



stc
Page 11



ABK
Page 9

CLOSING STATEMENT TO HIGHLIGHT PALESTINIAN CAUSE

Kuwait joins OIC Summit to tackle regional issues

Egypt media cite progress in Gaza truce talks



MoFA photo
Gambian President Adama Barrow welcomes Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, serving as the Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, on the sidelines of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's 15th session.

JEDDAH, May 4, (Agencies): The 15th session of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation kicked off its 15 session at the top level in the Gambian capital Banjul on Saturday, with participation of the Representative of His Highness the Amir (of the State of Kuwait) Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya.

The OIC Summit, held under the motto, "boosting unity and solidarity through dialogue for sustainable development," coincides with critical conditions prevailing across the Arab and Muslim nations, namely the Palestinian arena.

The two-day summit tackles issues and challenges facing the member states at economic, humanitarian, social and cultural levels, including issues concerning the youth and families, sciences, technologies, media, society and Muslim minorities in addition to diverse legal, financial and administrative topics.

Moreover, the agenda tackles the hatred rhetoric, Islamophobia, boosting intra-nations dialogue and various other matters.

OIC Secretary General Hissein Taha is scheduled to present during the meeting reports shedding light on the OIC activities and ventures that had been executed since the previous session.

The summit is expected to conclude with a statement expressing stands on the issues in the agenda namely the Palestinian cause and the Jerusalem issue.

On Thursday, the OIC members' foreign ministers held a meeting discussing the session papers and the prospected final communique of the summit.

Meanwhile, Gambian President Adama Barrow on Saturday received the Representative of the State of Kuwait Amir His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, on the sidelines of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's 15th session, currently held in the Gambian capital Banjul.

Continued on Page 5

Opinion

Minister of Commerce, visit Free Zone to see cause of devastation

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

KUWAITIS have many concerns. Without a doubt, HH the Prime Minister-designate and the future Cabinet should take into consideration the concerns of the people.

The Cabinet and its leadership must benefit from past experiences, so as not to repeat the old approach that led to many crises in the country.

Among these concerns are the weakness of the national product due to dependence on unstable sources and lack of other elements that help in maximizing national production, especially in the industrial and food infrastructure, as well as strategic services and partnerships with major institutions in this field.

For example, in the industrial sector, the basis is to create a partnership between the public and private sectors. The Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) system came about for this purpose. However, the system was exposed to many obstacles on the part of officials in several ministries. For instance, the industrial establishment's license is renewed every year, while factories in other countries are given 49 years renewable.

When the Constitution was drawn up and the National Assembly was freely elected, everyone was singing that this would be a good omen for the country's development projects.

The first goal is to diversify sources of income. This is an urgent need for the new Kuwait, as the country lacks components and resources that would fully wean it off oil dependence.

For this reason, some laws were put in place, but obstacles were erected soon through the parliamentary or ministerial practices whose owners sought to share projects. This was a devastating blow to the industrial, agricultural and service renaissance.

Therefore, Kuwait, up to this day, imports even tissue paper and basic medical supplies like gauze and others that can be manufactured locally, while food security has become news headline.

Meanwhile, in the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain pharmaceutical and manufacturing industries have been established. They achieved food security and many others that meet their needs and they have started exporting their products. This is due to the fact that public administration has a solid foundation -- to work for the State, not in the interest of individuals. For this reason, industrialists were given all the incentives and financial facilities.

The BOT system has become a source of diversification of national income, which reached very high levels in recent years. Indeed, all other countries invest in infrastructure through the BOT system.

In Kuwait, the opposite happened, as envy began to work in the hearts of some ministers and parliamentarians. What happened to one of Kuwait's most famous landmarks could be an example, as one of the commerce ministers tried to destroy this large project. I mean, 'The Avenues'.

Nevertheless, the patience and wisdom of those in charge of the project, and their commitment to work within the purview of the law thwarted the sabotage efforts. Thanks to them for preserving this great landmark.

In light of absurd, ill-considered and improvised procedures, it is impossible to continue working. For example, if someone makes a mistake, everyone is punished; while logic says that accountability should be for him alone. In this manner, everyone benefits through development, instead of exaggerating the situation as it has been happening to us.

Continued on Page 5

Email: ahmed@aljarallah.com

Follow me on:



ahmedaljarallah@gmail.com



Some of the participants pose for a group photo at the inaugural Youth Speak Forum.

KUNA photo

Kuwait hosts youth forum, empowering future leaders

Asrar Al-Ansari, the official spokesperson for the Public Authority for Youth, emphasized the significant role of youth in advancing sustainable development, particularly amidst the escalating challenges posed by climate change and persistent social disparities worldwide. Speaking at the inaugural Youth Speak Forum hosted by AIESEC Kuwait at the American University, Al-Ansari underscored the pivotal responsibility of young

people in driving positive change and fostering a more equitable and environmentally conscious society.

In her address, Al-Ansari emphasized that the pursuit of sustainability is not merely an option for today's youth but a fundamental duty towards themselves and future generations. She highlighted the forum's critical discussions on strategies to promote sustainable development, enhance educational opportunities,

create viable employment prospects, and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Al-Ansari emphasized the innovative potential of young people in driving progress across these fronts, citing their capacity to influence policy, drive technological innovation, and catalyze societal change.

Continued on Page 5

Other Voices

'Safeguard press freedom'

By António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations

The world is going through an unprecedented environmental emergency which poses an existential threat to this and future generations.

People need to know about this -- and journalists and media workers have a key role in informing and educating them.

Local, national and global media outlets can highlight stories about the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and environmental injustice.

Through their work, people come to understand the plight of our planet, and are mobilized and empowered to take action for change.

Media workers also document environmental degradation. And they provide evidence of environmental vandalism that helps to hold those responsible to account.

It is no surprise that some powerful people, companies and institutions will stop at nothing to prevent environmental journalists from doing their jobs.

Media freedom is under siege. And environmental journalism is an increasingly dangerous profession.

Dozens of journalists covering illegal mining, logging, poaching and other environmental issues have been killed in recent decades.

In the vast majority of cases, no one has been held to account.

UNESCO reports that in the past fifteen years, there have been some 750 attacks on journalists and news outlets re-

porting on environmental issues. And the frequency of such attacks is rising.

Legal processes are also misused to censor, silence, detain and harass environmental reporters, while a new era of climate disinformation focuses on undermining proven solutions, including renewable energy.

But environmental journalists are not the only ones at risk.

Around the world, media workers are risking their lives trying to bring us news on everything from war to democracy.

I am shocked and appalled by the high number of journalists killed in Israeli military operations in Gaza.

The United Nations recognizes the invaluable work of journalists and media professionals to ensure that the public is informed and engaged.

Without facts, we cannot fight mis- and disinformation. Without accountability, we will not have strong policies in place.

Without press freedom, we won't have any freedom.

A free press is not a choice, but a necessity.

Our World Press Freedom Day is very important. And so, I call on governments, the private sector and civil society to join us in reaffirming our commitment to safeguarding press freedom and the rights of journalists and media professionals around the world.



Guterres

Kuwait medical team conducts '40 surgeries' in Gaza hospitals

GAZA, May 4, (KUNA): The medical team of Kuwait Society for Relief announced conducting 40 surgeries in the first day of work in the Gaza Strip at the European Gaza Hospital in Khan Yunis and Kuwait specialized hospital in Rafah City, south of the Gaza Strip.

Speaking to KUNA in a press statement, head of medical delegation Omar al-Thuwaihi said the team would carry out more surgeries in Gaza in the coming days, adding that a relief convoy carrying about five tons of food supplies and needs for children was sent to northern Gaza.

Meanwhile, head of relief projects at the society Mahmoud al-Mesbah said the second Kuwaiti team is offering aid to displaced people, adding that this team distributed clothes to children.

It is a unique act in its kind, as a charitable event is organized to

help families choose what they like, he stated.

Water and hygiene bags will be handed out to refugees, who are suffering badly from the lack of potable water, in addition to giving hot meals and food parcels to people, he told KUNA in remarks.

Kuwait's team is present all the time to offer aid to Gazans, in cooperation with partners, he noted.

Kuwait's relief team arrived in Gaza via Rafah Border Crossing on Tuesday to support Palestinian people's steadfastness and health sector by conducting surgeries for patients and those injured.

Meanwhile, around 26 trucks laden with Kuwaiti aid arrived in the Jordanian capital Amman en route to the Gaza Strip, the country's Red Crescent Society (KRCS) chief Maha Al-Barjas said on Thursday.



Amiri Diwan photo
Representative of His Highness the Amir offers condolence to the President of the UAE.

Amir representative conveys condolences

KUWAIT CITY, May 4, (KUNA): The Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, arrived in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates, on Saturday.

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak offered condolences on the demise of Sheikh Tahoun

Continued on Page 5

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to the Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud on the demise of Prince Badr bin Abdulmohsen bin Abdulaziz.

His Highness the Amir sent a cable of identical content to the Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

The Caretaker Prime Minister, Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, also sent a cable of solace to the Saudi Monarch Prince Salman and the Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman. (KUNA)

CAIRO: Egyptian Finance Minister Mohammad Maait said Saturday his country's economy is now well-placed to fulfill future financing needs amid tough regional and international challenges due to Europe war, war on Gaza and Red Sea tensions.

The minister's remarks came after Fitch Ratings had revised the Outlook on Egypt's Long-Term Foreign-Currency (LTFC) Issuer Default Rating (IDR) to Positive from Stable, and affirmed the IDR at "B-". (KUNA)

TEHRAN: Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has detained several individuals suspected of involvement in deadly "terrorist attacks" on military and police facilities in the south-eastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan, the semi-official Tasnim news agency reported on Saturday.

The arrests took place early Saturday at a religious school in Pashamagh village of Rask County, which served as a hide-out for the suspects, Tasnim reported, without revealing the specific number of the arrestees. (Xinhua)

BAGHDAD: Four mountain climbers died in northern Iraq's Sulaimaniyah province after being swept away by flash floods, the local civil defense authority reported on Friday.

The victims were part of a 12-person mountaineering group that encountered sudden floods in the Qaradagh region, within the semi-autonomous Kurdistan area. (Xinhua)

LONDON: Sadiq Khan, the Labour Party's mayor of London, romped to victory Saturday, securing a record third straight term at City Hall, on another hugely disappointing day for the U.K.'s governing Conservatives ahead of a looming general election.

Khan won a little over a million votes, or nearly 44% of the vote, more than 11 percentage points ahead of his main challenger, the Conservative Party's Susan Hall. He did particularly well in inner London but struggled in several outer boroughs. (AP)

— Earlier Story Page 6

NEW DELHI: At least five university students including a female, aged between 20 and 22, died in a road accident in north India on Saturday, a local police officer told Xinhua over phone.

The accident occurred in the northern hilly state of Uttarakhand at around 05:00 local time, when a car carrying the students skidded off the road and fell into a deep gorge. One injured female student was admitted to a local hospital. Her condition is said to be serious.

Local villagers rushed to their help. Later, local police and personnel of the local fire department reached the spot. (Xinhua)

Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:37 Asr 15:21
 Sunrise .. 05:04 Maghrib .. 18:26
 Zohr 11:45 Isha 19:50

Local

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

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Rather hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate freshening at times southeasterly wind, with speeds of 10-45 km/h.

Weather

By Night: Mild, relatively humid especially over coastal areas and partly cloudy with light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 15-50 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery later on and a chance for rising dust over open areas.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	34	24
Kuwait Airport	34	24
Abdaly	35	20
Jahra	36	24
Salmiyah	27	25
Nuwaisib	36	25
Wafra	37	23

Rising water levels threaten sites: Dr Al-Mulla

'Protect cultural heritage from climate change'

PARIS, May 4, (KUNA): Kuwait has called for rapid intervention and suitable measures to protect global cultural heritage from climate change impacts. Delivering Kuwait's speech before the sixth World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue in Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, Kuwaiti Permanent Representative to the UNESCO Ambassador Dr. Adam Al-Mulla referred to famous heritage sites that face imminent risks due to the rising water level. Al-Mulla said without rapid intervention and proper actions these invaluable cultural assets are subject to damage and loss that could not be fixed.

The connection between preserving heritage, climate change and cultural dialogue

is robust evidence of a relationship between humans and environment, he said.

This is shown by enhancing dialogue to have a link among views, and varied traditions and values as well as daily practical experiments, he stated.

He made a presentation on UNESCO action in this matter that led, in light of efforts of states parties, experts and international organizations, to developing and updating a political document on integrating climate change into practices to preserve heritage.

The updated document on preserving global heritage was approved in 2023 after in-depth discussions.

Combating climate change requires a multidimensional action and multilateral cooperation, with the active participation of UNESCO with international stakeholders, Al-Mulla noted.

Al-Mulla also called for actual and deep cooperation with UNESCO sectors through good programs and practices.

He hoped that this dialogue could be a start to enhance action internationally in order to preserve heritage in the face of climate change.

The forum is a unique platform of international organizations and conferences as well as prominent leaders to partake in discourse on urgent global issues.

Plan to develop streets, services, infrastructure in 'Shuwaikh' area

Rise in traffic, visitors calls for redesigning: Municipal Council

Bid to prevent misuse

MoH to regulate dispensing of psychotropic drugs via 'Raqeb'

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: In a proactive move to regulate the circulation of psychotropic drugs and curb their misuse, the Ministry of Health has announced the implementation of an electronic platform named 'Raqeb' which automatically connects all licensed private pharmacies, facilitating the dispensation of medicines and psychotropic substances, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Dr. Ahmad Manawer Al-Saeed, the Undersecretary of Health for Pharmaceutical Control Affairs, highlighted that this initiative aligns with Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Abdel-Wahab Al-Awadhi's decision No. 469 of 2023.

It mandates the establishment of an electronic system to govern the dispensing of these substances, aiming to enhance control

measures and prevent repeated dispensing to the same patient.

Through the Raqeb platform, the Drug Inspection Department monitors the dispensing of prescriptions for psychotropic medications, ensuring compliance with regulations.

Pharmacies are required to activate their accounts on the platform and provide necessary data regarding prescriptions and related documents for these medications.

The Ministry's objective is to prevent repeated dispensing, enhance control over the quantities received and dispensed, and monitor any violations. Offenders against laws and ministerial decisions governing pharmacy practices and drug circulation will be referred to legal authorities.

Al-Saeed emphasized the Ministry's commitment to ensuring the correct distribution of medications and limiting their misuse, particularly psychotropic drugs. This measure aims to safeguard individual health and promote community well-being.



Dr. Al-Saeed



The MoU signing ceremony.

Opportunities enhanced

Dhaman, KUKE ink MoU to boost Arab-Polish trade, investment ties

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Arab Investment & Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (Dhaman) and Poland's National Export Guarantee agency (KUKE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of insuring trade, investment and finance, thus leading to developing trade, economic and investment relations between Arab countries and Poland.

The agreement was signed in the capital of the Norway, Oslo, on the sidelines of the "Berne Union" meetings, by Dr. Hassan Hamdan, Director of Dhaman's Operations, commissioned by its Director General Mr. Abdullah Ahmad Al-Sabeeh, and on behalf of KUKE both Janusz Władyczak, President & Chief Executive Officer, and Katarzyna Kowalska, Deputy Chief Executive Officer & Chief Risk Officer of KUKE.

Agreement

On this occasion, Mr. Abdullah Ahmad Al-Sabeeh, Director-General of Dhaman, explained that under the agreement, Dhaman which established in 1974 as a joint Arab body owned by the governments of Arab countries and four Arab financial institutions, would cooperate with the Polish agency to provide trade and finance insurance against political and trade risks as part of a comprehensive system that targets increasing trade exchange between Arab, Polish and other markets in the region and the world.

Al-Sabeeh also welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, emphasizing the commitment of the two entities to boosting cooperation and exerting joint efforts to enhance growth opportunities for trade and investment ties. He underlined Dhaman's keenness to strengthen its role in supporting the economies of member states only out of

its commitment to backing up trade and investment exchange and economic cooperation between Arab states and countries in the region and the world.

Al-Sabeeh elaborated that there were huge growth opportunities for the economic relations between Arab countries and Poland, especially with both sides' different production structures. He added that the Polish economy ranks fifth in Europe and its production structure encompasses food, agriculture and manufacturing, engineering and mining industries, while Arab countries are a key source of energy products, raw materials and several industrial products.

On his part, Janusz Władyczak, President & Chief Executive Officer of KUKE, which has more than 31 years of experience in insurance, trade finance, guaranteeing and discounting solutions that provide the needed liquidity for the growth of thousands of Polish companies, said that the MoU would contribute to boosting Poland's efforts aimed at increasing trade and economic relations with Arab countries, which have the world's sixth largest economy estimated at \$3.5 billion.

Władyczak stated that KUKE has a portfolio with a number of regional countries, most recently insuring some export deals for Egypt and Saudi Arabia, hoping that the agreement with Dhaman would play a part in expanding joint operations of KUKE and Dhaman. He added that this could be realized by including more deals and markets, based on Dhaman's expertise and ability to better access information about markets, clients and assess risks more efficiently.

He noted that wider covering would thus be offered to Polish exporters and investors, especially as KUKE has monitored business growth in regional markets, particularly Oman, Algeria and Jordan.

By Enas Awad

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The members of the Municipal Council Sharifa Al-Shalfan and Abdullatif Al-Daei yesterday presented a proposal to redevelop the Shuwaikh Industrial Area by focusing on redesigning and developing the streets, sidewalks, public spaces, services, and infrastructure in the Shuwaikh Industrial Area No. 1, provided that it includes, at least, Streets No. 4, 5 and 6.

The preamble of the proposal referred to the issuance of a previous decision by the Municipal Council regarding the Shuwaikh Craft and Commercial Service Area to create some activities for the area. Some of its plots, especially the Shuwaikh Industrial Area 1, became characterized by a commercial and recreational nature, which led to a change in the type of its patrons.

It stressed that the proposal coincides with this change, as it was supposed to redevelop the area's streets, sidewalks, and public spaces surrounding its buildings according to an integrated vision for their development, and to avoid problems of pressure on services.

The preamble stated that the absence of development resulted in random solutions that lack methods of urban and aesthetic development in the region, especially vehicular traffic with the increasing number of visitors to the area and activities that encourage movement in the area on foot. Therefore, it has become necessary to redesign it in accordance with this change.

The proposal presents a modern, sustainable vision that includes ten basic components, which are re-studying vehicle routes, traffic, and parking, infrastructure adapted for pedestrians and any other means of transportation, pedestrian crossing paths, ease of access for people with special needs, shades, planting and greening, a unified character for directional signs, urban furniture and lighting, as well as specifying the materials used and finishing materials for streets, sidewalks, urban furniture, etc., and any other components intended to serve the project.

Concluded

The proposal concluded by emphasizing the necessity of coordination with the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, and other relevant authorities.

Meanwhile, the Municipal Council, under the chairmanship of Abdullah Al-Mahri, is scheduled to convene its meeting on Monday. Among the key agenda items for discussion are the objections raised by Minister of Municipality, Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan, concerning the Municipality's proposed amendments to the regulations and requirements for private housing in building codes, reports Al-Jarida daily.

During the session, the Municipality will deliberate on Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's appeal to incorporate a commercial component into the oil sector complex building in Shuwaikh.

Additionally, considerations include requests to allocate state property to plots in Kuwait City's Al-Qibla area (Block No. 1), as well as the Ministry of Interior's proposal to establish surface parking lots in the front yard of the Rawda Police Station within Plot No. 2. Another significant matter up for discussion is the development request for the JW Marriott Hotel located in Kuwait City's Al-Qibla District, Plot No. 13.

Furthermore, the Council will address a proposal by members Al-Farsi, Farah Al-Roumi, Sharifa Al-Shalfan, Abdul Latif Al-Daei, and Ismail Behbehani, advocating for the allocation of a site for a recycling materials facility. Member Al-Shalfan's proposals regarding recycling plastic bottles and preserving beaches will also be reviewed.

Additionally, the Council will examine the Central Agency for Information Technology's request to allocate part of the site of the Umm Al-Haiman Post Center, previously Umm Al-Hayman, for the establishment of the national data center.

This center will focus on business continuity and disaster management. President of the Municipal Council Abdullah Al-Mahri's proposal to expand activities in the Ardiya Industrial Area and Vice Chairman Khaled Al-Mutairi's suggestion to assign parking lots adjacent to private housing plots in all Kuwait areas to plot owners will also be on the agenda.



KUNA photo
Kuwaiti Permanent Representative to the UNESCO Ambassador Dr. Adam Al-Mulla speaking at the forum.

Other Voices

The dangers of multitasking

By Ahmad alsarraf

Ana Borges recently wrote an article in the New York Times that changed some of my old notions about "some being special" in their ability to do multiple tasks at once. In general, a woman is better suited to work as a secretary, compared to a man, because she is able to type a message, respond to a call, and take a passing note from her boss, all at the same time.



alsarraf

This is called the ability to "multitasking," whether at home, in the kitchen, in the car, or the factory. "We get stuck in this trap of multitasking, often without realizing it," says Nicole Byers, a neuropsychologist in Calgary, Canada, who specializes in treating people who suffer from being burnt out and boredom.

There are also social and family temptations and pressures that force us to excel in the ability to perform multiple tasks, such as reading an advertisement for a job that requires someone to perform multiple tasks!

Since we spend a lot of time on computer screens, desktop, mobile or phone, this forces our minds to perform multiple tasks, and the truth is that we are not adept at doing this, and it does not seem like a wonderful thing, but rather tiring to many of us, and therefore we must find ways in which we can be smarter in our approach.

First, we must modify the nomenclature, as it is not possible, scientifically, to do two things at the same time, unless it is very easy, such as walking while catching up with a friend!

"Normally, when people think they are multitasking, they are actually shifting their attention back and forth between two separate tasks," says Gloria Mark, a professor of informatics at the University of California, California. When we engage in the task of cooking dinner, for example, the moment you decide what to do, different areas of your brain, collectively refer to as the "cognitive control network," cooperate to make it happen.

This network includes areas of your brain involved in executive function, or the ability to plan and

execute goal-directed behavior, by creating a mental model of the current job and what it will take to accomplish it.

Your brain may do this by relying on external and internal information, such as the ingredients in your refrigerator or your memory of a recipe.

This is like drawing on a mental whiteboard, but if your friend calls you to talk about their day, that whiteboard will be erased. Every time you shift your attention to a new task, your brain has to redirect itself.

If you know what's being cooked is very easy, and the conversation that interrupted the cooking is nice and easy, the switch may be simple, but the more effort each task requires, the more your brain has to sort through competing information and separate goals.

Multitasking has its harmful effects, and this depends on the activity and how skilled you are at doing it. But in general, when we switch between tasks, we pay what is called a "switching cost," says Dr. Wagner: "We will be slower and less accurate than we would have been if we had stayed on one task," and speed and accuracy are not the only risks.

Multitasking is more cognitively demanding, even when we do things we find enjoyable or easy. Dr. Wagner says when we multitask, we can put pressure on our working memory, or our ability to hold and process information in our minds.

"The more we overload this system and try to keep it in our brains at one time, the more mental exhaustion it can lead to," she said. "Other studies have shown that multitasking can make the heart race, raise blood pressure, cause anxiety, dampen our mood, and negatively affect our perception of the work we are doing."

It is to start monitoring yourself throughout the day, noticing when and how you switch tasks without realizing it. Hence, the advice is simple yet challenging: you will need to practice doing one task, or doing one thing at a time, to gradually retrain your focus and build your endurance. Doing individual tasks may be easier during times when your mental performance is better, and the best times for most people to tackle difficult tasks are mid-morning and mid-afternoon.



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

'Respect rights, privacy of dead'

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Ministry of Awqaf, through its Fatwa and Sharia Research Sector, has issued a ruling prohibiting the practice of using the hand or face print to unlock the phone of the deceased, reports Al-Qabas daily.

This fatwa was prompted by a query from the Funeral Affairs Department Director regarding the permissibility of such actions.

In the fatwa, the Ministry clarified that accessing the deceased's phone in this manner violates their privacy and raises suspicions about potential sensitive or shameful content.

Consequently, it is deemed impermissible to undertake such actions, as they infringe upon the dignity and sanctity of the deceased.

The Ministry emphasized that if there arises a legitimate need to unlock the deceased's phone, such matters should be handled through proper legal channels, either by seeking judicial authorization or involving the relevant security authorities.

