaka says she felt like she had "a 20-pound vest on" for her show-stopping outfit at the Met Gala - which she labeled "the Grand Slam for all fashion."

"My outfit was so heavy," she said with her tennis clothes back on at the Italian Open on Friday. "I felt like I had like a 20-pound vest on. But I just kept trying to tell myself to have good posture because tennis players ... sometimes we hunch over a lot."

At Monday's event in New York, Osaka stunned in a edgy Robert Wun white sculptural fitted dress featuring exaggerated shoulders and adorned with red feathers and a matching headpiece. To complete her look, Osaka wore two-toned red gloves. (AP)

## Arts &amp; Culture

## 17 nations bring urban art to a vast industrial heritage site

## Global artists turn UNESCO ironworks into creative hub



Frank Kraemer, exhibition director, stands next to the installation 'Affichage Libre' by artist Joachim Romain at the exhibition Urban Art Biennale 2026 at the former ironworks Voelklinger Huette, World Cultural Heritage Site, in Voelklingen, Germany. (AP)

VÖLKLINGEN, Germany, May 10, (AP): Dozens of urban artists from 17 countries have converged on one of Europe's most important industrial landmarks for a show that takes advantage of the former ironworks' sprawling spaces and aura of abandonment.

At the Völklinger Hütte, or Völklingen Ironworks, the Urban Art Biennale 2026 is getting underway, continuing what has grown into a biennial tradition over the past decade and a half.

"This location is at the core of street art and graffiti art," said Ralf Beil, the general director of the site, which is open to the public as a museum. "It all began in industrial places like this."

Artists "love this place and they do works for the Völklinger Hütte, in the Völklinger Hütte, with the Völklinger Hütte," he said.

This year's show features 50 artists. They include France-based Tomas Lacque, whose installation features a small van, a pile of tires, toys and debris covered in a coat of paint. Standing in a hall where furnaces once worked, it appears to evoke fossil-fueled mobility being covered in ash like Pompeii.

Spanish artist Ampparito has painted the words "no hay nada de valor"



A woman takes a photo of the installation 'Les Silence des Departes' by artist Tomas Lacque at the exhibition Urban Art Biennale 2026 at the former ironworks Voelklinger Huette, World Cultural Heritage Site, in Voelklingen, Germany. (AP)

(roughly, "There is nothing of value here") in huge white letters on the roof of one of the site's massive sheds - a work best seen from a viewing platform 45 meters (148 feet) above ground level.

Dutch artist Boris Tellegen, better known as Delta, contributed a mas-

sive green-and-black wooden sculpture that lights up the interior of the ironworks. French-based collective Vortex-X, who recycle salvaged material, stretched rays of white industrial fabric across one of the building's halls in a work titled "Memory in transit."



The installation 'One Beam' by artist Boris Tellegen, is on display at the former ironworks Voelklinger Huette, World Cultural Heritage Site, as part of the exhibition Urban Art Biennale 2026 in Voelklingen, Germany. (AP)



The installation 'Transit der Erinnerung,' Transit of Memory, by artist Vortex-X is on display at the former ironworks Voelklinger Huette, World Cultural Heritage Site, as part of the exhibition Urban Art Biennale 2026 in Voelklingen, Germany. (AP)

The ironworks spreads over a 6-hectare (nearly 15-acre) site, a maze of chimneys and furnaces in which visitors still encounter ominous industrial-era signs warning of risks such as a "danger of crushing." They dominate the town of Völklingen, near Germany's border with France.

They have been on UNESCO's world heritage list since 1994, recognized as "the only intact example, in the whole of western Europe and North America, of an integrated ironworks that was built and equipped in the 19th and 20th centuries."

The furnaces have been cold since 1986, when production ended, and the site has been preserved as it was then. But its appearance is much older, as no new installations were added after the mid-1930s.

"It's so dusty and it's so old, but it's beautiful, you know, there's beauty in decay," said British artist Remi Rough. "I think what I've done makes you kind of just perceive it in a bit of a different way."

Rough contributed small paintings that he said were meant to be "very clean and clinical," in contrast to the site.

Danish artist Anders Reventlov said he felt "humble to be able to do something here."

"As somebody told me ... it was hell to work here," he said. "Now it's not hell. It's like a nice place, people walking around, there are bees, there are beautiful flowers, but yeah, we still remember the history and that's super important."

Beil said that organizers "want pieces which are really original for this space and this also is then prohibiting (them) from being commercial."

"This is an installation for the space," he said. "This is pure art."

The Biennale opens Saturday and runs until Nov. 15.

## Art &amp; Museums

## First museum gallery for WWII orphaned art

## Lost paintings, found stories at Musée d'Orsay

PARIS, May 10, (AP): The painting shows a girl in a bonnet and her younger brother staring across the Normandy coast toward an unknown horizon.

The artwork itself faced an unknown future in 1942, when it was acquired in Paris for Adolf Hitler, one of countless works swept up in the Nazi plunder of European Jews.

On Tuesday, it went on permanent display in a new room at the city's Musée d'Orsay as part of France's long-delayed reckoning with Nazi-era looting. The gallery is the first in the museum's history given over to the orphaned masterpieces of the Nazi era.

It is also the first such display in France where the paintings are hung so visitors can read the backs. The stamps, labels and inventory marks map how each piece of art moved from private homes into Nazi hands.

The painting by Belgian artist Alfred Stevens was originally earmarked for the Führer's planned museum in Linz, Austria. But by 1943, it was reassigned to Hitler's mountain home in the Bavaria region of Germany. The museum was never built following Germany's defeat.

Allied recovery teams - the Monuments Men made famous by the 2014 George Clooney film - finally found the painting after the war.

No heir came forward, and no one knows who owned it before 1942.

The 1891 Stevens painting is not unique. It is one of 2,200 such artistic orphans in France - known as MNR, short for Musées Nationaux Récupération, or National Museums Recovery. These artworks were retrieved from Germany and Austria after 1945 and entrusted to French national museums in the early 1950s.

They were never claimed. The state does not own them but holds them in trust for heirs who may yet appear. The Musée d'Orsay holds 225 such pieces.

Marie Dubois, a retired schoolteacher from Lyon, paused Tuesday in front of the Stevens painting.

"I have seen those three letters - M, N, R - at the Louvre. I never knew what they meant. I thought it was a donor," she said.

Last month, the museum launched its first research unit dedicated to tracing the orphans' rightful heirs, file by file. The effort involves six Franco-German researchers led by Ines Rotermund-Reynard, the Orsay's head of provenance research.

The new gallery displays 13 such works. France is reckoning, in plain sight, with one of the longest silences in its postwar memory: the looted, sold and lost art of the Nazi era - and the French hands that helped move it.

Starting in the late 1960s, documentaries and historians began naming what France had done under the Vichy government that cooperated with the Nazis, including helping to send 80,000 Jews from France to their deaths and presiding over a Paris art market that grew rich on the



French painter Pierre-Auguste Renoir's painting titled Madame Alphonse Daudet, center, is on exhibit in the Musée d'Orsay museum's new permanent gallery dedicated to so-called MNR artworks, pieces recovered after World War II whose ownership remains uncertain, in Paris, Monday. (AP)



French painter Pierre-Auguste Renoir's painting, 'Madame Alphonse Daudet,' left, is seen at the Musée d'Orsay museum's new permanent gallery dedicated to artworks recovered after World War II whose ownership remains uncertain, in Paris on Monday, May 4, 2026. (AP)

property of the dead.

In July 1995, President Jacques Chirac stood at the site of the Vél d'Hiv roundup - the 1942 mass arrest in Paris of Jews who were then deported to Nazi camps - and said, for the first time, that the French state itself bore responsibility. In 1997, France launched a national inquiry into the plundering of artwork from Jews.

About 100,000 cultural objects were declared looted from France during the war. Some 60,000 were recovered. About 45,000 went home.

Roughly 15,000 had no identified owner. The 2,200 MNR artworks were chosen from that remainder.

For four decades, they were largely a dormant file. Between 1954 and 1993, France returned only four.

Chirac's mea culpa, and the country's slow reckoning with its own role, changed that.

