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# A happy Eid Al-Adha to all

There will be no issue of the Arab Times on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The next issue of the Arab Times will appear on the news-stands on Sunday morning.



His Highness the Amir

## Amir extends Eid blessings to Kuwaitis and expatriates

### Leadership exchanges warm wishes

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26, (KUNA):** The Amiri Diwan on Tuesday relayed Eid Al-Adha greetings from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Kuwait's citizens and residents, wishing them happy Eid amid amity, security and safety.

His Highness the Amir also wished both Arab and Muslim worlds blessed Eid, security and stability, praying to Allah Almighty to protect Kuwait and its people and to grant them security and safety.

The Amiri Diwan seized this blessed opportunity to convey Eid Al-Adha greetings to His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Tuesday a message of congratulations on Eid Al-Adha from His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

In the message, His Highness the Crown Prince expressed his honor to send sincere congratulations to His Highness the Amir on this occasion, praying sincerely to Allah to protect His Highness the Amir and wishing him enduring well-being.

His Highness the Crown Prince also wished success to His Highness the Amir in leading the dear country to make further progress and prosperity.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir sent a message of thanks to His Highness the Crown Prince for these good and sincere feelings.

Continued on Page 5



His Highness the Crown Prince

### Debt settled, not inherited

## Heirs protected in insured loan cases

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26:** The question of what happens to bank loans when the borrower dies, particularly whether heirs are required to settle the debt from their own assets, remains a point of discussion in legal and banking circles, considering the increasing reliance on consumer loans, housing finance and other forms of bank lending.

Legal experts told the newspaper that Kuwaiti law and judicial rulings conclusively addressed the matter. They explained that when a borrower dies, loans protected by bank or credit insurance are no longer recoverable from the heirs, because the insurance company, acting as guarantor under the banking agreement, assumes responsibility for settling the outstanding amount.

They stressed that the insurance serves as legal and social protection for the estate and the family. Once insurance coverage at the time of death is confirmed, banks are not legally entitled to pursue repayment from the personal finances of the heirs.

Attorney Jassim Bandar said insurance associated with bank loans is an essential component of the modern banking sector. He explained that this form of insurance is designed to ensure payment of the remaining loan balance in the event of the death of the borrower or under certain circumstances stated in the contract.

He added that Kuwaiti courts have established a significant legal principle whereby the deceased borrower is released from liability if the loan is insured. As a result, the bank is required to seek repayment from the insurance company rather than from the heirs.

Continued on Page 5

## Kuwaiti pilgrims reach Arafat as Hajj peaks



**ARAFAT, Saudi Arabia, May 26, (KUNA):** Head of Kuwait's Hajj mission Dr. Suleiman Al-Suwailim announced Tuesday the arrival of all Kuwaiti Hajj campaigns to Arafat to perform the main pillar of Hajj rituals.

Al-Suwailim said movement of pilgrims proceeded smoothly under approved transport plans, allowing pilgrims to reach Arafat with ease and reassurance.

He added all Kuwaiti pilgrims were in good condition and no obstacles were recorded during their transfer to the holy site.

Al-Suwailim stressed the importance of pilgrims adhering to approved instructions to ensure their safety and facilitate performance of rituals smoothly and securely.

He affirmed continued field and organizational follow-up of pilgrim movement plans to ensure smooth transfers between the holy sites and maintain pilgrims' comfort and safety.

Continued on Page 5

A Muslim pilgrim prays atop of the rocky hill known as the Mountain of Mercy, on the Plain of Arafat, during the annual Hajj pilgrimage near the holy city of Makkah, Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, May 26, 2026. (AP)

Friendship and cooperation highlighted in messages

## Ambassadors hail Kuwait stability, send Eid wishes

By Fares Ghaleb

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26:** A number of ambassadors and heads of diplomatic missions in the country expressed their greetings and best wishes to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

They affirmed the strong relations between their countries and Kuwait, while commending the level of security, stability and diplomatic and humanitarian standing of the latter.

Continued on Page 4



Al-Kharousi



Abu Al-Wafa



bin Issa



Balla



Koistinen



Tahboub



Gauvin



Geltov

### Day by Day

SOME people were discussing their misfortunes as well as their personal affairs. One of them said, "I have seen and experienced every extreme except extreme wealth."

Everyone is expressing their concerns, including their dream of becoming extremely rich. Let them wait, but that dream will never come true.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

## Father Bigoul lauds Kuwait culture of tolerance on Eid

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26:** Father Bigoul Anba Bishoy, senior priest and patron of the St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Cathedral in Kuwait, extended his heartfelt congratulations to His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (May God protect him), His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah (May God protect him),

the government of Kuwait led by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah (May God protect him), the generous Kuwaiti people, and all residents of Kuwait, on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

In a press statement, Father Bigoul wished Kuwait many happy returns, and conveyed to the Kuwaiti leadership and people the greetings of His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark, and of His Grace Metropolitan Antonios, Metropolitan of Jerusalem, and Archbishop of the Holy

Continued on Page 5



Father Bigoul

## Kuwait joins America's tribute to war heroes

**WASHINGTON, May 26, (KUNA):** The Embassy of the State of Kuwait to the United States participated Monday in the annual Memorial Day commemorations, joining US leadership in honoring American service members killed in action during global wars and conflicts.

The national ceremonies, which hold profound official and public significance across the United States, were attended by US President Donald Trump alongside senior administration officials and retired military personnel.

The nationwide observances featured traditional tributes, including the lowering of the American flag to half-staff until midday, the laying of wreaths on military graves,

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photo

Kuwaiti Embassy in the US participates in the annual Memorial Day commemorations.

## Fraudulent travel ads spike during holidays

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26:** The National Cybersecurity Center has warned travelers against falling victim to fake travel websites and attractive offers that may be used for online fraud, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The center urged travelers to plan their trips safely and ensure that bookings are made only through official and trusted platforms.

In an awareness post on its X account, the center explained that scammers exploit people's desire to travel during holiday seasons by promoting attractive flight deals that are often designed to defraud users and direct them to unreliable websites.

Continued on Page 5

## Court hearing set for four Iranian officers

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26:** The Criminal Court's State Security Circuit, presided over by Judge Nasser Al-Badr, has set the session of June 11 for the trial of four Iranian Revolutionary Guard officers accused of illegally entering Kuwaiti territorial waters and infiltrating a restricted military site, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Public Prosecution charged the defendants with crossing Kuwait's maritime borders and entering a secure military zone using boats, navigational tools, and field equipment. They are also accused of possessing weapons, ammunition, and communication and surveillance devices with the intent to target military, sovereign, and security sites and facilities.



### Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 03:18 Asr ..... 15:20  
 Sunrise .. 04:50 Maghrib .. 18:40  
 Zohr ..... 11:45 Isha ..... 20:10



KUNA photo  
 Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah meets representatives of major telecom companies.

## Minister pledges to get rid of hiccups in joint interest

KUWAIT CITY, May 26, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah met Monday with representatives of major telecommunications companies operating in Kuwait - Zain, Ooredoo, STC, and ITK - to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation, especially the cooperative sector.

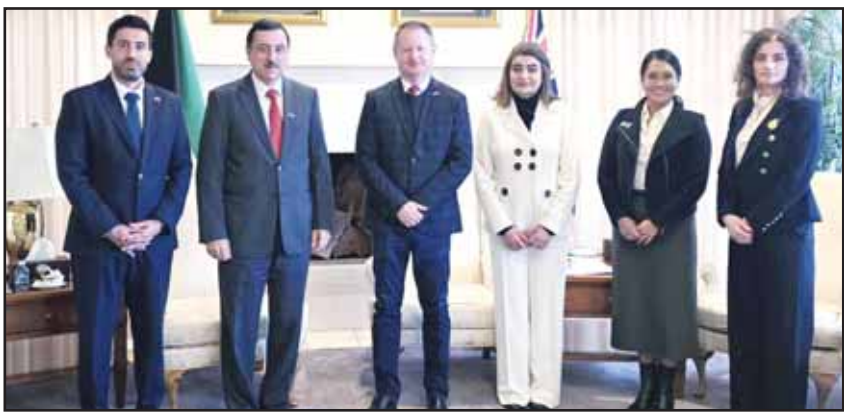
In a press statement following the meeting, which included representatives from Zain, Ooredoo, STC, and ITK, Dr. Al-Huwailah said the discussions focused on developing partnership mechanisms that serve the public interest, while emphasizing the importance of transparency, good govern-

ance, and protecting public funds.

She highlighted the need to improve collaboration with cooperative societies to achieve better outcomes and greater operational efficiency.

The meeting also confronted the main challenges faced by telecom companies when working with the cooperative sector, particularly regarding contracts and subsidies.

Dr. Al-Huwailah affirmed the ministry's commitment to removing obstacles, developing cooperation frameworks, and ensuring integration among all relevant parties to deliver the best services in line with approved legal and regulatory standards.



KUNA photo  
 Kuwait's Ambassador to Australia Malek Al-Wazzan with Murdoch University Pro Vice Chancellor Kelly Smith and embassy officials at the meeting.

## Kuwait, Australia seek ways to enhance academic bonds

KUALA LUMPUR, May 26, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ambassador to Australia Malek Al-Wazzan discussed Monday with Murdoch University Pro Vice Chancellor Kelly Smith ways to enhance academic cooperation and increase student enrollment across various disciplines.

The Kuwaiti Embassy in Australia said the meeting addressed issues concerning Kuwaiti students and ways to overcome

challenges facing them.

The meeting was attended by embassy counselor Ahmad bin Yousef and Acting Head of the Cultural Office in Canberra Dr. Abeer Abbas.

The embassy noted that Murdoch University, located in Perth in Western Australia, is internationally recognized, particularly in veterinary medicine, where it ranks 37th globally.

### Gulf union marks 45th 'versary

## GCC journey pioneering model of unity, social solidarity – Min.

KUWAIT CITY, May 26, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah stated on Monday that the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) represents a pioneering model of unity, social solidarity, and sustainable development.

This came in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the GCC's establishment.

She added that the GCC has succeeded over the decades in consolidating fraternal ties, affirming a shared destiny, and building an integrated Gulf system capable of confronting challenges.

She pointed out that social and developmental integration is at the heart of joint Gulf action, noting that the GCC countries have made significant strides in unifying social policies, developing family welfare systems, empowering women and youth, and supporting people with disabilities and the elderly.

Al-Huwailah noted that the Ministry of Social Affairs continues to work with its counterparts in the GCC countries to activate joint strategic initiatives, particularly those related to strengthening social safety nets and consolidating humanitarian and volunteer work.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) marks Monday the 45th anniversary of its establishment, capping decades of achievements that made it a model for regional integration and joint Gulf action.

The anniversary renews member states' commitment to advancing cooperation and integration in line with the aspirations of Gulf peoples for greater stability and prosperity.

Since its establishment, the GCC has remained a framework for coordination and



Dr. Al-Huwailah

collective action under the guidance of Gulf leaders, who have supported policies aimed at strengthening cooperation across political, economic, security and development fields.

Over the past decades, the GCC has withstood regional challenges and crises, reinforcing its role in safeguarding the security and stability of member states and protecting their achievements.

The Council has also promoted preventive diplomacy, peaceful conflict resolution and closer security and military coordination to enhance regional deterrence and collective defense.

### Summit

At the extraordinary consultative summit in Jeddah on April 28, GCC leaders condemned recent Iranian attacks against member states, describing them as grave violations of sovereignty, international law and the principles of good neighborliness.

The leaders affirmed the right of member states to defend themselves and stressed that the security of GCC countries is indivisible, with any attack against one state considered an attack against all.

Official Gulf positions reflected strong political and security coordination to protect maritime routes and regional stability while safeguarding national sovereignty and development gains.

The idea of the GCC was launched through a Kuwaiti initiative based on shared ties, common interests and a unified destiny among Gulf peoples.

In May 1976, the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah proposed the establishment of a Gulf union during talks with the late UAE President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan.

The GCC was officially founded in Abu Dhabi on May 25, 1981, by Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman, Bahrain and Qatar, becoming one of the region's most cohesive organizations.

### Traffic cops trap 10 motorists

## Bid to nab speedsters intensified

### By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: The General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry continued its traffic campaigns aimed at ensuring the safety of road users.

The recent 24-hour campaign led to the arrest of 10 individuals of various nationalities, all of whom were referred to the traffic police station for driving beyond the speed limit.

A security source confirmed that the depart-

ment is continuing its intensive traffic campaigns to reduce traffic accidents and guarantee road safety.

The source indicated that motorists found committing speeding violations are issued traffic citations, referred to the traffic police station, and their vehicles could be impounded for a period of up to two months.

The source also urged drivers to comply with posted speed limits in order to avoid fines and other penalties, while contributing to ongoing efforts to ensure safer roads for all users.

# The sacrificial meat is not just meat

By Abdullah M. AlShehab

General Manager of Kuwaiti Society for Cultural Dialogue

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: It is worth mentioning that 'Adhahi' (sacrificial animals or meat) is a profound act of devotion in Kuwait, honoring Prophet Abraham's (PBUH) submission to God while reinforcing social solidarity. In Kuwaiti culture, this sacrifice symbolizes piety and acts as a vital social bond, where distributing meat reinforces communal unity, sharing wealth with the needy, and strengthening familial ties across the nation.



AlShehab

Every year, when the month of Dhul-Hijjah (the last month of the Islamic Lunar calendar) arrives, the markets are filled with livestock, voices rise in the neighborhoods, and the smell of barbecue wafts from every house. But have you ever stopped and asked yourself: 'Why do we sacrifice in the first place?'

Almighty Allah begins the discussion of sacrificial animals and meat with a strikingly explicit negation. He says, translated as: 'Never will (any part of their) meat nor their blood reach Allah. But, rather, it is (your devotion - inspired by the) fear of Allah in you, that reaches Him.' (Al-Hajj - the Hajj-Pilgrimage 22: 37)

Almighty Allah does not want your meat from the animals you sacrifice, rather, He

wants your heart (filled with obedience). He wants to see in you a person who possesses something precious and then gives it away willingly, gratefully, and humbly, not boasting to people or competing in markets.

To truly grasp this meaning, consider the story of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). He wasn't initially commanded to sacrifice a sheep, but rather his son - the apple of his eye, the fruit of his prayers, and the most precious thing he possessed on earth. Yet, he didn't hesitate, he didn't compromise, and he didn't seek a way out. He surrendered himself entirely to God (Allah), and relief came from where he least expected it; a ram appeared from heaven as a substitute. This story isn't just history to be read and then forgotten; it's a living lesson, renewed each year, asking each of us: 'What are you prepared to offer God?'

### Sacrificial

Hence the division of the sacrificial animal's meat into three thirds; one-third for the family, one-third for neighbors and relatives, and another third for the poor and the needy. That emphasizes that the sacrifice has never been a personal feast, but rather a complete social act. When you sacrifice, you are not only feeding yourself and your family, but you are also remembering your neighbor who sits behind the wall of his house, unsure how he will feed his children during the Eid celebrations. You are remembering the mother who tries to hide her tears when she is unable to prepare a festive meal, and the child who longs to share the joy of meat, laughter, and the Eid celebration with his friends.

This is where reputable charities come

in: carrying this trust from the donor to the recipient with complete transparency. When you donate your sacrificial animal or it's meat through an organization that discloses its accounts and documents at every step, you are not just buying meat, but rather practicing a noble form of civilized interaction - saying, 'I trust someone who will deliver my donation to someone I don't know and who doesn't know me.' This trust is the cornerstone upon which societies build their cohesion and solidarity.

Therefore, your sacrifice, then, is not just kilograms of meat to be distributed and then it's over. It is an act of devotion to Almighty Allah (God) that pleases the Creator, a revival of the tradition of Prophet Abraham (PBUH) that connects you to the greatest chain of faith in history, a true joy in the heart of a child you have never seen, and peace of mind in your own soul when you know that your money has gone the right way.

So, when you decide this year where to place your sacrifice, remember what God Almighty said, and what no one before Him said with such clarity: 'It is not the meat that reaches, but piety.' And the greatest thing a person possesses is not what he holds onto, but rather what they give. So, which sacrifice will you be offering this year?

Ultimately, the Adha'hi (sacrificial animals or meat) in Kuwait is an enduring bridge connecting the spirit of obedience to Almighty Allah with the cultural imperative of generosity and communal bonding, ensuring the values of Islam continue to shape society.

Courtesy of Kuwaiti Society for Cultural Dialogue

## Grace period and flexible working timings clarified

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has informed government agencies that the permitted late arrival period for female employees during the morning shift is 45 minutes, while for male employees it is 30 minutes, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to informed sources, all employees both male and female, are entitled to a 30-minute grace period, which may be used either upon arrival in the morning or upon departure after completing official working hours.

Female employees are granted an additional 15-minute grace period upon departure.

Employees will continue to benefit from these grace periods during the reduction of official working hours to six hours in June, July, and August.

In this regard, Basma Al-Yaqoub, Director of the Fatwa and Opinion Department at CSC, explained in an interview with Kuwait TV that the reduction in working hours applies to employees working both morning and evening shifts.

There are two types of work schedules for the morning shift:

- Fixed hours, set by the employer (either starting at 7:00 am or 8:00 am), with a 30-minute grace period
- Flexible hours, which run from 7:00 am to 8:00 am, also with a 30-minute grace period.

Employees on the flexible schedule whose work starts at 7:00 am and who do not use the morning grace period may still benefit from it, along with the additional 15 minutes, upon leaving at 12:15 pm for female employees and 12:30 pm for male employees.

Employees on the flexible schedule whose work starts at 8:00 am and who do not use the morning grace period may still benefit from it upon departure, along with the additional 15 minutes. In this case, female employees would finish at 1:15 pm, and male employees at 1:30 pm.

For employees who choose to use the 30-minute grace period in the morning and whose workday runs from 8:01 am to 8:30 am, female employees would finish at 1:45 pm, and male employees at 2:00 pm.

As for shift workers, their work is considered special in nature and they are subject to the regulations governing their respective shifts.

The evening shift begins at 5:00 pm. Male employees are granted a 30-minute grace period only at the start of the shift, not at the end, while female employees are granted a 15-minute grace period at the end of the shift.

## MEWRE pulls authority of 6 from judicial team

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem issued a decision to withdraw the judicial authority of six members of the judicial enforcement team comprised of ministry employees, in the interest of work.

In another development, the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy on Monday signed a contract for the construction, completion and maintenance of the water pumping station and its facilities at Site One in Mutla'a Residential City.

The contract, valued at KD29.857 million, is included in the plan of the ministry to develop the freshwater system in new residential cities.

Sources from the ministry disclosed that the Water Projects Department is implementing the system according to the latest international specifications and standards, ensuring the efficient and continuous provision of fresh water to consumers.

Sources affirmed that the water infrastructure projects in Mutlaa City are progressing significantly under the supervision of Al-Mukhaizeem and Undersecretary of the ministry Dr. Adel Al-Zamel, who are keen on expediting the completion of these projects to cover the freshwater needs of the residents in the city. Sources said the water system in the city includes the pumping station, water transmission lines, underground reservoirs and water towers.

Sources added that contract also covers periodic maintenance work for the station and its facilities to maintain operational sustainability and prevent disruptions.

# 'Cut waste for food security'

## Plots distribution plugged

KUWAIT CITY, May 26, (KUNA): Kuwaiti State Minister for Development and Sustainability Affairs Dr. Reem Al-Fulaj conducted Monday an inspection tour of the Agricultural Plots Department, Fodder Distribution Hall, and the main administrative building of Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR).



Dr. Al-Fulaj

In a press statement on the sidelines of the tour, she announced a comprehensive package of reform decisions aimed at ensuring the sustainability of national food security, restructuring subsidies, and directing them to actual beneficiaries.

Dr. Al-Fulaj underlined the importance of justice, the rule of law, protecting public funds, and combating waste to improve the business environment.

Regarding agricultural plots, she decided to immediately stop accepting new applications for land holdings of all types and to cancel all previous applications.

She warned that holders must strictly comply with laws and regulations, with no tolerance for violations or random practices.

A specialized technical team was formed to conduct field verification of breeders' records and refer any manipulation cases to the competent authorities, she explained.

On the fodder system, she announced the reallocation of fodder types, requiring that mixed fodder constitutes no less than 50 percent as an alternative to barley to

strengthen strategic reserves.

Dr. Al-Fulaj set a minimum eligibility threshold of 50 heads for sheep and goats, and 15 for camels and cows.

Support will now be directed exclusively to livestock contributing to food security, excluding horses, and stopped for non-compliant holdings, she added.

Regarding administrative development and protection of public funds, she revealed the formation of an investigation committee to examine financial and administrative violations in the authority.

Based on its findings, cases of suspected embezzlement have been referred to the Public Prosecution, she pointed out.

Dr. Al-Fulaj described these measures as the first step in a comprehensive plan to reactivate the authority's vital role in enhancing national food security on sustainable and transparent foundations. In another development, the Minister Dr. Reem Al-Fulaj on Tuesday inspected several slaughterhouses in Kuwait to make sure they are prepared to receive sacrificial animals starting from the first day of Eid Al-Adha.

### Slaughterhouses

In a statement to KUNA, the minister underlined commitment to providing a safe and organized environment at the slaughterhouses and facilitating the procedures for receiving and processing sacrificial animals to accommodate the projected big number of animals during the Eid holiday.

She spoke highly of the efforts of the staff and the technical and administrative teams in preparing the sites and bolstering their operational efficiency.

The minister added that monitoring and oversight teams will continue their fieldwork throughout Eid Al-Adha to ensure that health and environmental standards are followed and to provide the best possible services to those offering sacrifices pursuant to the highest levels of safety and organization.



Kuwait University photo  
 The successful students pose with their certificates.

## Kuwait honors students who won Hatton research contest

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: The College of Dentistry at Kuwait University honored the students who won in the Hatton Kuwait Research Competition for the 2025/2026 academic year.

Acting Dean of the college Dr. Rashid Al-Azmi presided over the ceremony, with head of Kuwait Association for Dental Research (KUADR) - Kuwait chapter of the International Association for Dental Research (IADR) - Dr. Mariam Al-Khader, her successor for the upcoming year, Dr. Mohammad Qali, acting Assistant Dean for Research and Graduate Studies Dr. Mona Al-Sane and acting Assistant Dean for Student and Academic Affairs Dr. Manal Abu

Al-Malh in attendance.

Al-Khader revealed that 24 students, who were grouped into six, participated in the competition. She said the top winners are as follows:

- First Place: Razan Al-Arif, Aseel Abu Rizq and Hadeel Al-Abd Al-Hadi
- Second Place: Saleh Hajieh, Khaled Al-Ghanim, Ali Al-Qallaf and Fatima Ali
- Third Place: Fatima Al-Jasmi, Dima Al-Ajmi, Duha Al-Dhuwaih and Sundus Al-Shammari

She added that the first-place team will represent the State of Kuwait at the global IADR competition in Melbourne, Australia next year.

# diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## From flight cancellations to massive airfares hike

"THESE days, people are discussing local issues, including flight cancellations and on-time performance, which has caused dissatisfaction," columnist Eng. Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"I previously wrote about my support for Kuwait Airways, but there are some issues that could be addressed to avoid harming the reputation of the national carrier.



Adel Al-Kharafi

"Over the past two weeks, I was in another country. I was traveling with someone who had booked a ticket on a non-Kuwaiti airline, while my ticket was with Kuwait Airways.

"On our return journey, we arrived at the airport four hours before the scheduled departure time. When we reached the check-in counter, it was closed, and we were told to return in an hour. The procedures in that country had not changed, even though the number of airports there is ten times greater than in Kuwait.

"People are also talking about the high cost of airfares due to rising fuel prices. This explanation may be understandable in some countries, but it seems unjustified in Kuwait given the availability of local fuel.

"There may be other reasons as well. However, since Kuwait Airways is a public sector company, the government should support it. Kuwait Airways has excelled and contributed to spreading Kuwait's name to many countries around the world.

"I hope the government will support Kuwait Airways in providing affordable airfares, especially for medical treatment abroad and student travel.

"Yes, sometimes small issues can be frustrating for citizens. For example, upon arriving at Kuwait Airport, a young woman spoke with the officer standing at the gate. She asked for permission to enter and pick up her elderly mother. He told her, "No entry. Go back to your car."

"While respecting the officer, the young woman was surprised, especially because her mother was elderly. He replied, "I'm sorry, I can't do anything. These are the orders."

"Kuwait is a beautiful country, but we need to know how to treat people with kindness and understanding."

**Also:**

"The relationship between Kuwait and Iraq is one of the most sensitive in the region, marked by a complex history of tensions, along with a shared understanding of the importance of stability and cooperation," Kuwaiti journalist Salem Al-Wawan wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"With each change in Iraqi political leadership, including the appointment of a new prime minister, hopes are renewed for a new phase based on de-escalation, building trust, and moving away from inflammatory rhetoric.

"At the popular level, there appears to be greater potential to rebuild bridges of communication between the two peoples, especially as people are often more willing to forgive and engage when there are genuine positive signals from both sides.

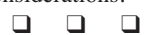
"Nevertheless, any meaningful rapprochement with Iraq cannot overlook the security concerns Kuwait has faced in the past, including incidents involving attacks or threats that have created a state of anxiety among citizens.

"These events are not easily forgotten, yet it is not impossible to move beyond them, provided there are clear guarantees that they will not be repeated and a strong will to prevent any parties from dragging the region into tensions that do not serve the interests of the people.

"The most important factor that could encourage Kuwait to reopen broader avenues of cooperation is building trust through actions, not just words, such as strengthening security coordination, respecting national sovereignty, and expanding economic and developmental cooperation.

"It is also crucial to distance Iraq from regional power struggles and to reassure Kuwait that Iraqi territory will not be used as a base for any threats. This would be a fundamental step towards a more stable relationship.

"A positive future for relations between the two countries is possible, but it requires patience, transparency, and a shared commitment to prioritizing the interests of the people above all other considerations."