Drug crimes

Passports pulled

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Drug Control General Department at the Interior Ministry has announced the withdrawal of the passports of Kuwaitis who committed drug-related crimes outside the country in accordance with Ministerial Resolution No. 648 of 2023.

The department revealed these crimes include the possession of narcotics, psychotropic substances and their preparations for the purpose of personal consumption or trafficking.

This approach ensures adherence to legal procedures while respecting the rights and privacy of the deceased individual.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Constitutional Court' and the naturalization appeal

"RECENTLY, a number of citizens submitted appeals to the Constitutional Court, asking the court to rule that Law No. 44 of 1994, amending the Nationality Law, is unconstitutional," columnist **Dr. Muhammad Hussein Al-Dallal** wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"The appeal aims, according to the appellants' point of view, to restore the situation to before 1994, by preventing children of naturalized citizens from having the right to vote and to run for office, after Law No. 44 of 1994 granted them those rights, and assuming that the Constitutional Court accepts the appeal, and that the amendment to Law No. 44 of 1994 is invalidated.

"It is expected that approximately 300 to 400 thousand citizens will be deprived of the right to vote and run in the National Assembly elections. This is after most of them exercised those rights for nearly 30 years!



Dr. Al-Dallal

"In view of the seriousness of the existing appeal and its effects on the state and society, given that citizenship is an element closely linked to the citizen, through which he is granted major rights and privileges, it is also linked to the performance and roles of constitutional institutions, and therefore the issuance of Law No. 44 of 1994 was correct and compatible with the constitution, the law, and the requirements of democratic development. On the other hand, invalidating the law would have a negative impact on society's stability and national unity.

"In this article, we review a number of key observations, to be under the consideration of members of the Constitutional Court in particular, and members of Kuwaiti society in general. "The first and most important of these observations is the amount of confusion and subjective confusion in dealing with the issue of citizenship at the level of society and the media.

"This confusion was appealed before the Constitutional Court, as some do not differentiate between the rights of the citizen, guaranteed by the Constitution and the law, and the issue of tampering with citizenship through forgery in the citizenship file and acquiring it from abroad unjustly, the overwhelming majority of Kuwaiti society rejects the falsification of citizenship, and demands an investigation and the withdrawal of citizenship from anyone proven to have transgressed in the citizenship file.

"This does not mean dealing recklessly and without objectivity with other issues, such as the rights of naturalized citizens to contest elections and cast their ballots.

"The second of these observations is what was stipulated in the texts of the Constitution and its explanatory memorandum. Article 7 of the Constitution stipulates: 'Justice, freedom, and equality are the pillars of society...', and Article 8 of the Constitution stipulates: 'The state safeguards the pillars of society and guarantees security, tranquility, and equal opportunities for citizens'.

"Article 29 of the Constitution stipulates: 'People are equal in human dignity, and they are equal before the law in public rights and duties...', and the explanatory memorandum of the Constitution for Article 82 states: '...and then candidacy is a right for the children of this naturalized person, if the Nationality Law includes them among the cases of citizenship in an original manner'. It is the correct ruling applicable in different countries..., and based on the above and assuming that the Constitutional Court invalidated Law 44 of 1994, this is considered a violation of constitutional texts that call for equality of citizens in rights and duties, and calls for equal opportunities. It is also considered a violation of the explanatory memorandum of the Constitution made an explicit reference to it.

"It is also noted that the generation of the founders of the Constitution had a clear understanding of the rights of naturalized citizens, especially the right of the children of naturalized citizens to elect and run for office. "Hamoud Al-Zaid Al-Khaled, may God have mercy on him, the Minister of Justice, had confirmed in the meetings of the Constitution Preparation Committee in 1962 regarding Article 82, saying: 'As for the naturalized person, he remains deprived of the right to vote and run, as for the son of a naturalized person born after his father's naturalization (required by the 1994 amendment), becomes a Kuwaiti by birth, and therefore has all the rights to vote and

run if he reaches the specified legal age.' This understanding was supported at the time by constitutional expert Dr. Othman Khalil Othman. May God have mercy on him.

"The amendment to the Nationality Law came in 1994, as a result of consensus and near parliamentary government consensus. Indeed, the approved legal amendment was based on a draft law submitted by the government, and it is noted that the approval in 1994 was approved by a number of those who were members of the Constituent Assembly and the late Amir of the country Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah 'honored and approved the law', the later the government of the then Prime Minister Sheikh Sa'ad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah submitted the draft law, Dr. Ahmed Al-Khatib and Abbas Munawer 'members of the National Assembly approved the law', may God have mercy on them all, which confirms the approval and adoption of the legal amendment to the law Citizenship in 1994.

"One of the important issues that the Constitutional Court considers, when it considers appeals to invalidate a piece of legislation, is to search all documents related to the challenged legislation, and to achieve this, after reviewing the minutes of the session of the National Assembly in 1994, in which the amendment to the Nationality Law was approved, granting the right to vote and nominate the children of naturalized citizens.

"We find that most members of the National Assembly agreed on one point of view, which was repeated by a number of them. We mention, for example, what MP Mishari Al-Osaimi, may God have mercy on him, said, approving the amendment granting the right to vote and run for the children of naturalized citizens.

"In terms of the issue, I was the first of those who advocate it, and I believe that what needs to be issued is a law. The government has incorrectly applied the text of Article 2 of the Nationality Law from the year 1960 until now. I am with this issue without a law at all. What needs to be issued is a law. This is a citizen's right that he derives from the text of the law. Interpretation: The one who wronged the law for 35 years was wrong..."

"One of the dimensions that must be under the microscope of the esteemed members of the Constitutional Court in the naturalization file is the connection of the Kuwaiti legislative system with international conventions, which, after being ratified by the State of Kuwait, are considered part of its legislation.

"As an example but not limited to, we point to what was stated in the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination, Racism: "The member states of this agreement undertake... to guarantee the right of every individual to equality before the law, especially to enjoy the following rights: Political rights, especially the right to nominate and vote in elections, on the basis of universal suffrage and equality, and the right to participate in the government and the management of public affairs.

"In conclusion, the great responsibility and sensitive role that the law has entrusted to the Constitutional Court necessitate that the court not limit its consideration of the appeal of Law No. 44 of 1994 according to constitutional and legal considerations only, without researching and considering the political and social considerations and effects of the invalidation of this law, and it is expected that the results of the invalidation will be it is large and dangerous, as the issue of citizenship and naturalization is one of the main issues in the state, and no aspect of it can be discussed unless there is a basis, reference, and an integrated strategic vision for the issue of citizenship, which is what is missing in dealing with this sensitive file, a strategy that defines rights and duties, a strategy that fulfills the requirements of justice and true citizenship, a strategy that guarantees the stability of society, a strategy that works to rid the citizenship file of tampering forms of forgery and violation of the law.

"Hundreds of thousands of people of the country are waiting for the constitutional judiciary to do justice to them by confirming their just right to enjoy all the privileges of nationality and citizenship, especially the rights to vote and run for office. They and others consider a return to what was before 1994 to be a transgression against the essence of justice, which Islamic Sharia and the Kuwaiti Constitution called for. God Almighty said: 'And when you judge between the people, you judge with justice.'"

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



Sheikh Faisal poses for a photo with National Guard personnel.

Sheikh Faisal commends 'Guards' efforts in safeguarding vital sites

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Deputy Chief of the National Guard, Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, conducted an inspection tour of the Al-Mutlaa transmission station, secured by National Guard personnel from the 3rd Facilities Protection Battalion in the 1st Protection Brigade, reports *Al-Qabas* daily.

In a press statement, the Guard highlighted that Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf conveyed the greetings and appreciation of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Chief of the National Guard. He expressed wishes for the success and excellence of the force in performing their assigned tasks, commending their efforts in safeguarding vital sites.

He urged them to maintain vigilance, attentiveness, and commitment to duty, emphasizing the importance of upholding an honorable image that reflects their allegiance to the guards.

Sheikh Faisal Al-Nawaf underscored the leadership's commitment to providing comprehensive support to the National Guard personnel, acknowledging their pivotal role in defense and security, in collaboration with the army, police, and general fire force.

He praised their cooperation under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir of the country and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, praying for his continued protection and guidance.

Savings lost in quest for a few coins more

Compatriots swindle Egyptians

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Ministry of Interior (MoI) has launched an investigation into a case involving the exchange of Kuwaiti dinars for Egyptian pounds on the black market. The incident has been classified as a breach of trust, with the potential for reclassification by the Public Prosecution, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

A security source reported that an expatriate born in 1987 filed a complaint at the Abu Halifa police station, claiming that he was defrauded after handing over 7,700 dinars to a currency dealer. The expatriate stated that his colleagues had recommended a man who offered favorable exchange rates and was believed to be trustworthy. However, after he handed the dealer the cash in Kuwait, the dealer failed to deliver the equivalent amount in Egyptian pounds to the complainant's family in Egypt, as agreed.

Despite repeated attempts to contact the dealer, who was identified as a man born in 1976 and residing in the Abu Halifa area, the complainant received no response. The informant provided detailed information about the suspect to the police. It's worth noting that several other expatriates have reported similar incidents, wherein they lost their savings while attempting to exchange currency through unofficial channels in hopes of getting better rates. Instead, they were left without the funds they had entrusted to these dealers.

Trucker dies at wheel: In a tragic incident, a worker lost his life after falling from



All makeshift homes on Miskan island have been demolished.

Miskan structures razed

The General Administration of the Coast Guard, in cooperation with the concerned authorities, took the necessary measures and removed all violating buildings on the Miskan Island, reports *Al-Qabas* daily.

This comes based on the directives and instructions of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah.

a construction site in the Salmiya area. The accident occurred when the man, an expatriate, lost his balance while working on the sixth floor of the building. Following the incident, the criminal investigation department and a forensic doctor were called to the scene to conduct an investigation. Security forces are currently probing the incident, and the project's contractor has been summoned for questioning, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

In a separate incident, a truck driver was found dead inside his vehicle in the Al-Mutlaa residential area. The unfortunate discovery was made about three hours after his passing. The cause of death is under investigation.



About 20 kg of various kinds of drugs were found in suspects' possession.

Drug peddlers arrested, pills, cash, arms seized

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: A successful operation conducted by the Criminal Security Sector, through the General Department of Narcotics Control, resulting in the arrest of 18 suspects involved in multiple cases of drug trafficking, marks a significant step in combating the illegal drug trade in the region, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

Seizing 20 kilograms of various narcotic substances, along with a significant quantity of psychotropic pills, unlicensed firearms, ammunition, and proceeds from drug sales, highlights the magnitude of the operation and the scale of the illicit activities being carried out by the defendants. The admission of guilt by the arrested individuals regarding their involvement in drug trafficking and abuse underscores the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts in apprehending criminals involved in such activities.

By referring both the defendants and the seized contraband to the appropriate legal authorities, the Criminal Security Sector ensures that necessary legal measures are taken to prosecute those responsible and prevent further harm to society.

This operation serves as a testament to the dedication and vigilance of law enforcement agencies in safeguarding communities from the scourge of drugs and related criminal activities. It sends a strong message that illegal drug trafficking will not be tolerated, and perpetrators will be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law.

'Unconstitutional'

Union goes to court to protest MoH decision

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Union of Private Medical Professionals has appealed to the Constitutional Court to rule on the constitutionality of the Ministry of Health's decision requiring private health facilities to utilize a private waste disposal company for waste management at exorbitant fees.

In a press statement, Head of the union Dr. Issam Al-Saleh explained that the Ministry of Health's obligation of private facilities to work with this company is unconstitutional, as the company obtained the tender through bidding and not tendering. This means that the Ministry of Health obtained the highest prices, and transferred its financial gain to imposing fees or a tax for transporting medical waste for the company and collecting it from citizens who own health facilities, which led to the company imposing exorbitant fees on private facilities.

Dr. Al-Saleh said, "This constitutes a clear violation of the Constitution, particularly as these fees were enforced on private healthcare facilities coercively. It contradicts the essence of the Constitution, which mandates that any charges or levies imposed on citizens must be authorized by law through the Council of Ministers or the National Assembly. It should not be through a ministerial decision (No. 196/2022), which is in clear violation of the Constitution. We hope that the Constitutional Court will decide on it in order to be fair to the rights of Kuwaiti doctors."

Novelist fined

'Aro' & Co. corruption case hearing delayed

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Court of Cassation has adjourned to May 30 the appeal submitted by former minister Mubarak Al-Aro and others against the ruling issued by a lower court which sentenced them to seven-year imprisonment for profiteering from a tender of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Al-Aro was arrested at dawn two days ago upon his return to the country via Kuwait International Airport, and he has been detained until a ruling is issued. The lower court convicted Al-Aro and the rest of the defendants in the case of profiteering from a tender of the Ministry of Social Affairs and harming the public funds, due to Al-Aro's agreement with the company owned by the fourth defendant to conclude a contract that includes a system for monitoring products in cooperative societies.

However, the contract was not implemented, which proves the violations attributed to them regarding the incidents of profiteering with that company at the expense of public money, the details of which was submitted in a report by the Ministry of Social Affairs to the ministers' investigation committee.

Novelist fined: The Court of Appeals upheld the verdict issued by a lower court which imposed a fine of KD 3,000 on the Kuwaiti novelist Buthaina Al-Essa for inciting a violation of public order and the national interest by selling a book on literature of stateless people in the Gulf without the approval of the Ministry of Information.

The case goes back to Al-Essa's referral to court on charges of circulating and selling the book titled "Stateless People in the Gulf" in Takween Bookstore.

2 held in debauchery charges

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Public Prosecution ordered the precautionary detention of two illegal residents, a mother and her daughter, on charges of inciting a number of citizens to debauchery and prostitution and extorting their money through threats.

The Public Prosecution said in a statement published on its account on the "X" platform, Thursday, that the two defendants display their adornment to entice them, so they propose to get to know the daughter, then an apparently good-intentioned emotional relationship is established that ends with them luring them to have physical relationship with her with consent, and then the two defendants extort money from them by blackmailing them, by reporting against them the crime of physical relationship with a minor by force and deceit, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

The Prosecution added that the two defendants used these tactics to gain money, and the total amount collected from the victims in exchange for their waiver in the cases registered against them in the Public Prosecution amounted to 54,000 Kuwaiti dinars. She explained that the two accused were interrogated and the prosecution confronted them with the charges against them, and investigation procedures are still underway.

Clip leads to arrest of car parts thieves

Nurses break bones in fistfight

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Two male nurses engaged in a fistfight at a clinic recently and one of them got a fractured hand, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

Details of Jahra Medical Professions Criminal Case No. 41/2024 revealed that a Gulf nurse, born in 1984 and working at the Ministry of Health, filed a report with a medical certificate attached showing he suffered from a fracture on the right hand and a bruise on the forehead as his co-worker assaulted him.

The accused, also a Gulf nurse born in 1997, submitted a medical report stating that he suffered from back and shoulder pains as a result of being beaten by the other nurse.

Both parties disclosed that the fistfight occurred while they were working at the clinic.

Car parts thieves nabbed: Less than 24 hours after video clips of people stealing spare parts of cars parked in Al-Rai went viral on social media, criminal investigation officers arrested three expatriates with some of the stolen items in their possession, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

A security source said these expatriates confessed to stealing spare parts of cars in six separate incidents and sold the stolen items online. They were referred to the Public Prosecution and investigations are underway.



Celebrate with Style
A place to make unforgettable memories
MUGHAL MAHAL FAHAHEEL
AL-RAYAN FAMILY LOUNGE & FUNCTION HALL

Sea view | Ample car parking
For more enquires Call: 23911174 / 23911175 / 97644421
Email: fahaheel@mughalmahal.com
info@mughalmahal.com

@mughalmahalkuwait www.mughalmahal.com

Moon to synchronize with planet Mars before sunrise on Sunday

Astronomical events embellish sky over Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Al-Ujairi Scientific Center announced Thursday that a series of astronomical events will embellish the sky over Kuwait during the initial week of May, reports Al-Qabas daily.

According to a statement provided to the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), the first of these phenomena happened (today) May 4, as the moon aligned with the planet

Saturn, potentially was visible to the naked eye at dawn until sunrise.

Following this, on May 5, the moon will synchronize with the planet Mars before sunrise, fading away amidst the brightening morning twilight.

During May 5 and 6, astronomy enthusiasts can anticipate the arrival of the Eta Aquarid meteor shower, with an average of approximately 30 meteors per

hour.

The optimal viewing window for these meteors will be post-midnight from locations devoid of city lights, ensuring a completely dark backdrop.

Furthermore, on the sixth of May, the moon will conjoin with the planet Mercury at dawn, providing another captivating celestial spectacle observable without the aid of telescopes until sunrise.

Awqaf Ministry initiates largest rotation of employees in years

Dr Badr Al-Mutairi issues a number of decisions

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr. Badr Al-Mutairi issued a number of decisions on rotation, transfer and secondment of employees – the largest in years, reports Al-Anba daily.

The daily obtained copies of the decisions on the following:

Dr Fahd Abdullah Surur Al-Jarman was assigned Director of the Department of Islamic Studies and Qur'anic Sciences for Farwaniya and Jahra Governorates, in accordance with Civil Service Commission (CSC) Resolution No. 25/2006 for a period of one year, effective from the date of issuance of this decision.

- Yousef Saud Nafel Al-Gharib was assigned Director of the Strategic Planning Department for a period of one year, starting from the date of issuance of this decision.

- Eid Rashid Eid Al-Uthaina was transferred from the position Head of the Public

Activities Unit at the Public Relations Department to Head of the Financial Inspection and Audit Department in the Inspection and Audit Office.



Dr Al-Mutairi

- Muhammad Khaled Muhammad Al-Tayyar was transferred from the position of Director of the Legal Affairs Department to Director of the Office of the Undersecretary.

- Eid Khamis Rudaini Al-Shammari was transferred from the position Director of the Office of the Undersecretary to Director of the Administration of the Grand Mosque in order to complete the secondment period stipulated in CSC Resolution No. 25/2006 and its amendments.

- Muhammad Al-Aneizi was transferred from the position Head of the Studies and Follow-up Unit in the Department of Hajj and Umrah Affairs to Head of the Cultural Programs Unit in the Hawalli Governorate Mosques Department.

- Khalaf Ali Muhammad Al-Jasmi was transferred from the position Head of the Cultural Programs Unit in the Hawalli Governorate Mosques Department to Head of the Studies and Follow-up Unit in the Hajj and Umrah Affairs Department.

- Abdul Wahab Jassim Muhammad Al-Kandari was transferred from the position Head of the National Assembly Affairs Department in the Coordination and Support Office to Head of the Coordination and Follow-up Department in the Undersecretary's Office.

- Faisal Nasser Hizam Al-Hajri was transferred from the position Head of the Root Maintenance Unit in the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate Mosques Department to Head of the Agriculture Unit in the same department.

- Saud Majid Ajab Al-Otaibi was promoted from supervisor to department head at the Islamic Cultural Center.

- Khaitan Rijal Sabahi was transferred from the Islamic Studies Unit in the Department of Islamic Studies and Qur'anic Sciences for Farwaniya and Jahra Governorates to Head of Curriculum Affairs Department.

National Day greetings

HH the Amir congratulates Poland

KUWAIT CITY, May 4, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has sent a congratulatory cable to Polish President Andrzej Duda on his country's National Day wishing him good health and Poland and its people fur-

ther progress and prosperity.

His Highness the caretaker Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah has also addressed a congratulatory cable to President Andrzej Duda on his country's National Day.

2 asteroids discovered with KFAS support

Kuwait University's 3 female students make Kuwait proud

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Three female students from the Kuwait University have made significant strides in the field of astronomy, recording two astronomical discoveries under the banner of Kuwait, with backing from the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), reports Al-Qabas daily.



Jamali

In February 2021, Maryam Jamali, Noura Al-Musayri, and Marahib Al-Azmi formed a team that observed two asteroids for the first time in the main asteroid belt situated between Mars and

Jupiter. Subsequently, these discoveries were officially confirmed by relevant authorities.

Presently, efforts are underway to study the orbits of the newly discovered asteroids and incorporate them into internationally recognized astronomical catalogs.

Furthermore, the International Union for Astronomical Research, in collaboration with NASA, has granted the female students the privilege of naming the two asteroids they discovered, along with providing certificates for each asteroid.

This achievement marks a notable contribution to the advancement of scientific knowledge and underscores the potential for groundbreaking discoveries by aspiring young scientists.



Some of the winners pose for a photo.

Al-Jarida photo

Sheikha Nabila congratulates students

Foundation announces the 25th Fadia Al-Saad Scientific Competition winners

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Al-Saad Foundation for Knowledge and Scientific Research has announced the winners of the 25th edition of the Fadia Al-Saad Scientific Competition at the local level, reports Al-Jarida daily.

During the closing ceremony, Bibi Al Janahi, Alia Bu Hamad, and Mazain Rashid from Qortuba High School were declared the winners of first place in the secondary stage category for their project "Robot Doctor."

Zeina Al-Safran, Sarah Al-Mutairi, and Joan Al-Khudi from Munira Othman Al-Saeed School secured first place in the middle stage segment for their project "SNS - Send Medicine Sofdy," while Maryam Al-Shammari and Alia Al-Hamid from Fatima Al-Dakhil School won first place in the primary stage segment for their story "The Moon Trees of Artemis."

The second place winners were Lulwah Al-Thuwaini, Maryam Al-Jalahma, and Dana Suleiman from Al-Isra High School for their project "Magnetic Lightning," Amina Majali, Nouf Thalab, and Maryam Thalab from Al-Daiya Middle School secured second place for their project "Smart Teacher Assistant," while Saja Al-Rashidi and Lynn Al-Sulaiman from Bahra Primary School won for their story "Cat Call."

Third place winners included Sawsan Abdul-Rasoul, Nahil Sultan, and Lujain

Al-Khubaizi from Salmiya High School for their project "Where Do We Go... Artificial Intelligence in Education."

Jana Al-Dulaimi, Fatima Al-Foudari, and Maryam Al-Nasser from Al-Fayhaa Middle School won third place for their project "Smart Store," and Maryam Fouladh and Juri Al-Haddad from John Al-Kuwait Model Primary School for their story "One Day... We Will Be."

Kawthar Nasrallah and Noura Al-Mulla from Maria Al-Qibtiya School won the best scientific research award in the secondary stage category for their project "Guardian of the Soil."

Fajr Al-Daihani and Fawzia Al-Anzi from Salma Bint Amis Primary School were recognized for their story "The Three-Headed Woman" as the best content, and Sarah Al-Mutairi and Heba Al-Anzi from the Farwaniya Religious Institute were awarded for their story "The Glow of Hearts" as the best anthropomorphic idea.

Sheikha Nabila Al-Sabah, the Chairman of the Competition Board of Directors, expressed gratitude to the participants and organizers for their efforts in making the competition a success.

She congratulated the winning students, emphasizing that they represent the nation's best investment in its bright future, and wished them continued creativity, expertise, and pursuit of knowledge.

Kuwaiti Youth Affairs minister awarded honorary Taekwondo black belt of ROK

KUWAIT CITY, May 4, (KUNA): Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the State of Kuwait Chung Byung-

Ha handed Kuwaiti Minister of State for Youth Affairs Dawood Marafi an honorary Taekwondo black belt, the highest sports honor in ROK, on Thursday evening.



Marafi

The awarding of the belt which took place at the end of the Ambassador's Cup Taekwondo Championship 2024 at the stadium of Jaber Al-Ahmad City, came in recognition of Marafi, also Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs, and Minister of State for Communications Affairs, efforts to promote the Taekwondo sport in Kuwait.

The championship, being co-organized regularly on annual basis by ROK Embassy and Kuwait Judo and Taekwondo Federation, reflects the depth of friendship between the Kuwaiti and Korean people,

the minister told reporters at the closing ceremony of the championship.

The Republic of Korea boasts a rich sports heritage and robust infrastructure that entitled the country to host global sports events over the past four decades, Marafi pointed out.

He stressed the importance of strengthening the friendly relations with ROK and enhancing the visit exchanges by sportspeople of both countries to help share experiences in sports.

Marafi thanked Chung Byung-Ha for the honoring which "materialized the perfect amity between the two countries."

On his part, the Korean diplomat said the Taekwondo sport serves as a bridge of friendship between the peoples of both countries.

He spoke highly of Marafi's efforts to promote the popularity of the sport among the Kuwaiti youth.

