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MPs-ELECT PLAN COORDINATION MEETING AHEAD OF PARLIAMENT SESSION

PM hands gov't resignation to Amir

Cabinet endorses April 17 Assembly opening

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Kuwait Cabinet expressed Saturday gratitude for all efforts made by all of the bodies that participated in organizing the 2024 parliamentary election.

Opinion

What comes next after the election results?

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

THE elections have ended, and the outcome has revealed the return of a significant percentage of the outspoken candidates who undoubtedly announced their demands during their campaigns. However, the focus now shifts to their conduct within the National Assembly.

Will they abandon their contentious stance and collaborate with the Council of Ministers, under the realization that the dynamics within Abdullah Al-Salem Hall are different from the campaign rhetoric? Or will they strive to turn back the clock?

This depends on the parliamentarians themselves, and how they reconcile their promises to their voters. It depends on whether they will "bring the wolf by the tail", or they come to the realization that the country's situation requires a different approach to matters, instead of imposing promises on the basis of what they pledged.

This is because the financial and economic situation of the state cannot be accepted by the Council of Ministers, regardless of its composition and form, as they are governed by the capabilities that they have.

They must also know that the approach of the current political leadership is different from its predecessors. It has the wisdom and decisiveness that can enable it to go until the end in order to preserve the country's highest interests. Therefore, it will not accept any leap into the unknown, irrespective of the cost.

In this regard, parliamentarians must realize that there are many obstacles preventing the fulfillment of their promises, the most important of which is the fact that the economic stagnation that the state has suffered in recent years due to ill-considered decisions and laws has affected the national product, which today needs strengthening.

Experiences spanning from 60 years ago to the present day have proven that depending solely on oil revenues and foreign investment returns does not establish a resilient economy capable of withstanding crises.

Moreover, the state's current financial obligations are greater than its ability to undertake any kind of adventure that meets electoral promises.

What the region and the Arab world are facing requires everyone to resort to solutions that may be painful at times, but are necessary, which means that the relationship between the two authorities cannot continue on the path of conflict that prevailed in the past.

Regardless of the MPs' efforts to bolster their electoral credentials by appealing to their voters, they must recognize the sensitivity of the regional and international situation, which prioritizes Kuwait's interests above all else.

Based on insights gleaned from the speeches of His Highness the Amir, particularly his speech during the last ten days of Ramadan, there appears to be a willingness from the leadership to address reasonable demands that benefit the people and bolster the economic and financial situation.

As for other parliamentary dreams, they have no place in its vision. We stress that its approach is completely different from the previous ones, and this is what the parliamentarians must understand, regardless of their views or agendas.

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Email: ahmed@aljarallah.com

Follow me on:



ahmedaljarallah@gmail.com



His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah presides over the Cabinet meeting on Saturday, April 6.

European outrage at Gaza aid worker deaths

Kuwait supports UN resolution halting arms export to Israeli occupying entity

GENEVA, April 6, (Agencies): Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international organizations, Ambassador Nasser Al-Hein, affirmed on Friday his country's support for the UN Human Rights Council resolution of halting the export of weapons to the occupying entity.

During his speech, within the framework of the second item on the agenda of the UN Human Rights Council held in Geneva, Ambassador Al-Hein emphasized the historic role of the Council in supporting justice through its adoption of the resolution, calling on it to commit to implementing all international laws and conventions.

Ambassador Al-Hein condemned the continuation of the war waged by the occupation forces against Palestinian civilians despite the decisions issued by the Security Council and the International Court of Justice, pointing out that the occupying force is flouting all international conventions and laws. The State of Kuwait participated, among other countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, in drafting the resolution.

Meanwhile, the Kuwait Relief Society's medical team in Gaza announced Saturday the achievement of their continued implementation of a series of relief projects for displaced people in the Gaza strip.

Deputy Director General of the Kuwaiti Relief Society and head of the Kuwaiti medical relief team present in Gaza, Omar Al-Thuwaini, said in a press statement to KUNA that 120 operations were done within two days for a number of patients at the European Hospital.

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Kuwait joins NATO 75th anniversary celebration

BRUSSELS, April 6, (Agencies): The Embassy of the State of Kuwait to the Kingdom of Belgium and its missions to the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) participated in the ceremony held by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, on the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of NATO, on the sidelines of the NATO Ministerial Meeting in Brussels.

During his speech, Blinken discussed the achievements achieved by NATO over the past decades, as well as efforts to strengthen partnerships with third countries, while looking forward to the Washington summit scheduled for July 2024.

He also addressed emerging risks, including cybersecurity, and the efforts achieved in spending 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on defense expenditures of all NATO members.

Kuwaiti Ambassador to Brussels Nawaf Al-Enezi told KUNA, "The State of Kuwait enjoys a partnership relationship with NATO as the first country to join the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative in 2004."

In addition, the State of Kuwait has hosted the NATO Regional Center since 2017, which is the first regional center of its kind outside the NATO region, as it provides training and educational courses in the areas of partnership between the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative

countries and NATO. NATO, which was founded on April 4, 1949 in Washington in response to the threatening policies pursued by the communist Soviet Union at this time, celebrated the 75th anniversary of its founding on Thursday in Brussels with the participation of the foreign ministers of member states.

Also:

BRUSSELS: NATO marked 75 years of collective defense across Europe and North America, with its top diplomats vowing on Thursday to stay the course in Ukraine as better-armed Russian troops assert control on the battlefield.

The anniversary comes as the now 32-nation alliance weighs a plan to provide more predictable longer-term military support to Ukraine. Plagued by ammunition shortages, Ukraine this week lowered the military conscription age from 27 to 25 in an effort to replenish its depleted ranks and appealed for additional air defenses to counter Russian ballistic missile attacks.

"I didn't want to spoil the birthday party for NATO, but I felt compelled to deliver a sobering message on behalf of Ukrainians about the state of Russian air attacks on my country, destroying our energy system, our economy, killing civilians," said Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba, who attended a meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Council.



National Assembly's General Secretariat receives ballot boxes after the completion of the election results.

Newswatch

JEDDAH: Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman affirmed Thursday the Kingdom's backing to measures taken by Jordan to maintain its security and stability.

This came during a telephone call conducted by Prince Mohammad with King Abdullah II of Jordan, Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported.

King Abdullah II expressed his appreciation to Saudi Arabia for its supportive stance to Jordan, the agency said. (KUNA)

WASHINGTON: US forces deployed in the Red Sea region have knocked out an anti-ship missile unleashed by the Houthis militia in Yemen, the US Central Command (CENTCOM) reported late on Thursday.

At approximately 2:20 p.m. (Sanaa time) on April 4, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) forces successfully engaged and destroyed one anti-ship missile (ASM) in a Houthi-controlled territory of Yemen. (KUNA)

BEIRUT: At least five people were killed and several others wounded in a series of air raids launched by the Israeli occupation aircraft Friday on some villages south of Lebanon.

Two people were killed in Jdeidet Marjayoun village and three others in Aytash Shab, the National News Agency (NNA) reported. (KUNA)

CAIRO: Egyptian authorities this week arrested 10 activists who participated in a pro-Palestinian protest where they accused the government of contributing to the siege of Gaza and called for the expulsion of the Israeli ambassador, a human rights lawyer said.

Egypt's government has condemned Israel's campaign in Gaza and has played a central role, along with the U.S. and Qatar, in trying to broker a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas. But it has largely banned public protests, and criticism of the country's ties with Israel is highly sensitive. (AP)

This came during an extraordinary meeting held at Bayan Palace and presided over by His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

The Cabinet was briefed by the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Acting Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, on the electoral process and the announcement of the election's final results.

Profiles of '24 Nat'l Assembly winners

— Page 2 —

In this regard, the Cabinet praised the citizens' national commitment they demonstrated in this democratic event.

The Cabinet went on congratulating all of the newly elected MPs, wishing them all success and further progress.

On the other hand, the Cabinet approved a bill calling upon the National Assembly to hold the first regular session of the 18th Legislative term on April 17 (Wednesday).

According to Article 57 of Kuwait's Constitution, His Highness the Prime Minister has submitted the government resignation to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

For his part, His Highness the Prime Minister expressed appreciation for His Highness the Amir's confidence, lauding the efforts made by all of the ministers.

Deputy Prime Minister, Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, said that the government pledged to Allah Almighty to work for everything that is in the country's best interest, which came within the framework of the constitution to embody the law to everyone without exception.

Results

On Friday, the Secretariat General of the National Assembly received the ballot boxes after the announcement of the official results of the 2024 parliamentary election.

In a press statement, Chairman of the committee tasked to receive the ballot boxes Omar Al-Ajeel confirmed receiving the ballot boxes from the judicial panel in charge of overseeing the election as per Articles 27, 28 and 31 of Election Decree No. 4/2024. He explained the delivery process is documented by recording the number of each ballot box, the concerned polling station, name of the judge in charge and name of the authorized employee who received the boxes.

He affirmed that the committee double checked the ballot boxes to be sure they are sealed well and intact. He said the number of ballot boxes totaled 759 and they will be stored in the place allocated for this purpose in the Assembly building until the settlement of all appeals against the election results, after which the ballot boxes will be handed over to the Ministry of Interior.

Meanwhile, MP-elect Fahd Falah Bin Jame'e has announced his plan to run for the parliamentary speaker election; while MPs-elect Hamdan Al-Azmi and Nawaf Behaish Al-Azmi disclosed they will vote for Bin Jame'e.

Behaish clarified that he will vote for MP-elect Ahmed Al-Saadoun only if Bin Jame'e does not vie for the speakership.

MP-elect Bader Al-Dahoum said the newly elected MPs have reached an agreement to hold the coordinative meeting at 2:00 pm on Monday in the Assembly building.

MP-elect Fayez Al-Jomhour has two conditions for cooperating with the incoming government; if it vows to improve the standard of living of citizens and if it excludes Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah; otherwise, he will file a grilling motion against the minister.

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Ramadan Timings

Iftar Sunday 18:11
Imsak Monday 04:05



Photo shows the Kuwait Relief Society's medical team in Gaza. The Kuwait Relief Society's medical team in Gaza performed 120 surgeries in two days at the European Hospital.

Kuwaiti surgeon earns fellowship

WASHINGTON, April 6, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti surgeon at the College of Medicine -- Kuwait University -- Dr. Moussa Khorshid has been granted the honorary fellowship from the American Surgical Association (ASA).

Dr. Khorshid is the first doctor in the Gulf and the Middle East to be honored with this fellowship.

In a statement to KUNA, he dedicated the certificate to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the people of Kuwait.



KUNA photo of Kuwaiti Ambassador to Brussels Nawaf Al-Enezi with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:12 Asr 15:23
 Sunrise... 05:33 Maghrib .. 18:09
 Zohr 11:51 Isha 19:27

Local

BIOMETRIC/FINGERPRINT APPOINTMENT: <https://meta.e.gov.kw/En/>

Expected weather for next 24 hours:

By Day: Rather hot and cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times southeasterly wind, with speeds of 15-50 km/h causing rising dust over open areas with a chance for rain might be thundery

Weather

at times.

By Night: Mild and partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times southeasterly wind, with speeds of 12-45 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	35	23
Kuwait Airport	37	18
Abdaly	38	16
Jahra	38	21
Salmiyah	30	23
Nuwaisib	34	18
Wafra	38	17

Profiles of constituency winners of National Assembly '24 polls



KUWAIT CITY, April 6, (KUNA): Profiles of the winners of National Assembly 2024:

First Constituency

Profiles of the 10 winners from the 1st Constituency:

1. Osama Zaid Al-Zaid: Worked in the petrochemical sector. Member of the 2023 Assembly and of the annulled 2022 Assembly.
2. Abdullah Jassem Al-Mudhaf: Born in 1983. Holds Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the College of Administrative Sciences at the Gulf University for Science and Technology in Kuwait. Worked in the banking and investment sectors. Member of the 2023 Assembly and the annulled 2022 Assembly.
3. Mohammad Johar Hayat: Born in 1982. Holds Bachelor's Degree in Political science and Philosophy at Kuwait University in 2006. Journalist writer on political and sports affairs. A journalist specialized in preparing and presenting programs on radio and television. He holds many media and journalistic courses inside and outside Kuwait. Member of the Media Committee of the Kuwait Society for Human Rights 2006-2010, Member of the Freedoms Committee of the Kuwaiti Society for Human Rights 2008-2010, Member of the Social Committee of the Kuwait Journalists Association 2007-2013, Media advisor at the Economic Society from 2021 to 2023
4. Ahmad Haji Lari: Born in 1955. Holds Bachelor's degree in Statistics. Member of the Municipal Council (1993 - 1995 - 1999), Member of the National Assembly (2006 - 2008 - 2013 - 2023, and the annulled 2022).
5. Basel Hussain Al-Bahrani: He holds a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in education.

He worked in the Personal Protection Department at the Ministry of Interior and in Kuwaiti embassies outside the country, He currently works in the private sector.

He has many contributions in the social and political field. Member of the General Secretariat of the Popular Action Movement. He adopted many social issues and initiatives, such as housing, education, financial deficit, and demographics.

6. Issa Ahmad Al-Kandari: Born in 1963. Former minister. Diploma from the Commercial Institute, specializing in banking. Member of the National Assembly (2013 - 2016 - 2020 - 2023 and the annulled 2022).

7. Khaled Marzooq Al-Ameera: Holds a bachelor's degree in security sciences. Worked as an officer in the Ministry of Interior. Member of the 2023 Assembly and the 2022 annulled Assembly.

8. Adel Jassim Al-Damkhi: Born in 1965. PhD in Islamic Sharia. Member of the National Assembly (annulled 2012 - 2016 - 2023- annulled 2022).

9. Saleh Ahmad Ashour: Born in 1953. Holds Bachelor's Degree in Economics and two Diplomas, military sciences and communications. A former colonel in the Air Force. He worked in the Ministry of Transportation, then he won membership in the national Assembly's in 1999, 2003 and 2006, and a membership in a number of associations, including the Kuwaiti Economics Society, the Kuwaiti Graduates Association, the Kuwaiti Human Rights Society, the Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society, the Kuwaiti Journalists Association and Al-Thaqalayn Charitable Society.

10. Mohammad Barrak Al-Azmi: College of Sharia, Kuwait University, from which he graduated in 2001 and obtained a Master's degree in Islamic Studies in 2009.

He became a preacher in 2005, and works at the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs at Marawi Al-Hadya Mosque in Salwa area.

He also works as a teacher at the Holy Qur'an House of the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs.

2nd Constituency

Profiles of the 10 winners from the 2nd Constituency

1. Marzooq Ali Al-Ghanim: Born in 1968. Holds a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering. Member of the National Assembly (2006 - 2008 - 2009 - annulled 2012 - 2013 - 2016 - 2023). Held the position of Speaker of the National Assembly (2013 - 2016 - 2020). Former Chairman of Kuwait Sports Club - Member of the Society of Engineers and the International Association of Mechanical Engineers.
2. Shuaib Ali Shaaban: Born in 1984. Holds a Bachelor's degree in Police Sciences from Saad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences. An officer in the Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior. Member of the National Assembly (2022 annulled) and in 2023.
3. Abdulwahab Aref Al-Essa: Born in 1988. Bachelor's degree in Political

Science from Kuwait University. Worked in media and commerce. Member of the Kuwaiti Journalists Association. Member of the National Assembly (2022 annulled) and 2023.

4. Falah Dhahi Al-Hajri: Director of the Attarjah Center for Memorizing the Holy Qur'an. Member of the National Assembly and (2022 annulled) and 2023.

5. Mohammad Barrak Al-Mutairi: Born in 1969. Holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. Member of the National Assembly (2003 - 2006 - 2008 - 2016 - 2020 - 2022 annulled) and 2023.

6. Bader Nashmi Al-Enezi: Born in 1979. Holds a Bachelor's degree in media from Kuwait University. An employee at the Public Authority for Communications. Chairman of the Board of Directors' Union (2009 - 2011). Member of the 2023 National Assembly.

7. Nawaf Bhaish Al-Azmi: Born in 1978. Retired

8. Abdullah Turki Al-Anbaei: Born in 1983. Bachelor's degree from Kuwait University. Worked in the private sector. Member of the National Assembly (2022 annulled) and 2023.

9. Bader Hamed Al-Mulla: Born in 1971. Holds a Doctorate in law. A lawyer and member of the teaching staff at the Saad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences. Member of the National Assembly (2016 - 2020 - annulled 2022) and in 2023.

10. Fahad Abdulaziz Al-Masoud: Born in 1961. Holds a Master's degree in computer engineering. is a computer engineer at Kuwait Airways. Member of the 2023 National Assembly.

3rd Constituency

Profiles of the 10 winners from the 3rd Constituency:

1. Abdulkarim Abdullah Al-Kanderi: Born in 1981. PhD in business and commercial law. Works as a lawyer and professor at the Faculty of Law at Kuwait University. Member of the National Assembly (2013 - 2016 - 2020 and annulled 2022) and in 2023.

2. Abdulaziz Tareq Al-Saqoubi: Born in 1986. Bachelor of Architecture from the College of Engineering and Petroleum at Kuwait University 2008. Master of Architecture from University of Cincinnati. Member of the National Assembly (2020 - annulled 2022) and in 2023.

3. Mohalhal Khaled Al-Mudhaf: Born in 1971. Diploma in Mechanical Engineering. Member of the teaching staff at the Industrial Institute in the Public Authority for Applied Education. Member of the National Assembly (2020 - annulled 2022) and in 2023.

4. Fares Saad Al-Otaibi: Born in 1974. Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. General Controller in Kuwait Municipality. Member of the National Assembly (2013 - 2020 - annulled 2022) and in 2023

5. Ahmad Abdulaziz Al-Saadoun: Born in 1934. Former Speaker of the National Assembly. Member of the National Assembly (1975 - 1981 - 1985 - 1992 - 1996 - 1999 - 2003 - 2006 - 2008 - 2009 - annulled 2012 and 2022, as well as in 2023) He was also Assistant Undersecretary for Telegraph and Telephone Affairs at the Ministry of Communications. President of Kuwait Football Association from 1968 to 1976.

6. Jarrah Khaled Al-Fouzan: Born in 1989. Bachelor's law degree. General Manager of Cyber Systems. Member of the 2023 National Assembly.

7. Muhannad Talal Al-Sayer: Born in 1981. Master of Private Law. Member of the National Assembly (2020 - annulled 2022) and in 2023.

8. Ahmad Nabil Al-Fadhel: Born in 1977. Bachelor's degree in administration science. He held leadership positions in many listed and unlisted companies. Member of the Laws Proposals and Projects team of the campaign of former MP Nabil Al-Fadhel.

He Specialized in restructuring troubled projects. Author of theses and research on modern mathematical economics. Member of the National Assembly 2016. Multiple courses in the financial, analytical and financing aspects. Postgraduate degrees in finance and the Arab market. 17 years of experience in the private sector

9. Janan Mohsen Ramadan: Born in 1973. Bachelor of Chemical Engineering from Kuwait University. Master of Chemical Engineering from Kuwait University. Member of the annulled 2022 National Assembly and in 2023.

10. Hamad Adel Al-Obeid: Born in 1982. Holds a Bachelor's degree in Comparative Jurisprudence and Fundamentals of Jurisprudence from Kuwait University. Holds a Master's degree in Islamic economics from Cairo University. Member of the annulled 2022 National Assembly and in 2023.

4th Constituency

Profiles of the 10 winners from the 4th Constituency:

1. Shuaib Shabab Al-Muwaizri. Born in 1959. Holds a diploma in police academy. A former colonel in the Ministry of Interior. Former Member of the National Assembly (2009 - annulled 2012 - 2016 - 2020 - annulled 2022) and in 2023.

2. Anwar Arrak Al-Dhaferi: Born in 1984. Holds a Bachelor's Degree in Special Education. President of the General Union of Students and Trainees of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training between 2005 and 2006.

General coordinator of the Kuwaiti Progressive Movement. He worked as a journalist in the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Rai

3. Obaid Mohammad Al-Mutairi: Born in 1971, Doctorate in Law, Faculty Member in Law College at Kuwait University, former Member of Parliament in 2012-2020.

4. Mohammad Awadh Al-Ruqab: Born in 1981. He holds a Bachelor's degree in accounting. Former executive in Kuwait Credit Bank (KCB). Former member of the Municipal Council. Member of the 2023 National Assembly.

5. Mubarak Hmoud Al-Tasha: Holds PhD in private law compared to Islamic law. Legal advisor to the Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf. Teacher of personal status law at Kuwait University. Teacher of civil law at the Commercial Institute. Member of the annulled 2022 National Assembly and in 2023.

6. Bader Sayyar Al-Shammari: Born in 1973. Retired Major General from the Ministry of Interior. Formerly Director of Jahra Immigration. Member of the 2023 National Assembly.

7. Saad Ali Al-Rashidi: Born in 1965. Holds a high school diploma. Worked in the Ministry of Interior. Member of the National Assembly (2008 - 2009 - annulled 2012 - 2013 - 2016 - 2020 - annulled 2022) and in 2023.

8. Fayez Ghanem Al-Jamhour. Born in 1971. Holds a Bachelor's degree in Sharia. Former executive at Ministry of Public Works. Former MP in the 2020 National Assembly and in 2023.

9. Mubarak Haif Al-Hajraf. Born in 1970. Holds a Master's degree in law and a diploma in private law. Member of the National Assembly (2016 - 2020 - annulled 2022) and in 2023.

10. Mohammad Hayef Al-Mutairi. Born in 1964. Holds a BA in Islamic Studies. Imam and preacher at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs. Member of the National Assembly (2008 - 2009 - 2012 - 2016 - annulled 2022) and in 2023.

5th Constituency

Profiles of the 10 winners from the 5th Constituency:

1. Fahad Falah Al-Azmi: Ex-military and member of the 2023 National Assembly.

2. Hamdan Salem Al-Azmi. Born in 1968. Master's in Civil Law. Attorney and legal researcher at the Ministry of Interior. Member of the National Assembly (2013 - 2016 - 2020 and annulled 2022) and in 2023.

3. Mutib Nasser Al-Suhali: Born in 1974. Holds a Bachelor's Degree in Police sciences. He worked in the Ministry of Interior in several departments until he reached the rank of retired major general.

4. Saud Abdulaziz Al-Hajri. Master's in Mechanical Engineering from the United States. Worked in the field of media and journalism. Member of the National Assembly (annulled 2022) and in 2023.

5. Bader Zayed Al-Dahoum: Born in 1975. He holds a doctorate and a master's degree in fundamentals of Islamic jurisprudence. Islamic education teacher. Member of the National Assembly 2012. Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Jaber Al Ali Cooperative Society.

6. Majed Musaed Al-Mutairi: Born in 1972. Bachelor's of Business Administration. Worked for the Kuwait Oil Company. Member of the National Assembly (2016 and annulled 2022) and in 2023.

7. Abdulhadi Nasser Al-Ajmi: Born in 1974. Holds a PhD in Islamic history. Professor of History and Civilization at the College of Arts at Kuwait University. Member of the 2023 National Assembly.

8. Hani Hussein Shams: Born in 1970. Bachelor's degree in Commerce, majoring in accounting from Kuwait University. Member of Parliament (annulled 2022) and in 2023.

9. Mohammad Musaed Al-Dousari: Born in 1976. He holds a doctorate in public law from Ain Shams University in 2015. Working as an Attorney.

10. Khaled Mohammad Al-Otaibi. Born in 1966. Bachelor's degree in Police Sciences. Member of the National Assembly (2016 - 2020 - annulled 2022) and in 2023.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Sustainable living environment threatened by over-population, chaos'

"WE know that there is a private housing crisis for newlyweds or married couples living with their parents, for many reasons, and there is no room to mention them in this limited space of this article, but the existence of this crisis means that we develop patchwork and destructive solutions for typical residential and/or urban areas, without a technical study," columnist **Sultan Musaed Al-Jazzaf** wrote for *Al-Qabas* daily.

"Due to the reality of these areas, and the extent of their tolerance in terms of services and capacity, we repeat the same mistakes, such as the case in Jabriya, which was established to accommodate 80 thousand, and now its population exceeds 150 thousand people, and there are other areas as well, such as Farwaniya and Fahaheel, where their population has doubled and tripled.



Al-Jazzaf

"The continued destruction of typical residential areas by populist decisions, and under various pressures, is disastrous and absurd. This is what was stated in the recent decision of the Municipal Council, which last month adopted a decision to increase the height of residential homes to 20 meters, which is a destructive decision for residential areas.

"This decision will put pressure on infrastructure services such as electricity, water, sewage, and parking, in addition to the financial burden that public funds will bear in raising the level of services and maintaining them.

"The population density will increase in Al Furjan, which already suffers from overcrowding because it was originally designed to accommodate a certain number of residents and cars.

"Basically, people are suffering from the current situation, to the point that you cannot invite your family or friends to your home, and not even a garbage truck can pass by the freely to collect garbage due to the large number of cars and lack of parking spaces.

"This is not to mention the chaos that this decision will create in terms of aesthetic distortions of the villas, as you will find villas that have five floors overlooking villas of two or three floors, and perhaps they will also be exploited by some property owners to create an apartment for rent.