The Orsay has returned 15 since 1994. The most recent pieces of art to be returned - by Alfred Sisley and Auguste Renoir, given to the heirs of Grégoire Schusterman - went home in 2024.

Inside the new gallery, the histories hang on the wall.

There is a piece by Edgar Degas, a copy he made of a Berlin ballroom scene around 1879. The Jewish collector Fer-

nand Ochsé bought it in 1919. Ochsé was deported to Auschwitz and killed.

There is another Renoir, a portrait of the writer Alphonse Daudet's wife, sold to a Cologne museum in November 1941. No record names the seller.

There is also a painting by Paul Cézanne that was dismissed as a fake by a Louvre curator in the 1950s. Recent study suggests it may be real.

Daniel Lévy, a software engineer visiting from Strasbourg, stood at the Cézanne, looking at its back.

"You walk past these labels your whole life and you do not read them. Now I will read them," he said. "My grandmother lost some of her family in the camps. Some of these paintings were probably hanging in homes like hers."

Paris was Western Europe's richest art hub in the early 20th century.

The Hôtel Drouot, the city's main auction house, reopened in autumn 1940 and ran briskly through the Nazi occupation.

French dealers were among the conduits. German museums sent buyers, and Hitler's agents took the best.

"The most important art market in Europe was concentrated in Paris," Rotermund-Reynard said. "The moment the Nazis arrived in occupied territory, they had enormous buying power. They threw themselves at the market."

Almost every museum in Nazi Germany, Rotermund-Reynard said, sent buyers to Paris to expand its collections. Those buyers drew on a market thick with looted and forced-sale property.

"Hitler himself wanted to build the world's largest museum, in Linz, the city in Austria where he grew up," she said.

Hermann Göring, Hitler's deputy, traveled 21 times to Paris during the occupation to help himself to works taken from Jewish collectors.

"There was an enormous thirst," Rotermund-Reynard said, "both for the possessions of Jewish collectors, and for acquisitions to expand the German museums."

For Rotermund-Reynard, the works cannot be separated from the genocide.

"All of this is part of the history of the Shoah," she said, using the Hebrew word for the Holocaust. "When you try to understand this drive to take from Jewish families, it is part of the terrifying Nazi ideology to erase Jewish life."

Antisemitic acts in France - home to Europe's largest Jewish community - hit 1,320 in 2025, according to the French Interior Ministry. Those near-record levels followed a sharp surge after the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel.

The gallery was not built to fight antisemitism, said François Blanchetière, the Orsay's chief sculpture curator and co-curator of the gallery. But the consequences of the Holocaust must be repaired, he said.

"There is no statute of limitations on these crimes," he said.

## Cultural Heritage

## Bridge of friendship

## Kenyan youth engage with Chinese poetry

NAIROBI, April 10, (Xinhua): Kenya on Thursday hosted the 2026 "Poetry Connects the World" classical Chinese poetry competition, where young participants showcased their enthusiasm for Chinese literature amid growing bilateral cultural ties.

Themed "Harmony Between Humanity and Nature," the half-day event featured poetry recitals, music, dance and scholarly debates, drawing government officials, faculty members, and students to the auditorium at the Confucius Institute of the University of Nairobi.

Elizabeth Muthoni, a literature student at the university with a minor in Chinese language, said that her love for Chinese poetry has deepened, given its ability to unite, inspire and connect humanity to nature.

"Chinese poetry is very philosophical; it calls us to do a lot of reflection on how we treat each other, not only ourselves. Mostly focusing on the communal aspect of the society," Muthoni said on the sidelines of the competition.

"Poetry is already acting as a bridge connecting our two cultures and in the future it will get stronger. Already, poetry has connected us, Kenya and China, and in future, it will be bigger and better," Muthoni said.

Lucy Makhundu, also a Chinese language minor at the University of Nairobi, interacted with classical poetry from the Asian country for some time, marveling at its ability to blend romance, environmentalism, rhythm and persuasion.

"The future of poetry between our two countries is great because we are going to learn from each other's cultures," Makhundu said, vowing to use poetry and build bridges of friendship between Kenyan and Chinese people.

Kenya has taken major steps to popularize Chinese poetry, embedding it in Mandarin teaching at both junior and high schools, according to George Okeyo, managing director of Kenya Literature Bureau, a state-funded publishing agency.

Okeyo disclosed that plans are in the pipeline to translate Chinese poems into simpler language for easier grasp by young learners, as teaching of Mandarin at the basic and higher institutions of learning gains traction.

Stacy Atieno, a Chinese language minor at the same university, said that Chinese poetry is very detailed, rhythmic and philosophical, with a unique capacity to talk about people, mountains, water, cultures and societal aspirations.

"I love the sentimental nature of Chinese poetry. It is like a river flowing and it moves like waves. There is a little bit of dancing in it. It is fun and has helped us understand Chinese culture better," Atieno added.



Students perform during a Chinese poetry event held at the Confucius Institute of the University of Nairobi in Nairobi, Kenya. (Xinhua)

## Health

Plane carrying Spanish passengers from MV Hondius leaves Tenerife for Madrid

## Experts wonder 'Where is the CDC?' as hantavirus outbreak unfolds on cruise ship

NEW YORK, May 10, (AP)—No quick dispatching of disease investigators. No televised news conference to inform the public. No timely health alerts to doctors.

In the midst of a hantavirus outbreak that involves Americans and is making headlines around the world, the U.S. government's top public health agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has been uncharacteristically missing in action, according to a number of experts.

To President Donald Trump, "We seem to have things under very good control," as he told reporters Friday evening.

To experts, the situation aboard a cruise ship has not spiraled because, unlike COVID-19 or measles or the flu, hantavirus does not spread easily. It has been health experts in other countries, not the United States, who have been dealing primarily with the outbreak in the past week.

"The CDC is not even a player,"

said Lawrence Gostin, an international public health expert at Georgetown University. "I've never seen that before."

Not until late Friday did CDC actions accelerate.

At their first briefing, held Saturday by telephone only for invited reporters, officials pledged to be transparent in updating the public but said the media could not cite the speakers by name under rules set by aides to Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. They did not directly answer a question about whether the American passengers could leave the university medical facility when they wanted.

The CDC's diminished role in this outbreak is an indicator the agency is no longer the force in international health or the protector of domestic health that it once was, some experts said.

The hantavirus outbreak is "a sentinel event" that speaks to "how well the country is prepared for a disease



Passengers sit inside a bus after being disembarked from the hantavirus-stricken cruise ship MV Hondius at the port of Granadilla in Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain, on May 10. (AP)

threat. And right now, I'm very sorry to say that we are not prepared," said Dr. Jeanne Marrazzo, chief executive officer of the Infectious Diseases Society of America.

Early last month, a 70-year-old Dutch man developed a feverish illness on a cruise ship traveling from

Argentina to Antarctica and some islands in the South Atlantic. He died less than a week later. More people became sick, including the man's wife and a German woman, who both died.

Hantavirus was first identified as a cause of sickness of one of the cases on May 2. The World Health Organization swung into action and by Monday was calling it an outbreak. About two dozen Americans were on the ship, including about seven who disembarked last month and 17 who remained on board.

For decades, the CDC partnered with the WHO in such situations. The CDC acted as a mainstay of any international investigation, providing staff and expertise to help unravel any outbreak mystery, develop ways to control it and communicate to the public what they should know and how they should worry.

Such actions were a large reason why the CDC developed a reputation as the world's premier public health

agency. But this time, the WHO has been center stage. It made the risk assessment that has told people the outbreak is not a pandemic threat.

"I don't think this is a giant threat to the United States," said Jennifer Nuzzo, director of Brown University's Pandemic Center. But how this situation has played out "just shows how empty and vapid the CDC is right now," she said.

The CDC has not been completely silent on hantavirus.

Meanwhile, the first plane carrying passengers evacuated from the hantavirus-hit cruise ship departed from Tenerife in Spain's Canary Islands on Sunday, headed for a military hospital in Madrid.

