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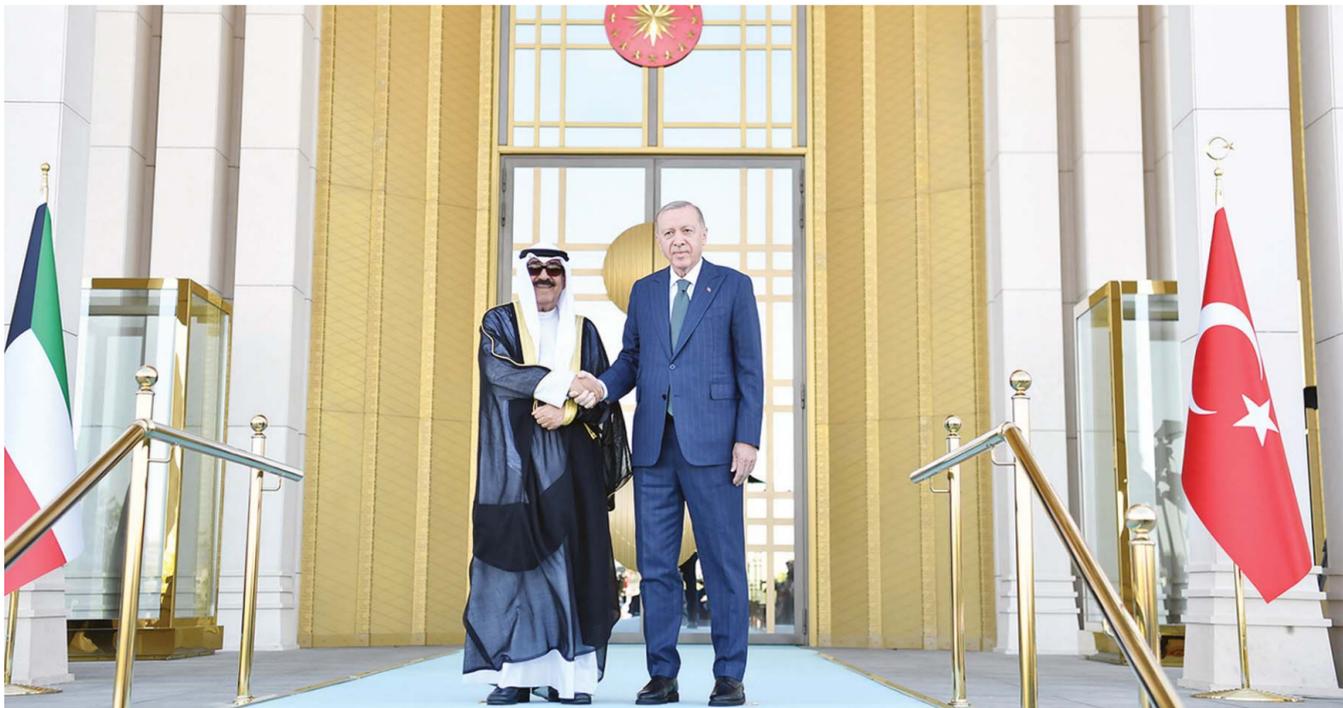


## LABOR PROTOCOLS UNBIASED, EXTEND FAIRLY TO ALL NATIONALITIES

# Kuwait revamps overseas recruitment

## H.H. AMIR BEGINS STATE VISIT TO TURKIYE

— Details Page 2 —



Amiri Diwan photo

### 'Credentials' key

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The committee overseeing labor market regulation is nearing completion of establishing protocols for recruiting foreign workers in specific technical fields demanded by the market. This initiative aims to streamline operations for business owners and private sector companies, fostering a conducive business environment to curb visa trade, reports Al-Jarida daily.

According to informed sources, the committee is focusing on devising recruitment mechanisms for key professions such as medical, educational, engineering, legal, accounting, and financial roles. These mechanisms will be applied uniformly to recruiters of all nationalities without discrimination, with implementation set to commence soon.

Following approval by relevant authorities, the implementation of the labor market regulation measures is expected to commence within the next few years.

The committee overseeing this regulation, comprising the Public Authority for Manpower and pertinent governmental and private entities such as the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Higher Education, the Kuwait University, and specialized professional associations, has nearly finalized the establishment of protocols for recruiting foreign workers in essential technical fields demanded by the market.

This initiative is geared towards facilitating business operations for owners and private sector enterprises, fostering a conducive business environment, and curtailing residency trade.

Continued on Page 5

### Kuwait an emerging tourism powerhouse

DUBAI, May 7, (KUNA): Kuwait has all the necessary potentials for ameliorating the tourism sector and become a preferred tourism destination for Arabian Gulf and international travelers, travel experts concurred.

In separate interviews with KUNA on the sidelines of the 31st session of the Arabian Travel Market in Dubai, the experts pointed to the stability, economic development and financial resilience as some of the potentials Kuwait has.

They commended the government endeavors and efforts, especially during the current period, to overhaul the tourism infrastructure, through increasing the number of luxury hotels, world-class restaurants, and entertainment facilities.

They also underlined the need for well-studied plans and efforts to promote tourism destinations and facilities to attract more visitors from all over the world.

"Kuwait has distinguished geographical location, and diverse and rich culture and history," Mohammad Mustafa, Dubai-based travel expert, told KUNA.

He pointed out that the development of the tourism sector in Kuwait would help achieve sustainable growth in tourism revenues, boost national economy and create job opportunities for nationals.

"Kuwait could also become a leading tourism destination in the region and attract more visitors and tourism investors," Mustafa said.

For his part, CEO of the Golden Globe Company Khaled Abuzaid said that Kuwait has well-established infrastructure and highly qualified national cadres in all economic and investment sectors who are able to develop the tourism sector to be able to compete with regional rivals.

He underlined the pivotal role of the tourism sector in the strengthening the national economy.

Abuzaid called for preserving and developing the cultural and environmental heritage for boosting the national identity of the state and attracts more tourists.

He also encouraged the government to introduce tourism-focused educational and training programs to

Continued on Page 5

### Day by Day

HOW many ministers are in prison, how many have escaped, and how many corrupt people spend sleepless nights? They feel insecure because they know they have walked the wrong path.

We pray to God to keep us away from betrayal of trust. Ministers, prime ministers, security officials and influential people had foreseen their eventual imprisonment and the ensuing public outcry over their scandals.

What's particularly troubling is that these individuals, despite their corrupt actions, wielded power oppressively and, in some cases, unjustly imprisoned their adversaries.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

### Nazaha takes proactive approach in combating corruption crimes

## Kuwait pledges to boost global anti-corruption efforts

CAIRO, May 7, (KUNA): Vice President of Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) Nawaf Al-Mahamel affirmed Tuesday Kuwait's commitment to enhance Arab and International cooperation in preventing corruption.

In his speech at the fifth session of the Arab anti-corruption convention Al-Mahamel said that Kuwait took an approach towards developing its institutional legislation and mechanisms in anti-corruption in line with the international and regional legislative development in the field.

He added that Kuwait, represented by Nazaha, was keen to exchange experiences and best practices, as well as exchange information with its counterparts, whether through joint memorandums of understanding and even requests for mutual legal assistance.