Chung Byung-Ha added that the championship was part of the celebrations marking the 60th anniversary of the economic cooperation between his country and Kuwait and the 45th anniversary of their diplomatic relations.

albander
hotel & resort

May

Room Promotion

Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 60.984 net	BHD 136.198 net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 76.230 net	BHD 170.247 net

Promo period from 2nd May to 31st May 2024

Terms & conditions apply*

Governor visit exhibition showcasing projects by students

Hawalli Governor Al-Asfar acknowledges Kuwaiti youths' talent

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Hawalli Governor Ali Salem Al-Asfar emphasized the vital role of Kuwaiti youth and the importance of nurturing their talents and accomplishments, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This sentiment was underscored during his visit to the exhibition showcasing projects by students of the College of Engineering for the academic year 2023/2024 at the Australian University, held in Salwa Al-Sabah Hall in the Salmiya area.

During his visit, Governor Al-Asfar was warmly received by Professor Issam Zaabalawi, the President of the Australian University - Kuwait, and Dr. Muhammad Abdel

Nabi, the Dean of the College of Engineering at the same university. He took the opportunity to acquaint himself with a variety of projects undertaken by the students, expressing his admiration for their efforts and contributions.

Governor Al-Asfar conveyed his pride in the innovative and industrious spirit displayed by these young Kuwaitis, recognizing their potential to positively impact the nation's future. He encouraged them to continue their dedication and hard work in their academic pursuits, emphasizing the importance of their contributions to the advancement and prosperity of Kuwait.



Al-Jarida photo

Governor Al-Asfar during his visit to the exhibition.

Minister of

Continued from Page 1

Therefore, we raise our voice about modernizing the BOT system, and for HH the Prime Minister and the entire government to work on this; because, simply put, Kuwait cannot rise without incentives for industrialists and farmers.

Vacant land has no value if it remains as it is; but when something is built on it, the value doubles, thanks to the constructions on it on one hand. On the other hand, it constitutes a factor of stability for the country and reduces unemployment.

All Kuwaitis are demanding for revival of the national industry. This must be one of the most important priorities of HH the Prime Minister-designate and the future government. Envy and miserliness should not be the bases, because that would mean further decline in Kuwait. We do not believe that Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah wants that, as the lives of great people are written through their actions.

Kuwait joins

Continued from Page 1

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that the minister conveyed greetings from His Highness the Amir, the Kuwaiti Government and people, and His Highness the Amir's success wishes for the OIC summit, due May 4-5, for sake of bolstering cooperation and solidarity among Muslim nations, as well as his good wishes for Gambia and its friendly people so they may witness lasting prosperity and progress.

For his part, the Gambian President expressed gratitude and appreciation for the State of Kuwait, its leadership, government and people, for the abundant contributions and goodwill initiatives, its response to international events, its pioneering role in boosting stability, continuous support for diplomatic efforts for settling strifes in the region with peaceful means and attaining security and stability throughout the globe.

The ministry statement added that the two sides, during the meeting, reviewed the close bilateral relations, means of boosting these bonds in various spheres and discussed issues of common concern that serve mutual interests.

The talks touched on current developments on the regional and international arenas, namely the tragic events in Gaza Strip, proposed solutions to resolve the humanitarian crises in addition to topics in the OIC Summit agenda.

Gambian President Adama Barrow received Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Hussein Ibrahim Taha on Friday on the eve of the 15th Islamic Summit Conference.

They reviewed the final preparations for the OIC Leaders' Summit, due in Banjul, capital of Gambia, on May 4-5, according to a statement from the secretariat of the Organization.

The Summit, themed "Enhancing Unity and Solidarity through Dialogue for Sustainable Development" will also address key regional and international issues of importance to the OIC Member States.

The OIC Secretary-General congratulated Gambia on the excellent preparations and facilities put in place for the Summit, commending the active role of Gambia within the Organization as it assumes presidency of the 15th Islamic Summit.

On his part, President Barrow reaffirmed commitment to advancing the Organization's agenda and fostering greater unity and solidarity among its member states during and after his tenure.

The meeting also reviewed ways for strengthening cooperation between Gambia and the OIC, the statement added.

Elsewhere, a delegation of the Palestinian militant group Hamas was in Cairo on Saturday as Egyptian state media reported "noticeable progress" in ongoing cease-fire talks with Israel while an Israeli official downplayed the prospects for a full end to the war.

Pressure has been mounting to reach a deal - Gaza's humanitarian crisis is dramatically escalating while Israel insists it will launch an offensive into Rafah, the territory's southernmost city.

The stakes are high to find a halt to the nearly seven-months-long war. More than 1 million Palestinians are sheltering in the

city of Rafah, along the border with Egypt, many having fled northern Gaza where a top U.N. official says there is now a full-blown famine.

Egyptian and American mediators have reported signs of compromise in recent days but chances for a cease-fire deal remain entangled with the key question of whether Israel will accept an end to the war without reaching its stated goal of destroying Hamas.

Egyptian state Al-Qahera news said Saturday that a consensus has been reached over many of the disputed points but did not elaborate. Hamas has called for a complete end to the war and withdrawal of all Israeli forces from Gaza.

The war has killed more than 34,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's local health officials, caused widespread destruction and plunged the territory into an unprecedented humanitarian crisis.

The conflict erupted on Oct. 7, when Hamas attacked southern Israel, abducting about 250 people and killing around 1,200, mostly civilians. Israel says militants still hold around 100 hostages and the remains of more than 30 others.

A senior Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss ongoing negotiations, played down the prospects for a full end to the war. The official said Israel was committed to the Rafah invasion and told The Associated Press that it will not agree in any circumstance to end the war as part of a deal to release hostages.

Israeli strikes early Saturday on Gaza killed at least six people. Three bodies were recovered from the rubble of a building in Rafah and taken to Yousef Al Najjar hospital. A strike in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza also killed three people, according to hospital officials.

Kuwait hosts

Continued from Page 1

Moreover, Al-Ansari underscored the commitment of the Public Authority for Youth to actively engage in significant youth forums and events both domestically and internationally. She emphasized the Authority's role in facilitating Kuwaiti youth's participation in such forums, providing them with opportunities for learning, skill development, and experiential growth. Al-Ansari reiterated the Authority's support for initiatives aimed at raising awareness, exchanging ideas, and fostering collaboration among youth on pressing global issues.

Maysoun Al-Attar, the head of AIESEC Kuwait, echoed Al-Ansari's sentiments, highlighting the forum's agenda designed to address the specific needs and aspirations of young people. Al-Attar emphasized the inclusion of expert-led lectures, interactive seminars, and opportunities for global volunteerism aimed at empowering youth to contribute meaningfully to sustainable development efforts. She emphasized the forum's unique challenge component, where youth teams develop innovative solutions aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with winning projects receiving support for implementation.

Al-Attar emphasized AIESEC Kuwait's collaborative approach with government institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector to foster youth leadership and create avenues for personal and professional development. She underscored the forum's broader objective of harnessing youth potential to address environmental concerns, promote knowledge-based economies, and foster inclusive growth and environmental sustainability in Kuwait and beyond. (KUNA)

Amir representative

Continued from Page 1

bin Mohammad Al-Nahyan, the Representative of the Ruler in Al-Ain, at Al-Mishref Palace in the UAE capital.

Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council Jassem Al-Budaiwi called on UAE President Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan at Al-Mushrif Palace in Abu Dhabi on Friday to offer heartfelt condolences over the passing away of Sheikh Tahnoun bin Mohammad Al Nahyan.

Al-Budaiwi prayed for Allah, the Almighty, to lodge Sheikh Tahnoun's soul in Paradise, and grant Al Nahyan family and the people of the UAE patience and solace, according to a statement from the GCC Secretariat.

MC member's proposal aims to enhance Capital infrastructure

Other countries have adopted governing principles: Al-Amir

By Inass Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Municipal Council member Munira Al-Amir has presented a proposal to establish different dealing mechanisms with regard to the Capital of Kuwait, which included a number of axes and called on the relevant government agencies to participate in developing the new mechanisms.

Al-Amir pointed out in the preamble to her proposal that the capitals of the world reflect the extent of the countries' civilization, and represent the State's image in front of others, pointing out that other countries have adopted governing principles in their capitals, which are used as basis for a proposal, law or voluntary action.

She cited the capital of Denmark, Copenhagen, which is classified as one of the cleanest capitals in the world, indicating its management adopted two main principles: Promoting green living and applying environmentally friendly practices, so it was able to advance to become the cleanest in the world.

She added that London is committed to strict standards related to construction and urban planning, and applies environmental quality standards.

She stressed that most developed countries work according to these approaches. She said cities in neighboring countries such as Dubai also commit themselves to the principles like the advanced techniques for maintaining cleanliness, landscaping, organized general appearance of the city, and applying modern follow-up systems and raising standards of quality performance.

Responsibilities

She explained that Kuwait municipality could propel this trend even though it neither shoulders all responsibilities nor holds all authorities. She called on the concerned authorities to implement the proposal in accordance with the principle of institutional integration.

The proposal has several axes. First is hygiene, which calls for reviewing hygiene procedures so that they are intensified like the street cleaning times, number of garbage bins, activating sorting operations from the source by providing waste containers for this purpose, renovating and monitoring the quality and efficiency of public toilets in the capital, and developing a plan to ensure their effective and continuous operation.

This is in addition to laying down an ambitious plan for forestation and optimal use of green spaces in cooperation with the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources, setting mechanisms for cultural and heritage activities and spaces for this purpose, and finding ways to cooperate in holding such events in the capital, which is the heart of culture in any country.

The proposal stated that in order for these events to take place smoothly and without complications, it is important to determine their locations, licensing mechanisms and provide their needs. It pointed out the importance of cooperation to introduce the capital and its activities, create a developed map for it, and convey this image to the world.

In her proposal, Al-Amir noted that one of the main steps is to unify the signboards in the capital and the signs of government buildings in terms of appearance, which gives a unified impression and facilitates access to them.



Photos by Iehab Qurtal

Above: Some photos from the event.

Ambassador says he will take with him memories about Kuwait

Bangladesh envoy completes his tenure in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Bangladesh Ambassador to Kuwait Major-General MD Ashiquzzaman described the relations between Kuwait and Bangladesh as advanced and built on a long history of friendship, trust and mutual respect.

He said this on the sidelines of a ceremony he held on the occa-

sion of the end of his tenure in Kuwait, in the presence of ambassadors and diplomats.

He added, during his tenure in Kuwait he worked to support and strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.

He pointed out that he will take with him memories he will never forget about Kuwait and

its people, pointing out that Kuwait will always remain in his heart.

He revealed a visit by a delegation from his country's Election Commission to Kuwait to launch the national identity program, which is a new service provided by the embassy to members of his community in Kuwait.

KIMS board of trustees adopts new procedures for 'qualifying' fresh graduate Kuwaiti doctors

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The Ministry of Health has announced that the Board of Trustees of Kuwait Institute for Medical Specializations (KIMS), headed by Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadi, adopted new procedures that support the qualification of fresh graduate Kuwaiti doctors with the aim of developing the human element and providing support for the qualification of national medical professionals, reports Al-Anba daily.

In a press statement, the ministry affirmed that the board of trustees approved the exception of newly graduated doctors,

who have accredited admission to postgraduate programs in prestigious and distinguished international universities, from enrolling or completing the internship year; provided they are appointed to the ministry in preparation for their scholarship through the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

The ministry indicated that the board of trustees also allowed trainee doctors in the internship year to complete part of the training period during internship (elective rotation) outside Kuwait, as long as they do so in distinguished international medical centers and hospitals for them to

gain more experience. It explained that this is one of helping them to obtain admission to accredited specialized training programs (board) after the training year, provided the entire period is counted as official working days, and that they are within the optional period in the training internship program.

It added these measures aim to achieve excellence, enhance the quality of health services, and raise the level of various specializations in the interest of patients and in line with the government's work program, the ministry's strategy and the 'New Kuwait 2035' vision.



Munira Al-Amir

World News Roundup

Europe

'Ukrainian village battered to ruins': The Ukrainian village of Ocheretyne has been battered by fighting, drone footage obtained by The Associated Press shows. The village has been a target for Russian forces in the Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine.

Russian troops have been advancing in the area, pounding Kyiv's depleted, ammunition-depleted forces with artillery, drones and bombs. Ukraine's military has acknowledged the Russians have gained a "foothold" in Ocheretyne, which had a population of about 3,000 before the war, but says that fighting continues.

Residents have scrambled to flee the village, among them a 98-year-old woman who walked almost 10 kilometers (6 miles) alone last week, wearing a pair of slippers and supported by a cane, until she reached Ukrainian front lines.



Syniehubov

Not a single person is seen in the footage, and no building in Ocheretyne appears to have been left untouched by the fighting. Most houses, apartment blocks and other buildings look damaged beyond repair, and many houses have been pummeled into piles of wood and bricks. A factory on the outskirts has also been badly damaged.

Elsewhere, Russia has in recent weeks stepped up attacks on Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, in an attempt to pummel the region's energy infrastructure and terrorize its 1.3 million residents.

Four people were wounded and a two-story civilian building was damaged and set ablaze overnight after Russian forces struck Kharkiv, in northeastern Ukraine, with exploding drones, regional governor Oleh Syniehubov said Saturday. (AP)



'Russia targets foes abroad with killings': The military defector was killed in a hail of gunfire and then run over by a car in Spain. The opposition figure was struck repeatedly with a hammer in Lithuania. The journalist fell ill from a suspected poisoning in Germany.

Since President Vladimir Putin launched his invasion of Ukraine, attacks and harassment of Russians - prominent or not - have been blamed on Moscow's intelligence operatives across Europe and elsewhere.

Despite attempts by Western governments to dismantle Russian spy networks, experts say the Kremlin apparently is still able to pursue those it perceives as traitors abroad in an attempt to silence dissent. Opponents of Putin increasingly fear the long arm of Moscow's security services, including in countries they once thought were safe. (AP)



Kremlin brands comments as 'dangerous': Recent statements by France's president and Britain's foreign secretary about the war in Ukraine are "dangerous" and will deepen international tension around the conflict, the Kremlin's spokesman said Friday.

French President Emmanuel Macron, in an interview published Thursday, repeated an earlier comment that he doesn't exclude sending troops to Ukraine. U.K. Foreign Secretary David Cameron, meanwhile, said during a visit to Kyiv the same day that Ukraine will be able to use British long-range weapons to strike targets inside Russia - a possibility that some other NATO countries providing weapons have balked at. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov branded Macron's comment "a very important and very dangerous statement." Remarks by Macron about possible direct French engagement in the conflict represent a "very dangerous trend," he said. Cameron's statement about Ukraine's right to use British weapons provided to strike facilities inside Russia is "another very dangerous statement," Peskov told reporters. (AP)



'Russia will face consequences': Germany on Friday accused Russian military agents of hacking the top echelons of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's party and other sensitive government and industrial targets, and was joined by NATO and fellow European countries in warning that Russia's cyberespionage would have consequences.

Relations between Russia and Germany were already tense, with Germany providing military support to Ukraine in its ongoing war with Russia.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said Russian military cyber operators were behind the hacking of emails of the Social Democrats, the leading party in the governing coalition. Officials said they did so by exploiting Microsoft Outlook. Officials described a hacking campaign that persisted for months. (AP)



London takes center stage: London took center stage on Saturday as the counting of votes began in the capital city's mayoral contest, a day after Britain's governing Conservative Party suffered a drubbing in local election results.

Sadiq Khan, the Labour Party mayor who is chasing a historic third straight election win, had been widely expected to win easily, but there are some concerns that the race may be tighter than previously thought.

That's mainly due to the fact that turnout at Thursday's election - at a total of 40.5% - was higher in the outer suburbs than in the inner city. Khan's main opponent, the Conservatives' Susan Hall, focused her campaign on issues such as a levy imposed on high-polluting vehicles, which has resonated in the suburbs where residents depend more on their cars for work and essential travel. (AP)



UK acted unlawfully in approving plan: High Court judge ruled Friday that the UK government acted unlawfully when it approved a plan to meet climate targets without evidence that it could be delivered.

It was the second time in two years that the government's main climate action plan was found to be unlawful and insufficient in meeting legally-binding targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Justice Clive Sheldon sided Friday with three environmental groups that brought the case, ruling that the government's decision to approve its Carbon Budget Delivery Plan last year was "simply not justified by the evidence." (AP)



Golden Dawn head grants early release: The head of Greece's extreme far-right Golden Dawn party was granted conditional early release from prison Thursday, after serving part of his sentence for running a criminal organization blamed for violent hate crimes.

A council of judges accepted the request by Nikolaos Michaloliakos, 66, who had served the minimal legal requirement for early release. The decision also took into consideration that he was aged over 65, which increases the time he is formally considered to have served. He is in poor health and spent 18 months in pre-trial detention.

Restrictions imposed on him include a ban on traveling outside the greater Athens region. (AP)



Thousands rally in Slovakia: Thousands of Slovaks rallied in the capital to protest - again - a controversial overhaul of the country's public radio and television services, a move that critics say would result in the government taking full control of the media.

The coalition government of populist Prime Minister Robert Fico approved the measure on April 24, and the Parliament, where Fico's coalition government has a majority, is expected to approve it in June.

The plan has been widely criticized by President Zuzana Čaputová, local journalists, the opposition, international media organizations and the European Commission.

The proposed changes would mean the public broadcaster known as RTVS would cease to exist and be replaced by a new organization. (AP)



US President Joe Biden awards nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, to Michelle Yeoh during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House on May 3 in Washington. (AP)

Biden awards Medal of Freedom to Pelosi, Yeoh and 15 others

US President Joe Biden bestowed the Presidential Medal of Freedom on 19 people, including civil rights icons such as the late Medgar Evers, prominent political leaders such as former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Rep James Clyburn, and actor Michelle Yeoh.

Biden said the recipients of the nation's highest civilian honor are "incredible people whose relentless curiosity, inventiveness, ingenuity and hope have kept faith in a better tomorrow."

One of them, Clarence B. Jones, said in an inter-

view that he thought a prankster was on the phone when he answered and heard the caller say they were from the White House.

Jones, 93, was honored for his activism during the Civil Rights Movement.

The White House said the recipients are "exemplary contributions to the prosperity, values, or security of the United States, world peace, or other significant societal, public or private endeavors."

The 10 men and nine women hail from the worlds

of politics, sports, entertainment, civil rights, science and religion.

Seven politicians were among the recipients: former New York mayor and philanthropist Michael Bloomberg, former Sen Elizabeth Dole, climate activist and former vice president Al Gore, Biden's former climate envoy John Kerry, former Sen. Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J., who died in 2013, Clyburn, the Democratic congressman from South Carolina, and Pelosi, the Democratic congresswoman from California. (AP)

Politics

'Two presidents with unfinished business'

Biden and Trump offer contrasts on issues

WASHINGTON, May 4, (AP) - Joe Biden and Donald Trump are two presidents with unfinished business and an itch to get it done.

Their track records and plans on immigration, taxes, wars abroad - you name it - leave no doubt that the man voters choose in November will seek to shape the landscape of American life in ways wholly distinct from the other.

The choices, if the winner gets his way, are sharply defined. The onward march of regulation and incentives to restrain climate change, or a slow walk if not an about-face. Higher taxes on the super rich, or not. Abortion rights reaffirmed, or left to states to restrict or allow as each decides. Another attempt to legislate border security and orderly entry into the country, or massive deportations. A commitment to stand with Ukraine or let go.

At no time in living memory have two presidents, current and former, competed for the office. Not since Presidents Teddy Roosevelt and William Howard Taft, both Republicans, in 1912, and that didn't work out for either of them - Democrat Woodrow Wilson won that three-way race.

More than a century later, voters again get to judge two presidents on their records alongside their promises for the next four years. Here's where they stand on top issues:

Biden: In a second term, Biden could be expected to continue his focus on implementing the climate provisions of his Inflation Reduction Act, which provided nearly \$375 billion for things like financial incentives for electric cars and clean energy projects. Biden is also enlisting more than 20,000 young people in a national

"Climate Corps," a Peace Corps-like program to promote conservation through tasks such as weatherizing homes and repairing wetlands.

Trump: His mantra for one of his top priorities: "Drill, Baby, Drill." Trump, who in the past cast climate change as a "hoax" and harbors a particular disdain for wind power, says it's his goal for the US to have the cheapest energy and electricity in the world. He'd increase oil drilling on public lands, offer tax breaks to oil, gas and coal producers, speed the approval of natural gas pipelines and roll back the Biden administration's aggressive efforts to get people to switch to electric cars, which he argues have a place but shouldn't be forced on consumers.

Biden: Protecting democracy has been the raison d'être behind Biden's decision to run for reelection. In a symbolic nod to the Revolutionary War, Biden delivered his first campaign speech of 2024 near Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, where he spoke of George Washington's decision to step down as the leader of the Continental Army after American independence was won.

Trump: The former president, who famously refused to accept his loss to Biden in 2020, has not committed to accepting the results this time. "If everything's honest, I'll gladly accept the results," Trump recently told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. "If it's not, you have to fight for the right of the country." He has said he will pardon the Jan. 6 defendants jailed for assaulting police officers and other crimes during the attack on the Capitol.

Biden: The president continues to advocate for the comprehensive immigration bill he introduced on his

first day in office, which would grant an eight-year pathway to citizenship for immigrants in the US without legal status, with a faster track for young immigrants living in the country illegally who were brought here as children. That legislation went nowhere in Congress.

Trump: The former president promises to mount the largest domestic deportation in US history - an operation that could include detention camps and the National Guard. He'd bring back policies he put in place during his first term, like the Remain in Mexico program and Title 42, which placed curbs on migrants on public health grounds.

Biden: This is where Biden and his protectionist tendencies - in a continued appeal to working-class voters - have some similarities with Trump. Biden is calling for a tripling of tariffs on Chinese steel, a move that would shield US producers from cheaper imports.

Trump: The former president wants a dramatic expansion of tariffs, proposing a levy of perhaps 10% on nearly all imported foreign goods. Penalties would increase if trade partners manipulate their currencies or engage in other unfair trading practices.

Biden: In his State of the Union address, Biden proposed raising the corporate tax rate to 28% and the corporate minimum tax to 21% as a matter of "fundamental fairness" that will bring in more money to invest in Americans.

Trump: The former president has promised to extend the tax cuts he signed into law in 2017 and that are due to sunset at the end of 2025. That package cut the corporate tax rate from 35% to 21% and roughly doubled the standard deduction and child tax credit.



A voter walks toward a polling station in London, Britain on May 2. Britain's ruling Conservative Party has suffered one of its worst ever election days as massive numbers of voters switched their allegiance in town hall elections across England. (Xinhua)



Cuellar



Hicks

America

Houston faces catastrophic floods:

The Houston area was under threat of worsening flood conditions Saturday, a day after heavy storms slammed the region and authorities warned those in low-lying areas to evacuate ahead of an expected "catastrophic" surge of water.

A flood watch remained in effect through Sunday afternoon as forecasters predicted additional rainfall Saturday night, bringing another 1 to 3 inches (2.5 to 7.6 centimeters) of water to the soaked region and the likelihood of major flooding.

Friday's storms forced numerous high-water rescues, including some from the rooftops of flooded homes. Officials redoubled urgent instructions for residents in low-lying areas to evacuate, warning the worst was still to come.

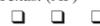
"This threat is ongoing and it's going to get worse. It is not your typical river flood," said Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo, the top elected official in the nation's third-largest county. (AP)

Cuellar vows to continue bid: For two decades, US Rep Henry Cuellar has stood out as a moderate Democrat along the Texas-Mexico border, bucking his party at times over guns and immigration while seldom facing a tough reelection.

But a federal indictment accusing Cuellar of federal conspiracy and bribery charges is putting the Laredo native who was first elected in 2004 in a different spotlight. Cuellar, 68, and his wife, Imelda, 67, were taken into custody Friday in connection with a US Department of Justice probe into the couple's ties to the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan.

The congressman professed his inno-

cence after the indictment was revealed and vowed to continue his bid for an 11th term in November, saying, "Everything I have done in Congress has been to serve the people of South Texas." (AP)



Hicks gives testimony: Donald Trump's 2016 campaign was seized with worry about the potential political damage from a tape that showed Trump bragging about grabbing women without their permission, longtime Trump adviser Hope Hicks testi-

fied Friday at his hush money trial.