Spanish nationals were the first to leave the ship, which was anchored off Tenerife. They will be under quarantine when they reach Madrid, Spanish health authorities say. Only Spanish nationals will quarantine in the country.

## Climate

## Scientists say don't forget about plants, climate change endangering tens of thousands of species

WASHINGTON, May 10, (AP)—Global warming extinctions usually have people picturing the last polar bears or other furry critters disappearing, but the crucial and oft-overlooked world of plants is going to be decimated by climate change. Scientists predict tens of thousands of plant species will disappear by the end of the century.

Between warmer temperatures and shifts in rain and snow patterns, between 7% and 16% of the world's plant species are likely to lose at least 90% of their habitat and go essentially extinct in about 55 to 75 years, according to a study in Thursday's journal *Science*.

That equates to roughly 35,000 to 50,000 plant species based on moderate carbon pollution scenarios, and much more if the world's pollution soars, said study co-author Xiaoli Dong, a University of California Davis ecologist.

"The warming rate drives the extinction," Dong said.

Dong and her colleagues used numerous biology and climate computer models to examine the potential futures of 18% of the world's plant species in detail, seeking to get a good handle on what's in store for all of them.

Scientists have figured that plant species could gradually shift to cooler climates as the world warms, borne by wind, water and animals toward the poles or higher altitudes. Scientists have observed this process and even relocated plants to conserve them. But Dong's millions of computer simulations show that even if these species move as fast as possible "it's not going to reduce the extinction rate."

"It is not because they are not



Tulips stand at the Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm in Woodburn, Ore on April 11. (AP)

moving fast enough," Dong said - it's because the habitats they depend on will no longer exist.

Climate change, whether by temperature or changes in rainfall, will make areas where plants used to grow no longer livable for some species, she said.

Consider the tulip, Dong said: It prefers a certain soil, temperature and rain level. Climate change has disrupted this combination: The right temperature pushed north, the proper rain pattern moved east and the perfect soil stayed put. "The perfect condition required by this tulip has become like really small," Dong said.

This scenario is getting especially bad in the Arctic, the Mediterranean and Australia, the study found. In the Arctic it's because the temperature is warming four times faster than the rest of the globe and in Australia it's driven more by rainfall changes, Dong said.

While Dong's study looks at future extinction risk, a second study published Thursday in the same journal looked at the current extinction risk of flowering plants, a group with more than 335,000 species, more than most varieties of flora and fauna.

Scientists at Kew Gardens in the United Kingdom found that nearly 10,000 flowering plant species are currently in danger of blinking out, and are so evolutionarily old and unusual that if they go, 21% of Earth's "tree of life" would disappear with them. They include odd species such as titan arum, the world's smelliest plant, and ones humans find useful, such as the orchid that provides vanilla, researchers said.

Evolutionary plant biologist and study lead author Felix Forest applied a 20-year system British biologists developed to prioritize species conservation by saving species that

are most unique. The study doesn't look at what's causing the extinction risk, just what would be lost in terms of biological history and distinctiveness.

In the biggest species prioritization study scientists have undertaken, Forest found that there's more evolutionary history at risk in unusual flowering plants than almost any other groups of flora or fauna, except turtles and tortoises.

Some other species, like different types of rats, have close relatives and a bushy branch, so if one blinks out, others remain to share its evolutionary history. But flowering plants include trees like the Ginkgo biloba, which has no similar species and presents hundreds of millions of years of evolution.

The trouble is that extinction in plants is often overlooked, even by official organizations, when compared with animals, Forest and Dong said.

"We're trying to redress that imbalance between plants and animals, especially vertebrates," Forest said. "Humans are generally more interested in fluffy furry things and things with two wings than plants. And that's just the way things are."

The two studies together show that the world cannot wait to take action to save endangered plant species, wrote Chilean biologists Rosa Scherson and Federico Luebert, who weren't part of the studies.

When the future of plants is unstable, "it can also affect human food security and access to basic materials," Scherson and Luebert wrote in a review of the two studies. "Maintaining the current conditions that support human life requires urgent action."



A solitary critically endangered mountain bongo emerges from the forested landscape of Mount Kenya, Africa's second-highest mountain, in Nanyuki, Laikipia County, Kenya on May 8. (AP)

Antelope reintroduced into the wild

## 'Ghost of the forest' returns to Kenya

NANYUKI, Kenya, May 10, (AP)—The mountain bongo has become the "ghost of the forest," hard to spot amid the dense shrubs due to its ability to camouflage.

A critically endangered species, the animal is being slowly reintroduced into the wild by conservationists to increase the number of the rare antelope that are indigenous to Kenya's forests.

The mountain bongo is a rare antelope known for its brown skin and distinct white stripes. With fewer than 100 individuals left in the wild, a conservancy based in Kenya is breeding them and slowly reintroducing them into the wild, with a target of 750 wild bongos by 2050.

Located on the misty slopes of Ke-

nya's highest mountain, Mount Kenya, and on the edge of the forest, the 1,250-acre Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy in the Nanyuki area has been restoring the survival instincts of zoo-bred bongos. They want to ensure the animals can feed without human assistance, escape from predators, and build a strong immunity against diseases in the wild.

Last week, the conservancy imported a new batch of four male bongos from the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria through the Czech Republic. These new arrivals, currently quarantined and under constant observation, will interbreed with descendants of 18 bongos that arrived at the conservancy in 2004 from the United States to ensure a more diverse genetic pool.

## The Conversation

## Biological age tests reveal what slows or hastens aging but they're useful only for researchers, not consumer

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

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By **Idan Shalev**, Penn State and **Abner Apsley** University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Imagine receiving a test result that tells you your body is biologically five years older than your chronological age. You exercise regularly, get good sleep, eat healthy meals and have a happy personal life. What have you been doing wrong? Can this test be trusted?

Dozens of companies are marketing products that promise to reveal a person's "true" biological age - that is, how well your body is functioning - for a price ranging from around US\$30 to over \$1,000. These products are based on epigenetic aging clocks, which are research tools that estimate age based on a person's DNA. These clocks are reshaping how scientists study aging and how the public thinks about it.

But while epigenetic clocks are highly effective research tools to study aging at the population level, they aren't designed to make claims about the health of individuals.

We are biobehavioral health scientists who study how early development and environmental factors across the lifespan shape biological aging, influencing health and

disease decades later. As researchers who use epigenetic clocks in our work, we have found them to be highly informative tools when studying large numbers of people. But these clocks can provide faulty results at the individual level, and they do not meet the standards required of common medical tests.

Measuring reversible chemical changes to DNA, known as epigenetic marks, can provide information about how your body is aging.

Using DNA obtained from routine blood draws, researchers can measure millions of these epigenetic marks in an individual. Running statistical algorithms on this information can produce a single value that represents that person's epigenetic age, analogous to chronological age.

Epigenetic clocks work because the chemical marks on DNA can shift over time and are influenced by lifestyle, stress and the environment. These changes capture aspects of aging that chronological age alone may not reflect.

In this way, epigenetic clocks help scientists identify the experiences, exposures and behaviors that may accelerate or slow biological aging.

Why can't epigenetic clocks provide reliable results about biological age for individual people?

First, there are dozens of different types of epigenetic clocks, each designed for a specific purpose. Some

are used to predict a person's age, while others are used to predict how fast someone is aging or how many years until they die. These different clocks do not always agree with one another, even when used on the same person.

Second, epigenetic changes are dynamic, making age predictions sensitive to short-term fluctuations in diet, environmental exposures, illness, time of day and other transient factors. As a result, estimated age could vary substantially depending on when someone is tested.

Third, constructing epigenetic clocks is technically challenging, and there is no established gold-standard method for generating clocks across laboratories. For example, testing epigenetic age in saliva versus blood samples can yield substantially different results for the same person. The technologies used to measure epigenetic marks have also evolved over time and will likely continue to improve. As these methods change, the original algorithms designed for specific measurement platforms may not perform the same way.

Fourth, scientists do not universally agree on what aging means, in part because it is a very complex process. Reducing that complexity to a single number, such as an epigenetic age, can be misleading.

