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First Deputy Prime Minister commends KFF's competence and professionalism Page 5



Opinion

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

Iran does not understand the meaning of doing good

THE region was on the brink of a major conflict yesterday as stated by American President Donald Trump, who posted on Truth Social that "the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and the President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed, have asked me to postpone our planned military attack against Iran, scheduled for tomorrow (yesterday), because serious negotiations are now underway."

It is fortunate that the attack was halted at the request of the leaders of Gulf states, whose governments understand that any attack on Iran will only exacerbate the crisis. They are also aware that the oppressed Iranian people have been living under systematic repression for 47 years, and that any misstep will have repercussions for the region. Therefore, they worked hard to stop such major attack, hoping to pave the way for diplomatic efforts.

Unfortunately, for five decades, this positive Gulf approach has been met with increasing intransigence and arrogance by Tehran - repaying kindness with evil. This is its modus operandi.

Nevertheless, as they say in the world of politics, "there are no permanent enemies or permanent friends, only permanent interests." It is in the interest of the Gulf states, as well as the Iranian people, to end the war, regardless of the interests of the pillars of the regime -- those who are visible and those who hide behind statements that only fuel doubts about the ability of the head of the State to lead. This raises many questions about the essence of the

continuous intransigence in failing to reach a solution.

Everyone knows that the regime does not care about the interests of its people. History records many tragedies it has caused. Since the beginning of its rule, it has killed thousands of opponents. The most infamous incident was the execution of more than 30,000 dissidents, sentenced by former President Ebrahim Raisi, who died in a plane crash, when he was a judge in the 'Revolutionary Court'.

This pattern of state-led violence continued. After the 12-day war last year, around 32,000 protesters were killed in the popular uprising against deteriorating living conditions.

This regime disregards its own people and its commitments to neighboring countries which, from a position of strength, strive to prevent the collapse of a neighboring nation, given the regional chaos it could cause.

However, the Tehran regime persists in its terrorist activities, not only domestically but throughout the region as well, including Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen, in addition to planting cells in Bahrain, Kuwait, UAE and Saudi Arabia.

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Kuwait sets May 26-31 Eid holiday



PM Diwan photo

HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting on Tuesday.

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): Kuwait has decided to suspend work across all state bodies and public institutions from May 26-31 to mark the Islamic Eid Al-Adha holiday, the Cabinet said on Tuesday.

Government employees will report back to work on Monday, June 1, while workplaces of "unconventional"

nature will determine their holidays as they see fit, bearing in mind public interest, the Cabinet said amid its weekly session.

The Cabinet went on to extend its warmest greetings to Kuwait's political leaders, in addition to nationals and expatriates alike over the joyous occasion.

Week-long sweep nets 41 wanted individuals

Campaigns yield 6 drug arrests

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: The General Directorate of Emergency Police, under the Traffic and Operations Sector, announced the arrest and referral of six individuals to the Drug Control

General Department (DCGD) during the period from May 10 to May 16.

Security campaigns also resulted in the apprehension of 41 individuals who were reported as absconding and for the execution of court orders, in addition to the dispersal of nine

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NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Amiri Diwan on Tuesday mourned the passing away of **Sheikh Mohammad Faisal Mohammad Abdulaziz Al-Malek Al-Sabah** at the age of 42.

The funeral service is to take place after Asr (afternoon) prayer tomorrow (Wednesday). (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs **Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah** conducted on Monday a telephone call with his Saudi counterpart Prince **Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud**.

During the call, both sides discussed the latest developments in the region and efforts exerted regarding them, Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement. (KUNA)

ABU DHABI: The UAE Ministry of Defense announced Tuesday that the country's air defense systems had successfully detected and intercepted six hostile drones that attempted to target civilian and vital areas in the country over the past 48 hours.

In a statement, the ministry said technical tracking and monitoring results related to the attack on the Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant on May 17 confirmed that the drones intercepted at the time, as well as those shot down later, had all originated from Iraqi territory. (KUNA)



8 NBK further reinforces commitment to advancing professional talent across financial sector through its partnership with CFA Society Kuwait

8 NBK organizes delegation from KPC, its subsidiaries, and EQUATE in celebration of internal audit awareness month



Photo during the cutting of celebratory cake in honor of outgoing ambassadors.

Kuwait honors outgoing envoys for 'strengthening' bilateral ties

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Tajikistan to Kuwait Dr. Zubay-

dullo Zubaydov hosted a farewell and honoring ceremony for outgoing ambassadors Mamadi Traoré (Guinea), Sayed Jawed Hashemi (Afghanistan),

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Kuwait will stay in my heart, says Bulgarian envoy

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Outgoing Bulgarian Ambassador to Kuwait Dimitar Dimitrov stated that Kuwait will forever occupy a unique position in his heart.

Dimitrov made the statement at a farewell reception commemorating the conclusion of his diplomatic mission in the country. Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Al-Mishal hosted the event, with several foreign dignitaries and a large group of Kuwaiti citizens in attendance.

He described his tenure in the country as a major personal and professional milestone, reflecting on his history with the nation. He revealed that his connection with Kuwait started almost a decade before his ambassadorial appointment in 2021, having previously served as counselor and consul from 2012 to 2016.

He highlighted the decades-long partnership between Bulgaria and Kuwait, expressing his aspiration for more collaboration in the tourism, culture, investment and economic sectors. He also looks forward to the resumption of direct air travel between the two countries.

He lauded the Kuwaiti media for its vital support for the diplomatic community, pointing out that the nation offers a strong platform for ambassadors to represent their respective countries.

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Undersecretary of the Ministry of Defense Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Al-Mishal with outgoing Bulgarian Ambassador.



Ambassadors of Bangladesh, Oman, Bahrain, China and Russia at the farewell reception. Photos by Samer Shiqer

Day by Day

HOW wonderful the sugar cube is when it gives itself to a cup of tea, dissolving and disappearing into it. Its sweet flavor becomes part of the tea itself. We enjoy the tea and say it is delicious, overlooking the fact that the sugar cube was the source of that sweetness.

Do not regret doing something good, just as the sugar cube does not regret if its sweet impact was ignored. That is life.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar



KUNA photo

Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani receives Kuwait Ambassador to Qatar Ahmad Abdulrahman Al-Shuraim.

Kuwait envoy presents credentials to Qatari Amir

Kuwait Ambassador to Qatar Ahmad Abdulrahman Al-Shuraim presented his credentials Tuesday to Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipoten-

tiary of Kuwait to Qatar.

During a meeting, Ambassador Al-Shuraim conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir

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Violations referred to judiciary

MoE wraps up textbook probe

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: The Ministry of Education announced the conclusion of the work of the impartial investigation committee formed last October by a decision of the Minister of Education, Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, to review observations and procedures related to the printing and supply of textbooks for the first semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The report included the investigation's findings, recommendations, and proposed procedures.

In an official statement, the Ministry of Education explained

that the committee, composed of members from the Fatwa and Legislation Department and legal experts from neutral bodies, reviewed and examined the legal and technical procedures related to 115 cases concerning the printing and supply of textbooks. This included studying the tendering process and verifying the extent to which companies and printing houses complied with the terms, conditions, technical specifications, and implementation deadlines.

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Interior Ministry powers up ops

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): Ministry of Interior Undersecretary Major General Abdulwahab Al-Wahib affirmed on Tuesday that the ministry is committed to building an integrated work system to guarantee efficiency and speed of execution.

In a press statement issued after an inspection tour of the Financial Affairs and Support Services Sector, Al-Wahib disclosed that the ministry is implementing the visual



Moi photo Ministry of Interior Undersecretary during an inspection tour.

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Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:23	Asr	15:20
Sunrise	04:53	Maghrib	18:36
Zohr	11:44	Isha	20:04

Kuwait, Thailand discuss ways to boost relations



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah receives Ambassador of Thailand to Kuwait Songchai Chaipatiyut and his team.

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah received Ambassador of Thailand to Kuwait Songchai Chaipatiyut on Tuesday.

During the meeting, they reviewed the strong bilateral relations between Kuwait and Thailand, and the progress made in various fields. They also discussed ways to further de-

velop and enhance cooperation in order to advance mutual interests between the two friendly countries. The minister wished the ambassador success in performing his diplomatic duties.

MoJ dept to start biometric attendance starting June 1

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait issued a decree requiring all employees at the General Department of Experts to adopt the biometric fingerprint system for tracking attendance starting June 1, 2026.

This mandate is in line with Ministerial Decree No. 950/2025 that regulates the official working hours.

It aims to modernize the department, instill institutional discipline, and boost the technical support provided to the judicial system.

According to the Ministry of Justice, this decision is one of several regulatory steps being taken to monitor attendance.

By ensuring that experts are present at their posts during official working hours, the ministry aims to refine operational workflows, accelerate the

finalization of technical reports, and provide better services to the lawyers and litigants.

The ministry has instructed the concerned employees to report to the Administrative Affairs Department to activate their fingerprint profiles and finalize the technical requirements before June 1 in order to ensure a smooth transition.

It added that direct supervisors are in charge of the oversight of staff movement, indicating the supervisors must report attendance violations to the Administrative Affairs Department, which will take disciplinary or corrective measures.

It reiterated that consistent staff presence is vital for the effective administration of justice and prompt submission of expert technical findings, especially since the General Department of Experts is the technical pillar of the judiciary.

One family key to stability, security

Kuwait rolls out new laws, policies

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): Kuwait is taking strategic steps to strengthen its family protection system through expanding initiatives, legislation and policies aimed at placing family cohesion at the heart of national security and sustainable development.



Al-Sumait



Al-Huwailah

The government's family protection program, launched by the Cabinet last Tuesday, marks a shift toward a proactive framework through a cross-sector project involving 12 government entities implementing 83 initiatives across six main pillars.

The program sets a timeline for measures covering legislation, digital transformation, awareness, rehabilitation, governance, professional efficiency, data analysis and infrastructure development, aimed at strengthening prevention, protection and institutional coordination.

Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait told the Cabinet the program represents an important step toward building a comprehensive governmental system focused on prevention, protection and rehabilitation, combining legislative development, digital transformation, community awareness and enhanced institutional capabilities.

Al-Sumait added the program includes launching an integrated digital infrastructure covering litigation, documentation, remote consultations, supervised visitation services and a centralized complaints platform to improve accessibility and efficiency in addressing family-related issues.

Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah said the program would strengthen early prevention of family disintegration and juvenile delinquency through awareness and counseling initiatives targeting educational, religious, media and youth environments.

Al-Huwailah noted the program would also enhance referral mechanisms among security, judicial, social and health authorities, while activating rehabilitation, reform and social reintegration programs for juveniles and affected families alongside broader social, psychological and healthcare support.

Program

The government preceded the program with legislative and regulatory reforms, including the Family Violence Protection Law, which entered into force in mid-March and established a broader legal framework to reinforce family protection and stability.

The 31-article law reflects the states constitutional and social commitment to safeguarding the family unit by addressing physical, psychological, sexual and financial abuse through clear reporting, intervention and institutional accountability mechanisms.

Kuwait also approved regulations governing shelters for abused women to ensure integrated protection and support services, including psychological, social and legal assistance, while defining reception procedures, confidentiality standards and administrative responsibilities within shelter centers.

Efforts to protect families have also been linked to

Health overhaul sought: minister

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): Kuwait is pushing forward with plans to transform its national healthcare system by parlaying global expertise and insight into more efficient healthcare services and adequate staff training, Health Minister Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi said on Tuesday.

Underlining the significance of sound scientific research towards greater healthcare development, the minister told a visiting delegation from the Kuwait-based Al-Babtian Center for Burns and Plastic Surgery that the facility's efforts to enlist the aid of internationally renowned physicians was instrumental in propping up the national healthcare system.

MC gives go ahead for Kuwait, S. Arabia railway project path

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: During its session held on Monday, presided over by Abdullah Al-Muhairi, the Municipal Council (MC) approved the Ministry of Public Works' request to allocate the right-of-way for the Kuwait-Saudi Arabia railway project, which extends 85 kilometers from the southwestern border to Al-Shadadiya.

The Council also approved the Ministry of Interior's request to amend its previous decision regarding driving school sites formerly used by the Kuwait Driving School Company.

In addition, the Council approved two requests from the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy. The first concerned the allocation of a route for overhead power lines connecting the main electricity substation Z3 in the Sabah Al-

Ahmad residential area to the Mohammed Al-Ahmad Naval Base (Navy-A) in the Al-Zour area.

The second approved request concerned allocating a route for cables starting from a main electricity substation in the Al-Wafra residential area and extending north toward the Abu Kharjin and Al-Sabahiya areas.

The Council approved three requests from the Ministry of Defense, as well as a request from the Green Urban Development Initiatives Committee to erect a memorial at the intersection of Fahahel Road and the First Ring Road between Dasma and Bneid Al-Gar areas.

The Council also approved a request from the Ministry of Social Affairs to relocate a restaurant in Khaldiya (suburb center) to be next to the police station, in addition to allocating part of a park in Shaab, plot number 8, for the construction of secondary transformer station number 2.



Vehicles moving at snail's pace as prevailing dust reduces visibility. Photo by Samer Shaqir

Rising dust in hot wind cuts road visibility

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): The acting Director of the Meteorological Department, Dhirar Al-Ali, said on Tuesday that the country was affected by hot weather and active winds stirring up dust, which is reducing horizontal visibility.

Al-Ali explained to Kuwait News

Agency (KUNA) that weather maps and satellite images indicate the country is under the influence of a high-pressure system from the northwest of the Arabian Peninsula, leading to active northwesterly winds reaching speeds of more than 55 km/h.

The strong, dust-raising winds are reducing visibility to less than 1,000 meters in some areas and are also causing higher sea waves.

He expected the wind activity and reduced visibility to continue, with hot weather and moderate to strong northwesterly winds stirring up dust.

Top job hopefuls must verify degrees

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: As part of the government's efforts to enhance transparency and governance of educational data, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) issued a circular to ministries, government agencies, and public institutions, reports Al-Rai daily.

The circular requires applicants for supervisory positions to update their academic qualifications if they hold degrees obtained outside Kuwait, and to have those degrees officially recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education.

The circular was issued at the request of the Chairman of the

Committee for Examining Academic Qualifications of Employees in Government and Private Sector Entities. This requirement applies to both citizens and residents in all government entities subject to the provisions of the Civil Service Law and its regulations.

All abattoirs set for Eid sacrifice

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Director of the Slaughterhouses Department in the Control and Inspection Sector at the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) Mohammad Al-Salem confirmed that all authorized slaughterhouses are fully prepared to operate throughout the Eid Al-Adha holiday.

Al-Salem revealed that the authorized central slaughterhouses include those in the Capital, Ahmadi, Jahra and Farwaniya governorates, in addition to the temporary slaughterhouse in Sabah Al-Ahmad City, which is affiliated with the cooperative society in the city in order to meet the needs of those residing in the southern part of the country.

He said PAFN completed the health, regulatory and precautionary requirements, as well as the provision of sufficient veterinarians and technical teams to receive sacrificial animals from the first hours of Eid until the last day to ensure their safety and compliance with the standards.

He stated that the working hours on the first day of Eid will start after the Eid prayer and will continue until 6:00 pm, and that on the second day of Eid, working hours will be from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm. He indicated that operations will stop every six hours to sanitize the halls and guarantee the readiness to receive new batches of sacrificial animals.

He praised the Ministry of Interior for its cooperation in organizing traffic and security in the central and temporary slaughterhouses, as well as supporting investors under the slaughterhouse management system.

Other Voices

The young preacher

By Ahmad alsarraf

THE YOUNG preacher left his homeland and went to work in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, as a religious teacher and preacher, carrying the usual outward symbols of a head covering, a short robe, and a good beard.

Within a relatively short period, he learned the local language and took charge of a religious institution. In a completely foreign society, he managed to build strong relationships and rose to prominence in a short time. Many sought to attend his sermons, and his management of Holy Qur'an memorization competitions, along with his recommendations of students eligible to travel to Egypt for further studies, earned him growing popularity. His television appearances increased, and he gained the trust of the community. It is said that he was granted citizenship in recognition of his work.

In 2021, one of his young students complained to his parents that he was sexually assaulted by the preacher. However, the accusation was covered up to protect the man's religious reputation and the reputation of the esteemed institution where he worked, as well as to avoid scandal.

The accusations later resurfaced, and an initial report was filed against him with the local authorities. The complaints were subsequently transferred to the police. As the number of victims and witnesses increased, the accused preacher was interrogated and later subjected to a disciplinary and religious counselling session.

He admitted that he may have acted inappropriately, but denied the allegations of harassment or sexual assault, and pledged to maintain good conduct.

The complaints resurfaced again, and legal proceedings were renewed.



alsarraf

Indonesian police reports indicated that some victims were lured with promises of academic opportunities or study trips to Egypt. Funds belonging to the association under his control were misused, raising further concerns about his conduct.

Feeling threatened, the preacher immediately returned to Egypt, citing his mother's illness.

As news of his escape from Indonesia amid the scandal spread, he appeared in a video denying the allegations, claiming he had not fled and that the summons was issued after he had already left Jakarta and arrived in Egypt. He also refused to return to Indonesia to clear his name.

Indonesian police later announced that they had requested Interpol to issue a red notice for him and sought his extradition from Egypt, classifying him as a suspect.

Indonesian authorities contacted their Egyptian counterparts to verify his status and discuss international judicial cooperation.

Media reports indicated that he was arrested and questioned by Egyptian authorities, although official judicial details regarding the case have not yet been made public.

Interpol notices are subject to specific legal requirements and the laws of each country. Egypt is not known for cooperating with requests from other countries or Interpol regarding the extradition of its citizens for trial abroad.

We are not writing to defame anyone, but rather to reiterate our earlier warnings that no entity should be granted preferential treatment over other government bodies under the pretext of a special religious status.

Serious crimes have occurred within some of these entities, some of which we have previously addressed. In many cases, the reason behind most of the censorship has been the absence of oversight and accountability, due to the near-sacred status often bestowed upon those who manage them.



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Why can't Kuwait become Singapore of Gulf region?

"I HAVE read more than once about Singapore, that remarkable city-state often described as a true modern wonder of the world because of its small size, strong economy, and vibrant urban life." Kuwaiti journalist **Hassan Ali Karam** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"This extraordinary nation excels in many sectors, including electronics, tourism, culture, and world-class dining.

"Reading about Singapore makes one feel as though it belongs to another era rather than our own world. Despite its limited land area and relatively small population, Singapore has never viewed its size as a weakness. Instead, it transformed itself and is classified as a 'city-state'."

"Singapore became a leading industrial and innovative nation through determination, planning, and the hard work of its people, not through empty arguments on satellite channels or through magic. Today, it stands as a strong competitor to many industrialized countries, particularly in electronics, technology, and manufacturing.

"Singapore is among the countries whose airlines rank among the best in the world for punctuality and quality of service. Today, Singapore is facing a labor shortage, prompting it to open its doors to around 25,000 expatriates to join the workforce, offering them financial benefits, pension rights, and permanent residency.

"When expatriate workers lack job security and peace of mind about their future, their productivity inevitably declines.

"Kuwait is one of the countries most comparable to Singapore in terms of size and strategic location. However, there is a vast difference between a country that strives for major economic and developmental achievements and another that chooses stagnation and clings to the defeatist saying: 'The less, the better.'"

"In terms of population, Kuwait is not far behind Singapore. Kuwait possesses talented young people and enormous wealth, yet it has not fully succeeded in utilizing these resources effectively. For decades, the country has relied primarily on extracting and exporting oil, then redistributing the revenues to citizens through salaries, subsidies, and various forms of state support.

"Singapore, by contrast, faces a labor shortage and has opened its doors to expatriates, many of whom eventually became citizens holding one of the world's strongest passports - the Singaporean passport.

"Meanwhile, Kuwait has thousands of unemployed young citizens, and in many cases the solution has been limited to creating forms of disguised unemployment while continuing to pay salaries without meaningful productivity.

"Why can't Kuwait become like Singapore, a country led by a woman of Yemeni Hadrami origin, who wears the hijab and is diligent in her prayers, especially the Fajr prayer?"

"We need a serious awakening to recognize our strengths and confront all shortcomings."

Also:

"With the accelerating urban and economic development that Kuwait is witnessing, and as development expands beyond traditional urban centers into broader areas, it has become appropriate to reconsider the country's administrative divisions to keep pace with these major transformations," columnist **Bassam Fahad Thunayan Al-Ghanim** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"Administrative divisions are not merely lines on a map but they are an essential tool for organizing services, strengthening security, supporting development, and bringing state institutions closer to citizens. The six governorates have played an important role in managing the state over past decades. However, Kuwait is now entering a new phase that is fundamentally different from the past.

"Today, there are large residential cities, ambitious economic projects, vast agricultural zones, strategic ports, and land and maritime borders, all of which require more specialized and focused administrative management.

"I propose adding six new governorates, bringing the total number of governorates in Kuwait to twelve. This would better align the administrative structure with the country's geographic size and future development projects, and place Kuwait in line with several Gulf countries that have adopted more detailed and comprehensive administrative divisions.

"I propose that the new governorates include the following:

1. Al-Khiran Governorate - This governorate would extend from Ali Sabah Al-Salem (Umm Al-Hayman), through Sabah Al-Ahmad Marine City, Khiran, and Al-Zour, and reach-

ing Nuwaiseeb. This area would be distinguished by its long coastline and major tourism and real estate projects, making it suitable to function as an independent governorate representing Kuwait's southeastern gateway.

2. Wafra Governorate - This governorate would include Sabah Al-Ahmad City (residential area), Wafra (both agricultural and residential zones), and extend to the southern border with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It would play a vital role in food security, agriculture, and national production.

3. Subiya Governorate - This governorate would include Subiya, the future Silk City, Boubyan Island and Warba Island, as well as Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port. It is positioned to become one of the most important economic and logistics hubs in the region.

4. Abdali Governorate - This governorate would encompass Abdali, Rawdatain, the northern farms, and the border area with Iraq. It represents the agricultural backbone of Kuwait and a major source of local agricultural produce. It would also include the small farms project, which allocates agricultural plots to retirees and young entrepreneurs.