Hicks, a former White House official, was compelled to testify by Manhattan prosecutors, who are hoping her remarks bolster their argument that the uproar over the infamous "Access Hollywood" tape hastened Trump's then-lawyer to pay off actor Stormy Daniels to bury a negative story that could imperil his 2016 presidential bid.

Once one of Trump's closest confidants, Hicks provided a window into the chaotic fallout over the tape's release just days before a crucial debate with Democrat Hillary Clinton. (AP)



Video shows mother pleading: Police officers repeatedly fired their guns at a New York City man who had called 911 during a mental health crisis as his mother and younger brother begged officers not to shoot, body-camera video released Friday shows.

Win Rozario's family called on the officers to be fired and charged with murder after the footage of the killing was made public by the state's attorney general.

"The video that was released makes it clear that Win should be alive but the police came and murdered him in our kitchen without any care for him or us," said a statement from Rozario's mother, brother and father. "The police created a crisis and killed him in cold blood." (AP)



Britain's King Charles III, (left), Edward, Duke of Edinburgh, (right), and his wife Sophie, Duchess of Edinburgh attend the Royal Windsor Horse Show in Windsor, England, on May 3. (AP)

Africa

Bomb kills 12 in Congo

'Darfur risks death if aid is not allowed in'

UNITED NATIONS, May 4, (Agencies): The United Nations food agency warned Sudan's warring parties Friday that there is a serious risk of widespread starvation and death in Darfur and elsewhere in Sudan if they don't allow humanitarian aid into the vast western region.

Leni Kinzli, the World Food Program's regional spokesperson, said at least 1.7 million people in Darfur were experiencing emergency levels of hunger in December, and the number "is expected to be much higher today."

"Our calls for humanitarian access to conflict hotspots in Sudan have never been more critical," she told a virtual UN press conference from Nairobi.

Sudan plunged into chaos in mid-April 2023, when long-simmering tensions between its military led by Gen **Abdel Fattah Burhan**, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces commanded by Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, broke out into street battles in the capital, Khartoum. Fighting has spread to other parts of the country, especially urban areas and the Darfur region.

The paramilitary forces, known as the RSF, have gained control of most of Darfur and are besieging El Fasher, the only capital in Darfur they don't hold, where some 500,000 civilians had taken refuge.

Kinzli said WFP's partners on the ground report that the situation in El Fasher is "extremely dire" and it's difficult for civilians wanting to flee the reported RSF bombings and shelling to leave.

Violence

She said the violence in El Fasher and surrounding North Darfur is exacerbating the critical humanitarian needs in the entire Darfur region, where crop production for staple cereals like wheat, sorghum and millet is 78% less than the five-year average.

On top of the impact of escalating violence, Kinzli said, "WFP is concerned that hunger will increase dramatically as the lean season between harvests sets in and people run out of food." She said a farmer in El Fasher recently told her that her family had already run out of food stocks and is living day-to-day, an indication that the "lean season," which usually starts in May, started earlier.

Kinzli said she received photos earlier Friday from colleagues on the ground of severely malnourished children in a camp for displaced people in Central Darfur, as well as older people "who have nothing left but skin and bones."

Kinzli called for "a concerted diplomatic effort by the international community to push the warring parties to provide access and safety guarantees" for humanitarian staff and convoys.

Power blackouts hit Tanzania: Tanzania's power distributing company on Saturday announced a major blackout for most of the country due to the power grid's failure ahead of approaching Cyclone Hidaya. The metrological department said the cyclone continues toward the coastline.

Heavy rainfall and strong winds have been reported in the coastal areas of Mtwara and Lindi, with forecasts saying that Tanzania's commercial hub, Dar es Salaam, may be affected.

Authorities warned residents to exercise caution as the intensity of the cyclone increases.

The weather service also said more than usual amounts of rainfall were recorded in the coastal areas overnight. The Tanzania Red Cross Society has been carrying out preparedness campaigns along the coast.

Over the past weeks, Tanzania - like much of East Africa - has been experiencing heavy rains and flooding which has seen heavy rains and flooding that killed 155 people and affected more than 200,000 others.

France deplores attack: France condemned, in the strongest terms, the attack on a humanitarian aid convoy of International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in South Darfur State, west Sudan.

Two people were killed and wounded three others wounded in the attack yesterday, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted in a statement on Friday.

The Ministry expressed condolences to the families of the deceased, wishing a rapid recovery to those injured, the statement said.

France called on all the parties to the conflict to respect their commitments, in line with international humanitarian law that requires the protection of humanitarian and health sectors' workers, and allow safely, fully and unrestrictedly humanitarian aid.

Bomb kills 12 in Congo: Attacks on two camps for displaced people in eastern Congo's North Kivu province on Friday killed at least 12 people, including children, according to local officials, an aid group and the United Nations.

The UN said in a statement that bombs hit two camps for displaced people in Lac Vert and Mugunga, near the city of Goma, the provincial capital of North Kivu.

The UN called the attacks a "flagrant violation of human rights and international humanitarian law and may constitute a war crime".

Lt. Colonel Ndjike Kaiko, a Congolese army spokesperson, blamed the attacks on a rebel group, known as M23, with alleged links to Rwanda, in a statement provided to The Associated Press.

The M23 rebel group denied any role in the attacks and blamed Congolese forces in a statement published on X.

Ruto postpones schools reopening: Kenyan President William Ruto has postponed next week's planned reopening of schools until further notice, as heavy rains and floods that have killed more than 200 people continue.

The president in his state of the nation address on Friday said that "meteorological reports paint a dire picture," citing the possibility of Cyclone Hidaya hitting coastal Kenya in coming days.

Kenya and other parts of East Africa have been overwhelmed by flooding, with more than 150,000 displaced people living in camps across the country.

Schools originally were to reopen this week, but the education ministry postponed that by a week. Students will now wait for the announcement of new reopening dates as some schools remain flooded and others have been damaged. Some displaced people have been living in schools while the government prepares to relocate them to camps.



Burhan



An aerial drone photo taken on May 4, 2024 shows houses submerged by flood due to heavy rainfall at Sidrap Regency in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. (Xinhua)

Flood, landslides hit Indonesia's Sulawesi island, killing 15

At least 15 people were killed after flooding and landslides struck Indonesia's South Sulawesi province, an official from the country's disaster agency said on Saturday.

The natural disasters, which were triggered by heavy downpours, had occurred since Friday in Luwu regency, Spokesman of the National Disaster

Management and Mitigation Agency Abdul Muhari said.

Consequently, more than 1,800 houses and mosques had been submerged by the waters by up to three meters, and a total of 103 houses were destroyed, the spokesman said.

In addition, 42 other houses were swept away by

the current, the spokesman said.

Moreover, 115 people were forced to flee home and take shelter in their relatives' houses or mosques located on safer grounds, he said in a statement.

The evacuation of disaster-affected people continued on Saturday, he said. (Xinhua)



Panama's Vice President Jose Gabriel Carrizo, the ruling party's presidential candidate in the upcoming election, speaks to supporters during a campaign rally, in Panama City on May 1. Panama will hold general elections on May 5. (AP)



Martinelli



Mulino

Lat/Am

'Three bodies recovered': Mexican authorities said Friday that three bodies were recovered in an area of Baja California near where two Australians and an American went missing last weekend during an apparent camping and surfing trip.

The state prosecutors office did not say whether the bodies were those of the three foreigners, but said the bodies were discovered during the search for the missing men. It also announced that three people who were being questioned in the case of the missing men had been arrested and charged.

"Three bodies were found south of the city of Ensenada, and they were recovered in coordination with other authorities during a specialized operation because they were found in a zone of difficult access," the office said in a statement.

"This was done as part of the search for two Australians and one American reported missing," the office said. (AP)

Brazil rains death toll 39: The death toll from heavy rains in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul has risen to 39 with some 70 people still missing, the Civil Defense agency said Friday.

The heavy rain was one of the worst climate tragedies that has so far affected 235 municipalities, including the state capital of Porto Alegre, according to the agency.

The state has seen persisting rainfall since Monday, causing rivers to swell, destroying bridges, and putting the city of Porto Alegre, with a population of more than 1.4 million, on alert.

Heavy rains also spread to the neighboring state of Santa Catarina, where a person was killed in the flooding and landslides.

Recognizing the calamity, the Brazilian government has sent equipment and financial aid to Rio Grande do Sul.

More than 24,000 people were displaced by the disaster, according to the agency. (Xinhua)

Panama SC rejects challenge: Panama's Supreme Court rejected a constitutional challenge to the candidacy of leading presidential contender **José Raúl Mulino**

Asia

China publicizes 2016 agreement with Philippines

US, Japan defense chiefs vow cooperation

HONOLULU, May 4, (AP): Defense chiefs from the US, Australia, Japan and the Philippines vowed to deepen their cooperation as they gathered in Hawaii for their second-ever joint meeting amid concerns about China's operations in the South China Sea.

The meeting came after the four countries last month held their first joint naval exercises in the South China Sea, a major shipping route where Beijing has long-simmering territorial disputes with a number of Southeast Asian nations and has caused alarm with its recent assertiveness in the waters.

US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told reporters at a news conference after their discussion that the drills strengthened the ability of the nations to work together, build bonds among their forces and underscore their shared commitment to international law in the waterway.

Increasing

Australian Defense Minister Richard Marles said the defense chiefs talked about increasing the tempo of their defense exercises.

"Today, the meetings that we have held represent a very significant message to the region and to the world about four democracies which are committed to the global rules-based order," Marles said at the joint news conference with his counterparts.

Austin hosted the defense chiefs at the US military's regional headquarters, US Indo-Pacific Command, at Camp H.M. Smith in the hills above Pearl Harbor. Earlier in the day, Austin had separate bilateral meetings with Australia and Japan followed by a trilateral meeting with Australia and Japan.

Defense chiefs from the four nations held their first meeting in Singapore last year.

The US has decades-old defense treaties with all three nations.

The US lays no claims to the South China Sea, but has deployed Navy ships and fighter jets in what it calls freedom of navigation operations that have challenged China's claims to virtually the entire waterway. The US says freedom of navigation and overflight in the waters is in America's national interest.

Aside from China and the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei also have overlapping claims in the resource-rich sea. Beijing has refused to recognize a 2016 international arbitration ruling that invalidated its expansive claims on historical grounds.

Skirmishes between Beijing and Manila in particular have flared since last year. Earlier this week, Chinese coast guard ships fired water cannons at two Philippine patrol vessels off off Scarborough Shoal, damaging both.

The repeated high-seas confrontations have sparked fears of a larger conflict that could put China and the United States on a collision course.

The US has warned repeatedly that it's obligated to defend the Philippines - its oldest treaty ally in Asia - if Filipino forces, ships or aircraft come under an armed attack, including in the South China Sea.

Also:

TAIPEI, Taiwan: For the first time, China has publicized what it claims is an unwritten 2016 agreement with the Philippines over access to South China Sea islands.

The move threatens to further raise tensions in the disputed waterway, through which much of the world's trade passes and which China claims virtually in its entirety.

A statement from the Chinese Embassy in Manila said the "temporary

special arrangement" agreed to during a visit to Beijing by former president **Rodrigo Duterte** allowed small scale fishing around the islands but restricted access by military, coast guard and other official planes and ships to the 12 nautical mile (22 kilometer) limit of territorial waters.

The Philippines respected the agreement over the past seven years but has since reneged on it to "fulfill its own political agenda," forcing China to take action, the statement said.

"This is the basic reason for the ceaseless disputes at sea between China and the Philippines over the past year and more," said the statement posted to the embassy's website Thursday, referring to the actions of the Philippines.

President **Ferdinand Marcos Jr.** and Duterte have denied forging any agreements that would have supposedly surrendered Philippine sovereignty or sovereign rights to China. Any such action, if proven, would be an impeachable offense under the country's 1987 Constitution.

However, after his visit to Beijing, Duterte hinted at such an agreement without offering details, said **Collin Koh**, senior fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies based in Nanyang Technological University, Singapore and an expert on naval affairs in the Indo-Pacific region, particularly Southeast Asia.

"He boasted then that he not only got Chinese investment and trade pledges, but also that he secured Philippine fishermen access to Scarborough Shoal," Koh said, referring to one of the maritime features in dispute.

Beijing's deliberate wording in the statement "is noteworthy in showing that Beijing has no official document to prove its case and thus could only rely mainly on Duterte's verbal claim," Koh said.

on Friday, removing an element of uncertainty two days before the May 5 vote.

The court was ruling on a challenge from lawyer Karisma Etienne Karamañites, who argued that Mulino was not eligible because

he had not been selected through a primary by the Achieving Goals party of former president **Ricardo Martinelli**.

Magistrate María Eugenia López, the Supreme Court's president, read a statement



Sudanese children suffering from malnutrition are treated at an MSF clinic in Metche Camp, Chad, near the Sudanese border, on April 6. The United Nations food agency warned Sudan's warring parties on May 4, that there is a serious risk of widespread starvation and death in Darfur and elsewhere in Sudan if they don't allow humanitarian aid into the vast western region. (AP)

on behalf of the court Friday, noting that there had been eight votes to reject the constitutional challenge and one dissent.

"What has moved this constitutional tribunal in the historic moment in which we find ourselves is the defense of our country and democracy, as well as institutional, social peace, the right to elect and to be elected, political pluralism, and let's not forget the important role played by the political parties," she said. (AP)

Haiti gangs launch attack: Gangs in Haiti laid siege to several neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince, burning homes and exchanging gunfire with police for hours as hundreds fled the violence early Thursday in one of the biggest attacks since Haiti's new prime minister was announced.

The attacks began late Wednesday in neighborhoods including Solino and Delmas 18, 20 and 24 located southwest of the main international airport, which has remained closed for nearly two months amid relentless gang violence.

"The gangs started burning everything in sight," said a man called Néne, who declined to give his last name out of fear. "I was hiding in a corner all night."

He walked with a friend as they carried a dusty red suitcase between them that was stuffed with clothes - the only thing they could save. The clothes belonged to Néne's children, whom he had rushed out of Delmas 18 around dawn during a pause in the fighting. (AP)

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
DUBAI	-	DFMGI	+1.90	4,142.72	
PAKISTAN	-	KSE 100	+1,263.98	71,971.82	
BRITAIN	-	FTSE 100	+41.34	8,213.49	
EUROPE	-	EURO Stoxx 50	+30.87	4,921.48	
PHILIPPINES	-	PSEI	-31.00	6,615.55	

Business

Extensive branch network and innovative digital services ensure seamless banking

Gulf Bank continues to enhance and develop customer experience

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: In its ongoing efforts to establish itself as the bank of the future, Gulf Bank is preparing to launch the second phase of its Core Banking Services system. This marks a transformative step in the bank's digital transformation journey, aimed at enhancing operational efficiency and easing banking transactions for customers.

In a press statement, Mr. Mohammad Al-Qattan, Gulf Bank's General Manager of Consumer Banking, confirmed that Gulf Bank now has a robust technological infrastructure that is among the most advanced and best in the banking sector. This makes it exceptionally well-prepared to meet banking needs and offer outstanding digital services. He pointed out that the bank's digital transformation is rapidly progressing towards leadership, fulfilling customers' demands for advanced banking services. He also emphasized that investing in comprehensive technological solutions is a fundamental pillar of Gulf Bank's strategy.

Al-Qattan mentioned that last year's total revamp of the Gulf Bank mobile app marked a significant milestone in the bank's transformation journey. This update has impacted a range of services and banking transactions, enhancing accessibility, simplifying processes, and ensuring availability to everyone, anywhere, at any time, through an interface that is easy to use, fast, and secure.

He further stated that the app offers Gulf Bank customers numerous outstanding banking services, some of which are exclusive to them, with continuous efforts to innovate

Mohammad Al-Qattan:

- Gulf Bank's mobile app users increased by 78% last year
- A 236% increase in financial transfers through the app over the last three years
- The digital transformation journey included electronic services, branches, ATMs, and the Call Center
- The bank features a robust technological infrastructure, ranking among the most advanced and top in the banking sector
- Gulf Bank is Committed to enhancing and developing services and implementing the latest and best technological applications
- Investing in comprehensive technological solutions is a fundamental pillar of Gulf Bank's strategy.

and expand these services. Additionally, he noted that the digital transformation extends to improving electronic services, branches, ATMs, and the Call Center, aiming to



Mohammad Al-Qattan showcasing quality services on the mobile application.

position Gulf Bank's services as some of the most convenient, quickest, and top-rated in the banking industry, leveraging technology that exceeds customer expectations.

He further highlighted that these developments have effectively increased the number of app users by more than 78% last year, with mobile banking transfers rising by 236% over the last three years.

Al-Qattan concluded his statements by saying, "Gulf Bank is committed to providing advanced products and services to its customers by studying their banking needs and requirements. The bank consistently works to enhance and expand its services, incorporating the most recent and effective technological solutions in the field of financial banking services."

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.

Other Voices

Kuwait's budget struggles amidst declining oil prices

By Kamel Al-Harami
Independent Oil Analyst

The current oil price is about \$90. It can barely cover our current budget that will be finished by the end of March next year. A noticeable part of our budget is that most of it or about 85 percent covers salaries subsidies and other items, yet there is no reference to any tangible element that can produce and be positive for our growth or development.



Kamel Al-Harami

If we look around ourselves we will notice developments and short and long term plans in our neighbors. We will notice the commitment and dedication of other states and their population to reach a certain level of growth and the creation of new jobs. All of us are looking forward to achieving and reaching certain goals and objectives.

Indeed, here in Kuwait, we lack such goals, objectives and execution. We are ashamed that nothing is being done to repair roads and streets everywhere in our country, that used to be the 'talk of the town' in the Arab world. We don't know how long the repairs will take place.

On the other hand, we are good in dissolving and electing a new parliament more than once a year, and that for 62 years, 45 governments were formed, which can be translated simply as no government has lasted one year.

So where do we go from here

— from failure to another with no clear vision or any goal to achieve? Today, we are hoping for any government official to stand up and say: "We will repair our roads and streets in the coming year."

We are in search of just one goal and task to be delegated and dedicated to the people for them to move on and implement. Despite our unlimited resources in every field and cordial relations with most of the nations that would love to help and assist us in every field, as well as our young population, adequate education and infrastructure; our country can excel only if we have clear established road map, backed up by a committed government. Certainly, this is a challenge that all of us must face together should it become reality.

Definitely, we have objectives and plans like the silk road and for Kuwait to become a commercial and financial center. Nevertheless, such goals are still somewhere in our minds or beautiful dreams to entertain ourselves with. Or just to be used as self-defense mechanism against anyone accusing us that we do not have any such plans or objectives in the short and long terms. Or just empty words to complete our past and future governments' annual message to the Parliament and the international media.

At the end, we are in desperate need for a strong and committed government with clear vision and objectives. Is this a difficult task to ask for the State that is popular, wealthy and surrounded by countries willing to assist it in almost any field? We have enough brains to come up with our needed and wanted goals.

Email: nafikuwaiti@yahoo.com

World Bank revises Kuwait's GDP growth projection to 2.8% for '24, Markaz report

Brent Crude registers gain of 0.4% in April

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" released its Monthly Market Review report for the month of April 2024. Kuwait and broader GCC markets were pressured by the escalation in geopolitical tensions while corporate earnings and positive economic outlook from World Bank lent some support. Global markets declined for the month as persistent inflation in the U.S. led to concerns about possible delays in interest rate cuts by the U.S. Fed.

The report stated that Kuwait equity market declined for the month, pressured by geopolitical tensions. However, positive Q1 2024 earnings cushioned the market decline. Boursa Kuwait All Share (PR) index fell 3.8% in April amid broad-based declines. The Banking index declined 2.3% during the month with Gulf Bank and Burgan Bank losing the most, at 8.2% and 6.8% respectively.

Gulf Bank received Central Bank of Kuwait's approval to extend its right to buy, sell or dispose of 10% of the bank's shares for another six months. NBK share prices declined by 4.4% for the month despite posting a 9.2% y/y increase in net profit to KD 146.6mm in Q1 2024. Among Premier Market stocks, Boubyan Petrochemical and Mezzan Holding Company were the top gainers for the month, rising by 10.1% and 8.8%. Mezzan's Holding positive performance was driven by its return to profitability in FY2023. Agility had declined the most among premier market stocks at 13.2%. The company's subsidiary Agility Global would be listing in the Abu Dhabi Stock Exchange in May 2024.

Kuwait's economic growth (real GDP) projection for 2024 was revised by the World Bank to 2.8% y/y, higher than the 2.6% y/y forecasted earlier in January 2024 owing to expectations of phasing out of OPEC+ production cuts. However, the IMF has estimated Kuwait's real GDP to contract by 1.4% in 2024, under the assumption that oil production cuts will continue into 2024, making it the only GCC economy which is expected to contract in 2024. Kuwait's CPI rose by 3.02% in March with food and beverage segment rising by 5.71%. According to data from the Ministry of Finance, Kuwait's project spending during 2023-24 had been at KD 345 mil-



Markaz Logo

lion, amounting to a third of the planned capital expenditure of KD 1.1 billion. Project activity had also been muted in Q1 2024, with the value of project awards amounting to USD 327 million, down from USD 1.8bn in Q1 2023. However, going forward, the project market is expected to be active with contractors preparing for big-ticket projects. Real estate sales in Kuwait declined by 2.3% y/y in Q1 2024, with residential and investment segments declining by 2.8% and 3.9% respectively, amid the high interest rate environment.

Most GCC markets were negative during the month as geopolitical concerns persisted. The S&P GCC composite index declined by 1.4% in April 2024. The dimming economic outlook amid status quo on production cuts and geopolitical tensions weighed on markets. The IMF has estimated GCC's real GDP growth for 2024 at 2.4%, revised down from 3.7% forecasted in October 2023, citing production cuts, geopolitical tensions, and shipping disruptions in Red Sea. However, the agency expects growth to rebound to 4.9% in 2025 driven by strong non-oil economic activity and a pickup in hydrocarbon production.

Saudi equity index fell by 0.1% during the month even as strong corporate earnings lent support to markets. Saudi Aramco fell 2.4% during the month. Al Rajhi Bank and Saudi National Bank (SNB) fell 2.9% and 6.5% respectively during the month. Al Rajhi bank has reported a 6% y/y increase in its net profit for Q1. The Dubai equity index declined by 2.1% during the month. The share price of Emirates NBD declined by 2.9% despite its net profit for Q1 2024 rising by 12% y/y. The rise in net profit was supported by higher income and recoveries on impaired loans. Salik Company declined by 7.5% for the month. The Abu Dhabi equity index declined by 1.7% during the month. FAB's shares fell 5.6% during the month. Qatar equity index fell 1.2% even as natural gas prices staged a recovery.

Saudi Arabia's revenue from the non-oil sector had amounted to USD 453 billion in 2023, the highest level in the country's history. According to UAE's PMI survey, while business conditions have been robust, businesses are facing administrative delays and

increased supply constraints due to the Red Sea shipping crisis.

Global and U.S. markets were negative for the week as sticky inflation dampened rate cut hopes. MSCI World index and S&P 500 indices declined 3.9% and 4.2% respectively in April. U.S. CPI rose 3.5% y/y in March compared to 3.2% y/y in the previous month, slightly higher than the 3.4% forecast from the Dow Jones consensus. The U.S. Personal Consumption Expenditure for March rose by 2.7% y/y in March, up from 2.5% in February. In addition to sticky inflation, slower than expected U.S. GDP growth for Q1 2024 at 1.6 y/y also weighed on market sentiments. Google's parent company, Alphabet, has reported better than expected Q1 2024 earnings and has also announced its first dividend payment. The MSCI Emerging Market index rose 0.3% during the month. Chinese equities (SSEA) edged up 2.1% during the month supported by stimulus hopes, positive economic growth and measures to improve the markets. China's Q1 2024 GDP was up by 5.3% y/y, well above analysts' forecast of 4.6%.

IMF has forecasted the global economy to grow by 3.2% in 2024, marginally up from the 3.1% projected in January 2024. Weak demand in China and Europe, and the escalation in Middle East tensions pose key risks, while stronger-than-expected job market and consumer spending in the U.S. are lending support to growth expectations.

The yield on the 10-year U.S. Treasury note edged up during the month and closed at 4.69%. Strong retail sales data and an uptick in inflation numbers have driven up yields during the month.