"Are not the decisions of delivery vehicles sufficient, which have been licensed without controls and are seen everywhere, and some of them concentrated in some areas, and have caused a lot of inconvenience and se-

curity problems for the residents of the areas, as a result of young people gathering late at night, in addition to the traffic of cars and garbage waste, which leaves behind the pioneers of fast food orders.

"The same applies to the Club Investment Law, which turned sports clubs in residential areas into commercial complexes and extremely ugly buildings, and these areas lost their privacy, beauty, tranquility, and safety.

"Therefore, I hope that the Minister of Municipality or the Council of Ministers will not accept or adopt this decision, which will transform residential areas and villas into buildings and residential complexes, and it is in fact contrary to the Kuwait 2035 plan and vision, which stipulates and ensures the creation of a sustainable living environment."

Also:

"A profound shift is imperative for Kuwait's current state. Depending solely on a dwindling source of income, vulnerable to the volatility of conflicts, global politics, economic shifts, industrial advancements, and rapid technological progress, while neglecting the transition from oil to sustainable energy sources, is not tenable," columnist **Naji Al-Mulla** wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"Embracing electric vehicles is crucial. Otherwise, our fate and future will be dictated by forces beyond our control.

The most pressing threat we face is the pervasiveness of an inflated rentier economy, where nearly 80% are effectively unemployed, and the absence of a productive sector capable of generating value. This requires cultivating a sector fueled by dynamic and innovative human capital.

"Through exceptional educational systems, akin to beehives, Kuwait can transform into a society that surpasses its own needs, satisfies societal demands, and competes in global markets, both domestically and internationally.

"Ensuring the continuity and advancement of society should be our primary concern. However, when we assess our reality comprehensively, we confront a vast and deep chasm that separates us from this objective, one that is expanding and deepening at an alarming rate.

"To bridge this gap, we need to dismantle and reconstruct our approach. We must break free from the confines of both distant and recent past paradigms that have led us here. Our current predicaments necessitate a revitalization of the Kuwaiti individual within a challenging environment,

fostering their energies and ingenuity to become not a burden but a pillar of support for themselves and others.

"An educational overhaul is imperative, modeled after the exemplary standards of countries like Finland. Those in the public sector with redundant scientific backgrounds should undergo intensive scientific training in Finland, obtaining professional teaching licenses according to Finnish standards.

"This includes achieving a master's degree and passing rigorous examinations to develop their own curriculum and employ highly innovative teaching methods, fostering students' attainment of international excellence without the need for homework, private tutoring, or plagiarized research. Moreover, a culture of integrity must prevail, free from cheating or exam malpractice.

"Schools undergo a remarkable transformation, becoming inviting and luxurious spaces devoid of morning queues and stifling uniforms. Instead, they feature open rooms with flexible seating options such as sofas or floor cushions, adorned in vibrant, psychologically chosen colors.

"These schools offer healthy and appealing meals tailored to taste and age, along with comprehensive healthcare and educational support, embracing non-traditional teaching methods aligned with the latest educational advancements.

"To realize this vision, it's imperative to phase out existing teacher institutes that admit candidates with low academic standings and outdated curricula. Accelerating the privatization of education becomes essential. As previously mentioned, the government annually covers tuition fees, amounting to 2,000 dinars for kindergartens and 4,000 for other educational stages. However, this subsidy is contingent upon schools meeting stringent accreditation standards, ensuring the quality of education.

"Kuwaiti teachers must undergo rigorous training, with an emphasis on Kuwaitization to manage the educational process akin to the Finnish model. They should receive support, competitive salaries, and incentives from both the government and private sector, tied to performance and the attainment of excellence.

"This revolution in the field of human creation and rehabilitation is the most important requirement for radical change in all aspects of life and building another human being for a different future."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes

Other Voices

When will the series of thefts, forgery & manipulation stop?

By Ahmad alsarraf

The Ministry of Social Affairs, through field inspection teams, as is the custom every year, revealed a large number of violations of fundraising during the month of Ramadan, and seized funds collected from worshippers and mosque visitors.

The ministry teams conducted hundreds of field visits to the mosques, in addition to 44 visits to the headquarters of "charity" societies, and monitored 450 various violations, the most notable of which were for people and entities that called for collecting funds via social media, setting up clothes collection kiosks, and registering violations against 28 restaurants that called for collecting money in the form of donations for 'iftar meals', in addition to monitoring five food supply companies and a central market calling for fundraising via social media!

The Ministry also monitored 321 violating advertisements for charities, organizations, and other entities, and they were contacted to remove them, in addition to monitoring a violation for a civil society organization that called for collecting donations for the benefit of cancer patients (!!). The Ministry also monitored four violations of donations on social networking sites, and other serious violations.

For more than thirty years, I have been writing about these same violations, which are repeated year after year, through which thousands of violators have collected hundreds of millions of dinars, often under false pretexts, including hiring preachers, printing the Qur'an, and digging wells, all of which are often for reasons whose authenticity cannot be verified.

The Ministry of Social Affairs knows that these are lies, the Awqaf knows, and Commerce knows, and no one can put an end to this laxity, which is led by several people, one of whom had previously had his citizenship withdrawn and then restored, so they continue to confront him in his deception, and claim, through various means of communication, that he is spending it on hire advocates!

A charity organization also carried

out an unpleasant act, announcing that it had received donations, even if it was ten dinars, to help buy a church and turn it into a mosque (!!).

This seasonal rush to collect donations, repeated annually in the same ways and with almost the same people, is due to three reasons:

1. The huge amount of money collected each season. The majority of ignorant people seeking a reward do not care where their money goes, as long as they do what they owe.

2. The ease of raising money through these methods, and the laxity of the concerned authorities in holding them accountable. These violations often end with a signature or a warning!

3. The absence of laws criminalizing these actions, which are immoral and harmful to the state's economy, and the absence of a desire to stress them, perhaps because the interests of these people coincide with the interests of some legislators.

We see the repetition of such crimes in tampering with citizenship, and in treatment files abroad, which are repeated year after year, whether by sending those who do not deserve treatment, or falsifying bills for medicine and treatment in health offices.

We also see it in the falsification of documents "proving" disability, which has also continued for more than twenty years, without stopping. Even the amnesty lists were not spared, as it was stated by the candidate and former MP Marzouq Al-Ghanim that the latest lists included the name of the person who was subjected to repeated insults to three of the state's Amirs, and it is known who he is, while the names of thousands of deserving people were forgotten.

It is necessary, and in the spirit of responsibility, to extend our thanks and gratitude to the wise leadership that emphasized the grave damage to national identity through tampering with Kuwaiti citizenship.

Given what national identity represents in terms of survival, existence, governance, and the fate of a country, an attack on it is an attack on the entity of the state and its basic components and cannot be tolerated. Therefore, we praise and support all efforts and measures aimed at preserving national identity.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart, Your Highness the Amir, for your great stance and support for the efforts of the Minister of Interior.

□ □ □

e-mail: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw



alsarraf

Strategic planning to up National Guard's capabilities wins support

Al-Nawaf, Lt Gen Al-Rifai hold meeting

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Deputy Chief of the National Guard, Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf, reaffirmed the Guard's commitment to its strategic planning approach, which entails staying abreast of the latest developments in armament and training while enhancing the capabilities of its members across various domains, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This ensures their optimal performance in defense and security operations, in collaboration with their counterparts in the army, police, and general fire force, under the wise leadership of the Amir of the country and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad.

Meeting

During a meeting held yesterday evening, attended by Undersecretary of the Guard, Lieutenant General Engineer Hashim Al-Rifai, and senior leaders involved in crafting the Guard's guiding document for 2025, Sheikh Al-Nawaf received a briefing on the objectives outlined in the document.

The meeting also addressed the executive objectives achieved thus far and highlighted the key challenges encountered by the working team.

Sheikh Al-Nawaf instructed the team to finalize the strategic planning process and tasked them with initiating the development of the new strategic plan for the Guard for the period 2025-2030.

This underscores the importance of meticulous planning in supporting the Guard's mission to serve as a vital protection and support entity. He emphasized the necessity of complete readiness and a highly professional force capable of swiftly and effectively responding to security challenges, supporting national defense plans, and providing assistance to government agencies.



Al-Nawaf during the meeting with senior National Guard officials.

Customs DG tours departments

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Abdullah Al-Sharhan, the Director General of the General Administration of Customs, conducted an inspection tour encompassing several customs centers and departments, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Beginning at Doha Port Customs, Al-Sharhan was warmly received by Controller Nayef Al-Otaibi. He then proceeded to inspect the Customs Warehouses Department in Amghara, where he was greeted by Director Muhammad Al-Saidi. Finally, the tour concluded at the Sulabiya Land Customs Administration, where Al-Sharhan was wel-

comed by Director Youssef Al-Kandari, overseeing the Sulabiya Customs Administration and the Vegetable District.

During the tour, Al-Sharhan meticulously examined the operations and procedures of each customs center, engaging in discussions about workflow, customs procedures, and challenges faced. Solutions to existing obstacles and difficulties were actively explored.

At the conclusion of his visit, Al-Sharhan commended the customs officers for their dedicated efforts and expressed gratitude for their hard work and commitment to their duties.

Polls schools cleaned, prepared for students

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: In an impressive display of efficiency, the Kuwait Municipality has swiftly completed the cleaning of polling schools designated for the "Nation 2024" elections, setting a record pace to hand them over to the Ministry of Education. This accomplishment underscores the Municipality's commitment to ensuring a smooth electoral process and maintaining hygienic standards in educational facilities, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to a statement released today, the Director General of the Municipality, Saud Al-Dabbous, wasted no time in mobilizing cleaning teams to commence work immediately following the conclusion of the electoral procedures. A total of 124 schools earmarked for voting underwent thorough cleaning, a task that involved approximately 1,300 dedicated cleaning personnel and the utilization of 66 specialized machines and equipment.

In the Farwaniya and Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorates, significant progress was made as 20 schools in Farwaniya were cleaned by a workforce of 200 individuals, aided by 46 machines and equipment. Simultaneously, 10 schools in Mubarak Al-Kabeer received meticulous attention.

Similarly, the capital city and Jahra Governorate witnessed a commendable effort as 36 polling schools in the capital were cleaned with the collaboration of 300 cleaning staff and the deployment of 80 machines and equipment. In Jahra, 10 schools were effectively cleaned by a team of 100 workers.

The teams assigned to Al-Ahmadi and Hawalli Governorates also accomplished remarkable feats by cleaning a total of 50 polling schools spread across various electoral districts. This feat was achieved through the concerted efforts of 600 cleaners utilizing 110 machines and equipment.

The Kuwait Municipality's swift and thorough execution of the cleaning process underscores its dedication to facilitating a seamless electoral experience and upholding standards of cleanliness and hygiene in educational institutions. This achievement stands as a testament to the Municipality's efficiency and commitment to serving the community during critical events such as the National Assembly elections.



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Donations to help pay debts, fines

Bid to help needy Kuwaiti families

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Abdulaziz Sari Al-Mutairi has urged cooperatives, charitable organizations, entities and individuals to participate in the 'Your help is their joy' campaign, which embodies the values of goodness and generosity, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Al-Mutairi pointed out the campaign is considered the Kuwaiti people's way of helping the needy and distressed

Kuwaiti families during the blessed month of Ramadan.

He affirmed that efforts are being coordinated with many parties to guarantee the success of the campaign, indicating the donations will be used to pay the debts or fines of citizens who cannot afford to do so.

He said the payment will be done as per the rules and regulations, stating it is expected that the final proceeds of the campaign will exceed KD10 million.

Finance sets rules for accepting donations in public institutions

'Confidentiality of donor's data must be maintained'

KUWAIT CITY April 6: Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Financial Affairs at the Ministry of Finance Matrook Al-Mutairi has announced the rules and regulations for accepting and using donations in public institutions like the Ministry of Education, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily obtained a copy of Al-Mutairi's letter to the Ministry of Education undersecretary stating: With reference to the Ministry of Finance's circular on the rules and regulations for accepting and using donations in government agencies, please take note of the following:

1. Donations and cash grants are accepted through certified check or automatic payment. Any other means are not accepted.
2. Approval of the Ministry of Finance must be obtained after the initial approval of the Minister of Education or his authorized representative to receive donations and the like after completing the data and documents stated in the circular.
3. The donation should not be conditional in favor of the donor or others, and that there are no direct or indirect interests or benefits for the donor, or a preferential grant, benefits, priority, or benefit from the services provided by the Ministry of Education.
4. The donation does not include any financial or in-kind benefits for employees of the Ministry of Education.
5. It is prohibited to request any cash or in-kind donations or contributions to finance projects or for any other purpose from contractors, private companies, individuals or others. This excludes public calls of entities for citizens to donate in accordance with the powers granted to them by the law.
6. The type of donation, methods of benefiting from it and the party responsible for implementation shall be determined through an agreement between the donor and the

Ministry of Education after completing the information requesting a donation using the attached form nos. 1 and 2.

7. The donation is directed for the purpose for which it was allocated, and the ministry has the right to direct the donation for another purpose in the interest of the public with the approval of the donor, his representative or heirs, in addition to the approval of the Ministry of Finance. In the event that there is a surplus, the Ministry of Finance has the right to disburse the surplus without consulting the donor or his heirs.

8. The donor should not manage or operate the project for which his donation is used.

9. The cash and in-kind donations and gifts received must be disclosed and statistical records must be allocated for them. Form nos. 3 and 4 attached to the circular must be completed. Copies of the forms must be submitted to the Storage Affairs and Procurement Systems Sector in the Ministry of Finance at the end of each fiscal year, in addition to the Financial Affairs Sector to be included in the ministry's budget and final account in line with the principles of governance and transparency.

10. All sectors of the ministry must include the amounts of repeated and confirmed donations in the annual draft budget, which should be forwarded to the Budget and Costs Department in the Financial Affairs Sector to be included in the ministry's overall draft budget.

11. In the event that the donor will implement the project or through another party assigned to him, he must sign the acknowledgment attached to Form No. 2 accepting the implementation of the project in accordance with the technical specifications and the terms of reference booklet prepared with the knowledge and by the Ministry of Education and under the supervision of the concerned government agencies and then deliver the project to the ministry immediately upon completion in accordance with the conditions and timetable.

12. The supporting documents for the financial and legal conditions of the donor and the person responsible for implementing the project should be completed in accordance with the rules stated in the circular of the Ministry of Finance, provided such data and documents are submitted in preparation for presenting the donation to the competent authority.

13. If the donations and gifts provided are in-kind, items or the supply of materials or the like, all circulars and instructions issued by the Public Storage Affairs Sector and Purchasing Systems at the Ministry of Finance shall apply to them. The Supplies and Stores Department shall be the competent authority to receive these items, taking into account the stipulated regulations under 'Clause Five: In-Kind Donations'.

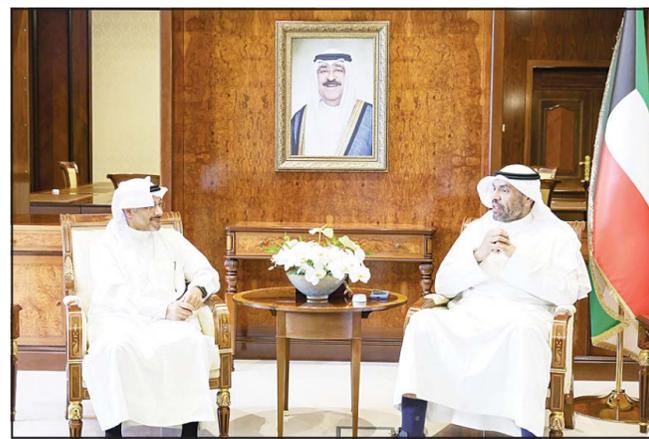
14. Ownership of projects donated in kind that have private ownership documents is transferred to the ownership of State property immediately upon acceptance of the donation and before implementation in accordance with the statutory procedures followed in accordance with the laws, regulations and regulating circulars.

15. With regard to donations and grants to finance construction projects, whether by the donor or with the knowledge of the Ministry of Education or by assigning a third party to implement such projects, Clause Six of the circular is applied.

16. In the event that there is a bank account for donations and cash gifts before the issuance of the Ministry of Finance circular, the Financial Affairs Sector should be provided with the details of those accounts to be sent later to the Ministry of Finance, as stated in Clause Seven of the circular.

17. Confidentiality of the donor's data must be maintained and his wish not to disclose his personal information must be respected.

18. The donor is given a letter and a certificate indicating his donation.



KUNA photo
FM Al-Yahya meeting with Arab League Assistant Secretary General Al-Ojairi.

FM meets Assistant Sec-Gen of Arab League

Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met Wednesday Assistant Secretary General of the Arab League Mohammad Al-Ojairi.

In a statement, the Foreign Ministry

said the meeting focused on boosting Arab joint action and different aspects of cooperation between Kuwait and the Arab League. (KUNA)



KUNA photo
Minister Sheikh Firas Saud receiving KFH CEO Al-Rushood.

Bid to help citizens in debt

'Social Affairs' hails KFH KD7 million donation to humanitarian campaign

KUWAIT CITY, April 6, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs Sheikh Firas Saud Al-Malik Al-Sabah lauded on Thursday Kuwait Finance House's (KFH) donation of KD seven million (around USD 22.7 million) to a humanitarian campaign at helping those in debt.

The ministry said in a statement that this came in a meeting between Minister Sheikh Firas and KFH CEO Abdulwahab Al-Rushood where he offered this donation.

The minister commended the donation as part of KFH's societal and humanitarian contribution that plays a role in unburdening the indebted Kuwaiti citizens during the holy and blessed month of Ramadan.

The first-of-its-kind campaign was launched last year and successfully paid off the debts of more than 10,000 indebted Kuwaiti citizens.

Decisions issued on higher edu programs

KU 'extends' validity period for secondary certificates for struggling students abroad

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Kuwait University has recently approved an extension of the validity period for secondary certificates, allowing registration for a duration of three academic years instead of the usual two, exclusively for struggling students on scholarship abroad, reports Al-Qabas daily.

This amendment aims to accommodate the circumstances of Kuwaiti students facing challenges while studying overseas.

Under the revised admission and registration policy, Kuwaiti students on scholarships abroad from the Ministry of Higher Education, who have not completed more than six semesters or three academic years, are eligible to register at Kuwait University.

The updated policy specifies that admission to the university is contingent upon secondary school graduation, with a maximum elapsed time of four semesters or two academic years.

However, this condition does not apply to Kuwaiti students on scholarship abroad, who may have up to six semesters or three academic years since their graduation.

The rationale behind this modification is to address the potential health, psychological, and social difficulties that some students abroad may encounter, necessitating their return to Kuwait.

These students may face challenges in meeting transfer requirements and may find themselves unable to apply to join the university due to the expiration of their secondary school certificates. Therefore, extending the validity period aims to provide these students with the opportunity to continue their education at Kuwait University despite their circumstances.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Dr. Adel Al-Adwani, has issued decisions regarding the addition and deletion of several study programs and degrees in the new list of higher education institutions permitted to enroll in undergraduate and postgraduate programs, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Al-Adwani stated that the specialization of Occupational Therapy has been added to the new list of higher education institutions in 6 universities in the United Kingdom, including according to the bachelor's system, and two universities according to the master's system.

Additionally, the Occupational Therapy program in the master's system has been added to the new list of higher education institutions permitted to enroll in undergraduate and postgraduate programs in Ireland.

Furthermore, the doctoral program in Oral Biology at the University of Mani-



Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber, presided over the meeting of the Committee for Follow-up of International Decisions and Agreements between Kuwait and other countries, reports Al-Jarida daily. The meeting, held at the Ministry's General Office, addressed all agenda items and reviewed developments pertaining to the committee's responsibilities. In a separate engagement, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Sheikh Jarrah Al-Jaber, welcomed the Iraqi Ambassador to Kuwait, Al-Manhal Al-Safi, today. During their meeting, they discussed bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries and exchanged views on matters of mutual interest.

'Contact employers'

CSC nominates 2,268 citizens for govt jobs

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Civil Service Commission has revealed the nomination of 2,268 male and female citizens for employment in various government agencies, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This announcement marks a new wave of candidates from the CSC's registry, eager to pursue careers in ministries and state institutions.

Emphasizing ongoing efforts, the CSC reiterated its commitment to nominating additional candidates in alignment with the job needs plan.

Candidates have been urged to directly contact their respective employers for further instructions, eliminating the necessity to visit the CSC building.

toba has been added to the new list of higher education institutions that allow admission to study undergraduate and graduate programs in Canada.

Lastly, Al-Adwani issued a decision to delete 4 postgraduate study programs from 15 American universities from the list of higher education institutions in the United States recommended by the National Agency for Academic Accreditation and Educational Quality Assurance.

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PAMA disburses Eid Al-Fitr aid for eligible minors

Banks hailed for supporting 'Let's Be Aware' awareness campaign

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Basil Ahmed Al-Haroun, Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait commended the distinguished efforts of Kuwaiti banks in backing the banking awareness campaign "Let's Be Aware," reports Al-Qabas daily.

Launched by the Central Bank in collaboration with the Kuwait Banks Association, the campaign received substantial support from banks, which utilized electronic channels, social media platforms, and organized activities to disseminate campaign materials and enhance financial and banking literacy across society.

In a statement, Governor Al-Haroun specifically praised the National Bank of Kuwait, the International Bank of Kuwait, and the Kuwait Finance House for their outstanding contributions to the campaign. He highlighted the collective efforts of all Kuwaiti banks, emphasizing their role in ensuring the campaign's success and broad outreach within the banking sector and society.

Al-Haroun reiterated the Central Bank's commitment to promoting financial and banking awareness while safeguarding customer rights, particularly in light of the evolving landscape of banking services and associated risks such as electronic fraud. He underscored the importance of ongoing awareness initia-

tives and the social responsibility of the Kuwaiti banking sector in this regard.

Eid aid deposited in banks: The Public Authority for Minors' Affairs (PAMA) has deposited the Eid Al-Fitr aid for eligible minors under its care in their bank accounts -- 2,416 beneficiaries within 792 families who met the conditions, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, Director General of PAMA Eng Hamad Al-Barjas affirmed that the authority is keen on covering the needs of its wards, including the disbursement of financial support before the holidays. He said the authority works continuously to strengthen its social, humanitarian, living, residential, educational, recreational and other programs; especially in the field of supporting needy families, in addition to programs supporting a number of charitable, social, religious, health and educational entities.

He stressed the authority sustains aid programs and develop its system with the aim of alleviating the burdens of beneficiary families, indicating the disbursement mechanisms have been developed through digital transformation programs and applications including PAMA's website and Sahel application.



Editor-in-Chief of the Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah with the media professionals.

Dean of Kuwait Journalism receives group of Arab media professionals

The Dean of Kuwait Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah received a group of Arab media professionals who participated in covering the activities of the 2024 National Assembly elections.

Among them are Ahmed Batmera, Hamid Al-Mahmeed from

the Sultanate of Oman, Rula Muwaffaq from Lebanon, and Yousry Al Badri from Egypt in the presence of colleagues Basam Al-Qassas and Saud Al-Farhan.

During the meeting, they discussed the parliamentary elections and the efforts exerted to ensure their success, as well as

the role of the security personnel from the Ministry of Interior in facilitating the way for voters to reach the polling stations to cast their votes easily and conveniently, as well as the major role played by the judiciary in fully supervising the elections to ensure the availability of the highest standards of integrity and trans-

parency. They also discussed the future image of Kuwait in light of the new parliament, and expressed their hopes that Kuwait will witness a new stage of maturity and political awareness, and that Almighty Allah will guide everyone's steps on the path to building a prosperous Kuwait.

PM hands

Continued from Page 1

He also addressed HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, indicating the latter has exhausted about 90 percent of the citizens' trust due to the poor performance of the government. He revealed he will grill whoever is appointed as the next prime minister if Sheikh Fahad Youssef Saud Al-Sabah remains in the government.

He strongly criticized the Ministry of Interior's call for citizens to report forged citizenship cases, asserting this move could undermine national unity and lead to social problems. He argued the ministry has access to such information, not the ordinary citizens. He warned that the ministry's request is dangerous as it could cause problems among citizens, since a citizen might make this report due to personal disputes and the wrongly accused citizen will suffer for months until proven that he deserves the nationality.

MP-elect Mohammad Hayef Al-Mutairi has organized a reception for citizens who congratulated him on his electoral victory; during which he revealed his plan to submit a bill on allowing judges to rule on citizenship cases during the first session of the Assembly. He stressed that he is keen on fulfilling his promise to investigate the citizenship withdrawal cases, as well as the dismissal of 68 officers from Kuwait Army and non-appointment of qualified public prosecutor applicants for holding Kuwaiti nationality as per Article Two of the Nationality Law. He added that he already printed the request for the Assembly to form two fact-finding committees to investigate these issues.

In related news, Arab Parliament Speaker Adel Al-Asoumi, on Friday, congratulated the Kuwaiti political leadership on the success of the National Assembly elections.

In remarks to KUNA, Al-Asoumi lauded His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's patronage and support of the Kuwaiti democratic process.

He also praised the democratic process of the Kuwaiti parliamentary elections, stressing that it is a pioneering and distinguished experience of the State of Kuwait.

Al-Asoumi wished all of the newly elected MPs success and further progress.

