



005587 745481

ARAB TIMES

THE FIRST ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY IN FREE KUWAIT
Established in 1977 / www.arabtimesonline.com



TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024 / SHAHWAL 28, 1445 AH

emergency number 112

NO. 18588

16 PAGES

150 FILS

Kuwait Amir patronizes, attends Informatics Award ceremony



Amiri Diwan photo
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah with the Head of the Award Board of Trustees Sheikh Ayda Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah.



Amiri Diwan photo
His Highness the Amir briefed about the Informatics Award.

Contributions to digital domain praised

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah patronized and attended on Monday the 23rd edition of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award ceremony in Bayan Palace.

His Highness the Amir was received by the Head of the Award Board of Trustees Sheikh Ayda Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah and other members of the supreme organizing committee.

During the ceremony, His Highness launched the new edition of the digital index.

Addressing the event, Head of the Award Board of Trustees said that the Informatics Award takes the responsibility of bridging the technical gap and protecting privacy due to the tremendous breakthrough that the

digital technology has created.

She voiced much appreciation and gratitude to the country's leaders for their far-sightedness, wisdom and fervent efforts for the sake of national development and modernization.

Also speaking during the ceremony on the occasion of winning the prize, Governor of the Central Bank of Bahrain Khaled Humaidan congratulated His Highness the Amir on assuming office, wishing His Highness success and further development and prosperity for Kuwait.

He said that His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award was a recognition of the efforts made in the field of digital transformation and that it is an incentive to continue the Bank's journey and adds to its achievements.

Continued on Page 5

Amir embarks on Turkiye state visit

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the accompanying delegation would depart Kuwait on Tuesday, May 7, to Turkiye on a state visit.

The visit encompasses summit talks with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to bolster bilateral ties, and coordinate cooperation on regional and international issues of common interest.

The notable and continuous development of relations between the two countries is stimulated by mutual visions and keenness of political leadership.

Kuwaiti-Turkish relations, marked with respect and mutual interest and coordination, dates back to 1969 when the two inked a diplomatic relations agreement.

Over the past six decades, the bilateral relations have experienced exponential growth as Turkiye proved itself a true partner in times of need.

During the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Turkiye took a firm stance against the aggression and stood in solidarity with Kuwait and its call for sovereignty and independence.

Following the liberation of Kuwait, the two continued exchanging visits on a multitude of levels and for various prospects.

Kuwait showcased its solidarity to Turkiye after the failed coup attempt in 2016, affirming its support to Turkish people and their democratically elected government.

The two friendly nations share a firm position on the Palestinian issue and the Palestinian people's right to an independent state, condemning the aggression and underlining the necessity of alleviating the suffering of Palestinian people.

On a global scale, the two are keen on combating terrorism, and rejecting attempts of linking terrorist and criminal acts to specific religions, sects or divisions.

Continued on Page 5

Opinion

Three decades and still in crisis

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

A COUNTRY cannot live through three decades of continuous crisis due to the ambiguous relationship between the two authorities -- the legislative and the executive, as well as the encroachment of one authority on the other. This led to an absurd conflict between them, which can only be solved by determining the specializations of each authority.

Otherwise, we will remain where we are; while the economy will keep on declining although we have a hundred-year oil reserve whose income can be exploited for gigantic development.

We are experiencing an ordeal in every sense of the word. For quite a while, it has been a taboo for anyone to demand for amendment of the Constitution; because he will face many accusations, up to the point that in one of the parliaments, some MPs suggested imprisoning those who criticized them or those who demanded for amendment of the Constitution.

Parliamentarians have been keen on interfering in the powers of successive governments; that is, they sought to seize power even through the guise of preventing others from criticizing them despite the presence of the ruler who is the father of all the authorities on this land. They rather tried to interfere with his powers by seeking to enact laws that limit such powers. This has not happened in any country throughout the world, even those whose democracy is older than that of Kuwait.

In the current crisis regarding the formation of the government; the MPs, who are not yet constitutionally immune, tried to blackmail the government by preventing the nomination of any of them to join the latter as an 'analyst'.

The goal is to delay the formation as much as possible, either because some of them want to dissolve the Parliament, or they are waiting for the ruling of the Constitutional Court on May 21; so that they can then decide whatever they want, or for more force and terrorizing of the Council of Ministers, as if the paralysis that the country has experienced over the past months is not enough.

Over the past three decades, all the flaws of the Constitution have become apparent. It has become old and has become in dire need of revision; even if the matter requires suspension of the National Assembly

for a certain period and asking for the assistance of constitutional experts -- whether citizens or those from abroad -- to review and revise it.

Genuine democratic countries are those that renew their constitutional systems in line with the current needs of society and the supreme interests of the State. They do not stop at the opinion of a parliamentarian or a bloc.

Here, the goal is the future; not clinging to the past. After 60 years of working with the current Constitution, Kuwait is now experiencing a multi-pronged crisis. This is not healthy at all.

One of the disadvantages is that some MPs exercise a kind of dictatorship over the ministers and the people. They impose their points of view and mood, while bragging about it through social media. This indicates the extent of their disdain for institutions.

Here we are, at a time the world is moving towards opening up to one another. These people deliberately close all outlets to other people; thus, preventing joy and smiles, whether through their backward laws like the 'negative phenomena' that do not exist in Kuwait, or through pressure on ministers to abandon their decisions. Unfortunately, ministers succumb to such pressure for fear of accountability. This is the clear characteristic of successive governments.

This means that the MPs are the ones who rule, not the constitutional institutions. For instance, the country needs every effort and cooperation between all authorities in order to repair what has been ruined by malicious and absurd practices and exploitation of influence.

The country lives in poverty due to the suspension of development projects or interfering with appointments. The country is poor in terms of its infrastructure or its services. Its people are groaning due to many crises, while the MPs focus on their personal interests.

It is now time for the country to emerge from this ordeal and to have a new Constitution built on solid foundations.

Those who prohibit this, attack those who demand for it. They prevent the development of the State. The beneficiaries of this chaos are those who sing praises for democracy, yet they are far from it.

This happens because they realized that once the relationship between the two authorities becomes clear, they will no longer have power over others to achieve all the personal goals they have always been seeking.

Email: ahmed@aljarallah.com

Follow me on:



ahmedaljarallah@gmail.com

Indians lead Kuwait's workforce

Labor market flourishes in 2023

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The past year witnessed notable transformations within Kuwait's labor market, marked by the influx of approximately 129 thousand new individuals, bringing the total workforce to around 2.919 million by the end of 2023, reports Al-Qabas daily.

This represents a 4.6% increase compared to the previous year's figure

of 2,790 million.

Distribution across sectors reveals that the private sector continues to dominate, employing approximately 56.8% of Kuwait's workforce, followed by the family sector at 31.9% and the government sector at 16.3%, as per data from the Central Administration of Statistics.

The number of Kuwaiti workers rose from 442.6 thousand in December 2022 to 454 thousand in December 2023, reflecting a 2.6% annual increase and constituting 15.6% of the total workforce. Among them, Kuwaiti males numbered 191.2

thousand, while Kuwaiti females numbered 262.8 thousand.

Non-Kuwaiti workers increased from 1.59 million in December 2022 to 1.67 million in December 2023, marking a 5.3% rise. Of these, approximately 1.4 million were males and 187 thousand were females.

The government sector saw a 2.4% increase in employees, totaling around 476 thousand, with 80.1% being Kuwaiti citizens. Similarly, the private sector witnessed an 5.3% growth, employing around 1.65 million individuals, including 72.8 thousand Kuwaiti citizens.

The family sector, comprising domestic workers and similar roles, expanded by approximately 33 thousand workers, reaching a total of about 786,231 individuals.

Continued on Page 5

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: The Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah departed to Saudi Arabia Monday to offer condolences on the demise of Prince Bader bin Abdulmohsen Al-Saud. (KUNA)

CAIRO: The Arab Parliament warned Monday, of the consequences of the Israeli occupation's invasion of Rafah City in Palestine, endangering the lives of 1.5 million civilians amidst an ongoing genocide.

In a statement, the Arab Parliament called on the international community, especially the US, to intervene and pressure the Israeli occupation to end their massacres of the Palestinian people, and hold the Israeli occupation accountable for their human rights violations.

The Arab Parliament condemned the inaction by the international community, which allows the Israeli occupation to further its agenda of massacring and committing heinous crimes against Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. (KUNA)

TEHRAN: Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Nechirvan Barzani, president of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, on Monday exchanged views on boosting relations.

In a meeting in the Iranian capital Tehran, the two sides discussed cooperation in the areas of economy and security, according to a statement on the website of the Iranian president's office. (Xinhua)



The 19th Arab Media Forum (AMF) session titled 'Palestine ... Facing the Media'.

KUNA photo

Forum tackles rapid changes

Arab official media shines above social media 'noise'

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): The Global media landscape has undergone significant changes, whether in terms of technology or the ability to convey messages, said current and former Arab ministers on Monday.

During the second day of the 19th Arab Media Forum (AMF), ministers pointed out that there were many rapid changes in the media landscape globally, making social media platforms a challenging competitor with media institutions.

The ministers pointed out the importance of using those platforms in a way that serves Arab issues and wins public opinion.

Lebanese Minister of Information, Ziad Makary emphasized during the fourth session in the forum titled "Palestine ... Facing the Media," moderated by former Kuwaiti Minister of Information, Sami Al-Nesef, that credibility in covering the Israeli occupation's war against Gaza is essential to win over the public opinion in the West.

He noted that the Ministry of Health in Gaza dealt with great credibility, which was the reason the Western media believed its narrative, expressing pride in their credible media, unlike the Israeli occupation's media that continues to spread misinformation.

Makary pointed out that the West and the Israeli occupation have always controlled the media. Still, now the situation has changed with the presence of Arab media conveying the image with great credibility, which has mobilized many supporters of the Palestinian cause in the West.

The General Supervisor of Official Media in Palestine, Ahmad Assaf stated that the Palestinians and the Lebanese are facing a genocidal war by the Israeli Zionist entity, which was created, based on a lie, claiming that there was no Palestine and have been using media since then to spread this lie and cover up their crimes.

Continued on Page 5

Banjul Declaration

Call for immediate 'ceasefire' in Gaza

JEDDAH, May 6, (KUNA): Leaders of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) called for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in the Gaza Strip at the conclusion of their 15th summit in the Gambian capital Banjul on Sunday.

In their Banjul Declaration, the leaders stressed the need for cessation of the all-out aggression against the Palestinian people in Gaza, as well as for providing humanitarian, medical, and relief aid. They called for providing water and electricity, and opening humanitarian corridors to deliver urgent aid to the Gaza Strip in an unhindered and adequate manner.

They warned of the danger of continuing the crime of genocide and ethnic cleansing, including starvation, deprivation of water, and preventing entry of fuel, which led to a genuine disaster for all health and humanitarian sectors.

The OIC leaders also affirmed categorical rejection and confrontation, by all means, to any attempt at forcibly displacing, expelling or transferring the Palestinian people from their land.

"We reaffirm the need to enable the Palestinian people to realize their legitimate national rights, as recognized by the international community, including through its recognition of the fully sovereign State of Palestine within on the 1967 borders, with

Continued on Page 5

Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:35 Asr 15:20
 Sunrise .. 05:02 Maghrib .. 18:27
 Zohr 11:45 Isha 19:52

Local

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

Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot and relatively humid especially over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

By Night: Mild, relatively humid especially over coastal areas and partly cloudy with light to moderate northwesterly wind to variable wind, with speeds of 08-35 km/h with a chance for scattered light rain.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	33	28
Kuwait Airport	40	25
Abdaly	38	24
Jahra	40	26
Salmiyah	36	27
Nuwaisib	36	24
Wafra	38	24

'Event commemorates deep-rooted ties with Kuwait'

UK envoy opens 'The Visit of King Charles III to Kuwait 1993' exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The British Ambassador to Kuwait, Belinda Lewis inaugurated the exhibition titled 'The Visit of King Charles III to Kuwait 1993' at the Kuwait National Library.

Speaking on the occasion, the British envoy said the exhibition coincides with King Charles's coronation anniversary and marking 125 years of Kuwait-Britain relations.

The exhibition commemorates the deep-rooted ties between Kuwait and Britain and underscores over a century of collaboration, emphasizing shared historical positions and mutual support in safeguarding sovereignty and fostering prosperity.



Belinda Lewis

Present at the event were Sheikh Hala Badr Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Kuwait National Library Director Siham Saad Al-Azmi.

Sheikha Hala Al-Badr highlighted the significance of King Charles's visit to Kuwait in 1993, shortly after the Iraqi invasion, noting the joy it brought to both Kuwaiti and British people.

The exhibition showcases pivotal moments of the visit, including the ceremony where King Charles received the Mubarak Al-Kabeer necklace from the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, marking him as the first Crown Prince to receive this honor.

Reflecting on the visit's impact, Sheikha Hala emphasized King Charles's admiration for Kuwait's resilience and progress, particularly in education, as evident during his tour of the British Council and interactions with Kuwaiti students.

Expressing gratitude to the Kuwait National Library for facilitating the exhibition, Sheikha Hala extended congratulations to King Charles on the first anniversary of his

coronation.

Researcher Issa Yahya Dashti, curator of the exhibition, highlighted its portrayal of historical Kuwaiti-British relations, featuring 30 images capturing King Charles's meetings and engagements during his visit.

Dashti underscored the significance of King Charles's decoration with the Mubarak Al-Kabeer necklace, symbolizing the enduring bond between Kuwait and Britain.

Director Siham Al-Azmi emphasized the exhibition's timing, which with King Charles's coronation anniversary and highlighted the recent efforts to strengthen cultural and diplomatic ties, including the symbolic planting of a friendship tree between the Kuwait National Library and the British Embassy.

Al-Azmi emphasized the role of the National Library in fostering cultural exchange and diplomatic relations with Kuwait's international partners, underscoring the country's commitment to promoting mutual understanding and cooperation on a global scale.

British Ambassador Belinda Lewis praised the pictures that depict King Charles' second official visit to Kuwait, which coincides with the one-year anniversary of his coronation as king. She added: "The pictures explain the strength of the relationship between the ruling families in both countries, which is clear from the expressions on their faces. It is also interesting to see pictures of people dating back three decades, including a picture of the former Kuwaiti ambassador to London, Khaled Al-Duwaisan, in addition to other pictures." To His Highness Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad... It is wonderful to see how people's features have changed during these three decades." She continued: "We are currently celebrating the 125th anniversary of the Kuwaiti-British partnership, and we are planning cultural and sporting events as the fall semester approaches," refusing to reveal whether there are currently any high-level visits between the two countries.



Photos by Rizk Taufiq
 Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah discussing various issues with guests in his office.

Editor-in-chief receives ex-ministers, officials

DEAN of Kuwaiti Journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah received in his office former Bahraini Minister of Information, Advisor for Information Affairs to the King of Bahrain and first Editor-in-Chief of Bahraini Al Ayam daily Nabeel bin Yaqub Al-Hamar.

Former Jordanian State Minister for Media Affairs and former Minister of Government Communications Faisal Shbouh, and chief foreign media expert in Kuwait's Information Ministry Saad Al-Ajmi accompanied Al-Hamar.

They discussed various issues of mutual concern, especially those concerning the press and media.

Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Suleiman Al-Jarallah and press colleague Saud Al-Farhan were also present at the meeting.



Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times newspapers Suleiman Al-Jarallah with the guests.



Photo by Mohammad Morsi
 Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Sa'ad receives the Iranian Ambassador Mohammad Totonji at the event.

'Good customs of Gulf people'

Saudi envoy hosts members of diplomatic corps at residence

By Enas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: In keeping with his custom every year and in a friendly atmosphere away from political work, Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Sa'ad hosted the 'Open Diplomatic Day' at his residence in Mishref recently, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Present at the event were heads of diplomatic missions and representatives of embassies of various countries and organizations -- regional and international institutions accredited in the country, along with a number of intellectuals, academicians and media professionals.

The Ambassador welcomed his guests and appreciated their keenness to respond to his invitation, stressing that Gulf society was built and grew with distinctive social characteristics; foremost of which is social cohesion. He said this open meeting for members of the diplomatic corps in Kuwait embodies those authentic and good customs of the Gulf people.

He pointed out the importance of such meetings in enhancing communication and deepening relations between peoples and cultures, as conversations and opinions are exchanged on various social and political issues. He praised the big number of attendees, which indicates the Kingdom's position in the heart of Kuwaitis, countries in the region and the world in general.

He said: "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has succeeded in achieving important economic gains and has proven its presence and mark by hosting many international and regional initiatives and events." He lauded the participation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the delegation accompanying him at the World Economic Forum, which was held in Riyadh.

He stressed that Kuwait's participation in this forum reflects its position in the new economic world, its development efforts and the strengthening of its political and economic roles in the Arab region and the world.

Meanwhile, the diplomats expressed their appreciation for this day and the efforts of the Saudi Arabian Embassy in ensuring its establishment. They described it as an ideal opportunity to enhance means of communication and discuss various issues.

They also talked about the successive and unprecedented development achievements of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at various levels, which strengthened its position and made it the focus of attention of the world.

They noted that the Kingdom played a major and pivotal role in international issues by devoting all efforts to building a stronger global system, and it also contributed to supporting the process of Gulf cooperation with countries in the region to overcome challenges and preserve the Gulf system.

Kuwait, EU discuss climate change, renewable energy cooperation

By Mohammad Al-Mutairi

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): Rising geopolitical "instability" has triggered greater challenges across the wider Middle East region, Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFES) chief Bader Al-Sa'ad said on Monday.

The slow progress in achieving development goals in the region has caused substantial gaps in technology, climate resilience, water and food security, in addition to institutional development, the official told a gathering bringing together regional institutions to discuss the progress of sustainable development goals.

Addressing the two-day Arab-DAC Dialogue on Development, he cited Sudan, Syria and Yemen as cases in point, saying unrest there has led to major obstacles that have hindered private sector-led growth, which has resulted in limited job creation and subsequent halt in national development goals.

In his speech, the chief of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Carsten Staur said the talks come as significant in the sense that it offers participants the chance to exchange information and knowhow, particularly when it comes to sustained development plans and objectives.

The acting chief of Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development Waleed Al-Bahar said the gathering allows the parties involved to benefit from their respective experiences in dealing with existential challenges, helping them keep those hardships at bay through the exchange of information and views on the matter.

The talks come ahead of forthcoming international events, including the United Nations Climate Change Conference and the Global Development Finance Conference, all of which will prove instrumental in bringing development goals to fruition, he added.

Climate change

Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) discussed on Monday with the EU Cooperation Team ways of enhancing cooperation in the fields of renewable energy and climate change, in addition to international environmental challenges.

In a statement, KISR Acting Director General Mashaan Al-Otaibi after his meeting with the EU Cooperation Team Leader, Spyros Kouvelis, affirmed the importance of the private sector's role in achieving the goals of international treaties, to double the production and efficiency of renewable energy, and the vision of enhancing the business environment through the green transition project as a mean to achieve these goals.

The initiative is considered essential to enabling renewable energy solutions and enhancing regional cooperation, and represents a step towards achieving a sustainable future and resisting the effects of climate change, he said.

On his part, the EU official reiterated the importance of enhancing cooperation between the UN and the GCC countries through the green transition project and its vision as a turning point to achieve a sustainable future.

During the meeting, both sides discussed the green transition project that aims to increase the usage of renewable energy sources in addition to boosting economic growth and diversity.



KUNA photo
 KISR Acting Director General Mashaan Al-Otaibi meets with the EU Cooperation Team.

Candidates for MC by-elections in 2 districts hits 27; 1 pulls out

By Enas Awadh
 Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The period specified for Municipal Council by-election candidates in Khaitan (Sixth District) and Ahmadi (Ninth District) to register ended recently with two citizens submitting their nomination papers to the Election Affairs Department at the Ministry of Interior -- Ahmad Marzouq Al-Otaibi and Turki Fahad Baddah.

The total number of candidates for the by-elections in the two districts reached 27, including 17 in the sixth district and 10 in the ninth district. One of the candidates has withdrawn.

Director of the Election Affairs Department Brigadier General Dr. Ahmad Al-Hajri said the department will ask the ministry's personnel to participate in the electoral process, and to receive agents and delegates for candidates allowed to enter the polling stations by submitting special requests.

He pointed out that the condition for registering an agent is that he should be registered in the electoral district in which the candidate will stand for election; while the

delegate must have an electoral registration, but he does not have to be from the same district.

He affirmed that the department received candidacies for 10 consecutive days -- from April 26 to May 5, with 28 candidates applying and one candidate stepping down; bringing the total number of those wishing to run in the elections to 27.

He called for completing nomination procedures by going to the police stations designated by the ministry, explaining that the Khaitan Police Station was designated to receive the candidates of the Sixth District, and the Sabah Al-Salem Suburb Police Station was designated to receive the candidates of the Ninth District.

He added the door for withdrawal and waiver is still open until May 11, and waiver can be made through the designated centers in each district.

Regarding the elections that will be held on May 18, he revealed 26 schools have been allocated for voting, and 194 polling stations were allotted in the two constituencies through the cooperation of State institutions and parties involved in the electoral process.

Heart attack leads to multiple accidents

4 get 5 years jail, fine in visa sale

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Criminal Court has sentenced an inspector, a citizen, a delegate and a mediator to five years in prison and fined them KD 4,000 for accepting a bribe of KD2,000 to approve 10 residency permits -- KD 500 each permit.

The court also acquitted three expatriates of purchasing residency permits. The detectives arrested the accused through an entrapment. The bribery was recorded in audio and video, as they agreed with one of the workers to establish a company owned by the citizen.

The Public Prosecution charged one of accused -- a public sector employee -- of accepting bribe, while the other defendants negotiated with the accused to obtain 10

residency permits illegally.

Heart attack while driving: A 70-year-old citizen, who figured in a traffic accident involving seven cars on the First Ring Road, suffered from cardiac arrest.

According to a security source, the Operations Unit at the Interior Ministry received a report of a collision between seven vehicles on the above-mentioned road. Immediately, security personnel and ambulances were dispatched to the location. It was found that the accident resulted in a 70-year-old citizen suffering from cardiac arrest and he was rushed to the hospital. He is in critical condition.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'High-level technical education can tackle market challenges'

"I WILL not go into the reasons for the deterioration of our educational outcomes and not linking this to the needs of the labor market, because what has been said and written about it occupies huge space on the shelves of any library. But one question sums up this issue: Where are we in terms of interest in technical education at a level close to a university degree?" columnist **Iqbal Al-Ahmad** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.



Iqbal Al-Ahmad

"The country is grappling with an oversupply of university graduates, many of whom possess degrees that hold little practical value beyond being certificates stating their academic achievements. Compounding this issue is the widespread practice of appointing these graduates to positions far away from their areas of expertise, resulting in numerous challenges and hindering productivity levels.

"This dilemma is further underscored by the glaringly high rate of unemployment, with a significant number of young individuals, both male and female, languishing at home for years awaiting job appointments. Conversely, there exists a substantial portion of employed individuals, also spanning both genders, who merely bear their names on office rosters, while effectively working from home. Lacking designated work spaces, they are encouraged to remain at home and draw their salaries remotely.

"Meanwhile, a considerable segment of the workforce engages in superficial activities, such as consuming beverages or leisurely socializing, before departing for the nearest recreational facility or returning home, only to clock back in at the conclusion of the workday.

"Addressing these systemic challenges inherent in Kuwait's employment landscape necessitates a concerted effort by the state to establish high-caliber technical institutes. These institutes should be strategically designed to produce graduates equipped with the practical skills and expertise demanded by the job market, as determined by comprehensive studies and recommendations put forth by relevant authorities.

"Only through such proactive measures can the country hope to effectively remedy the prevailing issues afflicting its labor market.

"Graduates in disciplines such as geography, Sharia, history, accounting, business administration, social sciences, and others are currently at the forefront of concern. However, despite their qualifications, they cannot be denied employment opportunities, as the state is duty-bound to provide for them.

"Furthermore, governmental institutions are effectively obligated to accommodate them, even though they may not fully meet the market's demand for technical expertise. Consequently, the state resorts to importing technical professionals from abroad, leading to grievances about the high proportion of expatriate workers and the challenges they face.

"The solution lies in the cultivation of high-level technical skills that align with the market's requirements. These technical outputs should be regarded with the same esteem as university graduates. To achieve this, a thorough reassessment of the educational sector in Kuwait is imperative.

"This entails a profound pause and a critical reevaluation to ensure that educational outputs are tailored to meet genuine market needs, free from any superficialities, compensations, intermediaries, or compromises. Only through such earnest efforts can the nation alleviate its current challenges across all sectors."

Also:

"Supporters of Israel have traditionally labeled anyone who opposes the Zionist state, or even protests and demonstrates against its Nazi practices against the Arabs of Palestine, as anti-Semitism. What is ironic, infuriating, angry, and astonishing is that the massive demonstrations by American and European university students were not calling for anti-Semitism, but rather against Israel," columnist **Talal Abdul Karim Al Arab** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"They only want to stop the brutal extermination of civilians, and end the injustice done to the people of Gaza, who fell victim between the hammer of the Zionists and the anvil of Hamas.