Al-Mahamel explained Nazaha actively participates in Arab and international networks and organizations concerned with combating corruption and was among the first entities to join the global operational network of law enforcement authorities concerned with combating corruption.

He stressed that it is inevitable to adopt and develop technological, digital and electronic methods of combating corruption crimes, adding that Kuwait seeks to keep pace with the qualitative and technical development in anti-corruption.

International and regional cooperation entities concerned with combating corruption, including the Arab

Continued on Page 5

## Kuwait's envoy backs Yemen peace process

KUWAIT CITY, May 7, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Ambassador in Belgium Nawaf Al-Enezi has restated his country's support for a political settlement to the Yemeni crisis as per the Gulf Initiative and its Executive Mechanisms, National Dialogue Conference Output and UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2216.

Al-Enezi, who doubles as chief of Kuwait's diplomatic mission at the European Union (EU) and NATO, made the remark on Tuesday during the sixth Senior Officials Meeting on Yemen, held in Brussels upon request from the EU and Sweden.

He commended UN Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg's efforts to uphold the truce, which came in the context of the initiative that was announced by Saudi Arabia in March 2021 to resolve the Yemeni crisis.

The Kuwaiti diplomat also reviewed Kuwait's humanitarian contributions to alleviate the humanitarian situation in Yemen, the last of which was five million US dollars offered by Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) in 2023.

He voiced sincere thanks to Sweden and the EU for co-organizing this meeting and their endeavor to alleviate the humanitarian situation in Yemen.

Meanwhile, the European Commission announced 125 million euro (USD 134.59 million) in new EU humanitarian funding to address the most pressing needs of people in Yemen amidst the ongoing crisis and escalating tensions in the region.

The announcement came on the occasion of the sixth Senior Officials Meeting on Yemen, chaired by Commissioner Janecz Lenarcic in Brussels.

The funding will be channeled exclusively through the EU's humanitarian partners, including UN agencies and NGOs actively involved in the response, supporting vulnerable communities affected by Yemen's decade-long conflict, displacement, and climate emergencies, the commission said in a press release.

Aid will support food security and assistance for malnutrition, health and specialized protection services and demining activities among others. Dedicated programs for education and child protection will also be supported, it added.



The Arab anti-corruption convention's fifth session began Tuesday at the League of Arab States (LAS) headquarters, chaired by Palestine and with Kuwait's participation.

## Israeli forces seize border crossing Kuwait denounces brutal Rafah assault

KUWAIT CITY, May 7, (Agencies): The State of Kuwait has warned against a "barbaric attack" that the Israeli occupation forces intend to launch on the city of Rafah in Gaza Strip, which would result in a forced displacement of Palestinians, in light of the lack of safe havens due to the massive destruction caused by the Israeli war machine.

A statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs affirmed Kuwait's complete rejection to the Israeli occupation forces' continued blatant violations of all international resolutions, calling for an end to these massacres, and their violation of international law, and international humanitarian law without deterrence, which exacerbates the humanitarian crisis and limits international peace efforts.

The ministry also renews its call on the international community to intervene immediately to stop these operations and genocide carried out by the Israeli occupation forces against defenseless civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Israeli tanks seized control of Gaza's vital Rafah border crossing on Tuesday as Israel brushed off urgent warnings from close allies and moved into the southern city even as cease-fire negotiations with Hamas remained on a knife's edge.

The U.N. warned of a potential collapse of the flow of aid to Palestinians from the closure of Rafah and the other main crossing into Gaza, Kerem Shalom, at a time when officials say the northern part of the enclave is already experiencing "full-blown famine."

The Israeli foray overnight came after hours of whiplash in the Israel-Hamas war, with the militant group on Monday saying it accepted an Egyptian-Qatari mediated cease-fire proposal. Israel, however, insisted the deal did not meet its core demands.

The high-stakes diplomatic moves and military brinkmanship left a glimmer of hope alive - if only barely - for a deal to bring at least a pause in the war, which as it marked its 7-month point Tuesday, has killed more than 34,700 Palestinians, according to local health officials, and has

devastated the Gaza Strip.

The incursion appeared to be short of the full-fledged offensive into Rafah that Israel has planned, and it was not immediately known if it would be expanded. The looming operation threatens to widen a rift between Israel and its main backer, the United States, which says it is concerned over the fate of around 1.3 million Palestinians crammed into the city.

U.S. President Joe Biden warned Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu again on Monday against launching an invasion of the city after Israel ordered 100,000 Palestinians to evacuate from parts of Rafah.

Cheers of joy overnight among Rafah's Palestinians over Hamas' acceptance of the cease-fire turned to fear Tuesday. Families fled in a steady stream out of Rafah's eastern neighborhoods on foot or in vehicles and donkey carts piled with mattresses and supplies. Children watched as parents disassembled tents in the sprawling camps that have filled Rafah for months to move to their next destination - which for many remained uncertain.



Palestinians look at the destruction after an Israeli strike on a residential building in Rafah, Gaza Strip, Tuesday, May 7, 2024. (AP)

### NewsWatch

**RIYADH:** The Representative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah offered condolences to the family of late Prince Bander bin Abdulmohsen Al-Saud. (KUNA)

**MOSCOW:** Kuwait's Ambassador to Russia, Rashed Al-Adwani, representing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, took part in Russian President's Vladimir Putin, inauguration ceremony for the fifth term.

The inauguration and oath-taking ceremony, held on Tuesday, took place in the Kremlin.

Kuwait's Embassy in the capital, Moscow, mentioned in a statement received by KUNA, that the ceremony was attended by high officials and foreign diplomats. (KUNA)

— See Also Page 6

**RIYADH:** Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan, received Tuesday a telephone call from his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov.

In a statement, Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the two sides discussed bilateral relations between the two countries and issues of mutual interest. (KUNA)

**CAIRO:** Somali National Army (SNA) killed on Tuesday Al-Shabaab commander after carrying out well coordinated operation at a location about 50 kilometers west of Hudur town in Bakool region under southwest State.

Army officials in the region identified the commander as Abdullahi Mohamed Yare, Somali National news Agency (SONA) said in a statement.

Yare was also the group's shadow tribal chief for one of tribes who collected extortion money from people there, the statement added. (KUNA)

## Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 03:34 Asr ..... 15:20  
Sunrise... 05:02 Maghrib .. 18:28  
Zohr ..... 11:45 Isha ..... 19:53

# Local

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

## Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:  
**By Day:** Rather hot with light to moderate northwesterly wind to light northerly wind, with speeds of 10-35 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

**By Night:** Mild with light to moderate northerly wind to north-easterly wind, with speeds of 10-35 km/h.  
**Station** **Max Exp** **Min Rec**  
Kuwait City 37 26

Kuwait Airport 37 26  
Abdaly 38 22  
Jahra 38 27  
Salmiyah 29 26  
Nuwaisib 39 22  
Wafra 39 24

## Kuwait Amir arrives in Ankara on state visit

Kuwait-Turkiye ties ... six decades of fruitful cooperation

**ANKARA, May 7, (KUNA):** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation arrived in Ankara on a state visit on Tuesday.

His Highness the Amir was welcomed by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkish Minister of Treasury and Finance and Chief of the Accompanying Mission of Honor Mehmet Simsek, Governor of Ankara Vasi Sahin, Kuwaiti Ambassador in Turkiye Wael Yousef Al-Enezi and Kuwaiti Consul in Istanbul Mohammad Sultan Al-Sharji.