Elsewhere, the Egyptian daily press dedicated wide spaces in the editions published on Saturday to the 2024 parliamentary elections of Kuwait and the democratic atmosphere that marked the polling.

The mass circulation "Al-Ahram" specialized wide spaces for the Kuwaiti elections and congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the polls' success and felicitated the winners of the 50 seats.

It wrote that change in the new line-up is different by 22 percent as compared to that of the previous assembly, where eight nominees had been elected as members of the parliament, three who were former MPs came back to Abdullah Al-Salem Hall, also noting that the voting reached 62.1 percent, according to the Ministry of Information.

"Al-Gomhuria" indicated that the change in the new assembly reached 20 percent. Ten figures who were members of the 2023 assembly joined the 2024 parliament. It also wrote that seven ones were elected as members in the new parliament and three former MPs rejoined the assembly.

The former MP Jenan Boushehri was the sole Kuwaiti woman to bag a seat in the new assembly.

"Al-Masri Al-Yom" newspaper also concurred that the change was estimated at 20 percent, noting that the voting had lasted for 12 hours covering five constituencies. The polling was conducted on a single vote basis.

Kuwait supports

Continued from Page 1

He thanked the Kuwaiti people for their contributions of providing material and moral support to the medical relief team.

The head of the relief and projects sector at the Kuwaiti Society and the administrative coordinator of the Kuwaiti relief team, Mahmoud Al-Mesbah, said in a similar statement to KUNA that the administrative coordinators in the team have participated in implementing a number of food projects that benefited approximately 25,000 affected and displaced people within the sector.

He confirmed that the team set up breakfast tables for 790 Palestinian families and distributed about 540 vegetable baskets, in addition to distributing 1,250 breakfast meals to displaced families, in addition to the team visiting meat warehouses inside the Gaza Strip.

The Kuwaiti team arrived in Gaza last

Monday through Rafah cross on a bold humanitarian mission involving 11 Kuwaiti doctors and administrators in the bombed out enclave.

In other news, the words coming from some of Israel's closest allies have been startling in their vehemence: "appalled," "outraged," "no more excuses."

The Israeli military's killing of seven aid workers in Gaza has triggered unprecedented criticism from European leaders, who are stepping up calls for a cease-fire and in some cases halting arms sales to Israel as the war's toll mounts.

The attack on the World Central Kitchen convoy has sharpened the dilemma for European politicians, who are squeezed between support for an ally that suffered a terrible attack on Oct. 7 and growing public pressure to stop a war over which they have little control.

"Nothing justifies such a tragedy," French Foreign Minister Sébastien Léonard said after Monday's attack. U.K. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said he was "appalled" by the deaths of the aid workers, three of whom were British.

Britain summoned the Israeli ambassador for a reprimand over the killings. So did Poland, which lost one of its citizens and whose foreign minister, Radek Sikorski, expressed "moral indignation."

Beyond Europe, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said attacking aid workers was "absolutely unacceptable," and Australian leader Anthony Albanese said his country was "outraged."

Israel said the attack that killed the aid workers and their Palestinian driver was a tragic mistake. Its military dismissed two officers and reprimanded three others, saying they violated the army's rules of engagement.

Julie Norman, associate professor of politics and international relations at University College London, said unease about the conflict was already growing in Europe, and Monday's attack "accelerated that and made it much more public."

"Things that had been said more quietly are now being said much louder," she said.

When Hamas killed some 1,200 Israelis in a cross-border attack from Gaza on Oct. 7, Israel's European allies strongly backed its right to strike back.

Within weeks, some were expressing disquiet at the mounting bloodshed. French President Emmanuel Macron called for a cease-fire as early as November. Sunak has moved from backing a "humanitarian pause" to support for a "sustainable cease-fire" contingent on Hamas releasing Israeli hostages and halting attacks.

Germany is one of Israel's closest allies and, given memories of the Holocaust, treads carefully when criticizing its actions. While remaining careful to stress Israel's right to defend itself, the government has become increasingly critical of the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Chancellor Olaf Scholz has voiced unease at the war's toll, asking Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at a meeting last month how any goal can "justify such terribly high costs."

Palestinians, aid workers and international rights groups say Western outrage over the deaths of foreign aid workers contrasts with the subdued response to the suffering of Gaza residents. More than 33,000 people have been killed, according to the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory, including more than 220 humanitarian workers. Hundreds of thousands of Gazans are on the brink of starvation.

"It's sad that it has taken an attack on international aid workers" to crystallize leaders' attention, said Nomi Bar-Yaacov, associate fellow in the International Security Program at international affairs think tank Chatham House. "But that is unfortunately the reality."

The World Central Kitchen attack has increased pressure on Europe's governments to move from criticism to suspending arms sales to Israel.

The United Nations' Human Rights Council passed a nonbinding resolution to that effect Friday. Among European countries in the 47-nation body, only Germany voted against it, as did the United States.

What comes

Continued from Page 1

On this basis, the approach in the immediate future needs to be different from past parliamentary practices. Also, if MPs persist in pushing for unfeasible promises, the current parliament will be told, "Goodbye."

Whether within the constitution or beyond, persisting with failed experiments and incomplete treatments is illogical.

What is urgently needed is to bridge the gap between the two authorities caused by the personal and political visions and agendas of some individuals in parliaments or successive ministries, instead of expanding it as if the goal is to risk the fate of the state to impose dreams that cannot be achieved.

IICO receiving 'Zakat Al-Fitr' for needy in Palestine, Yemen, Syria

Pay through website <https://www.iico.org/ar/>

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) continues to receive Zakat Al-Fitr through its website <https://www.iico.org/ar/> and its revenue centers in the governorates, reports Al-Anba daily.

The collected Zakat Al-Fitr will be distributed to the most needy groups in Palestine, Yemen and Syria, taking into consideration their extremely difficult humanitarian conditions. This year's Zakat Al-Fitr is estimated at KDI for every Muslim -- young or old, male or female.

Head of the Sharia Supervision Board in the organization Ali Al-Kulaib announced in a press statement that it is permissible to pay Zakat Al-Fitr in cash in proportion to the value of the zakat in kind according to the 'fatwas' of the Fatwa and Sharia Supervision Board, Fatwa Committee at the Ministry of Endowments, Sharia Authority at Zakat House, and the Sixth Symposium on Contemporary Zakat Issues. He clarified that the estimated amount may vary from year to year and from country to country, depending on food prices and other related expenses.

Distinguish

He added Zakat Al-Fitr is called 'zakat on the body' to distinguish it from 'zakat on money', as it purifies the fasting person from idle talk and obscenity, and provides food for the poor. It is paid by a Muslim who, when obligated, has more than his own strength and the sustenance of his dependents for whom he is obliged to spend on; in addition to his residence, belongings and his basic needs for the night and day of Eid. He does so for himself and on behalf of his family -- wife, children and his parents (if he supports them). He is not obligated to pay the zakat of his servants or whoever he sponsors, whether an orphan or a student. If he voluntarily offers to support them with their permission, then he can do so. The zakat of the fetus is not required, unless he is born before sunset on the last day of Ramadan, he explained.

He disclosed that Zakat Al-Fitr is due at sunset on the last day of Ramadan, it is the Sunnah to pay it on the day of Fitr before the Eid prayer, and it is permissible to pay it early on the first day of Ramadan.

He confirmed it is permissible to transfer Zakat Al-Fitr to another country where there are people whose need is more than the people of the country like the people of Gaza, Syria and Yemen. It is also permissible to transfer to areas of conflict, disasters and famines and to the relatives of the poor and needy who pay the



Kuwaiti medical team conducts surgeries on wounded persons in Gaza Strip.

KUNA photo

Relief aid handed to displaced persons in Gaza

Kuwait's medical team conducts surgeries

GAZA, April 6. (KUNA): A medical team of the Kuwait Society for Relief has been conducting surgeries for wounded and patients and handing out relief aid to the displaced persons in the war-ravaged Gaza Strip for third day in a row.

Head of the Kuwaiti team and Deputy Director General of the Kuwait Society for Relief Omar Al-Thuwaini told KUNA on Thursday that his team offered its healthcare services at the European and Kuwaiti hospitals in the Gaza.

The medical team has performed more than 75 surgeries for Palestinian patients and wounded in the Strip so far, he

said. He pointed out that the team also distributed vegetable packages to displaced families in the southern city of Rafah which houses over 1.2 million displaced people.

For his part, head of the relief and projects sector at the Kuwait Society for Relief Mahmoud Al-Mesbah told KUNA that the relief team accompanying the medical team distributed 540 vegetable packages weighing about thirteen kilograms each.

He clarified that the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip suffer from a severe shortage of basic needs.

Al-Mesbah noted that the society team has also distributed 1,200 fast-breaking meals of rice and meat catering for 3,500 people at the displaced people camps.

He clarified that the displaced people need everything, whether food, clothing, and even water.

The Kuwaiti medical and relief team, consisting of eleven people, including specialized doctors, entered the Gaza Strip last Monday via the Rafah land crossing to support the steadfastness of the health system, perform a series of surgical operations for sick and wounded Palestinians, and provide relief aid to displaced Palestinians.

'KIPIC leadership changes to boost Kuwait's oil sector'

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The recently announced changes in the senior leadership of Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) will boost the morale of the Kuwaiti oil sector and the contracting companies, reports Al-Anba daily quoting MEED Magazine.

The magazine stated that the appointment of Kuwait National Petroleum Company's (KNPC) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Wadha Ahmed Al-Khatib as acting CEO of KIPIC is a strong sign that Kuwait is serious about implementing long-planned mergers in this sector. It added the plan is expected to lead to

reduction of costs and accelerate the decision-making process in the country's oil, gas and petrochemical sectors.

Eight companies are currently affiliated with Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and the mergers will reduce the number of these large State-controlled companies from eight to four.

In 2020, KPC commissioned the American consulting firm, Strategy&, to conduct a study on restructuring the oil sector. It is believed that restructuring could have significant benefits for KPC in the long term.

The magazine cited the restructuring of Abu Dhabi Na-

tional Oil Company (ADNOC) as an example, as it helped open the door to increased foreign investment in the energy sector in the United Arab Emirates.

MEED said the recent appointment of executives from the leadership team of KNPC to leadership positions in KIPIC entails that the latter's merger with KNPC will be the first of the planned mergers. Once the merger is completed, it is expected that KIPIC will cease to be a separate financial and legal entity and its operations will be absorbed into KNPC, the magazine explained.

zakat, he added. He stressed that the disbursement of Zakat Al-Fitr is the same as the disbursement of zakat on money, and that the poor and

needy are the most deserving; because the intention is to enrich them on that particular day. He said it is not permissible to give this zakat and other types of zakat

to parents, no matter how high; to children, no matter how low; to wives or to the rich and those who are able to earn money and others.

World News Roundup

Europe

Russian missile strikes on Kharkiv kill 6: Russian forces overnight attacked Ukraine with drones and missiles, killing at least six people and wounding 11 more in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest city, local officials reported.



Syniehubov

Governor of the Kharkiv region **Oleh Syniehubov** said missile strikes on the city damaged residential buildings, a gas station, a kindergarten, a cafe, a shop and cars.

Overall, Russia fired 32 Iranian-made Shahed drones and six missiles at Ukraine overnight, according to the air force commander. Ukrainian air defense forces shot down three cruise missiles and 28 drones, Lt. Gen Mykola Oleshchuk said in a statement. "Russian killers continue to terrorize Ukrainians and attack Kharkiv and other peaceful cities," he said.

The Russian military has not commented on the strikes, but said that Ukraine on Saturday morning fired Vampire rockets at Russia. All 10 of them were shot down over Russia's border region of Belgorod by air defense systems, the Russian Defense Ministry said. (AP)

Russia officials try to link hall attack with Ukraine: Russian authorities on Friday again tried to link the deadly attack on a Moscow concert hall to Ukraine, saying one of the detained suspects had photos on his phone depicting troops in camouflage uniforms with the Ukrainian flag.

Ever since the March 22 mass shooting and fire at the Crocus City Hall concert venue that killed 145 people, Russian officials have sought to blame Ukraine for the massacre, even though Kyiv has denied any involvement and an affiliate of the Islamic State claimed responsibility.

Authorities, including President Vladimir Putin, have provided no evidence for the link as they sought to shift the narrative from the failure by security services to prevent the attack.

Russia's top law enforcement agency, the Investigative Committee, said in a statement Friday that authorities found photos in one of the suspects' phones depicting "people in camouflage uniforms with the Ukrainian flag against the background of destroyed houses."

The phone also bore an image of a Ukrainian postage stamp with an obscene message, the committee said. (AP)

Ukraine destroys Russian warplanes: Ukrainian officials claimed Friday they used a barrage of drones to destroy at least six military aircraft and badly damage eight others at an airfield in Russia's Rostov region. Russian defense officials, however, claimed they intercepted 44 Ukrainian drones and that only a power substation was damaged in the attack.

The Associated Press could not independently verify either side's claims.

The assault appeared to be one of Kyiv's biggest air attacks in the war, coming as its forces stepped up their assaults on Russian soil. Russia has also escalated attacks on civilian infrastructure, including Ukraine's power plants, in recent weeks, signaling a new and potentially dangerous phase in the conflict as both sides struggle to achieve significant advances on the ground.

The overnight attack targeted a military airfield near Morozovsk in Russia and was conducted by Ukraine's Security Service in cooperation with the army, Ukrainian intelligence officials told the AP.

They said around 20 members of the airfield's personnel were killed or injured. Morozovsk airfield was used by Russian bombers that have been launching guided aerial bombs at Ukraine's cities and frontline positions, the officials said. (AP)

Finland to keep its border with Russia closed: Finland will extend the closure of its border crossing points with Russia beyond the current April 14 deadline "until further notice" due to a high risk of organized migration orchestrated by Moscow, the Finnish government said on Thursday.

The Finnish Interior Ministry said in a statement that the Nordic country's national security and public order would come under serious threat if the estimated hundreds of third-country nationals were to continue to attempt to enter from Russia without proper documentation.

"Based on information provided by public authorities, the risk that instrumentalized migration (by Russia) will resume and expand as seen previously remains likely," the ministry said.

Finland closed the 1,340-kilometer (830-mile) land border late last year after more than 1,300 migrants without proper documentation or visas - an unusually high number - entered the country in the three months since September, not long after Finland joined the NATO alliance. (AP)

Kosovo to conduct a nationwide census: Kosovo's government began Friday its first nationwide census since 2011, which will include surveying the ethnic Serb minority in the north, at a time when tensions with neighboring Serbia are high.

The Agency of Statistics is conducting the 12-million euro (\$13 million) census, originally set to take place in 2021 but was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Some 4,400 surveyors will interview residents in person from April 5 until May 17 to cover demographic and socioeconomic indicators that "will take Kosovo a step ahead toward integration into the European Union," according to the agency's website.

The Kosovar government, the EU's statistical office, Eurostat, UN organizations and the World Bank are funding the census which will tally the number of people residing in the country, family households, their education and employment, as well as the number of locals living abroad. Surveyors will also ask interviewees about damages suffered during the 1998-1999 war and if they have relatives who died or were tortured at the time. (AP)

'Drone attacked military unit': State security services in Moldova's Russia-backed breakaway region of Transnistria said Friday that a drone attacked a military unit close to the border with Ukraine, causing minor damage to a radar station but no casualties.

The incident occurred in the region of Rabința, about 6 kilometers (about 4 miles) from the Ukraine border, the region's state security ministry said, adding that a criminal investigation has been opened. They did not say who they thought was behind the alleged attack.

Moldova's Bureau for Reintegration Policies responded by saying that the incident fits "a pattern of provocations" in Transnistria designed to "incite panic and tension" and maintain attention on the region.

Moldova, like Ukraine, is a candidate member for European Union membership, and has repeatedly accused Russia of conducting a "hybrid war" against the country, meddling in local elections, and running vast disinformation campaigns to try to topple the government and derail its path toward full EU membership. Russia has denied the accusations.

The drone incident came after an empty helicopter at a military installation in Transnistria last month was destroyed in what the authorities in Transnistria blamed on a Ukrainian drone strike. (AP)

Orban receives medal from Dodik: Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban on Friday received a medal from the pro-Russian leader of Bosnia's Serbs, who has been sanctioned by the US and Britain because of his separatist policies.

Orban visited the Bosnian Serb administrative headquarters of Banja Luka as part of a visit to Bosnia. He first traveled to Bosnia's capital Sarajevo on Thursday.

Bosnian Serbs are in charge of around half of Bosnia while the country's Bosniaks, who are mostly Muslim, and ethnic Croats run the other half. Bosnian Serb President Milorad Dodik, a supporter of Russia's President Vladimir Putin, has sought to split from the rest of Bosnia.

There have been fears in the West that Russia could try to stir instability in Bosnia to divert some of the attention from the war in Ukraine. Bosnia remains ethnically tense and politically fragile years after a 1992-95 ethnic war.

European Union leaders last month agreed to open talks with Bosnia on joining the bloc in an effort to bring the country into its fold. Bosnia's three-member multi-ethnic presidency said after a meeting with Orban on Thursday that it will continue on the EU path and thanked Hungary for its support. (AP)



Commuters ride the subway as normal after an earthquake hit in the morning on April 5, in New York. An earthquake centered between New York and Philadelphia shook skyscrapers and suburbs across the northeastern US on Friday, causing no major damage but startling millions of people in an area unaccustomed to such tremors. (AP)

US East Coast quake rattles millions but region escapes sweeping damage

An unusual East Coast earthquake shook millions of people from New York and Philadelphia skyscrapers to rural New England on Friday, causing no widespread damage but startling an area unaccustomed to tremors.

The US Geological Survey said over 42 million people might have felt the midmorning quake with a preliminary magnitude of 4.8, centered near Whitehouse Station, New Jersey, or about 45 miles (72

kilometers) west of New York City and 50 miles (80 kilometers) north of Philadelphia.

People from Baltimore to Boston and beyond felt the ground shake. Nearly 30 people were displaced when officials evacuated three multifamily homes in Newark, New Jersey, to check for damage. Officials around the region were inspecting bridges and other major infrastructure, some flights were diverted or delayed, Amtrak slowed trains throughout the busy

Northeast Corridor, and a Philadelphia-area commuter rail line suspended service as a precaution.

Whitehouse Station Fire Chief Tim Apper said no injuries were reported, but responders fielded some calls from people who smelled gas. Nearby, the upper portion of the 264-year-old Col. John Taylor's Grist Mill historic site collapsed onto a roadway, according to Readington Township Mayor Adam Mueller. (AP)

Politics

Biden tours collapsed Baltimore bridge

Ex-Trump officials oppose his return to WH

NEW YORK, April 6, (AP) - Former defense secretary Mark Esper has called him a "threat to democracy."

Former national security adviser John Bolton has declared him "unfit to be president." And former Vice President Mike Pence has declined to endorse him, citing "profound differences."

As Donald Trump seeks the presidency for a third time, he is being vigorously opposed by a vocal contingent of former officials who are stridently warning against his return to power and offering dire predictions for the country and the rule of law if his campaign succeeds.

It's a striking chorus of detractors, one without precedent in the modern era, coming from those who witnessed first-hand his conduct in office and the turmoil that followed.

Warning

Sarah Matthews, a former Trump aide who testified before the House Jan. 6 committee and is among those warning about the threat he poses, said it's "mind-boggling" how many members of his senior staff have denounced him.

"These are folks who saw him up close and personal and saw his leadership style," Matthews said.

"The American people should listen to what these folks are saying because it should be alarming that the people that Trump hired to work for him a first term are saying that he's unfit to serve for a second term."

Yet the critics remain a distinct minority. Republican lawmakers and officials across the party have endorsed Trump's bid - some begrudgingly, others with fervor and enthusiasm. Many

aides and Cabinet officials who served under Trump are onboard for another term, something Trump's campaign is quick to highlight.

Endorsed

"The majority of the people who served in President Trump's cabinet and in his administration, like the majority of Americans, have overwhelmingly endorsed his candidacy to beat Crooked Joe Biden and take back the White House," said Trump campaign spokesman Steven Cheung.

Still, the Biden campaign has trumpeted the criticism of former Trump officials in statements and social media posts, hoping to convince at least some Republican voters - including those who backed other candidates during the GOP primary - that they cannot support his candidacy.

"Those who worked with Donald Trump at the most senior levels of his administration believe he is too dangerous, too selfish and too extreme to ever lead our country again - we agree," said Biden campaign spokesman Ammar Moussa.

In many ways, the schism among former Trump officials is an extension of his time in the White House. Friction was constant as Trump's demands ran into resistance from some officials and aides who refused requests that they found misguided, unrealistic and, at times, flatly illegal. Firings were frequent. Many quit.

Staff upheaval was particularly intense in the chaotic weeks after the 2020 election as Trump worked to overturn his election loss to Biden. Trump summoned supporters to Washington on Jan 6, 2021, as his falsehoods

about a stolen election became the rallying cry for supporters who violently breached the US Capitol. Many people serving in the administration quit in protest, including Matthews.

Also:

DUNDALK, Md.: US President Joe Biden got a firsthand look Friday at efforts to clear away the "mangled mess" of remains of the collapsed Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, as cranes, ships and diving crews work to reopen one of the nation's main shipping lanes.

Aboard Marine One, circling the warped metal remains and the mass of construction and salvage equipment trying to clear the wreckage of last week's collapse, which killed six workers, Biden got an up close view of the devastation.

On the ground later, he received a briefing from local officials, the US Coast Guard and Army Corps of Engineers on the situation in the water and its impacts on the region. The president also greeted police officers who helped block traffic to the bridge in the moments before it was hit by a ship - which helped avert an even larger loss of life.

"I'm here to say your nation has your back and I mean it," Biden said from the shoreline overlooking the collapsed bridge in Dundalk, just outside Baltimore. "Your nation has your back."

Eight workers - immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador - were filling potholes on the bridge when it was hit by a huge cargo ship and collapsed in the middle of the night of March 26. Two men were rescued and the bodies of two others were recovered in subsequent days.



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak gestures during a visit to Aldersyde Day Nursery in Hartlepool, North East of England on April 2 as the first parents in England start to benefit from 15 hours of taxpayer-funded care for two-year-olds. (AP)



Trump



Kennedy

America

Crew administered drug to pilot: An autopsy report has been amended to show the pilot of a hot air balloon that plummeted in Arizona, killing him and three others, had been administered an anesthetic after the crash.

The Pinal County Medical Examiner's Office said earlier this week that toxicology tests showed Cornelius van der Walt had a high amount of ketamine in his blood but did not specify how it got into his system or when.

The balloon operated by Droplyne Hot Air Balloon Rides plummeted about 2,000 feet (609 meters) to the desert floor on Jan. 14 south of Phoenix near Eloy.

The amended report released Friday clarified that while neither paramedics from the Eloy Fire Department nor the hospital staff administered ketamine, the air ambulance company that transported van der Walt to the hospital did. The report had no other substantial changes. (AP)

Farmworker sues company: Prosecutors say Zhao killed three other colleagues at the farm on Jan. 23, 2023, after his supervisor demanded he pay a \$100 repair bill for damage to his work forklift.

They say he then drove to Concord Farms, a mushroom farm he was fired from in 2015, and shot to death three former co-workers. Zhao pleaded not guilty during his arraignment in February.

The lawsuit by Pedro Romero Perez and another lawsuit by his brother's wife and children against California Terra Garden, Inc. and Xianmin Guan, one of its owners, say there was a documented history of violence at the farm and that the company failed to take action to protect workers after another shooting at the property involving a

then-manager in July 2022. (AP)

Kennedy questions prosecutions: Independent presidential candidate Robert

F. Kennedy Jr. in a lengthy statement Friday suggested that the prosecution of rioters who violently attacked the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, might be politically motivated, partly aligning himself with the false por-

trayal being pushed by former US president Donald Trump and his allies.

The statement came a day after Kennedy came under fire for a fundraising email that painted a sympathetic portrait of the rioters as "activists" who were "stripped of their constitutional liberties."

While Kennedy's campaign said it had severed ties with a contractor who sent the fundraising email, his latest statement struck a similar tone. Rather than disavowing the idea that the rioters are being prosecuted unjustly, Kennedy has embraced it, saying he is "concerned about the possibility that political objectives motivated the vigor of the prosecution of the 16 defendants." (AP)

3 found guilty in killing: A jury has found three men guilty of killing a family in Washington state in 2017, crimes detectives asserted happened over drugs and money.

Danie Kelly, Jr., Robert Watson III, and Watson's younger brother, Johnny Watson, were each found guilty Friday of four counts of premeditated first-degree murder, four counts of first-degree murder, attempted murder and first-degree arson, KING-TV reported.

Christale Careaga, 37, Hunter Schaap and Johnathon Higgins, both 16, were found dead inside their burned home on the Kitsap Peninsula west of Seattle on Jan. 27, 2017. The remains of John Careaga, 43, were found two days later inside a scorched truck at a tree farm in Mason County. (AP)



People arrive to cast their vote for a presidential election at a polling station in Bratislava, Slovakia on April 6. Voters in Slovakia headed to the ballot stations on Saturday to elect a successor to Zuzana Caputova, the country's first female president and a staunch backer of neighboring Ukraine in its fight against Russia's full-scale invasion, who isn't seeking a second term. (AP)

Lat/Am

Peru prez interrogated

Mexico breaks off ties with Ecuador

QUITO, Ecuador, April 6, (AP): Mexico is breaking off diplomatic ties with Ecuador after police broke into the Mexican embassy in Quito to arrest a former Ecuadorian vice president who has sought political asylum there after being indicted on corruption.

