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ARAB TIMES

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**Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait
– Egypt Net Profit
Jumps 189%
in Q1 2024**

Ali Marafi: The Bank's outstanding results reflect the remarkable success in delivering our growth strategy and highlights our strong market position.

Business Page 9



SUNDAY, JUNE 2, 2024 / ZUL QAADAH 25, 1445 AH

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Opinion

Yesterday ... the late Amir Ahmed Al-Jaber, and today ... HH the Amir Mishal Al-Ahmad

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

IT is no secret how much today resembles yesterday. This is in reference to what events that transpired in the past few months that prompted His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to take necessary measures to safeguard Kuwait.

It is part of a long historical process during which the country went through many periods of growth, renaissance, setbacks, and threats to the national destiny. On this basis, it is not possible to separate what happened at the beginning of the 20th century from today's events.

Perhaps we, as Kuwaitis, should have learned from the events of the past and developed the experience for the better, instead of retreating and going backwards.

The inspiration behind this introduction stems from the image of His Highness the Amir turning the wheel to start operations at Al-Zour Refinery, which is reminiscent of a historic moment during the reign of the late Amir Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on June 30, 1946 when he turned the wheel of the oil pipeline in Ahmadi, signifying Kuwait's first overseas oil shipment.

Prior to this historical moment, a series of events had transpired in the country. It began in the year 1938 with the election of the second Shura Council, coinciding with various internal and regional events as a result of reckless adventures, the exploitation of British colonialism and the emergence of the new monarchy in Iraq.

Local events strike the chord of exploiting influence in order to impose their conditions on Kuwait, especially in oil export operations.

Also, on that day, the global political landscape was characterized by different currents. These included the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution and its global impact, as well as the emergence of various regional parties such as populist, nationalist, and Islamic parties, alongside calls for the restoration of the Ottoman Caliphate.

Like all societies, the Kuwaiti society was impacted by these ideas, to such an extent that a limited demonstration by Kuwaitis took place in 1939 in demand for the annexation of Kuwait to Iraq, as a result of the incitement of "Qasr Al-Zuhur Radio" in Iraq, which was run by King Ghazi.

Prior to this, the second Shura Council elected in late 1938 went against what the Kuwaitis wanted, and was therefore dissolved by order of the Amir of the country Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber. This is because some of its members exceeded their agreed-upon limits when approved by the council, to such an extent that they tried to impose something that conflicted with Kuwait's social traditions. This was rejected by the people of the country, who supported the dissolution of the Shura Council.

After that, a lot of water flowed under the bridges. However, in 1962, the Constitution that is currently in effect was drawn up but it was also greatly abused and violated several times.

The situation had deteriorated to such an extent that demands deviated from the national social contract. Nation representatives and executives encroached upon the powers of the executive authority, and the judiciary was undermined. Various types of practices of prioritizing personal interests over

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El Niño fuels heat

Kuwait logs third highest temperature in the world

By Muhammad Al-Musleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Kuwait recorded the third highest temperature in the world on Saturday, according Eldorado Weather website that specializes in temperature indicators.

The website reported that the temperature reached about 49.3 degrees Celsius at Kuwait International Airport -- the third highest on Earth.

The website stated that the city of Omidiyeh in Iran ranked first, as its temperature reached 51 degrees Celsius, followed by Basra in Iraq with 50 degrees Celsius.

A number of weather experts cited drought and

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Avoid false news: Info Ministry

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA): Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Press, Publishing and Publications at the Ministry of Information, Lafi Al-Subaie, called on all media outlets to refrain from publishing

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Kuwait enforces midday outdoor work ban, surprise checks ahead

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) announced the ban on outdoor labor work from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm from Saturday, June 1 until the end

of August, under the slogan "Their safety is more important."

Acting Director General of PAM Marzouq Al-Otaibi affirmed that PAM's inspection teams will follow up the implementation of the decision throughout a period of three months and will carry out surprise inspection campaigns on work sites to monitor

and record any violations and take legal measures against violators.

He explained that the decision aims to protect workers from the extreme heat during that period. Working outdoors under the sun during this time of the year is arduous due to the harsh climatic conditions. The ban aims to

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The National Museum, in cooperation with Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah in the State of Kuwait, launched an exhibition in Oman entitled 'Zeina: The Splendor of the Sultans of India' under the patronage of Her Highness the esteemed Lady Mian bint Shihab Al Said, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Omani Design Society. - **See Page 11**

Expats with financial crime convictions face travel ban

'Pay full fine'

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The Public Prosecutor, Counselor Saad Al-Safran, has issued a directive concerning travel restrictions for foreigners convicted in financial cases, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The decision, outlines specific scenarios where travel bans will be enforced to ensure compliance with fines issued by the courts.

Based on the Constitution of the State of Kuwait and Administrative Resolution No. (167/2024) regarding the restructuring of the committee tasked with facilitating procedures for collecting criminal fines for the state treasury, the decision addresses concerns regarding the growing number of unpaid fines among foreigners.

Failure to collect these fines within the statutory period could result in the state forfeiting its right to recover these financial penalties.

The directive specifies the following cases where travel bans will be imposed:

- Judgments issued in absentia carrying a fine
- Foreigners sentenced in absentia who were not notified.

- Foreigners sentenced in absentia, whether notified or not, who have filed an appeal within the prescribed time limit but have not yet received a decision.

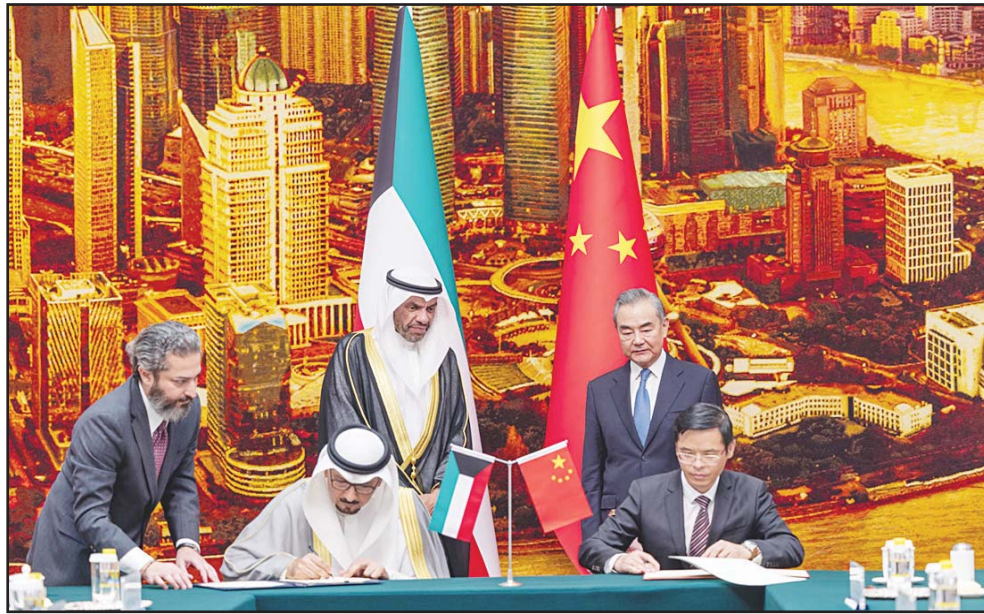
- Foreigners sentenced in absentia who did not file an appeal within the prescribed period (twenty-seven days from the date of the ruling's announcement).

The opposition rulings issued with a fine penalty, include:

- Foreigners who have filed an appeal against a fine penalty within the prescribed time limit, and the appeal is pending.

- Foreigners who have failed to file an appeal

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Kuwait and China sign accord regarding the allocation of land for the construction of the buildings of the General Consulate of the State of Kuwait in the city of Guangzhou.

Amir sends letter on bilateral ties to Chinese president

China, Arab states adopt documents on Palestine

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA): Kuwait's Amir His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a letter on Friday to President Xi Jinping of the People Republic of China regarding bilateral relations and ways to boost strategic partnership.

In a statement by the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry, Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya handed the letter during a meeting with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi.

Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, met on Friday with the Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, in

the Chinese capital, Beijing.

In a statement, released by Kuwait's Foreign Ministry, said that the meeting focused on bilateral relations and ways to enhance and develop joint cooperation in all fields.

In addition, the latest regional and international developments were also touched upon, added the statement.

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Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: Jaber Al-Ahmad Armed Forces Hospital announced on Saturday that the urology surgical ward's personnel have successfully used the latest technology to diagnose prostate cancer: the fusion technique of MRI and sonar imaging for biopsy. **Dr. Mohammad Al-Ghanem**, the head of the division, said in a press release that the state-of-the-art technology is the latest innovation for diagnosing prostate tumors worldwide.

The technology helps in making accurate diagnosis, Dr. Al-Ghanem said, noting that in some cases rapid intervention is necessary where the tumor grows quickly. As to the causes, the doctor said that they are divergent including hereditary factors and old age. He urged men aged above 50 to regularly undergo necessary tests and examinations. (KUNA)

□ □ □

KUWAIT CITY: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Sheikh Abdullah Al Nouri Charity Society have inked a partnership agreement worth USD 500,000 to enable some 400 Syrian refugee families in **Jordan** to meet their basics for six months.

Speaking to KUNA on the sidelines of the signing on Thursday, **Jamal Al-Nouri**, chairman of the society, affirmed keenness on continuing strategic partnership with the UNHCR as it is very professional in facilitating humanitarian acts.

Cooperative deals signed with the UNHCR over the last three years benefited more than 7,200 Syrian refugee families, he said.

He unveiled that the value of the four agreements signed with the UNHCR is estimated at about USD 2.5 million disbursed in cash to meet the needs of most needy Syrian families in Jordan. He affirmed that the society will go on backing Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and inside Syria until the humanitarian crisis ends.

Meanwhile, UNHCR representative in Kuwait **Nisreen Rubaia**n said in a similar statement to KUNA that with the increased pace of humanitarian crises in the region, there is less focus on the conditions of Syrian refugees staying in areas near Syria that may lead to a humanitarian catastrophe. (KUNA)



Rubaian

MoH expands 'Travelers' Health' service to 6 clinics nationwide

By Marwa Al-Bahrabi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The Ministry of Health's official spokesman -- Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad -- has announced the launching of the "Travelers' Health" service by public health and preventive medicine experts in six clinics throughout the country starting on Sunday; in addition to the Public Health Department in Shuwaikh.

Al-Sanad disclosed that the clinics designated to provide the service are: Al-Raqi Health Center in Farwaniya Governor-

ate on Sundays and Thursdays, Al-Oyoun Health Center in Jahra Governorate on Sundays and Wednesdays, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital in Hawally Governorate on Mondays and Wednesdays, Abdul Rahman Abdul Mughni Center in Faiha at the Capital Governorate and Ahmadi Health Center in Ahmadi Governorate on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and Al-Zahraa Health Center in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate, where the service is provided as long as work in these clinics is during the official working hours in the morning.



Al-Sanad

Continued on Page 5



Former US president Donald Trump speaks during a news conference at Trump Tower, Friday, May 31, 2024, in New York. A day after a New York jury found Trump guilty of 34 felony charges, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee addressed the conviction and likely attempt to cast his campaign in a new light. (AP) - **See Page 6**

Prayer Timings			
Fajr	03:16	Asr	15:20
Sunrise ..	04:49	Maghrib ..	18:43
Zohr	11:46	Isha	20:13

Local

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

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Hot and dusty with moderate to fresh strong at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 20-65 km/h.
By Night: Rather hot with light

Weather			
to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind, with speeds of 12-40 km/h causing rising dust over open areas.			
Station	Max Exp	Min Rec	
Kuwait City	48	33	

Kuwait Airport	48	34
Abdaly	49	32
Jahra	50	35
Salmiyah	45	33
Nuwaisib	46	33
Wafra	47	31

Municipal Council and Farwaniya Governor outline action plan

Meeting tackles bachelors' housing, traffic jams and cleanliness

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Chairman of the Farwaniya Committee in the Municipal Council Khaled Al-Mutairi says Farwaniya Governorate suffers from many problems, namely the issue of bachelors' housing, traffic congestion, lack of cleanliness, and non-maintenance of public gardens.

Al-Mutairi said this in a press statement issued on the sidelines of an official visit by members of the committee to the Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Sabah, which comes within the framework of periodic follow-up and coordination between the Municipal Council and the official authorities to follow up the implementation of all plans and solutions proposed to accelerate the wheel of achievement.

He revealed that the committee's visit to Farwaniya Governorate was fruitful, and it was agreed with the Governor Sheikh Athbi to develop a work program with the Municipal Council to activate cooperation between the two parties.

Al-Mutairi concluded by praising Sheikh Athbi's understanding of the problems that Farwaniya Governorate suffers from, adding that the governor assured full readiness to harness all capabilities and efforts to address them with the cooperation and support of the Municipal Council.

Meanwhile, a Municipal Council member Alia Al-Farsi said Farwaniya Governorate is one of Kuwait's governorates that is no less important than other governorates.

Cooperation

She stressed the need for enhancing communication between the concerned authorities, extending a hand of cooperation, and paying attention to the challenges being faced.

Al-Farsi affirmed that this positive trend is one of the most prominent things that enhance the development of the governorate's areas.

She appreciated the interest of the Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Sabah in improving the level of services in the governorate and his understanding of the magnitude of the responsibility placed on his shoulders.

Al-Farsi explained that the Municipal Council, particularly the members of Farwaniya Committee, are extending every cooperation to resolve the issues of cleanliness, beautification and development of the governorate's areas especially Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, and discussing the approval of public utility and other powers to organize, beautify and develop the area, in addition to the redevelopment and operation of the zoo, and other matters that seek to achieve the best urban and aesthetic standards for the governorate.

Furthermore, a member of the Farwaniya

Committee Walid Khaled Al-Dagher said, "We were pleased with the visit of the Farwaniya Governor. During the visit, the most important challenges facing the governorate were addressed along with the most prominent needs of its various areas related to the concerns of the Municipal Council. It will work on removing obstacles and stressing the problem of bachelors' housing and permanent coordination in order to reach solutions that would contribute to the development process of the governorate's areas.

Also, the Rapporteur of the Farwaniya Committee in the Municipal Council Abdullah Al-Enezi described the meeting with the Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Sabah as fruitful and positive.

He explained that many issues related to the governorate were discussed, at the forefront of which is the issue of bachelors living in private housing in violation of regulations and laws. They also highlighted the existing traffic congestion between the Ardiya and Ardiya industrial areas, which constitutes a disturbing concern for citizens.

Solution

Al-Enezi stressed the need to find a quick solution to it as soon as possible, adding, "We appreciate the keenness of Municipal Council President Abdullah Al-Mahri to cooperate with the relevant authorities in the country to solve the problems facing citizens."

In addition, a member of the Farwaniya Committee in the Municipal Council Ismail Behbehani said, "I was honored to visit the Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Sabah, along with my fellow members of the Farwaniya Committee".

He praised the distinguished and kind reception he received.

Behbehani explained that the members of the Municipal Council discussed the most prominent problems that the governorate suffers from and the challenges that are faced in developing solutions for them, especially with regard to Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, which is characterized by a unique strategic location in the country and is supposed to be one of the most beautiful areas and sites in Kuwait, but the reality indicates otherwise. The area has been completely destroyed and its infrastructure is dilapidated due to the huge number of its residents, which exceeds its capacity of people.

The committee also discussed with the governor the problem of expatriate bachelors living in private housing areas.

He revealed through his chairmanship of the complaints committee in the Municipal Council, more than one complaint was presented to him by citizens living in private residential areas such as Khaitan, Ishbiliya, and Sabah Al-Nasser.

Behbehani explained that these citizens are unhappy about the fact that their neighbors are bachelors, and their housing violates the conditions for using private housing as investment. The units are divided in a manner that violates the law, which negatively affects the citizens in the area and the quality and level of services.



Sheikh Athbi

Other Voices

When will the series of ethics violations in associations end?

By Ahmed alsarraf

All ministers of affairs have been involved in referring the board of directors of one or more cooperatives for prosecution or investigation.

Initially, the issue was localized to associations in specific regions, but the epidemic has since spread both internally and externally, impacting cooperatives across the board.

Amidst this wave of corruption and dismissals, one association stands as a beacon of integrity: the renowned internal association, long held as an exemplar and role model, has found its councils referred to the judiciary.

Recently, the recurring pattern of embezzlement within cooperative associations, sometimes involving sums in the tens of millions, has become a mundane and predictable occurrence. There appears to be no end in sight to these financial and administrative transgressions, nor to the suspicions of misappropriating shareholders' funds.

This phenomenon cannot be solely attributed to the financial mismanagement by those overseeing these associations or the pervasiveness of corruption within state institutions. Rather, it is inherent in the philosophy of cooperative societies and the laws governing their establishment.

The cooperative structure inherently predisposes those in positions of authority to corruption, as it represents a significant financial entity in which the citizens, the local community members, and the true stakeholders have little more than a nominal financial stake.

The lack of effective oversight mechanisms, coupled with the reluctance of stakeholders to invest significant time and resources in monitoring the activities of the association, exacerbates the vulnerability to corruption within the cooperative system.

The annual sales of cooperative societies reaching one billion dinars serve

as an enticing prospect for debtors, particularly those inclined towards complacency. The lack of immediate financial oversight within these institutions, stemming from the weak structural governance by their regional stakeholders, further compounds the susceptibility to malfeasance. It is noteworthy that the majority, if not all, of these cooperative societies' boards of directors profess religious affiliations, at least superficially.

The mismanagement of receivables within cooperative societies' boards also extends its ramifications to the boards of directors of charitable societies. Despite their shared founding objectives, a disturbing trend emerges where financial irregularities, ranging from millions to billions, have persisted for over half a century, prompting serious scrutiny.

The prevalence of such violations raises questions about the reluctance of higher supervisory or executive bodies to intervene, especially considering that the majority of these influential associations are controlled by boards of directors closely aligned with politicized religious factions.

This immunity enjoyed by these individuals, coupled with the leniency towards their financial indiscretions, underscores a systemic issue that compromises the integrity of these institutions.

Meanwhile, those not affiliated with religious political parties, who have demonstrated exemplary integrity and honesty in managing other institutions, find themselves overlooked in the establishment of charitable organizations.

It begs the question of what barriers exist preventing the formation of such organizations by individuals with proven track records of ethical stewardship, as exemplified by their management of associations like the Graduates Association and the Association of Socialists and Writers.

We extend to the honorable Al-Khaled family our deepest condolences on the death of our friend Faisal Abdul Razzaq Al-Khaled.

May his family have patience and mercy.



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alsarraf

Jaber Armed Forces Hospital reveals new tech to diagnose prostate cancer

Men over 50 years old urged to undergo periodic checkups

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Director of the Urology Department at Jaber Armed Forces Hospital Dr. Mohammad Al-Ghanim has revealed that the department is using a new technique to diagnose prostate cancer through the fusion feature between an MRI image and an ultrasound image, and taking samples from the prostate in the perineum area to diagnose the tumor, which leads to better results and reduces urinary tract infections as well.

He confirmed that the modern technology provided by the hospital is among the latest international technologies at present; stressing it is distinguished by the accuracy of diagnosis, so it greatly assists the doctor in diagnosing the type of tumor and starting the treatment plan immediately.

He pointed out that prostate cancer occupies an advanced position in global prevalence, indicating it is a slow-growing tumor in most cases, but it is aggressive and rapidly spreading in a small percentage of patients; hence, the need to raise public awareness to save thousands of lives.

He clarified the causes of this cancer are not clear and genetics plays a role in its incidence, as the rate doubles among first-degree relatives; in addition to advancing age, and geographical and spatial distribution. He said it is more widespread in the United States, Africa and Europe than in Asia and the Middle East.

He urged men more than 50 years old to undergo periodic checkups and undergo the necessary tests of the prostate.

New method to verify gov't employee certs

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: In conjunction with the efforts exerted by the Ministry of Education in assessing and scrutinizing the post-secondary certificates of citizens and expatriates to ensure their authenticity in cooperation with the Civil Service Commission (CSC), acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Higher Education Lamia Al-Melhem has revealed a new method of scrutinizing the certificates of those working in government agencies, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

While confirming that the Higher Education Ministry has scrutinized the master's and doctorate certificates of 2,730 employees; Al-Melhem disclosed the new method requires stating the appointment date of government sector employees who were recruited since 2019 till date.

Moreover, the daily obtained a copy of Al-Melhem's letter to the Ministry of Education regarding four employees who combined work and study to obtain a master's degree. She pointed these four employees studied while working, in violation of Ministerial Resolution No. 17/2019 on the accreditation of post-secondary degrees obtained outside the country, as well as Clause Five of Article 11 of the relevant law; stipulating that the academic certificates obtained by an employee in government or non-governmental agencies without going on sabbatical leave for the entire period specified for completing the academic degree will not be considered for accreditation. She added ministry has withdrawn the accreditation certificates issued to the four employees in compliance with the regulations.



KUNA photo

Sixth meeting of the feasibility study of rail link project between Kuwait City and Riyadh.

Saudi minister of transport visits Kuwait

Joint committee agrees feasibility study of Kuwait-Riyadh rail link project: Al-Meshaan

By Mubarak Al-Ajmi

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA): The Kuwait-Saudi higher steering committee approved during its sixth meeting the feasibility study of the rail link project between Kuwait City and Riyadh, said Kuwait's Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Dr. Noura Al-Meshaan.

"The endorsement of the project reflects a shared desire by the two sisterly countries to build a sustainable and coherent future for the people of the Gulf region," she told KUNA on Thursday.

Dr. Al-Meshaan welcomed the visit to Kuwait by Saudi Minister of Transport and Logistic Services

Saleh bin Nasser Al-Jasser and his entourage, saying it is "an important step on the road to enhanced strategic cooperation between both countries."

She noted that the joint committee met virtually on an almost daily basis with the managing teams of the railroad link project which will contribute to the advancement of economic development and integration among the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The rail link project will definitely open new horizons for logistic services between the State of Kuwait and the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and benefit the peoples of both countries, Dr. Al-

Meshaan affirmed.

On a similar note, Al-Jasser expressed satisfaction with the outcomes of the meetings of the joint steering committee which will enhance cooperation and integration between both countries.

"The meetings with the Kuwaiti officials have been very fruitful and showed a strong constructive will to advance cooperation in the field of transport and logistics," the Saudi minister told reporters today.

The visit to Kuwait fell in the framework of the sovereign instructions from the high leaderships of the both countries for promoting economic and trade cooperation, he added.

Decrease in cheating cases reported

12th grade exams proceed smoothly

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Twelfth-grade students across various departments, including scientific, literary, and religious education, continued their exams for the end of the 2023/2024 academic year for the second consecutive day, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Many students expressed satisfaction with the Arabic language test, in terms of the ease of the questions.

The Ministry of Education disclosed that on the first day of exams, 90 cases of deprivation were recorded, with 57 cases in the mathematics test for the scientific section and 33 cases in the French language test for the literary section.

Additionally, 1,814 students were absent on the first day, with 854 from the scientific section and 960 from the literary section. However, a total of 40,179 students attended exams on the first day, with 26,388 from the scientific section and 13,791 from the literary section.

Educational sources confirmed a decrease in the number of deprivation cases compared to previous years, attributing



Photo by Rizk Taufiq

Grade 12 students writing their exam.

this to the ministry's strict enforcement of regulations and imposition of penalties on students found cheating.

Ongoing coordination with relevant authorities, particularly the Ministry of Interior, played a crucial role in monitoring electronic accounts promoting cheating and preventing students from obtaining fraudulent grades.

Dr. Abdullah Al-Fadhli, the head of the Issa Al-Houli Secondary School Committee, remarked on the smooth conduct of the Arabic language exam, highlighting students' adherence to attendance and exam regulations. The school administration ensured a calm and comfortable atmosphere for students during this period.

New MoSA service to be launched on Sahel app

Decree transfers authority of Customs to Interior Minister

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: A decree No. 67/2024 has been issued for the transfer of the affiliation of the General Administration of Customs, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The first article of the decree states that the affiliation of the General Administration of Customs is transferred to the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior. He exercises all the powers assigned to the minister in accordance with the provisions of law No. 10/2003.

