



Kuwait's HH Amir receives letter from Bangladesh Prime Minister Page 4



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# Rhythmic ripples of water and light return to JACC

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## Opinion

**Ahmed Al-Jarallah**  
Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

### The Iran agreement ... Yes, but it means No

ONCE again, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states are demonstrating their commitment to maintaining regional stability and avoiding any confrontation that could plunge the region into the abyss of senseless conflicts.

Once again, the Iranian regime faces a critical test. The crucial question is whether it can adhere to the commitments and guarantees outlined in the agreement of principles announced between Iran and the United States - an agreement endorsed by Gulf states - or whether it will, as always, fail to uphold its obligations.

This raises further questions - Will Tehran abandon its regional proxies and act as a responsible state? Or will it continue to rely on militias to destabilize the region? Will Iran refrain from using the Strait of Hormuz as a weapon of blackmail? Or will it continue to threaten its neighbors in the Arabian Gulf region, whose only lifeline to the world is the Strait of Hormuz?

A realistic assessment of Iran's mindset, as discussed at length in recent weeks, is essential.

In short, Iran has been prone to treachery at the first opportunity and is careful to conceal its strategic intentions behind diplomatic language.

I recall when Ayatollah Khomeini agreed to "drink the poison chalice" in 1988 when accepting a ceasefire during the Iran-Iraq War. He then proceeded to open the regime's coffers to Iranian-backed militias, enabling them to commit several acts of terrorism and establish sleeper cells throughout the Arab world.

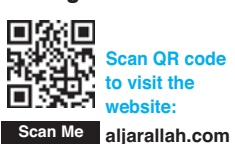
In this way, Khomeini publicly accepted the end of the war, but covered his treachery with a mask of goodwill.

Therefore, the current interim agreement between the United States and Iran, and the 60-day truce, contain numerous loopholes that the Revolutionary Guard could exploit to carry out terrorist acts that would destabilize the region. This scenario is reinforced by the fact that the Iranian state today appears to be composed of multiple heads, each vying to impose its will on others.

As further evidence of this, a problem quickly emerged from Tehran with its announcement that it would not hand over its highly enriched uranium. This means Iran violated the agreement before it was even officially finalized, indicating that any agreements are not likely to bear any fruit.

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# Kuwait gives workers lifeline against defaulting employers

Malicious absconding reports now under legal fire

By Fares Ghaleb  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Director General of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) Rabab Al-Osaimi issued Administrative Decision No. 680/2026, amending some provisions of Administra-**

**tive Decision No. 842/2015 regarding the conditions for workers to transfer from one employer to another.**

The decision, which was published Sunday in the official gazette, 'Kuwait Al-Youm', stipulates that a final paragraph is added to Article Seven of Administrative Decision No. 842/2015.

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## Newswatch

**KUWAIT CITY:** Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held a phone call Sunday with Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani.

The Foreign Ministry said in a statement that the two sides discussed current regional developments, ongoing efforts to address them, and ways to enhance regional and international security and stability. (KUNA)

**KUWAIT CITY:** Foreign ministers of Kuwait and several Arab and Islamic countries Sunday strongly condemned the illegal and unacceptable opening of a so-called Somaliland embassy in occupied Jerusalem.

In a joint statement, the foreign ministers of Kuwait, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan, Turkiye, Indonesia, Pakistan, Djibouti, Somalia, Palestine, Oman, Sudan, Yemen and Lebanon, Mauritania, Algeria, Bangladesh and Morocco termed this step as a blatant breach of international law and relevant international legitimacy resolutions and a direct encroachment on the legal and historical status of Jerusalem. (KUNA)



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**11 Cristian Mungiu's 'Fjord' wins Palme d'Or**

## Heat law has teeth

### Sun, storms dictate work pause

By Fares Ghaleb  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 24:** First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Chairman of the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah issued Ministerial Decree No. 3/2026 on regulating

work in open spaces during prohibited hours and adverse weather conditions.

This decree is based on the occupational safety and health regulations, with the aim of protecting workers from the risks of exposure to certain climatic conditions.

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### Iran, US close to 'historic accord'

**CAIRO, May 24, (AP):** The United States is close to reaching a deal with Iran that would end the war, reopen the Strait of Hormuz and see Iran give up its stockpile of highly enriched uranium, with the details and timelines to be worked out later, regional officials told The Associated Press on Sunday.

Iran has not publicly committed to giving up its uranium - a key demand of U.S. President Donald Trump - and the sides have seemed close to a deal at different points in recent weeks without clinching one.

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### Secret Service downs White House shooter

**WASHINGTON, May 24, (AP):** A man who opened fire Saturday near a White House security checkpoint is dead after being shot by officers who returned fire, the U.S. Secret Service said. It was the third incidence of gunfire in the vicinity of President Donald Trump in the past month.

The law enforcement agency said in a statement posted on X that the man was in the area of 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue when he "pulled a weapon from his bag" shortly after 6 p.m. EDT and began firing. Secret Service officers returned fire and hit the suspect, who died at a hospital, the agency said.

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KGAC photo  
Border staff examine the newly installed inspection device at the Salmi land border as Kuwait Customs strengthens screening and security operations.

### Advanced tech speeds Salmi customs checks

By Munif Naif  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 24:** The Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) announced the installation of a state-of-the-art pallet inspection device at the Salmi land border.

In a statement posted on its official account on the 'X' platform, KGAC disclosed that the device was manufactured by a leading international company and it has been added to the inspection equipment being used at various customs ports.

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### Kuwait road refresh targets 45 locations

By Mohammed Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 24:** The Ministry of Public Works has announced the start of major road maintenance works under new contracts, covering 45 sites distributed in 37 areas across the six governorates, in addition to 8 sites on highways from May 23 to May 28.

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### Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 03:19      Asr ..... 15:20  
 Sunrise .. 04:51      Maghrib .. 18:39  
 Zohr ..... 11:45      Isha ..... 20:08



HH Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad      HH Sheikh Sabah Khaled      HH Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah      Sheikh Abdullah Ali

## Amir receives Crown Prince, PM, Defense Minister

KUWAIT CITY, May 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

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

### Crown Prince audiences

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

His Highness the Crown Prince also received Defense Minister and Acting Interior Minister Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Sabah.

# Sheep prices spiral to KD200 for local breed

Around 40,000 heads ready for sacrifice: PAFN

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: 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 the authorized slaughterhouses are ready to receive sacrificial animals during Eid Al-Adha.



Al-Salem

In a statement to the newspaper, Al-Salem revealed that he expects 15-20 percent increase in the number of animals this year -- around 40,000 heads, compared to 32,000 last year. He affirmed that the central slaughterhouses and supporting facilities have completed their operational and regulatory preparations for slaughtering sacrificial animals throughout the Eid Al-Adha period. He added this is part of a comprehensive plan aimed at

easing procedures for citizens and residents, ensuring smooth operations, and maintaining the highest food safety and health standards.

He disclosed that the total number of animals slaughtered in the first five months of 2026 reached 500,000 heads of various types of livestock, indicating high consumption rates and local demand for meat. He said the total number of animals slaughtered in 2025 exceeded 1.06 million heads.

He pointed out that the peak of slaughtering operations is usually observed on the first day of Eid Al-Adha, adding that he expects the number of sacrificial animals to range from 13,000 to 15,000 in all slaughterhouses throughout the country.

He stated that the field and veterinary teams laid down organizational plans to manage the expected influx and ensure the immediate completion of transactions without compromising the health regulations.

He also disclosed that the local market witnessed the influx of imported live sheep in recent days, primarily from Saudi Arabia, African countries and Georgia to meet the increased demand before Eid Al-Adha.

He said the prices of imported sheep range from KD60 to KD125 depending on the size and breed, while the prices of local sheep range from KD170 to KD200.

Regarding supervisory and medical personnel, he revealed that PAFN assigned 39 veterinarians and inspectors to work during the Eid holi-

day, an average of nine veterinarians and inspectors in each slaughterhouse. He explained this step aims to intensify veterinary oversight and ensure the safety of the animals before and after slaughtering them, in addition to monitoring compliance with health regulations in the slaughterhouses.

He indicated that the four governorates -- Capital, Jahra, Farwaniya and Ahmadi -- issued 80 to 120 health cards to butchers in preparation for Eid Al-Adha in order to regulate the work and ensure that the workers meet the health standards.

He commended the efforts exerted by PAFN in supervising the central slaughterhouses in the Capital, Jahra, Farwaniya and Ahmadi governorates, as well as the temporary slaughterhouse in Sabah Al-Salem City.

He then underscored the need for consumers to go to authorized slaughterhouses only and avoid random or unregulated slaughterhouses due to the health and environmental risks.

He affirmed the continuation of intensive inspection tours to ensure the application of health standards and the safety of slaughtering and handling operations.

He pointed out that the veterinary teams conduct thorough examination of animals before and after slaughtering them to uncover diseases or injuries that may affect public health.

He said PAFN is keen on providing a safe and healthy slaughtering environment and guaranteeing the availability of meat, while abiding by the highest control and quality standards.

## Significance of the Day of Arafah

By Hassan T. Bwambale

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: According to Islam, the Day of Arafah (the 9th of Dhul-Hijjah) is the most virtuous day, marking the culmination of Hajj-Pilgrimage and the perfection of Islam. It is the day when believers are offered a final opportunity for profound repentance, acceptance of supplications, and spiritual liberation before the end of the ten blessed days of Dhul-Hijjah.

The Day of Arafah offers another opportunity to cleanse believers' hearts and remember their purpose in life and destination. Arafah is also the day in which Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) made his farewell sermon during his farewell pilgrimage. For those performing Hajj-Pilgrimage, the Day of Arafah is the most important day. Note that the Day of Arafah is very significant for Muslims for many reasons, the following being among them:

**First:** It represents the day of the completion of the religion of Islam and the completion of Almighty Allah's blessing of Islam upon the followers of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Ta'riq bin Shihab narrated, "A Jew (i.e., Ka'b Al-Ah'baar before embracing Islam) said to Umar: 'O Leader of the Believers, there is a verse in your (divine) Book that you (people) recite; had it been revealed to us (i.e., Jews), we would have marked the day it was revealed as a day of celebration.' He (Umar) asked him: 'Which verse is it?' He replied, '(It is) 'This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favors upon you, and I am pleased for you with Islam (peace) as your religion.'" (Al-Ma'idah - the Table Spread 5.3). Umar (ra) said, 'I know definitely on what day this verse was revealed; it was revealed on the day of Arafah, on a Friday.'" (Al-Bukhari # 45 + Muslim # 3, 017)

**Second:** It is a day by which Almighty Allah swore, and He does

not swear, except by things that are great. Almighty Allah said, translated as: "And (by) the witness and what is witnessed" - (Surat Al-Buruj - the Constellations 85: 3). What is meant by "what is witnessed," according to some interpretations, is the Day of Arafah.

Abu Hurairah (RA) narrated that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, translated as: "The promised day is the Day of Resurrection, the witnessed day is the Day of Arafah, and the witness is Friday." (Scheeh At-Tirmidhi # 3, 339 + Ahmad # 7, 972)

**Third:** The Day of Arafah is a day of celebration for the Muslims. Uqbah bin A'mir (RA) narrated that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, translated as: "The day of Arafah, the day of Sacrifice, and the (three) days of At-Tashreeq are days of celebration for us people of Islam. They are days of eating and drinking." (Al-Albani rated it as Saheeh (authentic) in Saheeh Abu Dawud # 2, 419)

### Pilgrims

Note that the three days following Eid-ul-Adha, are known as Ayy'am At-Tashreeq because pilgrims used to sun-dry their sacrificial meat during those days; a process called "tashreeq" (i.e., spreading the meat in a way that it faces the east where the sun rises). This practice preserved the meat for later consumption and helped it remain fresh. The word "tashreeq" itself is derived from the Arabic word for "sunshine" or "to dry in the sun," reflecting this historical meat preservation technique.

**Fourth:** It is a day of freedom from the Hellfire and forgiveness of the sins of whoever believes in Almighty Allah and performs righteous deeds. Aisha (RA) narrated that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, translated as: "There is not a day in which (Almighty) Allah sets free more of His servants from the Hellfire than the Day of Arafah." (Muslim # 1, 348)

**Fifth:** Supplications on the Day of Arafah are among the greatest acts of worship that Allah's servants should maximize to benefit widely from this auspicious occasion.

It was related by Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-A's (RA) that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, translated as: "The best supplication is the supplication (made) on the Day of Arafah, and the best statement that I and the prophets before me have said is: 'There is no deity worthy to be worshipped except Allah, He has no partner. All dominion belongs to Him, His is all praise, and He is over all things Omnipotent.'" (The afore-quoted hadeeth i.e., prophetic narration or tradition) is Hasan (i.e., authentic to a lesser degree by some evidences that prove its authenticity)

It is worth noting that the Day of Arafah, which occurs on the 9th day of Dhul-Hijjah is a blessed occasion in Islam, marking the climax of the Hajj-Pilgrimage. It is a day of immense forgiveness, when Almighty Allah sets many souls free from the Fire of Hell. Muslims worldwide who are not performing Hajj-Pilgrimage partake in fasting on that day. And all Muslims including those performing Hajj-Pilgrimage engage in increased devotion, and heartfelt supplications on this day, seeking Almighty Allah's mercy and grace.

Finally, it is worth noting that the Devil is never more humiliated than on this day, seeing the immense forgiveness showered upon the believers. It is a day when the Infinitely Just Allah boasts of His servants to the angels, welcoming back those who have turned to Him in repentance, looking past their transgressions and showering them with His immense mercy. It is a day the religion acts as a spiritual anchor, reminding believers that the ultimate success lies in the pleasure of the Majestic Allah.

Courtesy of Kuwaiti Society for Cultural Dialogue

## Greek envoy conveys Eid greetings to Amir, public

On the occasion of Eid Al-Adha, I am pleased to extend my sincerest congratulations and best wishes to His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait, His Highness the Crown Prince, His Highness the Prime Minister, and to the Government and people of the friendly State of Kuwait, praying to Almighty God to bring this blessed occasion back to Kuwait with continued progress, prosperity, security, and stability. I would also like to take this happy occasion to express my deep appreciation for the distinguished relations between the Hellenic Republic and the State of Kuwait, which are built on strong foundations of friendship, mutual respect, and fruitful cooperation across various fields. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the citizens and residents of the State of Kuwait, wishing them a blessed Eid filled with blessings



Ioannis Plotas

and peace of mind, hoping that this occasion brings with it the values of peace, solidarity, and fraternity among peoples.

Ioannis Plotas  
 Ambassador of Greece

## Bahrain, Kuwait to boost defense

MANAMA, May 24, (KUNA): Bahraini Minister of Interior General Sheikh Rashed bin Abdullah and a Kuwaiti security delegation discussed Sunday promoting security cooperation and sharing expertise to safeguard security, address security challenges and advance joint mechanism.

This came when the Bahraini minister received the security delegation of the Interior Ministry, who is in Manama to discuss means to bolster security cooperation and coordination, according to Bahrain News Agency (BNA).



Asimah (the Capital) Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Sabah and Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Abdulaziz Meshal Al-Sabah and other officials at the inauguration.



KUNA photos  
 The overhauled fountain combines clever engineering with art, featuring dancing water displays timed to national, Arabic, and international music, along with colorful laser shows.

## JACC reopens dynamic musical fountain

KUWAIT CITY, May 24, (KUNA): The Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center (JACC) on Saturday officially resumed operations of its iconic garden fountain, marked by an inaugural ceremony attended by Asimah (the Capital) Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Sabah and Undersecretary of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Abdulaziz Meshal Al-Sabah.

Speaking at the event, Sheikh Abdullah empha-

sized that this cultural and recreational landmark serves as a prestigious addition to Kuwait's civic infrastructure, underscoring the state's commitment to strategic projects that elevate the national tourism and cultural landscape.

The overhauled fountain combines clever engineering with art, featuring dancing water displays timed to national, Arabic, and international music, along with colorful laser shows.

The fountain's inaugural performance launched tonight, initiating a permanent daily schedule. The installation operates Sunday through Wednesday from 6:00 PM to 11:00 PM. On weekends (Thursday through Saturday), performances run in two distinct sessions: an afternoon matinee from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM, followed by an evening showcase from 6:00 PM to 11:00 PM.

## Kuwait, Bahrain seek upgrade in relations

KUWAIT CITY, May 24, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Shereedah Al-Mousherji and Bahraini Ambassador in Kuwait Salah Al-Maliki discussed means to promote bilateral relations between Kuwait and Bahrain across various fields.

The discussion came when Al-Mousherji welcomed the Bahraini ambassador at Al-Seif Palace on Sunday, said the Kuwaiti Minister's Office in a press release.

During the meeting, they also reviewed several issues of mutual interest and exchanged views on the latest regional developments and their reflections on regional security and stability.

They also tackled relations among the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries at all levels in a way that reflects deep fraternal and historical relations and ways of further expanding cooperation.



KUNA photo  
 Deputy Prime Minister and State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Shereedah Al-Mousherji and Bahraini Ambassador in Kuwait Salah Al-Maliki discuss bilateral ties.

## All Kuwaiti pilgrims arrive safely in S. Arabia: official

JEDDAH, May 24, (KUNA): Head of Kuwait Hajj Mission and Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs Dr. Suleiman Al-Suwailim said all pilgrims of Kuwait have arrived safely in Saudi Arabia, as part of 64 campaigns organized for this season Hajj.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement on Saturday, Al-Suwailim referred to ongoing follow-up, by all committees in Makkah, to check the condition of pilgrims and offer care and comfort to them since their arrival.

All pilgrims arrived safely at their residences in Makkah amid smooth organizing atmospheres and in cooperation with relevant bodies, he stated.

He underlined the importance for pilgrims to abide by organizing guidelines issued by the relevant bodies to maintain their safety and en-

able them to perform Hajj in an easy and tranquil way.

Kuwait Hajj Mission includes the Ministries of Islamic Affairs, Health, Information, Interior and Foreign Affairs, along with the Kuwait Fire Force and Kuwait Red Crescent Society and more.

The Public Authority for Civil Aviation (PACA) had announced Saturday the successful implementation of the plan of transporting pilgrims heading to Saudi Arabia for Hajj.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement, the PACA stressed that all pilgrim flights for the holy sites in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia left the country smoothly and efficiently, in accordance with the approved operational plan for the current Hajj season.

## Sales of 74 co-ops in Kuwait surpass KD 1.2 bln annually

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The extensive field study of the Competition Protection Authority titled, "Survey of Cooperative Societies Market in Kuwait," confirmed that cooperatives are an essential part of the food and consumer retail system, with yearly sales surpassing KD1.2 billion.

The country has 74 cooperative societies and their branches, which play an important role in maintaining market equilibrium and outcomes.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the study, which also indicated regulatory, operational and structural imbalances affecting competition and access within the cooperative society market.

It concluded that the cooperative market -- despite its purchasing power and broad geographical reach -- is still affected by regulatory and operational structures restricting competition and access to the point of sale.

It confirmed that the imbalances are not isolated individual practices, as they are inherent in the prevailing operational mechanisms, including product registration, supply chain management, financial collection, and allocation of display spaces and advertising services.

It pointed out the absence of standardized electronic processes and traceable procedural rules, which led to individual discretion, higher transaction costs and information irregularity among economic stakeholders.

It explained that in some cases, these procedural imbalances resulted in indirect barriers that limit the ability of the

market to absorb the latent supply within the Kuwaiti economy.

It added that the mechanisms for allocating display spaces and positioning products within a commodity category are considered a non-price competitive channel affecting the performance of suppliers.

It stated that in the absence of transparent standards for regulating these mechanisms, patterns of market share redistribution may emerge, which do not reflect production efficiency or the intensity of price competition linked to visibility and positioning within the point of sale.

### Untapped

It confirmed that the cooperative market has untapped economic potential, along with the widening competitive gap among suppliers.

Current operating mechanisms give cumulative advantage to larger companies or those with a diversified product portfolio, while weakening opportunities for specialized suppliers or those with a limited product portfolio.

The study revealed the lack of transparency in transactions and contracts with economic stakeholders, hence, increasing the risk of indirect exclusion and reducing market efficiency.

It called for the proper implementation of the Competition Law, as well as a thorough review of the relevant regulations and procedures.

It then proposed a phased executive reform roadmap for the development and implementation of a unified electronic system, which will serve as the primary tool for reform.

## PAI withdraws industrial plots

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Public Authority for Industry (PAI) issued regulatory decisions, such as the withdrawal and closure of 23 industrial plots in 11 industrial and craft zones.

This is part of oversight campaign aimed at ensuring compliance with regulations and uncovering violations that negatively affect the industrial and regu-

latory environment in the country.

The decisions include terminating contracts and withdrawing three industrial plots in Sulabiya Industrial Area and South Amghara after the discovery of several grave violations, such as subdividing industrial plots, storing materials outside the designated places, establishing worker accommodations without official permits, and using some plots as car garage or closing them and failing to operate them for their designated industrial purpose.

## Cut burden on people, make Kuwait beautiful

"EVERYONE feels how much more beautiful Kuwait has become than before. On this occasion, I would like to submit a suggestion to the General Traffic Department," columnist **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"I recently experienced being stuck for a long time in hot weather at a traffic light, which led me to suggest that traffic signals be adjusted to change every 60 seconds to reduce long waiting times, especially at congested intersections."

"I previously served at the Kuwait Embassy in Brasilia, Brazil, which was established a few years before Kuwait's independence. In that city, road users do not encounter traffic signals in the same way, as the city operates without them, and vehicles move using alternative road systems rather than stopping frequently at intersections."

"Why doesn't Kuwait consider this method while constructing new residential cities?"

"I suggest that the relevant authorities require owners of residential buildings to allocate basement areas for car parking. I also suggest that cooperative societies designate some seating near parking areas for elderly people who often feel exhausted."

"I previously pointed out a dark lift at the Ministry of Justice headquarters, and I hope the lighting inside the lift is repaired for users' safety."

"It is unfair to describe Kuwait City as merely a 'city of restaurants.' Kuwait City has many distinguished characteristics, including security, which is lacking in many European cities. The Daily Telegraph often publishes negative stories about nightlife, relationships, and rising taxes."

"I do not agree with the claim that Finland is the happiest country in the world. I have visited Finland, and when I wanted to go to a supermarket, I was informed that I had to take a taxi costing KD 28 for a return trip. I ended up paying KD 56 at the supermarket. Taxes are very high in Finland, and only education is notably distinguished there. That is why I decided to move to Germany."

### Also:

"Kuwait and its cooperative societies boast a rich history shaped by pioneers who worked along with government institutions to establish this vital project in service of the Kuwaiti people and the country's modern residential areas," columnist **Mohammad Ali Al-Naqi** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"In 1960, the Ministry of Social Affairs sent two respected citizens to Finland for observation and training in order to implement this important cooperative model. The initiative succeeded, and the cooperative sector was established to serve citizens. However, over time, negative practices began to emerge, including greed, corruption, and the embezzlement of public funds, starting with disreputable board elections. There was neither deterrence nor conscience. Eventually, matters escalated, and the media exposed a series of crimes committed by the descendants of traitors, the unscrupulous, and their accomplices and disciples of thieves."

"A few days ago, the Minister of Social Affairs referred officials from two cooperative societies to the judiciary. In light of these continuing violations, I believe it is necessary to return to the root of the issue when embezzlement within public service associations first came to light, and make this a turning point in the fight against corruption within cooperative societies."

"We all know that these traitors and thieves walk and live among us, side by side. Anyone who steals public funds is a traitor to the nation."

"Those responsible should be returned to prison cells and brought before the courts along with their accomplices and supporters. The penalties must be firm and decisive, serving as a deterrent and a lesson to others."

"Allow me to express my opinion. Either transfer the cooperative societies to the private sector, as previously proposed by Dherar Al-Ghanim, or entrust their management to Kuwaiti women, who are more sincere, honest, loyal, and honorable than these treacherous thieves."

"I also hope the state recognizes and honors distinguished citizens such as Hind Al-Sabeeh, Jinan Boushahri, Moudhi Al-Hamoud, Nabila Al-Anjari, Mona Boursli, Nouria Al-Roumi, and many other accomplished Kuwaiti women who have served the country with dedication and integrity."

"Food adulteration is one of the oldest commercial issues known to humankind, driven primarily by the desire to achieve greater profits through the use of cheaper alternatives," columnist **Mohammad Ibrahim Al-Furrah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Food adulteration often targets

high-value, widely consumed products such as olive oil, honey, milk, spices, coffee, and tea, as well as some types of meat mixed with other substances.

"Olive oil is among the most frequently adulterated products throughout history due to its high nutritional value and high price. By 2026, detection and analysis methods, as well as methods of adulteration, have developed significantly."

"Adulteration typically involves adding cheaper vegetable oils such as soybean oil, corn oil, sunflower oil, canola oil, and cottonseed oil. Old or unfit-for-consumption oil may also be added and resold as fresh products."

"It is important to read the label on both the front and back of the container. The front label may state that the oil is 'virgin,' while the back lists other ingredients indicating that it is blended with virgin oil, without specifying the actual blending ratios."