Mexico's President **Andrés Manuel López Obrador** made the announcement Friday evening after Ecuadorian police forced their way into the Mexican embassy to arrest Jorge Glas who has been residing there since December, as a diplomatic rift between the two countries deepened.

Glas, arguably the most wanted man in the country, was convicted on bribery and corruption charges. Ecuadorian authorities are still investigating more allegations against him.



Obrador

Police broke into the external doors of the Mexican diplomatic headquarters in the Ecuadorian capital and entered the main patio to get Glas.

"This is not possible, it cannot be, this is crazy," said Roberto Canseco, head of the Mexican consular section in the capital, Quito, told local press while standing outside the embassy. "I am very worried because they could kill him. There is no basis to do this, this is totally outside the norm."

Defending its decision, Ecuador's presidency said in a statement: "Ecuador is a sovereign nation and we are not going to allow any criminal to stay here."

López Obrador fired back calling Glas' detention an "authoritarian act" and "a flagrant violation of international law and the sovereignty of Mexico."

Suffered

Alicia Bárcena, Mexico's secretary of foreign relations, posted on X, formerly Twitter, that a number of diplomats suffered injuries during the break-in, adding that it violated the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

Bárcena said that Mexico would take the case to the International Court of Justice "to denounce Ecuador's responsibility for violations of international law." She also said Mexican diplomats were only waiting for the Ecuadorian government to offer the necessary guarantees for their return home.

Ecuador's foreign ministry and Ecuador's ministry of the interior did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The Mexican embassy in Quito remained under heavy police guard late Friday.

A day earlier, tensions between the two countries escalated after Mexico's president made statements that Ecuador considered "very unfortunate" about the last elections in which the Ecuadorian president Daniel Noboa won.



Peru prez interrogated by prosecutors: Peruvian President **Dina Boluarte** was interrogated by prosecutors for five hours Friday as authorities investigate whether she illegally received hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash, luxury watches and jewelry.

Prosecutors have been investigating the highly unpopular leader on charges of illicit enrichment and failure to declare assets. After she gave testimony, Boluarte rolled out of the offices in a car with tinted windows, surrounded by police and security detail.

In a televised speech following the meeting, Boluarte responded to the allegations saying "everything they've said is false." She flaunted one of her Rolex watches and a number of other golden bracelets and necklaces that spurred on the controversy, holding them up for the cameras and railing against critics.

"With respect to the watches, I should recognize that it was a mistake to have accepted (them) on loan," she said. "As these watches are not my property, I was not obliged to declare them."

While she said some of the jewelry was hers, she said she received the watches as a loan from Wilfredo Oscurima, the governor of the southern rural region of Ayacucho.

Boluarte's statements Friday appear to directly contradict previous comments she made saying the Rolex watches were "fruit of my labor," working since she was 18.



Colombia security forces attacked: Colombia suffered a series of attacks Thursday night and Friday morning, marking the first major assault against its military since a mafia group born from the now-defunct Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) announced it was scaling up operations earlier this week.

The attacks in the war-torn southwest of the country featured explosives and firearms, and a soldier was wounded, the army said.

A cease-fire between the armed group known as FARC dissidents and authorities was recently suspended after the government of President Gustavo Petro said FARC dissidents violated a truce by attacking a rural Indigenous community in the same region where the recent overnight attacks occurred.

The attacks mark a serious setback for Petro, a leftist, ex-guerrilla leader, who won the presidency on a promise of consolidating "total peace" in a country plagued by violence for much of its history.

The injured soldier was standing guard at military headquarters in the city of Tumaco, a hub for armed groups, in the southwest. He was wounded by shrapnel from a grenade thrown by a man on a motorcycle, an incident still under investigation.



Brazil's Krenak gets literary esteem: It was a historic week for Brazil's Krenak people, getting both literary esteem and an apology for dictatorship-era crimes - both firsts for the Indigenous people of the country.

On Tuesday, the indigenous group received a formal apology for human rights abuses they suffered during the military dictatorship (1964-1985) - a first in Brazil. Then on Friday one of their leaders, renowned writer and environmentalist Ailton Krenak, earned a seat at the Brazilian Academy of Letters, the country's most exclusive literary body.

During Friday's ceremony, Krenak received a sword, a necklace and a diploma from his peers. Wearing an Indigenous headband and the academy's traditional green vest adorned with golden embroidery, he said he had come "to bring more languages" to the room.

"My relatives have come from different parts of Brazil to be here. I can't mention every ethnicity here, there are many," Krenak said in his speech. "I am here. I am Guarani, I am Kayapo, I am Xavante, I am them all."



A Filipino port worker looks as the Japanese Ship Akebono (DD-108), a Murasame-class destroyer of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, prepares to dock for a goodwill visit at Manila's south harbor, Philippines on Sept 27, 2018. The United States, Japan, Australia and the Philippines will hold their first joint naval exercises, including anti-submarine warfare training, in a show of force April 7, 2024 in the South China Sea where Beijing's aggressive actions to assert its territorial claims have caused alarm. (AP)

Asia

Washington-Beijing military talks resume

US, Japan & Philippines to stage army drills

MANILA, Philippines, April 6, (AP): The United States, Japan, Australia and the Philippines will hold their first joint naval exercises, including anti-submarine warfare training, in a show of force Sunday in the South China Sea where Beijing's aggressive actions to assert its territorial claims have caused alarm.

The four treaty allies and security partners are holding the exercises to safeguard "the rule of law that is the foundation for a peaceful and stable Indo-Pacific region" and uphold freedom of navigation and overflight, they said in a joint statement issued by their defense chiefs Saturday.

China was not mentioned by name in the statement, but the four countries reaffirmed their stance that a 2016 international arbitration ruling, which invalidated China's expansive claims on historical grounds, was final and legally binding. China has refused to participate in the arbitration, rejected the ruling and continues to defy it. The Philippines brought its disputes with China to international arbitration in 2013 after a tense sea standoff.

There was no immediate comment by China.

Last year, the Chinese Foreign Ministry warned against military exercises involving the United States and its allies in the disputed waters harming its security and territorial interests.

"We stand with all nations in safeguarding the international order based on the rule of law that is the foundation for a peaceful and stable Indo-Pacific region," the four nations said but did not provide specific details of the military drills, called the Maritime Cooperative Activity.

Japan said in a statement, issued by its embassy in Manila, that it would deploy its destroyer, the JS Akebono, for the South China Sea exercises, which would include anti-submarine warfare training and other military maneuvers.

Also:

WASHINGTON: For the first time in nearly two years, US and Chinese defense officials met this week to discuss unsafe and aggressive ship and aircraft incidents between the two militaries in the Pacific region, restarting a dialogue that Beijing abruptly ended in a dispute involving Taiwan.

The meeting, which was Tuesday through Thursday in Hawaii, came as Washington and Beijing work to expand communications between the two world powers and ease escalating tensions. Military-to-military

Former Malaysia premier seeks to serve rest of prison term under 'house arrest'

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia, April 6, (AP): Malaysia's imprisoned former Prime Minister Najib Razak is seeking to serve the rest of his prison term under house arrest, two months after his sentence in a corruption case was reduced by half.

His surprise court application, which came as a surprise, was due to be heard Thursday but was postponed to April 17.

Najib said in his application, filed Wednesday, he had "clear information" that the nation's then-king Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah issued a separate order during the Jan. 29 Pardon's Board meeting, which cut his 12-year jail sentence by half and sharply reduced a fine, allowing him to finish his sentence under house arrest.

The former premier has asked the court to have the government verify and carry out the order.

Sultan Abdullah hails from Najib's hometown of Pahang. He ended his five-year reign on Jan. 30 under Malaysia's unique rotating monarchy system. A new king took office on Jan 31.

Najib, 70, has served less than two years of his sentence, supposed

to end on Aug. 23, 2028, after his sentence was commuted. He was charged and found guilty in a corruption case linked to the multibillion-dollar looting of state fund 1MDB which caused national outrage.

In his application, he accused the Pardons Board, Home Minister and the Attorney-General among seven entities of concealing the sultan's order "in bad faith."

Also:

TAIPEI, Taiwan: The demolition of a building that is leaning precariously after an earthquake in Taiwan was halted on Saturday because of aftershocks that made it lean even more, media reports said.

The red building, about 10 stories tall and inclined over a street in the city of Hualien, has become an iconic image from the magnitude 7.4 earthquake that also buried people under boulders at nearby Taroko National Park, a popular hiking destination about 25 kilometers (15 miles) northwest of Hualien.

The death toll rose to 13 after a third victim was found on the park's Shakadang Trail. Six other people are still missing, including three on the same trail.

contact had stalled in August 2022, when Beijing suspended all such communication after then-House Speaker **Nancy Pelosi's** visit to Taiwan, the self-governing island China claims as its own.

The thaw in relations between the two countries got a kick-start last November when U.S. President **Joe Biden** and China's President **Xi Jinping** met on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco. About a month later, Gen. **CQ Brown**, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spoke with his Chinese counterpart in a video call - in the first senior military-to-military contact since the Pelosi visit.

Other top-level talks have continued, including a call earlier this week between Biden and Xi, and a visit to China by Treasury Secretary **Janet Yellen** that began on Thursday.



TOKYO: Japanese Prime Minister **Fumio Kishida** said Friday he wants to strengthen military and weapons de-

velopment cooperation with the United States as well as with other countries such as the Philippines, as he prepares for a visit to the US next week to meet with President **Joe Biden**.

"Defense industry cooperation between Japan and the United States, as well as with like-minded countries, are extremely important," Kishida said in an interview Friday with selected foreign media, including The Associated Press, at the Prime Minister's Office.

"Within the Japan-US alliance, I do hope to steadily improve deterrence and response capability," he said.

Kishida said Japan hopes to promote security cooperation in areas including defense equipment and technology. "By building multi-layered networks of cooperation, we can further expand and strengthen our deterrence capability," he said.

During his April 8-14 trip to the US, Kishida will hold talks with Biden at the White House on Wednesday, followed by a trilateral summit with Philippine President **Ferdinand Marcos Jr.** the next day.



A Belgian soldier guards the front of a house, where Belgians wait to be evacuated out of Kigali, Rwanda, April 13, 1994. Belgian forces rescued several Belgians who lived in a compound in the Rwanda capital, running the Ndere psychiatric hospital. Rwanda is preparing to mark the 30th anniversary of the East African nation's most horrific period in history - the genocide against its minority Tutsi. (AP)



Rowe



Macron

Africa

UN food supplies arrive in Darfur:

The United Nations said Friday it has begun distributing food in Sudan's restive western Darfur region for the first time in months, following two successful cross-border deliveries in March, but the population still faces widespread hunger unless more help arrives.

The yearlong conflict between military and paramilitary forces in Sudan is causing one of the world's worst hunger crisis. About a third of the country's population, or 18 million people, face acute hunger, the UN food agency says, with the most desperate trapped behind the front lines. They include 5 million who face starvation, the UN's World Food Program has said.

In Darfur, where some of the worst fighting is underway, the situation is particularly severe. Two aid convoys crossed the border from Chad into Sudan in late March, the WFP said, adding that it has been unable to schedule further shipments. The current deliveries are expected to reach about 250,000 people and last for a month.

"Hunger in Sudan will only increase as the lean season starts in just a few weeks. I fear that we will see unprecedented levels of starvation and malnutrition sweep across Sudan," said the WFP's top envoy to Sudan, **Eddie Rowe**. (AP)



Scars of past haunt Rwanda: Rwanda is preparing to mark the 30th anniversary of the East African nation's most horrific period in history - the genocide against its minority Tutsi. To this day, new mass graves are still being discovered across the country of 14 million people, a grim reminder of the scale of the killings.

Delegations from around the world will gather on Sunday in the capital of Kigali as Rwanda holds somber commemorations of the 1994 massacres. High-profile visitors are expected to include Bill Clinton, the US president at the time of the genocide.

In a pre-recorded video ahead of the ceremonies, French President **Emmanuel Macron** said on Thursday that France and its allies could have stopped the genocide but lacked the will to do so. Macron's declaration came three years after he acknowledged the "overwhelming responsibility" of France - Rwanda's closest European ally in 1994 - for failing to stop the country's slide into the slaughter.

An estimated 800,000 Tutsi were killed by extremist Hutu in massacres that last-

ed over 100 days. Some moderate Hutu who tried to protect members of the Tutsi minority were also targeted. (AP)



Tourist killed in elephant attack:

A bull elephant charged a truck that an 80-year-old American was riding in with other tourists on a game drive in a Zam-

bian national park, flipping over the vehicle and killing her, a safari company said.

The attack injured five others on March 30 in the vast Kafue National Park, which covers 22,400 square kilometers (8,600 square miles) and is one of Africa's largest animal reserves.

According to the safari company Wilderness, the "aggressive" bull elephant

unexpectedly charged at the truck, which was carrying six guests and a guide on a morning excursion through wild areas.

It wasn't clear what upset the bull. But in a video widely circulated online, the pachyderm is seen menacingly charging through the bushy terrain toward the tourists' vehicle. A man is heard shouting "hey hey hey," in apparent but futile efforts to scare it away. It reaches the truck and flips it over using its trunk. (AP)



Ex-speaker released on bail: The former South African speaker of parliament was arrested on Thursday over allegations that she received about \$135,000 in bribes, in the latest corruption scandal to face the governing African National Congress party.

Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula turned herself in to police in the capital, Pretoria, on Thursday and was taken to Pretoria Magistrates Court, where she was released on 50,000 rand (\$2,670) in bail.

Mapisa-Nqakula maintained her innocence and suggested the charges against her were politically motivated with the country set to hold national elections later this year. The developments follow weeks of controversy over allegations that Mapisa-Nqakula received 11 cash payments from a defense contractor when she was minister of defense between 2016 and 2019. (AP)



Police break into the Mexican embassy in Quito, Ecuador on April 5. The raid took place hours after the Mexican government granted former Ecuadorian Vice President Jorge Glas political asylum. (AP)

oil soars

The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by USD 1.22 to USD 91.43 per barrel on Friday compared to USD 90.21 pb the day before, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Saturday.

The prices of the Brent crude and the West Texas Intermediate at the global markets increased by 52 cents and 32 cents respectively, reaching USD 91.17 pb and USD 86.91 pb each. (KUNA)

dollar steady ahead of jobs data

The dollar steadied below recent highs as traders awaited US jobs data and found reassurance in statements by Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell regarding potential interest rate cuts later this year, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The yen remained range-bound in recent weeks, hovering around 151.56, with limited movement amid expectations of government intervention.

Meanwhile, the euro saw a 0.6

percent increase, returning to the middle of its year-long range at \$1.0837, following lower-than-expected European inflation figures, which raised expectations of a rate cut in June.

Powell's balanced statements, indicating that policy decisions would be data-dependent, resonated with traders, particularly his assertion that recent data had not fundamentally altered the overall economic outlook.

Powell's remarks drive gold surge to new high

The price of gold surged to yet another record high, extending its week-long upward trajectory, following Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell's indication that it may be appropriate to initiate interest rate cuts "sometime this year," reports Al-Jarida daily.

Powell's remarks, delivered on Wednesday at Stanford University in California, suggested that while recent inflation figures exceeded expectations, they did not fundamentally alter the overall economic landscape.

Powell emphasized that policymakers would await clearer signals of declining inflation before implementing interest rate cuts. Given that gold does not yield interest, low interest rates are generally viewed as favorable for the precious metal.

Gold rallied by as much as 0.9 percent, reaching a new all-time peak of \$2,301.21 per ounce. While Powell reiterated the Fed's cautious approach, the central bank's commitment to a potential rate cut path remained unchanged.

Market Movements

05-04-2024

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+496.69	68,369.91	UAE	-2.52	4,244.15
			JAPAN	-781.06	38,992.08
			EUROPE	-56.01	5,014.75

Business

Banks show strong profitability and cash dividend

Kuwaiti banks demonstrate resilience amid challenges

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The financial performance of Kuwaiti banks in recent years, particularly during the period from 2019 to 2023, demonstrates their resilience and ability to navigate through challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, reports Al-Anba daily.

Despite facing economic uncertainties and the need to reserve provisions for credit losses, Kuwaiti banks have maintained solid profitability and continued to reward their shareholders with cash dividends.

Here's a summary of the key points highlighted in the analysis:

Overall Performance -- Kuwaiti banks achieved consolidated net profits of 5 billion dinars during the five-year period from 2019 to 2023. Despite challenges posed by the pandemic, they maintained profitability and distributed cash dividends totaling 2.55 billion dinars, equivalent to a cash distribution ratio of 50% of net profits.

Cash Distribution Ratio -- The cash distribution ratio averaged 50% over the last five years, indicating a consistent commitment to returning value to

shareholders through dividends.

National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) -- NBK emerged as the top performer among local banks, recording the highest profits of 2.08 billion dinars during the five-year period. It distributed approximately 54% of its net profits as cash dividends, totaling 1.12 billion dinars.

Net profits

Kuwait Finance House (KFH) -- The KFH ranked second in terms of net profits, achieving 1.59 billion dinars over five years. It distributed cash dividends equivalent to 51% of net profits, totaling 806.5 million dinars. In 2023, KFH's cash distributions reached a record high of 292 million dinars, representing 50% of that year's net profits.

Boubyan Bank -- The Boubyan Bank secured the third position in net profits with a total of 284 million dinars over five years. It distributed cash dividends worth 96 million dinars, equivalent to 34% of net profits during that period. In

2023, its cash distributions increased to 31.7 million dinars, representing 39% of the year's net profits.

Gulf Bank -- The Gulf Bank achieved the fourth highest net profits of 267.6 million dinars over five years. It distributed cash dividends totaling 143.4 million dinars, equivalent to 54% of net profits during that period. In 2023, Gulf Bank's cash distributions peaked at 43.5 million dinars, constituting 61% of the year's net profits.

Burgan Bank -- The Burgan Bank distributed cash dividends worth 107 million dinars over the last five years against net profits of 259.4 million dinars resulting in a dividend to net profits ratio of 41%.

Overall, Kuwaiti banks have demonstrated robust financial performance, balancing profitability with shareholder returns, despite facing various challenges. The distribution of cash dividends underscores their commitment to creating value for shareholders and maintaining investor confidence in the banking sector.

IMF warns of uncertain outlook

Geopolitical tensions elevate Arab oil producers' vigilance

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The ongoing conflict in Gaza and disruptions in Red Sea traffic have prompted heightened vigilance among oil and gas producers in Arab countries, who collectively account for 35% and 14% of global oil and gas exports, respectively, reports Al-Qabas daily.

According to a recent report by Global Finance, financial markets have remained relatively stable thus far, with no significant capital outflows or investor panic. However, the International Monetary Fund has cautioned that the outlook remains highly uncertain, with emerging downside risks. Escalation of the conflict in Gaza or unrest in the Red Sea region could have profound economic implications.

Despite these geopolitical uncertainties, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is expected to experience growth, with an anticipated increase from 2% in 2023 to 2.9% this year, outpacing Europe and the Americas. However, the region's performance could have been stronger if OPEC+ countries had not agreed to production cuts in late 2023.

The Gulf countries, which traditionally drive growth in the MENA region, experienced subdued growth of 0.5% in 2023 due to their participation in production cuts, leading to a recession

of -1.1%. However, growth is expected to rebound to approximately 3% this year. Non-oil growth, particularly in the Gulf states, has been robust, indicating that economic diversification efforts initiated a decade ago are beginning to yield results.

Inflation, which stood at 16.5% in 2023, is expected to decrease this year due to tight monetary policies in most countries.

The report highlights the thriving banking sector in the region, particularly in the Gulf states, Egypt, and Morocco. Banks in the MENA region recorded significant increases in net profits, operating income, net assets, and returns on equity in the first half of 2023.

Fitch Ratings has given banks in the region a neutral outlook, citing solid economic conditions, profitability, liquidity, asset quality, capital buffers, and credit growth prospects.

Financial technology (fintech) has seen substantial growth in the MENA region over the past decade, defying global economic slowdowns and technology sector crises. Local fintech companies have shown consistent growth, supported by their partnerships with established banks, particularly in the Gulf countries.

This symbiotic relationship has contributed to their success and resilience, even during economic downturns.

Boursa Kuwait releases its third standalone sustainability report

Kuwait stock market aligns CS pillars with UN SDGs & national plans

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Boursa Kuwait released its third standalone Sustainability Report, which shed light on the Kuwaiti stock exchange's corporate sustainability strategy and initiatives in 2023, as well as assessing the company's non-financial performance and progress for the period from January 1 to December 31, 2023.

The report also demonstrates Boursa Kuwait's commitment to adopting best-in-class practices in environmental, social and governance (ESG) metrics. To ensure transparency and adherence to internationally recognized standards, the report has been developed in alignment with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards: Core Option, the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) Security and Commodity Exchanges guidelines, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as Boursa Kuwait's ESG Reporting Guide.

Since its establishment, Boursa Kuwait has embraced a forward-thinking CS strategy that blends economic growth with a commitment to environmental and community responsibility, forming the foundation of its core values and integrating industry-leading practices in ESG reporting and implementation. In 2023, Boursa Kuwait intensified its efforts to weave these principles more deeply into its operations by advancing responsible business practices within its organization and endorsing social and environmental initiatives that benefit both the company and the State of Kuwait as well as reinforcing Boursa Kuwait's role as a catalyst for positive change.

Commitment

As one of the marquee capital markets in the region, Boursa Kuwait committed to aligning its CS pillars with the United Nations Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs), the "New Kuwait" vision and the National Development Plan for the State of Kuwait. As part of this commitment, the company has, over the past few years, urged listed companies to follow its lead as a model issuer in the "Premier" Market and adopt internationally accredited metrics and standards in its ESG reporting efforts.

Boursa Kuwait's Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Mohammad Saud Al-Osaimi, commented on the release, saying, "Sustainability sits at the heart of Boursa Kuwait's strategic vision and its blueprint for long-term success as the company understands that its various stakeholders, which include investors, employees, listed companies and the broader community, regard it as a beacon of social and environmental responsibility. The company plays a pivotal role in the development of the Kuwaiti capital market and its efforts have paved the way for its sustainable growth as well as that of its listed companies."

Initiatives

He added, "Over the past few years, we have made considerable inroads in our sustainability efforts, sponsoring key environmental initiatives and community programs as well as improving our business operations across the board. As we look ahead to the future, we will continue our journey of success, building on our momentum to deliver greater impact for our stakeholders as part of our goal for a more sustainable future and a brighter tomorrow."

Since becoming a partner and supporter of the Sustainable Stock Exchanges (SSE) initiative in 2017, Boursa Kuwait has committed to enhancing the understanding of corporate sustainability (CS) concepts and the essentials of effective environmental, social, and governance (ESG) reporting within the Kuwaiti capital market. To this end, the company published a comprehensive disclosure guide for listed companies which included globally recognized reporting metrics and a framework for their application.

Boursa Kuwait also played a key role in developing unified ESG disclosure metrics for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), presenting an optional set of 29 standards aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In addition to these contributions, Boursa Kuwait actively fosters learning and collaboration through the organization of workshops and seminars annu-

ally in partnership with globally acclaimed consultancies, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Chartered Financial Analysts (CFA) Society, among other notable organizations. Through these initiatives, Boursa Kuwait not only reinforces its commitment to sustainability but also supports the broader adoption of responsible business practices across the region.

In 2023, Boursa Kuwait was recognized by Global Finance and The European for its achievements in the sustainability field, and its iconic building received LEED Gold certification from the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) for its renovation efforts to align the building with best-in-class standards and globally recognized metrics.

The company also elected Mrs. Dalal Jafaar Behbehani as the first female member of its Board of Directors and improved its employee retention rate to 98% in 2023. Boursa Kuwait continued to be a responsible business citizen, adopting and supporting over 30 social programs and environmental initiatives in collaboration with local and international organizations to make a positive long-lasting impact in the community in which it operates.

Since its inception, Boursa Kuwait has worked diligently to create a thriving capital market that attracts local and foreign investors through a broad spectrum of new products and services, infrastructure upgrades, and market reform initiatives, as part of its multi-phase market development plans.

The company was fully privatized in 2019, the first government entity in the country to successfully undergo the process, bringing about greater levels of efficiency. Boursa Kuwait also self-listed in September 2020 and has made great strides in sustaining its operations and business continuity in the face of uncertainties and challenges.

The company has rolled out numerous market reforms and new initiatives as part of its comprehensive multi-phase market development (MD) plans and showcases some of the standout listed companies and the investment opportunities that reside in the Kuwaiti capital market through its series of Roadshows and Corporate Days, putting these companies in touch with some of the world's leading investment firms and financial institutions and highlighting their financial health and business strategies and outlooks, to help investors gain an in-depth understanding of the benefits and opportunities of investing in Kuwaiti companies.