5. Al-Mutlaa Governorate - This governorate would cover Al-Mutlaa City and the central areas northwest of Kuwait. It is one of the largest new residential cities in the country, expected to house hundreds of thousands of residents. It would also include the proposed "Kuwait Land" tourism project.

6. Al-Salmi Governorate - This governorate would include Al-Salmi, Al-Shagaya, the western areas, and the border area with Saudi Arabia. It is distinguished by its commercial and logistical significance, its role in hosting renewable energy projects, and the presence of large agricultural farms, agribusinesses, and food production facilities.

"The establishment of these new governorates is not merely an expansion of administrative structures, but a strategic step with clear practical benefits. It would contribute to improving the quality of public services, expediting transactions, strengthening security presence, and ensuring a more balanced distribution of resources.

"Each area would be managed by a specialized local administration focused on its specific needs. These new governorates would also support the implementation of New Kuwait 2030 vision, which aims to transform Kuwait into a regional and international financial and commercial hub.

"Projects of the scale of Silk City, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, Al-Khiran Tourist City, Al-Mutlaa Residential City, and Al-Wafra Agricultural City cannot be managed through administrative divisions designed for a very different reality decades ago.

"When we look at the Gulf experiences, we find that Saudi Arabia is divided into 13 administrative regions and Oman has 11 governorates. This confirms that increasing the number of governorates in Kuwait to 21 is a natural and logical step aligned with the best administrative practices in the region.

"This proposal is not merely a theoretical concept, but a practical and implementable vision. It could help enhance development efficiency, ensure a fairer distribution of services, and strengthen Kuwait's position among administratively and developmentally advanced nations.

"Building nations is not limited to constructing cities, roads, and ports; it also depends on the sound organization of public administration and redrawing Kuwait's administrative map. Establishing six new governorates would represent a long-term institutional investment in the future of Kuwait.

"Among the projects that strengthen the case for this proposed administrative structure is the construction of two new airports in the northern and southern parts of the country to accommodate expected urban and economic expansion.

"The northern airport could serve areas such as Jahra, Al-Mutlaa, Al-Abdali, Al-Salmi, Silk City, Al-Subiya, Boubyan Island, Warbah Island, and other northern regions.

"The southern airport would serve the governorates of Al-Khiran and Al-Wafra, including areas such as Al-Khiran, Sabah Al-Ahmad, Umm Al-Hayman, Wafra, and Nuwaiseeb, as well as surrounding tourism and residential developments.

"The presence of these airports would help stimulate investment, reduce travel time, and strengthen logistical connectivity between the new governorates. This would allow each governorate to function as part of an integrated development system, supported by a modern network of roads, ports, airports, and advanced public services."

- Compiled by Simi K. Kutty



Hassan Ali Karam



KUNA photo

Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian receives Director General of Military Operations of the Pakistani Army Brigadier Naveed Abbas.

Kuwait, Pakistan to boost defense bonds

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Shuraian held talks on Tuesday with Director General of Military Operations of the Pakistani Army Brigadier Naveed Abbas on ways to further develop joint military defense cooperation in support of mutual interests.

In a press statement, the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army said the discussions took place during Lieutenant General Al-Shuraian's reception of Brigadier Abbas and his accompanying delegation on the occasion of their visit to Kuwait.

The statement added that the meeting reviewed bilateral relations between Kuwait and Pakistan.

Noose tightened on graft

'Nazaha' strategy bolsters governance, transparency

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): **The Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) announced Tuesday the conclusion of Kuwait's first National Strategy for Enhancing Integrity and Combating Corruption (2019-2025), with implementation rates reaching around 90 percent.**

Nazaha said the strategy helped establish an integrated framework focused on legislative reform, governance, digital transformation, and improving public services.

It highlighted key legislative developments, including amendments to Nazaha's law under

Decree-Law No. 69 of 2025 to strengthen financial disclosure systems, expand criminalization of illicit enrichment, and enhance whistleblower protection. Kuwait also issued Decree-Law No. 79 of 2025 on international judicial cooperation in criminal matters to support prosecution of cross-border corruption cases.

The authority noted progress in governance through adopting national governance guidelines, strengthening accountability and internal audit systems, and implementing codes of conduct across state institutions.

Nazaha added that Kuwait advanced digital transformation through the "Sahel" government app, which now includes 42 government

entities and more than 500 electronic services, helping simplify procedures and reduce corruption opportunities. The app was recognized in the 2025 Arab Government Excellence Award.

The strategy also strengthened governance and transparency in the business sector through regulatory reforms, including the Auditors Law No. 103 of 2019, alongside awareness and training programs promoting ethical business practices.

Nazaha said the strategy project won the 2025 Arab Government Excellence Award for Best Arab Government Development Project and confirmed preparations are underway for a new post-2025 national strategy in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program.



Firemen tackling the blaze.

KFF photo

Bakery, confectionery wrecked as fire erupts

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Fire broke out in the basement of a building in Hawally, which was being used as a bakery and confectionery shop, reports Al-Anba daily.

The Kuwait Fire Service Force (KFF) explained in an official statement that firefighters from the Hawally and Salmiya fire stations rushed to the location and extinguished the fire. No casualties were reported. Investigations are ongoing to determine the cause of the fire.

Court acquits citizen in domestic violence case

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: The Criminal Court acquitted a citizen of all charges in a domestic violence case and dismissed the civil lawsuit filed against him seeking temporary compensation, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Public Prosecution had charged the defendant with unlawfully detaining his wife, spraying her with hot water, verbally abusing her, and threatening her with a firearm.

The Public Prosecution insisted that the defendant be punished in accordance with the provisions of the Penal Code and the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence.

During the trial sessions, lawyer Ali Matar Al-Wawan, who represented the defendant, argued that the charges were malicious and that there had been a delay in reporting the incident, in addition to existing family and financial disputes between the parties involved.

He challenged the seriousness of the investigations and the testimony of one of the witnesses, asserting that the case file lacked conclusive evidence to substantiate the accusations.

The court confirmed the absence of conclusive evidence in the case file to convict the defendant. It noted the plaintiff's delay in filing the report for over a year, despite her claim that the incidents occurred as early as July 2023.

The court clarified that the witness's testimony was based on statements attributed to the defendant without any direct observation.

It found that the police investigation lacked thoroughness and relied on conversations and recordings that were not included in the case file.

The court also confirmed that the forensic report failed to determine the nature of the injuries or the date and manner in which they occurred due to the considerable time that had passed since the incident.

Life term commuted, fine imposed in drug peddling

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: The Court of Cassation overturned life sentences for a customs inspector and two others in a drug smuggling case. The court sentenced the customs inspector to seven years in prison, while the others received three and ten years, respectively, and were fined KD 20,000 each, reports Al-Anba daily.

The Public Prosecution had charged

the defendants with smuggling drugs from abroad with the intent to traffic them, as well as offering and receiving bribes to allow bags to pass through Kuwait International Airport without inspection. Some of the defendants were also accused of firing on officers from the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) during a raid in the camel stables area.



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Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah poses with Samsun Provincial leadership, along with officials from Kuwait's Farwaniya Governorate, during an official meeting in Turkiye.



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah poses with Samsun Metropolitan Municipality leadership, along with officials from Kuwait's Farwaniya Governorate, during an official meeting in Turkiye.

Sheikh Athbi Al-Sabah attends Atatürk Anniversary, discusses joint initiatives with Turkish officials

Farwaniya Governor strengthens ties with Samsun during Turkiye visit

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah on Tuesday paid a friendly visit to Governor of Samsun Metropolitan Province in Turkiye Orhan Tavli, with representatives of the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in Ankara Counselor Sultan Al-Arada and Hassan Al-Ajmi in attendance.

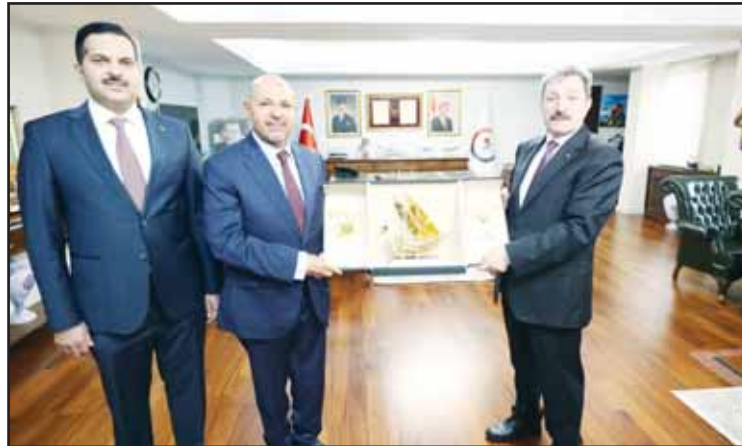
The visit was aimed at solidifying bilateral relations and exchange of expertise between the two sides. It coincided with the celebration of Atatürk's anniversary and the Youth and Sports Day.

Tavli warmly welcomed Sheikh Athbi Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation, expressing happiness over the visit, which reflects the deep fraternal ties between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Turkiye.

During the meeting, Sheikh Athbi emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation between Farwaniya Governorate and Samsun Province, particularly in the development, cultural and social fields.

He praised the historical and touristic significance of Samsun along the Black Sea, as well as its fraternal relations with Farwaniya Governorate.

He also appreciated the warm wel-



Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah exchanging commemorative gifts with Orhan Tavli, Governor of Samsun Metropolitan Province during his visit to Turkiye

come and hospitality, indicating that such meetings open more horizons for cooperation and the exchange of expertise in the interest of the two countries.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Tavli expressed his appreciation for the visit of the Governor of Farwaniya and his participation in the occasion. He affirmed that both sides are com-

mitted to continue communication, improve relations and strengthen cooperation between them. He wished the State of Kuwait more progress, prosperity and stability.

Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah met with Halit Dogan, Mayor of Samsun Metropolitan Municipality in the friendly



Farwaniya Governorate photos Farwaniya Governorate exchanging commemorative gifts with Samsun Metropolitan Municipality Mayor Halit Dogan, during his visit to Turkiye.

Republic of Turkiye.

Representatives of the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in Ankara Chargé d'Affaires Counselor Sultan Al-Arada and Hassan Al-Ajmi were also present.

This meeting took place during the official visit of Sheikh Athbi Nasser to Samsun, in response to the invitation to attend the Atatürk anniversary and

Youth and Sports Day celebrations.

They discussed ways to reinforce the agreement between the Farwaniya Governorate and Samsun Metropolitan Municipality, different topics of mutual interest, support for cultural and development cooperation, and exchange of expertise between the two sides.

Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser emphasized the importance of consolidating relations between the Farwaniya Governorate and Samsun, praising the deep-rooted historical ties between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Turkiye, which reflects the strength of cooperation and mutual understanding between the two friendly countries.

He thanked Dogan for the warm welcome and hospitality, affirming that such meetings open new horizons for joint cooperation and cultural initiatives.

Meanwhile, Dogan expressed his happiness over the visit of the Farwaniya Governor and his participation in the national celebrations. He confirmed his commitment to continue coordinating with Farwaniya Governorate in a way that serves common interests and contributes to the exchange of expertise and the strengthening of bilateral relations.

Toward the end of the meeting, both sides exchanged wishes for more progress and prosperity for Kuwait and Turkiye, while stressing the importance of continuous communication and strengthening of cooperation in various fields.

Kuwait takes part in 79th World Health Assembly and Arab Ministers' meeting

GENEVA, May 19, (KUNA): Sheikh Dr. Salman Al-Sabah, Kuwait's Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health and the head of delegation, took part on Monday in the inauguration of the 79th World Health Assembly held in Geneva, with the broad participation of member states and health senior ministers across the globe.

They are set to discuss the most prominent global health challenges and boosting international collaboration in this field.

Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah also took part in Arab health ministers' meeting which approved the executive bureau's recommendations, including the Arab group's support for the Jordan-GCC decision listed on the Assembly's agenda.

This step shows the Arab unified stance

toward humanitarian and health issues of mutual concern, and the importance of enhancing the protection of health systems as well as the continuation of health services during crises and emergencies.

The Assembly is set to discuss, during the next days, the bill which was submitted by the Jordan-GCC group, and supported and sponsored by the Arab group, along with France, the UK, Canada and some member states.

Kuwait's delegation affirmed the importance of continued Arab and international coordination on the health issues of humanitarian dimension, and support for efforts aiming to enhance health systems' steadfastness and the protection of main services, in a way which is compatible with the goals of the World Health Organization and its humanitarian message.



KUNA photo Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health, Sheikh Dr. Salman Khalifa Al-Sabah, participated in the work of the Executive Bureau meeting of the Council of Arab Health Ministers held in Geneva.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait honors

Francisco José Herrera Alvarado (Honduras) and Habib Idris (Ghana).

Representative of the Protocol Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Muhanna Al-Muhanna and a number of ambassadors and diplomats attended the event.

Speaking at the ceremony, Zubaydov affirmed that the four ambassadors greatly contributed to strengthening bilateral relations with Kuwait, in addition to supporting diplomatic efforts and international cooperation in the diplomatic community.

He said Guinean Ambassador Mamadi Traoré, who served from 2018 to 2026, played a vital role in supporting political, economic and development relations between Kuwait and his country. He disclosed that the outgoing ambassador was involved in the implementation of development projects funded by Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) and supported coordination among African missions in Kuwait. He added that Traoré also served as Deputy Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps in 2025.

He commended the efforts of Afghan Ambassador Sayed Jawed Hashemi in strengthening cooperation and preparing several draft agreements and memoranda of understanding. He affirmed his success in maintaining positive and constructive relations despite the political challenges his country has been facing since 2021.

On Ghanaian Ambassador Habib Idris, he revealed that the latter's tenure from 2023 to 2026 witnessed the strengthening of Kuwaiti-Ghanaian relations in the fields of trade, education and culture, as well as organizing the

first political consultation between the two countries in May 2025.

He praised the contributions of Honduran Ambassador Francisco Alvarado in consolidating friendly relations and cooperation with Kuwait and his participation in diplomatic and cultural activities.

He added that the four ambassadors left a positive mark on Kuwait, thanks to their professionalism and cooperation throughout their tenure.

On the sidelines of the ceremony, the Ghanaian ambassador expressed his pride in his time in Kuwait, describing it as an exceptional experience.

He emphasized that Kuwait has become a significant center for diplomatic activity in the region, which strengthened bilateral relations in a fruitful manner.

The Honduran ambassador said he is leaving Kuwait after a distinguished personal and professional experience. He affirmed that he established friendships and relationships that he will cherish for a lifetime. He lauded the generosity of the Kuwaiti people and the warm welcome he received during his tenure.

The Guinean ambassador stressed that he will always consider Kuwait a country of dialogue, openness and cooperation. He expressed his appreciation for the warm reception and support he received from the Kuwaiti authorities and the diplomatic corps.

The Afghan ambassador asserted that relations between his country and Kuwait extend back to the 1960s. He said the opening of the Afghan Embassy in Kuwait in 1974 is an important milestone in the course of bilateral relations. He expressed appreciation for the support and cooperation that Kuwait provided to his country and the Afghan community here.



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Continued from Page 1

Iran does

There is no solution for this rogue nation, whose leaders still live in the caves of medieval backwardness, but to uproot it entirely. This can only be achieved through internal action. Perhaps, the great Iranian people are more capable of doing this now, after the weakness caused by the recent war.

Poet Abu Al-Tayyib Al-Mutanabbi aptly summarized the natural order of things: "There is no hand but Allah's hand above it ... and no oppressor but one who will be afflicted by a greater oppressor."

In contrast, Arabs, particularly those in the Gulf, are known for their patience and prudence -- traits stemming from the harsh climate of their countries. They operate on the principle that "patience is bitter, but its reward is sweet."

Thus, the request for President Trump to halt the attack has several advantages, the most important is that the day after the ceasefire, regardless of the agreement reached, will likely lead to internal unrest in Iran. This will prevent any regional losses, as the anticipated change within the regime will proceed smoothly and without chaos.

Week-long sweep

fighters and the impounding of 17 vehicles.

These efforts are part of a plan to enhance security readiness and enforce order on roads and various areas through intensified deployment of field patrols in all governorates.

The directorate emphasized the continuation of security campaigns and the rapid response to reports and emergencies, contributing to maintaining security and improving traffic safety.

Meanwhile, the General Traffic Department continued its intensive traffic campaigns from May 11 to May 16, as part of its efforts to promote legal compliance and strengthen traffic discipline.

The campaigns resulted in the issuance of 16,559 traffic citations for various violations, the apprehension of 145 individuals for expired residency permits, the impounding of 332 vehicles and 42 motorcycles, the arrest of 18 individuals without official identification, the referral of 6 individuals to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD), and the referral of 4 individuals in an abnormal condition to the relevant authorities.

The campaigns also led to the seizure of 35 vehicles wanted by the courts, the handling of 2,827 traffic reports, and the response to 210 col-

lisions and injury cases, in addition to 1,070 traffic accidents.

The campaigns resulted in the apprehension of 108 wanted individuals, the referral of 12 juveniles to the Juvenile Prosecution, and the detention of 56 violators.

The Traffic and Operations Affairs Sector confirmed that field campaigns will continue with full determination to maintain road safety and protect road users.

MoE wraps

The Ministry of Education confirmed that the committee identified several administrative and financial observations and violations related to certain procedures and assigned responsibilities according to each party's role and duties.

The final report included several recommendations and proposed legal and administrative measures to address the observations and improve the efficiency of future procedures.

The Minister of Education, Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, issued directives to take the necessary legal and administrative actions, ensuring the protection of public funds and reinforcing the principles of integrity, accountability, and transparency in all procedures and transactions related to the ministry's work.

The acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education, Eng. Mohammed Al-Khalidi, issued a number of disciplinary decisions against several employees, following the confirmation of several administrative violations related to the procedures under investigation.

The criminal violations were referred to the competent judicial authorities to take the necessary action regarding the identified violations.

The Ministry of Education concluded its statement by affirming its continued commitment to developing the administrative and contractual work system and strengthening the principles of governance and institutional oversight, thereby contributing to increased performance efficiency and ensuring the integrity of procedures.

Kuwait envoy

Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, along with their wishes for continued progress and prosperity for Qatar's leader-

ship, government and people.

In a statement to KUNA, Ambassador Al-Shuraim affirmed Kuwait's keenness to strengthen the deep-rooted fraternal ties with Qatar and advance them toward broader horizons across various fields.

He noted that Kuwaiti-Qatari ties represent a distinguished model of Gulf relations based on brotherhood, cooperation and ongoing coordination under the support and patronage of the leaderships of both countries.

The ambassador also expressed pride in representing Kuwait in Qatar, affirming his commitment to enhancing bilateral cooperation and serving the shared interests of the two brotherly nations. (KUNA)

Kuwait will

He added that his years in Kuwait were defined by meaningful human interactions and valuable experiences, reiterating that the country will remain with him regardless of his future travels.

Interior Ministry

identification project for its buildings in order to support sectors and provide resources for the security system as a whole.

During the inspection tour, he reviewed the operational mechanisms and the level of administrative and technical readiness.

He listened to a detailed explanation of specialists about the tasks, services, mechanisms for covering the material and logistical needs of various sectors in the ministry, storage and distribution systems, and procedures followed to ensure speedy and efficient completion of tasks.

Head of the Financial Affairs and Support Services Sector Brigadier General Mohammed Al-Zoubi and other sector officials warmly welcomed Al-Wahib.

According to Al-Wahib, the Financial Affairs and Support Services Sector is the cornerstone of logistical support for all sectors at the ministry. He underscored the importance of developing the work system to raise the efficiency of security agencies and their level of readiness.

He also stressed the need to continue updating work mechanisms and utilizing modern technologies to achieve the highest standards of quality and institutional excellence.

He expressed appreciation for the efforts exerted by the staff at the sector and their vital role in supporting other sectors in the ministry.



Part of Boubyan Bank's honoring of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, and the leaders of the Fire Department.

Recognizing firefighters' national duty

First Deputy Prime Minister commends KFF's competence and professionalism

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah praised the sacrifices and efforts of firefighters, indicating that their readiness and discipline prove their competence and professionalism in performing their national duty.

This is part of an official statement that Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) issued on Tuesday, after Boubyan Bank honored Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef and several KFF officials for their national efforts and high level of preparedness in maintaining national security and safety.

It disclosed that the honoring ceremony was held when a Boubyan Bank delegation, headed by Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Boubyan Bank Group Adel Al-Majed, visited the KFF headquarters.

It quoted Al-Majed as saying that the vital role played by KFF is a manifestation of the commitment to shoulder national responsibility and the competence of its personnel in various work



MoI photos
First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior with Boubyan Bank's Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer during the honoring ceremony.

locations. It added that Al-Majed commended the rapid response and efficiency of the firefighting teams in dealing with a minor fire that broke out recently in the main building of the bank, which is under construction. It confirmed that the fire was extinguished in record time.

KU holds online guidance sessions

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Kuwait University, represented by the Deanship of Student Affairs and the Academic Counseling Department, organized a series of online guidance sessions for high school students from April 20 to 28, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This initiative is in line with the university's commitment to enhancing student readiness for university education and supporting early academic planning, in accordance with its strategic pillars of quality and sustainability.

The sessions aimed to familiarize students with admission and registration requirements, academic majors, and university life, as well as to highlight the student services offered

by the university. Kuwait University stated that this initiative reflects its approach of investing in early academic guidance as a key enabler for student success and a better university experience, thereby supporting the quality of educational outcomes and reinforcing its academic and community mission.

The sessions saw wide participation from all governorates of Kuwait, targeting 22 schools in both the public and private sectors, with a total of 508 students participating. The sessions were led by staff members from the Academic Counseling Department, who provided comprehensive guidance and answered students' questions.



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America

5 dead in San Diego shooting: Before the first shot rang out at a San Diego mosque in a deadly shooting that would leave three men dead, police were already scrambling to find two teenagers who would ultimately be responsible.