Finally, epigenetic clocks are influenced by a person's history of trauma, discrimination and early

life adversity. This makes their use at the individual level potentially problematic. On average, marginalized communities tend to show signs of accelerated aging when assessed with epigenetic clocks. If insurance companies began using epigenetic age estimates to set premiums, many people could face higher costs for biological differences shaped by circumstances beyond their control, potentially deepening existing health disparities.

While epigenetic clocks are not appropriate tools for individual health decisions, this does not mean they lack value.

Researchers have used epigenetic clocks to discover lifestyle habits that can, on average, slow down aging. Some examples include reducing daily calorie intake, exercising regularly, maintaining a healthy diet, getting enough sleep and avoiding smoking.

Epigenetic clocks can also help test new drug therapies aimed at slowing down specific aging processes. For example, researchers have shown that rapamycin, a drug connected to various aging processes, can reduce the epigenetic age of human skin cells. There is also some evidence that a treatment designed to regenerate the thymus may slow or even reverse epigenetic aging after one year of treatment. However, researchers have seen these effects only when looking at groups rather than individuals. (AP)

## Somalia on brink of severe hunger amid aid cuts: WFP

MOGADISHU, May 10, (Xinhua)—The World Food Program (WFP) warned on Friday that Somalia is on the brink of a severe hunger catastrophe that could escalate into famine without urgent funding.

WFP Assistant Executive Director **Matthew Hollingworth**, who visited Somalia, said six million people in the country are facing acute food insecurity due to the combined effects of drought, conflict, and funding shortages.



Hollingworth

Hollingworth noted that an estimated 1.9 million children are acutely malnourished, with hundreds

of thousands at risk of the most severe form of the condition.

"The warning signs are unmistakable. Hunger is rising. Coping strategies are collapsing. And the window is starting to close," he said.

The fallout from the crisis in the Middle East is driving up food prices by 70 percent in some areas, while fuel prices have skyrocketed by 150 percent. These spikes are disrupting supply routes and making the delivery of life-saving aid increasingly expensive inside the country, said Hollingworth.

Due to a critical lack of resources, the WFP has been forced to reduce aid. Life-saving assistance is now only reaching one in 10 people in need, a trajectory that mirrors conditions preceding the 2011 famine and the 2022 near-famine situation, the WFP warned.

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**Measles:** Japan has recorded more than 400 measles cases since January, a national health research body said Friday.

According to the Japan Institute for Health Security, medical institutions across the country reported 68 measles cases in the week through April 26, bringing the cumulative total for this year to 436. In comparison, 96 cases were recorded during the same period last year, and the full-year total for 2025 stood at 265.

Tokyo alone has recorded 211 cases this year, accounting for nearly half of the national total. Including the neighboring prefectures of Kanagawa, Chiba and Saitama, the greater Tokyo metropolitan area has reported more than 300 cases in total.

In a notice issued in late April, the institute said most domestic measles patients this year were teenagers and people in their 20s, around half of whom had either not completed the recommended two-dose vaccination schedule or had unclear vaccination histories.

The highest annual number of measles cases in Japan in the past decade was 744 in 2019.

The institute warned that measles is highly contagious, with more than 90 percent of non-immune individuals likely to become infected after exposure to the virus. Severe cases can lead to complications such as pneumonia and encephalitis.

Japan was declared measles-free by the World Health Organization in 2015. However, since 2023, the number of measles cases reported worldwide has continued to rise, increasing the risk of imported infections.

Pakistan bowled out for 386 despite Awais debut century

# Bangladesh holds upper hand after Hasan's spin magic

DHAKA, Bangladesh, May 10, (AP): Mehidy Hasan claimed five wickets with his crafty off-spin as Bangladesh fought to regain control of the first cricket test against Pakistan on Sunday.

Mehidy finished with 5-102 to help Bangladesh dismiss Pakistan for 386 and take a 27-run first-innings lead on a rain-affected third day. Bangladesh then moved to 7 for no loss, stretching the overall lead to 34, before bad light forced an early close of play.

Opener Azan Awais hit 103 on his debut to lead Pakistan's batsmen. Three other batters - debutant Abdullah Fazal, Salman Agha and Mohammad Rizwan - hit half-centuries to complement him but Mehidy ensured Bangladesh took the lead.

Pakistan appeared set for a big first-innings total after resuming at 179-1. Azan began the day fluently, hitting two fours in the first four overs to reach

99. He then nudged Nahid Rana to point for a single to raise his century off 153 balls, becoming the 15th Pakistan batter to hit a ton on debut.

But the brilliant knock came to an end when Taskin (2-70) dismissed him for his 50th test wicket. In doing so, Taskin became only the third Bangladeshi pacer after Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Shahadat Hossain Rajib to reach the milestone.

Taskin then sent back captain Shan Masood to trigger a mini collapse as Pakistan lost three wickets for four runs.

Mehidy struck twice, including the wicket of another debutant in Abdullah Fazal, who made 60, leaving Pakistan at 230-5.

Salman Agha and Rizwan mounted a strong recovery with a 119-run partnership, which frustrated Bangladesh's bowlers and revived Pakistan's hopes.

But left-arm spinner Tajjul Islam broke through with the wicket of Rizwan, dismissing him for 59.

Rain arrived shortly after his dismissal to delay the game for two hours.

Fast bowler Nahid Rana struck immediately after the resumption by getting the better of Salman for his only wicket in the innings.

Salman's dismissal, however, effectively ended Pakistan's hopes of taking an innings lead.

Mehidy then sent back Noman Ali and Shaheen Shah Afridi in consecutive overs to complete his 14th five-for before Tajjul (2-46) wrapped up Pakistan's innings.

Mahmudul Hasan was on 2 while Shadman Islam was yet to score when umpires called it a day.

Earlier in the match, Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto struck a sublime century - a 130-ball 101 - and Mominul Haque made 91 to lift Bangladesh to 413 all out in its first innings.

# Messi breaks MLS record for fastest 100 goal involvements



Inter Miami CF midfielder Lionel Messi (10) and Toronto FC defender Walker Zimmerman (25) chase the ball during first half MLS soccer in Toronto. (AP)

## San Jose & Vancouver share spoils in battle for summit

**TORONTO, May 10, (AP):** Lionel Messi had a goal and two assists to become the fastest player in MLS history to reach 100 goal contributions, and Inter Miami doubled up Toronto FC 4-2 on Saturday, upping its winning streak on the road to six.

Messi's effort gives him 59 goals and 41 assists in 64 regular-season matches, shattering the previous record of 95 set by Toronto's Sebastian Giovinco. Messi has piled up 87 goals and 57 assists in 101 career appearances in all competitions.

Rodrigo De Paul also had a goal and two assists to help Inter Miami bounce back from a 4-3 home loss to Orlando City in a match it led 3-0. The club is 0-1-3 at home since moving to Nu Stadium.

De Paul scored off a free kick in the 44th minute to give Inter Miami a 1-0 lead. The midfielder corralled the ball after it ricocheted off the wall of players and banged a second shot off the left post and into the net.

Messi usually takes all of the club's direct free kicks but he yielded to De Paul, who delivered his third career goal - all this year - in his 21st appearance over two seasons.

Messi and De Paul both picked up their third assists of the campaign when they set up Luis Suárez for his second goal and a 2-0 lead in the 56th minute. It was the 32nd goal in 63 career matches for Suárez.

Danny Musovski scored a goal and Andrew Thomas had four saves for



Vancouver Whitecaps defender Tate Johnson, left, brings the ball up the field against San Jose Earthquakes defender Paul Marie during the first half of an MLS soccer match in San Jose, Calif. (AP)

the Seattle Sounders in a 1-1 tie with San Diego FC.

The Sounders (6-1-3) are unbeaten, with five wins, in their last eight games.

Musovski's first goal this season made it 1-1 in the 80th minute.

Sebastian Berhalter scored a goal for the Vancouver Whitecaps on Saturday night in a 1-1 tie with the San Jose Earthquakes - a battle between the top-two teams in the MLS standings.

The Earthquakes (9-1-2) lead the league with 29 points, three more than second-place Vancouver.