"The Kuwaiti real estate market is currently experiencing a slowdown in trading activity and investment decisions. However, describing this as merely a "seasonal recession" does not reflect the full picture, given the interplay of economic, regional, and legislative factors that have created a clear atmosphere of anticipation and caution within the market." Real estate legal advisor Eman Al-Hashash

wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"The real estate sector is closely linked to stability and long-term confidence; therefore, any legislative or regulatory changes directly affect the decisions of owners and investors.

"One of the most prominent issues currently under discussion is the implementation of the law against the monopolization of undeveloped land and the associated fees, which has raised questions about the cost of holding land and the future viability of long-term speculation.

"The impact of real estate legislation is not limited to prices; it also extends to changes in investment behavior, prompting some owners to reassess their decisions to buy, sell, or hold property in light of new developments.

"The market appears to be undergoing a legal and investment repositioning rather than merely experiencing a typical seasonal slowdown. It has also been affected by regional tensions and disruptions to travel and aviation, factors that influence the real estate sector, which is closely tied to political and economic stability.

"The investment segment appears to be the most affected during this period due to its reliance on occupancy rates, seasonal activity, and operating returns.

"Meanwhile, the residential sector is facing pressures linked to expectations surrounding the implementation of the undeveloped land law and its impact on real estate supply.

"However, the current lull should not be viewed as an indicator of a comprehensive crisis, but rather as a reflection of a phase of realignment in investment decisions in light of concurrent legislative and regional changes.

"The real estate market tends to re-calibrate with every regulatory or economic shift, making it essential to understand the current landscape in addition to monitoring prices, supply, and demand."



"Europeans, Americans, and many other people use Arabic-derived words in their daily speech, such as coffee, sugar, spinach, eggplant, apricot, and cotton," columnist Ahmad Al-Dawas wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"The French use about 10 Arabic words in their speech out of 400 other words. Spaniards and people in Latin American countries pronounce thousands of Arabic words. Everyone uses Arabic numerals.

"Europeans and Americans speak proudly about freedom of speech, LGBTQ+ rights, and the right to be naked in public, yet they object to women wearing the hijab.

"One day, some French intellectuals were impressed by the Islamic inheritance system. For example, an heir does not take all of their father's money; rather, the deceased's estate is distributed among family members. These intellectuals said admiringly, "Why didn't you tell us about this just system? In the West, one of the children, the wife, or the mistress might take the entire inheritance. Therefore, Islam is fair and just."

"The French atheist philosopher Michel Onfray, one of the most famous figures in France and Europe, praised the morals of Muslims during a televised interview that was intended to criticize Islam. He said live on air, "Muslims possess a moral code of honor, while we have lost any sense of honor."

"The French atheist philosopher made these remarks during a televised interview with the far-right French politician Éric Zemmour, who was a presidential candidate at the time.

"The interview was specifically intended to criticize Islam, Muslims, and even French converts to Islam. During the discussion, Michel Onfray said, "I think Muslims are teaching us an important lesson, and they have every right to do so. It is a lesson in confronting materialism because, regardless of how we view them, they are people with high ideals. They are people who believe they can transcend the material horizon. They are people who possess a spirituality and a moral system to which they adhere, and values by which they live."

"They believe that we should be ashamed of abandoning the elderly in our society by placing them in nursing homes. They consider sexual relations outside marriage to be dishonorable for a woman, and forbid engaging in sexual relations in this manner with anyone, in any form.

"I believe this is not about material possessions, but rather about the Muslims' sense of dignity, because these people possess an ethic of honor, while we have lost any sense of the meaning of honor."

- Compiled by Simi K. Kutty

## Safety guidelines for sea trips



KFF photo

Take safety measures when handling burning coal while barbecue party.

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) emphasized in an awareness video, released on Monday on its official platforms, the importance of adhering to safety guidelines during sea trips to protect lives and property and prevent drowning incidents, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

KFF stressed the necessity of ensuring the availability of safety and protective equipment on board boats and other marine vessels, wearing life jackets throughout the trip, monitoring weather conditions, and avoiding sailing in unstable conditions.

# 'Dual' nationals lose nationality

Mol hounds forgers

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: The Higher Committee for Kuwaiti Citizenship Investigations, headed by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef, continues to address complex forgery cases, reports *Al-Rai* daily.



Sheikh Fahad

According to informed sources, the committee is conducting a thorough review of all files to ensure there are no instances of forgery or illegal additions, and to apply the law in all cases where manipulation or the provision of false information is proven.

The committee has reviewed several files to make the necessary decisions, including the withdrawal and revocation of citizenship from individuals involved in forgery and dual nationality cases. Among

these cases are approximately 27 cases of dual citizenship involving individuals who obtained Gulf and foreign nationalities in violation of the law.

Some of the cases include Kuwaitis who left the country with their mothers after their divorce from their Kuwaiti husbands and have not obtained Kuwaiti citizenship despite reaching the age of 20.

The committee reviewed files dating back decades, uncovering cases of manipulation through illegal additions and the registration of children and grandchildren with no genuine familial relationship to the original file holders. This was done by exploiting outdated procedural loopholes related to the absence of civil records or accurate registrations in earlier stages, or through the submission of false information.

The investigations encompassed files containing dozens of children and grandchildren, with some involving more than 150 dependents.

DNA testing conclusively established the absence of familial ties in a significant number of cases. This was done either by comparing the DNA of children and grandchildren with their alleged uncles, or by using DNA samples stored for years at the General Department of Criminal Evidence.

## MoJ work hours to 6 from June 1

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait issued Ministerial Decree No. 312/2026 on the official working hours during summer.

The decree states that the number of working hours in all sectors of the Justice Ministry is reduced to six hours per day from June 1 to Aug 31.

It stipulates a flexible work schedule

from Sunday to Thursday, indicating employees are allowed to start work any time between 7:00 am and 8:00 am, provided they complete six hours according to their arrival time, without prejudice to the legally mandated grace period.

It clarifies that the grace period begins after 8:00 am, while tardiness will be calculated after 8:30 AM. It added that time out requested by the employees at the beginning of the workday -- between 7:00 am and 8:00 am -- will be considered.



Finance Ministry photo  
Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Sayed Yousef Al-Rifai receives Bahrain Ambassador to Kuwait Salah Ali Al-Maliki.

## Trade tops talks between minister, Bahrain envoy

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Sayed Yousef Al-Rifai met with Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the State of Kuwait Salah Ali Al-Maliki recently.

During the meeting, they reviewed the fraternal and historical relations between the leaders and people of the two brotherly countries.

They also exchanged views on financial and investment cooperation and partnership opportunities for the private sector, considering the potential in various development and commercial sectors in both countries.

## Patrol cops arrest man with big variety drugs

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: During a field security patrol, the Capital Security Command, represented by the Security and Guards Department, apprehended an individual in possession of 23 pills suspected to be the narcotic substance 'Lyrica', two sachets containing a white substance suspected to be narcotics, 14 pieces suspected to be hashish, and a bag containing approximately half a kilogram of suspected marijuana, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

Authorities also seized six rolling papers, three precision scales used for weighing and preparing narcotics, and a quantity of empty bags.

The suspect, along with the seized items, was referred to the competent authorities for the necessary legal procedures.

The Ministry of Interior affirmed the continuation of its intensive security campaigns across various areas with unwavering resolve to combat drug trafficking.

It also urged the public to cooperate with security authorities and report any suspicious behavior or activities via the Emergency Hotline 112.

## Other Voices

### How to stop the upcoming crisis ?

By Ahmad alsarraf

THIS issue is extremely important and difficult, and few will take action on it. I am no better than anyone else; I am just sounding the alarm.

An article in *The New York Times* stated that diet and exercise are essential for health and well-being. However, for thousands of years, humanity lived unaware of this connection, which only became widely recognized in 1955 when US President Eisenhower suffered a heart attack at the age of 64.

Eisenhower was a symbol of American strength and vitality, which led doctors to investigate what had happened to such an active individual.

The renowned Dr. Paul Dudley White studied the case and raised awareness about heart disease and how to reduce risk. This marked the beginning of recognizing the importance of diet and exercise and their role in mortality. Modern lifestyles have led people to spend more time in offices and less time engaging in outdoor physical activity.

Then came the term "low-fat," the running craze spread, Jane Fonda's workout videos became popular, and the world began to view food and exercise in a different light.

However, this did not last long, as people once again became absorbed by emails and mobile phones. This reduced the ability to focus on mental tasks, and deep work gradually disappeared from many people's lives. Attention spans declined compared to the past.

This decline has been further influenced by the rise of artificial intelligence and the widespread use of platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, where frequent use has been associated with reduced critical thinking in some cases. Brain connectivity and reasoning - the foundation of understanding life and developing moral imagination - have also been affected.

This cognitive crisis may seem inevitable, a side effect of unstoppable innovation. But should we really accept this gradual decline in our thinking abilities as a foregone conclusion?

We must remember that, in a short period, we have changed the way we think about health. This should motivate us to seek a similarly revolutionary and rapid approach to addressing the decline in our thinking capabilities by taking a stand against "processed content," just as we did against processed foods. We must avoid mental distractions and pause to realize that using these tools, with all their tempting benefits, does not justify their harms.

Governments can support efforts to improve digital nutrition, just as they have previously restricted harmful substances such as alcohol and tobacco, and encourage a return to reading, whether serious or recreational, and reducing constant reliance on phone screens. A recent study showed that assigning difficult tasks to artificial intelligence has led to increased mental fatigue.

We use artificial intelligence not because it always improves job performance, but because it helps us avoid moments of deep concentration. The more we rely on artificial intelligence, the more our cognitive abilities deteriorate. Therefore, the problems are likely to worsen. To avoid disaster, we need a comprehensive effort to defend our minds against the "digital forces" that may undermine our way of thinking.


The major problem is that the global economy, represented by the New York Stock Exchange, has become increasingly dependent on the products of the companies this article warns against.

There does not seem to be any "governmental force" that can stand up to this formidable challenge as it did with fast-food companies, cigarette companies, and others. The convenience and entertainment offered by fast-paced communication tools and platforms are difficult for most people to resist. Perhaps it is time we make a real decision to work towards changing this reality. Humanity has done it before, and it can do it again.

A friend, a former prisoner, said she emerged from her brief experience physically and mentally free after ending her previous "forced" attachment to her mobile phone.



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# MoCI forms price-monitoring panel, greenlights gold expo

New body to track inflation, stabilize supply

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

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26: Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Boodai issued two new ministerial decrees – one on the establishment of a central committee to monitor commodity price developments in the local market and the other authorizes the Kuwait International Fair Company to organize the 25th International Gold and Jewelry Exhibition from June 22-27 at the Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref.**

Ministerial Decree No. 43/2026, which was published in the official gazette, 'Kuwait Al-Youm', stipulates the formation of a central committee tasked to monitor the availability of essential commodities and track price trends in the local market.

The committee is chaired by the undersecretary of the ministry and includes representatives from several government agencies and the commercial and cooperative sectors. It is in charge of studying supply and demand conditions, analyzing economic and commercial factors affecting price stability, monitoring local inflation indicators, analyzing their causes and impact on markets and consumers, monitoring the efficiency of supply chains, identifying disruptions that may affect the flow and availability of goods in the local market, proposing policies and procedures to enhance market efficiency and support fair competition in accordance with the provisions of the Competition Protection Authority Law, and proposing measures to address harmful trade practices, including dumping, as stipulated by the relevant legislation.

The decree grants the committee



Boodai

the authority to approve and adjust commodity prices in cooperative societies, review applications for the introduction of new products, and develop a pricing mechanism based on clear, consistent, measurable and monitorable criteria, thus, contributing to market stability and transparency.

It mandates the committee submit periodic reports to the minister containing comprehensive analyses of price developments, inflation indicators, and supply chain conditions. These reports will be accompanied by recommendations and proposed regulatory measures to address market imbalances and mitigate the effects of inflation.

The committee is also authorized to form specialized subcommittees to conduct the necessary technical studies and analyses within its scope of work.

On the other hand, Ministerial Decree No. 44/2026 states that the ministry approved the organization of the 25th International Gold and Jewelry Exhibition at the International Fairgrounds in Mishref, specifying morning and evening opening hours to accommodate visitors throughout the exhibition.

It regulates the mechanisms for displaying and selling precious metals, and permits the display of unstamped items at the temporary customs warehouse, provided that customs fees are paid and the pieces are stamped according to legal procedures before sale and delivery to buyers.

The decision obligates exhibitors to attach detailed data cards for each displayed item, along with photographs of pieces of high artistic value, and to document their serial numbers and specifications in the lists approved by the Precious Metals Department at the ministry.

The ministry requires the submission of detailed list of exhibition participants at least one week prior to its opening, in compliance with the regulations and decisions governing trade fairs.

Direct sales to the public are permitted, provided that no item is delivered before the completion of the stamping procedures and payment of the prescribed fees.

The participating entities are obligated to re-export unsold items within seven days of the conclusion of the exhibition, under the supervision of the relevant authorities.

## Crown Prince, PM extend greetings

### HH Amir congratulates Pres of Georgia on Independence Day

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26, (KUNA):** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable Tuesday to Georgian President Mikheil Kavelashvili congratulating him on his country's Independence Day.

His Highness the Amir wished the president continued good health and Georgia and its people further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-

Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable Tuesday to Georgian President Mikheil Kavelashvili congratulating him on his country's Independence Day, and wishing him continued good health and wellbeing.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable Tuesday to Georgian President Mikheil Kavelashvili congratulating him on his country's Independence Day.

## First phase covers 300,000 units

### CAPT approves smart meter tender

By Mohammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26:** The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) approved the request of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to issue a tender for the supply, installation, operation and maintenance of smart water meters, setting the deadline for submitting bids on June 23.

This is for the supply 300,000 smart meters in the first phase, supporting the efforts to increase the targeted digital transformation rates in the development plan in various government entities.

These smart meters will enable the ministry to conduct accurate remote consumption readings, as well as detect leaks and meter tampering, thus, enhancing efforts to rationalize water consumption and reduce losses.

The meters utilize modern technologies that allow the automatic transmission of readings to the central system of the minis-

try, thus, improving monitoring and consumption management efficiency.

The ministry finalized the technical specifications for the tender after studying meter models used in other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and identifying specifications suitable for the conditions and climate of Kuwait. These specifications and technical standards will be included in the tender documents to ensure compliance by competing companies.

In a related development, CAPT also approved the request of the ministry to issue a tender for the supply and installation of 132 kV underground cables for the two main substations in Amghara Industrial Area, with the aim of strengthening the 132 kV and 33 kV electrical networks.

The project is in line with the plan of the ministry to develop the electrical infrastructure and meet the increasing demand for power in industrial areas.

## Municipal Committee advances accessibility rules

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26:** The Committee for People with Disabilities at the Municipal Council, chaired by Eng. Farah Al-Roumi, met on Sunday, during which it approved the proposal of members Sharifa Al-

Shalfan and Farah Al-Roumi regarding regulations for adapting existing public facilities and buildings for people with disabilities.

The committee recommended coordination between the Kuwait Municipality and the Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA) to form a joint committee to monitor the im-

plementation of accessibility requirements for people with disabilities and the Kuwait Accessibility Code, based on a report from the Legal Department at the Municipality.

In addition, the committee referred to the executive branch a proposal to activate digital monitoring to enhance comprehensive access to

the Kuwait Accessibility Code and activate its implementation mechanisms.

Meanwhile, the questions submitted by Farah Al-Roumi regarding activating monitoring and inspection to ensure compliance with requirements for facilitating access for people with disabilities were shelved.

## Continued from Page 1

### Ambassadors hail

They pointed out that Eid Al-Adha embodies noble human and religious values that reinforce solidarity, tolerance and coexistence among peoples, wishing Kuwait, its leaders, government and people continuous progress and prosperity.

Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt Mohamed Abu Al-Wafa extended his sincere congratulations to His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, His Highness the Prime Minister and the Kuwaiti people. He wished Kuwait more progress and prosperity, while confirming the deep-rooted fraternal and historical relations between the two countries, distinguished by ongoing development and coordination.

Sudanese Ambassador Awadh Al-Karim Al-Rayah Balla extended his warmest congratulations to the Kuwaiti leadership and people, praying that Allah will protect Kuwait and grant it permanent security and stability. He also praised the wisdom of the Kuwaiti leaders and the unity of Kuwaitis.

Tunisian Ambassador Mohamed Boudali congratulated the Kuwaiti leaders and people, emphasizing the deep fraternal relations and shared commitment to strengthen cooperation between the two countries.

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco Ali bin Issa greeted His Highness the Amir and his brother, King Mohammed VI, on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha. He prayed to Almighty Allah that this occasion returns goodness, prosperity and blessings to both countries and their brotherly peoples.

Ambassador of the Russian Federation Vladimir Zheltov expressed his warmest greetings to the Kuwaiti leadership and people, emphasizing that Eid Al-Adha is a manifestation of the values of goodness and human solidarity. He commended the humanitarian and charitable role played by the State of Kuwait at the regional and international levels.

Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman Dr. Saleh Al-Kharousi congratulated His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, the government and the Kuwaiti people on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha. He wished more progress and prosperity for Kuwait and the Arab and Islamic nations and prayed that Allah will grant them lasting security and stability.

Ambassador of the State of Palestine Rami Tahboub sent his congratulations to the Kuwaiti leaders and people. He wished Kuwait lasting security, stability and prosperity, emphasizing the deep fraternal ties between the Palestinian and Kuwaiti nations. He expressed appreciation for the supportive stances of Kuwait on the Palestinian cause in various international forums.

Ambassador of the European Union Anne Koistinen conveyed her warmest congratulations to the Kuwaiti leaders and people, affirming that Eid Al-Adha embodies the values of sacrifice, generosity and friendship among nations.

The French Ambassador Olivier Gauvin extended his congratulations to the Kuwaiti leaders and people, stressing full solidarity of his country with Kuwait during these delicate times in the region, and wishing that this blessed occasion will bring peace and tranquility to everyone.

Pakistani Ambassador Zafar Iqbal extended his warmest congratulations to the Kuwaiti leaders, indicating that Kuwaiti-Pakistani relations are considered a model of fraternal ties built on trust, respect and fruitful cooperation. He said his country is keen on supporting Kuwait in its efforts to maintain its sovereignty, security and stability.

Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus Andreas Panayiotou greeted the Kuwaiti leaders, asserting that his country is keen on strengthening the friendship and cooperation with Kuwait in different fields.

Ambassador of Albania Alier Hosa emphasized the depth of the relationship between Kuwait and Albania, while praising the humanitarian and developmental roles that Kuwait plays in supporting Albania through development projects and humanitarian aid.

Ambassador of Peru Carlos Enrique Tomás Martín Jiménez Gil-Fortoul expressed his appreciation to Kuwait and its wise leadership for their responsible and effective management of the recent regional crisis. He lauded the measures taken by the Kuwaiti authorities to maintain national security and the safety of its residents.

Ambassador of Cuba Alan Pérez Torres stressed that relations between Kuwait and Cuba have been based on mutual respect, cooperation and understanding for over five decades. He praised the constructive role of Kuwait in promoting dialogue, peace and humanitarian values.

Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia Arsen Arakelyan wished continuous security, safety and prosperity for Kuwait, indicating that his country is keen on solidifying bilateral relations and expanding cooperation between the two nations.

Ambassador of the Philippines Jose Almodovar Cabrera III extended his warmest congratulations to the Kuwaiti leaders, stressing that Eid Al-Adha is an occasion for reaffirming commitment to the values of peace, compassion, solidarity and brotherhood among peoples.

Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Ju Myong Chol underscored the importance of strengthening bilateral relations between his country and Kuwait. He confirmed the commitment to expand cooperation in various fields to serve the interests of both friendly nations.

Ukrainian Ambassador Maksym Subkh expressed his appreciation for the noble values embodied by the Kuwaiti people during the Eid Al-Adha celebrations. He said the occasion is an opportunity to strengthen ties between peoples and promote the coexistence and solidarity.

Patriarchal Vicar of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church in Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf Archimandrite Boutros Gharib extended his warmest congratulations to the Kuwaiti leaders and people, praying that Allah will grant Kuwait security, peace and stability, and that Eid Al-Adha will be an occasion to spread mercy and peaceful coexistence.

Father Yassa Zakaria, priest of the Holy Family Cathedral for Coptic Catholics in Kuwait, congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha, wishing him continuous good health and wellbeing.

He also prayed for the well-being of Kuwait, a model of love, coexistence and brotherhood, and for God to grant it lasting security, stability and prosperity.

He further extended his greetings to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah, the government and the people of Kuwait on this blessed occasion.

Palestinian Ambassador Rami Tahboub sent a congratulatory cable to Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah, conveying his greetings and that of the Palestinian community residing in Kuwait, imploring Allah Almighty to bring this occasion back to everyone with goodness, prosperity and blessings.

The Moroccan ambassador also sent a message to Al-Jarallah, wishing him and the staff good health, and more prosperity and progress for the Kuwaiti and Moroccan peoples under their wise leaders.



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## Continued from Page 1

## Amir extends

His Highness the Amir asked Allah to repeat this blessed occasion on Kuwait, and Arab and Muslim nations with progress, goodness and development.

His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah Almighty to maintain security and safety as well as prosperity to the dear homeland, and wished success to all nationals for making further progress and accomplishments.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also received on Tuesday congratulatory cables on Eid Al-Adha from His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir also received cables from His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Kuwait National Guard Chief Sheikh Mubarak Humoud Al-Sabah, His Highness Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Hamad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah.

In their cables, their Highness expressed best wishes and prayers on the blessed occasion, wishing many returns.

In turn, His Highness the Amir thanked them for their kind words and sentiments.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meanwhile exchanged congratulations on Eid Al-Adha with Arab and Muslim leaders.

In his cables on Tuesday, His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah Almighty to return this blessed occasion on Arab and Muslim nations with goodness, blessings, and further stability and security.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Tuesday shared greetings and congratulations with Arab and Muslim leaders, kings and GCC crown princes on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha.

In his cables, His Highness the Crown Prince wished both Arab and Muslim nations goodness, blessings, security and stability.

Kuwaiti officials extended Eid Al-Adha greetings on Tuesday to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and the Kuwaiti people.

President of the Supreme Judicial Council and Court of Cassation, Dr. Adel Bouresli, conveyed his heartfelt congratulations, wishing Kuwait and the Arab and Islamic nations continued goodness, blessings, security, and

stability.

Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Mubarak Humoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also sent his congratulations to the Amir, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and the Crown Prince. In a statement to KUNA, he expressed his wishes on behalf of all National Guard personnel, praying for the Amir's continued health and success, and for Kuwait's sustained progress, security, and prosperity under its wise leadership.

Deputy Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah similarly extended greetings to the Amir and Crown Prince, wishing them good health and expressing hopes for continued stability and prosperity for Kuwait.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Al-Mousherji conveyed his congratulations to the Amir, Crown Prince, and Prime Minister, praying for their good health and for continued blessings, prosperity, and development for Kuwait and its people.

Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi also extended greetings to the leadership, emphasizing that Eid Al-Adha reflects values of solidarity and unity. He highlighted Kuwait's ongoing development under its leadership and reaffirmed the ministry's commitment to advancing healthcare services, infrastructure, and innovation, while praising the dedication of medical and administrative staff.

Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait expressed his congratulations, wishing the leadership and Kuwait continued health, prosperity, and security.

Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr. Mohammad Al-Wasmi extended similar greetings, affirming continued efforts to serve Kuwait and ensure the safe return of pilgrims during Hajj, while wishing the nation further blessings and stability.

Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jallal also conveyed his congratulations, expressing hopes for Kuwait's continued prosperity, security, and well-being under its leadership.

Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Rifai extended his sincere congratulations to the leadership, praying that the occasion returns with goodness, prosperity, and blessings for Kuwait and the Arab and Islamic nations.

Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Sabeeh Al-Mukhaizeem said the occasion reflects unity and solidarity, stressing the importance of valuing security and stability. He affirmed the ministry's ongoing efforts to enhance electricity and water systems in line with Kuwait's sustainable development goals.

Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthlal Al-Huwailah extended her congratulations, praying for continued health

and well-being for the leadership and for peace and prosperity across Kuwait and the wider Arab and Islamic worlds.

Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Boodai conveyed his congratulations on behalf of the ministry's staff, praying for Kuwait's continued prosperity and for the leadership's lasting health, while wishing the country enduring security and progress.

Oil Minister Tareq Al-Roumi described Eid Al-Adha as a reflection of solidarity and generosity, affirming that the oil sector continues to advance key development projects as a cornerstone of the national economy, and wishing Kuwait ongoing development and stability.

Minister for Development and Sustainability Affairs Reem Al-Fulaij also extended her congratulations, noting that the occasion presents an opportunity to cooperation in pursuit of a prosperous future, while wishing Kuwait continued security and growth.

## Kuwaiti pilgrims

Meanwhile, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Tuesday called Acting Undersecretary of the Minister of Islamic Affairs and Chief of the Kuwaiti Hajj Mission Dr. Suleiman Al-Swailem.

During the phone call, His Highness Ahmad Abdullah conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and their wishes for a safe and smooth pilgrimage.

His Highness the Prime Minister inquired about the conditions of Kuwaiti pilgrims and services provided by the Kuwaiti Hajj Mission, applauding the Kuwaiti Hajj Mission and all involved government agencies for their efforts in ensuring the care and safety of the pilgrims and enabling them to perform their rituals with ease and comfort.

His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah also expressed his deep appreciation for the significant role played by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, its leadership, government, and people, in organizing the Hajj season and providing advanced services and resources to serve the pilgrims.

He also appreciated relevant authorities' outstanding efforts to create a safe and convenient environment for pilgrims from around the world.

In highly spiritual, peaceful and serene atmosphere, millions of Muslim pilgrims started observing "the Standing at Arafat," the ultimate pinnacle of Hajj, on Tuesday.

They will stay on the plains of Mount Arafat, near Holy Makkah, until sunset and then head to Muzdalifah

- an open plain between Mount Arafat and Mina.

They spend the day chanting phrases of praise and glorification of Allah, the Almighty.