The search began after a mother of one of the teenagers reported her son was suicidal and had run away, according to San Diego Police Chief **Scott Wahl**, who said weapons were missing from the home and her vehicle was gone.

Two hours later, the shooting began at the Islamic Center of San Diego, just blocks away from the home.

The suspects, ages 17 and 18, were found in a vehicle after killing themselves a few blocks from the site of the shooting.

Authorities planned to execute search warrants related to the investigation Tuesday as they piece together how and why the shooting unfolded. There was no specific threat made against the Islamic center, but authorities found evidence that the suspects engaged in "generalized hate rhetoric," Wahl said, noting that the shooting is being investigated as a hate crime.

The center, which said it was closed until further notice, is the largest mosque in San Diego and typically holds five daily prayers. (AP)



Wahl

Ex-LA police detective Fuhrman dies: Former Los Angeles police detective Mark Fuhrman, who was convicted of lying during testimony at the O.J. Simpson murder trial, has died. He was 74.

Fuhrman was one of the first two police detectives sent to investigate the 1994 killings of Simpson's ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend, Ronald Goldman, in Los Angeles. He reported finding a bloody glove at Simpson's home but his credibil-

ity came under attack during the trial as the defense raised the prospect of racial bias.

Under cross-examination, Fuhrman testified that he had never made anti-Black racial slurs in the past decade, but a recording showed he had done so repeatedly.

Lynn Acebedo, the chief deputy coroner in Kootenai County, Idaho, said that Fuhrman died May 12. The county does not release the cause of death as a rule.

Alan Dershowitz, a prominent lawyer and law professor who was a legal strategist on Simpson's defense "Dream Team," said Fuhrman was a "much better detective than he was a witness."

"He's very smart, and you know, a very, very aggressive detective. Ultimately his actions helped us win the O.J. case because of his use of the 'n' word," Dershowitz said Monday evening. "I got to know him later, after it was all over, and we had a cordial relationship." (AP)

□ □ □

Former Hartford police officer charged: A white police officer in Connecticut who fatally shot a Black man suffering a mental health crisis has been charged with manslaughter after a state investigation found he failed to de-escalate the confrontation.

The officer, Joseph Magnano, was fired by the Hartford Police Department following the Feb. 27 shooting of Steven Jones, a 55-year-old man with a history of mental illness who had been walking through the street holding a large knife.

Magnano was charged Monday by the Connecticut Inspector General after he turned himself into law enforcement, according to Hartford Police Union President James Rutkauski.

Information about his attorney was not immediately available.

The shooting drew widespread public outcry and questions over Hartford's policies around responding to people in mental distress. (AP)



The Sandy Fire burns vegetation on May 18, in Simi Valley, Calif. (AP)

Thousands ordered to evacuate as S. Calif wildfire threatens homes

Thousands of people were ordered to evacuate Monday as a wind-driven wildfire threatened suburban homes in Southern California.

The Sandy Fire was reported around 10 am in hills above Simi Valley, about 30 miles (48 kilometers) northwest of Los Angeles.

By mid-afternoon it had consumed more than 500 acres (200 hectares) of dry brush and dam-

aged at least one home, according to the Ventura County Fire Department.

The flames were pushed by morning gusts that topped 30 mph (48 kph) but were subsiding later in the day, said according to fire department spokesperson Scott Dettorre.

"As the sun sets, those winds will calm down even more," Dettorre said. (AP)

We're changing the rules in the middle of the game: Wetmore

Redistricting debate shifts to S. Carolina as GOP seeks clean sweep of House seats

COLUMBIA, SC, May 19, (AP): An effort to reshape South Carolina's congressional districts got its first full airing Monday in the state House, as lawmakers launched what could become a lengthy discussion on whether to accede to US President Donald Trump's desires for a US House map that could yield a clean sweep for Republicans.

Tense debates already have played out in Tennessee, Alabama and Louisiana as Republicans push aggressively to leverage a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling that weakened Voting Rights Act protections for minority districts. The ruling has opened the way for Republicans to redraw districts with large Black populations that have elected Democrats.

But in South Carolina, some Republicans have reservations about a plan targeting a seat long held by US Rep Jim Clyburn, the only Democrat among the state's seven House representatives.

State Rep. Nathan Ballentine said

South Carolina has probably seen more projects and funding from the federal government thanks to Clyburn being in office. He said he has asked constituents whether they support redistricting and over half of reliable Republicans - people who voted in at least four recent GOP primaries - are against it.

"My mama raised me just because you can doesn't mean you should," Ballentine said.

Clyburn has said he has no intention of retiring, even if his district gets changed.

Last month's Supreme Court decision striking down a Black-majority congressional district in Louisiana has led to reversals in several other redistricting cases. On Monday, the Supreme Court vacated lower court decisions on state legislative districts in Mississippi and North Dakota and directed them to be reconsidered in light of the Louisiana ruling.

It took a similar action last week for Alabama's congressional dis-



US Republican South Carolina Rep. Nathan Ballentine presents his version of a map for new congressional districts during the House session on redistricting on May 18, in Columbia, SC. (AP)

tricts, creating an opening for Republican state officials to try to use a map in the midterm elections that could help the party win an addi-

tional seat.

Redistricting typically occurs at the start of each decade, based on new population figures from the census.

South Carolina's debate showed the complexity of changing congressional district boundaries mid-decade. An amendment adopted Monday would allow dozens of state board members chosen by congressional districts - including college trustees, utility regulators and parole board members - to stay in their positions until after the 2030 census, even under the new congressional map.

Democratic state Rep. Annie McDaniel said it was an example of how congressional redistricting outside normal procedures causes other problems.

"We're talking confusion on top of confusion on top of confusion," McDaniel said.

Monday's session ended with Republicans voting nearly unanimously to limit debate. Each House member will be allowed one amendment and just three minutes to advocate for their change to the bill. There were over 600 amendments on the desk

when the change was made.

Democratic Rep. Spencer Wetmore said she doesn't know of any other time that the House has limited the number of amendments filed.

"We're changing the rules in the middle of the game," Wetmore said. Some absentee and overseas military votes have already been cast for South Carolina's June 9 primaries. Early in-person voting is scheduled to begin May 26.

In addition to redrawing congressional districts, legislation pending in the state House would move the U.S. House primaries to August. If it clears the House, the legislation then must go to the Senate.

Republican Gov. Henry McMaster, who called lawmakers into a special session on redistricting, said it is important for South Carolina to send as many Republicans to Washington as possible to try to prevent Democrats from taking control of the House and attempting to impeach Trump.



Police and firefighters stand near a collapsed house in the city center of Górlitz, Germany on May 18. (AP)

3 missing in Germany building collapse

Rescue teams in eastern Germany searched Tuesday morning for three people who were missing after a building collapsed in the eastern city of Górlitz near the Polish border.

Police said a gas explosion may have been the cause for the col-

lapse of the building, which took place Monday night.

Emergency responders proceeded with great caution at the scene in case of gas leaks, German news agency dpa reported.

After unsuccessful attempts to locate the missing under the rubble

with the help of search dogs, rescuers began clearing debris with an excavator and by hand around 2 a.m. Tuesday.

Initial concerns that up to five people may have been buried under rubble turned out to be wrong, police said. (AP)

Europe

Ex-Spanish PM faces corruption probe: A Spanish court is investigating former prime minister **José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero** for alleged influence peddling and other possible crimes tied to a government airline bailout.

The National Court in Madrid is probing possible financial wrongdoing in connection with the Spanish government's rescue of the Plus Ultra airline, which in 2021 received 53 million euros (now \$62 million) in public money as part of COVID-19 recovery funds.

The court said in a statement that the investigation was widened to include Zapatero, who was summoned to answer a judge's questions on June 2. Police with warrants from the investigating judge searched Zapatero's office on Tuesday. Zapatero, 65, was prime minister from 2004 to 2011. He is a member of the Socialist party headed by current Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez.

He denied any wrongdoing related to the bailout in a Senate hearing in March, saying he "never received any commissions from Plus Ultra."



Zapatero

Plus Ultra is a Spanish-owned airline with investors from Venezuela. It specialized in flights between Spain and Venezuela, Peru and Ecuador.

Since leaving office, Zapatero has focused a large part of his activity on maintaining dialogue with the far-left regime in Venezuela, which was largely isolated from Western countries after it cracked down on the democratic opposition. (AP)

□ □ □

Belarus stages N-forces training drill: Belarus has commenced a scheduled military training exercise focused on nuclear combat and support capacities, the Belarusian Defense Ministry said Monday.

The drill, aimed at enhancing the armed forces' readiness to employ modern weapons systems, including special munitions, will test the operational preparedness of units, equipment and specialized technical systems to carry out missions from unprepared territories across the country.

While units from Belarus's missile forces and air force are actively participating, a key task of the exercise is to assess capabilities to conduct nuclear strikes from dispersed, non-prepared locations, featuring stealth, long-range mobility, and precision targeting, said the ministry. (Xinhua)

Hungary's Magyar kicks off first foreign trip as prime minister to ally Poland

BUDAPEST, Hungary, May 19, (AP): Hungary's new prime minister headed on Tuesday to Poland, a longtime ally whose recent political transformation has plenty of lessons to offer on how Pétér Magyar's government can go about reversing his country's authoritarian drift.

Magyar, whose center-right Tisza party defeated far-right Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his nationalist-populist Fidesz in an earthquake election last month, has vowed to dismantle the political and economic system his autocratic predecessor spent 16 years building.

That has raised hopes across Europe, and also drawn comparisons to Poland's 2023 election when Prime Minister Donald Tusk's center-right coalition defeated the national-conservative Law and Justice party after eight years in power.

Like Magyar, Tusk moved quickly to restore democratic institutions eroded during the previous government, including the judiciary and public media, while seeking accountability for officials accused of abuses of power. Magyar is flying to the southern



Hungarian Prime Minister Peter Magyar, (center), stands between two of the government spokespersons Eva Magyar, (left), and Anita Kobol, (right), during a press conference following the meeting of the government in Budapest, Hungary on May 18. (AP)

Polish city of Krakow on Tuesday, before proceeding by train to the capital of Warsaw and then on to Gdansk, on the Baltic Sea.

Also:

BUDAPEST: Hungary and Ukraine will begin consultations on the rights of Ukraine's ethnic Hungarian minority, the countries' foreign ministers said Monday, an early sign that strained

relations between Budapest and Kyiv could improve under Hungary's new government.

Bilateral ties between the neighboring countries eroded for years under the pro-Russian government of former Hungarian Prime Minister **Viktor Orbán**, which refused to provide Ukraine with money or weapons to assist in its defense against **Russia's** full-scale invasion.

Russia holds massive drills of nuclear forces as Ukraine steps up drone attacks

MOSCOW, May 19, (AP): Russia on Tuesday began massive maneuvers of its nuclear forces featuring practice launches of nuclear-capable ballistic and cruise missiles in drills that come amid surge in Ukrainian drone strikes.

The three-day exercise will involve 64,000 troops, over 200 missile launchers, more than 140 aircraft, 73 surface warships and 13 submarines, including eight armed with nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles, the Defense Ministry said.

The maneuvers will focus on the "preparation and use of nuclear forces under the threat of aggression," the ministry said.

The drills will also practice cooperation with Belarus, a neighbor and ally that hosts Russian nuclear weapons. Russian arsenals in Belarus include its latest intermediate range nuclear-capable Oreshnik missile system.

The maneuvers come as Ukraine



In this image made from video provided by Russian Defense Ministry Press Service on May 12, Russia's new Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile is test launched at an unspecified location in Russia. (AP)

has sharply intensified its drone attacks against Russia, including a weekend barrage on Moscow's suburbs that killed three and damaged several buildings and industrial facilities.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly reminded the world about Moscow's nuclear arsenals after sending troops into Ukraine in February 2022 to try to deter the West from ramping up support for Kyiv.

Leaders reach common ground on trade, Taiwan and global issues

China and US chart 'strategic stability' path after Xi-Trump Beijing summit

BEIJING, May 19: China and the United States have agreed to pursue a "constructive relationship of strategic stability" following extensive talks between President Xi Jinping and U.S. President Donald Trump, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said, describing the Beijing summit as a "historic meeting" that sets a new direction for bilateral ties.

Speaking in a post-summit briefing, Wang said the two leaders held nearly nine hours of discussion – spanning formal talks, private exchanges, and cultural engagements – focused on managing differences while expanding cooperation across political, economic, and global security domains.

New phase in ties

Wang framed the summit as a pivotal moment, noting it marked Trump's first visit to China as president and the first in-person meeting between the two leaders since late last year. He said the talks signaled a "new starting point" for relations at a time of accelerating global change.

"The two presidents sought the right way for two major countries to get along," Wang said, adding that both sides aim to align national development goals in a manner that contributes to global stability and prosperity.

Central to the outcome is a shared commitment to build a relationship defined by cooperation, managed competition, and long-term stability. According to Wang, this framework emphasizes avoiding zero-sum rivalry, maintaining policy consistency, and preventing conflict through mutual respect for core interests.

Expanding cooperation channels

The two sides agreed to deepen engagement across multiple sectors, including foreign policy, military communication, trade, public health, agriculture, tourism, and law enforcement. Wang said this would "lengthen the list of cooperation and shorten the list of irritants."

Leadership-level communication will remain central, with both presidents committing to regular contact through meetings, calls, and correspondence. Xi is also expected to pay a state visit to the United States later this year.

Economic and trade discussions yielded what Wang described as "balanced and positive outcomes," including plans to establish new trade and investment coordination

mechanisms, expand market access – particularly in agriculture – and pursue reciprocal tariff reductions. Details remain under consultation.

People-to-people ties

The summit also placed strong emphasis on societal exchanges. Xi announced a plan to invite 50,000 young Americans to China over five years for study and exchange programs, an initiative welcomed by both sides.

Wang highlighted growing engagement among business, academic, and local government actors, noting that U.S. corporate leaders accompanying Trump expressed continued interest in the Chinese market.

Taiwan and core concerns

The Taiwan issue featured prominently in discussions. Wang reiterated Beijing's position that Taiwan is an internal matter and warned it remains "the most important issue" in China-U.S. relations.

He said both sides recognized the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, adding that China expects Washington to adhere to the one-China principle and existing bilateral communiqués.

Global issues on agenda

Beyond bilateral ties, the leaders discussed key international challenges. On the Middle East, Wang said China called for dialogue over force and urged continued negotiations, including between the United States and Iran, alongside efforts to stabilize critical waterways such as the Strait of Hormuz.

Regarding the Ukraine conflict, Wang said both countries support efforts toward a political resolution and will maintain communication to facilitate peace talks, while acknowledging the complexity of the crisis.

Toward a longer-term framework

Wang concluded that the summit provides strategic guidance for China-U.S. relations in the coming years, stressing the need to translate high-level consensus into concrete policies.

"The direction has been set," he said. "What remains is to deliver results that benefit both peoples and contribute to global peace and development."



US President Donald Trump participates in a welcome ceremony with China's President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People on May 14, in Beijing. (AP)

Leaders plan to discuss int'l issues

Putin visits China to reaffirm Russia ties

BEIJING, May 19, (AP): Russian President Vladimir Putin is traveling to China to meet with Chinese leader Xi Jinping less than a week after US President Donald Trump wrapped up his own trip to Beijing.

Putin is scheduled to be in China on Tuesday and Wednesday in a visit likely to be closely watched as Beijing seeks to maintain stable relations with the United States while also preserving strong ties with Russia.

The Kremlin has said Putin and Xi plan to discuss economic cooperation between the two countries, but also "key international and regional issues." The visit coincides with the 25th anniversary of the Sino-Russian Treaty of Friendship signed in 2001.

Putin said in a video address released before his visit that bilateral ties are at "a truly unprecedented level" and the relationship plays an important role globally, China's official Xinhua News Agency reported Tuesday.

There is "no connection" between Trump's visit to China and Putin's, presidential aide Yuri Ushakov told reporters Monday, noting the trip by the Russian leader was agreed in advance, several days after Putin



Russian President Vladimir Putin gestures during a news conference, at the end of his visit to China for the Tianjin SCO Summit and the military parade to mark the 80th anniversary of the end of World War Two, in Beijing on Sept 3, 2025. (AP)

and Xi spoke via video conference on Feb. 4.

"The Trump visit was about stabilizing the world's most important bilateral relationship; the Putin visit is about reassuring a long-standing strategic partner," said Wang Zichen, deputy secretary-general for the Beijing-based think tank Center for China & Globalization. "For

China, these two tracks are not mutually exclusive."

Putin last visited China in September 2025 to attend the annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Tianjin, watch a military parade honoring the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II and hold talks with Xi.

Lee, Takaichi hold 4th meeting in 6 months to push South Korea-Japan cooperation

SEOUL, South Korea, May 19, (AP): South Korean President Lee Jae Myung and Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi held their fourth meeting in about six months on Tuesday, underscoring the need for greater cooperation between the historical Asian rivals amid global challenges, including the Iran war.

Lee hosted Takaichi in his hometown of Andong, a southeastern South Korean city famous for its centuries-old traditional folk village, a UNESCO World Heritage site. In January, the two met in Takaichi's hometown of Nara, an ancient Japanese capital.

The meetings marked the first time sitting leaders of the two countries have visited each other's hometowns.

"The fact that such meaningful and historic exchanges took place in the span of just four months speaks to the depth and strength of the friendship and bonds that Korea and Japan now share," Lee told a joint news conference with Takaichi after the summit.

Lee said bilateral cooperation was needed more than ever due to instability in supply chains and energy markets caused by the war in the Middle East. Takaichi made similar



South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, (right), speaks as Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi listens during their joint news conference in Andong, South Korea, on May 19, (AP)

comments, saying the two discussed stabilizing energy and critical mineral supplies and pursuing swap arrangements of crude oil, petroleum products and natural gas.

The two leaders said they also discussed the importance of trilateral cooperation among Seoul, Tokyo, and Washington.

Experts say current ties between

Seoul and Tokyo have no sticking points and that their relationship will subsequently remain on a positive trajectory for now.

"The two countries focus more on cooperation than contentious issues," said Choi Eunmi, a Japan expert at the Seoul-based Asan Institute for Policy Studies. "They would now think negative bilateral relations won't be helpful to anyone."



Police stand guard behind a fence during anti-government protests near the government palace in La Paz, Bolivia on May 18. (AP)

Bolivia protesters allied with Morales clash with police

Supporters of Bolivia's influential ex-president Evo Morales clashed with police on Monday in the capital city as they called on the president to resign, joining a nationwide protest movement fueled by the worst economic crisis in a generation.

Thousands of Morales' followers

converged on the plaza outside the government headquarters as Bolivia remains paralyzed by road blockades that have strangled cities and triggered food and fuel shortages in the last two weeks.

The unrest presents the biggest challenge yet for President Rodrigo

Paz, a business friendly centrist who came to power six months ago as a wave of conservative electoral wins swept the region. Security forces pushed back protesters who tried to break police ranks with canisters of tear gas before they could reach Congress or the presidential palace. (AP)



People strip parts from a burned-out vehicle during a public transport strike over fuel prices in Nairobi, Kenya on May 18. (AP)

4 killed, dozens injured in Kenya protests over fuel prices

Four people died and over 30 others were injured when police clashed with protesters in Kenya's capital on Monday as a nationwide public transport strike kicked off to protest record fuel prices.

Interior Minister Kipchumba Murkomen also said 348 people were

arrested and would be charged over their involvement in what he called violent illegal protests. He did not say how the four people were killed, but witnesses told local media that police in Nairobi had opened fire.

Commuters were stranded in many suburbs and the city center

was deserted as protesters burned tires on major roads and attacked motorists, setting at least two vehicles on fire.

Kenya's fuel prices hit a record high on Friday, with the diesel price increasing by 23.5% and gasoline by 8%. (AP)

Lat/Am

Maduro ally charged in bribery case: A close ally of ousted Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro was charged Monday with bribing top officials to steal hundreds of millions of dollars from lucrative contracts to import food at a time of widespread hardship in the South American country.

Alex Saab made his initial court appearance after being deported over the weekend by acting President Delcy Rodríguez as part of a purge of insider businessmen who are believed to have enriched themselves through corrupt dealings with Maduro. (AP)



Students protest in Venezuela: A few dozen people demonstrated Monday in Venezuela's capital in memory of a woman who died over the weekend, just days after learning that her son had died in state custody nine months ago.

The demonstrators, mostly college students, briefly blocked a highway in Caracas as they blamed Venezuela's government for the deaths of Víctor Hugo Quero, whose detention was considered politically motivated, and his elderly mother, Carmen Navas. As the students chanted, they also carried a large banner with Navas' photo. (AP)

Subcontinent

Passenger train catches fire in India: A fire broke out Monday in one of the coaches of a passenger train in the eastern Indian state of Bihar, officials said.

No one was hurt in the incident.

The fire broke out in the train at Sasaram railway station, about 157 km west of Patna, the capital city of Bihar. The blaze caused panic among the passengers on the platform. Preliminary investigations suggest that an electrical short circuit may have triggered the fire. (Xinhua)



Gunmen kill 2 police officers in Pakistan: Gunmen in two separate attacks Monday shot and killed two police officers assigned to protect polio vaccination teams in northwest Pakistan before fleeing, officials said.

The attacks occurred in two areas of Bajaur, a district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan, police officer Zafar Khan said, as Pakistan launched a new campaign across the country to vaccinate 19 million children against polio in an effort to eradicate the crippling disease. (AP)

Divers recover two of dead Italians from underwater cave in Maldives

MALE, Maldives, May 19, (AP): Finnish divers on Tuesday recovered the bodies of two of the four remaining Italians who died deep inside an underwater cave in an atoll in the Maldives, an official said.

The bodies were located on Monday, when searches resumed after being suspended following the death of a local military diver during a perilous mission to try to reach them.

Five Italian divers went missing on Thursday, with one of the bodies recovered earlier. The plan is to recover the remaining two bodies on Wednesday.

The announcement that two bodies were recovered on Tuesday was made by presidential spokesperson Mohamed Hussain Shareef.