"The pillar of anti-Semitism for anyone who opposes Israel has turned into a tool of oppression and abuse, even against the Western peoples who rose up calling for an end to the criminal Israeli violations and the destruction of Palestinian human rights, which Western countries violate day and night.

"It is an unjust justification for supporting the world's first racist state. Mr. (Joe) Biden (the US President) commented on the protests of American university students on the pretext of anti-Semitism, saying that there is no place for anti-Semitism in American universities, even though none of them mentioned Semitism.

"The demonstrators were on the side of the Palestinians and against Israeli violations, but it is an arrogant justification for all American and Western politicians to stand up. With the Zionist entity at the expense of Palestinian rights, fabricating any excuse whatsoever.

"The brutal suppression of opponents of Israeli crimes revealed the other side of darkness and ugly face of the West, which prides itself on democracy, freedom of expression, and Western human rights in particular. Human rights

for them stop when they conflict with the Zionist interest specifically, and the increasing anti-Israel momentum even among the political elites indicates dissatisfaction with Zionist economic and media hegemony and on the American and Western political decision, which seemed clear that the interests of Israel are more important to these politicians than the interests of their nations. We say to all the deceived and defenders of Semites that the Arabs are Semites.

"They were Semites before Judaism existed, and before they crossed the sea into the wilderness. Arabs were Semites before the birth of our Prophet Abraham (PBUH) and the messengers and prophets who came after him, and those who took to the American and European streets only came out demanding an end to injustice. About the Palestinian Semites, is there any sane person among you who understands?"

"Oh Mr. Biden, read this noble prophetic hadith if you believe in freedom of religion. Our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Shem is the father of the Arabs, Ham is the father of the Ethiopians, and Japheth is the father of the Romans." The ancient Semitic peoples are the Arabs of the Peninsula, in addition to the Assyrians, Babylonians, Arameans, Canaanites, and Phoenicians, the Amorites, the Moabites, the Edomites, the Ammonites, and the Hebrews.

"The Arabs and the original descendants of our Prophet Jacob (PBUH) in particular, and not the Zionists of this era, are cousins and are Semites, separated by politics, separated by the criminal Balfour Declaration, and their political and military support for the Zionist state.

"Enough with your injustice to the Semites, enough with your anti-Semitism, enough with your tampering with the destinies of nations. The Zionists are not Semites, they are the Nazis of the era. Enough with arming the killers of Palestinians and enough with shedding crocodile tears over the victims of Gaza, the Semites."

"Before the cord breaks... My knowledge of some members of the respected Al-Qarifa Family will not stop me from expressing my opinion, as long as it has the support of the emirate and the Al-Sabah family, to which I (God forbid) belong," **Sheikh Ali Al-Jaber Al-Ahmad** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The statement of Mr. Musaed said, was both a threat and a warning to the ruling regime, which no rational person would utter due to its seriousness. It goes beyond the 'We will not allow you' speech. It met with applause and encouragement from some audience members who either did not understand or were unaware of the implications of his words.

"Moving forward, the government should take into consideration the shocking behavior of current and former parliamentarians who compete to defend the candidate instead of supporting the procedures of the Ministry of Interior, as mandated by the Public Prosecution. This happened in similar cases before. It is shameful that they do not uphold the law, as they choose to play with it instead.

"However, we must rise above tribal fanaticism, prioritizing Kuwait and its ruling regime.

"Some MPs declared their defense in video interviews without even mentioning the paragraph that called for the candidate's summons. This is a statement that an experienced MP would not make, unless it was for the sake of politeness and gaining favor.

"Others remained silent out of fear of being blamed, fighting to maintain their position in the legislature. When confronted by the government, they 'kept their mouths shut', as if the Kuwaiti government is their arch enemy.

"Their statements are influenced more by emotions than credibility, especially when it comes to matters involving tribal members. Just as they have their opinions, we also believe that the government should seriously consider establishing a second chamber for balance, like in the rest of the world. This would contribute to stability in the country and ensure the safety of its people, given that the representatives' practices and statements have reached such a point, and will continue to worsen if their approach does not change.

"Their actions are not devoid of veiled threats, and they even terrorize their colleagues during unconstitutional meetings like before. They seem to follow an unwritten rule that says, 'To become a representative in the National Assembly, one must assault members of the Al-Qarifa family.'"

"Hello Oman... The Sultanate of Oman, may Allah protect it, recently experienced severe hurricanes, floods and unprecedented rainfall. The impact of these natural disasters was so strong that water entered homes and roads were cut off by torrents. Some of the beloved areas of the Sultanate suffered significant damage. This was an act of Allah -- according to His will," columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"However, it is worth noting the voice of the Omani people was not one of complaint or blame, as often happens elsewhere. Instead, they called on the government and the people to work together to manage the crisis, save what could be saved and restore life to normalcy.

"Public panic coincided with government efforts, and they succeeded in overcoming the crisis due to the admirable cooperation between citizens and the government. There was no time for gossip or excessive questioning. Everyone worked together towards saving the country and its people despite continued warnings on future floods."

— **Compiled by PFX Fernandes**

Court jails lawyer in blackmail for 'cash'

Jail, fine for Syrian imposter

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Criminal Court has ruled to imprison a lawyer for two years with a guarantee of KD1,000 to suspend the implementation of the sentence as he was convicted of blackmailing a citizen to obtain a sum of KD20,000 and threatening to accuse him of assaulting his client.

Meanwhile, the court acquitted the accused of forcing the complainant to sign documents proving the existence of a debt, a car sales contract and a receipt.

Case files indicate the complainant said the lawyer summoned him to his office and blackmailed him and threatened to accuse him of assaulting his client if he does not pay KD20,000. He also claimed that he was forced to sign documents proving the existence of the debt, a car sales contract and a receipt for the same amount.

Syrian imposter jailed: The Criminal Court sentenced a Syrian to 10 years in pris-

on and fined him KD20,000 for impersonating an employee in the Consumer Protection Department to steal KD15,000 from a citizen's bank account.

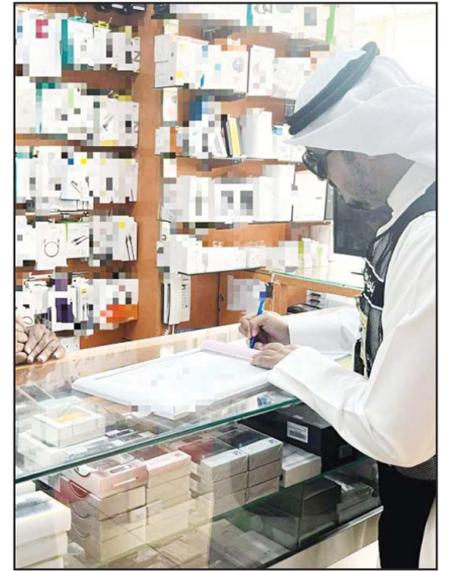
The Public Prosecution charged the accused with hacking the website of a government agency and impersonating a public employee.

According to the case files, the accused hacked into a government website and impersonated those responsible for consumer protection using certain techniques. He then corresponded with the citizen via the social networking application WhatsApp, claiming that he represents the Ministry of Commerce and then stole KD15,000 from the victim's bank account.

Drug addict nabbed: Maida Hawally securitymen referred a person born in 1988 to the Drug Control General Department at the Interior Ministry for possessing and consuming drugs, reports Al-Anba daily.

While patrolling on Abdul Karim Al-Khattabi Street in Salmiya, the securitymen got suspicious upon noticing the unusual behavior of the suspect. When they inspected him, they found a pack of shabu, a piece of hashish, a marijuana roll, cigarette rolling papers, and a light bulb used as an instrument for consuming drugs in his possession.

The suspect was referred to the concerned authorities, along with the confiscated items.



A municipality inspector writes a citation.

13 violations spotted in municipality raids

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: A recent inspection campaign by municipal teams in the West Abu Fatira, Al-Harafiya area led to 13 violations involving advertising licenses. The violations included failure to renew advertising permits, neglecting advertisement maintenance, placing unauthorized promotional materials, introducing unapproved advertising for business activities, and unauthorized use of public spaces, reports Al-Rai daily.

The municipality's Public Relations Department reported that the auditing and service follow-up teams will be conducting more frequent field campaigns across the country's governorates throughout the month.

Violators face legal action

'Protect privacy of schoolchildren'

By **Abdul Rahman Al-Shammari**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Assistant Undersecretary for Public Education Affairs at the Ministry of Education Hessa Al-Mutawa recently issued a circular to educational districts and religious institutes regarding the ban on filming and publishing clips, pictures and anything related to students on personal accounts in order to protect their privacy.

In the circular distributed to schools and kindergartens, Al-Mutawa warned violators of being subjected to legal accountability in

line with the laws and regulations in force in this regard.

She explained that the circular is within the framework of protecting the students' privacy, developing plans and programs to protect the child, and supervising the implementation in coordination with all parties concerned with child protection as per Law No. 21 of 2015 on the rights of the child and out of concern for the interests of students.

She added the circular is a follow up to the general bulletin issued by the undersecretary on absolutely not allowing any interviews or statements to be conducted by students.

Construction worker dies in fall

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: An Egyptian expatriate lost his life after falling from a height while working on a construction project along Al-Ghazali Street, near a commercial market. Authorities were notified of the accident, prompting a response from both security and forensic teams. The investigator in charge ordered the body to be taken away, while detectives were tasked with investigating the circumstances surrounding

the incident, reports Al-Rai daily.

Many hurt in fire: The General Fire Force stated that its teams contained and extinguished an apartment fire in a building in the Abu Halifa area in the early hours of the morning. The fire was brought under control, but several people sustained injuries and were handed over to emergency medical services for treatment, reports Al-Rai daily.



A bottle of 'perfume' and local liquor found in accident car.

Accident reveals drunk driver & liquor bottles

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: An accident involving an overturned vehicle in Jahra revealed that the driver was apparently intoxicated. Three bottles containing alcohol were also discovered at the scene, reports Al-Anba daily.

It was reported that the driver, who was residing in the country illegally, was arrested for driving while impaired, causing an accident, and damaging public property.

Authorities received a report around 9:40 pm of a car accident on Al-Jahra Road toward Al-Mutlaa, near the Palace area. When the police arrived, they found an overturned Japanese car driven by a man born in 1986 who was lying on the ground. The car had collided with a fence, and the driver was refusing medical treatment. He appeared disoriented, slurred his words, and smelled strongly of alcohol. Additionally, there were signs of a fire in the vehicle.

Elsewhere in Jahra, police detained a young man and referred him to the General Administration for Drug Control after discovering substances believed to be intoxicants in his possession. The arrest came after police became suspicious of a vehicle parked in a dirt yard. Inside the car, they found a 1.5-liter bottle, a 0.5-liter bottle, and a bottle of cologne, all containing intoxicating substances.

Victim suffers KD1,883 loss

E-gadgets bought on stolen card

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Detectives have started the search for an unidentified individual who implicated a citizen in contracts with a telecommunications company, resulting in debts totaling over KD1,883, reports Al-Anba daily.

Details of Misdemeanor Case No. 5/2024 revealed that the citizen -- Ali Sabah Al-Salem who was born in 1997 reported that he was swindled through two subscription contracts with a telecommunications company. The contracts were made using his civil identification and bank cards with a forged signature, leading to the acquisition of an iPhone Pro Max, a Sony PlayStation, an Apple Watch and a router on Dec 16, 2019

at the company's branch in Ali Sabah Al-Salem suburb. The citizen explained that he lost his wallet and obtained a loss certificate, which confirmed he was out of the country on the date of signing the contracts. The contracts, which the citizen had no involvement in, led to debts totaling KD1,883.618; while the individual who forged the signature in both contracts and an employee of the telecommunications company have been charged with forgery.

The employee responsible for issuing the contracts was summoned for questioning, during which he admitted to being the one who completed the transactions.

No jobs for med students?

Call for transparency in distributing jobs in KPC

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: MP Abdullah Al-Mudhaf urged the Ministry of Oil to maintain transparency and clarify the evaluation process for applicants to Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), particularly in the chemical engineering field, reports Al-Anba daily.

He emphasized the importance of ensuring fairness for all applicants and safeguarding their rights.

Al-Mudhaf expressed concern for the future of applicants who have dedicated academic efforts to attain their qualifications.

Meanwhile, MP Miteb Al-Jalal denounced the challenges faced by young graduates, particularly those with specialized skills needed in the Kuwaiti job market. He criticized the refusal to appoint Kuwaiti citizens who graduated from medical colleges accredited by the Ministry of Higher Education. Al-Jalal called upon the Minister of Health to utilize national talents to address shortages in hospitals.

He emphasized the unacceptable treatment of medical students graduating from accredited Egyptian universities, stressing the need for immediate action.

Gulf citizen swindled: As per the instruction of a police investigator, a Kuwaiti citizen was summoned for questioning as he has been accused of defrauding a Gulf national, reports Al-Anba daily.

The defendant allegedly accepted KD8,000 from the victim in exchange for transferring ownership of a luxury vehicle, but failed to complete the sale or return the money.

Under Case No. 240/2024 titled 'Fraud', a lawyer acting as the complainant's representative filed a report stating that his client had fallen victim to fraud and deception. His client had allegedly been tricked into handing over KD8,000 to a Kuwaiti who promised to transfer ownership of the luxury vehicle, but did not do so.

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

Ministry of Health urged to expedite medical examination for teachers

About 600 teachers from Jordan, Palestine to arrive in batches

Pharmacists gather at KPAC '24 to shape Kuwait's healthcare future

Conference is first of its kind to include all sectors: Dr Taqi

By Zaina Al-Ayoub

KUWAIT CITY, May 6, (KUNA): The first Kuwait Pharmaceutical Advancement Exhibition and Conference (KPAC), organized by the Kuwait Pharmaceutical Association (KUPHA), kicked off on Sunday, focusing on the advanced role of pharmacy practice in Kuwait.

KPAC aimed to "ensure representation of all pharmacy sectors in Kuwait, highlight career opportunities to all pharmacists, continue professional development for pharmacists, and improve patient care in all pharmacy sectors." In a statement to KUNA, Chairman of KPAC Dr. Ahmad Taqi said that this conference is the first of its kind to include all sectors under the umbrella of pharmacy.

In turn, Dr. Farah Al-Enezi, co-chairwoman of KPAC, said "The conference aims to bring all pharmacists together" and is seeking to be recognized and ranked amongst the leading worldwide scientific conferences to network and share updated information related to pharmacy.



Pharmacist Dr. Al-Owayesh at the Kuwait's Ministry of Health (MoH) and KPAC organizer Ph. Dana Al-Aynati explained that this conference "is by pharmacists for pharmacists," and "the organizers and photographers are also pharmacists."

The topics discussed in the conference centered on the innovative developments regarding healthcare in pharmacy practice ranging from

pharmacy education to updated clinical guidelines.

The lectures, by renowned pharmacists and researchers in this field, were carefully selected to highlight the diverse challenges and strategies concerning clinical pharmacy, toxicology, drug supervision, and manufacturing.

Local and global speakers participated in this conference, sharing their research and data with attendees through workshops, exhibitions, and other educational programs offered at the event.

Kuwait University faculty member Dr. Maryam Al-Owayesh's lecture discussed "Cost of Illness Studies" in Kuwait, where the field of Pharmacoeconomics focuses on the economic and financial magnitude of an illness or disease.

Pharmacoeconomics quantifies the expenses of the disease, which will aid in forecasting the needed budget for that specific disease, she explained.

In his lecture "A closer look at the

current status of drug manufacturing in Kuwait," Dr. Rashed Khazal, chairperson and manager of Kuwait Saudi Pharmaceuticals Industries Company, talked about the ambitious and opportune future of drug manufacturing in Kuwait.

Whereas Director of Drug Inspection Administration at Kuwait MoH Dr. Reem Al-Essa's lecture, "Pharmacy inspection process in Kuwait," discussed the meticulous inspection and Pharmacovigilance process in the region.

The workshops offered include Practical Scenarios for Warfarin Dosing and Monitoring by Dr. Asmaa Al-Buloushi, Pharmacy Care Services for Older Adults by Ph. Mariam Al-Haddad, an Introduction to Kuwait's Poison Control by Dr. Abdullatif Al-Oumi, and much more.

Researchers from Kuwait University, local hospitals, visiting and local pharmacists, members of KUPHA, pharmacy students, and associations participated and attended the two-day workshops and conference.

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: About 600 teachers that the Ministry of Education hired from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Palestine will arrive in batches in the coming days to address the academic manpower shortage in public schools, reports Al-Anba daily.

The ministry has initiated coordination with its Ministry of Health counterpart to ensure that medical examination proce-

dures for these teachers are conducted promptly. This will facilitate the appointment process and enable them to start working in public schools in time for the new academic year.

In response, the Ministry of Health has instructed the General Medical Council and other concerned authorities to streamline the medical examination procedures for these teachers.



Honoring on the sidelines of Kuwait's 1st pharmaceutical advancement conference opening.



Some of the officials during the conference. KUNA photos

Kuwait Scouts Assoc to hold specialized training program

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Kuwait Scouts Association will organize a specialized training program on strategic leadership from May 28-30 with broad Arab participation, reports Al-Anba daily.

Chairman of the Board of Directors of the association Dr. Abdullah Al-Tarjji said in a press statement that Kuwait is holding this program as

part of its efforts to support the Arab Scout Movement, and its keenness to develop the leadership capabilities and skills of Arab youths. He affirmed that a number of experts from Arab countries will participate in the program.

He disclosed that the training program aims to provide participants with skills and abilities in many fields like strategic thinking as a

basis for administrative creativity, planning, business follow-up, strategic plan management, best practices in leadership and planning, and developing an innovative practical approach for leadership and management, in addition to the creative skills and soft behaviors necessary for leadership and the skills of building strategies, plans, programs,

indicators and evaluation. It also focuses on decision-making skills, following up the implementation, and ensuring sustainability and practical applications of leadership and management styles in comprehensive and continuous change and development, and exchanging knowledge and practical experience among participants, he added.

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*

PFMC breaks records with 25% profit surge

MoE launches campaign ahead of final examinations for 2023/2024

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Ahmed Al-Wahida, the official spokesperson for the Ministry of Education, has announced the commencement of the third awareness campaign titled "Our Goal is the Summit" in preparation for the final examinations of the 2023/2024 academic year, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This campaign, orchestrated by the Department of Public Relations and Educational Media, targets all students and will run until the conclusion of the twelfth-grade secondary school exams through various media platforms and the ministry's electronic channels.

Al-Wahida highlighted that the campaign aligns with the directives of Dr. Adel Al-Adwani, Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, urging all ministry sectors to invest in available resources to support students at every educational stage.

The objective is to motivate and equip students for successful exam preparation, emphasizing efficiency, success, progress, and prosperity.

Throughout the campaign, comprehensive educational, psychological, and health support will be extended to students and their parents. This includes access to learning materials, advice to foster perseverance and diligent study habits, accredited learning resources, question banks, educational channels with lesson explanations, psychological counseling services, and electronic consultation platforms for social support. Additionally, motivational messages from exemplary students and practical tips will be shared.

Al-Wahida encouraged everyone to follow the Ministry of Education's official social media accounts to stay updated and access vital information regarding the campaign's developments.

Unprecedented success: The Public Facilities Management Company (PFMC) announced its unprecedented financial success in 2023, surpassing all previous records with profits exceeding 10 million dinars. This remarkable achievement represents a substantial 25% increase over the previous year, fueled by a revitalized approach to development and strategic initiatives aimed at driving profitability and enhancing stakeholder value, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Dr. Muhammad Al-Abduljader, Chairman of the Board of Directors, hailed this milestone as historic for the company, emphasizing the commitment to sustained growth in the years ahead. He credited the adoption of a comprehensive development strategy and adherence to stringent governance and transparency standards for the remarkable performance.

Eng. Saleh Al-Othman, CEO of the company, expressed confidence in maintaining positive momentum, highlighting ongoing efforts to implement a robust development plan designed to optimize operational efficiency and revenue generation across all company facilities. Under the visionary leadership of the board of directors, the company is focused on modernizing infrastructure, embracing digital transformation, and ensuring the highest standards of safety and environmental stewardship.

Al-Othman underscored the company's commitment to digital innovation, noting the successful transition to electronic archiving and the attainment of ISO certifications for quality management, occupational health and safety, and environmental management systems. These accolades underscore the company's dedication to excellence and its alignment with international standards.

As the company looks ahead to 2025, Al-Othman expressed optimism for continued growth and advancement, reaffirming the commitment to realizing the goals of Kuwait Vision 2035 and delivering exceptional service to customers while embracing sustainability and technological innovation.

KFAS grants funding to American Int'l University ... for smart energy project

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: American International University Kuwait (AIU) joins forces with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) to pioneer a transformative project in smart energy management. Dr. Omar Daoud, alongside a team of six dedicated students, spearheads the initiative aimed at curbing energy waste through innovative IoT solutions.

Under the guidance of Dr. Daoud, students will leverage smart wireless sensors and network actuators to develop a comprehensive energy management model tailored to AIU's facilities. With KFAS funding, the project underscores AIU's commitment to fostering student-led initiatives driving positive change and sustainability within Kuwait.

Over a one-year timeline, students will conduct a thorough survey to gather data on energy consumption behaviors within

AIU facilities. This data will inform the development and implementation of control strategies and monitoring plans, optimizing energy usage and promoting sustainability.

Divided into six work packages, the project encompasses project management, deployment strategies, and dissemination activities. Upon completion, students will showcase their findings through publications, presentations, and international engagements, contributing to global conversations on energy efficiency.

AIU extends gratitude to KFAS, Dr. Omar Daoud, and his student team for their pivotal role in advancing sustainability initiatives. Supported by the KFAS grant, their efforts epitomize AIU's dedication to innovation and environmental stewardship, exemplifying the power of collaboration in creating a sustainable future.

Awarding ceremony held under the patronage of HH the Amir

KFH scoops Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatcs Award



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad honoring the Chairman of KFH's Board of Directors, Hamad Al-Marzouq.

Kuwait Amir

Continued from Page 1

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah handed the awards to the winners, and was given a commemorative gift on this occasion.

Meanwhile, winners of Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatcs Award 2023 commended the event's contributions to in the digital domain.

In a statement to KUNA, Governor of Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) Khaled Humaidan said Monday that he was honored to receive Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatcs' Award from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Humaidan stated that this prestigious award is an honorary recognition of the efforts made in the field of technical innovation and digital transformation as well as an incentive to continue the bank's journey.

In turn, CEO of the National Center for Statistics and Information in the Sultanate of Oman Dr. Khalifa Al-Barwani expressed to KUNA his gratitude for the honor of receiving the award from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Chairman of the Board of Directors Hamad Al-Marzouq expressed his sincere gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for sponsoring this event.

He said that it was an honor to receive from His Highness the award for digital transformation and financial solutions in the field, as it motivates them to accomplish more achievements in the field of artificial intelligence and robotics.

The founder of Vanera Limited Mohammad Al-Kilani from Palestine told KUNA that Kuwait was a pioneer in the field of digital transformation and informatics in the Arab world, and expressed pride in receiving the award from His Highness the Amir of Kuwait.

The founder of (MyFatoorah) Company Abdullah Al-Dabbous said that he is honored to be with the winners today, and noted that the company was established in Kuwait, expanding in the region, and ranked among the top ten companies in financial technology in the Middle East by Forbes magazine.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sponsored on Monday the ceremony of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatcs Award in the twenty-third session and inaugurated the new version of the Informatcs Index project.

Amir embarks

Continued from Page 1

In 1983, Kuwait and Turkiye inked an agreement for economic, industrial and technical cooperation, while in 1988 they signed an investment encouraging deal.

Turkish-Kuwaiti Joint Committee for Cooperation held its first session back in October of 2013 to amplify cooperation across a variety of fields.

The two have signed some 62 agreements concerning various fields, with Kuwait investments in Turkiye reaching USD 2.5 billion.

Around 447 Kuwaiti companies are operating in Turkiye, while some 50 Turkish companies are in Kuwait.

Turkish companies in Kuwait, mainly concerned with infrastructure, have executed 50 projects with total value estimated at USD nine billion, including Kuwait's new international airport.

In addition to cooperation on economic and technical fronts, the two also engaged in activities promoting defense and parliamentary partnerships.

On a humanitarian level, Kuwait has lent its support to Turkiye in times of need including aftermath of devastating earthquake in 2021, fire eruptions in 2023 as well as largely contributing to easing burden on Turkish government as host of some three million Syrian refugees.

The upcoming visit by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Turkiye on Tuesday will add to the strong historic ties linking the two countries and would boost the strategic cooperation, said Kuwaiti Ambassador to Turkiye Waled Al-Enezi on Tuesday.

This is the first visit by His Highness the Amir outside of the frame of GCC and Arab countries, which reflected the importance of Turkiye in the Kuwaiti discourse, Ambassador Al-Enezi told KUNA.

He predicted that the visit would focus on boosting ties on all possible levels especially with it coinciding with the 60th anniversary of diplomatic ties.