The second article stipulates that

the Prime Minister and the ministers - each in his capacity - must implement this decree. It will come into effect from the date of its issuance, and every text that contradicts its provisions will be repealed and published in the official gazette.



New service on Sahel: The Minister of Social, Family and Children Affairs and State Minister for Youth Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila says the ministry will soon

add a new online service on Sahel application for obtaining licenses for private kindergartens, reports Al-Anba daily.

Talking to KUNA, Al-Huwaila affirmed that this step is part of the digitization strategy adopted by the ministry with the aim of facilitating the procedures for citizens.

She highlighted the keenness of the Ministry of Social Affairs to complete the work on creating an electronic interface with the relevant institutions including Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education,

Kuwait Municipality, Public Authority for the Disabled Affairs and Kuwait Fire Service Directorate.

Dr. Al-Huwaila indicated that citizens will be able to complete their transactions through easy and transparent procedures using e-mail, SMS and Sahel application.

She added that the strategy of digitizing the services of the Ministry of Social Affairs is part of the plan adopted by the state to switch to complete digitalisation of services in all public institutions.

‘How did some individuals amass fortunes overnight?’

“I ONCE asked a friend about the amazing ability of some Kuwaitis who were able to secure tens of millions, and sometimes hundreds of millions of dinars in a few years. Based on my banking experience in managing commercial loans and my direct dealings with the accounts of the country’s major merchants, I did not find a single merchant who was able to amass such huge sums of money in a decade,” columnist **Youssef Abdul Karim Al-Zankawi**, wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

“But how some people were able to collect hundreds of millions in much less than this period? I added that some of these “new rich” or newly affluent people had their name on the list of requests for government houses and lived in a rented apartment, so how all of a sudden dinars rained on their homes, to the extent now they own palaces?”



Al-Zankawi

“I gave my friend a simple example, saying that I live like a king and do not have to pay installments or any form of loans. If my monthly salary was 3,000 dinars, and I did not spend a single penny of it for 30 continuous years, the total of these salaries would be 1,080,000 dinars (1.08 million).

“So how were MPs, ministers, fascists, and ordinary people able to collect all these millions within a short period of time? Because such information is known among the general public in Kuwait, I am surprised why no official oversight body has asked these corrupt people a question: Where did you get this money from?”

“Or where did you get all these extraordinary investment capabilities that enabled you to collect these millions at lightning speed? Why do these regulatory authorities share our responsibility only if we deposit more than 5,000 dinars in cash in banks?”

“I believe that all facts were dreams one day, because our government taught us in its schools how Ali Baba discovered a cave full of treasures of jewelry, gold and silver, and how Aladdin was able to wipe the lantern to get the genie out of it and fulfill his dreams, and how Sinbad was able to cross the seas and oceans. And the deserts on the carpet of the wind, and how the invisibility cap was able to restore people’s rights, but all of this is in mythical or imaginative novels.

“In reality, there is nothing like this, neither the cave of Ali Baba, nor the magic lantern, nor the carpet flying in the wind, or the invisibility cap. They are all just imaginary tales. It is like pulling wool over the eyes of the simple people “those who live in our homes,” who wander with love in the virtual city, in order to let “the lottery graze” on human property and for “the caliber to feed his children.”

“The well-known English playwright William Shakespeare published in 1600 his famous play *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, in which he made the bodies of mules come true as the dreams of birds when he focused on the idea of the world of imagination, which he wanted to parallel the world of reality, where the forest was a place to retreat without supervision or authority, and where the dreamers had reasons to manipulating as they please, “so that this imaginary world plays an important role in showing characters who refused to agree to an existing system that determined the foundations of their lives.”

“That’s why I dreamed, just a dream, that local higher authorities had reserved 3 large hotels in preparation for summoning influential people, including sheikhs, ministers, representatives, and those who have become wealthy in the absence of time, to investigate them about their corruption and spoiling the Kuwaiti atmosphere, in order to recover all the money that was embezzled while they were in the office.

“They will be tried, fined, and then imprisoned if the charges are proven against them. I also dreamed that the security authorities had counted more than 5,000 fake nationality files to investigate in order to cleanse the country of counterfeiters and double “loyalty”. “Will my dreams come true on the

ground, so that reality agrees with what the government was teaching us in its schools, and so that the good times can return?”

Also:

“Kuwait stands as a beacon of democracy and freedom in the region, a testament to the enduring relationship between its people and government,” columnist **Majda Al-Attar** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

“Rooted in a historical contract based on mutual respect and shared interests, Kuwait navigates the tumultuous waters of governance with a steady hand.

“However, when individuals betray this sacred contract, threatening the stability and safety of Kuwait and its citizens, it becomes imperative to reassess the laws safeguarding the nation’s interests.

“The Constitution shields the Amir of Kuwait, and his authority remains undisputed. Swift action is taken against those who stray from the path of righteousness. Justice is the cornerstone of Kuwait’s leadership, instilling confidence in the wisdom and integrity of the Amir.

“In societies built on the foundation of freedom, regulated liberty serves as a powerful tool for progress. Yet, when democracy is manipulated to undermine its very essence, the consequences are dire.

“True democracy flourishes in an environment devoid of sectarianism and tribalism. However, when personal agendas overshadow the greater good, democracy becomes a breeding ground for corruption and stagnation.

“The exploitation of democracy by self-proclaimed elites and opportunists undermines the fabric of society, hindering progress and sowing discord.

“Populism, coupled with ignorance of the state’s fundamental principles, poses a grave threat to democracy’s integrity. Protecting democracy is not merely a duty but a moral imperative for Kuwait’s leaders and enlightened citizens alike. Freedom, though cherished, must be tempered by responsibility, both in rhetoric and action.”

□ □ □

“Veiled female beggars have become widespread throughout Kuwait. No one can stop them or hold them accountable. They are a wandering menace. They are taken to all areas by buses, which return to pick them at the end of their work,” columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

“There is no need to talk about nationalities, as the dialect is very evident and well-known. All of them are violators of the residency law.

“What is new in this aspect is that these beggars have adopted a new method. As soon as they see you with a red eye or realize that you are trying to contact the anti-begging police, they start screaming and blaming you for harassing them, which will end up in getting you into a problem! If you manage to photograph them, they will run away and disappear into the crowd. This is clear evidence that they are well trained in escaping. It seems as though they have undergone an intensive course on how to get rid of people following up on them.

“The issue is much bigger than what some people imagine. It is no longer a hobby for them but rather it has reached the level of professional organized networks. The money they acquire has reached such an extent that it is hard to believe. Therefore, it has become a dire necessity to dismantle these networks, which requires additional effort from the concerned authorities. The matter has escalated to a large extent.

“We say they are working according to a plan because if they are seen in the market area today, they will be seen in Shuwaikh Industrial Area tomorrow. They are moving from one place to another in accordance with a well-thought-out criminal plan!

“In the past, our mothers and grandmothers used to give beggars some rice or bread, and these beggars would express their gratitude. Today the matter has turned into a way of gaining wealth under the name of begging, in the absence of the red eye and strict security grip that keeps them away from the country. It is from God that we seek help!”

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



KUNA photo

Lt. Gen. Al-Muzain inspects the naval platform of the Kuwaiti Naval Force, Fanar Boubyan.

Army General Chief urges forces to stay vigilant for the country’s security

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA): Chief of General Staff of the Kuwait Army Lieutenant General Bandar Al-Muzain has stressed the necessity of maintaining preparedness and vigilance to keep the country’s security and stability.

Al-Muzain made the statement after paying an inspection visit to the platform affiliated with Kuwait’s navy force, north of the

country, the Ministry of Defense said a press statement.

He also affirmed the need of continued coordination and collaboration among military sectors to preserve Kuwait’s security and stability, it added.

During the visit, Al-Muzain conveyed the greetings and appreciation of the military leadership to the country’s naval personnel

for their heroic role and sacrifice made to serve their homeland and preserve its territorial integrity, the statement noted.

He was briefed on missions and duties implemented by the platform and its readiness, in addition to coordination and cooperation between the force and the Coast Guard Department in carrying out several common duties, tasks and drills, it noted.

Customs workers help 4 citizens to smuggle in 1 million drug pills

Court upholds acquittal of girl accused of trafficking in drugs

By Jaber Al-Hamoud and Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Officers from the Drug Control General Department (DCGD) at the Interior Ministry dealt a new blow to drug traffickers after thwarting the attempt of four citizens and customs employees to smuggle about a million Lyrica pills into the country.

A security source said police investigations revealed that four citizens, who came from a Gulf country, tried to bring in seven suitcases packed with Lyrica pills at Kuwait International Airport.

Accordingly, the control teams headed by Assistant Undersecretary for Criminal Security Affairs Major General Hamid Al-Dawas and Director General of DCGD Brigadier General Mohammad Qabazard monitored the arrival of the suspects.

The source added that the culprits coordinated with customs employees who facilitated the entry of the seven suitcases into the country without being searched. The four citizens and the customs employees were arrested. They were referred to the concerned authorities, along with the confiscated items.

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Acquittal verdict upheld: The Court of Appeals upheld the verdict issued by the Criminal Court to acquit a Kuwaiti girl who was accused of trafficking in cannabis and psychotropic substances “Tramadol and Methamphetamine”, and refrain from pronouncing punishment against her for the use of cannabis and psychotropic substances.

The court obligated her to maintain good conduct and behavior under a financial guarantee of KD 1,000, and not to return to drug use for a period of one year. It also ordered to place her under the supervision of an employee specialized in the aftercare department, and to present herself twice a month to have samples taken from her to ensure she is not using drugs.

According to the case file, the prosecution accused the citizen of possessing narcotic drugs, hashish, and psychotropic substances - tramadol and methamphetamine - with the intent of trafficking and abuse.

3 arrested in security sweep

Authorities issue violations in Shuwaikh industrial zone

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Last Wednesday evening, the Five-Year Committee orchestrated a comprehensive security operation in the Shuwaikh Industrial Area, collaborating with various government bodies including the ministries of Interior, Commerce and Industry, Electricity and Water, the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition, the Kuwait Municipality, the Public Authority for Industry, and the General Administration of Residency Investigations, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

Lieutenant Colonel Abdullah Bu Hassan, representing the Public Relations and Traffic Awareness Department at the General Traffic Department, reported significant outcomes as the inspection teams disconnected power supply from 21 workshops and documented eight summons reports by MEW inspectors.

Moreover, the GTD intensified its field campaigns against non-compliant workshops in industrial zones, with guidance from Major General Yousef Al Khadda, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Traffic and Operations Affairs.

Brigadier General Jamal Al-Foudari, Director General of the General Traffic Department, along with Brigadiers-General Ghazi Bourqba and Ashraf Al-Amir, provided field supervision. Additionally, inspectors from PAI recorded 4 summons reports for workshop and garage owners. MEW inspectors reported 21 workshops and garages, while MCI inspectors issued 8 violation reports.

The Kuwait Municipality inspectors addressed issues such as abandoned vehicles, cleanliness violations, and impeding traffic flow, leading to 90 warning stickers placed, 18 violations issued, and 6 neglected vehicles and debris removed.

Furthermore, three street vendors were arrested. Bu Hassan highlighted that PAFN inspectors issued eight violations for delivery vehicles and motorcycles, and addressed violations related to refrigerator trucks and ice cream carts that contravened PAFN regulations.

Warning issued to reckless motorists

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA): The vehicles used in reckless driving will be destined for crushing or dumping as they jeopardize the lives of people, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) cautioned on Thursday.

Law will be decisively applied to all violators, the ministry’s department of security media and public relations added in a statement.

The move is part of security measures and the most severe legal penalties taken against the vehicles used in reckless acts, it noted.

Ongoing traffic campaigns, in cooperation with the General Directorate of Logistics and Supply, has started implementing this punishment, it said.

The ministry urged the public to contact the emergency number (112) or send messages on the traffic department’s what’s app: 99324092, in case of observing any irrational acts, it stated.

Matar Al-Wawan, against the Kuwaiti owner of a general trading and contracting company, demanding the return of KD 45,000 that he had received unlawfully.

The plaintiff explained that he had concluded an agreement with the defendant in his capacity as the owner of a company to carry out restoration and expansion work on his house within a maximum period of two months for an amount of KD 45,000, and he handed over the amount to him upon contracting.

He then handed him three promissory notes, each worth KD 15,000, as a guarantee to the defendant to pay the rest of the contract amount. However, the company failed to carry out the work and there was a delay in implementation, in addition to the presence of defects and deficiencies that violated the agreement.

During the court session, Lawyer Ali Matar Al-Wawan presented documents to prove that his client had paid the company owner the amounts that are the subject of the performance orders issued against him, and requested that the defendant be obligated to return these amounts based on his lack of right to them.

He also presented documents proving the liquidation of the account of the works carried out by the company, the amounts paid to him, the value of repairing the defective works, his failure to implement the contract works, and his cessation of implementing the remaining works, which proves the validity of the inadmissibility of the company owner demanding the rest of the contract works due to their cessation.

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Ruling postponed: The Court of Cassation has decided to postpone until next Thursday the pronouncement of the ruling in the case of profiting from an artificial intelligence contract and harming the interests of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The defendants in the case are former minister Mubarak Al-Aro, former undersecretary of Ministry of Social Affairs Abdulaziz Shuaib, and former director of the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies Abdulaziz Assad.

□ □ □

One dies in accident: On Friday morning, fire brigades dealt with a collision on Kabd Road. The accident resulted in the death of one person, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

The accident was dealt with and the site was handed over to the competent authorities.

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Tire storage, dumping sites targeted

Authorities issue several violations

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) announced that a team, in cooperation with the Environmental Public Authority, the Kuwait Municipality, the Public Authority for Manpower, and the Ministry of Interior, conducted an inspection campaign on tire storage and dumping sites in Al-Salmi, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

The campaign resulted in the issuance of several preventive violations against some companies for failing to implement safety and fire prevention requirements.

This campaign is part of the General Fire Department’s strategy, in collaboration with government agencies, to eliminate violations concerning public safety.

Meanwhile, the General Fire Department carried out an administrative closure of five facilities in the Capital Governorate Friday morning for violating safety and fire prevention requirements.

This action followed previous warnings to rectify these violations, which pose a



Al-Anba photo

One of the establishments being sealed. danger to lives, property, and public security.

Furthermore, a source in the Fire Department stated that the fines imposed on violators under the law, as well as administrative closures, do not equate to anything in the event of injury or, God forbid, death to any individual resulting from non-compliance with safety and prevention requirements.

Minister nods new regulations for pharmacy practice licenses



KUNA photo
A memorial photo featuring the recipients of the prestigious award in memory of the late His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may he rest in peace, for their outstanding research contributions in elderly healthcare and health promotion in the year 2024.

Kao, Dr Alwhaibi recognize for excellence

Sheikh Sabah award for medical care an incentive to ‘boost’ public health: envoy

VIENNA, June 1, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait Permanent Representative at the United Nations and International Organizations Ambassador Nasser Al-hayen the granting of the late Amir His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah’s prize for health care researches constitutes an incentive to boost public health.

The granting of the late Amir’s award in the research of health care for the elderly and enhancing public health in 2024 constitutes a minaret and a positive stimulant to attain objectives of sustainable development and enhancing public health as well as ensuring its compatibility with the international health priorities and the top practices, Ambassador Alhayen said.

The senior diplomat, in a statement he addressed

during handover of the award to the winners on sidelines of the 77th session of the World Health Assembly, said the prize is dedicated to the workers in the healthcare sector to express appreciation for their efforts.

Its granting also mirrors the constructive cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the World Health Organization, dating back to decades ago, exactly when Kuwait joined the World Health Organization in 1960.

The ambassador congratulated the winners of the award for the 2024 season. They are Professor Fing Kao, the deputy chair of the Chinese Association for the old age medicine, Dr. Hamed Said Alwhaibi, the head of the elderly and community care at the Omani Ministry of Health.

Al-Awadhi urges full co-op

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi, the Minister of Health, approved a ministerial decision outlining the requirements for obtaining licenses to practice the pharmacy profession and related fields in both government and private sectors, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This decision is part of the ongoing efforts to advance the health sector and ensure the delivery of high-quality medical services to all citizens.

The Ministry of Health emphasized that the new regulations aim to enhance and standardize procedures for issuing licenses across different sectors. Concurrently, precise oversight mechanisms will be implemented to monitor compliance with health standards and ensure the delivery of safe and effective services.

The statement highlighted that the new regulations will address personnel shortages by conducting scientific assessments, evaluating professional competence, and conducting interviews and tests to verify the scientific proficiency and personal capabilities of individuals before granting licenses.

Furthermore, the regulations include meticulous mechanisms and procedures to ascertain the competency and eligibility of applicants for pharmacy and related professions licenses in both government and private sectors. The Ministry will provide necessary supervision and support to ensure the efficient delivery of health services.

All health sector workers are obliged to adhere to the standards and controls outlined in the ministerial decision.

The Ministry emphasized the importance of cooperation with relevant authorities to ensure effective implementation, demonstrating its commitment to enhancing the quality of health services and fostering public confidence in healthcare provision.

The Ministry called for full cooperation from all health workers to facilitate the implementation of the decision and urged adherence to standards aimed at elevating pharmaceutical services.



Dr. Al-Awadhi



KUNA photo
The Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Republic of India, Meshal Al-Shamali, presented his credentials to the President of India, Droupadi Murmu.

Kuwait’s Ambassador presents credentials to Indian President

NEW DELHI, June 1, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Ambassador to India Meshal Al-Shemali presented his credentials to President of India, Droupadi Murmu, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Kuwait to the Republic of India.

Kuwait’s Embassy in New Delhi, in a press release obtained by KUNA, said that Ambassador Al-Shemali presented his credentials during a ceremony held in the presidential palace.

The Ambassador relayed greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to President Murmu, as well as wishes for India and its people of further progress and prosperity.

Ambassador Al-Shemali expressed his pride in the trust he was granted and his keenness to develop bilateral relations between the two countries.

On her part, the President conveyed greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and wished progress and prosperity upon Kuwait and its people.

She wished Ambassador Al-Shemali success in his endeavors and in strengthening bilateral relations that bring the two countries together.

Furthermore, the Indian President stressed her country’s readiness to provide all possible support to facilitate the Ambassador’s tasks.

Kuwait opens consulate office in Malaga to serve summer tourists

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The Embassy of the State of Kuwait in Spain has announced the establishment of a Kuwaiti Consulate Office in the Governorate of Malaga, in Spain to cater to the needs of the Kuwaiti visitors and tourists who opt to visit southern Spain as their summer destination, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The consulate office, situated at the IBV Palace and Spa Hotel in Fuengirola, will operate from the today (June 1) until the end of September.

In a statement issued, Friday, the embassy said it is delighted to extend services to Kuwaiti citizens, ensuring their comfort, and facilitating their affairs while addressing any challenges they may encounter.

Kuwaiti citizens can reach out for assistance through the emergency phone number designated for the capital, Madrid, and other Spanish cities, +34680600000 as well as the emergency number for Malaga, +34682822222.

MoH forms committee to conduct interviews

Key medical positions up for grab

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

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi issued a ministerial decision to form a committee to conduct interviews for the position of “Faculty Head Program Director” at the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialties for vacant specialized programs during the period from June 30 to July 3.

These job openings include program director and faculty head for Plastic Surgery, Urology, Critical Care Fellowship, Neurosurgery, Otolaryngology and Psychiatry units.

The specialized programs available for the position of “program director” include dentistry (pediatrics), dentistry (endodontics), dentistry (oral and maxillofacial surgery), and a professional diploma in the principles of toxicology emergencies.

The decision stipulated the formation of a committee headed by the Dean of the College of Medicine and a member of the Board of Trustees Dr. Mona Al-Ahmad, with members Assistant Undersecretary for Dental Affairs Dr. Ahmed Assad as Vice President, the Director of Technical Administration Dr. Nofa Al-Shammari, Superintendent of Postgraduate Studies at the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialties Dr. Abdullah Rajab, and Director of the Clinical Microbiology Program Dr. Hessa Al-Otaibi.

The decision specified the tasks assigned to the committee, which include conducting interviews for the aforementioned positions in accordance with Articles 4 and 14 of the ministerial Resolution No. 51/2017.

PAAAFR supervision transferred to MEW

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Decree No. 79 of 2024 has been issued transferring supervision of the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources to the Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The decree indicated in its first article that the Minister of Electricity must exercise all the powers assigned to him, in accordance with the provisions of Law No. 94 of 1983 referred to.

The Prime Minister called on the ministers, each within their jurisdiction, to implement the decree and implement it from the date of its issuance.

‘Rights and duties’

Kuwaiti women ... A journey of achievements, empowerment

By Zahra Al-Kathemi

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA): Kuwaiti women have been empowered in various fields, armed with education and qualifications based on the abundant share of rights they enjoy, by the Kuwaiti Constitution.

Kuwait has taken many decisions to enhance the status of women locally and internationally and has supported many draft laws in conferences and meetings in the United Nations.

May 16, 2005 marked a historical milestone in the Kuwaiti democratic process and a turning point in the lives of Kuwaiti women as they gained their political rights in candidacy and election.

On the aforementioned day, the Kuwaiti National Assembly officially approved women’s political rights as a culmination of an initiative launched in 1999 by late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as he believed that Kuwaiti women are an essential and integral part of society.

The National Assembly elections in 2006 witnessed the first participation of Kuwaiti women in candidacy and election, while 2008 elections witnessed 27 women applying for candidacy.

In 2009, Kuwaiti women were able to mark a historic achievement as four won seats in the Kuwaiti National Assembly out of 17 candidates; Dr. Masouma Al-Mubarak, Dr. Aseel Al-Awadhi, Dr. Rola Dashti and Dr. Salwa Al-Jassar.

Kuwait celebrates Kuwaiti Women’s Day on May 16 every year as an affirmation and demonstration of their positive and pioneering role and its continuous giving in building the society.

Kuwait has recently witnessed a new achievement added to the credit of Kuwaiti women with Dr. Reem Al-Shammari winning the 2024 Woman of Cybersecurity Award for the Arab World.

This was the first regional honor of its kind at the Gulf Information Security Expo & Conference (GI-SEC) to honor distinguished women at the level of the Arab world.

On leadership, the percentage of women’s representation in ministerial positions reached 28% in the public sector, while the number of women doubled in the police, diplomatic, oil, and judicial sectors as in 2023.

Kuwaiti women also recorded a presence in the economic sector, where their percentage of leadership and supervisory positions in the Central Bank of Kuwait reached 41%.

On May 11, 2024, an Amiri decree was issued to form the new cabinet which included two women; Minister of Public Works, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan and Minister of Social Affairs, Family affairs and Childhood, Minister of State for youth Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah.

In a statement to KUNA, Dr. Masouma Al-Mubarak, the first female minister in Kuwait history said that Kuwaiti women have their rights and duties, and they have played their role to constitute a significant percentage in the state sectors especially in education and health.

Dr. Al-Mubarak added that Kuwaiti women have been empowered to hold positions in all sectors and have proven their impressive excellence and that they are scientifically and professionally qualified in various fields.

She pointed out that the first part of empowering women is related to the woman herself, as she must strive and struggle, and the second falls on the responsibility of institutions, decision-makers, and laws to develop women’s capabilities.



Dr Al-Mubarak

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KEO completes significant extension on time and within budget

New Kuwait Center for Nephrology & Kidney Transplant opens

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Designed by KEO, the modern specialized center is set to officially open on 2nd June, as announced by the Ministry of Health, offering specialized high-quality care for patients in Kuwait.

The Kuwait Center for Nephrology and Kidney Transplant officially opens on June 2nd, as announced by Kuwait's Ministry of Health at a ceremony attended by representatives from the Sabah Health Care District, Ministry of Health, the Public Committee for Collecting Contributions, and other dignitaries.

The Center, an extension of the existing Hamid Essa Hospital (also known as the Organ Transplant Center), is situated at the Al Sabah Hospital Complex in Shuwaikh. It includes 83 inpatient beds, 11 isolation rooms, 4 ICU beds, and 15 dialysis beds. The facility is dedicated to providing comprehensive care for people living with chronic kidney disease and helping patients lead fuller lives. The center offers kidney and stem cell



Sultan

transplants, dialysis, chemotherapy, and post-operative therapies.