Saudi aims for \$100 bln FDI annually by 2030

Mideast ranks high in foreign investment attractiveness

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Middle East is increasingly emerging as one of the most attractive regions for foreign investors seeking to deploy capital, as indicated by a survey ranking countries most likely to attract investment over the next three years, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Efforts towards economic diversification and business policy reforms in the UAE and Saudi Arabia have led to significant advancements in the Kearney Foreign Direct Investment Confidence Index 2024. Both countries have surged ten places since 2023, with the UAE securing the eighth position and Saudi Arabia ranked 14th, according to Bloomberg.

Among emerging markets, the two largest Gulf economies rank second and third, respectively, after China. Additionally, the Sultanate of Oman made its debut in the index of emerging markets,

propelled by the launch of the "Oman Future Fund," which primarily focuses on attracting foreign direct investment.

For Saudi Arabia, attracting foreign direct investment is a critical priority, with ambitions to draw inflows worth \$100 billion annually by 2030, nearly three times the average achieved from 2017 to 2022, which stood at just over \$17 billion annually. It is important to note that while the survey measures participants' interest in various countries, it may not necessarily translate into actual investments.

Terry Toland, a consultant at Kearney and co-author of the report, highlighted the notable transformation in the region's economic landscape. Efforts to establish new centers of technology and artificial intelligence are expected to contribute to this shift, with both the UAE and Saudi Arabia investing in

these sectors as part of their economic diversification strategies.

In terms of sectors attracting investments, technology and innovation capabilities are given the highest priority by surveyed investors. Additionally, the efficiency of legal and regulatory processes, as well as ease of capital transfer, are significant factors influencing investment decisions.

Despite geopolitical tensions being a top concern, investors express optimism towards the UAE and Saudi Arabia among developing markets.

The Kearney Foreign Direct Investment Index, prepared by the Global Business Policy Council, is based on an annual survey of global business leaders conducted in January. Notably, participating companies in the index have annual revenues of no less than \$500 million.

Kuwaiti perfume market report reveals growth trends

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The report issued by the "Market and Research" group provides valuable insights into the Kuwaiti perfume market, highlighting various factors driving its growth and projecting its future trajectory, reports Al-Anba daily.

Here's a breakdown of the key points outlined in the report:

Market size and growth -- The Kuwaiti perfume market reached \$163.8 million in 2023, and it is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7.7% during the period 2024-2032, reaching \$325.3 million by 2032. This growth is fueled by increasing spending on personal care products, supported by regulations encouraging local production of perfumes and the emergence of specialized per-

fume retailers.

Government policies -- Favorable policies by government agencies in Kuwait to support local production of perfumes are stimulating market growth. Incentives and an enhanced business environment for local manufacturing contribute to the development of local brands, adding diversification and competitiveness to the market.

Influencers and brand ambassadors -- The report highlights the role of influencers and brand ambassadors in promoting specific brands or products, creating aspirational appeal and stimulating growth. The growing number of influencers and strategic cooperation between global and local brands are expected to enhance market growth.

Consumer preferences -- The Kuwaiti perfume market is driven by consumers' inclinations towards luxury perfumes and distinguished brands, supported by high levels of disposable income and the popularity of international brands. Increasing consumer awareness towards personal care and demand for personalized scents also contribute to market growth.

Cultural significance -- Traditional Arabic perfumes such as oud, musk, and amber hold cultural importance in Kuwait, reflecting status and hospitality. Perfumes are deeply rooted in Kuwaiti culture, used in various social and religious ceremonies, and act as a symbol of cultural identity and tradition.

Other Voices

Debating oil price stability: Sustainable or temporary?

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

The oil barrel price has finally reached the level that oil-producing nations have been anticipating. However, the question remains - Is this level sustainable, and how long will it last?

Undoubtedly, the current complex political situation is a contributing factor to reaching this level. Additionally, the OPEC+ group's steadfast grip on production, coupled with Russia's pledge to honor its commitment to reduce production by 900,000 barrels per day by the end of next month, has played a significant role. This commitment may already be in effect, given the damage inflicted on its three refineries due to recent attacks by Ukraine.

The current situation in the Red Sea and the regular ship attacks have escalated tensions in the area, effectively transforming the Red Sea into a war zone. There are no indications of the crisis abating, and this challenge of such a level is expected to persist for some time, particularly with the upcoming U.S. elections in November. It remains to be seen if the U.S. administration, under pressure from the elections, will urge OPEC+ to loosen their supply restrictions to ease the supply situation. Alternatively, the surge in oil prices beyond \$91 could be attributed to genuine growth in demand. However, these prices have since receded with the closure of U.S. markets.

While the USA administration

keeps changing its mind about refilling its strategic reserve due to concerns about further oil price increases, they have to do so some time in the future, making the oil market anticipate such a move. This expectation is helping in maintaining oil prices within the range of \$90, a level that may not be favorable for USA voters and could lead to frustration with the current administration as the election approaches.

Credit must be given to OPEC+ for its determination to remain firm on its production obligations, and for the unity of its members in adhering to their quotas without fail. All members, including Iraq, are now coming forward to reduce production. Non-member Russia is also committing itself to significant reductions, a move long overdue.

Currently, OPEC+ should be happy with its success in maintaining its discipline to reduce its production. However, a looming challenge is how long it can tolerate other oil-producing nations effortlessly capturing its crude oil market share. Countries like the USA, Canada, Brazil, and Guyana are competing without hindrance. For instance, US crude oil is now flowing to India, potentially jeopardizing the long-term supply from the OPEC countries in the Arabian Gulf region and Russia.

This perhaps may be acceptable today, but for the long term, proactive measures must be taken such as reducing oil prices to deter the advancement of other oil producers with higher costs of crude oil!



Email: naftikuwait@yahoo.com



Al-Harami

Zimbabwe introduces new currency

Zimbabwe on Friday launched a new currency to replace its previous one that in recent months has been battered by depreciation, and in some instances rejection by the population. Authorities hope the new measure will halt a currency crisis underlining the country's yearslong economic troubles.

Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Gov. John Mushayavanhu said the new currency will be called

ZiG, and will be anchored on gold reserves and a basket of foreign currencies. It goes into effect on Monday.

The Zimbabwe dollar has come under sustained pressure in recent weeks, making it one of the world's worst performing currencies.

Since January, the Zimbabwe dollar lost over 70% of its value on the official market, and was plunging even further on the

thriving but illegal black market. Inflation increased from 26.5% in December last year to 34.8% this January before spiking to 55.3% in March, according to official figures.

Traders were increasingly rejecting lower denominations of the now scrapped currency, with many insisting on payment only in U.S. dollars, which are also legal tender in the southern African country. (AP)

Nigeria seeks to try crypto exchange Binance execs

Nigerian authorities asked in court Thursday for cryptocurrency exchange Binance and two of its executives to be tried for alleged money laundering and tax evasion, the first legal step following weeks of a criminal investigation into the trading platform.

Only Tigran Gambaryan, an American citizen and Binance's head of financial crime compliance, attended the court hearing as Nadeem Anjarwalla, the

company's regional manager remains at large after fleeing custody in late March.

Nigeria harbors Africa's largest crypto economy in terms of trade volume with many citizens using crypto to hedge their finances against surging inflation and the declining local currency. Authorities, however, alleged the platform was being used for money laundering and terrorism financing.

In separate charges seen by The Associated Press Thursday at the Federal High Court in the capital, Abuja, Nigeria's anti-corruption agency and the local tax authority accused Binance and the two officials of operating without the required license, unlawfully negotiating foreign exchange rates, tax evasion and concealing the origin of illegal proceeds and revenue of \$35.4 million. (AP)

Bid to allow more liquids and packed laptops

UK airports get more time to put in new scanners

LONDON, April 6, (AP): Drink it or bin it: That phrase should have become history this summer at all U.K. airports.

But it's set to persist for at least another year after the British government said it will grant extensions to several large U.K. airports unable to meet the June 1 deadline to fully install new scanning technology. The airports include London's two biggest, Heathrow and Gatwick.

The new scanners use computed tomography, commonly known as a CT scan, to produce clearer images. They are being rolled out globally, including in the U.S. and across Europe, and will allow passengers to go through security with 2 liters (70 ounces) of liquid in their hand luggage - rather than the current paltry 100 milliliters (3.5 ounces).

They will also mean laptops and tablets won't need to be removed from bags - saving even more time.

The restrictions were introduced around the world in 2006 following a foiled terror plot to blow up planes flying from London to the U.S. with homemade liquid bombs. They were not expected to be in place for 18 years and have been cited as one of, if not the, biggest cause of delays at airport security checks.

A deadline for the new technology to be in place at U.K. airports had originally been set for December 2022 but that was delayed to this summer as a result of the huge disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The new deadline comes after airports reported that they were struggling to install the scanners ahead of the busy summer holiday period, largely due to supply chain delays and construction difficulties caused by the weight of the machines.

The Department for Transport said the extensions will be granted on a case by case basis and that it was exploring how financial penalties could be imposed for further non-compliance.

It did not provide a breakdown of the situation for each airport, citing security concerns, but said that by the start of June about half of passengers flying from U.K. airports will be processed by the new scanners. London City Airport, a popular short-haul airport, has already successfully introduced the new scanners, as has Teeside Airport in the northeast of England.

"These cutting-edge scanners will make air travel safer and easier for passengers by strengthening security even further," said Transport Secretary Mark Harper.

"The U.K. is leading the world with its rollout of this technology, but it's important we give those airports yet to meet the deadline a second chance to get the job done. Until they do, passengers should continue to check before travelling."

Heathrow has previously said it expects to have new scanners in all security lanes sometime this summer, while Gatwick expects to complete the program by the end of March next year. Manchester Airports Group, which runs Manchester, East Midlands and London Stansted airports, said its scanners will be fully rolled out in 2025.

"Airports are making excellent progress in delivering these multi-million-pound investment programmes, which will ensure the U.K. remains at the forefront of aviation security in the years ahead," said Karen Dee, chief executive of the trade body Airport Operators Association.

Naomi Leach, deputy editor of consumer magazine Which? Travel, said passengers leaving the U.K. should be warned about potential problems and delays ahead as different rules will apply at different airports.

"It's imperative that these changes are made as quickly as possible and that the rules at different airports are communicated clearly to passengers in the meantime," she said.

Singapore best country in the world for doing business: EIU

Political stability a crucial factor in its attractiveness

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Singapore's top ranking as the best country in the world for doing business, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), highlights several key factors contributing to its business-friendly environment, reports Al-Anba daily.

Here's a closer look at the reasons behind Singapore's strong position:

Political Stability -- Singapore's political stability is a crucial factor

in its attractiveness to businesses. A stable political environment provides certainty and reduces risks for investors, fostering an environment conducive to business growth and development.

Government Support -- The Singaporean government's focus on supporting local private sector companies in technological development plays a significant role. By investing in innovation and technology, Singapore enhances its competitiveness and attractiveness to businesses seeking to leverage advanced technologies.

Digital Readiness: Both Singapore and Denmark benefit from advanced digital infrastructure, which is increasingly important in today's global

economy. A strong digital ecosystem enables businesses to innovate, collaborate, and compete more effectively on a global scale.

Long-Term Outlook -- The report suggests that Singapore, Denmark, and the United States are expected to maintain their favorable business environments in the coming years. This long-term outlook provides businesses with confidence and stability when making investment decisions.

Macroeconomic Fundamentals -- Denmark's second-place ranking underscores the importance of strong macroeconomic fundamentals. Factors such as low inflation, stable currency, and sound fiscal policies contribute to Denmark's appeal as a business destination.

Infrastructure -- Denmark's high-quality transportation and digital infrastructure provide businesses with essential resources for efficient operations. Modern infrastructure supports productivity and facilitates connectivity, both domestically and internationally.

Overall, Singapore's continued dominance as the best country for doing business reflects its commitment to political stability, technological innovation, and a supportive business environment. Denmark's strong performance underscores the importance of macroeconomic stability and quality infrastructure, while the United States remains a key player in the global business landscape.

Treasury secretary kicks off 5-day visit

Yellen calls for a level playing field for US workers & firms during China visit

GUANGZHOU, China, April 6, (AP): U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen called on China on Friday to address manufacturing overcapacity that she said risks causing global economic dislocation, and to create a level playing field for American companies and workers.

Starting a five-day visit in one of China's major industrial and export hubs, she raised what the U.S. considers to be unfair Chinese trade practices in talks with senior Chinese officials.

"The United States seeks a healthy economic relationship with China that benefits both sides," she said ahead of a meeting with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng and the central bank governor and other officials in the southern city of Guangzhou. "But a healthy relationship must provide a level playing field for firms and workers in both countries."

Earlier, she said at an event hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce in China that "Chinese practices ... are tilting the playing field away from American workers and firms."

China's He didn't get into specifics in remarks before the media but said that both sides "need to properly respond to key concerns of the other side."

High on Yellen's list is the overcapacity issue. Chinese government subsidies and other policy support have encouraged solar panel and EV makers in China to invest in factories, building far more production capacity than the domestic market can absorb.

The massive scale of production has driven down costs and ignited price wars for green technologies, a boon for consumers and efforts to reduce global dependence on fossil fuels. But Western governments fear that that capacity will flood their markets with low-priced exports, threatening American and European jobs.

Yellen, the first Cabinet member to visit China since President Joe Biden and Chinese leader Xi Jinping met last November, said that it is important for the U.S. and China to have open and direct communication on areas of disagreement.

"This includes the issue of China's industrial overcapacity, which the United States and other countries are concerned can cause global spillovers," she said during a meeting with the governor of Guangdong province.

Guangzhou is the capital of Guangdong, a Chinese manufacturing center that is home to telecom giant Huawei and BYD, China's largest EV maker. Huawei has been hit hard by U.S. restrictions on semiconductor exports to China and is at the vanguard of Chinese efforts to become self-sufficient and a leader in technology.

Just as on her previous trip to China last July, Yellen got attention on social media for eating at a popular restaurant after her arrival Thursday evening.

A social media account run by Chinese state media posted a catchy video of her eating with the U.S. ambassador and other officials at Tao Tao Ju, a Guangzhou restaurant that dates to 1880.

The post, one of the most viewed on the Weibo microblog app the next morning, praised Yellen for holding chopsticks well but added, "as a U.S. official, Yellen needs to know more



U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, right, and Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng, center, arrive to a bilateral meeting at the Guangdong Zhudao Guest House in southern China's Guangdong province, Saturday, April 6, 2024. (AP)

US & China plan talks on economics, including manufacturing 'overcapacity' issue, Yellen says

GUANGZHOU, China, April 6, (AP): The U.S. and China agreed to hold talks that will address a key American complaint about China's economic model, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said on the second day of an official visit to China.

The two sides will hold more talks and create two new economic groups dedicated to growth in domestic and global economies as well as anti-money laundering, according to a U.S. statement about the creation of the groups.

Yellen, who started her five-day visit in one of China's major industrial and export hubs, has focused thus far on what the U.S. considers to be unfair Chinese trade practices in talks with

senior Chinese officials.

"I think the Chinese realize how concerned we are about the implications of their industrial strategy for the United States, for the potential to flood our markets with exports that make it difficult for American firms to compete," Yellen told reporters directly after the announcement.

"It's not going to be solved in an afternoon or a month, but I think they have heard that this is an important issue to us."

The announcement of the groups come after two days of extended meetings between Yellen and Vice Premier He Lifeng on Friday and Saturday. There was no immediate comment from the Chinese side.

In her statement, Yellen said she and

her counterparts "agreed that the U.S. and China will hold intensive exchanges on balanced growth in the domestic and global economies. These exchanges will facilitate a discussion around macroeconomic imbalances, including their connection to overcapacity, and I intend to use this opportunity to advocate for a level playing field for American workers and firms."

"It's going to be critical to our bilateral relationship going forward and to China's relationship with other countries that are important, and this provides a structured way in which we can continue to listen to one another and see if we can find a way forward that will avoid conflict," Yellen told reporters.

Bid to end a yearlong dispute

Snr docs in England agree on pay deal with the govt

LONDON, April 6, (AP): Senior doctors in England have accepted a pay offer from the British government that ends a yearlong dispute with unprecedented strike action.

The British Medical Association and the Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association, which represent the senior doctors, who are known as consultants, said Friday that 83% of those casting a vote backed the offer.

The pay increases will see those who have been consultants between four and seven years getting a 2.85% raise. It also addresses some gender pay issues in the state-owned National Health Service and enhances parental leave options.

Consultants have held several strikes over the past year, which has hobbled the NHS as it tries to grapple with financial constraints and backlogs caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

Dr. Vishal Sharma, who chairs the BMA consultants committee, said the fight was "not yet over" and that there is "some way to go" before pay gets back to equivalent levels 15 years ago. The relative decline in pay for consultants has led to an exodus of senior doctors abroad, he said.

Junior doctors - those at the early stages of their careers, who form the backbone of hospital and clinical care as they train up to be specialists in a

particular field - remain in dispute with the government. They have walked off the job for days at a time, with their senior colleagues drafted in to cover for emergency services, critical care and maternity services during the strikes.

Matthew Taylor, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, said leaders in the health service will "breathe a sigh of relief" that consultants have settled but urged the government and junior doctors to come to an agreement.

"The potential for further junior doctor strikes looms large, which could lead to more operations and appointments being canceled and place more pressure on already stretched services," he said.

NHS figures show more than 1.4 million appointments and operations have been canceled over the past year because of industrial action, with even more patients joining waiting lists.

Britain has endured a year of rolling strikes across the health sector as staff sought pay rises to offset the soaring cost of living. Unions say wages, especially in the public sector, have fallen in real terms over the past decade, and that double-digit inflation in late 2022 and early 2023, fueled by sharply rising food and energy prices, left many workers struggling to pay their bills.

Boeing's CEO got compensation worth nearly \$33 million last year

WASHINGTON, April 6, (AP): Boeing CEO David Calhoun received compensation valued at \$33 million last year, nearly all of it in stock awards, but his stock payout for this year will be cut by nearly one-fourth because of the drop in Boeing's share price since the January blowout of a panel on one of its planes in midflight.

The company said Friday that after the accident on the Alaska Airlines Boeing 737 Max, Calhoun declined a bonus for 2023 that was targeted at nearly \$3 million.

Calhoun announced this month that he will step down at the end of the year as Boeing deals with multiple investigations into the quality and safety of its manufacturing.

The company said in a regulatory filing that Calhoun got a salary of \$1.4 million last year and stock awards valued at \$30.2 million. Including other items, his compensation totaled \$32.8 million, up from \$22.6 million in 2022.

Since Jan. 5, when a door-plug panel blew off an Alaska Airlines Max jetliner flying 16,000 (4,800 meters) feet above Oregon, Boeing has been thrust into its deepest crisis since a pair of deadly crashes involving Max jets in

2018 in Indonesia and 2019 in Ethiopia.

The Federal Aviation Administration, National Transportation Safety Board and Justice Department have launched separate investigations into the company. The FAA is limiting Boeing's production of 737s until the company meets the agency's safety concerns.

Boeing said Calhoun and other top executives will see their stock awards for this year reduced by about 22%, which the company said matched the drop in the share price from the accident until the stock-grant date.

Boeing shares have fallen 26% since the panel blowout, through the end of regular trading Friday.

"The months and years ahead are critically important for The Boeing Company to take the necessary steps to regain the trust lost in recent times, to get back on track and perform like the company we all know Boeing can and must be, every day," the company's new chairman, Steve Mollenkopf, said in a letter to shareholders. "The world needs a healthy, safe, and successful Boeing. And that is what it is going to get."

Tradition of giving: Initiative reflects Ramadan spirit

NBK, LOYAC sponsor kids in low income families through 'Eid Clothing' campaign

KUWAIT CITY, April, 6: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) and LOYAC organized "Eid Clothing" campaign to support children in low income families through purchasing new Eid clothing to celebrate Eid Al-Fitr by dressing up and wearing their new outfits. The campaign covered purchasing new Eid clothing to 30 children in Kuwait.

Each dedicated volunteer was assigned to accompany a child to go shopping. The shopping trip included buying new clothes and shoes for Eid Al-Fitr, so that children would look their best and don't feel left out of the celebration mood due to the limited resources of their families.

"NBK is so proud of its cooperation with LOYAC. We highly appreciate its role in the community

through organizing a wide range of volunteering, developmental, awareness and social initiatives", Joanne Al AbdulJaleel, NBK Public Relations Manager said.

"The "Eid Clothing" campaign, launched to support children in low income families, is considered a unique initiative across Kuwait. It extends a helping hand to families in need to bring them the joy of Eid through providing the necessary support to whomever in need, so no one is left out when celebrating Eid holidays" she added.

She highlighted that NBK is always committed to supporting humanitarian initiatives and is proud to lead this campaign with LOYAC. "We look forward to organizing this campaign to complement our community and philanthropic initiatives that share the same objectives of lending helping hands to those in need," she noted.

Al AbdulJaleel stressed that NBK firmly believes that this social commitment is a fundamental cornerstone of NBK's objectives as a leading financial institution, expressing his hopes that this campaign had left a positive impact on children and brought them happiness, confirming that NBK's mission is to bring joy and hope for a better tomorrow.

The initiative is part of NBK's commitment to its social responsibility program in Ramadan and expanding its reach to cover more sustainable programs.

NBK continues to reinforce its



Dedicated volunteers pose for a group photo during the 'Eid Clothing' campaign to support children in low income families.



Joanne Al Abduljaleel, NBK Public Relations Manager

leading corporate citizen role committed to bringing positive values to the community through its CSR

initiatives that adopt a wide range of objectives.

NBK's participation in this

initiative is part of its partnership with LOYAC through its participation in similar campaigns cov-

ering training, developmental, educational and social services programs.

Various activities provide convenience across Kuwaiti mosques

stc offers hospitality to worshippers during the last 10 days of Ramadan

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced that it will be organizing a special service for worshippers during the last 10 days of Ramadan at different mosques in Kuwait. The service will be available for those praying at Al-Rashid Mosque in Adaliya, as well as Moza Muhammad Salem Mosque in Bayan. The activities come as part of stc's month long campaign during Ramadan called "With good, we go further", which was launched under the Company's extensive corporate social responsibility agenda.

The worshipper's hospitality service is comprised of several activities that aim to provide comfort and convenience during the last 10 days of Ramadan, which is considered a special spiritual time of the Holy Month. The activities launched under the hospitality service include supplying refrigerators filled with water, distributing coffee, supplying extra seating to keep them comfortable, and additional services that aim to enrich the experience for worshippers.

As part of its dedication to serving and positively contributing to the community, especially during the Holy Month, these services have been thoughtfully designed by stc to cater to the needs of worshippers, ensuring that their journey during these days is as fulfilling and comfortable as possible. Through these efforts, stc aims to strengthen its commitment to social responsibility and its role in supporting the community's well-being. The objective of this campaign is to provide a serene and accommodating environment for all worshippers, enhancing their experience and enabling them to focus on their spiritual practices during this sacred time.

stc highlighted that the Corporate Communications team as well Sofara'a Team members namely Abdulwahab Al Shuwaiti and Aseel Al Shaheen were present to offer support and distribute refreshments amongst the worshippers.

stc indicated in a statement that it is proud to facilitate these hospitality services alongside its partners, reinforcing its values of giving back to the community and foster-



stc presence during the last ten days of Ramadan.

ing a spirit of generosity and kindness during Ramadan. The Company also expressed that such activities build on stc's continuous

pursuit of enriching the lives of its customers and the communities it serves through various ways.

Advancing towards digital leadership

Gulf Bank's mobile app offers exclusive services for personal account transfers

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Gulf Bank's new mobile application is swiftly advancing towards digital leadership, offering a comprehensive range of high-quality services. Among these, is the seamless transfer feature between the customer's personal accounts. Users can easily initiate transfers by simply dragging the icon from the source account to the destination account, enhancing the overall customer experience.

In this context, Mr. Bader Al-Ali, Gulf Bank's Deputy General Manager of Consumer Banking, said: "Gulf Bank's mobile application offers numerous features and services through a smart user interface, tailored to meet the unique needs of each customer and promptly address their expectations."

Al-Ali highlighted the distinctive features of the bank's mobile app, positioning it as the most user-friendly and efficient choice in the banking industry – thereby bringing modern and advanced technology directly to users' fingertips.

He further mentioned that the application offers customers an even simpler option for transferring between their accounts. This involves dragging the icon of the source account to the destination account, inputting the desired transfer amount, reviewing the transaction, clicking "Review and Pay," and confirming the operation by dragging. Upon successful completion, a confirmation page will be displayed.

Al-Ali concluded by emphasizing that the new version of Gulf Bank's mobile application represents a significant advancement in customer experience, impacting various banking services and transaction stages. It is accessible to everyone, regardless of location or time, via a simple, fast and secure interface.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the lead-



Bader Al-Ali, Gulf Bank's Deputy General Manager of Consumer Banking

Bader Al-Ali: The mobile app offers distinctive features that make it the most user-friendly and efficient choice in the banking industry

ing Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining robust developments in sustainability at environmental, social and governance levels through diverse sustainability initiatives, strategically selected to benefit the Bank both internally and externally. Gulf Bank supports Kuwait Vision 2035 "New Kuwait" and works with various parties to achieve it.