Maldives government spokes-



In this handout photo release by Maldives President Media Division, a Finnish diver gets ready to attempt to recover the bodies of two of the four Italians who died deep inside an underwater cave in an atoll earlier this month, at Alimathaa Island, in Vaavu Atoll, Maldives on May 19. (AP)

man Ahmed Shaam had earlier said that the three Finnish divers would retrieve the bodies, which were lying at a depth of around 60 meters (200 feet). The legal depth for recreational diving in the Maldives is 30 meters (nearly 100 feet).

The government of the Indian Ocean island nation on Monday said that the bodies were spotted in the innermost part of the cave by the three Finnish diving experts, supported by the Maldives police and the military.

"As was previously thought, the four bodies were found inside the cave, not only inside the cave, but well inside the cave into the third segment of the cave, which is the largest part," Shaam said.

He said that the four bodies were found "pretty much together."

Kuwaiti oil rises to \$124.63 pb

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 60 cents to USD 124.63 per barrel (pb) in Monday's trading, compared with USD 124.03 pb in trading last Friday, the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation

(KPC) said Tuesday.

In global markets, Brent crude futures rose by USD 2.84 to reach USD 112.10 pb, while West Texas Intermediate crude futures increased by USD 3.24 to settle at USD 108.66 pb.

Business

The bank participates in honoring 19 CFA Charterholders for 2026

NBK further reinforces commitment to advancing professional talent across financial sector through its partnership with CFA Society Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Reinforcing its continued commitment to developing professional talent within the financial sector, and in partnership with CFA Society Kuwait, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) participated in the 16th Annual CFA Charter Awards Ceremony 2026.

The event brought together senior leaders and professionals from across the investment community, during which 19 new CFA charterholders were recognized, reflecting the continued advancement of professional capabilities and rising standards across the financial sector.

During the ceremony, Fahad Al-Bader, Deputy CEO – Asset Management at NBK Wealth, delivered the keynote address, highlighting the evolution of regional capital markets, the importance of advancing professional standards, and the need to strengthen institutional capabilities in the next phase of the financial sector's development.

Market Evolution

The discussions highlighted the significant transformation witnessed across GCC capital markets over the past two decades, with the market capitalization of listed exchanges now measured in trillions of dollars, driven by broader institutional participation, evolving regulatory frameworks, enhanced market infrastructure, and increasing market maturity.

The evolution of Kuwait's capital market was also addressed following Boursa Kuwait's transition from Frontier Market to Emerging Market status between 2017 and 2020, a milestone that contributed to attracting nearly USD 5 billion in cumulative foreign inflows during that period. This transition reflects growing international investor confidence and the continued advancement of the market's institutional environment.

The discussions further underscored that the next phase of Kuwait's market development will no longer depend solely on market access, but increasingly on the quality of institutional infrastructure, market depth, higher professional standards, and the continued development of investment capabilities.

As Kuwait advances along its path toward FTSE Advanced Emerging Market status, NBK continues to invest in institutional capabilities, capital market infrastructure in Kuwait, brokerage services, and investment solutions in line with the market's long-term evolution.

Technological Advancement

The discussions also highlighted the impact of technological transformation across the financial and investment services sectors, particularly in the fields of data analytics and artificial intelligence, and the implications of these developments for institutions and professionals across the industry.

Participants noted that competitive advantage is no longer driven



NBK participates in CFA Charter Awards 2026



Fahad Al-Bader

- The next phase of Kuwait's capital market development requires deeper institutional capabilities and higher professional standards
- NBK continues to invest in market infrastructure, investment services, and brokerage activities in line with the ongoing evolution of Kuwait's capital market
- Competitive advantage in the financial services industry is increasingly driven by the quality of professional judgment, discipline, and ethical standards

solely by access to information, but increasingly by the quality of analysis, the strength of professional judgment, and the ability to make disciplined investment decisions within clear governance frameworks and ethical standards.

The importance of risk management capabilities, professional integrity, and building long-term client trust was also emphasized as essential pillars for institutional success in the next phase of the industry's development.

Investing in Professional Talent

NBK reaffirmed its continued commitment to investing in human capital development and strengthening institutional capabilities equipped to keep pace with the next phase of evolution across both the financial sector and Kuwait's capital market, further reinforcing the Bank's position among the leading institutions in attracting, developing, and empowering investment talent.

At the conclusion of the event, emphasis was placed on the pivotal role professional talent plays in shaping the future of the financial sector, while recognizing the graduates' dedication and commitment throughout their journey toward earning the CFA designation, widely regarded as one of the world's leading professional credentials in the investment industry.

Tarek Rohayem Highlights the Investment Implications of Regional Geopolitical Developments

Tarek Rohayem, Chief Investment Officer at NBK Wealth, delivered a keynote presentation titled: "The Middle East Conflict: Investment Implications and the Balance of Risks."

The presentation highlighted the latest geopolitical developments and their implications for the regional investment landscape.

Seminar focuses on governance and audit challenges

NBK organizes delegation from KPC, its subsidiaries, and EQUATE in celebration of internal audit awareness month



Nidal Tebawi



NBK seminar explores future of audit and risk.

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Marking Internal Audit Awareness Month, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) hosted an industry-focused seminar for a delegation from Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), its subsidiaries, and EQUATE Petrochemical Company (EQUATE), highlighting the evolving role of internal audit in strengthening corporate governance, enhancing institutional resilience, and enabling organizations to navigate an increasingly complex and rapidly evolving risk landscape while supporting long-term sustainability.

The seminar was delivered by Nidal Tebawi, Group Chief Internal Audit Officer at NBK, and served as a platform for exchanging expertise and discussing leading practices and key challenges shaping the future of internal audit.

This collaboration between NBK, KPC, and EQUATE reflects a shared commitment to strengthening corporate governance and fostering a culture of compliance, contributing to enhanced institutional efficiency and the continued development of the workplace environment.

Tebawi stated that the concept of internal audit has undergone a fundamental transformation in recent years, evolving beyond its traditional oversight role to become a strategic partner that enhances business value and supports decision-making. He noted that internal audit now plays a pivotal role in strengthening governance frameworks and enhancing institutional readiness to address evolving challenges and risks.

He added that today's business environment, characterized by accelerating change and heightened uncertainty, requires organizations to adopt more agile operating models, particularly amid the growing focus of boards of directors and executive management on business continuity and maintaining stakeholder confidence.

Furthermore, Tebawi explained that internal audit is increasingly relying on continuous analytics to monitor critical controls, alongside conducting root-cause analysis and dynamically updating audit plans based on risk indicators. This enhances organizations' ability to respond rapidly to emerging challenges, while also reinforcing internal audit's role in providing inde-

Tebawi:

- Internal audit has evolved beyond a traditional oversight function to become a strategic partner in supporting decision-making
- The risk environment has become increasingly complex, requiring a more integrated and proactive approach
- Data and advanced analytics are shaping the future of internal audit

pendent assurance services and evaluating the effectiveness of risk management systems.

He explained that the risk environment has become increasingly complex and interconnected, with challenges no longer confined to traditional risks, but extending to cyberse-

curity threats, developments related to artificial intelligence, and mounting regulatory and geopolitical pressures, underscoring the need for a more proactive and integrated approach to risk management.

The session also addressed the role of internal audit in identifying root causes across various operational processes, alongside the use of continuous controls analytics and reporting, while emphasizing the importance of maintaining effective risk assurance mechanisms and critical control frameworks.

He further noted that data and advanced analytics have become central to the evolution of internal audit practices, enabling organizations to transition toward "continuous assurance" models that rely on real-time monitoring of risk indicators, thereby enhancing control effectiveness and supporting more proactive risk mitigation.

Tebawi concluded by emphasizing that advancing internal audit practices is no longer optional, but rather a strategic necessity, stressing the importance of adopting integrated models capable of addressing risks with a high degree of efficiency. He noted that this initiative reflects the growing role of internal audit as a strategic partner in strengthening corporate governance, fostering cross-sector collaboration, and contributing to the assessment of future risks within institutions operating in increasingly complex regulatory environments.

NBK maintains deep-rooted and longstanding relationships with the oil sector, serving as the key banking partner to KPC and its subsidiaries. The Bank also continues to play a pivotal role in developing human capital and strengthening institutional capabilities across government entities through its position as a strategic banking partner to the public sector.

General index down 0.25%

Boursa Kuwait closes in red on broad-based losses

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait closed Tuesday's trading session in negative territory, with the general index slipping 21.82 points, or 0.25 percent, to settle at 8,659.27 points.

Market activity saw a total of 403.1 million shares traded across 23,307 cash transactions, with a combined value of KD 100.6 million (approximately USD 328.4 million).

The main market index declined by 8.91 points, or 0.10 percent, to 8,532.56 points. Trading on the main market reached 244 million shares through 11,655 transactions, valued at KD 39.1 million (around USD

127.6 million).

The premier market index also recorded losses, falling 25.71 points, or 0.28 percent, to close at 9,135.59 points. A total of 159 million shares were traded in 11,652 transactions, with a value of KD 61.4 million (approximately USD 200.4 million).

Meanwhile, the Main 50 Index dropped 40.01 points, or 0.42 percent, ending the session at 9,486.03 points. Trading volume reached 201.4 million shares across 8,996 transactions, with a total value of KD 33.1 million (around USD 108 million).

KFH offers Eidiyah through branches & digital channels

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: In line with its commitment to providing seamless banking services and sharing the joy of Eid Al-Adha with its customers, Kuwait Finance House (KFH) is offering new "Eidiyah" banknotes in various denominations. The service is available through KFHOnline app, KFH Go smart branches, and traditional branches across Kuwait, in addition to concierge delivery service for selected customer segments.

KFH Executive Manager Digital Channels, Meshal Mandani explained that the bank is committed to keeping pace with digital transformation, reaffirming its leadership in providing innovative payment solutions and secure, flexible options for digital cash transfers. He added that customers will be able to send Eidiyah digitally starting from the first day of Eid Al-Adha through the KFHOnline app, using the WAMD service and KFH Pay links, which allow funds to be transferred quickly and conveniently.

Mandani explained that the bank has completed its preparations to offer Eidiyah banknotes through all KFH branches across Kuwait,



Meshal Mandani

enabling customers to obtain new banknotes ahead of Eid Al-Adha. Customers will also be able to withdraw Eidiyah from KFH Go smart branches located in seven locations across Kuwait, starting Sunday, May 24, 2026 for three days. ATMs will dispense the most requested denominations: KD 1, KD 5 and KD 10.

Mandani noted that KFH also offers an Eidiyah delivery service to Private Banking and Premium customers via their account managers. The service delivers the requested amounts in a manner that aligns with the prestige and privacy of these segments, meeting their specific needs for Kuwaiti Dinar banknotes.

Focusing on ESG-driven long-term value

Kamco Invest publishes its 2025 Sustainability Report titled 'Single Actions to Sustainable Systems'

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse with one of the largest AUMs in the region, announced the release of its 2025 Sustainability Report, titled "Single Actions to Sustainable Systems," highlighting the Company's continued advancement in integrating Environmental, Social, and Governance considerations into its strategy and day to day operations. The report reflects a more structured evolution of sustainability at Kamco Invest, where consistent actions across the organization collectively form interconnected, resilient systems that support long term value creation.

The 2025 theme is grounded in the concept of natural systems, where repeated processes such as growth and adaptation give rise to structured, balanced, and self-sustaining environments. This perspective reflects the Company's approach to ESG, where sustainability is not treated as a standalone initiative, but as a series of deliberate, ongoing actions embedded across functions, reinforcing the Company's ability to adapt, scale, and deliver sustained impact.

During the year, Kamco Invest continued to demonstrate disciplined performance across its core business lines, reinforcing the relationship between responsible practices and sustainable financial outcomes. Assets under management grew by approximately 3.9 percent to USD16.5bn, compared to USD15.9bn in 2024. The Company's investment banking activity also expanded, with the number of transactions increasing to 14 from 11 in the previous year, while the total value of transactions rose by approximately 43 percent to USD7.0bn from USD4.9bn in 2024. In addition, new clients' money raised increased by 25 percent to USD1.5bn, compared to USD1.2bn in the prior year. Local procurement reached 61 percent, contributing to the development of the local economy and strengthening the Company's role within the broader market ecosystem. These results reflect the Company's ability to maintain growth while consistently scaling its operations.

From a social perspective, Kamco Invest continued to invest in talent development and community engagement. The internship program expanded significantly to include 79 participants, compared to 44 in 2024, reinforcing the Company's commitment to developing local talent. This was further supported by the Company's active engagement with local universities through targeted programs, collaborations, and knowledge sharing initiatives aimed at bridging academia with industry and enhancing students' readiness for the workforce. Kuwaitization stood at 51%, while Kuwaiti new hires accounted for 61% of total new hires. In parallel, Kamco Invest continued to encourage female participation and leadership across the organization, reflecting its ongoing commitment to inclusion and diversity.

The Company also maintained its focus on employee development through structured training and professional development initiatives, supporting a resilient and capable workforce.

Community engagement remained a key pillar of the Company's sustainability strategy. Kamco Invest organized its annual blood donation drive in partnership with Kuwait Projects Company Holding and its sister companies, in addition to supporting a range of sports related initiatives that promote health and wellbeing. These efforts reflect the Company's continued focus on contributing to societal wellbeing through targeted and recurring programs.



Nawal Mulla-Hussain, Managing Director of Support Operations



Rania Shaker, Vice President, Marketing and Investor Relations

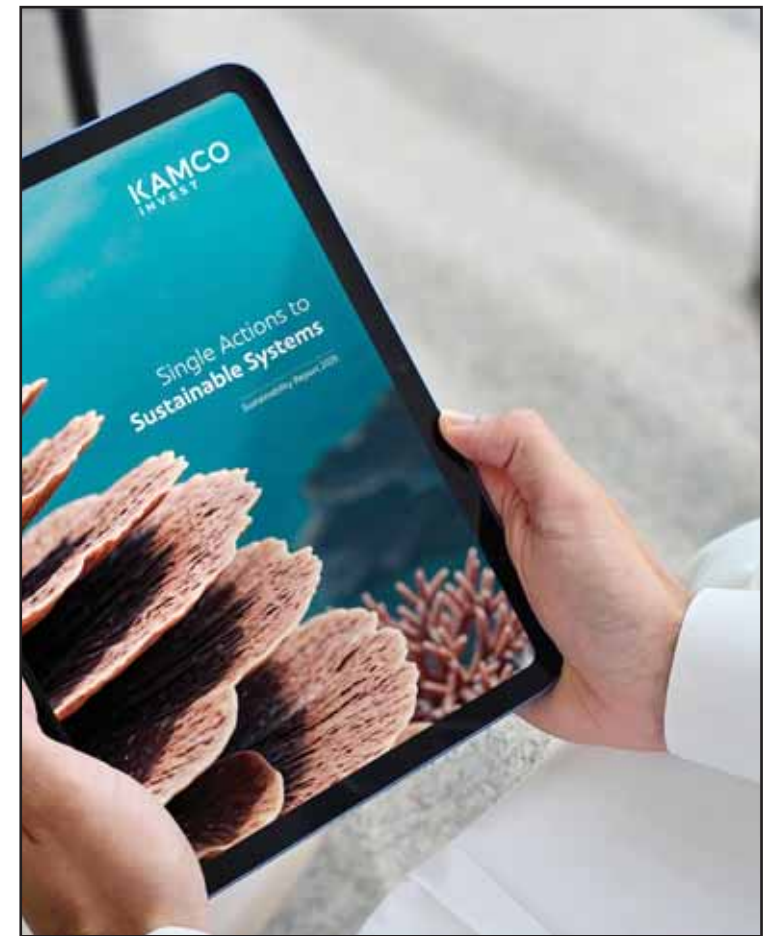
- **Mulla-Hussain:** The transition from single actions to sustainable systems reflects how progress is achieved through continuity, alignment, and integration
- **Shaker:** Joining the KIPCO Group ESG Committee supports the development of a more unified and structured sustainability strategy across the Group

From an environmental perspective, Kamco Invest maintained its focus on improving operational efficiency and reducing its environmental footprint through the adoption of digital processes and workflows, reducing reliance on paper usage and limiting single use plastics across its operations. In parallel, the Company continued to enhance its digital infrastructure to improve client experience and engagement. The Kamco Invest App and Web Client Portal remained central to client interaction, offering streamlined access to investment portfolios through advanced, technology enabled features.

From a governance standpoint, Kamco Invest maintained a high level of regulatory compliance and strengthened its ESG reporting practices by joining the KIPCO Group ESG Committee. This supported enhanced alignment at the group level, improved data management, and a more coordinated approach to sustainability governance, while contributing to a broader strategic sustainability direction and greater long-term impact.

Nawal Mulla-Hussain, Managing Director of Support Operations, said, "We continue to advance our approach to sustainability through consistent and disciplined actions across all areas of the business, enabling us to build an integrated framework that supports long term value creation."

She added, "The transition from single actions to sustainable systems reflects how progress is achieved through continuity, alignment, and inte-



Kamco Invest's sustainability report

gration, allowing us to build a model that is both scalable and capable of sustaining impact over time."

Rania Shaker, Vice President, Marketing and Investor Relations at Kamco Invest, said, "Joining the KIPCO Group ESG Committee supports the development of a more unified and structured sustainability strategy across the Group. Through this, we are strengthening data consistency, enhancing governance practices, and supporting a more coordinated effort to deliver long term impact, and a more integrated contribution as part of a consolidated network of companies operating across multiple markets and geographies."

It is worth noting that the report has been developed in alignment with leading sustainability frameworks, including the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Boursa Kuwait's ESG indicators, and the ESG pillars of the Kuwait National Development Plan (KNDDP).

Saudi, Kuwait sign MoU on export development

RIYADH, May 19, (KUNA): Saudi Arabia's Cabinet approved on Tuesday a memorandum of understanding between the Kingdom and Kuwait in export development.

Saudi Minister of Media Salman Al-Dosari said, according to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA), that the decision came during a Cabinet session chaired by King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud in Jeddah.

The Cabinet reiterated that the Kingdom would spare no effort in taking all measures necessary to protect its security, preserve its stability and

safeguard citizens and residents, praising the high capabilities of the armed forces in defending the nation and protecting its achievements and resources.

The council also expressed support for the outcomes of the emergency meeting of GCC interior ministers held in Riyadh, particularly the affirmation that Gulf security is indivisible, stressing the importance of strengthening joint coordination to confront current regional challenges and developments.

The Cabinet reviewed progress in implementing plans for the 1447 AH Hajj season and efforts under the Pilgrim Experience Program to enhance services provided to pilgrims in Makkah, the holy sites and Madinah through integrated government coordination.

The Cabinet also approved the implementation of the GCC Supreme Council's decision issued during its 46th session held in Bahrain, adopting the general agreement linking GCC states through the railway project.

UAE economy tested by war, strait disruptions

DUBAI, May 19, (AP): The United Arab Emirates for decades has advertised itself as a haven for international business in a Middle East awash in violent upheaval. Those waves have now crashed into this nation, testing its economic model like never before.

The UAE, a close ally of the United States and Israel, faced more missile and drone attacks from Iran during the war than any other country. The attacks - and Iran's chokehold on the Strait of Hormuz - have more than halved the Emirates' exports of crude oil and natural gas. Its tourism and conference sectors have also suffered.

The country, which sits just across the Arabian Gulf from Iran, has portrayed itself as unfazed, even as it makes significant changes. It recently announced plans to build another pipeline to reduce its reliance on the strait, and it dropped out of the OPEC oil cartel so it can boost energy production longer-term, something that had been under consideration since before the war.

While the U.S. and Israel started the war, the UAE is firmly entangled. A drone attack Sunday on its Barakah nuclear power plant underlines the continued risks - even if a shaky ceasefire holds.

Because the Emirates boasts a large surplus of cash, the war's economic disruptions so far do not appear to have caused major job losses or an exodus of foreign business. The longer the standoff drags on and prevents business as usual in the Emirates, the greater the risk to its image that has been key to drawing international business and investment.

Emirati officials increasingly accuse Iran of piracy and even terrorism, while threatening to take military action.

The UAE "will not tolerate any threat to its security and sovereignty under any circumstances," its Foreign Ministry said Sunday night. "It reserves its full, sovereign, legitimate, diplomatic, and military rights to respond to any threats, allegations or hostilities."

It's hard to know how the UAE will respond to the Barakah attack, which caused no radiological release and hasn't stopped the nuclear plant in Abu Dhabi's far western desert from operating.

The UAE is a federation of seven autocratically ruled sheikhdoms, including Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Its top ruling body is the Federal Supreme Council, comprised of the hereditary rulers of its seven emirates. But decision-making is dominated by Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and his family.

The ruling family, analysts say, has directed a more aggressive foreign policy in the last decades, including entering the war in Yemen against Iranian-backed Houthi rebels. The UAE helped bring Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi to power in 2013, and is alleged to have sent arms to parties in Sudan and Libya's civil wars, which it denies.

Sheikh Mohammed, who rarely speaks publicly, gave his only brief remarks on the war for state media while visiting those wounded by Iranian attacks at a hospital in March.



Smoke rises after an Iranian drone attack in the port area of Dubai, United Arab Emirates, March 1, 2026. (AP)

"The UAE is attractive, the UAE is beautiful, the UAE is a model. But I say to them: do not be misled by the UAE's appearance," the sheikh warned at the time. "The UAE has thick skin and bitter flesh; we are no easy prey."

But that doesn't mean there has been no pain. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz has impeded the UAE's ability to sell crude oil and natural gas, though a few of its tankers have made it out. It can export approximately 1.8 million barrels of crude a day through a pipeline to Fujairah, a city with an oil terminal on the Gulf of Oman outside the strait. The Emirates is trying to speed up the construction of a second pipeline to double that capacity.