To enhance patient, staff, and equipment movement, the center is linked to the existing hospital by an elevated causeway. The extension primarily consists of an intensive care unit and dialysis wing, separate floors for male and female wards, an emergency department, diagnostic laboratories, radiology, and an outpatient clinic.

The remarkable story of this new center, like many exceptional medical care specialty centers in Kuwait, is that it has been funded and built through the generosity of the caring people of Kuwait. The center's realization came from private donations and was built in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. Kuwait uniquely organizes such exceptional privately funded medical facilities under the guiding care of the Public Committee for Collecting Contributions.

The Center includes impressive medical facilities with state-



Architectural design of the new facility.

of-the-art medical equipment. Its design prioritizes patient well-being and comfort with soothing architectural aesthetics and colors. The building includes a dedicated patient lobby with its own elevators. The main entrance features a sweeping double-height lobby with a well-appointed reception area and welcoming spaces, in-

cluding a coffee shop. The building experience is enhanced by an atmosphere of light and transparency, achieved through the strategic use of glass tempered by vertical metal fins on the façade, providing privacy to patient rooms and treatment areas and protection from sunlight and heat.

"I am very proud to see this

center come to life and to witness the great achievements of all those involved," said Dr. Abdul Aziz Sultan, Chairman of KEO. "KEO architects and engineers, the contractor, and especially the Ministry of Health have all contributed immensely to this project. Attending the official opening brought back memories of our other achievement



Facilities with state-of-the-art medical equipment.

for the Ministry of Health, the delivery of the Amiri Hospital extension, where KEO successfully completed a significant extension on time and within budget."

KEO provided full services architectural and engineering design services from concept design through to construction management and supervision services.

Yesterday ... the

Continued from Page 1

the national interest became prevalent.

If the events of 1938 and 1939 left some scars on the second democratic experience after the Shura Council in 1921, then the circumstances that occurred during that period may be very similar to the circumstances of today.

Was it due to the beating of the drums of war from 1936 until it ignited in 1939? Or was it because some of the Kuwaiti executives did not realize the criticality of the situation at that time?

What happened in recent years and the current regional events are no different from before, but today they are more sensitive.

For this reason, it was necessary to exercise caution in making decisions, and to be wise and prudent in handling matters with great care. This is why the warnings were announced more than once by His Highness the Amir, and coincidence would have it fall on the shoulders of the son of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber, as if history was repeating itself.

Today, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad is working to stop political violence and thwart the attempts of corrupt people to steal national wealth.

He has also started managing the wheel of development, which had stopped since 1992, by managing the launch of the Zour Refinery. He also took upon himself the responsibility of maintaining the country's national security by imposing its stability locally.

We have said in the past and we repeat today - We are before a ruler who has his country's renaissance in mind, and is working to restore Kuwaiti pioneering, as his father did 86 years ago.

That is why I affirmed His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad's statement - Within 80 to 100 years, the nation - any nation - can produce a leader capable of awakening it from its slumber, eliminating its obstacles, and revitalizing it.

Expats with

Continued from Page 1

against a fine penalty within the prescribed time limit (twenty days from the date of the ruling's issuance).

In-person judgments issued imposing a fine penalty, include:

- Foreigners who have filed an appeal against a fine penalty within the prescribed time limit, and the appeal is pending.
- Foreigners who have failed to file an appeal against a fine penalty within the prescribed period (twenty days from the date of the ruling's issuance).

The directive also outlines that the travel ban on foreigners convicted in the aforementioned cases will be automatically lifted upon full payment of the imposed fine.

Additionally, the committee responsible for facilitating procedures for collecting criminal fines for the state treasury has been notified of this decision for implementation.

MoH expands

Continued from Page 1

He added the service is provided throughout the year and on all days of the week at the main clinic in the Public Health Department in Shuwaikh.

He revealed the service includes health advice before and after traveling, providing information about common diseases, safety and health prevention information during trips, providing the necessary vaccinations to prevent infectious diseases according to the destination of travel, and providing preventive medications such as malaria medications.

He said this service aims to facilitate health care for travelers and visitors and to protect society from infectious diseases, which contributes to preserving public health and safety, and providing the highest level of healthcare to travelers.

China, Arab states

Continued from Page 1

The meeting was followed by the signing of an agreement between the two sides regarding the allocation of land for the construction of the buildings of the General Consulate of the State of Kuwait in the city of Guangzhou.

Meanwhile, China and Arab countries adopted a joint statement on the Palestinian issue on Thursday, as they held the 10th ministerial conference of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum in Beijing, state-run Xinhua News Agency reported.

The joint statement expresses deep concerns of China and Arab states over the prolonged conflict in Gaza, which has resulted in a humanitarian crisis, according to the agency.

It emphasizes the firm stance and important consensus of the two sides in promoting a ceasefire in Gaza, ensuring humanitarian aid, opposing the forced displacement of Palestinian people, supporting Palestine's full membership in the UN, and steadfastly working toward an early resolution of the Palestinian issue based on the two-State solution.

At the conference, the two sides also adopted the Beijing Declaration and the forum's execution plan for 2024-2026, the report said. The Beijing Declaration reviews the important consensus and progress in implementing the outcomes of the first China-Arab States Summit and clarifies the practical path for promoting the building of a China-Arab community with a shared future.

It reaffirms that China and Arab states will continue to support each other on core interests, deepen pragmatic cooperation, and expound on their shared positions on political resolution of regional hot issues, dialogue among civilizations, global governance, counter-terrorism, human rights, artificial intelligence, climate change, etc.

The execution plan charts the course for strengthening the building of a forum mechanism in the next two years and promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation in fields such as politics, economy and trade, investment, finance, infrastructure, resources and environment, cultural exchange, aerospace, education and health.

Capital Markets Authority cracks down on unauthorized 'exploitation' of name, logo

Ten reports sent to prosecution

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The Capital Markets Authority (CMA) has taken decisive action against parties misusing its name and logo to solicit customers, submitting approximately 10 reports to the Public Prosecution, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The exploitative tactics employed by these entities involve developing systematic methods to project an official appearance, deceiving the public into believing their compliance with the law, and falsely obtaining approvals without official consent from the CMA.

According to informed sources, numerous electronic accounts on social media and promotional advertisements falsely claimed affiliation with the CMA, purporting to be licensed platforms authorized by the authority. Their objective was to promote financial products and solicit investments through deceptive means.

It is emphasized that any company offering financial services,

brokerage, or investment fund activities, even those licensed outside Kuwait, must obtain approval from the CMA before conducting marketing activities locally.

The responsibility extends to other governmental bodies granting licenses for advertising activities without ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements.

Promotional advertisements for financial products lacking CMA licenses are deemed fraudulent and misleading to investors, as they fabricate authorization for activities not legitimately granted. The CMA officially announces all licenses granted on its website, ensuring transparency and accountability in the market.

Investors are urged to verify the licenses of entities offering financial services and scrutinize their documentation before engaging in any investment transactions. Failure to comply with Law No. 7 of 2010 and its executive regulations and amendments entails legal consequences, underscoring the importance of due diligence in safeguarding investments.

Kuwait's CMA Academy ... helping achieve long-term strategic goals

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA): Kuwait's Capital Markets Authority (CMA) Academy is a specialized educational and training institution – an independent and non-profit body under the Authority's supervision.

The Academy, established in 2021, comes as part of New Kuwait Vision 2035, as it contributes to promoting the knowledge economy, fashioning a suitable infrastructure for it, and equipping those in the field with adequate skills.

The project aims to create a competitive environment, the benefits of which are reaped by the state of Kuwait's economy.

Speaking to KUNA, Academy Director General Abdulaziz Al-Bader described the institution as an educational extension of the Authority, helping it achieve long-term strategic goals.



Al-Bader

The Academy will positively impact socioeconomic reality, reflected Al-Bader, adding that it goes in line with the Authority's operational strategy and comprehensive, financial national program.

It is setting forth to be an active contributor to promoting efficiency of capital market workers via presenting diverse programs, commented Al-Bader.

To achieve Kuwait's vision of becoming a regional financial hub brimming with investment opportunities, the Academy is seeking co-operation with professional international institutions, he added.

Alongside training and accreditation programs, Al-Bader said the Academy will also be establishing a digital library, creating alliances with local universities for the exchange of expertise and opportunities.

CMA was established 2010 to regulate and supervise securities' activities, ensure transparency, fairness, efficiency, and observe listed companies' implementation of Corporate Governance regulations, in addition to protecting investors from unfair practices and violations.

Other Voices

The visions of Imam Khomeini transformed Palestinian issue into world's primary issue

By Mohammad Toutounchi
Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran

These days, we are marking the 35th anniversary of the passing of the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran – Imam Khomeini. This memory has not faded or diminished throughout the years, as it rather increased in brilliance and radiance; because this great human being continued his bitter struggle against injustice and tyranny throughout his life and devoted himself to supporting the oppressed and the weak without getting tired or bored.

The late Imam was keen on unifying the Islamic ranks and reunification, confronting fragmentation and bickering, warning against the attempts of enemies to sow strife and division, and to divide the ranks, promising peace and harmony and rejecting conflicts and wars.

He eliminated the 'takfiri' and alien ideas that distorted the bright face of our true religion. This is the secret of the immortality of his ideas and proposals and what distinguishes him from the rest of the historical leaders.

Imam Khomeini was a theoretician, a political sage, a brave fighter and a strategic thinker. Therefore, he identified the disease and the cure from the first days of his renaissance, as he predicted that the Palestinian uprising would continue until the Palestinian people obtain their just rights.

He emphasized that the Zionist entity is the cancerous gland implanted in the body of the Islamic nation, and that liberating Jerusalem from the desecration of tyrants must be the concern of every Muslim. From this standpoint, he was pushing for Jerusalem to be the blood pulsing in the hearts of Muslims.

The last Friday of the blessed month of Ramadan, which is one of the Nights of Destiny, was declared an international day for Jerusalem, as it is the first of the two 'qiblas' and the end of the night journey and the ascension, so that people can express their rejection of the Zionist aggression, support the truth, and stand by the oppressed, and so that the Palestinian cause remains alive in the conscience of peoples.

He is the first religious power to authorize support for Palestinian resistance fighters from legitimate sources of money and zakat.

Today, after all these years, we witness that the Imam's vision regarding this bastard regime was correct, and that the brutal massacres he committed with all despicableness are increasing day after day in the face of the disgusting silence of countries that pay lip service to human rights as they see hundreds of defenseless women and children being killed and slaughtered in tents.



Mohammad Toutounchi, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the State of Kuwait.

We see that the generation of young intellectuals and university graduates in many countries around the world have had the facts revealed to them and have begun to demand that their governments stand by the Palestinian right to sever ties with the racist Zionist regime.

The late Imam emphasized in his speeches that Israel's ambitions go beyond occupying Palestine and displacing its people, and that this entity aspires to bring the entire nation to its knees.

The revolution of Imam Khomeini (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was neither the replacement of a closed dictatorial regime subordinated to a foreigner nor a mere political change, through which a group stepped down from power to be replaced by another group with new names.

Rather, the Islamic Revolution was a profound, radical transformation in the country's policy at all levels. It was the establishment of a State based on the people and their will, and characterized by independence, a State with an identity stemming from its civilization and religion, based on two pillars: "the word of monotheism and the unification of the word."

The late Imam's faith, his trust in Almighty Allah, and his adoption of authentic Mohammad's (PBUH) Islam, far from fossilization, attracted young people who yearned for social justice and freedom, rejected American hegemony, and aspired for independence.

The 35th anniversary of his death comes to sharpen in us the determination to move forward on the path of truth, to which he was committed, and to remain a beacon that illuminates the paths of justice, faith and hope for rising generations.

Kuwait enforces

Continued from Page 1

regulate work and not reduce working hours in order to avoid any harm to the ongoing projects.

Meanwhile, Al-Anba daily reported that PAM announced the implementation of Decision No. 535/2015 to ban labor work under direct sun from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm from the beginning of June 2024 until August 31.

He affirmed that the implementation of the decision over the recent years was positively received by the concerned companies and contractors, indicating that this decision is part of the commitment of Kuwait to the international work criteria.

Al-Otaibi stated that the decision is aimed at protecting laborers from the dangers of working directly under the sun during the hot weather. The decision does not reduce the working hours, but it only reorganizes them in order to avoid any troubles or delay in the completion of the ongoing projects.

Avoid false

Continued from Page 1

news that contains false information and to work with high professionalism and national responsibility.

Al-Subaie told (KUNA) on Saturday that some news accounts on social media sites recently published news containing incorrect information and analyses, which makes them subject to legal accountability.

He stressed that media professionalism requires everyone to be careful about publishing news, adding that everyone must bear responsibility for all incorrect news that is published and should not commit violations of the law in order to preserve professional media credibility.

He affirmed confidence that the various media outlets and those in charge of them work with a high sense of patriotism, have a spirit of cooperation and responsibility, and are careful in broadcasting and publishing news and media content in all its classifications.

World News Roundup

Europe

Europe poll may tip Meloni's balancing act: While Italian Premier **Giorgia Meloni** adopts a reassuring Western-allied foreign policy, cultural wars at home are preserving her far-right credentials heading into a European Parliamentary election, where her neo-fascist-rooted Brothers of Italy party is projected to secure significant gains - and a possible coalition role.

In less than two years leading the EU's third-largest economy, Meloni has emerged as the most powerful far-right-wing leader in Europe, a position emphasized in a fiery speech in May to a Vox rally in Spain that included French far-right leader Marine Le Pen, Hungary's Viktor Orbán and pro-Trump Republicans.

Still, her pro-Ukraine policies have proven reassuring to centrist American and European allies as Italy prepares to host United States President Joe Biden and other leaders of the Group of Seven most industrialized nations in late June.

The European elections June 6-9 could begin to tip Meloni's balancing act.

"I think there are two Melonis, and the Meloni that is getting more attention is the pragmatic, pro-Ukrainian Meloni," said Wolfango Piccoli of the London-based Teneo consultancy. "There is another Meloni, back in Italy, where she is pursuing a clear right-wing agenda on a variety of issues from migration to social-cultural values. The European elections could be a bit of a moment of truth. (AP)



Meloni

NATO ministers meet in Prague: NATO foreign ministers were meeting in the Czech capital Friday to prepare for this summer's leaders' summit as the alliance boosts support for Ukraine and countries one-by-one remove restrictions on how Kyiv can use western-supplied weaponry to combat Russia's invasion.

A day after US President Joe Biden gave Ukraine the go-ahead to use American munitions to strike inside Russia for the limited purpose of defending Kharkiv, numerous ministers, including those from the Netherlands, Finland, Poland and Germany, expressed approval of the decision, saying that Ukraine has the absolute right to defend itself from attacks originating on Russian soil.

The chorus of allied voices backing greater leeway for Ukraine to use their weapons grew louder in recent weeks after Russia launched artillery strikes on Kharkiv from its territory, prompting appeals for help from Kyiv. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken had hinted strongly this week that a change in Washington's position was coming. (AP)

'Hard to meet discussions on war': China said Friday it would be "hard to meet" calls for discussions on the Russia-Ukraine war, citing problems with arrangements that appear to point to Beijing's strongly pro-Moscow stance.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said that "China's hopes appear to be hard to meet at the meeting."

"There is still a clear gap between the arrangements for the meeting and the demands of the Chinese side, as well as the general expectations of the international community," Mao said.

Mao gave no details, but said that China has "informed parties concerned about our considerations and concerns," and would keep in touch with all parties concerned. China claims to be neutral in the conflict, but has strongly backed Russia, most recently hosting President Vladimir Putin on a state visit. (AP)

19 hurt as Russia hits: Ukraine power grid Russia pummeled Ukraine's energy infrastructure with a large-scale drone and missile attack Saturday, injuring at least 19 people, local officials said.

The Ukrainian military reported that it had downed 35 out of the 53 missiles launched at targets across the country overnight on June 1, as well as 46 out of 47 attack drones. Injuries were reported by officials across the country, including in Ukraine's western Lviv region and the central Dnipropetrovsk region.

Twelve people, including eight children, were hospitalized after a strike close to two houses where they were sheltering in the Kharkiv region, said Gov. Oleh Syniehubov.

The strikes were part of a series of sustained attacks by Russia against Ukraine's power grid, which has been ongoing since March. Ukraine's largest private energy firm, DTEK said that two of its power plants had been seriously damaged in what it said was the sixth attack on the company's plants in two and a half months. (AP)

Russia, Ukraine exchange POWs: Ukraine and Russia exchanged prisoners of war on Friday, each sending back 75 POWs in the first such swap in the past three months, officials said. A few hours earlier and at the same location, the two sides also handed over bodies of their fallen soldiers.

The Ukrainian POWs, including four civilians, were returned on several buses that drove into the northern Sumsy region. As they disembarked, they shouted joyfully and called their families to tell them they were home. Some knelt and kissed the ground while many wrapped themselves in yellow-blue flags and hugged one another, breaking into tears. Many appeared emaciated and poorly dressed. (AP)

'Fake news likely work of Russia': A fake news report that appeared on Poland's national news agency saying that Prime Minister Donald Tusk was mobilizing 200,000 men starting on July 1 was probably the work of Russia-sponsored hackers and was designed to interfere with the upcoming European Parliament election, authorities said.

"Everything indicates that we are dealing with a cyberattack directed from the Russian side," said Krzysztof Gawkowski, a deputy prime minister who also holds the digital affairs portfolio. "The goal is disinformation ahead of (European Parliament) elections and a paralysis of the society."

Tusk said on X that it was "Another very dangerous hacker attack which well illustrates Russia's destabilization strategy on the eve of the European elections. ... It is increasingly clear how important these elections are for us." (AP)

Germany knife attack injures 6: A man stabbed several members of a group on a central square in the German city of Mannheim on Friday, authorities said. Six people were wounded, including a police officer who intervened.

Police quickly put an end to the attack by shooting the assailant, who also was wounded.

The attack happened shortly after 11:30 am (0930 GMT) on the Marktplatz, a downtown square in the southwestern city of Mannheim.

The assailant stabbed participants in an event organized by the Pax Europa group, wounding five members of the organization, police and prosecutors said in a statement. The police officer was stabbed several times from behind in the head, they added. (AP)

France files preliminary charges against teen: French authorities on Friday raised preliminary terrorism charges against an 18-year-old accused of a plot targeting spectators attending soccer games at the upcoming Paris Olympics. The interior minister said it was the first such thwarted plot targeting the Games, which start in eight weeks as France is on its highest threat alert level.

The man is accused of planning a "violent action" on behalf of the Islamic State group's jihadist ideology, the national counterterrorism prosecutor's office said in a statement Friday. The man, who was not identified, is behind held in custody pending further investigation. (AP)



Former US president Donald Trump speaks during a news conference at Trump Tower on May 31 in New York. A day after a New York jury found Trump guilty of 34 felony charges, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee addressed the conviction and likely attempt to cast his campaign in a new light. (AP)

Politics

'Former president took verdict with solemnness'

GOP joins Trump attacks on justice system

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP): Embracing Donald Trump's strategy of blaming the US justice system after his historic guilty verdict, Republicans in Congress are fervently enlisting themselves in his campaign of vengeance and political retribution in the GOP bid to reclaim the White House.

Almost no Republican official has stood up to suggest Trump should not be the party's presidential candidate for the November election - in fact, some have sought to hasten his nomination. Few others dared to defend the legitimacy of the New York state court that heard the hush money case against the former president, or the 12 jurors who unanimously rendered their verdict.

In fact, any Republicans who expressed doubts about Trump's innocence or political viability, including his former hawkish national security adviser John Bolton or top-tier Senate candidate Larry Hogan, were instantly bullied by the former president's enforcers and told to "leave the party."

Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., said she's voting for Trump "whether he is a free man or a prisoner of the Biden regime."

The firebrand congresswoman also posted the upside-down American flag that has come to symbolize the "Stop the Steal" movement Trump started with allies before the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

The swift, strident and deepening commitment to Trump despite his felony conviction shows how fully Republican leaders and lawmakers have been infused with his unfounded grievances of a "rigged" system and dangerous conspiracies of "weaponized" government into their own attacks on President Joe Biden and the Democrats.

Rather than shunning Trump's escalating authoritarian language or ensuring they will provide checks and balances for a second Trump term, the Republican senators and representatives are upturning longstanding faith in US governance and setting the stage for what they plan to do if Trump regains power.

Ohio Senate okays fix 'assuring' US President Biden on fall ballot

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP): A temporary fix allowing President Joe Biden to appear on this fall's ballot cleared the Ohio Senate on Friday as the Republican-dominated Legislature concluded a rare special session.

The vote came one day after the House approved the measure, along with a ban on foreign nationals contributing to state ballot campaigns. The latter measure had been demanded by the Senate, which approved it Friday. Both bills now head to Republican Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, who is expected to sign both.

The latter bill also broadened the definition of "foreign nationals" to include lawful permanent residents of the U.S., also known as green card holders. The provision was added to the House bill, with proponents saying it would close "a glaring loophole" in the bill, but several lawmakers questioned whether it eventually would lead to the courts striking down the entire measure as unconstitutional.

The special session was ostensibly called by DeWine last week to address the fact that Ohio's deadline for making the November ballot falls on Aug. 7, about two weeks before the Democratic president was set to be formally nominated at the party's Aug. 19-22 convention in Chicago.

But when the Senate - and then DeWine's proclamation calling lawmakers back to Columbus - tied the issue to the foreign nationals prohibition, the Democratic National Committee moved to neutralize the need for any vote in Ohio. In tandem with the Biden campaign, it announced earlier this week that it would solve Biden's problem with Ohio's ballot deadline itself by holding a virtual roll call vote to nominate him. A committee vote on that work-around is set for Tuesday.

The Democratic National Committee said Friday that the planned virtual roll call will still move forward.

prised at Trump's stoic demeanor as he listened to the verdict that made him the first former U.S. president convicted of a crime. **Todd Blanche** was sitting to Trump's left in the Manhattan courtroom as the verdict was read - the jury foreman repeating the word "guilty" 34 times.

"I was shocked at how he took the verdict," Blanche said. "He just stood there and just kind of took it. And I think had a lot of appropriate solemnness for the moment that made me very proud to be sitting next to him when it, when it was happening," said Blanche, adding that he thought Trump was still handling himself well on Friday, the day after the verdict, even as the presumptive Republican presidential nominee railed that the trial was unfair.

WASHINGTON: US President **Joe Biden** on Friday condemned Donald Trump's unfounded assertions of a biased legal system as "reckless" and

"dangerous" - breaking his long-held silence on the presumptive Republican nominee's criminal woes as Trump's nearly three dozen felony convictions injected a new element of uncertainty into a volatile presidential campaign.

Biden's sober denunciation of his predecessor and his defense of the US legal system - delivered in just under two minutes from the White House - came after campaign aides made clear they would continue to focus on issues such as democracy, abortion rights and other freedoms that have formed the foundation of the president's reelection bid.

He noted the dozen jurors who found Trump guilty of all 34 counts stemming from a hush money case were selected "the same way every jury in America's chosen" and that the former president had "every opportunity to defend himself." As Biden underscored Trump's right to appeal, he emphasized that "the American principle that no one is above the law was reaffirmed."

Also:

NEW YORK: Donald Trump's lawyer told The Associated Press he was sur-

Explosion caused by cut gas line: A crew working in the basement area of an Ohio building intentionally cut a gas line not knowing it was pressurized before a deadly explosion this week, the National

Transportation Safety Board said Friday. NTSB board member **Tom Chapman** said preliminary investigation shows workers were in the basement to clear out piping and other outdated infrastructure and debris from the basement and vault area - which

extends underneath the sidewalk next to the building - in anticipation of a city project to fill in the area and replace the sidewalks. A crew of five people and a supervisor had been on site that day and four of the workers were there when it happened, he said.

"It was an apparently abandoned service line coming off the main, which ran parallel to the street," Chapman said.