Erdoğan

His Highness the Amir is accompanied by an official delegation that comprises Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs Dr. Anwar Ali Al-Mudhaf, Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, and senior officials from the Amiri Diwan and Foreign Ministry.

Earlier, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the accompanying delegation left Kuwait on Tuesday heading to Turkiye on an official state visit.

His Highness the Amir was seen off at the airport by Deputy Amir and Prime Minister Designate Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and caretaker Prime Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

Also present at the departure were Deputy Chairman of the Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Acting Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah, Minister of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shereeda Abdullah Al-Mousherji, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Oil Dr. Imad Mohammad Al-Atiqi, and senior state officials.

His Highness the Amir is accompanied by an official delegation, which includes Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs Dr. Anwar Ali Al-Mudhaf, Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, and senior officials from the Amiri Diwan and Foreign Ministry.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Tuesday paid a visit to Ataturk's mausoleum in Ankara, the Turkish capital.

His Highness the Amir laid a garland of flowers and signed the honor book.

### Official reception ceremony

An official reception ceremony was held at the Turkish Presidential Palace in Ankara on Tuesday in honor of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, on the occasion of his state visit to Turkiye.

His Highness the Amir was accompanied by a group of equestrians carrying the flags of the two countries to the presidential palace and was welcomed by the President of the Republic of Turkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Upon the arrival of the Kuwaiti official delegation to the Palace, trumpets were blown and artillery fired twenty-one rounds to welcome His Highness the Amir.

The national anthem of Kuwait and Turkiye were also played.

His Highness the Amir greeted some of Turkiye's top officials and the Turkish president greeted and welcomed the Kuwaiti official delegation.

### Six decades of fruitful ties

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's visit to Turkiye on Tuesday, the first since assuming the leadership post, is another milestone added to the six decades of fruitful ties.

The visit also comes to celebrate the 60th anniversary of establishing diplomatic ties.

The strength of ties between Kuwait and Turkiye expanded beyond the political realm, reaching high peaks in various domains such as investments and the economy to name but a few.

Kuwait opened its first embassy in Ankara in 1971, a step followed by the opening of the Turkish embassy in Kuwait in the same year.

Relations continued to solidify throughout the years since then and they were put to the test during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, an event that was met by strong Turkish condemnation and opposition.

In 1991, then Amir the late Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah visited Ankara post-Iraqi invasion in a display of gratitude towards the Turkish stance with Kuwait during its darkest times.

Kuwait returned in favor in July 2016 when the Kuwaiti government stood in solidarity with its Turkish counterpart during the failed coup. Then Amir the late Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, expressing his support to the Turkish leader and the will of the Turkish people.

During the history of relations, major visits occurred between leaders and top figures.

In 2008, the late Amir Sheikh Sabah visited Turkiye, resulting in the signing of seven agreements to boost relations in various domains.

A second visit to the Amir Sheikh Sabah occurred in April 2013 with eight bilateral agreements signed during the visit.

In between 2008 and 2014, several ministers from Kuwait and Turkiye exchanged visits a plethora of agreements on the military, security, and several other prominent fields.

In 2009, the late Amir Sheikh Sabah headed Kuwait's delegation to the 25th OIC Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC), which was held in Istanbul.

The late Amir Sheikh Sabah also headed Kuwait's delegation to the 13th OIC Summit in Istanbul in April 2016 and the international summit for humanitarian work, which was held also in Istanbul in May of the same year.

### Summit

The late Amir Sheikh Sabah also headed Kuwait's delegation to the urgent summit for the OIC, dubbed the Al-Quds (Jerusalem) summit, which was held in Istanbul in 2017.

On the Turkish, former President of Turkiye Abdullah Gul visited Kuwait on three separate occasions in 2009, 2011, and 2014 as part of the continuous efforts on the part of the two countries to bolster ties.

Turkish President Erdogan visited Kuwait on two occasions in 2015 and 2017 to boost relations and also play a part in the mediation efforts to resolve the Gulf relations crisis.

In 2017, President Erdogan bestowed on visiting late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah the Order of State award for his role in bolstering relations and his global humanitarian efforts and response. In return, Sheikh Sabah bestowed on President Erdogan the order of Mubarak the Great for his regional and international efforts.

Kuwait's support for Turkiye went beyond the political domain.

In August of 2021, the late Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent Kuwaiti firefighters and equipment to help Turkiye fend off the forest fires, which engulfed parts of the country.

In February 2023, the latter country faced a devastating earthquake.

The late Amir Sheikh Nawaf ordered the establishment of an air bridge to deliver humanitarian aid to those affected by the ground natural disaster. Kuwait donated USD 30 million to help relief aid efforts in Turkiye and Syria. The total of government and popular donations reached USD 97.7 million.

In the commercial domain, Kuwait exports to Turkiye in the third quarter of 2023 reached KD 13.5 million, while Turkish exports to Kuwait reached KD 169.2 million.

In 2016, the volume of commercial exchange reached USD 1.2 billion. In the same year, the number of projects executed by Turkish contracting companies in Kuwait reached USD 6.5 billion, while the volume of direct Kuwaiti investments in Turkish reached USD 1.7 billion.



HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the official reception ceremony held for HH the Amir.



HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is received at the airport by the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan upon arrival in Turkiye.



HH the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan walking hand-in-hand at the reception ceremony.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his team during the summit talks.

### Call to upgrade ties in all fields between two nations

## Kuwait, Turkiye sign cooperation agreements

ANKARA, May 7, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan witnessed on Tuesday the signing of several cooperation agreements at the Presidential Palace in Ankara.

The two sides signed an executive protocol between the Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense and the Turkish National Defense Ministry, regarding the purchase of defense industries from government to government.

The executive protocol was signed by Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya on behalf of the Kuwaiti side and Minister of Defense Industry Haluk Gorgun on behalf of the Turkish side.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on establishing a strategic dialogue was signed between the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The MoU was signed by Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya on behalf of the Kuwaiti side and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan on behalf of the government of Turkiye.

Both sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Kuwaiti Civil Defense and the Turkish Ministry of Interior and Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD) regarding disasters and emergency management.

The MoU was signed by Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya on behalf of the Kuwaiti side and AFAD Governor, Okay Memis.

A Letter of Intent was signed between the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority and the Turkish General Authority for Free Zones in the Ministry of Trade on cooperation in the free zones field.

The letter was signed by the Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs, Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf on behalf of the Kuwaiti side and the Minister of Trade, Dr. Omer Bolat on behalf of the Turkish side.

The two sides signed a Letter of Intent between the Kuwaiti Ministry of State for Housing Affairs and the Turkish Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change on the cooperation in housing and infrastructure.

The letter was signed by the Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs, Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf on behalf of the Kuwaiti side and Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Mehmet Ozhasaki on behalf of the Turkish side.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Kuwait's Investment Authority and the Turkish Presidency Investment Office regarding the cooperation on investment promotion.