Oil price settled at USD 87.9 per barrel, recording a monthly gain of 0.4%. The commodity had reached six-month highs during the month supported by geopolitical tensions and OPEC+ decision to maintain status quo on extending production cuts until June 2024. OPEC+ has also insisted some countries improve compliance to output cuts. However, factors such as weak growth momentum in China capped gains. Gold prices rose by 2.4%, closing at USD 2,285.6/oz., amid worsening geopolitical conflicts and sticky inflation. Natural gas prices rose 12.9% during the month as concerns pertaining to the impact of the ongoing conflicts on LNG exports from Qatar and increase in U.S. electricity output supported prices.

The U.S. Fed's policy meeting in May could provide a much-needed direction to the global markets as sticky inflation has increased speculations that interest rates could remain longer than previously anticipated. Additionally, geopolitical developments would also need to be carefully monitored as it could lead to short-term volatility in markets.

174.3% rise in electric car imports

Electric cars gain popularity in Kuwait despite challenges

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: In recent years, electric cars have experienced significant advancements and a surge in global popularity due to their modern technology, numerous advantages, and eco-friendliness, reports Al-Qabas daily.

However, in Kuwait, efforts to promote electric vehicles face challenges, primarily the low cost of traditional fuel. Despite this, there has been a notable increase in the importation of electric cars into Kuwait over the past five years.

According to statistics compiled by Al-Qabas, based on data from the General Administration of Customs, Kuwait imported a total of 832 electric cars over the past five years, valued at 9.7 million dinars. The number of electric cars imported saw a significant increase of 174.3% in 2023, reaching 417 cars valued at 6.9 million dinars, compared to 152 cars in 2022 worth 1.5 million dinars.

Experts attribute the global growth in electric vehicle adoption to various factors, including heightened awareness of sustainability and environmental conservation. They suggest that Kuwait should align with the global trend of combating climate change and reducing carbon emissions, encouraging the adoption of electric cars as part of this effort.

Improvements in charging infrastructure in Kuwait, with expanded public and private charging points in commercial centers, hotels, and residential areas, have contributed to increasing the comfort and acceptance of electric cars among owners.

Despite the increasing demand, challenges remain, including cultural preferences for traditional cars and concerns about charging infrastructure. However, advancements in battery technology have extended the range of electric cars, with some models capable of traveling 300-400 kilometers on a single charge.

To further promote the adoption of electric vehicles, experts recommend that the government establish import laws and expand charging infrastructure nationwide. Additionally, incentives such as tax exemptions and free charging could encourage consumers to switch to electric cars, similar to measures implemented in other countries.

In 2022, the Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy issued regulations governing electric car chargers, which contributed to the increased demand for electric cars in Kuwait. Continued government support and investment in electric vehicle infrastructure are crucial for furthering the adoption of electric cars and advancing sustainable transportation initiatives.

Plans to increase oil production

Kuwait's construction sector set for robust growth in '24

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: According to a report by GlobalData, Kuwait's construction sector is poised for robust growth, with an anticipated expansion of 6.6% in real terms this year, reports Al-Qabas daily.

This growth is underpinned by investments in the energy sector, government initiatives to boost oil and gas production, and infrastructure development projects.

MEED magazine highlighted that in July 2023, the government unveiled a comprehensive four-year development program comprising 107 major projects across various sectors.

Notable projects include the Gulf Railway Project, the construction of a new Terminal 2 at Kuwait Airport, and the expansion of flight capacity, with plans to increase the number of flights from 240,000 to 650,000 by 2027 through the construction of three new runways.

However, the magazine cau-

tioned that political issues and a downturn in the real estate market could pose short-term challenges to the construction sector's prospects.

Looking ahead, GlobalData forecasts an average annual growth rate of 3.9% for Kuwait's construction industry from 2025 to 2028. This growth will be supported by investments in renewable energy, transportation, electricity, housing, and sports facilities, as well as initiatives outlined in the New Kuwait 2035 vision.

As part of New Kuwait 2035, the government plans to invest over 350 million dinars (\$1.1 billion) in the construction of various sports projects nationwide. Additionally, growth will be bolstered by plans to increase oil production from 2.9 million barrels per day in 2023 to 4 million barrels per day by 2035, further stimulating construction activity and economic development in Kuwait.

Türkiye's disinflation program expects to yield results in June

ANKARA, May 4, (Xinhua): Türkiye's disinflation program is expected to show results in June, as the government's economic team has predicted. However, due to a less positive outlook since January, economists said control over inflation may take more time.

The country's inflation accelerated to 69.8 percent annually in April, up from 68.5 percent in March, according to data released by the Turkish Statistical Institute on Friday.

However, Mehmet Simsek, the architect of a policy overhaul kickstarted in mid-2023, is optimistic about Türkiye's economic prospects.

The Turkish treasury and finance minister stated repeatedly in recent weeks on different occasions that the staggering inflation rate is set to decline sharply starting next month as part of the monetary tightening program.

Simsek also said last week that the government would take additional fiscal measures to support disinflation efforts and proceed to a public spending cut.

Experts have largely welcomed last year's policy reversal but consider that stricter fiscal discipline is needed to tame staggering inflation.

"We haven't seen many concrete results on the inflation front since the new program was launched," Mustafa Sonmez, a Turkish economist and writer, told Xinhua.

He said the economic team had to convince consumers that the current disinflation program would yield positive results in the short term.

Families struggling with price increas-

es of all basic commodities are eagerly expecting some relief since Simsek and his team took the reins of the economy and promised to address their hardships.

Senol Babuscü, a professor of finance from Ankara's Baskent University, said 11 months have passed since Simsek took office, but the inflation rate remains elevated.

"Inflation was 38 percent then, it is almost 70 percent now. Did he implement the wrong policies? No, he implemented the right, rational policies. However, he implemented incomplete policies," Babuscü told Xinhua.

He called on the government to increase monetary tightening and put immediately into effect other fiscal and monetary tools to curb inflation.

Babuscü also welcomed the central bank's efforts to rebuild foreign exchange reserves to prop up the weakened Turkish lira.

On April 25, the central bank kept its key policy rate unchanged at 50 percent but didn't rule out further rate hikes if the general outlook deteriorates.

On the plus side, Türkiye's efforts to attract foreign capital inflow have gained pace, Simsek wrote earlier on social media platform X.

According to the minister, Türkiye saw a net portfolio inflow of 16.8 billion U.S. dollars from June 2023 to February 2024.

Simsek also announced on Monday that the country had secured financing of 6.3 billion dollars from the Islamic Development Bank over the next two years for various development projects.

ABK upgraded to premier market of Boursa Kuwait, reflecting shareholder confidence

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait delivers strong performance in Q1 2024

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) proudly announced its robust financial results for Q1 2024, once again affirming its position as a leading financial institution.

Financial Performance

ABK reported a Net Profit of KD14.52million, representing a 35% increase and an increase in Earnings per Share (EPS) of 50% from 4 fils to 6 fils. Operating Profit also witnessed an increase of 25%, reaching KD 27.80 million while Operating Income also increased by 21% to KD 51.86 million, reflecting the Bank's strong profitability and shareholder value creation.

Total Assets of the Bank reached KD 6.51 billion while maintaining steady growth in Loans and Advances amounting to KD 4.27 billion, with Customer Deposits at KD 3.91 billion, affirming the Group's reputation as a trusted financial partner. Moreover, the Bank's Non-performing Loan (NPL) ratio stood at 1.34%, with NPL coverage at 462%, Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) at 16.27%, and Shareholders' Equity at KD 593.52million, further underscoring ABK's financial stability, healthy financial position, and robust balance sheet.

Economic Overview

Commenting on the strong performance, Mr. Talal Behbehani, Chairman of ABK, said, "Kuwait's resilient economic environment in 2024, characterized by efforts to diversify and strengthen the economy, has played a significant role in supporting ABK's recent strong financial results."

He continued, "ABK's strategic alignment with the evolving economic landscape, coupled with our focus on innovation, customer-centric services, and operational excellence, has enabled the Bank to capitalize on these opportunities, drive sustainable growth, and deliver value to stakeholders amidst a promising economic backdrop."

Furthermore, Mr. Behbehani recapped on the recent upgrade of the Group's shares from the Main Market to the Premier Market of Boursa Kuwait during Q1. This achievement is a reflection of the Group's success in meeting the criteria required for the upgrade that also signifies shareholders' confidence in ABK's stock, as evidenced by the trading rates aligning with stipulated requirements. Mr. Behbehani also highlighted the potential for increased trading in ABK's stock by international institutions and funds following the stock's inclusion in Boursa Kuwait's Premier Market index as a result of this development.

Credit Ratings

ABK is pleased to announce that it maintains its strong credit ratings of A from Fitch and A2 from Moody's. Mr. Behbehani said, "This essentially reflects our financial stability, creditworthiness, and risk management capabilities. It also signifies that our bank continues to be perceived as a reliable partner with increased investor confidence."

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)

ABK's steadfast commitment to ESG principles underscores its dedication to responsible and sustainable banking practices. Mr. Behbehani affirmed, "The



Mr. Talal Mohamed Reza Behbehani - ABK Chairman

■ **Talal Behbehani:** ABK's focus on innovation, customer-centric services, and operational excellence, has enabled us to capitalize on several opportunities



Mr. Abdulla Al Sumait - Acting Group Chief Executive Officer

■ **Abdulla Al Sumait:** ABK started off Q1 strong with a series of noteworthy achievements and initiatives

Bank recognizes the importance of incorporating ESG considerations into operations to create long-term value for all stakeholders while positively impacting the environment and society."

In alignment with this commitment, ABK has embarked on developing a comprehensive five-year group strategy and framework that will further enhance its ESG efforts and enable it to persevere in the future. Mr. Behbehani continued, "This strategic initiative aims to integrate ESG criteria into decision-making processes, enhance transparency, promote ethical standards, and drive positive social and environmental outcomes."

Egypt and the United Arab Emirates

International operations in Egypt and the UAE continue to significantly contribute to the Group's profits. Mr. Behbehani stated that ABK continues to take precautions and develop prudent plans to address the economic challenges in Egypt. In addition, the Group persists in its efforts through its Dubai International Financial Center (DIFC) branch to gain the trust of global investors, secure loan deals, and enhance financial performance.

Digital Advancement

ABK persists in its relentless pursuit of digital advancements, exemplified by the recent launch of its new state-of-the-art website, underscoring the Bank's

commitment to innovation and enhancing customer experience.

Describing the new platform, Mr. Abdulla Al Sumait, Acting Group Chief Executive Officer at ABK, said, "Our new website embodies cutting-edge technology, intuitive design, and user-friendly features that cater to the evolving needs and preferences of digital-savvy customers." The layout, user interfaces, and tools offer customers a convenient and engaging platform to access ABK's banking services, information, and support anytime, anywhere.

This integration of technology with customer-centric principles both elevates the Bank's digital presence and also reinforces its reputation as a forward-thinking financial institution that prioritizes customer satisfaction, engagement, and convenience in an increasingly digital-driven world.

An Active Start

Mr. AlSumait mentioned that in Q1 of 2024, the Group signed a USD 250 million credit facility agreement with South Korea's Daewoo Engineering and Construction Company. This partnership, in collaboration with Commercial Bank of Kuwait and Burgan Bank, underscores the strong relationships and trust the Group has cultivated with global institutions across different sectors, thanks to its unique solutions, professional approach, and ability to meet diverse needs.

He stated that Q1 also witnessed the reopening of the Jabriya branch after undergoing a complete renovation, complemented by the latest technologies in the banking industry. This achievement occurred within a period of three months, demonstrating ABK's commitment to innovation and excellence in customer service. Mr. Al Sumait stressed that the upcoming period will witness the continuation of the plan across the Bank's branches in various governorates with the aim of improving its competitive position.

Furthermore, the Bank launched a series of new and uplifted products and services, of which included its new cashback credit card proposition.

This is in addition to ABK's continuous endeavors to launch several offers and promotional campaigns as part of its strive to attract new customers to its constantly growing family.

Employee Empowerment

ABK's unwavering dedication to employee empowerment and recognition plays a pivotal role in fostering a culture of excellence, engagement, and motivation within the organization. "We are committed to recognizing and valuing employees as integral partners in the Bank's growth journey. We place a strong emphasis on empowering them through training, development opportunities, and a supportive work environment that nurtures their professional growth and fulfillment," said Mr. Al Sumait.

Recognizing that employees are the driving force behind its success, he claimed that ABK actively acknowledges and rewards performance and contributions, both within and outside the workplace.

Recently, the Bank organized a series of events and initiatives aimed at celebrating and rewarding employees for their dedication, innovation, and commitment to excellence, such as the Ramadan Ghabga, National & Liberation Day, Mother's Day, and so on.

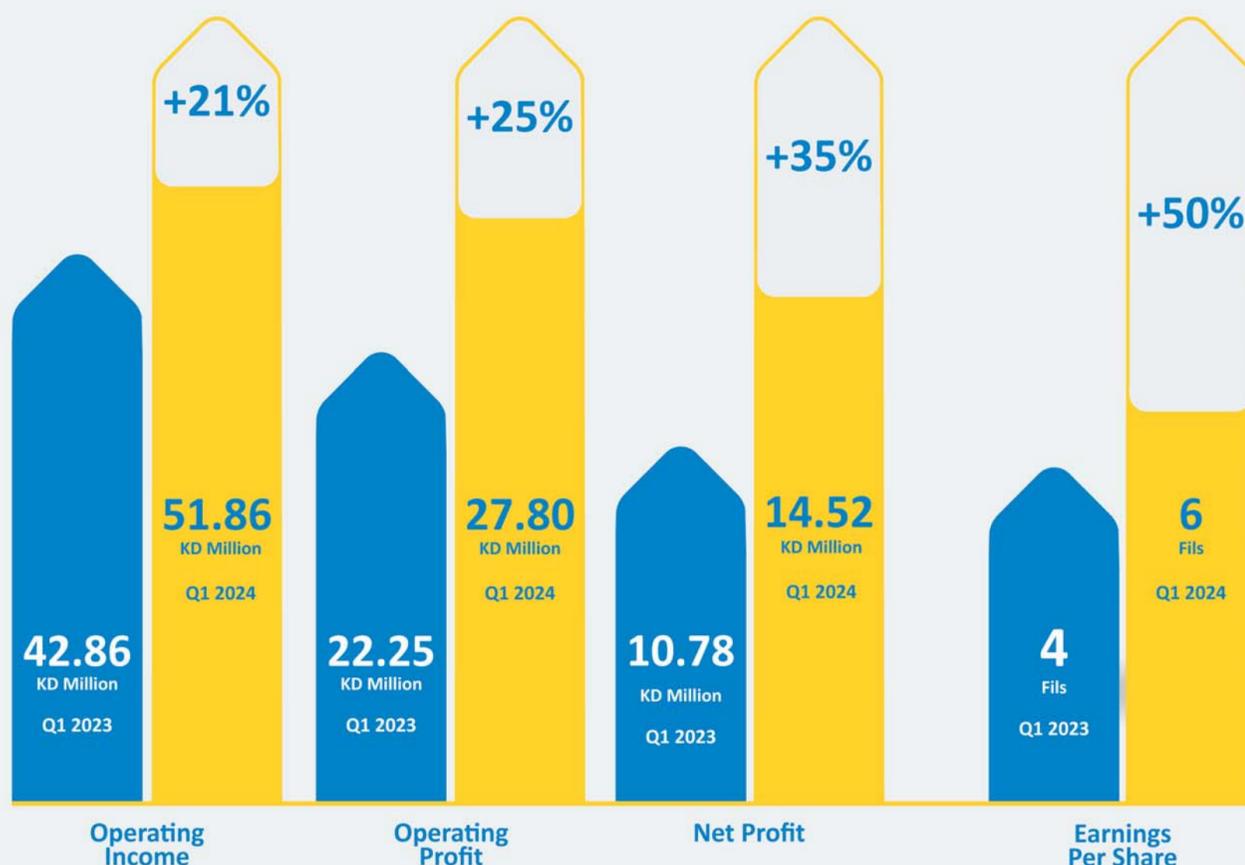
"We strive to cultivate a positive and inclusive work culture and reinforce the connection between individual efforts, organizational achievements, and collective success," Mr. Al Sumait emphasized.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Employees at ABK actively engaged in a series of CSR sponsorships, exemplifying the institution's commitment to social responsibility and community welfare. The most recent of which were during the holy month of Ramadan, where employees participated in iftar distributions to individuals in need and collaborated with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society to distribute care packages, providing essential support and assistance to vulnerable populations during the holy month.

Mr. Al Sumait also affirmed that ABK continues to support the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwait Banking Association's 'Let's Be Aware' banking awareness campaign. As part of this commitment, he pointed out that the Bank launched a Ramadan TVC focusing on educating customers about ways to confront banking fraud and protect customer information, which exceeded 10 million views during the holy month.

2024 Q1 RESULTS



Ahlan Ahli 1 899 899

eahli.com

MOODY'S A2 FitchRatings A

Asia-Pacific economy to grow at 4.5 pct in 2024: IMF

The growth in the Asia-Pacific region will moderate to 4.5 percent this year from the outperformed 5 percent in 2023, said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its "Regional Economic Outlook Asia and Pacific" launched in Singapore Tuesday.

Asia-Pacific is expected to remain the most dynamic region across the world, contributing about 60 percent of global growth in 2024, the report noted.

The region embraces diverse growth drivers, from resilient domestic consumption in most ASEAN countries to a sharp uptick in tourism in the Pacific island countries, IMF said.

Near-term risks are now broadly balanced. Retreating inflation and the prospect of earlier monetary easing have increased the likelihood of a soft landing, IMF said.

Stronger-than-expected growth in Europe and the United States

will bring growth to Asia's exporters while increased geo-economic fragmentation and geopolitical tensions continue to pose serious downside risks to medium-term growth in the region, it added.

Central banks should ensure that inflation returns smoothly to target, and policymakers should avoid making decisions overly dependent on anticipated interest rate moves by the Federal Reserve, IMF noted. (Xinhua)

France, Japan to deepen economic partnership

French President Emmanuel Macron welcomed visiting Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, of Japan, to a working luncheon at the Elysee Palace on Thursday.

Kishida's current visit to France coincides with the 60th anniversary of Japan's accession to the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The two leaders discussed a range of regional issues of com-

mon concern, including the war in Ukraine and the situation in the Middle East, as well as the bilateral relations, according to a statement from the Elysee.

The discussions focused on cooperation in such areas as science, technology, industry, civilian nuclear energy, space culture and new projects that could help deepen "the exceptional economic partnership" between both countries, the statement noted.

Both sides also dealt with climate issues, notably the efforts to curb global warming and conserve woodland, particularly in Papua New Guinea, and the oceans, in the run-up to the UN Ocean Conference to be held in Nice, France on June 9-13, 2025.

They also reviewed Japan's contributions to the AI governance during its presidency of the G7 last year, the statement added. (KUNA)

Earnings per share was 3.82 fils

KIB Group announces net profit of KD 6 mln – 74% increase for Q1 of '24

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman of Kuwait International Bank (KIB) Group, announced the financial results for the first quarter of 2024. The Bank achieved net profit attributable to shareholders amounting to KD 6 million which grew by 74% compared to KD 3.5 million. Earnings per share (EPS) was 3.82 fils compared to 3.06 fils for the first quarter of 2023. Total operating income was almost KD 21 million, which grew 23% compared to the first quarter of 2023.

Commenting on the latest financial results, Al-Jarrah said: "The results from the first quarter of 2024 reflect the Bank's stable financial standing and its consistent approach to sustainable growth. The flexibility and adaptability of the executive team and all staff have enabled the implementation of our growth strategies and plans. These are based on the innovation of new digital products, services, and solutions that meet customers' needs and ensure a distinct banking experience."

Regarding the Bank's interim financial statements for the first quarter of 2024, Al-Jarrah noted that the financing portfolio reached KD 2.44 billion as at 31 March 2024. In terms of KIB's investment securities portfolio, Al-Jarrah revealed that the portfolio, which included primarily high quality Sukuk, grew by KD 80.7 million, reaching almost KD 386 million by the end of Q1 2024, compared to KD 305.3 million during Q1 2023.

Al-Jarrah highlighted that KIB's depositors' accounts reached KD 2.08 billion as of 31 March 2024, while the shareholders' equity totaled KD 333.2 million.

On a related note, Al-Jarrah men-



Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman



Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, Vice Chairman and CEO

tioned that "KIB continues to reap the benefits of its strategic investments in technology infrastructure and the development of its human resources. These investments have directly improved the quality of service provided to customers," adding that "The Bank is focused on expanding its operations and sustaining growth across all sectors, while looking to seize the best favorable opportunities."

From his side, Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, Vice Chairman and CEO of KIB, said: "We are pleased to announce these positive results for the first quarter of 2024. This achievement is a testament to KIB's success in implementing the best

practices in responsible banking and risk management, and in providing high-quality financial services that meet the aspirations and growing needs of our customers."

Furthermore, Bukhamseen underlined that KIB recently issued an Additional Tier 1 (AT1) Sukuk that received high demand from investors, resulting in an oversubscription of over two times. He said: "The issuance concluded by setting a new benchmark for the tightest spread ever achieved on an AT1 Sukuk globally with 195 bps spread over US Treasuries. This transaction stands as a testament to the confidence of local and international investors in the robust Kuwaiti banking sector in

general and KIB's operational performance and forward-looking strategy in particular." The USD 300 million AT1 perpetual Sukuk, classified under Tier 1 capital as per Basel III and CBK guidelines at an annual profit rate of 6.625%, will be made available for trading in the secondary market and will be listed on the London Stock Exchange.

As for the Bank's geographical expansion, Bukhamseen noted that KIB opened its new branch in the Sabah Al-Salem area during the first quarter of 2024, which features a modern, innovative design and advanced technical specifications that align with the Bank's new digital transformation strategy. This expansion

is part of KIB's ongoing efforts to enhance its customers' banking experience and to be closer to them wherever they are.

On a different note, Bukhamseen discussed the Bank recently hosting its inaugural real estate forum. This initiative is rooted in the Bank's more than 50 years of experience. Furthermore, the Bank signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Kuwait University - College of Administrative Sciences, to contribute to student training and enhancing educational curricula in the field of real estate through practical studies, in addition to organizing workshops and training.

Even more, KIB launched several

significant initiatives in the first quarter of 2024 that reinforced its role as a leader in community development, as part of its comprehensive social responsibility program. Bukhamseen said. Notably, the Bank successfully hosted the second season of KIB. The Stadium, Kuwait's first and premier professional sports championship, which took place from January 26 to February 17. This year, the event particularly highlighted equestrian sports, expanding the venue to approximately four times its size from the previous year.

Bukhamseen also affirmed that the Bank continues its support of the 'Let's Be Aware' banking awareness campaign, for the fourth consecutive year. Launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait in collaboration with the Kuwait Banking Association, this initiative aims to advance the goals of its community program and to promote banking and financial literacy across all societal segments.

In their concluding remarks, Al-Jarrah and Bukhamseen commended the Central Bank of Kuwait for its exceptional regulatory and supervisory roles, as well as its consistent support. They also expressed their gratitude to the Capital Markets Authority for its supportive role in fostering an attractive and competitive investment environment in Kuwait. In addition, they praised the tireless efforts of all KIB teams, highlighting their contributions to achieving these results. They expressed their profound appreciation to the Board of Directors and Executive Management for their ongoing support and wise guidance, which have been crucial in enhancing KIB's financial standing and meeting all environmental, social, and corporate governance requirements.

Nippon Steel says it is delaying closing of acquisition of US Steel until late this year

Decision at the request of US DoJ

TOKYO, May 4, (AP): Nippon Steel said Friday it has postponed the expected closing of its \$14.1 billion takeover of U.S. Steel by three months after the U.S. Department of Justice requested more documentation related to the deal.

Tokyo-based Nippon Steel Corp. said the deal, already approved by U.S. Steel's shareholders, is still expected to go through.

"Nippon Steel will continue to fully cooperate with the examination of the relevant authorities," it said in a statement.

The sale has drawn opposition from President Joe Biden's administration on economic and national security grounds, and from former President Donald Trump, the likely Republican presidential candidate in November's election.

The new timing could push the closing beyond the election, but Nippon Steel denied the delay was related to that.

Initially the deal was supposed to have closed by September. Now it will close by December, meaning

China's equipment renewals to boost demand for higher-end steel products

BEIJING, May 4, (Xinhua): The country's action plan to promote large-scale equipment renewals is estimated to generate about 8 million tonnes in new market demand for medium and high-end steel products by the manufacturing industry, according to an industrial association.