He said workers smelled no gas before they started cutting the pipe and knew there was a problem when they made the third cut. (AP)

'Prosecute Boeing': Relatives of passengers who died in two jetliner crashes pushed federal officials Friday to prosecute Boeing on criminal charges related to the accidents no later than this fall but said they got no commitment from the Justice Department.

The Justice Department determined two weeks ago that Boeing violated terms of a settlement that let the company avoid prosecution for deceiving regulators who approved the Boeing 737 Max. Prosecutors have said they will announce by July 7 whether the company will face sanctions.

Boeing agreed in 2021 to pay \$2.5 billion - mostly compensation to airlines - to avoid prosecution on a fraud charge. Relatives of some of the 346 people who died in the 2018 and 2019 crashes have tried ever since to scuttle the settlement. (AP)



Sweden's King Carl Gustaf and Queen Silvia meet Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy outside Stockholm Palace, in Stockholm, Sweden on May 31. (AP)



Arrington



Chapman

America

Suspect acted alone: A man who fatally shot four law enforcement officers with an assault rifle a month ago acted alone and was solely responsible for all casualties, police in North Carolina's largest city said Friday.

"At this point in the investigation, it has been determined there was one shooter and no friendly fire," Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department Deputy Chief **Tonya Arrington** told reporters.

Four other officers were also wounded in the April 29 incident in a residential neighborhood, the deadliest shooting against law enforcement officers since 2016, when a sniper killed five officers at a Dallas protest. President Joe Biden traveled to Charlotte and met privately with the families of the officers who died.

Officers from a US Marshals Task Force based in Charlotte came under fire at a home when they tried to serve warrants for possession of a firearm by an ex-felon and fleeing to elude. Law enforcement officers shot and killed 39-year-old Terry Clark Hughes Jr who had been wanted in adjoining Lincoln County. (AP)

'Defendants must be released': A federal appeals court on Friday upheld a ruling that Oregon defendants must be released from jail after seven days if they don't have a defense attorney.

In its decision, the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals called Oregon's public defense system a "Sixth Amendment nightmare." OPB reported, referring to the part of the US Constitution that guarantees people accused of crimes the right to a lawyer. The opinion said Oregon is responsible for upholding legal protections for criminal defendants.

Oregon has struggled for years to address its public defender crisis. As of Friday, more than 3,200 defendants did not have a public defender, a dashboard from the Oregon Judicial Department showed. Of those, about 146 people were in custody, but fewer people were expected to be impacted by Friday's ruling, according to OPB.

An Office of Public Defense Services draft report from March found that Oregon needs 500 additional attorneys to meet its obligations, OPB reported. State officials have sought to address the issue, including by taking such steps as providing additional funding, but structural issues remain. (AP)



Forensics officers stand behind a smashed stall on the market square in Mannheim, Germany on May 31. An assailant with a knife attacked and wounded several people in a central square in the southwestern German city of Mannheim on Friday, police said. Police shot the attacker, who also was hurt. (AP)

Lat/Am

Bomb plot foiled

Mexico gangs play ‘wider role’ in polls

COTIJA, Mexico, June 1, (AP): Mexico’s drug cartels and gangs appear to be playing a wider role than before in Sunday’s elections that will determine the presidency, nine governorships and about 19,000 mayorships and other local posts.

The country’s powerful drug cartels have long staged targeted assassinations of mayoral and other local candidates who threaten their control. Gangs in Mexico depend on controlling local police chiefs, and taking a share of municipal budgets; national politics appear to interest them less.

But in the runup to Sunday’s vote, gangs have increasingly taken to spraying whole campaign rallies with gunfire, burning ballots or preventing the setting up of polling stations, and even putting up banners seeking to influence voters.

Security analyst **David Saucedo** says it’s likely some drug gangs will try to force voters to cast ballots for their favored candidates.

“It is reasonable to assume that the cartels will mobilize their support bases during Sunday’s elections,” Saucedo said. “They have loyal voters who they have won over through the distribution of food packages, cash, medicine and infrastructure projects. They will use them to support narco-candidates.”

In some places, it appears the gangs are encouraging people to vote while discouraging voting in areas controlled by their rivals.

Violence

On Friday, electoral authorities reported that assailants burned a house where ballots were being stored ahead of Sunday in the violence-wracked town of Chicomuselo, in the southern state of Chiapas. While they did not say who was behind the attack, the town is completely dominated by two warring drug cartels, Jalisco and Sinaloa.

On May 14, gunmen apparently linked to a cartel shot and killed 11 people in a single day in Chicomuselo. On May 17, five people were killed along with a mayoral candidate when gunmen opened fire on a crowd in the town of La Concordia, Chiapas, about 45 miles (75 kilometers) east of Chicomuselo.

Targeted assassinations of local candidates continued. On Wednesday, dramatic video images showed a mayoral candidate in the southern state of Guerrero being shot in the head at point-blank range with a pistol. A total of 31 candidates, almost all running for mayorships, have been killed this year.

But mass attacks on campaign rallies, once exceedingly rare in Mexico, are becoming common, and have killed many more supporters than candidates this year. The effect is intimidating.

On Wednesday, the last official day of campaigning, unidentified gunmen opened fire a couple of blocks away from a mayoral candidate’s final campaign rally in the western state of Michoacan, sending hundreds of people scrambling for safety.

Dividing

“It seemed like a normal evening, like the campaign closers of other candidates,” said Angélica Chávez, a homemaker who was at the rally in Cotija. “Then there were gunshots, several rounds of gunfire very close. And then people started running and diving to the ground, crouching.”

Chávez was hurt in the stampede and had to take refuge in a local church.

In Celaya, a city in Guanajuato, gunmen opened fire on a campaign event in April, killing a mayoral candidate and wounding three of her supporters.

Saucedo, the analyst, sees the shootings as a sign that narco gangs are no longer willing to see their handpicked candidates lose.

“Rather than allow the victory of a candidate who is not in line with their criminal interests, or allow a candidate linked to a rival drug gang to win, they use this tactic,” Saucedo said. “What we’re seeing in the final stretch is pretty desperate strategy on the part of some groups of drug traffickers.”

Saucedo said that such attempts at narco-control of local politics had been seen previously in some particularly violent states, like Tamaulipas. “What was once limited ... is now spreading to include the whole country,” he said.

Also:

MEXICO CITY: The British foreign ministry has apparently removed its ambassador to Mexico, **Jon Benjamin**, following controversy generated by a video in which he jokes while pointing a high-powered rifle at staff inside a vehicle.

The **United Kingdom’s** government website on Friday described the seasoned diplomat as being its ambassador to Mexico in the past tense, though no details were given. Benjamin’s official biography on the government website says he “served as ambassador to Mexico from 2021 to 2024,” with no further details.

Asked by The Associated Press about Benjamin and the video, a government statement said: “We are aware of this incident and have taken appropriate action. Where internal issues do arise, the FCDO (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office) has robust Human Resources processes to address them.”

In the video, allegedly made during a trip by Benjamin to the northern Mexican state of **Durango**, the diplomat, seated in the front passenger seat, is seen wielding what appears to be an assault rifle and smilingly pointing it at colleagues in the back seat.

The video appears to have been recorded with a cellphone. Laughter can be heard in the background and the person being aimed makes a gesture of surprise.

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador: El Salvador said authorities have broken up a plot to plant bombs around the country to coincide with President **Nayib Bukele’s** inauguration on Saturday.

The country’s National Police said the plot involved “veterans” of the country’s 1980-1992 civil war, an apparent reference to former leftist guerrillas.

Police posted photos of small cylinders of explosives with fuses and sacks of ammonium nitrate on the force’s social media accounts. It said the explosives had been seized in raids, and that the plot supposedly was going to target gasoline stations, supermarkets and government buildings.

It said some of the explosives were found in a raid on a former rebel stronghold, Guazapa, on the outskirts of San Salvador, the capital.

Police blamed a shadowy force it called the “Salvadoran Insurrection Brigade” for the plot, and former congressman José Santos Melara of the leftist FMLN party - formed by former guerrillas - had been detained and was “the one who financed these plans.”



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, (left), flanked by Bharatiya Janata Party leader Suvendu Adhikari waves to greet his supporters from a vehicle during a roadshow ahead of the last phase of elections in Kolkata, India on May 28. Inset: Voters wait for their turn to cast their vote during the seventh and final phase of voting of the national election in Varanasi, India on June 1. (AP)

Voting begins in last round of India’s election

A six-week-long national election in India that is a referendum on Hindu nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s decade in power neared its end Saturday as the last phase of voting began.

The election is considered one of the most consequential in India’s history. If Modi wins, he’ll be only the second Indian leader to retain power for a third term after Jawaharlal Nehru, the country’s first prime minister.

The seventh round of polls covers 57 constituen-

cies across seven states and one union territory. It will complete a national election to fill all 543 seats in the powerful lower house of parliament. Nearly 970 million voters - more than 10% of the world’s population - were eligible to elect a new parliament for five years. More than 8,300 candidates ran for the office.

Most polls show Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party leading over the broad opposition alliance that’s challenging them, led by the Congress party.

The votes will be counted Tuesday, with results expected by the end of the day.

Modi’s campaign, vying for a third-straight term, began on a platform of economic progress. He has promised to uplift the poor and turn India into a developed nation by 2047. But the campaign has turned increasingly shrill in recent weeks as he escalated polarizing rhetoric in back-to-back incendiary speeches that targeted the country’s Muslim minority, who make up 14% of India’s 1.4 billion people. (AP)

Asia

‘War with China neither imminent nor unavoidable’

Austin stresses importance of renewed talks

SINGAPORE, June 1, (AP): United States Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin told a gathering of top security officials Saturday that war with China was neither imminent nor unavoidable, despite rapidly escalating tensions in the Asia-Pacific region, stressing the importance of renewed dialogue between him and his Chinese counterpart in avoiding “miscalculations and misunderstandings.”

Austin’s comments at the Shangri-La defense forum in Singapore came the day after he met for more than an hour on the sidelines with Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun, the first in-person meeting between the top defense officials since contacts between the American and Chinese militaries broke down in 2022 after then-US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan, infuriating Beijing.

Neither side budged from their long-standing positions on Taiwan - which China claims as its own and has not ruled out using force to take - and on China’s sweeping claims in the South China Sea, which has led to direct confrontations between China and other nations in the region, most notably the Philippines.

While declining to detail the specifics of their conversation, Austin said the most important thing was that the two were again talking.

“As long as we’re talking, we’re able to identify those issues that are troublesome and that we want to make sure that we have placed guardrails to ensure there are no misperceptions and no miscalculations ... that can spiral out of control,” he said.

Addressing the same forum on Friday night, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr bluntly outlined what could be at stake, saying that if a Filipino were killed as China confronts his country’s coast guard and merchant fleet to press its claims in the South China Sea, it would be “very, very close to what we define as an act of war and therefore we will respond accordingly.”

PNG’s PM ‘visits’ site of landslide estimated to have killed hundreds

MELBOURNE, Australia, June 1, (AP): Papua New Guinea’s prime minister on Friday visited the site of a major landslide, which is estimated to have buried hundreds of villagers in the South Pacific island nation’s mountainous interior a week ago and left the ground too unstable for heavy earthmoving machines to help clear up the mess.

James Marape told hundreds who had gathered near the devastated Yambali village that the list of governments and world leaders who had sent their condolences included the United States, China, India, France, Malaysia and the Czech Republic. First on the list was U.K. King Charles III, Papua New Guinea’s constitutional head of state.

“My people are simple people. I want to say thank you for them to the global friends of PNG,” Marape said.

The first mechanized excavator arrived at the scene on Sunday, but it hasn’t been permitted to start

removing the boulders, rocks and splintered trees that have buried a 150-to-200-meter (500-to-650-foot) stretch of the Enga province’s main highway.

Tin Oo dies: Tin Oo, one of the closest associates of Myanmar’s ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi as well as a co-founder of her National League for Democracy party, has died. He was 97.

Tin Oo died Saturday morning at Yangan General Hospital, said Moh Khan, a charity worker citing a member of his family. Charity workers in Myanmar handle funeral arrangements.

Moh Khan said Tin Oo had been hospitalized at Yangan General Hospital on Wednesday due to difficulty urinating and other health problems, including weakness. His cause of death was not immediately announced.

Also:

UNITED NATIONS: The United States and allies **South Korea** and **Japan** clashed with **China** and **Russia** Friday over **North Korea’s** latest satellite and ballistic missile launches and threats to use nuclear weapons that have escalated tensions in northeast Asia.

The scene was an emergency open meeting of the UN Security Council called after North Korea’s failed launch of a military reconnaissance satellite on May 27 and other launches using ballistic missile technology in violation of UN sanctions.

Since the beginning of 2022, the

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea - the North’s official name - has launched over 100 missiles using this banned technology as it has advanced its nuclear weapons program. In response, the US and its allies have carried out an increasing number of military exercises.

UN Assistant Secretary-General **Khaled Khiairi** briefed the council meeting saying sovereign states have the right to benefit from peaceful space activities - but the DPRK is expressly prohibited from conducting launches using ballistic missile technology and its continuing violations undermine global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation treaties.

tions, a constitution and transitional justice.

Kiir had alleged on Saturday that Western powers wanted to delay elections, but he did not explain how they were doing that. Kiir said he was committed to ensuring elections proceed in December as planned and warned that a postponement would spark violence.

South Sudan is due to hold its first election in December, but crucial processes that include the adoption of a permanent constitution and a unified police force are not in place. (AP)

Militants kill 11 in Nigeria: Militants enforcing a separatist lockdown in Nigeria’s southeastern region attacked security forces deployed to restore order, killing five soldiers and six civilians during a shootout, the Nigerian military said Friday.

The soldiers were attacked on Thursday at a checkpoint in Abia state’s Aba town where the separatists were enforcing a lockdown to commemorate the short-lived Republic of Biafra which, in 1967, fought and lost a deadly civil war to become independent from Nigeria, defense spokesman Maj GenEdward Buba said in a statement.

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) separatist group often uses lockdowns to push for the creation of an independent country in the southeast, decades after the war that killed at least one million people. Hundreds have been killed in recent years in such violent lockdowns and other attacks blamed on the group, which claims its secessionist campaign is peaceful. (AP)



Lu Yilin, a city-level inheritor of Jieshou painted pottery, checks on painted pottery works outside the kiln in Jieshou City of east China’s Anhui Province on May 23. The making of Jieshou painted pottery can be traced back to the Tang Dynasty (618-907). Tianying Township in Jieshou City was the main production site of Jieshou painted pottery in history. The technique of making Jieshou painted pottery was inscribed as a national-level intangible cultural heritage in 2006. (Xinhua)



Kiir



Lungu

Africa

ANC loses its 30-yr majority: The African National Congress party lost its parliamentary majority in a historic election result Saturday that puts South Africa on a new political path for the first time since the end of the apartheid system of white minority rule 30 years ago.

With nearly 99% of votes counted, the once-dominant ANC had received just over 40% in the election on Wednesday, well short of the majority it had held since the famed all-race vote of 1994 that ended apartheid and brought it to power under Nelson Mandela. The final results are still to be formally declared by the independent electoral commission that ran the election.

The result ended the ANC’s dominance three-decade dominance of South Africa’s young democracy, but the way forward promises to be complicated for Africa’s most advanced economy, and there’s no coalition on the table yet. (AP)

Zambia ex-first lady arrested: Zambia’s former first lady and one of her daughters have been arrested over their ownership of several properties worth more than \$2 million that a law enforcement agency says are suspected to be proceeds of crime.

Esther Lungu, the wife of former Zambian president **Edgar Lungu**, daughter Chiyeso Katete and a family friend were arrested on Thursday, said the Drug Enforcement Commission, a law enforcement agency which also has a mandate to investigate money laundering allegations.

The properties owned by Esther Lungu that are under investigation include 15 apartments worth \$1.5 million in a district near the capital, Lusaka, the DEC said in a statement. It said she couldn’t give a reasonable explanation for how she acquired the properties.

Katete and family friend Charles Phiri were accused of having properties worth

more than \$570,000 that were proceeds of crime. (AP)

Official denies allegation: The European Union delegation in South Sudan has

denied reports that it is working to delay elections in the country as was alleged by President **Salva Kiir**.

Deputy Head of the EU Delegation Lothar Jaschke said Thursday that his group is fully supporting an environment to enable elec-



Leader of the main opposition Democratic Alliance John Steenhuisen, (right), shakes hands with ANC’s Chairman. Gwede Mantashe, (left), on a visit to the Results Operation Centre (ROC) in Midrand, Johannesburg, South Africa on May 31. (AP)

Market Movements				31-05-2024	
		Change	Closing pts	Change	Closing pts
↑ DUBAI	- DFMGI	+6.92	3,977.93	↓	
JAPAN	- Nikkei 225	+433.77	38,487.90		
PHILIPPINES	- PSEi	+61.35	6,433.10		
PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	+884.53	75,881.88		
BRITAIN	- FTSE 100	+44.33	8,275.38		
EUROPE	- EURO Stoxx 50	+1.49	4,983.67		

Business

Partnership enhances customer experience

Gulf Bank partners with Ottu to revolutionize digital payments

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance digital solutions and provide top-tier services to its merchant clientele, Gulf Bank has announced a strategic partnership with Ottu, a leading provider of digital payments management. This partnership aims to deliver outstanding services to both large companies and small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Through this agreement, Ottu will provide Gulf Bank's merchant clients with an Online Payment Management System (OPMS) and an Application Programming Interface (API) that integrates all online sales channels and payment gateways into a single, unified dashboard.

Additionally, both existing and new Ottu clients will benefit from Gulf Bank's direct integration of electronic payment gateway services. This collaboration will enable clients on both sides to deliver exceptional services to their customers, and manage financial operations with ease.

Commenting on the partnership, Mr. Mohammad Al-Qattan, General Manager of Consumer Banking at Gulf Bank, said, "We are pleased to sign this partnership agreement, which combines Gulf Bank's extensive expertise in banking services with Ottu's innovative digital payment platform. This collaboration



Mohammad Al-Qattan and Talal Al-Awadhi during the signing of the agreement.

will allow us to mutually promote each other's services to our respective clients, as both Gulf Bank and Ottu are committed to leading innovation and providing outstanding customer experiences".

Al-Qattan highlighted that this strategic partnership marks a significant milestone in driving the ongoing digital transformation in the banking industry.

He noted that the collaboration would enable corporate clients and business owners to manage their digital payments seamlessly, enjoying a seamless a banking experience

characterized by simplicity, speed, and security. They will have access to user-friendly payment gateways and a wide range of innovative financial solutions.

"We look forward to building a robust partnership that will lead to mutual growth and success for both parties, reflecting our shared commitment to helping companies and merchants to grow and expand their businesses through innovative digital solutions. This will ensure their integration into the rapidly evolving world of digital banking services," he concluded.



Mohammad Al-Qattan and Talal Al-Awadhi stand between the teams of Gulf Bank and Ottu.

Talal Al-Awadhi, CEO of Ottu, also expressed his enthusiasm stating: "We are pleased with the strategic collaboration we have established with Gulf Bank, representing a strong partnership aimed at enhancing digital payments in Kuwait."

He added: "We aspire to go beyond simple technological development; we see this partnership as a realization of our vision to support the future of digital banking services and boost economic growth in Kuwait. By empowering

companies and business owners to achieve new heights in digital payments, we aim to provide a seamless and advanced payment experience."

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading 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.

Kuwait stresses GCC economic collaboration at Doha meeting

121st GCC economic meeting focuses on integration & growth

DOHA, June 1, (KUNA): Kuwait is eager to boost joint coordination and collaboration with GCC member states in all economic domains, Kuwaiti Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Anwar Al-Mudhaf said on Thursday.

This keenness is aligning with the visions of the GCC leaders aiming to strengthening the bonds among member states in all areas mainly economy, Al-Mudhaf said in a statement to KUNA after the 121st meeting of financial and economic cooperation committee meeting.

The meeting discussed and reviewed topics related to boosting economic and financial collaboration among GCC members, he added.

The committee was briefed on the recommendations made by the committee of GCC Central Banks' Governors, the customs union authority and the joint market committee, Al-Mudhaf, leading a Kuwaiti delegation to the meeting held earlier in the day in Doha, noted.

Also:

DOHA: The 121st GCC Financial and Economic cooperation committee meeting kicked off on Thursday in Doha, Qatar, with Kuwait's participation.

In his speech, Qatari Minister of Finance Ali Al-Kuwari said that the meeting will discuss several topics regarding joint economic work, in continuation of the findings of the Committee of Undersecretaries of the Ministries of Finance, including the recommendations submitted by the Central Bank Governors Committee, the Board of Directors of the Customs Union Authority, and the Gulf Joint Market Committee.

He expressed his aspirations that the meeting would result in a number of decisions that would enhance economic integration, reach economic unity among the GCC countries, overcome the difficulties and obstacles that obstruct the process of joint Gulf action, and increase the gains for the benefit of the citizens.

He stressed the need for the GCC countries to continue efforts to diversify economic income and raise competitiveness by updating laws and legislation to attain higher competitive positions that contribute to attracting more foreign investments.

Al-Kuwari expressed his happiness after several countries in the region, including Qatar, entered partnerships for advanced technology projects, including artificial intelligence with international companies specialized in this field.

On his part, GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi expressed his hopes that this meeting would be filled with achievements and fruitful work, praising the

efforts to reinforce cooperation and joint integration between GCC countries, following the directives of the GCC political leaderships.

"Despite the weak global economic growth, high interest rates, and geopolitical risks in the region and the world as a whole, the World Bank expects the economy of the GCC countries to grow by 3.6 percent in 2024 and 3.7 percent in 2025, outperforming major global markets," said Al-Budaiwi.

He said that the International Monetary Fund expects the total general government surplus of the GCC countries to reach 3 percent of the gross domestic product during this year, indicating the World Bank's confirmation that the non-oil sectors will lead economic growth in the countries of the GCC.

"In light of the economic challenges facing many countries of the world, the expansion of the economic and industrial aspects, innovation and artificial intelligence in the GCC countries has become a huge leap that carries many promising investment opportunities within it, especially in light of the great potential that the GCC countries enjoy," he pointed out.

The Kuwaiti delegation is headed by the Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment, Anwar Al-Mudhaf, and other senior officials.

Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Al-Budaiwi underlined Thursday the significance of the 121st GCC Financial and Economic cooperation committee meeting held in Doha earlier in the day.

Speaking in remarks to reporters after the meeting, Al-Budaiwi expressed his delight about partaking in the gathering mainly this committee is one of the key committees tasked with joint Gulf action.

The committee has played a key role in implementing the Gulf economic deal and integration highly desired by the GCC leaders, he noted.

The results of the 82nd meeting of the Central Bank Governors Committee were discussed, he said, noting that appropriate decisions were taken.

The meeting covered the results of the meetings of the GCC Customs Union Authority, he said, indicating that this body was established in order to unify joint customs work, in addition to discussing the outcomes of the meeting of the joint market committee highly desired by every Gulf citizen.

Of the paramount items discussed was to hold a major event during the annual meeting of the World Bank due in October 2024 in Washington, especially since the Gulf economy has great financial reputation and is built on clear and transparent policies, he stated.

Kuwait took part in the 121st meeting with a delegation led Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Anwar Al-Mudhaf.

Kuwait, Japan discuss climate goals

KPC emphasizes commitment to safe and sustainable energy

KUWAIT CITY, June 1, (KUNA): The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has been firmly committed to offering safe supplies and environmentally friendly derivatives to its customers at global markets, CEO of KPC Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Sabah said on Thursday.

Delivering an inaugural speech at the fourth energy transformation conference co-organized by the corporation and Japan Cooperation Center for Petroleum and Sustainable Energy (JCCP), Sheikh Nawaf Al-Sabah praised bilateral ties between Kuwait and Japan, and Japanese Embassy's support.

The corporation launched last October its strategy for enemy transformation in 2025, a roadmap of Kuwait towards sustainable future, he noted.

Aligning with Kuwait's commitment to international agreements,

the strategy aims at reducing emissions and harnessing developed techniques for cleaner oil products, he pointed out.

Meanwhile, CEO of JCCP Tsuyoshi Nakai commended ties with Kuwait, mainly the KPC.

The conference discussed practical measures to achieve climate goals through strategic initiatives of energy transformation in Kuwait, in addition to sharing practical, technical and economic expertise in this field with Japan.