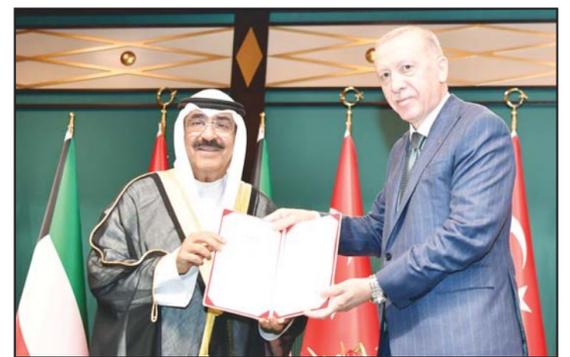
The MoU was signed by the Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic and Investment Affairs, Dr. Anwar Al-Mudhaf on behalf of the Kuwaiti side and Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Mehmet Ozhasaki on behalf of the Turkish side.

**Summit talks between Kuwait, Turkiye**  
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held summit talks with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Presidential Palace in Ankara on Tuesday.

The two leaders discussed historic relations between the two countries and ways promoting and developing the existing partnership at all levels.

In a speech, His Highness the Amir, expressing gratitude for the Turkish President, government and people for the warm hospitality, reaffirmed that his visit "boosts constructive cooperation between the two countries, and reflects desire of the two leaderships to promote it in all fields for the best of our countries and honors aspirations of our people."

His Highness the Amir commended the "historic relations between our countries for the past 60 years since their establishment in 1964, and we express



The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan awards Kuwait's Amir the Order of State.

our aspirations towards promoting these relations to honor aspirations of our peoples."

His Highness the Amir praised Turkiye's "honorable" support for Kuwait during Iraq's invasion in 1990.

He congratulated Turkiye for the success of Antalya's 3rd diplomatic forum, which was held last March, and commended the signing of a joint statement, on April 21, that marked the start of negotiations for a free trade agreement between the GCC and Turkiye.

His Highness the Amir said he was looking forward for a joint committee meeting to be held at the foreign ministers' level, as well as the economic, industrial and technical committee meeting that would be co-chaired by Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry.

"We affirm our aspiration for strengthening of joint cooperation in all fields especially in defense domain through government-to-government contracting," he said.

His Highness the Amir said Kuwait looked forward for further cooperation with Turkiye in trade and investment, noting the two countries have potentials to boost trade exchange and investment opportunities, citing Limak Holding's execution of Kuwait International Airport's Terminal Two (T2).

The two leaders also discussed regional and international issues of mutual interest, and the talks expressed common desire to bolster cooperation and coordination in many fields.

**Banquet in honor of Kuwait Amir**  
Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan held a dinner banquet in honor of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation, on the occasion of a state visit to Ankara.

**Erdogan awards Amir Order of State**  
Turkiye President Recep Tayyip Erdogan awarded Tuesday His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah with the State Order at the presidential palace in the Turkish capital, Ankara.

The State Order was given to His Highness the Amir to reflect deep-rooted ties between the two friendly countries.



Chief of the General Staff of the Army Lieutenant General Pilot Al-Muzain honors the outgoing Italian military attaché Colonel Salvatore Ferrara.

### Italy military attaché honored

Chief of the General Staff of the Army Lieutenant General Pilot Al-Muzain, met with Colonel Salvatore Ferrara, the Italian military attaché in Kuwait, at his office earlier today. The meeting was in honor of Colonel Ferrara's departure, marking the end of his tenure in the country.

In a press release, Lieutenant Gen-

eral Al-Muzain expressed his gratitude and appreciation for Colonel Ferrara's contributions during his time in Kuwait, specifically highlighting the role he played in strengthening military relations between the two nations. He extended his best wishes to Colonel Ferrara for continued success in his future endeavors.

## How fragile are oil-producing countries; diversify economy

"AMIDST growing concerns about climate change and a global shift towards renewable energy sources, traditional petro-states find themselves facing unprecedented challenges. A recent report from Carbon Tracker, composed of financial experts assessing climate risks to financial markets, highlighted the vulnerabilities of countries heavily reliant on fossil fuel extraction and exportation, including Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Council," columnist Samia Ahmad Al-Duaij wrote for Al-Jarida daily.

"As the world increasingly embraces clean energy alternatives, the future of oil-producing nations hinges on a delicate equilibrium. The International Energy Agency's latest Global Energy Outlook predicts a rise in demand for oil, gas, and coal by the end of the decade, despite falling costs for clean technologies. However, the recent call at COP28 in Dubai to expedite the transition towards renewable energy sources like wind and solar is set to accelerate this shift.



Samia Al-Duaij

"Simultaneously, the exploration of naturally occurring hydrogen within the Earth is compared to a new gold rush, reminiscent of the disruption caused by hydraulic fracturing in the early 21st century.

"A key concern highlighted in the report is the notion of a 'carbon bubble,' reflecting the disparity between the estimated value of fossil fuel reserves and their potential value in a world committed to limiting global warming as per the Paris Agreement.

"As efforts to mitigate climate change intensify, the demand for fossil fuels is expected to decline, posing significant economic risks to petro-states. This vulnerability extends beyond economic concerns to encompass social and political impacts, as many rely heavily on oil and gas revenues to fund government budgets and social welfare programs. External shocks, such as the war in Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic, further expose their susceptibility to global energy market fluctuations.

"In response, urgent action is urged to mitigate risks facing oil-producing nations by diversifying economies, investing in renewable energy infrastructure, and implementing policies supporting a just transition away from fossil fuels. While this transition presents challenges, it also offers opportunities for innovation, economic diversification, and sustainable development.

"The fate of petro-states rests on their ability to adapt to the evolving energy landscape and embrace sustainable development paths. Failure to do so leaves them vulnerable to the pressures of decreasing fossil fuel demand and the imperatives of a low-carbon future."

**Also:**

"Kuwait has undergone significant social progress from the pre-oil era to the post-discovery period. Both Kuwaiti men and women have played pivotal roles, driven by their commitment to development," columnist Dr Ghadeer Muhammad Asiri wrote for Al-Qabas daily.

"Women's involvement traces back through history when they assumed vital societal management tasks and made crucial decisions.

"Over time, they took bold steps towards education and participation, entering schools and universities in the forties and fifties. Despite facing restrictions on running and voting, they actively engaged in political discourse, attending seminars, National Assembly sessions, and state gatherings.

"The Kuwaiti Constitution, crafted amidst challenging circumstances, stands as a beacon of social advancement. Its provisions emphasize equality between Kuwaiti women and men in rights and responsibilities.

"The heroic resistance of Kuwaiti women during the early nineties, marked by sacrifices and resilience during the state's occupation, played a significant role. The state responded by granting women political rights on May 16, 2005, a milestone achieved with the support of forward-thinking men dedicated to social justice.

"The democratic evolution in Kuwait saw women's integration into ministerial roles, opening doors for nominations and voting, and their inclusion in national assemblies.

"Their persistent efforts extended to elections in various civic bodies, demonstrating their integral role in Kuwait's social, political, and national fabric.

"However, challenges persist, including filling legislative gaps concerning leadership roles, equal compensation, and addressing issues like violence against women and incest.

"Providing women with the necessary support, rights, and job opportunities is crucial not only for their advancement but also for achieving the country's development goals.

"Studies indicate that women in leadership positions are less prone to corruption. Bold steps are needed to tackle growing issues of violence against women and incest, dispelling misconceptions and ensuring justice prevails."