The UAE's tourism and conference market - estimated to be more than 12% of its economic output - has also been hit hard. Since the war started Feb. 28, over 70 scheduled events in the UAE have been postponed, canceled or otherwise affected, according to Northbourne Advisory, a communications firm based in Qatar that's been tracking the effects of the war. The Emirati government did not issue a blanket ban for events, but organizers likely changed their plans over "insurance withdrawal and liability exposure," the firm said.

On May 4, the country's airline, Emirates, announced it had resumed nearly its entire schedule of flights out of Dubai International Airport, the busiest worldwide for years for international travel. But the same day, Iran launched multiple drone and missile attacks, setting off alerts on mobile phones and groans among the Emirates' business community, which is eager to return to some sense of normalcy.

The airport appears to be building a protective cage around its jet fuel tanks, something officials there declined to discuss.

Hotels, including Dubai's iconic, sail-shaped

Burj Al Arab, have closed for renovations as occupancy rates have fallen to around 20%. Moody's Analytics estimates that rate will fall to 10% in the June quarter, down from 80% before the war.

Moody's warned that occupancy rates will likely stay down through the rest of 2026, with travelers likely to remain hesitant even after hostilities subside.

In an analysis published on Monday, the Institute of International Finance said: "Dubai's openness makes it vulnerable to shocks in travel, logistics, and confidence, while Abu Dhabi's balance sheet and energy assets give the federation the capacity to absorb the blow."

Dubai in particular has been trying to show it is still open.

This past weekend, Dubai hosted an abbreviated version of its annual Art Dubai show. The war felt close by, not only because the show's preview happened the same day Iran seized a ship anchored off Fujairah.

One piece of art was a coin-operated black fighter jet, covered in pairs of black Nike tennis shoes.

One artist, Solimán López of Spain, came with a piece centered on the idea of him claiming ownership of a metal-rich asteroid that's the target of a NASA mission. The artwork is meant to reflect on how countries and companies extract oil and other commodities.

The conflict made it a challenge to attend with his work, he said. "But I said I have to do my best, because I do believe that it's the perfect context to talk about this in the region," he said.

Another artist, Alfred Tarazi of Beirut, noted his grandparents lived through two world wars. "Life doesn't stop in a world war," he said. "We can only counter a narrative of violence with culture."

Step-by-step to 40+ projects

Reportage expands as UAE property market flourishes

By Marlon Aquino Malinao
Managing Editor, Arab Times

ABU DHABI, May 19: As the UAE's real estate sector continues to expand at a rapid pace, Reportage is positioning itself as one of the region's fast-rising developers by focusing on integrated communities, in-house operations, and investor-friendly projects.

In an exclusive interview with the Arab Times, Simona Musso, Group Executive Director at Reportage, reflected on the company's journey since its establishment in 2014 and highlighted the factors driving its steady growth across the UAE and international markets.

"We established our company in 2014, and from there we experienced very healthy growth because we started step by step with a few projects," Musso said.

She explained that one of the company's defining strengths lies in its fully integrated business model, with all major functions managed internally.

"We streamlined all our procedures and internal departments. We have everything in-house - from engineering, contracting, marketing and sales to brokerage," she said. "It is like a one-stop shop."

According to Musso, this structure enables the company to maintain tighter control over project development while offering competitive pricing that appeals strongly to investors.

"This helps us deliver better and control the entire lifecycle of the project," she noted. "Because we manage the process internally, we are able to offer attractive pricing and sometimes higher discounts for shorter payment plans."

She added that many investors have seen substantial returns through their investments with the company.

"A lot of people who invested with us achieved very good returns. Some were able to double or even more than double their in-



Simona Musso, Reportage Group Executive Director

vestment," Musso said. As Abu Dhabi's real estate market becomes increasingly competitive, Musso said the company continues to expand alongside the broader growth of the sector.

"We are growing together with the market," she said. "Today, in the UAE alone, we have around 900 employees, and internationally we have more than 1,500 employees, excluding the contracting company."

From initially launching only a handful of projects, Reportage Properties has now expanded its portfolio significantly.

"We went step by step from a few projects, and now we have more than 40 projects," she said.

Musso also emphasized the company's focus on creating integrated communities rather than simply constructing residential buildings.

"We like to say that we are building communities, not just apartments," she said.

She pointed to the company's Verdana development in Dubai as an example of this philosophy.

"It's like a small town," Musso explained. "In all these communities, we include common areas and facilities that support residents and allow them to enjoy the lifestyle of Dubai."

With demand rising for lifestyle-oriented and connected developments, Reportage believes integrated living will remain central to the future of urban development across the UAE.

What's On

SPOTLIGHT

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Photos during the event.

Event strengthens China-Kuwait relations

'China through your lens – photography exhibition & travel stories' held in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Ahead of the 16th "China Tourism Day" on May 19, the "China Through Your Lens – Photography Exhibition & Travel Stories" event was held in Kuwait on May 18. The event was jointly organized by China Cultural Center in Kuwait and Kuwaiti Association for Photographic Arts.

Centered on the "Ni hao! China" tourism promotion brand, the event brought together a photography exhibition, tourism presentations, travel storytelling sessions and interactive exchanges. It offered participants a broad overview of China's tourism resources, urban development and technological achievements, while contributing to strengthened cultural and tourism cooperation between China and Kuwait and deepening mutual understanding between the two peoples.

The event consisted of two main sections: the "China Through Your Lens" Photography Exhibition and a China travel storytelling session.

The exhibition showcased award-winning entries from the "China Through Your Lens" Photography Contest, jointly launched by China Cultural Center in Kuwait and Kuwaiti Association for Photographic Arts during this year's Spring Festival period. It also presented a special display titled "New Horizons of China's Development", highlighting modern life in China as well as recent achievements in technology and social development.

A total of 42 award-winning works were exhibited, featuring subjects ranging from the karst landscapes

of Guilin and the skyline of Shanghai to the historic town of Zhenyuan. Covering themes such as natural scenery, cultural heritage and contemporary urban life, the exhibition offered visitors a broad visual portrait of modern China.

The "New Horizons of China's Development" section was presented to coincide with the opening year of China's 15th Five-Year Plan period. Through a series of visual displays, it highlighted developments in areas including technological innovation, major infrastructure projects, smart transport, intelligent connected vehicles, urban renewal and green development, presenting Kuwaiti audiences with an image of a modern China that is innovative, open and dynamic.

One of the highlights of the event was the China travel storytelling session, which engaged the audience. The event screened the official promotional video for the 2026 China Tourism Day campaign, which introduced the origins of the event and its related activities while promoting the theme "Love Travel, Love Life".

Dr Suad Alhammar, Head of the Kuwaiti Association for Photographic Arts, shared reflections on her travels across China and the stories behind her photographic work, offering personal insights into Chinese culture and offering.

Photographer Zeyad Bouarki also presented his experiences in China, illustrating aspects of daily life, local customs and development through his pho-

tographic documentation.

Ebrahim Bao, General Manager of Nabhan Asia for Tourist Trips and Guidance, delivered a presentation on China's tourism resources, recommended travel routes and the latest travel facilitation policies for international visitors, offering practical information and advice for Kuwaiti travelers interested in visiting China.

An award ceremony for the photography contest was also held during the event. Out of a wide pool of submissions from across Kuwaiti society, 42 works were selected for exhibition and 14 photographers were recognized for their contributions. Certificates were presented in acknowledgement of their efforts to capture and promote images of China through photography.

The event brought together nearly 100 participants, including representatives of the Kuwaiti Association for Photographic Arts, the Kuwait Travelers Association, students of Chinese language programmes at the China Cultural Center in Kuwait, members of the Kuwait-China Friendship Club, media representatives, tourism influencers and members of the public.

Using photography and storytelling as a platform for cultural exchange, the event provided Kuwaiti audiences with an engaging window into China's culture and tourism, while further strengthening people-to-people ties and cultural connectivity between China and Kuwait.

Art, music shine at event

'Tunisian Mosaic' showcases culture in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: The International Women's Group (IWG), in cooperation with the Embassy of the Republic of Tunisia in the State of Kuwait, hosted a distinguished cultural evening titled "Tunisian Mosaic: A Night of Lights" on Sunday, May 17, 2026, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The event was attended by a number of ambassadors accredited to the State of Kuwait, alongside cultural and media figures and guests interested in cultural and artistic affairs in Kuwait.

The evening was opened by the master of ceremonies, Mrs. Rima Al-Khalidi, wife of the Ambassador of the State of Palestine and Vice President of the Group, who welcomed the distinguished guests and members of the diplomatic corps.

In her opening remarks, IWG President Mrs. Mari-ka Kochlamazashvili, wife of the Ambassador of the Republic of Georgia, spoke about the significance of the gathering, which marked the resumption of the group's activities after a suspension of nearly two months due to regional tensions affecting Kuwait and the GCC countries. She noted that the occasion held additional importance as it coincided with Kuwaiti Women's Day, celebrating the achievements and contributions of Kuwaiti women to society.

Mrs. Kochlamazashvili expressed her sincere gratitude to the Tunisian Embassy, His Excellency Ambassador Mohamed Karim Boudali, and his spouse Mrs. Zeineb Mlika Boudali for organizing an evening that reflected Tunisia's rich heritage, history, traditions, hospitality, and values of peace and unity.

She also conveyed her appreciation to the IWG's Honorary President, Her Excellency Sheikhha Hanouf Bader Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah, and to the Government of Kuwait for its wisdom and leadership during challenging times, emphasizing Kuwait's role as a symbol of diplomacy, stability, and humanity in the region.

For his part, the Ambassador of the Republic of Tunisia to the State of Kuwait affirmed the deep-rooted fraternal relations between Tunisia and Kuwait and the continued development of cooperation across various fields, particularly in the economic and cultural sectors. He praised the bonds of love, appreciation, and mutual respect shared by the two

brotherly peoples.

The Tunisian Ambassador reiterated Tunisia's firm support for the State of Kuwait, its leadership, and its people, as well as its categorical rejection of any infringement upon Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity. He also commended the wise leadership of Kuwait, represented by His Highness the Emir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, may God protect and preserve them, for their effective management of the challenges and exceptional circumstances faced by the country, which has further strengthened security, stability, and Kuwait's standing as a model of wisdom and moderation.

The Ambassador thanked the International Women's Group for the cultural initiative and stressed that "Tunisian Mosaic: A Night of Lights" served as a cultural and tourism platform highlighting Tunisia's civilizational and cultural diversity. He noted that Tunisia, under the leadership of His Excellency President Kais Saied, has witnessed notable development in several sectors, particularly culture and tourism, which contributed to its selection as the Arab Tourism Capital for 2027 in recognition of its historical authenticity, cultural richness, natural beauty, and advanced tourism infrastructure.

In her speech, Mrs. Zeineb Mlika Boudali, wife of the Tunisian Ambassador, highlighted the important role Tunisian women have played throughout history and their contributions to diplomatic, legal, economic, social, and cultural life.

The evening featured a short documentary that took the audience on a journey through Tunisia's history, from ancient civilizations including the Carthaginians and Romans to the Arab-Islamic era and modern Tunisia. The film was warmly received by attendees, who appreciated its vivid portrayal of Tunisia's cultural and historical heritage.

A second video celebrating Tunisia's diverse cultural identity and heritage was also screened, highlighting the country's most prominent tourist, archaeological, and natural landmarks and reinforcing its position as a leading tourist and cultural destination in the Arab world and internationally.

Guests also enjoyed musical performances by Tunisian artist Wafa Boukil and Tunisian artist Mohamed Omrani, who presented a selection of Tunisian and Kuwaiti songs blending authentic melodies with contemporary rhythms.

The program included a fashion show of traditional Tunisian attire inspired by various regions of Tunisia, reflecting the richness and diversity of Tunisian cultural heritage.

To showcase Tunisian cuisine, a dedicated corner presented a selection of traditional dishes that highlighted the diversity and authenticity of Tunisia's culinary heritage. Tunisian products also attracted notable attention, particularly olive oil, internationally recognized for its exceptional quality and taste, as well as "Deglet Nour" dates, regarded among the finest Tunisian date varieties.

The event also featured an exhibition of Tunisian traditional crafts, displaying a variety of handicrafts that reflected the skill of Tunisian artisans and the richness of Tunisian cultural production. Models of Tunisia's most prominent archaeological and historical landmarks and tourist attractions were also showcased, offering guests insight into the country's heritage and tourism appeal.

In addition, an exhibition of Tunisian artwork highlighted the diversity and distinctiveness of Tunisian artistic expression. Guests admired the aesthetic and creative dimensions reflected in the paintings.

Before the conclusion of the program, the IWG board bid farewell to the outgoing 2025-2026 honorary board members, including President Mrs. Mari-ka Kochlamazashvili, who delivered an emotional speech thanking the board members, sponsors, government institutions, and the Crowne Plaza Hotel for their support throughout the year.

She described her tenure as president as "among the most wonderful and memorable experiences" of her life and expressed gratitude to all those who contributed to a year filled with success, inspiration, friendship, warmth, and unforgettable moments. Mrs. Kochlamazashvili also spoke warmly about Kuwait and its people, saying the country had become very dear to her heart and that her family truly felt at home here.

Blood drive draws over 130 donors

PAK Donors hold 33rd blood donation drive

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: PAK Donors proudly organized its 33rd-Blood Donation Drive with the spirit of compassion, unity, and humanity, inspired by the beautiful concept of the AI ARFAJ flower – a symbol of hope and life in the desert.

The event was graced by the presence of Mahmoud Razzouk, Managing Director of Al Ahlia Integrated Co., whom the PAK Donors team warmly welcomed and appreciated for his continuous encouragement and support toward humanitarian initiatives.

More than 130 donors registered to donate blood during the campaign, reflecting the strong commitment of the community toward saving lives and supporting humanity beyond nationality.

Several respected Pakistani dignitaries also participated in the event

and highly appreciated the efforts and dedication of the PAK Donors team in promoting awareness about blood donation and serving the community.

Abdul Waheed Jaber, Incharge Coordinator of PAK Donors, along with Camp Leader Muhammed Imran Zafar, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the real heroes of the day – the blood donors, volunteers, guests, supporters, and media representatives – whose contributions made the event successful.

The Female Wing of PAK Donors also played a positive and active role in the success of the event with the valuable support and cooperation of Pakistan Women Forum.

PAK Donors continues its mission to spread awareness about blood donation and serve humanity under its slogan: "Humanity Beyond Nationality."



Photos during the event.

Program to feature renowned scholars

IMA Kuwait to organize special online Yaum-e-Arafah Program

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Indian Muslim Association (IMA) Kuwait, under the patronage of the Foreign Relations Department, Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Kuwait, is organizing a special online Yaum-e-Arafah Program on Thursday, 21 May 2026 at 8:30 PM (Kuwait Time).

The program will feature an address by Dr. Javed Mukarram, a renowned scholar from India, on the timely and thought-provoking topic: 'The Farewell Sermon: The Muslim Ummah in Contemporary Era' (Khutba Hajja-tul-Widaaur Daur-e-Hazirmein Ummat-e-Muslima se Amli Taqazay). The session will reflect on

the timeless guidance of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in addressing the moral, social, and collective responsibilities of the Muslim Ummah in today's world.

The Event will also include a special talk by Maulana Khurshed Falahi on 'The Importance and Virtues of the Ten Days of DhulHijjah', highlighting the spiritual significance of these blessed days and encouraging believers to maximize acts of Worship, Repentance & Devotion.

An Interactive Question & Answer Session will follow, providing participants an opportunity to engage directly with the scholars.

The Good Shepherds launches Medical Camp set for Salmiya

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: The Good Shepherds Cultural & Social Welfare Association – Kuwait, in collaboration with Metro Medical Group, will organize a community medical camp on May 22, 2026, in Salmiya as part of ongoing efforts to promote preventive healthcare and wellness awareness among residents.

The medical camp will provide free doctor consultations and basic health screenings for members of the community. Services available include consultations in general practice, internal medicine, gynecology, pediatrics and ophthalmology.

The event will also offer several medical tests and screenings, in-

cluding fasting blood sugar checks, blood pressure monitoring, total cholesterol testing and eye screening services.

Organizers said the initiative aims to encourage residents to take proactive steps toward maintaining their health and wellbeing through early detection and medical guidance.

The camp will be held on Saeed Bin Al Mesayeb Street, Block 3, Salmiya, Kuwait. Community members interested in attending may register in advance or seek additional information through the following contact numbers: +965-66213043, +965-99737659, +965-97724732 and +965-60078264.

K.T.M.C.C to host musical event in Kuwait on May 27

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: To offer a unique musical experience for Malayalam music lovers in Kuwait, the Kuwait Town Malayalee Christian Congregation (K.T.M.C.C) is organizing a special musical evening. The event will be held on Wednesday, May 27, at 6:00 PM at the National Evangelical Church.

Several prominent choir groups from across Kuwait will participate in the musical program. Around ten renowned choirs, including the K.T.M.C.C Choir, India Pentecostal Church Choir, Kuwait City Mar Thoma Church Choir, Men's Voice and Choral Society Kuwait, St. James

Mar Thoma Church, St. John's Mar Thoma Church, St. Peter's CSI, St. Thomas Evangelical Church, Voice of Joy, and Youth Chorus Kuwait, will perform during the event.

The organizing committee, led by Roy K. Yohannan, Kuruvila Cherian, Saju Vazhail Thomas, Ajosh Mathew, Shiby V.Sam, Shilu George, Jinu Areekal, Bijo K. Easo, Thomas Philip, and K.T.M.C.C committee members, is coordinating the preparations for the musical evening.

The organizers warmly welcome all music lovers to this special gathering where music and fellowship come together.



Photos during the event.

Na Hong-jin serves alien chaos with signature sting

'Hope' blasts Cannes into another orbit



From left: Taylor Russell, Hyeon, Zo In-sung, director Na Hong-jin, Hwang Jung-min, Alicia Vikander and Michael Fassbender pose for photographers at the photo call for the film 'Hope' during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Monday, May 18, 2026. (AP)

Sprawling action movies with aliens do not generally compete for the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or. But Na Hong-jin's "Hope" is not your average science fiction.

Few movies were more anticipated in Cannes. It's been 10 years since Na's last film, the well-regarded 2016 thriller "The Wailing." While some of Na's fellow Korean genre masters, like Bong Joon Ho, have found global renown, for many cinephiles, Na is overdue for the kind of global introduction a Cannes premiere provides.

But that doesn't mean that Na, a few hours before debuting "Hope," was feeling at ease.

"I'm really nervous," the writer-director said in an interview alongside the Cannes beach. "I didn't imagine it would be so nerve-racking to be honest, to the point of not sleeping."

Na's movie, one of the most expensive Korean films ever made, certainly provides no rest. For two hours and 40 minutes, it takes a story that begins with the mysteriously scarred carcass of a dead bull and breathlessly and quite bloodily accumulates into a cosmically grand, audaciously gonzo sci-fi tale.

The headlong rush of Na's bonkers would-be

international blockbuster left Cannes alternatively awed, befuddled and thrilled. Variety's Jessica Kang called it "hilarious, unwieldy, overlong and featuring some of the most breathtakingly elegant action moviemaking of this or any year."

Hwang Jung-min plays the Hope police chief in a rural village whose investigation into the bull attack rapidly turns into a frantic chase, following a trail of carnage through the Korean Demilitarized Zone. He's eventually joined by another police officer (Jung Ho-yeon). Meanwhile, the chief's cousin (Zo In-sung) is following a separate set of clues into the forest.

How "Hope" gets from A to B is much of the fun. But let it be known: Michael Fassbender and Alicia Vikander play extraterrestrials.

"I wanted to talk about a story that starts off with something very trivial, and that can build to something that can impact the entire universe," Na says. "In order to tell that story, I felt I had to incorporate aliens."

Just how grand a scope "Hope" would encompass took some figuring out for Na. He ultimately decided he would put only part of it in the film. A sequel set in space, more centered around Fass-

bender and Vikander's characters, has already been written. Na warmly offered "a secret," describing how his theoretical part two ends, before being hushed by publicists.

Na rushed to complete the edit in time for Cannes. Speaking through an interpreter, he sounded very much like a filmmaker who has for years been consumed by the possible iterations of this story. That it's taken 10 years to get here, he grants, is hard to believe.

"It didn't feel that long to me. I only realize now that it's been quite a journey," he sighs. "The editing took a long time. The CGI took forever."

For the Korean stars of the film, Na was the main attraction. Asked why he wanted to do the film, Zo answers straightforwardly: "Because it's Na Hong-jin. Nothing else."

Jung hopes the film - which Neon will release in the U.S. later this year - will bring new audiences to the director. "He has such cool filmography," she says. "It will be nice if he can have a much wider audience."

Hwang, one of South Korea's top stars, is reuniting with Na after starring in "The Wailing." Almost immediately, they started talking about another

film together. Hwang was the first performer to sign on to "Hope."

"Among the actors, we have this faith in the director that whatever movie he does, he'll do a good movie," says Hwang before deadpanning. "But I don't think he knows that many good actors."

Some spectacular and lengthy action sequences make up much of "Hope." But as much as the movie is a pedal-to-the-medal ride, it's predicated on some of the weighty themes that have characterized Na's films, particularly "The Wailing."

The genre and perspective shifts in "Hope," from monster movie to sci-fi, go to the heart of what drove Na's largest production in the first place. For him, it all began with people's struggle to see and understand those different from them.

"I started off with a focus on xenophobia and immigrant problems," he says. "As I was developing the story, it became a much bigger story."

"In any big tragedy, they don't necessarily arise from malicious intention. It all starts with difference in perspective," he says. "I think it's that conflict in perspective or misunderstanding that creates these collisions. That's what I wanted to talk about." (AP)

Variety



Singer Barbra Streisand performs in New York, Oct. 11, 2012. (AP)

CANNES: Barbra Streisand announced on Sunday that she will not attend the Cannes Film Festival's closing ceremony later this week where she was to receive an honorary Palme d'Or, after sustaining a knee injury.

The festival organizers said they would still honor the singer-actor despite her absence, according to a press release that carried Streisand's statement.