The conferees also dealt with the future energy challenges facing Kuwait and Japan that related to climate and the outcomes of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28), in addition to panel discussions and other topics.

Other Voices

US congress eyes oil firms

OPEC+ maintains production cuts amid surplus oil market

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

The online meeting of OPEC+, which is scheduled to be held today, is expected to be easy and should finish within a few hours. This is because the key decisions have already been drafted, with only the customary exchange of pleasanties among members remaining. It is likely that they will agree to extend the current production cuts well into 2025, given the absence of significant signs pointing to a genuine progress in oil demand in the near future.

The organization should find solace in the fact that none of its members are calling for an increase in their quota. This is largely due to the financial constraints and conditions faced by all, as there is a collective understanding that any increase in crude oil production could exacerbate the ongoing weakening of oil prices, resulting in worse outcomes.

The decision to continue with the current crude oil production cut of 5.86 million barrels was reached in the last few days. This includes fixed agreed cuts of 3.66 million barrels and voluntary reductions of two million barrels by certain members. This arrangement is set to persist for the remainder of the year, possibly extending into the first half of 2025.

There seems to be surplus volume in the oil market, with significant volume available as spare capacity, awaiting future demand.

Today, OPEC+ finds itself unable to do anything to push the oil prices beyond \$90 a barrel, given the current range of \$82-\$84 and the absence of any signs of strengthening. Therefore, OPEC+ must accept the current situation.

The level of demand is not enough, and China is notably absent to list the volumes from the producers. Consequently, OPEC+ and other suppliers, particularly the USA, Brazil, and Canada, are actively seeking new outlets. The USA has already initiated exports, spurred on by pressure from the Congress to ramp up crude oil production.

The US Congress may probe American oil companies for potential collusion with OPEC+ to inflate prices at the expense of consumers' pockets. While oil companies rake in substantial profits, OPEC+ is struggling with trying to meet their annual deficits and balancing their incomes with oil prices at the current range of \$82-\$83 per barrel. Most of the OPEC+ members are in dire need for the oil price to reach \$90 a barrel.

Continuing with the current arrangement is the best option, as any instability within OPEC+ would be unwelcome by all members.

□ □ □

email: nafitkuwait@yahoo.com

First-ever ESG issuance out of Kuwait & first green issuance by a MENA bank in 2024 YTD

NBK pioneers sustainable finance with \$500 mln green bonds debut

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has successfully priced its first US\$500 million green bonds under its Global Medium Term Note programme.

The Green notes have a 6-year maturity and first call date after 5-years. The inaugural issuance not only marks the first Green issuance by NBK but the first of its kind out of Kuwait, marking a pivotal step towards NBK's commitment to sustainable and transition finance.

Issued in both Reg S and Rule 144A formats, these bonds represent a landmark debut in the realm of green bonds from a Kuwaiti financial institution. NBK remains the sole FI issuer in 144A format, allowing investors from the US access to the scarce paper out of the country.

Notably, they also stand out as one of the largest green issuances from conventional financial institutions in the MENA region, underscoring NBK's pioneering role in advancing sustainable financial practices.

The issuance aligns with the Group's strategy to enhance the Bank's foreign currency liquidity, improve regulatory ratios, diversify funding sources, and showcase its commitment to ESG practices and principles.

The total order book for the new issuance peaked at US\$1.5 billion (Excluding Joint lead managers interest), resulting in an over subscription of more than 3 times. This reflects global investors' strong interest and confidence in the quality of NBK's credit position and its sustainability initiatives as well as the attractiveness of Kuwait as an investment destination.

The bank's bond issuance saw strong reception from a diverse array of global investors and financial institutions. U.S. investors made up 49% of the issuance, followed by Middle East investors at 26%, UK investors at 18%, European investors at 5%, and Asian investors contributing 2% of the coverage. In terms of the bond coverage by investor type, as-



NBK headquarters

set managers accounted for 69%, followed by banks and private banks at 22%, while governments, insurance companies and pension funds made up 9% of the total investor base.

NBK continues to be the tightest non-sovereign issuer out of Kuwait. Strong investor demand provided the bank with a significant advantage in pricing the bonds, which featured a spread of 95 bps over US Treasuries, the equivalent of a 5.522% reoffer yield. The notes were issued at a discount and had a final coupon of 5.500%, fixed with semi-annual coupon payments until their first call date, followed by a floating rate of SOFR + 116 bps paid quarterly thereafter.

The bonds will be listed on the Irish Stock Exchange (Euronext Dublin). The Bank will allocate an amount equivalent to the net proceeds from the bonds exclusively to finance eligible green assets, in accordance with the Sustainable Financing Framework launched by NBK Group in 2022.

Citigroup, JPMorgan, along with HSBC and Standard Chartered acted as Global Coordinators on the issuance. Additionally, Citigroup, JPMorgan, HSBC, Standard Chartered, Goldman Sachs International, First Abu Dhabi Bank, Emirates NBD, and National

Bank of Kuwait acted as joint lead managers.

NBK Group's ambitious sustainability strategy is meticulously crafted on a robust four-pillar framework. Rooted in a profound commitment, this strategy spearheads the drive towards a sustainable economy while championing the cause of sustainable finance within the region. At the core of its strategy lies the pillar of "Responsible Banking," shaping the bank's trajectory towards achieving net-zero emissions. This fundamental principle drives the evolution of products, services, and financing solutions offered to customers, embodying NBK's unwavering dedication to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

NBK has achieved significant milestones on its ESG journey. By introducing its comprehensive Sustainable Financing Framework, NBK has elevated its commitment to driving sustainable initiatives. This framework now serves as a cornerstone incorporated throughout NBK's diverse business models, operational strategies, and corporate culture. Embracing a future of sustainability and fostering a transition toward a low-carbon economy, NBK's progressive approach harmoniously aligns with Kuwait's vision of achieving carbon neutrality by 2060.

Looking ahead to 2030, the bank is steadfast in its commitment to cultivating a sustainable asset portfolio exceeding \$10 billion. NBK has also set interim targets for its gross operational emissions (Scope 1 and Scope 2), targeting reduction of 25% by 2025.

Furthermore, NBK is committed to integrating ESG standards into its business activities and decisions and has taken significant steps towards this commitment by joining the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), the world's largest sustainability initiative for responsible business practices.

Setting new benchmarks in environmental accountability and as part of its carbon neutrality commitment, NBK has recently joined the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF) initiative.

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait–Egypt records EGP 3.185 billion net profit in Q1 2024

Bank focused on attracting top talents to join its divisions

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait-Egypt (ABK-Egypt) recorded breakthrough financial results for Q1 2024, achieving a significant increase in Net Profit by 189%, which stood at EGP 3.185 billion compared to EGP 1.102 billion over the same period in 2023. Net Interest Income increased by 71% to reach EGP 1.439 billion compared to EGP 841 million in March 2023, while Net Fees and Commissions income grew by 165% to reach EGP 477 million compared to EGP 180 million over the same period last year.

Furthermore, the Bank's Total Assets grew by 18% to reach EGP 115.159 billion compared to EGP 97.606 billion in December 2023. Total Customers Deposits increased by 15% to reach EGP 95.865 billion compared to EGP 83.064 billion at the end of 2023 and Total Gross Loans Portfolio increased by 22% to reach EGP 60.385 billion compared to EGP 49.494 billion at the end of 2023. In addition, the Non-Performing Loans (NPL) ratio was 1.65% at the end of March 2024.

Commenting on the results, Ali Marafi, Chairman of ABK-Egypt, stated, "The Bank's outstanding results over Q1 2024 reflect the remarkable success in delivering our growth strategy. It also confirms the strength of the Bank's financial position, balance

Ali Marafi:
The Bank's outstanding results over Q1 2024 reflect the remarkable success in delivering our growth strategy.

sheet, quality of credit services, sustainable finance, and liquidity growth ratios while maintaining steady growth in business volume and profitability, all paving the way to achieving further success in 2024."

Marafi added that ABK-Egypt continues to actively carry out its digital transformation plan in its operations. The Bank remains committed to staying abreast of changes and developments in the banking industry, catering to all customer needs through innovative banking solutions, products, and services.

He elaborated that ABK-Egypt is also expanding its presence across various Egyptian governorates. The Bank is focused on modernizing its branches with the latest technologies to enhance customer satisfaction and attract them, with the aim of becoming their preferred banking partner in Egypt. Emphasizing customer-centricity, the Bank prioritizes customer needs and consistently strives to deliver exceptional services 24/7.

Marafi attributed this success to the Executive Management for leading the implementation of ABK-Egypt's strategic plans and ensuring the agility of its business model in the face of changing local and global economic environments. He said, "These efforts have ensured that we are well equipped and able to build on our growth mo-



Ali Marafi, Chairman of ABK-Egypt

mentum to achieve exceptional results on all financial indicators."

Marafi added that he is confident that the Bank will continue to achieve remarkable progress and that the team will spare no effort in achieving aspired growth across all business lines and upholding its strong position in the Egyptian market. He continued, "We will remain committed to our vigilant approach in facing prevailing challenges and will continue to upgrade our digital infrastructure to gain market share in a highly competitive sector and a vastly changing technological landscape."

He also stated that ABK-Egypt is ready to engage in financing development projects in the country. The Bank aims to support small and medium enterprises, entrepreneurs, and other institutions as part of its strategic plans and its role as a responsible financial and banking institution.

Marafi stated that the Bank is working on forming partnerships with local entities to conduct training courses aimed at enhancing the skills and pro-



Khaled El Salawy

ductivity of its employees. The Bank is also focused on attracting top talents to join its divisions, thereby boosting its innovative capabilities.

He elaborated that the Bank is also developing plans to address the current economic challenges in Egypt. Furthermore, ABK-Egypt remains committed to supporting the relevant authorities in the country to meet the needs of citizens and residents, acknowledging the dedicated efforts of all parties involved in elevating economic activity to greater heights in the upcoming period.

At the end of his statement, Marafi expressed his gratitude to all regulatory authorities in Egypt, led by the Central Bank of Egypt, for their ongoing support and relentless efforts to enhance the banking sector's performance and achievements over time.

Strongly Positioned

Reaffirming the strength of the Bank's financial results, Khaled El Salawy, CEO & Managing Director of

Khaled El Salawy:
Our strong performance in Q1 grants us confidence in the capability of our team to deliver even stronger results in the future.

ABK-Egypt, said, "We are delighted to start the year with outstanding growth rates on all financial indicators, which reinforces our strong position and sets us on the right path. We were able to achieve operational excellence on all business fronts, which led to realizing outstanding financial results as Profit Before Tax shows a notable increase of 185% to reach EGP 3.558 billion by the end of March 2024, compared to EGP 1.249 billion over the same period in 2023. Our strong performance in Q1 grants us confidence in the capability of our team to deliver even stronger results in the future."

El Salawy further acknowledged the efforts of all employees for their hard work and perseverance that allowed the Bank to consistently deliver added value to customers whilst adhering to an astute risk management framework to adapt to market changes. He said, "The Executive Management remains committed to implementing our ambitious growth strategy that is pillars upon resilience and innovation and look forward to achieving more accomplishments to make 2024 another successful year for ABK-Egypt."

El Salawy also stated that the upcoming period will witness further focus on leveraging performance across all business lines as well as higher

proficiency in serving the the needs of all customer segments and speed in adapting to market changes. He clarified, "We intend to focus on achieving our strategic priorities that enable us to achieve rapid growth and an increase in our market share."

Furthermore, El Salawy mentioned that the Bank provides a range of offers and promotional campaigns throughout the year to reward customers for their trust and to entice them to utilize its diverse solutions for their ongoing financial and banking transactions.

Corporate Social Responsibility

El Salawy highlighted that ABK-Egypt is actively strengthening its social responsibility program by sponsoring various health, educational, sports, cultural, and other events and initiatives in collaboration with diverse entities and institutions across sectors. These initiatives reinforce the Bank's presence and uphold its prominent position among all segments of society.

Ambition and Awards

In continuation of ABK-Egypt's journey of success throughout the past eight years, the Bank will continue to set ambitious goals for 2024 and beyond to boost performance, expedite growth, and maximize profitability whilst maintaining governance standards and applying best banking practices.

ABK-Egypt's strong performance and noticeable growth rates have been recognized over the years through prestigious awards from various reputable entities. The most recent of which is MEED's MENA Banking Excellence Awards where ABK-Egypt was recognized as 'Best Retail Bank - Egypt' as well as 'Fastest Growing Bank in Egypt' by International Business Magazine.

BHP Group drops bid for Anglo American

LONDON, June 1, (AP): BHP Group has dropped its 38.6 billion pound (\$49.3 billion) bid for Anglo American, ending plans to create a global mining giant focused on copper and other minerals that are expected to drive the transition to renewable energy.

Melbourne, Australia-based BHP announced the decision late Wednesday, after last-minute overtures failed to ease Anglo's concerns about the complexity of the proposed deal. Anglo American earlier rejected a request to extend Wednesday's deadline for BHP to submit a formal offer.

"BHP will not be making a firm offer for Anglo American," CEO Mike Henry said late Wednesday in a statement to the London Stock Exchange.

London-based Anglo American repeatedly rebuffed BHP's bid, saying the structure of the deal created too much risk for Anglo shareholders. The proposal would have required Anglo American to spin off two South African units, Anglo American Platinum and Kumba Iron Ore, as BHP sought to focus on copper, coking coal used in steel production and potash, a widely used fertilizer.

BHP had sought to ease those concerns, saying it was willing to talk about a break fee payable by BHP if regulators in South Africa failed to approve the deal. The company also pledged to continue investing in the South African economy and maintain Anglo American's charitable commitments in the country.

But those assurances, announced on Wednesday morning in London, failed to win over Anglo American's board.

"In aggregate, BHP has not addressed the board's fundamental concerns relating to the disproportionate execution risk associated with the proposed structure and the value that would ultimately be delivered to Anglo American's shareholders," the company said.

An inflation gauge closely tracked by Fed rises at slowest pace this year

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP): A price gauge closely tracked by the Federal Reserve cooled slightly last month, a sign that inflation may be easing after running high in the first three months of this year.

Friday's report from the Commerce Department showed that an index that excludes volatile food and energy costs rose 0.2% from March to April, down from 0.3% in the previous month. It was the mildest such increase so far this year.

Measured from 12 months earlier, such so-called "core" prices climbed 2.8% in April, the same as in March. Overall inflation increased 0.3% from March to April, the same as in the previous month, and 2.7% from a year earlier, also unchanged from March's figure.

The latest figures could provide some tentative reassurance for Fed officials, who aggressively raised interest rates to fight inflation, that price pressures are easing. Chair Jerome Powell has said he expects inflation, after picking up in the first three months of 2024, to resume cooling in the coming months. Powell has cautioned, though, that the central bank needs "greater confidence" that inflation is sustainably slowing before it would consider cutting rates.

"April is a first step in the right direction, but much work remains," said Stephen Stanley, chief U.S. economist at Santander, an investment bank.

The Fed tends to favor the inflation gauge that the government issued Friday - the personal consumption expenditures price index - over the better-known consumer price index. The PCE index tries to account for changes in how people shop when inflation jumps. It can capture, for example, when consumers switch from pricier national brands to cheaper store brands.

Inflation fell sharply in the second half of last year before sticking well above the Fed's 2% target in the first few months of 2024. With polls showing that costlier rents, groceries and gasoline are angering voters as

the presidential campaign intensifies, Donald Trump and his Republican allies have sought to heap the blame on President Joe Biden.

Friday's report also showed that income growth slowed and spending cooled sharply in April, a trend that could help moderate economic growth and inflation in the coming months and potentially please the Fed.

Adjusted for inflation, after-tax incomes fell 0.1% in April, the second such drop this year. Consumer spending also declined 0.1% when adjusted for inflation, a sign that economic growth may remain modest in the current April-June quarter. The Fed will likely see such data as evidence that the economy is cooling in a way that could restrain inflation later this year.

Many Americans, particularly lower-income workers, have been pulling back on spending as they struggle to keep up with rising expenses, leading some businesses to rein in prices. In recent weeks, chains including McDonald's, Target and Walmart have announced price reductions or temporary discount deals.



Shoppers consider appliances on display in a Costco warehouse March 6, 2024, in Sheridan, Colo. On Friday, May 31, 2024, the Commerce Department issues its report on consumer spending for April. (AP)

Grocery prices eased last month, according to Friday's report, though they're still up significantly from before the pandemic. The prices of long-lasting goods also dropped, led by less expensive new and used cars, furniture and appliances. The cost of used cars has declined nearly 5% over the past year.

Gas prices, though, jumped 2.7%, just from March to April. Likewise, the costs of many services rose faster than the Fed would like. Restaurant meals, for example, increased 0.3% from March to April and are up 4% from a year earlier. Entertainment prices, including for movies and concerts, jumped 7.4% from 12 months earlier.

In the past couple of weeks, a stream of remarks by Fed officials have underscored their intention to keep borrowing costs high as long as needed to fully defeat inflation. As recently as March, the Fed's policymakers had collectively forecast three rate cuts this year, starting as early as June. Yet Wall Street traders now expect just one rate cut this year, in November.

Musk sees another big advisory firm come out again his multibillion dollar pay package

DETROIT, June 1, (AP): A second shareholder advisory firm has come out against reinstating a pay package for Tesla CEO Elon Musk that was voided earlier this year by a Delaware judge.

ISS late Thursday joined Glass Lewis in recommending against the package, recently valued by the company at \$44.9 billion but in January had a value of about \$56 billion.

Shareholders of the electric vehicle and solar panel company are voting on the package, with the results to be tabulated at Tesla's June 13 annual meeting.

ISS said in its recommendations on Tesla's proxy voting items that Musk's stock-based package was outsized when it was approved by shareholders in 2018, and it failed to accomplish board objectives voiced at that time.

The firm said that Tesla met the pay package's performance objectives, and it recognized the company's substantial growth in size and profitability. But concerns about Musk spending too much time on other ventures that were raised in 2018 and since then have not been sufficiently addressed, ISS said.

"The grant, in many ways, failed to achieve the board's other original objectives of focusing CEO Musk on the interests of Tesla shareholders, as opposed to other business endeavors, and aligning his financial interests more closely with those of Tesla stockholders," ISS wrote.

Also, future concerns remain undressed, including a lack of clarity on Musk's future compensation and the potential for his pay to significantly dilute shareholder value, ISS wrote.

Musk plays big roles in his other ventures including SpaceX, Neuralink and the Boring Company. Last year he bought social media platform X and

formed an artificial intelligence unit called xAI.

Last week the other prominent proxy advisory firm, Glass Lewis, also recommended against reinstating Musk's 2018 compensation package. The firm said the package would dilute shareholders' value by about 8.7%. The rationale for the package "does not in our view adequately consider dilution and its long-lasting effects on disinterested shareholders," Glass Lewis wrote.

But in a proxy filing, Tesla said that Glass Lewis failed to consider that the 2018 award incentivized Musk to create over \$735 billion in value for shareholders in the six years since it was approved.

"Tesla is one of the most successful enterprises of our time," the filing said. "We have revolutionized the automotive market and become the first vertically integrated sustainable energy company." Tesla is struggling with falling global sales, slowing electric vehicle demand, an aging model lineup and a stock price that has tumbled about 30% this year.

Tesla asked shareholders to restore Musk's pay package after it was rejected by a Delaware judge this year. At the time, it also asked to shift the company's legal corporate home to Texas.

Glass Lewis recommended against moving the legal corporate home to Texas, but ISS said it favored the move.

California's public employee retirement system, which holds a stake in Tesla, said it has not made a final decision on how it will vote on Musk's pay. But CEO Marcie Frost told CNBC that as of Wednesday, the system would not vote in favor. CalPERS, which opposed the package in 2018, said it will discuss the matter with Tesla "in the coming days."

Market reaction a day after ex-president was convicted

Trump Media shares swing wildly and then tumble

NEW YORK, June 1, (AP): Shares of Trump Media & Technology Group closed lower Friday after swinging wildly over the course of the day following the conviction of former President Donald Trump in his hush money trial.

After the U.S. stock markets closed Thursday, a New York jury found Trump guilty of falsifying business records in a scheme to illegally influence the 2016 election through hush money payments to a porn actor who said the two had sex.

After rising more than 2% at the opening of trading Friday, the shares ended the day down 5.3%.

The stock, which trades under the ticker symbol "DJT," has been extraordinarily volatile since its debut in late March, joining the group of meme stocks that are prone to ricochet from highs to lows as small-pocketed investors attempt to catch an upward momentum swing at the right time.

The stock has tripled this year, in the process frequently making double-digit percentage moves either higher or lower on a single day. It peaked at nearly \$80 in intraday trading on March 26. For context, the S&P 500 is up almost 10% year to date.

In a filing with the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission before going public, Trump Media warned investors of the potential pitfalls faced by the former president and the adverse affect it might have on the stock.

"President Donald J. Trump is the subject of numerous legal proceedings, the scope and scale of which are unprecedented for a former President of the United States and current candidate for that office. An adverse outcome in one or more of the ongoing legal proceedings in which President Donald J. Trump is involved could negatively impact TMTG and its Truth Social platform."

Earlier this month, Trump Media

reported that it lost more than \$300 million last quarter, according to its first earnings report as a publicly traded company.

For the three-month period that ended March 31, the company posted a loss of \$327.6 million, which it said included \$311 million in non-cash expenses related to its merger with a company called Digital World Acquisition Corp. DWAC was an example of what's known as a special purpose acquisition company, or SPAC, which can give young companies quicker and easier routes to getting their shares trading publicly, but with much less scrutiny.

Trump Media & Technology fired an auditor this month that federal regulators recently charged with "massive fraud." The media company dismissed BF Borgers as its independent public accounting firm on May 3, delaying the filing of its quarterly earnings report.

Trump Media had previously cy-

cled through at least two other auditors - one that resigned in July 2023, and another that was terminated by its board in March, just as it was re-hiring BF Borgers.

Trump was charged with 34 counts of falsifying business records at his company in connection with an alleged scheme to hide potentially embarrassing stories about him during his 2016 Republican presidential election campaign.

The charge, a felony, arose from reimbursements paid to then-Trump lawyer Michael Cohen after he made a \$130,000 hush money payment to porn actor Stormy Daniels to silence her claims of an extramarital sexual encounter with Trump in 2006. Trump was accused of misrepresenting Cohen's reimbursements as legal expenses to hide that they were tied to a hush money payment.

Trump's defense contended that the Cohen payments were for legitimate legal services.

WB approves \$250 million loan to support Ghana's financial stability

ACCRA, June 1, (Xinhua): The World Bank Group has approved a 250-million-U.S. dollar loan to support Ghana's financial sector stability program over the next five years, according to a press release issued here on Friday.

The release said the loan would help strengthen Ghana's financial sector after the government's Domestic Debt Exchange Program (DDEP) impacted some financial institutions.

The loan would address short-term shocks to improve prospects for long-term sustainable development and long-term resilience against future shocks while promoting financial stability, a key requirement to protect people and preserve jobs, it said.

The World Bank said the loan would support Ghana's Financial Sector Strengthening Strategy to recapitalize viable banks and specialized deposit-taking institutions (SDIs) impacted by the DDEP.

The financial system is critical

to the functioning of the Ghanaian economy, providing critical services to households, firms, and the government to support economic growth, according to the release.

"Through the GFSF, this project will contribute to Ghana's financial stability by providing solvency support to banks and SDIs impacted by the DDEP," said Robert Taliercio, World Bank country director for Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

"Through direct support to banks and SDIs, the project will benefit Ghana's financial sector and the economy by supporting the access of depositors and other financial consumers to savings, payments, and other core financial services provided by adequately capitalized banks and SDIs," Taliercio added.

Ghana, which has been undergoing economic hardship for years, commenced its economic reforms last May, backed by a loan of three billion dollars from the International Monetary Fund to reverse the economic downturn.

Empowering students through its educational ‘upgrade’ initiative

stc signs MoU with NUKS to support students through various initiatives

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Union of Kuwaiti Students (NUKS) – Kuwait University Branch. The strategic partnership reflects stc’s commitment to empowering the youth and providing platforms that can assist them in achieving academic excellence. The initiative comes under stc’s extensive corporate social responsibility, more specifically, the educational ‘upgrade’ initiative, which was launched to support the education system in Kuwait.