"Al-Badr is gone... Al-Badr bin Abdul Mohsen, the renowned Saudi poet, has left us. He will always be remembered as a symbol of quality in contemporary Saudi literature and in the realm of Saudi song," columnist Talal Al-Saeed wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"His heartfelt and restrained poems have touched the hearts of generations, not only in the Gulf, but throughout the Arab world. People rejoiced and sang along to his words, which had a distinct color and character. The late poet, Prince Badr bin Abdul Mohsen -- may Allah have mercy on him -- was a star wherever he went and his audiences applauded him."

"A true poet, Al-Badr lived his life through his words. He generously shared his talent with his beloved country, his cherished values and his countless fans. His weapon was the eloquent word and his signature style was unmistakable. When you saw him, you knew he was a great poet even before he spoke. The essence of poetry radiated from his face.

"Al-Badr enriched the literary landscape through his creative work. He effortlessly delved into various themes and effortlessly expressed himself. His poetic fountain never ran dry, as he continued to create until his passing. His legacy is a literary school that future generations can learn from and follow in his footsteps. Exploring his extensive body of work offers invaluable insights. It goes beyond simply reading and enjoying his poems or songs; it delves into the deeper realms of word choice, the processing of thoughts, and the ability to harness emotions to express the suffering of others.

"May Allah have mercy on the poet Prince Badr bin Abdul Mohsen. He was the true symbol of quality in modern Saudi literature. May Allah forgive him, and grant patience and solace to all those who mourn his loss. He may have physically departed, but his works will continue to live on as long as life exists. We belong to Allah, and to Him, we shall return."

□ □ □

"The political volcano and the Kuwaiti mixture! ... Volcanoes are formed when high temperatures inside the Earth cause rocks to melt. This leads to the emission of hot gases through cracks in the ground, resulting in smoke and fiery lava being expelled from the Earth's interior into the surrounding area," columnist Dr. Abdullah Sahar wrote for Al-Rai daily.

"In Kuwait, we are witnessing a similar situation in our political landscape. Over time, political tensions have been building up, dating back to the brutal Iraqi invasion.

"Many political and economic issues have been left unresolved, as they are continually postponed to avoid dealing with their consequences. Political and economic corruption comes in the form of purchasing favors, lack of accountability for negligence and preferential treatment in job appointments and senior positions based on political satisfaction rather than justice and efficiency. His Highness the Amir, may Allah protect and preserve him, mentioned all these in his sublime speech.

"In addition, there has been manipulation of populist and illogical demands, exploitation of sectarian divisions, and a neglect of the true purpose of the media, which has been reduced to a tool for spreading rumors and creating fake celebrities. Furthermore, conflicts and disputes among politicians and their elites have only intensified. All of these issues represent the growing heat at the political bottom, causing cracks in the societal and political foundations. If not addressed with a 'political cooling' approach, it could lead to a dangerous eruption of volcanic lava affecting all of us (Allah forbid).

"By 'political cooling', we mean the need to identify and promptly resolve the real problems, rather than merely trying to patch up the cracks caused by the increasing heat at the bottom. The longer these issues are neglected or ignored, such as patronage appointments, discriminatory practices, tolerance of corruption, political bribery, and the failure to address important matters while being distracted by sectarian divisions, the hotter the situation becomes.

"Security and freedom are two essential and interconnected elements that cannot be disregarded. They must be balanced, with neither one prioritized over the other. This balance is what establishes a State. Throughout history, the concept of freedom has always been accompanied by security, without tipping the scale towards tyranny.

"Therefore, the social contract emerged, leading to the creation of constitutions. This same principle applies to the constitutional system in Kuwait, where freedom and security are integral components of the State and society, defined by a constitutional charter agreed upon by both the ruler and the people.

"Articles two and seven of the Constitution stipulate the essence of the Kuwaiti political system with justice, equality and freedom serving as the pillars of society. The State's responsibility is to safeguard equality of opportunity and tranquility. Hence, there can be no true freedom without security, and vice versa. This equation of balance is the key for those seeking stability and prosperity within the 'Kuwaiti mixture'."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes

# Bid to mitigate disaster risk

Kuwait, GCC official discuss cooperation

**KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Acting Chief of the General Fire Force, Major General Khaled Fahd, hosted Brigadier General Dr. Rashid Al Marri, the Head of the Gulf Cooperation Council Center for Emergency Management, along with his delegation at the DGFDD building, reports Al-Jarida daily.**

The meeting focused on discussing areas of cooperation between the two entities, aiming to achieve mutual objectives. Al Marri provided insights into the GCC Center for Emergency Management and its role in enhancing the capabilities of GCC countries through collaborative efforts in handling emergency situations.

In return, Fahd presented an overview of the preventive measures implemented by the Fire Department to mitigate the risks of disasters and accidents. The visiting delegation was also given an opportunity to observe the operations center's functioning and response protocols.

Both sides agreed to establish a framework for cooperation to effectively pursue shared goals. The meeting was attended by Brigadier General Ahmed Hammoud, the Acting Vice President of the Control Sector, Brigadier General Ahmed Al-Daihani, the Director of the Public Relations and Media Department, and several other leaders from the fire force.

However, despite Major General Fahd's reputation for competence and dedication to advancing the fire force's departments, recent actions have stirred controversy.

## AOU efforts lauded

### KEPS explores joint bid to protect environment

**KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Jenan Behzad, the Secretary General of the Kuwait Environment Protection Society (KEPS) highlighted the purpose of her recent meeting with Dr. Mohammad Sayed Mohammad, the Director of the Arab Open University (AOU) in Kuwait, and Dr. Omar Al-Jarrah, the Vice President of the University for Planning and Development Affairs, reports Al-Jarida daily.**

The meeting aimed to address numerous environmental concerns and explore avenues for collaborative efforts between the university and the Environmental Society. Additionally, they discussed the potential signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance cooperation in environmental endeavors, scientific research, and joint activities.

Behzad emphasized the significant progress made by the university in environmental initiatives, particularly in implementing global environmental projects and smart, eco-friendly initiatives.

During the meeting, discussions revolved around various aspects of collaboration, including joint environmental research publication, data exchange related to environmental issues, and the launch of environmental programs and projects. The overarching goal is to support sustainable development objectives, sending a clear message that positive change is both possible and necessary.

The planned MoU between the Environmental Society and the Arab Open University seeks to streamline research operations, analyze environmental data for policymakers and researchers, and enhance the quality of research and studies in development and planning policies. It also aims to establish a network of experts and specialists in environmental development, facilitate the exchange of scientific and practical knowledge, raise awareness about environmental and developmental issues, and provide comprehensive databases and information across various related fields.

## 'Towers' worker jailed

### 22,897 Kuwaitis, expats 'banned' from traveling

By Jaber Al-Hamoud  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Sentence Enforcement General Department at the Ministry of Justice, headed by Judge Abdullah Al-Othman, has been exerting tremendous efforts to preserve public money through the enforcement of judgments in various governorate administrations and Kuwait International Airport.**

According to statistics from the ministry; 22,897 citizens and expatriates were banned from traveling in the first three months of 2024; while the travel ban of 11,654 citizens and expatriates was lifted.

The statistics also revealed that the travel ban lifted for 1,122 citizens was 'a one-time trip' as they are Kuwaitis who do not fear escape or treatment abroad.