The strength of the bilateral ties had been exemplified in the signing of 62 agree-

ments, Memorandums of Understanding (MoU), and cooperation protocols in inception of relations, he affirmed, adding that Kuwait would always remain grateful for Turkiye especially with its just stance during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

He also mentioned Kuwait's humanitarian support to Turkiye on various occasions crises including the 2023 February devastating earthquake that his southern Turkiye.

Arab official

Continued from Page 1

Ahmad Assaf noted that Palestinian media realized this and sought to convey the voice of the Palestinian people and their right to the world, however, they faced strong Western media, which coordinated with the Israeli occupation narrative.

He added that due to the openness of the media and the presence of social media, the Israeli occupation failed to prevent the Palestinian message from reaching the world and revealing the reality of what is happening inside Palestine.

Former Jordanian Minister of Information Faisal Al-Shboul stated that there was a study on several Arab countries indicating that the credibility of official media in the Arab world is more trustworthy than news services and others on social media platforms, pointing out that the media is a weapon that you either use or is used against you. The 19th Arab Media Forum began yesterday, Sunday, and will continue until tomorrow, Tuesday, with the official launch ceremony of the forum scheduled for later today.

Call for

Continued from Page 1

Al-Quds Al-Sharief as its capital," reads the Declaration.

They vowed to take all measures to safeguard the Islamic identity of Al-Quds Al-Sharif from the illegal measures and policies as well as Judaization attempts of the occupier and the violations against the sanctity and the status of Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

"We confirm the full solidarity of Member States with the Palestinian People in their struggle to free themselves from foreign occupation and colonization and condemn all illegal actions aimed at denying their legitimate rights, commend the role of UNRWA in serving the Palestinian refugees and invite all States and the international community to continue supporting it to execute its historic mandate and responsibility," they said.

Indians lead

Continued from Page 1

The government sector hosts the highest proportion of Kuwaiti workers, while the private sector accommodates the majority of non-Kuwaiti workers, accounting for 64.3% of its workforce. Non-Kuwaiti representation in the government sector is at 3.8%, while the family sector employs around 31.9% of the country's total workforce.

More than 56.7% of national workers in the private sector are concentrated in 3 economic activities such as 32.6% in accommodation and food services activities; 13.1% in financial and insurance activities and 11% in construction.

More than 60.6% of non-Kuwaiti workers work in the private sector in only 3 economic activities -- 36.6% in food and accommodation services activities, 13.8% in construction and 10.2% in manufacturing industries.

In Kuwait's diverse labor landscape, Indians comprise the largest demographic, constituting approximately 30.3% of the total workforce with around 885.4 thousand. Egypt ranks second, with 477.9 thousand workers, representing 16.4% of the labor market.

Kuwaiti citizens rank third in terms of workforce representation, making up 15.6% of the labor market with 454 thousand individuals. Filipino workers follow closely, accounting for 9% of the Kuwaiti labor force, totaling 262.8 thousand people. Bangladesh occupies the fifth spot with 8.5% of the workforce, numbering 249.4 thousand individuals, while Sri Lankan workers represent 4.7% with 137.4 thousand workers.

Additionally, workers from Nepal, Pakistan, Syria, and Jordan contribute significantly to Kuwait's labor force, with respective numbers of 111 thousand, 70 thousand, 46.6 thousand, and 28.9 thousand individuals. This diverse composition underscores the multinational character of Kuwait's labor market.

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has received the 23rd edition of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatcs Award for 2023 for the category of excellence in digital transformation in technical financial solutions. The award ceremony was held at Bayan Palace under the patronage and presence of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

KFH Chairman, Hamad Abdulmohsen Al Marzouq said, "We are honored to receive this award from His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Winning His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatcs Award for 2023 for the category of excellence in digital transformation in technical financial solutions recognizes our excellence in providing comprehensive digital financial services. This includes Tam Digital Bank, the first Sharia-compliant digital bank in Kuwait."

Al Marzouq added: "The recognition of KFH's contributions and leadership in providing exceptional digital products and services motivates us to continue pursuing digital excellence. It also furthers KFH's role in the private sector, aligning with Kuwait's 2035 vision that aims to transform Kuwait into a regional financial and trade hub."

"We are honored by this recognition. It's a great privilege for



Sheikha Aida Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Hamad Al-Marzouq, Abdul Wahab Al-Rashoud and Yousef Al-Ruwaih.

us. We stress our commitment to continue offering digital financial solutions that cater to the needs of our retail and corporate customers as well as the community, facilitating financial transactions and the banking experience with high efficiency," he added.

KFH's 2023 digital initiatives were among the criteria considered for the award. The diverse and highly efficient initiatives successfully met customer aspirations, enhancing banking experience, Al

Marzouq revealed.

He added "KFH is keen on establishing an innovation-based environment and has pioneering Digital Academy that empowers its human talents to develop new business initiatives to contribute to creating unique solutions and services."

Al Marzouq said that KFH distinguished itself by pioneering various digital financial services within the banking industry. These services included launch-

ing the "Zaheb" digital platform, and for the first time in the Middle East, instant credit, and prepaid card printing service, in addition to the Liveness Face Matching service in branches, emergency cash, exceptional digital services for gold accounts (selling, buying, delivery, storing) as well as transferring funds from prepaid cards to the account. KFH also launched its first Shari'a-compliant digital bank in Kuwait, Tam Digital Bank.

Kuwait population hits 4.91 mn on Jan 1, compared to 4.79 mn in '23

CBK accepts 227 citizens to join its workforce

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Recent statistics from the Central Statistics Bureau revealed that the population of Kuwait reached 4.91 million on Jan 1, 2024 -- 119,700 higher compared to 4.79 million on the same day in 2023, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to the statistics, the number of Kuwaiti citizens increased by 28,700; reaching 1.545 million at the beginning of January 2024, compared to 1.517 million at the beginning of 2023. The number of male citizens increased to 758,700 at the beginning of January 2024; compared to 744,230 on the first day of January 2023. The number of female citizens increased to 787,000 on the first day of January 2024 compared to 772,800 on the first day of January 2023.

The number of expatriates increased by 90,990 to reach 3.36 million on the first of January 2024, compared to 3.27 million on Jan 1, 2023. The number of male expatriates increased to 2.26 million on Jan 1, 2024; compared to 2.18 million on Jan 1, 2023. The number of female expatriates increased to 1.1 million on Jan 1, 2024; compared to 1.08 million on Jan 1, 2023.

CBK appoints 227 citizens: The Central Bank of Kuwait has published an announcement in the Official Gazette (Kuwait Al-Youm), stating that it has accepted 227 citizens to join its workforce, reports Al-Anba daily.

The Central Bank said the accepted candidates included 19 citizens with disabilities employed in various roles; including civil engineer, economic researcher, legal and administrative research assistant, security and currency development specialist assistant and senior translator.

In addition, 208 citizens were recruited for various positions like banking controller, economic inspector and researcher, security and currency development specialist, cybersecurity specialist, business intelligence and business continuity specialist, specialist researcher, accountant, financial analyst assistant, financial risk controller assistant, internal auditor assistant, trader assistant, controller assistant, banker, economic research assistant, cybersecurity specialist assistant, career development research assistant, legal research assistant, computer operator, security and safety officer, security and safety technician assistant, and banknote sorting and counting technician assistant.



Top and above: Some photos from the celebration.

Photos by Rizk Taufiq

St. Mark's Cathedral in Kuwait hosts Mass of unity and love

Egyptian Coptic Orthodox Church celebrates Glorious Resurrection

By Bassam Al-Qassas

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Egyptian Coptic Orthodox Church in Kuwait celebrated the Glorious Resurrection, one of its most important and largest religious occasions.

The atmosphere was filled with values of tolerance, love and brotherhood.

St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox Cathedral held a Mass attended by representatives of different creeds, sects, members of the diplomatic corps, prominent social figures and church members.

Patron of the Egyptian Coptic Orthodox Church in Kuwait Anba Bishop Bigol presided over the Mass. He emphasized that Kuwait is a country of humanity, tolerance, and coexistence among different religions and nationalities.

As a religious tradition, the church was covered in white and decorated with bouquets of roses. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's bouquet was placed in the middle.

Deputy Egyptian Ambassador Noura Abdul Hadi, Military Attaché Brigadier General Mohamed Ragab, members of the diplomatic mission, and a large number of personalities and members of the Egyptian community attended the event.

Abdul-Hadi conveyed a congratulatory message from Egyptian President Abdul Fattah El-Sisi to the Egyptian Copts abroad. She expressed appreciation and gratitude to Kuwait for its constant attention and care towards the Egyptian community, which reflects the deep fraternal relations between the two countries.

In a speech on behalf of Ambassador Shaltout, Abdul-Hadi extended sincere congratulations to Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of Saint Mark and the Coptic Orthodox sons of Egypt in Kuwait on this occasion. The ambassador added: "We renew the pledge of unity and love among the people of the country. We are happy to share the holidays and support each other in facing challenges. We recall the teachings of Jesus Christ, calling for upholding the values of tolerance

and love. We express the depth of the authentic Egyptian ties between the people of Egypt and those living abroad; such that Egypt's national unity remains a unique model for all peoples. Our celebration in Kuwait is special, which the country deserves throughout history with its wise leadership towards the people of Egypt on its land President Abdul Fattah El-Sisi appreciated the attention and care that Kuwait provides to the Egyptian community, as demonstrated during the recent visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad to Egypt."

On the other hand, Father Bigol praised His Highness the Amir for his visit to Egypt and thanked him for the luxurious bouquet of roses that decorated the church. He expressed gratitude for His Highness's care towards the members of the Egyptian community, emphasizing that living in Kuwait feels like living in their home country, Egypt. He praised the two loving nations and wished for more security and stability for all people on Earth.

World News Roundup

Europe

Rare demo in Hungary

Russia announces nuke weapon drills

MOSCOW, May 6, (AP): Russia plans to hold drills simulating the use of battlefield nuclear weapons, the Defense Ministry announced Monday, days after the Kremlin reacted angrily to comments by senior Western officials about the war in Ukraine and Moscow warned that tensions with the West are deepening.

The drills are in response to "provocative statements and threats of certain Western officials regarding the Russian Federation," the Defense Ministry said in a statement.

It was the first time that Russia has publicly announced drills involving tactical nuclear weapons, though its strategic nuclear forces regularly hold exercises. Tactical nuclear weapons include air bombs, warheads for short-range missiles and artillery munitions and are meant for use on a battlefield. They are less powerful than the massive warheads that arm intercontinental ballistic missiles and are intended to obliterate entire cities.

The Russian announcement appeared to be a warning to Ukraine's Western allies about becoming more deeply involved in the more than two-year war. Some of Ukraine's Western partners have previously expressed concern about stoking the conflict amid fears it could spill beyond Ukraine into a war between NATO and Russia.

French President Emmanuel Macron repeated last week that he doesn't exclude sending troops to Ukraine, and UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron said Kyiv's forces will be able to use British long-range weapons to strike targets inside Russia. Some other NATO countries providing weapons to Kyiv have balked at that possibility.

Dangerous

The Kremlin branded those comments as dangerous, heightening tension between Russia and NATO. The war already has placed significant strain on relations between Moscow and the West.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Monday said Macron's recent statement and other remarks by British and US officials had prompted the nuclear drills.

"It's a new round of escalation," Peskov said, referring to what the Kremlin regarded as provocative statements. "It's unprecedented and requires special attention and special measures," Peskov told reporters.

Dmitry Medvedev, the deputy head of Russia's Security Council that's chaired by President Vladimir Putin, said in his typically hawkish fashion that the comments by Macron and Cameron risked pushing the nuclear-armed world toward a "global catastrophe."

Western officials have blamed Russia for threatening a wider war through provocative acts. NATO countries said last week they are deeply concerned by a campaign of hybrid activities on the military alliance's soil, accusing Russia of being behind them and saying they represent a threat to their security.

Claims

Peskov dismissed those claims as "new unfounded accusations leveled at our country."

Meanwhile, Ukrainian drones hit two vehicles Monday in Russia's Belgorod region, killing six people and injuring 35 others, including two children, local authorities said, in an area frequently struck by Kyiv's forces in recent months.

One of the vehicles was a minibus that was carrying farm workers, Belgorod Gov Vyacheslav Gladkov said.

No other details were immediately available, and it was not possible to independently confirm the report from the border region.

While Ukraine's army is largely pinned down on the 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) front line due to a shortage of troops and ammunition after more than two years of fighting, it has used its long-range firepower to hit targets deep inside Russia. The apparent aim is to disrupt Russia's war logistics system by hitting oil refineries and depots, and unnerve the Russian border regions.

The Belgorod region was a staging ground for Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Also:

BERLIN: A teenager surrendered to police on Sunday over an attack on a candidate from the party of Chancellor Olaf Scholz that fueled concern about intimidation and violence in the run-up to next month's election for the European Parliament.

The 17-year-old, accompanied by a parent, turned himself in at a police station in the eastern city of Dresden at 1 a.m., Saxony state police said. "He admitted the act but didn't go beyond that," police spokeswoman Silvine Reiche said.

Matthias Ecke, a candidate for the Social Democrats in the June 9 election, was attacked by four people while putting up posters in Dresden on Friday evening. The party said he was taken to a hospital and required surgery for his injuries.

Both government and opposition parties say their members and supporters have faced a wave of physical and verbal attacks in recent months and have called for greater protection for politicians and election rallies.

Mainstream parties accuse the far-right Alternative for Germany party of links to violent neo-Nazi groups and of fomenting an intimidating political climate. One of its leaders, Bjoern Hoecke, is currently on trial for using a banned Nazi slogan.

DEBRECEN, Hungary: A rising challenger to Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán held what he called the largest countryside political demonstration in the country's recent history on Sunday, the latest stop on his campaign tour that has mobilized thousands across Hungary's rural heartland.

Some 10,000 people gathered in Debrecen, Hungary's second-largest city, in support of Péter Magyar, a political newcomer who in less than three months has shot to prominence on pledges to bring an end to problems like official corruption and a declining quality of life in the Central European country.

Supporters endured a brief but unexpected rain shower ahead of the afternoon demonstration, turning the city's central square into a sea of umbrellas. They waved Hungarian flags bearing the names of towns and villages across the country from which they had come.

"Today, the vast majority of the Hungarian people are tired of the ruling elite, of the hatred, apathy, propaganda and artificial divides," Magyar told the crowd. "Hungarians today want cooperation, love, unity and peace."



Gladkov



Denmark's King Frederik X (foreground), stands by Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustaf, with Denmark's Queen Mary and Sweden's Queen Silvia, in the Hall of State at the Royal Palace in Stockholm, Sweden on May 6. Denmark's King Frederik X arrived in Stockholm, accompanied by his Australian-born wife Queen Mary, as he embarked on his first official visit abroad as new Danish monarch. (AP)

Danish King Frederik, wife visit Sweden on their first official trip abroad

Denmark's King Frederik X arrived in Stockholm on Monday with his Australian-born wife Queen Mary, as they begin their first official visit abroad as new Danish monarchs. The 55-year-old Frederik was proclaimed king on Jan. 14, after his 83-year-old mother, Queen Margrethe II, who was Europe's longest-reigning monarch, abdicated.

In the Swedish capital, Frederik and Mary were first greeted by Crown Princess Victoria and her husband Prince Daniel, who boarded the Danish royal

yacht Dannebrog. They then took the gilded Swedish Royal Barge to shore and were welcomed there by King Carl XVI Gustaf, Sweden's longest-reigning monarch, and German-Brazilian-born Queen Silvia. The welcome also included a cannon salute and music by Sweden's Royal Guards, lined up on the quay at the foot of the Swedish royal palace.

Relations between the two royal houses are close. Frederik's grandmother, Queen Ingrid who died in 2000, was a Swedish princess.

The May 6-7 visit includes meetings with Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson and the speaker of the Swedish Parliament. A visit to a military facility is also scheduled.

Danish government members also accompanied the royals, among them Defense Minister Troels Lund Poulsen and Foreign Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen. Danish monarchs, whose roles are ceremonial, traditionally travel to other Scandinavian countries first. (AP)

Politics

Trump criticizes Biden

Democrats wrestle with how to use AI

WASHINGTON, May 6, (AP): US President Joe Biden's campaign and Democratic candidates are in a fevered race with Republicans over who can best exploit the potential of artificial intelligence, a technology that could transform American elections - and perhaps threaten democracy itself.

Still smarting from being outmaneuvered on social media by Donald Trump and his allies in 2016, Democratic strategists said they are nevertheless treading carefully in embracing tools that trouble experts in disinformation. So far, Democrats said they are primarily using AI to help them find and motivate voters and better identify and overcome deceptive content.

"Candidates and strategists are still trying to figure out how to use AI in their work. People know it can save them time - the most valuable resource a campaign has," said Betsy Hoover, director of digital organizing for President Barack Obama's 2012 campaign and co-founder of the progressive venture capital firm Higher Ground Labs. "But they see the risk of misinformation and have been intentional about where and how they use it in their work."

Analyze

Campaigns in both parties for years have used AI - powerful computer systems, software or processes that emulate aspects of human work and cognition - to collect and analyze data.

The recent developments in supercharged generative AI, however, have provided candidates and consultants with the ability to generate text and images, clone human voices and cre-

ate video at unprecedented volume and speed.

That has led disinformation experts to issue increasingly dire warnings about the risks posed by AI's ability to spread falsehoods that could suppress or mislead voters, or incite violence, whether in the form of robocalls, social media posts or fake images and video.

Those concerns gained urgency after high-profile incidents that included the spread of AI-generated images of former President Donald Trump getting arrested in New York and an AI-created robocall that mimicked Biden's voice telling New Hampshire voters not to cast a ballot.

Regulation

The Biden administration has sought to shape AI regulation through executive action, but Democrats overwhelmingly agree Congress needs to pass legislation to install safeguards around the technology.

Top tech companies have taken some steps to quell unease in Washington by announcing a commitment to regulate themselves. Major AI players, for example, entered into a pact to combat the use of AI-generated deepfakes around the world. But some experts said the voluntary effort is largely symbolic and congressional action is needed to prevent AI abuses.

Meanwhile, campaigns and their consultants have generally avoided talking about how they intend to use AI to avoid scrutiny and giving away trade secrets.

The Democratic Party has "gotten much better at just shutting up and doing the work and talking about it later,"

said Jim Messina, a veteran Democratic strategist who managed Obama's winning reelection campaign.

The Republican National Committee, which declined to comment, has experimented with generative AI. In the hours after Biden announced his reelection bid last year, the RNC released an ad using artificial intelligence-generated images to depict GOP dystopian fears of a second Biden term: China invading Taiwan, boarded up storefronts, troops lining US city streets and migrants crossing the US border.

Also:

ATLANTA: Donald Trump told Republican donors at his Florida resort this weekend that President Joe Biden is running a "Gestapo administration," the latest example of the former president employing the language of Nazi Germany in his campaign rhetoric.

The remarks Saturday at Mar-a-Lago were described by people who attended the event and spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the private session.

The "Gestapo" comment, one person said, came as Trump renewed his complaint that Biden's White House is behind the multiple criminal prosecutions of the presumptive GOP nominee, including his ongoing hush money and fraud trial in New York and additional cases stemming from his efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

The Gestapo was the secret police force of the Third Reich that squelched political opposition generally and, specifically, targeted people for arrest during the Holocaust.



Péter Magyar, a rising challenger to Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, addresses people at a campaign rally in the rural city of Debrecen, Hungary, on May 5. Magyar, whose TISZA party is running in European Union elections, has managed to mobilize large crowds of supporters on a campaign tour of Hungary's heartland, a rarity for an Orbán opponent. (AP)



Hebeish



Lamont

America

1 killed in Texas floodwaters: At least one boy was killed and a woman injured on Sunday in floodwaters in Texas, where more than one third counties have issued disaster declarations during the past week due to heavy rainfalls that continue to pound the state.

As of Sunday evening, more than 2.1 million people across Texas, including the Houston area, were under the flood watch.

Thousands of people have been displaced and an estimated 1,000 people, together with hundreds of pets, have been rescued from flooded homes and roads since last week.

In a swath from central Texas to the Dallas-Fort Worth area in the north, storms brought as much as 9 inches (23 cm) of rain in six to eight hours Sunday overnight, said National Weather Service meteorologist Matt Stalley.

Near Fort Worth in northern Texas, a 5-year-old boy died after the vehicle carrying him and two adults was stuck in rapidly moving floodwaters on Sunday morning, local authorities said. The two adults were successfully rescued. (Xinhua)

I-95 in Connecticut reopens: Interstate 95 in Connecticut reopened Sunday after a flaming crash involving a gasoline tanker scorched a bridge and left the roadway closed for days, officials said.

Authorities shut the highway down in both directions after a three-vehicle crash Thursday involving a gasoline tanker, which burst into flames and damaged an

overpass above I-95 in Norwalk. No one was seriously injured.

Workers began demolishing the bridge on Friday and worked to repave damaged parts of the roadway in time for rush hour on Monday.

"It is truly remarkable to complete this

work in less than 80 hours," Connecticut Gov Ned Lamont said Sunday on the social platform X. (AP)

Police search for suspects: Police on Sunday were searching for suspects in



People visit a photo exhibition marking the 60th anniversary of the establishment of China-France diplomatic relations, in Paris, France on May 4. The photo exhibition was inaugurated on Saturday. (Xinhua)

a late-night shooting that wounded seven people, four critically, in Long Beach, California. At least two gunmen were suspected of opening fire on a group of people around 11:15 pm Saturday, according to the Long Beach Police Department. All of the victims were adult men.

Videos of the aftermath posted to social media showed a heavy police presence outside the Prendido de Noche nightclub nearby, the Los Angeles Times reported.

"The Long Beach Police Department has been actively investigating this shooting since late last night, and we will continue working until we identify and arrest those involved in this unacceptable act of gun violence," police Chief Wally Hebeish said in a statement Sunday. (AP)

2 found dead in park: Two women were found dead and a 5-year-old girl critically injured at a park near Clovis, New Mexico, authorities said Sunday.

Meanwhile, police said they are searching for an abducted 10-month-old girl, who is the daughter of one of the victims. No suspect has been identified yet in the case.

Police have identified the dead women as Samantha Cisneros and Taryn Allen, both 23 years old and from Texico, New Mexico. They said at least one of the women was fatally shot. The 5-year-old girl was critically injured with a gunshot wound.

New Mexico State Police issued an Amber Alert late Friday for the infant. (AP)

Asia

Australia accuses China of unsafe behavior: Australia has protested to Beijing that a Chinese fighter jet endangered an Australian navy helicopter with flares in international waters, officials said Monday.

The incident occurred on Saturday as the Australian air warfare destroyer HMAS Hobart was enforcing United Nations Security Council sanctions against North Korea in international waters in the Yellow Sea, the Defense Department said in a statement.

A Chinese Chengdu J-10 fighter jet released flares in the flight path of an Australian navy Seahawk deployed from the Hobart 300 meters (986 feet) in front of the helicopter and 60 meters (197 feet) above, Defense Minister **Richard Marles** said.



Marles

"This was an incident which was both unsafe and unprofessional," Marles told Nine News television.

"We will not be deterred from engaging in lawful activities and activities which are there to enforce UN sanctions in respect of North Korea," Marles added.

There were no injuries or damage, the Defense Department said, adding the Australian government expressed concerns to the Chinese government. There was no immediate comment from Beijing on Monday.

It was the most serious encounter between the two nations' forces since Australia accused the Chinese destroyer CNS Ningbo of injuring Australian navy divers with sonar pulses in Japanese waters in November last year. Australia said China disregarded a safety warning to keep away from the Australian frigate HMAS Toowoomba. (AP)

'Boy in deradicalization program': A 16-year-old boy who was shot dead by police after stabbing a man in the Australian west coast city of Perth had been in a deradicalization program but had no links to an alleged network of teen extremists in the east coast city of Sydney, authorities said.

The boy had participated in the federally funded Countering Violent Extremism program for two years but had no criminal record, Western Australia Police Minister Paul Papalia said Monday.

"The challenge we confront with people like the 16-year-old in this incident is that he's known to hold views that are dangerous and potentially he could be radicalized," Papalia said. "But the problem with individuals like this is they can act at short notice without warning and be very dangerous."

On the potential for the boy to have been radicalized, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said he was concerned by social media pushing extreme positions.

"It's a dynamic that isn't just an issue for government. It's an issue for our entire society, whether it be violent extremism, misogyny and violence against women. It is an issue that of course I'm concerned about," Albanese told reporters. (AP)

'\$230m to fight domestic violence': Australia's New South Wales (NSW) on Monday announced an investment of 230 million Australian dollars (about 152.1 million US dollars) to prevent domestic violence and support victims.

The announcement came out within days after state ministers convened for a special cabinet meeting last week, where they reaffirmed the commitment to "taking urgent action as well as looking at long-term reform."

According to the state government, the fund will be provided over four years as part of an emergency package to enhance support for domestic, family and sexual violence victim-survivors as well as expand programs to curb violence against women and children.