Customers may receive new Eidia notes in branches

ABK participates in CBK and KBA's 'Eidity' initiative

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced its participation in the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and Kuwait Banking Association's (KBA) 'Eidity' initiative which aims to provide Eidia in various Kuwaiti Dinar denominations on the blessed occasion of Eid Al Fitr.

ABK clarified that Eidia will be provided to customers who visit any of the Bank's branches across Kuwait by placing a request with one of the present employees. Furthermore, ABK will be providing Eidia delivery service for its Elite customers. This is in addition to providing Eidia via the Bank's interactive teller machines (ITMs) in the Al-Khiran and Al Jabriya branches.

ABK's participation highlights the Bank's eagerness to provide convenient banking services to all segments of society and to encourage financial inclusion.

On this occasion, Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK, extended her greetings and said, "In cooperation with CBK and KBA, our branches are ready to provide Eidia across the country."



Johair Marafi, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK



Eidity Logo

Marafi continued, "The ABK team is ready to face the increase in customers' withdrawals while ensuring the best banking service and utmost satisfaction at all times. In order for customers to get their Eidia, they may visit ABK branches during official

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



Water refrigerators from stc.



Distributing coffee to worshippers.

CNN's Camerota opens up about her turbulent past in memoir

NEW YORK, April 6, (AP) — Wandering the former site of New York's famed CBGB nightclub, pointing to familiar names on band posters spread amid carefully preserved graffiti, is like being transported to a life that CNN's Alisyn Camerota has long since left behind.

The high-end apparel store there now has kept some of those artifacts to appeal to rock 'n' roll pilgrims, one wearing a Ramones T-shirt who wanted to see where the quartet got its start. The room is far more polished than it was four decades ago.

So is Camerota. Her recent visit isn't the only time-traveling she's done lately.

The Jersey girl has written "Combat Love," a memoir that focuses on sex, substance abuse, effective abandonment by her parents and even brief homelessness all before she graduated high school, and the family she found with followers of a local band, Shrapnel, to help cope.

Camerota, who poses for a picture under a street sign marking "Joey Ramone Way" outside the old club, even details a cringe-worthy backstage encounter with the punk pioneers.

"People would ask me about my high school life and I would tell them and they would sort of blanch," she said. "I thought that everybody in the 1980s had my experiences ... I guess not everybody was in a car surrounded by skinheads or in a lot of car accidents and had friends really wrestling with drug addiction and alcoholism."

An only child, Camerota was 8 years old when her parents divorced. An already distant dad largely disappeared from her life, while her mom chased one failed relationship after another, moving her daughter cross-country to Washington for one. Both parents hid secrets that explained, if not excused, their behavior.

Her mom set out for Pittsburgh in her junior year, leaving Alisyn behind to stay out West with friends. She moved back to New Jersey for her senior year in high school at the home of another friend, then was kicked out and slept briefly in her car or on the beach before finding someone who would board her.

Despite her experiences, "I wasn't really a wild child," she said. "I was searching for belonging."

She dreamed from age 15 of being in television news. She still went to school and did the work. When Camerota earned a scholarship at American University, she applied herself toward achieving her goals, getting serious at a time many peers were ready to party. She'd already been there.

Successful

Now a successful, 57-year-old newswoman with stops that included "America's Most Wanted," Fox News Channel and CNN, Camerota is married with three children and a comfortable home in a Connecticut suburb. But her high school experiences never left her.

"I had just a lot of loose ends emotionally," she said. "I moved to six different houses in two years. I left sometimes before saying goodbye, and certainly left before having closure. Writing helped me put it in chronological order. Some of these stories kind of, not haunted me, but definitely followed me around begging for more attention."

She wrote "Combat Love" when her children were teenagers and worried about what they might think.

"I sat them down a couple of times during the writing process and said, 'Guys, you know the '80s were different than it is now, right?'" she said. "'You know that Mom didn't have a lot of supervision, right?'"

You guys were helicopter-parented. I was the opposite."

Now the kids - twin girls who just started college and a son still in high school - are so absorbed in their own lives, she says, that they haven't expressed much interest in reading the book.

Others from her past weren't so thrilled. She's still friends with some of the people she knew from high school and, though Camerota disguised names for the narrative, people who know the stories know who she is talking about.

Camerota regrets how she treated old boyfriends, and contacting some of them again was tough. She felt she was in survivor mode those days and not attentive to the feelings of others. It took her longer to achieve a stable, lasting relationship than to become successful professionally.

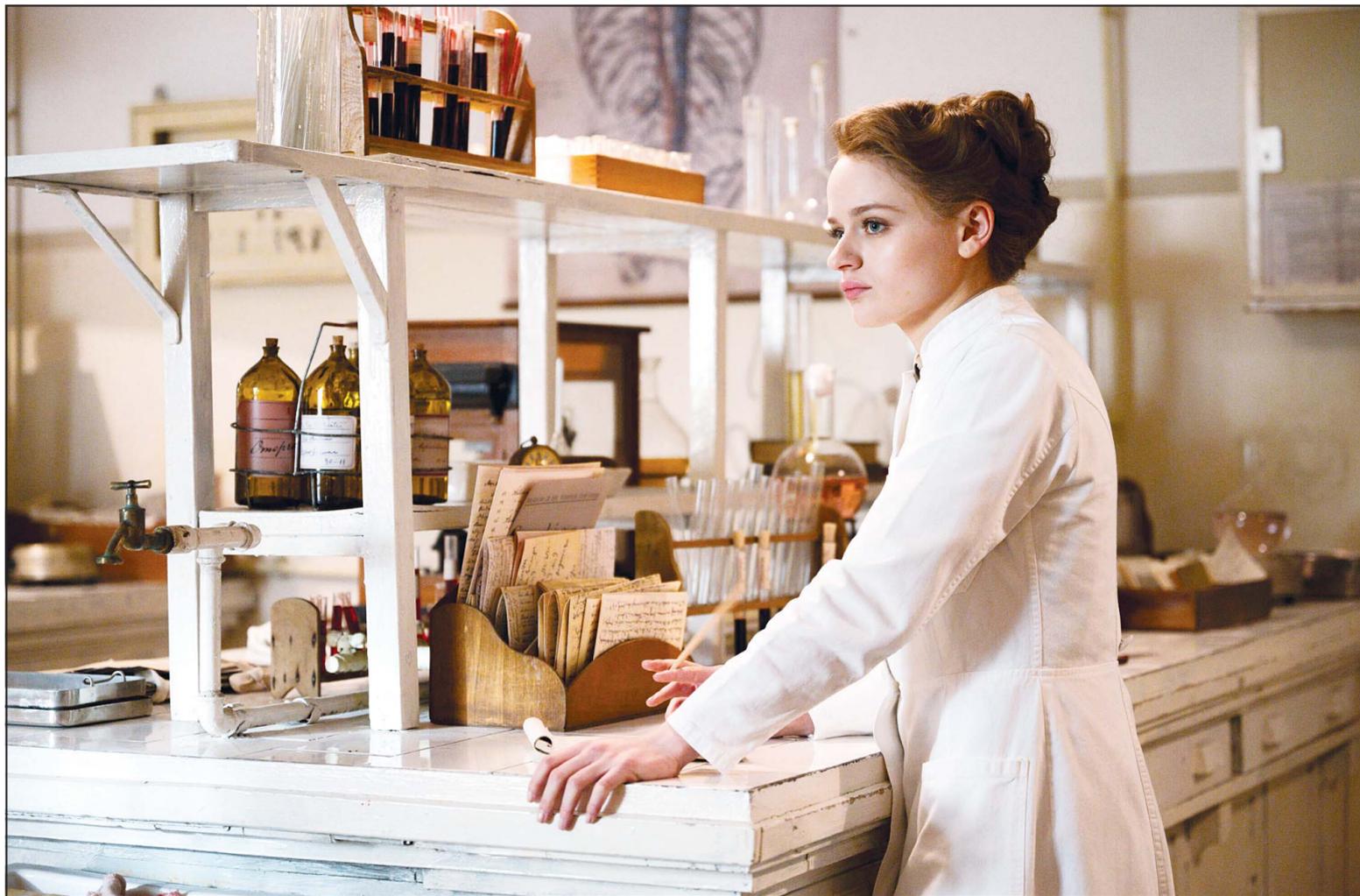
Her father is dead, but Camerota's mother is 84 and lives in a nearby Connecticut town. She struggled with the idea of the stories becoming public. Camerota had talked about her resentments at an earlier time, a difficult conversation that was recounted in the book.

"My mom asked me repeatedly over the past decade when I was writing this, 'Can't you wait until I'm dead?'" she said. "I needed her help and I wanted her blessing. I said to her, 'You know, Mom, I'm entitled to tell my story. I lived it.' And she said, 'Of course you are. But it's my story, too.'"

She hopes the book can be more than a personal therapy session. "Everyone has a survival story of some kind, and that can be a bridge," she said. "For a long time we've been divided in this country, and I always looked for a bridge. And I think if we share our individual stories we would find that we have a lot more in common. "People can be inspired by survival stories," she said. "I know I am."

Books

Variety



This image released by Hulu shows Joey King in a scene from 'We Were the Lucky Ones.' (AP)

Television

A story of family, heritage, and resilience

'Lucky Ones' embraces family stories

LOS ANGELES, April 6, (AP) — In Hulu's limited series "We Were the Lucky Ones," the Kurc family in Poland is separated during World War II and spends years trying to reunite. This was before the Internet and cell phones so tracking each other's whereabouts was hard.

It's based on a non-fiction book of the same name by Georgia Hunter, who wrote about her own family's story. As a teen, Hunter discovered her late-grandfather Eddy, (who had changed his name from Addy), along with his parents and siblings - were Holocaust survivors.

Logan Lerman, who plays Hunter's grandfather, says the character's story resembles his own grandfather's. Addy escaped to South America during the war and built a life in Brazil, while Lerman's family went to China.

"My grandfather was a refugee with his family," said Lerman. "He fled Germany in the late 1930s and ended up on this long journey similar to my character. He ended up in Shanghai with his parents and sister because I guess it was one of the countries that was letting refugees in at the time. Addy also had a long journey as a refugee, seeking a country that would let them in."

It took years for Hunter to trace the Kurc's lineage. "We Were the Lucky Ones" serves as a reminder to learn your family's history.

Joey King, who plays youngest daughter, Halina, values having a close relationship with her grandmother and says they are "thick as thieves." King says her ancestry and heritage have "always been such an open conversation."

"There wasn't ever a moment that I learned about the Holocaust that I can recall. It was just something that was always talked about in my home. When you grow up in a Jewish family, it's not this defining moment in school where they're like, 'And this is the Holocaust.' I knew about it well before we learned about it in school."

When it comes to sharing accounts of the Holocaust, not every survivor wants to go into detail about their experiences.

"They had to go through such horror and such dark times," said Michael Aloni, who plays Selim, husband to Kurc's sibling Mila. "Some did not say a word about what they went through. They just continued with their lives and that was their victory."

Don M. Fox, a historian and author, says many former WWII combat veterans also keep that part of their life to themselves.

"So many of them just exited the war and, particularly if they didn't stay in the service, they just went on with their lives."

Communication is so vital to sharing knowledge and the National WWII Museum now uses AI for an exhibit that allows visitors to have virtual conversations with photographs of veterans.

Conversation

When speaking with actual Holocaust survivors or former military members, Fox suggests approaching the conversation with open-ended questions.

"I would start out by saying, 'I know that you were in Europe during the Second World War. Can you tell me what that was like?' or 'If you don't mind, start from the beginning when you first became aware of what was happening around you.'"

Even if your relatives are no longer alive, Henry Lloyd-Hughes, who plays oldest sibling Genek Kurc, points out that, like Hunter, anyone can do research.

"It's not always a question of listening," he said. "There are diaries and photos in attics with stories in everyone's family that someone might not be (aware of)."

Sam Woolf says portraying Halina's boyfriend and later husband in the series led him to dig into his own background. "I've had so many more conversations with my mother since," he said. While filming in Poland, the Britain born-and-raised actor was able to visit a nearby town where his grandfather was

born and found his birth certificate. It's made Woolf want to honor his Polish heritage.

"Now I'm applying for Polish citizenship," he said. "It was this sort of knitting together of information I've never had because you often don't think to ask and then sometimes it's too late. I lost all my grandparents quite young at 13 or 14. I could have asked. You never get that opportunity back."

Earlier this year, a study released by the New York-based Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, known as the Claims Conference, reported about 245,000 survivors are still living across more than 90 countries.

Kurc family matriarch Nechuma is portrayed by Robin Weigert, who admits to carrying guilt about the sobering fact that Holocaust survivors are dying.

"There are Holocaust stories in my family that I will never know. My (grandfather) had relatives. I don't know their names. I don't think my father ever heard about them. I regret every single conversation I didn't have," she said.

This week, the Claims Conference announced a global initiative to combat antisemitism by using Holocaust survivors' stories as a way to educate.

"There's a difference between reading something in a history book or on Wikipedia, and talking to a human being that actually went through (the Holocaust)," said Hadas Yaron, who plays Selim's wife, Mila.

Even if you're personally not interested in your family's history, or aren't a fan of clutter and want to cull artifacts, Fox advises to purge wisely and keep a record of information to pass on.

"Keep it in your family. Study it yourself in more detail. Share it within your family. What's more important, from my perspective, is that on a multi-generational basis, you develop a culture within your own lineage... There's always the chance that a generation or two down the line, there will be some great appreciation or desire to know more."

Features

ARABO TIMES

SUNDAY, APRIL 7, 2024

his next album. (AP)

MISSION, Kansas: An actor who appeared in a spinoff of the popular television western "Yellowstone" was found dead after he went missing amid a domestic violence investigation in Kansas, authorities said Friday.



Cole



Combs

The Johnson County Sheriff's Office said in a statement that deputies found the body of 27-year-old Cole Brings Plenty in a wooded area. Crime scene investigators and the medical examiner were at the location, but no details were released about the cause of death. Two days earlier Brings Plenty was charged in a nearby county

with aggravated burglary, domestic battery, and criminal restraint. An arrest warrant was issued. Police in the town of Lawrence said officers responded Sunday to an apartment where a woman was screaming for help and Brings Plenty had left before they arrived. He then missed an audition for

an upcoming film project that was scheduled for Monday morning over Zoom, his agent, Peter Yanke of Phirgun Mair Worldwide, said this week. Brings Plenty's father, Joe, said in a statement Friday that he is grateful for everyone "for their prayers and positive thoughts you sent for Cole." (AP)

People & Places

Music

Kiss sells catalog

Sean Paul reignites the 'dancehall' fire

LOS ANGELES, April 6, (AP): It has been 21 years since Sean Paul's dancehall anthem "Get Busy" topped the Billboard Hot 100 - which means "Get Busy" is finally old enough to hear "Get Busy" at the club.

"It's changed for me now," Sean Paul told The Associated Press over Zoom from his studio in Jamaica, reflecting on the song's legacy. "Because when I say, 'Get busy,' I'm telling the kids to do their homework or clean stuff up."

In the years since Paul helped introduce dancehall riddims and reggae to new audiences, he's released six ambitious albums, including two straight out of the coronavirus pandemic: 2021's "Live n Livin'" and 2022's "Scorcha." He's become a father and a devoted husband. (The "Jodi" in the "Get Busy" lyric "Shake dat ting, yo, Donna Donna / Jodi and Rebecca"? That's his wife.) And his ambition to make joyful, danceable music has never wavered.

"It's a timeless piece for me," he says of "Get Busy." "Every time I try to do a song, I try to put the same butterflies

that I had in my belly when I was flirting with the first girl on the first dance floor I went to. It's just a feeling."

That translates to his goal of bringing positivity to the masses.

"I have a lot of help with the riddim tracks, the genre itself is very infectious," he says. "It gives you joy." His dedication comes from life experience.

"I had a lot of problems, as most teenagers do, trying to find themselves, trying to understand what life's about. You know, my father was in prison. It was a single mom situation, and she was struggling to make sure that we were conscious beings," he says.

Music was the release.

Energy

Now, he's taking that energy on a 22-date US run dubbed the "Greatest Tour," kicking off May 2 at House of Blues in Orlando, Florida, and ending June 16 at the Fillmore in Charlotte, North Carolina.

"Why am I doing it now? I feel that the people are ready for me again," Paul says.

"I did some work with some reggaeton acts last year," he adds, referencing new dancefloor hits, including the massive "Niña Bonita" with Feid and "Dem Time Deh" with Colombian singer Manuel Turizo.

He's also released a few solo singles, including the infectious "Greatest," and promises more conscious songs in the future - thematically not unlike 2016's "Never Give Up."

"There's a lot of struggles here in Jamaica as well as it being, you know, a very beautiful place. But we do have our struggles that we have to deal with," he says. "A lot of people don't know me for that type of material, but, you know, it's as important in my career."



It's never really the end of the road for Kiss. The hard rock quartet have sold their catalog, brand name, and IP to Swedish company Pophouse Entertainment Group in a deal estimated to be over \$300 million, it was announced Thursday.

This isn't the first time Kiss has partnered with Pophouse, which was co-founded by ABBA's Björn Ulvæus. When the band's current lineup - founders Paul Stanley and Gene Simmons as well as guitarist Tommy Thayer and drummer Eric Singer - took the stage at the final night of their farewell tour in December at New York City's famed Madison Square Garden, they ended by revealing digitized avatars of themselves.

The cutting-edge technology was created by George Lucas' special-effects company, Industrial Light & Magic, in partnership with Pophouse. The two companies recently teamed up for the "ABBA Voyage" show in London, in which fans could attend a full concert by the Swedish band in their heyday, as performed by their own digital avatars.

The ways in which Kiss' avatars will be utilized has yet to be announced, but Pophouse CEO Per Sundin says fans can expect a biopic, a documentary and a Kiss experience on the horizon.

An avatar show is scheduled to launch in the second half of 2027 - but don't expect it to look anything like "ABBA Voyage," Sundin told the AP. And fans can expect it to kick off in North America.

Record

Sundin says the goal of the purchase is to expose Kiss to new generations - which he believes sets Pophouse apart from other acquisitions of music catalogs.

"The record companies, the three big ones that are left, they're doing a fantastic job, but they have so many catalogs and they can't focus on everything," he says. "We work together with Universal (Music Group) and Kiss, even though we will own the artists rights, and we're doing it in conjunction with Kiss. But yes, we bought all rights, and that's not something I've seen that clear before."

"I don't like the word acquisition," Gene Simmons tells the AP over Zoom, assuring the band would never sell their catalog to a company they didn't appreciate.

"Collaboration is exactly what it's about. It would be remiss in our inferred fiduciary duty - see what I just did there? - to the thing that we created to abandon it," he continued. "People might misunderstand and think, 'OK, now Pophouse is doing that stuff and we're just in Beverly Hills twiddling our thumbs.' No, that's not true. We're in the trenches with them. We talk all the time. We share ideas. It's a collaboration. Paul (Stanley) and I especially, with the band, we'll stay committed to this. It's our baby."

And within that: no more live touring, for real. "We're not going to tour again as Kiss, period," he says. "We're not going to go put the makeup on and go out there."

Kiss are Pophouse's second investment outside of Sweden: In February, Cyndi Lauper entered a partnership with the company which including the sale of the majority share of her music and a new immersive performance project she's calling an "immersive theater piece" that transports audiences to the New York she grew up in.

The aim is to develop new ways to bring Lauper's music to fans and younger audiences through new performances and live experiences.



Dave Bayley, (left), and Drew McFarland of Glass Animals perform at Lollapalooza Music Festival in Chicago on July 29, 2022. The English indie-pop band releases its fourth album on July 19. (AP)

Music

Latest album explores a different side of love

Glass Animals unpacks emotions

NEW YORK, April 6, (AP): Glass Animals' latest album was born thanks to a massive storm, a house on a cliff, and an existential crisis. What emerged from that? A 10-track collection exploring love.

The indie-pop band's frontman, songwriter and producer Dave Bayley found himself in an Airbnb house high on stilts below Mulholland Drive in Los Angeles, alone, sick with fever and wondering about Glass Animals' place in the universe.

Then came a powerful storm: Trees tumbling down the hill, roads flooded and his rented house perched precariously. "My existential crisis went to the next level," Bayley says, laughing. But in the dazed calm that followed, Bayley saw people emerge from the storm and embrace - families, couples, friends, neighbors. "I felt like I was sitting in space in this house, looking down on the whole city." A musical concept was born.

A few furious weeks of writing produced the 10-track "I Love You So ... Much," a follow-up to their third album, 2020's "Dreamland," which sold over 12 million copies. The new collection comes out July 19 via Republic Records.

There are songs about longing and ones about past relationships. One compares love to being tied and thrown into the trunk of a Corolla. "Each try to kind of touch on a different side of love," Bayley says. "I love trying to build a whole world."

The anthemic "Creatures in Heaven" is the first single, a memory of a tender, intimate moment. "You held me like my mother made me just for you/You held me so close that I broke in two."

The album title - which can be read passionately or exasperatedly or a million ways in between - comes from the crazy nature of love. "Everything is always chaotic. You just have to kind

of embrace it for what it is and love it," he says. "That is what pulled me out of that dark spot."

"Show Pony," the first song, is a table of contents for the album, a tune about a complex, up-and-down relationship that Bayley grew up witnessing ("All those times he did what he pleased/Boy, those scars must really run deep").

Several songs lean on space imagery - especially "A Tear in Space (Airlock)" - or the need to flee - "On the Run" - or the dangerous push-pull of adoration in "Wonderful Nothing." There are some gorgeous lines, like: "I think we're formed from old Lego/in a bedside drawer/where the stray things go."

Bayley has become a more confessional writer with each passing Glass Animals album. On "How to Be a Human Being," he wrote each song from the perspective of someone else. The last tune, "Agnes," was about a friend of the band who died by suicide. It was Bayley's most personal song at the time.

Personal

He pushed that envelope on the next album with the single "Heat Waves," a hypnotic, hazy tune that honors a departed friend whose birthday brings grief each passing June. It hit No. 1 on Billboard's 2022 year-end Hot 100 Songs chart, propelled by love on TikTok.

Bayley put it at the end of the album, "Dreamland," for a reason: It was so personal that he was scared. "The response from people was so supportive and positive. It kind of gave me the courage to try and push it more, be more personal and more open."

"Heat Waves" led to new fans - and a Grammy nomination - and people now not only recognize Bayley in the street but come up to him to ask about his songs and lyrics.

"The questions are often very deep, really big. So I'll just like be in my pajamas walking my dog and I got this question, 'What do you mean by this line in the song, 'Agnes?'"

"I'm like, 'Whoa, it's 8:30 in the morning. I just had some cereal and I haven't showered yet.' But it's wonderful. It's kept me on my toes for sure."

Glass Animals - which also includes Drew MacFarlane on guitar and keys, Edmund Irwin-Singer on bass and keys, and drummer Joe Seaward - will hit the road to support the new album.

The fall tour kicks off Aug. 7 in Charlotte, North Carolina, and hits such cities as New York City, Philadelphia, Toronto, Cincinnati, Nashville, Kansas City, Salt Lake City, Seattle, Dallas, Phoenix, Red Rocks Amphitheatre outside Denver and Austin, Texas.

Glass Animals will spend October and November in Europe, playing Paris, Brussels, Warsaw, Berlin, Milan, Zurich, Amsterdam, Dublin, Manchester, Glasgow and ending at London's massive O2 arena on Nov. 7.

The band will mix it up, varying each show's setlist depending on the vibe. Some band's pre-program everything they do live, but not Glass Animals, who like to react to the crowd, even swapping out songs moments before going on.

"I actually came from a DJ background. I started deejaying clubs in London when I was really young," Bayley says. "Really good DJs react to the feeling in the room and you pick up the tempo slowly sometimes. Sometimes you start with the fast stuff, you bring it down and then up again."

In line with Glass Animals' desire to connect with listeners, Bayley says he'd be happy if fans sent them their setlists. "I'd be very happy to play with what people want. That's what I feel our job is. I want to make people happy."



Nicola Coughlan attends the Tubi original series premiere of 'Big Mood,' at The Whitby Hotel, on Thursday, April 4, in New York. (AP)



Fisher



Williamson

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Sacha Baron Cohen and Isla Fisher say they filed for divorce last year after more than 20 years together.

The English "Borat" star and the Australian "Wedding Crashers" actor who married in 2010 announced their split Friday in joint Instagram posts that showed them together in tennis outfits.

"After a long tennis match lasting over twenty years, we are finally putting our racquets down," the posts said. "In 2023 we jointly filed to end our marriage."

It is not clear where or exactly when the couple filed to end their marriage, or when the divorce would have become final.

"We have always prioritized our privacy, and have been quietly working through this change," the posts said.

Fisher, 52, and Cohen, 48, met at a party in Sydney in 2001, and became engaged in 2004.

They have a 16-year-old daughter, a 13-year-old daughter and a 7-year-old son. (AP)

BRISTOL, Conn.: Norby Williamson, ESPN's head of event and studio production, is leaving the network after nearly 40 years.

The move was announced in a memo on Friday by Burke Magnus, the network's president for content. The move was first reported by the New York Post.

Williamson had overseen ESPN's studio content - including "SportsCenter" - as well as NFL and college football.

Williamson was also involved in the controversy in early January between Pat McAfee, Aaron Rodgers and Jimmy Kimmel.