Defender Sergio Reguilón made his third appearance when he subbed into the match in the 68th minute before scoring his first goal in the 73rd - with an assist from Messi - for a three-goal lead.

Kevin Kelsy had two goals and

two assists - his first multi-goal game this season - and James Pantemis had three saves to help Portland beat Sporting Kansas City 6-0, the Timbers' largest margin of victory in club (MLS regular season) history.

Sporting (1-8-2) played Seattle to a 1-1 tie last time out to snap a five-game losing streak. Kansas City is last in MLS with five points, eight goals scored and a minus-24 goal differential this season.

Rookie Jorge Ruvalcaba, Cade Cowell and Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting scored goals to lead the New York Red Bulls to a 3-1 victory the Chicago Fire.

The Fire (5-4-2) avoided a shutout when Hugo Cuypers scored in the 87th minute to extend his goal-scoring streak to nine matches. Cuypers had scored two goals in three straight to help Chicago climb to fourth place

in the Eastern Conference, entering play. His 11th goal of the season moves him one in front of FC Dallas' Petar Musa in the Golden Boot Award race.

Daniel Ríos scored and Dagur Thorhallsson scored stoppage-time goals, Thomas Gillier had four saves, and CF Montreal beat Orlando City 1-0.

Gillier had his third shutout this season.

Gabriel Pec scored two goals late in the second half to rally the Los Angeles Galaxy to a 2-1 victory over Atlanta United.

Pec used assists from Marco Reus and Joseph Paintsil to tie it in the 74th minute and then scored unassisted for the lead in the 79th for his first two goals of the season.

Carles Gil scores two late goals as Revolution extend unbeaten run to 7 with 2-1 victory over Union.

Carles Gil had a goal and an assist in the second half to overcome an own goal by Will Sands and the New England Revolution upped their unbeaten streak to seven with a 2-1 victory over the reeling Philadelphia Union.

Kevin Denkey and Evander Da Silva Ferreira - known simply as "Evander" - each scored a first-half goal Saturday night for FC Cincinnati in a 2-2 tie with Charlotte FC.

Idan Toklozmat and Cep Biel scored goals about two minutes apart early in the second half to make it 2-2.

Roman Celentano had one save for Cincinnati (4-4-4), which is unbeaten in six straight.

Santiago Moreno and Kaick Ferreira scored first-half goals to lead FC Dallas to a 3-1 victory over Real Salt Lake.

## Dashti seeks new club

### Al-Arabi strengthens squad with Adi and Ajaj signings

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Al-Arabi bolstered their goalkeeping options after completing the signings of Ahmed Adi and Abdulrahman Ajaj, adding them to a roster that already includes Suleiman Abdulghafour and Hussein Kankouni.

Adi previously featured for Al-Nasr and also played for Al-Salmiya and Al-Fahaheel, where he has been since 2023. Ajaj, meanwhile, impressed during the current season with Al-Tadamon.

At the same time, Al-Arabi allowed goalkeeper Ahmed Dashti to explore opportunities with another club ahead of next season.

The club has recently reshaped its squad, including the addition of Brazilian striker Lucas Chalon from Al-Sulaibikhat SC following the expiration of his contract at the end of the campaign.

The technical staff, headed by national coach Nasser Al-Shatti, is reportedly planning a major overhaul of the foreign player contingent. The club is not expected to retain Hassimii Fadiga of France, Palestinian player Zaid Qunbar, Moroccan defender Nabil Marmouk or Bahraini midfielder Kamil Al-Aswad, as the



Goalkeeper Ahmed Adi in action during a match.

coaching staff seeks higher-impact signings capable of boosting the club's title ambitions.

Nigerian winger Ayano Iwala remains the foreign player most likely to stay with "The Green," while a final decision has yet to be made regarding fellow Nigerian Christopher John, who is currently on loan with Erbil SC until the end of this month. John remains under contract with Al-Arabi through next season.

## Leipzig clinches Champions League spot

### Bayern holds off Wolfsburg as Kane's miss ends penalty run



Bayern Munich's Harry Kane reacts after missing a penalty during a Bundesliga soccer match between Wolfsburg and Bayern Munich, in Wolfsburg, Germany. (AP)

BERLIN, May 10, (AP): Harry Kane's remarkable penalty conversion streak in the Bundesliga has ended at 24 as Bayern Munich striker missed a spot kick for the first time on Saturday, while Leipzig secured a return to the Champions League.

Kane stepped up to the penalty spot at 0-0 against Wolfsburg after teammate Michael Olise was fouled by defender Konstantinos Koulierakis.

Kane seemed to slip slightly as he approached the ball and his shot went wide of the right-hand post.

Bayern still got a 1-0 win in its second-to-last Bundesliga game of the season but it needed a spectacular curling goal off the underside of the crossbar by Olise, and Wolfsburg's Mattias Svanberg hitting the bar in the 89th minute with only the goalkeeper to beat.

Kane hadn't missed a penalty in the Bundesliga since he joined Bayern in 2023, with 10 of his 24 scored this season alone.

Across all competitions, Kane has failed to convert three penalties for Bayern this season. One was saved by third-division Wehen Wiesbaden's Florian Stritzel in the German Cup and Kane hit the crossbar against Union Saint-Gilloise in the Champions League.

Wolfsburg stayed 16th and in danger of relegation. It last played outside the top division in 1997. American midfielder Kevin Paredes and Algerian striker Mohamed Amoura were "not in the squad for disciplinary reasons," Wolfsburg said without giving further details.

The bottom three teams - Wolfsburg, St. Pauli and Heidenheim - are battling to avoid ending next week in the bottom two and being relegated. Their only chance is to finish 16th and reach a promotion-relegation playoff against a second-division team.

Wolfsburg visits 17th-placed St. Pauli next Saturday in the final round of regular season games. Wolfsburg will be relegated with a loss but could survive with a draw. St. Pauli

must win.

Last-placed Heidenheim has two games to play and could yet overhaul both Wolfsburg and St. Pauli, but needs to avoid defeat against Cologne on Sunday first.

Leipzig survived a late scare to secure a Champions League return for next season and a 2-1 win over St. Pauli made sure of third place in the Bundesliga.

Leipzig was leading 2-0 with both goals from corners after Xaver Schlager bundled in a loose ball just before halftime and Willi Orban headed in shortly after the break.

Relegation-threatened St. Pauli showed late signs of life through Abdoullie Ceesay's 86th-minute goal off an unusual long-range header assist by Jackson Irvine.

It's a much better season for Leipzig after placing seventh last year, its worst top-flight finish, and also losing seven of eight Champions League games.

St. Pauli was 17th in the 18-team league following its ninth winless game in a row.

Deniz Undav's 19th league goal of the season capped a 3-1 comeback win for Stuttgart over Bayer Leverkusen to leave Stuttgart in the fourth Champions League spot.

Leverkusen stunned with Alex Garcia's goal 34 seconds into the game on the counter, but Ermedin Demirovic leveled for Stuttgart in the fifth minute and won a penalty that Maximilian Mittelstädt converted to take the lead just before halftime.

Undav, the second highest scorer in the league after Kane, added a third off Jamie Lewelling's cross.

Leverkusen was sixth with only a slim chance of a Champions League spot.

Hoffenheim was level on points with Stuttgart in fifth after its 1-0 win over Werder Bremen was made easier by a fifth-minute red card for Bremen's Yukinari Sugawara for a reckless studs-up challenge. Bazoumana Toure scored the only goal from a quickly taken corner.

## Chelli scores big upset by stopping Cuban southpaw Morrell

# Dubois stops Wardley to retain WBO title

MANCHESTER, England, May 10, (AP): Daniel Dubois showed up late, got knocked down early and still beat Fabio Wardley to become a two-time heavyweight champion.

Dubois stopped Wardley in the 11th round to win the WBO heavyweight title at the Co-op Live arena after reportedly being delayed by traffic on his arrival.

Wardley dropped Dubois (23-3, 22 KOs) just 10 seconds into the bout with an overhand right, and again in the third round, but the former IBF champion rebounded both times and dominated from there by landing heavy rights that produced swelling and bleeding on Wardley's face.