The China Iron and Steel Association said that the action plan to boost equipment renewals and trade-ins of consumer goods, which

it could still close as early as September, according to a company spokesperson, who requested the anonymity customary at Japanese companies.

More than 98% of the Pittsburgh-based U.S. Steel Corp. shares voted at a special investor meeting in April approved the takeover. Nippon Steel has said it has prepared

adequate financing to go through with the deal.

First announced in December last year, the merger of U.S. Steel into Nippon Steel has raised concerns about what that might mean for unionized workers, supply chains and U.S. national security.

The United Steelworkers union has opposed the acquisition.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida met Biden last month. But there was no indication the topic came up in the summit.

When Biden visited the Pittsburgh headquarters of United Steelworkers recently, he reiterated his opposition to the Nippon Steel purchase, stressing U.S. Steel "has been an iconic American company for more than a

century and it should remain totally American."

The U.S. steel industry has declined over the decades as global steel production came to be dominated initially by Japan, and more recently by China. Under the deal, U.S. Steel will keep its name and its headquarters in Pittsburgh, where it was founded in 1901.

also continued to improve, with value-added steel products accounting for 35 percent of all exported steel products in the first quarter of this year.

Jiang said that value-added products were becoming the core element affecting the profitability of enterprises. "Optimizing the variety and adjusting the structure of products are critical amid fierce market competition."

The railway is among a range of Belt and Road projects that have delivered tangible benefits to Europe and beyond, and such achievements are not possible without visionary leaders who are keen to harvest shared benefits from win-win cooperation.

Serbia, Hungary, and France are three destinations of Chinese President Xi Jinping's upcoming state visits on May 5-10. Each of these European countries shares a profound friendship with China and has witnessed fruitful cooperation in recent years.

In addition to tangible outcomes from Belt and Road cooperation between China and Serbia, Hungary has been China's primary investment destination in Central and Eastern Europe for consecutive years. Furthermore, China-France relations have long been at the forefront of China's relations with major Western countries and the two serve as crucial stabilizing forces in the increasingly volatile China-Europe relations, bringing more stability and certainty to a turbulent world and further energizing global development.

The comprehensive strategic partnership between China and the EU has seen fruitful results over the past some 20 years. As two major forces advancing multipolarity, two major markets in support of globalization, and two major civilizations championing diversity, China and the EU have achieved remarkable cooperation in various fields, which has greatly benefited the peoples of both sides and has made positive contributions to world peace, stability, and prosperity.

Stable China-EU relations are in the world's interests. The China-Europe freight train service, connecting 219 cities in 25 European countries, established a secure and efficient lifeline for global industrial and supply chains, and is playing a unique role in the Red Sea shipping crisis; China's visa-free policy for multiple European countries further facilitates personnel and trade exchanges; and key cooperation projects under the BRI, such as the Belgrade-Budapest railway, the Port of Piraeus in Greece, and the Peljesac Bridge in Croatia, continue to benefit the people along the routes.

Sun-powered synergy: Samarkand solar plant bolsters China-Uzbekistan green ties

SAMARKAND, May 4, (Xinhua): In Kattakurgan, some 50 km northwest of Samarkand, Uzbekistan's bustling gem and second-largest city, lies an ocean of solar panels, casting waves of dazzling radiance beneath the Central Asian sun.

The 220 MWac Samarkand solar PV plant, constructed by Chengdu-based Dongfang Electric Corporation (DEC), greeted the public for the first time on Monday after its installation in April.

At the doors-open event, Deputy Minister of Energy of Uzbekistan Umid Mamadaminov said the project is "one of the first large-scale renewable energy projects in Uzbekistan." He added that it is significant for strengthening Uzbek-Chinese ties, expanding bilateral cooperation and showcasing China's commitment to and experience in green development.

DEC adheres to its mission to "Shape the Future with Green Power" and works with all stakeholders to share development results and create a better future, said Yuan Minggang, from the top management of DEC.

Sherzod Mukhammadiyev, a 26-year-old engineer who has been working on the project



This photo taken on April 29, 2024 shows the solar PV plant built by China's Dongfang Electric Corporation in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. (Xinhua)

since August 2023, is responsible for the technical support of construction on site.

"I think our Chinese colleagues are enthusiastic and energetic, and I have acquired a lot of skills working with them. I appreciate the youth employment opportunities the project brings. I am proud to participate in it and con-

tribute to the construction of my hometown," he said.

Shakhnoza Mirzaeva, a 36-year-old mother of two twins who is the project's human resources manager and also oversees external relations, said she was happy about the changes in her life brought about by the project.

E. African cbank chiefs address economic challenges

Central bank chiefs from the East African Community (EAC) said on Friday that ongoing conflicts and the effects of climate change in the region have dampened the economic outlook of member states despite the strong economic performance in 2023.

The central bank governors, who met in the South Sudanese capital of Juba for a week-long meeting, said the EAC economies recorded GDP growth rates ranging from 2.8

percent to 8.1 percent in 2023. They noted that this performance was supported by strong growth in key sectors and the continued implementation of policies and reforms aimed at improving private and public investment in most countries.

"Nevertheless, the region still faces unfavorable global financial conditions, negative spillovers from geopolitical conflicts, and the impact of climate change

that continue to weigh on the economic performance of East African countries," the governors said in a communique issued during the 27th Ordinary Meeting of EAC Monetary Affairs Committee (MAC) in Juba.

The meeting was attended by the governors of the central banks of South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, and Burundi, as well as representatives of the central banks of Uganda and Rwanda. (Xinhua)

China's import expo unique opportunity for Egyptian firms

The annual China International Import Expo (CIIE) represents a unique and tremendous opportunity for Egyptian exporting companies to enter the massive Chinese market, said the head of the Egyptian Businessmen's Association (EBA) in a recent interview with Xinhua in Cairo.

Noting the CIIE as the world's first national-level import-themed expo, EBA executive director Mohamed Youssef said the expo

highlights China's strong belief that "encouraging countries and partners to export to China is as equally important as encouraging Chinese exports to these countries."

Youssef said that the EBA has been actively promoting the CIIE among Egyptian businesses and encouraging more Egyptian companies to participate every year since the first CIIE was held in Shanghai in 2018.

The expo welcomes hundreds

of participating companies and hundreds of thousands of professional attendees across the world each year, according to the CIIE Bureau.

"The EBA established in 2007 a special committee, the primary goal of which is to encourage the Egyptian business community to learn more about the opportunities and capabilities available in cooperation with the Chinese market," he noted. (Xinhua)

EBITDA increased by 1.1% to reach KD 21.8 mn

KD87.4 mn stc's revenues for the first 3 months ended 31 March 2024 with KD 8.8 mn net profit

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc), a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers and enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced its financial results for the three months period ended 31 March 2024, highlighting the most significant achievements, financial and operational performance in addition to the social initiatives made by the company during 2024.

In this regard, Eng. Muataz Abdullah Aldharrab, the company's CEO, stated: "The first quarter of 2024 witnessed many financial and operational achievements for Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) due to the continuous and increasing demand for ICT and digital solutions for both the individual and the enterprise sectors. The company has been keen on seizing available opportunities to support its business through expanding its business model and efficiently managing its internal operations. Additionally, the expansion of stc services has had a significant impact on enhancing the company's position as a leader in the telecommunications industry, alongside its ability to increase its market share in a highly competitive market, by achieving new revenue streams."



CEO Eng. Muataz Abdullah Aldharrab

Commenting on the key achievements of stc's during the first three months of 2024, Eng. Muataz Aldharrab, the Company's CEO, stated that: "Based on the fundamental pillars of its corporate strategy 'LEAD' for 2023 to 2025, stc consistently strives to drive its business into new areas of sustainable growth by focusing on developing its infrastructure and offering the latest solutions specially designed to meet the changing needs of its individual and enterprise customers. Thus, stc has achieved numerous technical and strategic milestones, including the implementation of a series of innovative initiatives related to the 5G network, in addition to taking new steps in this field, represented by signing an MoU with Huawei to build an intelligent wireless 5.5G service network and provide new services aimed at supporting stc in leading digital innovation. The first quarter of this year also witnessed stc implementing a number of partnerships to attract the youth and enhance the individual sector by providing the highest quality of services and products in line with market requirement."

The strategic transformation in the company's operations, pursued by stc in previous years, has reflected its ability to keep pace with the latest global developments by providing fixed telecommunications services and information technology (ICT services), in addition to providing comprehensive innovative solutions, technical solutions, fixed and broadband services, integration systems, cloud services, 5G services, IoT, and data analysis for individual clients and enterprise sectors. stc has managed to excel through leveraging its most advanced network and benefiting from the expertise of its specialized subsidiaries in providing fixed ICT services, and to provide the enterprise sector with comprehensive, integrated, and innovative digital solutions of high quality."

Commenting on the announcement of the financial results as of March 31st of 2024, Aldharrab stated that: "stc has achieved good financial results during the first quarter of 2024, with total revenues reaching KD 87.4 mn by the end of March 2024 with a growth rate of 0.9% compared to KD 86.6 mn during the same period last year. The main reason for this growth is attributed to the increase in customer sector revenues, which constitute 75% of total revenues. Meanwhile, business sector revenues accounted for 25% of stc's total revenues during the first three months of 2024, as a result of expanding the company's business model, developing digital services, and providing integrated technical solutions to companies in various fields."

Aldharrab added: "These outcomes resulted in a growth of EBITDA by 1.1% to reach KD 21.8 mn in the first three months of 2024 compared to KD 21.6 mn during the same period in 2023 supported by the increase in the Company's revenue. As a result, the Company's net profit increased by 7.0%

to reach KD 8.8 mn (EPS 9 Fils) in the first three months of 2024 Compared with KD 8.2 mn (EPS 8 Fils) in the same period last year. Whereby, stc's customer base reached approx. 2.3 mn customers at the end of March 2024".

Commenting on the announcement of stc's financial results for the three months ended March 31, 2024, Aldharrab noted: "stc's total assets reached KD 467.1 mn by the end of March 2024, while the total equity of the company's shareholders amounted to KD 217.8 mn. Furthermore, stc has a strong solvency position amongst the telecom companies in the Middle East.

Regarding stc's CSR framework, Eng. Aldharrab indicated that Q1 2024 witnessed a number of community and interactive activities through activating and enhancing initiatives that are the key pillars of stc's CSR integrated and sustainable program in collaboration with various charitable organizations, as well as institutions in the government and private sectors respectively. Whereby, stc's programs and initiatives in Q1 2024 were diverse and sustainable, each targeting specific community needs and causes that coincided the Company's values and beliefs.

As stc envisions a sustainable future in line with the overall corporate strategy, the CSR program focused on activating sustainable development partnerships within a series of various initiatives that were launched in

line with stc's 2024 sustainability program titled "small move, Big Impact" which aims to increase awareness and adopting long-term sustainable practices, that will leave a positive impact for future generations. stc will continue to implement community programs aimed at promoting long-term development, focusing on key areas such as education, environmental sustainability, sports and health, youth empowerment, and entrepreneurship."

Aldharrab Noted: "Driven by the importance of stc's financial strategy in allocating its resources in a manner that serves the company's interests to remain at the forefront of telecommunications companies, meet customer needs, and provide an added value to shareholders, stc is committed to periodically review and continuously update all the factors that may affect the financial strategy. stc continues to successfully implement numerous strategic projects with the support of digital solutions that align with the company's strategic and financial objectives to enhance operational efficiency and regulatory practices, as well as achieving excellence in treasury management operations."

About stc

Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc) is a Kuwaiti shareholding company incorporated pursuant to Amiri Decree No. 187 on 22 July, 2008, to operate and manage the third GSM mobile network in Kuwait as per Law No. 2 of 2007. Accordingly, stc launched its operations in December 2008 and was listed on Boursa Kuwait in December 2014. It is a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers and enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, and is a subsidiary of stc Group. stc has rapidly reached a leadership stance in the market through its customer and employee centric strategy.

stc offers an innovative range of world-class products, services and solutions with high quality, that cater to the customers' needs and demands, both for individuals and enterprises (solutions by stc). In 2019, stc acquired 100% of the share capital of the Internet Service Provider, Qualitynet General Trading and Contracting Company (solutions by stc) in Kuwait. In April 2022, stc acquired the entire share capital of e-port Holding Company and its subsidiaries – the leading ICT services provider in Kuwait.

stc offers high internet speeds due to the implementation of the most advanced 5G network and deployment of the largest network nationwide.

stc seeks to support several initiatives within its social responsibility programme that support various initiatives in the areas of health, education, environment, sports and entrepreneurship that benefit society and employees.



stc HQ



Net Profit

8.8 +7.0% ▲
KD Million

The Board of Directors of **Kuwait Telecommunications Company (stc)** is pleased to announce to its shareholders that the company has achieved a net profit of KD 8.8 million (earnings per share 9 fils) for the three months ended 31 March 2024.

Q1 - 2024
Total Revenue 87.4 +0.9% ▲
KD Million

31 March 2024
Subscribers 2.3 -4.8% ▼
Million

Q1 - 2024
EBITDA 21.8 +1.1% ▲
KD Million

Q1 - 2024
EPS 9 +7.0% ▲
Kuwaiti fils per share

The financial results for three months period 31 March 2024	
Revenues	KD 87.4 mn
EBITDA	KD 21.8 mn
Net Profit	KD 8.8 mn
Earnings per share	9 Kuwaiti fils
Assets	KD 467.1mn
Shareholders' equity	KD 217.8 mn
Book value per share	218.0 fils per share
Customer base	2.3 mn customers



Event honors outstanding students with learning difficulties

NBK sponsors KALD's Persevering Student Award for 2023-24

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: As an official sponsor of the youth activities of the Kuwait Association for Learning Differences (KALD) and a key supporter of many of its events, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has sponsored for school year 2023/2024.

The awarding ceremony was hosted by NBK at its HQ in the presence of Ms. Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group CEO of NBK, and Mrs. Amaal Al-Sayer, Founder and Chair of KALD, along with a number of executives from NBK and KALD. During the event, the accolades were presented to the winners of the 3rd edition of the Persevering Student Award from the students with specific learning difficulties or ADHD.

Potentials

In her speech during the ceremony, Al-Bahar stated, "We, at NBK, are pleased to celebrate a new group of persevering students who won the KALD's Award for the school year 2023-2024. Our sponsorship of KALD's activities emanates from our belief in the massive opportunities they provide for children and youth with learning difficulties, by motivating them to unleash their abilities and talents and develop their social skills."

"Throughout the past years, NBK built strategic partnerships with institutions, and associations whose goals resonate with our social mission, seeking to provide support to different segments of society. Over decades, NBK has created a rich record in supporting and sponsoring social and cultural activities in Kuwait in line with its unwavering commitment to fulfill its responsibilities towards society, especially when it comes to providing the required academic and social support to students. In this context comes our strategic partnership with KALD, which provides care for a group that deserves all our support and encouragement from our children and youth with learning difficulties. Our sponsorship of KALD's activities aligns with our sustainability strategy, which integrates education as a key factor," she noted.

"NBK shows unwavering commitment to supporting charities and childcare institutions, and will always stand out among the private sector institutions in terms of sponsoring purposeful social programs in the fields of healthcare, childcare, social, environ-



A group photo from the KALD's Persevering Student Award ceremony for the year 2023-2024.



Photos from the event

mental, sports and awareness development. It is also a pioneer in introducing large-scale programs and initiatives in many areas, most notably education, healthcare, employment, training, and support of national talent, reflecting its leading role at the forefront of socially responsible institutions in Kuwait.

On her part, Mrs. Amaal Al-Sayer, the Founder and Chair of KALD, praised NBK's continuous contributions over the years to supporting KALD's activities, stressing that this support had a sub-

stantial impact in achieving the desired goals of these activities.

"The ceremony marking the 3rd edition of KALD's Award is a memorable occasion as it gives us the opportunity to extend deepest appreciation to NBK for its support and sponsorship of different activities of KALD's Integrated Educational Program, which was well-received by schools, teachers as well as parents, with highly engaging activities for students," she mentioned.

"National Bank of Kuwait is a well-

fitting name for such an economic edifice, which, since its founding 72 years ago, has always shown commitment to serving the country and its people," she emphasized.

"KALD's Persevering Student Award comes as part of the Social Support under the Integrated Educational Program launched by KALD, which consists of 3 parts including academic, psychological and social support," Al-Sayer explained.

"We launched this award to encourage

students with learning difficulties to persevere and work hard in their studies and promote a culture of excellence among students by honoring the outstanding among them. In addition, it aims to develop positive attitudes towards learning, as teachers who evaluate students focus on tenacity and perseverance, not only on achievement, which aligns with our endeavors to create a motivating and encouraging environment for KALD's members," she added.

The Kuwaiti Association for Learn-

ing Differences (KALD) is a non-profit organization that collaboratively works towards helping all individuals, especially students in private schools and special education in Kuwait, who have ADHD and Learning Difficulties.

The Association aims to identify and develop the capabilities of these students and to provide them with academic, psychological and social support, through setting up awareness programs, training courses, and recreational activities for the students and their families.



Dr. Bin Sabt, Al Khashti, and Al Dehani welcoming the champions at Kuwait International Airport.

Kuwait team secures 'Build Award'

Zain, SACGC proud of KU team's win at VEX Robotics World Championship in US

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Zain and Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC) - a center of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), have expressed their pride in the win achieved by the team from the Computer Science Department, College of Science, Kuwait University, who brought home the Build Award from the VEX Robotics World Championship 2024 held recently in the United States.

The champions were welcomed at Kuwait International Airport by Acting Dean of the College of Science and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at Kuwait University Dr. Mohammed Hussain bin Sabt, Zain Kuwait Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer Waleed Al Khashti, and Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity General Manager Neda Al Dehani.

The Kuwait University team - Abdullah Al Jaber, Abdulwahab Al Obaid, Abdulrahman Al Dughaim, and Osama Hassan, under the supervision of Dr. Noura Al Jeri - is the first university-level team from the Middle East to claim an award at the VEX Robotics World Championship 2024 (out of 15 awards). The team was among 120 university-level teams participating in the competition from around the world.

The team won the Build Award after meticulously designing a robot with high attention to detail so that was competently capable of competing in the World Championship. Criteria for this award included durability, strength, reliability, and safety. In addition, team members had to show teamwork, effective communication, professionalism, and thorough understanding of the build process.



Abdullah Al Jaber, Abdulwahab Al Obaid, Abdulrahman Al Dughaim, and Osama Hassan after winning in Dallas, Texas.

Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, and in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

Zain, SACGC, and Kuwait University are proud of all six teams qualified from KNRC who represented Kuwait in the World Championship, including middle school, high school, and uni-

versity levels. Reaching this international arena is a testament to Kuwaiti young people's talent and creativity, and affirms the fact that they are more than capable to compete with their peers from around the globe.

This international experience has also contributed to growing the stu-

dent's passion for technology, and will encourage them to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), skills that are prioritized by today's job markets. In addition, this step was a direct outcome of the fruitful partnership between the local public and private sectors to empower the next generation of innovators in Kuwait.

The Kuwait National Robotics Competition (KNRC) featured 32 teams, with 170 students from 11 high schools, 13 middle schools, and 6 universities across private and public academic institutions. Over 40 volunteers helped organize the competition, along with a panel of 8 judges from Kuwait University, the Kuwait Technical College (ktech), and private sector experts.

This partnership came under the umbrella of Innovation Nation, the initiative under which all of Zain's innovation and entrepreneurship programs fall, with a focus on STEM areas. The initiative mainly targets young people and entrepreneurs and aims to foster a digitally capable generation.

This announcement adds to the long list of programs and initiatives presented and supported by Zain and SACGC under their strategic partnership.

Lifestyle

'Let mom decide'

Mother's Day gift ideas tailored to her desires

NEW YORK, May 4, (AP): Not all moms are the same. They like and do different things. Some, gasp, don't love the idea of flowers and chocolates for Mother's Day.

Consider these alternative gifts, many based on testimonials from actual moms.

There's a zillion ways to pamper mom. There's breakfast in bed, of course, and homemade coupon books offering to do some of her least favorite chores, or joining her on something she loves but you don't. If you're looking for a self-care something, this hair tool is pricy but there's little it can't do. There are styler-dryer Dyson Airwrap sets for straight to wavy, and curly to coily hair. All avoid extreme heat. So many attachments. So little time. Widely available.

Pamper

Still in the pamper mom search? Gift cards for mani-pedis, a spa day or a spa weekend may be greatly appreciated. How about cleaning out the garage or pantry without complaint? Not happening? Re-pot some plants, clean up the garden or put in a bunch of new annuals to add color. Try a gift card for car detailing, and an offer to go get it done so she doesn't have to. Better yet, kids, clean mom's car inside and out for free. Do a good job.

Consider a swing through a garden center or three so mom can pick out whatever she wants. Again, with no grumbling. Alternatively, go yourself and bring home flats full of her favorites. Offer to do her indoor chores for a week so she can spend more time in the garden. Gift her some new outdoor containers or fancy indoor pots.

Whether mom is a runner, hiker or camper, think gear. There's so much tech in gear and she may not be completely up to date. If that's not important, there's plenty of just regular stuff, too. Perhaps a LifeStraw water filter

bottle. Check out the Altra Lone Peak trail shoes. A fancy tent or camp stove, perhaps. High performance shorts and matching tops. A new bicycle? The possibilities are endless.

Bags of her favorite beans, or anything coffee-related. Coffee pods, a Starbucks card, a new coffee maker, funny coffee-themed signs for the kitchen, a homemade coffee cake to go with mom's cup of Joe. Have at it. You could even turn her on to some new beans. Artisanal java is everywhere.

Mother's Day is usually about togetherness. What if mom wants to go it alone? Easier said than done for some families. If doable, send her somewhere on the actual day, rather than a future one, where for 24 hours her every need and desire will be anticipated and met. Massage, delicious food, alone time in a calming, private outdoor spot by a creek. No one asking her for a single thing. A slice of heaven.

Books

Sometimes, new moms just want their own moms. That's not always possible, considering distance and cost. Splurge! Especially if mom is marking her first postpartum Mother's Day. Fly in her mom if you have to. Plan a nice brunch, either at home or at a restaurant, followed by an afternoon at a botanical garden or a park. Are there grandkids? Daughters who are pregnant or with new babies? Make it happen that everybody is together. It's what memories are made of.

Does mom collect a specific kind of crystal, china, anything else? You could pick up a piece or come up with a new or expanded display scheme. See if there's a museum tie-in, either locally or on a trip, that you could take her to. Does the cherished collected thing inspire coffee-table books or books of history? Is she passionate about a specific TV show or movie franchise? Merch is everything. How about a new yoga mat?

IAK holds AGM in Abbasiya

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Idukki Association Kuwait (IAK) has conducted annual General Meeting. Ouseppachan offered the welcome speech. Annual report and financial reports were presented by Martin and Johnly. Memento was given to Ex-General Secretary Martin Chacko who is leaving Kuwait for good. Jobs, Vineetha, Jiji, Ivy and Babu thanked Martin for his contributions to IAK in the farewell meeting.

Abin Thomas elected as the new president of IAK. The new committee consists Raji Mathew Shaji (women's forum chairperson), Jobs Joseph (general secretary), Bijo Joseph (treas-

urer), Johnly Thundiyl (vice president), Jomon P Jacob (joint secretary), Anish Prabhakaran (Joint Treasurer), Jiji Mathew (advisory board chairman) and other executive members as well.

IAK president announced membership campaign and requested all the people from Idukki district of Kerala to be part of the association. He informed Onam and picnic programs shall be conducted as usual with time and date to be determined, also expressed interest in conducting various programs with Priority to women and children. Treasurer Bijo Joseph offered the vote of thanks.



A photo from the annual general body meeting of Idukki Association Kuwait.

The Conversation

Insights from a dentist

Why healthy teeth are wondrous & priceless

By Samer Zaky
University of Pittsburgh

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

□ □ □

At an auction in England in 2011, one of John Lennon's teeth sold for just over US\$31,000.

How much are your teeth worth?

Teeth are amazing little miracles. They light up our smiles, we use them to speak and we chew with them more than 600 times at every meal.

Yet, in a society where 1 out of 5 Americans ages 75 and up live without their teeth, many people may not realize that teeth are designed to stay with us for a lifetime.