"Sometimes, 'pomace oil,' which is extracted from pressing residues such as pits and rinds using chemical solvents, is added and then marketed as virgin oil."

"Some fraudsters resort to using additives to give inferior oil the appearance of quality and freshness, such as adding chlorophyll to create a green color and mislead consumers into thinking it is 'first cold-pressed,' or using beta-carotene to produce an attractive golden hue. The country of origin and production source are also often misrepresented."

"Therefore, I advise anyone buying olive oil to consider the following:

- Make sure to read all the information printed on the front and back of the container.

- Buy oil packaged in dark glass or tin containers, and avoid clear plastic containers.

- Compare prices carefully. If the price is unusually low, it is best to avoid buying.

- Check the production and expiry dates, and verify that the information states 'country of origin' and not just 'country of packaging.'

"Careful attention to these details can help consumers avoid misleading products and ensure they are purchasing genuine, high-quality olive oil."

"Driven by economic and commercial development and the expansion of public services, 'contracts of adhesion' have emerged as a common modern contractual form in many everyday transactions," Kuwaiti lawyer **Sarah Al-Jassem** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"These agreements are particularly prevalent in essential sectors such as telecommunications, Internet services, transportation, insurance, software, and various banking activities, all of which have become integral to modern life."

"In an adhesion contract, the stronger party, often holding economic or technical dominance, pre-determines all terms, leaving the other party with no real opportunity to negotiate or request amendments. Acceptance becomes the only available option for those in need of the service."

"Consequently, while legal principles generally uphold freedom of contract and the autonomy of will, this autonomy in adhesion contracts is often only apparent, due to the significant imbalance of power between the parties."

"Serious concerns arise when such contracts contain exploitative terms, such as restricting the right to compensation, imposing disproportionate penalties, or allowing the dominant party to unilaterally alter prices or conditions."

"Such clauses may jeopardize the interests of the adhering party by exploiting their essential needs."

"To counter these issues, Kuwaiti law empowers the judiciary to protect the adhering party by intervening in such contracts."

"When imbalance or unfairness is established, the courts may amend oppressive terms or exempt the weaker party from them, thereby upholding the principles of good faith and justice."

"Furthermore, since the stronger party drafts the contract for its own benefit, any vague or ambiguous clauses are interpreted in favor of the adhering party under the law."

"While the contract remains a primary legal obligation between the parties, justice requires that freedom of contract does not become a means of exploitation, particularly for essential services."

"Although adhesion contracts are a practical necessity today, their legitimacy depends on maintaining a fair balance between the parties involved."

"Economic or technical leverage must not be used to undermine the principles of true consent or equity."

- Compiled by **Simi K. Kutty**

## Municipality lifts 60 abandoned cars, motorbikes

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Field teams from the Public Hygiene and Road Occupancy Departments at Kuwait Municipality continue to intensify inspection campaigns in various governorates to monitor and remove violations, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The Director of Ahmadi Municipality, Saad Al-Khurainj, confirmed that these field campaigns aim to detect violations and take

legal action against offenders.

He stressed the commitment of supervisory teams to improving public cleanliness and removing anything that distorts the city's appearance or obstructs roads in different areas of the governorate.

Al-Khurainj said the latest inspection tour in Fahaaheel resulted in 27 citations related to misuse of public spaces and public hygiene

violations, the removal of 60 abandoned cars and motorcycles, the clearance of 15 piles of waste and tires, and the placement of 19 warning stickers on abandoned vehicles in preparation for further legal action.

He affirmed that field inspections will continue, emphasizing that there will be no leniency in enforcing regulations or taking legal action against violators.

## 155 linked to 2 fraud files

Nationality saga lingers on

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Higher Committee for Kuwaiti Citizenship Investigations has completed a new phase in a complex forgery case, part of which had been addressed previously, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

The case involves a deceased man who had five legitimate children with his wife. Subsequent investigations revealed that additional individuals had been fraudulently registered under his citizenship file as his children.

According to informed sources, the committee had previously investigated one of the alleged children, whose citizenship, along with that of all 115 individuals registered under his file, was revoked.

The committee has now reviewed the case of another alleged son of the same deceased man, who has approximately 40 dependents, including 21 children, with the remainder being grandchildren.

The file holder has been a fugitive from

Kuwait for approximately a year. It was also discovered that some of his children and grandchildren are currently in Kuwait, while others are abroad, in addition to individuals whose biometric fingerprints are not recorded.

Since the file holder is currently outside the country, his half-siblings (from his second mother) were summoned. They denied any relation to him and confirmed that there is no familial connection.

Investigations confirmed that the seven brothers summoned are full siblings from the same mother. It was further revealed that two other individuals had been fraudulently added to the citizenship file. One of them had already had his citizenship revoked, while the other is now set for revocation following the completion of investigations, examinations, and legal procedures.

DNA testing conclusively proved that the children of the fraudulently added brother are not related to the deceased father's legitimate descendants. In total, approximately 155 individuals are linked to the two fraudulently added files.

## Gulf woman, father gets 7 yrs jail in nationality fraud

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Criminal Court closed one of the largest Kuwaiti citizenship fraud cases, spanning three decades, by sentencing a Gulf woman and her father to seven years in prison with hard labor, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Presided over by Judge Dr. Khaled Al-Amira, the court deliberated on the case, in which the defendants were convicted of impersonating a deceased Kuwaiti citizen and forging official documents to illegally obtain Kuwaiti citizenship and the associated benefits.

The court also fined the defendants KD1.5 million, as it was proven that they received salaries, pensions, government housing and other privileges based on the forged citizenship from 1995 to 2025.

Case details reveal that the defendants used the personal information of a deceased Kuwaiti citizen, registering the woman as his daughter. This enabled them to obtain official documents and benefit from the privileges granted to Kuwaiti citizens for many years before the fraud was uncovered and they were brought to trial.

The court affirmed in its ruling that the defendants' actions constitute an attack on public trust and forgery of official documents, stressing that forgery of citizenship is a grave danger to the legal system and the rights associated with citizenship.

**4 hurt in mishap:** Four people sustained serious injuries and fractures in a three-vehicle collision that occurred recently on the Sixth Ring Road opposite Sabah Al-Salem, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The injured were transported by ambulance to Farwaniya Hospital for medical treatment.

## Transfer via 'Sahel' of car ownership begins

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Ministry of Interior has announced the resumption of its vehicle ownership transfer service through the Sahel app, reports **Al-Rai** daily.

The service has been restored following the completion of upgrades and development work on the Insurance Regulatory Unit's systems.

## MoCI shuts eight shops selling imitation goods

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Capital Governorate inspection team at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in cooperation with the Hawally Governorate Criminal Investigation Department at the Ministry of Interior, carried out an inspection campaign recently, resulting in the closure of eight shops found to be possessing, displaying and selling counterfeit goods, as well as the confiscation of a large quantity of fake items.

This is a grave violation of laws on the protection of intellectual property rights and trademarks.

Official reports on the violations were filed and legal measures were taken against the violators.

The relevant authorities emphasized that these violations infringe upon the rights of companies owning the original trademarks and negatively impact the reputation and standing of the State of Kuwait in international rankings related to combating counterfeit goods and promoting intellectual property rights protection.

In a similar campaign, the Farwaniya Governorate inspection team checked several shops in the governorate, leading to the closure of a perfumery shop found to be selling expired products and violated health and consumer protection regulations.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry confirmed the continuation of its inspection campaigns in various governorates to stop illegal commercial practices, ensure the safety of goods sold in the local market, and protect the rights of consumers and owners of original trademarks.

### Other Voices

## Sentencing of a 'former MP'

By **Ahmad alsarraf**

More than three years ago, I filed a lawsuit against former MP Hamad Al-Matar, who was the representative of the Muslim Brotherhood in the National Assembly at that time, following a statement he made from the National Assembly podium that was widely circulated.

The statement included offensive and defamatory remarks about me, in which he said verbatim, "I am now talking about other people who always talk about the quality of education, but when it comes to important issues like this, they make no comment."

For example, Mr. Ahmad Alsarraf talks about the quality of education every day. In my opinion, you are like a solution with a low concentration of liberalism but saturated with sectarianism..."

The court stated that the defendant, Al-Matar, was not confronted with the charges against him

as he went into hiding and failed to appear before the Public Prosecution despite being summoned several times during the investigation.

The Court of Appeals issued its ruling in the case, fining him KD 150 and referring the civil claim to the competent court.

Therefore, my lawyer requested the Civil Court to order the defendant to pay KD 5,001 as provisional compensation, in addition to court costs and attorney's fees, for material and moral damages.

In 2025, the Court of First Instance ordered the defendant to pay KD 100 in moral damages and a similar amount for actual attorney's fees. I appealed the ruling before the Court of Appeals, citing flawed reasoning, insufficient justification, and the minimal moral damages awarded, which were disproportionate to the extent of the harm.

I requested the court to order the defendant to pay KD 5,001 as provisional compensation, as this reflected the material damages incurred. However, the Court of Appeals accepted the appeal in form and, on the merits, overturned the earlier ruling insofar as it rejected the claim for material compensation and amended it with regard to the awarded moral damages.

The Court of Appeals ordered the respondent to pay the appellant KD 600 as final compensation for material and moral damages. The court also ordered the respondent to pay the costs of both levels of litigation and KD 100 for actual attorney's fees at the appeal level. Since this type of lawsuit cannot be appealed before the Court of Cassation, I accept the Court of Appeals' ruling.

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## LOCAL

# Bangladesh formally hands over goodwill food consignment to Kuwait as a gesture of solidarity

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: In light of the ongoing regional situation in West Asia, the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh today symbolically handed over a goodwill consignment of food supplies to the Government of the State of Kuwait as a gesture of solidarity and friendship from the people of Bangladesh to the brotherly people of Kuwait.

The initiative forms part of a broader support effort under which a total of 240 tons of essential food items from Bangladesh are scheduled to arrive in Kuwait through multiple flights beginning on 25 May 2026. This contribution is expected to help strengthen Kuwait's strategic food reserves and support emergency needs amid the prevailing regional circumstances, including the prolonged closure of the Strait of Hormuz and the resulting pressure on Kuwait's supply chains.

On this occasion, a ceremony was held today at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait, where the consignment was symbolically handed over to His Excellency Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait, by Mr. Humayun Kabir, Special Envoy of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh and Adviser on Foreign Affairs to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, who is currently visiting Kuwait.

The other members of the three-member high-level delegation from the Gov-

ernment of Bangladesh - State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mr. Rashiduzzaman Millat and the Director General (West Asia) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh - were also present at the ceremony. The Ambassador of Bangladesh to Kuwait, Major General Syed Tareq Hussain, OSP, awc, psc, participated in the delegation's official engagements, bilateral meetings, and the handover ceremony.

During the discussions, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations, the prevailing regional situation, humanitarian cooperation, and other issues of mutual interest. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the longstanding friendly and brotherly relations between Bangladesh and Kuwait and reiterated their commitment to further expanding cooperation in areas such as trade, investment, manpower, food security, civil aviation, and other promising sectors.

The dispatch of this goodwill food consignment by the Government of Bangladesh to the State of Kuwait reflects the deep-rooted fraternal ties between the two countries and demonstrates Bangladesh's continued commitment to supporting friendly nations during times of regional uncertainty and challenge.

Both sides reaffirmed their shared commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations based on mutual respect, trust, friendship, and multifaceted cooperation.



MoFA photo

Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received the advisor and envoy of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Humayun Kabir, and the Minister of State for Civil Aviation and Tourism, M. Rashiduzzaman Millat.

## Kuwait's HH Amir receives letter from Bangladesh Prime Minister

KUWAIT CITY, May 24, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Sunday a letter from Prime Minister of the friendly People's Republic of Bangladesh Tarique Rahman on close relations between both friendly countries and how to develop them.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah was handed the letter when he welcomed the Bangladeshi Prime Minister's Advisor and Envoy for Foreign Affairs Humayun Kabir and State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism M. Rashiduzzaman Millat, according to a Foreign Ministry release.

### KD2.563m set

## Kuwait boosts NGO funding

By Mohammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The 2026/2027 State Budget Report revealed the allocation of KD2.563 million to support non-governmental organizations (NGOs) -- an increase of KD67,000 compared to KD2.496 million in the previous budget.

According to the report, the allocated amount is distributed as follows: KD1.663 million for unions and public benefit associations, KD600,000 for sports clubs and activities, and KD300,000 for local newspapers.

The funds allotted for these categories aim to encourage them to provide better public services and play their societal role efficiently.

The item includes support for activities specified in laws or decisions issued by the Council of Ministers.

# MPW moves ahead with 5 infrastructure tenders

Projects cover key ministries and facilities

By Mohammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Ministry of Public Works (MPW) is in the process of tendering five construction projects for Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC), Voluntary Work Center, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Information and Ministry of Health.**

The MPW recently asked the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) to issue tenders for three of the abovementioned projects as follows:

- Construction, completion, supply, maintenance and furnishing of the Special Education Complex in Egaila for the Ministry of Education,
- Construction, completion and maintenance of the

Volunteer Work Center building.

- Study, design and supervision of the construction of an administration building for KGAC in Shuwaikh Industrial Area.

Meanwhile, the agency requested the MPW to complete certain procedures, respond to its decisions regarding the tendering process for the companies that it classified, and setting the deadline for submission of bids. CAPT will then refer the bids to MPW for review and preparation of a technical recommendation.

Regarding the other two projects, the MPW obtained approval from the State Audit Bureau (SAB) to sign the contract with a local consulting firm for the design, licensing, and preparation of plans and documents for the medical city project in Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential City and supervise its implementation.

The MPW also approved the consulting contract for the research, design and supervision of the construction of the new Ministry of Information building.

## Italian envoy conveys Eid wishes to Kuwait leadership and people

On the blessed occasion of Eid Al-Adha, I extend my warmest congratulations and sincere best wishes to HH the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, to HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, to the government, and to the people of Kuwait.

May this sacred celebration bring peace and unity, as well as continued progress and prosperity, in these very challenging times

I am confident that the friendly relations between Italy and Kuwait and between our people will continue to flourish in a spirit of mutual respect, cooperation and



Lorenzo Morini, Ambassador of Italy to Kuwait

shared aspirations.  
Eid Mubarak.  
Lorenzo Morini  
Ambassador of Italy

## UCCS opens summer training program for Kuwaiti students

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Maryam Al-Awadh, the newly appointed Director of the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies (UCCS), announced the start of registration and recruitment procedures for Kuwaiti students to work and receive training in cooperative societies during the summer season, in coordination with the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM).

The initiative is part of a summer program running from July 1 to August 31, with working hours not exceeding six hours per day, either in the morning or evening shifts. The program aims to provide students with practical experience and early exposure to the labor market, under the support of the Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, and the follow-up of the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi.

In a press statement, Al-Awadh explained that UCCS and its member societies are committed to their national, social, and economic

responsibilities by supporting initiatives that empower Kuwaiti youth and enhance their participation in various sectors.

UCCS issued Circular No. 114/2026 to all cooperative societies, emphasizing the importance of providing training and employment opportunities for Kuwaiti students during the summer, within the framework of the existing strategic partnership with PAM, which supports the State's efforts to encourage employment in the private sector.

PAM has introduced a special registration form for students wishing to join the program. They have to complete and submit the form in order to finalize the required administrative procedures and facilitate their placement in participating cooperative societies.

Al-Awadh stressed that the summer program represents a pioneering practical experience aimed at investing in young people and making productive use of their free time in a beneficial way.

She affirmed that these practical experiences contribute to enhancing self-confidence, developing a sense of responsibility and self-reliance, and providing students with financial compensation for their work.

Al-Awadh noted that the program aims to equip students with important practical and professional skills, most notably communication and interpersonal skills, work discipline, and teamwork, which will help them gradually integrate into the labor market.

June 2-4 window set

## KU opens inter-college transfers

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Deanship of Admissions and Registration at Kuwait University announced that applications for inter-college transfers will be accepted online via the registration website from June 2 to June 4, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press release posted on its X account, the Deanship explained that transfer applications are subject to the following conditions:

1. Transfers are allowed from one college to another once the student meets the general and specific transfer requirements.
2. Students who have completed 45 credit hours or fewer and meet the other transfer requirements will receive a notification confirming their transfer to the new college.
3. Students who have completed more than

45 credit hours and meet all other transfer requirements will receive a message confirming acceptance of their transfer request. The request will then be reviewed by the university's Student Affairs Committee.

4. Students who meet the transfer requirements from the 2021 cohort and later are eligible to submit transfer applications electronically through the Student Information System.

5. Students from the 2020 cohort and earlier must visit the Deanship of Admissions and Registration during official working hours from June 2 to June 4, 2026.

6. Students from the 2015 cohort and later are not entitled to transfer to any other college after completing 78 study units.

Continued from Page 1

## Iran, US

Secretary of State Marco Rubio, on a visit to India, said Sunday that "significant progress, although not final progress, has been made" in the negotiations, and that the world would no longer need to fear Iran getting a nuclear weapon, without elaborating.

Iran's embassy in India responded to Rubio on social media, saying Tehran has an "inalienable" right to nuclear technology. Iran has always insisted its program is peaceful.

The reopening of the strait would begin to address a worldwide energy crisis sparked by the surprise U.S. and Israeli bombardment of Iran on Feb. 28, which led Tehran to effectively close the crucial waterway. Its closure has caused a spike in the price of oil, gas, and several downstream products, jolting the world economy.

The U.S. in recent weeks had threatened to

resume its bombing campaign, which would have likely prolonged the closure and led to Iranian retaliation on Israel and U.S.-allied energy producers in the Gulf.

On Saturday, Trump said a deal had been "largely negotiated," after calls with Israel and other regional allies. "Final aspects and details of the Deal are currently being discussed, and will be announced shortly," Trump said on social media.

Under the potential deal, Tehran would agree to give up its stockpile of highly enriched uranium, according to the two regional officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive negotiations.

One official, with direct knowledge of the negotiations, said how Iran would give up its highly enriched uranium would be subject to further talks over the course of a 60-day period. Some would likely be diluted, while the rest would be transferred to a third country, potentially Russia, the official said.



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## MoSA, UNDP explore social development partnership

KUWAIT CITY, May 24, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah and UN Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative in Kuwait Emma Morley discussed Sunday ways to enhance bilateral social and development cooperation.

In a press statement following the meeting, Dr. Al-Huwailah said the two sides discussed opportunities for the UN program to support capacity-building efforts in the charitable sector, particularly in governance, transparency, and compliance.

She added that this support is based on the institutional reform and development path led by the

ministry to enhance the efficiency of charitable work and consolidate best administrative and organizational practices.

The minister explained that the meeting touched on cooperation to promote equality and empower women through initiatives supervised by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs.

It also addressed supporting the integration and empowerment of persons with disabilities in cooperation with the Public Authority for Disability Affairs, she noted.

Dr. Al-Huwailah affirmed the ministry's keenness to expand cooperation with international organizations to serve national priorities and enhance

sustainable social development.

She further praised the UNDP's role in supporting developmental initiatives and building institutional capacities.

For her part, Morley praised the recent developments in organizing Kuwaiti charitable work regarding enhancing transparency, oversight, and directing aid to deserving programs.

Morley expressed her appreciation for the ministry's efforts in developing the social and charitable work system.

She also affirmed the UNDP's aspiration to enhance its partnership with the State of Kuwait in areas of mutual interest.



MoSA photo  
Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs, Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, with the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme in the country, Emma Morley.

### Continued from Page 1

## The Iran

There is a diplomatic rule - "How can you say Yes when you mean No?"

The Iranian regime has followed this approach for 47 years, enabling it to evade responsibility for the terrorist acts committed by its affiliated militias. Iran has absolved itself by claiming to support the resistance groups, while also claiming that the decisions of these groups are independent.

Over the past five decades, it was confirmed that bombings, aircraft hijackings, attacks on Gulf ambassadors, and attacks on certain embassies were carried out according to directives issued from Tehran.

Yes, the current agreement can be framed in many diplomatic terms, but ultimately, what matters most is the mindset used to interpret its content. What further complicates the situation is that several provisions in the agreement are worded vaguely, allowing for multiple interpretations.

Therefore, there is no guarantee that Iran's terrorist behavior will not be repeated.

In any case, the GCC states have once again demonstrated good faith. The question remains whether Iran will respond positively to this initiative and make use of this opportunity with the Gulf states, an opportunity that may not present itself again, especially after the hundreds of Iranian attacks targeting Gulf countries during the recent war.

Rebuilding trust cannot be achieved through evasion.

## Kuwait gives

This paragraph states that as an exception to the provisions of the first paragraph of the same article, subject to the provisions of Article Six of Law No. 6/2010 and Article 51 of the Regulations for the Rules and Procedures for Granting Work Permits, and in response to the labor complaint submitted by the worker, PAM is mandated to investigate the complaint about the request to transfer to another employer before the end of one year with the current employer, provided one of the following conditions is met:

1. The issuance of a work permit, residency permit, or the completion of related procedures becomes impossible due to the employer's negligence.

2. A suspension or restriction has been placed on the employer's file, preventing the completion of resi-

dency procedures.

3. It is proven that the employer filed a malicious absconding report against the worker or misused the reporting procedures in a manner inconsistent with the facts in order to harm the worker, prevent the worker from claiming his rights, or block the transfer of the worker's permit.

4. The employer is found to have violated any of the provisions or conditions stipulated in Article 48 of Law No. 6/2010 mentioned above.

5. One of the two conditions stipulated in Article 50 of Law No. 6/2010 mentioned above has been fulfilled.

The decision also defines a 'defaulting employer' as any employer who has brought in a worker under a work permit, or to whom a worker has transferred, and for whom the one-year period has not yet elapsed, but who subsequently fails or refuses, without justification, to complete the procedures for issuing the work or residency permit of the worker, or whose file is suspended or restricted in a manner that prevents the completion of these procedures.

The decision authorizes PAM to take any administrative measures it deems appropriate against a defaulting employer. These measures may include suspending or restricting the issuance of new work permits or authorizations for the employer's file, temporarily halting the recruitment of workers, or rejecting applications for new worker recruitment until the violations are rectified and the status of affected workers is resolved.

The decision takes effect from the date of its issuance and publication in the official gazette.

## Advanced tech

According to KGAC, the device is part of its plan to intensify customs control and improve inspection efficiency by using the latest security technologies, which expedite the inspection and detection of goods entering the country through the Salmi land border. It stated that the device is distinguished for its high accuracy and speed features, thereby, shortening customs clearance periods and guaranteeing the smooth flow of goods.

The device provides customs inspectors with advanced technological tools that detect any contraband or prohibited materials, thus, raising the efficiency of customs operations and maintaining the security and safety of the country.

KGAC affirmed its commitment to continuously develop customs operations at all points of entry by

introducing the latest modern inspection equipment and systems, in line with global advancements in the customs field and to ensure balance between speed of processing and accuracy of control.

Customs Director at Salmi land border Saad Al-Quraini and other border staff checked the device thoroughly.

## Sun, storms

It prohibits work in open areas from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, from June 1 to Aug 31 each year. PAM may amend the timing or duration of this prohibition in accordance with climatic and environmental changes

It also prohibits work in open areas in situations that pose a risk to occupational safety or health. These situations include natural disasters or unusual weather conditions, floods or water accumulations that endanger the workers, dust storms when they exceed approved safe limits, high humidity levels deemed harmful to the health of workers, heavy rainfall when it reaches a level that endangers workers or work sites, temperatures dropping below zero degrees Celsius, exceptionally high temperatures -- more than normal averages, and the spread of epidemics or infectious diseases that necessitate work suspension to protect the workers.

The decision exempts from these prohibitions work that is technically necessary or in emergency situations when work cannot be postponed, or the nature of work necessitates continuous operation, provided approval is obtained from the Labor Inspection Department, and full compliance with the occupational safety and health regulations is maintained.

The exempted works include routine or emergency maintenance of exposed facilities or equipment, repair of sudden malfunctions affecting public utilities and services, such as water, electricity, telecommunications and gas, works that, due to their operational nature, require continuity like airports, ports and vital facilities linked to public services, road paving and concrete pouring works whose suspension could result in huge technical damage, emergency road maintenance work whose disruption could affect traffic safety, removal of collapses or sudden hazards in buildings or facilities, and any other works determined by PAM.

In all cases when work is permitted in open areas or during exceptional circumstances, the decision

obligates the employer to provide sufficient quantities of clean cold drinking water, first aid supplies at the work site, and appropriate cooling methods as per the nature of the work. The employer must allocate shaded and properly equipped rest areas for workers during breaks and organize suitable rest periods that are appropriate to the nature of the work and climatic conditions, without prejudice to the legally prescribed working hours.

The decision affirms that, without prejudice to any more severe penalty stipulated by another law, anyone who violates its provisions shall be punished according to the penalties stipulated in Law No. 6/2010.

It also states that PAM has the right to suspend the file of the employer until the violation is rectified.

It stipulates the cancellation of Decision No. 535/2015 and any provision that contradicts or conflicts with its provisions.