Under this prescribed rite and according to Sunna (tradition) of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), the pilgrims will perform Al-Zuhr (the midday) and Al-Asr (afternoon) prayers in a conjoined and brief way.

Standing at Arafat, also known as the Day of Arafat, is observed annually by the Muslim pilgrim on the ninth day of Dhu al-Hijjah of the lunar Islamic calendar.

Every year, the Saudi authorities make their utmost to ensure the safety and convenience of the pilgrims, deploying large numbers of security personnel and vehicles at all holy sites.

## Father Bigoul

and Ancient Archdiocese of Jerusalem, all Palestine and the Near East., as well as of the priests of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Kuwait.

Father Bigoul explained that major holidays carry profound human and spiritual meanings, as they offer people an opportunity for rapprochement, forgiveness, and the restoration of peace. Holidays restore feelings of tranquillity and human warmth that society needs at all times.

What distinguishes holidays in Kuwait is their refined social spirit, where feelings of love and connection are renewed, and family gatherings, diwanias, and visits become spaces for coming together and strengthening human relationships. Eid al-Adha also reinforces the meanings of sacrifice, giving, and altruism, and reminds people of the importance of love, doing good, and supporting others.

Father Bigoul pointed out that this year's holidays come at a time when people are increasingly in need of wisdom, tranquillity, and the adoption of a language of dialogue.

He stressed the importance of adhering to human values that bring people closer together and provide hope and peace.

Father Bigoul praised the wisdom of the political leadership in Kuwait, headed by His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (May God protect and preserve him).

He affirmed that the State of Kuwait, throughout its history, has presented a balanced model of moderation, tolerance, and respect for humanity and its rights.

Father Bigoul said Kuwait, through the wisdom of its leadership and the steadfastness of its approach, has maintained its stability and its distinguished humanitarian standing, which is highly valued by the international

community.

He concluded by expressing his wishes that the blessed Eid Al-Adha would bring goodness and peace to the region and the world, and that God would continue to bestow upon the State of Kuwait the blessings of security, stability, and love.

## Fraudulent travel

The center emphasized the importance of avoiding interaction with suspicious links in order to protect personal data.

## Kuwait joins

and remembrance events dedicated to fallen troops.

Speaking to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on the occasion, Kuwaiti Ambassador to the United States Sheikh Zain Al-Sabah stated, "On Memorial Day, we remember with deep appreciation those who sacrificed their lives in defense of freedom. The State of Kuwait will never forget their sacrifices."

"As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, we remember that the bonds between our two countries were forged at pivotal moments in history and solidified by shared stances and sacrifices," Sheikh Zain added, referencing the United States' leadership of the international coalition that liberated Kuwait in 1991.

The Ambassador further noted, "With the upcoming dedication of the National Desert Storm Memorial this fall, we continue to honor those who stood with Kuwait and contributed to shaping the course of history."

The cornerstone ceremony of the annual holiday, observed on the last Monday of May, took place at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C., where the US President laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to honor the nation's fallen service members.

The State of Kuwait maintained its traditional participation in the prominent commemoration parade held along Constitution Avenue, connecting the White House and the Capitol, represented by a formal diplomatic delegation from the Kuwaiti Embassy in Washington.

According to historical records from the National Cemetery Administration of the US Department of Veterans Affairs, the occasion originated after the American Civil War as "Decoration Day," during which citizens decorated the graves of fallen soldiers with flowers and flags.

The administration noted that the US Congress recognized Waterloo, New York, as the official "birthplace of Memorial Day" in 1966, before subsequently establishing it as a federal holiday observed on the last Monday of May starting in 1971.

## Heirs protected

He pointed out that some heirs mistakenly assume they must immediately pay the debt following the death of the borrower which, in some cases, prompts them to undertake financial obligations without legal justification.

He underscored the importance of carefully reviewing the loan contract and insurance provisions before making financial commitments.

Attorney Mohammad Al-Rifai affirmed that the established legal doctrine prevents heirs from being pursued through their personal assets when the debt is covered by a valid insurance policy. He stated that, under such circumstances, the insurance company is the entity legally obligated to pay the debt to the bank.

He stated that banking procedures following a borrower's death are generally confined to completing official formalities, including the submission of the death certificate, identification of heirs, and notification of the insurance provider. He stressed that these procedures do not constitute a transfer of liability to the heirs. He added that, in such cases, the estate remains shielded from claims arising from the insured loan.

He said the objective of banking insurance is to maintain financial stability for the family and prevent additional hardship after the loss of the breadwinner.

He disclosed that Kuwaiti courts issued numerous judgments reinforcing this principle, emphasizing that the judiciary rejects any claims exceeding the limits established by the insurance policy and applicable law.

Attorney Saad Al-Mutairi explained that the legal position changes if the loan is not covered by insurance or if the insurance policy excludes the disputed case of death. "In such situations, the outstanding debt becomes an obligation of the estate," he added.

He stated that debts in these circumstances must be settled from the assets of the estate before inheritance is distributed among the heirs, as repayment of liabilities legally takes priority over the division of inherited property.

However, he emphasized that heirs are not personally responsible for repayment beyond the value of their respective shares in the estate.

He pointed out that certain loans may contain special conditions or insurance exclusions linked to the cause of death or the validity period of the policy, indicating this requires thorough legal assessment of each case individually in order to determine liability accurately.

He added that credit insurance provides a "protective umbrella" for both the family and the bank by safeguarding the rights of lenders without causing harm to the heirs or exhausting the resources of the estate.



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US president lauds administration efforts exerted in immigration

## Trump's no-bond policy for immigrants in custody played out for years in Tacoma

TACOMA, Wash., May 26. (Agencies): Four immigration judges in Washington state were years ahead of a sea change in immigration enforcement that has reversed a long American tradition.

The denial of bond for many held on immigration charges has unleashed tens of thousands of lawsuits since July, alleging violations of constitutional rights against illegal confinement. The Trump administration suffered a legal setback this month when an appeals court knocked down its policy after two other appeals courts had agreed with it, setting up a likely showdown at the Supreme Court.

The practice had already played out for years in Tacoma, where immigration judges at the Northwest ICE Processing Center started denying bond early this decade. Few people noticed outside the immigration attorneys there. But when the Trump administration adopted the theory last year, it echoed the judges' reasoning.

Neil Floyd, the only one of the four Tacoma judges who agreed to talk to The Associated Press, said

clerks researched the issue for about six months before the judges decided Congress never authorized them to grant bond.

"We made the decision that we were going to do it collectively because it was too big a decision for someone to step out that far on their own," said Floyd, who became the top federal prosecutor in Seattle during President Donald Trump's second term.

The judges took their cue from a 1996 law that states that "applicants for admission" to the United States must be detained. The law was long interpreted as affecting people recently crossing the border without legal permission. People living here for years were categorized under a different statute that allowed bond hearings.

The Tacoma judges may seem like unlikely figures to spearhead such radical change. While all four - Theresa Scala, the chief Tacoma judge at the time; John Odell; Tammy Fitting; and Floyd - started their careers as US Immigration and Customs Enforcement lawyers, they each granted asylum at rates slightly higher



The Northwest ICE Processing Center in Tacoma, Wash., seen from the air on Feb 18, 2024, where Japanese American organizers from Tsuru for Solidarity joined local immigrant rights group La Resistencia in a protest to call for its shutdown. (AP)

than the national average.

Floyd, who left Tacoma after Trump took office last year to advise the FBI on immigration law before moving to his current position, said the judges' conclusion was a matter

of fairness based on the law.

"It is the right interpretation of the law, and it's the only fair one, because if you enter the United States the right way, by coming and knocking on the door to ask for asylum at a

port of entry, the law is 100% clear," Floyd said. "And it has been from the beginning that you are detained until we decide whether or not we're going to let you in."

Immigration lawyers in Tacoma were stunned. They scoured the nation for anything similar and found nothing.

"It was from our perspective, a pretty blatantly prosecutorial push to keep people locked up," said Matt Adams, an attorney for Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, which sued over the practice. The case has not yet been scheduled for trial.

The lawsuit, filed in March 2025, alleges that the Tacoma judges ignored decades of precedent.

The Justice Department's Executive Office for Immigration Review, which operates more than 70 immigration courts nationwide, did not respond to requests for comment.

In July, ICE announced a major change that mirrors the Tacoma judges' view, stating that immigrants who have been in the US for years are "applicants for admission" if they didn't enter the U.S. legally and, as a result, were subject to man-

datory detention.

It began arguing against all bond hearings. The Justice Department's Board of Immigration Appeals, which sets policy for courts, agreed with ICE's arguments in September.

The number of people in ICE custody roughly doubled last year, peaking at about 75,000 in January. ICE plans to spend \$38.3 billion to increase detention to 92,300 beds by the end of November, largely by opening warehouses, or "megacenters," that house up to 10,000 people each. Judges say massive ICE raids have compounded the strain.

Once eligible for bond consideration, some 2 million immigrants now face mandatory detention if arrested. Immigrant detainees have filed more than 40,000 lawsuits since Trump returned to office 16 months ago, according to an AP tally.

Despite the Trump administration's stance, many immigrants have succeeded in the courts. Some federal judges have ordered immediate freedom, while others send cases back to immigration court for bond hearings.

## US schools face backlash on digital devices as screens saturate classrooms

WASHINGTON, May 26, (AP): Just a few years ago, America's public schools were rushing to get every child a laptop. Los Angeles middle school teacher Anna Soffer remembers it well: "The idea was that technology is the future, so we need to put tech in every child's hands."

Now, the conversation has flipped. After pouring billions of dollars into laptops, tablets and learning apps, many schools are facing a digital reckoning. Classrooms have become saturated with screens, and a growing number of parents, teachers and school districts are saying it is time to scale back.

"The Chromebook is just a world of distraction," says Soffer, who teaches 6th grade English and history. She favors pen-and-paper assignments but is required to use laptops and online apps for certain activities. "Every day, I'm battling, 'Who would you rather listen to, Ms. Soffer or Minecraft?'"

The Los Angeles Unified School District, where Soffer teaches, recently became the first major school district to say it will stop giving devices to its youngest students. It is part of a new screen-time policy taking effect in the fall across the country's second-largest school system.

A sweeping resolution passed last month by the Los Angeles school board requires the district to elimi-



LuAnn Oliver's son demonstrates how he uses an iPad for his classes during a meeting where a group of school parents discussed ways to push back against screen time at the children's school on May 9, in Arlington, Va. (AP)

nate devices until second grade; set daily and weekly screen limits for all higher grades; block YouTube on school devices; and ban the use of devices at lunch and recess in elementary and middle school. The district will also audit its education technology contracts, which the teachers union says amount to \$1.6 billion.

The Los Angeles crackdown is adding momentum to calls for reform

emerging around the country. In many cases, parents lobbied a few years ago for school cellphone bans, which have now become the norm. Realizing phones weren't the only classroom distraction, they pivoted to a new target: school-issued devices.

The campaign for change is becoming a public policy issue. At least 14 states have proposed laws to limit screen time in schools, according to Ballotpedia.

What public finds out is up to president

## Trump to get annual medical check up

WASHINGTON, May 26, (AP): US President Donald Trump is scheduled to get a medical exam on Tuesday, putting his health under renewed public scrutiny after he has worked to dismiss concerns over his age and stamina.

The 79-year-old president is scheduled to visit Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for what the White House described as annual preventative medical and dental checkups. It will be Trump's fourth publicly disclosed medical exam since he returned to office for a second term, and comes as he tries to project strength ahead of midterm elections that will test his sway with voters.

For decades, administrations have released selected results from presidential physicals, offering the public a glimpse at the commander-in-chief's health. But the results are filtered through the White House and must be approved by the president, raising questions about what the public does and doesn't get to see.

Trump turns 80 next month and was the oldest person elected US president. His predecessor, former President Joe Biden, was 82 when he left office, dropping out of the 2024 presidential race because of



US President Donald Trump speaks during the 158th National Memorial Day Observance coinciding with the nation's 250th anniversary, at the Memorial Amphitheater in Arlington National Cemetery on May 25, in Arlington, Va. (AP)

widespread concerns he was too old for the job.

A Washington Post/ABC News/Ipsos poll conducted in April found that less than half of U.S. adults think Trump has the mental sharpness or physical health to serve effectively as president.

"I think concern for the president's physical health is probably at an all-time high, and I think advanced physical age is the No. 1 concern," said Dr. Jeffrey

Kuhlman, who served as a White House physician for more than a decade under former presidents Barack Obama, George W. Bush and Bill Clinton.

For a president of Trump's age, a complete physical would be expected to include advanced heart testing, screening for common cancers and a cognitive assessment, along with basics like height, weight and blood pressure, Kuhlman said.

## PM Carney warns Alberta independence vote from Canada could echo Brexit as 'dangerous bluff'

TORONTO, May 26, (AP): Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on Monday compared Alberta's vote on whether to move toward independence to Brexit, calling it a potential "dangerous bluff."

Danielle Smith, the premier of Canada's oil-rich province of Alberta, said last week a vote would be held Oct. 19 on whether Alberta should stay in Canada or take legal steps under the Constitution to hold a binding referendum on leaving.

Carney drew on his experience with Brexit in his comments. Carney was the governor of the Bank of England in 2016 when Britain voted to leave the European Union, and he helped navigate the central bank through it.

"I saw firsthand what happened in the United Kingdom when the view was, 'Vote for this, it'll be soft and then we'll negotiate, etc.," Carney said. "They're still 10 years later trying to undo what people didn't think they were voting for, but what they ended up having."



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney talks to reporters as he takes part in an event at a new housing development in Orleans, Ont., on May 25. (AP)

Smith's party didn't run on or mention a referendum in the last provincial election campaign.

Carney said the vote is not help-

ful when he's trying to attract investment to Canada. He suggested it is undemocratic.

"Is it the democratic will of Alber-

tans? Did they vote for this in the last provincial election? No, they didn't. It wasn't on the ballot paper," Carney said.

Smith has said she supports Alberta remaining in Canada. Some have compared her stance to the one of Britain's then-Prime Minister David Cameron ahead of the Brexit referendum, which he embraced as a way to manage a vocal faction of his ruling party while not wanting the U.K. to leave the European Union.

Carney is working on getting a new oil pipeline built from Alberta to Canada's Pacific coast. Many Albertans have long complained that Ottawa hasn't done enough to get Alberta's vast oil reserves to Asian markets.

"We have to be very careful about this. There's a very strong positive case for Canada, a strong Alberta in a united Canada," Carney said. "I look forward to making that case with many, many other Albertans and Canadians over the course of the next 150 days."

## Fidias to keep EU Parliament job after winning Cyprus seat

NICOSIA, Cyprus, May 26, (AP): Cypriot YouTuber and TikTok star **Fidias Panayiotou**, who translated his online popularity into a meteoric political career at home and in Europe, said Monday that he'll hold onto his European Parliament seat, despite winning one in Cyprus' House of Representatives.

"I'll stay in the European Parliament because it would be good for the Direct Democracy party to have a European Parliament member," Fidias, who goes by his first name, told reporters before a proclamation ceremony.

"We could've done better but we're happy with what has happened, this is a small victory."

Fidias whipped up much speculation by being coy about his political future throughout his campaign.

It was only six months ago that Fidias, 26, founded the Direct Democracy party. He said that the party was intended to upend the established political order in Cyprus and abroad by enabling ordinary citizens to have a say in formulating party policy and declare themselves party candidates through an online application.

Direct Democracy received 5.4% of total votes in Sunday's parliamentary election and four seats in the 56-member House. Fidias, who garnered the most votes out of all of his party's candidates, ceded his seat to runner-up Yiannis Laouris.

Even though it's a remarkable result for a group that eschewed the traditional way of wooing voters by outlining its policies, the result didn't live up to Fidias' own expectations. That's because nearly one in five voters cast their ballots for him in the June 2024 European Parliament election, even though he took no political positions, made no promises and didn't present a program for his time in office.



Fidias

## Kyiv warns to brace for possible barrage

## Russia maintains attacks on Ukraine

UKRAINE, May 26, (AP): Russia fired more than 100 drones and two ballistic missiles at Ukraine overnight, the Ukrainian air force said Tuesday, as the country's foreign ministry noted that Moscow's recent threat to hit Kyiv especially hard from the air brought nothing new.

Russia on Monday urged foreign citizens, including members of diplomatic missions, to leave the Ukrainian capital as quickly as possible and told residents to steer clear of military and government facilities. It said that "systemic strikes" on Kyiv were being prepared.

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told US Secretary of State Marco Rubio by phone Monday that the U.S. should evacuate its diplomatic staff from Kyiv, a foreign ministry statement said. Rubio didn't say whether the State Department would take that step, but expressed concern during a trip to India that the "terrible" war in Ukraine could escalate further.



Ukrainian servicemen of the Cerberus Ground Unmanned Systems Company of the 60th Separate Mechanized Brigade, Third Army Corps, conduct a drill with a combat ground drone during a training at the polygon in Kharkiv region, Ukraine, Sunday, May 24, 2026. (AP)

The Trump administration has tried for more than a year to stop the fighting that broke out after Russia's February 2022 invasion.

But its efforts yielded no significant breakthrough and are now on ice as Washington focuses on the Iran war.

## Europe

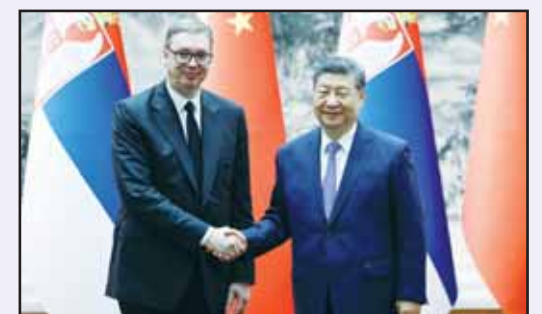
**Serbian president deepens ties with China:** Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic deepened ties with China on Monday during a trip to Beijing as he faced pressure at home from anti-government protests in his Balkan country, including a major rally that prompted clashes over the weekend.

After a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, the two leaders witnessed the signing of more than 20 cooperation agreements, covering areas such as politics, trade, technology and education, Chinese state broadcaster CCTV reported. During their talks, Xi told Vucic that their countries should strengthen exchanges and cooperation to push their comprehensive strategic partnership to new heights.

Xi also said both sides should expand cooperation in artificial intelligence, digital economy and green energy to develop new growth drivers. (AP)

**Parts of Europe swelter in record May heat:** Europe is baking under unseasonal heat that is shattering temperature records, including in the United Kingdom on Monday, and prompting government warnings after deaths were reported at amateur sports events in France.

The French sports minister, Marina Ferrari, posted condolences to the loved ones of a runner who died Sunday in a Paris race. Le Parisien newspaper reported that the 53-year-old man suffered a heart attack during the run in the capital's 20th arron-



Chinese President Xi Jinping and Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic shake hands after a signing ceremony at the Great Hall of the People, in Beijing, China on May 25. (AP)

dissement, and that firefighters were unable to revive him. (AP)

**Belgium train-bus collision kills 4:** A crash between a bus and a train traveling at high speed in northern Belgium killed four people, including two children, and injured five other children, prosecutors said Tuesday.

The injured children were taken to the hospital in a serious condition, spokeswoman Lisa De Wilde said at a news conference. The accident happened at a level crossing during the morning rush hour near the town of Buggenhout, about 30 kilometers (20 miles) northwest of the capital, Brussels. (AP)

## INTERNATIONAL



South Korean firefighters and rescue team try to search at the overpass collapsed while it was being dismantled in Seoul, South Korea on May 26. (AP)

### 3 dead in S.Korea after collapse at overpass demolition site

Three people were killed and three others were injured Tuesday when a decades-old overpass undergoing demolition partially collapsed in the South Korean capital, Seoul, fire officials said.

The accident occurred during a safety inspection after workers halted demolition work upon noticing that a part of the structure slightly sunk while concrete slabs were being cut, said Lee Jong-

woon, an official at Seoul's Seodaemun District Fire Station. The victims were crushed by debris and other wreckage after a section of a bridge deck suddenly collapsed, officials said. (AP)

## N.Korea launches close-range ballistic missile and other weapons over sea

SEOUL, South Korea, May 26, (AP) — North Korea launched a close-range ballistic missile and other weapons toward the sea on Tuesday, South Korea's military said, days after the leaders of Russia and China voiced their opposition to Western pressures on North Korea.

The missile fired from Jongju, a city near the North's west coast, flew about 80 kilometers (50 miles), South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said. North Korea launched other kinds of projectiles, it said, but didn't elaborate.

South Korean media, citing the military, reported the other weapons systems mobilized included multiple rocket launch systems. The reports said that the simultaneous launches of different kinds of weapons were likely meant to test an ability to evade South Korean and US defenses.

South Korea's military said it closely monitors activities in North Korea. It said that South Korea, with a solid alliance with the U.S., maintains a readiness to repel any provo-



A TV screen shows a reporting of North Korea's unidentified projectile, with file footage during a news program at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea on May 26. (AP)

cations by North Korea.

It was North Korea's first weapons launch event since April 19, when the country fired multiple short-range missiles in what state-media described as a demonstration of cluster bomb warheads.

North Korean leader Kim Jong

Un has focused on modernizing his nuclear and missile arsenals since his nuclear diplomacy with U.S. President Donald Trump collapsed in 2019. In recent years, Kim has expanded ties with Russia by sending troops and conventional arms to support its war efforts against Ukraine.

'We are deeply committed to this partnership'

## Quad ministers announce new Indo-Pacific initiatives on maritime security, energy

NEW DELHI, May 26, (AP) — Foreign ministers from Australia, India, Japan and the United States announced new initiatives on Tuesday on maritime security, port infrastructure and energy to boost cooperation in the Indo-Pacific to counter concerns about China's growing influence.

The announcements by the group of nations known as the Quad came after talks in New Delhi between India's Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi and Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong.

Speaking after the meeting, Rubio announced a new Indo-Pacific maritime surveillance initiative to integrate the four countries' surveillance capabilities and strengthen real-time information sharing across the region. He said the Quad would work with Fiji to upgrade port infrastructure in the Pacific islands, marking its first joint regional infrastructure project.

The ministers also launched an Indo-Pacific energy security initiative aimed at strengthening regional fuel and energy supply chains, with the US set to host a Quad fuel security forum later this year, Rubio said.

"We are deeply committed to this partnership. It is a linchpin in a cornerstone of our global strategy as a nation," he said.

Separately, India and the US signed a deal to strengthen cooperation on critical minerals as global concerns grow over reliance on China-dominated supplies.

Asked about the Quad agreements, China said that cooperation among countries should promote regional peace and stability and not target third parties.

"We do not support forming exclusive small groupings or bloc confrontation. Any cooperation should not undermine mutual trust and cooperation among regional countries," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said in Beijing.

The Quad group is a key strategic partnership for cooperation on maritime



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, (right), speaks as Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong, (left), India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, (second left), and Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi listen following a Quad ministerial meeting at Hyderabad House in New Delhi, India on May 26. (AP)

security, supply chains and regional strategy as China expands its military and economic influence in the Indo-Pacific.

Its members have 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.

The Quad meeting comes days after US President Donald Trump visited China, a trip closely watched in New Delhi for signs of any shift in Washington's approach toward Beijing.

Ahead of Tuesday's talks, Rubio said that Washington wants the Quad to move beyond being a dialogue platform and take more concrete action on issues including maritime security and critical minerals. He also said officials were working toward a summit of the four leaders later this year, although no date has been announced.

The four countries had hoped to hold a leaders' summit in India last year, but the plan was delayed because of strains in US-India relations, including disagreements over tariffs.

Jaishankar described the talks as "an exercise of considerable value," saying the ministers also discussed maritime trade, energy and fertilizer supplies, as well as critical minerals. He added that as economic activity, energy, trade and maritime commerce in the region grow, "the responsibilities of the Quad will grow commensurately, and we must prepare for that."

The leaders also discussed the Iran war and halted energy shipments through the Strait of Hormuz.

Australia's Wong said the Indo-Pacific was facing "acute economic stress" and warned that any closure of the strait would have serious consequences for regional energy security.

"We recognize the importance of maintaining the principle of freedom of navigation and our opposition to any tolling proposition," Wong said, referring to Iran's plan to charge vessels passing through the Strait of Hormuz.

She said the Quad reflects a shared commitment among four sovereign nations to a free and open Indo-Pacific.

## Cambodia's new conscription law takes effect in wake of conflict with Thailand

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, May 26, (AP) — Cambodia's new conscription law, which establishes penalties of up to five years in prison for those who evade military service, has come into effect, the country's Prime Minister Hun Manet said Monday.

The law was signed on Saturday by Senate president Hun Sen in his capacity as acting head of state while King Norodom Sihamoni undergoes medical treatment for prostate cancer in China.

The initiative for a new conscription law followed significant border fighting with Thailand that flared twice last year, resulting in approximately 100 deaths and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people.

The new law consists of eight chapters and 20 articles, replacing a 2006 statute that was never implemented and was considered outdated. It now requires Cambodian men aged 18 to 25 to serve two years in the military, while women may serve voluntarily. Individuals summoned for service must appear within 30 days of receiving notice or be considered as evading duty, unless a valid excuse is provided.

Penalties for evasion vary according to whether Cambodia is at peace or at war. During peacetime, an individual may face six months to two years in prison and a fine of \$250 to \$1,000. During war or a foreign attack, the pen-



Cambodian military members participate together with government civil servants in the country's 70th Independence Day, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on Nov 9, 2023. (AP)

alties increase to between two and five years in prison and a fine ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500.

#### Also:

**PHNOM PENH, Cambodia:** Cambodian opposition leader **Kem Sokha** was granted a royal pardon on Monday from a 27-year prison sentence for treason, a month after an appeals court affirmed his conviction and punishment.

Hun Sen, the Senate president acting as head of state in the absence of

King **Norodom Sihamoni**, issued the pardon freeing Kem Sokha from house arrest. Sihamoni is in China on an extended stay for medical treatment.