"I know I've got heart, bundles of heart, I'm a warrior in there," said Dubois, whose resolve had been questioned in the past. "What a great fight, what a great battle. I'm No. 1 again."

Wardley absorbed blow after blow without going down before referee Howard Foster halted the bout early in the 11th.

It's the first professional loss for Wardley (20-1-1, 19 KOs). He was making his first title defense. "He's a durable guy... a great warrior," Dubois said. "It was an honor to be in the ring with him."

Dubois lost his IBF belt to Oleksandr Usyk via a fifth-round knockout at Wembley Stadium last July. It was his second loss to Usyk.

Dubois could be on a collision course with rising star Moses Itauma, who was ringside. WBO president Gustavo Olivieri has said after Itauma's demolition of Jermaine Franklin he'll recommend the British southpaw become the WBO mandatory challenger.

Frank Warren, the promoter for both Dubois and Wardley, said in the ring, however, that there's a

rematch clause in the contract.

Usyk holds the WBA, WBC and IBF belts. The 39-year-old Ukrainian's next bout is against former kickboxing champion Rico Verhoeven on May 23 at the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt.

London light heavyweight Zak Chelli scored a big upset by stopping Cuban southpaw David Morrell in the 10th round. Chelli (17-3-1, 9 KOs) called out WBC light heavyweight champion David Benavidez, who also holds titles at cruiserweight. Morrell (12-2, 9 KOs) had gone the distance with Benavidez last year, losing on points after 12 rounds.

Jack Rafferty (27-0-1, 18 KOs) made a successful welterweight debut against 37-year-old Ekow Essuman (22-3, 8 KOs), whose corner retired their fighter after six rounds.

## SPORTS

## Juventus blanks relegation-threatened Lecce

## Serie A champion Inter beats Lazio in Italian Cup warmup

MILAN, May 10, (AP): After helping Inter Milan to the Serie A trophy, captain Lautaro Martínez also looks set to win the top goal-scorer's prize.

Lautaro scored one and set up another to help Inter win at 10-man Lazio 3-0 on Saturday in a warmup for the Italian Cup final.

That took his tally to 17 in the league, four clear of his nearest rival, teammate Marcus Thuram. Como duo Tasos Douvikas and Nico Paz have five fewer than the Argentina World Cup winner.

There are three rounds remaining after this weekend.

Inter clinched Serie A last Sunday and can secure a league-cup double in the Italian Cup final on Wednesday, when it will again face Lazio at the Stadio Olimpico.

Inter took an early lead in the sixth minute as a long throw-in was nodded

on by Thuram for Lautaro to volley in from close range.

Inter doubled the lead shortly before halftime. Lautaro and Andy Diouf exchanged several passes on the left side of the area before Lautaro rolled it across for Petar Susic to fire into the top left corner from just outside the area.

Lazio's hopes of salvaging something diminished in the 59th when defender Alessio Romagnoli was sent off for a high, studs-up challenge on Ange-Yoan Bonny - the Inter forward was fortunate to come away unscathed.

Henrikh Mkhitaryan capped the result for Inter.

Dusan Vlahovic scored after just 12 seconds to help Juventus win at relegation-threatened Lecce 1-0.

It was the fastest Serie A goal for Juventus since the statistic was count-

ed in 2004-05 according to stats provider Opta.

Juventus also had two goals ruled out for offside in the second half.

Lecce was left four points above the drop zone and could find itself in further trouble at the end of the weekend.

Cagliari is still not mathematically safe from relegation following a 2-0 loss at home to Udinese in a game that was marred by accusations of racism after the final whistle.

Udinese forward Keinan Davis, who is Black, alleged Cagliari defender Alberto Dossena called him a "monkey" during the match. Dossena denied any wrongdoing.

Both players were backed by their teammates and clubs.

Cagliari was nine points above Cremonese.



Inter Milan's Alessandro Bastoni, left, and Lazio's Tijjani Noslin vie for the ball during a Serie A soccer match between Lazio and Inter Milan, in Rome. (AP)

## Oklahoma City storms past Lakers again as unbeaten playoff run hits 7



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, right, shoots as Los Angeles Lakers forward Adou Thiery defends during the second half of Game 3 in a second-round NBA basketball playoffs series in Los Angeles. (AP)

## Harden hits clutch shots, Cavaliers trim Pistons lead

LOS ANGELES, May 10, (AP): Ajay Mitchell had career playoff highs of 24 points and 10 assists, and the Oklahoma City Thunder extended their unbeaten playoff run to the brink of another Western Conference finals with a 131-108 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers in Game 3 of the second round.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 23 points and nine assists for the Thunder, who coolly improved to 7-0 - both in these playoffs overall, and in their seven games this season against LeBron James and the Lakers. Oklahoma City is the NBA's sixth defending champion to start 7-0 in the following postseason after three wins over short-handed Los Angeles by a combined 59 points.

Game 3 was remarkably similar to Game 2 in many respects: The Lakers again had to fight desperately just to keep up with the champs into the third quarter, only for the Thunder to run away with their usual merciless efficiency when LA finally faltered. Chet Holmgren had 18 points and nine rebounds for Oklahoma City, which outscored the Lakers 33-20 in the third quarter and wasn't threatened at all down the stretch.

Game 4 is Monday night in Los Angeles.

James had 19 points, eight assists and six rebounds, while Austin Reaves had 17 points and nine assists. But both stars struggled from the field to a combined 12 for 32, and 21 points from Rui Hachimura weren't enough to keep LA in contention with the champs.

Gilgeous-Alexander had his highest-scoring game of the series despite missing nine of his first 11 shots amid another concerted defensive effort by the Lakers on the NBA MVP, albeit with fewer double-teams than in the series' first two games.

Luke Kennard added 18 points for the Lakers, who have lost five of their last six games since midway through the first round against Houston.

## Cavaliers 116, Pistons 109

In Cleveland, After collapsing in the clutch in the first two games of the Eastern Conference semifinals, the Cleveland Cavaliers got timely plays in the final three minutes from James Harden and Max Strus to get back into their series against the Detroit Pistons.

Harden hit three big shots and Strus came up with the steal and go-ahead basket in the Cavaliers' 116-109 victory on Saturday to cut the Pistons' lead to 2-1.

"We know how important it is to get this first win to make it a series. So, really a team win where a lot of guys contributed tonight," Cavaliers coach Kenny Atkinson said.

The Cavaliers will look to even the series when they host Game 4 on Monday night.

Donovan Mitchell led Cleveland with 35 points and 10 rebounds, while Harden finished with 19 points and Jarrett Allen scored 18.

There were 11 lead changes, with the final one occurring with 2:28 remaining when Strus jumped to snare Cade Cunningham's inbound pass to Daniss Jenkins near midcourt. Strus then drove past Cunningham and Jenkins to make a layup and give the Cavaliers a 106-104 advantage.

Atkinson called it the winning play of the game.

It was also the first of three straight turnovers by Cunningham, who had his second career postseason triple-double with 27 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists, but also committed eight turnovers.

Harden, who drew plenty of criticism for turnovers in the clutch in the first two games, kept the Cavaliers in front with big shots. The 17-year veteran hit a 16-foot step-back jumper to extend the lead to 108-104. After a driving dunk by Cunningham, Harden made a floating 7-footer to put the lead back up to four.

Cunningham responded with a 3-pointer before Harden provided the decisive blow with 25 seconds remaining on a step-back 3-pointer while being guarded by Harris to make it 113-109.

## Joshua defends 125-pound crown, Strickland wins middleweight title

NEWARK, N.J., May 10, (AP): Sean Strickland won UFC's 185-pound championship for the second time in his career on Saturday night, defeating Khamzat Chimaev via split decision in a bout that never rose to the level of vitriol and threats of violence outside the cage both fighters engaged in ahead of the main event of UFC 328.

Strickland won two scorecards 48-47 while Chimaev took the other scorecard at 48-47 in front of a crowd of 17,783 fans at the Prudential Center.