I'm a dentist and an assistant professor spanning clinical dentistry and craniofacial regeneration research. Researchers like me are still deepening our understanding of tooth development, with the ultimate goal of serving patients with on-demand regrown ones.



Zaky

In the process, I have developed reverence for natural teeth and for the complex beauty of these biological and mechanical masterpieces.

Durability

The secret of teeth longevity lies in their durability as well as in how they are anchored to the jaw - picture a hammer and its hand grip. For each tooth, durability and anchorage are functions of the complex interface between six different tissues; each alone is a biological marvel.

For anchorage, the cementum, ligament and bone grip the tooth at its root portion that is buried under the gum. The ligament, a soft tissue that is about 0.2 millimeters wide (about the diameter of four hairs), attaches the cementum of the root on one end to the bone of the jaw on the other end. It serves to anchor the tooth as well as to cushion its movement during chewing.

For durability, however, the secret lies in the enamel, dentin and pulp - our focus in this discussion.

The enamel is the protective shell that covers the visible part of the tooth above the gum. Thanks to its high mineral content, enamel is the hardest tissue in the body. It needs to be, since it acts as a shield against the constant impact of chewing.

Enamel does not contain cells, blood vessels or nerves, so it is nonliving and nonsensitive. Enamel is also non-regenerating. Once destroyed by decay or broken by misuse such as ice chewing, nail biting or bottle opening - or touched by the dental drill - that part of our priceless enamel is gone for good.

Because it interfaces with a germ-laden world, the enamel is also where decay starts. When acid-generating bacteria accumulate on unbrushed or poorly brushed teeth, they readily dissolve the minerals in the enamel.

Like hair or fingernails, the non-innervated enamel is not sensitive. The decay advances through the 2.5-millimeter thick (tenth of an inch) layer of enamel painlessly. When caught at that phase during a dental checkup visit, the dentist can treat the decay with a relatively conservative filling that hardly compromises the tooth's structural integrity.

Because of its high mineral content, enamel is stiff. Its lifelong support is provided by the more resilient infrastructure - the dentin.

With less mineral content than enamel, dentin is the resilient body of the tooth. It is a living tissue formed of parallel tiny tubes housing fluid and cellular extensions. Both originate from the pulp.

The pulp is the tooth's soft tissue core. Vastly rich in cells, blood vessels and nerves, it is the life source of the tooth - its heart - and the key to its longevity.

Like smoke detectors communicating with a remote fire station, the cellular extensions within the dentin sense decay as soon as it breaks through the nonsensitive layer of enamel into dentin. Once the extensions communicate the danger signal to the pulp, our tooth sensitivity alarm goes off: The tooth heart is in flames.

The inflamed pulp initiates two protective actions. The first is to secrete an additional layer of dentin to delay the approaching attack. The second is toothache, a call to visit the dentist.

The earlier the visit, the less the drilling and the smaller the filling. If caught in time, most of the tooth's natural tissues will be preserved and the pulp will likely regain its healthy state. If caught too late, the pulp slowly dies off.

Without its heart, a nonliving tooth has no defense against further decay invasion. Without a hydration source, a dried-out dentin will sooner or later break under the forces of constant chewing. Besides, a tooth that has already lost a significant portion of its natural structure to decay, cavity preparation or root canal instrumentation becomes weak, with limited longevity.

In other words, the tooth is never the same without its heart. Pulpless, the tooth loses its womb-to-tomb endurance and mother nature's lifelong warranty.

Formation

More complex - and more precious - than a pearl within an oyster, the formation of a tooth within our jawbone involves layered mineral deposition. As tooth development progresses in a process of ultimate cellular engineering, the cells of the six aforementioned tissues - enamel, dentin, pulp, cementum, ligament and bone - multiply, specialize and mineralize synchronously with each other to form uniquely interlocking interfaces: enamel to dentin, dentin to pulp, cementum to dentin and cementum to ligament to bone.

In a process akin to 3D printing, the tooth crown grows vertically to full formation. Simultaneously, the root continues its elongation to eventually launch off the crown from within the bone across the gum to appear in the mouth - the event known as teething. It is about that time, around 12 years of age, that our set of adult teeth is complete. These pearls are set to endure a lifetime and are undoubtedly worth preserving.

Tooth decay, the most prevalent disease in humans, is both predictable and preventable. The earlier it is caught, the more the tooth integrity can be preserved. Since the process starts painlessly, it is imperative to visit the dentist regularly to keep those insidious germs in check.

During your checkup visit, the dental professional will clean your teeth and check for early decay. If you are diligent with your daily preventive measures, the good news for you will be no news - enough to make anyone smile. (AP)



A photo from the Kuwait Anti-Smoking Awareness campaign.

Kuwait to organize over 30 awareness events throughout May

Anti-smoking campaign targets youth, highlights tobacco industry influence

MoH highlights social and economic impact of disease

Kuwait Dental Association launches awareness campaign on oral health

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: Dr. Ahmed Al-Shatti, Vice President of the National Anti-Smoking Program, disclosed that the ongoing awareness campaign, conducted in collaboration with the Health Promotion Department at the Ministry of Health, encompasses over 30 events throughout May, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The events held under the theme "Protecting children from tobacco industry interventions," these events span commercial complexes, schools, community centers, and primary healthcare facilities.

Additionally, training sessions for medical personnel and school health staff aim to bolster health awareness and highlight the perils of smoking, particularly rampant among children and adolescents.

Citing World Health Organization studies, Dr. Al-Shatti emphasized the alarming global toll of eight million annual deaths attributable to tobacco consumption.

Combating smoking, he stressed, is a collective obligation, given that tobacco companies target children and youth, the future pillars of nations. Notably, adolescents using e-cigarettes exhibit a significantly heightened likelihood of later cigarette use, with usage rates among 13 to 15-year-olds surpassing those of adults in many countries.

This year's World No Tobacco Day, titled "Protecting children from the

interference of the tobacco industry," underscores the imperative of shielding youth from industry manipulation. Contrary to industry claims, e-cigarettes lack proven efficacy as tobacco cessation aids and are associated with

adverse health effects. Dr. Al-Shatti decried tobacco companies' deceptive promotion of harm reduction while aggressively marketing products to children and non-smokers.

The National Anti-Smoking Pro-
lence of untreated tooth decay among individuals aged 5 and above exceeded 30% in 2019 according to a World Health Organization (WHO) 2022 report, while severe periodontal disease affected nearly 20% of individuals aged 15 and above that same year.

Oral disease also comes with a hefty price tag, thereport shows. Total expenditure on dental healthcare in Kuwait topped \$200 million in 2019, while productivity losses stemming from oral disease totaled a staggering \$374 million.

"Kuwait Dental Association has long led efforts to raise awareness about the importance of oral healthcare in general and among young people in specific," said Dr. Bsais Al-Ajmi, Head of the Oral

Health Campaign, adding: "Studies have proven that leading by example is one of the most successful methods to effect change among youth. It's important for parents to instill positive dental and oral hygiene habits in their children at an early age."

"We believe that 'an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure', especially where our teeth are concerned. We can prevent many conditions, from periodontal disease to tooth decay, by practicing good oral hygiene, including daily brushing and flossing, as well as regular visits to the dentist. Preventive dentistry is integral to maintaining optimal oral health and generally saves patients money, time, and pain." Al-Ajmi said.

gram's 2024 campaign, inaugurated on Thursday, represents a concerted effort by relevant ministries, state entities, and institutions to safeguard children from tobacco industry influence.

China calls for global unity in lunar exploration

Chang'e-6 launched to explore moon's far side

BEIJING, May 4, (Xinhua): China on Friday launched the Chang'e-6 spacecraft to collect and return samples from the moon's mysterious far side, sending a clear message to underline its commitment to international cooperation in the field of lunar exploration.

Carrying four payloads developed through international cooperation, Chang'e-6 started a journey to the moon brimming with opportunities for scientists globally, serving as both a call and an act to emphasize the need for unity in exploring the moon for the common good of all humanity.

The moon has witnessed a series of visits from Earth in recent years, as China, India, Japan and a private company from the United States landed unmanned spacecraft there. With the moon once again becoming a hotspot for space ex-



A Long March-5 rocket, carrying the Chang'e-6 spacecraft, blasts off from its launchpad at the Wenchang Space Launch Site in south China's Hainan Province, May 3. (Xinhua)

ploration, the question now is whether the closest celestial body to Earth should become an arena for another space race or a new frontier for peaceful human utilization of space.

The hurdles to overcome in achieving successful lunar exploration are significant. They require pooling of resources, sharing of expertise, and a spirit of unity that transcends national borders.

China has always been an active advocate of international cooperation in space exploration. China has made clear that it is willing to work with space agencies and international organizations worldwide to promote the establishment of a new type of global partnership in space exploration and innovation -- a partnership based on equality and mutual benefit, openness

and inclusiveness, peaceful use and the benefit of mankind.

Chang'e-6 is carrying payloads from France, Italy, Pakistan and the European Space Agency/Sweden. Chang'e-7, scheduled to be launched in 2026, will carry scientific instruments developed by Egypt, Bahrain, Italy, Russia, Switzerland, Thailand and the International Lunar Observatory Association.

Chang'e-8, to be launched around 2028, provides a payload capacity of 200 kg for international cooperation. The final selection of partners will be completed by September 2024.

However, some people from a certain country still indulge in the outdated mentality of a space race, viewing the lunar exploration endeavor, which is ripe with opportunities for international cooperation, as a zero-sum game.

MEDICAL CLASSIFIEDS

Take care of your health



To advertise in this page please call: (+965) 24813566 Ext.: 513 or E-mail: advt@arabtimesonline.com

For your ads on this page

Call: **24813805** E-mail: **advt@arabtimesonline.com**

www.arabtimesonline.com

مرکز شفاء الجزيرة الطبي
SHIFA AL JAZEERA MEDICAL CENTRE
الفروانية FARWANIYA

DENTAL & COSMETIC DEPARTMENT

- SCALING & GUM TREATMENT
- COSMETIC SMILE RECONSTRUCTION
- GUM & ORAL SURGERY
- BAD BREATH TREATMENT
- SURGICAL TREATMENT
- ROOT CANAL TREATMENT
- COSMETIC FILLING
- FIXED & REMOVABLE DENTURES
- CROWN TREATMENT
- SIMPLE & SURGICAL EXTRACTION

Dr. Shajahan V.M
BDS, MDS
Dental Surgeon

Dr. Ayham Askar
BDS
Dental Surgeon

Dr. Raina Fernandes
BDS
Dental Surgeon

Working Time: From 9am to 1pm & 5pm to 9pm
Ph: 24 734 000

Behind Maghateer Commercial Complex & Opp. Police station - Farwaniya
www.shifaaljazeera.com.kw

Chiefs dominate Western Force

Ryan scores 2 tries, Reds hold on to defeat Crusaders in Super Rugby Pacific

CHRISTCHURCH, May 4, (AP): Winger Tim Ryan scored two tries to lift his tally to five tries in his last two matches as the Queensland Reds beat the Christchurch-based Crusaders 33-28 on Saturday in Super Rugby Pacific.

Ryan scored three tries last weekend in the Reds' 41-34 loss to the Auckland-based Blues and added a double as the Reds came out on top in another high-scoring match against the defending champions.

The Reds had the upper hand in the first half and led 14-7 at halftime and 21-7 after 42 minutes. But the Crusaders stormed back into the match in the second half and came close to a comeback win.

Ryan's second try helped the Reds hold on for their first win in Christchurch in 25 years.

"It's massive," Reds captain Liam Wright said. "The boys really banded together after a season full of close losses. We

knew if we could take it to them early, they would come back but we did a great job to hold on. Some big moments there from key players."

Wallabies backrower Fraser McReight was one of those players. He scored a try and provided the last pass in another in an outstanding performance in the first half.

RUGBY

Former Wales international Leigh Halfpenny had a chance to score his first points for the Crusaders in Super Rugby with an 11th-minute penalty. But the fullback who scored more than 800 international points for Wales hooked the ball well wide of the uprights from close range.

Halfpenny has had to wait until the 11th round of the sea-

son to play his first Super Rugby match after suffering a serious chest injury in a pre-season game.

McReight's try gave the Reds a 7-0 lead which became 14-0 after Ryan scored in the 26th minute.

The Crusaders hit back before halftime with a try to center Dallas McLeod who inserted himself in a blindside surge after a lineup drive. Halfpenny converted for his first points in Super Rugby.

The Reds scored a critical try two minutes after the break through one-test All Blacks prop Jeff Toomaga-Allen.

The match then opened up and the Crusaders scored through backrowers Corey Kellow and Quentin Strange to level the score at 21-21. No. 8 Harry Wilson put the Reds ahead with a 62nd-minute try and Ryan's second try stretched the Reds' lead to 33-21.

In Hamilton, Daniel Rona scored three tries and flyhalf

Damian McKenzie scored a try among 16 points as the Chiefs beat the Western Force 56-7.

Earlier, more than 10,000 people turned out in heavy rain in the Tonga capital Nuku'alofa to watch Moana Pasifika beat the Dunedin, New Zealand-based Highlanders 28-17 in the first Super Rugby match played in the Pacific Island nation. Tonga became the 11th country to host a Super Rugby match.

Jacob Ratumaitavuki-Kneepkens scored two first-half tries for the Highlanders who led 19-17 at halftime. Both teams tried to play entertaining rugby in increasingly difficult conditions on a sodden field.

Cameron Millar kicked four penalties, the only points of the second half.

The Highlanders' win keeps them inside the top-eight playoff zone for another week while Moana Pasifika are beginning to slip from playoff contention.

Thorpedo Anna goes wire to wire at 'soggy' 150th Kentucky Oaks

McPeek's first Oaks triumph after three runner-up finishes



Brian Hernandez Jr. rides Thorpedo Anna, (right), to win the 150th running of Kentucky Oaks horse race at Churchill Downs in Louisville, Ky. (AP)

LOUISVILLE, May 4, (AP): Thorpedo Anna capped her biggest victory with one impressive burst.

The filly went wire to wire in the \$1.5 million marquee race for 3-year-old fillies. She led by at least a length over Fiona's Magic with Ways and Means and Into Champagne in the mix heading into the far turn.

Just F Y I charged into contention entering the stretch, but jockey Brian Hernandez Jr. took Thorpedo Anna up a gear to break away and cover the 1 1/8 mile in 1:50.83 for her fourth victory in five starts by a combined 22 1/4 lengths.

It was McPeek's first Oaks triumph after three runner-up finishes. Hernandez also earned his first Oaks win.

"It looked like there was no speed to our inside," the rider said, "so we thought that if we let her run under the wire in the first turn, she would get good position, which she did. From there, she is just such a naturally talented filly, she went quick through the half and the whole way around there, really."

"She was just doing it with her

ears up and cruising along.

Thorpedo Anna paid \$10.98, \$6.06 and \$3.06. Just F Y I returned \$5.06 and 3.98 for second, and Regulatory Risk paid \$11.82 for third.

Just F Y I jockey Junior Alvarado said his mount ran a great race but Thorpedo Anna was simply better.

"Turning for home I thought I had a chance to win the race but I was just second-best," Alvarado said.

Thorpedo Anna arrived at the Oaks off a four-length victory in the Grade 2 Fantasy Stakes at Oaklawn Park in Arkansas on March 30. She posted an 8 1/2-length victory in her debut at Keeneland in Lexington and added a nine-length rout in an allowance optional claiming race at Churchill Downs before closing last year with second in the Grade 2 Golden Rod Stakes.

McPeek noted that Thorpedo Anna was a little nervous before the Fantasy Stakes but shook it

off to take over halfway and win.

That wasn't the case before the Oaks with 107,236 looking on at Churchill Downs.

"Today she got out there and she was just cool, calm, taking it all in," he said. "When I (saw) the way she was in the post-parade, I thought, man, it's going to take a really, really good horse to beat her today."

Friday marked the week-old spring meet's first day with off conditions on Churchill Downs' upgraded surface installed last year as part of several safety changes that followed last spring's spate of 12 deaths at the historic track. That total included seven horses in the week leading up to the Kentucky Derby and two on the Derby undercard.

The first half of the 13-race card went off under a steady drizzle, and the rain tapered off to intermittent showers throughout the afternoon. An allowance optional claiming race on turf was moved to the dirt and resulted in eight scratches.

McPeek noted that Thorpedo Anna was a little nervous before the Fantasy Stakes but shook it

off to take over halfway and win.

That wasn't the case before the Oaks with 107,236 looking on at Churchill Downs.

"Today she got out there and she was just cool, calm, taking it all in," he said. "When I (saw) the way she was in the post-parade, I thought, man, it's going to take a really, really good horse to beat her today."

Friday marked the week-old spring meet's first day with off conditions on Churchill Downs' upgraded surface installed last year as part of several safety changes that followed last spring's spate of 12 deaths at the historic track. That total included seven horses in the week leading up to the Kentucky Derby and two on the Derby undercard.

The first half of the 13-race card went off under a steady drizzle, and the rain tapered off to intermittent showers throughout the afternoon. An allowance optional claiming race on turf was moved to the dirt and resulted in eight scratches.

McPeek noted that Thorpedo Anna was a little nervous before the Fantasy Stakes but shook it

off to take over halfway and win.

That wasn't the case before the Oaks with 107,236 looking on at Churchill Downs.

"Today she got out there and she was just cool, calm, taking it all in," he said. "When I (saw) the way she was in the post-parade, I thought, man, it's going to take a really, really good horse to beat her today."

Friday marked the week-old spring meet's first day with off conditions on Churchill Downs' upgraded surface installed last year as part of several safety changes that followed last spring's spate of 12 deaths at the historic track. That total included seven horses in the week leading up to the Kentucky Derby and two on the Derby undercard.

The first half of the 13-race card went off under a steady drizzle, and the rain tapered off to intermittent showers throughout the afternoon. An allowance optional claiming race on turf was moved to the dirt and resulted in eight scratches.

McPeek noted that Thorpedo Anna was a little nervous before the Fantasy Stakes but shook it

Williams brothers star for Bilbao

Bologna draw at Torino miss chance to go third

TURIN, Italy, May 4, (AP): Bologna missed a chance to leapfrog Juventus and move into third place in Serie A after a lackluster 0-0 draw at Torino.

A win would have taken Bologna, one of the surprises of the league, to one point ahead of Juve.

Instead, it remained in fourth, a point behind the Turin club and having played a game more. Juventus is at Roma on Sunday.

The best chances of Friday's game fell to Torino. Antonio Sanabria and Duvan Zapata came close and Lukasz Skorupski made a string of good saves for the visitor.

Bologna was stuck with a fourth draw in its last five matches.

The result left Torino in 10th place.

In Madrid, Brothers Iñaki and Nico Williams combined twice to give Athletic Bilbao a 2-0 victory over Getafe in the Spanish league.

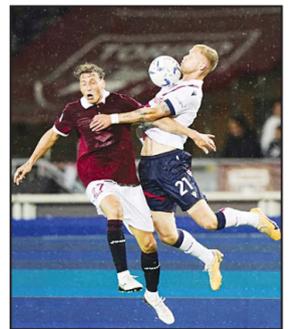
SOCCER

Nico got an assist in each half and Iñaki scored twice before the team was reduced to nine men and coach Ernesto Valverde was red-carded, too.

Athletic closed the gap to three points behind fourth-placed Atletico Madrid. The top four in La Liga go into the Champions League. Athletic has five games to play, including at Mallorca on Saturday. Athletic has four games remaining.

As has happened so often this season, the Williams brothers stood out for the Basque club.

With 26 minutes gone, Niko played a short pass to Iñaki and from 20 meters out he curled the ball in.



Torino's Mergim Vojvoda (left), and Bologna's Jens Odgaard battle for the ball during the Serie A soccer match between Torino and Bologna at the Olympic Stadium Grande Torino, Turin, Italy. (AP)

Six minutes into the second period, Nico played a defense-splitting pass to his brother who swept the ball home with aplomb.

Athletic was then punished for indiscipline. Yeray Alvarez was sent off for handball after 58 minutes and fellow defender Aitor Paredes joined him 11 minutes from time.

Getafe threw men forward and was awarded a penalty with two minutes remaining but Mason Greenwood, one of the home side's stand-out performers, saw his spot kick saved by the outstanding Unai Simón.

Athletic coach Valverde was shown a red card for protesting the spot kick decision.

Getafe was in 10th place.

Silva to return to Fluminense

Three referees, one player suspended

NAIROBI, May 4, (Xinhua): Kenyan football authorities have suspended three match officials, a player and a team manager for alleged involvement in match-fixing.

The Football Kenya Federation (FKF) in a statement issued on Friday said that investigations into the charges against the five accused have been opened by its Integrity Department.

Kevin Olango, a goalkeeper for Nairobi-based FKF Premier League club Talanta FC, and Abdulkarim Amele, Kibra United's third-tier FKF Division One team manager, have been barred from participating in any football activities until the investigation is completed.

Jacqueline Barongo, Meshack Omondi and Stephen Adeya were named as the three referees who have also been suspended on match-fixing charges.

FKF has thus directed all its members and the general public not to have any form of sporting contact with the suspended individuals.

"No further details will be provided at this stage as the matter is pending hearing and determination by the FKF Disciplinary Committee," FKF CEO Barry Otieno said. The five were charged following the FKF Premier League match played on April 20 between Talanta and Nairobi City Stars, in which the former won 3-0.

The result sparked conversations on social media due to how Talanta conceded the goals, with Mohammed Bajaber, Robinson Asenwa and Samuel Kapen scoring in the rout.

It was the ninth win of the season for the City Stars at the time, as they recorded their sixth win on the bounce at the time.

The match was officiated by the three suspended referees, and it is unclear what role the accused team manager played.

Match-fixing in Kenyan football has come under the spotlight in recent times, with stakeholders alarmed by the increasing cases of alleged manipulation of results in the country's Premier League and lower tiers.

FKF integrity officer Mike Kamure said in December 2023 that unscrupulous syndicates are consistently seeking ways to infiltrate the game and coerce players or officials into manipulating matches.

"We must remain vigilant against the dangers of match-fixing," Kamure said at a workshop ironically organized by Talanta FC.

Fluminense has reached an agreement to sign veteran Chelsea defender Thiago Silva on a free transfer, according to widespread media reports in Brazil.

The 39-year-old former Brazil captain, whose contract with the Premier League club will expire next month, agreed to a deal that runs until June 2026, Globo Esporte said on Friday.

It added that Silva would be free to complete the move when Brazil's winter transfer window opens on July 10.

On Monday, Silva confirmed that he would leave Chelsea at the end of the season after four years with the London outfit. Silva began his youth career at Fluminense in 1998 and made 97 first-team appearances for the club from 2006 to 2008.

Costa Rica and Uruguay will step up their preparations for this year's Copa America with a friendly later this month, the Costa Rican football federation said on Saturday.

The game will be played at the National Stadium in the Costa Rican capital San Jose on May 31.

SOCCER

The last seven matches between Costa Rica and Uruguay have produced two wins for each team and three draws.

Costa Rica will begin its quest for Copa America glory against Brazil on June 24 before also meeting Paraguay and Colombia in the group stage.

Uruguay is due to open its campaign against Panama on June 23 and will also face Bolivia and the United States in the tournament's first stage.

Chile international midfielder Javier Altamirano has thanked fans for their support after resuming light training this week. The 24-year-old has been sidelined since suffering a seizure on the pitch while playing for Estudiantes against Boca Juniors in Argentina's top flight on March 18. "For now, I'm training without contact or friction," Altamirano said in an interview published by Cielo Sports on Friday.

"I'm only doing light movement to regain strength and aerobic capacity but being able to be with my teammates is already a huge step." Altamirano spent more than a week in intensive care after the incident, which doctors say was caused by a thrombosis.

"I'm a person who has a low profile, but I was struck by the fans' affection for me and my family," Altamirano said. "The support was a positive emotional boost that gives me extra motivation for what's ahead." Despite being cleared to resume light training, Altamirano is not expected to return to the pitch for at least another month.

Kolkata breaks 11-year bogey by beating Mumbai

MUMBAI, India, May 4, (AP): Kolkata Knight Riders bowled out Mumbai for 145 and ended an 11-year losing streak at the Indians in the Indian Premier League.

Mumbai's chase of the 170 target fell short by 24 runs as Mitchell Starc overcame poor form to pick up 4-33. Mumbai was all out with seven balls to spare.