Rodgers implied during a Jan. 2 appearance on McAfee's show that comic Jimmy Kimmel's name might appear on a list of associates of Jeffrey Epstein, a millionaire accused of sex trafficking involving underage victims before he died by suicide.

The war of words between Kimmel and Rodgers resulted in some tension between McAfee and ESPN. McAfee accused Williamson of trying to "sabotage" his program and claimed Williamson had no respect for him. (AP)

NEW YORK: Powered by big stadium tours from artists like Taylor Swift and Beyoncé, ticket sales are booming and it

appears likely that live acts will continue to draw massive crowds this year after the pandemic closed down concert venues globally for close to two years.

Concert and event producer Live Nation confirmed this week that data has been showing for more than a year: With COVID largely in the rearview mirror, millions are seeking entertainment away

from home and they're willing to spend a lot of money to do it.

Live Nation, which owns Ticketmaster, said in a filing with regulators this week that 2023 brought all-time highs in both attendance and ticket sales.

Attendance jumped 20% to a staggering 145 million in 2023, compared with the previous year.



CNN broadcast journalist Alisyn Camerota poses at the former CBGBs nightclub, now a high-end men's clothing outlet, on March 29, 2024 in New York, to promote her memoir 'Combat Love: A Story of Leaving, Longing, and Searching for Home.' (AP) — Details Page 11

In 2021, when venues began reopening with mask requirements, attendance was a paltry 35 million. The company is not providing attendance figures for 2020, when COVID-19 began to spread. Attendance was 98 million in 2019.

Live Nation expects demand to continue to snowball. (AP)

NEW YORK: Bestselling author Eoin Colfer has a new set of adventures ready for young Juniper Lane.

Colfer's "Guardians of Cedar Wood" is scheduled to come out in 2025, Roaring Brook Press, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, announced Thursday. It's the second book in Colfer's middle-grade series about Juniper Lane and a helpful reindeer who were featured in Colfer's 2023 holiday tale, "Juniper's Christmas."

In "Guardians of Cedar Wood," Juniper is now an apprentice to Santa who finds herself battling unfriendly visitors in the forest of Cedar Wood.

"The Juniper books are packed full of magic, comedy and mythological characters but at their heart they are about friendship, in this case between a girl and her partner who happens to be a reindeer," Colfer said in a statement. "And if the reader looks past the magic, fireworks, night flights and belly laughs they will find the heart of this new story which opens up to reveal just how far Juniper will go to save someone she cares about."

The Irish author is best known for his "Artemis Fowl" series, including such favorites as "Artemis Fowl" and "Artemis Fowl and the Arctic Incident." (AP)

The Conversation

Pediatricians propose guidelines for teen social media regulation

Online child safety laws could help or hurt, experts warn

By Megan Moreno, University of Wisconsin-Madison
and Jenny Radesky, University of Michigan

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

Society has a complicated relationship with adolescents. We want to protect them as children and yet launch them into adulthood. Adolescents face risks from testing out independence, navigating peer relationships, developing an identity, and making mistakes in these processes.

Today's teens have new areas of risk and opportunity as they navigate the digital world, and this has led to debate over their social media use.

Concern about social media use by 13- to 17-year-olds has led to a patchwork of state initiatives as well as proposed federal legislation. Following the Surgeon General's Advisory on Social Media and Youth Mental Health, issued on May 23, 2023, the Biden administration convened the Kids Online Health and Safety Task Force.

We are pediatricians who study child online behavior, and we are co-directors of the American Academy of Pediatrics Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health.

As we consider the role of the federal government in regulating teen social media use, we believe it is important to consider how to support adolescents' drive for independence and social interactions, while protecting them from serious harm or having their identities commodified by powerful technology companies.

Without commenting on any specific piece of active legislation, here are the elements of any potential policy related to children and technology that we believe would be helpful, and those we are concerned could be harmful.

Key to any effective online child safety legislation is accountability, so that platforms are designed with the needs of children and adolescents in mind, rather than being driven by engagement and revenue goals.

Default privacy protections are also crucial. Young people often receive - and don't want - contact from unknown adults. These are typically marketers or random strangers, dubbed "randos." Teens often teach each other ways to try to be safe, leading to widespread practices that may or may not be effective.

Methods for stopping online child sexual exploitation are not adequate, and elements of proposed legislation could help by limiting who can contact teens outside of their known social circles. Making young users' accounts private by default would allow them to have online interactions just with friends and communities they seek out. Encouraging collaboration among technology platforms to flag social media users who pose a threat and identify problematic practices is also crucial.

Control

Another helpful element of child online safety legislation is requiring better access to and control over platform settings. One challenge for social media users of all ages is to find and navigate the different available settings. These could be standardized to be readily accessible rather than requiring multiple clicks to find protections buried in an app's settings. Young people describe wanting more control in their platform use, including the ability to control their content, reset or update their algorithms, and delete data or accounts.

Prohibiting data collection from young people would also help. Behavioral data from digital breadcrumbs reveals a lot about users, which allows technology companies to sort them into categories to predict what they might buy or click on next. This practice is unethical because it can be used to exploit susceptibility to self-harm and low impulse control. It also is incompatible with the adolescent development ideal of exploration - teens are supposed to test things out, push boundaries and change. Teens are harmed when apps and sites nudge them in particular directions in order to profit from them.

Legislation could also require technology companies to take user-reported problems more seriously. The companies could make clear the process for reporting problematic content or people, and what steps they will take after a report. Anecdotally, we have both heard in our pediatric clinical practices that teens don't make these reports because they don't trust that anything will happen in response. There are several possible approaches, including direct

reporting to platforms as well as designating an intermediary to receive reports about problematic interactions on platforms.

Legislation could also focus on limiting the impact of misinformation. Misinformation is another problem teens encounter that is likely to grow with generative artificial intelligence. Platforms could mandate watermarking of AI-generated content. Platforms could also prevent the spread of untrustworthy content by identifying super-producers and applying rate limits so that they can't clog everyone's feeds.

The federal government could also fund additional research. Despite the past decade of prolific social media research, there remains a lack of common data formats, metrics to measure key concepts, and interventions to promote well-being. Funding to support research, including projects that include investigators from government, academia and industry, should lead to progress and innovation in this area.

Finally, legislation could help advance age verification. To enhance protections for adolescents, platforms need to know if a user is a young person. Age assurance and age verification are complicated topics that researchers, policymakers and technology developers are studying to determine how to accomplish it without compromising privacy. One option could be a new setting that allows a device to indicate to platforms, browsers and apps what age range the user is in and implement age-appropriate protections for young users.

Restriction

Requiring parent permissions would be harmful. This restrictive approach would limit access to safe places for many young people and exclude teens who are in unsupportive family settings. These approaches also put the burden on parents to be gatekeepers for every decision about platform access, which has the potential to increase family conflict.

Shutting down particular social media is also problematic. Singling out individual platforms does not address the systemic revenue-driven designs and business models that exist throughout the industry.

Thirteen is a common minimum age for social media platforms. Imposing age limits from 13 to 16 would also not be helpful. This proposal is not supported by clear evidence about what age range is best for all teens. It is developmentally appropriate for 13-year-olds to want to connect with their peers online.

Adolescents themselves support needing to meet developmental milestones to be allowed to use social media, and they acknowledge that individual teens may meet these at different ages. In other words, some teens have no problems at age 13, while others will continue to have problems with social media at age 17. Age restrictions may serve to distract from making sure platforms are following guidelines and best practices for all ages.

Young people often navigate online interaction with little help from adults. There's a need for additional approaches to engage, educate and involve parents - and other adults who work with and care for young people - in supporting young people as they enter the online world.

There are numerous other critical areas of work, including bullying, mental health and parent burnout that need separate consideration. These areas are likely to need distinct policy approaches. But policy alone is not likely to solve all of these complex, intertwined issues that intersect in the digital world.

Legislation is a powerful approach to increase safety for young people online. It is important to recognize that teens themselves, as super-users in these spaces, have thoughtful ideas of their own about possible legislative and design elements to enhance their safety.

Families and adults who work with youth also need resources to better support adolescents. The Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health seeks to provide those resources through a Q&A portal, ongoing learning opportunities and resources.

Finally, adults must also be accountable for their own social media and technology use. Many teens report that parents' social media use distracts from parent-child interaction and that adult social media use negatively affects them. (AP)

Workers rally for smoke-free workplace

ALS drug pulled from market due to lack of patient benefit

WASHINGTON, April 6, (AP) - The maker of a drug for Lou Gehrig's disease that recently failed in a large study said Thursday it will pull the medicine from the market, acknowledging it didn't help patients with the deadly neurological condition.

Amylyx Pharmaceuticals announced it will voluntarily halt sales and marketing of the drug in the US and Canada, where new patients will no longer be able to get a prescription.

"While this is a difficult moment for the ALS community, we reached this path forward in partnership with the stakeholders who will be impacted and in line with our steadfast commitment to people living with ALS," company co-founders said in a statement. Patients already taking the therapy who wish to continue will be able to enroll in a program to receive it for free.

The Food and Drug Administration approved the much-debated drug, Relyvrio, in September 2022, following a years-long advocacy campaign by patients with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS.

The drug's failure is a bitter disappointment for patients and advocates, who have pressed the FDA and other federal agencies to fund and approve more experimental therapies for the fatal muscle-wasting disease. Relyvrio's withdrawal leaves just three ALS medicines available to US patients, only one of which has been shown to extend survival by several months.

Experimental

Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Amylyx also said Thursday it will lay off 70% of its more than 350 employees as part of a major restructuring effort. Company executives said they plan to continue studying Relyvrio and another experimental drug for several rare diseases, including Wolfram syndrome, which causes childhood diabetes and blindness.

Company shares climbed more than 7.5% in trading Thursday morning. Amylyx said last month it was considering pulling its drug after a clinical trial in 600 patients failed to show any improvements in survival or other health measures, such as muscle strength or walking ability.

The company's voluntary action resolves what could have been a major dilemma for the FDA. The agency's regulators would not have had a clear path to quickly force the drug from the market if the company had refused to remove it. That's because the FDA granted the drug full approval, despite the preliminary nature of the company's data on effectiveness.

The 2022 approval was mainly based on results from one small, mid-stage study that was criticized by some of the agency's own internal scientists. Normally the agency requires two large, late-stage studies that show



This image provided by Amylyx Pharmaceuticals shows the drug Relyvrio. (AP)



A woman sprays herself with a makeshift mosquito repellent of vanilla and water as she waits to be attended at a hospital amid a surge in dengue fever cases, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Friday, April 5, (AP)

Cases skyrocket

Mosquito repellent shortage grips Argentina amid dengue outbreak

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, April 6, (AP) - Shelves have gone empty, as residents hunt in vain and resort to DIY alternatives. And surging resale prices are shocking even to Argentines accustomed to triple-digit inflation. The country's latest crisis: There isn't enough mosquito repellent.

As the South American country contends with its worst outbreak of dengue fever in recent memory, bug spray has become this season's hot-ticket item. So hot that it's sold out in virtually all Buenos Aires stores and going for exorbitant prices online, in some cases as much as 10 times the retail value.

"We've been to at least 30 pharmacies all over the city and there is nothing left," Ana Infante said as she swatted mosquitoes away from her two small daughters, their arms visibly pocked with red bumps. Infante, 42, joined the frenzied race for repellent when her co-worker at an empanada shop fell seriously ill with dengue last week.

"All we have is this," she said, raising her swatting hand.

Rampant hoarding and surging prices have stoked desperation. In one widely shared video from a market in the town of El Talar outside the capital Thursday, shoppers are seen descending on an employee opening new boxes of

bug spray, snatching up stock before he could place a single bottle on a shelf.

"I feel helpless, because I know I can't do anything," said Marta Velarde, a 65-year-old shop owner in Buenos Aires, recalling how a distraught customer recently threatened to punch her in the face when she broke the news she had no repellent left. "You have no explanation and people are very aggressive."

As public outrage mounted and the repellent shortage evolved from nuisance to national news, the government - busy battling sky-high inflation and near-daily protests - was forced to intervene. On Thursday, authorities lifted import restrictions on foreign-made mosquito repellents to boost supply and announced they would ramp up production at local labs.

"We spoke with producers who told us that they have changed their capacity to produce, they are doing it at their maximum capacity," Health Minister Mario Russo told the local Telefé channel Thursday in his first TV appearance since the dengue outbreak. When asked how Argentines should protect themselves in the meantime, he offered a warning that was instantly mocked on social media: "Be careful with shorts," he said.

a clear benefit before granting approval. But at the time FDA officials explained that "regulatory flexibility" was appropriate when reviewing Relyvrio, "given the serious and life-threatening nature of ALS and the substantial unmet need."

The medication is part of a string of drugs for deadly, degenerative diseases that have won FDA approval in recent years despite questionable evidence they work.

Also:

NEW YORK: Frustrated at having unsuccessfully agitated for over three years to get lawmakers to ban smoking in Atlantic City casinos, workers on Friday tried a new tactic. They filed a lawsuit to try to overturn a law that leaves casino workers as the only ones not covered by

the protections of a clean workplace air act.

The United Auto Workers, which represents workers at the Bally's, Caesars and Tropicana casinos, and a group of casino workers opposed to smoking in the gambling halls, filed a lawsuit in state Superior Court challenging New Jersey's indoor clean air law.

Enacted 18 years ago, the law bans smoking in virtually all indoor workplaces - except casinos.

The litigation seeks to have that exemption declared unconstitutional on several grounds, including equal protection under the law.

At a rally outside the courthouse where the litigation was filed, workers said they are employing new tactics to ban smoking in the casinos after thus far failing to convince legislators to do it.

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Clark leads Iowa to 71-69 win over UConn

Gamecocks surge past N.C. State



UConn guard Paige Bueckers (left) fights for a loose ball with Iowa guard Gabbie Marshall. (AP)

CLEVELAND, April 6, (AP): Caitlin Clark eventually found a way.

Completely shut down in the first half, the most exciting player in women's college basketball now has one game left in her storied career at Iowa. She'll try to cap it off by bringing the Hawkeyes their first national championship.

Clark scored 21 points and made three momentum-turning 3-pointers in the second half to rally Iowa past Paige Bueckers and UConn 71-69 in the women's Final Four on Friday night.

BASKETBALL

Next up for the Hawkeyes (34-4) is a rematch with unbeaten South Carolina, which also had a perfect record last year before losing to Iowa in the national semifinals.

The Hawkeyes then fell to LSU in the title game.

After a rough opening 30 minutes because of a swarming UConn defense, the NCAA Division I all-time leading scorer finally got going in the fourth quarter.

With the game tied at 51-all, Clark scored seven points in the first 2 1/2 minutes of the period - including one of her signature step-back 3s - to give Iowa a small cushion. UConn (33-6) got within 60-57 before the Hawkeyes scored six straight to take a 66-57 advantage.

Iowa led 70-66 before Nika Muhl hit a 3-pointer after a steal with 39.3 seconds left to get the Huskies within one.

Iowa's Hannah Stuelke turned it over with 10 seconds left. UConn had a chance to take the lead, but Aaliyah Edwards was called for an offensive foul while setting a screen with 4.6 seconds left.

Clark made one free throw but missed the second. Teammate Sydney Affolter got the rebound after Stuelke tipped it and UConn tied her up, forcing a jump ball. The possession arrow kept the ball with the Hawkeyes, who sealed the win by throwing the ball in the air to run out the final seconds.

Stuelke scored 23 points to lead Iowa. Clark finished with nine rebounds and seven assists.

Bueckers and Edwards each scored 17 points for the Huskies, who were back in the Final Four after a one-year hiatus that ended their run of 14 straight seasons in the national semifinals.

This might have been one of the best coaching jobs by Geno Auriemma. UConn had hopes of winning the 12th title in school history coming into the season, but those were quickly dashed by a series of injuries that sidelined nearly half of its roster.

But Bueckers, the national player of the year as a freshman in 2021 who returned to that form after missing an entire season and part of another with injuries, carried the Huskies back into title contention.

UConn got going early behind Bueckers and stellar defense by Muhl and her teammates, who swarmed Clark every time she touched the ball. The Huskies led by 12 points in the second quarter.

Iowa trailed by six at the half before getting going in the third quarter behind their star. She made her first 3-pointer of the game 2 minutes into the period, and then her four-point play got Iowa within one. The Hawkeyes then took their first lead later in the period right before Martin got hit in the face by Edwards, resulting in a bloody nose. She ran off the court, leaving a trail of blood behind her.

Martin was back on the Iowa bench before they had finished cleaning the court. She then hit three big baskets down the stretch and finished with 11 points.

Perfectly dominant. Nothing new for South Carolina.

With All-America center Kamilla Cardoso scoring 22 points, the Gamecocks emphatically kept their unbeaten season going, advancing to the championship game of the women's NCAA Tournament with a 78-59 victory over North Carolina State.

The talented and tenacious Gamecocks (37-0) led by just one at halftime before putting their full arsenal on display in the third quarter. They clamped down on defense, started knocking down 3-pointers and outscored the Wolfpack 29-6 to turn what had been a tense matchup into another one of their blowouts.

After rallying past UConn in Friday's later semifinal, Clark and her teammates will have their hands full. South Carolina appears to be on a mission.

Aziah James scored 20 points on 6-of-17 shooting for No. 3 seed N.C. State (31-7), which knocked



South Carolina guard Bree Hall (23) celebrates after making a three-point basket during the second half of a Final Four college basketball game against North Carolina State in the women's NCAA Tournament in Cleveland. (AP)

off a No. 1 and a No. 2 seed to get to Cleveland.

But the Wolfpack had no shot against the Gamecocks, who were a unanimous No. 1 most of the season in the AP Top 25 and are aiming to become the first undefeated national champions since UConn in 2016.

They look all but invincible. Cardoso added 11 rebounds while playing just 23 minutes.

She hurt her right leg late in the first half and returned in the third quarter, wearing a black compression sleeve. Staley had the luxury of resting her star center in the fourth quarter to make sure she's ready for Sunday.

Watkins was just as dominant inside for the Gamecocks, getting 15 of her boards on the defensive end and scoring eight points. Raven Johnson added 13 points.

Saniya Rivers, who transferred from South Carolina to N.C. State after winning a title as a freshman, shot just 2 of 11 and had five turnovers as her former teammates made every touch a tough one.

N.C. State coach Wes Moore knew his team would have to play its best to have any chance of bringing down bigger, badder South Carolina.

On Thursday, he likened the semifinal to a David-vs.-Goliath matchup and promised his team would "put the stone in the sling and let it rip."

The Wolfpack needed more than stones.

Relishing the underdog role, the Wolfpack, who lost a double-overtime heartbreaker to UConn two years ago in the Elite Eight, were hoping to replicate some of the magic the school conjured in 1983. Back then, N.C. State's Jim Valvano-coached men's team shocked the hoops world by beating heavily favored Houston in the NCAA title game - an upset that helped define March Madness.

But unlike a year ago, when South Carolina stormed into the Final Four in Dallas with an identical 36-0 record before losing to Iowa, the Gamecocks kept this season pristine.

The 6-foot-7 Cardoso made sure of it despite not moving as well as usual after the injury. South Carolina, which won by an average of 29.6 points this season, left no doubt after halftime, showing its dominance to a sellout crowd and national TV audience.

Paopao and Johnson made 3-pointers as the Gamecocks quickly stretched their lead to 10, and they closed the quarter with a dizzying 17-1 run that quieted a rowdy N.C. State crowd.

While this unprecedented season of women's basketball has been largely driven by Clark's assault on the record books with her logodistance 3-pointers and charisma inspiring fans from coast to coast, one team rose to the top.

It's been South Carolina all along. These Gamecocks have ruled the roost with equal amounts of depth, talent and swagger.

Staley wasn't sure what type of team she had when the season began after having to replace five starters from last year's squad. She also worried about her young team's carefree attitude and whether this group would mature.

But not only did the Gamecocks bond and get themselves together, they're one win from cementing South Carolina as a dynasty.

UAE bans Pakistan-born batter Khan for 5 yrs

Hyderabad in six-wkt win over Chennai

HYDERABAD, India, April 6, (AP): Aiden Markram's half-century rushed Sunrisers Hyderabad to a comfortable six-wicket victory over Chennai Super Kings in the Indian Premier League on Friday.

Hyderabad cruised to 166-4 with 11 balls to spare after limiting Chennai to 165-5.

Despite consecutive defeats, Chennai stayed third on the table while Hyderabad moved to fifth on an inferior net run-rate.

Markram's 50 off 36 balls, his first fifty of the campaign, followed Abhishek Sharma's whirlwind 37 off just 12 deliveries, which provided the home team a rollicking start of 46 runs inside the first three overs.

Opener Travis Head was dropped by Moeen Ali in the first over before the Australian left-hander scored. He went on to 31 off 24.

CRICKET

Sharma smashed three sixes and two boundaries off Mukesh Choudhary in the second over and was out in the third when he tried to slice Deepak Chahar over cover and was caught at backward point.

Head and Markram added 60 runs for the second wicket and Ali came back to dismiss Markram and Shabbaz Ahmed. But, by then, the asking run rate was in Hyderabad's favour.

Fast bowler Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who was wicketless in the first three games, made the first key breakthrough for Hyderabad when Rachin Ravindra, on 12, sliced a catch to Markram at mid-on in the fourth over.

Chennai captain Ruturaj Gaikwad (26) and Ajinkya Rahane (35) couldn't capitalize on good starts, and when Shivam Dube tried to push the scoring rate with 45 off 24 balls, fast bowler Pat Cummins deceived the left-hander with a brilliant slower ball.

Ravindra Jadeja struck four

boundaries in an unbeaten 31 off 23 balls but the Hyderabad pacers restricted Chennai to a below-par total.

Meanwhile, the Emirates Cricket Board banned Pakistan-born Usman Khan for five years on Friday after the batter seemed to show interest in playing for his country of birth.

Khan has been training with Pakistan after he struck back-to-back centuries in the recent Pakistan Super League and caught the eyes of the selectors.

The 28-year-old Khan played the PSL as foreign player for finalist the Multan Sultans, but it seems he is interested in representing Pakistan.

"After a detailed investigation, Usman was found to have misrepresented to ECB about his decision to play for the UAE team and has used the opportunities and development provided by the ECB to him to seek out other prospects," an ECB statement said.

The ECB said Khan "is found to have breached his obligations owed to ECB and will therefore not be allowed to participate in ECB-sanctioned tournaments/leagues as well as local events organized under the aegis of councils/academies in UAE for a period of five years."

The five-year sanction means Khan will be ineligible to play the two main Twenty20 leagues in the

United Arab Emirates - ILT20 and Abu Dhabi T10 - until 2029.

The ECB said Khan participated in the ILT20 this year as a local UAE player, and it had an employment contract with the batter for one year.

"This was done to give him security and allow him to fulfil his eligibility criteria that would allow him to represent UAE in international cricket," the ECB said.

Pakistan is due to play 11 T20s ahead of the T20 World Cup in June in the Caribbean and the United States. Pakistan's preparations include five T20s against New Zealand from later this month at home. Khan is likely to be named.



Chennai Super Kings' Rachin Ravindra plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Sunrisers Hyderabad and Chennai Super Kings in Hyderabad, India, Friday, April 5, 2024. (AP)

NZ vs Australia in men's & women's semis

NZ KO's Fiji in Hong Kong Sevens quarters

HONG KONG, April 6, (AP): Defending champion New Zealand knocked out Fiji 19-12 with a last-minute try to reach the Hong Kong Sevens semifinals on Saturday.

Iconic Hong Kong's most successful men's teams, who have met in 15 finals including last year's, didn't produce another classic in the quarterfinals but it was typically tense.

Regan Ware brushed off two poor Fiji tackles to score the first try but Fiji was 12-7 ahead by halftime after tries by Ponepati Loganimasi from 80 meters out and Joji Nasova, who stood up his marker and glided past.

New Zealand leveled with two minutes to go when Xavier Tito-Harris screamed into the right corner. The winner came after New Zealand moved lineout ball right then left, stretching the Fiji defense to breaking point. Tone Ng Shiu dummied and crossed with seconds remaining in his first tournament since 2022 when he ruptured his ACL.

In the semifinals on Sunday, 12-time champion New Zealand will play six-time winner Australia, and France will face Ireland. France made the final once while Ireland never has.

New Zealand and Australia also meet in the women's semis, after France tackles the United States.

Fiji backed into the quarterfinals as one of the two best third-placed pool teams. The 19-time Hong Kong champion, but not since 2019, upset France 14-7 in their last pool outing to edge out world series leader Argentina from the quarterfinals. Argentina missed a quarterfinal for the first time in 12 tournaments and 15 months.

France, without Antoine Dupont, accounted for Spain 24-10, and Australia won 15-0 against South Africa, which has never won Hong Kong. Nathan Lawson scored the first try and his jackal in the second half set up Maurice Longbottom for the clincher in the second half.

Ireland versus the U.S. was the Terry Kennedy and Keven Williams show as they scored tries tit for tat. Kennedy sealed it in extra time with his hat trick. He scrambled back 10 meters to collect a loose pass, kicked upfield and won the race with two U.S. defenders to the ball in goal. Ireland won 24-19.

The women's quarterfinals weren't as close.