The decision takes effect from the date of its publication in the official gazette, 'Kuwait Al-Youm'. The concerned authorities shall implement its provisions, each within their

## Kuwait road

The ministry explained that maintenance works in Jahra Governorate include Saad Al-Abdullah and Al-Qasr. In Hawalli Governorate, the works

cover Jabriya, Salmiya, Mubarak Al-Abdullah, Al-Siddiq, Qasr Bayan, Mishref, Salwa, and Bayan.

In the Capital Governorate, the maintenance works include Dasma, Nuzha, Shamiya, Jaber Al-Ahmad, Sulabikhat, Doha, Rawda, and Qairawan.

In Ahmadi Governorate, maintenance works include Fintas, Jaber Al-Ali, Riqqa, Abu Halifa, and Mangaf. In Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, works will be carried out in Masayel, Qurain, Qasour, Abu Futaira, Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Adan, and Funaites.

In Farwaniya Governorate, maintenance covers Ardiya, Omariya, Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Al-Rabiya, Ishbiliya, Khaitan, and Firdous.

The highway works include Al-Subiya Road, the intersection of the Fourth Ring Road with Al-Maghrib Road, Al-Fahaheel Road opposite Mishref and Salwa, and the overpass at the Fourth Ring Road intersection towards Salmiya.

Maintenance also covers the Fourth Ring Road from its junction with Al-Maghrib Road to Damascus Street, Al-Salmi Road towards Kuwait City, and the Seventh Ring Road from Kilo 24 to Kilo 27 in both directions.

## Secret Service

The suspect was identified as 21-year-old Nasire Best, said a law

enforcement official who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the investigation.

According to District of Columbia court records, Best was arrested in July 2025 after he attempted to enter a different White House checkpoint without authorization, didn't heed officers' commands to stop, and said he wanted to be arrested.

An initial hearing was held and a "Pretrial Stay Away Order" was issued, typically a measure ordering a defendant not to go near a person or area before a trial. A bench warrant was issued in August after a notice of "noncompliance" against Best, who did appear for a subsequent hearing.

It was the third time in the past month that shots were fired near the president after incidents at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner in April and near the Washington Monument earlier in May.

A bystander was also struck on Saturday, but a law enforcement official said it wasn't clear whether that person was hit by the suspect's initial bullets or those fired subsequently by officers.

Secret Service said none of its officers were injured, and that Trump - who was at the White House at the time - was not "impacted." Trump originally was scheduled to spend the weekend at his New Jersey golf club but changed his plans on Friday to stay at the White House instead.

### State of Kuwait

#### Kuwait Investment Authority - Debts Purchased for the State's Account Settlement and Management Office Announces:

Amended List of Debts  
Bankrupt Debtor: Yousef Abdulaziz Al-Muzaini  
Submitted to the Bankruptcy Department in Case No. 51/2000 -  
Bankruptcy (Public Indebtedness/2) dated 15/12/2002

Pursuant to the decision of the Bankruptcy Judge issued on 11/05/2026, approving the inclusion of accessories of the debt in accordance with the letter of Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (Managing Bank), the final debts and approved accessories to be included in the list are as follows:

#### • Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait

Debt purchased by the State in the total amount of K.D 63,381,308.173, comprising a principal amount of K.D 19,230,611.723 pursuant to Court of Cassation Judgment No. 2577/2017

dated 19/07/2020, and K.D 44,150,696.450 representing the accrued accessories calculated on the principal debt owed to the State in accordance with the Judgment Declaring Bankruptcy and the provisions of Law No. 41 of 1993, for the period from the date of cessation of payments until the issuance of the bankruptcy judgment on 29/10/2002, as approved for inclusion pursuant to the Bankruptcy Judge's decision dated 11/05/2026.

#### • Commercial Bank of Kuwait

The Commercial Bank of Kuwait - a debt purchased by the State amounting to K.D 1,347,202.708, representing the remaining share of the bankrupt debtor in the guaranteed debt of the Kuwaiti Italian

Steel Buildings Company, in accordance with Article 13 of Law No. 41 of 1993.

• The National Bank of Kuwait - K.D 4,118,912, pursuant to the Bank's letter dated 02/02/2003.

• Bahrain Cinema & Film Distribution Company - BHD 1,951,542.200, pursuant to Judgments No. 3992/1985 and 828/1986 dated 14/01/1987, issued by the Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs - Courts of the Kingdom of Bahrain jointly and severally against the bankrupt debtor and Fahad Al-Muajel, upheld under Appeal No. 124/1987 by the High Civil Commercial Court of Appeal, and ratified by the Court of First Instance in the State of Kuwait under Case No. 1403/1992 (Commercial - First Instance), as further supported by the certificate issued by the Execution Department in the Kingdom of Bahrain dated 29/07/2001, after deduction of amounts paid and without calculating statutory interest at the rate of 7%.

• Arab International Bank of Bahrain - USD 28,447,486, pursuant to the Bank's letter dated 29/01/2017 and the Loan Agreement dated 05/02/1985, without calculating statutory interest.

• Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait - K.D 1,201,382.236 and USD 3,784,569.11, pursuant to the Bank's letter dated 01/02/2010, Judgment No. 1986/874 (Commercial First Instance 17) dated 16/01/1995, and the Debt Settlement and Rescheduling Agreement notarized under No. 261, Volume 84, dated 16/12/1987, in its capacity as a joint and several guarantor for the Gulf Financial Center Company.

#### While observing the Provisions of Article 111 of Law No. 71 of 2020

### State of Kuwait Kuwait Investment Authority - Debts Purchased for the State's Account Settlement and Management Office Announces:

Summary Report on the Bankruptcy Proceedings and the Provisional Debt List  
For the Bankruptcy of / Duajj Ali Al-Duajj General Trading and Contracting Company (Duajj Ali Al-Duajj L.L.C.)  
Submitted to the Bankruptcy Department in Case No. 61/2010  
General Debt Bankruptcy dated 16/02/2011.

#### First: Financial and Accounting Procedures:

1) Debt as at 1/8/1990: K.D 1,086,215/408

2) Debt pursuant to Article 13: K.D 25,785,573/655

• Commercial Bank of Kuwait (debt purchased on behalf of the State): K.D 4,991,724/655, pursuant to Article 13 of Law No. 41 of 1993.

#### Summary Report on the Bankruptcy Proceedings and the Provisional Debt List

For the Bankruptcy of / Al-Othman Trading and Contracting Company (Suleiman and Abdullah Al-Ghanim Al-Othman L.L.C.)  
Submitted to the Bankruptcy Department in Case No. 2618/1995  
Commercial - First Instance/ 5 dated 30/05/2006.

#### First: Financial and Accounting Procedures:

1) Debt as at 01/08/1990: K.D 11,003,296/498

2) Debt pursuant to Article 13: K.D 25,785,573/655

• Commercial Bank of Kuwait (debt purchased on behalf of the State): K.D 4,991,724/655, pursuant to Article 13 of Law No. 41 of 1993.

9) International Contractors Group Company: K.D 73,536/960, as per the creditor's letter dated 23/04/2007, accompanied by Judgment No. 1349/1995 Commercial - First Instance/6, dated 16/02/1997, excluding statutory interest at 7% from 11/04/1992 until the date of the bankruptcy declaration judgment, upheld on appeal No. 1997/400 Commercial/5, dated 17/06/1998, inclusive of costs, excluding interest.

#### Third: Debts the Authority Considers Excludable:

1) Creditors: K.D 2,003,276/000 - per the financial statement prepared by the Public Prosecution; however, no documents substantiating the validity of the indebtedness are available.

2) Credit balances: K.D 96,475/000 - as per the financial statement prepared by the Public Prosecution; however, no documents substantiating the validity of the indebtedness are available.

3) Credit balances held with banks: K.D 5,240/000 - as per the financial statement prepared by the Public Prosecution; however, no documents substantiating the validity of the indebtedness are available.

4) Maas Equipment and Trading Company K.S.C. (Closed): K.D 342/400 - as per the report of the judicial liquidator of Maas Company, which is a bankrupt entity. The liquidator was contacted to provide documents evidencing the validity of the indebtedness; however, by his letter dated 18/02/2018, he confirmed that no official documents substantiating the validity of such indebtedness are in his possession.

5) Arab Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Company: K.D 14,826/820 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

6) Musk Mechanical Equipment Company: K.D 2,079/915 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

7) Hussein Sayed Nasrallah Mousawi: K.D 1,253/411 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

8) Shaheen Al-Ghanim Company: K.D 57,405/190 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

9) Al-Wawan General Trading Company: K.D 3,107/940 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

10) Mohammad Abdul-Rahman Al-Bahr (in his official capacity): K.D 2,828/870 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

11) Al-Muhallab Trading and Contracting Company: K.D 16,002/853 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

12) Musk Mechanical Equipment Company: K.D 10,795/084 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

13) Luay Eid Misbah Ashour: K.D 3,223/598 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

14) Al-Muhammadi International Food Company: K.D 777/675 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

15) Sons of Abdullah Abdul-Mohsen Vegetables Company: K.D 18,685/370 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

16) Abdul-Mohsen Abdul-Aziz Al-Babtain Company: K.D 2,227/125 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

17) Shaheen Al-Ghanim Road and Bridge Contracting Company: K.D 52,134/157 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

18) Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait - debt purchased on behalf of the State: K.D 25,785,573/655, pursuant to Article 13 of Law No. 41 of 1993.

19) Kuwait Foundry: K.D 5,891/935 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

20) Aluminum Industries Company: K.D 51,580/500 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

21) Al-Muhammadi Raw Materials Company: K.D 4,675/035 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

22) Al-Awali General Trading Company: K.D 33,500/760 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

23) Salmi Ahmad Al-Afyouni: K.D 1,480/033 - same basis; as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

24) Luay Eid Misbah Ashour: K.D 3,223/598 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

25) Faiseer Khalil Ibrahim Athiyara: K.D 1,647/600 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

26) Saad Tayih Ali Hamdan: K.D 2,002/126 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

27) Iliya Habib Saadeh: K.D 2,148/511 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

28) Wadih Jirjis Adhrar: K.D 2,418/839 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

29) Adel Abdul-Maqsood Abdul-Karim: K.D 139/485 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

30) Salah Al-Din Mohammad Ali: K.D 7,969/020 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

31) Sahyouni Milad Harun: K.D 514/881 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

32) Mohammad Abdullah Muawwad: K.D 431/820 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

33) Musa Abdullah Saeed Mohammad: K.D 142/286 - same basis; as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

34) Mobile Telecommunications Company: K.D 212/503 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

35) Mahmood Abdul-Hamid Izzat: K.D 432/592 - as per the letter of former Bankruptcy Administrator Mr. Ali Abdul-Rahman Al-Hassawi dated 27/09/2006, accompanied by the distribution schedule for enforcement proceeds among attaching creditors; however, no documents were submitted to the Authority in its official capacity evidencing the validity of the debt.

According to the Provision of Article 111 of Law No. 71 of 2020, "The debtor and each creditor, even if his name is not included in the list of debts, may appeal to the Bankruptcy Department against debts included in the list, within ten days from the date of announcing the list".



Mohammed Al-Mutairi receives Editor-in-Chief Ahmed Al-Jarallah



A conversation between Editor-in-Chief Al-Jarallah, Ahmed Al-Adwani, Muhammad Al-Mutairi, and Saud Al-Farhan.

Kuwaiti farmers call for recognition, reforms and stronger institutional support

# Al-Jarallah stresses agriculture's strategic role amid regional and global challenges



A conversation between the Editor-in-Chief, Ahmed Al-Jarallah, and Mohammed Al-Mutairi



A souvenir photo.



Dr. Al-Safran, Al-Adwani and Al-Farhan

By Adnan Makkawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Agricultural affairs dominated discussions at a luncheon hosted by farmer Mohammed Ali Al-Mutairi at his farm in Al-Wafra on Thursday afternoon.

Among those in attendance were the Editor-in-Chief of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers and veteran Kuwaiti journalist Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Head of the Kuwaiti Farmers Union Ahmed Al-Adwani, Vice President Fahd Al-Hayyan, Dr. Yousef Abdulrahman Al-Safran, Dr. Ahmed Zaid Al-Azmi, farmer Santan Al-Zoubi, several farm owners from Al-Abdali and Al-Wafra areas, agricultural engineers, and journalists Saud Al-Farhan and Mohammed Al-Farhan.

Al-Jarallah expressed optimism that the government would soon approve a series of reforms aimed at facilitating the movement of farmers in remote border areas.

He stressed that the agricultural sector must be given paramount importance, commensurate with its role as a cornerstone of Kuwait's food security, particularly in light of the serious repercussions of the war since early March and the potentially more severe consequences that may arise in the future.

For his part, Ahmed Al-Adwani, Head of the Kuwaiti Farmers Union, emphasized the importance of government support and encouragement for productive farmers across various agricultural regions.

He noted that agricultural conditions in remote border areas are steadily improving.

Al-Adwani also expressed his appreciation to Al-Jarallah for his attention to agricultural affairs, reflected in the allocation of a weekly page in Seyassah newspaper dedicated to agricultural issues.

He stressed the vital role played by the media in highlighting the achievements of Kuwaiti farmers and conveying their concerns so they can be addressed promptly.

Farmer Mohammed Ali Al-Mutairi called on the Kuwaiti Farmers Union to organize a ceremony marking the end of the 2025/2026 agricultural season, during which individuals who have provided significant service to farmers would be honored, foremost among them First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef.

Al-Mutairi explained that Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef facilitated the transfer of agricultural marketing centers and facilities in Andalous, Jahra, and Fahad Al-Ahmad suburbs back to the Kuwaiti Farmers Union, in order to better serve both producers and consumers.

Many Kuwaiti officials have served the agricultural sector with dedication, foremost among them Director



Fahd Al Hayyan



Ahmed Al-Adwani and Ahmed Zaid

General of the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) Sheikh Mohammed Yousef Al-Sabah, whom he described as a respected and committed role model during his tenure.

Al-Mutairi called for Sheikh Mohammed Yousef Al-Sabah to be appointed Honorary President of the Kuwaiti Farmers Union, revealing that he is also one of the largest date producers in Al-Wafra.

He also called for honoring Ahmed Al-Jarallah in recognition of his weekly agricultural column.

Al-Mutairi emphasized that honoring veteran farmers, represented by their sons and grandsons who have continued agricultural work in the border regions, is both a duty and a right.

He further called for granting them permanent membership in the Kuwaiti Farmers Union.

Al-Jarallah expressed his satisfaction with the renewed focus on the agricultural sector after a prolonged period of neglect, attributing this shift to the visits of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah.

He stated that Kuwait is on the cusp of a new agricultural renaissance, following the initial launch of the Palestinian Agricultural Development Association (PARC) during the tenure of Sheikh Dr. Ibrahim Al-Duaij around 1983.

Al-Jarallah noted that he has written several articles highlighting the importance of agriculture, expressing hope for a fresh start now that the Cabinet, represented by Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, has prioritized agricultural issues.

He also called for stability in senior agricultural positions within PAAAFR, emphasizing the vital link

between PAAAFR and Kuwait's food security.

Al-Jarallah emphasized the importance of direct meetings between farmers' representatives and officials responsible for the agricultural sector, praising the recent meeting between representatives of the Farmers' Union and Minister Dr. Reem Al-Faleej, who oversees agricultural affairs before the Cabinet.

He said the farmers' representatives presented Dr. Al-Faleej with important agricultural data requiring practical measures to develop and enhance plant resources.

Al-Jarallah also stressed the importance of supporting farmers in maintaining agricultural production during the sweltering summer months by ensuring uninterrupted water and electricity supplies, in line with their national role under these challenging conditions.

He said sound agricultural decisions should be based on the achievements of the majority of Kuwaiti farmers in agricultural areas, not on any violations committed by a few.

Al-Jarallah praised the achievements of Kuwaiti farmers under various circumstances, stressing that they have demonstrated their loyalty to the country and commitment to serving the community during the COVID-19 pandemic and other challenging times. This calls for greater support and encouragement, rather than decisions that weaken their resolve.

He expressed hope that the decision prohibiting farmers from transferring, subdividing, or expanding their farms would be temporary, describing it as a measure that targets the core of the agricultural sector and could threaten its future.

Al-Jarallah also questioned the rationale behind

preventing some farmers from investing part of their farms in agritourism or selling their produce in front of their farms during the winter and spring seasons.

Al-Jarallah praised the agricultural achievements of farmers in Al-Wafra and Al-Abdali, highlighting their self-reliance and citing the example of farmer Sheikh Salem Hamoud Al-Salem, who dedicated most of his farm, "Bab Al-Hawa," in Block 3 of the Al-Abdali farming area, to cultivating Rhodes grass using modern agricultural machinery.

He noted that "the happiest people are those who turn their hobbies into professions", and called for the optimal use of Kuwait's vast agricultural areas to produce green fodder through modern harvesters and center-pivot irrigation systems, thereby saving time, effort, and water.

Al-Jarallah emphasized the importance of utilizing every drop of treated wastewater for agricultural irrigation, stressing the need to ensure its availability to all productive farms.

He also expressed no objection to the use of desalination plants on farms, while acknowledging the need to address the resulting brackish water issue.

Al-Jarallah affirmed that no problem is insurmountable, urging the search for practical solutions to agricultural challenges.

He emphasized that Kuwaiti farmers are awaiting genuine support to confront both natural and human-made challenges, ensuring the continuity of agricultural production.

Al-Mutairi called for honoring pioneering farmers, including Sayyah Shayea Abu Shaiba, Jassim Ahmed Al-Amir, Ali Al-Khalaf Al-Saeed, Saud Al-Jalal Al-Sahli, Mashabeh Al-Jalal Al-Sahli, Saad Al-Jalal Al-Sahli, Mohammed Al-Jalal Al-Sahli, Saad Qadhab Al-Mutawtah, Jadian Al-Baghli, Sayer Zwaid Al-Shammari, Sheikh Mubarak Sabah Al-Nasser, Fahad Thunayyan Al-Ghanim, Mubarak Al-Dammak, Eid Aqab Al-Azmi, Mohammed Shayea Al-Azmi, Barakat Sand Badah Al-Mutairi, Mutlaq Al-Otaibi, Nahar Al-Otaibi, Bader Al-Jari, Mohammed Shayea Fahad Al-Azmi, Fahad Mohammed Al-Shuraidah and his brothers, Khaled Al-Essa Al-Saleh, and Abdulaziz Al-Ayoub, in addition to former heads and members of the Kuwaiti Farmers Union boards.

The proposal also included honoring the sons and grandsons of several founding farmers, including Khalid Al-Masoud Al-Mutairi, Nader Qarash Al-Otaibi, and Nasser Al-Badah, as well as farmers Muhammad Abdulkarim Al-Humaidan, Abdullah Sand Al-Muhaini, Mukhlif Al-Janfawi, Ibrahim Al-Quraishi, Abdullah Al-Lafi, Lafi Al-Lafi, Khalifa Al-Banwan, and Abdullah Al-Rashid.

## 17 wells planned across fields and Kuwait Bay

# KOC gears up for second offshore exploration campaign

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) is currently preparing for the second exploration campaign.

The campaign covers three offshore fields, the latest of which is Jazza and half of the first phase of offshore exploration in six fields.

It includes drilling nine exploratory wells in the offshore area and eight wells at Kuwait Bay.

KOC is continuing drilling operations in the Jurassic exploratory wells -- Raqwa 3 and Julaija 3.

The company is reviewing the specifications of offshore drilling platforms and logistic operations to achieve optimal specifications aimed at reducing operational costs and drilling time, while maintaining the highest quality standards.

It is studying the best early production methods for its operations and implementing the necessary infrastructure and production facilities.

Moreover, the May 2026 Ministry of Oil Magazine, published Saturday, disclosed that the offshore exploration and drilling project will increase the hydrocarbon reserves of the country, solidify

its position as a globally reliable producer, and ensure the availability of new resources to meet global market demands.

In accordance with international standards, this will put Kuwait among the top regional offshore operators, advanced technical skills will be developed, Kuwaiti talent will have excellent job opportunities, and cutting-edge technologies in digitalization, machine learning, artificial intelligence and data analysis will be implemented.

According to the magazine, the ministry is duty-bound to record efforts and highlight accomplishments in exploration projects, such as the offshore drill-

ing project.

It emphasized that this project extends beyond its exploration aspect, encompassing strategic dimensions related to developing Kuwaiti expertise and strengthening institutional readiness for the future energy industry in the country.

Offshore explorations in the country will put the Kuwaiti oil sector at the forefront of global oil and gas reserves. Initial indicators for Al-Nokhatha offshore field, discovered in 2024, estimate huge hydrocarbon reserves equivalent to 3.2 billion barrels of oil equivalent of light oil and associated gas.

The reserves of Al-Julaija offshore

field, which was discovered at the beginning of 2025, are estimated at about 800 million barrels of medium-density oil with commercial quantities of associated gas.

The initial tests of Jazza offshore field, whose discovery was announced in October 2025, showed that its production exceeds 29 million cubic feet per day of gas and more than 5,000 barrels per day of condensates, in addition to initial estimates indicating the presence of about one trillion cubic feet of gas and more than 120 million barrels of condensates, which is equivalent to about 350 million barrels of oil equivalent.

## INTERNATIONAL

## Two traffic accidents in Cambodia kill 14 garment factory workers, injure 79 others

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, May 24, (AP): Two separate traffic accidents in Cambodia on Saturday killed at least 14 garment factory workers and injured 79 others, mostly women.

The garment sector is Cambodia's main export earner, with low labor costs being its competitive advantage. Salaries, including overtime, generally amount to \$200-300 a month.

The first incident occurred in the province of Kampong Chhnang, approximately 60 kilometers (37 miles) north of the capital, Phnom Penh, when a heavy cargo truck crashed into an open-top truck transporting workers to their factory. Nine people were killed and 44 injured, according to a statement issued by the Labor Ministry.

The second crash occurred in the southeastern province of Svay Rieng, one of Cambodia's main garment-factory hubs. A bus carrying workers veered off the road and overturned, killing five and injuring 35 others.

Flatbed trucks are the usual method of transportation available for workers. They often lack seats or benches, forcing passengers to stand, significantly increasing the risk of injury or death.

The Labor Ministry statement said 74 of the 93 crash victims were fe-



In this Dec 3, 2018 photo, garment factory workers ride a truck as they go home after a day's work at outside Phnom Penh, Cambodia. (AP)

male, roughly matching the proportion of women in the garment sector workforce. Labor Minister Heng Sour said in a speech for International Women's Day in March that about 80% of Cambodia's garment workers are female.

The Labor Ministry stated it was "deeply shocked by two horrific traffic accidents that occurred simultaneously" and appealed for strict compliance with traffic laws to prevent accidents.

A Transport Ministry report notes that 1,467 people were killed in traffic accidents in 2025, making it by far the leading cause of deaths by accident in the Southeast Asian nation.

Cambodia's garment sector, comprising clothing, footwear, and travel items, employs an estimated 800,000 to 1 million people in approximately 1,900 factories, with production accounting for more than \$15.5 billion in exports last year, according to the country's Ministry of Commerce.

## Rescuers race to find survivors after deadly Chinese coal mine blast kills 82

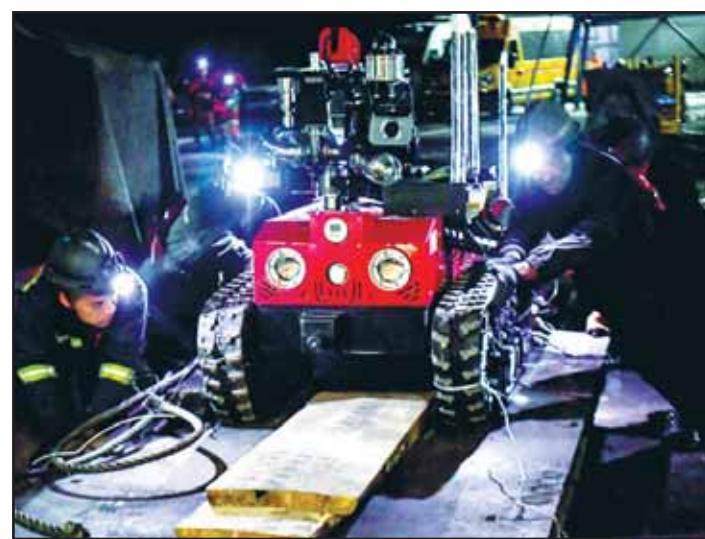
QINYUAN, China, May 24, (AP): Rescuers in northern China looked for survivors Sunday after the country's deadliest coal mine explosion in recent years killed at least 82 people.

An Associated Press reporter witnessed police and security guarding the entrance to the mining facility located in Qinyuan county in the city of Changzhi as emergency vehicles were on site.

Hundreds of emergency responders and medical personnel were sent to help with rescue efforts, state media reported. Rescuers were taking turns to go down the mine shaft, according to the official Xinhua News Agency, facing hurdles including flooded tunnels.

Chinese President Xi Jinping called for a thorough investigation and accountability of those responsible, after the deadly gas explosion happened Friday evening at the Liushenyu coal mine in the province of Shanxi.