Strickland, the second former middleweight to regain the title, mimed putting the belt around his waist after the fifth round ended to wrap a fight where neither fighter ever seemed in serious danger. He had help with his shiny new fashion accessory when Chimaev did the honors for him inside the cage.

UFC beefed up security at hotels, public events and around the cage for this one following one of the more loathsome displays - specifically, Strickland - of trash talk in recent fight history.

UFC CEO Dana White - who expressed confidence Conor McGregor would return to fight this summer - said Chimaev told him after the fight he wanted to move up in weight class.

The fighters tapped gloves to start the fight to prove they were professionals and the prefight

hostilities never spilled over into the cage.

The 35-year-old Strickland, who won the 185-pound belt in September 2023 and lost it in his first title defense,

Joshua Van mauled Tatsuro Taira into a bloody mess in the co-main and successfully defended his 125-pound championship in the first title fight in company history contested between two Asian fighters.

Van dominated with elite boxing and won via



In this file photo, Sean Strickland, UFC middleweight champion, arrives on stage to face off with Dricus Du Plessis during a mixed martial arts news conference ahead of UFC 297 in Toronto. (AP)

stoppage at 1:32 of round five and had the crowd roaring in his first title defense since he beat Alexandre Pantoja at UFC 323.

Van (17-2) seized control in the second round with a violent right hand to the jaw for the knock-down and he repeatedly bashed Taira (18-2) in the face. Van failed to finish the round but continued to rip shots the rest of the rounds to the face and body that left Taira's face and chest smeared with blood.

Van and Taira marked the first time UFC has a title fight with both competitors born in the 2000s.

The 24-year-old Van, of Myanmar, has won seven straight fights and 10 of 11 since he signed with UFC - and few bigger than in the co-main event of UFC's 11th stop in Newark.

Taira failed in his try to become the first Japanese fighter to become UFC champion.

UFC held its last major card before its June 14 show at the White House to fete President Donald Trump, a proud proponent of cage match politics. The show - what White dubbed a "1 of 1 event" - is timed for Trump's 80th birthday and as part of the nation's 250th anniversary. Trump, who frequently attends major UFC events, did not attend Saturday night at the Prudential Center.

## China wins second consecutive recurve title

## India clinches gold after shoot-off win

SHANGHAI, May 10, (Xinhua): China claimed its second recurve mixed team title from as many stops of the Archery World Cup season with a 5-3 victory over two-time Olympic champion South Korea.

Against the backdrop of Shanghai's Lujiazui skyline along the iconic Huangpu River on a windy morning, Huang Yuwei and Li Mengqi edged Oh Ye-jin and five-time Olympic gold medalist Kim Woo-jin 38-37 in the opening set to take a 2-0 lead. Li's crucial 10 with the final arrow of the second set earned China another point, but the South Korean pair fought back to level the match at 3-3.

In the decisive fourth set, Kim and Oh both shot eights, while the newly formed Chinese duo held their nerve to prevail 37-35 and seal the victory.

The win came after Zhu Jingyi and Sun Jinxuan had triumphed at the opening leg in Puebla, Mexico.

"I think my overall performance was quite good. There were weather factors during the match, especially the wind, which affected the arrows' trajectory, but I was able to adjust quickly," Li said.

The newly crowned national champion also praised his partnership with Huang.

"I think we worked together with great chemistry. We have a really strong under-

standing between us. Even though we only teamed up recently, it feels like we have been working together for a long time," he added.

Huang, meanwhile, claimed her second medal of the day after China lost 5-4 to India in a shoot-off in the women's team final to settle for silver. The 21-year-old said the key to bouncing back was to reset mentally as quickly as possible.

"I think it's important to move on after each match. Once one event is over, you turn the page and focus on the next one. The competition wasn't over, so you can't give up just because you didn't perform well earlier," she said.

Kim also finished the day with two medals after helping South Korea defeat Türkiye 6-0 in the men's team final alongside Lee Woo-seok and Kim Je-deok, repeating the trio's triumph from last year. Vietnam beat the United States 5-3 to claim bronze.

"I really enjoyed the passion in Shanghai," said 33-year-old Kim, who collected his 34th World Cup gold medal and 16th silver.

"It's the first World Cup of the season for our team, and it's hard to say whether the result was good or bad. But we can do better at the next stage in Antalya," he added.

## Kerr agrees to a two-year deal to continue coaching Warriors

SAN FRANCISCO, May 10 (AP): Steve Kerr is giving it another go with Golden State.

Kerr has reached an agreement in principle on a two-year contract to continue coaching the Warriors, according to a person with knowledge of the negotiations. Kerr still must sign his new deal, the person told The Associated Press on Saturday night, speaking on condition of anonymity because the contract must be finalized.

The Warriors missed the playoffs for the second time in three years, earning the 10th seed in the Western Conference and eventually losing at Phoenix in the play-in tournament.

Kerr's 12-year coaching run with the franchise has featured four championships and six NBA Finals appearances alongside Stephen Curry and Draymond Green, including five straight from 2015-19. Kerr shared an embrace with those two stars near the end of the loss in Phoenix, saying afterward he knew it could be their final time together.

He has a career record of 604-353 and a 104-48 playoff mark, with Golden State winning its last championship in 2022.

The Warriors were 37-45 this season while dealing with numerous injuries, including losing Jimmy Butler to a season-ending right knee injury in January and Curry's 27-game absence with a right knee injury of his own.

ESPN first reported Kerr's new contract.

Kerr, 60, got his first coaching job in 2014-15 and immediately guided Golden State to the franchise's first title in 40 years. The Warriors would then begin the next season with a record 24-0 start without him as assistant Luke Walton led the way as Kerr missed the initial 43 games as his team went on to a record 73 victories. Kerr took a leave of absence to recover from debilitating complications following two back surgeries, then missed time again in 2017 with Mike Brown filling in as Kerr underwent a procedure to deal with a spinal fluid leak.

Green had predicted on his podcast once the season ended that Kerr wouldn't return.

Throughout his coaching career, Kerr has used his platform to speak out against gun violence and social injustice among other prominent issues.

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Bayern Munich players celebrate after winning the German women's soccer championship after the Bundesliga match between Bayern Munich and Eintracht Frankfurt in Munich, Germany. (AP)

# Sports

## Kuwait ready for all-Arab test at 2027 Asian Cup

Blues face Saudi Arabia, Oman and Palestine in Group A

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff  
**DIRIYAH, May 10: Kuwait is drawn in Group A of the 2027 AFC Asian Cup alongside hosts Saudi Arabia, Oman and Palestine following the official draw ceremony held at the historic Salwa Palace in Diriyah.**

Kuwait will open its campaign against Oman on January 8, 2027 at Al-Awwal Park in Riyadh before facing Palestine four days later at Kingdom Arena. Kuwait will then conclude the group stage against Saudi Arabia on January 17 in Jeddah.

Kuwait previously met Oman and Palestine during the qualifiers for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, while the clash with Oman also revives memories of Kuwait's final group-stage match at the 2015 Asian Cup. Kuwait, champion in 1980, is returning to the continental tournament after missing the 2019 and 2023 editions.

Kuwait coach Helio Sousa attended the draw alongside development director Mohammed Al-Failakawi and national teams' director Saud Al-Mujamed.

Sousa described the group as "balanced," noting that the competing teams are closely matched in quality. He stressed that every match will be



A file photo of Kuwait and Oman players battling for the ball.

difficult but said Kuwait's objective remains reaching the knockout rounds.

"The matches will be very tough, but we will enter with the ambition of qualifying for the next stage," Sousa said after the draw, adding that the national team still has time to continue improving ahead of the tournament.

He also pointed out that facing teams from different parts of Asia creates a unique challenge, while emphasizing that all sides in the group have equal chances.

Oman coach Tarik Sektioui warned that Group A would be highly competitive and stressed the importance of hard work both on and off the pitch. Palestine coach Ehab Abu Jazar said the presence of four Arab nations, all familiar with one another, makes the group especially unpredictable.

For the first time, Saudi Arabia will host the AFC Asian Cup and will look to lift the trophy on home soil after winning previous titles in 1984, 1988 and 1996.