Ahmadi Governorate recorded the highest number of travel ban during the aforementioned period, followed by Farwaniya, Hawally, Capital and Mubarak Al-Kabeer.

**Towers staff jailed:** The Criminal Court ruled to imprison an Egyptian employee for seven years for embezzling KD29,000 -- the value of forged Kuwait Towers tickets.

According to the case files, the Egyptian was arrested red-handed by the legal department of the Kuwait Towers Administration, in coordination with the detectives. He admitted to forging the tickets as he printed them and sold them within two years. He stole around KD29,000 after he infiltrated the database and tampered with the information and dates.

The accused appeared before the court with his defense team that demanded for declaration of his innocence due to lack of incriminating evidence and that his confession was under duress. However, the arbitrator disregarded the argument of the defense team, confirmed that the accusation against the Egyptian was proven true, and that the elements of the crime were present, which necessitated his imprisonment and deportation after serving time.

**Arrest orders for officers:** The Court of Appeals ordered the arrest of a brigadier general and a lieutenant colonel in the Juvenile Investigation Department who were sentenced to four years in prison with hard labor on charges of torturing and manhandling two teenagers when referring them to the Central Prison.

The court scheduled a session for May 21 to decide on the case.

The Public Prosecution charged the defendants with torturing and beating the two teens in order to force them to confess and give statements and information related to a felony case. The teenagers told the investigators that they do not remember the circumstances of a video clip related to the case that was shown to them.

## Other Voices

### Scorching summer and the 'rogue conscience'

By Ahmad alsarraf

All the reassurances of Ministry of Electricity officials that the situation is under control and that there will be no programmed outages next summer, that is, after two months, are incorrect, as the outages began days ago, and Al-Nuzha and Al-Mansouriya were the first victims.

We, and dozens of others, have warned of the coming crisis. The power network is overburdened, the transformers are exhausted, the pressure continues, and consumption is rising. The Ministry will not be able to meet all of the state's energy needs in light of the increasing expansion in the distribution of residential homes, by the thousands, and the expectation of an increase in the number of expatriates.

The lack of any plans to build new electrical projects, knowing that contracting and building them to begin their work requires a period of no less than seven years, if we start moving today.

We faced, almost a decade ago, something similar to the current situation, as the power cuts included all areas of Kuwait. It was a sad tragedy in a country awash with money, and of course the government did not learn anything from that experience.

On that day, the leadership issued orders to do everything possible to avoid the problem of power outages, so the ministry, in its most wasteful era, disbursed 400 million dinars to everyone who submitted an offer to supply electricity stations or generators, even if he was a seller of carrot juice, so scrap stations were imported from countries, remnants of the Soviet Union.

The terrible deficit was actually averted, for a few weeks, then several stations and transformers stopped working one after another, and began to burn or explode and caused casualties, which was due to corruption of open procurement and it was a scandal, at that time,

from which all accused companies escaped without any penalty, for known reasons, known to everyone and as a result 400 million dinars of public money were found their way in the pockets of some people, and the same crime is expected to be repeated soon.

It is clear from the minutes of the last National Assembly, and from a speech by MP Abdul Wahab Al-Issa, that he warned, as we have warned dozens of times, against indifference to the size of the problem, and that no one wants to comprehend the scale of the crisis that Kuwait will face soon, as it is large and frightening.

The end is inevitably coming, and reliance on the Gulf interconnection will not cover the need, as the electricity sector, and the public sector as a whole, has died clinically, due to its inability to solve any problem, especially this tired and confusing file, which, at least, the last five electricity ministers chose to ignore, due to their inability to do anything about it.

The Ministry is in a well-known hellish cycle, and the deficit is on the rise, as it will reach 1,300 megawatts by the end of this year, 1,400 megawatts the following year, and 1,600 in 2026, and all of this is without taking into consideration the need for new hospitals, university cities, and other huge projects. This is in addition to the need for energy for tens of thousands of residential homes in the new areas.

Note that the power was delivered to more than one area in Al-Mutla'a, and often with the intervention of representatives whose feelings are hurt by seeing a woman's bare shoulders, and they do not care about the problem of the terrible shortage of electrical power, if they do not seek to increase its deficit.

The problem is that the two technical ministries are partly run by Sharia graduates and during their reign all maintenance contracts, whether for power plants or roads, ended, and they did not say a word!

The issue is serious, and tens of thousands of citizens and residents will be affected. Therefore, I will reconnect the electricity generator to my house, after removing it for a while.

□ □ □

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

## House robbed as family on foreign trip

### 5 years jail for assaulting old lady

**KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Criminal Court ruled to imprison a woman for five years with hard labor for assaulting an elderly woman, reports Al-Anba daily.**

Case files indicate that the assault happened in a famous market when the victim's six-year-old grandson entered the restroom for women, as the defendant shouted at the child and then pushed his grandmother such that the latter fell on the floor.

Attorney Mohammad Al-Sayegh, lawyer for the victim, confirmed that the accused assaulted his client. He presented medical reports and surveillance camera recordings that documented what happened to the elderly woman outside the bathroom.

Al-Sayegh demanded that the accused

be punished in accordance with the Penal Code, and that she be obliged to pay his client KD5,001 temporary compensation for the material and moral damages suffered by the elderly woman.

□ □ □

**House ransacked:** A citizen has filed a report at Jahra Police Station, stating that an unknown person stole money, gold jewelry and official documents from his house while he and his family were abroad, reports Al-Anba daily.

In his report, the citizen disclosed that the suspect broke into his house and stole the above-mentioned items from his bedroom, indicating that he and his family were outside the country when the burglary happened.

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**'Green transformation project vital to achieve vision of boosting business environment'**

**KISR official urges private sector role in global renewable energy goals**

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Dr. Mishaan Al-Otaibi, the Acting Director General of the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), emphasized the significant role of the private sector in fulfilling global commitments to double the production of renewable energy and enhance its efficiency,

reports Al-Jarida daily. He stressed the importance of achieving the vision of enhancing the business environment through the green transformation project as a means to realize these objectives. Al-Otaibi made these remarks following a meeting with Spyros Kou-

velis, the leader of the European Union cooperation team, to explore avenues for enhancing cooperation between Kuwait and the European Union in the fields of renewable energy and climate change, as well as addressing global environmental challenges.