By signing the MoU and forming a strategic partnership, stc and NUKS will collaborate to deliver an array of programs and activities tailored specifically for students in Kuwait University. The programs will cover various subjects that aim to empower and educate students on various topics that can assist them in their future careers and personal lives. Considering that Kuwait University is the largest academic institution in Kuwait, the university serves as a vital hub for nurturing the country’s future leaders and innovators. As a pioneer in the Kuwaiti telecom and community, stc aims to further enhance its role in supporting students through its educational ‘upgrade’ initiative, in which the Company has organized numerous successful events throughout the years.

The educational ‘upgrade’ initiative was designed to attract and develop student talents and capabilities, providing them with diverse opportunities to gain knowledge and expertise across various subjects. The addition of the new strategic partnership with NUKS comes as a continuation of stc’s ongoing support for educational initiatives. The Company has demonstrated its commitment to developing and enhancing the education system through previous collaborations with various

educational institutions in Kuwait. These initiatives reflect stc’s commitment to investing in the future of Kuwait by providing students with the resources and opportunities to thrive.

Commenting on the partnership, Danah AlJasem, General Manager of Corporate Communications at stc, said, “At stc, we are dedicated to supporting the educational journey of Kuwaiti students. Our partnership with NUKS aligns with our mission to invest in the youth, providing them with the resources and opportunities that help them achieve their full potential. Through such programs and collaborations, stc aims to strengthen and broaden the effective platforms available for students to expand on their educational experience.”

AlJasem added, “We are proud to partner with NUKS and are excited to launch the different programs that we believe will add great value to the students at Kuwait University. When launching our educational ‘upgrade’ initiative, stc’s primary objective was to play a contributing role in the education sector. Since launching the initiative, stc successfully collaborated with numerous institutions and organizations, such as NUKS, to bring students unique and innovative learning experiences. As such, stc will continue to form strategic partnerships with parties that share the same objectives as the Company for the greater good of the community.”

Mohammad Adel Al Rushoud, President of the National Union of Kuwaiti Students – KU Branch, said, “This strategic partnership with stc will help strengthen the caliber of events and activities that we present to students in Kuwait University. We are honored to have a reputable partner like stc by our side to support our vision and the range of initiatives we aspire to host. We believe that by working together, we can significantly contribute to the overall educational experience of students at Kuwait University, preparing them to become future leaders and innovators in Kuwait.”



Danah AlJasem and Mohammad Al Rushoud mediate between the work teams during the signing of the memorandum of understanding.

‘Eidiya’ initiative reflects commitment to customer satisfaction

KIB ensures convenience with ‘Eidiya’ service across branches & ATMs

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced that its Eidiya service will be available across its nationwide network of branches and ATMs in the lead-up to Eid Al-Adha. This annual initiative aligns with the initiative launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in collaboration with the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) on the same occasion. The revival of the Eidiya service further confirms the Bank’s commitment to offering a wide range of banking services and solutions that fulfill its customers’ needs and guarantee they enjoy a convenient and rewarding banking experience. The initiative also comes under KIB’s expansive social responsibility program.

On this occasion, Faisal Al-Shuwaired, Assistant General Manager of the Retail Banking Department at KIB, said: “We are delighted to be among the first to greet the Kuwaiti government and people on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha, and what better way to celebrate than to uphold our steadfast commitment to offering our customers banking products and services that are tailored to suit their needs and match their modern



Faisal Al-Shuwaired

lifestyles. We are fully aware of the importance of making the Eidiya service available for our customers no matter where in Kuwait they are, noting that this initiative is one of many that bring us closer to our community as it allows us to share



KIB’s Eidiya service for Black segment.

their celebrations during these blessed annual festivities.”

He added: “This vital initiative enables our customers to conveniently withdraw cash in all denominations, including KD 1, KD 5, KD 10, and KD 20, to give out as Eidiya to chil-

dren, preserving one of the primary traditional features of Eid celebrations in Kuwait.”

It serves to note that KIB continues to offer its Eidiya delivery service exclusively to its Black segment customers on a 24/7 basis, in a continued bid to fulfill their needs with the utmost convenience without any waste of their time or effort. Every year, this service is met with great enthusiasm, confirming its success in realizing the aspirations of KIB’s distinguished customers. Interested KIB Black segment customers can request the exclusive Eidiya delivery service by calling the customer service hotline on 1866866 or by contacting their designated customer support agent. Moreover, they can start applying for the Eidiya home delivery service between June 2 and June 12.

Stemming from its philosophy and slogan “Bank for Life”, KIB remains steadfast in its efforts to elevate the banking experience it provides its customers across all segments by offering innovative and unique banking solutions, such as Eidiya, that exceed customers’ expectations and add convenience and luxury to their everyday lives.

AlRabeh campaign crowns 536 winners

Kuwait Finance House unveils winners of the AlRabeh draw

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of the AlRabeh draw with 20 customers winning cash prizes worth KD1,500 each for the 19th and 20th weeks of 2024.

The winners of KD 1,500 each are: Wadha Al-Harbi, Mohammad Al-Munayes, May Al-Ameeri, Eisa Al-Jadi, Faisal Al-Ibrahim, Faleh Al-Azmi, Shareefah Al-Refaei, Ahmad Al-Obaid, Mohammad Al-Muhaimmed, Najlaa Al-Harbash, Bader Al-Shammari, Obaid Al-Ajmi, Maha Al-Mutairi, Abdulaziz Al-Azmi, Mohammad Al-Baqer, Ali Al-Hajri, Ibrahim Al-Mehteb, Khuloud Al-Khulaifi, Esraa AbuObaid, Saad Al-Otaibi.

The AlRabeh campaign provides prizes and draws that offer customers several chances of winning “weekly, monthly and quarterly”. The campaign crowns 536 winners throughout the year.

The draw took place under the supervision of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The campaign is part of KFH’s ongoing efforts to offer exceptional products and services that meet customers’ aspirations, enhance the Bank’s leadership in the local and global markets, as well as reflect its excellence in offering innovative banking solutions as per the highest quality standards.

The Al-Rabeh account is a salary account available to custom-

ers wishing to transfer their salaries and manage their personal accounts. Customers can open Al-Rabeh account in any of KFH branches in Kuwait, or through the Bank’s online channels. The account can be opened in the Kuwaiti Dinar and is targeted for customers wishing to transfer their salaries and manage their personal accounts. Salary transfer is a prerequisite for customers to enter the draw provided that the transfer of salary to Al-Rabeh account is constant.

Regarding the terms and conditions of the prizes and draws, a customer is able to deposit 3 salaries during the 3 months prior to the draw, and the minimum balance of the account should not be less than KD 50 at the end of each month during the 3 months prior to the draw. Ten draws take place on a weekly basis for amount of K.D 1,500 for 10 winners each, 1 KG of KFH gold will be drawn monthly for one winner and K.D 25,000 for one winner every quarter, reaching a total number of 536 winners during the year.

KFH is keen to further meet customers’ requirements and aspirations and their increasing needs as well as offer innovative and modern services, therefore achieving customer satisfaction, which is one of the fundamentals at KFH. The Bank has achieved a qualitative shift in the level of financial services by utilizing technology.



Photos during the event.

AIU celebrates class of 2024 achievements at commencement ceremony

On May 29, American International University (AIU) celebrated the remarkable achievements of its graduating class of 2024 during the commencement ceremony held at the AIU Campus. The ceremony honored the dedication, perseverance, and academic excellence of the graduating students, highlighting their transformative journey.

The ceremony featured distinguished speakers, including Dr. Fuad Al Ali, a distinguished alumnus of Kuwait University and a leader in medical education and accreditation who delivered the commencement address, inspiring the graduates as they start their professional journeys. The keynote speech was complemented by words of wisdom from the US Ambassador Karen Hideko Sasahara, underscoring the significance of the graduates’ accomplishments and their potential to contribute positively to society.

Representing the diverse talents and accomplishments of the graduating class, two outstanding students, Mr. Mohammed AlTaweel and Ms. LuIwa AlNashmi, delivered speeches as student speakers. Mr. Al-Taweel, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical and Computer Engineering with a specialization in Automation and Robotics, demonstrated exemplary academic performance and leadership throughout his time at AIU. His innovative thinking and dedication to advancing technology have set a high standard for his peers. He emphasized on the future stating, “What we must do is to continue with even more determination and resilience. Ask yourselves, where can we make the biggest impact? What can we do to make Kuwait a better place? To make the world a better place? And know that we will find the answers. We

will find our calling.”

Ms. AlNashmi, a top student in AIU’s graduating class, majored in Electrical and Computer Engineering, consistently making the Dean’s List since 2020. Her dedication and passion for learning inspired peers and faculty alike. She reflected on the day, stating, “Today is not just a day of academic accomplishment but a celebration of resilience, growth, and collective strength.” Expressing gratitude, she noted, “I am eternally grateful to all professors who have supported and inspired us.” Ms. AlNashmi advised her fellow graduates to embrace the future, saying, “Embrace the uncertainty ahead to discover our true potential. Take risks, ask questions, and never stop learning.”

Furthermore, we proudly recognize Ms. Fatima Alsowailah, who excelled in her Bachelor of Science in Engineering and Computing with a major in Civil Engineering, maintaining a perfect GPA of 4. Similarly, Ms. Reem Abdulkarim S Alessa and AeshahAlthiab have demonstrated outstanding academic performance, each earning a GPA of 4 in their respective Biomedical Engineering majors.

As AIU celebrates the accomplishments of its graduates, the university reaffirms its commitment to encouraging excellence in education and preparing students to become leaders in their chosen fields in the future. The commencement ceremony serves as a testament to the dedication and hard work of the graduates, as well as the constant support of faculty, staff, and families.

Congratulations to AIU’s Class of 2024 on reaching this significant milestone, and best wishes for continued success in all future endeavors.

Win with your salary

536 Winners

Your chance to win is bigger

الرابح

The campaign visual



دار الآثار الإسلامية

Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah The al-Sabah Collection, Kuwait



Some photos from the 'Zeina' exhibition in Oman.

Photos by Rizalde Cayanan, courtesy of DAI

Photos by Rizalde Cayanan, courtesy of DAI
Some of the unique and distinctive art pieces on display.

Cultural fusion ... Kuwait and Oman collaborate

'Zeina' showcases splendor of Sultans of India

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: To highlight the richness of Indian Islamic civilization and display its beauties, the National Museum, in cooperation with Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah in the State of Kuwait, launched on Thursday, May 30, an exhibition entitled "Zeina: The Splendor of the Sultans of India" under the patronage of Her Highness the esteemed Lady Mian bint Shihab Al Said, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Omani Design Society.

The Kuwaiti delegation is headed by His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, one of the owners of The al-Sabah Collection (TaSC) and Director of Burgan Bank, and leading the audience from the Friends of Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah is Her Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Al-Khalifa Al-Sabah, Honorary President of Kuwait's Disabled Sports Club along with members of the royal family and friends of Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah.

The exhibition includes more than 130 unique and distinctive pieces of art from the collection of the late Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Sheikh Hussa Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah from the sisterly State of Kuwait.

A cinematic celebration of a creative genius

Muppets creator Henson gets a film as exciting as he was

By Mark Kennedy

There are moments when the spark of creation suddenly ignites and history stops. Like when the Wright brothers got a plane to fly. Or when Oreο added double filling. Maybe just as resonant was when Jim Henson cut up his mother’s green coat into odd shapes and added ping-pong balls for eyes. At that moment, he birthed Kermit the Frog, who would go on to enchant generations. Kermit’s humble beginnings are part of the engrossing and enlightening documentary “Jim Henson Idea Man” and it’s apt to start with the sweetly outgoing Kermit, who is in many ways Henson’s alter ego. The Ron Howard-directed Disney+ movie is a kinetic mix of show clips, interviews, bloopers, behind-the-scenes workplace videos, home movies and artist sketches - as animated as Henson’s Muppets, who educated millions on “Sesame Street” and entertained even more on “The Muppet Show.” Viewers are walked chronologically through Henson’s early life in rural Mississippi, his teaming up with his wife, Jane, on early late-night TV appearances, his often oddball sensibility, his self-doubt, embrace of educational TV, his marriage crumbling, the red-hot height of fame and then the fall with “Labyrinth.” It’s a definitive as you can get. We

even learn why he chose to grow a beard: acne scars. It’s also a portrait of a driven, brilliant creative man who wanted to be taken seriously as an artist and had lifelong ambivalent feelings about becoming America’s favorite preschool entertainer. Writer Mark Monroe makes it seem as if he often felt straightjacketed, like an arm stuck in a puppet’s felt body. Watchers will walk away with a deeper understanding of a man who had such an outsized presence in their childhoods. Once you realize that Henson was, in his heart of hearts, really a experimental filmmaker, you better understand the whacky, psychedelic videos on “Sesame Street” or why The Great Gonzo eats a rubber car tire to “Flight of the Bumblebee.” The voices Howard has wrangled are fantastic, from Frank Oz (the Burt to Henson’s Ernie), puppeteer Fran Brill, puppet builder/costume designer Bonnie Erickson and actors Jennifer Connelly and Rita Moreno. Henson’s own short diary entries - “attend seminar in Cambridge re: Children’s TV workshop” - are also put to good use, as is footage from his funeral, a joyous affair. One weird quibble is the decision by Howard - who apparently met Henson once, briefly - to put his interview subjects in a sterile, grey

room with brick walls. Why keep going back there to celebrate a figure who opposed formality? Frank Oz, the voice of Miss Piggy and Ernie who was Henson’s puppeteering partner in crime for decades, is wonderfully honest about his yin-and-yang relationship with Henson - “it was both a joy and a grind” - as are Henson’s children about their father, who died in 1990. “There’s an honesty and an integrity to what he was creating. He was creating it because he needed to create it,” one says. Another concludes: “He showed that creativity, artistry, metaphor can be used as a great power of good.” There are fascinating moments - like when we learn that Kermit wasn’t originally a frog at all - to ones more sublime, like how Miss Piggy made her dramatic entrance as a star in her own right. (A clip of her flirting with Morley Safer is priceless.) Viewers may shake their head when learning that all the networks initially passed on “The Muppet Show” and it had to be made in England. It’s a documentary, ultimately, about creativity and a singular mind, one who dreamed up a gaggle of friends for life: Big Bird, Cookie Monster, the Count and, of course, Kermit, stitched from an old coat. “Jim Henson Idea Man,” a Disney+ release that starts streaming Friday, is rated TV-PG. Running time: 108 minutes. Three and a half stars out of four. (AP)

Variety



This image released by Disney shows, Daisy Ridley, as Trudy Ederle, in a scene from ‘Young Woman and the Sea.’ (AP)

Film

‘Young Woman and the Sea’ celebrates Trudy Ederle

Ridley shines in stirring sports drama

By Lindsey Bahr

In August 1926, a 19-year-old New Yorker named Trudy Ederle became the first woman to swim the English Channel. Only five men had finished the 21-mile trek from Cape Gris-Nez in France to Kingsdown Beach in England before - a harrowing journey through frigid waters, unpredictable tides, currents and swarms of jellyfish. Ederle swam 35 miles that day and still beat their times by about two hours. Don’t worry if this doesn’t sound familiar. Ederle is not what you might call a household name, but she soon could be thanks to Daisy Ridley, who portrays the competitive swimmer in the inspirational new film “Young Woman and the Sea.” It is a classically made and effectively stirring sports drama for everyone that feels right on the big screen. Families with young daughters should make this a special priority - this is one of those empowering stories that (mostly) avoids cloying cliches. Just don’t try to write a school paper off of the movie or regale pals with your newfound knowledge of Ederle at a summer Olympics party. Written by Jeff Nathanson and directed by Joachim Rønning, the movie takes extensive liberties with some significant details surrounding her history-making swim. It even glosses over the fact that she won a gold medal at the 1924 Olympics in Paris in the 400-meter freestyle relay. “Young Woman and the Sea” dwells on the high hopes for Ederle, who had set over a dozen records in women’s swimming, but only won bronze medals by herself. They weren’t going to let facts get in the way of the truth - or, more accurately, a tidy story with symmetry and emotional payoff. If the whole story is what you’re looking for, the film was adapted from Glenn Stout’s exhaustively researched and widely available book “Young Woman and the Sea: How Trudy Ederle Conquered the English Channel and Inspired the World.” But we don’t go the movies for a history lesson: We go to be entertained. This story paints Ederle as a survivor, a child of German immigrants who defeated measles and then rose to defy expectations as an exceptional athlete. By 1920, white women were beginning to make headway in sports like tennis and swimming but still beholden to strict standards of “femininity.” Remem-

ber those etiquette classes in “A League of Their Own?” In this film, Trudy is assigned a misogynist coach who is more concerned with keeping her separated from the men and on a dainty diet of fruit than actually helping her to succeed with proper nourishment and advice. Nathanson’s script puts a special emphasis on Trudy’s relationship with her sister Meg (Tilda Cobham-Hervey), also a swimmer, and her mother (Jeanette Hain) who pushes for the girls to learn and helps keep them in lessons with a determined instructor, Lotie Epstein (Sian Clifford). Influence Epstein’s positive influence on Trudy is spotlighted, but the fact of her management of the women’s swimming teams during three Olympic Games in the 1920s is brushed aside in service of creating a male antagonist. Charitably, it is a shorthand way to illuminate the very real sexism they all faced. It also erases Epstein’s real accomplishments in order to do so. This is a film that’s also very, very white, though they do include one Black swimmer who bonds with Ederle as they both train for the Channel. But again, the broader history is there for those who are curious and on its own terms this is a story that will keep you engaged. Much of that has to do with Ridley, who aside from Star Wars has not been blessed with the most memorable roles. As an executive producer on “Young Woman and the Sea,” she is perhaps signaling a new phase in her career in which she has more control over things. Trudy Ederle was a great choice, a perfect melding of actor and character that also shows dimensions we didn’t get to see from Rey. A successful film like this is also a stark reminder that movies have only scratched the surface of the fascinating history of women in competitive sports. It doesn’t seem like a coincidence that more than a few of them have gone on to be classics. But maybe after this and “Nyad,” open water swimming can take a bit of a breather. “Young Woman and the Sea,” a Walt Disney Pictures release in theaters Friday, is rated PG by the Motion Picture Association for “thematic elements, some language and partial nudity.” Running time: 129 minutes. Three stars out of four.

Also:

ATLANTA: The publisher of “2000 Mules” issued a statement Friday apologizing to a Georgia man who was shown in the film and falsely accused of ballot fraud during the 2020 election. The widely debunked film includes surveillance video showing Mark Andrews, his face blurred, putting five ballots in a drop box in Lawrenceville, an Atlanta suburb, as a voiceover by conservative pundit and filmmaker Dinesh D’Souza says: “What you are seeing is a crime. These are fraudulent votes.” Salem Media Group said in the statement that it has “removed the film from Salem’s platforms, and there will be no future distribution of the film or the book by Salem.” “It was never our intent that the publication of the 2000 Mules film and book would harm Mr. Andrews. We apologize for the hurt the inclusion of Mr. Andrews’ image in the movie, book, and promotional materials have caused Mr. Andrews and his family,” the statement said. A state investigation found that Andrews was dropping off ballots for himself, his wife and their three adult children, who all lived at the same address. That is legal in Georgia, and an investigator said there was no evidence of wrongdoing by Andrews. The film uses research from True the Vote, a Texas-based nonprofit, and suggests that ballot “mules” aligned with Democrats were paid to illegally collect and deliver ballots in Georgia and four other closely watched states. An Associated Press analysis found that it is based on faulty assumptions, anonymous accounts and improper analysis of cellphone location data. Salem said it “relied on representations by Dinesh D’Souza and True the Vote, Inc. (“TTV”) that the individuals depicted in the videos provided to us by TTV, including Mr. Andrews, illegally deposited ballots.” Lawyers for D’Souza and True the Vote did not immediately respond to emails Friday afternoon seeking comment on Salem’s statement. Andrews filed a federal lawsuit in October 2022 against D’Souza, True the Vote and Salem. The case is ongoing, and representatives for Salem and for Andrews’ legal team did not immediately respond to emails asking whether the statement came as a result of the lawsuit. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: A daughter of actors Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt filed paperwork to legally remove “Pitt” from her name on the day she turned 18. Shiloh Nouvel Jolie-Pitt submitted a petition in Los Angeles County Superior Court on May 27 to change her name to Shiloh Nouvel Jolie, the Los Angeles Times reported. The third-eldest of the former couple’s six children was born in Swakopmund, Namibia, on May 27, 2006. The siblings also include Maddox, Pax, Zahara and twins Knox and Vivienne. Shiloh, who performs as a voice actor in the film “Kung Fu Panda 3,” is the first of the siblings to file a petition for a legal name change, but some of the other children have dropped public use of their father’s last name in recent years, the Times reported. Angelina Jolie filed for divorce from Pitt in September 2016 but the details of the divorce have not yet been finalized. (AP)

NEW YORK: Jennifer Lopez canceled her 2024 North American tour, representatives for Live Nation confirmed to The Associated Press. “Jennifer is taking time off to be with her children, family and close friends,” they said in a statement. The tour was to be her first in five years, in support of her first solo album in a decade, “This Is Me... Now” and its companion film. The tour was scheduled to kick off on June 26 in Orlando, Florida, and conclude in Houston on Aug. 31. Live Nation shared that attendees who purchased tickets through Ticketmaster will be automatically refunded. Lopez offered her own statement to fans on her OntheJLo website and newsletter, writing, “I am completely heartsick and devastated about letting you down. Please know that I wouldn’t do this if I didn’t feel that it was absolutely necessary.” She continued: “I promise I will make it up to you and we will all be together again. I love you all so much. Until next time...” (AP)

COPENHAGEN, Denmark: The four members of the Swedish pop quartet ABBA, who triumphed at the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest with the peppy love song “Waterloo,” on Friday got one of

the most prestigious knighthoods in Sweden from the Swedish King Carl XVI Gustaf. The Order of the Vasa was handed out for the first time in almost 50 years. Agnetha Faltskog, Björn Ulvaeus, Benny Andersson and Anni-Frid Lyngstad became “Commander of the First Class” of the order for “very



Lopez

Shiloh

outstanding efforts in Swedish and international music life.” Sweden has several orders, including the Royal Order of Serafim, which is awarded to heads of state and foreign royals, and the Royal Order of the Polar Star that is given to foreign citizens and stateless persons. The Royal Order of Vasa, which

is given in recognition of personal efforts for Sweden or for Swedish interests as well as the successful performance of public duties and assignments, was dormant until late 2022, when it was reactivated after regulations opened the Royal Orders to Swedish citizens again. Earlier this year, candidates were nominated by the public and

the Swedish government and the king approved the nominees that included the four ABBA members. The orders were awarded during a solemn ceremony at the Royal Palace in the gilded Vita Havet Assembly Rooms. The monarch handed them the order in a red box while a diploma was given to them by Queen Silvia. (AP)

Time-restricted eating trend: What you need to know

Is intermittent fasting better than counting calories?

NEW YORK, June 1, (AP): As weight-loss plans go, it's easy to see the allure of intermittent fasting: Eat what you want, but only during certain windows of time - often just eight hours a day.

Instead of counting calories or measuring portions, dieters just have to pay attention to the clock, said Courtney Peterson, a nutrition researcher at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"You have this really simple rule: Eat or don't eat," Peterson said.

The technique has skyrocketed in popularity in recent years, becoming a leading trending topic on social media.

But does time-restricted eating, a form of intermittent fasting, really help people shed pounds and boost health?

Here's what you need to know about the practice:

Intermittent fasting is a meal strategy where people switch between fasting and eating on a regular schedule, defined as at least 14 hours with no food, Peterson said. That can mean variations such as eating every other day, eating five days a week and then fasting for two days or limiting daily eating to certain hours.

Time-restricted eating, where people condense all of their eating into a daily window of 10 hours or less, is the most popular form of intermittent fasting. Diners will delay breakfast until 10 a.m. or noon and then eat dinner by 6 p.m. or 8 p.m., forgoing food the rest of the time.