"Too many lives have been lost and too many families have been broken because of domestic and family violence. It is a blight in our communities, and it is a problem that deserves our government's concerted attention and response," said NSW Premier Chris Minns. (Xinhua)

Philippines crash kills 2 riders: Two people were killed after their motorcycle rammed into a truck in the Philippine capital before dawn on Monday, authorities said.

A street video surveillance camera caught the speeding motorcycle with the male riders crashed into the back of the slow-moving trailer truck in Tondo, a district in Manila City.

The victims died at the scene. Emergency responders said the driver and the passenger were reeking with alcohol. (Xinhua)

Quake hits off eastern Indonesia: A 6.0-magnitude earthquake struck off Indonesia's eastern Maluku province on Monday morning without triggering giant waves, the country's meteorology and geophysics agency said.

The agency had initially reported the magnitude as 6.1 before revising it.

The undersea earthquake occurred at 01:33 a.m. Jakarta time (1833 GMT Sunday) with its epicenter situated 57 km southeast of Seram Bagian Timur regency and a depth of 19 km, the agency reported.

The intensity of the quake was felt at IV to V MMI (Modified Mercalli Intensity) in the Seram Bagian Timur regency, the agency said.

The tremors were also felt in the nearby province of West Papua with the intensity from III to IV MMI, it added. Officials of the agency did not issue a tsunami warning as the tremors would not cause giant waves, it said. Two weak aftershocks followed the main shock, according to the agency. (Xinhua)

Chinese truck driver praised: A Chinese truck driver was praised in local media Saturday for parking his vehicle across a highway and preventing more cars from tumbling down a slope after a section of the road in the country's mountainous south collapsed and killed at least 48 people.

Wang Xiangnan was driving Wednesday along the highway in Guangdong province, a vital economic hub in southern China. At around 2 a.m., Wang saw several vehicles moving in the opposite direction of the four-lane highway and a fellow driver soon informed him about the collapse, local media reported.

Reacting swiftly, Wang, a former soldier, positioned his truck to block the highway, effectively stopping dozens of vehicles from advancing into danger, Jiupai News quoted Wang as saying. Meanwhile, his wife got out of the truck to alert other drivers about the situation, it said.

"I didn't think too much. I just wanted to stop the vehicles," Wang told the Chinese news outlet. (AP)

Myanmar weapon attack kills 2: Two people were killed and 15 others injured in a heavy weapons attack in western Myanmar's Rakhine State on Saturday, the State Administration Council's Information Team reported.

According to the council's information team, the explosive assault, carried out by Arakan Army (AA), hit a high school compound in Buthidaung Township of Rakhine State at around 1 a.m. local time on Saturday.

The victims included internally displaced persons that are taking shelter in the school compound, as well as local residents, the report said.

The injured included four children aged between one and five years old, the report said.

Local authorities and rescue organizations transported the injured to a nearby military hospital for medical treatment, it added. (Xinhua)

SC upholds strike leader 2 yr sentence: Cambodia's Supreme Court on Friday upheld the two-year prison sentence of a labor union leader who led a long-running strike against the country's biggest casino.

Chhim Sithar, president of the Labor Rights Supported Union of Khmer Employees of NagaWorld, had originally been convicted in May 2023 of incitement to commit a felony.

She had been leading a strike that began in December 2021 to protest mass layoffs and alleged union-busting at the NagaWorld casino in the capital, Phnom Penh, and was arrested and charged after a January 2022 demonstration of dismissed employees who were demanding to be rehired.

NagaWorld in late 2021 had fired 373 employees amid financial struggles related to the coronavirus pandemic.

Some dismissed workers continue to hold regular protests, appealing for Chhim Sithar to be released and for them to get their jobs back, Am Sam Ath of the rights groups Licadho said Friday. (AP)



Presidential candidate Jose Raul Mulino, of the Achieving Goals party, celebrates after winning on the day of the general election in Panama City on May 5. (AP)

Lat/Am

Brazil floods kill 75 people over 7 days

Mulino wins Panama presidential race

PANAMA CITY, May 6, (AP) — José Raúl Mulino said he was practically retired from politics just over six months ago.

Now, he'll be Panama's president for the next five years.

Standing before a pack of supporters Sunday night, Mulino said: "I never imagined this."

In a historic and tumultuous election, preliminary results put Mulino on top to lead the normally sleepy Central American nation through a moment of political tension, historic migration and a struggling economy.

The 64-year-old lawyer, whose last position in politics was as minister of security in then President Ricardo Martinelli's 2009-2014 administration, was initially tapped by the popular former leader to be his running mate after Martinelli's wife declined.

But then Martinelli was disqualified from running after he was sentenced to more than 10 years in prison for a money laundering conviction. Mulino took his place, and ended up winning Sunday's presidential election with 35% of the vote and a nine-point lead over his nearest opponent after dodging constitutional challenges to his own candidacy.

Support

The president-elect got there with strong support from Martinelli, arguably the most important tool in Mulino's campaign as he rode the fiery ex-leader's popularity to victory.

While he lacks Martinelli's charisma, the economic boom seen under his ally pushed many voters to support Mulino at a time that Panama's economy has lagged.

The former president, who has been sheltering in the Nicaraguan Embassy since February after receiving political asylum, said his trust for Mulino dates back 30 years.

"Mulino seems a little tough, but he is a good guy, serious, and is the only one prepared to take on this great challenge and knows how the economy works to lift the country," Martinelli said in a video broadcast to supporters at Mulino's campaign close.

A maritime law attorney who graduated from Tulane University in New Orleans, Mulino became known as a private business leader who took part in a civil movement against the dictatorship of Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, who was ousted by an American invasion on Dec. 20, 1989.

He acted as vice minister of foreign

affairs in the 1989-1994 administration of President Guillermo Endara, who took office after the fall of Noriega and the end of the Panamanian military regime. Mulino later remained in charge of the country's international policy in the last part of that administration.

Mulino remained active in politics and more than a decade later backed Martinelli in the election that the supermarket magnate won in 2009. Mulino was appointed minister of the interior and justice, later taking the reins of the public security office.

Mulino says one of the achievements during that time was to "recover" a swath of Panama on the border with Colombia, known as the Darien Gap, which "was in the hands of the narco-guerrillas" of the neighboring country.

As president, he has promised to stop soaring levels of migration through the Darien jungles, where more than a half million people crossed last year, though experts question the viability of his plan due to the sheer quantities of vulnerable people traveling through the passage.

"I will make the effort to end this migratory crisis in our territory with respect for human rights and with sincere international participation," Mulino said at the closing of his campaign last week.

As security minister, he was also the target of harsh criticisms following police repression of a protest of Indigenous banana growers in the northern provinces of Bocas del Toro and Chiriqui in 2010. The crackdown left two dead and more than 100 injured by pellet shots, among them some with eye injuries.

"He was quite severe in controlling social protests," Panamanian political analyst Rodrigo Noriega told The Associated Press before the election. "There are a lot of unknowns about him."

Also:

RIO DE JANEIRO: Massive floods in Brazil's southern Rio Grande do Sul state have killed at least 75 people over the last seven days, and another 103 were reported missing, local authorities said Sunday.

At least 155 people were injured, while damage from the rains forced more than 88,000 people from their homes. Approximately 16,000 took refuge in schools, gymnasiums and other temporary shelters.

The floods left a wake of devastation, including landslides, washed-out

roads and collapsed bridges across the state. Operators reported electricity and communications cuts. More than 800,000 people are without a water supply, according to the civil defense agency, which cited figures from water company Corsan.

A rescue team pulled an elderly man in serious medical condition into a helicopter from a remote area in the **Benito Gonçalves** municipality, according to footage from military firefighters. Torrents of brown water poured over a nearby dam.

Brazilian President **Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva** visited Rio Grande do Sul for a second time on Sunday, accompanied by Defense Minister **José Múcio**, Finance Minister **Fernando Haddad** and Environment Minister **Marina Silva**, among others. The leftist leader and his team surveyed the flooded streets of **Porto Alegre** from a helicopter.

MEXICO CITY: Relatives have identified three bodies found in a well as those of two Australian surfers and one American who went missing last weekend, Mexican authorities said Sunday.

Baja California state prosecutors said the relatives had viewed the corpses recovered from a remote well about 50 feet (15 meters) deep and recognized them as their loved ones.

Thieves apparently killed the three, who were on a surfing trip to Mexico's Baja peninsula, to steal their truck because they wanted the tires. They then allegedly got rid of the bodies by dumping them in a well near the coast.

The well was located some 4 miles (6 kilometers) from where the foreigners were killed, and also contained a fourth cadaver that had been there much longer.

Three suspects are being held in connection with the case, which locals said was solved far more quickly than the disappearances of thousands of Mexicans.

The three men were on a camping and surfing trip along a stretch of coast south of the city of Ensenada, posting idyllic photos on social media of waves and isolated beaches, before they went missing last weekend.

Chief state prosecutor **María Elena Andrade Ramírez** described what likely would have been moments of terror that ended the trip for brothers **Jake** and **Callum Robinson** from **Australia** and American **Jack Carter Rhoad**.



Locals march to protest the disappearance of foreign surfers in Ensenada, Mexico on May 5. 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. (AP)



Itno



Gnassingbe

Africa

Chad holds presidential poll: Voters in Chad headed to the polls on Monday to cast their ballot in a long delayed presidential election that is set to end three years of military rule under interim president, **Mahamat Deby Itno**.

Deby Itno seized power after his father who ran the country for more than three decades was killed fighting rebels in 2021. Last year, the government announced it was extending the 18-month transition for two more years, which provoked protests across the country.

There are 10 candidates on the ballot, including a woman. Analysts say Deby Itno is expected to emerge among the front runners. The main opposition figure Yaya Dillo, the current president's cousin, was killed in February in circumstances that remain unclear.

"For years now, we've had to cope with the high cost of living, without any solution," said Adoumadi Jean, a teacher at a state secondary school in Moyen-Chari province, in an interview with The Associated Press. "We want a change this year through this election", he added.

Along with high food prices partly caused by the war in Ukraine, Chad has absorbed a wave of over half a million refugees from neighboring Sudan, and is dealing with a threat from the Boko Haram insurgency spilling over from its southwestern border with Nigeria. (AP)

Tanzania highway shut down: Tanzania's 396-kilometer highway connecting the port city of Dar es Salaam and southern regions of Lindi and Mtwara was shut down on Sunday after flash floods washed away at least four main bridges, said an official.

"The highway has been closed until further notice," Joseph Mwasabeja, the Tanzania Fire and Rescue Force commander for Lindi region, told Xinhua when reached on phone.

Mwasabeja said the flash floods were triggered by an overnight heavy rain caused by the tropical cyclone Hidaya before it completely lost its strength after its landfall on Mafia Island earlier on Saturday.

He said the floods washed away bridges over Mbemkuru, Somanga, Mikereng'ende and Matandu Rivers in Kilwa district in Lindi region.

Mohamed Nyundo, Kilwa district commissioner, said the floods also submerged several houses in seven villages, displacing scores of villagers and damaging hundreds of hectares of farm crops. (Xinhua)

3 separatist fighters killed: Three separatist fighters, including a key commander,

were killed when government forces struck their hideout on Sunday in Cameroon's war-torn Anglophone region of Northwest, according to local and security sources.

The crackdown, as confirmed by a military official in the region who requested not to be named, was launched in the early

hours of Sunday in the Ngoketunja division of the region.

Among those killed was a key commander who referred to himself as "General Sagon."

"General Sagon" was among the first to take up arms in 2017 to fight the govern-



This undated file photo shows people visiting the China-Vietnam Detian Waterfall cross-border tourism cooperation zone in the border city of Chongzuo in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. (Xinhua)

ment. In 2021, he was the second in command when separatist fighters ambushed and killed 15 soldiers in a single combat in Ngoketunja division, according to security reports by local police. (Xinhua)

Togo ruling party wins majority: Togo's ruling party has won a majority of seats in the West African nation's parliament, the election commission said as it announced provisional results of last week's vote that was rejected by the opposition as part of a move to extend President **Faure Gnassingbe's** tenure.

The provisional results late Saturday showed the ruling Union for the Republic (UNIR) party won 108 out of 113 seats in the vote that tested support for a proposed new constitution that would scrap presidential elections and give lawmakers the power to choose the president.

The new constitutional provision provides for a presidential tenure of four years with a two-term limit. It makes it likely that 57-year-old Gnassingbe - in power since 2005 - would be reelected by the new parliament when his mandate expires in 2025, and could stay in power until 2033.

"The Togolese have spoken clearly in our favor," Gilbert Bawara, a ruling party spokesman, told The Associated Press.

Both the opposition and religious leaders have called for protests after they rejected the legislation passed by lawmakers in March after their mandate expired. (AP)

bonds

The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the most recent issues of CBK Bonds and related Tawarruq, totaling KWD 160 million. The first issue is for a duration of 3 months with a Rate of Return of 4.375%, while the second issue is for a duration of 6 months with a Rate of Return of 4.500%.

Bursa starts week with modest gains

The Kuwait Stock Exchange kicked off the week on a positive note, with trading closing in the green during the first session. The general market index saw a slight uptick of 0.15 percent, closing at 7,043.71 points, while liquidity decreased to 37 million dinars from the year's average of 56 million dinars, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Trading activity amounted to 219.7 million shares across 11,789 transactions, with 119 shares traded, 51 of which gained, 52 lost, and 16 remained unchanged.

The Premier Market Index also experienced a modest gain of 0.21 percent, closing at 7,667.03 points, with liquidity totaling 23.8 million dinars. Trading

activity amounted to 81.4 million shares across 5,175 transactions, with 33 shares traded, 11 of which gained, 15 lost, and 7 remained unchanged.

On the other hand, the main market index witnessed a slight decline of 0.16 percent, closing at 5,975.84 points, with liquidity reaching 13 million dinars.

KOTC initiates cybersecurity tender

The Supreme Purchasing Committee for Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) tenders, responding to a request from the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC), a subsidiary of KPC, has announced the initiation of a tender process designated as Participation No. 05/2023-ICT, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This tender is focused on the development, updating, and maintenance of licenses, as well as the provision of technical support necessary for the cybersecurity systems programs of the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company.

The tender will be conducted in accordance with specific requirements and standards out-

lined in the tender documents.

Interested parties can obtain the tender documents through the KPC & Subsidiaries K-Tendering Portal website for a fee of 500 Kuwaiti dinars. Additionally, a preliminary meeting will be convened to address any inquiries from prospective participants.

Market Movements

06-05-2024

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
DUBAI - DFMGI	+13.13	4,155.85	SAUDI - TASI	-0.61	12,372.50
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	+36.94	6,652.49			
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+750.37	72,722.19			

Business



NEOM welcomes global banking leaders.

Key projects highlighted during NEOM tour

NBK commends NEOM GIGA project progress and sees opportunity for growth

Kuwait set to settle local bonds worth KD 160 mln

Repayment plan for bonds issued in 2014 & 2017

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Kuwait is set to settle local bonds totaling 160 million dinars during May and August 2024. These bonds were initially issued by the Ministry of Finance in 2014 and 2017 to address the state's general budget deficit, reports Al-Anba daily quoting responsible sources.

In May 2024, the first batch of bonds, valued at 10 million dinars, was repaid. This includes traditional bonds offered on May 1, 2014, and Islamic and conventional bonds issued on May 10, 2017. The remaining 150 million dinars will be repaid by August 21, 2024, comprising 40 million dinars in Islamic bonds and 60 million dinars in conventional bonds.

Furthermore, Kuwait holds global bond obligations worth 1.370 billion dinars, due for repayment on March 20, 2027. These global bonds, issued on March 20, 2017, carry a fixed interest rate of 3.5%. The total debt, encompassing both local and global bonds, amounts to approximately 1.580 billion dinars.

Kuwait has been strategically borrowing externally since 2014 to mitigate the financial deficit amid declining oil prices. The proceeds from these bonds, acquired by the General Reserve Fund, have been instrumental in financing various governmental expenses, including operational

Total loans reach 54.5 bln dinars

Kuwait's banking sector injects KD 964 mln in Q1

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: At the close of the first quarter of the current year, Kuwait's banking sector injected 964 million dinars into various sectors and economic segments, marking a growth rate of 1.7 percent, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Notably, the real estate sector led the surge with a growth rate of 1.8 percent, witnessing an increase in new facilities amounting to 183 million dinars, reaching 9.92 billion dinars by the end of March, up from 9.73 billion in December 2023.

This uptick in real estate sector facilities reflects the implementation of several major projects under the auspices of the private sector. Additionally, medium-sized companies seized opportunities in a sector experiencing price declines and corrections, presenting attractive purchasing prospects.

Total loans by the end of the first quarter totaled 54.5 billion dinars, compared to 53.5 billion dinars in

December 2023. Government and public institution deposits amounted to 11.384 billion dinars, with a 0.5 percent growth, while private sector deposits surged by 825 million dinars, a 2.2 percent increase, reaching 38.16 billion dinars.

Overall deposits in the private banking sector, including government deposits, reached about 49.61 billion dinars by the end of the first quarter, up from 48.72 billion dinars in December 2023, marking a 1.8 percent growth and an increase of 892 million dinars.

Given the growth momentum observed in the first quarter, it is anticipated that the current year will conclude with a commendable 6.8 percent growth rate. This positive trajectory may witness further expansion if forthcoming projects align with the ambitions of the private sector, which is eager to contribute significantly to the development process, supported by banks ready to provide financing.

costs.

The Kuwait Investment Authority is committed to depositing the necessary liquidity to cover bond repayments on the specified dates without delay.

This liquidity will be sourced

from the Authority's bank accounts, without affecting strategic investments, and will be generated through various investments, including interest on bank deposits, bonds, Sukuk, and foreign real estate.

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), renowned as one of the region's leading financial institutions, has received an exclusive invitation, alongside a select group of international banks, to witness firsthand the progress of NEOM project. As a leading bank with a steadfast dedication to monitoring development initiatives throughout the GCC, particularly in the vibrant Saudi market, this invitation underscores NBK's esteemed reputation and its pivotal role in shaping the economic landscape of the region.

NEOM, a monumental US\$500 billion GIGA Project supported by the Public Investment Fund (PIF), stands as a cornerstone of Saudi Arabia's transformative trajectory, marking a pivotal moment in the nation's quest to broaden its economic horizons and cultivate sustainable development. The tour, which comprised representatives from 52 global, regional, and local financial institutions, highlighted the advancements made in key projects such as THE LINE, Oxagon, Trojena, and Sindalah. An integral component of the itinerary involved a site visit to THE LINE, affording participants the opportunity to witness the rapid progress of phase one construction and gain a comprehensive insight into the project's innovative design, in addition to an aerial view of Sindalah, a luxury island destination set to open soon.

Among the global banks invited to NEOM, NBK made a lasting impression by showcasing its keen interest in the ongoing projects and investment prospects within the region. This gathering served as a valuable platform for financial institutions to seek potential partnerships and align investment strategies with NEOM's vision of sustainable growth and development. NEOM's commitment to fostering collaboration with international partners highlights its pivotal role in driving economic transformation and innovation on a global scale.

Leading the NBK-Saudi team at the event was Mr. Zaid I. Al-Sager, General Manager - Deputy Head of International Banking Group at National Bank of Kuwait. Reflecting on this exceptional occasion, Mr. Al-Sager remarked, "It was a privilege for us to be among the exclusive group of banks directly invited to observe the continuous advancements in this pivotal project and assess investment possibilities. This invitation not only highlights NBK's prominence and significance in the region but also underscores our dedication to supporting Saudi Arabia's growth and progress."

"I am delighted to convey our profound admiration for the NEOM Project in Saudi Arabia—an extraordinary initiative that seamlessly aligns with the ambitious objectives outlined in "Saudi Vision 2030". Serving as a pioneering model for



Zaid Al-Sager

Zaid Al-Sager:

■ We are highly impressed by the advancements and intricate design elements evident in the diverse phases of NEOM

■ NEOM is a creative environment where sustainability and creativity meet to bring about growth and exciting opportunities

■ NBK is eager to continue playing a major role in promoting developmental projects across the region

■ We remain committed to expanding our footprint and leveraging our expertise to tap into the dynamic Saudi market

sustainable living, working, and thriving, NEOM emerges as a nucleus for innovation, drawing the brightest minds from across the globe to shape the future landscape," Al-Sager remarked.

"As we observe the culmination and commencement of several NEOM initiatives and stages by the year's end, NBK reaffirms its steadfast commitment to supporting economic prosperity and sustainability in Saudi Arabia and beyond. With a distinguished track record of excellence in banking and financial services, NBK offers an extensive portfolio of products and solutions tailored to meet the diverse needs of its corporate and individual clients. Committed to fostering sustainable



NEOM poster

development, NBK continues to play an active role in supporting the advancement of the communities it serves," added Al-Sager.

"At NBK, we are committed to offering more than just financial support; we strive to instill new values and opportunities into all our projects. Through our extensive array of services, which includes project finance, NBK mortgage, and Corporate Real Estate Services (CRES), we aim to empower both businesses and individuals to achieve their goals and play a part in fostering the sustainability of the Saudi economy," he further stated.

Al-Sager also highlighted that NEOM's sustainable objectives resonate harmoniously with NBK's strategic vision, as both parties are committed to fostering economic growth while prioritizing environmental sustainability and social responsibility. He further stated that NEOM's ambitious sustainability goals, encompassing renewable energy, conservation efforts, and eco-friendly infrastructure, align seamlessly with NBK's overarching strategies aimed at promoting sustainable development and responsible banking practices.

NBK has continuously strived to bolster its presence in the GCC, with a particular focus on the lucrative Saudi market and the burgeoning projects sector. Recognizing the immense potential and growth opportunities within the region, the bank has remained committed to expanding its footprint and leveraging its expertise to tap into the dynamic Saudi market. The bank's strategic endeavors in this regard underline its dedication to capitalizing on the numerous projects and investment prospects emerging across the GCC, positioning itself as a key player in driving economic development and prosperity in the region.

In parallel, NBK's International Banking Group (IBG) continues to spearhead the bank's efforts in expanding its international footprint and fostering strategic alliances with global partners. Leveraging its expertise and network, IBG plays a pivotal role in facilitating cross-border transactions, providing a comprehensive array of services, and unlocking new business opportunities in key markets worldwide. As NEOM emerges as a focal point for international investment and innovation, NBK remains poised to capitalize on these opportunities, further solidifying NBK's position as a leading financial institution in the region and beyond.

Revenues total 293.43 billion riyals

Saudi Arabia posts \$3.3 bln deficit in Q1

RIYADH, May 6: Saudi Arabia announced Sunday a budget deficit of 12.39 billion Saudi Riyals (3.30 billion U.S. dollars) in the first quarter of 2024.

The quarterly budget performance report, released by the Saudi Ministry of Finance, revealed that revenues reached 293.43 billion Saudi Riyals and expenditures amounted to 305.82 billion Saudi Riyals.

Oil revenues, amounting to 181.92 billion Saudi

Riyals, increased by 2 percent compared to the same period last year, leading the state's revenue sources. Non-oil revenues, totaling 111.51 billion Saudi Riyals, saw a 9 percent growth compared to the same period last year.

The Saudi cabinet approved the state budget for 2024 in December last year, which includes an estimated deficit of 97 billion Saudi Riyals.

Zain Group holds AGM with a quorum of 77 pct; Assembly approves H2 2023 dividend of 25 fils to total 35 fils for '23

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Zain Group Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held at the Zain Group's headquarters in Kuwait, attended with a quorum of 77% of shareholders whereby they were presented with the Zain Group's 2023 annual report entitled "40 years of pioneering innovation and sustainable growth" which highlights the financial statements, Governance and Auditors reports and the major achievements of Zain Group and its operations and subsidiaries across Middle East and Africa, for the year ended December 31, 2023. Additionally, Zain Group released its 2023 Sustainability Report.

The shareholders approved all items on the AGM agenda, including the recommended cash dividend of 25% (25 fils per share) to the shareholders already registered in the company's record date of Thursday, 23 May 2024. Cash dividends will be paid to shareholders commencing Wednesday, 29 May 2024.

Attractive dividends for shareholders

This 25 fils dividend for H2 2023 follows the semi-annual dividend of 10 fils distributed earlier in 2023, totaling 35 fils per share for the year and reflecting a 70% payout ratio, one of the highest in the region. In 2023, Zain adopted a minimum cash dividend policy of 35 fils per share for three years.

2023 financial performance

During the AGM, Zain Group presented its financial results for the full-year 2023, whereby the company served 50.6 million customers. For the full-year 2023, Zain Group generated consolidated revenue of KD 1.9 billion (USD 6.2 billion), a Y-o-Y increase of 10%. Consolidated EBITDA for the period increased by 5% Y-o-Y, to reach KD 705 million (USD 2.3 billion), reflecting an EBITDA margin of 37%. Consolidated net income reached KD 215 million (USD 701 million), up 10% Y-o-Y and reflecting earnings per share of 50 fils (USD 0.16).

Excerpts from the Board of Directors statement at the AGM

The Board of Directors welcomes all shareholders and affiliated parties to the Annual General Assembly of Zain Group. Zain operates in a highly regulated, competitive, and rapidly evolving environment. Despite the difficult circumstances represented by geopolitical instability in the region, and the challenges associated with economic and social conditions in several markets, the progress of the company's 4Sight strategy resulted in developing new value-accretive entities and driving operational efficiency, as the Group's operations recorded strong growth in 2023. Our commitment to providing shareholders with a healthy dividend of 35 fils for 2023 reflects the strength of our financial solidity.