Two were missing and dozens of miners were hospitalized, local officials said late Saturday at a news conference. The death toll was revised down from 90, with officials blaming "chaotic" scenes in the aftermath and inaccurate information provided by the mine operator as



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, a rescue robot is deployed at the rescue site in the aftermath of an explosion at Changzhi city's Liushenyu coal mine in Qinyuan county in Changzhi, northern China's Shanxi Province on May 24. (AP)

the reason.

Some hospitalized miners recalled seeing smoke when the accident happened and blacking out, according to state media reports. Many among the injured were hurt by toxic gas, state media said.

The coal mine has "seriously" violated the law, according to local officials, although they did not

elaborate on the specific violations. China's state broadcaster CCTV reported that blueprints provided by the Liushenyu coal mine did not match the actual layout, which hampered rescue efforts.

State media said those responsible for the company behind the mine accident had been "placed under control."

'This is the worst day of our lives'

## Building under construction in Philippines collapses, 1 dead and 21 trapped

ANGELES, Philippines, May 24, (AP): A nine-story building under construction in a city north of the Philippine capital collapsed before dawn on Sunday, leaving at least one Malaysian tourist dead and at least 21 mostly workers trapped in the rubble, officials said. Two were located alive but could not be immediately extricated.

At least 24 workers either managed to dash out of the building, where they mostly slept on the ground floor, or were rescued after the it crumbled to the ground around 2:30 a.m. in a crowded neighborhood of budget hotels, cafes, spas and rural houses outside a former US Air Force base, officials said.

A Malaysian tourist died and another guest was injured in a lodging house, which was partly hit by debris from the collapsing building in Angeles City in Pampanga province, Fire Superintendent Maria Lea Sajili said.

Relatives of those trapped under concrete slabs, twisted iron bars and aluminum scaffolding and other debris prayed and wept as they waited for word from about 700 rescuers gingerly scouring the rubble pile to create space for them to safely move into the collapsed structure.

"This is the worst day of our lives," Joamel Angcao, an 18-year-old student, told The Associated Press as she and other siblings waited for word on their parents, who were among those trapped.

Her parents were tending to their food and coffee cart positioned beside the building when it tumbled down. The parents had struggled through poverty to send her and another sibling to school, Angcao said, tears welling in her eyes.

John Carlo Villarente, a young plumber, said that he stepped out of the



Caution tape marks the area around a collapsed building in Angeles city in Pampanga province, north of Manila, Philippines on May 24. (AP)

building about two hours before it collapsed after heavy rains and fierce wind to have a drink.

"I was so shocked, there were people inside, including my nephew," Villarente told The AP. "We ran and tried to help but we were not allowed to get near because people said it was very dangerous."

Randy Alapide, a 41-year-old plumber who was off-duty when the accident unfolded, said he rushed back to the scene and helped rescuers locate trapped workers by drawing a map to pinpoint their location. "I know three of the missing. They are breadwinners and they have families waiting for them," Alapide said.

Sajili said two of the trapped workers were located alive by rescuers but it was taking time to pluck them out safely. Ambulance vans, firefighters and police lined up waiting for the two to be extricated.

Nearly 200 police officers were helping in the rescue, which would proceed overnight "until all are accounted for," regional police director Brig. Gen. Jess Mendez said.

Angeles City hosted one of the largest U.S. Air Force bases outside of the American mainland until it closed in the early 1990s, helping develop Angeles and outlying cities and towns into entertainment and commercial hubs in the main northern Philippine region of Luzon.

The former American air base, now a bustling industrial and tourism enclave called the Clark Freeport Zone, lies about about 80 kilometers (50 miles) north of Manila.

## Russia uses hypersonic Oreshnik ballistic missile in mass attack on Kyiv

KYIV, Ukraine, May 24, (AP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Sunday Russia used the powerful hypersonic Oreshnik ballistic missile during a mass drone and missile attack on Kyiv on Sunday that killed at least two people, marking the third time the weapon has been used in the four-year war.

The intense aerial assault damaged buildings across the Ukrainian capital, including near government offices, residential buildings, schools, a market and schools, Ukrainian authorities said. At least 83 people were wounded in the attack.

The Oreshnik, which is capable of carrying nuclear or conventional warheads, struck the city of Bila Tserkva in the Kyiv region, Zelenskyy said in a post on Telegram. The target was not immediately clear.

Russia's Defense Ministry on Sunday confirmed it used the Oreshnik, as well as other missile types, to strike Ukrainian "military command and control facilities," air bases and military industrial enterprises. It did not specify where the targets were.

The ministry added the attack was retaliation for Ukrainian strikes on "civilian facilities on Russian territory," without immediately giving detail.



Rescue workers put out a fire of residential building destroyed after a Russian strike in Kyiv, Ukraine, on May 24. (AP)

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday denounced a drone strike on a college dormitory in Russian-occupied eastern Ukraine, which Moscow blames on Kyiv, and ordered the Russian military to submit its proposals for retaliation. He said there were no military or law enforcement facilities near the college.

The death toll from the strike in

Starobilsk had risen to 21 as search-and-rescue operations closed, the press service of Russia's Ministry of Emergency Situations said late on Saturday. It said 42 other people had been wounded in the attack the previous night. The Kremlin-installed authorities of the Luhansk region announced two days of mourning on Sunday and Monday to honor the victims.



Anti-government protesters take part in a rally led by Serbia's protesting university students who are pushing for major political changes in the Balkan country run by President Aleksandar Vucic, in Belgrade, Serbia on May 23. (AP)

## Protesters clash with police after anti-govt rally in Serbia's capital

Clashes erupted between groups of protesters and riot police after a huge anti-government rally on Saturday in the Serbian capital of Belgrade by tens of thousands of opponents of the country's autocratic President Aleksandar Vucic.

While the rally at a central square in Belgrade passed peacefully, groups of young assailants later clashed with riot police, throwing flares, rocks

and bottles at police cordons. Police responded with pepper spray as they charged forward to disperse them.

The groups, including apparent soccer hooligans, rolled trash cans into the streets as shield-carrying riot police tried to surround them. Police parked anti-riot vehicles in a central Belgrade area to block the demonstrators from returning and the violence soon ended.

Police said 23 people were detained.

Crowds of protesters earlier on Saturday streamed into central Belgrade, many carrying banners and wearing T-shirts inscribed with the "Students win" motto of the youth movement which organized the gathering. Columns of cars drove into Belgrade from other Serbian towns earlier in the day. (AP)

## Europe

**'Belarusian journo falls seriously ill':** An imprisoned Belarusian journalist has fallen seriously ill, relatives say, and his family and media rights advocates urged authorities on Friday to quickly release him from custody to save his life.

Kiryl Pazniak, 49, has been in custody since his arrest in September on extremism charges, accusations widely used by authorities to stifle critical voices. Pazniak, who hosted a popular show on YouTube, faces a prison sentence of up to seven years if convicted.

Pazniak's 20-year-old daughter also has been arrested on extremism charges. Both have been named political prisoners by human rights defenders.

Pazniak's ex-wife Elena said that he was suffering from pneumonia and COVID-19, and was placed earlier this month in a prison hospital in grave condition. She argued that he hadn't been given proper medical treatment and his life was in jeopardy. (AP)



Pazniak

two trams collided in central Duesseldorf on Saturday, according to emergency services.

Emergency crews quickly arrived at the scene and treated dozens of people. Authorities said an additional 28 individuals received medical attention but were not injured. No fatalities or life-threatening injuries have been reported.

Most passengers were able to leave the damaged vehicles on their own, and no complex rescue operation was required, officials said.

The collision disrupted tram services across the city center, with several routes diverted while emergency responders and investigators worked at the scene. (Xinhua)

**Greek far-left terror group leader released:** The head of a far-left Greek militant group that killed 23 people - among them industrialists, diplomats and a CIA station chief - has been released from a maximum-security prison, officials said Friday. The decision is now being reexamined by a senior prosecutor.

Alexandros Giotopoulos, the 82-year-old convicted leader of the armed group November 17, was released Thursday from a prison in Athens.

A judicial panel approved his conditional release on grounds of advanced age, deteriorating health and good behavior during his incarceration.

But the decision has triggered renewed scrutiny. A prosecutor at Greece's Supreme Court is reviewing the ruling and could seek to challenge it. (AP)

**27 injured in Germany tram collision:** At least 27 people were injured, including five seriously, after

## Pakistani rail terror kills at least 23

QUETTA, Pakistan, May 24, (AP): A suicide bomber detonated an explosives-laden vehicle near a railway track as a passenger train passed through the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta on Sunday, killing at least 23 people and wounding over 70 others, officials said.

The force of the explosion caused two of the train cars to overturn and catch fire, sending thick black smoke into the air, according to footage shared online.

The attack happened in an area where security forces are usually stationed, badly damaging several nearby buildings and smashing more than a dozen vehicles parked along the road, according to witnesses and images circulating on social media.

Doctors at local hospitals said they had received the wounded, with 20 in critical condition. Three security officials told The Associated Press the bodies were transported to hospitals following the attack. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to be able to speak to the media.

The outlawed Baloch Liberation Army, or BLA, which demands independence from Pakistan's central gov-



Security officials examine a damaged train coach on a railway track at the site of bomb explosion, in Quetta, Pakistan, Sunday, May 24, 2026. (AP)

ernment, has claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement sent to reporters. The militant group said it targeted a train carrying security personnel.

Quetta is the capital of insurgency-hit Balochistan province. The oil- and

mineral-rich region has long been the scene of a low-level insurgency. The insurgents have frequently targeted security forces, government installations and civilians in the province and elsewhere in the country.

Played a key role in two DCM issuances in May

## Kamco Invest successfully manages the largest KWD denominated Sukuk issuance for KFH

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse with one of the largest assets under management in the region, announced that it has successfully managed two landmark debt transactions in its capacity as Joint Lead Manager during the third week of May 2026. The transactions included a KWD-denominated Additional Tier 1 Sukuk issuance for Kuwait Finance House (KFH) and the USD-denominated perpetual Additional Tier 1 capital securities issuance for Oman Arab Bank.

The two issuances witnessed strong investor demand and were significantly oversubscribed despite the ongoing geopolitical tensions and volatility across regional and global markets. This reflects the strength of the issuing institutions, investor confidence in the quality of these issuances, and Kamco Invest's deep relationships with local and regional investors.

Kamco Invest led the KWD200mn Additional Tier 1 Mudaraba Sukuk issuance for KFH, which was issued on Wednesday, May 20, 2026. The transaction marked the first and largest issuance of its kind in Kuwaiti Dinar within the local banking sector. Demand exceeded the target issuance size by more than KWD275mn, while the Sukuk was priced with an annual return of 5.5%.

Kamco Invest also led the USD400mn perpetual Additional Tier 1 capital securities issuance for Oman Arab Bank, which was priced on Wednesday, May 20, 2026. The issuance attracted demand exceeding USD1bn, highlighting strong regional and international appetite for the offering and confidence in the bank's financial position and the Omani banking sector.



Abdullah M. AlSharekh



Omar A. Zaineddine

The successful outcomes further highlight Kamco Invest's growing role in contributing to the debt capital markets landscape in Kuwait and the region through the execution of pioneering and innovative transactions for financial institutions, corporates, and governments. These transactions also add to the market's depth and provision of diversified financing solutions that support economic growth.

In 2025, Kamco Invest successfully led and managed 14 debt capital market transactions with an aggregate value of USD7.0bn. These included 13 bond and Sukuk issuances totaling USD6.7bn for financial institutions and corporates across Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar, in addition to a USD304mn liquidity management transaction for a Kuwaiti com-

pany. Commenting on the transaction, Abdullah M. AlSharekh, Managing Director of Markets and Investment Banking at Kamco Invest, said, "The strong success of these two transactions reflects the strength of Kamco Invest's debt capital markets platform and our ability to execute high-quality transactions across varying market conditions, even amid the current geopolitical challenges and volatility affecting investor sentiment regionally and globally."

He added, "Both issuances witnessed strong investor demand and oversubscription levels, reflecting investor confidence in the issuing institutions and the quality of the issuance structures, in addition to the continued attractiveness of fixed income and Sukuk

instruments in the region. We are proud to continue our role as a trusted partner to leading financial institutions by delivering innovative financing solutions that support growth plans and enhance funding diversification."

Meanwhile, Executive Director of Capital Markets, Omar Zaineddine, said, "We continue to strengthen our presence across regional debt capital markets, supported by a strong track record in managing and executing both conventional and Shariah-compliant issuances, as well as our ability to access a broad and diversified investor base across local, regional, and international markets. As debt markets in the region continue to evolve, we remain focused on capturing new opportunities and contributing to the advancement and efficiency of the financial ecosystem in Kuwait and the wider region."

AlSharekh concluded by extending his appreciation to the issuers, Kuwait Finance House and Oman Arab Bank, for their trust. He also expressed his gratitude to all parties that contributed to the successful execution of both issuances, particularly the joint lead managers, for their instrumental role in completing the transactions successfully.

It is worth noting that Kamco Invest recently received the "Best Investment Bank for Financial Institutions in the Middle East 2026" award from Global Finance in recognition of its outstanding performance across debt and equity capital markets, mergers & acquisitions, and its growing role in developing capital markets in Kuwait and the region.

### Branches and digital channels ready to serve customers locally and abroad May 26-31

## Warba Bank outlines Eid Al-Adha service schedule

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Warba Bank announced that it will maintain banking services during the Eid Al-Adha holiday, starting from Tuesday, May 26, until Sunday, May 31, 2026. The bank has activated its operational plan to ensure uninterrupted services through selected branches, digital platforms, and customer care channels.



Abdullah Al-Shuail

The bank confirmed the working hours for its operating branches during the holiday period as follows:

■ Kuwait International Airport Branch (Terminal 4): Operates daily from 4:00 AM to 8:00 PM to facilitate transactions for travelers and pilgrims.

■ The Avenues Mall Branch: Operates daily in two shifts: morning shift from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM, and evening shift from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM. (On Fridays, the branch operates from 1:00 PM to 8:00 PM).

■ Al-Egaila Branch: Operates on Saturday and Sunday (May 30 and 31) in two shifts: morning shift from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, and evening shift from

5:00 PM to 7:00 PM.

All regular branch operations across Kuwait will officially resume on Monday, June 1, 2026.

#### Digital and Customer Support Channels:

Customers can manage their accounts and complete transactions 24/7 through the Warba Bank mobile application and digital channels. Additionally, customer support remains available via the Call Center at 1825555 (domestically) and +965 2228 8888 (internationally), alongside the official WhatsApp service at +965 5162 5555 and the bank's social media platforms.

Abdullah Nasser Al-Shuail, Senior Director of Branches at Warba Bank, congratulated His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, and the people of Kuwait on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

"Warba Bank is fully prepared to serve our customers during the Eid holiday, whether they are in Kuwait, on Hajj pilgrimage, or traveling abroad," Al-Shuail stated. "Our digital banking services allow customers to securely manage accounts, transfer funds, and pay bills securely and efficiently, reflecting our commitment to delivering secure Sharia-compliant banking services."

#### About Warba Bank:

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

### Fuel and insurance costs push airfares higher

## Kuwait Airways to operate 728 weekly flights in June

KUWAIT CITY, May 24, (KUNA): Kuwait Airways is scheduled to operate approximately 728 weekly flights in June to 58 destinations worldwide, after obtaining official approvals from relevant authorities for certain destinations, the company's Acting CEO Abdulwahab Al-Shatti said.



Acting CEO of Kuwait Airways, Abdulwahab Al-Shatti

Al-Shatti stated to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Sunday the airline was currently operating around 420 weekly flights, including departures and arrivals, to 45 destinations around the world.

He explained that June destinations include Malaga, Alexandria, Salalah, Sarajevo, Nice, Vienna, Antalya, Bodrum, Trabzon, Mykonos, Zurich, Moscow, Dammam, London, Manchester, Amsterdam, Madrid, Barcelona, Istanbul, Sabiha Airport in Turkiye, Geneva, Milan, Rome, Paris, Frankfurt and Munich.

He added destinations also include Delhi, Kathmandu, Bangkok, Manila, Guangzhou, Beirut, Sphinx, Cairo, Sharm El-Sheikh, Sohad, Amman, Manama, Doha, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Medina, Taif, Jeddah, Riyadh, Lahore, Islamabad, Dhaka, Mumbai, Trivandrum, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Casablanca, Bengaluru, Colombo, Hyderabad and Kochi.

Regarding canceled tickets and refund, he said total number of tickets canceled by passengers on Kuwait Airways flights reached around 500,000 since February 28. He noted that the company has refunded approximately 55 percent of their value, while work was underway to refund the remaining 45 percent in the near future.

He explained that delays in refund procedures were due to the airport closure, the surge in refund requests, and the reduction of staff in government agencies to no more than 30 percent during the past period, in addition to verifying banking details in coordination with banks.

He added that after the reopening of airspace and adjustment of flight schedules, refund requests increased significantly.

He stressed the company continues to improve services, accelerate refund procedures and increase flights to high-demand destinations while maintaining competitive prices as much as possible despite operational and economic conditions imposed by the crisis.

He pointed out the company granted people who have bookings flexible options by allowing them to retain their tickets for two years and use them either for the same destination or another destination without additional fees or fare differences.

He noted that aircraft fuel prices have risen sharply, affecting Kuwait Airways operations, with increases exceeding 120 percent, in addition to higher insurance costs, leading to increased ticket prices.

He explained that some external factors may continue for a longer period, including fuel availability, insurance costs and geopolitical developments, noting that stability would positively impact insurance costs and ticket prices.

He said the company carefully studied ticket pricing to meet market needs with competitive fares and seeks markets and routes where fuel can be obtained at suitable prices, which would help reduce ticket prices.

Al-Shatti stated that some ticket prices perceived as high by travelers may be linked to SPA (Special Prorate Agreements), commercial agreements between airlines that determine how ticket revenues are distributed when a traveler's journey involves more than one carrier.

Kuwait Airways sets the fare for the first segment, while partner airlines determine the fare for the second segment, he explained.

He said the company uses advanced systems and software to determine the most efficient routes in terms of operational efficiency and cost reduction, emphasizing that the primary goal is to provide travelers with the destinations they need at competitive prices.

He added the closure of some routes has increased flight durations compared to before the crisis. Some short-haul Gulf flights now take longer, increasing fuel consumption and operational costs, which in turn affects ticket prices, despite the company's efforts to avoid excessive increases.

He confirmed the company was looking forward to a gradual return to normal conditions, and that it did not only consider Kuwait Airport but also the broader airport network, as some airports still face challenges related to fuel supply, aircraft parking slots, rerouting and avoiding tension-prone air-

space, all of which affect operations despite the recovery of traffic at Kuwait Airport.

He said the recent period witnessed continuous updates and changes from relevant authorities in and outside Kuwait, affecting flight schedules and aircraft types, which impacted some travelers and their travel dates. He stressed that these circumstances were beyond the company's control.

He noted that customer service experienced unprecedented pressure during the recent period, as calls to the hotline (171) increased to more than four times the normal levels, thus affecting waiting times.

He added the company increased the number of customer service agents to meet travelers' needs.

He said calls ranged from refund requests to inquiries about flight schedules, stressing that customer service teams worked to address all requests based on the information available.

Regarding the biggest challenges faced by Kuwait Airways, Al-Shatti said one of the most significant came after the closure of Kuwait airspace on February 28, when company aircraft and passengers were abroad while transit passengers were inside Kuwait.

He explained that the company activated its emergency plan and redistributed flights according to prearranged plans to different airports.

He added that transit passengers who could not continue their journeys through Kuwait Airport after the airspace closure were accommodated in hotels within Kuwait at the company's expense.

Coordination was also carried out with Kuwaiti and Saudi authorities to transport them to Dammam Airport so they could continue to their final destinations.

He said the company acted quickly to assist stranded Kuwaiti citizens abroad, returning around 2,180 passengers via 15 flights between March 2 and 13 through Dammam Airport under special arrangements.

Gathering points were designated in Europe and East Asia, and passengers with existing bookings were returned without issuance or change fees.

He emphasized that the company was keen to ensure no Kuwaiti citizen wishing to return home remained abroad, whether they were on medical, educational or other trips.

Citizens were repatriated before the company resumed scheduled operations through Dammam Airport, adding another challenge during the crisis was rescheduling flights after limited operations resumed.

Flights to some destinations were reduced according to available approvals for operations, requiring the rescheduling of large numbers of passengers under circumstances beyond the company's control.

He noted the initial phase of resumed operations was limited to certain operational hours, affecting flights that previously departed and returned on the same day before the crisis.

This forced the company to keep aircraft abroad overnight and return the next day, leading to additional costs such as aircraft parking and crew accommodation expenses compared to normal operations.

He explained that the national carrier prioritized supporting the country's food and medical security during the crisis in coordination with relevant authorities.

The company transported more than 2.4 million kilograms of various goods and operated special flights to transport sensitive medications, including cancer treatments and radioactive medicines from France while airspace was closed.

He added that, in coordination with the Ministry of Interior, Kuwait Airways operated flights to repatriate more than 5,000 residency violators to their home countries during the airspace closure. It also operated flights through Dammam Airport for overseas medical patients, students and urgent cases to several destinations.

He noted that daily and regular meetings were held with the Public Authority of Civil Aviation (PACA) and relevant authorities during the crisis to organize operations in a way that served travelers.

The company chose to operate flights through Dammam Airport because it was an international airport with suitable services and facilities for passengers when needed, he said.

Al-Shatti confirmed that the company was assessing its emergency plan daily throughout the crisis, saying operational safety remained the top priority and that flights were operated according to laws and procedures.

He expressed his thanks and appreciation to Tamdeen Company for its initiative in making Khairan Mall available as a gathering point for transporting passengers by bus to Dammam Airport during the crisis.

He also expressed gratitude to PACA and relevant authorities in Saudi Arabia for their efforts and joint coordination that helped address the challenges during the crisis.

### Hormuz crisis hits global LNG trade

## Kuwait organizes seminar on LNG, hydrogen developments

KUWAIT CITY, May 24, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Oil organized Sunday a virtual seminar on developments in liquefied natural gas (LNG) and hydrogen in cooperation with the Arab Energy Organization (AEO).

Director of Public Relations and Petroleum Media at the ministry Sheikhha Tamadhur Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah said Kuwait is expanding the use of natural gas in electricity generation to improve energy efficiency and environmental performance.

She highlighted LNG import facilities in Al-Zour as a key component in supporting electricity and water plants and enhancing the flexibility and sustainability of the national energy system.

She added that the ministry continues efforts to strengthen specialized knowledge in the energy sector and keep pace with rapid global developments.

AEO gas industries expert Wael Abdulmouti said the first quarter of 2026 witnessed major shifts in global energy markets due to disruptions in LNG shipments through the Strait of Hormuz.

He said the United States maintained its position as the world's top LNG exporter, raising its market share to nearly 29 percent amid shipping disruptions.

Abdulmouti noted that around 19 percent of global LNG trade was affected by navigation disruptions

in the Strait of Hormuz, while Arab LNG exports declined by more than 24 percent in the first quarter of 2026.

He added that spot LNG prices rose by more than 60 percent in March compared to February, reaching USD 18 per million British thermal units.

AEO expects global LNG supplies to reach around 435 million tons in 2026, reflecting growth of only one percent amid concerns over supply shortages and maritime security risks.

On hydrogen, Abdulmouti said around 65 countries have adopted national hydrogen strategies representing most of the global economy and carbon emissions.

Abdulmouti said a gap remains between announced plans and projects under construction, reflecting a shift toward economically viable projects backed by long-term demand.

He added that Arab countries are steadily investing in low-carbon hydrogen and ammonia projects, with 2027 expected to mark a major turning point for the sector in the region.

The seminar was attended by representatives from the Environment Public Authority, AEO, the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, Kuwait University's College of Engineering and Petroleum, and local media outlets.

### Exporters, importers exposed to volatility

## The Arab Energy Organization shock raises stagflation risks

By Najeh Bilal  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Arab Energy Organization, formerly Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), confirmed in its report for the first quarter of 2026 that the current global energy shock is not limited to the Middle East, as it affects various parts of the world.

According to the report, any disruption in supplies quickly affects the global economy, thereby, increasing its vulnerability to future shocks. The continuation of these shocks over a prolonged period, coupled with the persistent rise in energy prices, could create favorable conditions for stagflation – a combination of high inflation and weak economic growth. This can weaken export competitiveness, affect government budgets, and make it more difficult to implement effective monetary and fiscal policies.

The effects are not limited to the economies of energy-importing countries, but also the economies of exporting countries, which may experience changes in global demand and price volatility.

Due to the war, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) announced precautionary reduction in crude oil production and refining operations as part of its risk management and business continuity strategy.

KPC took this decision in light of repeated malicious attacks, including threats to the passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz, as well as the attack on the crude oil tanker, 'Al-Salmi', of Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) while it was anchored off the port of Dubai.

This is in addition to attempts to

target the energy infrastructure of Saudi Arabia, including the Shaybah oil field – one of the largest crude oil fields with a production capacity of about one million barrels per day.

Aramco shut down some operational units at the Ras Tanura refinery as a precautionary measure, following an attack that resulted in minor damage.