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Kuwaiti skier Fares Al-Obaid

Al-Arabi, Al-Qadisiya renew rivalry

Recent history favors Green

By Hassan Musa
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Kuwaiti soccer enthusiasts are eagerly anticipating an exciting Ramadan evening as Al-Arabi and Al-Qadisiya clash at 9:30 pm in Sabah Al-Salem Stadium. This showdown marks the pinnacle of the third round of championship group matches in the Zain Premier League.

The match holds significant importance for both sides, transcending the traditional derby rivalry.

The "Green" and "Yellow" teams are vying for the league title, with Al-Arabi holding second place with 46 points and Al-Qadisiya closely trailing in third with 45 points, just behind league leaders Kuwait Club (47 points). Kuwait Club faces

SOCCER

a challenging match against Al-Salmiya in the upcoming round.

Additionally, this match takes on a national significance, particularly with the clash between Al-Qadisiya's coach, Mohammed Al-Mashaan, and Al-Arabi's newly appointed coach, Nasser Al-Shatti. Al-Shatti's arrival follows the dismissal of Bosnian Nestorovic after a



A file photo of Al-Arabi and Al-Qadisiya players challenging for the ball.

1-1 draw with Al-Salmiya, marking the first time in several years that the derby will be managed by national coaches.

Recent history favors Al-Arabi in

the derby encounters. Last season, Al-Arabi triumphed over Al-Qadisiya three times out of five matches, securing two league victories (2-0 and 3-1)

and eliminating them from the Crown Prince Cup semi-finals with a comprehensive 3-0 win. However, Al-Qadisiya managed one league victory (2-1) and a goalless draw in their encounters.

In the current season, today's match marks the fourth meeting between the rivals. Al-Qadisiya made their mark by eliminating Al-Arabi from the Prince's Cup semi-finals with a 2-1 victory. The league clashes ended in draws: 1-1 and 2-2. Fans of Al-Arabi are pinning hopes on coach Nasser Al-Shatti, aiming to restore the team's convincing performances and maintain their title contention. Conversely, Al-Qadisiya fans are optimistic about the team's recent offensive prowess, demonstrated by convincing wins in recent rounds.

The outcome of this highly anticipated match will have significant implications for both teams' aspirations in the league title race.

Fares Al-Obaid makes 'waves' in International Winter Sports

ATHENS, April 6: Fares Al-Obaid, the pioneering Kuwaiti snowboarder, recently made waves at the International Winter Sports Competition in Greece. The event, sponsored by the Hellenic Winter Sports Federation and supported by Audi, hosted the FIS NC and NJC Alpine races at the picturesque Parnassus Ski Resort from March 26 to 27.

As the first Kuwaiti competitor to join the International Ski Federation (FIS), Al-Obaid harbors aspirations of competing in the 2026 Olympics in Italy. Reflecting on his journey, Al-Obaid expressed pride in representing Kuwait on the international stage, emphasizing his commitment to elevating his country's reputation in global sporting arenas.

Sharing his excitement about participating in the winter sports competition, Al-Obaid stated, "Achieving this milestone marks my second official participation this season. My

ultimate goal is to become Kuwait's inaugural official skater at the 2026 Winter Olympics in Cortina, Italy."

Acknowledging the crucial role of support networks, Al-Obaid extended gratitude to the Kuwaiti Winter Games Club for their unwavering backing. He also appealed for increased sponsorship from the private sector and partial

SKIING

recognition from the General Sports Authority to further advance the sport's prominence in Kuwait.

Looking ahead, Al-Obaid aims to leverage his experience gained from training alongside professional skaters in France, Switzerland, and Austria over the past two months. He envisions a future where he mentors and guides young Kuwaiti talents, nurturing a new generation of winter sports enthusiasts.



Burgan player goes solo to score against Salmiya.

Burgan halt Al Salmiya's momentum in handball league

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Burgan handball team successfully halted Al Salmiya's advancement, putting the brakes on their momentum after a thrilling tie two days ago, finishing 32-32 in the eighth round of the General Handball League at the Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Sports Complex in Sabah Al Salem.

As a result, Al-Salmiya surrenders their first point since the league's inception, holding onto their lead with 15 points, while Burgan boosts their tally to eight points, securing sixth place.

In another fixture on the same day, Sulaibikhat triumphed over Yarmouk with a commanding 36-24 vic-

HANDBALL

tory. This win elevates Sulaibikhat to seventh place with seven points, leaving Yarmouk in eleventh place with five points.

Today, two matches are scheduled for the ninth round of the "Merge" handball league. At 8:30 pm, Al-Tadamon, at the bottom of the standings without a point, faces Khaitan, currently twelfth with two points. This will be followed by a match at ten p.m. between Al-Sulaibikhat (seven points) and Al-Sahel (thirteenth), who are yet to score.

The first encounter is anticipated to favor Khaitan over Al-Tadamon due to their experience and skill gap. Similarly, the second match is expected to be easier for Sulaibikhat and challenging for Al-Sahel. Consequently, both Khaitan and Sulaibikhat aim to secure points with minimal effort and climb the league standings.

Best of the Rest

Beale joins Western Force:

Former Wallabies playmaker Kurtley Beale has signed a short-term deal with the Western Force until the end of the Super Rugby Pacific season, the Perth-based club said on Saturday.

The 35-year-old utility back joins the last-place Force just two months after a jury found him not guilty of raping a woman in the bathroom of a Sydney pub.

Beale only returned to the field for the first time in 14 months in mid-March for Sydney club side Randwick.

"I'm excited to join the Force and I'm looking forward to making the move to Perth with my family," Beale said in a Force statement on Saturday. "I know I have plenty to offer and I'm grateful for the opportunity to continue playing the game that I love."

Force coach Simon Cron said he hoped Beale's experience would help his side given injuries across the backline.

In matches Saturday, the ACT Brumbies beat the New South Wales Waratahs 40-16 for their fifth consecutive win and the Hamilton, New Zealand-based Chiefs defeated Moana Pasifika 68-12. (AP)

Red Bulls withdraw teams:

The New York Red Bulls have withdrawn their Under-15 and U17 teams from an upcoming MLS Next tournament because of "racist incidents against players."

The club says players on its U17 team were victims of racism during two recent Generation Adidas Cup matches and adds that "match officials didn't take action."

"There is no room for discrimination around competitive play," the Red Bulls said in a statement. "As an organization, we stand together with our players on and off the pitch."

The Red Bulls won't play in the GA Cup to be played in Florida this weekend. (AP)

Kuwait Club beat Kazma again

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: In a decisive clash, Kuwait Club showcased its supremacy over Kazma in basketball, securing commanding 93-77 victory in the second round of the league's golden square division competitions. Al-Abyad ascended to the pinnacle of the standings with 10 points, followed closely by Al-Qadisiya with 9 points. Meanwhile, Kazma currently holds 6 points, trailed by Al-Arabi with 5 points.

The upcoming semi-final matches will follow a two-part league

BASKETBALL

system, with the first semi-final pairing the top team against the fourth, and the second pairing the second against the third in a "play-off" format consisting of three matches, with the victor of two matches advancing to the final.

Kuwait Club's dominance over Kazma has been consistent, with the former clinching victory in their fourth consecutive encounter, including two wins in the West Asian League Championship.

Although the first quarter saw both teams locked in a tight battle, resulting in a 22-22 tie, Al-Abyad began asserting its authority in the second quarter, spearheaded by



Kuwait Club player dunks as an opponent looks on.

standout Anthony Carr (18 points) and leading scorer Muhammad Adnan (21 points). Kuwait Club capitalized on Kazma's defensive lapses to end the second quarter with a 49-39 lead.

Despite a stellar performance by American player Clint Chapman, who emerged as the game's top scorer with 33 points, Kazma struggled to rally support from their team. Kuwait Club continued to dominate in the third quarter, with stellar contributions from Hamad Adnan, Alexander Al-Ghais, and Imran Johar, ending the quarter with a commanding 73-55 lead.

In the final quarter, Al-Abyad further solidified its control over the match, clinching a resounding victory with a final score of 93-77.

Sulaibikhat rout Yarmouk



KUNA photo

Kuwait's Salem Al-Sarraf celebrates on the podium with other winners.

Al-Sarraf clinches second place

Kuwait's Salem Al-Sarraf clinched second place in the concluding round of the 2023-2024 Qatar Drift Championship, held on Friday. Leading the race was Ahmad Al-Ameri from Oman, with Jordanian racer Ali Jabsha securing third place in the overall championship standings that commenced in November. Al-Sarraf highlight-

ed his previous achievements, securing second place in the initial round and first place in the third round. He expressed gratitude to the championship organizers, particularly Sheikh Jabr bin Khalid, Chairman of Qatar Racing Club, for their hospitality and dedication to ensuring a smooth experience for all participants. (KUNA)

Frankfurt draw with Bremen

Bottom two clubs draw as relegation 'looms' for Salernitana and Sassuolo

ROME, April 6, (AP): Sassuolo's hopes of avoiding relegation from Serie A were dealt a blow in stoppage time when it gave up a two-goal lead and drew with bottom-of-the-table Salernitana 2-2.

Sassuolo started the night second from bottom and took a two-goal lead thanks largely to Albanian winger Nedim Bajrami.

Armand Laurienté converted Bajrami's pass to make it 1-0 after 37 minutes and Bajrami then doubled their lead on halftime.

Antonio Candreva got one back from the penalty spot for Salernitana in the 57th but just when it looked like Sassuolo would take all three points and move out of the relegation zone Giulio Maggiore equalized.

His strike in the first minute of stoppage time gave Salernitana only its 15th point and its first in four games.

It remained on the bottom of the table, 10 points adrift of Sassuolo, and with only seven games remaining almost certain of relegation.

Sassuolo has 25 points, equal with Frosinone and Empoli, both of whom have a game in hand.

Empoli is at Torino on Saturday, and Frosinone welcomes Bologna 24 hours later.

SOCCER

In Berlin, Brazilian defender Tuta scored and then was sent off as Eintracht Frankfurt came from behind at home to draw with Werder Bremen 1-1 in the Bundesliga.

Frankfurt goalkeeper Kevin Trapp pulled off several good saves to thwart the visitor but he could only parry a shot in the 62nd minute and Miloš Veljković

pounced to knock home the rebound.

The game appeared to swing Frankfurt's way in the 73rd when Bremen midfielder Jens Stage was sent off for a bad tackle on substitute Jean-Mattéo Bahoya.

The home side pushed forward and four minutes later Tuta got on the end of a lofted pass from Willian Pacho to loop in a headed equalizer and his first league goal of the season.

Then a minute from time, Tuta was shown a straight red card for a foul on Felix Agu.

The draw ensured Frankfurt extended its unbeaten home run to eight games and was sixth in the Bundesliga, nine points behind Leipzig.

Bremen snapped a four-game losing streak and remained in 10th place.

In Paris, Lille moved into third place in the French league after a 3-1 victory over a faltering Marseille.

The win took Lille above Monaco on goal difference and to within a point of second-placed Brest. It has not lost a league game at home since September.

Jonathan David opened the scoring from the penalty spot after 53 minutes to take his season tally to 15, second only to Kylian Mbappé in the Ligue 1 scoring chart.

Rémy Cabella made it two, and although Ismaily's own goal gave Marseille a glimmer of hope, Gabriel Gudmundsson restored Lille's two-goal advantage in the 83rd. It was Marseille's third league defeat in a row, its worst run this season.

The south coast club remained in seventh place, above Reims and Rennes on goal difference, although both have a game in hand.

Marseille's record away from home against the six teams above it in Ligue 1 reads played six, lost six.



Marco Friedl of Bremen, (left), and Omar Marmoush of Frankfurt fight for the ball during the Bundesliga soccer match between Eintracht Frankfurt and Werder Bremen at the Deutsche Bank Park stadium in Frankfurt, Germany. (AP)



Manchester United's Alejandro Garnacho (right), is challenged by Chelsea's Cole Palmer (second right), and Chelsea's Marc Cucurella (left), during the English Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and Manchester United at Stamford Bridge in London. (AP)

Sports

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Mavs solidify hold on fifth place in West

Celtics hold off late Kings charge

DALLAS, April 6, (AP): P.J. Washington capped his best game in Dallas with a tiebreaking layup with 4.5 seconds remaining as Luka Doncic watched because of a sore knee, and the Mavericks beat Golden State 108-106 on Friday night to end the Warriors' six-game winning streak.

Washington finished with 32 points, his most since being acquired by the Mavericks from Charlotte before the trade deadline, and Kyrie Irving had 26.

"He was spectacular," Irving said. "You could tell it was going to be a special night just based off how he started the game. That's what we need, especially when we don't have certain guys in the lineup and we need that offensive firepower."

Dallas solidified its hold on fifth place in the Western Conference and is two games clear of seventh in pursuit of one of the six guaranteed playoff spots.

Stephen Curry scored 28 points, including a tying jumper with 13 seconds to go, as Golden State missed a chance to clinch a postseason spot.

Houston's 119-104 loss to Miami gave the Warriors the chance to wrap up at least 10th place in the West. Instead, a five-game road winning streak ended and the Warriors need a win or Houston loss to become the final West team in the play-in tournament.

Suns 97, Timberwolves 87

In Phoenix, Grayson Allen scored 23 points, Kevin Durant had 22 and Phoenix raced to a victory over Minnesota.

Bradley Beal had 14 points for the Suns, who have won four straight home games. Devin Booker, coming off games with 52 and 40 points, finished with 13 points and 13 assists. His only 3-pointer of the night gave the Suns a 94-72 lead with 4:02 remaining.

Jusuf Nurkic, who was a game-time decision with a left calf injury, played 26 minutes and had 11 points, 15 rebounds and six assists.

Anthony Edwards struggled from the field, making just 6 of 19 shots and finishing with 17 points. Nickell Alexander-Walker was the only other Timberwolves player in double figures with 13 points. Naz Reid had a team-high 11 rebounds.

Celtics 101, Kings 100

In Boston, Payton Pritchard had 21 points, including five 3-pointers and Boston held off a late charge to beat Sacramento.

Kristaps Porzingis added 20 points and 11 rebounds - his second straight double-double - to help the NBA's top team claim its 12th consecutive win at home one game after clinching home-court advantage throughout the playoffs. They've won 13 of their last 15.

De'Aaron Fox had 40 points for the Kings and banked in a go-ahead 26-footer with 27 seconds to play.

But after Celtics reserve Xavier Tillman put Boston back in front, Fox misfired on a jumper - one of three potential game-winning shots for the Kings in the final seven seconds as the Celtics survived.

Raptors 114, Bucks 111

In Milwaukee, Gary Trent Jr. scored 31 points and Toronto snapped a 15-game losing streak with a victory over slumping Milwaukee.

Milwaukee, playing without the injured Giannis Antetokounmpo, lost for the fifth time in its last six games, with the last three coming against Washington, Memphis and Toronto, who are all well below .500. Antetokounmpo sat out with a left hamstring injury.

BASKETBALL

Trent was 7 of 15 from 3-point range and helped the Raptors build a 14-point lead in the third quarter before the Bucks mounted a rally. But point guard Damian Lillard fouled out with 1:48 left and Toronto held on to take the season series from Milwaukee, 2-1.

RJ Barrett added 26 points and Immanuel Quickley had 25 for Toronto. **Clippers 131, Jazz 102**

In Los Angeles, Terance Mann scored 19 points to lead eight players in double figures and the Los Angeles Clippers routed Utah, sending the Jazz to their 11th consecutive loss.

Kawhi Leonard sat out his third straight game with a sore right knee for the Clippers, but they never needed their superstar.

James Harden had his third triple-double of the season with 13 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds. Ivica Zubac had 12 points and 10 rebounds and Paul George added 14 points as the Clippers swept a back-to-back, having beaten Denver 102-100 on Thursday.

It was the Clippers' first time with eight players in double figures since May 16, 2021, at Oklahoma City.

Talen Horton-Tucker led Utah with 17 points off the bench. Omer Yurtseven, who started for the injured Walker Kessler, had 12 points and seven rebounds. Utah's bench outscored the starters, 63-39.

Spurs 111, Pelicans 109

In New Orleans, Victor Wembanyama scored 15 of his 16 points in the second half and had a crucial block on Herb Jones' shot in the final seconds to lift San Antonio Spurs to victory over New Orleans.

Wembanyama and the Spurs overcame a 10-point halftime deficit in sending the short-handed Pelicans to their fourth consecutive home loss. The Spurs had lost seven straight in the series with New Orleans.

Trailing 107-106, the Pelicans had a chance to regain the lead, but Jones dribbled into the paint and his shot was swiped clean by Wembanyama with 10 seconds left.

CJ McCollum led New Orleans with 31 points, and Jonas Valanciunas had 26 points and seven assists. The Pelicans were without their two



Dallas Mavericks forward Derrick Jones Jr. (55) drives against Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Dallas. (AP)

leading scorers. Zion Williamson (22.8) was sidelined with a bruised finger on his left shooting hand, an injury he suffered in a 117-108 loss to Orlando on Wednesday night, and Brandon Ingram (20.9) missed his eighth straight game because of a bone bruise on his left knee.

Hornets 124, Magic 115

In Charlotte, Brandon Miller made his first 10 shots from the field and finished with 30 points as Charlotte snapped Orlando's three-game win streak with a victory.

Miles Bridges added 23 points and Grant Williams added 18 points as the Hornets won for only the second time in their last 11 games. Paolo Banchero had 32 points, eight rebounds and eight assists for the Magic, while Franz Wagner added 22 points.

Orlando (45-32) came in tied with the New York Knicks for fourth place in the Eastern Conference and hoping to take a step toward securing a home-court advantage in the first round of the playoffs.

Trail Blazers 108, Wizards 102

In Washington, Deandre Ayton scored a season-high 34 points and grabbed 13 rebounds, and Portland sent Washington to a franchise record-tying 63rd loss.

Dalano Banton added 21 points and Scoot Henderson scored 19 for Portland, which won its second straight. Jabari Walker finished with 11 points and 13 rebounds to help the Trail Blazers to their first consecutive wins since the beginning of March.

Deni Avdija had 22 points and 13 rebounds for Washington, which had



Indiana Pacers guard T.J. McConnell (9) drives against Oklahoma City Thunder guard Aaron Wiggins (21) during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Indianapolis. (AP)

won four of its previous five. Jordan Poole added 20 points and Tristan Vukcevic had 17 for the Wizards, who have four games remaining.

Pacers 126, Thunder 112

In Indianapolis, Pascal Siakam scored 21 points, Aaron Nesmith had 17 and Indiana Pacers beat Oklahoma City for their ninth victory in 14 games.

Pacers All-Star Tyrese Haliburton was held to eight points, but had 11 assists. With his 11th assist, a fourth-quarter pass setting up Nesmith's 3-pointer, Haliburton broke the Pacers' single-season record of 713 set by Mark Jackson in the 1997-98.

T.J. McConnell and Myles Turner added 16 points apiece for Indiana. Lu Dort led Oklahoma City with

22 points. Fighting for the top spot in the Western Conference, the Thunder were without injured All-Star Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and second-leading scorer Jalen Williams.

Heat 116, Rockets 104

In Houston, Jimmy Butler scored 22 points, and Bam Adebayo had 18 points and 12 rebounds to help Miami to a victory over Houston.

The Rockets opened the fourth quarter with an 8-2 run, capped by two 3-pointers by Jalen Green, to cut the lead to 94-91 with about 10 minutes to go.

The Heat got 3-pointers from Caleb Martin, Tyler Herro and Jaime Jaquez Jr. in a 20-5 run after that to make it 114-96 with just more than four minutes remaining.

Green and Houston coach Ime Udoka received technical fouls during that stretch for yelling at the officials. Jeff Green made a 3-pointer for Houston with about eight minutes left, but the Rockets didn't score again until a layup by Jock Landale four minutes later.

Herro had 17 points, six assists and five rebounds in his return after missing 20 games with knee and foot injuries. He didn't start but played 25 minutes minutes after coach Erik Spoelstra said he'd be on a minutes restriction.

Jalen Green had 21 points and Dillon Brooks added 18 for the Rockets, who lost their fourth straight game after winning the previous 11.

Grizzlies 108, Pistons 90

In Memphis, Trey Jemison had 17 points and 13 rebounds, Maozhin Pereira also scored 17 points, as Memphis built a first-half lead and

coasted to a victory over Detroit.

Scotty Pippen Jr. scored 16, while GG Jackson and Lamar Stevens each added 15 points. Seven of the eight Grizzlies who played reached double figures as Memphis got its first three-game winning streak since late January.

Jaden Ivey led the Pistons with 31 points, and Jalen Duren finished with 17 points and 10 rebounds for his 42nd double-double of the season. Jaylen Nowell added 12 points as Detroit lost its third straight and 11th of its last 12.

Bulls 108, Knicks 100

In Chicago, Javonte Green set career highs with 25 points and 13 rebounds, Ayo Dosunmu scored 24 and Chicago beat New York.

Green, who spent much of the season in the G League, had the crowd roaring with his explosiveness and dunks.

DeMar DeRozan scored 20 and had 10 assists while Nikola Vucevic added 16 points and 13 rebounds. Andre Drummond grabbed 16 boards, and the Bulls overcame a big effort by Jalen Brunson to win the first of three meetings between the two teams over the final 10 days of the regular season.

Ninth-place Chicago leads Atlanta by a game in the Eastern Conference. The Bulls, who own the head-to-head tiebreaker, would host a play-in game if they finish with identical records.

Brunson had 35 points and 11 assists, but New York - tied with Orlando for the fourth-best record in the East - lost for the fourth time in five games.

Dutchman claims pole at Japanese GP

Verstappen is back after troubles in Australia

SUZUKA, Japan, April 6, (AP): Max Verstappen was asked a few days ago if he had concerns going into the Japanese Grand Prix. His rear brakes caught fire just two weeks ago at the Australian GP, forcing him out on the fourth lap.

"No, no," Verstappen replied. True to his word. No worries. The Dutchman claimed the pole for Red Bull in Saturday qualifying, poised to return to his unprecedented dominance in Formula 1 after the blip in Australia.

Verstappen clocked 1 minute 28.197 seconds, just 0.066 ahead of Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez. Lando Norris of McLaren and Carlos Sainz of Ferrari - the winner in Australia - will make up the second row.

MOTOR RACING

"It was quite close at the end," Verstappen said of his teammate Perez. "I think overall this track is very sensitive with the tires. When you really want to go to the limit it doesn't always work out."

Verstappen did not sound totally pleased with his day, but he'll take it. "The point is to be on pole," he added.

"Of course you want every lap to be perfect but around a track like this that's not always the case. But overall a very good day - a good starting position for tomorrow. And of course, tomorrow is what counts."

He also relished starting alongside



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands steers his car during the qualifying session at the Suzuka Circuit in Suzuka, central Japan ahead of Sunday's Japanese Formula One Grand Prix. (AP)

Perez. "It's great as a team of course to be one and two, and hopefully we can keep that going for tomorrow."

Verstappen pointed to Ferrari as Red Bull's biggest threat, perhaps looking at Sainz who won in Melbourne and is

in view again.

"Ferrari look very comfortable," he said. "Maybe they were not so quick on one lap, but they were definitely fast in the long runs."

Verstappen is the three-time defending champion and has won 21 of the last 25 races entering Sunday's race in Japan.

He's won every pole this season - four - and this was the 36th of his career and he chases his 57th win on Sunday.

Seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes, who dominated the sport before Verstappen, is without a win in 48 races - the last in 2021. He will start from seventh on the grid.

Saturday was a sunny, dry day and race day should be the same with no rain in the forecast. Rain often plagued the race when it was traditionally held in the fall. This season it's been moved to the spring and dovetails with Japan's cherry blossom season.

Fernando Alonso of Aston Martin was fifth, with McLaren's Oscar Piastri qualifying in sixth place ahead of Hamilton.

Japanese driver Yuki Tsunoda of the RB team will start No. 10 on the grid as he tries to top his strong seventh-place finish in Australia.

Liverpool visit Old Trafford

Man United haven't learned how to close out games, Ten Hag says

MANCHESTER, England, April 6, (AP): Blowing late leads has become a hallmark of Manchester United's season.

Erik ten Hag hopes that changes when Liverpool comes to Old Trafford on Sunday.

United is still clinging to hopes of a Champions League spot, despite a stunning 4-3 loss to Chelsea on Thursday night.

United first gave away the lead in the 10th minute of stoppage time at Stamford Bridge and then the game a minute later - both goals coming from Cole Palmer.

That followed a blown lead in a 1-1 draw at Brentford last Saturday. United had just recovered from celebrating Mason Mount's goal in the 96th when Kristoffer Ajer tied it three minutes later.

"We can beat the best teams in the Premier League," Ten Hag said. "When you beat them in the Premier League, you can do it across Europe, but we need to learn how you win games ... how you bring games over the line and get the three points. We have to step up."

SOCCER

Dropping five points in the past two games is "very expensive," he added.

"Games are running out. We know that and we have to catch up and we are now many points behind," Ten Hag said. "It will be difficult. We will keep fighting."

With eight games remaining, United is nine points behind fifth-place Tottenham and 11 points back of fourth-place Aston Villa. Because of a format change to the Champions League next season, the Premier League might get a fifth spot in Europe's elite club competition.



Ten Hag