Digital transformation initiatives have changed the way governments and businesses are organized and managed, with 5G applications, cloud services, big data, AI, data analytics, machine learning, Internet of Things, blockchain, managed services, and cybersecurity becoming the main change drivers for the foreseeable future.

In addition to heavy investment in networks and technologies, Zain Group has entered multiple strategic partnerships with global and regional institutions to ensure that its transformational initiatives closely respond to market needs. These alliances have helped increase the value of Zain's core business, and support the focus on new lucrative growth opportunities in the digital sector and beyond, providing customers a better telecommunications experience.

During 2023, the Group's strategic investments in 4G networks, expansion of 5G infrastructure, development of fiber technology to the home, and digital platforms represented 16% of revenues, contributing to the improvement of customer retention and attracting new customer segments. Zain now operates the largest 5G network in the region, provided in four markets - Kuwait, Saudi Arabia (KSA), Bahrain, and Jordan.

Zain Group is committed to implementing a sound framework model for corporate governance, and demonstrating a strong commitment to environmental, social and economic development, as it has integrated its ESG indicators at a time when the challenges of climate change are increasing. As such, the Group continues to work towards achieving its ambition to achieve net zero emissions, having maintained the classification in the category Leadership at level A- in the CDP report.

On behalf of all members of the Board of Directors, executive management, and employees of Zain, we express our sincere appreciation for the confidence shown in us by our valued customers and shareholders, as well as by all the government ministries, and regulatory authorities across our markets.

Excerpts from Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO, Bader Al-Kharafi's AGM statement

2023 witnessed the ongoing implementation of our future-proof

Osamah Al-Furaih

Zain Group Chairman

■ "Our commitment to providing shareholders a healthy dividend reflects the strength of our financial solidity"

Bader Al-Kharafi

Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO

■ "A defining 40th year of pioneering innovation, sustainable growth, customer service, and maximizing shareholder value"

■ Zain brand value grew from USD 2.2 billion to USD 3 billion over past 3 years

■ Cash dividends to be distributed to eligible shareholders on 29 May 2024

■ Zain publishes 2023 Annual Report and 2023 Sustainability Report available only in digital format

4Sight strategy during our 40th year of pioneering innovation, which turned out to be a defining one for Zain, delivering strong performance, significant milestones, sustainable growth, and value to our customers and stakeholders.

Zain's Board of Directors and executive management teams have worked effortlessly to overcome socio-economic regional challenges in our markets, where we maximized value creation by investing heavily in our networks, technologies, and people. This resulted in us extending our market leadership in many highly competitive and evolving markets.

The multiple digital transformational initiatives and expansion of new business verticals has driven business growth and positioned Zain firmly as a leading provider of innovative technologies and digital lifestyle communications, delivering meaningful connectivity that empowers societies.

Zain brand valuation soars 11% to USD3 billion

Our focus on catering to the evolving requirements of our individual, enterprise, and government customers has seen our sustainability-conscious mindset develop and proactively act with a sense of urgency, innovating to enhance the digital experiences and introduce appealing, demanded services.

As a result of our efforts, apart from reporting strong operational and financial results for 2023, we were awarded numerous accolades, and saw our brand valuation increase 11% from USD 2.7 billion to USD 3 billion by Brand Finance in its 2024 global valuation report, up a remarkable 37% on its USD 2.2 billion valuation in 2021.

This impressive growth in valuation some 16 years after the initial Zain brand launch is testament to the investment the company has placed in establishing its name and identity, and the successful media campaigns, corporate sustainability, diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives it has instituted over the years. This well-regarded brand is also a reflection of our ongoing innovation and investment in network upgrades that result in quality mobile and data services and exceptional customer experience at every touch point, making Zain one of the most inspirational and recognized corporate brands in the region and beyond.

Network investments driving digital revenues

Significant investment in network and technology totally nearly USD1 billion during 2023 ensured meaningful connectivity to the com-



Osamah Al-Furaih, Bader Al-Kharafi, and Ossama Matta.



A photo from the Annual General Meeting.

munities we serve in a reliable and high-speed manner. It also creates value by driving significant growth in data revenues, which grew 8% and reached USD 2.4 billion in 2023, representing 39% of Zain Group's consolidated revenues for the year.

The impressive 9% growth of our Group-wide digital services revenue reflects the many data monetization initiatives maximizing our networks.

Our digital MVNO operators, Zain Saudi Arabia's 'Yaqoot' and Zain Iraq's 'oodi', continue to deliver healthy customer and revenue growth, offering a simple, all-digital mobile experience that frees customers from the traditional retail buying experience. Of note, Zain Jordan launched 5G commercially in December 2023, becoming the fourth Zain operation to offer this exclusive high-speed and reliable service.

Fintech innovation and expansion

During 2023, Group-wide fintech customers grew 40%, with revenue up 195%, and total transaction volume tripling to USD 11 billion. The impressive and profitable growth of TAMAM in Saudi Arabia, and Zain-Cash in Iraq and Jordan has firmly established these fintech entities as

market leaders for the unbanked and underbanked in their respective markets. In Kuwait, we acquired Bookeekey to drive the development of cutting-edge financial solutions and provide advanced, creative offerings through strategic partnerships with banks and Zain Kuwait. We will continue to foster their growth through innovation while driving financial inclusion and contributing to the evolution of the region's digital ecosystem.

Aiming to be the partner of choice for governments and enterprises

It was a momentous year for ZainTECH, Zain's ICT solutions powerhouse, which has grown significantly organically and through acquisitions since its launch in October 2021. The 20% annual growth in B2B revenues across our footprint reflects the synergistic business model between ZainTECH and our local operations' B2B teams.

Following the closing of the strategic acquisition of leading managed cloud service provider BIOS Middle East, ZainTECH made two other strategic acquisitions during 2023: Adfolks and Specialized Technical Services Company (STS). In addition to Cloud services, growth areas that ZainTECH is driving include Cybersecurity, IoT, AI, Big Data,

Smart Cities, Drones, Robotics, and other emerging technologies. By providing comprehensive ICT services, ZainTECH is paving the way to becoming the digital transformation partner of choice for governments and enterprises across our markets, the UAE, and beyond.

Sale of passive tower networks creating shareholder value

The tower sale and leaseback strategy across Kuwait, KSA, Iraq and Jordan to date has already unlocked over 17,000 towers with a total value of USD 1.3 billion and yielded a net gain of USD 415 million over the years.

In December 2023, Zain solidified its position as the regional leader in the tower arena with a pioneering agreement with Qatar's Ooredoo Group and TASC Towers, which aims to incorporate nearly 30,000 towers across six countries, combining the service providers' respective passive infrastructure portfolios. The tower deals enhance operational efficiencies and enable a laser focus on service provision, thus providing customers a better mobile and data experience as well as reducing our carbon footprint.

Zain Omantel International revolutionizing the wholesale telecommunications sector

Zain Omantel International (ZOI)

is an unprecedented joint venture that will revolutionize the international wholesale carrier sector. ZOI is creating synergies by optimizing the existing wholesale businesses of both companies by reducing operating costs and increasing competitiveness through access to state-of-the-art, low-latency and high-capacity services over its extended footprint.

Imperative focus on regulatory initiatives and Corporate Governance compliance

The regulatory landscape in which Zain Group operates has changed significantly over the last 12 months, impacting all operations as they are subject to cross-sector, sector-specific, extraterritorial legislation, regulations, and national licenses.

As a leading listed entity on the Premier Market in Kuwait, with other local listings in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Iraq, Zain Group is proactively exceeding the regulations issued by all governmental financial and regulatory bodies across these markets. Our Investor Relations, Corporate Governance, Regulatory and Sustainability teams' high ethical standards, transparent reporting, and professionalism towards all our stakeholders, is promoting investor and market confidence in Zain.

Our business has sustainability and DEI at its core

Across our footprint, Zain is guided by the four pillars of our five-year corporate sustainability strategy, centered on Climate Change, Social Business, Inclusion, and Generation Youth. We are very proud of the ground breaking partnership between Zain KSA and Red Sea Global that unveiled the world's first zero-carbon 5G network. Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) program continues to be a positive force within, boosting the company's productivity and overall morale. It's rewarding to see this initiative recognized through various external awards.

Conclusion

As we look back at our 40 remarkable years of creating value for our shareholders, serving our customers with absolute pride, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those that have contributed to the Zain ecosystem over these years. Our focus for 2024 and beyond remains on the further execution of our corporate strategy, transforming our core telecom business to be more efficient and profitable, while fostering the growth of new business verticals that involve ICT, digital infrastructure, fintech and digital services.

Please feel free to download the online version of 2023 Zain Group Annual Report entitled '40 years of pioneering innovation and sustainable growth' and the 2023 Sustainability Report, entitled 'A Pathway to Value Creation'

Several key matters were discussed during the AGM:

1. Zain Sudan operations show signs of improvement after restoring the network

Regarding a question about the latest developments in Sudan given the social unrest in the country, Bader Al-Kharafi stated that Zain Sudan's operation is gradually overcoming the network closure problem that saw the network completely shut down for several months from February 7, 2024. Due to the continuous efforts of the Sudan team, the company succeeded in building a new disaster recovery center in Port Sudan at the beginning of March, with 1,064 sites out of 3,000 sites currently in operation. After restoring services, revenues are trending for the better, and the company expects further improvement, noting that Zain Sudan is the only operator whose network was not closed for a long period, and everyone is effortlessly working under very difficult conditions.

Growth of operations and new opportunities

In a question about the growth expectations of the group's operations, especially after eliminating the one-off gain of the tower deals, Bader Al-Kharafi said, "The group continues to achieve growth in its operations, and if the impact of the tower deals was excluded, consolidated profits would have nevertheless increased by 4%. The group has diversified and made extensive investments in new growth areas, notably Zain Omantel International, which is revolutionizing and growing its carrier wholesale operations. Also in ZainTECH, which provides comprehensive ICT solutions, is becoming the preferred digital partner for governments and enterprises across the region. The group's operations' various Fintech platforms are witnessing healthy growth, and we are fostering this lucrative part of the business.

Digital Bank license in Kuwait

In a question about the developments in Zain's desire to obtain a license to establish a digital bank, Al-Kharafi said that Zain is having ongoing discussions with the Central Bank of Kuwait pointing out that Zain's recent acquisition of Bookeekey will help the company implement its plans in this space.



Zain headquarters

AIDanah millionaire account updates prize structure

Gulf Bank distributes KD 100,000 prize to 100 winners in one day

SACGC collaborates with Zain & Warba Bank to host mastermind behind innovation of 'Apple Vision Pro'

Kuwait welcomes Bertrand Nepveu for first Mideast appearance

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC), in cooperation with the Mobile Telecommunications Company - Zain and Warba Bank, hosts Bertrand Nepveu, the mastermind of the most prominent innovations in the modern world, including the Apple Vision Pro, for the first time in Kuwait and the Middle East region, on May 12 and 13, to talk about his rich and pioneering experience in the world of technology and creative industries.

The Head of SACGC, Neda Al-Daihani, said in a press statement today that hosting the leader of innovation Bertrand Nepveu by the Center in cooperation with "Zain" and "Warba," constitutes an important milestone in translating the Center's message of nurturing our talented and creative Kuwaiti children so that they can closely examine one of the successful creative experiences in the world of technologies, the virtual world, and the amazing acceleration in the world of communication media, and the future of mixed reality experiences.

Al-Daihani added that the experience of the creative Nepveu deserves to be seen by creatives and innovators in Kuwait, which he is visiting for the first time, and it is his first visit to the Middle East, in line with the mission of SACGC and its partners in nurturing and supporting innovators and talented people in Kuwait.

He highlighted the importance of this event and the great benefit of attracting and bringing international expertise to Kuwait in order to benefit from their experiences and expertise in the world of investing in technology, developing services in Kuwait, and inspiring young people through the most prominent international success stories.

For his part, the Director Marketing and Corporate Communications at Warba Bank Ayman Salem Al-Mutairi said: "We at Warba Bank are keen to support technology and keep pace with development, and we believe that future success lies in adopting modern technology, especially since our real desire is to keep pace with the accelerating trend in the banking sector. Warba Bank does not consider technology a threat to traditional banking services, but rather it is one of the ways that help provide appropriate solutions to better serve its clients. This partnership comes in response to supporting young people and creating an innovative generation that keeps pace with global development and opportunities for them to speak closely with international innovators to exchange experiences and learn about everything new in the technological and digital world.

Al-Mutairi concluded, "Warba Bank focuses its efforts on what it provides to its clients, including innovative digital banking products and services, which are designed to suit clients' requirements and their diverse lifestyles." He explained that Warba Bank has succeeded in making great leaps in providing distinguished banking products and services in the local market, which are considered the first of their kind in Kuwait.

Zain Kuwait's Chief Relations and Corporate Affairs Officer, Waleed Al-Khashti, said: "We are pleased with this cooperation with our partners at the SACGC and in cooperation with Warba Bank to host Bertrand Nepveu to share his experiences with our talented Kuwaiti youth. Under the umbrella of our "Home-



Group photo during the event.

• **Al-Daihani:** Hosting Nepveu is an important milestone for translating our message of nurturing talented people and providing them with close insight into one of the successful creative experiences in the world.

• **Al-Mutairi:** "Warba" is keen to participate and support digital innovation that serves the banking sector to meet the needs of customers and society.

• **Al-Khashti:** Our "Homeland of Innovation" initiative attracts enriching global experiences to enhance digital creativity in Kuwait.

• **Al-Ebrahim:** We are proud of our partnerships with institutions that seek to support youth, innovation, and promote creative thought

land of Innovation" initiative, which aims to enhance creativity in society, we are keen to attract successful names and distinguished international experiences to enhance the digital creativity environment in Kuwait, and we look forward to the enriching sessions that we will host within this cooperation and the added value it will bring to the participants."

For his part, Mohammed Al-Ebrahim, CEO of Jazz Events, the company organizing Bertrand Nepveu's visit, said: "We always strive to keep pace with the latest developments and

bring the best experts in the world from various fields, to Kuwait and the region to transfer their experience."

Al-Ebrahim added, "Today we are proud of our partnership with institutions that support youth and innovators and promote creative thought, such as SACGC, Zain and Warba Bank."

It is noteworthy that Bertrand Nepveu is the leading mind behind the vision of Apple Vision Pro, and he is a prominent name in the world of innovation. He was born into a family with a rich entrepreneurial heritage and inherited the spirit of innovation from his grandfather, Ernest Ernst, the founder of the Lavo company, famous for the La Parisienne fabric bleach brand. He instilled in Bertrand a deep passion for innovation since an early age.

From gaming dreams to the triumph of virtual reality, and driven by his love for video games and advanced technology, Bertrand began his entrepreneurial journey by establishing the VRvana company in the year 2005, transferring himself to his favorite Xbox games through virtual reality experiences.

As for the partnership with Apple to raise the level of innovation, Bertrand's journey took a turning point when he and his team collaborated with Apple in California together to push the boundaries of technology and lead to the creation of Apple Vision Pro, and the pioneering vision led him to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of mixed reality experiences.

Out of his keenness to empower the next generation of innovators in the creative industries, Bertrand participated in establishing Triptyq Capital, and he also uses his experience to support and sponsor innovative projects in a way that advances the innovative scene in the world.

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Continuing its dedication to rewarding customers and fulfilling their requirements, Gulf Bank has unveiled plans to distribute a total of KD100,000 as the prize for the upcoming draw, scheduled for October 17, 2024. Rather than one winner taking it all, 100 lucky individuals will each walk away with KD1,000.

Last year, Gulf Bank increased the grand prize amount from KD 1.5 million to KD 2 million, establishing a Guinness World Record for the largest cash prize associated with a bank account worldwide.

Now in its 26th consecutive year, the AIDanah Millionaire account draw schedule, established in 1998, has been updated to include two significant annual draws. The yearly grand prize has been set at KD 2 million, and the semi-annual prize at KD 1 million.

In addition to these major prizes, there are monthly draws that reward ten winners with KD 1,000 each. A draw for KD 100,000, previously announced on April 18th, is part of the schedule. The year's second draw will similarly divide KD 100,000 among 100 winners, awarding each KD 1,000.

On this occasion, Mohammad Al-Qattan, Gulf Bank's General Manager of Consumer Banking, said: "At Gulf Bank, it's our tradition to prioritize rewarding all our customers and especially AIDanah account holders. This change is designed to expand the number of winners and beneficiaries of the AIDanah Millionaire account, highlighting our commitment to encouraging and inspiring our customers to save."

He added that the bank consistently engages with customers to understand their needs and requirements, and promptly responds to them. "The AIDanah Millionaire account is among the best savings accounts in Kuwait, offering valuable prize draws and numerous benefits to account holders.

It is also one of the oldest and most prestigious savings accounts in Kuwait, designed to instill a culture of saving within the community and reward regular savers for their commitment. We urge everyone to open an AIDanah account, save consistently, and enjoy the array of benefits it offers to customers.

Al-Qattan emphasized a unique feature of the AIDanah Millionaire account: it is the only account in Kuwait that rolls over customers' chances of winning from one year to the next. This is part of a loyalty program designed to reward customers for their ongoing commitment to Gulf Bank.

He also mentioned that the AIDa-



Mohammad Al-Qattan

Mohammad Al-Qattan: Increasing the number of winners reflects our leading role in motivating and encouraging customers to save

nah Millionaire account is accessible to both Kuwaiti citizens and expatriates. To open the account, customers need to maintain a minimum balance of KD 200, ensuring they retain the same amount to qualify automatically for the upcoming AIDanah Millionaire draws. If the balance falls below KD 200 at any point, KD 2 will be deducted monthly until the minimum balance is reinstated. Customers who open a new AIDanah Millionaire account or add more funds, will be automatically entered into the AIDanah draws.

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.

New tracks aligned with industry demands

AIU expands engineering & biotechnology degrees

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: In a strategic move aimed at aligning with the dynamic needs of the job market and providing enhanced employment opportunities for its graduates, the American International University is proud to announce the introduction of new tracks within its engineering, biotechnology, and computer science undergraduate degrees. These innovative tracks include "Smart Cities," "Artificial Intelligence," "Blockchain Technology," "Cybersecurity," "Data Science," "Smart Electronics and Internet of Things," "Control and Robotics Engineering," and more.

The Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment, Ms. Souad Basawaki, emphasized the university's commitment to continuous development, stating, "Our goal is to ensure that our educational programs not only impart knowledge but also equip our graduates with the latest technologies and practical skills essential for success in the modern workforce."

The newly introduced tracks are meticulously designed to meet the demands of the rapidly evolving industries. "Smart Cities" focuses on enhancing urban infrastructure and sustainability, offering opportunities in urban planning and data analytics. "Artificial Intelligence" serves various sectors such as medicine and manufacturing, while "Blockchain Technology" provides secure methods for online data exchange, opening avenues in application development.

Additionally, "Cybersecurity" addresses the critical need for safeguard-

ing sensitive information from electronic threats, while "Data Science" delves into the analysis of large data sets with applications in marketing and computer science. "Smart Electronics and Internet of Things" and "Control and Robotics" cater to the burgeoning fields of telecommunications and industrial automation, respectively.

Furthermore, the university takes pride in offering three tracks in Biotechnology, focusing on cutting-edge techniques for enhancing human life and health. Tissue engineering, bioinformatics and clinical laboratory science.

These developments come because of a comprehensive analysis of market needs and future trends, aligning with Kuwait's Vision 2040. The university aims to provide educational programs that excel in meeting the evolving demands of the job market, ensuring graduates possess a competitive edge equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills for innovation and success.

In addressing academic integrity, Khadija Abdullah, a network specialist at the Public Authority for Social Security, highlighted the role of blockchain technology in different industries, its benefits and how students can get started in the field.

The American International University reaffirms its commitment to providing authentic American education in education and anticipates that these initiatives will further distinguish it as a leading academic institution dedicated to shaping future industry leader within Kuwait and beyond.



Photo during the event.

Innovative banking experience for Bloom clients at Warba

Warba Bank reveals winners of 'Al Sunbula' weekly draw, monthly 'Al Sunbula Kids' & 'monthly student allowance'

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Warba Bank - the best bank in corporate and investment banking services in Kuwait - announced the winners of the weekly Al Sunbula draws, the monthly Al Sunbula Kids account, and the monthly student allowance. Warba Bank will continue to hold weekly draws for ten winners of Al Sunbula account and five winners of the monthly student allowance account, in the presence of a representative of Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Warba Bank employees.



Ahmed Al Mutawa

Each of the 10 lucky winners of the Sunbula weekly draw of Warba Bank received KD 1,000, and the winners are: Nada Bader Nasser Tamian Mekhle, Shatta Musalam Raja Al-Azmi, Essa Mohammed Al-Rashidi, Manar Mohammed Saeed Al-Ajmi, Ali Saad Sari Al-Ajmi, Asma Mohammed Ibrahim Al-Kandari, Maryam Imad Mohammed Al-Ateeqi, Dhafer Fahed Mohammed Al-Ajmi, Haya Khaled Rashid Al-Rajhi, and Sara Khaled Duwaih Al-Rasis.

There are 7 winners in the Sunbula Kids draw, and they are: Abdulaziz Mshari Mohammed Al-Bader, Musab Mubarak Ayaash Al-Subaie, Dana Ab-

dulaziz Obaid Al-Rashidi, Al-Bayareq Ali Jihadi Al-Thiyab, Maryam Fawaz Saleh Omar Mansour, Shekha Fahed Zuher Al-Zamil, Muneera Ali Madallah Mutlaq Al-Salal.

Warba Bank also congratulates the winners of the "student allowance" monthly draw for Bloom clients, who are: Shahad Saad Falah Al-Azmi, Maryam Sleman Dawoud Al-Khashti, Manar Saleh Turki Al-Shemmari, Rayan Hamed Marzouq Al-Mutairi, Hmoud Ibrahim Hmoud Al-Eiban.

Warba Bank distinguished the "Bloom" clients with a unique digital banking experience that lives

up to their aspirations and orientations, which is considered the cornerstone of development through a private banking application, the first of its kind not only in Kuwait, but in the entire region, it is inspired by social media applications, the most widely used in terms of design, interface, browsing methods, and choice of colors, especially for young people.

As for the Sunbula account, it is the ideal choice for all those wishing to save money and achieve appropriate financial returns on their accounts at the same time, in addition to the opportunity to win cash prizes throughout the year.

Regarding the conditions, Mr. Ahmed M. Al-Mutawa, Area Manager Retail Banking Group said: "KD 100 is now required to enter the weekly Sunbula draws and major draws, and the client still gets one chance for every KD 10 in the account, and the chances are calculated according to the lowest balance in the account during the month. Therefore, a full month must have passed in the account to qualify for the weekly draw, and two full months for the major draws to calculate the chances. There are

no restrictions or limits for withdrawal and deposit, the higher the deposited amount, the greater the client's chances of winning".

Notably Warba Bank launched its latest banking solutions service, "Customer Onboarding", in accordance with the terms of its ambitious five-year strategy, which enables non-Warba Bank clients to apply for opening a Sunbula account in an easy digital way via the Bank's website without the need to visit any of the Bank's branches, and within only five minutes - through the new and unique automated system used to enable this service - new clients will be able to complete the request to open an account at any time and any place.

Warba Bank is one of the banks that has achieved great successes in a short period, as it occupied a leading position in the field of Islamic digital banking services for individuals, and it is one of the largest local banks in the number of shareholders, and these are among the most prominent components that make the Bank close to all members of society.

With help from AI, Randy Travis got his voice back

LOS ANGELES, May 6. (AP) — With some help from artificial intelligence, country music star Randy Travis, celebrated for his timeless hits like “Forever and Ever, Amen” and “I Told You So,” has his voice back.

In July 2013, Travis was hospitalized with viral cardiomyopathy, a virus that attacks the heart, and later suffered a stroke. The Country Music Hall of Famer had to relearn how to walk, spell and read in the years that followed. A condition called aphasia limits his ability to speak — it’s why his wife Mary Travis assists him in interviews. It’s also why he hasn’t released new music in over a decade, until now.

“What That Came From,” which released Friday, is a rich acoustic ballad amplified by Travis’ immediately recognizable, soulful vocal tone.

Cris Lacy, Warner Music Nashville co-president, approached Randy and Mary Travis and asked: “What if we could take Randy’s voice and recreate it using AI?” Mary Travis told The Associated Press over Zoom last week, Randy smiling in agreement right next to her. “Well, we were all over that, so we were so excited.”

“All I ever wanted since the day of a stroke was to hear that voice again.”

Lacy tapped developers in London to create a proprietary AI model to begin the process. The result was two models: One with 12 vocal stems (or song samples), and another with 42 stems collected across Travis’ career — from 1985 to 2013, says Kyle Lehning, Travis’ long-time producer. Lacy and Lehning chose to use “Where That Came From,” a song written by Scotty Emerick and John Scott Sherrill that Lehning co-produced and held on to for years. He believed it could best articulate the humanity of Travis’ idiosyncratic vocal style.