Prime Minister **Hun Manet**, in a statement posted on the Telegram social media platform, described the pardon as a step in strengthening national unity. Kem Sokha made no immediate public comment. His lawyers said the action did not lift a ban on him taking part in politics or leaving the country for five years after his sentence was over.

## Search on for seven trapped in Laos cave

BANGKOK, May 26, (AP) — Rescuers tried to reach seven villagers trapped inside a flooded cave in Laos for the seventh day on Tuesday, with difficult terrain and weather impeding their efforts. There has been no contact with them since they became trapped.

The villagers entered the cave in Xaisomboun province on May 19, but heavy rain triggered flash flooding that blocked the exit, according to Lao and Thai rescue teams involved in the operation.

The Lao organization Rescue Volunteer for People, which is working closely with the local authorities, posted on its Facebook page that Tuesday's operation plan includes exploring air shafts above the cave in hopes of identifying possible access points, and locating the trapped people.

Rescuers from neighboring Thailand also arrived at the site over the weekend to assist the operation.

According to rescuers, divers have navigated about 100 meters into the flooded, narrow cave. They believe the villagers may be trapped about 30 meters beyond the furthest point currently accessible. They are working to pump water out of the cave to aid the search efforts.

The site is in a remote area in Xaisomboun province's Longcheng district, which is about 120 kilometers (75 miles) north of the capital, Vientiane.



In this release Metta Tham Rescue Kalasin, rescuers work to reach seven people who have been trapped in a cave in Xaisomboun province, Laos on May 25. (AP)

### Africa

**Senegal president names new PM:** Senegal's president on Monday appointed a former banking executive as the new prime minister after his predecessor was sacked last week, a move that comes at a particularly tense moment as the African country grapples with debt and an internal crisis in the ruling party.



Faye

According to a statement read on national television, President **Bassirou Diomaye Faye** named Ahmadou Al Aminou Lo as the head of government, replacing Ousmane Sonko.

Sonko was sacked on Friday, after months of simmering tensions between him and the president. The sacking triggered the resignation of all the members of the government and its dissolution.

Lo will now have to form a new government. He was formerly an executive at the Central Bank of West African States, where he played a significant role in shaping monetary and economic policies at the regional level. (AP)

**3 dead after vehicle hits elephant in Uganda park:** A passenger van struck an elephant in a Ugandan national park, killing three people and injuring four others, police said.

The crash happened on Sunday on a paved road inside Murchison Falls National Park, police said in a statement on Monday.

The van was transporting employees of the Uganda Revenue Authority traveling from a city in northern Uganda to Kampala, the capital.

After hitting the animal, the driver "subsequently lost control of the vehicle," the police statement said. "Motorists are strongly urged to exercise extreme caution while driving through national parks and wildlife-protected areas." (AP)

## 'You have to stay alert to what is happening'

## Drone attacks raise fears as Colombians vote to elect prez

JAMUNDI, Colombia, May 26, (AP) — Gladys Marín only has to cross the street to reach a school where polling stations will open Sunday in her small town in Colombia. But she's still not sure she'll make the short walk, because fears for her safety could outweigh the chance to vote for the country's next president.

Her home in the southwestern village of Potrerito sits less than 100 meters (320 feet) from the police station, which has become a frequent target for drone-dropped explosives. Authorities blame the attacks on a rebel faction that rejected a peace agreement signed a decade ago with the Colombian government.

"You have to stay alert to what is happening, because we live very close to the police station," Marín said from her porch in this town about 470 kilometers from the capital, Bogotá.

Colombia will elect a new president and vice president on May 31 in what has been cast as a referendum on President Gustavo Petro's policies, most



A man rides his motorcycle past the ruins of homes destroyed five months earlier in an attack by dissidents of the former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, in Buenos Aires, Cauca, Colombia on May 20. (AP)

notably his controversial "total peace" initiative to negotiate with the country's remaining rebel groups.

By most accounts, violence tied to armed groups has worsened under Petro's watch.

According to Colombia's Electoral Observation Mission, 386 municipalities, or about a third of the country, are vulnerable to violence from illegal armed groups, and data from the Ideas for Peace Foundation think

tank indicates that roughly 27,000 people remain under arms nationwide. In Robles, a neighboring town in the Jamundi municipality, the streets leading to the police station are blocked by improvised barricades. The police are entrenched in sentry posts, using shelters made of sandbags and black fabric to scan the sky for any approaching drones.

"You pass by the police station with this sense of dread, looking up, hoping you won't run into a nasty surprise," said Eucaris Zamora, who had to vacate her home after a cylinder bomb struck it in October, leaving the building partially destroyed.

Guillermo Londoño, a security official in the region of Valle del Cauca, where Jamundi is located, said illegal armed groups in the area have sought to maximize damage through simultaneous, "swarm-style" drone strikes, marking a shift from previous tactics, where attackers would launch attacks with a single drone, reload it, and then resume their assault.

## Kuwaiti oil price dips to \$113.83 pb

KUWAIT CITY, May 26, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went down USD 6.98 cents to reach USD 113.83 per barrel on Monday, compared to USD 120.81 pb on Friday, according to the Kuwait Petroleum

Corporation (KPC) on Tuesday. In global markets, Brent crude dropped USD 7.24 to reach USD 96.30 pb, and West Texas Intermediate decreased USD 6.30 to reach USD 90.88 pb.

Strengthening international footprint

## KPI shifts focus to global fuel stations, EV expansion

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI) is now focusing on its international fuel stations, while continuing the implementation of fuel station projects in Kuwait, including eight stations in the first phase, pending the transfer of the local fuel station portfolio from Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) to KPI.

Sources told the newspaper that this move is based on the leadership and excellence of KPI in managing and partnering with more than 5,000 international fuel stations, mostly in Italy.

Sources said the strategy includes the opening of more than 500 fast-charging stations for electric vehicles in the Benelux region (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) in the next five years, through the KPI subsidiary, Q8 Electric, which is striving to become a major player in the field of sustainable mobility in Europe.

Sources pointed out that Q8 stations operating in various countries continue to innovate and find the best way to attract customers, particularly since the current goal is to provide 200 Bbox units (post office box services) at Q8 service stations in Belgium by the end of this year, adding that Bpost opened its 100th post office box at a Q8 station this week.

As part of its innovative approach in Belgium, Q8 opened its first digital restaurant on May 7 at the Liège-Grétry service station, where customers can order a wide variety of fresh meals, in line with the objective of the company to expand its food offerings in its stations. The digital restaurant supports the transformation of Q8 into a leader in sustainable transportation, offering a broad range

of shops and restaurants, sources added.

Sources confirmed that Q8 Electric has undertaken massive expansion in the fast charging network, indicating that its existing network offers charging cards and the Q8 app at more than 900,000 charging points throughout Europe and almost all charging stations in the Benelux region.

Sources revealed that starting this summer, the existing electric vehicle charging stations will be gradually rebranded from Tango to Q8 Electric. Sources explained this transformation is not just changing the name and visual identity, as it includes the integration of digital systems into the Q8 Electric network.

Q8 has become a leading fuel and energy company in the Benelux region, focusing on sustainable transportation in the Netherlands, where it operates 198 Tango service and charging stations. It recently opened its first transportation hub in partnership with Bakker Bart, offering charging infrastructure, food services and co-working spaces. It is also committed to developing more sustainable transportation options.

In addition to its partnerships and ownership of service stations in Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, the company is currently developing a network of service stations for passenger vehicles in Spain. This network will consist of stations under the Q8 and Q8 easy brands in Spain and Portugal.

In Sweden, the company owns OKQ8 in partnership with the Swedish OK Economic Association. The vision of OKQ8 is to be the ideal choice for drivers and energy consumers by getting closer to the mindset of consumers in order to provide the best benefits to its customers.

## Oil giant BP ousts chairman over governance concerns

WASHINGTON, May 26, (AP): BP has ousted its chairman over what it called serious concerns related to "important governance standards, oversight and conduct."

The departure was abrupt and unexpected, with Albert Manifold having been appointed to the position late last year.

"Albert has helped bring a welcome focus and pace to BP's transformation," Amanda Blanc, senior independent director, said in a statement Tuesday. "However, the board has been surprised and disappointed to learn of governance oversight and conduct issues it deems unacceptable and has taken decisive action."

BP's board named Ian Tyler as interim chair, effective immediately.

The search for a new chair is underway, BP said. BP, based in London, is a "super-major," one of the five largest oil production and exploration companies in the world by when measured by revenue and profit.

The company maintains operations in about 60 countries. Manifold, who had been the top executive at the global building materials company CRH, based in Dublin, for 10 years, became the chair at BP in October.

Last year there were media reports that British oil giant Shell was in talks to buy rival BP. Shell denied the reports at the time.

Industry analysts have suggested that BP would be an attractive take-

over target after a plan to shift its focus to renewable energy, which was abandoned earlier last year.

The company recently did a hard reset and returned to its roots after it had shifted its focus to renewable energy in 2020. The decision has been criticized by some shareholders and environmentalists.

CEO Murray Auchincloss said last year that optimism over opportunities in renewable energy was misplaced, with the company moving "too far and too fast."

Auchincloss stepped down in December, and the company named Meg O'Neill as his successor.

BP has also struggled to recover from the 2010 Deepwater Horizon tragedy, one of the worst environmental disasters in U.S. history. The explosion killed 11 workers and forced the company to pay billions of dollars for environmental damage in the Gulf of Mexico.

More recently, like other oil companies, BP has struggled with falling demand in recent years.

BP's 2025 earnings fell 16% from a year earlier to \$7.49 billion as the price of Brent crude, a benchmark for international oil prices, dropped 16.9%. The company's preferred measure of earnings is underlying replacement cost profit, which adjusts for one-time items and fluctuations in the market value of inventories. Net income plunged 86% to \$55 million.

Shares of BP Plc slid 4% before the opening bell on the NYSE.

# Business

Credit agencies praise Kuwait's economic durability

## Kuwait's sovereign rating reaffirmed with stable outlook

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: Standard & Poor's and Moody's, two of the leading credit rating firms in the world, reaffirmed the long-term sovereign credit rating of Kuwait with 'stable' outlook.

They pointed out that the substantial financial holdings of Kuwait are vital to managing the regional consequences of the Middle East conflict and the related logistics challenges in the Strait of Hormuz.

Commenting on this, two financial specialists underscored the significance of the fiscal strength of Kuwait, pointing out that protecting the economy from external shocks remains a priority.

Financial specialist Faisal Al-Harbi stated that the rating validation, particularly coming from such prominent global institutions, highlights the superior creditworthiness of the Kuwaiti economy. He said the national economy proved its durability even when major European Union nations faced economic strain from regional hostilities and despite the three-month suspension of Kuwaiti oil exports during the peak of the war.

Economic advisor Abdullah Al-Gharib indicated that such an assessment serves as a testament to the economic fortitude of Kuwait amidst global instability caused by geopolitical strife.

He attributed this strength to the sovereign wealth of the country and its evolving strategy on improving the business climate, reducing administrative barriers, and expanding revenue streams beyond traditional sources to boost national competitiveness.

He said the local economy has a history of navigating difficult challenges, including the 2008 global crisis, market volatility, and invasions. "This enduring stability is anchored on huge crude oil reserves, exceeding 102 billion barrels, alongside the Future Generations Fund.

Economic advisor Abdullah Al-Gharib affirmed that despite the economic fluctuations the world witnessed as a result of geopolitical tensions and their repercussions on the economies of major countries, the two agencies' report confirms the resilience of the Kuwaiti economy amidst the winds of war. "This resilience is driven by the sovereign reserves of the country and its strategy, which has begun to rely on

numerous policies to diversify income sources, eliminate bureaucracy and red tape, and improve the business environment to make Kuwait more competitive. The national economy has overcome severe crises, such as the invasion, 2008 global financial crisis, and stock market crash. The strength of the Kuwaiti economy is based not only on the Future Generations Fund, but also on crude oil reserves exceeding 102 billion barrels," he asserted.

Economist Ahmed Al-Sadhan stated that maintaining the sovereign credit rating under these circumstances reflects the strength and stability of the financial position of Kuwait and its ability to confront global economic challenges despite the war and tensions in the Arabian Gulf region. "This confirms the success of the monetary and fiscal policies spearheaded by the Central Bank of Kuwait in maintaining economic stability and international confidence in the Kuwaiti economy. This high rating is not just a financial indicator, but a message of reassurance to investors and global markets that Kuwait still possesses strong economic fundamentals supported by sovereign reserves and a robust banking sector," he concluded.

Aligning with 'Let's Be Aware' in service overhaul

## ABK reduces complaint response time to 5 business days

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced a major update to its customer complaints and feedback handling mechanism, reducing the maximum response time to just five business days instead of the previously applicable timeframes.

This step reflects the Bank's firm commitment to enhancing customer experience and delivering the highest standards of banking services in line with the new Customer Protection Guide.

The initiative comes as part of the Bank's ongoing participation in supporting the 'Let's Be Aware' campaign, in cooperation with the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwait Banking Association, in alignment with regulatory directives aimed at protecting customer rights.

This step also reflects the Bank's commitment to engaging with customers and resolving their concerns efficiently and promptly, helping build long-term relationships founded on mutual trust and full transparency.

Accelerating response times and complaint resolution represents a key pillar of the Bank's plans, with internal systems updated and teams trained to handle complaints accurately and without delay.

This decision is also linked to the Bank's continuous efforts to highlight customers' rights and responsibilities when dealing with the banking sector, while raising awareness of the official mechanisms and channels available for submitting complaints and suggestions in a manner that safeguards customer data and enhances financial awareness.

Providing a prompt response within a maximum of five business days serves as an important preventive measure that enables customers to address any inquiries or complaints immediately, in line with the objectives of the 'Let's Be Aware' campaign, which contributes to strengthening overall financial security and banking stability.

The Bank encouraged all customers to make use of the official complaint channels, stressing that every customer experience received represents an opportunity for continuous development and improvement.

ABK reaffirmed its commitment to continuing to introduce solutions that always place customers at the forefront of priorities, while continuing to pro-



mote the awareness messages of the 'Let's Be Aware' campaign to ensure a safe, seamless, and integrated banking experience for all customer segments in the local market.

New CEO eyes overhaul as PayPal faces pressure

## PayPal struggles to defend turf amid rising competition

NEW YORK, May 26, (AP): PayPal helped invent online checkout. Nearly three decades later, it's struggling to defend its turf.

The iconic online payments company is facing its biggest challenge in nearly three decades of existence. Its core business of customers using the app to check out when shopping online is barely growing and new management has bluntly warned investors that "significant changes" will be needed to fix the company's problems.

One of the biggest success stories of the original dot-com era, PayPal has seen its territory steadily conquered by new and existing competitors, particularly Apple, Shopify, the buy now, pay later companies like Affirm and Klarna, and peer-to-peer money transfer services like Cash App and Zelle, particularly in the past five years.

As a result, PayPal's stock has fallen nearly 40% in the past 12 months. The stock, which soared during the pandemic as millions of Americans started shopping online for groceries and other necessities, has plunged roughly 80% in the past five years as investors worried that PayPal missed an opportunity to leverage its name recognition and dominance in online payments and allowed its competitors to take market share that will be hard to recover.

Investors' concerns are not about profitability, although PayPal did warn investors that 2026 profits would be down from the previous year. The concerns lie more with how will PayPal grow and maintain its market with increasing competition.

PayPal said in its first-quarter earnings report that branded checkout - the company's most profitable business by margin - grew just 2%. While the company noted there had been a slowdown in its European division and other discretionary purchases, a growth of only 2% in one of the fastest growing industries alarmed investors and shares dropped nearly 8%.

The pressures on PayPal's business have led to some dramatic changes at the top of the company. The board ousted CEO Alex Chris in February and replaced him with Enrique Lores, the former president and CEO of HP Inc., and a member of PayPal's board. Lores announced a cost-cutting plan that includes reorganizing the company into three divisions and relying more on artificial intelligence. He told investors at May's shareholder meeting he expects to update them on the company's turnaround plan "in a few months."

The biggest threat to PayPal's dominance has been Apple and its Apple Pay service. Apple rolled out Apple Pay in 2014, which allowed Apple customers to store virtual credit and debit cards on their devices to pay online. The company also integrated tap-to-pay technologies into iPhones and the Apple Watch to allow Apple users to pay for items at stores in person.

So, while PayPal has embedded itself as a checkout button on countless merchant websites, that checkout button has become less useful when a customer can store their payment information on their phone and pay using a fingerprint or a glance of their face, ana-

lysts said.

This has caused customers to drift away from PayPal as a default payment method. PayPal in 2019 controlled roughly 9% of e-commerce in the U.S. and globally, with Apple Pay having a 3% market share, according to analysts at UBS. Six years later, Apple overtook PayPal as the dominant checkout option, and its market share is expected to continue to grow as Apple rolls out Apple Pay to non-iOS users.

There is also the growing popularity of buy now, pay later companies such as Klarna and Affirm. While PayPal now offers buy now, pay later services like its pay-in-four plan, and longer-term monthly payment plans, it lags its major competitors including Affirm, which was founded by one of PayPal's founders, Max Levchin.

"PayPal has had a lot of trouble evolving from being just a way to pay on your desktop computer," said Sanjay Sakhrani, an analyst who covers credit cards and payment methods at investment bank Keefe Bruyette & Woods.

Going forward, investors worry that if the branded checkout business continues to lag behind its competitors, it could spell future trouble for PayPal. Wall Street analysts have questioned whether Venmo or Braintree may be spun off from the company, noting that Lores was previously responsible for splitting HP into two separate companies.

Earlier this year, PayPal's stock jumped briefly on unconfirmed reports that the payments company Stripe was interested in acquiring all or parts of PayPal.

Investors weigh Iran strikes against peace talk optimism

## World stocks and oil prices are mixed after US launches strikes in southern Iran

HONG KONG, May 26, (AP): Shares were mixed Tuesday in Europe and Asia after the U.S. military said it carried out what it called "self-defense" strikes in southern Iran, including on missile launch sites and boats placing mines.

The attacks came even as President Donald Trump said on social media that negotiations on ending the war were "proceeding nicely."

In early European trading, Germany's DAX lost 0.7% to 25,214.08, while the CAC 40 in Paris shed 0.9% to 8,187.07. In Britain, the FTSE 100 gained 0.7% to 10,540.40.

The futures for the S&P 500 and the Dow Jones Industrial Average were up 0.5%.

Oil prices were mixed, with Brent crude rising but still trading below \$100 a barrel while U.S. benchmark crude oil fell.

The U.S. military said the strikes Monday were done "to protect our troops from threats posed by Iranian forces." It said it used restraint due to the ceasefire with Iran, which gave no official response. Further details were not immediately available, including more specifics on threats from Iran and what this means for negotiations.

With the status of peace talks with Iran unclear, markets have been swayed by various developments and comments by Trump.

"Markets are behaving as though a full Iran breakthrough already exists, even though the hardest parts of the negotiation remain unresolved," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management wrote in a commentary. "Washington continues to signal optimism, while Tehran insists no agreement is imminent."

During Asian trading, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 lost 0.3% to 64,996.09, falling back from an all-time high close over 65,000 on Monday.

In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng index was nearly unchanged at 25,599.45, while the Shanghai Composite index shed 0.2% to 4,145.37.

South Korea's Kospi jumped 2.6% to 8,047.51, catching up after markets were closed Monday for a holiday.

The S&P/ASX 200 in Australia lost 0.4% to 8,657.80.

Benchmark U.S. crude oil declined \$3.67 to \$92.97 a barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, gained \$3.03 to \$96.45 a barrel after falling nearly \$5 on Monday.

U.S. markets were closed on Monday for the Memorial Day holi-

day. On Friday, the S&P 500 added 0.4% and the Dow industrials climbed 0.6%. The Nasdaq composite gained 0.2%.

Global markets advanced Monday after regional officials in the Middle East said the United States was close to reaching an agreement with Iran to end the war, reopen the Strait of Hormuz and see Iran give up its stockpile of highly enriched uranium. But it's not clear when or how the deal might be finalized and when its various parts will take effect.

An end to the war would ease concerns throughout a region that saw Gulf havens and travel hubs like the United Arab Emirates struck by Iranian missiles and drones.

It would allow for global shipping, including an estimated 20% of the world's oil, to resume flowing through the Strait of Hormuz. It also would allow the rebuilding of energy and other infrastructure in the region.

In other dealings early Tuesday, the U.S. dollar rose to 159.09 Japanese yen from 158.91 yen. The euro cost \$1.1636, down from \$1.1645.

# Global inflation sees first signs of Middle East war

By KAMCO Invest

The war in the Middle East has reversed some of the downward trends of inflation that the world has witnessed during the past 2 years. According to the IMF, global headline inflation is revised up to 4.4% in 2026 before reversing course and declining to 3.7% in 2027. This inflation growth is driven primarily by war-related spikes in commodity prices, including crude oil, natural gas, fertilizers, and metals. The overall outlook is highly uncertain: with some more adverse scenarios putting oil prices at an elevated price of USD 110 per barrel, penciling global inflation to reach 5.4% in 2026. In an even more severe scenario with persistent, large-scale disruptions, global headline inflation could increase to just above 6% by 2027, as per the IMF.