Regarding the situation in Qatar, the report stated that Qatar Energy declared force majeure on liquefied natural gas (LNG) shipments following attacks on gas facilities in Ras Laffan, which caused huge damage to a gas-to-liquids (GTL) plant.

One unit at the Bapco Energies refinery in Bahrain was targeted, prompting Bapco to declare force majeure affecting its operations due to the regional conflict and the attack on its oil refinery complex.

The report cited the World Economic Outlook report of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for April 2026, which identified three main, interconnected pathways to the overall impact of regional geopolitical tensions in the Middle East on the global economy.

The first pathway covers rising commodity prices and sharp decline in supply, as the costs of producing energy-intensive goods and services, including fertilizers, chemicals, food, transportation and heating, increase. This resulted in supply chain disruptions, accelerated inflation, and decline in purchasing power.

The second pathway focuses on companies attempting to offset anticipated revenue losses by raising prices and wages, and third is the reaction of financial markets, as these developments may lead to an increase in risk aversion.

# The Free Trade Agreement between Britain and GCC marks the beginning of a new era

By Hassan F Beidas

In a move that reflects the rapid transformations shaping the global economy, Britain and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have successfully concluded a comprehensive free trade agreement that stands among the most significant economic and trade deals in recent years. More than simply reducing tariffs, this agreement represents a long-term strategic vision aimed at boosting economic growth, encouraging investment flows, and opening broader horizons for trade cooperation between both sides.

The agreement includes tariff exemptions on approximately 93% of Gulf exports to the United Kingdom, alongside immediate customs clearance for perishable goods within less than six hours. This will provide Gulf companies with greater flexibility and faster access to British markets, particularly in the food, agricultural, and fast-moving consumer goods sectors.

The deal also marks a major success for Britain as it continues to redirect its commercial focus toward financially strong and high-growth markets following the reshaping of its global economic relationships. The GCC countries have emerged as key economic partners, backed by substantial liquidity, accelerating growth, and diverse investment opportunities.

The agreement gains additional importance as Britain becomes the first G7 nation to successfully sign a comprehensive free trade agreement with the GCC – an achievement that reflects London's strategic commitment to strengthening its economic and trade ties with the Gulf region.

According to figures published by the UK Department for Business and Trade, the GCC common market represents a major



Hassan Beidas

economic powerhouse, with a combined GDP of nearly £1.9 trillion and an import market exceeding \$1.04 trillion, making it one of the world's most attractive destinations for trade and investment.

Per the official British estimates, they indicate that the agreement is expected to contribute approximately £3.7 billion annually to the UK economy, while also increasing British workers' wages by around £1.9 billion – a clear indication of the positive economic impact anticipated across multiple sectors.

Experts also expect bilateral trade, currently valued at around £53 billion, to grow by nearly 20% over the coming years, adding approximately £15.5 billion to long-term trade exchange between Britain and the GCC countries.

For British businesses, analysts believe that eliminating tariffs could save companies nearly £580 million annually in customs-related costs, particularly across sectors such as technology, education, healthcare, aviation, electronics, and the automotive industry, including hybrid vehicles. This is expected to significantly enhance the competitiveness of British companies within Gulf markets.

British agricultural and food exports are also set to gain strong competitive advantages through the immediate removal of tariffs on products such as cheese and chocolate. In return, Britain will eliminate tariffs on all existing Gulf exports, while also accelerating customs disclosure procedures and introducing self-clearance options for small and medium-sized enterprises, helping strengthen supply

chains and facilitate trade flows.

The benefits of the agreement extend beyond traditional trade into the digital economy and financial services sectors. The deal enables the free flow of financial data between banks and eases restrictions on foreign ownership in Britain, creating greater opportunities for Gulf startups seeking international expansion with lower costs and greater operational flexibility.

In addition, the agreement includes mutual recognition of professional qualifications to facilitate the movement of experts and professionals between both sides, alongside simplified visa procedures that will encourage the exchange of expertise and human capital between Britain and the GCC.

As part of adapting to the global digital transformation, the agreement also introduces advanced digital trade facilitation measures by eliminating paper-based requirements and relying solely on electronic transactions. This will reduce time and costs while improving the efficiency of commercial operations.

Furthermore, the agreement establishes fast and transparent mechanisms for resolving commercial and legal disputes between both parties, reinforcing investor confidence and providing businesses with a more stable legal environment.

In conclusion, this agreement is far more than an ordinary trade arrangement. It lays the foundation for a new phase of economic and investment integration between Britain and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. Once the necessary parliamentary and legal procedures in the United Kingdom are completed, the agreement is expected to come into force and open a new chapter of long-term growth, prosperity, and strategic partnership between both sides.

## Airlines raise bag fees

# Rising airfares reduce value of travel points

NEW YORK, May 24, (AP) – First, the bad news.

Users of credit cards that accrue airline miles and points toward various travel perks are likely to find their balances won't take them as far this summer.

As jet fuel prices have jumped during the Iran war, so have the cost of airline tickets and fees for checking bags. Airfares in April were 21% higher than a year earlier, the Labor Department reported last week. Flights already are more expensive during the summer since there's more demand.

That means travelers who wanted to use an airline-branded credit card or a travel rewards card from a bank with a specific trip or a first-class seat in mind may have to shell out some cash, choose a different destination or fly at inconvenient times to get the most out of their accounts, travel experts say.

In the early years of frequent flyer programs, airlines published tables that showed customers how much a higher class of service or flying a certain distance would cost in miles. Nearly all airlines now continuously adjust their airfares, an algorithm-powered strategy known as dynamic pricing.

Flights priced in points are based on overall demand, just like regular fares. The cash value of those seats often will roughly equal the same in points. Higher airfares typically translate into needing more miles or points to buy a ticket.

Long before the current disruption to global oil supplies, consumers, a pair of U.S. senators and former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg cried foul over the airline practice of increasing the number of points or miles needed to earn a free flight or offering fewer redeemable seats before people could cash in their loyalty stockpiles.

"There's no question that dynamic award pricing, higher redemption rates on some domestic routes, and added fees have made it harder to find the outsized deals that travelers enjoyed a decade ago," said Brian Kelly, the travel and credit card rewards expert better known as The Points Guy. "But that doesn't necessarily mean points have lost value. It just means consumers need to be more strategic about how they redeem them."

Now, the better news.

There are a lot of ways to accrue airline miles, and most don't come with an expiration date. Signing up for an airline's frequent flyer program is the simplest method and usually doesn't cost anything. Depending on the carrier, members can earn miles when they fly with the airline or its partners and can redeem them for perks like discounted flights, seat upgrades or checked bags. Higher tiers of loyalty programs can also unlock benefits like priority boarding or waived baggage fees.

Major airlines also partner with banks to market co-branded credit cards that carry an annual fee. The cards earn users miles whenever they buy something.

"When you're going to spend money anyway, you might as well get something back for it," said Adam Morvitz, a credit card miles expert and CEO of point.me, a travel loyalty platform. "If you're already buying groceries, paying for gas or booking a hotel, a travel rewards card turns that everyday spending into points that can fund your next trip."

This is where being a frequent flyer or having an airline credit card might yield summer savings. To offset their jet fuel costs, some U.S. airlines have raised the checked baggage fees for domestic flights and many short-haul international flights. United Airlines raised the price of the first checked bag from

\$40 to \$50. Delta Air Lines' first checked bag fee went from \$35 to \$45.

The airlines still are allowing customers in the upper tiers of their loyalty programs or who hold credit cards like the Delta SkyMiles Card from American Express or United's card with Chase to check a bag for free.

Financial institutions like American Express, Chase Bank and Citibank issue their own travel credit cards that supply points with purchases. Travelers that want the option of flying with more airlines tend to favor these. Depending on the card, perks can include airport lounge access, travel insurance, no foreign transaction fees and TSA PreCheck or Global Entry credits.

"For those who spend responsibly, the value is incredible as you're able to get more in value from the perk, even if there is an annual fee," he said.

For beginners, Morvitz recommends flexible points cards over airline-specific options because they can be transferred across loyalty programs and provide more redemption options if an airline changes its award pricing. He said consumers should match a card to their actual spending habits – such as choosing cards with bonus categories for groceries or dining – while also considering whether annual fees are justified by the benefits they'll actually use.

A lot of banks are promoting sizable sign-up bonuses while people make summer plans, such as offering 100,000 miles or even 150,000 miles or points to new customers who qualify and spend a certain amount of money within a specific period – usually the first three months. Kelly said the bonuses make it a good time to get one of these cards, which might make trips more affordable for people needing extra points.

Those sign-up offers also can be among the most valuable features of rewards cards, sometimes worth more than \$1,000 in travel, Morvitz said. But consumers should carefully track minimum spending requirements to qualify. He also recommends using category bonuses and shopping portals to maximize rewards and always attaching a frequent flyer number to airline reservations.

The important thing to remember is that the value of a bank travel card or an airline loyalty card evaporates if you carry a balance. The average credit card interest rate is between 21% and 24%, so even carrying a \$1,000 balance can quickly wipe out any savings from a complimentary checked bag.

"Travel rewards cards are one of the best financial tools available to responsible cardholders, but they're designed for people who treat them like a debit card," Morvitz said. "Spend what you'd spend anyway and always pay the balance in full each month. The moment you start carrying a balance and paying interest, the math works against you."

Hotels are another place where travelers may not get as much from their rewards points this summer. Hyatt overhauled its loyalty program this week to take it from three tiers to five. While some lower-cost hotel stays will require the same number of points, the same might not be true for Hyatt's more upscale properties.

The travel blog One Mile at a Time estimated that some of Hyatt's most elite properties would cost as much as 67% more with points under the new system.

"If you're sitting on hotel points don't sit and hoard them. ... They quickly seem to be getting less valuable," said Sally French, who covers credit cards and loyalty programs for Nerd Wallet.

## Al Khiran Mall branch to operate during holiday

# ABK branches to close May 26–31 for Eid Al-Adha

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) extends its greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah as well as the government, people, and residents of Kuwait on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha, hoping it bestows an abundance of blessings.

ABK discloses that its branches will be closed from Tuesday, 26 May 2026 to Sunday, 31 May 2026, to resume operations on



Monday, 1 June 2026. During this time, ABK's branch in Al Khiran Mall will be functional to service customers from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The Bank has also confirmed its full operational readiness to serve customers 24/7 via its various digital platforms throughout the holiday. This includes Online Banking via eahli.com, Mobile Banking through the ABK app, as well as the Bank's Call Center Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 and its ATM network.

## Reinforcing innovation drive with Digital Eidiya launch

# ABK launches 'Digital Eidiya' service for Eid Al Adha

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: In line with its ambitious digital transformation strategy and commitment to meeting customers' evolving expectations, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced the official launch of its 'Digital Eidiya' service starting from the first day of Eid Al Adha through the WAMD instant payment service, in collaboration with KNET.

This innovative service reflects the Bank's commitment to delivering smart solutions that revive authentic social customs and traditions in a contemporary way. The service enables customers across all segments to send Eidiya to relatives and children easily and securely from anywhere within seconds, around the clock, while also allowing them to attach creative greeting cards featuring personalised Eid messages specially designed for the occasion.

Customers can benefit from the service easily by logging into the ABK Mobile app, selecting 'Digital Eidiya' from the main menu, choosing the amount, selecting the recipient from their contacts list, and sending it along with their preferred greeting card.

This initiative embodies the Bank's vision of being a true partner to its customers during their various social occasions. Its seamless integration within ABK's digital ecosystem also reflects the Bank's operational efficiency and continuous innovation capabilities, further strengthening its leading market position and attracting new customer segments passionate about technological advancement.

On another note, this partnership with KNET represents a significant leap in Kuwait's local digital payments ecosystem through a highly secure and ultra-fast payment experience, reaffirming the Bank's vision of investing in Kuwait's national digital infrastructure.

This step also supports the efforts of the Central Bank of Kuwait to enhance financial inclusion. Furthermore, the service enhances customer satisfaction by eliminating the hassle of searching for new banknotes or waiting in long



queues at ATMs and branches, offering instead a convenient banking experience that allows customers to focus on enjoying the festive Eid atmosphere.

The 'Digital Eidiya' service therefore reflects ABK's ongoing commitment to placing customer convenience and satisfaction at the forefront of its priorities, as a direct response to changing customer expectations and the growing demand for banking services that save time and effort while integrating seamlessly into customers' daily lives and social occasions.

The Bank also invited all customers to download the latest update of the ABK Mobile app to benefit from the service's features, highlighting the availability of comprehensive 24/7 technical support throughout the Eid holiday via its call centre and social media platforms to address inquiries and provide an exceptional and seamless digital banking experience for all.

Since its establishment in 1967, ABK has progressed to become one of the leading Kuwaiti banks in the region that offers a wide array of personal, corporate, and private banking products and services. ABK also provides a broad range of local, regional, and global investment solutions and services through its subsidiary, ABK Wealth Management.

Across the region, the Bank offers individuals and corporates the convenience of comprehensive banking and financial services in the Egyptian market through ABK-Egypt's network of 46 branches.

This is in addition to ABK's three branches located in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) in the United Arab Emirates, servicing both Kuwaiti and Emirati individual and corporate clients.

ABK is a strong supporter of Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Banking Association's 'Let's Be Aware' awareness campaign. Through its various initiatives, the Bank aims to promote financial inclusion by educating Kuwaiti society about customer rights, responsibilities, and the different types of banking and special needs services. Additionally, ABK consistently provides strategic information on how to avoid banking and financial fraud, loan application requirements, digital services, and more.

For more information about ABK, please follow the Bank's Instagram account @abk\_kuwait, visit eahli.com, contact Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899 or visit one of the Bank's branches across Kuwait.

## Flights starting four times a week from 8 July, extending to daily flights from 1 August

# Jazeera Airways announces direct flights to LLA

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's pioneering low-cost carrier, today announced the launch of direct flights between Jazeera Terminal 5 (T5) at Kuwait International Airport and London Luton Airport (LLA).

This will be Jazeera Airways' longest route, 7 hours, operated using its Airbus A320 fleet, and demonstrating the airline's continued fleet capability enhancements and network reach.

This announcement comes soon after Jazeera operated its first flights into Milan Bergamo building connectivity with the Northern Italy region and opening a gateway to Europe. With London Luton, Jazeera will continue expanding its European connectivity to serve more leisure travelers, students, business travelers and reunite families.

The London Luton service will begin with four weekly flights on 8 July 2026 and increase to daily flights from 1 August 2026. This new route strengthens London Luton Airport's connectivity to the Middle East while offering travelers seamless access to over 60 onward destinations across the GCC, South and Central Asia and Europe via

Jazeera's dedicated Terminal 5 in Kuwait.

Barathan Pasupathi, Chief Executive Officer of Jazeera Airways, said: "We are proud to launch this important new connection between Kuwait and the United Kingdom. London Luton further expands our growing European network soon after our inaugural operations to Milan Bergamo in Italy. This milestone route not only links two vibrant cities but also demonstrates the strength and capability of our fleet with flights of up to seven hours. London remains one of the most sought-after destinations for our customers, and we are focused on building a network centered on convenience, value and seamless connectivity for travelers in both directions. We look forward to welcoming passengers onboard as we continue writing the next chapter of our European growth story."

Stuart Summers, Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Kuwait, said: "This route carries significance both economically and diplomatically. It enhances connectivity, facilitates business, tourism, and educational exchange, and stands as a reflection of the strong and steadily deepening

partnership between Kuwait and the United Kingdom."

Alberto Martin, CEO, London Luton Airport, said: "Bringing even greater choice and flexibility for our passengers is key to the simple and friendly passenger experience we look to offer and it's hugely exciting to welcome Jazeera Airways to London Luton Airport. The launch of this service underlines LLA's ambition to grow regional connectivity and diversify our route network and will provide frequent and affordable flights to a hugely desirable destination for both business and leisure passengers. Importantly, it provides an important new connection to over 60 onward travel destinations across the Middle East, South and Central Asia and Europe, all of which is welcome news for those who choose to fly from LLA including the high contingent of South Asian people living in our local community."

Passengers can book seats to London Luton through the Jazeera Airways website on www.jazeeraairways.com, Jazeera Airways mobile app or by calling 177.



Stuart Summers - Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Kuwait.



Jazeera Airways team

Introducing smart saving tools to boost financial literacy

# Weyay Bank announces Digital Eidiya via 'Wamd' & 'Eidiya Link'

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Weyay Bank, Kuwait's first digital bank, has announced its digital Eidiya service on the Weyay app throughout Eid Al-Adha, reinforcing its commitment to supporting customers during key occasions and delivering banking solutions that match their fast-paced digital lifestyles.

The service enables users to send and receive Eidiya through Wamd, in addition to the "Eidiya Link" feature available to all Weyay customers, including Jeel cardholders aged 8 to 14.

### WamdEidiya: Speed at the Core

Weyay places its instant Wamd service at the forefront of this year's digital Eidiya options. The feature allows cardholders to send Eidiya to up to 5 recipients simultaneously, securely and in real time.

This offering stands out as a smart so-

lution that ensures instant sending and receiving of Eidiya with the highest levels of security, delivering a seamless financial experience throughout the Eid holiday.

### Eidiya Link for Weyay and Jeel Customers

The bank also continues to offer the "Eidiya Link" feature, enabling users to create a personalized link and add a greeting message. The recipient can then choose the amount they wish to send back to the person who shared the link, offering greater flexibility than traditional payment links.

The feature is also available to Jeel card users (ages 8-14), allowing them to receive Eidiya digitally in a fun and fully secure way that enhances financial awareness while bringing joy during the festive season.

### From Eidiya to Savings: Smart Tools in the Weyay App

Beyond instant digital services, Weyay Bank remains committed to building a sustainable financial future for its customers by continuously highlighting the smart saving tools available within the app.

The bank encourages customers, especially younger users, to spend their entire Eidiya, and instead allocate part of it into Weyay Saving Pots, which also provide smart saving tools that go beyond traditional savings accounts, such as hiding the pot balance and temporarily locking savings.

They also enable users to set clear financial goals and develop stronger financial planning habits, helping them grow their savings with confidence.



## Market Crosscurrents: Higher-for-longer pressures amid flurry of data & energy risks

By National Bank of Kuwait

Global markets were shaped this week by broadly resilient US economic data, increasingly hawkish Federal Reserve expectations, and persistent Middle East geopolitical risks, which have continued to drive energy market volatility and support broad dollar strength. In the United States, initial jobless claims fell to 209K, manufacturing PMI rose to 55.3, while housing starts declined 2.8% MoM, Fed minutes signal led growing support for further tightening should inflation remain elevated, while Kevin Warsh was sworn in as the 17th Fed Chair; DXY closed the week at 99.239 [-0.05%]. Meanwhile, Canadian CPI rose 2.8% YoY (0.4% MoM), and retail sales increased 0.6% MoM, as USD/CAD ended the week at 1.3818 [+0.49%]. Across Europe and the United Kingdom, euro area business activity contracted further as the composite PMI declined to 47.5 and France's reading fell to 43.5, while UK CPI slowed to 2.8% YoY, services inflation eased to 3.2%, and UK private sector activity fell into contraction at 48.5 alongside a rise in unemployment to 5.0%, reinforcing expectations of slower regional growth as ECB tightening expectations remained intact; EUR/USD closed the week at 1.1603 [-0.19%] and GBP/USD at 1.3433 [+0.80%]. In Asia-Pacific, Japan's core CPI slowed to 1.4% YoY and core-core inflation eased to 1.9%, moderating immediate Bank of Japan tightening expectations despite continued yen weakness, while China's retail sales rose just 0.2% YoY, industrial production slowed to 4.1% and fixed investment contracted 1.6%, reviving stimulus expectations; Australia's unemployment rate rose to 4.5% as employment declined by 18.6K, prompting a repricing of Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) expectations. USD/JPY closed the week at 159.18 [+0.28%], USD/CNH at 6.7983 [-0.23%], and AUD/USD at 0.7127 [-0.32%]. US Treasury yields remained volatile, with yield curve spreads reflecting shifting policy expectations, while global equities advanced - marked by another DJIA record high and the S&P 500's eighth consecutive weekly gain - amid ongoing uncertainty. Commodities remained reactive to geopolitics, with Brent at 103.54 [-5.24%], WTI at 96.60 [-8.37%], and spot gold at 4509.40 [-0.68%], as volatile sentiment, oil supply risks, and elevated yields weighed on precious metals.

### United States and Canada

Warsh Sworn In as 17th Fed Chair as Minutes Signal Potential Tightening Amid Policy Uncertainty

Kevin Warsh was sworn in as the 17th Chair of the Federal Reserve in a White House ceremony on Friday following earlier Senate confirmation by a narrow 54-45 vote, as policymakers confront elevated inflation risks and a shifting policy outlook. The Fed maintained the federal funds target range at 3.50% to 3.75% at its April meeting, while minutes revealed that majority of officials signalled that policy firming could be warranted if inflation remains persistently above the 2% target. Swap markets currently fully price one 25bps hike by year-end, reflecting stronger-than-expected inflation and labour market data

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.1625	1.1576	1.1662	1.1603	1.1400	1.1700	1.1649
GBP	1.3326	1.3303	1.3463	1.3433	1.3200	1.3500	1.3430
JPY	158.74	158.54	159.34	159.18	158.50	160.50	158.00
CHF	0.7869	0.7838	0.7907	0.7848	0.7750	0.7950	0.7771

alongside energy-driven price pressures linked to Middle East supply disruptions. President Trump reiterated support for Fed independence despite prior criticism of the policy stance, while Warsh pledged institutional reform, balance sheet reduction from ~USD 6.7T, and renewed focus on price stability and maximum employment. DXY closed the week at 99.239.

### US Jobless Claims Fall to 209K, Manufacturing PMI Rises to 55.3, Housing Starts Decline 2.8% MoM

US macroeconomic data presented a mixed but broadly resilient picture, with initial jobless claims easing by 3K to 209K, underscoring labour-market stability despite ongoing corporate restructuring, while continuing claims edged higher to 1.78M. Manufacturing activity accelerated sharply, with the S&P Global flash PMI rising to 55.3 from 54.5, marking the strongest expansion in four years as firms accelerated precautionary stockpiling amid supply-chain disruptions linked to the Middle East conflict, although price pressures surged to their highest level since June 2022. Conversely, housing activity softened as total starts fell 2.8% MoM to an annualised 1.47M, led by a 9.0% decline in single-family construction and a 2.6% fall in permits, signalling builder caution under elevated mortgage costs.

### Canada CPI Accelerates to 2.8% YoY (+0.4% MoM), as Gasoline +28.6% YoY; Retail Sales Up 0.6% MoM

Canada's headline inflation rose to 2.8% YoY in April, up from 2.4% in March and the highest since May 2024, driven primarily by a 28.6% YoY surge in gasoline prices amid ongoing Middle East tensions and base effects from prior carbon levy changes. On a MoM basis, CPI increased 0.4%, below the 0.7% consensus. Core inflation measures eased, with the Bank of Canada's trim and median averaging 2.05%, the lowest since January 2021, while CPI excluding food and energy slowed to 1.5% YoY. Excluding gasoline, inflation printed at 2.0%. Price pressures moderated in rent at 3.6% YoY and groceries at 3.8% YoY. Meanwhile, Canadian retail sales rose 0.6% in April, even as higher gasoline prices may increasingly squeeze household budgets. USD/CAD closed the week at 1.3818.

### Europe and the United Kingdom Eurozone Composite PMI Falls to 47.5, France Drops to 43.5 as Inflation Risks Increase

Eurozone business activity deteriorated sharply in May, with the composite PMI falling to 47.5 from 48.8, marking the deepest contraction since late 2023 and underscoring mounting stagflationary pressures. Manufacturing resilience remained supported by precautionary inventory accumulation, though service-sector weakness

intensified as elevated energy costs compressed household demand. France emerged as the key drag, with its composite reading plunging to 43.5 from 47.6, the weakest since 2020, reflecting broad-based contraction across both manufacturing and services. Survey price indicators accelerated to their highest level in more than three years, suggesting upward pressure on inflation in coming months. The deteriorating growth backdrop presents a difficult trade-off for the European Central Bank, as markets continue to price a 25bps hike in June despite increasing evidence that economic momentum across the bloc is weakening materially. EUR/USD closed the week at 1.1603.

### UK CPI Slows to 2.8% YoY, Services Inflation Falls to 3.2%, PMI Drops to 48.5 and Unemployment Rises to 5.0%

UK inflation moderated more sharply than expected in April, with headline CPI easing to 2.8% YoY from 3.3%, while services inflation slowed to 3.2%, its lowest since January 2022, reducing immediate pressure for a June Bank of England hike. However, broader macro indicators signalled deteriorating domestic momentum as private-sector PMI fell into contraction at 48.5 from 52.6, retail sales declined 1.3% MoM, and unemployment unexpectedly rose to 5.0%, accompanied by a 100K fall in payroll employment and softer wage growth of 3.4% YoY. While lower utility costs temporarily eased inflation, producer input prices rose 7.7% YoY, signalling pipeline cost pressures from the Middle East energy shock. Markets have meaningfully repriced tightening expectations, though policymakers remain cautious amid growing concerns of stagflationary conditions and heightened fiscal pressure, with April borrowing rising to GBP 24.3B. GBP/USD closed the week at 1.3433.