“I never even thought about another song,” Lehning said.

Equation

Once he input the demo vocal (sung by James Dupree) into the AI models, “it took about five minutes to analyze,” says Lehning. “I really wish somebody had been here with a camera because I was the first person to hear it. And it was stunning, to me, how good it was sort of right off the bat. It’s hard to put an equation around it, but it was probably 70, 75% what you hear now.”

“There were certain aspects of it that were not authentic to Randy’s performance,” he said, so he began to edit and build on the recording with engineer Casey Wood, who also worked closely with Travis over a few decades.

The pair cherry-picked from the two models, and made alterations to things like vibrato speed, or slowing and relaxing phrases. “Randy is a laid-back singer,” Lehning says. “Randy, in my opinion, had an old soul quality to his voice. That’s one of the things that made him unique, but also, somehow familiar.”

His vocal performance on “What That Came From” had to reflect that fact.

“We were able to just improve on it,” Lehning says of the AI recording. “It was emotional, and it’s still emotional.”

Mary Travis says the “human element,” and “the people that are involved” in this project, separate it from more nefarious uses of AI in music.

“Randy, I remember watching him when he first heard the song after it was completed. It was beautiful because at first, he was surprised,

and then he was very pensive, and he was listening and studying,” she said. “And then he put his head down and his eyes were a little watery. I think he went through every emotion there was, in those three minutes of just hearing his voice again.”

Lacy agrees. “The beauty of this is, you know, we’re doing it with a voice that the world knows and has heard and has been comforted by,” she says.

“But I think, just on human terms, it’s a very real need. And it’s a big loss when you lose the voice of someone that you were connected to, and the ability to have it back is a beautiful gift.”

They also hope that this song will work to educate people on the good that AI can do — not the fraudulent activities that so frequently make headlines. “We’re hoping that maybe we can set a standard,” Mary Travis says, where credit is given where credit is due — and artists have control over their voice and work.

Last month, over 200 artists signed an open letter submitted by the Artist Rights Alliance non-profit, calling on artificial intelligence tech companies, developers, platforms, digital music services and platforms to stop using AI “to infringe upon and devalue the rights of human artists.” Artists who co-signed included Stevie Wonder, Miranda Lambert, Billie Eilish, Nicki Minaj, Peter Dinklage, Katy Perry, Smokey Robinson and J Balvin.

So, now that “Where That Came From” is here, will there be more original Randy Travis songs in the future?

“There may be others,” says Mary Travis. “We’ll see where this goes. This is such a foreign territory. There’s likely more on the horizon.”

Music

Variety



This image released by Sideshow and Janus Films shows Hitoshi Omika, (left), and Ryo Nishikawa in a scene from ‘Evil Does Not Exist.’ (AP)

Film

A compelling storytelling of Ryusuke Hamaguchi

Nature, nurture collide in ‘Evil Does Not Exist’

By Jake Coyle

The films of Ryusuke Hamaguchi unspool with elegant everyday ease and yet anything can happen.

Lives take sudden detours. Seemingly minor characters become primary ones. People are brought together by mysterious connections. There are even, as in the case of his “Asako I & II,” doppelgangers. Soberly naturalistic as Hamaguchi’s movies are, they’re among the most beguilingly unpredictable.

That was true of his Oscar-nominated “Drive My Car,” which over the course of three hours took winding narrative turns in route to its moving terminus. But it’s doubly so in Hamaguchi’s “Evil Does Not Exist,” a shorter and more enigmatic drama but a no less enchanting one.

The first images of “Evil Does Not Exist” are looking upward at tree branches against the sky while we move slowly through the forest. It’s a sign of what’s to come in a movie that asks plenty of questions about how we interact with nature, and Hamaguchi holds the shot several times longer than most filmmakers would.

The gaze, if it’s anyone’s, is of Hana (Ryo Nishikawa), the 8-year-old daughter of Takumi (Hitoshi Omika), a self-described jack-of-all-trades (though he does little self-describing) who lives with Hana in a rustic cabin in rural Japan. The area is pristine, with fresh spring water running down mountain streams. And Takumi, like most of the local residents, is alert to its splendor. While he and Hana walk through lightly snow-covered woods, he quizzes her on the plant life.

But something ominous is tugging at “Evil Does Not Exist” despite the assertive certainty of that title. The score, by Eiko Ishibashi, is mournful. The father and daughter come across a dead fawn in the forest. A gunshot is heard from nearby hunters. Later, blood drips from a small branch. It’s maybe not a coincidence that the film’s opening images of trees are followed by a lengthy scene of wood chopping.

Just what is fragile and wounded in “Evil Does Not Exist,” though, isn’t always clear. The serenity is snapped when a company named Playmode comes to town to open a glamping camp for tourists. In a town gathering, a pair of company representatives from Tokyo pitch their plans. During the scene, easily the longest in the film, our attention is mainly on Takumi and other townspeople who quickly and perceptively poke holes in the designs and the ecological impact it will

have. “Water always flows downhill,” the village chief says.

From here, “Evil Does Not Exist” sticks closer to those two representatives: Takahashi (Ryuji Kosaka) and Mayuzumi (Ayaka Shibutani). In another film, they might be extras or villains, but for Hamaguchi, they’re people, like any others, with their own hopes and regrets. When they, after being pressured by their boss in a meeting over Zoom, return to spend time with Takumi and convince him to be the camp’s caretaker, it’s not clear until the film’s last bewildering and unforgettable moments if they’re becoming friends or if one side will dominate the other.

“Balance is key,” one character says of nature in the film. “Evil Does Not Exist,” though, is boldly uneven. Its final, harrowing scenes, bathed in an intoxicating mist, pass in a comparative rush. In interviews, Hamaguchi has suggested his movie remains mysterious even to him. It’s a jarring finale but also a devastatingly haunting one that blends a child’s fate with a fawn’s — another doppelganger, maybe — leaving us to ponder an earlier exchange between Takumi and Takahashi about deer the glamping site would displace.

“Where would they go?” Takumi asks. “Somewhere else, I guess,” Takashi shrugs.

The makers of the influential 2008 documentary “Food, Inc.” never planned to make a sequel. They figured they’d said it all in their harrowing look at a broken, unsustainable food system — a system led, they argued, by a few multinational corporations whose monopoly squeezes out local farmers, mistreats animals, workers and the soil itself, and makes all of us less healthy.

But 16 years after that Oscar-nominated film, they’re back with “Food, Inc. 2.” What happened? Well, first of all, the pandemic — an event that both strained our food system and revealed its precariousness, they say.

Also, the filmmakers suggest, it was perhaps naive to assume that informed, ethical shoppers could alone reverse such an entrenched narrative. “You can change the world with every bite,” the first film had argued, urging consumers to buy local and organic, patronize farmer’s markets, demand healthy school lunches and most of all, read labels and understand what they’re eating.

Now, much of that is happening. But some problems have worsened, and new ones have emerged. “We re-

ally thought we could change the system one bite at a time,” says investigative author and producer Michael Pollan (“The Omnivore’s Dilemma”), who’s back with frequent commentary along with fellow author/producer Eric Schlosser (“Fast Food Nation”). “As important as that is, it’s not enough.”

Directed by Robert Kenner and Melissa Robledo, the new film begins, as did the first, with an inspiring image out of a painting — here, a tractor gliding along a field of crops under a glistening sun. If you’ve seen the original, you’ll know such a scene will soon yield to images of unsavory assembly lines, “kill floors” at slaughterhouses, or workers earning pennies in fields.

A lot has happened since 2008. More people are interested in what they’re eating and where it’s from. Farmer’s markets are everywhere, and supermarkets carry organic and GMO-free food, because consumers want it.

But, Pollan reminds us, the industry is still dominated “by a handful of very large and very powerful companies.” In normal times this power is invisible, but when the pandemic hit, the curtain was peeled back, he says. We see images of countless hogs euthanized because they couldn’t be processed, and farms disposing of perfectly good milk. At the same time, many supermarket shelves were empty, and people lined up in their cars, hungry. This, the film argues, is what happens when only a few companies are in charge. Some babies don’t get their formula, for example.

As with the first film — the style is very much the same — we’re taken across the country (and beyond), listening to a stream of voices: organizers, workers, farmers, nutritionists, politicians, entrepreneurs, scientists. (Occasionally we don’t know who’s talking for a few seconds, which can be confusing.)

In Immokalee, Florida, lifelong farmworker (and labor leader) Gerardo Reyes Chavez explains how immigrant workers — mostly Latino and Haitians — are both relied upon and mistreated. “The industry wants immigrant workers because they feel they can take advantage of us,” he says. If we’re eating fruits and vegetables, Schlosser and Pollan tell us, we’re part of a chain of exploitation.

With flashy, colorful and user-friendly graphics, the film traces industry consolidation: the few companies who have 70% of the carbonated drinks market, for example, or 80% of the baby food market. Such realities violate the spirit of antitrust legislation, they argue. (AP)

Features

ARABO TIMES

TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024

NEW YORK: “The Fall Guy,” the Ryan Gosling-led, action-comedy ode to stunt performers, opened below expectations with \$28.5 million, according to studio estimates Sunday, providing a lukewarm start to a summer movie season that’s very much to be determined for Hollywood.

The Universal Pictures release opened on a weekend that Marvel has regularly dominated with \$100 million-plus launches. But last year’s strikes jumbled this year’s movie calendar, “Deadpool & Wolverine,” originally slated to open this weekend, is instead debuting in July.

So in place of a superhero kick-off, the summer launch went to a movie about the stunt performers who anonymously sacrifice their bodies for the kind of action sequences blockbuster are built on. Going into the weekend, forecasts had the film opening \$30 million to \$40 million.

“The Fall Guy,” directed by former stuntman and “Deadpool 2” helmer David Leitch, rode into the weekend with the momentum of glowing reviews and the buzz of a SXSW premiere. But it will need sustained interest to merit its \$130 million production budget. It added \$25.4 million in overseas markets.

Working in its favor for a long run: strong audience scores (an “A-” CinemaScore) and good reviews (83% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes). Jim Orr, distribution chief for Universal, believes things line up well for “The Fall Guy” in the coming weeks.

“We had a very solid opening,” said Orr. “We’re looking forward to a very long, very robust, very successful run throughout the domestic box office for literally weeks if not months to come.” (AP)

NEW YORK: Kim Godwin is out after three tumultuous years as ABC News president, a move presaged earlier this year when network parent Walt Disney Co. installed one of its executives, Debra O’Connell, to oversee the news division.

Godwin, the first Black woman to lead a network news division, said Sunday she was retiring from the business. O’Connell said she will be in charge “for the time being” as it looks ahead.

Godwin inherited a news division where its two most important programs, “World News Tonight

and “Good Morning America,” led rivals at CBS and NBC in the ratings. They’re still ahead, although “Good Morning America” has seen some slippage amid the messy departures of anchors T.J. Holmes and Amy Robach, and Cecilia Vega’s jump to CBS News.

Godwin was recruited as an outsider from CBS News and



Gosling



Godwin

was beset by grumbling about her management style that made it into print. (AP)

BEIJING: Chinese comedy “The Last Frenzy” claimed the top spot on the daily box office chart in the Chinese mainland on Sunday, data from the China Movie Data

Information Network showed. The film, exploring life’s choices in the face of death, raked in 53.62 million yuan (about 7.55 million U.S. dollars) on the fifth day of its release.

Hong Kong action crime thriller “Twilight of the Warriors: Walled In,” ranked second, grossing 42.68 million yuan in box

office revenue on Sunday.

The action thriller “Formed Police Unit,” which narrates the story of the Chinese peacekeeping police, came in third with a daily box office earning of 36.26 million yuan.

The Chinese mainland’s box office revenue totaled 184.07 million yuan on Sunday. (Xinhua)

People & Places

Books

Experience shared

Griner still adjusting after 'prison' ordeal

NEW YORK, May 6, (AP): **Brittney Griner** continues her efforts to settle into a normal routine following her release from a Russian prison 17 months ago. Life isn't what it once was for the perennial WNBA All-Star. It may never be.

The 6-foot-8 center looks different and has different priorities. Gone are her familiar dreadlocks that couldn't be maintained during her incarceration. She regularly sees a therapist to help her cope after being imprisoned for 10 months. And since her release, Griner has been an advocate for the return of other Americans being detained overseas.

She has met with President Joe Biden twice since her release, including once last month in Phoenix.

"Got to talk to him about a couple of people and just keep it on the forefront of everyone's mind," the Phoenix Mercury star said in a phone interview with The Associated Press. "You want to get exposure and that keeps it on the forefront of people's minds. Keep people accountable."

Griner was detained at a Moscow airport in February 2022. Russian authorities said a search of her luggage revealed vape cartridges containing oil derived from cannabis.

She shares details about the harrowing experience in her new book - "Coming Home" - which comes out Tuesday.

Griner hopes one takeaway for anyone who reads the book will be a vivid picture of what detainees have to endure. She said it's why it took her all of last season to write it with Michelle Burford.

"I didn't leave anything out from the detainment, to being over there, the conditions. As much as we could fit into a book, we basically did," Griner said. "People will be shocked at some of the things."

"I hope it brings a little bit more of an understanding to the conditions that detainees go through."

Momentum

Griner says it is important people have a clear picture of what it's like for those Americans not home yet, including Paul Whelan and Evan Gershkovich, so that no one gives up the fight.

"It took everyone to come together to bring me home," she said. Government officials "have to make really hard decisions."

Griner, who first met President Biden at the White House Correspondent's dinner in 2023 a few months after her return to the US, said she and her WNBA teammates must keep the momentum going to get everyone home.

"How are we going to do it? Bringing in families, playing videos, give them airtime?" she said. "Maybe someone that doesn't know, sees (the book) and they write a letter to congress that tips over the scale to get someone home."

Griner said her days of playing basketball overseas during the WNBA offseason are over.

Though many WNBA players still play in international leagues to supplement their league salaries, Griner said she is done, except with USA Basketball. She hopes to be on the Olympic team at the Paris Games this summer, and the odds are in her favor that will happen.

Griner had played in China for a few years during the WNBA offseason, before making the move to Russia - where she had played since 2015 before her arrest.

It's not just her ordeal in Russia, however, that is going to keep her home. Griner's wife, Cherelle, is expecting the couple's first child.

"The only time I'll go overseas is with Team USA," Griner said. "I need to be in the states. About to be a parent. Last thing I want to do is be in and out of my kid's life. I want to be there for everything. I don't want to uproot my family and take them overseas with me. It's too much."

Griner, who has been an advocate for mental health for the past decade, said she sees a therapist regularly - something she did for several years before she went to Russia - and it helps her process what she endured while in prison.

"They are instrumental to my mental health," Griner said about her sessions. "Everyone can benefit from having someone to talk to. Someone outside of their every day life. It just helps to have a different perspective on life from someone."

"That way if you do feel nervous or struggling with something, it's very beneficial."

The 33-year-old took a mental health break for several days last year during the WNBA season, missing three games. She'll begin her 12th year in the league May 14.

Griner is looking forward to it after the welcome she received in her return last year. One of the only positives that Griner will take away from her ordeal was the outpouring of support she received from people in the form of letters they wrote to her in prison.

"The letters were amazing from the fans, teammates, opponents, GMs, they all meant so much to me," she said. "It was very dark at times, especially going through the trial. When I was in isolation for weeks, it was an emotional rollercoaster and those letters made me remember that I wasn't forgotten."

Also:

NEW YORK: **Ransom Riggs'** first new series since the million-selling "Miss Peregrine" books will launch this summer.

"Sunderworld, Vol. 1 The Extraordinary Disappointments of Leopold Berry" begins the adventures of a **Los Angeles** teen who, after his mother's death, has some surreal encounters in his everyday life. Dutton Books for Young Readers, a Penguin Random House imprint, will publish "Sunderworld" on Aug. 27.

"I've always been drawn to portal fantasies in fiction," Riggs said in a statement Wednesday. "They feel like invitations to optimistic worlds where, ultimately, joy is possible, if only you can find the key. We're living through some very heavy, very dark times - we have been for a while - and this story is meant to be an escape - and a respite from darkness."

Riggs' "Miss Peregrine" novels have sold more than 10 million copies. The first book in the series, "Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children," was adapted by **Tim Burton** into a 2016 film starring **Eva Green**.



Griner



Emmanuelle Proulx performs during the Shaky Knees Music Festival on Sunday, May 5, at Central Park in Atlanta. (AP)

Music

Emerging artists find their own voices

China's flavor of rap is flourishing

CHENGDU, China, May 6, (AP): In 2018, the censors who oversee Chinese media issued a directive to the nation's entertainment industry: Don't feature artists with tattoos and those who represent hip-hop or any other subculture. Right after that, a well-known rapper, GAI, missed a gig on a popular singing competition despite a successful first appearance. Speculation went wild: Fans worried that this was the end for hip-hop in China. Some media labeled it a ban.

The genre had just experienced a banner year, with a hit competition-format TV show minting new stars and introducing them to a country of 1.4 billion people. Rappers accustomed to operating on little money and performing in small bars became household names.

The announcement from censors came at the peak of that frenzy. A silence descended, and for months no rappers appeared on the dozens of variety shows and singing competitions on Chinese TV.

But by the end of that year, everything was back in full swing. What had looked like the end for Chinese hip-hop was just the beginning. "Hip-hop was too popular," says Nathaniel Amar, a researcher of Chinese pop culture at the French Centre for Research on Contemporary China. "They couldn't censor the whole genre."

Since then, hip-hop's explosive growth in China has only continued. It has done so by carving out a space for itself while staying clear of the government's red lines, balancing genuine creative expression with something palatable in a country with powerful censors.

The effort has succeeded: Today, musicians say they're looking forward to an arriving golden age.

Much of the energy can be found in Chengdu, a city in China's southwestern Sichuan region. Some of the biggest acts in China today hail from Sichuan; Wang Yitai, Higher Brothers and Vava are just a few of the names that have made Chinese rap mainstream, performing in a mix of Mandarin and the Sichuan dialects.

Although Chinese rap has been operating underground for decades in

cities like Beijing, it is the Sichuan region - known internationally for its spicy cuisine, its panda reserve and its status as the birthplace of the late leader Deng Xiaoping - that has come to dominate.

The dialect lends itself to rap because it's softer than Mandarin Chinese and there are a lot more rhymes, says 25-year-old rapper Kidway, from a town just outside Chengdu. "Take the word 'gang' in English. In Sichuanese, there's a lot of rhymes for that word 'fang, sang, zhuang,' the rhymes are already there," he says.

Part of the city's hip-hop lore centers around a collective called Chengdu Rap House or CDC, founded by a rapper called Boss X, whose fans affectionately call him "Xie laober" in the Sichuan dialect. The city has embraced rap, as its originators like Boss X went from making music in a run-down apartment in an old residential community to performing in a stadium for thousands.

Mainstream

"When I came to mainland China, they showed me more love in like three or four months than I ever received in Hong Kong," says Haysen Cheng, a 24-year-old rapper who moved to the city from Hong Kong in 2021.

The price of going mainstream means the underground scene has evaporated. Chengdu was once known for its underground rap battles. Those no longer happen, as freestyling usually involves a lot of curse words and other content the authorities deem unacceptable. These days it's all digital, with people uploading short clips of their music to Douyin, TikTok's Chinese version, to get noticed.

Rarely can a single cultural product be said to have originated a whole genre of music. But the talent competition/reality TV show "The Rap of China" has played an outsized role in building China's rap industry.

The first season, broadcast on IQiyi, a web streaming platform, brought rap to households across the country. The first season's 12 episodes drew 2.5 billion views online, according to Chinese media reports.

In the first season, the show relied on its judges' star power to draw in an audience. Two winners emerged from the first season: GAI and PG One. Shortly after their win, the internet was awash with rumors about the less than perfect doings of PG One's personal life. The Communist Youth League also criticized one of his old songs for content that appeared to be about using cocaine, very much violating one of the censor's red lines.

Then came the 2018 meeting where censors reminded TV channels of who could not appear on their programs, namely anyone who represented hip-hop. PG One was finding that any attempts to release new music were quickly taken down by platforms. The platform, IQiyi, even took down the entire first season for a while.

But by late summer 2018, fans were excited to hear that they could expect a second season of "The Rap of China," though there was a rebrand. The name in English stayed the same, but in Chinese the show's name changed from "China Has Hip-Hop" to "China Has 'Shuochang,'" a term that also refers to traditional forms of storytelling. Regulators had given the go-ahead for hip-hop to continue its growth in China, but artists had to obey the government censors. Hip-hop had to stay away from mentions of drugs and sex. Otherwise, though, it could proceed.

"It was a success for the Chinese regulators," Amar says. "They really succeeded in coopting the hip-hop artists."

With tight censorship on the entertainment industry and a ban on mentions of drugs and sex in lyrics, artists have reacted in two ways. Either they wholeheartedly embrace the displays of patriotism and nationalism or they avoid the topics.

Some, like GAI, have fully taken on the government's mantle in the mainstreaming of hip-hop. He had won "The Rap of China" with a song called "Not Friendly" in which, in classic hip-hop fashion, he dissed other rappers. Just a few years later, Gai is singing about China's glorious 5,000 years of history on the CCTV's Spring Festival New Year's Gala broadcast.



Actors **Bernard Hill**, (left), and **Bill Paterson** attend the UK premiere of the London Children's Film Festival screening, 'Chicken Little,' at the Barbican Cinema, in central London, Sept. 11, 2005. Hill, who delivered a rousing battle cry before leading his people into battle in 'The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King' and went down with the ship as captain in 'Titanic,' has died. Hill, 79, died Sunday morning, May 5, agent **Lou Coulson** said. (AP)



Bates



Cash

Variety

LONDON: Actor **Bernard Hill**, who delivered a rousing cry before leading his people into battle in "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" and went down with the ship as the captain in "Titanic," has died. Hill, 79, passed away Sunday morning, agent **Lou Coulson** said.

Hill joined "The Lord of the Rings" franchise in the second film of the trilogy, 2002's "The Two Towers," as Théoden, King of Rohan. The following year, he reprised the role in "Return of the King," a movie that won 11 Oscars.

In one of the film's most memorable scenes, Hill's character fires up his over-matched forces by delivering a battle cry on horseback that sends his troops thundering downhill toward the enemy and his own imminent death.

"Arise, arise, riders of Théoden!" Hill hollers. "Spears shall be shaken, shields shall be splintered! A sword day, a red day, ere the sun rises! Ride now! Ride now! Ride! Ride for ruin and the world's ending! Death! Death! Death!"

In "Titanic," Hill played Captain Edward Smith, one of the only characters based on a real person in the 1997 tragic romance starring **Leonardo DiCaprio** and **Kate Winslet**. The film also won 11 Academy Awards.

As the doomed ship takes on water, Hill's character silently retreats to the wheelhouse. As the cabin groans under the pressure of the waves, he takes a final breath and grabs the wheel as water bursts through the windows.

Hill first made a name for himself as Yasser Hughes in "Boys From the Blackstuff," a 1982 British TV miniseries about five unemployed men. (AP)

LITTLE ROCK, Ark.: When Arkansas lawmakers decided five years ago to replace the statues representing the state at the **US Capitol**, there was little objection to getting rid of the existing sculptures. The statues that had stood there for more than 100 years were obscure figures in the state's history.

"I remember giving tours to constituents

from Arkansas, to young people, and I would point out the two representatives in Statuary Hall in our **United States Capitol** from Arkansas," said former Gov. **Asa Hutchinson**.

son, who also served in Congress. "And they would say, 'We've never heard of them.'"

Instead of two little-known figures from the 18th and 19th centuries, the state will



Travis Tritt, (left), **Randy Travis**, (center left), **Mary Travis**, (center right), and **Ricky Traywick**, (right), appear on stage at the '1 Night. 1 Place. 1 Time.: A Heroes and Friends Tribute to Randy Travis' on Feb. 8, 2017 in Nashville, Tenn. (AP) — **Details Page 11**

soon be represented by the "Man in Black" and a woman who was instrumental in the fight over school desegregation.

Officials plan to install statues of civil rights leader **Daisy Bates** this week and musician **Johnny Cash** later this year.

Bates, who headed the state NAACP, mentored the Black students known as the Little Rock Nine who integrated Central High School in 1957. She is a well-known civil rights figure in Arkansas, where a downtown street in the capital, Little Rock, is named in her honor. The state also marks Daisy Bates Day on Presidents Day. (AP)

NEW YORK: The Pulitzer Prizes are set to be announced on Monday, traditionally the most anticipated day of the year for those hoping to earn print journalism's most prestigious honor.

Along with honoring winners and finalists in 15 journalism categories, the Pulitzer Board also recognizes distinguished work in areas including books, music and theater. The awards, which will honor work from 2023, are scheduled to be announced via livestream at 3 p.m. Eastern time.