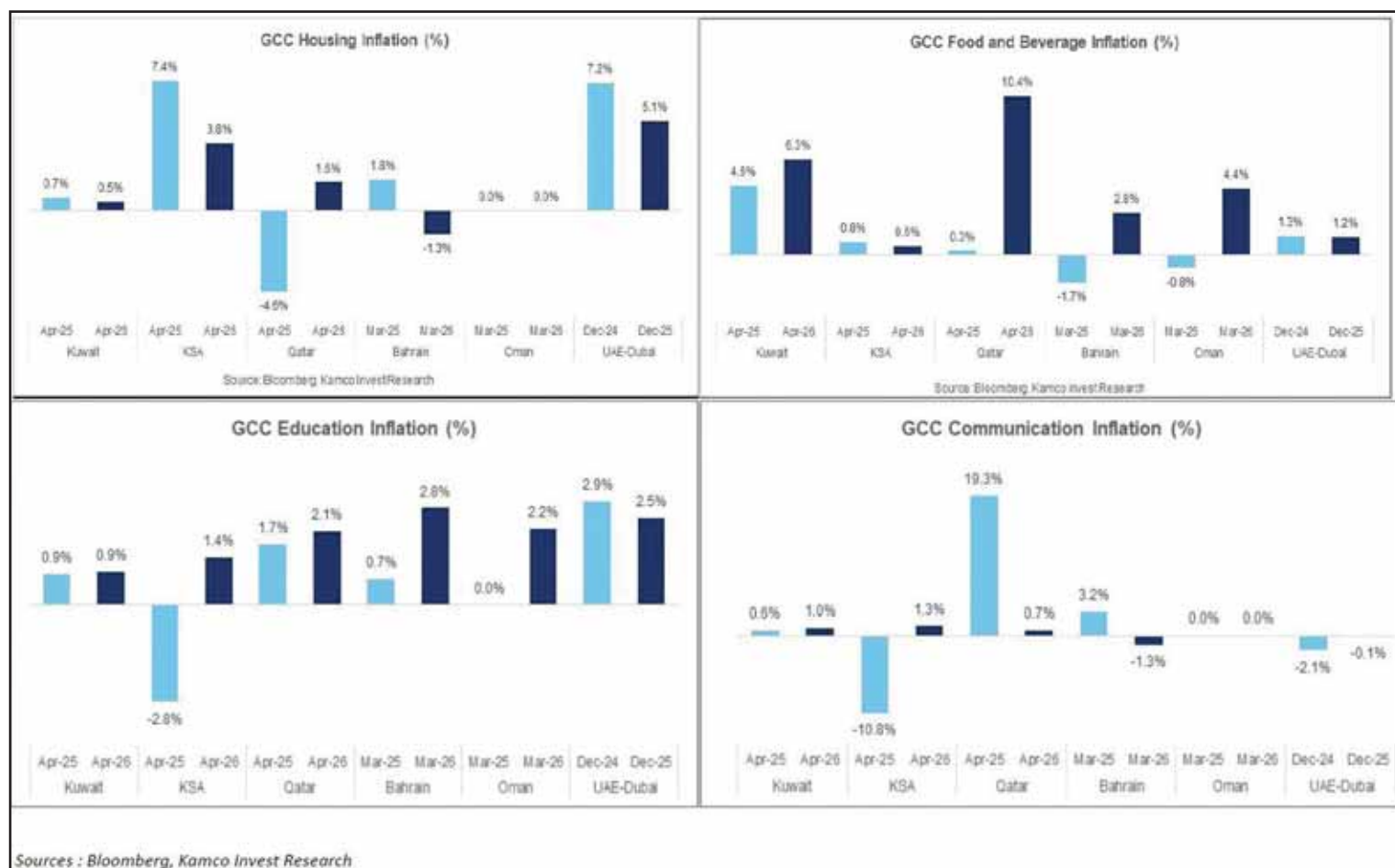
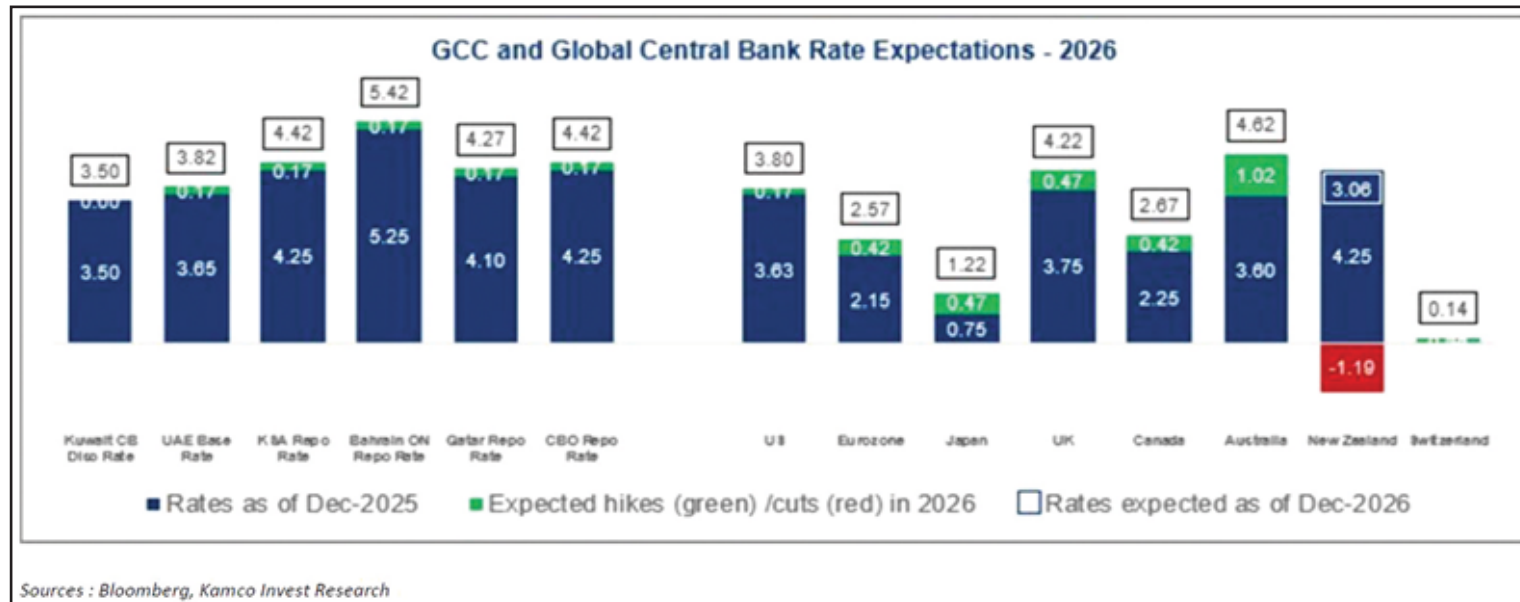
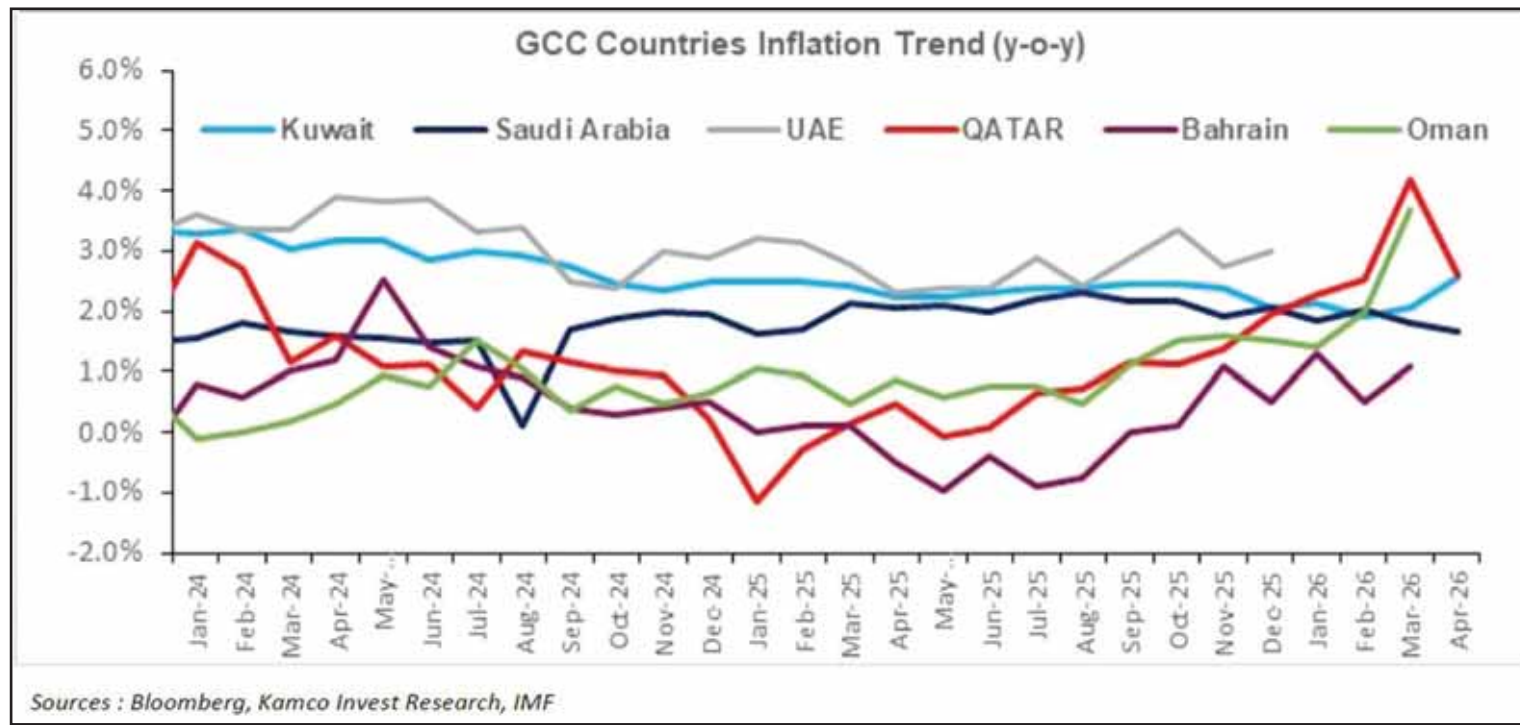
In the US, inflation jumped to 3.8% in April-2026 (up from 3.3% in March-2026), marking a US price increase that has not been observed since May-2023. The growth in US inflation was underpinned by a combination of increases in basic essentials, including a jump in the cost of gasoline and grocery prices during the month. Overall, energy costs contributed to almost all the increase in prices during the month because of the energy supply disruption impact of the war in the Middle East and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. Similarly, inflation across the Eurozone region increased during April-2026, witnessing 3% growth (as compared to 2.6% in March-2026) mainly because of higher energy prices due to the disruption by the war in the Middle East. Energy prices in the Euro area increased by 10.9% y-o-y in April-2026 as compared to 5.1% y-o-y in March-2026. The increase of inflation in the Eurozone region has prompted fears of stagflation in the region, where if the ECB raises benchmark rates to rein in inflation, such a move may be detrimental to the region's economy for fear of strangling growth.

For the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (MENAP) region, the inflationary impact of the war has been positive but highly uneven among the countries in the region. The energy supply shock is expected to raise imported goods prices across directly affected oil exporters. However, the magnitude varies widely based on exposure to affected imports and domestic factors. Directly affected MENA oil exporters (including most GCC countries) face upward inflation trends, although GCC countries have less steep inflationary growth as compared to their counterparts in the wider MENA region. Within the GCC, the inflationary effects are present but generally moderate in the reference scenario (assuming disruptions fade by mid-2026). Beyond direct price effects, GCC economies face some additional inflation risks from food imports (over 80% of consumption in four GCC members according to the IMF) and reliance on desalinated water. Moreover, prolonged disruptions could affect food inventories and push up food prices. There are expectations that central banks in the region may need to tighten monetary policy or maintain restrictive stances to contain second-round effects from higher commodity prices, especially where inflation expectations are fragile. Countries with flexible exchange rates (not typical for most GCC fixed-peg regimes) are advised to let currencies act as shock absorbers.

## Global Food Prices

Global food prices witnessed moderate growth during April-2026. The FAO Food Price Index increased by 2.0% (y-o-y) in April-2026 but stood 18.4% lower than its March-2022 peak, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Overall, the FAO Index averaged 130.7 points during April-2026, which was 1.6% higher than the March-2026 average. The growth in global food prices witnessed its third consecutive monthly gain in April-2026, albeit at a lower rate than the previous month. The growth in global food prices was mainly driven by a 6.4% y-o-y increase in the average Meat Price Index during the year, with higher prices across all meat categories except bovine meat quotations, which remained broadly stable during the month. Moreover, poultry meat prices increased, buoyed by higher quotations in Brazil, as strong buying interest from several African markets more than offset softer sales to the Near East, where logistical and transport constraints required shipments to be rerouted through the Red Sea. On the other hand, bovine meat prices remained broadly stable, as higher quotations in Australia, reflecting tight exportable supplies, were offset by declines in New Zealand due to weaker demand from China, its main export destination.

The FAO Vegetable Oil Price Index averaged 193.9 points, recording a 5.9% m-o-m increase during April-2026 from March-2026, reaching its highest level in nearly four years (since July-2022). Some of the reasons that the index improved strongly during the year included higher prices of palm, soy, sunflower, and rapeseed oils. Moreover, international palm oil prices increased for the fifth consecutive month in April-2026, largely supported by prospective higher demand



Consumer Price Index	Actual			Projections	
	2023	2024	2025	2026e	2027e
<b>Y-o-y percent change</b>					
Bahrain	0.1%	0.9%	-0.1%	2.4%	1.2%
Kuwait	3.6%	2.9%	2.4%	2.8%	2.5%
Oman	1.0%	0.6%	1.0%	1.7%	1.9%
Qatar	3.1%	1.2%	0.6%	3.9%	2.5%
Saudi Arabia	2.5%	1.5%	2.0%	2.3%	2.1%
United Arab Emirates	1.6%	1.7%	1.3%	2.5%	2.0%
<b>Middle East and Central Asia</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>

Sources: Bloomberg, IMF, Kamco Invest Research

from the biofuel sector, buoyed by policy incentives in several producing countries and higher crude oil prices. Similarly, the FAO Cereal Price Index improved marginally by 0.4% y-o-y to an average of 111.3 points. The growth reflected higher prices across major cereals, except sorghum and barley. World wheat prices increased by 0.8%, reflecting upward pressure from drought in parts of the United States of America and a higher likelihood of below-average rainfall in Australia. On the other hand, the FAO Dairy Price Index witnessed a 1.1% m-o-m drop during April-2026 to average 119.6 points. The fall was mainly due to lower international quotations for butter and cheese, which more than offset the continued increases in the prices of skim milk powder (SMP), while whole milk powder (WMP) prices remained broadly unchanged.

## GCC Rates and Inflation

The global inflation uptick during the first few months of 2026 has halted the expected widespread rate cuts for 2026. In April-2026, the US Federal Reserve kept the benchmark funds rate steady at 3.5%-3.75% due to a reversal of the downtrend of inflation. Similarly, the European Central Bank kept its benchmark rates unchanged in April-2026 due to upward price pressure buildup and growth-weakening data. Sharp

increases in energy prices due to the hydrocarbon supply disruption by the war in the Middle East are impacting the ECB's choices. GCC central banks continued to match the Federal Reserve's rate adjustments throughout 2026 by also keeping their rates unchanged during the first few months of the year. GCC headline inflation eased despite an uptick in grocery prices during the first few months of 2026. This was due to the inverse price performance of housing prices, which witnessed a downward movement against food and beverage prices that registered significant spikes during the period due to the supply disruption caused by the war in the Middle East.

### Kuwait

The latest Consumer Price Index (CPI) reading for Kuwait in April-2026 showed a (y-o-y) increase of 2.6%, while the CPI monthly index improved 0.65% m-o-m during the same period. This increase was primarily led by a 6.3% growth in the Food and Beverages index, the second-largest weighted index.

The Services and Miscellaneous index witnessed the highest y-o-y growth during April-2026 with a 6.9% increase, while the Housing Services Index, the largest weighted index, reported a 0.5% y-o-y growth during the month. Six out of the

fourteen sectoral indices remained unchanged during the month. The transportation group prices increased by 4.5% in April-2026, while the prices of the Clothing and Footwear group improved by 1.24%. In terms of m-o-m inflation performance, the prices of the Food and Beverages group increased by 1.15% compared to the previous month, due to higher prices in the cereals and bread group, meat and poultry group, fish and seafood group, milk, cheese and eggs group, and oils and fats group. The prices of the Clothing and Footwear group increased 0.27% m-o-m due to the April-2026 increase in the clothing and footwear group. Meanwhile, the prices of the health group increased by 0.08%, because of the increase in prices of medical products, appliances, and equipment group.

### Saudi Arabia

Overall inflation growth in Saudi Arabia remained stable during the first several months of 2026, averaging slightly below the 2% mark. The annual average Consumer Price Index (CPI) recorded a 1.7% increase for April-2026 as compared to April-2025. The growth was mainly supported by an increase in housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuel prices of 3.8%, driven by a 4.8% increase in actual rentals for housing groups. Similarly, the transport index recorded 1% y-o-y growth, mainly driven by a 5.2% in-

crease in passenger transport services. Moreover, restaurant and accommodation services witnessed a 1% uptick, supported by 2% growth in accommodation services prices during the month. Additionally, the prices of education services increased by 1.4%, affected by a 1.6% increase in the prices of secondary education. Meanwhile, information and communications prices also recorded an increase of 1.3%, driven by a 1.8% increase in the prices of the information and communications group. Food and beverages prices rose by 0.6%, driven by a 1.8% increase in the prices of fresh, chilled, or frozen meat.

In terms of m-o-m inflation performance, the Saudi inflation rate witnessed a marginal growth of 0.2% m-o-m during April-2026 as compared to March-2026. The prices of the food and beverage division increased by 0.8%, driven by a 0.9% increase in the food group.

Meanwhile, the prices of the housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels division increased by 0.3%, the transportation division by 0.3%, the health division by 0.2%, the insurance and financial services division by 0.5%, and the furniture, home appliances, and periodic home maintenance division by 0.1%. On the other hand, the prices of restaurants and accommodation services declined by 0.3%, personal care, social protection, and other goods and services by

0.7%, and clothing and footwear by 0.1%. The prices of education, entertainment and culture, information and communications, and tobacco services remained stable and did not record any significant relative change in April-2026.

### UAE

The UAE inflation rate for April-2026 is expected to remain stable despite the instability caused by the war in the region. This is due to the Emirates' ability to manage its inflation and keep it not far from the 2% mark. However, the UAE has already witnessed elevating prices in some of its sectors. The UAE increased fuel prices for the month of April-2026, with the price of diesel up more than 70% over the previous month to AED 0.69 (USD 1.28) per liter, while petrol prices increased by more than 30%. In context, this is the second consecutive month of increase in fuel prices in the country, in line with global prices which have been on an upward trend since the start of the war in the Middle East during the end of February-2026. In the latest inflation data release, the Dubai Consumer Price Index witnessed a moderate y-o-y uptick of 3.0% during December-2025, a figure slightly higher than the 2.9% monthly average recorded in December-2024. Overall, the Dubai CPI averaged an annual growth rate of 2.8% in 2025 as compared to 3.3% in 2024. Dubai's CPI index growth was primarily driven by the Housing, Water, Electricity, and Gas group, the highest-weighted category, which recorded a 5.1% monthly average increase and a 6.4% annual growth during 2025; this compares to a 6.7% average growth rate in 2024. In context, the annual inflation rate for the UAE as a whole recorded a 1.3% increase in 2025, compared to a 1.7% rise in 2024. This moderate growth was primarily driven by increases in significantly weighted categories, including Housing, Water, Electricity, and Gas (+3.9%), Insurance and Financial Services (+3.8%), and Recreation and Culture (+4.0%). However, these gains were largely offset by declines in equally important groups, such as Transport (-4.0%) and Textiles, Clothing, and Footwear (-1.9%), resulting in stable overall inflation growth for the year in the UAE.

### Qatar

Qatar's inflation rate increased by 2.6% y-o-y during April-2026 but witnessed a 0.7% m-o-m decline compared to March-2026. In terms of yearly basis performance, the data showed increases in eight groups, led by the miscellaneous goods and services group which witnessed a 13.8% y-o-y increase, followed by Food and Beverages which improved by 10.4% y-o-y during April-2026. Moreover, other significantly weighted groups registered moderate growth during the month, including Clothing and Footwear by 4.71%, the Education group which improved by 2.1%, and Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels by 1.62%. Meanwhile, the Restaurants and Hotels group recorded a moderate improvement of 0.90% y-o-y during April-2026, while Furniture and Household Equipment recorded 0.8% during the same period. In contrast, Qatar's Consumer Price Index (CPI) witnessed a 0.7% m-o-m drop led by the Recreation and Culture group which recorded a 6.2% drop, followed by a 0.9% drop in the Transportation group and a 0.6% fall in the Clothing group.

### Bahrain

Bahrain's inflation rate remained moderate, recording only a y-o-y uptick of 1.1% in March-2026, as the general CPI closed the month at 102.4 points. In terms of m-o-m change, Bahrain's CPI improved marginally by 0.7% during the month. Bahrain had one of the lowest inflation rates among the GCC countries that published data for March-2026. The y-o-y moderate uptick of Bahrain's inflation rate was mainly due to contractions in four out of the twelve sub-indices within the general CPI.

The Miscellaneous Goods and Services index witnessed the largest expansion, increasing by 5.0%, followed by the Food and Non-alcoholic Beverages and the Education Index, which saw y-o-y increases of 2.8% each in March-2026. Comparatively, the Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages index recorded a 4.8% m-o-m increase during March-2026. However, eight of the twelve indices in the Bahrain CPI recorded m-o-m declines during March-2026, led by a 4.9% m-o-m drop in the Recreation and Culture index, a direct result of the various disruptions caused by the war in the region.

### Oman

Oman's Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 3.2% y-o-y in April-2026, recording the highest growth among the GCC countries. This growth was mainly driven by significant increases in heavily weighted groups, led by the Miscellaneous Personal Goods and Services group (+9.2% y-o-y) and the Food and Non-alcoholic Beverages group (+6.2% y-o-y). The Food and Non-alcoholic Beverages group growth was broad-based, registering increases across most categories in April-2026 as compared with the same month last year, underpinned by a jump in prices of vegetables at 25%, followed by an 11.6% increase in prices of fruits, while prices of fish and seafood improved by 6.1% during the month.

# What's On

## SPOTLIGHT

Got a birthday or event?



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## Grand Rosary 2026: A celebration of faith and unity



Photos during the event.

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: Throughout the month of May 2026, the Grand Rosary of the Filipino Community in Kuwait (PCK) was prayerfully celebrated every Friday under the leadership of the Marian Groups - Our Lady of Lourdes and Ina ng Laging Saklolo, in collaboration with the PCK Worship Ministry, Catechism Children, Lectors and Commentators.

Each gathering brought together families, children, youth,

church workers, and parishioners in a spirit of faith, unity, and devotion to Mama Mary. Through the Holy Rosary, the community offered prayers of thanksgiving and intentions, fostering a deeper relationship with God and strengthening the bonds among the faithful.

The active participation of the children and the dedicated service of volunteers made each celebration meaningful, inspiring, and spiritu-

ally enriching. The Grand Rosary served as a powerful reminder that prayer unites hearts, deepens faith, and builds a stronger Christian community.

As the month of May came to a close, the faithful were encouraged to continue their devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to remain steadfast in prayer. May Mama Mary continue to guide, protect, and intercede for all as we journey together in faith.

Health camp focuses on early detection & community wellness

## The Good Shepherds Association organizes Humanitarian Medical Camp in collaboration with Metro Medical Group

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: The Good Shepherds Cultural & Social Welfare Association of Kuwait, in collaboration with Metro Medical Group, organized a community medical camp on May 22, 2026, in Salmiya at the Metro Clinic branch in Salmiya block 3 as part of ongoing efforts to promote preventive healthcare and wellness awareness among residents.

A large number of the Goan community, members and volunteers in Kuwait attended this humanitarian initiative and took proactive steps toward maintaining their health and well-being through early detection and medical guidance. The medical camp provided doctor consultations and basic health screenings for community members. Available services included consultations in general practice, internal medicine, gynecology, pediatrics and ophthalmology. The event also offered several medical tests and screenings, including fasting blood sugar checks, blood pressure monitoring, total cholesterol testing and eye screening services.

The President of Good Shepherds Cultural & Social Welfare Association, Mr. Salvador D'Silva, warmly welcomed the special guests including Rabin Gonsalves, Ross Vaz, Reyna Vaz, and John Fernandes, along with representatives from Metro Medical Group including Basheer Batha, Jisha Varghese, and Litty-Sabu.

During the official function, Mr. Salvador D'Silva presented a memento to Metro Medical Group as a token of love and appreciation for their immense support, cooperation, and partnership in organizing the medical camp.

The event concluded with a



Photos during the event.

vote of thanks delivered by the Vice-President of Good Shepherds Cultural & Social Welfare

Association, Manuel Rodrigues, who expressed gratitude to the medical team, volunteers, guests,

sponsors, and all participants for contributing towards the success of the initiative.

### Press Club Kuwait pays tribute to Victor Joseph

## Kerala Press Club Kuwait elects new office bearers

KUWAIT CITY, May 26: The Kerala Press Club Kuwait has elected its new office bearers for the upcoming term. T.V. Hikmath (Kairali TV) was elected as President, Anil P. Alex (Mangalam) as General Secretary, and Abdul Razak Kumaranellur (Sathyam Online) as Treasurer.

The elections were held during the Annual General Body Meeting convened on Sunday at Chef Naushad Restaurant in Farwaniya. An Executive Committee comprising representatives from various media organizations was also elected during the meeting.

The General Body meeting paid tribute and recorded its condolences on the demise of former Kuwait-based media professional Victor Joseph.

The meeting was presided over by former President Sujith Sure-



T.V. Hikmath



Anil P. Alex



Abdul Razak Kumaranellur

shan. General Secretary Saleem Kottayil presented the annual activity report, while Treasurer Sreejith presented the financial report for the previous term,

which was approved by the General Body.

During the discussion session, Executive Committee members including Reji Bhaskar, Aslam,

Sathar Kunnil, Krishnan Kadalundi, Johnly Thundiyl, Anil K. Nambiar, Abdul Muneer, NijasKasim and Shajahan Koyilandy participated.

## Looksmaxxing craze sparks health alarm

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

By Jordyn Tovey

University of Michigan

Punishing regimens of facial exercises. Intentional starvation. Reshaping the jawline or cheekbones by smashing them with a hammer or chisel.

These are some of the more extreme behaviors in a practice called looksmaxxing - an effort to maximize one's looks at all costs - that's attracting an enormous following of largely teenage boys and young men on social media. Looksmaxxing has gone from niche to mainstream since trending on TikTok in the early 2020s.

Much of the media coverage of looksmaxxing has focused on cultural dimensions, such as the misogynist ideology underlying this trend and its implications for cultural conversations about masculinity. Meanwhile, looksmaxxers with an especially large following of hundreds of thousands of people on social media platforms like TikTok and Kick have attained pop-culture status.

But in the midst of this spectacle, the well-being of the young men participating in this trend has been largely overlooked.

From my perspective as a mental health professional studying how people think and talk about emotions and mental health, the behaviors associated with looksmaxxing look suspiciously like symptoms of eating disorders and body dysmorphia, also called body dysmorphic disorder.

These disorders are especially harmful to young people who are in the throes of figuring out who they are, what they want and how to navigate relationships - efforts already complicated by the pressures of social media.

In my view, platforming these young men and sensationalizing their behaviors, rather than recognizing those behaviors as signs of psychological distress, distracts from the urgent need to address these serious mental health concerns.

The looksmaxxing trend repeats some troubling history.

A similar ideology emerged in the 2000s, but it was embraced and popularized primarily by young women and girls. Microblogging and social networking platforms like Tumblr and MySpace became hotbeds for advice on disordered eating.

Users developed communities where they could share tips and encourage eating disorder-related behavior - for example, restricting eating, inducing vomiting or hiding weight loss from loved ones. This content was tagged "pro-ana" (pro-anorexia), "pro-mia" (pro-bulimia), or "pro-ED" (pro-eating disorder).

Mainstream media, including "The Oprah Winfrey Show" in 2001, covered the phenomenon of pro-eating disorder internet communities with an air of grim concern. Exploring how online pro-eating disorder communities affected girls and young women quickly became an area of research for social scientists and medical professionals.

Still, it took until 2012 for Tumblr, an especially popular site for these communities, to implement a policy banning pro-eating disorder content and warn users about the dangers of eating disorders. This was part of a larger effort by the platform to curb self-harm-related blogging.

Now, in 2026, almost all social media platforms have regularly updated policies or "community guidelines" that aim to prevent such communities from forming and that instead direct

users to helpful resources.

In addition to guidelines that prohibit explicit pro-eating disorder content, Instagram and TikTok have dedicated pages about getting help for eating disorders. Meta has a policy page detailing its rationale and practice around "suicide, self injury and eating disorders" - as does Pinterest, which also banned all weight loss ads in 2021 in an ongoing commitment to user safety.

Despite the widespread recognition that eating disorder-related content is harmful to mental and physical health, looksmaxxing has yet to be addressed by social media platform policies. Instead, prominent looksmaxxers are treated as internet celebrities and have been interviewed and profiled for their methods and worldview.

The language and positioning used for each scenario is likely one factor. "Pro-ED" refers directly to a mental health disorder. Recent research argues that looksmaxxing, by contrast, is positioned as goal-oriented and in that way can masquerade as self-improvement.

Still, what I personally consider the major difference between these movements is gender. Looksmaxxing is primarily aimed at young men, while "pro-ED" internet culture has centered around young women.

Researchers estimate that 1 in 3 people struggling with eating disorders are male. However, the traditional view that eating disorders are a girl's and women's illness lingers in both societal understanding and healthcare.

A 2025 analysis of published studies underscored this discrepancy. It found that obsession with thinness is still widely considered the hallmark of an eating disorder, even though it only captures one type - primarily female - of the condition. Boys and men who struggle with eating disorders and body dysmorphia are far more likely to be fixated on leanness - meaning achieving an "ideal" or "perfect" ratio of muscle to fat.

Given that even clinical screenings do a poor job accounting for how this disorder appears in boys and young men, it's no surprise that parents, teachers and the media also fall short in making this distinction.

Seen through an accurate clinical lens, looksmaxxing behaviors clearly resemble potential symptoms of eating disorders and body dysmorphia. Beginning with an intense fixation on physical flaws, the practice encourages prioritizing appearance above all else.