During the meeting, the participants discussed the green transformation project, which aims to bolster the utilization of renewable energy sources, foster environmental conservation efforts, and promote economic growth and diversification. Kouvelis underscored the

significance of bolstering collaboration between the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries through the green transformation project, viewing it as a pivotal milestone in advancing toward a sustainable future. It's important to highlight that

this initiative is deemed crucial for enabling renewable energy solutions and strengthening regional cooperation. Furthermore, it represents a significant stride toward achieving sustainability and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

**Delay in budget approval hinders KD 814 mn development projects**

MoF agrees to include costs for study, design over rail project

**KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Several government agency officials have voiced their frustrations over their inability to proceed with assigned projects, particularly those pertaining to development initiatives. The primary hindrance stems from the delay in adopting the draft budget law for the fiscal year 2024/2025, which encompasses projects valued at 814 million dinars, reports Al-Qabas daily.**

Despite the notable reduction in development expenditures within the 2024/2025 plan, marking the lowest levels in 14 years, the delay in budget approval poses significant challenges to adhering to project com-

pletion timelines. The Ministry of Finance has circulated directives to government agencies, stipulating that the signing of new contracts for the fiscal year 2024/2025 is impermissible until certain sections of the budget are ratified by the National Assembly or until the budget law is enacted. However, Circular No. 2 of 2024 issued by the Ministry of Finance allows government agencies, with prior approval, to initiate measures such as launching practices and tenders outlined in their respective project budgets for the fiscal year 2024/2025. Contracting procedures should not be finalized until relevant budget sections receive approval. Exceptions are made for contracts pertaining to periodic supplies, employment, services, maintenance, and rentals, in accordance with Decree Law No. 31 of 1978. To expedite project implementation aligned with the approved annual development plan for 2024/2025, government agencies are instructed to coordinate with relevant authorities and com-

mence necessary measures. Spending on these projects must adhere to circular instructions and any subsequent directives issued by the Ministry of Finance. In a related development, it has been revealed that the Ministry of Finance has agreed to include the costs for study, design, and document preparation for the Gulf Railways Tender's first phase in the budget of the Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport. This initiative aims to advance the railway project, spanning approximately 2,117 kilometers from Kuwait to Muscat, Oman, as envisioned since 2009 to facilitate transportation and trade among GCC countries. Additionally, the first phase of the Kuwait-related segment of the railway, extending from Nuwaiseb center to the main passenger station in the Shaddadiya area, covers a distance of 111 kilometers. This underscores the ongoing efforts to advance crucial infrastructure projects, despite challenges posed by budgetary delays.



EU cooperation group and KISR representatives.

Al-Jarida photo



Ambassador Dr Swaika envoy receiving the commemorative shield from Governor Sheikh Hamad Salem Al-Hamoud.

**'MEW completes job performance evaluation of 32K employees'**

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The concerned sectors in the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy have completed the annual job performance evaluation of 32,000 employees, reports Al-Anba daily quoting reliable sources from the ministry. Sources confirmed these evaluations were linked to the systems of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) immediately after approval, add-

ing that around 400 remaining evaluations are being finalized. Sources emphasized that the ministry is keen on completing job performance evaluations promptly, as this is necessary in approving the lists of employees eligible for the excellent job performance bonus. Sources explained this bonus is given to employees who achieved a high level of performance during the evaluation year. They

revealed certain procedures are related to the evaluation and linking it with the CSC; hence, such transactions are being coordinated with the CSC. Sources expect that the excellent job performance bonus will be disbursed soon. They also expressed appreciation for the efforts exerted by Undersecretary Eng. Maha Al-Asousi, as well as the assistant undersecretary for the Administrative Affairs Sector and the Personnel Affairs Department director.

**Indian envoy calls on Ahmadi Governor**

The Indian Ambassador to Kuwait HE Dr Adarsh Swaika called on HE Sheikh Hamad Salem Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah, the new Ahmadi Governor. The meeting served as an opportunity to strengthen the longstanding ties between the two nations, emphasizing avenues for further collaboration across various sectors. Discussions also centered on enhancing joint cooperation and knowledge exchange, particularly at the local administrative level, including governorates and regions. As a gesture of appreciation and

goodwill, the governor presented Ambassador Dr Swaika with a commemorative shield, expressing hopes for the continued prosperity and expansion of friendly relations between Kuwait and India. In response, the Indian envoy expressed his gratitude for the warm reception and the hospitality extended to him and his country's diplomatic mission. He also conveyed his deep appreciation for the support and care provided to Indian citizens residing in Kuwait, both at the official and community levels.



Eng. Maha Al-Asousi during the exhibition.

Al-Jarida photo

**Maintenance plan for power grid highlighted**

**MEW supports sound construction policy at 'How to Build Your House'**

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy participated in the "How to Build Your House" forum and exhibition, a significant event held under the patronage of Dr. Salem Al-Hajraf, the Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, and Minister of State for Housing Affairs, reports Al-Jarida daily. The event was attended by Rashid Al-Enazi, the Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare, and Eng. Maha Al-Asousi, the Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy. The ministry's participation aimed to promote awareness of sound construction practices, particularly regarding the provision of electricity and water services in accordance with the requirements set forth by the ministry and relevant authorities in the country. Specialists from the ministry delivered informative lectures during the forum, focusing on building energy-effi-

cient houses, with the support of the Public Relations Department. In a separate announcement, the Ministry of Electricity disclosed the maintenance schedule for the current week, which includes maintenance activities on secondary transformer stations across the six governorates. The maintenance work will be conducted until the following Friday, starting from 8:00 am and lasting for four hours each day. Consequently, there will be temporary disruptions to the electrical supply during these maintenance periods. These maintenance activities, spanning 52 stations, are part of the ministry's ongoing efforts to enhance the resilience of the electrical network, especially in preparation for the summer season. The ministry emphasized its commitment to providing uninterrupted services to all consumers across the regions, expressing appreciation for the dedication and efficiency of the maintenance teams responsible for carrying out these essential tasks.

**Discussions focus on combating poverty**

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Zakat House participated in the annual meetings of the Islamic Development Bank Group in Riyadh from April 27 to 30, coinciding with the bank's golden jubilee celebration marking its 50th anniversary, reports Al-Jarida daily. The discussions focused on combating poverty and its implications across various sectors such as education, health, income, and economic empowerment. These deliberations highlighted the need for comprehensive development strategies to tackle poverty effectively.

Dr. Majid Al-Azmi, Acting Director General of the Zakat House, emphasized the importance of addressing poverty comprehensively. During the event, a memorandum of understanding and cooperation protocol were signed with the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development to promote the role of zakat in economic and social development initiatives. The cooperation protocol with the Islamic Development Bank aims to strengthen collaboration in areas of mutual interest, contributing to the enhancement of living standards and the promotion of progress and prosperity.

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Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
<b>NOW</b>	<b>NOW</b>
<b>BHD 76.230 net</b>	<b>BHD 170.247 net</b>

Promo period from 2<sup>nd</sup> May to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024 Terms & conditions apply\*

## LOCAL

## Kuwait revamps

Continued from Page 1

Similarly, the Public Authority for Manpower persists in its endeavors to regulate the labor market and refine the processes for recruiting overseas workers through a series of regulatory measures, facilitated by a civil government committee comprising a panel of experts, reports Al-Rai daily.

According to reliable PAM sources the committee will have representatives from PAM and key stakeholders such as the ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Higher Education, the Kuwait University, and the specialized public service associations.

The sources said during a recent meeting various proposals for recruiting workers, particularly in technical fields, were deliberated upon.

The sources elaborated that the committee scrutinized the most pressing technical professions demanded by the labor market, intending to devise tailored recruitment mechanisms for each while at the same time underscoring that the proposed recruitment process would unfold gradually, with the initial phase targeting professions in medical, educational, engineering, legal, and financial domains.

Efforts are underway to ascertain the labor market's requirements through comprehensive assessments conducted by the committee, inclusive of all nationalities eligible for entry into the country.

Among the proposals is a stipulation to withhold the issuance of new work permits unless preceded by the endorsement, validation, and equivalence of academic credentials by official bodies and the Kuwaiti embassies overseas.

Furthermore, the committee is mulling over the addition of accredited professional experience certificates for each profession, spanning a minimum of 3 years for select roles and up to 5 years for others.