While forecasting potential winners is a guessing game, the Pulitzer's often go to coverage of the year's biggest stories. In this case, the Oct. 7 attack on **Israel** and subsequent war in **Gaza** is a possibility and may engender controversy. (AP)

Cleveland Clinic offers new treatments

Gene therapies bring potential cures for sickle cell disease and beta thalassemia

CLEVELAND, May 6: Ahead of World Thalassemia Day (May 8), global health system Cleveland Clinic's main campus has become one of only a few centers worldwide authorized to offer three novel gene therapies for treating individuals with sickle cell disease and beta thalassemia, significantly improving their quality of life and in most cases achieving a functional cure.

Sickle cell disease and beta thalassemia are inherited blood disorders caused by abnormalities in hemoglobin, the red protein responsible for transporting oxygen in the blood. In sickle cell disease, a genetic mutation causes abnormal hemoglobin to clump together so that the red blood cells become sickle shaped. Beta thalassemia, on the other hand, affects the body's ability to produce hemoglobin. India and countries in the Middle East and Africa are among those with a higher prevalence for both diseases.

"These new therapies are well-tolerated, transformative and could enable individuals to live free from the often-debilitating effects of these diseases and their traditional treatments such as frequent blood transfusions, which carry the risk of iron overload and organ damage," says **Rabi Hanna MD**, a hematologist-oncologist and director of the pediatric blood and bone marrow transplant program at Cleveland Clinic Children's.



Dr Hanna

Complications (cross head) Both sickle cell disease and beta thalassemia are associated with lifelong complications, multi-organ damage and comorbidities that impact quality of life, ultimately leading to a shortened lifespan. Until now, the only curative treatment was an allogeneic blood or marrow transplant, and finding a suitable donor was often difficult and therapy could be complicated by Graft rejection or Versus Host disease (GVHD) due to immune interaction between donor and recipient (patient). In contrast, the new therapies work by extracting, a patient's own blood-producing stem cells then modifying or adding genes that produce functionally normal red blood cells and reinfusing these blood-producing stem cells, thereby eliminating the need for a matching donor and the need to use immune suppression medications, while minimizing the risk of rejection and GVHD complications.

Cleveland Clinic will treat children and adults using one of three new therapies that act by either adding to or replacing defective genes in stem cells.

The newest therapy, exagamglogeneautotemcel (Casgevy), treats both sickle cell disease and beta thalassemia in children age 12 or older in addition to adults. Approved in January this year for treating sickle cell disease, and in December 2023 for transfusion-dependent beta thalassemia, this is the first medicine approved in the U.S. that uses the gene-editing tool CRISPR, which earned its inventors the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 2020.

The other two available therapies are lvoitibeglog-

neautotemcel (Lyfgenia), approved by the FDA in December last year and used to treat patients with sickle cell disease who are aged 12 or above, and betibeglogeneautotemcel (Zynteglo) approved in 2022 for the treatment of children and adults with transfusion-dependent beta thalassemia.

"The clinical trials showed remarkable success for this once-in-a-lifetime therapy, with a functional cure rate—defined as either transfusion-free survival in thalassemia patients or pain-free survival in sickle cell disease patients,—well above 90%. However, prospective patients should be aware that this is a treatment journey involving several phases, which is also why so few centers have the comprehensive and specialized expertise needed to provide the treatment," Dr. Hanna says. "We are working with some hospitals in other regions so that international patients can undergo some of the preliminary phases in their own countries before completing the treatment at our facilities."

The initial preparation phase, lasting two to three months, focuses on preparing the body for stem cell collection by reducing any inflammation in patients' bone marrow. Certain medications may be given, or stopped, and patients may have additional blood transfusions. Next, the patient will visit our facility for one or more cycles of stem cell collection, with the extracted cells sent to an external company for gene modification. In this step, a gene capable of producing normal hemoglobin is either added to or replaces the faulty gene in the extracted cells. The modified cells then undergo quality assurance testing, which takes a further two months. Towards the end of this period, patients will have chemotherapy over a period of a few days to destroy their remaining bone marrow, making room for the repaired cells that will be infused back into their body.

In the last stage, involving a hospital stay of around four to six weeks, the infused cells will engraft while the patient is carefully monitored for any adverse effects. "We use one medication, Busulfan, as the chemotherapy to get rid of the old bone marrow and create space for the new modified stem cells. This is basically an autologous transplant — one using the patient's own cells — so patients do not need to take drugs to suppress their immune systems and there is no risk of graft-versus-host disease where donor bone marrow or stem cells attack the recipient," explains Dr. Hanna.

According to the World Health Organization, approximately 5% of the world's population carries trait genes for hemoglobin disorders, mainly sickle-cell disease and thalassemia, although this does not mean they will necessarily develop the disease. It is estimated that 300,000 babies with severe hemoglobin disorders are born each year.

Cleveland Clinic's Global Patient Services (GPS) department helps patients from abroad to make medical appointments and travel arrangements to receive novel treatments. Among other considerations, the department helps to overcome language barriers and assist with cultural requirements.

Experts develop flood forecasting model

CSIRO explores cloud's impact on climate

CANBERRA, May 6, (Xinhua): Researchers from Australia's national science agency have launched a project that will seek to understand how liquid clouds in the Southern Ocean affect Earth's climate.

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) on Monday announced that scientists will spend 17 months at the Kennaook/Cape Grim Baseline Air Pollution Station in the island state of Tasmania studying atmospheric aerosols in a bid to address gaps in climate models.

Because of high water purity, clouds that form over the Southern Ocean are often made up of super-cooled liquid water instead of ice. Super-cooled liquid water clouds reflect more sunlight back to space than ice clouds do, helping to cool the surface of the ocean.

Melita Keywood, a CSIRO Senior Principal Research Scientist, said the project would help fill gaps in the understanding of cloud properties as a factor in climate science by measuring how much sunlight clouds over the ocean reflect back to space and how much heat is trapped in Earth's atmosphere.

"New data will help explain what's happening between the surface and the clouds, and what's happening within the unique 'super-cooled' liquid clouds that are known to form in the region," she said in a media release.

"With Earth just recording its hottest year on record, better quantifying how much heat is trapped in Earth's atmosphere has never been so important."

Aerosols play a key role in cloud formation by enabling water to condense and form into clouds.

The main source of aerosols in the Southern Ocean are sea spray and gasses released by phytoplankton.

The Cloud and Precipitation Experiment at Kennaook

(CAPE-k) project is a collaboration between the CSIRO, Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) and US Department of Energy's Atmospheric Radiation Measurement (ARM) facility.

Chinese researchers have proposed a novel hybrid deep-learning model to address streamflow forecasting for water catchment areas at a global scale, with a view to improving flood prediction, according to a recent research article published in the journal The Innovation.

Streamflow and flood forecasting remains one of the long-standing challenges in hydrology. Traditional physically based models are hampered by sparse parameters and complex calibration procedures particularly in ungauged catchments.

More than 95 percent of small and medium-sized water catchments in the world lack monitoring data, according to the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS).

Researchers from the Institute of Mountain Hazards and Environment of the CAS used the datasets of more than 2,000 catchments around the world to conduct model training in order to cope with streamflow forecasting at a global scale for all gauged and ungauged catchments.

The distribution of these catchments was significantly different, ensuring the diversity of data.

The results show that the forecasting accuracy of the model was higher than traditional hydrological models and other AI models.

The study demonstrated the potential of deep-learning methods to overcome the lack of hydrologic data and deficiencies in physical model structure and parameterization, the research article noted.

Space seeds

Chinese sat spots 100+ 'solar' flares

NANJING, May 6, (Xinhua): China's Advanced Space-based Solar Observatory (ASO-S) — dubbed Kuaifu-1 in Chinese — has detected more than 100 solar white-light flares since its launch in October 2022, according to the Purple Mountain Observatory under the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Solar white-light flares are a type of flare that exhibits enhanced radiation in the visible light continuum spectrum. These flares typically have high energy and can have an impact on space weather, causing disruptions or interruptions in ground communication, as well as interfering with the normal operation of spacecraft.

Before the launch of ASO-S, the observation and reporting of solar white-light flares were limited to around 300 cases, which accounted for a relatively small proportion of the total number of flare eruptions.

Research

The research team of the satellite has analyzed 205 high-energy flares that occurred between October 2022 and May 2023. Among them, 49 white-light flares were identified, resulting in a white-light flare occurrence rate of 24 percent, which is significantly higher than the previously observed data.

The observation data from ASO-S shows that white-light flares are not as rare as previously thought, said Gan Weiqun, the chief scientist of the Kuaifu-1 mission and a researcher at the Purple Mountain Observatory.

The satellite team will continue to combine multi-wavelength observations from other satellites for comprehensive study of white-light flares to provide a theoretical basis for the country's space weather forecasting, Gan said.

ASO-S is a comprehensive solar observation satellite used for solar research. It was officially handed over to the Purple Mountain Observatory in September 2023.

Since its launch, the satellite has recorded approximately 600TB of raw solar observation data, providing a wealth of material for subsequent research.

The new study was published recently in the journals Solar Physics and The Astrophysical Journal Letters.

With the return on Tuesday of the Shenzhou-17 manned spacecraft, a new batch of scientific experimental samples from China's space station have arrived on Earth, including seeds for breeding experiments.

Forage seeds, including alfalfa and oats, provided by the Lanzhou Institute of Husbandry and Pharmaceutical Sciences under the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, underwent 11 months of space radiation on the space radiation biology exposure equipment aboard the space station.

After basic checks at the Technology and Engineering Center for Space Utilization under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the seeds were sent to a research team from the Lanzhou Institute of Husbandry and Pharmaceutical Sciences for experimental research.

The researchers have started seed germination experiments on the seeds and will further conduct ground-based breeding experiments to obtain excellent mutants and cultivate superior new forage varieties with higher yield, better quality and stronger resistance, said **Yang Hongshan**, the team's chief scientist.

The research results are expected to significantly enhance China's competitiveness in the field of agricultural science and technology, providing strong support for the sustainable development of agriculture in the country, Yang said.

The research team has successfully cultivated three new varieties of alfalfa and one new variety of oats through space-mutation breeding. These varieties have been widely promoted and applied in production.



Boeing's Starliner capsule atop an Atlas V rocket is rolled out to the launch pad at Space Launch Complex 41, Saturday, May 4, in Cape Canaveral, Fla. NASA astronauts Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams will launch aboard to the International Space Station, scheduled for liftoff on May 6. (AP)

New entry to space travel

Boeing's new capsule set to carry astronauts into space

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., May 6, (AP): After years of delays and stumbles, Boeing is finally poised to launch astronauts to the International Space Station for NASA.

It's the first flight of Boeing's Starliner capsule with a crew on board, a pair of NASA pilots who will check out the spacecraft during the test drive and a weeklong stay at the space station.

NASA turned to U.S. companies for astronaut rides after the space shuttles were retired. Elon Musk's SpaceX has made nine taxi trips for NASA since 2020, while Boeing has managed only a pair of unoccupied test flights.

Boeing program manager Mark Nappi wishes Starliner was further along. "There's no doubt about that, but we're here now."

Alternate

The company's long-awaited astronaut demo is slated for liftoff Monday night.

Provided this tryout goes well, NASA will alternate between Boeing and SpaceX to get astronauts to and from the space station.

A look at the newest ride and its shake-down cruise:

White with black and blue trim, Boeing's Starliner capsule is about 10 feet (3 meters) tall and 15 feet (4.5 meters) in diameter. It can fit up to seven people, though NASA crews typically will number four. The company settled on the name Starliner nearly a decade ago, a twist on the name of Boeing's early Stratoliner and the current Dreamliner. No one was aboard Boeing's two previous Starliner test flights. The first, in 2019, was hit with software trouble so severe that its empty capsule couldn't reach the station until the second try in 2022. Then last summer, weak parachutes and flammable tape cropped up that needed to be fixed or removed.

Veteran NASA astronauts Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams are retired Navy captains who spent months aboard the space station years ago. They joined the test flight after the original crew bowed out as the delays piled up. Wilmore, 61, is a former combat pilot from Mount Juliet, Tennessee, and Williams, 58, is a helicopter pilot from Needham, Massachusetts. The duo have been involved in the capsule's development and insist Starliner is ready for prime time, otherwise they would not strap in for the launch.

"We're not putting our heads in the sand," Williams told The Associated Press. "Sure, Boeing has had its problems. But we are the QA (quality assurance). Our eyes are on the spacecraft."

Starliner will blast off on United Launch Alliance's Atlas V rocket from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. It

will be the first time astronauts ride an Atlas since NASA's Project Mercury, starting with John Glenn when he became the first American to orbit the Earth in 1962. Sixty-two years later, this will be the 100th launch of the Atlas V, which is used to hoist satellites as well as spacecraft.

"We're super careful with every mission. We're super, duper, duper careful" with human missions, said Tory Bruno, CEO of ULA, a joint venture of Boeing and Lockheed Martin.

Starliner should reach the space station in roughly 26 hours. The seven station residents will have their eyes peeled on the approaching capsule. The arrival of a new vehicle is "a really big deal. You leave nothing to chance," NASA astronaut Michael Barratt told the AP from orbit. Starliner will remain docked for eight days, undergoing checkouts before landing in New Mexico or elsewhere in the American West.

Both companies' capsules are designed to be autonomous and reusable. This Starliner is the same one that made the first test flight in 2019. Unlike the SpaceX Dragons, Starliner has traditional hand controls and switches alongside touchscreens and, according to the astronauts, is more like NASA's Orion capsules for moon missions. Wilmore and Williams briefly will take manual control to wring out the systems on their way to the space station.

Delivery

NASA gave Boeing, a longtime space contractor, more than \$4 billion to develop the capsule, while SpaceX got \$2.6 billion. SpaceX already was in the station delivery business and merely refashioned its cargo capsule for crew. While SpaceX uses the boss' Teslas to get astronauts to the launch pad, Boeing will use a more traditional "astrovan" equipped with a video screen that Wilmore said will be playing "Top Gun: Maverick."

One big difference at flight's end: Starliner lands on the ground with cushioning airbags, while Dragon splashes into the sea.

Boeing is committed to six Starliner trips for NASA after this one, which will take the company to the station's planned end in 2030. Boeing's Nappi is reluctant to discuss other potential customers until this inaugural crew flight is over. But the company has said a fifth seat will be available to private clients. SpaceX periodically sells seats to tycoons and even countries eager to get their citizens to the station for a couple weeks.

Coming soon: Sierra Space's mini shuttle, Dream Chaser, which will deliver cargo to the station later this year or next, before accepting passengers.

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

SHIFA AL JAZEERA MEDICAL CENTRE

فروانية FARWANIYA

Dr. Shajahan V.M
BDS, MDS
Dental Surgeon

Dr. Ayham Askar
BDS
Dental Surgeon

Dr. Raina Fernandes
BDS
Dental Surgeon

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

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

Kolkata beats Lucknow to go top in IPL

Chennai ends 5-match losing streak against Punjab

DHARAMSALA, India, May 6, (AP): Ravindra Jadeja put in an all-round performance to help Chennai Super Kings beat Punjab Kings by 28 runs in the Indian Premier League.

Kolkata Knight Riders scored big to defeat Lucknow Super Giants by 98 runs in the second game to go top of the points table.

Jadeja scored 43 runs off 26 balls to anchor Chennai's innings to 167-9 and then took 3-20 in four overs to help restrict Punjab's chase to 139-9.

It was only Chennai's second win in the last five games, and also ended its five-match losing streak against Punjab.

CRICKET

Put into bat, Chennai lost Ajinkya Rahane (9) early. Rituraj Gaikwad (32) and Daryl Mitchell (30) put on 57 off 32 balls for the second wicket.

Wrist spinner Rahul Chahar then took 3-23 in four overs to restrict the visiting side. He dismissed Gaikwad and then big-hitting Shivam Dube for a golden duck.

Sam Curran dismissed Moeen Ali for 17 as Chennai was reduced to 101-5 in 12.4 overs.

Jadeja guided Chennai to a challenging total on a two-paced wicket.

Babar hoping Rauf will regain full fitness, make an impact for Pakistan at T20 WC

ISLAMABAD, May 6, (AP): Pakistan captain Babar Azam is hoping Haris Rauf will regain full fitness after a shoulder injury and make an impact at next month's T20 World Cup.

Fast bowler Rauf has been included in an 18-man squad for the upcoming tours of Ireland and England, with Pakistan delaying its 15-strong party for the World Cup in the United States and West Indies until May 22.

The fitness of Rauf, Mohammad Rizwan, Irfan Khan and Azam Khan will be assessed during the seven T20s against Ireland and England.

"I wasn't expecting that he (Rauf) would recover so early and start bowl-

ing again," Babar told reporters in Lahore on Monday as the team prepared to fly out to Ireland, where the first T20 will be played in Dublin on Friday.

"There's pressure on him to make a comeback. There's a lot of talk going around on his injury and how he will respond to it. But I think he will make a good response because when you give yourself proper rest mentally and physically, you can make a different impact."

Rauf has been out since dislocating his shoulder in late February during the Pakistan Super League. Since then he has gone through rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy in Lahore.

The seven-member selection committee, which also includes Babar, have named fast bowler Hasan Ali, who last played a T20 international in 2022, as backup for Rauf.

Babar backed the inclusion of Hasan after pace bowlers Zaman Khan, Mo-

CRICKET

hammad Wasim and the PSL's top wicket-taker Mohammad Ali were omitted.

"There's no injustice with anyone. We debated a lot on the World Cup combination and Hasan is there as

backup for Rauf because of his experience," Babar said. "Zaman and Ali are new-ball bowlers but we already have enough new-ball bowling options."

Fast bowler Mohammad Amir, who played in two T20s against New Zealand after ending his retirement, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah and Abbas Afridi are Pakistan's pace options.

Under Babar, Pakistan has done well in the last two T20 World Cups, reaching the semifinals in 2021 at the United Arab Emirates and losing to England in the final at the 2022 tournament in Australia.

The chairman of the Pakistan Cricket

Board, Mohsin Naqvi, has promised a cash award of \$100,000 to every player if the team wins the tournament.

"What happened in the past is in the past, unfortunately we couldn't finish the way we wanted," Babar said. "We're doubly confident and believe we can bring the trophy home."

Pakistan starts its campaign against host United States in Dallas on June 6 before taking on arch-rival India in New York three days later.

White-ball head coach Gary Kirsten will likely join the team in England after completing his Indian Premier League assignment with Gujarat Titans.

He hit three fours and two sixes, while Harshal Patel's death spell didn't allow excess run-scoring.

MS Dhoni batted at No. 9 - for the first time - and Patel bowled him for a golden duck.

In reply, Punjab's top order crumbled. Tushar Deshpande dismissed Jonny Bairstow (7) and Rilee Rossouw for a three-ball duck in the space of four balls.

Impact player Prabhsimran Singh scored 30 off 23 balls, and along with Shashank Singh's 20-ball 27 helped

rebuild the innings from 9-2.

Jadeja didn't allow the middle order to get away, sending back Singh as well as Curran (7).

Pacer Simarjeet Singh came on as impact sub and took 2-16 in three overs as Punjab's chase never looked a threat.

Shardul Thakur and Mitchell Santner took a wicket each. Despite missing key bowlers, Chennai put in an all-round bowling performance to restrict the hosts.

Chennai moved up to third with 12

points, ahead of Lucknow Super Giants and Sunrisers Hyderabad on net run-rate. Punjab's hopes of qualification took a blow. It's eighth in the 10-team league with eight points.

Sunil Narine continued his impressive batting form with a 39-ball 81 as Kolkata thrashed Lucknow.

Narine hit seven sixes and six fours, putting on 61 runs off 26 deliveries with fellow opener Phil Salt (32 off 14). The two-time champions reached 235-6 in 20 overs after being asked to bat first in Lucknow.

Impact player Angkrish Raghuvanshi scored 32, captain Shreyas Iyer hit 23 and Ramandeep Singh hit three sixes in his six-ball 25 not out. It was Kolkata's sixth 200-plus total this season.

It was also the first 200-plus total at the Ekana International Stadium in the IPL.

However, the hosts failed to challenge and were bowled out for 137 runs in 16.1 overs.

Pacer Harshit Rana (3-24) and mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy (3-30) combined for six wickets to run

through Lucknow's lineup.

Marcus Stoinis top scored with 36 off 21 balls, while skipper Lokesh Rahul made 25. They were the only batters to cross 20.

Andre Russell took 2-17, while Narine finished with 1-22 in four overs to round off another excellent outing.

Kolkata tops the table with 16 points from 11 games. Rajasthan Royals also has 16 points but is behind

Kolkata on net run-rate. Lucknow is fifth with 12 points.

Pendrith 'bags' Byron Nelson as Kohles falters at TPC Craig Ranch

Koepka wins for 4th time on LIV

McKINNEY, Texas, May 6, (AP): Taylor Pendrith took advantage of Ben Kohles' final-hole meltdown to win the CJ Cup Byron Nelson on Sunday for his first PGA Tour title.

Kohles overtook Pendrith with birdies on Nos. 16 and 17 for a one-shot lead, then bogeyed the 18th after hitting his second shot into greenside rough. His first chip didn't reach the green. After having to chip twice from the rough and already looking stunned, Kohles missed a 6-foot putt that would have forced a playoff.

Pendrith two-putted for birdie on the 18th, holing a 3-footer for a 4-under 67 and 23-under 261 total at the TPC Craig Ranch. The 32-year-old Canadian won in his 74th career PGA Tour start.

Playing just north of his birthplace of Dallas, Kohles shot 66 to finish a stroke back.

Pendrith earned a trip to the PGA Championship in two weeks and the Masters next year. He also gets into the three remaining \$20 million signature events.

Brooks Koepka became the first player to win four times on the LIV Golf circuit when he closed with a 3-under 68 in LIV Golf Singapore.

Koepka had four birdies and a bogey to finish at 15-under 198 for the three rounds, two ahead of Australians Marc Leishman and Cameron Smith. Leishman finished with a 66 and Smith a 64 at the Sentosa Golf Club.

GOLF

Talor Gooch shot 67 and finished in fourth place, three strokes behind Koepka. Jon Rahm had a 67 and tied for 10th, the only player to finish in the top 10 in every LIV event this year. Rahm has yet to win since joining the Saudi-funded circuit in September.

Koepka was the seventh winner in seven LIV Golf events this season. He next tries to defend his title at the PGA Championship on May 16-19 at Valhalla in Louisville, Kentucky.

Ripper GC, led by Leishman and Smith, won the team title for the second straight week. They finished three shots ahead of Fireballs and Cleeks.

Adrian Otaegui overcame a five-shot deficit to win the China Open by closing with a 7-under 65 for the Spaniard's fifth European tour title.

Otaegui had been trailing Sebastian Söderberg after Friday - the third round was canceled because of thunder and lightning - and he won by one shot over Guido Migliozzi of Italy, who had a 67.

Otaegui had seven birdies and finished at 18-under 198. The victory moved him to No. 3 in the tour's Asian Swing and earned him a spot in the PGA Championship, along with Söderberg and Keita Nakajima.

Söderberg tied for third after starting Sunday with a bogey. The Swedish player holed four birdies but was undone by another bogey on the 15th hole and a double bogey. He closed with a 72.

Scott Dunlap was declared the 36-hole winner of the Inseperity Invitational when rain washed the final round Sunday, giving Dunlap his first PGA Tour Champions title in nearly 10 years.

Devastating rain in the Houston area previously washed out the open-



Qadisiya player tries to stop an opponent during the Zain Premier League.

Al-Qadisiya look to maintain title challenge vs Al-Salmiya

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Al-Arabi were to face Al-Nasr this afternoon in what promised to be a challenging encounter, kicking off at 5:35. Following that, at 8:15 pm, Al-Qadisiya will square off against Al-Salmiya at Thamer Stadium, marking the conclusion of the sixth round of the championship group in the Zain Premier League.

In the first match, Al-Arabi, currently positioned second with 51 points, anticipates a tough battle against Al-Nasr. Despite Al-Arabi's dominance in its previous four encounters this season, winning three times (3-1, 6-3 in the league, and

3-1 in the Prince's Cup), it remains vigilant as one of its two losses this season came against Al-Nasr (1-3 in the league), alongside a defeat to Kuwait Club (1-2). Coach Nasser Al-Shatti emphasizes the significance of this match, understanding that dropping points now could diminish its title aspirations as the competition nears its end. Following a valuable draw against league leader Kuwait Club, Al-Arabi aims to reignite its winning streak, albeit aware of the psychological pressure this may entail.

Conversely, Al-Nasr, coached by Zaher Al-Adwani, approaches the match without significant pressure but is eager to reverse its recent winless streak, which has seen it slip to

the bottom of the standings.

In the second clash, tonight's match between Al-Qadisiya and Al-Salmiya serves as a prelude to their upcoming showdown in the Amir Cup final on May 21.

Al-Qadisiya, positioned third with 49 points, aims to bolster its title contention and reaffirms its superiority over Al-Salmiya, having secured victories in two out of three league encounters (4-1, 1-0) and sharing one draw (1-1). Coach Mohammed Al-Mashaan and his team understand the imperative of securing every point to keep their title hopes alive.

Meanwhile, Al-Salmiya, led by Croatian coach Ante Misha, currently occupies fourth place with 31 points.