The theory behind time-restricted eating is that it supports the circadian rhythm, or the body's internal clock. Spending more time in a fasting state may boost the body's processes that govern blood sugar and fat metabolism, for instance, scientists say.

Early studies in mice starting in 2012 seemed to show health benefits from time-restricted eating. Small studies in people with obesity suggested that the practice might help them lose weight and improve other health markers.

Research has shown that people on time-restricted eating plans tend to eat fewer calories, which could explain weight loss.

Results from combined studies suggested that adults with obesity who limited

their eating hours without focusing on calories naturally reduced their energy intake by 200 to 550 calories a day, losing 3% to 5% of their baseline body weight.

But a larger study of people observed over a longer period of time showed that the time restrictions alone might not matter.

A 2022 study published in the New England Journal of Medicine tracked 139 people with obesity for a year. Participants either followed a calorie-restricted diet during a certain time window or ate the same number of calories throughout the day. Both groups lost weight - 14 to 18 pounds on average - but there was no significant difference between the strategies.

"Our data right now suggests that time-restricted eating isn't any better or worse than cutting calories," Peterson said. Nor does the technique help burn more calories, she added.

Still, Peterson said, the simplicity of time restriction might be easier to maintain than a typical diet.

"Almost no one likes calorie counting," she said.

Early clinical trials with eating windows of six to 10 hours found that time-restricted eating was "generally safe," researchers reported in the journal Obesity.

But headline-grabbing research presented this year at an American Heart Association scientific session suggested that people following an 8-hour time-restricted diet had a much higher risk of death from cardiovascular disease than those who ate over 12 to 16 hours.

That research hasn't been published in a peer-reviewed journal, noted Dr. Francisco Lopez-Jimenez, of the Mayo Clinic.

But he said there is reason to be cautious. Longstanding evidence suggests that skipping breakfast may be linked to cardiovascular disease and death. People should check with their health care providers before they try restricted eating, especially if the fasting window lasts until midday.

"It's a call for pausing before you just recommend a particular diet," Lopez-Jimenez said.



A photo from the event.

Healthcare excellence honored

City Clinic Group awarded the coveted ACHSI accreditation

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: City Clinic Group, comprising City Clinic International, Mirqab, Mahboula, and Khaitan branches, proudly announces its attainment of the prestigious accreditation by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHSI) for ambulatory care centers. This achievement underscores City Clinic's unwavering commitment to excellence in healthcare delivery and patient safety.

The journey towards this accreditation commenced in 2023, marking a significant milestone in City Clinic's pursuit of elevating healthcare standards. Over the past 15 months, the dedicated teams at City Clinic have demonstrated unwavering dedication, professionalism, and adherence to rigorous standards set by the ACHSI. The accreditation is effective from 3rd April 2024 across all centers in Kuwait.

"We are immensely proud to receive the ACHSI accreditation, in fact the first polyclinic in Kuwait, which reflects our continuous efforts to uphold the highest standards of healthcare," said (Dr.Noushad KP, Managing Director), at City Clinic Group. "This accomplishment is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our staff across all branches. It reaffirms our commitment to providing exceptional healthcare services to our community."

The ACHSI accreditation is a mark of distinction in the healthcare industry, signifying compliance with stringent international standards and best practices. It demonstrates City Clinic's ability to deliver safe, high-quality care while continuously striving for improvement and innovation.

As part of the accreditation process, City Clinic underwent comprehensive assessments, including evaluations of clinical governance, patient safety, risk management, and quality improvement initiatives. The successful attainment of this accreditation reaffirms City Clinic's position as a leading healthcare provider in the region.

Key highlights of City Clinic's accreditation journey include:

- **Patient Safety:** City Clinic implemented comprehensive measures to ensure the safety of patients, including infection control protocols, patient identification processes, and fall prevention strategies.
- **Patient Rights:** City Clinic upheld the rights of patients, including the right to informed consent, confidentiality, and dignity in care.
- **Patient Education:** City Clinic provided patients with relevant information and resources to empower them to make informed decisions about their healthcare.
- **Emergency Response Plans:** City Clinic developed and implemented robust emergency response plans to effectively manage and respond to emergencies within the healthcare facility.

- **Disease Management Guidelines:** City Clinic established evidence-based guidelines for the management of various diseases, ensuring standardized and effective care for patients.
- **Medication Safety:** City Clinic implemented medication safety protocols to reduce the risk of medication errors, including medication reconciliation processes and safe storage practices.
- **Ethical Practice:** City Clinic upheld ethical principles in healthcare delivery, including respect for patient autonomy, beneficence, and non-maleficence.
- **Risk Management:** City Clinic conducted risk assessments and implemented risk management strategies to identify and mitigate potential risks to patient safety and quality of care.
- **Audits:** City Clinic conducted thorough internal audits to ensure compliance with ACHSI standards and identify areas for improvement.
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** City Clinic established and monitored KPIs to measure performance across various aspects of healthcare delivery, including patient satisfaction, clinical outcomes, and efficiency.
- **Statutory Compliances:** City Clinic remained committed to upholding all relevant statutory requirements and regulations, ensuring adherence to legal standards in healthcare provision.
- **Staff Welfare and Safety:** City Clinic prioritized the welfare and safety of its staff, providing ongoing training, support, and resources to ensure a safe and conducive working environment.

City Clinic Group acknowledges and thanks the following insurance partners - Al Ahleia, Cigna, GlobeMed, Metlife, MSH International, NAS, National Life&General Insurance,Next Care, NOW Health Insurance, Protection, SAICO, Warba Insurance and Wapmed - for their continued commitment to excellence and dedication to enhancing healthcare delivery. The collaborative efforts between City Clinic Group and these esteemed insurance partners have facilitated seamless access to healthcare services for insured individuals, enabling them to receive timely and quality medical care across City Clinic's various branches.

City Clinic Group extends its heartfelt gratitude to all staff members, patients, and stakeholders for their unwavering support throughout this journey. With the ACHSI accreditation, City Clinic reaffirms its commitment to providing excellence in healthcare services and looks forward to continuing its mission of enhancing the health and well-being of the communities it serves.

US confirms third bird flu case this year

Benefits and risks debated

MDMA faces scrutiny as FDA considers approval for PTSD

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP): Federal health regulators are questioning the safety and evidence behind the first bid to use MDMA, the mind-altering club drug, as a treatment for PTSD, part of a decadeslong effort by advocates to move psychedelic drugs into the medical mainstream.

The Food and Drug Administration posted its initial review of the drug Friday, ahead of a meeting of outside advisers who could help decide whether MDMA - currently illegal under federal law - becomes the first drug of its kind to win U.S. approval as a medication.

In their assessment, FDA scientists said that patients who received MDMA and talk therapy showed "rapid, clinically meaningful, durable improvements in their PTSD symptoms." But they also called the research "challenging to interpret," and questioned how long the benefits might last.

They said it's difficult to know how much of the improvement came from MDMA versus simply undergoing intensive therapy, and also raised several safety concerns, including MDMA's heart risks and potential for abuse.

medical use.

MDMA, also known as ecstasy or molly, is the first in a series of psychedelics that are expected to be reviewed by the FDA in coming years. It's part of a resurgence of research into the potential of psychedelics for hard-to-treat conditions like depression, addiction and anxiety. MDMA's main effect is triggering feelings of intimacy, connection and euphoria.

Companies are studying MDMA, psilocybin, LSD and other mind-expanding drugs for numerous mental health problems.

Studies

Until recently, psychedelic research was mainly funded by a handful of nonprofit advocacy groups, including Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, or MAPS. The company seeking approval for MDMA, Lykos Therapeutics, is essentially a corporate spinoff of MAPS, which conducted all the studies submitted for FDA review.

In two studies, patients received MDMA as part of an intensive, four-month course of talk therapy lasting more than a dozen sessions, only three of which involved taking the drug. The drug is thought to help patients come to terms with their trauma and let go of disturbing thoughts and memories.

The approach was studied in nearly 195 adults with moderate-to-severe PTSD who were randomly assigned to undergo the therapy with MDMA or with a dummy pill. Following treatment, patients who received MDMA had significantly lower PTSD scores and were more likely to be in remission.

But FDA reviewers noted that the vast majority of patients correctly guessed whether they had received MDMA or a dummy pill, making it "nearly impossible" to maintain the so-called "blinded" objectivity considered essential for high-quality drug research. The agency also questioned how long the drug's benefits might last.

NEW YORK, June 1, (AP): Another Michigan farmworker has been diagnosed with bird flu, the third human case associated with an outbreak in US dairy cows, health officials said Thursday.

The dairy worker reported a cough, congestion, sore throat and watery eyes. The other two patients had only eye symptoms, health officials said. The farmworker was given antivirals and is recovering from respiratory symptoms, health officials said.

The risk to the public remains low, although farmworkers exposed to infected animals are at higher risk, health officials said. The Michigan cases occurred on different farms and there are no signs of spread among people, officials said.

"Risk depends on exposure, and in this case, the relevant exposure is to infected animals," the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a statement.

A human case with respiratory symptoms was not unexpected - flu-like symptoms have been seen in past cases of people who got other strains of bird flu from poultry. But it does raise the odds of possible spread, said the CDC's Dr. Nirav Shah.

"Simply put, someone who's coughing may be more likely to transmit the virus than someone who has an eye infection" he said.

In late March, a farmworker in Texas was diagnosed in what officials called the first known instance globally of a person catching this version of bird

flu - H5N1 Type A - from a mammal.

Last week, Michigan officials announced the second U.S. case. That worker developed eye symptoms after "a direct splash of infected milk to the eye," Michigan health officials said in a statement.

Neither of the Michigan workers was wearing face shield or other personal protective equipment, which "tells us that direct exposure to infected livestock poses a risk to humans, and that PPE is an important tool in preventing spread among individuals who work on dairy and poultry farms," Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, the chief medical executive of Michigan's health department, said in a statement.

There are 100,000 to 150,000 workers on US dairy farms, the United Farm Workers estimates.

Many dairy workers are reluctant to wear protective gear such as masks when working with cows in "some of the wettest conditions imaginable," said UFW spokeswoman Elizabeth Strater. The organization has called for better access to equipment such as face shields - and for more information from employers about the risk of infection on the affected farms.

"Most dairy workers are not that aware of how to protect themselves," Strater said.

About 350 people in the U.S. have been monitored for bird flu symptoms this year, including at least 220 in Michigan, health officials said.

South Sudan receives first batch of malaria vaccine

JUBA, South Sudan, June 1, (Agencies): South Sudan got its first batch of a new malaria vaccine on Friday from the U.N. health agency, an important step in efforts to battle a disease that is the biggest killer of children in this African country.

The more than 645,000 doses of the R21 malaria vaccine received will be distributed across 28 counties with the highest malaria burden.

In 2022, South Sudan had an estimated 2.8 million cases and 6,680 deaths from malaria. It has one of the region's highest rates of malaria incidence, with an estimated 7,630 cases and 18 people dying of the disease every

day, according to the World Health Organization.

South Sudan's health minister, Yolanda Awel Deng, said the new vaccine, alongside other preventive measures such as insecticide-treated bed nets and timely access to medical care, will be instrumental in a push to eliminate malaria.

Others also welcomed the development.

UNICEF South Sudan Representative Hamida Lasseko said that the "governments' proactive engagement and health systems' preparedness are pivotal in facilitating the successful rollout of the immunization program."

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Hurricanes go top

Defending champion Crusaders miss Super Rugby Pacific playoffs

LAUTOKA, Fiji, June 1, (AP): The seven-time defending champion Crusaders have been the big losers in the last, hectic scramble for playoff places in Super Rugby Pacific, missing out on the quarterfinals for the first time in a decade.

The Christchurch-based Crusaders won their last regular-season match 43-10 against Moana Pasifika on Friday to move inside the top-eight playoff zone for the first time this season.

But they were shuffled back to ninth place when the Fijian Drua took a bonus point from a 40-19 win over the Melbourne Rebels in Lautoka on Saturday. The Drua moved up to seventh, reaching the quarterfinals

for the second consecutive year, and the Rebels held on to eighth to qualify for the playoffs for the first time in their 14-year history.

But there was a somber note to the achievement after Rugby Australia announced on Thursday that it will

RUGBY

not renew the Rebels' license to play in Super Rugby next season because of financial instability.

Saturday's match was the Rebels' last regular-season match in Super Rugby and the club will cease to exist as soon as their playoff run ends.

The Crusaders needed the Rebels

to beat or draw to progress to the playoffs themselves.

The Crusaders issued a statement announcing a review of the season when their match in Fiji ended.

"Our review is focused on performance and ensures we don't make any rash decisions," said chief executive Colin Mainsbridge. "We want the team and organization to operate to the standard we expect and that every opportunity to improve is looked at."

The Hurricanes also took a bonus point from a 41-14 win over the Dunedin-based Highlanders in a match played in gale-force winds in Wellington.

The bonus point broke the top-of-

the-table tie between the Hurricanes and the Auckland-based Blues, who beat the Hamilton-based Chiefs 31-17 on Saturday.

The Blues and Hurricanes came into the last regular-season round tied on 51 points. The Hurricanes' bonus-point win took them to 56 points while the Blues finished with 55 after missing a bonus point when the Chiefs scored a last-minute try.

Winger Saleisi Rayasi scored a hat-trick of tries and backrower Du'Plessis Kirifi claimed two in an impressive Hurricanes win. Top-seeding means they will retain home advantage as long as they stay in the playoffs.

"I guess we just want to be able to control our own destiny and we're

looking no further ahead than next week," Hurricanes captain Jordie Barrett said.

The Blues seemed to have a bonus point under wraps when they led 31-7, by five tries to one, midway through the second half. But the Chiefs finished strongly with tries from Josh Ioane and Quinn Tupaea.

"We can be happy with the win but our goal was to win with the bonus point and unfortunately we didn't do that," Blues captain Patrick Tuipuloto said. "It's very disappointing for us, especially with the way we wanted to play. We didn't do it consistently, only in patches."

The match in Lautoka was the most momentous of the round, decid-

ing the playoff fate of the Drua, Rebels and Crusaders.

The game was locked 19-19 at halftime but the Drua shocked the Rebels with three tries immediately after the break to take it by six tries to three.

The Rebels scored three first-half tries, including a penalty try for a professional foul by Drua scrumhalf Frank Lomani, who received a yellow card in his first match back from a six-week suspension.

Lomani atoned by scoring one of the Drua's second-half tries while winger Waqa Nalaga scored a try in each half. Center Iosefo Masi also scored a try to top an outstanding performance.

US denies visa to Nepalese

Lamichhane to miss Twenty20 World Cup

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP): Nepal's ace leg-spinner Sandeep Lamichhane was ruled out of the Twenty20 World Cup on Friday after his U.S. visa application was rejected for a second time.

The Nepalese government and its

to give travel permission (visa) to national player Lamichhane to play the World Cup."

The Nepalese cricket association suspended Lamichhane after he was arrested in 2022 over an accusation of the rape of an 18-year-old woman. He was found guilty in January this year but was acquitted on appeal because of "lack of evidence" and the cricket association allowed him to resume playing cricket.

Nepal, placed in Group D, opens its T20 World Cup campaign against Netherlands on June 7 in Dallas before taking on Sri Lanka at Lauderdale, Florida on June 11. It will then travel to the West Indies for its remaining two group games.

CRICKET

cricket authorities took up Lamichhane's case after his visa was first rejected last week.

The Cricket Association of Nepal said in a statement that "despite taking necessary initiatives ... the U.S. Embassy has expressed its inability

Teammates to study for diploma

FIFA unites World Cup winners & club execs

ZURICH, June 1, (AP): World Cup and Champions League winners are learning about the soccer industry at FIFA alongside club founders and front-office leaders.

All were teammates in the classroom this week at the soccer body's headquarters in Zurich to study all fields of the industry for the FIFA Diploma in Club Management.

Graduates this week included Juan Mata and Angel City founder Julie Uhrman, while Cesc Fàbregas, Esteban Cambiasso and Radamel Falcao are among the latest intake for the 18-month course.

Now in its third edition, the FIFA course aims to give former stars a pathway to careers off the field and better educate soccer industry executives about the players' perspective.

"When we learn something it is a great feeling. These courses give us a chance to do that," said Mata, who won a World Cup title with Spain and a Champions League with Chelsea.

As a co-founder in 2017 of the socially progressive Common Goal charity, Mata's smarts already were established and he was expected to have an impactful post-playing career.

However, former Argentina and Inter Milan midfielder Cambiasso cautioned in one session that some industry executives "think that if a football player develops his brain, that is a danger."

Fàbregas is studying on the course while coaching in Italy at Como, newly promoted to Serie A after a 20-year absence, where he is also a minority investor.

He was hired at Como by Dennis Wise, who played for Chelsea and England, was an executive at Newcastle and is part of the FIFA selection board for the course and

helps teach it.

"There are many of us that are capable of doing it and we have shown we are capable," Wise said. "You are never too old to continue to learn."

FIFA started its diploma course in 2021 following the UEFA masters course taught since 2015 by the European soccer body with input from universities in England and France.

This generation of newly-retired international players typically acquired enough wealth to have serious investment options and no need to work again. Mata has a stake in Formula One team Alpine.

"We do have exceptional lifestyles," acknowledged Tim Cahill, an advisor to Qatar's soccer federation and board member at Qatar-owned Belgian second-tier club Eupen.

SOCCER

Wise suggested the motivation for FIFA students to be educated was "not about money. It is about success and achieving certain things." While FIFA was teaching its course this week, a former teammate of Mata and Fàbregas in the 2010 World Cup title squad was put under investigation in Spain over his business interests in soccer.

Gerard Piqué, who did not study on the FIFA or UEFA courses, is implicated in the case of disgraced official Luis Rubiales linked to taking Spanish Super Cup games to Saudi Arabia.

FIFA's course focuses on club operations rather than national federation issues and a keynote lecturer is Arsene Wenger, its head of global development after 22 years as Arsenal coach.



Como coach and minority investor Cesc Fàbregas attends the FIFA Diploma in Club Management 2024 at the Home of FIFA on May 27, 2024 in Zurich, Switzerland. World Cup and Champions League winners have been learning about the soccer industry this week at FIFA alongside club founders and front office leaders. Behind Fabregas is Angel City president Julie Uhrman. (AP)

UNCASVILLE, June 1, (AP): Brionna Jones scored a season-high 22 points, Alyssa Thomas added 15 points, 14 assists and nine rebounds, and the Connecticut Sun held off the Dallas Wings 74-72 on Friday night for their seventh straight win to start the season.

Connecticut is the only unbeaten team in the WNBA and stretched its best opening mark in franchise history. The 2018 and '21 teams each started 5-0.

The Sun built a 59-50 lead heading into the fourth quarter before Sevgi Uzun's 3-pointer gave the Wings a 72-69 lead with 1:20 remaining. Thomas scored the next four points and Tyasha Harris split a pair of free throws to cap the scoring with 1.2 seconds left.

BASKETBALL

Following a Wings' timeout, Uzun cut through the lane for the inbound pass, but Harris knocked the ball out of her hands to end it.

Jones was 10 of 14 from the field. Thomas finished 6-of-11 shooting and scored eight of the Sun's 15 points in the fourth quarter. DeWanna Bonner, who reached 7,000 career points in a 70-47 win against the Phoenix Mercury on Tuesday, added 12 points.

Liberty 90, Mystics 79

In New York, Sabrina Ionescu scored 24 points, Kayla Thornton added 20 and New York used a late scoring run to defeat Washington.

Breanna Stewart had 18 points, 15 rebounds and five assists and Jonquel Jones scored 16 for the Liberty. Every New York starter played at least 30 minutes and they combined to score 86 points.

The Mystics led twice in the game - both times in the fourth quarter. Aaliyah Edwards made it 75-74 for the Mystics at the five-minute mark of the fourth. Soon after, the Mystics were assessed a technical foul for delay of game and Breanna Stewart made two free throws to give New York the lead for good.

Washington went 2 1/2 minutes without scoring. New York added a couple of 3-pointers and the Liberty made six free throws in the final 90 seconds to seal it.

Ariel Atkins scored 15 points, Shakira Austin 12, Myisha Hines-Allen 11 and Jade Melbourne also had 11 for Washington.

Dream 78, Aces 74

In College Park, Allisha Gray had 24 points, Rhyné Howard scored 16 and Atlanta beat Las Vegas.

After A'ja Wilson made a step-back basket from 16 feet away to give the Aces a 60-56 lead with 7:57 left to play, Atlanta went on a 9-2 run to take the lead for good. Gray made a pair of 3-pointers wrapped around a three-point play by Cheyenne Parker-Tyus and the Dream led 65-62 with 5:41 left.

Gray made a pair of foul shots to extend the lead to 69-64 before Clark buried a 3-pointer to get Las Vegas within two.

Wilson made two foul shots with 1:56 remaining to again reduce Las Vegas' deficit to two. The Dream missed a shot and then fouled Jackie Young with 1:25 left to play. Young made 1 of 2 to get the Aces within 71-70 but Atlanta held them off at the foul line in the final minute.

Wilson scored 28 points, Kelsey Plum 19 and Young 15 for the two-



Phoenix Mercury forward Natasha Mack goes up for a shot as Minnesota Lynx forward Alanna Smith (left), defends during the first half of a WNBA basketball game in Minneapolis. (AP)

President hosts Kansas City Chiefs

Biden breaks unofficial rule about headwear

WASHINGTON, June 1, (AP): President Joe Biden welcomed the Kansas City Chiefs to the White House on Friday, lauding the back-to-back Super Bowl champion team for its sportsmanship on and off the field, and breaking an unofficial political rule about headwear. He tried on a Chiefs helmet the team gave him as a gift.

"It was cool to see him put the helmet on," quarterback Patrick Mahomes told reporters after the celebration on the South Lawn. "We didn't expect that."

Coach Andy Reid speculated that Biden might have been the first president to wear an NFL helmet.

"You all witnessed it. It's history being made," said Reid, who appeared with Mahomes.



President Joe Biden wears a Chiefs helmet as he speaks during an event with the Super Bowl-champion Kansas City Chiefs on the South Lawn of the White House to celebrate their championship season and victory in Super Bowl LVIII. (AP)

At the sun-splashed celebration, the Democratic president recalled that he had said during the Chiefs' visit last year that the team is building a "dynasty." He noted the struggles they encountered last season on the road to another Super Bowl trophy and said, "I don't think anybody's doubting you now."

Of the doubters, Biden joked, "I know what that feels like."

He referred to Mahomes as the "comeback king, not kid" and said he'll never forget watching the game as the Marine One presidential helicopter brought him back to the White House that Sunday night.

The Chiefs came from behind in overtime to defeat the San Francisco 49ers 25-22 to win the Super Bowl in Las Vegas in February. The Chiefs de-

feated the Philadelphia Eagles to win the Super Bowl in 2023.

They have won the Lombardi Trophy three times in the past five years.

Biden also lauded the players for their actions in February when gunfire rang out during Kansas City's parade and rally honoring the team. A mother of two was killed, and others injured.

"We saw pride give way to tragedy," Biden said, adding that, "amid the chaos this team stepped up."

"This team is exceptional," the president said, adding that the country as a whole must "do more to stop the tragic shootings before they happen."

Kicker Harrison Butker, who made headlines by assailing some of Biden's policies during a commencement

speech earlier in May, accompanied his teammates to the White House. Butker recently defended his comments, saying he had no regrets about expressing his beliefs.

In the May 16 speech at Benedictine College, a private Catholic liberal arts school in Atchison, Kansas, Butker congratulated the women who were receiving degrees and said most of them were probably more excited about getting married and having children.

He criticized some of Biden's policy positions, including the president's condemnation of the Supreme Court's reversal of its 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion nationwide. Abortion is an issue that Biden and his fellow Democrats hope to use to their advantage in the November elections.

time defending-champion Aces.

Lynx 95, Mercury 71

In Minneapolis, Alissa Pili scored 20 points, Napheesa Collier posted her fifth double-double of the season with 14 points and 11 rebounds, and Minnesota cruised to a victory over Phoenix, handing them their fourth straight defeat.