### Asia-Pacific

### China Retail Sales Rise 0.2% YoY, Industrial Output Slows to 4.1% YoY, Fixed Investment Falls 1.6% YoY (Jan-Apr)

China's April activity data pointed to broad-based economic deceleration, strengthening calls for renewed policy support as domestic demand softened sharply despite resilient exports. Retail sales rose just 0.2% YoY, marking the weakest expansion since post-pandemic reopening, while industrial production slowed to 4.1%, its weakest pace in nearly three years. Fixed investment unexpectedly contracted 1.6% YoY in the first four months of 2026, reflecting renewed weakness in manufacturing, infrastructure and private-sector capital expenditure. Consumer demand remains notably fragile, with auto sales plunging 15% YoY and discretionary categories including home appliances and jewellery posting double-digit declines. While export-oriented strategic

manufacturing remains robust, the breadth of domestic weakness has revived expectations for incremental policy easing, including reserve requirement reductions and potential fiscal top-ups should second-quarter GDP slip toward 4.1% YoY. USD/CNH closed the week at 6.7983.

### Japan Core CPI Slows to 1.4% YoY, Core-Core Inflation Eases to 1.9% YoY as BOJ Tightening Bets Moderate

Japan's inflation momentum moderated significantly in April, with core CPI slowing to 1.4% YoY, the weakest pace in four years, while the narrower core-core measure eased to 1.9%, both undershooting expectations and complicating the Bank of Japan's near-term tightening calculus. Softer processed food inflation, lower education costs and continued government energy subsidies restrained headline pressures, though policymakers remain alert to broader inflation pass-through risks stemming from yen weakness and elevated import costs. The yen averaged 159.18 per dollar in April, amplifying imported inflation concerns despite weaker domestic pricing signals. Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's decision to pursue supplementary fiscal support and reinstate energy subsidies has further complicated the policy mix, with markets increasingly concerned about additional debt issuance and rising term premia, even as consensus expectations continue to favour a June rate increase toward 1.0%. USD/JPY closed the week at 159.18.

### Australia Unemployment Rises to 4.5%, Employment Falls 18.6K as Rate-Hike Expectations Soften

Australia's labour market weakened materially in April, with unemployment rising to 4.5% from 4.3%, its highest level since November 2021 and notably above market expectations, while employment declined by 18.6K against forecasts for a 15K increase. The participation rate edged lower to 66.7%, while underutilisation rose to 10.3%, indicating broader labour market softening as households and firms face mounting pressure from elevated borrowing costs and energy-driven inflation uncertainty. The data prompted a sharp repricing of RBA tightening expectations, with markets reducing the probability of a near-term hike and shifting expectations toward later in 2026. While policymakers remain focused on inflation persistence, the weaker employment backdrop raises questions over labour market resilience and suggests policy flexibility may increase should domestic demand weaken further. AUD/USD closed the week at 0.7127.

### Kuwait

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30680.

Trade tensions overshadow

## Rubio holds key talks with India's Jaishankar

NEW DELHI, May 24, (AP): U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio held bilateral talks with his Indian counterpart Subrahmanya Jaishankar on Sunday as the two countries look to steady ties that have fallen to their lowest point in over two decades.

Rubio's visit comes during an economic and diplomatic downturn between the United States and India, strained largely by U.S. President Donald Trump's tariff policies that raised duties on several Indian exports.

After the initial round of talks Sunday, Rubio and Jaishankar addressed a joint press briefing where they reiterated their aim to deepen the U.S.-India strategic partnership while pursuing their own respective national interests.

Rubio arrived Saturday on his first official visit to India ahead of a meeting set for Tuesday with his counterparts from India, Australia and Japan, which are members of the Indo-Pacific strategic alliance known as the Quad.

Rubio said that India is one of the most important strategic partners of the United States in the world and expressed optimism of finalizing a bilateral trade deal soon. "I don't view our relation with any country in the world as coming at the expense of our strategic alliance with India," he said.

The trade issue is not about New Delhi, he said. "There virtually is no country in the world that I could travel to that isn't going to raise the issue of trade because we did this from a global perspective."

Jaishankar said the U.S.-India strategic partnership exists because of a "convergence of national interests" in multiple areas.

"Trump administration has been very forthright in putting forward its foreign policy outlook as America first... We have a view of India first. So both of us are obviously driven by our respective national interests," he said.

His four-day visit will include a multicity tour and a gala reception in New Delhi marking the 250th anniversary of U.S. independence.

"In the past one year, statements and rhetoric coming from Washington on some of India's most sensitive security concerns and trade matters have not been helpful and have created a trust deficit," said Ashok Malik, a former policy adviser in India's Foreign Ministry.

"Certain misgivings will remain," Malik added, noting Rubio's visit will be considered an achievement if the talks somewhat stabilize the relationship and check further deterioration.

Experts say friction exists between U.S. global strategic ambitions and India's priorities as an emerging middle power. Historically close to Russia, India has long shown unease as it moves closer to the U.S., which reflects India's lingering distrust of American intentions rooted in cultural differences and Cold War-era instincts.

Still, India-U.S. ties steadily deepened over two decades into a broad, robust strategic partnership,

increasingly shaped in recent years by shared concerns over China's growing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific and diplomatically articulated through the Quad forum.

The Quad has repeatedly accused China of flexing its military muscles in the South China Sea and aggressively pushing its maritime territorial claims. Beijing maintains that its military is purely defensive to protect what it says are China's sovereign rights and calls the Quad an attempt to contain its economic growth and influence.

After the U.S. presidential inauguration in January 2025, Rubio's first formal international engagement was meeting with the foreign ministers of the Quad countries jointly and in separate sessions.

However, a series of events since last year have brought the diplomatic relationship to a low point.

Despite close ties and often being perceived as ideological allies, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi downplayed Trump's role in brokering a ceasefire after a brief India-Pakistan military conflict triggered by the April 2025 massacre of mostly Hindu tourists in Indian-controlled Kashmir. But Pakistan openly courted Trump and even advocated the Nobel Peace Prize for him.

Economic tensions followed, with the Trump administration imposing tariffs on India over its discounted purchases of Russian oil that further strained ties between the two countries.

"In India, there is some skepticism about U.S. policy and predictability," said Malik, who heads the India chapter of The Asia Group advisory firm in the U.S. He said what has happened in the past year between India and the U.S. "can't be forgotten or erased easily."

When the Iran war broke out in February, the U.S. stepped up engagement with Pakistan, which positioned itself as a mediator between Washington and Tehran, deepening unease in New Delhi. Trump's recent, high-profile visit to China has only added to India's discomfort.

India-U.S. relations are challenging "due to a few structural tensions and Trump only brought them to the fore," said Praveen Donthi, a senior analyst with the International Crisis Group.

"New Delhi's foreign policy, increasingly colored by its domestic politics, has become more black-and-white in the last decade, as evidenced by its deep discomfort with the U.S.'s ties with Pakistan and its moves toward detente with China," Donthi said.

Experts say these shifts reflect the growing complexity of India-U.S. relations rooted in shared strategic interests, yet increasingly shaped by competing priorities and a shifting geopolitical landscape.

"New Delhi is likely to exercise strategic patience and wait for Trump to leave office," Donthi said. "India would hope that the bipartisan consensus on India in the U.S. survives his term and that it can start building on that again."



United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio, right, and India's Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar leave after addressing a joint press conference following their talks in New Delhi, India, Sunday, May 24, 2026. (AP)

Norway-set family drama triumphs at 79th Cannes Film Festival

## Cristian Mungiu's 'Fjord' wins Palme d'Or

CANNES, France, May 24, (AP): Cristian Mungiu's Norway-set drama about political polarization, "Fjord," has won the Palme d'Or, handing the Cannes Film Festival's top honor for the second time to Mungiu, the Romanian director of "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days."

At a 79th Cannes Film Festival that saw few films cause a stir, "Fjord" found wide admiration for its engrossing tale of what Mungiu called "left-wing fundamentalism." It stars Sebastian Stan and Renate Reinsve as Romanian Evangelicals who move to Norway, but soon after have their children taken from them by child services for spanking them.

"Today the society is split. It's divided. It's radicalized," said Mungiu. "This film is a pledge against any type of fundamentalism. It's a pledge for these things we quote very often, like trauma and inclusion and empathy. These are lovely words but we need to apply them more often."

Mungiu becomes just the 10th filmmaker to win the Palme d'Or twice. His "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days," a Romanian abortion drama, won the award in 2007.

The win for "Fjord" extends one of the movies' most extraordinary streaks. Neon, the specialty label, has now taken seven Palme d'Or winners in a row. "Fjord" adds to its unparalleled run, including last year's champion, Jafar Panahi's "It Was Just an Accident," and the 2024 winner, "Anora." The latter went on to win best picture at the Oscars.

The Grand Prix, or second prize, went to "Minotaur," Andrey Zvyagintsev's domestic thriller set against Russia's war with Ukraine. Loosely based on Claude Chabrol's 1969 film "The Unfaithful Wife," "Minotaur" is about a Russian businessman suspicious of his wife's indiscretions. At the same time, he's tasked with conscripting 150 of his workers for Vladimir Putin's war machine.

"The only person who can stop this butchery is you, Mr. President of the Russian Federation," Zvyagintsev said, accepting his award. "Put an end to this slaughter. The whole world is waiting for this."

By wide consensus, it wasn't a banner festival. Hollywood largely sat out this year's edition. Many of the selections struggled to bowl over critics. The global



Cristian Mungiu, winner of the Palme d'Or for 'Fjord,' poses for photographers at the awards ceremony photo call during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)

buzz that Cannes typically generates was fitful at best.

But the awards handed out Saturday as the 79th Cannes drew to a close will significantly raise the international profiles of the winners. Last year's Cannes produced a long string of Oscar nominees, including "Sentimental Value" and "The Secret Agent."

The nine-member jury that decided the awards was headed by Korean filmmaker Park Chan-wook. Demi Moore, Chloé Zhao and Stellan Skarsgård were also jurors. Chan-wook, a Cannes regular including last year with his satirical thriller "No Other

Choice," joked that he preferred not to give away the Palme.

"To be honest, I didn't want to award the Palme d'Or to any of the films, because it's an award I myself have never gotten," Chan-wook told reporters after the ceremony. "But I had no other choice."

Two films won for best director: the Polish filmmaker Pawel Pawlikowski, for his postwar drama "Fatherland," and the Spanish creative duo Javier Ambrossi and Javier Calvo for "The Black Ball," a generation-spanning queer epic "The Black Ball."

It was Pawlikowski's second

time winning the same Cannes prize in as many films, following his "Cold War" in 2018. But the award marked a breakthrough for Ambrossi and Calvo in their first Cannes entry.

"No one knew us. Thierry didn't know us," Ambrossi told reporters, referring to Thierry Fremaux, Cannes artistic director. "It was just that the movie spoke."

Virginie Efira and Tao Okamoto, the two stars of Ryusuke Hamaguchi's "All of a Sudden" shared the best actress award. In the elegantly empathetic drama, the two play women brought together in friendship out of their

mutual sense of care for others.

The jury also split the best actor prize. They chose Emmanuel Macchia and Valentin Campagne, the two stars of "Coward," Lukas Dhont's drama about young Belgian men sent to the front lines of World War II.

The prize for best screenplay was awarded to Emmanuel Marre for "A Man of His Time," a French drama about a Nazi collaborator in Vichy France. Marre based it on the experiences of his own great-grandfather.

The jury prize, or third place, went to German filmmaker Valeska Grisebach's "The Dreamed

Adventure," a crime drama set in a Bulgarian border town.

Saturday's ceremony was missing its tribute honoree. Barbra Streisand was to receive an honorary Palme d'Or, but a knee injury prevented her from attending. Isabelle Huppert nevertheless celebrated Streisand during the ceremony, and Streisand appeared in a taped video message.

The Camera d'Or, Cannes' award for best first film, went to Marie Clémentine Dusabejumbo's post-genocide drama "Ben'Imana," the first Rwandan film to be officially selected for the festival.



Andrey Zvyagintsev, winner of the grand prize for 'Minotaur,' poses for photographers at the awards ceremony photo call during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)



Yana Radeva, left, and Valeska Grisebach, winners of the jury prize award for 'The Dreamed Adventure,' pose for photographers at the awards ceremony photo call during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)



Valentin Campagne, left, and Emmanuel Macchia, winners of the award for best actor for 'Coward,' poses for photographers at the awards ceremony photo call during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)



Tao Okamoto, left, and Virginie Efira, winners of the award for best actress for 'All of a Sudden,' pose for photographers at the awards ceremony photo call during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)



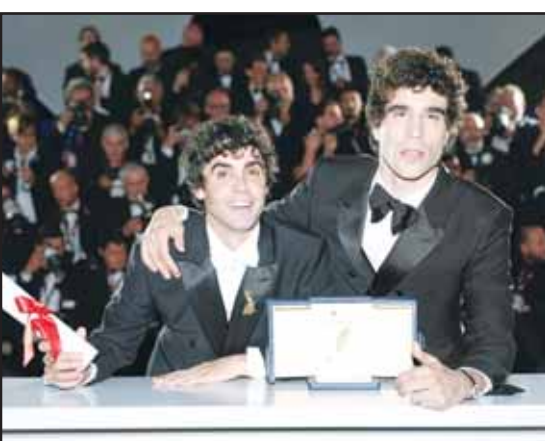
Pawel Pawlikowski, winner of the award for best director for 'Fatherland,' poses for photographers at the awards ceremony photo call during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)



Festival director Thierry Frémaux, left, and Cannes film festival president Iris Knobloch, fifth from right, pose with jury members Diego Céspedes, from left, Chloé Zhao, Ruth Negga, Park Chan-wook, Demi Moore, Isaach de Bankolé, Lauren Wandel, Stellan Skarsgård, Paul Laverty upon arrival at the awards ceremony during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)



Emmanuel Marre, winner of the award for best screenplay for 'A Man of His Time,' poses for photographers at the awards ceremony photo call during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)



Javier Ambrossi, left, and Javier Calvo winners of the award for best director for 'La bola negra,' poses for photographers at the awards ceremony photo call during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)



Federico Luis, winner of the Palme d'Or for the short film 'For the Opponents,' poses for photographers at the awards ceremony photo call during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)



Eye Haïdara, left, and Isabelle Huppert look on as Barbra Streisand remotely accepts an honorary Palme d'Or during the awards ceremony photo call during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)



Marie Clémentine Dusabejumbo, winner of the Camera d'Or award for 'Ben'Imana,' poses for photographers at the awards ceremony photo call during the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Saturday, May 23, 2026. (AP)

## Efforts boost protection and ecological awareness

## Young nature educators advance conservation in rural China

NANCHANG, May 24, (Xinhua): During spring and summer, a group of young researchers would organize local volunteers to patrol farmland and riverbanks three times a week in search of invasive snails in a renowned scenic area in east China's Jiangxi Province.

The work is muddy, repetitive and toil-some, very different from the big-city careers many of the researchers, mostly born in the 1990s and 2000s, could have pursued after earning postgraduate and doctoral degrees.

Over the past eight years, members of the Linnaeus Laboratory in Wuyuan County have worked on tasks ranging from removing invasive species to rescuing injured wildlife and teaching people about nature. Their efforts have helped protect local biodiversity and raise public awareness of ecological conservation through nature education.

Wuyuan, often called "China's most beautiful village," is known for its traditional Huizhou-style houses with white walls and black tiles, as well as vast fields of rapeseed flowers that attract tourists every spring.

Nestled in a quiet corner of the county seat, the Linnaeus Laboratory, named after the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus in honor of his work, is an understated yet magical space. Inside, children peer through microscopes, fern spores grow in petri dishes, and rescued wildlife find a temporary home.



Members of the Linnaeus Laboratory pose for a group photo in Wuyuan, east China's Jiangxi Province, Oct. 8, 2025. (Xinhua)

The laboratory was founded in 2018 by Liu Zhilong, a post-90s botanist, together with partners from several well-known Chinese universities. Instead of staying in major cities, the young researchers decided to settle in rural Jiangxi.

"At first, villagers thought we were

strange people doing strange things. But later, they came to understand exactly what we're doing," Liu said.

One of the team's main seasonal battles is combating golden apple snails, an invasive species that threatens crops and aquatic ecosystems.

Zhou Xinlong, a team member who can identify more than 6,000 plant species, teaches locals how to trap snail eggs by placing bamboo slips into the silt in shallow water. "We wear waterproof trousers and place bamboo strips into the silt in the morning before collecting the snails and removing the eggs later in the day," Zhou said.

The fieldwork can be exhausting and, at times, misunderstood.

Shen Xianhui, who holds a PhD in ecology, recalled going out by boat at 1 a.m. to study snail activity, only to be mistaken for fish thieves by vigilant villagers.

In the second half of each year, the team turns its attention to another ecological threat: Canada goldenrod, an invasive plant that spreads rapidly and crowds out native vegetation.

The researchers rally public participation in invasive-species control through educational campaigns, holding up to nine public lectures in a single day to teach identification skills and launching a mini-program for residents to report sightings. Volunteers also participate in removal and composting activities.

"After participating, I realized this is not just physical work, but a valuable lesson to help understand nature," said Jiang Li, a local resident who joined the activities with her child.

The team also serves as nature educators

for local communities, bringing together specialists in veterinary science, plant taxonomy, animal behavior, and even butterfly genome evolution.

Liu said the laboratory offers free or low-cost public classes every week, including indoor lectures, outdoor field trips, and nighttime wildlife observation.

"Nature education is not simply going out for spring outings. It is about helping people build an emotional bond with nature," Liu said.

Over eight years, the laboratory's team of more than 20 members has brought over 55,000 youngsters to its nature classes through programs including the Field Natural History Expeditions, The Magic of Yeast, and Secrets of the Bacterial World.

The laboratory also operates Wuyuan's only wildlife rescue and rehabilitation center. "We are not only rescuing animals but also changing public attitudes towards wildlife," Liu said.

Villagers who once killed snakes on sight or used them to make medicinal liquor are now more willing to protect wildlife.

"We hope to break down the barriers of science," said Ning Zhenzhen, a recent graduate from Nanjing Agricultural University. "Biodiversity protection is not just the responsibility of researchers and authorities. It is a duty for every one of us."

## Arts &amp; Culture

From forests to galleries

## Trolls go indoors in Danish artist's museum debut

ISHØJ, Denmark, May 24, (AP): For more than a decade, Danish recycling artist Thomas Dambo has scattered wooden troll sculptures around the world. He has created almost 200 in 19 countries.

Now the poet and former hip-hop artist is bringing a collection of fairy tale-inspired creations in from the cold for his first museum exhibit.

"The Garbage Man," at the Arken Museum of Contemporary Art on the outskirts of Copenhagen, tells the story of a group of mischievous trolls who secretly move into the museum, take it over and redesign it.

"They build and leave a giant human made of trash ... as a lesson for the humans to behave better and don't put their trash where everybody else lives," Dambo said at his studio near the Danish capital.

The 46-year-old artist started spreading his trolls back in 2014, when he built two sculptures for a Danish music festival.

Two years later, he hid six giant trolls in wooded areas around Copenhagen. The project went viral, drawing millions of viewers online.

"I was like, if I tell a story that combines them all, then when I've done this (for) 10 years, I will probably have made over 100 sculptures and ... I have made the world into my stage," he said.

Twelve years on, Dambo has made almost 200. The artist and his team build about 25 new trolls annually. "Long Leif," the tallest at 13 meters (43 feet) high, stands in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota.

Usually, Dambo's work is as much treasure hunt as exhibit. His fairy-tale creations are tucked away in forests, mountains, jungles and grasslands around the world, discoverable using an online "Troll Map."

There is "Little Lisa" hidden in a German forest, and "Happy Kim" lounging in a South Korean botanical garden.

Children clamber and adults gasp as they find the trolls. Dambo estimates about 5 million people visit his works annually.

"The sculptures bring people out to experience things that they would otherwise have been too lazy or maybe not creative enough to go and visit," he said. "My trolls, they bring people to all these small, little corners of the world."

Each of Dambo's trolls has a



Danish recycling artist Thomas Dambo poses for a photograph in his new exhibit 'The Garbage Man' at Arken Museum of Contemporary Art in Ishøj, Denmark, May 14, 2026. (AP)



'Little Tilde' troll sculpture by Thomas Dambo is seen in Vallensbaek, Denmark, May 14, 2026. (AP)



'Hill Top Trine' troll sculpture by Thomas Dambo is seen in Hvidovre, Denmark, May 14, 2026. (AP)

unique name and design. In the Arken exhibit, which opens Sunday and will be on show until Nov. 29, his new works are based on friends he had when growing up.

They have "personalities of a late teenage, young 20s type of group of boys that are causing havoc, and the type of gang that would break into a museum and fill it up with trash," Dambo said.

Trolls often appear in Scandinavian folklore, but Dambo said he chose to work with the mythical creatures as a vehicle to convey messages on waste and recycling.

The recycling artist's sculptures are made almost entirely from waste and discarded materials, such as wooden pallets, old furniture and whisky barrels.

He said a museum exhibit means he can experiment with materials that wouldn't survive outdoors, including discarded electronics, cardboard and clothes, lots of them.

In one corner, a troll named "Dyna Dee" dozes on a 6-meter (nearly 20-foot) mound of discarded clothing from a local recycling organization.

Dambo hopes museum visitors will leave with an urge to buy less.

"It's not really about recycling, it's about you probably have enough clothes in your cabinet to wear for the rest of your life," he said. "This is not my recycling project, this is my stop buying stuff project."

## Technology

## AI glasses wow Hefei visitors

## Int'l journalists explore Anhui, witness innovation in motion

HEFEI, May 24, (Xinhua): A group of international journalists have just visited east China's Anhui Province, where they got a close-up look at the booming production lines of local new energy vehicles (NEVs), next-generation display technology and low-altitude industries, and witnessed firsthand the province's vibrant innovation vitality.

The three-day event this week was attended by journalists from multiple countries, including the United States, Britain and Japan, as part of a series of tours that gave international media a closer look at the implementation of China's 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-2030) across the country.

At the AI headquarters of iFLYTEK in the provincial capital Hefei, a pair of seemingly ordinary glasses caught the attention of journalists, many of whom eagerly took turns trying them on.

The iFLYTEK AI Glasses, set to be released by the intelligent speech and technology company at the end of this month, weigh only 40 grams and can provide real-time speech translation, displaying the translated content directly on the lenses, according to Lin Huijie, general manager of iFLYTEK Consumer Wearables Business.

After trying the glasses, several journalists said they hoped to use them in future interviews and noted that they were impressed by their ability to automatically generate summaries with AI support.

The journalists went on to visit the NEV sector after experiencing the wearable device.

Anhui produced about 1.8 million NEVs and exported over 1.22 million units of automobiles in 2025, both ranking first nationwide.

At NIO Factory Two, the journalists had a chance to see how nearly 1,000 robots operate autonomously, enabling the smart power service provider workshop to run smoothly even under lights-out conditions.

Inside the factory of Gotion High-Tech Co., Ltd., the global expansion of China's power battery technology became a key focus of questions from journalists from Bloomberg and other media outlets.

They were also impressed by the flexible in-vehicle display designed to closely fit the curved interior surfaces of automobiles at Hefei Visionox Technology Co., Ltd.

"The speed and scale of development in China's NEV industry are astounding," said a Japanese journalist, who first visited an automobile factory in Hefei more than a decade ago. He also noted that the level of smart manufacturing today is completely different from what he saw back then.

The reporter told Xinhua he was awestruck by NIO's automated battery swapping system, which greatly improves the convenience of NEV use by enabling a recharge in three minutes.

The growth of China's new quality productive forces is not only reflected in the coordinated development of industries, but also in the emerging future-oriented sector.

From low-altitude sightseeing to urban air transportation and emergency rescue, the unmanned aerial vehicles displayed by EHang Holdings Limited broadened the visiting journalists' imagination of what future mobility could look like.

Anhui plans to enhance industrial technological innovation, accelerate the digital and green transformation of the manufacturing sector, and advance industrial cluster development, said Feng Kejin, director of the provincial department of industry and information technology.



This photo shows a production line of the NIO Second Advanced Manufacturing Base in Hefei, east China's Anhui Province. (Xinhua)

## Celebration highlights unity and living heritage

## Namibia's cultural pride on display at 16th Omagongo Festival

WINDHOEK, May 24, (Xinhua): Namibia on Saturday celebrated the 16th annual Omagongo Festival at Onamega village under the Uukwambi Traditional Authority in the country's northern Omusati Region, highlighting the enduring role of culture in fostering unity, identity and social cohesion.

Omagongo is closely associated with the marula tree, whose fruit ripens during the rainy season in northern Namibia.

Traditionally, women collect the fruit, extract its juice and ferment it into omagongo, a seasonal beverage shared among families and

communities. Over time, the drink has become not only a symbol of harvest and hospitality but also the centerpiece of a wider cultural celebration that brings together traditional leaders, communities and visitors.