"On the advice of my doctors, as I continue recovering from a knee injury, I am sadly unable to attend the Festival de Cannes this year," she said in the statement. "But I am deeply honored to receive the honorary Palme d'Or and had so been looking forward to celebrating the remarkable films of the 79th edition." (AP)

MADRID: A Spanish court acquitted Shakira in a tax fraud case, ordering the government to return more than 55 million euros (\$64 million) in wrongly imposed fines, a court document seen Monday by The Associated Press said.

The decision follows years of tax troubles in Spain for the Colombian superstar.

The ruling relates to a dispute over the 2011 tax year in which Spanish authorities failed to prove that the singer was a resident of Spain, the Madrid-based court said in its decision.

For a person to be considered a tax resident in Spain, she must spend more than 183 days in the country. (AP)

'Fatherland' widely acknowledged as clear standout

Hüller's quiet storm rolls into Cannes

CANNES, May 19, (AP): For Sandra Hüller, eruptions of emotion don't come naturally. She prefers to be quiet and calm, and often her screen presence radiates intensity when she's simply watching. But when she explodes - whether in grief or karaoke - she can be magnificent.

"It's not something that I like to do, particularly," Hüller says, sitting in a garden in Cannes. "Maybe I like the characters more who don't erupt all the time because these are very annoying people, I don't know."

She takes a drag on a cigarette and considers it further.

"I like to observe more than I like being observed. When I do something big, of course I'm the center of attention. Maybe that's the root of it. But you are not my therapist so we will not find out today," Hüller says, and laughs.

The full range of Hüller's talent is on full display this year in four films that run from big to small. Foremost among them is "Fatherland," the Cannes Film Festival entry by Paweł Pawlikowski, the Polish director of "Ida" and "Cold War."

In the first week of Cannes, "Fatherland" (which Mubi will release later this year) was widely acknowledged as a clear standout, and a possible Palme d'Or favorite. Like "Ida" and "Cold War," it's elegantly shot in black and white, uncommonly brief (82 minutes) and throbs with the pain of post-war Europe.

Hüller plays Erika, the daughter of the German author Thomas Mann (Hanns Zischler). They return to Germany in 1949 on a road trip, toggling between the American-controlled West Germany and the Soviet-ruled East Germany. Their former country no more, they are betwixt, as Thomas says, "Mickey Mouse or Stalin."



David Striesow, from left, Ewa Puszczyńska, August Diehl, Sandra Hueller, Pawel Pawlikowski, Hanns Zischler, Lukasz Zal, and Lorenzo Mieli pose for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film 'Fatherland' at the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Thursday, May 14, 2026. (AP)

For Hüller, who was born in East Germany, "Fatherland" follows her chilling turn in Jonathan Glazer's "The Zone of Interest," set near a concentration camp. In "Fatherland," her character was staunchly opposed to the Nazis, but is now living amid their blithely unremorseful collaborators.

"A void is hard to portray, and I think it's a big deal trying it," says Hüller. "We talked about this in school. It's part of our history classes. But I never got into the specifics of what it felt like. We know a lot of pictures of the women cleaning up the streets because the men were dead or somewhere in prison. But what it meant to not know the country you were born in anymore is something we weren't

familiar with."

Several of Hüller's performances have already been indelible parts of the Cannes Film Festival: the 2016 comedy "Toni Erdmann" and the 2023 Palme d'Or winner "Anatomy of a Fall." "Fatherland" is likewise a standout, but it comes during the kind of year actors dream of.

At the Berlin Film Festival earlier this year, Hüller won best leading performance for "Rose," a gender exploration set in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War. In the March box-office hit "Project Hail Mary," she co-starred alongside Ryan Gosling and, at Gosling's urging, performed one of the movie's best scenes: a karaoke rendition of Harry Styles' "Sign of the Times." She also co-stars

in Alejandro G. Iñárritu's much-anticipated "Digger," due out later this year.

"I'm almost 50 now and I feel very blessed that I can have this experience right now," Hüller says. "For some of my peers, it's a gap in the journey or the end of the journey."

If her character in "Fatherland" is torn between worlds, Hüller is moving frictionless between the movie realms of Europe and Hollywood.

"I've been looking at the things that came my way and I have been thinking about whether I can say yes to them or not, if I'm ready to do them," she says. "There are some experiences coming my way that I've never had before and I would be very, very stupid if I

wouldn't use them."

"Not so much for success reasons," she continues. "It's really more of a question of growth - and getting to know more spaces so you can move more freely through the world. There's a lot of pleasure in this. It's also dangerous. But it's far out of my comfort zone."

Still, success has come with a cost. Hüller considers herself a theater actor first, and is desperate to return to the theater collective she grew out of. She still directs with them, but her notoriety is too much to be part of an ensemble.

"I miss theater like a heartbroken person," she says, her eyes welling up. "Even when I talk about it with you, I start crying."

As pared away as Pawlikowski's films are, he occasionally adds things, too. During filming, he had an idea for a scene where Erika, after quietly growing skeptical of her father's optimism about a good Germany, shouts at him.

"I said, 'Listen, if it's bad, I'm not going to put it in, just do your best.' And she did brilliant," Pawlikowski says. "That was the luxury of an actress who can do so much. I was just watching, like, how did she do this? It's so much better than what I imagined."

Hüller didn't expect Pawlikowski's style to change her methods, but it did. Pawlikowski's frames leave a lot of space. She had to find how to exist in them without becoming a statue.

"It has a lot to do with presence and awareness and focus, and with a rich inner movement that's not necessarily seen on the outside," says Hüller. "But you can feel it, in some way. The more precise this inner movement is, the better it works in that very precise frame. That's something I had to find out."

Art & Culture

'Golden Dust of Time' highlights Kuwait's cultural legacy

Kuwait royal artifacts bring ancient civilization to life in China

BEIJING, May 19, (Xinhua): Li Duo wandered past the weather-worn statues of Angkor Wat, soaking in the timeless charm of the ancient ruins and delving into the civilization that created them -- all without ever setting foot in Cambodia.

At the Meet You Museum in Beijing's trendy 798 Art Zone, an exhibition featuring 122 artifacts from the National Museum of Cambodia is offering Chinese visitors a rare glimpse into the legacy of the Angkor civilization. This exhibition opened on May 1 and runs to Aug. 30.

"The exhibition gives us access to a wide range of renowned artifacts including the iconic 'Khmer Smile,' and helps us gain insights into the exotic civilization that evolved along a path parallel to that of Chinese civilization," said Li, who holds a master's degree in archaeology.

"We are able to encounter another great civilization without traveling overseas. This is precisely the profound significance of museums," she noted.

Wang Haixuan, vice president of Beijing Zhongchuang Tourism & Culture Group that runs the museum, told Xinhua that digital technologies are being used to recreate the engineering wisdom behind Angkor Wat, while motion-capture systems enable visitors to interact with mythological figures associated with the site.

The museum has previously hosted exhibitions focused on other ancient civilizations, including a well-received showcase of Egyptian civilization last year.

"Our goal is to give audiences opportunities to engage with civilizations from across the world," said Wang, who added that these exhibitions are particularly popular among museum enthusiasts, young people and families.

"Museums act as bridges linking history and the present, and connect China with the rest of the world," he said. "Through these curatorial efforts, we promote dialogue between civilizations, facilitate cultural exchanges and strengthen people-to-people ties."

By the end of 2025, China had 7,188 registered museums, more than 91 percent of which offered free admission, according to official data released by the National Cultural Heritage Administration (NCHA) on the International Museum Day, which is observed on May 18. They received 1.56 billion visits in 2025.

Across China, a growing number of museums, both public and private, are bringing overseas civilizations closer to domestic audiences, allowing people to explore the world without leaving their home cities.

In Lanzhou, capital city of north-west China's Gansu Province, visitors to the Gansu Provincial Museum are finding themselves face to face with a civilization from the Middle East.

Titled "Golden Dust of Time: Exhibition of the Royal Collection From Kuwait," this event showcases 130 sets of artifacts from the Kuwaiti royal collection, including ibex sculptures, metal bowls, rhytons and gold ornaments, which quietly tell stories spanning thousands of years.

"I've never been to Kuwait, but these artifacts give me a direct sense of its civilization and spiritual



People visit an exhibition titled 'Golden Dust of Time: Exhibition of the Royal Collection From Kuwait,' at the Gansu Provincial Museum in Lanzhou, north-west China's Gansu Province. (Xinhua)

world," said Liu Chunxia, a tourist from Guangzhou in south China. "They already possessed highly sophisticated metalworking and pottery techniques thousands of years ago. In those tiny ornaments, you can see beauty, faith and emotional connections between people."

As material life becomes increasingly abundant, many Chinese visitors are seeking richer cultural and spiritual experiences, she said, adding that this is one reason why more and more people in China today are willing to spend on high-quality exhibitions.

Ban Rui, director of the Gansu museum, said museums in China are no longer simply spaces dedicated to local history, but are increasingly evolving into public platforms for exchanges between civilizations.

"Civilizational exchange is not abstract," Ban said. "It exists in every artifact. That makes it more immediate and easier for audiences to understand and connect with."

Behind the growing number of international exhibitions are also changes in the way museums operate.

Introducing overseas exhibitions often involves enormous costs and logistical challenges, including curation, transportation, insurance, display and promotion. In recent years, however, museums in China have increasingly experimented with more market-oriented partnerships, bringing in state-owned enterprises and private-sector partners to help expand access to international exhibition resources.

Such efforts are unfolding across China. According to incomplete statistics of Art Exhibitions China, an agency under the NCHA, exhibitions from countries including Italy, the Czech Republic, Syria, Britain, Greece and Kuwait have been staged in Chinese museums since the beginning of this year.

Shanghai will host a major exhibition on the People's Square.



People visit the exhibition 'Homage to the Virtuosos: From Leonardo da Vinci to Caravaggio - Masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance' at the National Art Museum of China in Beijing, capital of China. (Xinhua)

biton on ancient civilizations of the Americas beginning in early July. Titled "Ancient Civilizations of the Americas," the exhibition will run for 16 months at the Shanghai Mu-



Visitors present cards with Dunhuang elements during an exhibition showcasing Tsinghua University's research and design work inspired by the ancient art of Dunhuang at the UN headquarters in New York (Xinhua)

seum on the People's Square. It will be the sixth installment in the museum's "A Dialogue with the World" series of art and cultural

relics exhibitions, and another landmark show on global ancient civilizations following its popular exhibition on Ancient Egypt.

At the same time, Chinese cultural relics and exhibitions are reaching wider global audiences. The culture of Dunhuang, one of China's best-known cultural symbols overseas, has become an increasingly important part of international cultural exchanges. Exhibitions in France have used digital technologies, reconstructed caves, live performances and immersive experiences to take the art of the Mogao Grottoes in northwest China to overseas audiences.

Chai Qilin, deputy head of the cultural promotion department at the Dunhuang Academy, said overseas audiences have shown strong interest in Chinese cultural exhibitions. "Many visitors tell us they hope to see more exhibitions like these," Chai said. "Through them, people gain a more direct and deeper understanding of Chinese culture."

Home to an extensive collection of cultural relics in north China, the Shanxi Museum has since 2012 partnered with peer institutions across the United States, Australia, Russia, Armenia, Hungary, Greece, France and Mexico to host overseas exhibitions.

Zhang Huiguo, deputy director of the museum, told Xinhua that bronze and jade pieces featured in its European exhibitions had sparked strong local interest. "Jade is rarely used in traditional European cultural contexts. Although bronze artifacts also exist in European history, their production techniques, functions and cultural connotations are markedly different from those of ancient Chinese bronzes," he explained.

Alongside exhibits, the museum employs a range of interactive and immersive methods to demonstrate ancient techniques like mechanics of dougong, a traditional Chinese interlocking wooden bracket system core to ancient architecture, and the ancient craftsmanship behind Chinese bronze ware, as part of its efforts to share Chinese culture more vividly with global viewers.

For its shows in Mexico, a major global silver producer, the museum drew side-by-side comparisons between traditional Chinese silver-making techniques and local craftsmanship, identifying both shared features and distinct, culture-specific traits of these two craft traditions.

In recent years, as China's comprehensive national strength has steadily improved, the global influence of Chinese culture has kept rising, igniting the viral "China Chic" craze, said Zhang. People around the world are embracing Chinese food and drinks, trying on gorgeous traditional Hanfu garments, and delving into the time-honored Chinese history and culture embodied in cultural exhibits.

Myanmar welcomes 360K foreign tourists

YANGON, May 19, (Xinhua): Myanmar welcomed over 360,000 foreign visitors during the first four months of 2026, according to the Ministry of Hotels, Tourism and Culture on Tuesday.

The number of foreign tourist arrivals between January and April marked an increase from the same period in 2025, an official from the ministry told Xinhua.

China accounted for the largest number of visitors, with more than 42,000 arrivals, followed by Thailand and South Korea, the official said.

In 2025, over 973,000 foreign tourists visited Myanmar, according to the ministry.

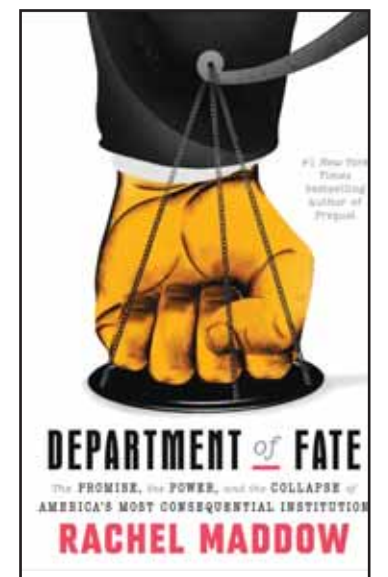
Rachel takes on DOJ history in new book

NEW YORK, May 19, (AP): After writing bestsellers about the military, the oil and gas industry and the state of democracy, Rachel Maddow is now working on a history of the Justice Department.

Crown, a division of Penguin Random House, announced Monday that "Department of Fate" will be published Nov. 10, one week after this year's midterm elections, and offer "both a diagnosis and a prescription for the American institution."

"As goes DOJ, so goes the republic," the liberal author, podcaster and MS Now host said in a statement issued through Crown. "What DOJ chooses to pursue - and what it lets go - can determine the boundaries of our political rights, our economy, and the fundamental question of whether the protections written into our Constitution are just words, or real life."

According to Crown, Maddow will trace "triumphs and misdeeds" over the department's 150-year history, from "the riotous chaos of the Red Scare" after World War I to "cabinet scandals that make Watergate look like Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" and the upending of a wide range of norms during the second administration of President Donald Trump.



This cover image released by Crown shows 'Department of Fate: The Promise, the Power, and the Collapse of America's Most Consequential Institution' by Rachel Maddow. (AP)

Destinations

Participants explore heritage and Shenzhen innovation

International Youth Poetry Festival ends Guangdong visit

GUANGZHOU, China, May 19, (PRNewswire): News report from South: On a night cruise along Guangzhou's Pearl River in southern China's Guangdong Province, poets from China and the Arab world sat on the open deck, talking quietly between readings as city lights slid across the water.

"I thought we would simply read poetry in a hotel, or perhaps in a conference room. Maybe visit one or two museums," the Tunisian poet Anouar Ben Hassine said. "But it feels like a dream-I keep saying it... it feels like a dream."

"Then what would you say if the dream woke up?"

"Come back. You have no choice."

The May 12 river cruise marked the closing moments of the Guangdong leg of the 2026 International Youth Poetry Festival (China-Arab States Session), a five-day cultural programme that brought together more than 100 poets, writers and literature scholars from Arab countries and China.

The festival, which runs until May 17, will continue with its Beijing leg. It is organized by the China Writers Association. Since its launch in 2024, it has grown into a platform for cross-cultural literary exchange among young writers from China and other regions. The China-Arab Session is divided into two stages: the Guangdong leg, followed by a final programme in Beijing.

In Guangdong, participants spent five days moving between Guangzhou and Shenzhen. The programme combined visits to both historical and contemporary urban spaces, including the Cantonese Opera Art Museum, Canton Tower, Tencent, Huawei, and



Night cruise vibes on Guangzhou's Pearl River as guests enjoy the illuminated skyline, with friends sharing a cheerful moment on deck. (PRNewfoto/South)



Performers and visitors celebrate friendship through traditional Chinese opera and shared gestures of unity. (PRNewfoto/South)



China-Arab participants capture a group moment at a Guangzhou cultural site during the 2026 International Youth Poetry Festival. (PRNewfoto/South)



China-Arab poets and writers gather in Guangzhou for the 2026 International Youth Poetry Festival, marking the end of the Guangdong leg of the cultural exchange programme. (PRNewfoto/South)

Shenzhen Bay Cultural Park. These places reflected two layers of the region: Guangzhou's long cultural history, and Shenzhen's rapid development driven by technology and innovation.

Across both cities, the schedule included poetry readings, cultural visits, and group discussions. But often, the most meaningful moments happened outside the formal programme - on buses, over meals, and in quiet

conversations between participants. What stood out most was not only what people saw, but how deeply they responded to the experience. "I'm so happy to be back in Guangzhou again."

This city holds some of the most difficult memories of my life. Before arriving, I had already decided to write a poem for the city. When I was writing, I became so overwhelmed by emotion that at times I was unable to continue. The poem became my personal gift to Guangzhou that I deeply cherish." -Mira Ahmed, author of City of Flowers.

"On the road to Shenzhen, there are a lot of hills and trees, and a lot of green. The green always reminds me of something about fertilizing a successful future. I also felt at home-the Chinese people are so inviting and I really appreciate it. And then I wrote a poem. I never thought I could write here, but it came suddenly. That is poetry-you cannot fully control it." -Anouar Ben Hassine, author of Guangzhou.

Taken together, these voices form a shared impression of the journey: poetry here was not abstract or distant, but closely tied to lived experience. It appeared in movement, in landscapes, in encounters, and in emotion.

And as these moments accumulated, a question quietly surfaced: In a world still marked by conflict and uncertainty, does poetry and literature still matter?

For many participants, the answer was not stated directly, but revealed through experience.

Poetry, in Guangdong, was not separate from reality. It emerged inside it-fragile, immediate, and deeply human-formed in the act of travelling, meeting, and speaking across languages. In that sense, what was written here was not a conclusion. It was something still unfolding, still moving forward, like the river that carried the final night away.

Australian study reveals limits to memory recovery after high-sugar diets

SYDNEY, May 19, (Xinhua): Improving diet quality can enhance memory, but high sugar consumption may cause lasting cognitive damage, an Australian study has revealed.

The study led by researchers at Australia's University of Technology Sydney (UTS) examined how changes in what we eat affect memory and brain function, said a UTS statement released Monday.

The findings, published in *Nutritional Neuroscience*, analyzed 27 preclinical studies to assess whether memory function can recover after switching from unhealthy to healthier diets.

"Our results show that improving diet quality does benefit memory. But those improvements were incomplete. Even after weeks on a healthy



Rehn

diet, memory did not return to the level seen in animals that had never eaten an unhealthy diet," said Simone Rehn, the study's lead author from UTS.

Researchers found that rodents moved to a healthy diet performed better on memory tasks than those that continued eating high-fat or high-sugar foods.

However, memory recovery depended on diet composition, with recovery seen in experiments that used high fat diets but not those using diets high in sugar or combined high fat and high sugar diets, the researchers said.

"This suggests sugar may be a key factor in limiting memory recovery," Rehn said, adding the memory tasks analyzed reflect function of the hippocampus, a brain region essential for learning and memory, and one that is also involved in regulating appetite and food intake.

The study found no consistent improvements in anxiety, activity levels or food motivation, indicating the effects were specific to memory.

MoH completes assessment for Field Epidemiology Training Program

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: The Ministry of Health announced the completion of the training needs assessment for the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) in Kuwait, paving the way for the establishment of a sustainable national institutional program in accordance with approved international standards, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press release, the ministry explained that this step comes as part of its efforts to strengthen and enhance public health system readiness, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Middle East Network for Community Health, with the participation of the Kuwait Center for Disease Prevention and Control.

The Field Epidemiology Training Program is an international program focused on building the capacities of healthcare personnel in epidemiological surveillance, rapid outbreak response, health data analysis, and decision-making support.

The ministry quoted Dr. Mohammed Behbehani, Head of the Public Health Emergency Planning Unit at the Kuwait Center for Disease Prevention and Control, as saying that the completion of the assessment represents a strategic step towards developing a national program specializing in field epidemiology in accordance with best international practices.

Behbehani stressed that field training programs are among the basic pillars globally for supporting public health systems and enhancing health security.

He also noted that this step complements what the State of Kuwait has achieved in developing its public health infrastructure, particularly in the areas of epidemiological surveillance and reference laboratories.



MoH photo
Middle East network representatives pose for a group photo.

Congo reports sharp rise in Ebola cases as WHO worries about outbreak's scale, speed

KINSHASA, Congo, May 19, (AP): The World Health Organization director-general openly worried Tuesday over the "scale and speed" of an outbreak of a rare Ebola variant in eastern Congo, where authorities reported a sharp increase in suspected deaths - to at least 131 - and over 500 suspected cases.

The virus spread undetected for weeks after the first known death as authorities tested for a more common strain and came up negative, health experts and aid workers said. This Bundibugyo virus, a rare variant, has no approved medicines or vaccines.

Congo's health minister, Samuel Roger Kamba said investigations were underway to determine whether the deaths and 513 suspected cases were "actually linked to the disease."

WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said he is "deeply concerned about the scale and speed of the epidemic," adding the UN health agency will convene its emergency committee later Tuesday. He pointed to the emergence of



Workers inspect medical supplies at a World Health Organization (WHO) warehouse in Nairobi, Kenya on May 18. (AP)

cases in urban areas, the deaths of healthcare workers and significant population movement.

The WHO has declared the Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern, requiring a coordinated response. Resources

were being rushed to the two affected provinces near the border with Uganda, which has reported one death in a person who traveled from Congo.

The head of the WHO team in Congo said authorities haven't identified

"patient zero" in the outbreak.

Dr. Anne Ancia also said the Erbevo vaccine, used against a different Ebola strain, was among those being considered for possible use. But even if that or another is approved, it would take two months to become available.