Pili sank 7 of 9 shots from the floor,

including all four of her 3-pointers.

Dorka Juhász had 13 points and Cecilia Zandalasini scored 12 for Minnesota. Courtney Williams pitched in with 11 points and five assists.

Kahleah Copper hit three 3-pointers and scored 21 to lead the Mercury. Diana Taurasi added 14 points and Sophie Cunningham scored 13. Natasha Mack had 10 rebounds to go with eight points.

Alanna Smith scored seven of her eight points in the first quarter to help the Lynx take a 21-12 lead.

Williams sank two 3-pointers and Bridget Carleton had one to cap an 11-2 run to give Minnesota a 55-26 lead with 1:12 left before halftime. Copper scored the final five points before the break and the Mercury trailed by 24.

BOXING

"My body is in better overall shape than it has been since the 1990s, and I will be back to my full training sched-

Tyson's fight with Paul has been postponed after Tyson's health episode

MIAMI, June 1, (AP): Mike Tyson's fight with Jake Paul has been postponed after the 57-year-old Tyson fell ill on a flight last weekend.

Tyson and Paul said Friday that they will announce a new fight date next week. They were scheduled to meet July 20 in Arlington, Texas.

Tyson became nauseous and dizzy during the final hour of a flight from Miami to Los Angeles last Sunday, and his plane was met by first responders

who attended to the former heavyweight champion. Tyson's camp attributed the episode to an ulcer problem.

"During a follow up consultation on Thursday with medical professionals on his recent ulcer flare-up, the recommendation is for Mike Tyson to do minimal to light training over the next few weeks and then return to full training with no limitations," the fight's promoters said in a statement.

Tyson hasn't fought professionally since June 2005, but he has been

training regularly for several years. He fought Roy Jones Jr. in an entertaining exhibition in Los Angeles in November 2020.

ule soon," Tyson said in the statement. "Jake Paul, this may have bought you some time, but in the end you will still be knocked out and out of boxing for good. I appreciate everyone's patience and can't wait to deliver an unforgettable performance later this year."

Texas boxing officials have sanctioned Tyson's meeting with Paul as a legitimate bout with eight 2-minute rounds and unusually heavy gloves. Tyson will turn 58 before the fight, which

was scheduled to be streamed on Netflix in what's likely to be a massive payday for both fighters.

Tickets already purchased for the fight, which was to be held at the Dallas Cowboys' home stadium, will be honored on the new fight date, promoters said. The rescheduled fight is also expected to be in Arlington. The 27-year-old Paul is a YouTube star who has forged a successful prizefighting career mostly by taking on mixed martial artists and journeymen boxers.

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The Special Olympics badminton delegation.

Kuwait badminton team for disabled receives honors for Gulf success

The delegation of the Kuwait badminton team for the disabled received a distinguished reception after winning three medals (gold, silver, and bronze) at the Gulf Badminton Competition for the Special Olympics. This event was organized by the UAE Special Olympics in collaboration with the Regional Presidency of the Special Olympics for the Middle East and North Africa and supervised by the International Federation of Badminton.

Welcoming the delegation were Sheikha Sheikha Al-Abdullah, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Al-Tommooh Club, Dirar Al-Rabah, and Rehab Boursli, National Director of the Special Olympics. The Kuwait was represented by Muhammad Bourbaa and Fawzan Al-Qassar in both singles and doubles competitions, Sheikha Al-Hindi in singles, with Coaches Rawan Al-Foudari and Mustafa Hassouna, and adminis-

trator Hazem Al-Tarkait. The delegation was led by Hanaa Al-Zawawi, head of the Kuwaiti Special Olympics. Sheikha Sheikha Al-Abdullah praised the remarkable achievements of the champions, congratulating them, the technical and administrative staff of the Kuwaiti Special Olympics, and the Al-Tommooh Sports Club. She expressed her joy at the continued success of the champions in all regional and international forums.

Top clash as Al-Qadisiya and Kazma battle for second spot

By Khaled El Anzi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: The showdown between Al-Qadisiya and Kazma, scheduled for 4:30 pm today in the seventh round of the Premier Handball League, promises to be intense. With Al-Qadisiya currently holding second place in the league standings with 29 points, just one point behind Kazma in third place, the match is pivotal for both teams. The rivalry is expected to be fierce as Al-Qadisiya aims to secure a podium finish on the 9th of this month.

HANDBALL

Meanwhile, Kazma is determined to reclaim second place in what has become a closely contested battle between the two teams. The competition for the runner-up position has been likened to a “game of chairs,” with both teams vying for dominance. In other matches today, fifth-placed Al-Arabi (23 points) will face league leaders Kuwait (36 points) at 6:00 pm, followed by a clash between fourth-placed Al-Salmiya (25 points) and sixth-placed Burgan (18 points) at 7:30 pm. These matches will take place at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex. In the previous round held two days



A file photo of Al-Arabi and Al-Qadisiya players in action.

ago, Kuwait defeated Burgan 34-28, Al-Qadisiya secured a victory over Al-Arabi with a score of 30-36, and Al-Salmiya and Kazma ended in a 21-21 draw.

Osama Al-Musameh, the administrator of the Al-Qadisiya team, expressed confidence in his team’s technical and mental preparedness for the crucial match against Kazma. Despite experiencing a dip in performance recently, the team has focused on rectifying weaknesses and capitalizing on strengths to return to winning ways.



A file photo of school kids displaying their prizes.

Kuwait School Sports Federation honors top athletes

KUWAIT CITY, June 1: Under the patronage and presence of Dr. Mathal Al-Huwaila, Minister of Social Affairs, Labor, Family and Childhood Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, the Kuwait School Sports and Higher Education Federation is organizing an event to honor morning activities and gifted centers for the 2023-2024 sports season. The ceremony will take place today at 5 pm in the Al Baraka Hall of the Crowne Plaza Hotel - Farwaniya. Faisal Al-Maqseed, Chairman of the Federation’s Board of Directors, emphasized that the ceremony will honor all distinguished players from the sports season, including those involved in morning activities organized by the Federation in collaboration with the Ministry of Education’s technical guidance for physical education for both boys and girls. He noted that this season saw a significant increase in player

participation, as well as the involvement of male and female coaches and administrative staff in clubs and federations. This aligns with the federations 2021-2026 strategy and vision, which focuses on discovering and developing school talents to supply clubs and federations. This season marked the third year of the strategy, highlighted by the federation’s first external participation in the Arab Championship for School Sports held in Cairo last November, where notable results were achieved. This was preceded by participation in the World University Championships in China. The President of the Federation expressed gratitude to Dr. Mathal Al-Huwaila for her sponsorship and immediate approval of the ceremony, viewing her support as a significant incentive for the School Federation’s activities in the coming period.

Alcaraz, Swiatek push through for 2nd week at Roland Garros

Rybakina and Sabalenka reach fourth round

PARIS, June 1, (Agencies): Two-time Grand Slam winner Carlos Alcaraz defeated Sebastian Korda in straight sets to reach the last 16 of the French Open for a third successive year.

The Wimbledon defending champion, playing for the night session for the first time this year at Roland Garros, dispatched the American 27th seed 6-4, 7-6 (7-5), 6-3 to set a round of 16 clash against the winner between another American player Ben Shelton, seeded 15th, and Canada’s 21st seed Felix Auger-Aliassime, with the pair’s match was interrupted by the rain when Auger-Aliassime led by 5-4 in the first set. 21-year-old Alcaraz reached the semifinals in Paris last year, where eventual champion Novak Djokovic defeated him, and beat Korda at the same stage in the clay major in 2022.

The No.3 seed hit 38 winners (Korda totaled just 20) to 27 unforced errors (Korda had 40), and landed 78 percent of his first serves. “It was a really good match. I think I played really, really, well, much better than the previous match. This was something that I really wanted: to get in the rally, to play good points, feeling (like) myself on the court, and I think I did that really well,” Alcaraz said on the court.

Italy’s Matteo Arnaldi delivered the biggest upset of the day as the unseeded player toppled 6th seed Andrey Rublev to reach the round of 16 at Roland Garros for the first time.

Over three impressive sets in which he barely stumbled, the 23-year-old handed Rublev his second straight third-round exit in Paris, 7-6(6), 6-2, 6-4.

It was the first victory over a top 20 opponent on clay or a top 10 rival at a major for the world No.35. “It’s incredible. I think I have played the best tennis for sure of my life, I’d say, because to do it for three sets - it’s easy to do in two sets in a normal tournament, but in a Slam playing three sets at this level I think I wasn’t even expecting,” said Arnaldi, who will next face clay specialist Stefanos Tsitsipas for a place in the quarterfinal.



Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus plays a shot against Spain's Paula Badosa during their third round match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris. (AP)

The Greek world No.9 eased through with a straight-set 6-3, 6-3, 6-1 win over Chinese Zhang Zhizhen.

World No.2 Jannik Sinner advanced by defeating Pavel Kotov 6-4, 6-4, 6-4. The Australian Open champion, who will overtake Novak Djokovic as world number one if he reaches the final, will next take on home hope Corentin Moutet who came from behind to defeat Sebastian Ofner in four sets.

Sinner, who has only lost two matches so far this year, is yet to drop a set in the tournament.

In the women’s competitions, two-time reigning champion Iga Swiatek celebrated her 23rd birthday by brushing aside Marie Bouzkova 6-4, 6-2 to reach the last 16. The four-time major title holder had to save a match point to avoid an upset defeat by former world No.1 Naomi Osaka in the second round, but seemingly already back to the way she was used to in the match against the world No.42 from the Czech Republic.

“Honestly, I think this is the advantage of having one day off because sometimes it’s harder to, you know, keep the routine or something, but this time actually it helped because yesterday I wasn’t even practicing, also because of the rain,” Swiatek said. “So, yeah, I could reset, and I

could also rest physically because this match (against Osaka) was for sure demanding. I felt good today. Like, I can just proceed with having a solid tournament even though I was in trouble against Naomi for sure.” Elsewhere, Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova ended the run of Frenchwoman Chloe Pacquet, winning 6-1, 6-3. America’s third seed Coco Gauff claimed a commanding 6-2, 6-4 victory over Dayana Yastremska.

Grand Slam winners Elena Rybakina and Aryna Sabalenka

TENNIS

reached the fourth round of the French Open in straight sets .

The 2022 Wimbledon champion Rybakina, seeded fourth, beat Elise Mertens of Belgium 6-4, 6-2. Two-time Australian Open champion Sabalenka followed her on Court Philippe Chatrier and won 7-5, 6-1 against Paula Badosa.

“It’s tough to play your best friend,” Sabalenka said. It certainly was for a while.

After trailing 5-3 in the first set, Sabalenka won eight straight games to take complete control.

“I was just feeling myself and trusting my shots,” Sabalenka said.

The former No. 1-ranked Sabalenka’s best performance at Roland Garros is reaching the semifinals while Rybakina - the only player from Kazakhstan to win a major title - has one quarterfinal appearance here.

Rybakina dropped her serve in the seventh game of the first set but broke straight back to tie her match at 4-4.

Russian-born Varvara Gracheva of France advanced to the fourth round of a major for the first time after downing Romanian Irina-Camelia Begu 7-5, 6-3.

In other men’s third-round play, 21st-seeded Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime beat No.15-seeded American Ben Shelton 6-4, 6-2, 6-1. Their match resumed after being interrupted by rain on Friday evening.

Auger-Aliassime has never reached the quarterfinals here, and must get past two-time major winner Carlos Alcaraz of Spain.

For the fifth consecutive day, rain interrupted play.

‘Khaba to stay for another season’

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAAIT CITY, June 1: Al-Arabi Club President, Abdelaziz Ashour, has confirmed that Moroccan professional, Hamza Khaba, will remain with Al-Akhdar for a second consecutive season, despite receiving numerous offers from other clubs.

SOCCER

Ashour emphasized Khaba’s preference to continue with the team.

Addressing rumors about Salmiya Club’s interest in Khaba, Ashour denied any agreed exchange deal involving Sultan Al-Anzi and Fawaz Ayed, affirming that Al-Anzi will stay with Al-Arabi for two more seasons.

In other updates, striker Bandar Al Salama is set to travel to Germany for further treatment, with a decision on surgery pending after medical examinations.

Ashour disclosed that Al-Arabi will commence training in July, followed by a foreign camp in Turkey starting July 18. He praised the Football Association’s decision to limit the squad to 25 players.

Expressing renewed confidence in the administrative and technical staff, Ashour confirmed the continuity of Ali Jawad as head of the football staff and coach Nasser Al-Shatti. Despite concerns over Hamad



Sultan Al-Anzi

Al-Qallaf’s red card record last season, Ashour expressed confidence in the player’s ability to overcome this issue, with discussions underway to find a solution.

Regarding player acquisitions, Ashour ruled out any deals for local players, citing confidence in the current squad, particularly the young talents.

Meanwhile, it has been confirmed that Moroccan trio Walid Essabar, Ayman Sfaxien, and Algerian defender Imad Eddine Boubakar will depart after the season. Nigerian player Anayo Iweala awaits medical examination results due to recurring injuries.

Ashour also honored the under-17 (junior) team for clinching the league title last season.

Best of the Rest

Wei clinches 4th title: The Taklimakan Rally concluded on Saturday in Aksu, Xinjiang, with Chinese driver Han Wei taking the overall car title and French rider Neels Theric won the motorcycle category.

The rally’s final special stage took place on the same day, covering a short distance of 23 kilometers. With overall rankings largely determined before the stage began, racers completed the stage in a relatively relaxed manner.

Last year, Han had to withdraw from the championship race early due to mechanical issues. This year, partnering with navigator Ma Li, Han demonstrated exceptional strength, winning the championship with a time of 25 hours, 52 minutes, and 7 seconds.

This victory marked his fourth title (2015, 2016, 2018, 2024) in the Taklimakan Rally. Sun Ping and Liao Ming from Shaanxi Yunxiang Club finished second, while Fan Gaoxiang and Yue Caili from Hebei Qian’an Jiujiang Auto and Motorcycle Sports Club took third place. (Xinhua)

China beat Thailand: China eased past Thailand 25-23, 25-17, 25-18 in the FIVB Women’s Volleyball Nations League (VNL) here on Saturday.

Thailand dropped from 12th to 13th in the world rankings after the match with China.

China’s outside hitter Li Yingying scored a game-high 23 points, followed by Zhu Ting with 17 and Yuan Xinyue with 13. Thailand’s Kokram Pimpichaya collected a team high 15 points.

“We learned from yesterday’s game (against Japan) and made targeted adjustments, which was quite successful today, but there were still some ups and downs during the game, and hopefully we can do better tomorrow,” said Li in an interview.

Earlier in the day, Japan, which upset China 3-1 on Friday, beat the Dominican Republic 3-1, while Brazil edged Italy 3-2. (Xinhua)

New protocols adopted to support players

LONDON, June 1, (AP): Soccer’s international governing body is implementing new measures designed to further support the well-being of players and coaches during pregnancy and after the birth of their children.

The FIFA protocols give both players and coaches a minimum of 14 weeks of paid maternity leave, and a minimum of eight weeks paid leave for those who adopt a child younger than 2. There is also a minimum eight

weeks paid for women who are non-biological parents of newborns.

While the players’ maternity leave was previously adopted in 2020, the new rules extend it to coaches, non-biological and adoptive mothers.

The protocol goes into effect on Saturday. It was approved last month by the FIFA Council.

Ellis led FIFA’s technical study group for the Women’s World Cup last year in Australia and New Zealand.



Canada’s Felix Auger-Aliassime plays a shot against Ben Shelton of the U.S. during their third round match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris. (AP)



Bono makes a save during the penalty shootout.

Sports

Latest sports scores at — <http://sports.arabtimesonline.com>

Al-Hilal crowned King's Cup champions

Heartbreak for Ronaldo as Al-Nassr end season without silverware

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia, June 1, (AP): Cristiano Ronaldo left the field in tears after his Al-Nassr team lost the King's Cup final to Al-Hilal and ended a second successive season in Saudi Arabia without any major silverware.

Al-Hilal won a penalty shootout 5-4 to decide a final that finished 1-1 after extra time in Jeddah. Ronaldo, who signed for Al-Nassr in December 2022, fell to the ground in despair and was consoled by teammates at King Abdullah Sports City.

The loss came just four days after the end of a Saudi Pro League season in which Al-Nassr finished second, 14 points behind Al-Hilal. There was some consolation then as Ronaldo scored twice to set a new league record of 35 goals in a season.

SOCCER

There was no such comfort this time at the end of a tempestuous encounter that saw two goals and three red cards.

Aleksandar Mitrovic headed Al-Hilal ahead after seven minutes. It got worse for Al-Nassr early in the second half when goalkeeper David Ospina, formerly of Arsenal and Napoli, was sent off for handling the ball outside the area.

Al-Hilal was also reduced to 10 men after 86 minutes when Ali Al-Bulaihi was red-carded for an apparent headbutt on Sami Al-Najeti.

Seconds later, Ayman Yahya headed Al-Nassr level.

Al-Hilal had another defender sent off in the 91st minute after Kalidou Koulibaly, signed from Chelsea last summer, received a second yellow card. There were no goals in extra time and the final went to a shootout. Ruben Neves missed Hilal's first attempt as did former Manchester United defender Alex Telles for Al-Nassr.

Ronaldo, who earlier hit the post with a spectacular overhead kick, converted his penalty but could only watch as Bounou, a hero of Morocco's march to the semifinals of the 2022 World Cup, saved twice, the first from Ali Al-Hassan and then from Al-Nemer.

The saves gave Hilal an 11th King's Cup triumph while Ronaldo and his team will have to wait until next season.

Italian Guido Finga, CEO of Al-Nassr Club, confirmed the future of Portuguese star Cristiano Ronaldo with the team despite the loss. He stated, "Cristiano will continue with us. His blood has turned yellow. Like-



The winners of the King's Cup Al Hilal.

Rodríguez stars as NYC routs Earthquakes 5-1

NEW YORK, June 1, (AP): Santiago Rodríguez scored the go-ahead goal in the 80th minute and substitute Alonso Martínez added a hat trick from there as New York City FC pulled away for a 5-1 victory over the San Jose Earthquakes at Yankee Stadium on Friday night, matching a club record with its fifth straight win.

Neither team scored until Hannes Wolf took a pass from Rodríguez in the 50th minute, netting his third goal of the season to give New York City (9-5-2) the lead.

The advantage lasted until San Jose rookie Hernán López fed rookie Amahl Pellegrino for the equalizer in the 53rd. It was the fifth goal for Pellegrino and the first assist for López.

wise, the team's technical director, Luis Castro, will continue to lead the team," highlighting the positive results under his leadership.



Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman hands the King's Cup to Al Hilal President Fahad bin Nafel.

Kuwait intensify training for India 'showdown' in Kolkata

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

BANKOK, June 1: The Kuwaiti national team is currently undergoing training sessions at STP Stadium in Bangkok, Thailand, as part of its preparatory camp which commenced last Wednesday. It is set to depart for the Indian city of Kolkata the day after tomorrow, Tuesday, to face the India next Thursday in the fifth round of the



Kuwait coach supervises the Blues training session.

SOCCER

first group of qualifiers for the Joint World Cup and Asian Cup qualifiers. Following this, it will return home to host Afghanistan on June 11 in the sixth and final round.

Under the guidance of Portuguese national team coach, Rui Pinto, Al-Azraq is engaged in rigorous training twice a day, morning and evening, aiming to reach peak readiness levels to secure a positive result and enhance its chances of qualifying for the next stage.

Currently occupying fourth place in the group standings with 3 points, Al-Azraq faces tough competition as the Qatari team has already secured qualification by topping the group with 12 points, while the Indian team holds second place with 4 points on goal dif-

ference from Afghanistan. Meanwhile, India's Croatian national team coach, Igor Stimac, has been motivating his players ahead of their encounter with the Kuwaiti team. Stamic emphasized the importance of the upcoming match, stating, "We have two goals, the first of which is to win the match considering it as the penultimate match in the qualifiers." He urged his players to give their all on the field, emphasizing the need for meticulous preparation and unwavering commitment to secure victory for their country.

Best of the Rest

Kimmich slams survey: Germany midfielder Joshua Kimmich has slammed as "absolutely racist" a survey and its findings that one in five of his compatriots would prefer more white players on the national team.

The poll of 1,304 randomly selected participants was commissioned for national broadcaster ARD's documentary "Unity and Justice and Diversity", which is to be shown on Wednesday. Some 21% of those surveyed said they would prefer it if more players with white skin were playing for Germany.

"Anyone who's grown up with soccer knows this is absolute nonsense. Soccer in particular is a good example of how you can unite different nations, different skin colors and different religions," Kimmich said Saturday. "That's what our team is all about. I would miss a lot of players if they weren't here. This is absolutely racist and has no place in our changing room." (AP)

Julen signs new deal: Athletic Club Bilbao have assured the future of Copa del Rey winning goalkeeper Julen Agirrezabala with a new contract until the end of June 2027.

The new two-year contract ends doubts over Agirrezabala's future, given that his previous deal was due to expire in the middle of 2025.

The presence of Spain international Unai Simon at Athletic Club means the 23-year-old former Spain U-21 international has only made 15 appearances for Athletic Club in La Liga, but he has constantly impressed in their starting line-up in the Copa del Rey in the last two seasons. (Xinhua)

Juventus rejoin ECA

Real Madrid, Barcelona's hopes of a so-called European Super League are dealt fresh blow

LONDON, June 1, (AP): A so-called European Super League was dealt a fresh blow on Saturday when Italian giant Juventus decided to the body of clubs opposing the controversial breakaway competition.

Juventus had been with Real Madrid and Barcelona in pushing for a new competition that would replace the Champions League. But it will rejoin the European Club Association of 600 teams, which has fought strongly against attempts to create a Super League.

"They are back. It is great," ECA chairman Nasser Al-Khelaifi said. "The club has an amazing history. We are proud they are back to their family. I also call the others to be back."

Madrid and Barcelona are now the only two clubs trying to form a proposed Super League, which has already had one failed launch after angry fan protests in 2021.

Madrid president Florentino Perez has been determined to push ahead with plans to create a breakaway, despite the majority of Europe's leading clubs rejecting the idea. His position appeared to be strengthened in December when the Court of Justice of the European Union ruled that soccer's governing bodies UEFA and FIFA acted contrary to EU competition law by blocking attempts for a breakaway league.

Super League organizers quickly revealed plans for the new competition, which Perez described as a "great opportunity to improve Euro-

pean club football."

But, crucially, he did not have the backing of many of the leading clubs, which faced a furious backlash from fans when attempting to form a breakaway in 2021.

SOCCER

Back then a group of 12 of Europe's most storied clubs announced plans to create a new Super League. Proposals for the 20-team elite tournament would have seen 15 top sides protected from relegation.

Madrid, Barcelona, Atletico Madrid, Manchester United, Manchester



Bolivia's Jose Sagredo (left), pushes Mexico's Jordan Carrillo (right), during the second half of an international friendly soccer match in Chicago. Mexico won 1-0. (AP)

City, Liverpool, Arsenal, Chelsea, Tottenham, Juventus, AC Milan and Inter Milan were part of the original breakaway group.

Madrid, Barcelona and Juventus were eventually left as the only clubs carrying on the fight before Italy's record 36-time champion, Juventus, withdrew last year.

Al-Khelaifi, who is also president of Paris Saint-Germain, spoke after a meeting of the ECA Executive Committee in London ahead of Saturday's Champions League final between Madrid and Borussia Dortmund.

He said he wanted Madrid and Barcelona to follow Juventus' lead, saying a Super League of two teams "doesn't make sense."

"They can play two teams, home and away for 20 matches?," he said. "It is not for anyone's interest. They are going against their (own) interests today."

Madrid is going for a record-extending 15th European Cup when it faces Dortmund at Wembley Stadium.

"I heard yesterday they (Madrid) talked about the love story between Madrid and the Champions League. On the other hand they want to destroy the Champions League. You love or you hate. You want to destroy the thing you hate?" Al-Khelaifi said.

Al-Khelaifi said he would welcome discussion with Madrid and Barcelona about rejoining the ECA.

"It's really important for us and for them," he said.