This mindset often leads to actions to correct these perceived shortcomings. In a clinical setting, mental health experts call such actions compulsions - behaviors that feel impossible to resist - are fueled by obsessive thoughts and eventually begin to interfere with a person's ability to lead a normal, healthy life.

For example, some actions like wearing makeup or putting lifts in shoes to appear taller aren't bad in and of themselves, and can even be beneficial if they make people feel more confident. But not being able to leave the house or function without these corrective measures indicates a problem. Similarly, modifying diet or exercise to lose fat or gain muscle can be quite healthy, but abusing amphetamines to suppress appetite - a widespread practice in looksmaxxing - is dangerous and points to a mental health issue.

These behaviors deserve exploration because if left untreated, body dysmorphia and eating disorders can have lifelong implications. Early detection and intervention are key, as these disorders significantly raise the risk of physical and mental health issues, including heart problems, lasting skin changes, gastrointestinal complications, depression and suicide. (AP)

Films

Chilean drama wins the festival's beloved canine competition

## A round of a-paws for 'La Perra,' winner of the prestigious Palm Dog award at Cannes

CANNES, France, May 26, (AP): A round of a-paws for "La Perra," winner of this year's Palm Dog award at the Cannes Film Festival. The Chilean movie took the top canine prize, a day before the festival's official awards ceremony.

The quirky tradition on the Cannes beachfront was a celebratory affair, packed with journalists, dog lovers and, of course, plenty of dogs. The sound of barking was interspersed with the clink of wine glasses as eager pups posed for the cameras and socialized with their canine pals. It was bone appetit for the animal guests as they were served gourmet doggie snacks and look-alike local pooches stood in for their famous peers to collect awards.

Screening in the Directors' Fortnight sidebar, "La Perra" (Spanish for female dog) follows a solitary woman and her bond with an abandoned puppy, Yuri - named after the famous Mexican pop star.

When director, Dominga Sotomayor, collected the coveted dog collar, she explained that she rescued two very special dogs to play Yuri, from puppy to adulthood.

"Yuri and little Tormenta who played the little Yuri, they are both rescue and they are both happy in their new houses. They were not trained so it was really wild to work with them."

Speaking after the ceremony Sotomayor said



Dominga Sotomayor, left, director of the film 'La Perra' poses with Apocalypse after accepting the Palm Dog award on behalf of Yuri, who could not attend, at the end of the Palm Dog award ceremony at the 79th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Friday, May 22, 2026. (AP)

she wanted to make a film where dogs are not just useful for the story but are like characters themselves.

"I think both dogs were the heart of the film so I am very happy with this prize," she said.

Both the ceremony's top awards went to films directed by women - and also to female dog characters. The Grand Jury prize was awarded to Lola, the border terrier cross who appears in the British movie "I See Buildings Fall Like Lightning."

"I See Buildings Fall Like Lightning" also picked up the Directors' Fortnight audience award Thursday. The film follows a group of friends who grew up together in the same building complex, on the cusp of turning 30, facing adulthood and unfulfilled dreams. Director Clio Barnard showed up for doggie celebrations.

After the ceremony she honored Lola's professionalism.

"I loved working with her, and I would love to work with her again," Barnard said.

The Palm Dog Award was founded in 2001 by film journalist Toby Rose with a mission to give equal celebration to canines at Cannes as their human co-stars. Former winners include Messi from "Anatomy of a Fall," Brandy from "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood" and Uggie from "The Artist."

Obituary

'Saxophone Colossus'

### Jazz giant Sonny Rollins dies

NEW YORK, May 26, (AP): Sonny Rollins, the tenor saxophonist and restless genius whose bold, distinctive tone and constant experimentation kept him on the cutting edge of jazz for more than 50 years, died Monday at age 95.

Spokesperson Terri Hinte told The Associated Press that Rollins died at his home in Woodstock, New York. She cited no specific cause of death, but said he had been largely housebound over the past couple of years because of various physical problems.

From his early days as a teen phenom to his more measured solo work and experimentation with free jazz, Rollins was revered for his improvisational skill. He was one of the last living greats of the bebop era and - along with John Coltrane and Charlie Parker - one of the most influential saxophonists of his time.

Rock fans got a dose of his music with the Rolling Stones' 1981 album "Tattoo You," which features Rollins' wistful sax solo on the ballad "Waiting on a Friend," devised after watching Mick Jagger dance.

Despite his enduring success, Rollins was never quite satisfied with his art, occasionally taking lengthy hiatuses from playing and consistently adopting eclectic new styles.

He always referred to himself as "a work in progress," saying he wasn't one of those artists who settle into one way of playing.

While his early bebop work was the most popular with his fans, Rollins never looked back, saying he found it "excruciating" to even listen to the flaws in his older recordings.

"I don't consider myself a musician that has learned as much as I want to learn," he told The Associated Press in 2007.

In the 1990s and 2000s, Rollins released a string of critically acclaimed albums. He maintained a rigorous practice regimen, and continued to tour, into his 80s. Pulmonary fibrosis, a thickening and damaging of the lungs, would eventually force him into retirement. He played his last concert in 2012 and stopped playing altogether in 2014.

While he missed the adoration of crowds, he missed the actual playing more.

"I played a couple of concerts early on where I was out in the open in the afternoon." He told the New York Times in 2020. "I was able to look up in the sky, and I felt a communication; I felt that I was part of something. Not the crowd. Something bigger."

His 2001 album "This is What I Do," earned him a Grammy award for best jazz instrumental album. He won again in 2006 for best jazz instrumental solo for "Why Was I Born?"

"Why Was I Born" was from the album "Without a Song: The 9/11 Concert," a live recording from a performance in Boston just four days after the Sept. 11 attacks. Rollins, who had been evacuated from his apartment a few blocks from ground zero, had gone ahead with the concert at the urging of his wife and manager, Lucille. She died in 2004.

His survivors include a nephew, Clifton Anderson, and nieces Vallyn Anderson and Gabrielle DeGroat. Rollins had gotten his first major



Sonny Rollins performs during a concert in Tokyo, Oct. 4, 2010. (AP)

break in his late teens when he was invited to join Thelonious Monk's band. He soon was jamming with Miles Davis and Bud Powell, who introduced him to the recording world even before he finished high school.

But like many jazz musicians in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Rollins' rising star almost faded when he became hooked on heroin at the age of 19. As his addiction grew steadily worse, Rollins served two stints in jail - 10 months in 1950 and three months in 1953 - and ultimately found himself living on the streets in Chicago. In 1954, Rollins checked himself into a hospital in Lexington, Ky., to undergo drug treatment.

He left underwent a spiritual awakening as he kicked drugs.

"I began to have a deeper philosophy of what life was about," he told the AP in 2007. "From that point on is when my consciousness awoke."

After being discharged, he returned to Chicago and signed on as a member of the Max Roach-Clifford Brown quintet. In 1956 he recorded a solo album, "Saxophone Colossus." Its stripped-down, hard bop sound announced him as one of jazz's premier sax players and remained one of his most influential works.

In the following two years Rollins hit upon a different approach, switching to a pianoless trio on three more landmark albums: "Way Out West," "A Night at the Village Vanguard" and "Freedom Suite."

Then, at the peak of his popularity, Rollins went into seclusion, spending the next two years practicing alone on a solitary niche above the East River on a Williamsburg Bridge walkway.

"The thing that I am most proud of in my career is that fact that I was able to see beyond being popular and all that stuff," he told the AP in 2007, "and do what my inner self told me to do."

During his absence, jazz moved away from the fast-paced, tightly woven sound of bebop to the more frenetic and chaotic free jazz. When Rollins chose to return to the scene in 1961, he embraced the new sound - a move that divided his fans. In the mid-'60s, Rollins toured heavily in Europe, switching back and forth between more traditional and avant garde approaches. He contributed original music to the soundtrack of "Alfie," the 1966 British film that made Michael Caine a star.

The Conversation

### Beyond Disney: A 1616 portrait of Pocahontas shows how English colonizers viewed Indigenous Americans

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. The Conversation is wholly responsible for the content.



By Peter C. Mancall  
USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences

Thanks to the Walt Disney Company, Pocahontas may be the most famous Native American who lived in the 17th century. The animated film version of her early life included her speaking with a willow tree, befriend animals, singing about "the colors of the wind," and being caught up in an ill-fated romance with Captain John Smith.

The 1995 film created an enduring visual image of Pocahontas, and contained some details drawn from the historical record, though plenty is pure fiction. Smith was, in fact, one of the English colonists who arrived in Jamestown, Virginia, soon after its founding in 1607. Pocahontas' father Wahunsonacock - whom colonists and Disney called Powhatan - was the paramount chief of the Powhatans, who lived in communities along the edges of Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Only one portrait of Pocahontas from her lifetime exists - a sharp contrast with the Disney-drawn image most Americans know. And it speaks volumes about how the English saw colonization.

As I describe in my 2026 book, "Contested Continent: The Struggle for North America, c. 1000 to 1680," Wahunsonacock was the most consequential political figure in early Virginia, the land Powhatans knew as Tsenacommacah. Through personal alliances and shrewd stratagems, he controlled perhaps 30 communities along the shores of Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Pocahontas, also known as Matoaka and Amonute, was probably about 10 or 11 years old when she encountered Smith in late 1607. At that moment he was a captive of her father, who, Smith later wrote, was about to have him killed. Though scholars believe Wahunsonacock was likely putting Smith through a ritual adoption, the colonist claimed Pocahontas saved his life.

In 1613, the English took Pocahontas captive during a conflict known as the first Anglo-Powhatan War. After obtaining his daughter's freedom in 1614, Wahunsonacock approved her marriage to John Rolfe, who played a leading role in the colony's tobacco economy, and she converted to Christianity. Sometime between 1615 and 1617 she gave birth to their son, Thomas.

Two years after the marriage, Pocahontas and Rolfe sailed to England, where she played a leading role in her father's diplomatic mission.

During her stay in London, which included meeting King James I, Pocahontas sat for a portrait by the artist Simon van de Passe. Her clothing and pose echoed portraits of other elite English women of the era. The image emphasizes her tall stovepipe hat, ample lace collar, a dress with detailed embroidery or brocade, and a pearl earring dangling from her left ear.

In addition to her English clothing, Pocahontas holds a quill pen, suggesting that she had learned to write. Since Europeans considered literacy a crucial marker of civilization, the engraving highlights English hopes that Indigenous Americans could rapidly embrace the colonists' culture.

The engraving of Pocahontas was not the first image of Native peoples of the mid-Atlantic coastline circulating in England. Illustrations in one widely reprinted book played a crucial role



Simon van de Passe's 1616 engraving of Pocahontas is the only known portrait made during her lifetime.



An engraving of Wahunsonacock by William Hole appeared on a map John Smith created of Virginia.



The title page of the 1590 edition of Theodor de Bry's 'A Briefe and True Report of the Newfound Land of Virginia.'

in convincing the English to establish settlements in North America.

In the late 16th century, advocates of Eng-

lish colonization understood that descriptions of North America could make foreign territory more enticing to potential migrants. They wanted to demonstrate to English men and women that they could create profitable economies and coexist with Native peoples.

Some promoters recognized that watercolor images painted in 1585 by the artist John White depicting the Carolina Algonquians of the Outer Banks could perhaps generate interest - and investments. The promoters, who had ties to leading figures in the English court as well as to printers, also saw the benefits of an in-depth study of the region by the young English mathematician and writer Thomas Harriot, "A Briefe and True Report of the Newfound Land of Virginia." In 1590, the promoters worked with the Flemish printer Theodor de Bry to produce an illustrated version, which contained engravings based on White's paintings.

The volume described Carolina Algonquians' practices and enumerated commodities that could be extracted for profit. Some of the Native Americans depicted in these pages are clad with only a deerskin loincloth. Some of the women wear skirts but not tops.

To Europeans bred on the idea that clothing an entire body was a marker of civilization, these Algonquians' appearance was significant. People who colonizers considered "savages" were often depicted nude, like the Tainos whom Christopher Columbus encountered a century earlier. English men and women reading the book about the Algonquians, on the other hand, saw them as a people who would, under the right tutelage, adopt English-style culture - including Protestant Christianity.

"Some religion they have already," Harriot wrote in "A Briefe and True Report," "which although it be farre from the truth, yet being as it is, there is hope it may be the easier and sooner reformed."

To make the point that Native Americans could be converted to European culture, the engravers added depictions of ancient Britons, allegedly based on an old chronicle. Three of these images of Picts depicted them as nude, bearing tattoos more extensive than the Algonquians'. These individuals are also portrayed as more violent: A Pict man holds a head still dripping blood, with another head at his feet, while a Pict woman brandishes spears and a broadsword.

When Pocahontas sat for Van de Passe, his portrait did more than create a resemblance of the young woman, who would die the following year, soon after leaving London - felled either by disease or, as a Virginia tribe's oral history suggests, poison.

Like the images popularized by Harriot's book, her portrait suggested that Native Americans would soon embrace English ways. Pocahontas herself, as the words on the engraving noted, had become Rebecca Rolfe after her marriage. In his writings, her husband celebrated her conversion to the Anglican faith. The proof of the model of cultural conversion seemed to be on plain view in the portrait.

Pocahontas' father died in 1618. Four years later, the Powhatans launched a rebellion against English colonists. On March 22, 1622, under the direction of a war captain named Opechancanough, they killed approximately one-fourth of the colonists in Virginia. The English labeled the violence a "barbarous massacre" and launched a war of vengeance, which included a mass poisoning of Powhatans in 1623 - an action that the English at the time knew violated the emerging law of war.

Seeing Pocahontas poised on a chair, wearing an elegant hat and holding a quill pen, the English had assumed that Native Americans would embrace the colonizers' ways. March 1622 proved them wrong. (AP)

Kimes debuts as new television host

## Scripps Spelling Bee opens with global contestants

WASHINGTON, May 26, (AP) — The best young spellers in the English language are competing at the Scripps National Spelling Bee this week, continuing a more than century-old tradition. The three-day competition began Tuesday and concludes Thursday night.

The first bee was held in 1925, when the Louisville Courier-Journal invited other newspapers to host spelling bees and send their champions to Washington. After a long run at a convention center in suburban Maryland, the bee returns to the nation's capital this year at Constitution Hall, a few blocks from the White House.

Another change for this year: ESPN NFL analyst and recent "Celebrity Jeopardy!" champion Mina Kimes has joined the bee as its television host.

This is the 98th bee; it was canceled from 1943 to 1945 because of World War II and again in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This year's champion will be the 111th, because the bee ended in a two-way tie several times and an eight-way tie in 2019.

Thirty of the past 36 champions have been of Indian heritage, including last year's winner, Faizan Zaki.

The bee is broadcast and streamed on channels and platforms owned by Scripps, a Cincinnati-based media company.

On Tuesday, preliminary rounds will stream on Scripps Sports Network and spellingbee.com from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. EDT.

Wednesday's quarterfinals will stream on Scripps Sports Network and spellingbee.com from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and semifinals can be watched on those platforms from 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Tape-delayed semifinals broadcast on ION from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Finals will broadcast Thursday on ION from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. The semifinals and finals will also air or be streamed on these Scripps-owned channels or services: ION Plus, Bounce, Grit, Laff, The Spot, Bounce XL, Grit Xtra, Laff More, Scripps News and Scripps Sports Network.

Spellers qualify by advancing through regional bees hosted by sponsors around the country. In order to compete, spellers must not have advanced beyond the eighth grade or be older than 15.

Contestants must get through two preliminary rounds, where they are quizzed on words from a list provided in advance. There is one spelling round and one multiple-choice vocabulary round.

Those who make it through the preliminaries sit for a written spelling and vocabulary test, with the top 100 or so finishers advancing to the quarterfinals. The words for the test, and for all subsequent rounds,



In this file photo, Faizan Zaki, of Dallas, reacts as he wins the 2025 Scripps National Spelling Bee in Oxon Hill, Md. (AP)



Left: This photo provided by Spelling coach Scott Remer shows Remer and his student, Faizan Zaki, on the day after Faizan finished second in that year's Scripps National Spelling Bee. Right: In this file photo, Sarv Dharavane, 11, of Tucker, Ga., reacts after spelling his word correctly in the finals of the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Oxon Hill, Md. (AP)



are taken from the Merriam-Webster Unabridged dictionary.

Throughout the quarterfinals and semifinals, spellers are eliminated at the microphone through oral spelling or vocabulary questions.

About a dozen spellers advance to the finals. When only two remain, Scripps has the option to use a lightning-round tiebreaker known as a "spell-off" to determine the champion.

This year's bee has 247 spellers representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, three U.S. territories and five other countries: The Bahamas, Canada, Ghana, Nigeria and the United Arab Emirates.

The top returning finisher from

2025 is Sarv Dharavane of Dunwoody, Georgia, who finished third last year as an 11-year-old fifth-grader. Even if he falls short this year, he has two years of eligibility left.

Other possible contenders:

- Shrey Parikh, a 14-year-old eighth-grader from Rancho Cucamonga, California, who finished third in 2024. He has dominated the bee circuit in the past year, winning the South Asian Spelling Bee, the SpellPundit National Spelling Bee and the Words of Wisdom Spelling Bee.

- Oliver Halkett, a 14-year-old eighth-grader from Los Angeles who finished in a tie for seventh last year.
- Esha Marupudi, a 14-year-old

eighth-grader from Chandler, Arizona, who also tied for seventh last year.

The winner receives a custom trophy and more than \$50,000 in cash and prizes. Here are the prize payouts:

- First place: \$52,500 in cash, reference works from Encyclopedia Britannica and Merriam-Webster, a custom trophy and commemorative medal, and \$1,000 in flight credits from Delta Air Lines.

- Second place: \$25,000.
- Third place: \$15,000.
- Fourth place: \$10,000.
- Fifth place: \$5,000.
- Sixth place: \$2,500.
- All other finalists: \$2,000.

Language study builds confidence

## Sudanese students embrace Chinese to expand horizons

PORT SUDAN, Sudan, May 26, (Xinhua) — Sudanese university students gathered here on Sunday for the final of the 25th "Chinese Bridge" Chinese Proficiency Competition for Foreign College Students in Sudan, viewing Chinese language skills as a gateway to a broader world.

Jointly organized by the Mandarin Center and Chinese language departments across Sudanese universities, and sponsored by the Chinese Embassy in Sudan, the final brought together 12 Sudanese students to compete in speeches and cultural performances under the theme "One World, One Family."

Muazza Tariq Hassan, a fourth-year Chinese language student at the University of Khartoum who won the first place, said she began learning Chinese in 2019.

"The Chinese language is an opportunity for me to see the world more broadly," she said. "It brings me closer to a great culture and an ancient civilization."

Hassan said learning Chinese has strengthened her confidence and inspired her dream of pursuing a diplomatic career.

"The more I learn, the more I feel the world is becoming closer to us, and that language can be a bridge to hope, knowledge and the future," she said.

During the final, Alaa Abu Bakr presented paper cutting, one of China's oldest folk arts, which she recently learned at the Mandarin Center.

"When I learn an art form like paper cutting, I feel that I'm not just learning a language. I'm getting closer to people's lives and culture, and seeing the world in a broader and more beautiful way," she said.

The competition transcended language, serving as a platform for students from diverse backgrounds to share dreams through joint passion for Chinese culture, she said.

"Sometimes I feel the Chinese language carries me to places I haven't visited yet," she said. "It makes me imagine a broader future filled with opportunities and knowledge."

Director of the Mandarin Center Muwaffaq Atif Babikir noted that Sudanese students have demonstrated remarkable talent and genuine interest in Chinese culture.

"Despite all the challenges Sudan faces today, we are committed to continuing this competition because it represents a space for hope and ambition for young people," Babikir said.

Onur Ahmed, director of consular affairs at Sudan's Foreign Ministry, said Sudanese youth's growing interest in Chinese reflects the importance of openness to different languages and cultures.

As one of the first Arab nations to embrace Chinese language education, Sudan now operates a Confucius Institute, a Mandarin Center, and Chinese language programs at five universities, among others.

Ahmed said Sudan intends to expand such programs to more universities and eventually integrate them into school curricula, calling the language a vital bridge for fostering mutual understanding and unlocking future opportunities for youth.



Contestants wait for the start of the Chinese Proficiency Competition in Port Sudan, eastern Sudan. (Xinhua)

### The Conversation

# Today's bans on DIY repairs of everything from cell phones to tractors grew out of Hollywood's fear of videotaping

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

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By Oana Godeanu-Kenworthy  
Miami University

If you have ever tried to repair something, realized that it was beyond your financial or technical means, and ended up buying a new one, you are not alone. Repairing electronics and household appliances has not been a real option in the United States for decades now, particularly for items that have proprietary software in them.

Absurd situations have proliferated. It can cost about the same to buy a new printer as it does to replace the ink cartridge. The U.S. Department of Defense cannot repair the weapons systems it purchases because the intellectual property rights remain with the manufacturer. John Deere, the farming equipment company, doesn't allow farmers to access the software needed to repair their own combines and tractors because, while the purchase covers the physical machinery, it does not cover the software.

One consequence, in addition to cost and frustration for consumers, is environmental harm. The U.S. is the world's second producer of electronic waste after China, to the tune of about 43 lbs (19.5 kg) of electronic waste annually per person. Only 25% of this e-waste is recycled.

The right-to-repair movement emerged in response, calling for people to be able to repair what they purchase, or have third parties do the repair work, without



Betamax video recorders like this one helped set off a chain of events leading to bans on repairing your own devices. Steve Jurvetson/Wikimedia Commons, CC BY

unnecessary financial, legal or technical barriers. Right to repair seems to be a rare area of bipartisanship in Congress. The Warrior Right to Repair Act - introduced in 2025 by a Democrat - and the Repair Act - introduced by a Republican - are two ongoing legislative initiatives to create a federal legal framework that would make it easy and cheap for American users to repair their devices. Both bills are fiercely opposed by industry groups.

As a scholar of American culture, I found through my research that the origins of the legal and technical obstacles to product repairs lie in debates in the 1980s

over new media and copyright guardrails.

The rapid rise and popularity of video cassette recorders, or VCRs, in the late 1970s transformed films and TV shows from transient experiences into tangible consumer goods. As I show in my book, "Videotape," despite the potential for extra revenue, Hollywood was alarmed by the fact that users were now able to copy films on videotape, and tried to stop the technology. Today's repair bans are part of that story.

The first U.S. copyright provisions were embedded in the 1790 Constitution. Over time, the law was amended to include new tech-

nologies, but at the core of future legal arrangements remained the initial intent: to protect the financial rights of creators while giving enough access to information for society as a whole to progress.

Until the second half of the 20th century, the American doctrine of fair use, which allows the unlicensed use of protected works under specific conditions, allowed judges to prevent copyright law from negatively affecting public interest. Organizations such as public libraries, book clubs, universities and news organizations benefited from this legal approach. The concept was codified into American law in the Copy-

right Act of 1976.

When the film studios took Sony to court to stop the production and sale of video recorders in 1976, they argued that Sony's product encouraged copyright infringement. But the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1984 that taping TV content for personal use did not violate copyright law, expanding the understanding of fair use.

The industry then focused on finding a technological solution to the piracy problem and on securing stricter legal protections for its products.

They identified the digital versatile disc, or DVD, as a safer alternative to the VHS tape. Initially, the DVD was a read-only format. It took a few more years of engineering before affordable recording was possible. Even then, the process was far more complicated for users than videotape recording. In 1997, barely one year after the video disc was launched, all of the Motion Picture Association of America member studios joined the DVD Forum, collectively adopted the new format and started to phase out films released on videotape.

Then came digital rights management. Collectively, the term refers to the battery of technological tools that the industry developed in order to control user access to content. These include encryption software and various forms of authentication or enforcement software that limit which types of digital activities users can perform. For instance, some mechanisms block the option to download or share a digital file.

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act, or DMCA, signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 1998, provided the broad legal

framework that allowed these technological locks to expand far beyond entertainment, including to software. The Digital Millennium Copyright Act reflected a new alignment in interests between the entertainment and software industries. It increased existing penalties for copyright infringement online and criminalized any technology used to bypass technological locks. The law was adopted although at the time - and since then - critics warned that it could stifle innovation and increase costs for consumers.

Since 1998, more and more consumer products, from toys to dishwashers, use microchips and proprietary software protected by copyright. Because of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, third party repairers cannot alter or bypass the proprietary software. If they did so, they would be liable for infringing the manufacturer's intellectual property rights, as is the case for John Deere farm equipment. Some electronics are even designed to make tampering with the product impossible.

Manufacturers maintain that only they or authorized personnel can and should repair their products. These repairs are often quite costly. When getting a product repaired becomes almost as expensive as buying a new one, many consumers will choose to buy and throw repairable items away.

Technology tends to outpace existing legal arrangements. With over 80% of Americans supporting the right to repair, it remains to be seen when or if American law will catch up with the unexpected consequences of a law meant to protect the intellectual rights of the creative industries, but which is now hurting consumers' pocket books. (AP)

Fijians urged to avoid Central Africa travel

## WHO reports 220 suspected Ebola deaths in DRC, warns outbreak outpacing response

GENEVA, May 26, (Agencies): The World Health Organization (WHO) revealed on Monday that a rapidly spreading Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has caused 220 suspected deaths, as health officials struggle to catch up with the epidemic.

While 101 confirmed cases and 10 confirmed deaths have been recorded, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the true scale is far larger. "There are now more than 900 suspected cases and 220 suspected deaths," Tedros said at the Virtual Ministerial Briefing on the Bundibugyo Ebola Outbreak on Monday.

The outbreak, declared as a public health emergency of international concern on May 17, has also spread to Uganda, which has five confirmed cases and one death.

Tedros highlighted a critical challenge: the delay in detecting the outbreak means that health teams are now playing catch-up with a very fast-moving epidemic. "We are urgently scaling up operations, but at the moment, the epidemic is outpacing

us," he said.

Compounding the crisis, the affected provinces of Ituri and North Kivu are plagued by intense insecurity and community distrust. Recent months have seen intensified fighting displacing over 100,000 people, along with two security incidents at health facilities last week.