Inside Congo, cases have been confirmed in the capital of Ituri province, Bunia; North Kivu's rebel-held capital, Goma; and the localities of Mongbwalu, Nyakunde and Butembo - home to well over a million people in all.

Dr. Peter Stafford, an American doctor is among the Bunia cases, said the Christian organization he works for, Serge. He had been treating patients at a hospital. Three other Serge employees were working there, including Stafford's wife, but were not showing symptoms.

Congo has said the first person died from the virus on April 24 in Bunia, and the body was repatriated to the Mongbwalu health zone, a mining area with a large population.

'Rare species of Ebola' What to know about Bundibugyo virus

KINSHASA, Congo, May 19, (AP): The species of Ebola virus causing an outbreak in Congo that has killed 131 people is less common than other Ebola viruses, which is complicating the response because there are no specific treatments or vaccines.

"There's nothing even close to ready for clinical trials," said Dr. Celine Gounder, an infectious disease specialist and epidemiologist who treated patients in West Africa during the 2014-2016 Ebola epidemic. "And so that means responders, healthcare workers and other aid workers are really back to the basics."

Here's what to know about Bundibugyo virus, the rare species behind the outbreak of what public health officials call Ebola virus disease.

Bundibugyo has caused two other outbreaks, all in the same region of the Congo River basin, said Dr. Tom Ksiazek, a University of Texas Medical Branch virologist and veterinarian. He directed the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Special Pathogens Branch, which first identified the virus in 2007.

The virus is spread the same way as other Ebola viruses: through close contact with sick or deceased patients' bodily fluids, such as sweat, blood, feces or vomit. Healthcare workers and family members caring for sick patients face the highest risk, experts said.

"So very often we see doctors and nurses among the first to be infected and to die," said Gounder, editor-at-large for public health at KFF Health News.

From the few outbreaks health experts have seen, Bundibugyo might be slightly less deadly than what is often called Zaire virus, the most common species.

"I think a 30%-plus mortality rate is still quite scary, but it's hard to say with a lot of precision because we don't have a lot of experience," Gounder said.



US President Donald Trump listens as Joe Gebbia, the Chief Design Officer of the United States and the head of the National Design Studio, speaks about prescription drug prices in the South Court Auditorium in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House campus on May 18, in Washington. (AP)

Trump touts major TrumpRx expansion, adding more than 600 generic drugs

WASHINGTON, May 19, (AP): US President Donald Trump on Monday announced more than 600 generic medications are being added to the government's discounted-drug website TrumpRx, dramatically increasing offerings from one of the Republican administration's key initiatives to help Americans struggling with high costs.

The beefed-up website is the Trump administration's answer to criticism from Democrats who have called TrumpRx performative and noted that many of the brand-name drugs it has featured are cheaper with insurance or have lower-cost generic versions sold elsewhere.

It also marks an effort to respond to a top voter concern for November's midterm elections: affordability. Health costs are a worry for many Americans, an issue compounded by the Republican-led Congress' recent cuts to Medicaid and the expiration of enhanced Affordable Care Act subsidies this year that sent some people's

premiums skyrocketing.

The expansion is made possible by partnerships with other online pharmacies, including Amazon Pharmacy, GoodRx and billionaire investor Mark Cuban's Cost Plus Drugs, Trump said at an event at the White House.

"This has been the greatest breakthrough in lowering health care costs in modern history, but we're just sort of getting started," Trump said, calling TrumpRx the "hottest thing in medicine."

TrumpRx is not a platform for buying medications. Instead, it's set up as a facilitator, pointing Americans to drugmakers' direct-to-consumer websites, where they can make purchases. It also provides coupons to use at pharmacies. The site initially launched in February with over 40 medications, including weight-loss drugs such as Ozempic and Wegovy.

Trump said Monday's additions increase the site's offerings by nearly seven times. He said TrumpRx has

been visited more than 10 million times since its launch.

Even with generics added, experts said the potential savings heavily depend on a patient's situation. For the vast majority of Americans who have health insurance, using that coverage to pay for medications is still usually a better deal than paying cash through TrumpRx, said Rena Conti, a professor at Boston University's Questrom School of Business.

People who are uninsured or have a high deductible to meet, on the other hand, might benefit more from discounts on sites like TrumpRx, she said. She noted the addition of generics would likely provide more options for those shopping the website.

Cuban, a political independent, publicly campaigned for Democrat Kamala Harris in the 2024 presidential election. But he has enthusiastically advocated for TrumpRx and the work that some in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services are doing to make prescription drugs cheaper.

Chinese scientists hit new milestone in space solar power project

XI'AN, May 19, (Xinhua): Chinese scientists have taken a major step toward building a space solar power station, a giant power plant in space that could one day send energy back to Earth or to spacecraft.

A research team from Xidian University in northwest China's Shaanxi Province has made significant progress on the Sun Chasing project, or "Zhuri" in Chinese. The team has developed a ground-based test system for wireless power transmission that can charge multiple moving targets at the same time.

In recent tests, the system achieved a wireless power transmission efficiency of 20.8 percent from direct current to direct current over a distance of 100 meters. It delivered 1,180 watts of power. The team has also built a wireless charging system for drones. In a test, a drone flying at 30 kilometers per hour was able to receive 143 watts of stable power from 30 meters away.

A space solar power station works exactly as its name suggests: a huge array of solar panels placed in orbit. It would collect sunlight in space, where the sun always shines, and then convert that energy into microwaves or lasers to beam down to Earth or directly to satellites and spacecraft. This could address two significant issues: supplying uninterrupted power for space missions and alleviating energy shortages on the ground.

In 2018, the research team launched the first phase of the Sun Chasing project to build a ground test system. By June 2022, they had completed the world's first full-link, full-system ground validation system for a space solar power station. Now, the team has moved to phase two. The goal now is to solve the challenges of generating high power in space and transmitting it efficiently over long distances.

According to Duan Baoyan, an expert at Xidian University and an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, recent breakthroughs include

improving the efficiency of solar energy collection and conversion, increasing the precision of microwave beam control to reduce energy loss, and making the transmitting and receiving antennas smaller and lighter, which is critical for space application.

The team has also solved the problem of how to power multiple moving targets at once using a single transmitter. This means that in the future, one space power station could potentially supply electricity to several satellites or ground vehicles at the same time, Duan added.

Duan noted that there is still a long way to go before a space solar power station becomes a commercially viable reality. The next step, he said, is to conduct in-orbit tests. He said that he hopes to contribute Chinese wisdom and solutions to global energy change and sustainable development. Enditem

Also:

KOUROU, French Guiana: The Solar Wind Magnetosphere Ionosphere Link Explorer (SMILE), a joint mission between the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the European Space Agency (ESA), was successfully launched Tuesday aboard a Vega-C rocket from Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana.

Following the launch, the satellite was confirmed to have entered its planned orbit, with its solar arrays successfully deployed and systems operating normally, marking a sweeping success for the landmark collaboration in **China-Europe** space science.

SMILE marks China's first mission-level project with the ESA in space science exploration. The satellite will use soft X-ray imaging technology to provide a global view of the large-scale structure of Earth's magnetosphere for the first time.

The mission is expected to deliver a series of scientific breakthroughs in areas including space weather forecasting and the fundamental understanding of magnetospheric physics.

It may depend on whom you ask

Will future missions to Moon be sustainable?

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



By **Marco A. Janssen**, Arizona State University; **Afreen Siddiqi**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and **Parvathy Prem**, Johns Hopkins University

There's a new space race to the moon, and this time the ambitions are not just to visit but to stay. NASA's Artemis program aims to establish a long-term human presence on the lunar surface in the 2030s. China, India, Japan and a number of private companies all have lunar mission programs of their own.

As of now, the human footprint on the moon is small. That could change with the planned increase of lunar missions.

National space agencies are focused on science and exploration, while private companies aim to develop a lunar economy - potentially with mining operations. In the coming years, these groups will test technology and build some initial infrastructure on the moon. From 2030 onward, moon bases could become a reality.

But what are the long-term consequences of lunar missions for the moon itself? The Artemis program's goals are sustainable exploration and setting up a sustainable presence on the moon. However, sustainability is a broad concept with a variety of definitions and uses when it comes to space exploration. As a sustainability scholar, a space systems engineer and a planetary scientist, we've been trying to pin down what sustainability means in a lunar context.

Unlike Earth, the moon has no biodiversity, climate as we typically think of it, or oceans. But it does have its own active environment. While the moon may seem unchanging and indestructible, it is surprisingly sensitive to human activity. Without the wind, water or other natural forces that reshape the Earth, things that happen on the moon tend to leave a mark - sometimes for thousands, or even millions, of years.

When a rocket lands on the moon, its engines blast the

surface with exhaust gases and send fine dust particles flying at enormous speeds. A single landing by a large modern spacecraft, such as SpaceX's Starship, could disturb an area of the lunar surface two to five times larger than the Apollo missions did in the 1960s and 1970s.

Some of those ejected dust particles can travel tens of miles across the surface, and the finest grains can reach the moon's orbit, potentially threatening other spacecraft. Images from satellites in lunar orbit show that changes to the uppermost layer of the surface from a single landing can remain visible for decades.

Landings can also release water vapor, carbon dioxide and other gases into the lunar exosphere - an extremely thin layer of atoms hovering above the surface - and create a temporary atmosphere.

And all these effects can come from just one mission. Future missions will focus on the polar regions, which have ideal spots for collecting solar energy atop peaks, as well as water in the form of ice in craters. Scientists don't yet understand what the cumulative effects of the dozens of missions planned over the coming decade on the lunar environment - its surface, its thin atmosphere and its scientifically precious polar regions - will be, and whether they're reversible.

On Earth, the concept of sustainability balances protecting the environment, maintaining economic well-being and caring for society - current as well as future generations.

But what does sustainability mean on the moon? To find out, we sent out a survey asking people with a demonstrated interest in space and lunar exploration to define sustainability in this new context. We received 277 complete responses from academics, space industry professionals, space agency staff and engaged members of the public.

We found that people mean very different things when they talk about lunar sustainability - and those differences often track closely with who they are and where they work.

People working in the space industry tended to think about sustainability in financial and operational terms: keeping missions affordable, making infrastructure reusable, and developing the moon's resources to support a self-sustaining economy. (AP)

Spurs outlast Thunder in 2OT thriller

Wembanyama erupts for 41 and 24

OKLAHOMA CITY, May 19, (AP): Victor Wembanyama had 41 points and 24 rebounds, Dylan Harper finished with 24 points and a team playoff-record seven steals, and the San Antonio Spurs beat the Oklahoma City Thunder 122-115 in a double-overtime classic to open the Western Conference finals.

Wembanyama sealed it with a pair of dunks in the final minute, one of them leading to a three-point play as the Spurs stole home-court advantage and beat the Thunder for the fifth time in six meetings this season.

Stephon Castle had 17 points, Devin Vassell and Keldon Johnson each scored 13 and Julian Champagnie added 11 for the Spurs, who were without De'Aaron Fox because of ankle stiffness.

"A great effort - from everybody," said Wembanyama, who, at 22 years, 134 days, became the youngest player with at least 40 points and 20 rebounds in a playoff game. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was 22 years, 343 days when he had a 40/20 game in the 1970 NBA Finals.

Alex Caruso scored 31 points, the second-highest scoring game of his career, off the bench for the Thunder - whose nine-game playoff winning streak dating to Game 7 of last season's Finals was snapped.

Jalen Williams returned from a six-game absence caused by a hamstring strain and scored 26 points for the Thunder, while Shai Gilgeous-Alexander - on the night he got his second straight Most Valuable Player trophy - had 24 points and 12 assists but shot 7 for 23.

It was the sixth Game 1 in NBA playoff history to go into double overtime - the first since a Spurs-Warriors game in 2013.

And as the clock ticked toward midnight, Wembanyama decided enough was enough.

Game 2 is Wednesday at Oklahoma City.

"It was a war of wills," Spurs coach Mitch Johnson said. "The levels of mental toughness exceeded by both teams ... we needed every second from everybody that played."

The Spurs were up by 10 with 9:10 left in regulation, wasted it all, then survived a frantic final stretch where the lead changed hands twice and the game was tied three times in a span of less than two minutes.

Wembanyama had an off-balance chance to win it on the last play of regulation, but Chet Holmgren swatted it away. In overtime, Wembanyama more



San Antonio Spurs forward Victor Wembanyama (1) and Oklahoma City Thunder center Chet Holmgren (7) reach for a rebound during the first half of Game 1 in a third-round NBA basketball playoffs series in Oklahoma City. (AP)

than atoned - connecting on a tying 3-pointer from well behind the arc with 28 seconds left to tie the game and send it to a second OT.

"We have to get better from this game," Thunder coach Mark Daigneault said.

Gilgeous-Alexander had his worst first half, shooting-wise, in nearly three years - 1 for 5 from the field, four points. It was the first time since Oct. 29, 2023, a span of 270 appearances including playoffs, that he didn't have at least two field goals before halftime.

Meanwhile, Wembanyama was doing whatever he wanted - dunking over trios of defenders, flexing at times, finishing the half with 14 points and 10 rebounds, looking perfectly comfortable in his debut on this stage.

And the Spurs' lead was only seven at the break, 51-44.

Gilgeous-Alexander got a couple shots to fall in the third, and the Thunder even briefly reclaimed the lead. But the Spurs were unfazed and the margin was still seven. San Antonio was ahead 80-73 going into the fourth.

Kishan anchors with 70, Klaasen accelerates with 47

Hyderabad seals playoffs spot with win over CSK

CHENNAI, India, May 19, (AP): Sunrisers Hyderabad qualified for the Indian Premier League playoffs after Ishan Kishan anchored them to a five-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings.

Hyderabad's win also ensured Gujarat Titans a place in the four-team playoffs. Defending champion and league leader Royal Challengers Bengaluru were already through, meaning only one place remained to be filled in the knockouts.

Five-time champion Chennai was still in contention but needing to beat Gujarat in its last league match on Thursday and other results to go in its favor.

Hyderabad, playing its first game after a week's rest, cruised to 181-5 with an over to spare as Kishan scored a breezy 70 off 47 balls and Heinrich Klaasen mastered spin with a knock of 47 off 26 deliveries.

Chennai made 180-7, struggling against the variations of the Hyderabad fast bowlers: Captain



Sunrisers Hyderabad's captain Ishan Kishan plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Chennai Super Kings and Sunrisers Hyderabad in Chennai, India. (AP)

Pat Cummins led with 3-28 and complemented by Sakib Husain's 2-34 and Eshan Malinga's 1-26.

"Really satisfying, pretty tough wicket to bat," Cummins said. "That partnership (between Kis-

han and Klaasen) was really tough. They just chose their matchups, and played some ridiculous shots.

"The real stuff (playoffs) starts now."

Veteran Mahendra Singh Dhoni came to the stadium for the first

time this season but he was still nursing a calf injury and sat out his team's final home game in front of almost 35,000 fans.

Chennai's Sanju Samson started in a brisk fashion on the slow pitch, smashing five fours and a six off the first 11 balls he faced before Cummins found his outside edge in the third over.

Skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad labored for 21 balls to score 15 without a boundary before he, too, fell to Cummins, but Chennai was well served by Dewald Brevis (44) and Kartik Sharma (32) scoring at a healthy rate in the middle overs.

However, they were overshadowed by Hyderabad's Kishan and Klaasen, who was dropped on 18. The pair combined for 75 for the third wicket until Klaasen was stumped. But Kishan batted on to six runs from victory.

"We were in the game until the second-last over," Gaikwad said. "Everyone played their heart out today."

Fiery start awaits Asian Handball Championship

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: The Asian Handball Federation has released the schedule for the 28th Asian Men's Club League Handball Championship, which will be hosted by Kuwait SC at Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Sports Complex from June 6 to 15, with eight clubs taking part.

Opening-day fixtures promise strong early clashes, as Burgan faces China's CHA, Bahrain's Al-Najma meet Saudi Arabia's Al-Khaleej, host Kuwait Club takes on Qatar's Al Arabi, and UAE champion Sharjah play Qatar's Al Duhail.

The preliminary stage runs until June 9, with the quarter-finals scheduled for June 11, before the tournament concludes on June 15.

The draw, held recently in Kuwait, produced highly competitive group line-ups. Kuwait Club was placed in Group B alongside Al-Najma, Al-Khaleej, and Al Arabi, while Burgan SC were drawn in Group A with Sharjah, CHA, and Al Duhail.

Under the competition format, the top team in Group A will face the fourth-placed team in Group B, while second plays third across



Players preparing for the championship.

groups, with winners advancing to the semi-finals.

Kuwait Club has reinforced their squad with Macedonian player Filip Kuzmanovski, their fourth foreign professional for the tournament. The squad also includes Qatari Frankis Marzo, Montenegrin Vladan Lipovina, and Portuguese Victor Iurriza.

Burgan, meanwhile, features Japanese professional Yasuhiro and is exploring further reinforcements from the Egyptian league as it continues its training camp in Cairo.

Japan secured second place

Saudi Arabia retains top spot in AFC club rankings

JEDDAH, May 19: Saudi Arabia continued to lead the Asian Football Confederation's latest rankings for men's club competitions following the conclusion of the 2025-2026 season.

According to the AFC, Saudi clubs topped the standings with 132,545 points, ahead of Japan in second place and South Korea in third.

Saudi Arabia's position was strengthened by impressive results in both the AFC Champions League Elite and AFC Champions League Two. Al Ahli successfully defended its continental crown last month, while Al Nassr finished runner-up in the AFC Champions League Two competition.

Japan secured second place with 120,410 points, helped by the strong campaign of Machida Zelvia, which ensured a seventh final appearance for a Japanese side in Asia's premier club tournament.

South Korea claimed third place after Gangwon FC and FC Seoul both advanced to the Round of 16 in the AFC Champions League Elite. Pohang Steelers also boosted the country's tally by reaching the knockout stages of the AFC Champions



Al Ahli celebrates after successfully defending Asian Champions League Elite title.

League Two.

Indonesia achieved the biggest improvement in the rankings, climbing five spots from 25th to 20th. The rise came largely thanks to Persib Bandung reaching the Round of 16

in the AFC Champions League Two before exiting against Thailand's Ratchaburi. Dewa United also contributed by reaching the quarterfinals of the AFC Challenge League.

Cambodia also enjoyed prog-

ress in the rankings after Phnom Penh Crown and Preah Khan Reach Svay Rieng advanced to the quarterfinals of the AFC Challenge League. The latter eventually reached the final before losing to Kuwait Club.

Diomande's 'crazy life' takes him to World Cup

NEW YORK, May 19, (AP): Yan Diomande has had a "crazy life" and he's still only 19.

In two years, Diomande has gone from playing at a Florida high school to facing the likes of Real Madrid, Barcelona and Bayern Munich. Now the winger is heading back to the United States for his first World Cup as one of the most-hyped young players at the tournament.

"That was this crazy life," he told reporters last week, shortly before he was named to the Ivory Coast roster. "Everything went fast."

While most of the world's top teen players were at storied club academies in Europe, Diomande was playing for DME Academy in Daytona Beach and taking local club team AS Frenzi to a national title.

He returns as the German league's rookie of the year after he scored 12 goals and assisted nine more this season for Leipzig.



Yan Diomande

Diomande arrived in Florida from the Ivory Coast aged just 15, without any family members and speaking only French. He's grateful for what he learned in the U.S., but the memories are bittersweet.

"Really far away from your family, from your friends, and from the people you love, and I didn't speak English before, so it was really difficult for me, but that was a great experience to be there," he said.

Diomande took the unusual career path via Florida at a time when he was too young under international soccer rules to sign a pro contract outside of his home country.

He said he struggled with "unhealthy" food, the American preference for basketball over soccer and other culture clashes.

"It was a very different culture, because I'm from Africa. There's a lot of, kind of, respect, the way you speak to people," he said, adding the U.S. was "not the same thing."

Moving to the Spanish league in January 2025 with Leganes - where he made his pro debut against Real Madrid - and then in July to Germany gave Diomande a chance to shine against the world's best opponents.

Pakistan left needing miracle 400+ chase on final day

Islam stars as Bangladesh closes in on Pakistan whitewash

SYLHET, Bangladesh, May 19, (AP): Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam claimed four wickets as Bangladesh moved within three wickets of a series sweep against Pakistan after reducing the tourists to 316-7 on day 4 of the second test in the chase of an improbable 437.

Mohammad Rizwan was batting on 75 as the last hope for Pakistan, with Sajid Khan on 8 at stumps.

Salman Agha and skipper Shan Masood added 71 runs each to help Pakistan take the test to a fifth day.

Taijul put Bangladesh on top, breaking the threatening partnership of Agha and Rizwan, who shared 134 runs for the sixth wicket to give Pakistan a glimmer of hope. Taijul bowled Agha with a slider to break the stubborn rearguard before removing Hasan Ali for duck.

Fast bowler Nahid Rana took 2-58 with raw pace that troubled Pakistan throughout the day. He gave Bangladesh the first breakthrough when he dismissed Abdullah Fazal (6), who steered a short-pitch ball to gully.

Soon after, offspinner Mehidy Hasan trapped Azan Awaish lbw for 21, giving Bangladesh control of the game.

But Masood and Babar Azam resisted, negotiating Nahid Rana's bowling well and keeping the runs flowing. The 91-run stand between them came to an end when Taijul strangled Babar down the leg for 47.

Saud Shakeel then edged a pacy delivery of Nahid behind while Taijul had Masood caught at short-leg, leaving Pakistan 162-6 as Bangladesh sensed a victory inside four days.

Change Name

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SPORTS

Brazil takes gamble on Neymar for World Cup campaign

'Samba Boys can match world's best'

RIO DE JANEIRO, May 19, (Agencies): Neymar made Brazil's World Cup squad, a selection many local analysts and former footballers deemed unlikely only days ago. The striker will appear at his fourth World Cup.

The 34-year-old Neymar is Brazil's all-time top goal-scorer with 79 but has struggled to return to top fitness since he tore his left ACL in October 2023. He's played eight matches for Santos this year with four goals and two assists.