Kolkata was dismissed for 169 off the second-to-last ball and led by Venkatesh Iyer's 70 off 52 balls.

Kolkata had lost seven straight times at Wankhede Stadium since 2013.

The Knight Riders remained second overall, and Mumbai was ninth and eliminated from playoffs contention.

Kolkata got off to a horrendous start and was reduced to 57-5 in 6.1 overs. Its high-scoring top order failed for once; openers Phil Salt (5) and Sunil Narine (8), skipper Shreyas Iyer (6) and youngster Angkrish Raghuvanshi (13).

Rinku Singh, who missed the In-

dia bus to the T20 World Cup next month, was out to spin for 9.

Mumbai's Nuwan Thushara picked up 3-42, his best IPL haul in four games. Skipper Hardik Pandya took 2-44.

Manish Pandey was subbed in

as impact player and combined with Venkatesh Iyer to put on 83 off 62 balls for the sixth wicket.

Their partnership rescued the day for Kolkata; Iyer hit three sixes and six fours, and Pandey hit two sixes.

But it was a sub-par total as Jas-

prit Bumrah claimed three wickets in his two-over death burst.

Mumbai didn't start its chase any better.

Ishan Kishan was bowled by Starc for 13, and former skipper Rohit Sharma was subbed in as an impact player and made only 11 before Narine had him caught.

CRICKET

Kolkata's spinners produced and Mumbai was down to 70-5 in the 11th over.

Defeat loomed for Mumbai when Pandya was on 1 and caught off Andre Russell on 1.

The world's top-ranked T20 batter, Suryakumar Yadav, had other plans though. He smacked two sixes and six fours for 56 off 35 balls and kept up the fight for Mumbai.

Tim David chipped in 24, and Yadav ran out of time - and partners - before holing out off Russell in the 16th over.



Kolkata Knight Riders' Manish Pandey plays a shot as Mumbai Indians' Ishan Kishan watches during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Mumbai Indians and Kolkata Knight Riders in Mumbai, India. (AP)

Kuwait Club hold ground, Al-Arabi resilient

Title race intensifies in the Zain Premier League



Al-Arabi player Sultan Al-Enezi tries to stop the run of Kuwait striker Youssef Nasser.

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: The top positions remained unchanged in the Zain Premier League championship group after the conclusion of the fifth round and the first section. Kuwait Club maintained its lead with 54 points, holding a three-point advantage over its closest rival, Al-Arabi, at 51 points. Al-Qadisiya slipped to third place with 49 points after securing a victory over Al-Nasr with two unanswered goals, maintaining its contention for the title despite the challenging task ahead as the competition nears its climax.

SOCCER

Although Kuwait Club nearly widened the gap to six points with a late goal against Al-Arabi, ultimately resulting in a draw, this outcome is seen as a positive step towards defending their title.

With only five rounds remaining, the leading teams understand the importance of not dropping any points, as recovering from losses becomes increasingly difficult.

Al-Arabi's determination to avoid defeat paid off as Sultan Al-Anzi's late equalizer salvaged a draw, keeping their title hopes alive.

Meanwhile, Al-Qadisiya returned to winning ways with a narrow victory over Al-Nasr, reigniting its chances in the competition. However,

it faces a tough road ahead and must win its remaining matches while also relying on slips from Kuwait Club and Al-Arabi to stay in contention.

Al-Qadisiya must maintain focus, especially with the upcoming Amir Cup final against Al-Salmiya looming on May 21.

As for Al-Salmiya, its back-to-back victories propelled it to fourth place with 31 points, while Al-Fahaheel remained fifth with 27 points after a defeat against Al-Salmiya.



Dallas Mavericks center Daniel Gafford (21) shoots in front of Los Angeles Clippers guard James Harden (1), guard Terance Mann (14), center Ivica Zubac (40) and forward Paul George, behind, as Mavericks' forward Derrick Jones Jr. (55) looks on during the first half of Game 6 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series in Dallas. (AP)

Al-Sahel rekindle qualification hopes



Yarmouk keeper makes a save during Al-Sahel and Yarmouk game.

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: In the nineteenth round of the first division league, Al-Sahel rekindled its hopes for the second qualifying spot in the Zain Premier League by securing a 2-0 victory over Al-Yarmouk at Abdullah Al-Khalifa Stadium.

SOCCER

With this win, Al-Sahel climbed to third place with 24 points, trailing behind league leader Al-Yarmouk, who have already secured the first qualifying ticket, and Al-

Tadamon in second place with 26 points.

In another match, Burgan and Sulaibikhat settled for a 1-1 draw.

To secure the second qualifying spot, Al-Sahel must win its upcoming match against Sulaibikhat in the twentieth round next Friday. However, victory alone might not suffice as it also needs Al-Tadamon to defeat Al-Yarmouk in the same round. The "Sons of Farwaniya" require just one point to secure their spot, having the advantage of direct confrontations after defeating Al-Sahel twice and drawing twice.

Switzerland's Euro prospects hit by injuries

Teams can add 3 players in 26-man squads

NYON, Switzerland, May 4, (AP): Teams at the European Championship can name three extra players in 26-man squads after UEFA agreed to amend the tournament rules.

Netherlands coach Ronald Koeman and England's Gareth Southgate were among those asking UEFA to let them select more players for the June 14-July 14 tournament and help deal with injuries in the squad.

Tournament squad sizes had long been 23 players but were increased to 26 by UEFA for Euro 2020, which was postponed and played the next year, and by FIFA for the 2022 World Cup to better deal with COVID-19 issues in the delegation.

The larger squads will stay for the 24 teams at post-pandemic Euro 2024 in Germany.

"The increase does not represent an obligation for the participating national associations," UEFA said in a statement.

Adding up to 72 extra places on the collective tournament roster should lower the daily rate UEFA pays to clubs for releasing their players to national team duty at Euro 2024.

UEFA agreed with the European Club Association to set aside 140 million euros (\$150 million) from total tournament revenue of more than 2 billion euros (\$2.16 billion) to distribute among clubs whose players are selected for the finals tournament. A further 100 million euros (\$108 million) was allocated to clubs whose players were selected for Euro 2024 qualifying games and Nations League games.

After Euro 2020, Chelsea got the largest payment of 5.1 million euros (\$5.5 million) from a UEFA club benefits total fund of 200 million euros (\$216 million).

Switzerland's preparations for the European Championship took another hit with a key player's fitness being in doubt for a second straight day.

Newcastle defender Fabian Schär followed Monaco midfielder Denis Zakaria in having their club coach

suggest they are unlikely to play again this month because of hamstring injuries.

"Fabian will miss a period of time," Newcastle coach Eddie Howe said Friday. "He won't be available tomorrow and I doubt we'll see him again this season."

Monaco coach Adi Hütter gave a similar diagnosis Thursday for Zakaria, and the longer-term prospects for both expected Switzerland starters at Euro 2024 is unclear.

SOCCER

Switzerland coach Murat Yakin is due to announce his preferred players on May 17, and UEFA requires squads to be finalized by June 7 - one week before the opening game.

Euro 2024 starts with a game in Switzerland's group on June 14 when host Germany faces Scotland in Munich.

The Swiss begin the next day against Hungary in Cologne, face Scotland in the same city on June 19 and play Germany in Frankfurt on June 23.



From left: Bayern Munich's Jovana Damnjanovic and Maria Luisa Grohs hold a cardboard trophy as they celebrate after the German Bundesliga women's soccer match between Bayer Leverkusen and Bayern Munich, in Leverkusen, Germany. (AP)

Best of the Rest

Reign snap 5-game skid: Veronica Latsko scored on a header in the 89th minute and the Seattle Reign snapped a five-game losing streak with a 2-1 victory over the San Diego Wave in the National Women's Soccer League on Friday night.

The match at Seattle's Lumen Field started poorly for the Reign (1-5-1) when Tziarra King was handed a red card in the ninth minute and Seattle was down a player the rest of the match.

The Wave (2-2-2) took advantage and Kyra Carusa scored after the restart to take a 1-0 lead.

Bethany Balcer maneuvered past Wave goalkeeper Kailen Sheridan and scored into an empty net to level it for the Reign, who won their first match of the season but dropped the next five.

Sheridan stopped So-Yun Ji's dangerous free kick in the 77th minute. But Ji served another free kick to Latsko who scored on a reverse header that tucked just into the far corner.

"I'm still trying to process it," Latsko said with a smile afterward. (AP)

Di Maria on Miami radar: Argentina World Cup winner Angel Di Maria was reported to join his national teammate Lionel Messi at Inter Miami this summer.

Di Maria's contract with Portuguese club Benfica is due to expire next month and Inter Miami is among the frontrunners to secure the 36-year-old's signature, Argentina's TyC Sports reported.

The right winger previously expressed a desire to return to his original club Rosario Central but has reportedly changed his mind due to security concerns in the Argentine city.

Di Maria has scored 16 goals and provided 15 assists across all competitions for Benfica this season.

The former Real Madrid, Manchester United and Juventus star has said he will retire from international football after this year's Copa America - to be played in the United States from June 20 to July 14 - but he is expected to continue his club career. (Xinhua)

Reus to leave Dortmund: Marco Reus will leave Borussia Dortmund this summer after both sides announced Friday that they've agreed to part ways, ending the midfielder's 12-year run with the German team.

The 34-year-old Reus' contract expires at the end of the season, but unlike one year ago when they extended the deal, they'll now move on.

"The club and I have come to the decision not to extend my contract," the former team captain said in a video message to Dortmund fans.

"It made me incredibly proud and I am incredibly grateful to have been able to play for this club for so many years," he said in his message, translated by the club. "It's quite hard for me right now to find the right words. Nevertheless, it's important for me to tell you fans first." (AP)

Lakers fire coach Ham: The Los Angeles Lakers fired coach Darvin Ham on Friday after just two seasons in charge.

The Lakers announced on social media that they were dismissing Ham four days after their season ended with a first-round playoff loss to Denver in five games.

Ham led Los Angeles to the Western Conference finals less than a year ago in his first season as an NBA head coach. He had replaced Frank Vogel, who was fired by the Lakers exactly 18 months after winning the franchise's 17th championship in 2020. (AP)

Mavs eliminate Clippers as Magic 'force' Game 7

Orlando overcomes Mitchell's 50 points

DALLAS, May 4, (AP): Luka Doncic struggled with his shot again thanks to his ailing right knee, and Kyrie Irving spent a bunch of energy playing defense.

Through all that, the co-stars of the Mavericks tag-teamed for a second-half surge that sent Dallas to the second round in their first postseason together.

Doncic had 28 points and 13 assists, Irving scored 28 of his 30 points after halftime and the Mavericks finished off the Los Angeles Clippers with a 114-101 victory Friday night.

With Irving alongside him this time, Doncic did what the Slovenian superstar couldn't three years earlier - close out the Clippers in Dallas in Game 6 of a first-round playoff series.

The fifth-seeded Mavericks beat the Clippers for the first time in three first-round tries over the past five seasons and will open the Western Conference semifinals at the top seed, Oklahoma City, on Tuesday night.

Paul George had 18 points and 11 rebounds for the Clippers, who won the first two times they played without Kawhi Leonard in the series but didn't have enough scoring punch in the last two he was sidelined by right knee inflammation.

James Harden had 16 points and 13 assists but was just 5 of 16 from the field and missed all six of his 3-pointers as LA was eliminated in the first round for the second consecutive season despite the early-season trade for the 10-time All-Star.

Irving, added at the trade deadline last year for the kind of playoff run the Mavs hope they just started, spent plenty of time guarding Harden in the first half, when he had two points on just six shots.

The eight-time All-Star opened the second half with a layup to break a 52-



Orlando Magic forward Paolo Banchero (5) questions a call by an official during the second half of Game 6 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series against the Cleveland Cavaliers in Orlando, Fla. (AP)

52 tie, then Doncic hit a 3-pointer after going 0-for-7 from deep in the first half. Following an LA turnover, Irving hit a 3 for an eight-point lead after Dallas had lost a 13-point advantage in the second quarter.

The Mavs outscored the Clippers 35-20 in the third quarter - the same quarter that fueled the Game 5 win in Los Angeles for a chance to clinch - and pushed the lead to 20 early in the fourth.

Irving gave Dallas its biggest lead with a flashy four-point play when he hit a leaning 3-pointer as he was bumped by P.J. Tucker and made the free throw for a 106-82 lead.

The Clippers answered with an 11-2 run to get within 13 but never seriously threatened a big comeback in the final minutes after George, Harden and Ivica Zubac each played at least 22 minutes in the first half to get LA back in the game.

Doncic, who also has dealt with illness in addition to a sore knee, was 9 of 26 from the field and just 1 of 10

from 3 while going 9 of 11 on free throws. Irving was 10 of 13 from the field after halftime.

"Terrible, man. I need some rest," Doncic said before walking away from a TV interview - and into a three-day break.

Now Doncic will try at least to match his long playoff run of two years ago, when Dallas stunned Phoe-

BASKETBALL

nix with a Game 7 blowout in the West semis before falling to eventual champ Golden State in five games in the West finals.

Norman Powell scored 20 points for the Clippers, and Zubac had 17 points and 11 rebounds.

P.J. Washington scored 14 points with some big 3-pointers for the Mavs, going 4 of 8 from deep, and Daniel Gafford had 13 points with several emphatic buckets down low.

Dallas' Maxi Kleber didn't return after spraining his right shoulder when he took a hard fall on a blocking foul against Amir Coffey on a drive in the first minute of the second quarter.

Kleber, whose 3-point shooting was a boost for Dallas in the series, returned to shoot free throws, making one of two before leaving at the next dead ball.

Magic 103, Cavaliers 96

In Orlando, Paolo Banchero scored 10 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter, helping the Orlando Magic overcome Donovan Mitchell's 50 points and hold off the Cleveland Cavaliers to force a decisive Game 7 in their first-round NBA playoff series.

Three nights after scoring 39 points on 14-of-24 shooting in a one-point road loss that left the Magic on the brink of elimination, the 21-year-old Banchero put his team on his back and carried them to their biggest win in years.

China to meet Indonesia in Uber Cup final

CHENGDU, May 4, (Xinhua): Host China will compete for the Uber Cup title against Indonesia after beating Japan 3-0 in Saturday's semifinals.

Olympic champion Chen Yufei ousted Aya Ohori 21-18, 21-15 in straight games, before world No. 1 Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan made it 2-0 with a comeback victory in the doubles over Nami Matsuyama and Chiharu Shida 14-21, 21-13, 23-21.

He Bingjiao then sealed the final spot for China by defeating Nozomi Okuhara 21-8, 21-18.

Playing on home soil for the first time since 2016, China, the record holder with 15 titles in the tournament

BADMINTON

history, aims to reclaim the title after losing to South Korea two years ago.

Also on Saturday, Indonesia knocked out defending champion South Korea 3-2, by winning all three singles matches to reach the final for the first time since 2008.

"This is our first semifinal in the past 14 years, so winning this match means a lot to the team," said Gregoria Mariska Tunjung, who took the first point for Indonesia with a 21-15, 21-13 victory over Sim Yu-jin.

"My dream since I was a kid was to win the Uber Cup," added the rising star.

In the first doubles, Baek Ha-na and Lee So-hee levelled the score by beating Apriyani Rahayu and Siti Fadia Silva Ramadhanti 21-6, 21-18.

Indonesia regained the upper-hand when Ester Nurumi Tri Wardoyo won over Kim Ga-ram 20-22, 21-16, 21-12, before Jeong Na-eun and Kong Hee-yong tied the semifinal again by taking the second doubles match over Lanny Tria Mayasari and Ribka Sugiarto 21-

15, 21-14.

During the decisive third singles match, Komang Ayu Cahya Dewi rallied from one game down to triumph over Kim Min-sun 17-21, 21-16 and 21-19, awarding Indonesia the ticket to the final.

The 30th biennial Uber Cup was being held in Chengdu, southwest China's Sichuan Province, with the final scheduled on Sunday.



Jonatan Christie of Indonesia competes during the singles match against Wang Tzu Wei of Chinese Taipei in the semifinal match at the BWF Thomas Cup Finals in Chengdu, southwest China's Sichuan Province. (Xinhua)



Arsenal players try to block a penalty kick from Bournemouth during the English Premier League soccer match between Arsenal and Bournemouth at Emirates Stadium in London, England. (AP)

Sports

Latest sports scores at — <http://sports.arabtimesonline.com>

Arsenal keep up Premier League title push

Ipswich Town seals promotion to Premier League after 22-year absence

LONDON, May 4, (Agencies): Arsenal maintained its pursuit of the Premier League title with a 3-0 win over Bournemouth on Saturday.

Bukayo Saka converted a penalty in the 45th minute after a trip on Kai Havertz before Leandro Trossard and Declan Rice added second-half goals at Emirates Stadium to secure Arsenal's fourth straight victory in the league.

Arsenal, seeking its first league title since 2004, has two matches still to play - at Manchester United and home

against Everton.

Havertz won the penalty in the 42nd minute after running onto a through-ball and rounding Mark Travers, only for the goalkeeper to clip the Germany international's trailing leg.

Saka made it six from six from the penalty spot this season with what was Arsenal's 16th shot of the match at that point.

Bournemouth came into the game more in the second half but lost hope when Rice teed up Trossard, who curled in a low shot from inside the area in the 70th.

Rice ran onto Gabriel Jesus' pass and scored in the seventh minute of stoppage time to wrap up the win.

At 2-0, Ryan Christie had a goal for Bournemouth disallowed for a push on Arsenal goalkeeper David Raya by Dominic Solanke in the buildup, with a VAR check not changing the decision of the on-field referee.

Luton got a valuable point in its fight to avoid relegation after a hard-fought 1-1 draw with visiting Everton.

Will it be too little, too late? Luton remained third to last, below 17th-placed Nottingham Forest only on goal difference. Luton has two games left. Everton has already guaranteed its survival.

Everton took the initiative when Dominic Calvert-Lewin scored from the penalty spot after 24 minutes.

A video review ruled Teden Mengi held Jarrad Branthwaite, and Calvert-Lewin notched his fourth goal in his last five appearances.

Luton bounced back quickly thanks to Elijan Adebayo. The

SOCCER

striker scored five in five games before he was injured in February, and almost three months out did not seem to have affected his eye for goal. In his first start since returning, Adebayo collected his 10th goal of the season.

Luton substitute Andros Townsend saw his shot blocked on the line in the dying seconds as the home side pushed men forward in a desperate bid for a winner that could save its season.

"We threw everything at it," Luton coach Rob Edwards told the BBC. "We were pushing until the end and that is us. We've been like that all season.

"We threw everything at it so I am disappointed right now.. But I can't fault the players. The players gave it absolutely everything, so did the supporters.

"We're still in the mix and the fight, we've got to keep believing." Ipswich Town was promoted to the Premier League on Saturday after a 2-0 win at home to Huddersfield Town.

The result means that Ipswich returned to the top level of English football after a 22-year absence, and a journey that saw them drop as low as League One - the third tier of the English game.

Ipswich went into the final round of matches in the Championship (second division) with a three-point lead over third-placed Leeds United and knowing that a draw would be enough to assure their historic return.

Goals from Wes Burns and Omari Hutchinson gave fans in their Portman Road Stadium a comfortable afternoon against a rival that needed to win to have any chance of avoiding relegation.

The promotion is down in large part to the work of coach Kieran McKenna, who joined the club from the east of England in December 2021 when they were struggling in the lower half of League One.

He brought around an important turn in fortunes in his first months in charge, before leading Ipswich to promotion to the Championship last season. He has now steered the club to consecutive promotions - an impressive feat given the difficulty of the second tier of the English game.

Ipswich joined Leicester City back in the Premier League, while Leeds United, Southampton, West Bromwich Albion and Norwich City will now go into the play-offs for the remaining promotion spot.

Meanwhile, Rotherham and Birmingham City were relegated to League One, along with Huddersfield.



Japanese players celebrate with a trophy after winning a U-23 Asian Cup final between Uzbekistan and Japan in Doha, Qatar. (AP)

Japan win U-23 Asian Cup

Japan left it late to win its second Under-23 Asian Cup after beating Uzbekistan 1-0 in the final.

Substitute Fuki Yamada broke the deadlock in the first minute of stoppage time at Jassim bin Hamad Stadium and Japan goalkeeper

Leo Kokubo saved a penalty to preserve the lead.

Uzbekistan, the 2018 champion, almost took an incredible lead just before halftime. Ruslanbek Jiyanov, just inside the Japanese half, tried to send a long cross into

the area but, instead, the flight of the ball deceived Kokubo and bounced off the crossbar.

For the goal, Ryotaro Araki back-heeled the ball to Yamada just outside the area, and he fired low into the left corner.

Just five minutes later, Uzbekistan was awarded a penalty after a VAR review when Hiroki Sekine handled in the area. Kokubo made a diving save to his right to push out Umarali Rakhmonaliev's powerful shot.

Both finalists and third-placed Iran also qualified for Paris Olympics men's soccer. Fourth-placed Indonesia has one more chance to make it to a first Olympics since 1956 with a playoff against Guinea next Thursday. (AP)

International Swimming Federation President endorses Africa for World Junior Championships Al-Arabi earn hard-fought win over Kazma in 'series' opener



Hussein Al-Musallam with Esparence DeCosta.

LUANDA, May 4: Hussein Al-Musallam, the President of the International Swimming Federation, has officially announced Africa's opportunity to host the World Junior Swimming Championships. This declaration was made during Al-Musallam's meeting with Her Excellency, the Vice President of the Republic of Angola, Ms. Esparence Decosta.

The discussions during the meeting encompassed Angola's proposal to host the Championships in 2027 and the ongoing endorsement of the International Swimming Federation's literacy initiatives in Angola. Since 2023, over 300,000 children and 150 physical education instructors have reaped the benefits of the swimming literacy program.

Ireland knock out Argentina 'again' in Singapore Sevens

SINGAPORE, May 4, (AP): Ireland beat Argentina 21-5 in a Singapore Sevens quarterfinal matchup of the world series' leading teams on Saturday.

The front-running Argentines have lost only two quarterfinals this season, and Ireland dumped them both times.

Ireland, which has never won the series, will have a chance on Sunday to overtake Argentina in the standings and lead going into the Madrid grand final this month.

Argentina scored first from nothing when Tobias Wade broke out of his own 22. But with seconds left in the half, Jordan Conroy collected Gavin Mullin's kick-ahead and they led 7-5.

The second half was all Ireland. A Connor O'Sullivan break gave Terry Kennedy a series-leading 31st try, and

RUGBY

after Matteo Graziano was sin-binned for a deliberate knockdown, Billy Dardis scored from the resulting scrum.

Ireland will face Britain in the semifinals on Sunday after Britain thrashed France 35-7. Britain backed into the quarters by downing the United States 21-19, saved by Charlton Kerr tackling Perry Baker out the back of the in-goal. Titleholder New Zealand and Australia will meet in the other semifinal. The Kiwis won their pool clash 26-10 on Saturday to stumble into the quarters.

The Irish scraped through as a third-placed pool team. They lost to Fiji 26-19 but Fiji had to win by eight points to advance at Ireland's expense.

Al-Arabi earn hard-fought win over Kazma in 'series' opener

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 4: In the opening match of the Basketball League Championship's "Playoff" to determine third and fourth places, Al-Arabi secured a hard-fought victory over Kazma with a score of 94-91.

The third and fourth place matches will follow a "play-off" format consisting of three games, with the team winning two of them emerging victorious.

Kuwait Club and Al-Qadisiya have advanced to the final round, set to com-

BASKETBALL

merce next Friday with a "play-off" series potentially spanning five matches.

The game commenced with intense competition as both teams traded leads throughout. The first quarter ended in a 25-25 tie, with Kazma gaining a 9-point advantage in the second quarter before Al-Arabi narrowed the gap to 6 points by halftime, leading 51-45.

In the third quarter, Al-Arabi continued to close in on Kazma's lead, thanks to standout performances from their American professional, Dembicki, who scored 35 points, and Ali Al-Hadhud. The teams exchanged the lead once again, concluding the quarter with a 69-69 deadlock.

The final quarter saw heightened excitement, with Al-Arabi's Saqr Abdel-Rida showcasing his scoring prowess from the perimeter, while Kazma's American player Leslie posed a constant threat. Ultimately, Al-Arabi emerged victorious, clinching the first showdown with a score of 94-91.



Al-Arabi and Kazma players fight for the ball.