The Omagongo Festival featured a procession of marula products, traditional music and dance, local cuisine and cultural performances.

In her keynote address at the event, Namibian President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah said the festival remains an important platform for preserving cultural heritage and



People perform during the 16th annual Omagongo Festival at Onamega Village, Omusati region, Namibia. (Xinhua)

strengthening national unity.

"As we celebrate Omagongo today, we also celebrate the pride of being Namibian and the beauty of our cultural diversity. Culture forms the foundation upon which communities build identity, dignity, values and social cohesion," she said.

The Omagongo Festival, whose hosting rotates among the eight Aawambo traditional authorities in northern Namibia, was inscribed in 2015 on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity under the name Oshituthi shomagongo,

marula fruit festival.

"This accolade reinforces its significance as a cultural treasure. We must protect, preserve and sustain Omagongo for future generations," Nandi-Ndaitwah said.

This year's celebration also paid tribute to women, who play a central role in collecting and processing marula fruit and in keeping the associated knowledge and practices alive across generations.

Nandi-Ndaitwah said the festival is not only a celebration of tradition but also a space for communities to reflect on shared responsibilities and confront social challenges.

## HEALTH/SCIENCE



A sanitation worker from Bunia city government sprays disinfectant in the central market area near a rubbish truck in Ituri province, as they continue efforts to combat the Ebola outbreak in Bunia, Congo on May 23. (AP)

## 2nd treatment center set ablaze in Congo, 18 suspected cases flee

## Burkina Faso strengthens preventive measures against Ebola

OUAGADOUGOU, May 24. (Agencies) Burkina Faso has strengthened preventive measures against ebola virus disease, with health authorities stressing that no cases have been recorded in the country so far.

In a statement issued on Saturday, the Ministry of Health said it has stepped up epidemiological surveillance, particularly at the country's entry points. Meanwhile, all health facilities have been placed on alert to ensure the early detection of any suspected cases.

The ministry also announced enhanced capacities of national laboratories, including the deployment of mobile laboratories to rapidly confirm suspected cases. These measures are accompanied by the preparation of isolation sites and treatment systems, as well as the mobilization of the Center for Emergency Health Response Operations.

While reaffirming that no Ebola cases have been reported in Burkina Faso, health authorities called on the

public to remain vigilant and comply with health guidelines.

Meanwhile, angry residents of a town at the epicenter of the Ebola outbreak in eastern Congo attacked and burned a tent that was part of a health center where people are being treated for the virus, the staff there said Saturday. It was the second such attack in the region in a week.

No one was hurt in the attack, according to initial reports but as patients ran out to escape the fire, 18 people with suspected Ebola infections left the facility and are now unaccounted for, a local hospital director said.

The angry residents had arrived at the clinic in the town of Mongwalu on Friday night and set fire to a tent set up for suspected and confirmed Ebola cases by the Doctors Without Borders humanitarian group, Dr. Richard Lokudi, director of the Mongwalu hospital, told The Associated Press.

"We strongly condemn this act, as it caused panic among the staff and

also resulted in the escape of 18 suspected cases into the community," he said.

On Thursday, another treatment center, in the town of Rwampara, was burned down after family members were banned from retrieving the body of a local man suspected to have died of Ebola.

The bodies of those who died of Ebola can be highly contagious and lead to further spread when people prepare them for burial and gather for funerals. The dangerous work of burying suspected victims is being managed wherever possible by authorities, which can be met by protests from families and friends.

A communal burial for Ebola patients in Rwampara took place on Saturday under tight security as tensions between health workers and the local community ran high, said David Basima, a team leader with the Red Cross overseeing burials.

Armed soldiers and police monitored the burials as Red Cross workers clad in white protective suits low-

ered sealed coffins into the ground. Crying family members stood at a distance.

Basima said his team, after arriving at the scene, "experienced a lot of difficulties, including resistance from young people and the community."

"We were forced to alert the authorities so that they could come to our aid, just for safety," said Basima.

Authorities in northeastern Congo on Friday banned funeral wakes and gatherings of more than 50 people in an effort to curb the spread of the virus.

The World Health Organization has said that the outbreak now poses a "very high" risk for Congo - up from a previous categorization of "high" - but that the risk of the disease spreading globally remains low.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Friday that 82 cases and seven deaths have been confirmed in Congo, but that the outbreak is believed to be "much larger."

'Snowpack is really like a savings account'

## Shrinking snowfall on Greece's mountains provoking anxiety, altering economy

ARACHOVA, Greece, May 24. (AP) As a child, Giannis Stathas remembers being snowed in for days at a time in Arachova, a village famous for its ski resort and long known as a winter playground for Greeks.

"We couldn't go to school because of the snow," said Stathas, now mayor of Arachova and the surrounding area. "We might have been stuck at home for two days without being able to go out because of the snow."

"Now we don't see that here anymore."

Stathas says snowfall on Mount Parnassos at an altitude of 2,400 meters (7,874 feet) is what once fell at 300 meters (984 feet).

New findings from the University of Cambridge's Scott Polar Research Institute confirm the mayor's observations.

"What we found across 10 mountains of Greece, across the mainland, is that snow cover is rapidly declining," said Konstantis Alexopoulos, a snow hydrologist at the University of Cambridge and the National Observatory of Athens, and co-founder of the Hellenic Mountain Observatory. "We've lost more than half of the snow cover ... since the mid-1980s."

Using 40 years of NASA and European Space Agency satellite imagery, researchers reconstructed gaps left by cloud coverage and infrequent satellite passes by using machine learning to estimate miss-

ing snow cover data.

Alexopoulos said the decline matters because snow acts like a natural water reservoir.

"Snowpack is really like a savings account," he said. "You can deposit an amount today and the longer you keep it in this savings account without spending it, the interest value is going to increase. And snow works in the exact same way."

Unlike rain, which runs off quickly into rivers and the sea, snow remains stored in the mountains "ultimately melting at the time that we need it the most," Alexopoulos said.

This helps sustain water supplies during the dry season, which is especially important in the Mediterranean climate where summer rainfall is limited.

He added that the loss of snow is driven primarily by rising temperatures linked to greenhouse gas emissions, which reduce both snowfall and the duration of snow cover on the ground.

"The snow cover decline that we're observing on the Greek mountains is not connected to the natural climate variability that does exist," he said. "The current rate of climate change globally and specifically in hotspots like the Mediterranean is much faster than what the earth has experienced previously."

Alexopoulos said the team expected a decline, but was surprised by its magnitude. "Other mountain-



An aerial view shows melting snow on the slopes of Mount Parnassos at the Kalaria ski center in central Greece, on May 5. (AP)

ous regions of the world, such as the Andes or the Himalayas, ... have all experienced a steep decline in snow cover but not at the rate that we saw in the Greek mountains."

The study was one of the first long-term analyses of Greek mountains.

"Studying mountainous environments is inherently difficult due to remote access," Alexopoulos said, adding that it's difficult to install weather stations to take measurements and maintain a consistent record of observations.

"In Greece we haven't focused so much on it because we never really understood the importance of snow's contribution to our water resources," he said. "But as this shifts and as this starts to decline, we are seeing those droughts, and we are trying to explain them."

While Mount Parnassos wasn't part of the study, Alexopoulos said it is still representative of the conditions seen across Greece.

Back in Arachova, in the shadow of Mount Parnassos, the consequences are already visible.

"One hundred percent of Arachova's water is supplied by snowmelt," said local restaurant owner Aktida Koritou.

She said locals have become increasingly conscious of water scarcity and are extra careful not to be wasteful, especially during summer when shortages are most severe.

There is great concern because the springs in Arachova are drying up and reservoirs are not refilling, according to the mayor.

"The biggest problem begins in late August and early September and lasts until late September or early October," Stathas said.

An unexpected snowfall in April caught locals off-guard and was welcomed as a top-up, but "will hardly help the reservoirs fill up," according to Stathas.

Authorities are trying to adapt. The municipality is exploring the construction of small dams so that no water is lost, while the ski center is also implementing snow retention measures to help preserve it longer.

Less snow also means drier vegetation and increased fire risk. Stathas said fires weren't really an issue in northern Greece in the past, but this has changed.

"You could set fire among the fir trees 30 years, 40 years ago and there was never a chance that the mountain would burn," he said. "But now there is a great danger because of the severe drought."

Arachova's ski-based economy is also shifting.

Koritou, who worked at the ski center when it opened in the early 1980s, said the ski season now starts in January instead of December.

"No one will come to the mountain for Christmas. They will go to Switzerland. They will go wherever they find snow," she said. "So they leave and (business) decreases. This Christmas, there was a 30% reduction, for me at least."

In response, the municipality is trying to diversify winter tourism, promoting the mountain town of Arachova as a summer destination.

"Someone can swim and in 20 minutes come to stay here where it's cool," Stathas said. "But to be able to hold on to tourism in the summer, we have to have water."

Locals still remember how winters once were. Koritou recalls farmers rushing to harvest grapes in late October before the first snowfall. People kept shovels behind their doors, and neighbors cleared roads together. She also remembers sections of the mountain where snow never fully melted before the following winter came.

"There are some years when despair grips you," Koritou said. "For those of us who know winter well, it's disappointing not to see snow. You want it in the winter. The change is enormous."

## Solar activity follows 11-year cycle - here's how it controls eruptions and solar flares

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

□ □ □

By Yeimy J. Rivera,

Smithsonian Institution

When you look up at the sky on a sunny day, the Sun might seem like a bright spot, unchanging in the sky. But the Sun is a complex, dynamic celestial body, wrapped in electrical currents and magnetic fields that constantly move and tangle as it rotates. At times the Sun's surface is very active, casting out powerful bursts of plasma called coronal mass ejections, while at other times it is calmer.

I'm a solar physicist who has spent over a decade researching the Sun. Its movement and activity is directly linked to conditions on Earth: Solar flares and ejections can cause space weather that produces beautiful Northern lights but threatens satellites. This activity follows a roughly 11-year-long cycle, and learning about this cycle helps researchers predict future space weather.

The Sun is a star composed of plasma: a hot, ionized gas. The plasma acts as an electrically conductive fluid, and generates large-scale magnetic fields that encircle the Sun.

The Sun is composed of several layers, all made up of a plasma that's about 70% hydrogen and 28% helium by mass.

The Sun has a solid core at its center and a dense layer outside the core, where particles of light bounce around, transferring energy outwards. Beyond that layer is a thin line called the tachocline that separates those inner layers from the outer layer. This outer zone is cooler and less dense, allowing plasma to move around.

Inside the core, particles collide and release incredible amounts of energy, which radiate out from the Sun in the form of light - a process called nuclear fusion. The light travels outward towards the radiative zone outside the core, before reaching the tachocline.

At the outer layer of the Sun above the tachocline, called the convective zone, the hot plasma travels from deep in the Sun to its surface. As it moves, the plasma cools and contracts, causing it to sink back down. This cyclic process is called convection.

The Sun is constantly generating magnetic fields that grow and twist below its surface. Two processes control these magnetic fields by moving the electric charges around in the plasma. One is convection, and the other is the Sun's rotation.

Scientists think that together, these two processes are ultimately responsible for the Sun's magnetic activity cycle, during which the Sun shifts from an organized to a less organized magnetic field arrangement. The entire cycle, called the Schwabe

Cycle, takes roughly 11 years. Over the course of two Schwabe cycles, the Sun's magnetic poles flip, and then return to their original orientation.

When the Sun is in an organized state, the center of the Sun resembles a giant vertical bar magnet with positive and negative ends at the top and bottom, or vice versa - called a magnetic dipole. In the 11-year solar cycle, this phase is known as solar minimum.

Although you cannot see the invisible magnetic field directly, the glowing plasma sticks to these field lines. The magnetic field's shape during the solar minimum is similar to Earth's magnetic field, with open-ended magnetic field lines at the north and south poles and closed, looped fields near the equator. After the solar minimum state, the Sun's magnetic field grows tangled over time. Eventually, it reaches its solar maximum state, where the solar atmosphere resembles tangled spaghetti.

Two main forces tangle the magnetic field as the Sun rotates and plasma churns away in the convection zone: the Omega and Alpha effects.

The Sun doesn't rotate as a solid body everywhere. The interior of the Sun - the core and radiative layers - spins as a solid sphere, like a basketball. Outside these layers, the convection zone and the surface of the Sun do not spin all together. (AP)



In this photo provided by NOAA, a remotely operated vehicle encounters a large undersea boulder field during the 2021 North Atlantic Stepping Stones expedition. (AP)

## Trump's push for deep-sea mining spawns new companies and fast-tracked rules

WASHINGTON, May 24. (AP) In the year since US President Donald Trump signed an executive order promising to create a deep-sea mining industry from scratch, businesses have raised millions of dollars from investors, stock prices have soared and federal regulators have raced to fast-track a permitting process.

At least nine companies are in talks with the government for access to seabed minerals, according to an Associated Press review. Sections of the seafloor from American Samoa to Alaska could be auctioned for offshore mining this summer and through the fall.

All the action suggests the US may soon give the green light for companies to commercially mine the seabed - something that's never been done in international waters.

But a close look at some of the companies involved reveals uncertain track records and histories spattered with legal disputes, while major questions about how the minerals would be processed and refined remain unanswered. Watchers of the nascent industry are skeptical the promised riches will ever materialize.

"It just feels right to people thinking that there is a cornucopia of metals on the bottom of the seafloor that are just there to be plucked up like seashells on the seashore," said Victor Vesco, a private equity investor and deep-sea explorer who has chosen not to back any deep-sea mining companies.

"If there's more scrutiny on their actual financial models," he added, "you would go, 'Wait a second, this is much more uncertain.'"

Trump's executive order in April last year marked a sudden embrace of an industry long dormant in the U.S. The president hailed seafloor minerals as vital to America's future prosperity and its trade independence from China. He directed US agencies to expedite permitting.

The most widely prized ores are fist-shaped rocks known as polymetallic nodules, formed over millions of years from the remains of sunken shark teeth and shells. They contain high grades of manganese, copper, nickel and cobalt, and much smaller amounts of rare earth elements.

Other parts of the seafloor have drawn prospectors, too: the mineral-

rich crusts atop volcanic seamounts, and the rocky mounds flecked with gold and silver near hydrothermal vents. Nearer to shore, companies have proposed dredging ocean sands for titanium, zirconium and phosphorites. But for many companies, seafloor nodules hold the most allure.

Trillions of nodules lie on the international seabed between Mexico and Hawaii, scientists say. For more than a decade, delegates from dozens of countries have convened at the headquarters of the International Seabed Authority in Jamaica with the difficult task of creating globally agreed upon mining rules for those areas, which belong to no single country.

The agency has so far granted exploration rights to nearly two dozen contractors, but has not allowed any to mine commercially. Under its mandate, the minerals are designated for the shared benefit of "all humankind."

Trump's order suggests the U.S. will decide for itself when to mine the global seabed, reversing the decision of previous administrations to honor the seabed authority's rules.

## China's upcoming lunar mission to target moon's south pole

JIUQUAN, May 24. (Xinhua) China's Chang'e-7 lunar exploration mission, scheduled for launch in the second half of 2026, will conduct environmental and resource surveys of the moon's south pole, and carry out international cooperation, the China Manned Space Agency said on Saturday.

The Chang'e-7 mission will employ a comprehensive exploration approach encompassing orbiting, landing, roving and hopping, Zhang Jingbo, the agency's spokesperson, said at a press conference held ahead of the launch of the Shenzhou-23 crewed mission, scheduled for Sunday night from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China.

In April this year, the Chang'e-7 lunar probe was delivered to the launch site in the southern island province of Hainan, where it is undergoing pre-launch preparations.

All related work is progressing steadily as planned, Zhang said.



A stacked composite photo taken on Nov 4, 2025 in Changping District of China's capital Beijing shows the Chinese space station passing in front of the moon. (Xinhua)

Torrez Jr knocked out by Sanchez

## Usyk stops Verhoeven in the 11th round of a thriller in Egypt

GIZA, Egypt, May 24, (AP): Heavyweight champion Oleksandr Usyk survived a scare to earn an 11th-round stoppage against Rico Verhoeven, a Dutch kickboxer who pushed the undefeated Ukrainian to his limits.

In a chaotic ending, the 39-year-old Usyk dropped the challenger late in the penultimate round, and referee Mark Lyson waved it off at 2:59 after Usyk pounced when Verhoeven beat the count shortly before the bell.

"I thought it was an early stoppage but in the end it's not up to me," Verhoeven said moments later while still in the ring with the Pyramids of Giza in the background.

Usyk (25-0, 16 KOs) holds the WBC, WBA and IBF belts. For the 37-year-old Verhoeven,

it was just his second time fighting as a boxer.

"Thank you so much, Rico, you are an amazing fighter," said Usyk, who dedicated the win to "Ukrainian people and Ukrainian soldiers."

The 6-foot-5 Verhoeven, whose only previous fight as a boxer was a victory in 2014, had some observers thinking back to Buster Douglas' stunning upset of Mike Tyson in 1990. The former kickboxing champion was able to slow Usyk with body shots and make him look sluggish at times.

"I thought we were pretty equal on the scorecards," said Verhoeven, who was only eligible to win the WBC belt.

On the undercard, U.S. heavyweight Richard

Torrez Jr. was knocked out by Cuba's Frank Sanchez, who dropped the Californian with a crunching right to the face in the second round.

Torrez, who won a silver medal at the Tokyo Olympics, tried to beat the count but stumbled back down to the canvas. It's the first pro loss for the American after 14 victories. Sanchez (26-1, 19 KOs) put himself in line for an IBF title fight.

Britain's Hamzah Sheeraz (23-0-1, 19 KOs) won the vacant WBO super middleweight title with a second-round knockout of Alem Begic, finishing the German with a body shot.

Mizuki Hiruta of Japan dominated Mai Soliman over 10 rounds to retain her WBO junior bantamweight title via unanimous decision.



Oleksandr Usyk, left, fights during a boxing match against Rico Verhoeven, right, at the WBC World Heavyweight Championship 'Glory in Giza' at the site of the Pyramids of Giza in Giza, Egypt. (AP)

# Punjab keeps playoffs hopes alive with Iyer's brilliant 100

Singh hits sixth half-century of the season

LUCKNOW, India, May 24, (AP): Shreyas Iyer hit 101 not out as Punjab Kings stayed in the hunt for the Indian Premier League knockouts and ended a six-match losing streak.

Suryansh Shedge shepherded Iyer to his maiden IPL hundred as Punjab reached 200-3 in 18 overs and topped Lucknow Super Giants' 196-6 by seven wickets.

Punjab moved into the fourth and last open playoff spot but could be bumped out by Sunday's results.

Rajasthan Royals plays at Mumbai Indians and Kolkata Knight Riders host Delhi Capitals on the last day of league games. Victory for Rajasthan will knock out Punjab and Kolkata. Delhi was eliminated on Saturday owing to Punjab's win.

Lucknow finished 10th with 10 losses in 14 games.

Lucknow was missing Mitchell Marsh and Aiden Markram for its final game. Josh Inglis replaced Marsh and hit a third half-century in five games. Inglis got to 50 off 28 balls. Overall, he hit nine boundaries and two sixes in scoring 72 off 44.

But Inglis kept losing partners to Punjab fast bowler Marco Jansen (2-33) and leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal (2-25) and Lucknow crawled to 196.

Mohammed Shami returned to action for Lucknow and dismissed Pun-



Lucknow Super Giants' Nicholas Pooran plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Lucknow Super Giants and Punjab Kings, in Lucknow, India, Saturday. (AP)

jab opener Priyansh Arya for a golden duck. Shami also bowled Cooper Connolly for 18 as Punjab slipped to 22-2.

But Iyer and opener Prabhsimran Singh added 140 off 76 balls in Punjab's fifth highest partnership in tournament history.

Singh hit his sixth half-century of the season off 28 balls. Iyer got to 50 off 33 balls.

Singh hit two sixes and seven fours in his 69 off 39, and was out lbw to Arjun Tendulkar in the 15th over.

Iyer then charged to the finish, hitting five sixes and another 51 runs off

the next 18 balls. Shedge held back and fed Iyer the strike as often as possible. Iyer notched his first IPL hundred with his fifth six.

Iyer became only the third Punjab skipper to hit an IPL hundred after Adam Gilchrist in 2011 and Lokesh Rahul in 2020.

Noor named player of the match

## Bangladesh's Khulna Royal Bengal wins KCC T10 Ramadan League title

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: Bangladesh expatriate team Khulna Royal Bengal emerged as champions of the KCC T10 Ramadan League 2026, organized by the Kuwait Cricket Club in Kuwait. The exciting tournament featured 20 teams representing expatriate communities from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and several other countries.

The grand final was held on Friday afternoon at the Sulabiya Cricket Ground, where Bangladesh's Khulna Royal Bengal faced India's Super Eleven in a thrilling title clash. Both teams displayed outstanding performances throughout the tournament to secure their places in the final.

After winning the toss, Khulna Royal Bengal elected to bat first and posted a competitive total of 99 runs for the loss of five wickets in the allotted 10 overs. The Bangladeshi side produced a disciplined batting display to set a target of 100



Fans watch during the final match between Bangladesh's Khulna Royal Bengal and India's Super Eleven.

runs for their Indian opponents.

In reply, India's Super Eleven fought hard during the chase, but

Khulna Royal Bengal's controlled bowling attack and sharp fielding performance restricted them to 87

runs for six wickets in 10 overs. Bangladesh's team secured a memorable 12-run victory to lift the championship trophy.

Khulna Royal Bengal player Sujon Noor was named Player of the Match for his exceptional performance in the final.

A large number of expatriate cricket fans from different countries gathered at the venue to enjoy the match. Following Bangladesh's victory, jubilant supporters celebrated enthusiastically with national flags and cheers across the stadium.

Organizers and community members said such sporting events create a strong sense of brotherhood, harmony, and entertainment among expatriates despite their busy working lives abroad. They added that Bangladesh's triumph in Kuwait was not only a victory for a cricket team but also a proud moment for the entire Bangladeshi community overseas.

Zverev cruises past Bonzi in straight sets

## Tearful Kostyuk reaches French Open 2nd round

PARIS, May 24, (AP): Marta Kostyuk's first-round win at the French Open became one of her toughest matches after she found out beforehand that a missile almost hit her parents' home in Ukraine.

Kostyuk fought back tears after beating Oksana Selekhmeteva 6-2, 6-3 on Court Simonne-Mathieu on the opening day of the clay-court Grand Slam at Roland Garros in western Paris.

"I think it was one of the most difficult matches of my career," the 15th-seeded Kostyuk said. "This morning, 100 meters away from my parents' house, the missile destroyed the building and it was a very difficult morning for me... I didn't know how I would handle it, I've been crying part of the morning."

She received a message at 8 a.m. and could not stop thinking what could have happened.

"I felt sick," she said. "If it was 100 meters closer, I probably wouldn't have a mom and a sister today."

Her mother, sister and great aunt - were in the house at the time of the strike, she said, among 17 people in total, so her relief was enormous that no

one was injured.

"I don't want to think what I would do if something worse happened, but I knew that this is the day to go out and play," she said. "It didn't cross my mind today that I shouldn't go out, because,



Benjamin Bonzy of France returns to Alexander Zverev of Germany during their first round men's singles tennis match at the French Open tennis tournament in Paris. (AP)

you know, at the end of the day, everyone is alive."

After the match, she thanked fans and received an ovation. Then she explained how she found the emotional and mental resources to play.

"I think it's important to keep going. My biggest example is Ukrainian people, I woke up in the morning today and," the 23-year-old Kostyuk said, becoming tearful before repeating and finishing the sentence.

"I looked at all these people who woke up and kept living their life, kept helping people who are in need," she said. "I knew a lot of Ukrainian people would be here today and a lot of Ukrainian people would come out, support. My friends from Ukraine came as well."

The opening match on Court Philippe-Chatrier saw No. 11 Belinda Bencic beating Sinja Kraus 6-2, 6-3 and 2024 runner-up Alexander Zverev followed with a 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 win against Benjamin Bonzi. The second-seeded German plays unseeded Tomas Machac next.

Wolodzi scores 1st MLS goal

## Nashville extends unbeaten run with victory over NYCFC

NASHVILLE, Tenn., May 24, (AP): Maxwell Wolodzi scored his first MLS goal, Jeisson Palacios added his first goal this season, and MLS-leading Nashville SC beat New York City FC 2-1 on Saturday night to extend its unbeaten streak to eight games.

Nashville (10-1-3) has won three in a row and has 33 points, one more than Western Conference-leading San Jose.

Sam Surridge, who returned from a four-game absence, subbed on for Ahmed Qasem in the 72nd minute.

Nashville is the only MLS club still undefeated (6-0-1) at home this season and has a plus-14 (23-9) goal differential at Geodis Park.

Brian White had two first-half goals and two second-half assists and Thomas Müller added three assists to propel the Vancouver Whitecaps to a 4-2 victory over San Diego FC.

White staked the current and reigning Western Conference leaders to a 1-0 lead in the 30th minute with assists from Müller and Tristan Blackmon.