"He has improved his fitness, he will be an important player in this World Cup," Brazil coach Carlo Ancelotti said at a press conference in Rio de Janeiro.

The coach added he preferred experienced players for some spots in his squad, including Neymar.

"He can still improve his fitness until the first match of the World Cup," Ancelotti said. "He has experience in this kind of competition, the love of our group, he can create a better environment in this group." Shortly before Ancelotti's squad was announced, Neymar changed his Instagram bio in a revealing way; he had only Santos as a reference of where he is currently playing and added Brazil to it.

Brazil's 26-man squad also features its main players in recent years, Vinicius Júnior and Raphinha.

Ancelotti who took over in May 2025 but had not summoned Neymar until Monday.

He extended his contract with the Brazilian Football Confederation last week to the 2030 World Cup but he has had a troubled spell in Brazil so far with many injured players out of his World Cup squad; strikers Rodrigo and Estevao are the ones he will miss the most in North America.

Brazil opens its World Cup campaign against Morocco in New Jersey on June 13, followed by Haiti and Scotland in Group C.

Brazil
Goalkeepers: Alisson (Liverpool), Ederson (Fenerbahce), Weverton (Gremio) **Defenders:** Alex Sandro, Danilo, Leo Pereira (Flamengo), Bremer (Juventus), Ibanez (Al-Ahli), Wesley (Roma), Marquinhos (Paris Saint-Germain), Gabriel Magalhaes (Arsenal), Douglas Santos (Zenit St. Petersburg) **Midfielders:** Bruno Guimaraes (Newcastle), Casemiro (Manchester United), Danilo Santos (Botafogo), Fabinho (Al-Ittihad), Lucas Paqueta (Flamengo)



Coach Carlo Ancelotti announces Brazil's squad for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Forwards: Endrick (Lyon), Gabriel Martinelli (Arsenal), Igor Thiago (Brentford), Matheus Cunha (Manchester United), Raphinha (Barcelona), Vinicius Júnior (Real Madrid), Luiz Henrique (Zenit St. Petersburg), Neymar (Santos), Rayan (Bournemouth).

Ancelotti said that his players could compete on equal footing with the world's best, but stopped short of predicting a sixth World Cup title for the South American team this year.

"I'm not a magician, but I'm a worker who has been in this world for 40 years," Ancelotti said after announcing his final 26-man squad for the tournament in the United States, Mexico and Canada.

"I have the knowledge and confidence that this team can compete with the best teams in the world. We have to be demanding, because demands bring more motivation. Can we win the World Cup if we reach the final? I say yes, we can reach the final. The best thing is to get there and win." Brazil will open its campaign against Morocco in New Jersey on June 13 before meeting Haiti and Scotland in Group C.



A screen displays an image of Neymar after coach Carlo Ancelotti, left, included him in Brazil's squad for the 2026 FIFA World Cup in Rio de Janeiro. (AP)

The Italian named France, Brazil, Argentina, Spain, Portugal and England as the favorites to win the competition, adding that predicting winners was a fool's game.

"There are many teams, but nobody is perfect," he said. "Brazil is not far behind them and we will compete with confidence." When asked if he had a message for fans, he replied: "Trust us. We are well-prepared to compete. Football is a game of many details, but I have a lot of confidence in this team. We will fight to produce the best version of the national team." Eleven of the 26 players named by Ancelotti will be making their World Cup debuts. The most experienced player in the squad is Neymar, who will be making his fourth appearance in football's showpiece event.

"To succeed in modern football, you need talent," Ancelotti said. "Fortunately, Brazil has a lot of talent. But you have to combine talent with commitment, the right attitude, teamwork and concentration. That's the work I started when I arrived here a year ago."

'My main goal is and remains Paris'

Sinner enters French Open on 29-match win streak, chasing career Grand Slam

ROME, May 19, (AP): From the California desert to Miami; Monte Carlo to Madrid; and the red clay of Rome, too, nobody has been able to beat Jannik Sinner for three full months.

By sweeping the first five Masters 1000 tournaments of the year, the top-ranked Sinner has dominated tennis like few other players have in the sport's recent history while amassing a 29-match winning streak.

And yet now the stakes are rising for Sinner as he attempts to complete a career Grand Slam by winning the French Open. The clay-court Grand Slam, which starts on Sunday in Paris, is the only major that Sinner hasn't won.

A couple of hours after becoming the first Italian man to win the Italian Open in 50 years on Sunday, Sinner's focus was already pivoting toward Roland Garros.

"We don't have much time to realize what we're accomplishing," Sinner said. "I said it before the start of the year: My main goal is and remains Paris."

"What we've done here and the rest of the year is incredible. I realize that. But mentally I know that now I've got to do all the right things. It's necessary to rest, but I also need to stay in form because soon my most important tournament of the year is approaching. I don't want to put too much pressure on myself, because that comes by itself."

The pressure on Sinner has heightened with his only real rival, Carlos Alcaraz, currently sidelined due to a right wrist injury that will keep the Spaniard out of the French Open. Alcaraz became the youngest man to complete a career Grand Slam when he won the Australian Open in February at 22.

The 24-year-old Sinner has matched Pete Sampras' 29-match winning streak from 1994 for the



Jannik Sinner, of Italy, returns the ball to Casper Ruud, of Norway, during the final match at the Italian Open tennis tournament, in Rome. (AP)

fifth longest run in the ATP Tour era (since 1990). Novak Djokovic holds the record with 43 straight match wins in 2010-11.

With his Rome title, Sinner has already become the second man after Djokovic to win all nine Masters 1000 events - the biggest tournaments outside the Grand Slams - over his career. Djokovic won each event at least twice.

Might Sinner want to consider attempting to win all nine Masters events this year, now that there's only Canada, Cincinnati, Shanghai and Paris remaining? That's something that not even Djokovic accomplished.

"We need to go tournament by tournament. The most important thing is to feel good physically on the court. If you're not feeling well physically, you'll go nowhere," said Sinner, who had to

overcome exhaustion and fatigue during a semifinal victory over Daniil Medvedev in Rome.

"The most important thing for me is my body. Everyone plays tennis well," Sinner said of his fellow pros.

Still, Sinner suggested that because he won't be playing any grass-court warmups before defending his Wimbledon title this year, "there's a chance we play in Canada" in August.

"I don't think it's realistic," Sinner added of winning all nine Masters in the same year. "It's not possible to continue playing like I am now for the entire season."

Known for his understated celebrations and always maintaining his composure, Sinner is not one to dwell on his victories and titles. "Happiness shouldn't depend on winning a tournament or not,"

he said. "I'm fairly even-tempered off the court. It's small things that make me happy, like spending half a day playing golf or going to race go-Kart."

Sinner's humane side was on display when he accompanied kids from a children's hospital onto the court in Rome.

One child's overflowing joy made Sinner smile, while another time he had to slow his pace so the kid could keep up.

"Sometimes us tennis players, and it's not nice to say, we don't realize how fortunate we are," Sinner said. "These might be the moments that touch me the most, because you make physical contact with the kids. ... Minor gestures that they'll remember forever and which don't cost us anything - or rather they provide us with beautiful feelings."

Maresca to take over, according to reports

Guardiola expected to leave Man City after this season

MANCHESTER, England, May 19, (AP): Pep Guardiola's record-breaking, 10-year tenure at Manchester City might be coming to a close, according to reports in the British media.

City wouldn't comment on stories from outlets including national broadcaster the BBC and the Daily Mail that Guardiola is expected to leave the club at the end of this season. He has a year left on his contract.

Enzo Maresca, the former Chelsea manager who was previously assistant to Guardiola at City, is the leading contender to take over, according to the BBC. There was no immediate response from Maresca's representatives when contacted by The Associated Press.

Guardiola, who has won 17 major trophies at City since arriving in English soccer in 2016, has repeatedly been asked in recent weeks whether he would be staying at City beyond this season.

On Monday, he rolled his eyes when another question was posed about his future and answered: "I've said so many times, I have one more year."

Overseeing the most successful period in City's history in his decade in charge, Guardiola has spent long-

er at the club than he did at Barcelona (2008-12) and Bayern Munich (2013-16).

His biggest achievement at City has been winning the Premier League-Champions League-FA Cup treble in the 2022-23 season, emulating the feat of Manchester United in 1999.

Guardiola's City team has won the Premier League six times and

became the only team in the nearly 140-year history of English soccer to win four top-flight league titles in a row (2021-24), the first team to earn 100 points in a top-flight season (2017-18), and the first team to win the domestic treble of the league, FA Cup and League Cup in the same season (2018-19).

This season, City has won both the League Cup and FA Cup and

is second behind Arsenal in the Premier League, needing to beat Bournemouth on Tuesday to keep the title race going until the final round on Sunday. City is five points behind Arsenal.

Guardiola has also changed the face of English soccer in general, bringing a style of football - a possession-based approach that started with playing the ball out from the goalkeeper or defense - that ended up being mimicked across the country, from kids' teams at grassroots level to rival teams in the Premier League.

Asked Monday if he thought a stand at City's Etihad Stadium should be named after him, Guardiola said: "The important thing in our lives is when you look back, you can say, 'Wow.' You can look with a big smile and (say) that was good."

"I am pretty sure," he added, "most of the people who lived this time together can feel that."

The final years of Guardiola's time at City has been under something of a cloud, with the club currently involved in a huge legal case with the Premier League. City was charged by the league in February 2023 with more than 100 financial breaches, including providing misleading information about its sources of income.



Manchester City's head coach Pep Guardiola greets fans at the end of the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester City and Brentford in Manchester. (AP)

NY to host 8 World Cup games, including final

New York ready for World Cup party as transport headaches loom for fans

NEW YORK, May 19, (AP): New York is welcoming soccer fans from around the planet this summer for the World Cup - and then transporting a vast majority of them to MetLife Stadium in northern New Jersey at a hefty price. The home of the NFL's Jets and Giants is set to host eight games, including the final on July 19. It's the latest big event at the 80,000-seat stadium in the Meadowlands, a dozen years after the Super Bowl was played there and three years since Taylor Swift's "The Eras Tour."

The Statue of Liberty, Times Square, Empire State Building, Central Park, Coney Island, and shows on and off Broadway, and at Radio City Music Hall are atop a long list of tourist destinations. Major League Baseball's Yankees and Mets each have plenty of home games, including the Los Angeles Dodgers at Yankee Stadium the weekend of the final. Start with a bagel and a slice of pizza and go from there to any type of cuisine your heart desires.

There are 72 restaurants in New York City and the surrounding areas with a Michelin star, and there are quality eats at every price point. Some of the best steakhouses and Italian can be found all over, especially in Manhattan, and Flushing in Queens features an array of excellent Asian food. There will be a free one in each of the city's five boroughs:

Rockefeller Center in Manhattan, Billie Jean King National Tennis Center - home of the U.S. Open tennis tournament - in Queens, on the East River waterfront and in Brooklyn Bridge Park in Brooklyn, a shopping mall near Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, and a minor league baseball stadium in Staten Island.

Another is taking place in Harrison, New Jersey, at Sports Illustrated Stadium at a cost of \$10 for adults and free for children 12 and under, though a ticket is required. A round-trip train ticket from Penn Station in Manhattan to East Rutherford on NJ Transit costs \$98 - down from the \$150 initially unveiled but still significantly more than \$12.90 for other events - and it's not direct. Ticket-holders must buy ahead for a specific time slot, board in one of two desig-



A FIFA World Cup trophy is displayed on stage for a panel on the 2026 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament halftime show at the Global Citizen NOW summit in New York. (AP)

nated zones, and then transfer at Secaucus Junction.

Fans can also take NJ Transit from Secaucus or Hoboken Terminal. FIFA's official shuttle bus is \$20 and departs from Grand Central Station, the Port Authority Bus Terminal, a to-be-determined site in north Midtown, or a park-and-ride site in Clifton, New Jersey.

Despite vast lots surrounding the stadium with more than 20,000 spots usually available, the only parking on site will be what FIFA calls premium and limited availability at the American Dream mall. Ride share pickup and drop-off is at the Meadowlands harness racing track. Allow plenty of time to get in and even more patience to get out. A regular-season football game leads to long lines and logjams, and the logistical complications of no parking or tailgating, combined with the number of fans unfamiliar with the stadium and the transportation there, could cause lengthy delays.

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KUNA photo
Kuwait's women's shooters display gold medals on the podium.

Sports

KFF chief and staff thanked for efforts in Cup success

Crown Prince congratulates Al-Arabi on victory

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Monday sent a congratulatory letter to Al-Arabi chairman Abdulaziz Ahmad Ashour and the club's staff following their victory in the final of His Highness the Crown Prince Cup, securing the trophy.

In his message, His Highness praised the well-deserved triumph, stressing that it reflected the significant efforts and dedication of the club's management and staff, as well as the high technical standards and determination shown by the players. He added that Al-Arabi's performances throughout the tournament had earned widespread admiration from Kuwaiti sports fans.

He wished Al-Arabi SC continued success and further achievements across various sporting competitions, contributing to raising Kuwait's standing under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In a separate letter, His Highness the Crown Prince also extended thanks to the Chairman and staff of the Kuwait Football Association (KFA), Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah, commending their efforts in organizing the tournament and contributing to its success in an honorable manner.

The message came after the conclusion of the 2025-2026 Crown Prince Cup final, in which Al-



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah applauds during the Crown Prince final.

Arabi SC defeated Kuwait Club 3-0 to claim its tenth title in the competition's history.

His Highness noted that the tournament reflected strong support for Kuwaiti sport and provided a platform for players to compete in a competitive and high-quality environment, showcasing strong technical standards.

He also praised the KFA's role in developing Kuwaiti football, supporting young talent, improving the sports system in line with international standards, and promoting sportsmanship and ethical values.

His Highness wished the KFA continued success in fulfilling its national responsibilities and in further elevating Kuwait's presence in regional and international sporting arenas.

Minister of State for Youth and Sports Affairs Dr. Tareq Al-Jalalma said that the Crown Prince's patronage and presence at the final highlighted the state's strong and continued support for the sports sector.

He noted that the final demonstrated the importance placed on sports in promoting values of belonging, excellence, and fair competition among youth.

He added that the atmosphere of the match reflected the passion of fans and the success of organizational efforts by the relevant authorities.

Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Sports Bashar Abdullah also said the Crown Prince's presence underscored the leadership's strong backing of the sports and youth sectors, describing the final as a major national sporting event that drew wide attention across the country.

Kuwaiti shooters steal the spotlight



The shooters celebrates with their medals.

KUNA photos

Padel team suffers narrow defeat

DOHA, May 19: Kuwait's shooting team continued its outstanding run at the 4th Gulf Games in Doha, capturing gold medals in both the men's and women's individual trap events to underline the country's supremacy in the sport.

Kuwait's women's shooting team claimed the gold medal in the trap team event on Tuesday at the 4th Gulf Games, currently being held in Doha and running until May 22.

The Kuwaiti team, featuring Shahad Al-Hawal, Reem Al-Zamanan, and Hajar Malak, secured first place and the gold medal. Qatar finished second, while Bahrain took third place.

Kuwait also secured a silver medal in the men's team trap competition, with the trio of Abdulrahman Al-Faihan, Khaled Al-Mudhaf, and Talal Al-Tarqi finishing second.

Kuwait Shooting Federation President Duajj Al-Otaibi congratulated the country's leadership, the Public Authority for Sport, and all those who supported the team's participation, praising the shooters' strong performances.

He also commended Qatar for its hospitality and the excellent organization of the tournament.

In the men's competition, Abdulrahman Al-Faihan clinched gold after edging Qatar's Mohammed Al-Rumaihi in a thrilling shoot-off tie-breaker, winning 23-22 following a closely contested final.

Kuwaiti shooter Shahad Al-Hawal also delivered an impressive display to secure gold in the women's individual trap event, adding another valuable medal to Kuwait's tally and highlighting the growing strength of women's shooting in the country.

Al-Faihan expressed pride in winning the title, saying the achievement was the result of extensive prepara-



Snooker bronze medalist Ahmed Abl

tion and hard work. He described the competition as extremely intense, particularly the decisive shoot-off rounds, which reflected the high level of Gulf shooting athletes.

Elsewhere, Kuwait added a bronze medal through national billiards and snooker player Ahmed Abl, who finished third in the men's individual 15-red snooker event.

Kuwait's men's padel team suffered a narrow 2-1 defeat against Qatar, while the national handball team fell 28-21 to the UAE.

Kuwait Olympic Committee technical director and delegation administrator Dr. Hussein Al-Saeed praised the performances of the Kuwaiti teams, revealing that the country's athletes have so far collected 46 medals at the Games, a sign of the continued progress of Kuwaiti sports on the Gulf stage.

The 4th Gulf Games continue in Doha with around 1,400 athletes competing across multiple sports, including handball, athletics, table tennis, padel, fencing, boxing, taekwondo, karate, swimming, billiards, snooker, basketball, shooting, archery, volleyball, equestrian, and bowling.

Kuwait drawn with Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Oman in Gulf Cup 27

JEDDAH, May 19: The draw for the 27th Arabian Gulf Cup, held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, placed Kuwait in Group A alongside Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Oman. Group B features the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Yemen.

Saudi Arabia will host the tournament from December 23 to January 6. The competition will be played in a group-stage format, with the top two teams from each group advancing to the semi-finals.

Kuwait, the record holders with 10 Gulf Cup titles, will be aiming to end a 16-year wait for the trophy, having last lifted it in Gulf Cup 20 in Yemen in 2010.

In preparation, the national team will travel to Bangkok in early June for a training camp that includes two friendly matches. They are scheduled to face Thailand on June 9, while a second friendly is still being arranged after Oman withdrew from the match initially set for June 4.

Best of the Rest

'Team focused only on match in S. Korea': Head coach of Pyongyang-based Naegohyang Women's FC told a press conference on Tuesday that the team will "focus only on the game" in South Korea, one day ahead of their semifinal against South Korea's Suwon FC Women in the AFC Women's Champions League.

The team from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) arrived in South Korea on Sunday, marking the first visit by DPRK athletes to South Korea for a sports competition in nearly eight years since the International Table Tennis Federation World Tour Grand Finals in December 2018.

Naegohyang will face Suwon at 7:00 p.m. local time Wednesday at Suwon Stadium.

"We came here to play the match. We will focus only on the game," Naegohyang head coach Ri Yu Il said when asked about local support from a cheering squad for the team. (Xinhua)

Al-Shatti: Crown Prince Cup is the result of players' effort and fans' support

Al-Muzayni: A priceless title ... an indescribable joy



Al-Arabi management and players celebrate the Crown Prince Cup with fans.

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: Al-Arabi SC board secretary Fawad Al-Muzayni described winning the His Highness the Crown Prince Cup as "a joy that cannot be described," saying the achievement is deeply cherished by everyone at the club.

Speaking after Al-Arabi's 3-0 victory over Kuwait SC in the final at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, Al-Muzayni praised the play-

ers for delivering an excellent performance and fulfilling their promise to secure the trophy. He also commended the efforts of the administrative, technical, and medical staff throughout the preparation period.

He said the club had been eager to win the title to avoid ending the season without silverware, while congratulating all members of the "Green Castle."

Al-Muzayni added that the board would not have held the players accountable even if the title had not

been won, given the challenging circumstances the team faced, including some players' work commitments.

Al-Arabi coach Nasser Al-Shatti also expressed his delight after guiding the club to a tenth Crown Prince Cup title, praising the players for their commitment and strong performances throughout the tournament.

He said the squad fully deserved the triumph, noting that the team had performed well last season but fell short of titles, before making up for

it this year with the cup win.

Al-Shatti added that Al-Arabi was the better side in the final in terms of focus, tactical discipline, and mental strength, which ultimately secured the victory, expressing hope that the team would maintain this level going forward.

Fans of Al-Arabi gathered at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium to celebrate the victory alongside the players, in the presence of club chairman Abdulaziz Ashour and board members.

KFA holds General Assembly to choose new board for 2026-2030 term

KUWAIT CITY, May 19: The ordinary General Assembly of the Kuwait Football Association will be held at 7:00 pm today to elect a new Board of Directors for the 2026-2030 term.

The Election Committee has approved all nomination papers for candidates contesting the posts of chairman, two vice-chairmen, board members, and the women's seat.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Yousef is running for the position of board chairman.

For the vice-chairman posts, four candidates are competing, with the General Assembly set to elect two: Dyeen Al-Dyeen, Ayman Al-Husseini, Khaled Al-Qabandi, and Sheikh Nasser Talal Al-Sabah.

For board membership, the approved candidates are Dr. Ahmed Ajab, Dr. Adel Al-Adwani, and Nasser Al-Adwani, while the women's seat will be filled by Dalal Al-Mudhaf.



The Kuwait Football Association headquarters.

Afonso Eulálio defies expectations to keep Giro lead

MASSA, Italy, May 19, (AP): Afonso Eulálio surprisingly remained in the overall lead of the Giro d'Italia after Tuesday's lengthy individual time trial, which was won in dominant fashion by Filippo Ganna of Italy.

No one could come close to Ganna, a time trial specialist who completed the flat, 42-kilometer

(26-mile) route along the coast from Viareggio to Massa in 45 minutes, 53 seconds.

Thymen Arensman was second, 1:54 behind Ganna, with Rémi Cavagna another five seconds back.

Pre-race favorite Jonas Vingegaard, who is also an expert time trialist, was expected to move into the overall lead after the 10th stage,

despite starting the day 2:24 behind Eulálio. However, an impressive ride from the young Portuguese rider - who is relatively untested in time trials - saw Eulálio keep hold of the pink jersey with a 27-second advantage over Vingegaard. Arensman moved into third overall, 1:57 behind Eulálio.

It was the only time trial in this

year's race.

Wednesday's 11th stage is a 195-kilometer (121-mile) route from Porcari to Chiavara that features three categorized climbs.

The 109th men's Giro ends on May 31 in Rome. The women's Giro runs from May 30-June 7 with Italian rider Elisa Longo Borghini as the defending champion.