The 15-year-old amateur from South Korea closed with a 5-under 67 for a one-shot victory over Shuri Sakuma in the World Ladies Championship Salompas Cup, the first JLPGA major of the year. Song was seven shots behind going into the final round. ... Madison Young had a birdie-eagle stretch to build a five-shot lead on the front nine, and she held on for a 1-under 71 to win the Casino Del Sol Golf Classic by one shot on the Epson Tour.

Ren Yonezawa captured his first Japan Golf Tour title when he birdied the final hole for a 5-under 65 for a one-shot victory over Naoyuki Kataoka in The Crowns. ... Hongtaek Kim closed with a 2-under 69 and beat Chonlatit Chuenboonngam in a playoff to win the GS Caltex Maekyung Open on the Asian Tour.

Thomas Longbella won the Kia Open in Ecuador when the final round of the PGA Tour Americas event was washed out.

Peter Banker won the Barbados Legends with a 2-under 69 and a birdie on the first playoff hole to beat Scott Hend in Barbados on the European Legends Tour.

Ji Young Park closed with a 6-under 66 to win the Kyochon 1991 Ladies Open on the Korea LPGA.

Closest finish ever in Cup Series

Larson edges Buescher at the line at the Kansas Speedway

KANSAS CITY, May 6, (AP): Kyle Larson came around Chris Buescher on the final lap and banged doors with him all the way to the finish line Sunday, where he was declared the winner of the Cup Series race by officials at Kansas Speedway in the closest finish in NASCAR history.

The official margin was a thousandth of a second - every bit as close as the Kentucky Derby a day earlier - and Buescher was left both dumbfounded and dejected. His team had begun to celebrate before learning he had finished second.

The dramatic finale came after a caution for Kyle Busch's spin forced a green-white-checkered finish. Larson pulled behind Buescher on the backstretch of the last lap, then came around him on the outside of the final corner. Buescher looked as if he had pulled in front, and even Larson thought he had finished second, before the call came through that he had won.

CAR RACING

"That was wild," Larson said. "I was thankful for that caution. We were dying pretty bad. I was happy to come out third."

It was a brilliant start to a busy month of May for Larson, who will attempt to run the Indianapolis 500 and Coca-Cola 600 on the same day Memorial Day weekend. The win was the second of the season for him in the No. 5 car for Hendrick Motorsports, and a bit of retribution finishing second to Denny Hamlin last week at Dover and in the spring race at Kansas a year ago.

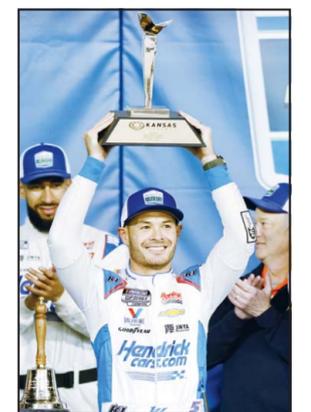
Martin Truex Jr. finished fourth on Sunday and Hamlin, who had the lead on the final restart, faded back to fifth place.

Meanwhile, Buescher was left questioning the grainy black-and-white images of the photo finish, and the entire Ford contingent - which has yet to win in any of NASCAR's top three series this year - had to rue the closest miss in its history.

"I don't know what to say right now," Buescher said, shaking his head while standing beside his No. 17 car. "I haven't seen a replay other than just the picture, and I sure can't see in that picture. That sucks to be that close."

Making it a bigger bummer for Buescher was the fact that he had overcome a big miscue midway through the race. He had just won the second stage and led the field onto pit road when a crew member came over the wall too soon. The penalty sent him to the rear of the field, and he had to spend much of the final stage working his way back to the front.

Ultimately, he opted for a different pit strategy along with Hamlin, who had his own share of problems on pit road. And it might have worked out for them had the race finished under



Kyle Larson, center, celebrates in Victory Lane after winning a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Kansas Speedway in Kansas City, Kan. (AP)

green. Instead, the late caution forced all the leaders to pit.

"I don't know what to say right now," Buescher said.

Christopher Bell started on the pole but struggled to run up front all day in a race that began after a 3 1/2-hour delay because of rain, finishing sixth. He was followed by Alex Bowman and Kyle Busch, whose spin brought out the last caution. Noah Gragson and Michael McDowell gave Ford two more cars in the top 10.

There were no cautions other than for stage breaks until Jimmie Johnson wrecked with 91 laps to go. The seven-time champion, back in the No. 84 for the second consecutive week, was hit from behind by Corey LaJoie after he checked up.

"Just trying to set up for the corner, I got a little help from behind and just kind of hanging on from there," Johnson said.

The yellow flags then came in quickly: Hamlin made contact with Austin Cindric, sending the No. 2 into a wreck that spun out Bubba Wallace and McDowell. Harrison Burton wrecked on the restart, then Joey Logano did on the next one.

Corey Heim, who won the Truck Series race on Saturday night, finished 22nd while subbing for Erik Jones in the No. 43 car for Legacy Motor Club. Jones has been cleared to return after a wreck at Talladega resulted in a compression fracture in his back, but the team opted to hold him out for one more week to be on the safe side.

Ricky Stenhouse Jr. finished 16th in his first race since signing a contract extension with JTG Daugherty Racing. He also did it after going for a wild ride in his sprint car on Saturday night at nearby Lakeside Speedway. ... Gragson has had strong back-to-back weeks after finishing sixth at Dover. ... The series heads to Darlington next for its annual throwback weekend.



Joey Logano (22) spins out after hitting the wall in Turn 4 during a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Kansas Speedway in Kansas City, Kan. (AP)

Athletic coupé proportions with a dynamic character line on the side

The new CLE: Shaped by desire – the new series of Mercedes-Benz dream cars



Left-right: The new Mercedes-Benz CLE Coupé which arrived in Kuwait recently.

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Al Mulla Automobiles Co., a member of the Al Mulla Group and the sole authorized distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait, has recently announced that the new Mercedes-Benz CLE Coupé has arrived to Kuwait. Shaped by desire, Mercedes-Benz is continuing its long tradition of sporty, elegant dream cars with a new, independent series. The new CLE Coupé uses the conceptual and technical innovations of the C-Class and E-Class. With its expressive design, exclusive comfort equipment for maximum individuality and confident, sporty driving performance, the new two-door car goes its own way. With the new dream car series, Mercedes-Benz is fulfilling the wishes of many customers in the C and E class segments. The all new CLE Coupé will be showcased in the Mercedes-Benz Flagship showroom in Al Rai and the Mercedes-Benz boutique in Avenues for guests and will be available for on the spot test drives.

Iconic design: Long wheelbase, a well-positioned and strongly inclined A-pillar, a short front and a slightly longer rear body overhang, as well as pronounced shoulders and large wheels. There has always been a special magic inherent in these proportions – and they are inextricably linked to the Mercedes-Benz brand.

The new CLE Coupé combines these sporty, elegant proportions with the modern design language of Mercedes-Benz. True to the Mercedes-Benz design philosophy of Sensual Purity, the result is a sculpture full of power and dynamism that embodies an emotional statement from every perspective.

Athletic appearance: The progressively forward-leaning front section ("shark nose") with a low-slung bonnet, flat LED headlights with a unique design and the newly designed, three-dimensional radiator grille ensure an athletic yet extremely elegant appearance. The strongly contoured power domes on the long hood refer to the powerful engines with up to six cylinders. In the side view, a distinctive shaped edge structures the powerful volume. This character line runs from the headlight to the exterior mirror and from the rear light to the door handle. The muscular rear is characterized by flowing surfaces, smooth transitions and two-part LED lights with new contours and three-dimensional light bodies.

Plenty of space: At 4,850 millimeters long, 1,860 millimeters wide and 1,428 millimeters high, the new two-door is the largest coupé in the mid-size segment. With its dimensional concept – in particular the 25-mil-

limetre longer wheelbase – the CLE Coupé offers significantly more space than the C-Class Coupé. The rear passengers in particular benefit from 10 millimeters more headroom, 19 millimeters more shoulder and elbow room and 72 millimeters more knee room. The trunk volume offers 60 liters more volume and can easily hold three golf bags.

Sporty luxury: Eye-catchers in the interior are the free-standing 12.3-inch, fully digital instrument display, the 11.9-inch, driver-oriented central display in user-friendly por-

trait format and the dynamic ambient lighting featuring 64 colours. If desired, it can extend from the centre console to beneath the outer air vents. In each of the doors, a strip of light runs along the contours of the armrest and beltline to the rear. Another highlight is the front seats in integral sport design, developed exclusively for the CLE. In conjunction with the optional Burmester® 3D surround sound system, they each have two loudspeakers at the level of the headrests and thus create a particularly individual and immer-

sive music experience with Dolby Atmos and Spatial Audio close to the ears.

Specific EASY-ENTRY function: For the first time at Mercedes-Benz, the front seats are not unlocked using a lever, but instead with an elegant loop made of Nappa leather. It is conveniently located at the upper edge of the backrest.

Latest MBUX generation: The CLE Coupé adopts numerous digital innovations from the new E-Class. With the new electronics architecture and the third generation of the MBUX infotainment system, it is the most intelligent coupé with the star. It offers an exceptionally interactive entertainment experience with third-party apps and a new level of personalization with automated convenience functions (routines).

Sporty and comfortable driving pleasure: The chassis is lowered by 15 millimeters as standard. The optional DYNAMIC BODY CONTROL, with continuously adjustable damping on the front and rear axles in combination with rear-axle steering, both offered in the Technology package, ensures particularly agile and at the same time comfortable driving pleasure. The steering angle is up to 2.5 degrees. This reduces the turning circle by 50 centimeters. Despite its larger dimen-

sions, the CLE Coupé with rear-wheel drive has a smaller turning circle than the C-Class Coupé (10.7 instead of 11.2 meters).

Extensive safety: Numerous driver assistance systems, some of which have been further developed, offer situation-specific support for more safety. The extensive standard equipment includes ATTENTION ASSIST, Active Brake Assist, Active Lane Keeping Assist, Speed Limit Assist, and the parking package with reversing camera. In Western Europe, Active Distance Assist DISTRONIC is also standard equipment.

The all new CLE is available in CLE 200 and CLE 300 models, with the AMG version CLE 53 available at a later part of the year.

The all new CLE Coupé will be available for test drives and displayed in the Mercedes-Benz Flagship Showroom in Al Rai as well as the Mercedes-Benz Boutique in the Avenues. For more information and queries related to the all-new CLE Coupé, please visit Al Mulla Automobiles Mercedes-Benz showroom in Al Rai, Mercedes-Benz Boutique in The Avenues, WhatsApp or call the customer center at 1887888 and follow the account on Instagram @MercedesBenzKuwait, or visit the website at www.mercedes-benz-mena.com/kuwait/en



The interior of the new Mercedes-Benz CLE Coupé.

Taekwondo Championship 'reinforces' Republic of Korea-Kuwait bilateral ties



Minister of State for Youth honored with a Black-belt certificate from Kukkiwon.



The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the State of Kuwait Chung Byung-ha.



Dawood Maarafi, Minister of the State for Youth exhibiting his taekwondo skills.

By Paul Francis X. Fernandes
Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Kuwait, alongside the Kuwait Taekwondo Federation and the Korean Community Association, co-presented the Ambassador's Cup Taekwondo Championship 2024.

Held from April 30 to May 2 at the Jaber Al Ahmad facility of the Kuwait Olympic Committee, the event showcased the prowess of over 200 young male and female athletes from Kuwait competing in nine weight categories, showcasing their dedication to Taekwondo.

TAEKWONDO

The highlight of the gala on May 2 was attended by VIPs from the sports community and over 700 spectators, highlighting the widespread popularity and support for Taekwondo in Kuwait.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the State of Kuwait Chung Byung-ha expressed appreciation to Hani Al Mersahad, President of the Kuwait Taekwondo Federation, and Mrs. Jung Sunghee, President of the Korean Association in Kuwait, for their collaborative efforts in organizing this significant event.

Special thanks were also extended to the Minister of the State for Youth and sports club leaders in Kuwait for their steadfast support of Taekwondo.

This championship holds particular significance as it commemorates the 45th anniversary of diplomatic relations and the 60th anniversary of energy cooperation between Kuwait and Korea, tracing back to Korea's initial importation of crude oil from Kuwait in January 1964.

To celebrate this remarkable occasion, the Korean folk ballet troupe "The Little Angels" visited Kuwait, showcasing the essence of traditional

Korean performing arts, thereby celebrating the profound cultural ties between the two nations.

The event also included a prestigious awarding ceremony where Dawood Maarafi, Minister of State for Youth, was honored with a Black-belt certificate from Kukkiwon, the World Taekwondo Headquarters.

In his address, Ambassador Chung Byung-ha underscored the transformative impact of Taekwondo in instilling values like courtesy, integrity, perseverance, and self-control among Kuwait's youth. Since its introduction in the 1980s, Taekwondo has attracted over 4,000 practitioners in Kuwait, and through annual Taekwondo events and competitions, it continues to inspire and engage more young people.

The Embassy of the Republic of Korea eagerly anticipates further deepening cultural and sports exchanges between Korea and Kuwait, strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation that enrich both nations.

Minister of State for Youth honored with a Black belt certificate



The Korean folk ballet troupe 'The Little Angels'.



The championship officials.

Kuwait Cricket appoints Asad Khan as first KCC advisor

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: Kuwait Cricket Club (KCC), the official governing body for cricket in Kuwait under the auspices of the Public Authority of Sport and Kuwait Olympic Committee, alongside the International Cricket Council and the Asian Cricket Council, has appointed Indian businessman M.A. Asad Khan as the inaugural advisor.

CRICKET

During a ceremony coinciding with the inauguration of the ICC Asia Cricket Week T20 Series 'Yalla Shabab' and the grand presentation ceremony of KCC T20 Desert Championship & KCC T10 Ramadan League, the KCC President Haider Farman expressed wholehearted appreciation for Asad Khan's invaluable support spanning over 12 years.

Farman emphasized the role played by personalities such as Khan from the business community in driving



Asad Khan (right) appointed KCC advisor.

the development and advancement of KCC in the years ahead.

Addressing the gathering at the Sulaibiya Cricket Ground, Director General Sajid Ashraf echoed Farman's sentiments, underscoring the importance of corporate figures such as Khan in advisory roles to sports organizations amidst a competitive and commercialized sports landscape.



Athletes gear up for action.

World Cup-winning coach Menotti dies

BUENOS AIRES, May 6, (Xinhua): Former Argentina manager Cesar Luis Menotti, the man who masterminded the country's first World Cup title in 1978, has died aged 85, the Argentine Football Association (AFA) said on Sunday.

Menotti, who had still been working as Argentina's national team's director, died in his home after battling a series of health problems.

"The Argentine Football Association regrets to announce with great sadness the death of Cesar Luis Menotti, current director of the national teams and former World Cup winning coach of Argentina. Farewell, Flaco querido," read a statement on the entity's website.

Among the first to offer tributes on Sunday was current Argentina captain and Inter Miami star Lionel Messi.

"One of the great references of our football has left us," Messi said in a social media post. "Condolences to his family and friends, may he rest in peace."



McLaren driver Lando Norris of Britain is lifted after winning the Miami Formula One Grand Prix auto race in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP)

Sports

Latest sports scores at — <http://sports.arabtimesonline.com>

Norris ends Verstappen dominance at Miami GP

British earns first career F1 victory

MIAMI GARDENS, May 6, (AP): Lando Norris should take a lesson from his last big party and perhaps tone down the celebration for his first career Formula 1 victory.

His reaction following the Sunday victory in the Miami Grand Prix showed the British driver probably doesn't plan to miss a beat.

Norris won in his 110th career start after a mistake by Max Verstappen ended Verstappen's dominance at the circuit in the parking lot surrounding Hard Rock Stadium. The 24-year-old driver sprinted down pit lane to leap into the arms of his McLaren crew, which crowd surfed Norris until he finally got to boss Zak Brown, who wrapped Norris in a bearhug.

Norris arrived in Miami with a bandage covering stitches on his nose from a cut received by broken glass while he was in Amsterdam following F1's last outing. Norris was celebrating King's Day with DJ Martin Garrix when he cut his nose.

Verstappen, who started from the pole and won Saturday's sprint race, was out front when he hit a chicane and knocked a cone out of place on the circuit. It forced the three-time reigning F1 champion to pit and gave Norris the lead.

MOTOR RACING

Norris then controlled the race to give McLaren its first win since a Daniel Ricciardo victory in 2021. Ricciardo was among the handful of drivers who found Norris for a congratulatory hug following the race.

Norris is the second British driver in F1 history to be feted on the podium. George Russell in 2022 is the only other British driver to win outside of Queen Elizabeth's reign; Russell's victory in Brazil came two months after Queen Elizabeth's death.

The song seemed to affect Norris, who closed his eyes as he turned his head to the sky with a huge grin on his face. When it came time for the champagne celebration, he was doused by runner-up Verstappen and third-place finisher Charles Leclerc, who sprayed the champagne directly into Norris' eyes.

It took him a few minutes of wiping his eyes clear before he slammed his own champagne bottle to the ground to force it into a heavy stream he used to soak his McLaren team below the podium. He also tossed the winning trophy into the air, but caught it.

With about 10 laps to go, Norris realized the race was his to lose when his lead over Verstappen hit 5 seconds.

Indeed he was as an ecstatic McLaren squad celebrated a rare victory on a weekend in which it debuted significant upgrades on its two cars. McLaren now has 13 wins in races in the United States - tying a record with Ferrari - but it was the first on American soil since Lewis Hamilton at Circuit of the Americas in 2012.

Norris' final margin of victory was 7.6-seconds over Verstappen of Red Bull. Verstappen had been undefeated at Miami with wins in its first two races and the sprint race on Saturday.

Norris said he knew when he entered the track Sunday morning that he'd end the day at the podium.

"Finally, I am so happy. I knew it. I knew it when I came in this morning," Norris said. "And I nailed it."

McLaren has now won an F1, Formula E and IndyCar race in the past two months. Norris is the first driver since Carlos Sainz Jr. to beat Verstappen this season - and Verstappen was eliminated from that race in Melbourne with a mechanical failure.

McLaren before the start of the race hosted former President Donald Trump, who chatted with F1 officials from inside the McLaren garage. When he made his way toward the starting grid, fans began chanting "USA! USA!" and Trump pumped his fist in approval.

Ferrari drivers Leclerc and Sainz finished third and fourth and were followed by Sergio Perez of Red Bull.

Hamilton was sixth for Mercedes, Yuki Tsunoda of Red Bull's junior team was seventh and Russell was eighth for Mercedes. Fernando Alonso of Aston Martin and Esteban Ocon of Alpine rounded out the top 10. Ocon did it with team investors Patrick Mahomes and Travis Kelce of the Kansas City Chiefs in attendance.

About halfway through the race, Logan Sargeant crashed and brought out the safety car that forced the Pompano Beach native out of his car. The 23-year-old and only American driver on the F1 grid is clinging to his seat with Williams as speculation is rampant he could be replaced before the end of his second season.



Al-Qadisiya players celebrate after winning the Arab Club Cup Championship in flag football.

Al-Qadisiya win Arab Club Cup Championship in flag football

Al-Qadisiya Club's flag football team secured the Arab Club Cup Championship title in a recent tournament held in Abu Dhabi, UAE, triumphing over Al-Masry in the final match with a commanding score of 44-12.

Sheikh Mishal Talal Al-Fahad, former Vice President of the Asian American Football Confederation, commended the exceptional performance demonstrated by the players of Al-Qadisiya Football

Club. He attributed their success in clinching the Arab Club Championship Cup to their remarkable skills and teamwork, surpassing other participating clubs despite incorporating experienced foreign players.

Highlighting the significance of this achievement, Al-Fahad emphasized that participation in such tournaments serves as a crucial catalyst for players to compete in upcoming continental and international events. He

particularly noted the importance of preparing for the qualifiers leading to the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics, especially since flag football has been included as a sport in the scheduled Olympic Games from 2028 onwards.

Mitchell scores 39 points

Cavaliers push past Magic in Game 7

CLEVELAND, May 6, (AP): Donovan Mitchell brought redemption and relief to himself and the Cavaliers.

A year after being bullied and bounced in the first round of the NBA playoffs, Cleveland is moving on.

Mitchell made sure. "This is why I'm here," he said. "It's my job."

Mitchell scored 39 points, Caris LeVert added 15 and Cleveland avoided a potentially franchise-shifting loss by rallying for a 106-94 win over the Orlando Magic on Sunday in Game 7 to advance in the Eastern Conference playoffs.

BASKETBALL

The Cavs trailed by 18 in the first half and were in danger of being eliminated early for the second year in a row - a scenario that may have led to firings.

But Mitchell, who scored 50 in a Game 6 loss at Orlando and has been battling a left knee injury for months, put the Cavs on his back. He carried them past an up-and-coming Orlando team whose playoff inexperience showed in the second half.

"I don't mean this disrespectful, but it doesn't really mean much," Mitchell said. "We didn't come in just to win the first round. We accomplished one goal, now we have to do it again. That's the mindset."

According to the NBA, Cleveland's comeback is the largest in a Game 7 since the league began tracking play-by-play in 1997-98.

Evan Mobley grabbed 16 rebounds and Darius Garland hit a critical 3-pointer - after getting a pep talk from Mitchell - in the fourth for Cleveland, which won its first playoff series without LeBron James since 1993.

The Cavs will begin the second round on the road against the top-seeded Celtics in Game 1 on Tuesday. Boston went 2-1 against Cleveland this season.

In the closing minutes, the towel-waving crowd inside Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse chanted, "We want Boston!" - a matchup that didn't look likely an hour earlier.

"I'm pretty sure everybody thinks they're going to come in and kick our ass," Mitchell said. "So for us to con-



Cleveland Cavaliers guard Donovan Mitchell (45) shoots between Orlando Magic forward Paolo Banchero (5) and forward Franz Wagner, (right), in the first half of Game 7 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series in Cleveland. (AP)

tinue to stay level-headed throughout, and just be who we are, that's the biggest thing."

Paolo Banchero scored 38 - just 14 after halftime - and added 16 rebounds to lead the Magic, who grew up in the series but couldn't figure out how to win in Cleveland as both teams held serve on their floors.

Orlando's Franz Wagner and Jalen

Suggs went a combined 3 of 28 from the field.

The moment turned out to be too much for the Magic, who pushed the Cavs to the limit.

"After the first game, people were like, 'I don't know if they're ready,'" Banchero said. "To come back the way we did, it shows where we're headed and shows what we're able to do."



Los Angeles Galaxy defender Jalen Neal (24) wins a header over Seattle Sounders FC defender Yeimar Gómez, (left), during the first half of an MLS soccer game in Seattle. The game ended a scoreless draw. (AP)

Kuwait Gymnastics Federation applauds Al-Ruzaihan success in Asian Champ'ship

KUWAIT CITY, May 6: The Kuwait Gymnastics Federation commended Nour Al-Ruzaihan's outstanding performance and commendable outcome in the 20th Asian Rhythmic Gymnastics Championship, which concluded in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Highlighting her achievement, the federation revealed that Nour clinched the eighth position in the hoop competition, amidst formidable contenders from nations like Indonesia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, China, and Singapore.

GYMNASTICS

They emphasized her remarkable feat of standing out among the continent's elite rhythmic gymnasts in the junior girl's category, having progressed to the championship's final round. The federation deemed the team's participation in this continental event a resounding success.

Notably, Al-Ruzaihan's eighth-place finish marks the pinnacle of



Al-Ruzaihan and her coaches honored upon their return to the country.

Kuwaiti gymnastics' history in continental competitions for girls and youth. The federation underscored Nour's status as a promising champion, deserving of utmost attention and support.

Reus eager to win CL ahead of farewell

BERLIN, May 6, (Xinhua): The announcement that striker Marco Reus is to leave the club this summer has triggered an emotional reaction from Borussia Dortmund fans ahead of their 2023-24 UEFA Champions League semifinal second leg against Paris Saint-Germain.

Many supporters demanded that the team win the tournament as a farewell present for the man who has played for over 12 years in Dortmund's shirt.

A 1-0 victory in the first leg on home soil gives Dortmund a slight advantage.

"He is a legend and has always been around for the club in good and bad times. He has become a crowd pleaser and has conquered the fans' hearts. I cannot think of anyone else more deserving of the trophy," coach Edin Terzic said.

Reus has won two trophies in his career - the 2017 and 2021 German Cup - but both were far from happy events. In 2017 he was substituted with a serious knee injury which sidelined him for

months, while in 2021, the game took place in an empty stadium due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The forward also missed many of the German national team's tournament outings with injury, including the 2014 FIFA World Cup triumph.

SOCCER

Reus announced plans to continue playing for another one or two years, with Manchester United and Major League Soccer thought to be possible destinations, but the forward spoke about the Champions League final as "a last big thing." For now, Dortmund are determined to survive this week's game in Paris. "That's the first step we need to do, and we know it's a hard nut to crack," Reus said. "We might dream about the final, but there is one more decisive game." With an overwhelming 5-1 victory over Augsburg in the Bundesliga last weekend, Dortmund are in good form, with Reus scoring a goal and delivering two assists.