Vancouver took a 2-0 lead into halftime after White used assists from Jeevan Badwal and Kenji Cabrera to score his 10th goal of the season.

David Vazquez scored his third goal of the season and career to get San Diego within 2-1 in the 53rd minute.

White and Müller set up rookie Bruno Caicedo's second goal for a 3-1 lead in the 67th minute after Caicedo subbed in for his eighth appearance four minutes earlier.

Logan Farrington and Santiago Moreno scored on first-half penalty kicks to lead FC Dallas to a 2-1 victory over the Colorado Rapids.

Farrington scored for the sixth time this season to give Dallas a 1-0 lead in the 12th minute. The PK was awarded after Farrington was fouled by Rapids midfielder Paxten Aaronson.

Aaronson answered in the following minute with his fourth goal of the campaign to knot the score at 1-1. Georgi Minoungou and Wayne Frederick had assists.

Preston Judd scored goals in the second and 12th minutes, Daniel Munić also scored a goal, and the San Jose Earthquakes beat the Portland Timbers 3-1 to snap a four-game winless streak.

San Jose beat Portland at Providence Park for the first time in 20 tries (1-14-5) since the Timbers joined MLS in 2011.

The Earthquakes (9-3-2) have 32 points, one behind MLS-leading Nashville.

Rookie Jorge Ruvalcaba scored twice in the first half and the New York Red Bulls held on for a 2-1 victory over Sporting Kansas City.

The Red Bulls took a 1-0 lead in the 4th minute when the first-year forward took passes from Gustav Berggren and 18-year-old Julian Hall and scored. Berggren's first assist this season was his second in 16 career matches.

Ruvalcaba used another assist from Hall, along with one from 21-year-old rookie Rafael Mosquera, to score three minutes into stoppage time and the youngest team in the league led 2-0 at the half.

Robin Lod and Andrew Gutman each scored a goal Saturday night to help Chicago beat Toronto FC 2-1 for the Fire's third consecutive win.

Toronto (3-6-5) has lost three in a row and is winless in eight straight, dating to a 3-2 victory over Colorado

on April 4 - the last of a four-game unbeaten streak.

Evander Da Silva Ferreira - known simply as "Evander" - had two goals and three assists, Kenji Mboma Dem scored two goals, his first multi-goal game in MLS, and FC Cincinnati beat Orlando City 6-2.

Evander, who has seven goals and five assists in his past five games, is the first player in club history with at least two goals and two assists in a single game.

Cincinnati coach Pat Noonan earned his 75th regular-season win in just 151 games, tied with Seattle's Brian Schmetzer fastest to the mark in the MLS post-shootout era (since 2000).

Idan Toklomati scored an early goal for Charlotte and Kristijan Kahlina made it stand in a 1-0 victory over New England, despite the Revolution having a man advantage over the final 42 minutes.

Toklomati used assists from rookie defender Will Cleary and Pep Biel to score his fourth goal and give Charlotte a 1-0 lead in the 16th minute.

Toklomati scored 11 goals in 30 appearances last season, his first in the league. The 23-year-old Cleary notched his first assist, starting for the first time after subbing into the match last time out in his debut. It was the sixth helper for Biel to go along with a team-high seven goals.

Fallou Fall scored his first career goal in the 56th minute, Ben Lundt made his season debut and had two saves, and St. Louis City beat Austin FC 3-0 in the final match before the World Cup break.

Daniel Edelman scored his first goal for St. Louis to cap the scoring in the 90th minute.

St. Louis (4-6-4) is unbeaten, with three wins, in its last four. The 30-year-old Lundt started in place of Roman Bürki (quad) and had his third career shutout.

Prince Owusu finished off his first MLS hat trick on a penalty kick four minutes into stoppage time, and teenager Hennadii Sychuk scored the equalizer two minutes later to rally CF Montreal to a 4-4 draw with D.C. United.

Montreal trailed 4-2 heading into stoppage time before Owusu scored for the third time in the match and the ninth time this season. The PK was awarded after he was fouled by Keisuke Kurokawa.

Houston's Guilherme Santos matched a first-half goal by Los Angeles' Joseph Paintsil and the Dynamo and Galaxy played to a 1-1 draw.

Paintsil staked the Galaxy to a 1-0 lead with an unassisted score in the 30th minute and Santos answered in the 41st with assists from Jack McGlynn - his fourth - and defender António Carlos - his first.

It was the third goal this season for Paintsil after he found the net 10 times in each of his first two seasons. Santos has eight goals in his first 14 appearances in the league.

Mauricio González subbed on in the 77th minute for Minnesota United and scored his first career goal in stoppage time in 1-1 tie with Real Salt Lake.

Joaquín Pereyra played a ball into the area from about 27 yards out on the left side and González flicked a header inside the back post to make it 1-1 in the third minute of stoppage time. The 21-year-old González made his sixth career appearance in MLS.

Minnesota won both matches with RSL last season and has a six-game unbeaten streak in the series.



CF Montreal midfielder Hennadii Sychuk, front left, tries to get the ball past D.C. United goalkeeper Sean Johnson, right, during the second half of an MLS soccer match in Washington. (AP)

## SPORTS

# Barca storms past Lyon, completes historic quadruple

Pajor ends final heartbreak

OSLO, Norway, May 24, (AP): Barcelona rose again to the peak of European soccer by routing its most storied rival, OL Lyon, 4-0 in an overwhelming second-half display in the Women's Champions League final.

A four-time European champion in just six seasons, Barcelona is a dynasty in women's soccer, replacing Lyon, which dominated the previous decade and has a record eight titles.

Barcelona forward Ewa Pajor lost in her first five visits to the European title match, but the former Wolfsburg star made her sixth attempt count with two goals.

Pajor struck with an arrowing low shot in the 55th minute and a close-range finish in the 69th when the Barcelona attack was queuing up to score past the stretched Lyon defense.

"This is amazing, the best day of my life," the 29-year-old Pajor said. "I've played in six finals, and finally, in Oslo, we did it."

Salma Paralluelo turned the screw on Lyon by firing in a rising left-foot shot in the 90th and adding another slick finish in stoppage time.

The decisive first goal was created by a surging 40-yard run and an assist by Patri Guijarro, often overlooked in a stellar midfield alongside Ballon d'Or winners Aitana Bonmati and Alexia Putellas.

Barcelona has swept all four domestic and international trophies this season.

One year ago, Barcelona was denied another trophy sweep by a surprising 1-0 loss to Arsenal in the final.

In the dugout y, it was a victory for a former assistant over his one-time



Barcelona's Alexia Putellas, center left, and Marta Torrejon celebrate with the trophy after winning the Women's Champions League final soccer match between FC Barcelona and OL Lyonnese, in Oslo. (AP)

boss.

Barcelona coach Pere Romeu was an assistant to Jonatan Giráldez, now with Lyon, when the Catalan giant won back-to-back Champions Leagues in 2023 and '24.

It was a cruel end for Lyon, which was also seeking a quadruple of trophies this season and impressed

early. Lyon stifled Barcelona's intent to control play with neat passing and was typically strong with set pieces.

Barcelona goalkeeper Cata Coll saved well in the first half from Wendie Renard's header and a free kick by left back Selma Bacha that curled toward the top corner.

"It was a team win, Cata saved us

early on, and then the whole team pitched in," Barcelona coach Romeu said.

Almost inevitably in modern soccer, a VAR intervention changed the flow of the game, though it was needed by Barcelona to spot an offside missed by the match officials.

When Renard's header in the

14th was pushed out by Coll, Lyon midfielder Lindsey Heaps poked the loose ball into the goal from three yards. The United States captain advanced beyond Renard when the header was struck, but the offside was only confirmed one minute later as Barcelona waited to kick off.

Heaps was consoled by Barcelona's stars after playing one of her last games for Lyon. She is returning home to join Denver Summit, an expansion team in the NWSL.

The Poland star flipped her own script after enduring a ragged first half. Pajor twice shot wide of the goal when in clear space to shoot.

Cavs fall into perilous 3-0 hole

## Knicks keep rolling on road in East finals

CLEVELAND, May 24, (AP): Donovan Mitchell has lacked his customary explosiveness and not looked like himself through three games of the Eastern Conference finals. Something seems off with the All-Star guard.

Same for the Cavaliers.

They may soon have time to heal. Like all summer.

Cleveland is on the brink of elimination.

The Cavs couldn't match New York's force, firepower or balance despite being on their home floor and lost Game 3 to the Knicks 121-108 to fall into a perilous postseason hole in the best-of-seven series.

No team in NBA history has ever come back from an 0-3 deficit, and the Cavs aren't showing signs of becoming the first in 164 tries.

Mitchell did what he could, scoring 23 points. But he didn't have his burst and committed five of his team's 18 turnovers as the Cavs couldn't contain the Knicks, who were cheered on by a raucous group of New York fans that invaded Rocket Arena.

Following the game, Mitchell sat in a chair behind the table before his media interview and stared blankly at a box score underscoring New York's dominance.

Asked what it's going to take to avoid a sweep and win Game 4 on Monday night, Mitchell was succinct.

"Let's start with making some shots," he said. "Let's start with getting some stops and making some free throws."



New York Knicks guard Jalen Brunson (11) shoots against Cleveland Cavaliers center Jarrett Allen (31) during the first half of Game 3 in the Eastern Conference finals NBA basketball playoffs series in Cleveland. (AP)

Mitchell's first trip to a conference final after so many second-round exits hasn't gone as hoped. The Cavs, who were pushed to seven games by Toronto and Detroit earlier in the playoffs, blew a 22-point lead in the fourth quarter and lost Game 1 at Madison Square Garden.

They battled for much of Game 2 before fading and are now dragging physically after weeks of playing every other day. The Knicks, who had time to rest after sweeping Philadelphia in the second round, are taking advantage of Cleveland's heavy legs.

"We did it to ourselves," Mitchell said. "We can't be mad now."

Just as in the first two games, New York was the more aggressive team in the early going, jumping to a 9-1 lead in the open-

ing two minutes and forcing Cavs coach Kenny Atkinson to call a timeout. The Cavs regrouped, but their sloppiness combined with New York's ability to get out in transition and score proved too much.

"Their physicality and energy level was higher than ours," Atkinson said. "They were the more physical team and we couldn't get to that level. Whatever the stats say, they were the better team. They're playing great basketball. They're on a hell of a run and we haven't been able to stop the momentum."

The Cavs had seized it in the series opener before a stunning collapse that has already provided Mitchell with a lasting lesson.

"Don't lose Game 1 after being up 22," he said when asked about

what's soured his conference final debut. "But hey, it happened and now we have to find a way to get back from 3-0. We just have to find a way. We were up 22. It's on us."

In the closing minutes, thousands of blue-and-orange-clad New York fans were hollering "Knicks in 4!" and serenading Knicks guard Jalen Brunson, who scored 30 points and added six assists, with chants of "M-V-P" at the foul line.

Those moments normally belong only to Mitchell in Cleveland. But the Knicks are taking everything away from the Cavs. Mitchell said the noise wasn't unexpected.

"I'm from New York, this doesn't shock me," he said. "They do it in every arena. It's like (Dallas) Cowboys fans. It's just who they are. It wasn't just a Cleveland thing. That's how Knicks fans are. I was one back in the day. That had nothing to do with what's going on in Cleveland. We didn't get it done for our home crowd tonight."

Before the game, Atkinson described Mitchell's physical issues as merely "bumps and bruises." The All-Star, who left the floor for treatment in the first quarter, is now dealing with the mental strain of a deficit that's probably too large to overtake.

Mitchell, though, isn't giving up.

"We have an opportunity to get one (win) on Monday," he said. "Then go back to New York and get one there and come back here."

## Iran relocates WC base camp to Mexico amid US concerns



In this file photo, Iran players pose for a team photo prior to a friendly soccer match between Iran and Costa Rica, in Antalya, southern Turkey. (AP)

PHOENIX, May 24, (AP): The president of the governing body of Iranian soccer said the nation's World Cup training base has been moved to Mexico from the United States after getting approval from FIFA.

Mehdi Taj, president of the Iran Football Federation, announced the decision in a statement issued by the federation's media relations official. FIFA has not confirmed the move.

Iran had been scheduled to train in Tucson, Arizona, but a move has been a possibility because of uncertainty surrounding the war in the Middle East and security concerns. Officials at Tucson's Kino Sports Complex had no comment.

The federation says the team will now be based in Tijuana, Mexico, just south of San Diego. This year's World Cup runs from June 11 to July 19 and will be co-hosted by the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

"All team base camps for the countries participating in the World Cup must be approved by FIFA," Taj said in his statement. "Fortunately, following the requests we submitted and the meetings we held with FIFA and World Cup officials in Istanbul, as well as the webinar meeting we had yesterday in the Tehran with the respected FIFA secretary general, our request to change the team's base from the United States to Mexico was approved."

Pachuca routs Gotham to win bronze

## Club America tops Washington for CONCACAF W Champions Cup title

PACHUCA, Mexico, May 24, (AP): Irene Guerrero scored the go-ahead goal in the 79th minute

and Scarlett Camberos added another in stoppage time to seal a 5-3 victory for Club America over the

Washington Spirit for the CONCACAF W Champions Cup title.

It was the second regional championship for women's club teams. Gotham FC, the defending champion, fell 3-0 to Pachuca in the third place-match earlier Saturday at Estadio Hidalgo.

Liga MX's Club America took the early lead when Aylin Aviléz's tapped in a goal off a pass from Camberos in the 22nd minute. They doubled the lead in the 27th with Geysel's goal just some five minutes later.

Sofia Cantore narrowed the score for the NWSL's Spirit with a goal from 35 yards out. Rosemonde Kouassi tied it at 2 just 35 seconds into the second half.

Kouassi chipped in a second goal in the 58th to give the Spirit the lead. She was the tournament's top scorer with six total goals.

But Geysel took advantage of a mistake from Spirit goalkeeper Sandy MacIver to score a second goal in the 61st that pulled Club

America into a 3-3 tie.

Guerrero came score from out front and into the bottom right corner in the 79th, off another assist from Camberos.

Camberos, Club America's captain, scored six minutes into stoppage time to clinch the win. She was named the best player of the final with a goal and two assists.

"Obviously, the result stings a little bit, but incredible effort from the team, to be two goals down and come back and tie it up," said the Spirit's Kate Wiesner. "I think we showed a lot of resilience today, which is what we want to be part of our DNA as the Spirit. And so proud of the fight that we put up, obviously came up short, but a lot of lessons learned and a lot of things we can take back and hopefully improve on."

The Spirit advanced to the final with a 1-0 semifinal victory over Pachuca. Club America downed Gotham 4-1.



Scarlett Camberos of Mexico's Club America, center, lifts the trophy after winning the Women's CONCACAF Champions Cup final soccer match against The United States' Washington Spirit in Pachuca, Mexico. (AP)



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Real Madrid's players throw David Alaba after playing the last game for the club after a La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Athletic in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

# Sports

## Burgan steps up championship build-up with friendly in Egypt

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 24: The Burgan Club handball team takes on Egypt's youth national team today in a friendly match, opening its warm-up schedule during the ongoing training camp in Cairo.

The camp forms part of Burgan's preparations for the 28th Asian Men's Club Handball Championship, which will be hosted in Kuwait from June 6 to 15 and serves as a qualifier for the 2027 IHF Super Globe in Egypt.

Burgan will meet the same Egyptian side again on the 28th, before wrapping up its friendly matches on the 30th against Qatar's youth team.

In the championship draw, Kuwait's representatives were placed in challenging groups. Host Kuwait Club features in Group B alongside Bahrain's Al-Najma, Saudi Arabia's Al-Khaleej, and Qatar's Al-Arabi.

Burgan is in Group A with UAE's Sharjah, China's CHA team, and Qatar's Al-Duhail. It begins its campaign on June 6 against the Chinese side, followed



A file photo of player in action.

by matches against Al-Duhail and defending champion Sharjah.

The top four teams from each group will advance to the quarter-finals, with cross-group matchups deciding the semi-finalists.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Club continues its preparations with intensive double training sessions under Algerian coach Saeed Hijazi, with players set to receive a short break during the Eid Al-Adha holiday.

'Our compatriots will soon be reunited with their families'

## Moroccan King pardons 18 Senegalese fans jailed over chaotic Africa Cup final

CASABLANCA, Morocco, May 24, (AP): Morocco's King granted an official pardon to 18 Senegalese soccer fans jailed over hooliganism linked to a chaotic Africa Cup of Nations final that saw supporters attempt to storm the field, the Royal Cabinet said.

The 18 Senegalese fans were sentenced in February to prison terms of up to a year on charges including damaging sporting facilities and committing violence during a sporting event. Some have already completed their sentences.

"Given the long-standing fraternal ties between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Senegal, and on the occasion of (Muslim holiday) Eid al-Adha, King Mohammed VI has graciously granted, for humanitarian reasons, his royal pardon to Senegalese supporters convicted of offenses committed during Africa Cup of Nations competitions," the Royal Cabinet said in a statement.

During the final game of the tournament in January, Senegalese fans attempted to storm the field and Senegalese players walked off in protest over a late penalty awarded to host Morocco.

Senegal eventually won the game 1-0 and lifted the trophy, but in an unprecedented series of events, the Confederation of African Football stripped Senegal of the title and declared Morocco the champion. Senegal later said it had appealed the decision.



In this file photo, Morocco's King Mohammed VI arrives at the Elysee Palace to meet France's President Francois Hollande in Paris. (AP)

The final and its aftermath prompted senior officials in both countries to call for calm during a surge in what rights groups in Morocco described as "hate speech targeting sub-Saharan residents." The leaders of Morocco and Senegal pledged to maintain friendly ties and signed dozens of agreements aimed at boosting trade and investment.

In Morocco, the king, as head of state, has the authority to grant pardons and release prisoners. Each year, on some religious and national holidays, he issues royal pardons that free or reduce the sentences of thousands of inmates, including journalists, activists and others convicted of various offenses.

"Our compatriots detained in Morocco (...) will soon be reunited with their families, thanks to the Royal Grace that His Majesty King Mohammed VI has graciously granted," Senegal's President Bassirou Diomaye Faye wrote on X. The Senegalese fans were expected to leave Morocco immediately.

The pardons came less than 24 hours after the Senegalese president dismissed Prime Minister Ousmane Sonko following months of tension between the two, leading to the resignation of all the members of the government and its dissolution.

In a recent speech, Sonko said Africa has 55 states, a remark in Morocco that was widely interpreted as a reference to the independence of Western Sahara. Morocco claims the territory, while the Polisario Front, based in Algeria, seeks independence for the region. The dispute remains a central issue in Morocco's foreign policy. Some observers saw pardons as a gesture of support for President Faye amid his rift with his former prime minister.

## Al-Kharafi seals historic five-peat

Al-Awadhi and Al-Anaz complete podium

KUWAIT CITY, May 24, (KUNA): Ali Al-Kharafi clinched a historic fifth consecutive Kuwaiti Equestrian League title after being crowned champion of the 2025-2026 season at the Police Sports Federation's Equestrian and Shooting Club in Sabhan.

Speaking to KUNA, Al-Kharafi expressed pride in achieving an unprecedented milestone following intense competition against a strong field of local riders. He noted that the rising level of the league, driven by tougher course standards and the emergence of new talent, continues to enhance the development of Kuwaiti riders and strengthen the national team.



Ali Al-Kharafi was presented with the league championship shield by the president of the federation.

The Kuwait rider credited the domestic league as the foundation behind the national team's

recent continental achievements, highlighting the impressive performances of Kuwaiti riders at

the Asian Championships and the Gulf Games in Doha.

Al-Kharafi also thanked the Public Authority for Sport, the Kuwait Olympic Committee, and the Police Sports Federation for their continued support of equestrian sports in Kuwait.

In the final standings, Al-Kharafi finished first with 437 points, followed by Abdullah Al-Awadhi with 340 points and Anaz Al-Anaz with 334 points. Abdulrahman Al-Fuzai claimed fourth place with 236 points, while Fawaz Al-Subaie completed the top five with 223 points.

The season was held through a strategic partnership between the Kuwait Equestrian Federation and the Police Sports Federation, utilizing the federation's facilities in a move aimed at further developing equestrian sport in the country.

## Mallorca and Girona relegated

BARCELONA, Spain, May 24, (AP): Girona and Mallorca were relegated after playing their last games of the La Liga season, while Robert Lewandowski bid farewell to Barcelona as did Dani Carvajal to Real Madrid.

Girona and Mallorca both needed to win and for other results to favor them to make a last-gasp escape from the bottom three spots. They had no such luck and both will join last-placed Real Oviedo in the second division next season.

A victory would have saved Girona but the team that just two seasons ago finished third in La Liga couldn't better a 1-1 home draw with Elche. That result meant Elche ensured its safety.

Mallorca beat Oviedo 3-0 but its goal difference with Osasuna and Levante did it in.

"I am torn up. It's our fault we are going down," Mallorca midfielder Sergi Darder said.

Celta Vigo locked up a sixth-place finish and the resulting Europa League berth after beating Sevilla 1-0.

Getafe is going to the Conference League after securing seventh place with a 1-0 win over Osasuna.

Champion Barcelona, Real Madrid, Villarreal, Atletico Madrid and Real Betis had already locked up the top five spots and the resulting Champions League berths before the last round.

Lewandowski scored in his last game for Barcelona, netting the champion's only goal in a 3-1 loss at Valencia.

The 37-year-old striker and Barcelona decided to part ways this summer after he spent four seasons at the club. His goal at Mestalla Stadium was No. 120 in blue and burgundy.

Barcelona clinched the league title with three rounds remaining.

Carvajal received ovations from the Santiago Bernabeu and wept when he was substituted in the veteran right back's last game for Real Madrid.

Carvajal, whose contract is about to expire, assisted Gonzalo Garcia for the opening goal. Jude Bellingham and Kylian Mbappé added goals in the 3-1 win over Athletic Bilbao.

Stuttgart swept aside in German Cup

## Kane produces masterclass as Bayern completes domestic double

BERLIN, May 24, (AP): Harry Kane cut through the smoke of the German Cup final with a hat trick for Bayern Munich to beat defending champion Stuttgart 3-0 and complete another domestic double.

Kane's goals in the second half set off fireworks among the Bayern fans who had joined their Stuttgart rivals in protesting against the German soccer federation (DFB) for a planned increase in security measures.

The protests started after the halftime break when the Bayern fans displayed a giant DFB logo with a line drawn through it over a banner with an expletive against the DFB, while their Stuttgart counterparts had a banner calling for "freedom for the terraces." They both then filled the ends of the stadium with huge pyrotechnic displays, shrouding the field under a cover of smoke.

Kane broke the deadlock shortly afterward with a diving header to Michael Olise's cross in the 55th minute.

That prompted more fireworks from the Bayern fans, worsening the already poor visibility and leading to a break in play.

Kane struck the crossbar with a thunderous shot before sealing the result in the 80th with a shot inside the bottom corner after being picked out by Luis Diaz.

Angelo Stiller conceded a penalty for handball, and Kane completed his hat trick from the spot in stoppage time.

"He's impressive," Bayern coach Vincent Kompany said of Kane. "It's not just his outstanding quality, but also his personality for the group. I've no idea how someone can score so many goals in their career and still be like just one of the guys."

Kane finished with 61 goals for Bayern this season, including the cup, league, super cup, and Champions League.

They helped Bayern wrap up the Bundesliga title with four rounds to spare. It was Bayern's first appearance in the German Cup final since 2000, when it defeated Bayer Leverkusen 4-2 for its previous domestic double.

Stuttgart defeated third-division champion Arminia Bielefeld 4-2 in last year's decider.

Bayern's players ran straight over to their fans in Olympiastadion's east end to celebrate the end of the six-year cup title drought.

Stuttgart had the better of an intensive first half with Maximilian Mittelstädt forcing an outstanding save from Jonas Urbig, who was playing in place of the injured Manuel Neuer in Bayern's otherwise full-strength team.

Stuttgart was playing at its limit, however, while Bayern was not. There was only going to be one winner after Kane scored his first.

"The second half was much better. We were much more effective," Joshua Kimmich told broadcaster ARD before his team got to lift the trophy under a shower of golden confetti.

While no one was surprised to see Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann at the match two days after he announced his World Cup squad with 11 Bayern and Stuttgart players included, few expected to see Portuguese coach José Mourinho in attendance.

Mourinho, currently coach of Benfica, is expected to return to Real Madrid next season, leading to speculation that he was at the final to see Bayern star



Bayern Munich goalkeeper Manuel Neuer lifts the trophy and celebrates with teammates after winning the DFB Pokal, German Cup final soccer match between VfB Stuttgart and Bayern Munich in Berlin, Germany. (AP)

Michael Olise.

"He can have five eyes on Olise, he's not getting him," Bayern powerbroker Uli Hoeneß told broadcaster Sky.

Outside the stadium before the game, Thomas Melchior was continuing his

one-man campaign to stop gambling providers' involvement in sports. He was wearing a bright Stuttgart jersey, looking for Bayern fans to confront with a sign saying "Sport rather than sports betting" while carrying a 30-kilogram weight on his shoulders.