WHO has raised its national risk assessment to "very high," while regional risk remains "high" and global risk "low." Neighboring countries are urged to take immediate action.

Tedros is set to travel to DRC with WHO's emergencies director, as the agency commits to stopping the outbreak. "It will get worse before it gets better," he admitted. "But we know this virus, and we know how to stop it."

Meanwhile, Fiji's health ministry is urging the public to avoid non-essential travel to several central African countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda and Kenya, following the recent Ebola outbreak in the region.

Health officials are working with partner agencies at international



Francois Kasereka, a member of the Congo Scouts movement, speaks to people during a public sensitisation campaign amid the Ebola outbreak in Bunia, Congo, on May 23. (AP)

points of entry, including Nadi International Airport, to implement targeted screening and follow-up measures for travelers arriving from affected countries, reported Fiji

Broadcasting Corporation on Monday.

The ministry said Fiji's risk from the outbreak remains low, but preparedness measures are being

strengthened following the World Health Organization (WHO) declaration of a public health emergency of international concern for Ebola disease in the DRC and Uganda last week.

The health ministry said anyone traveling to affected areas should avoid contact with sick individuals and animals in forested areas, avoid consuming bush meat, and practice good hygiene.

It also advised travelers to monitor themselves for symptoms including fever, severe headache, muscle pain, weakness, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, rash and unexplained bleeding or bruising, for 21 days after leaving affected countries.

Individuals with developing symptoms during the monitoring period should immediately self-isolate and contact the nearest health facility by phone for advice, the ministry added.

Every time Vanny Birungi, a volunteer with the Red Cross in eastern Congo, goes out to raise awareness about the latest Ebola outbreak as suspected cases near 1,000, she faces

a double threat.

One is the rare Bundibugyo type of Ebola, with no vaccine or treatment. The other is the anger and suspicion of residents who have pelted her with stones and verbal abuse in Bunia, a city at the heart of the outbreak.

"We continue to tell them that the disease is out there. Some accept, and others don't," Birungi told The Associated Press on Monday as she and colleagues spoke with groups of people in a working-class neighborhood under the scorching sun.

Aid workers are especially at risk in this volatile region where residents, like Birungi, have long been under threat of armed groups that have killed thousands of people and displaced many more in recent years.

Trust is hard to find among the traumatized population that is wary of outsiders, even those trying desperately to contain the rapidly spreading outbreak that experts say was discovered weeks late. Surveillance for such diseases has been weakened by US and other aid cuts.

## Atlantic hurricane season forecast to be milder than normal thanks to El Nino

WASHINGTON, May 26, (AP): A developing El Nino that is forecast to get quite strong will likely dampen the upcoming Atlantic hurricane season, but it won't make the potentially deadly storms disappear, federal and outside meteorologists predict.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration issued its seasonal outlook for the Atlantic, giving a 55% chance of a below-average season. The agency forecasts eight to 14 named storms, with three to six of them becoming strong enough to hit hurricane status and one to three of those intensifying to major hurricanes.

A normal hurricane season has 14 named storms, seven of them becoming hurricanes and three of them reaching major hurricane level, which is more than 110 mph (177 kph).

Eighteen other groups, private and academic, have also forecast what they think the season will be like and most of them also call for a below average summer and fall. Those other forecasts average a dozen named storms, only five becoming hurricanes and two of those being major ones. Those forecasts also call for the Accumulated Cyclone Energy index, which takes into account strength and duration of storms, to be 80% of normal.

Colorado State University, which pioneered the science of hurricane seasonal forecasting in 1984, is predicting the lowest overall activity since 2015, which was the strongest El Nino in the last 75 years. And that forecast is likely to be revised to even lower numbers in June, said Colorado State's hurricane expert Phil Klotzbach.

This is after nine of the last 10 Atlantic hurricane seasons have been above normal or even hyperactive, Klotzbach said. Last year started slow, but then had a burst, producing a near-record total of three Category 5 hurricanes, including Melissa which devastated Jamaica and Cuba, said Suzana Camargo, a climate scientist and tropical weather expert at Columbia University.

Inflation-adjusted damage across the globe from tropical cyclones has increased from an average of \$11.4 billion a year in the 1980s to \$109.7 billion a year over the past 10 years, with three-quarters of the damage done in the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean, according to insurance giant Munich Re.

Hurricanes, typhoons and cyclones are the same weather event, with the different names being used in different parts of the world.

"We should expect a less active year than certainly what we've seen

recently, and perhaps significantly so below average," said University at Albany atmospheric scientist Kristen Corbosiero. "But again, it only takes one to cause real devastation and destruction in the mainland U.S. or even in Hawaii."

It's mostly because of "the elephant in the room" which is an El Nino, Camargo said.

An El Nino is the natural and cyclic warming of parts of the central Pacific that warps weather patterns around the globe, especially during winter. Scientists for decades have found a correlation between an El Nino and below average Atlantic hurricane activity and stronger and more storms in the central and eastern Pacific. This year many forecasts are calling for a strong, superstrong or even record setting intense El Nino. During a La Nina, the cool flip side of El Nino, the Atlantic is generally busier with stronger storms.

There's a 98% chance that there will be an El Nino this summer and an 80% chance it will be moderate or strong, NOAA Administrator Neil Jacobs said Thursday.

Atlantic hurricane seasons when an El Nino reaches strong or very strong status have two-thirds the named storms and half the hurricanes of the 1991-2020 average, according to an Associated Press analysis of

storm and El Nino statistics.

El Ninos fight Atlantic storm formation in several ways, especially with cross winds about 1 mile to 7 miles (1.5 to 11 kilometers) above the surface "which can basically blow apart the thunderstorms that make up" a hurricane, Corbosiero said.

"A stronger than normal wind shear tends to tilt storms as they try to develop," said University at Albany atmospheric scientist Brian Tang. "It pushes dry air into storms. And prevents storms from developing in the first place. And if they do develop, it also prevents them from intensifying."

El Nino reduces the number and intensity of weaker storms, but once a storm hits hurricane status with 74 mph winds, "they can be kind of like a self-feeding entity" and are less prone to being dampened by El Nino's wind shear, said Matthew Rosencrans, lead hurricane season forecaster with NOAA's National Weather Service.

Forecasts for peak hurricane season show strong wind shear from the west in the main development region for the largest and long-lasting hurricanes that come off of Africa and develop as they head west over the Atlantic, Klotzbach said. Fewer of these type storms happen during El Ninos.



A Navy officer helps a woman cross a flooded street after heavy rain in Poza Rica, Veracruz state, Mexico on Oct 12, 2025. (AP)



A woman and child cross a flooded street due to Typhoon Fung-wong and high tide on Nov 10, 2025. (AP)

## Falling space debris poses escalating risk as spacecraft get stronger, more heat resistant

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

By Matthew Ray, University of Wisconsin-Stout and Reese Hufnagel, University of Wisconsin-Stout

When it comes to space debris, what goes up is coming down more often - and not safely.

When spacecraft launch, some components, including nonreusable rocket boosters, are jettisoned to decrease weight, leaving them to intentionally burn up as they reenter the atmosphere. Satellites also enter the atmosphere at the end of their life, supposedly burning up. But in many cases, they are not doing so as predicted.

Debris from partially burned-up spacecraft components and satellites reentering Earth's atmosphere can pose a risk to people and structures on the ground. The surge in launches, driven largely by private players such as SpaceX, is turning a once-remote risk into a growing threat.

Our materials research group at the University of Wisconsin-Stout is studying the materials that allow reentry debris to survive. We look for ways to safely modify their exceptional heat-resistant qualities to make them safer for atmospheric reentry.

Re-entry debris has fallen on both private and public property around the world multiple times since 2021.

Some of the most notable events involve pieces from SpaceX Dragon's carbon fiber trunk, which stays attached to the crewed capsule until just hours before its reentry. These trunks are larger than a 15-passenger van and used for storage.

Trunk debris from the Crew 7 mission to the International Space Station has landed in North Carolina, and fragments from the Crew 1 mission landed in New South Wales, Australia. Similarly, debris from the Axiom 3 mission landed in Saskatchewan, Canada.

In addition to trunk debris, carbon fiber components that hold pressurized gases to adjust a spacecraft's orientation also make up a lot of recovered reentry debris. Some of these most recent recoveries have been in Australia, Argentina and Poland.

Most of the debris that reenters the atmosphere burns up, so why are these pieces making it down to Earth's surface?

Satellites such as SpaceX's Starlink reside in low Earth orbit, typically between 190 and 1,240 miles (300 and 2,000 kilometers) above the Earth's surface. To stay there, they need to move really fast, at about 17,000 miles (27,000 km) per hour. To reach this speed, a rocket with a million pounds of fuel had to accelerate it, and part of this energy is still contained within the satellite's momentum.

As an object in orbit drifts down, closer to Earth's upper atmosphere, it starts to collide with air molecules, slowing the object down. The amount of heat generated from

this interaction rapidly consumes the satellite, melting metal at over 3,000 degrees Fahrenheit (1,600 degrees Celsius).

Countries around the world have been launching items into space since the 1950s, so why is reentry a concern now?

Starting in the 1960s, about 100 objects were launched into space every year - or at least that was the case until 2016. Since then, the number has been increasing exponentially. In 2016, 200 objects launched. But in 2025, that number was 4,500, meaning 20% of all objects launched into space since the 1950s were launched last year.

Most of these launches came from companies in the United States, such as SpaceX and Rocket Labs. Companies like these, along with those outside of the U.S., have plans for large satellite constellations composed of hundreds of thousands to a million satellites.

The more objects and payloads launched, the more reentry events occur. Satellite operators are required to remove their decommissioned satellites from orbit after 25 years to comply with regulations set in place by international committees. Groups across the world, including the Federal Communications Commission in the U.S., have pushed to shorten the deorbit window to five years. Because of these guidelines, the full influx of reentry debris events from these recent launches will not be felt for another 10 or more years.

The objects launched and policy decisions made today will have a lasting effect on future safety. (AP)



Five-year-old patient Calvin Owens, second from left, throws a ball for facility dog Hadley with physical therapist Paige Torbet, kneeling left, and child life assistant Schellie Scott, kneeling right, during a physical therapy visit on the patio of Cincinnati Children's Hospital in Cincinnati on May 4. (AP)

## Good dog! More children's hospitals turn to furry caregivers to help kids heal

CINCINNATI, May 26, (AP): The first time 5-year-old Calvin Owens went outside in more than a month, he met up with his canine friend Hadley on a hospital patio. Despite being tethered to equipment with wires and tubes, the little boy managed to stand up near his wheelchair long enough to toss her a ball.

He smiled as she ran to fetch it. Caregivers cheered.

"Look how good you're doing!" said Hadley's handler, Schellie Scott.

Such small victories and moments of joy are common whenever Hadley or one of the other three facility dogs at Cincinnati Children's Hospital show up. These furry caregivers aren't the typical therapy dogs volunteers bring to hospitals to comfort patients. They are specially trained, full-time working dogs that provide emotional support during stressful procedures, motivate kids to move around and make hospitals seem less scary. And experts say their ranks are growing at children's hospitals across the nation.

A mounting body of research shows that even short interactions

with facility dogs can improve children's overall well-being, decrease the pain they feel and reduce signs of stress, like cortisol levels and blood pressure.

"These dogs are making a real difference," said Kerri Rodriguez, director of the Human-Animal Bond Lab at the University of Arizona. "They can provide a little bit of normalcy, a little bit of comfort, in a really stressful, sterile environment that kids might not feel comfortable in."

Although no one tracks the number of facility dogs in children's hospitals, Rodriguez points to the continual growth of the annual Facility Dog Summit, where handlers and other participants network and where attendance nearly doubled from 2024 to 2025. Other types of hospitals also have full-time dogs, but experts say children's hospitals account for most of the expansion in programs. One large nonprofit, Canine Assistants in Georgia, has a specific children's hospital initiative through which it has placed more than 80 dogs nationally.

Dogs have been on the job for

years at places such as Mount Sinai Kravis Children's Hospital in New York, Norton Children's in Louisville, Kentucky, and St. Louis Children's Hospital. And new programs keep sprouting up. In March, Johns Hopkins Children's Center in Maryland introduced its first two facility dogs.

Hospitals generally get the dogs from nonprofits. Organizations such as Canine Companions, where Cincinnati Children's gets its dogs, breed, raise and train them, then place them with hospital staff members but still own them. Dogs and handlers live and work together.

Although hospitals don't pay for the dogs, they're responsible for costs such as food and veterinary care, which can add up, especially since most are larger breeds like Labradors or golden retrievers. Hospitals usually fundraise or seek grants to cover the costs.

Experts say the benefits of these sorts of "animal-assisted therapies" are clear. A 2022 study Rodriguez co-authored analyzed a survey conducted across 17 children's hospitals.



This August 1989 image provided by NASA shows the planet Neptune photographed by the Voyager 2 spacecraft, processed to enhance the visibility of small features. (AP)

## Neptune's mysterious moon Nereid may be original: study

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., May 26, (AP): Neptune's far-flung moon Nereid may be the last of the planet's original companions that managed to survive a cosmic crash, scientists reported.

Sixteen known moons circle Neptune, our solar system's eighth and most distant planet. Neptune's biggest moon, Triton, barged in from the solar system's frigid outskirts billions of years ago, scattering the planet's original moons and putting them on destructive collision courses.

A team led by the California Institute of Technology used NASA's Webb Space Telescope to study Nereid. Their observations suggest that Nereid is no party crasher like Triton and likely survived by escaping into its extreme, elliptical orbit around Neptune.

## SPORTS

## Expect extreme heat and soccer passion

## Monterrey gears up for World Cup heat and hype

MEXICO CITY, May 26, (AP): World Cup fans visiting Monterrey can expect a cutting-edge soccer stadium, searing heat and some of northern Mexico's best grilled food.

The northern city is ready to showcase its industrial grit and mountain majesty for the 2026 World Cup, but fans should prepare for a climate that is as intense as the local soccer passion. While the city is a modern powerhouse, the June and July temperatures often soar past 100 F (38 C), making hydration and sun protection essential for visitors.

The people of Monterrey are very friendly and almost always very kind to visitors from other countries. They demonstrated this during the intercontinental playoff, especially with Iraq, that qualified for the World Cup in that city.

The Macroplaza is one of the largest public squares in the world, serving as the central hub for the city's most significant monuments. It is surrounded by major institutions like the Metropolitan Cathedral and the Government Palace.

For a change of pace, the Barrio Antiguo (Old Quarter) features cobblestone streets and colorful colonial-style mansions. This historic neighborhood is the city's cultural and bohemian center, filled with art



Tony Chow, President of Coke Canada Bottling, center left, and FIFA Legend Alessandro Nesta, center right, unveil the FIFA World Cup Trophy during a Trophy Tour event at Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto. (AP)

galleries, independent coffee shops and antique stores.

Although it is now a common practice in almost the entire country, Monterrey is considered perhaps the first city to popularize the grill and carne asada - "grilled meat" in Spanish - in particular.

Expect to find an abundance of asadores and steakhouses spotlighting the region's signature cuts - rib-eye, arrachera and cabrito - alongside

expanded street food offerings like tacos de trompo, gorditas campechanas and rich quesadillas stuffed with local cheeses.

Beyond meats, Monterrey's dining scene is diversifying rapidly: craft breweries and cocktail bars are proliferating, and chefs are increasingly fusing Mexican staples with Asian, Mediterranean and Southern U.S. influences to create approachable yet inventive plates for visitors.

The official central hub for the 2026 FIFA World Cup in Monterrey will be in Parque Fundidora, a former steel foundry that has become a massive urban oasis and a testament to Monterrey's industrial heritage. The park hosts the Paseo Santa Lucia, an artificial river offering scenic boat rides and walking paths.

Beyond the main park, the city created an 8-km pedestrian route that connects downtown Monterrey straight to Estadio BBVA in Guadalupe. The lively path will host street-food stalls, local performers and designated areas where supporters can drink, mingle and enjoy the matchday vibe.

Board Line 1 and ride it to the Exposición terminal station. The station connects directly to a secure, dedicated pedestrian walkway leading straight into the stadium gates.

Rideshare (Uber/DiDi): Drivers can drop fans off at designated rideshare drop-off zones outside the security perimeter. Expect heavy traffic and surge pricing on matchdays.

The stadium's iconic steel structure can trap heat, so hydrate before entering.

Also, if you have tickets in the East stand, you will face direct afternoon sun. Wear sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat. The West stand (Poniente) gets shade first.



World Aquatics President Husain Al-Musallam and Dubrovnik Mayor Mato Franković signed the agreement during the ceremony to host the inaugural 4x4 Water Polo World Championship in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

Version features several changes

## World Aquatics introduces new 4x4 water polo format

DUBROVNIK, Croatia, May 26: World Aquatics has officially signed the agreement to host the inaugural 4x4 Water Polo World Championship, scheduled to be held from August 31 to September 6 in the Croatian city of Dubrovnik.

World Aquatics President Husain Al-Musallam thanked the Croatian government and for their major support in organizing the first edition of the tournament.

Al-Musallam stressed that the new format would contribute to the growth of water polo worldwide and creates broader opportunities for teams from Africa, Asia, and the

Americas to compete internationally.

The updated version of the sport features several modifications, including a smaller playing area measuring 15 meters by 10 meters. Each side will field four players along with substitutes, while matches will consist of four periods, with the team winning three periods declared victorious.

The competition is also designed to be played in a variety of venues, including beaches, rivers, lakes, and swimming pools, adding a more dynamic and globally accessible dimension to the sport.

De Silva remains test skipper

## Mendis reclaims captaincy role

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, May 26, (AP) Sri Lanka has handed the captaincy of its one-day and Twenty20 teams back to Kusal Mendis while retaining Dhananjaya de Silva as skipper for the tests on next month's cricket tour of the West Indies.

Mendis captained Sri Lanka in the 50-over World Cup in 2023 but was replaced in 2024. He has never led his country in T20s.

He succeeds Charith Asalanka as ODI captain and Dasun Shanaka in the T20s. Both former skippers were kept in those respective squads named Monday.

Sri Lanka called up two uncapped players, batter Pasindu Sooriyabandara and fast medium bowler Isitha Wijesundara, to its test squad.

Leg-spin bowler Wanindu Hasaranga and fast bowler Eshan Malinga, who were ruled out of this year's T20 World Cup because of injury, have returned to the white-ball squads.

Paceman Matheesha Pathirana, who also missed the World Cup, is sidelined again after being injured in the Indian Premier League.

The first tour game is an ODI in Kingston, Jamaica on June 3.

Squads  
Test squad: Dhananjaya De Silva (captain), Pathum Nissanka, Lahiru Udara, Nishan Madushka, Dinesh Chandimal, Pasindu Sooriyabandara, Kamindu Mendis, Sonal Dinusha, Kusal Mendis, Milan Rathnayake, Prabath Jayasuriya, Ramesh Mendis, Asitha Fernando, Vishwa Fernando, Lahiru Kumara, Isitha Wijesundara,



Kusal Mendis

Kasun Rajitha.  
ODIs: Kusal Mendis (captain), Pathum Nissanka, Kamil Mishara, Pavan Rathnayake, Janith Liyanage, Charith Asalanka, Kamindu Mendis, Milan Rathnayake, Wanindu Hasaranga, Dunith Wellalage, Maheesh Theekshana, Dushmantha Chameera, Dilshan Madushanka, Eshan Malinga, Asitha Fernando, Pramod Madushan.

T20s: Kusal Mendis (captain), Pathum Nissanka, Kamil Mishara, Lasith Croosapulle, Pavan Rathnayake, Kamindu Mendis, Dasun Shanaka, Milan Rathnayake, Dunith Wellalage, Wanindu Hasaranga, Maheesh Theekshana, Dushmantha Chameera, Dilshan Madushanka, Eshan Malinga, Binura Fernando, Nuwan Thushara.

Captain doubtful for opener

## Marsch optimistic on Davies recovery ahead of World Cup

MONTREAL, May 26, (AP): Canada head coach Jesse Marsch believes captain Alphonso Davies will play in the World Cup, although it's unlikely he'll be ready for the team's opener because of injury.

Davies injured his hamstring earlier this month while playing for Bayern Munich. Marsch included Davies on Monday on the team's latest 32-player training camp roster, but he will not join the team until the end of the month to allow him to continue his rehab with the German club.

"Bayern has put him through certain protocols that they can do in Germany that they can't do in North America. So that's one of the reasons why he stayed in Germany, because we think they have some advanced techniques in terms of the treatments that he can get, so we think that that's been good," Marsch said. "They also are very supportive, and they want to see him play in the World Cup. I think that they understand that supporting their players for both club and country is important."

Canada is training this week in Charlotte, North Carolina, ahead of a pair of final preparation matches against Uzbekistan on June 1 in Edmonton and against Ireland on June 5 in Montreal.

"Alfonso will be here on the 31st in Edmonton. So we spoke with Bayern and thought that the best thing for him was to continue his initial recovery treatment until the 28th, then we're giving him a few days to get away, and then he'll be joining us the 31st and we'll pick

up his rehab from there, and try to put him in a position to physically succeed and to be part of our team," Marsch said.

Davies, 25, was hurt during Bayern Munich's loss to Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League semifinals. He has played in 58 matches for Canada with 15 goals.

**Goalkeepers:** Maxime Crépeau (Orlando City), Owen Goodman (Barnsley), Dayne St. Clair (Inter Miami).

**Defenders:** Zorhan Bassong (Sporting Kansas City), Moïse Bombito (Nice), Derek Cornelius (Rangers), Alphonso Davies (Bayern Munich), Luc de Fougerolles (Dender EH), Alistair Johnston (Celtic), Alfie Jones (Middlesbrough), Jamie Knight-Lebel (Swindon Town), Richie Laryea (Toronto), Ralph Priso (Vancouver Whitecaps), Niko Sigur (Hajduk Split), Joel Waterman (Chicago Fire).

**Midfielders:** Ali Ahmed (Norwich City), Tajon Buchanan (Villarreal), Mathieu Choinière (LAFC), Stephen Eustáquio (LAFC), Marcelo Flores (Tigres UANL), Ismaël Koné (Sassuolo), Liam Millar (Hull City), Jayden Nelson (Austin), Jonathan Osorio (Toronto), Nathan-Dylan Saliba (Anderlecht), Jacob Shaffelburg (LAFC).

**Forwards:** Jonathan David (Juventus), Promise David (Royale Union Saint-Gilloise), Daniel Jebbison (Preston North End), Cyle Larin (Southampton), Tani Oluwaseyi (Villarreal), Jacen Russell-Rowe (Toulouse).

## Sabalenka dazzles as Medvedev falls in scorching Roland Garros

Gauff and Osaka advance

PARIS, May 26, (AP): Aryna Sabalenka's diamonds sparkled in the sun when she won her first-round match at the heat-soaked French Open on Tuesday.

Top-ranked Sabalenka looked light on her feet on Court Philippe-Chatrier, despite wearing two thick necklaces in a 6-4, 6-2 win against Jessica Bouzas Maneiro.

"Diamonds, I don't really feel the heaviness, but I can imagine how it looks from the outside," said Sabalenka, the tournament runner-up last year to Coco Gauff. "So I feel pretty comfortable. For me, it's important to look good."

The four-time major winner was initially going to wear three necklaces but said she thought that might be too much.

"It probably sounds a bit crazy, but when I feel good about what I'm wearing, how I look on court, I tend to perform much better," she said. "I like to bring a little bit of a fashion on the tennis court. I know the dress that I will wear on the Grand Slam, and I just try to come up with something to match the outfit."

Sabalenka said she wasn't worried over her jewelry away from Roland Garros.

"I have my fiancé. He's kind of like my security," she said, smiling. "My physio does jujitsu, so I feel pretty secure walking around. If I go somewhere, I don't go alone."

Gauff began her title defense with a 6-4, 6-0 victory over fellow American Taylor Townsend, while four-time major winner Naomi Osaka beat Laura Siegemund 6-3, 7-6 (3) on Court Suzanne-Lenglen.

The fashion-conscious Osaka again caught the eye with a sequined gold playing dress.

For a third consecutive day, the temperature in Paris was forecast to rise to at least 32 degrees Celsius (90 Fahrenheit).

The unusually hot conditions at Roland Garros make net-rushing - usually better reserved for hard and grass courts - a viable option because the court is drying out quicker and playing faster.



Coco Gauff of the U.S. returns to Taylor Townsend of the U.S. during their first round women's singles tennis match at the French Open tennis tournament in Paris. (AP)

Daniil Medvedev usually thrives in such conditions but he struggled in a five-set loss to 97th-ranked Australian opponent Adam Walton.

Walton, who received a wild card invitation from tournament organizers, beat Medvedev 6-2, 1-6, 6-1, 1-6, 6-4. It was Medvedev's second straight first round exit here and third in four years.

"I know why I don't really play my best in Roland Garros, but if I say it, it's (making) excuses," he said. "So I keep it to myself."

Stefanos Tsitsipas, the 2021 runner-up to Novak Djokovic, was leading 6-2, 3-0 against Alexandre Muller when his French opponent retired. Muller wiped

away tears as he left the court and later said he injured his right calf, three months after injuring his left calf.

Later, top-ranked Jannik Sinner looks to extend his 29-match winning streak when he opens against French wild card Clement Tabur in the night session.

French teenager Moïse Kouamé made the perfect start to his French Open career with a 7-6 (4), 6-2, 6-1 win over veteran Marin Cilic.

The 17-year-old Kouamé won one day after 39-year-old Frenchman Gael Monfils made his last appearance at Roland Garros.

The teenager raised his arms in tri-

umph and tilted his head back after defeating the 37-year-old Cilic, who won the 2014 U.S. Open, finished runner-up at two other majors, and reached the French Open semifinals in 2022.

The ATP Tour said No. 318-ranked Kouamé became the first man born in 2008 or later to win a Grand Slam match, and the crowd on a sun-baked Court Simonne-Mathieu showed their appreciation by chanting "Mo-ise! Mo-ise! Mo-ise!" and clapping in-between.