Elsewhere, defending champion Qatar was drawn with Japan, Thailand and Indonesia in Group F. Jordan landed in Group B alongside Bahrain, Uzbekistan and North Korea, while Iraq is grouped with Australia, Tajikistan and Singapore. Syria will face Iran, Kyrgyzstan and China in Group C, while United Arab Emirates was drawn with South Korea, Vietnam and either Lebanon or Yemen in Group E.

Athletes urged to rise to challenge

### Kuwait delegation departs for GCC Games in Doha

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Kuwait's sports delegation left the country today for Doha to compete in the 4th GCC Games, which run from May 11 to 22 with strong participation from across the Gulf Cooperation Council nations.

Ahead of departure, Kuwait Olympic Committee Director General retired Major General Muhammad Al-Khalfan met with the team in the presence of Public Authority for Sport Director General Bashar Abdullah.

Al-Khalfan told athletes that each member of the delegation represents Kuwait as an ambassador, urging them to deliver strong performances and uphold high sporting ethics that reflect the country's proud Gulf sporting history.

He stressed that real success comes in difficult circumstances, noting that confidence in the athletes is unwavering and that the hopes of the Kuwaiti sports community rest on their efforts.

Al-Khalfan also called for full discipline, strict adherence to competition rules, strong team unity,



Bashar Abdullah and retired Major General Muhammad Al-Khalfan address Kuwait GCC Games delegation.

and high morale throughout the event. He reaffirmed that all necessary support has been provided to ensure the delegation is fully prepared, with the aim of raising Kuwait's flag and the national anthem on the podium.

Kuwait is sending a 120-strong

delegation of male and female athletes competing in 13 sports out of 17 on the programme, including equestrian, 3x3 basketball, handball, athletics, bowling, swimming, padel, taekwondo, archery, billiards and snooker, fencing, karate, and shooting.

### All eyes on Kuwait, Asian Club Handball Championship draw unfolds Saturday

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: The draw for the 28th Asian Men's Club League Handball Championship will be held next Saturday at 7:00 p.m. at Al Raya Hotel. The tournament, postponed from 2024, qualifies the champion for the 2026 IHF Men's Super Globe in Egypt.

The event had been delayed following developments in the Gulf region since February 28.

Eight clubs have confirmed participation so far, including hosts Kuwait Club, Burgan Club, Al-Arabi SC, Al-Duhail SC, Sharjah Club, Al-Khaleej Club, Al-Nojoom Club and a Chinese club.

Matches will be played at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex from June 6 to 15, while the technical meeting is set for June 5.

Tournament organizing committee chairman Sameh Al-Hajri said preparations for the continental championship are nearing completion, praising the cooperation between the organizing committees and the man-



Samah Al-Hajri, chairman of the tournament's organizing committee.

agement of Kuwait Club to deliver a tournament befitting Kuwait's stature in Asian handball.

He noted that preparations at the venue are progressing quickly, including upgrades to the playing court, stands, team facilities and media center, along with arrangements for accommodation, transportation and reception of participating delegations. He added that all committees are working daily to ensure complete readiness before kickoff.

Al-Hajri described hosting Asia's top handball clubs as a source of pride for Kuwaiti sports, especially with the participation of several leading continental teams, expressing confidence that the tournament will showcase Kuwait's organizational capabilities.

He also confirmed that Kuwait SC has intensified preparations for the competition, with daily training sessions underway since sporting activities resumed. All players, including the club's three professionals except those on military duty, are taking part. The team will also hold a training camp in Bahrain from May 17 to 31, featuring three friendly matches aimed at boosting technical and physical readiness ahead of the tournament.

Al-Hajri thanked Kuwait Club president Khaled Al-Ghanem and the club's board members for their continued support of the organizing committee, stressing that everyone is working together to ensure the success of the championship.

Meanwhile, Burgan Club will hold a similar training camp in Cairo during the same period in preparation for the Asian event.

Forest near safety; Celtic keeps heat on Hearts in Scottish title race

### Villa's top-four hopes take hit after draw

LONDON, May 10, (AP): Aston Villa still has work to do to secure Champions League qualification. Nottingham Forest is almost safe from relegation.

Three days after meeting in the Europa League semifinals, Villa and Forest returned to Premier League action and neither got the win they really wanted.

Villa was held 2-2 at already relegated Burnley and stayed in fifth place, four points above sixth-place Bournemouth in the race to finish in the top five and get into the Champions League. Both teams have two games left - and both still have to play title-chasing Manchester City.

Villa's players have another possible route into next season's Champions League: By winning the Europa League.

If they do that and finish fifth in the league, then the team that places sixth - currently Bournemouth, though Brighton is only two points further back - would also get into Europe's top competition.

Forest equalized in the 88th minute through England midfielder Elliot Anderson to grab a 1-1 draw with Newcastle and move seven points clear of the relegation zone.

If third-to-last West Ham loses to first-place Arsenal later, Forest will

be mathematically safe. Arsenal will be desperate for a win to restore its five-point lead over second-place Man City.

In another game Sunday, Crystal Palace twice came from behind to draw 2-2 with Everton.

In Scotland, Daizen Maeda's stunning overhead kick completed Celtic's comeback in a 3-1 win over fierce rival Rangers that kept the heat on Hearts in a thrilling Scottish Premiership title race.

Second-place Celtic moved a point behind Hearts with two match-

es left, while Rangers dropped out of contention for the title and is assured of finishing third.

Trailing to Mikey Moore's ninth-minute opener for Rangers in a typically frenetic Old Firm derby, Celtic fought back to equalize through South Korea winger Yang Hyun-jun in the 23rd before a second-half double from Maeda - the second from the Japan forward being a looping overhead kick that dropped underneath the crossbar in the 57th.

The next installment of a title race for the ages comes on Wednesday.

Hearts, without a Scottish league title in 66 years, will be expected to beat sixth-place Falkirk, while Celtic faces a testing trip to fourth-place Motherwell, which held Hearts to a draw on Saturday.

If the title is still in the balance next Saturday, it promises to be a sensational final day - with Celtic hosting Hearts in what would be a last-round shootout.

Martin O'Neill, Celtic's 74-year-old manager, said: "We're still in it, we're still fighting."

"We might fall short at the end of it all, who knows?" O'Neill said. "But it's been a fabulous effort."

Celtic has won 13 of the last 14 league titles, the other going to Rangers. Not since 1985, when Aberdeen was champion under Alex Ferguson, has a team other than Celtic or Rangers been Scottish champion.

Hearts doesn't have as deep a squad as Celtic and it has been hit by key late-season injuries.

Marc Leonard and Craig Halkett will miss the final games after sustaining what Hearts coach Derek McInnes described as "really bad" and "unusual" injuries against Motherwell.

Halkett had an outside chance of making Scotland's squad for its return to the World Cup for the first time since 1998.



Aston Villa's Ross Barkley, top, heads the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Burnley and Aston Villa in Burnley, England. (AP)

### Al-Fuzai storms to win in Kuwait Equestrian League fourth round



Abdulrahman Al-Fuzai on the podium with other winners.

KUWAIT CITY, May 10: Abdulrahman Al-Fuzai, star rider of Hawally Equestrian Club, captured the title of the fourth round of the Kuwait Equestrian Federation League, held on Friday and Saturday at the Police Sports Federation arena in Subhan. The event featured strong competition among a large group of riders vying for top honors.

Al-Fuzai secured first place in the Grand Prix event over 140cm after clocking 26.83 seconds, finishing ahead of Ali Al-Kharafi, Abdullah Al-Awadhi, Fahad Al-Falah and Abdullah Al-Roudhan.

Separately, Ali Jassim Al-Kharafi of Kuwait Equestrian Club topped the Kuwaiti riders' rankings in the standings of the International Federation for Equestrian Sports with 612 points. He was followed by Annaz Al-Annaz (389), Abdullah Al-Awadhi (270), Yara Al-Hunaidi (258), Fawaz Rashid (244), Hamad Al-Hajri (225), Fawaz Al-Subaie (150), Rakan Al-Hassawi (125), Dalia Al-Zaham (125), and Madhi Al-Khamis (110).