"It's not easy to stay in the present without thinking of the score," Kouamé said. "It wouldn't have been possible without the huge help you (the crowd) gave me."

Underdogs clash for European dream

## Palace &amp; Rayo seize moment on big stage

MUNICH, May 26, (AP): There's an ironic prize on offer if Crystal Palace can beat Rayo Vallecano in the Conference League final on Wednesday: A spot in the competition Palace originally should have been playing in anyway.

A season which began with Palace in court appealing in vain against demotion from the Europa League ends with a chance to win its first-ever European trophy in the competition it didn't want to play in. The winner gets a Europa League place for 2026-27.

It's the last game at Palace for Oliver Glasner, the club's most successful coach, before he leaves at the end of the season. Midfielder Will Hughes has called on the English team to give Glasner "a proper send-off" with the trophy.

Spain's Rayo scrapped its way to the final despite having a season marred by a fan boycott and a simmering feud between the supporters and the club president.

Palace and Rayo are usually in the shadow of more successful neighbors. On Wednesday, they get the European



Rayo Vallecano players celebrate their victory at the Conference League semifinal second leg soccer match between Strasbourg and Rayo Vallecano, in Strasbourg, eastern France. (AP)

spotlight to themselves. Leipzig's Red Bull Arena is an unlikely corporate setting for two vibrant fan bases.

Far from the glamor of Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid, Rayo is the Spanish capital's third team, backed by passionate fans from a working-class neighborhood.

Pirate imagery and left-wing politics make Rayo stand out, while fans even boycotted a game - which turned out to be a stunning 3-0 upset of Atletico - in protest at the club president, while the team briefly moved out of its stadium because the field was unfit for play.

The FA Cup win last season which qualified Palace for European competition was the first-ever major trophy for the team from an unfashionable corner of south London. After hosting Arsenal's Premier League title party Saturday, now's the chance for a party of their own.

Under Glasner, Palace has made a habit of outperforming bigger London rivals with a fraction of the budget, even if it often means saying goodbye to key players when a better offer comes along.

Palace is waiting on the fitness of American defender Chris Richards after he tore ankle ligaments. Glasner said last week Richards was "50-50" for the final. That could leave Richards weighing up how to much to risk his fitness ahead of the World Cup.

Rayo attacking midfielder Isi Palazón could be fresh for the final because he hasn't played since the semifinal win over Strasbourg due to a suspension in the Spanish league for confronting a referee. He scored two vital goals in the 4-3 aggregate win over Greece's AEK Athens in the quarterfinals.

Despite mixed results, confidence remains high

# Brazil turns to Ancelotti to end long wait for World Cup glory

SAO PAULO, May 26, (AP) - Brazil's biggest hope to end a 24-year World Cup title drought is not a clinical striker, a creative midfielder or a dribbling winger like in previous editions of the tournament. This time Brazilians are pinning their hopes on a 66-year-old Italian, who will be sitting on the bench.

Carlo Ancelotti, one of the most successful coaches of his generation, left Real Madrid to take over Brazil's national team last year, a rare example of a foreign coach in charge of the Seleção. Even though his results have been mixed - five wins, three losses and two draws - the country is optimistic he can elevate a squad which is seen as less star-studded than Brazil's iconic teams of the past, despite high-profile players like Neymar and Vinicius Júnior.

While Brazil has won the World Cup five times - more than any other team - it hasn't lifted the trophy since 2002, an eternity for a soccer-obsessed nation that produced some of the most brilliant players in history, such as Ronaldo, Ronaldinho and Pelé.

Since 2002 it has only gotten beyond the quarterfinals once - as World Cup host in 2014 - and even that tournament ended in disappointment after an embarrassing 7-1 semifinal loss to eventual champion Ger-

many. Brazil's self-confidence hasn't been helped by the success of archrival Argentina, the defending World Cup champion and back-to-back Copa America winners.

"It is allowed to believe," Ancelotti says in a World Cup-themed advertising campaign, acknowledging the self-doubt that has crawled into Brazil's national soccer psyche.

Brazil begins its World Cup campaign at MetLife stadium in New Jersey on June 13 against Morocco, semifinalist in the 2022 World Cup. Other Group C opponents are Haiti and Scotland.

Surviving the group stage is taken for granted in Brazil - anything else would be disaster in a World Cup expanded from 32 to 48 teams. How deep Brazil can go against stronger opponents in the knockout phase is less obvious.

"I am aware and reliant that this team can compete against the best in the world. Can we win the World Cup and reach the final? Yes, we can reach the final. But I don't know if that is enough, it is best for us to get there and win the final," Ancelotti said on May 18.

One of the biggest questions facing Ancelotti is what to do with 34-year-old Neymar, who was Brazil's brightest star until he moved to the big-spending Saudi league in



Coach Carlo Ancelotti arrives to announce Brazil's squad for the 2026 FIFA World Cup in Rio de Janeiro. (AP)

2023. He hardly played there due to a string of knee injuries, and last year returned to boyhood club Santos in Brazil, where he dealt with even more injuries.

Ancelotti included Neymar in his World Cup squad despite concerns about his fit-

ness, calling him an "important player" for the team. Barcelona winger Raphinha also sees Neymar as key to the squad, recently describing him as "the man of our sixth World Cup title."

If that happens it will be with a more structured approach than the free-flowing style of play that once made Brazil stand out in global soccer.

With a reputation as a master tactician, Ancelotti has made Brazil a team that is happy to sit back and wait for moments to attack rather than dominate ball possession. He often opts for a compact 4-4-2 formation that can quickly turn into an attacking 4-2-4.

Brazilians are generally satisfied with Ancelotti, even though his record so far is uneven. After he took over, Brazil won two World Cup qualifiers, drew one and lost one, finishing fifth in South American qualifying after Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia and Uruguay.

In friendlies more recently, Brazil beat Croatia - which eliminated Brazil from the 2022 World Cup in a quarterfinal shootout - but lost to 2022 runner-up France.

Former Brazil left-back Filipe Luís, who has recently started a coaching career, in April called Ancelotti "the best thing that

happened" to the national team.

"It is not a sure thing we will win anything," he said. "But we needed someone big, with enough support to make decisions. A man people respect, who knows Brazil has gone through many years in doubt for not winning the World Cup."

Ancelotti took over after a tumultuous time for Brazil.

The team had struggled in qualifying for the 2026 World Cup, losing twice to Argentina, and was knocked out by Uruguay in the quarterfinals of the 2024 Copa America. Three coaches came and left - caretakers Ramon Menezes and Fernando Diniz and full-time coach Dorival Júnior were all fired after poor results and criticism from fans.

Meanwhile, Brazil pursued Ancelotti, whose second stint at Real Madrid appeared to heading toward an end despite the team winning both the Champions League and the Spanish league in 2024.

So confident is the Brazilian soccer confederation that it has made the right choice that it has already extended Ancelotti's contract until the 2030 World Cup.

"We have a beast taking care of our national team, a man who is respected by everyone," Luís said. "This World Cup is for us to build on that."

## Wolfsburg's 29-year Bundesliga stay ends after playoff loss in Paderborn



Wolfsburg's Joakim Maehle, right, and Paderborn's Sebastian Klaas, left, challenge for the ball during the soccer relegation match between German second division team SC Paderborn and German first division team VfL Wolfsburg in Paderborn, Germany. (AP)

Curda delivers decisive extra-time blow

**PADERBORN, Germany, May 26, (AP): Christian Eriksen and Wolfsburg were relegated from the Bundesliga after losing at Paderborn 2-1 in the second leg of their end-of-season playoff to determine which plays in Germany's top division next season.**

Laurin Curda scored Paderborn's promotion-clinching goal in the 10th minute of extra time after Wolfsburg played all but the first 13 minutes with 10 players.

It gave Paderborn, which finished third in the second division, a 2-1 win on aggregate after the teams drew 0-0 in the first leg of their playoff in Wolfsburg on Thursday.

"I could only cry, I couldn't get my emotions under control at all," Paderborn midfielder Ruben Müller said of the club's third promotion to the Bundesliga.

"Indescribable, it's unbelievable what's happened here," said Paderborn goalkeeper Dennis Seimen,

who made two late saves to preserve the win.

It's Wolfsburg's first relegation since the Volkswagen-backed club was promoted to the Bundesliga in 1997. Wolfsburg won the championship in 2009 but has struggled in recent seasons. It survived playoff deciders against Eintracht Braunschweig in 2017 and Holstein Kiel the following year and was forced into another showdown for survival this season after again finishing third from bottom.

It marks the end of a bitterly disappointing season for Eriksen, the Denmark star who signed a two-year deal when he joined Wolfsburg in September. Eriksen captained the side in Paderborn and received commiserations from opposing players before jubilant home supporters stormed the field to celebrate.

Dženan Pejićinović got Wolfsburg off to a great start in the third minute, but Joakim Maehle was sent off in the 14th with his second yellow card for a foul on Mattes Hansen, just minutes after he got his first for pushing Filip Bilbija over for flicking the ball away.

"He feels just as bad," Wolfsburg winger Patrick Wimmer said of Maehle. "He knows what

happened probably shouldn't have happened. But I don't think the whole team should be ganging up on Joakim. He's had a fantastic season since coming back from his shoulder injury and done a great job. He was maybe a bit unlucky today but generally you can see the whole team is lacking in energy."

The sending off arguably changed the course of the game with only Paderborn pushing forward. Bilbija duly equalized in the 39th with a diving header to Calvin Brackelmann's header on from a long throw-in.

Sebastian Klaas struck the post around the hour mark and Curda finally made Paderborn's pressure count when Wolfsburg's defense left him free at the back post to rifle in substitute Sven Michel's cross.

Paderborn, a city to the east of Dortmund in the west German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, also earned promotion in 2014 and 2019. Its Bundesliga appearances were brief after finishing last two seasons.

"We were promoted twice before but we haven't stayed up, yet. We have to make sure we make good decisions this summer," Paderborn coach Ralf Kettmann said.

## Mexico president says 'no issue' with hosting Iran during WCup

MEXICO CITY, May 26, (AP) - Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said that she has "no issue" with her country hosting Iran's World Cup team after its training base was moved from the United States to Mexico for the summer soccer competition.

The team will still play its group stage matches in the U.S. but its base has been moved to Tijuana, Mexico, just south of San Diego, California, a move that Iran's soccer federation announced recently and that was formally confirmed by FIFA, the sport's governing body, on Monday.

Moving the training base comes against the backdrop of the war in Iran, which the U.S. and Israel launched on Feb. 28.

Sheinbaum said at a news conference that she was told by a FIFA representative the U.S. was reluctant to have the Iranian soccer team spend time outside the games on U.S. territory.

"The United States doesn't want the Iranian national team to stay overnight in the United States," Sheinbaum told reporters. She said a FIFA representative had then asked, "Can they stay overnight in Mexico?"

"And we said, 'Yes, no problem. We have no issue with that,'" she said.

Iran's soccer team is slated to play matches in Inglewood, California, against New Zealand on June 15 and against Belgium six days later, before facing Egypt on June 26 in Seattle.

Before the war broke out, the team was originally planned to set up its base in Tucson, Arizona. But with tensions simmering, Iran's team moved its base to Tijuana in Mexico, Sheinbaum said, confirming an announcement by the Iranian federation over the weekend. The federation said the Iranians had received approval from FIFA,



The FIFA World Cup Trophy is displayed during a Trophy Tour event at Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto. (AP)

which made the move official on Monday when it released the lists of all 48 base camp sites.

Teams use base camps to train before and after matches. This year's World Cup runs from June 11 to July 19 and will be co-hosted by the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

The possibility of a move had simmered for months in the uncertainty surrounding the war in the Middle East and security concerns. U.S. sanctions on Iran were likely to only make the team's stay in the U.S. more complex.

The U.S. State Department said in a statement on Monday that President Donald Trump had made it clear the Iranian team was welcome to participate in the tournament.

### Best of the Rest

**Timbers and coach Neville part ways:** The Portland Timbers announced that they have mutually parted ways with coach Phil Neville after two-plus seasons.

The move comes following Portland's 3-1 loss at home to the San Jose Earthquakes on Saturday night. The Timbers are 4-8-2 this season and sitting in 13th place in Major League Soccer's Western Conference.

Neville finished with a 27-31-24 record at the helm of the Timbers after joining the team ahead of the 2024 season. In a statement, Neville thanked the Timbers' front office, players and supporters.

"I realize we are in a results business, and the results haven't been to the expectation of this football club. To the Timbers Army - you are the reason I felt inspired to try and bring success to this club," Neville said. "Keep getting behind the players and the club in this wonderful city. I will miss you all."

Before he was hired by the Timbers, the former Manchester United defender was coach at Inter Miami, where he finished 35-42-13. Neville also coached the England women's national team at the 2019 Women's World Cup.

With the Timbers, Neville replaced Giovanni Savarese, who led the team to the MLS playoffs in four of his five-plus seasons in Portland. (AP)

## Tottenham leadership promises change after team narrowly averts EPL relegation 'disaster'

LONDON, May 26, (AP) - "Disaster" has been averted.

"Uncomfortable truths" have come to the surface.

For Tottenham's players and leadership, there was little to celebrate after the club - one of the richest in European soccer - narrowly escaped relegation from England's top division for the first time in nearly 50 years.

"We will not dress it up," chairman Peter Charrington said in a letter to fans published Monday, "as anything other than falling well short of what this club expects."

While Tottenham's 17th-place finish last season was viewed as an aberration amid the team's ultimately successful bid to win the Europa League, there was little excuse - except, maybe, a long list of injuries - for a repeat 12 months later.

Yet there Spurs were, heading into the final round of this season on Sunday just two points outside the relegation zone and in danger of dropping into the second tier for the first time since 1977.

It would have been the most unlikely relegation since the Premier League was founded in 1992, with Tottenham a member of England's so-called "Big Six," at the forefront of plans to launch the quickly-aborted Super League just five years ago, and owner of one of the most stunning stadiums in Europe. However, Tottenham beat Everton 1-0 - ren-

dering third-to-last West Ham's win over Leeds irrelevant - to complete a late-season revival that included three wins in its last five games under recently-hired coach Roberto De Zerbi, who was brought in late in March to lead the rescue act.

"Without that appointment," Tottenham midfielder James Maddison said, "disaster could have maybe struck."

"But it didn't."

It was too close for comfort, though, for a club



Tottenham's Micky van de Ven, center, and Everton's Thierno Barry battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Tottenham Hotspur and Everton in London, England. (AP)

hierarchy that has undergone profound change over the last couple of years, including the departure of long-time chairman Daniel Levy in September - five months after the arrival of Vinai Venkatesham as chief executive, a role he previously performed at fierce-rival Arsenal.

Charrington said that during this "full reset" of the boardroom, the club had taken its eye off the ball.

"As part of that process, we discovered some uncomfortable truths. The qualities that make Spurs distinct, our football, our ambition, the connection between the team and its supporters, had been allowed to fade," he wrote in his open letter.

"Football success had not been driving our decisions."

Charrington gave a five-point list of commitments to fans, including that the club "will invest across multiple transfer windows to rebuild, balance and strengthen" the team for De Zerbi, who was given a five-year deal when he joined.

"There has been speculation about ownership and the future direction of the club," Charrington added. "Let us be direct. Tottenham Hotspur is not for sale. The Lewis family are wholly committed to this club and to this rebuild."

"They will provide the stability and investment needed at every level to move us forward, and they see that as a long-term responsibility, not a short-term fix."

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Two Qadsia players challenge an opponent for the ball during the Zain Premier League match between Tadamon and Qadsia.

# Sports

## Qadsia gains momentum as rivals falter

Veteran Al-Mutawa delivers again

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26: Qadsia was the biggest beneficiary of Round 16 in the Zain Premier League, moving up to second place after a narrow 1-0 win over Al-Tadamon, secured by a goal from veteran star Badr Al-Mutawa.**

The "Yellows" climbed to 28 points, capitalising on Al-Kazma's 3-2 defeat to Al-Fahaheel, which kept them on 27 points and saw them slip in the standings. Qadsia also took advantage of Al-Arabi's 1-1 draw with Al-Jahra, which dropped the "Greens" to fourth on 26 points, level with Al-Salmiya but behind on head-to-head.

Qadsia continued its positive momentum with a second straight win, with coach Nabil Maaloul giving opportunities to younger players for the second match in a row, while Badr Al-Mutawa once again proved decisive.

League leader Kuwait Club, who remains on 40 points, returned from Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium with a 1-1 draw against Al-Nasr, extending its unbeaten run and maintaining its strong lead at the top.

Al-Arabi and Al-Kazma were the main losers of the round. Al-Kazma dropped to third after its defeat to Al-Fahaheel, while the winner moved up to sixth place on 21 points.

Al-Arabi, meanwhile, continued its dip in form, collecting just three points from their last six matches. Its last league victory came in Round 10 with a 5-0 win over Al-Shabab.

Al-Salmiya, sitting fifth on 26 points, secured a convincing 3-0 victory over Al-Shabab to keep its hopes alive of competing for a continental qualification spot.

The defeat left Al-Shabab in trouble on 15 points, dropping to eighth place behind Al-Nasr, who are seventh with 16 points.

Next round will feature a crucial relegation battle between eighth-placed Al-Shabab and ninth-placed Al-Tadamon (12 points), a match that could significantly shape the survival race.

Al-Jahra, bottom in 10th with 8 points, earned a valuable draw against Al-Arabi to keep its slim survival hopes alive.



Al-Jahra goalkeeper punches the ball away from two Al-Arabi players during the Zain Premier League match.

KUNA photos

**We did this to ourselves: Mitchell**

## Knicks sweep Cavaliers to reach East finals

**CLEVELAND, May 26, (AP):** Donovan Mitchell and the Cavaliers finally got past the second round and face-planted in the Eastern Conference finals.

They weren't ready for the Knicks or the big stage.

The lights were too bright again.

Cleveland's season ended with a resounding, demoralizing and embarrassing 130-93 loss on Monday night in Game 4 to the New York Knicks, who swept the series and advanced to the NBA Finals for the first time since 1999.

Playing on tired and wobbly legs after failing to put Toronto and Detroit away before seven games in the earlier rounds, the Cavs, whose fate was sealed when they blew a 22-point lead in the fourth quarter and lost Game 1 at Madison Square Garden, had no answer for anything the Knicks threw at them.

They got out-played, out-shot, out-rebounded and out-coached.

"We did this to ourselves," said Mitchell, who scored 31 in the close-out loss. "We didn't give our team a chance because we didn't take care of business. You can't play with your food. We had an opportunity in Game 1 and we blew that."

"We had an opportunity, but give credit where credit is due." And now that they've fallen short, the Cavs head into what will likely be a tumultuous summer that will trigger a major roster overhaul and perhaps other moves.

This wasn't the plan. Cleveland made a blockbuster trade at the deadline in February, sending guard Darius Garland, part of its "Core Four" to the Los Angeles Clippers for James Harden, who was supposed to take pressure off Mitchell.

It never happened.

Cleveland's top player approved the Garland swap, but other than a few games here and there, he and Harden never truly meshed as intended. The Cavs, who shot just 28.9% (48 of 166) on 3-pointers in the series, never outgrew their growing pains.

"This was the first time going through what we were going to go through," said Harden. "Now we



The New York Knicks hold the Eastern Conference Championship trophy after Game 4 in the Eastern Conference finals NBA basketball playoffs series against the Cleveland Cavaliers in Cleveland. (AP)

have to take another two steps and get even better. ... I feel like we didn't have a fair chance. We did play one quarter of Cavs basketball offensively. If you're not making shots, you're not going to beat anybody."

Harden has a \$42.3 million player option for next season that he's expected to decline to re-sign with the Cavs as a free agent. But the 36-year-old didn't perform up to offensive expectations and was a virtual turnstile on defense.

Mitchell's future is more complicated. He can be offered a five-year, \$350 million super-max extension by the Cavs as early as this offseason, but the team will likely wait due to several financial factors, and still must decide if the seven-time All-Star is worth the investment.

With the Knicks up by 33 in the fourth, Mitchell and Cleveland's other starters were mercifully replaced. The 29-year-old went to the bench and watched a team he once

cheered for as a kid win its 11th straight playoff game.

Mitchell feels the Cavs took a



New York Knicks guard Jalen Brunson (11) shoots against Cleveland Cavaliers guard Sam Merrill (5) during the second half of Game 4 in the Eastern Conference finals NBA basketball playoffs series in Cleveland. (AP)

significant step this season, and he's determined to get Cleveland a title.

"I love it here," he said when asked about the extension. "I don't know how else to say it. I have no doubt these guys can get there. We have unfinished business."

Cleveland's stunning flame-out in the conference finals is only going to fuel more speculation about coach Kenny Atkinson's future. He guided the team to a No. 1 seed in his first season a year ago before a disappointing, second-round exit against Indiana.

Atkinson helped the Cavs take a step deeper into the postseason, but it's not certain that will be enough to satisfy demanding owner Dan Gilbert, who has dropped more than \$400 million on a team that hasn't delivered him a second title.

Not long after the game, Gilbert went on social media to give a brief assessment of the season.

Harden and Mitchell staunchly defended Atkinson.

## Sulaibikhat completes foreign trio with addition of Milseftch

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 26:** Al-Sulaibikhat's handball team has finalized its foreign signings for the 2026-2027 season by bringing in Serbian player Jovan Milseftch, who becomes the club's third overseas recruit.

The move follows earlier deals for Brazilian international Leandro da Silva and French player Nicolas Claire, as the club continues strengthening its first-team squad ahead of the new campaign.

First-team manager Hussein Saiwan praised the club's board and technical committee for their strong backing in preparing the team in a way that reflects Al-Sulaibikhat's ambitions before the season begins.

He expressed full confidence in head coach Hussein Habib and the players, stressing their ability to deliver strong performances and achieve positive results.

Saiwan said the team faces an important challenge next season, confirming that work is ongoing to sign additional local players. He added that talks are underway with four players, in coordination with the



Jovan Milseftch

coach's recommendations, who has full authority in selecting the squad.

He emphasized that the club's management is committed to providing all necessary support for the new technical staff to help the team meet its ambitions, noting that success will require greater effort and unity from everyone involved.

Saiwan also revealed that Hussein Habib was appointed after a detailed review of several candidates, highlighting his experience, understanding of local players, and ability to build a competitive team for upcoming competitions.

## Inter Miami confirms Messi has left hamstring overload due to fatigue

**MIAMI, May 26, (AP):** Inter Miami confirmed Monday that Lionel Messi has a left hamstring issue, one that has popped up about a week before defending World Cup champion Argentina is set to begin its training camp for this summer's title defense.

And the events of Sunday and Monday surely add at least a bit of intrigue to Argentina's plans.

Messi underwent testing on Monday - which almost certainly means an MRI exam, though the team did not divulge what procedures were involved - and was ultimately diagnosed with "an overload associated with muscle fatigue in his left hamstring" that kept him from finishing Inter Miami's match on Sunday night.

Typically, the timeframe for recovery from such issues is varied depending on the severity.

"The timeline for his return to physical activity will depend on his clinical and functional progress," Inter Miami said in a release.

Messi was subbed out of Inter Miami's match against the Philadelphia Union in the 73rd minute on Sunday. He essentially stopped playing a couple of minutes earlier and was seen grabbing at the back of his left leg at least once before he could be removed for a sub.

Messi walked off the field without any assistance and went directly to the team's locker room. Inter Miami, the defending MLS champion, won the game 6-4 and Messi had a pair of assists in the first half.

Heavy rain fell during the second half, leaving the field slippery. It was



Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi walks on the field during the first half of an MLS soccer match against Philadelphia Union in Miami. (AP)

unknown if Messi took a misstep at any point during the storm or if the conditions were involved in the decision for him to leave the match. All the team said Monday was he was subbed out because of "physical discomfort."

Argentina has a pair of friendlies scheduled in advance of the World Cup, first on June 6 in College Station, Texas, against Honduras and then on June 9 in Auburn, Alabama, against Iceland. Those games will be played in college football stadiums - the home fields of Texas A&M and Auburn - with a combined capacity of about 180,000.

Argentina is in Group J for the World Cup. Its group stage matches: Algeria, at Kansas City, on June 16; Austria, at Arlington, Texas, on June 22; and Jordan, back in Arlington, on June 27.

## Jordan pays tribute to Pep in Man City manager's final sendoff

**LONDON, May 26, (AP):** Basketball great Michael Jordan paid tribute to Pep Guardiola as the departing Manchester City manager was given a final sendoff during an open-top bus parade and after-party featuring an on-stage contract announcement by one of the club's top players on Monday.

After the parade through the streets of Manchester, a sell-out crowd of 19,000 inside the Co-op Live arena - near City's Etihad Stadium - witnessed a video message from Jordan to Guardiola on the big screen.

"Hey Pep, this is Michael Jordan," the six-time NBA champion said. "I just want to congratulate you on an unbelievable career. Enjoy your retirement."

"Good luck on the links," Jordan added, in a nod to Guardiola's hobby of golf, "and keep them straight. Congratulations."

Guardiola is leaving after a record-breaking decade in charge of City in which he won 17 major trophies.

Former City captain Vincent Kompany - the current Bayern Munich coach - and Noel Gallagher of Britpop band Oasis attended the event in person. It was arranged to celebrate the domestic cup double of the men's team as well as the club's Women's Super League and FA Youth Cup triumphs.

In the part of the show dedicated to the women's team, record scorer Khadija "Bunny" Shaw announced on stage she signed a new four-year

contract with City, ending speculation linking her with Chelsea.

Shaw has already been with City for five years. Also speaking on the stage was Erling Haaland, who said he was determined to make sure City's success does not end with the departure of Guardiola and long-time stalwarts Bernardo Silva and John Stones.

"It has been an up-and-down season," Haaland said, "but we are going to try to keep pushing and try to fight to win the biggest trophies we can."

"It has been a pleasure to play with Bernardo and John, and of course for Pep. It has been an amazing journey but we need to keep pushing and fighting even without them."