Additionally, applicants may be required to present a profession practice certificate sanctioned by relevant authorities and successfully clear a profession practice test.

Recent decisions issued by PAM have regulated the process of transferring expatriate labor brought in from abroad between employers, allowing companies to recruit all anticipated workers from overseas without the need for internal transfers.

However, the daily has learned that the committee has made significant progress in this regard, with a focus on addressing the market's demand for technical professions.

Regarding the proposed mechanisms, sources indicated strict enforcement of certifying practical certificates issued by labor-exporting countries, in coordination with Kuwaiti embassies abroad.

Additionally, requirements include possessing a certificate indicating years of experience specific to each profession, alongside a profession practice certificate endorsed by relevant au-

thorities in the worker's country.

Equivalency of the certificate in higher education in Kuwait and successful completion of profession practice tests sanctioned by certain public benefit associations are also part of the criteria.

## Kuwait pledges

Continued from Page 1

League, must take into account the necessity of consolidating advanced technical and digital technologies, especially after the spread of artificial intelligence.

He noted the possibility of enhancing the effectiveness of developing national legislation directed at corruption by providing opportunities for citizens to participate in the processes of surveying the shortcomings of existing legislation, and help amend and develop them.

He touched on the events in the Palestinian territories by saying that today's conference coincides with cruel events that Palestine has and is still witnessing, as a result of the inhumane actions of Israeli occupation, which are a flagrant violation of the international humanitarian law.

He stressed the need to strengthen Arab solidarity to consolidate the international rejection of acts of war directed against Palestinians, urging to support them.

Nawaf Al-Mahamel headed the Nazaha's delegation to the Arab anti-corruption convention commenced on Tuesday at the General Secretariats of Arab League's HQ, chaired by Palestine.

The works of the fifth session of the Arab anti-corruption convention commenced on Tuesday at the General Secretariats of the League of Arab States (LAS) headquarters, chaired by Palestine with the participation of Kuwait.

LAS Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, Dr. Mohamed Al Amin Weld Kik said in a speech delivered on behalf of the Secretary-General of the league, Ahmad Aboul Gheit, during the opening session that corruption undermines the development of most countries around the world.

Dr. Mohamed Al Amin Weld Kik added that the Arab anti-corruption - which was approved by the Arab Ministers of Interior and Justice during their joint meeting on December 21, 2010, and entered into force on June 29, 2013, aims to coordinate the efforts, improve capacities, and enhance cooperation and more.

He called on all countries that have not yet acceded to this convention to expedite this process, indicating that the state parties reached 15 Arab countries out of 22, the latest being Somalia, which ratified it in October 22, 2023, meaning that seven Arab countries are still outside the convention.

He expressed his support for Palestinians against the systematic extermination, ethnic cleansing, starvation and forced displacement amid the

double standards of colonial and racist powers.

On his part, Head of the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission, Raed Radwan affirmed in his speech during the opening that his country has built state institutions and managed to join many international organizations in pursuit of good governance.

He pointed out that the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission was established in 2010 as an independent national institution concerned with achieving integrity and fighting corruption, emphasizing that the Palestinian people, who offer martyrs, prisoners, and wounded, reject corruption.

He noted that the 19th government composed of national competencies has been formed and tasked with national duties in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, and will provide relief to the Palestinians, especially in Gaza, in addition to building institutions.

The Arab anti-corruption aims to strengthen measures aimed at preventing and combating corruption, as well as promoting integrity, transparency and accountability, in addition to enhancing Arab cooperation in preventing corruption.

The delegation of Kuwait was represented by Vice President of the Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha) Nawaf Al-Mahamel.

## Kuwait an

Continued from Page 1

improve the efficiency of travel agencies, workers and ensure provision of high-level services to tourists.

Meanwhile, Director General of Lebanon Radio Asaad Marwan told KUNA that Kuwait "possesses great potentials and opportunities to achieve a remarkable tourism renaissance".

He called the private and public sectors in Kuwait to cooperate to turn this goal into a reality on the ground for benefit of the national economy and society in general.

He urged the Kuwaiti government to launch initiatives and programs to encourage investment in this sector and facilitates related procedures.

He also called for diversifying programs for different kinds of tourism to attract different types of tourists.

The Arabian Travel Market is the leading global event for the inbound and outbound travel industry in the Middle East. For over 30 years, the annual event has connected products and destinations from around the world with buyers and travel trade visitors at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

The 31st edition of Arabian Travel Market, which kicked off on Monday and concludes on Thursday, brings together 2,300 exhibitors, from more than 165 countries, and 41,000 attendees.

From startups to established brands, the event highlights how innovators are enhancing customer experiences, driving efficiencies and accelerating progress towards a net-zero future for the industry.

## 'Arab Media Forum' a breeding place for ideas, initiatives: min

'Kuwait proud to host its activities, discussion sessions'

KUWAIT CITY, May 7, (KUNA): Minister of Information and Culture, Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi said Monday that Arab Media Forum has been a breeding place, since its inception, for ideas, initiatives, and forward-looking studies in various fields of media in its written, audio, visual and electronic branches.

This came in a speech delivered by Minister Al-Mutairi, representing the forum's sponsor, His Highness the Prime Minister-designate Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, at the opening ceremony of the 19th session.

Al-Mutairi referred to the Ministry of Information's strategy, in his speech, which aimed at strengthening partnership and unifying efforts with the private sector and civil society as a true embodiment of the great interest that the country's political leadership attaches to the media's mission of awareness, education, and strengthening the cultural identity of the Arab and Islamic worlds.

The minister added that hosting such forum is an extension of the keenness of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, for unity among Arab nations in the media field and the development of the Arab media structure.

"The State of Kuwait is proud to host its activities and discussion sessions since its first launch 21 years ago," the minister said.

Al-Mutairi explained that in light of the great transformation that occurred in the media and the modern technological developments that represented a qualitative shift and a real revolution at a remarkable pace, and the mixing of human intelligence with technology in forming the form and content of the media, all professionals and those interested must study, research and analyze the magnitude of the challenges imposed by technology.



KUNA photo  
The Minister of Information honors the General Supervisor of Palestinian Media, Ahmed Assaf (guest of honor at the forum for this session - State of Palestine).

## Lectures and workshops mullied

'Knowledge is First Line of Defense' campaign to run throughout month

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Affairs at the Ministry of Health Dr. Munther Al-Hasawi launched the annual hand hygiene campaign entitled, "Knowledge is First Line of Defense," which was held recently at the headquarters of the Infection Prevention Department in Sabah Specialized Medical District under the patronage of Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi.

Director of the Infection Prevention Sector Dr. Ahmed Al-Mutawa said in a statement on the sidelines of the event that Kuwait occupies an advanced position in combating the spread of diseases and achieved high rates in preventing the spread of infection within health facilities and establishments, such that it is considered one of the countries with the least spread of infection in intensive care units for children and premature infants.

He disclosed that the campaign aims to raise awareness and establish health awareness on the importance of hand hygiene and enhance skills and expertise aimed at improving health services and preventing infections associated with health care.

He pointed out that the campaign's activities will continue throughout the month, by organizing many awareness programs and events in hospitals and health centers where infection prevention teams will create a corner to educate health team members, patients and visitors about the importance of hand hygiene and its role in preventing infection, in addition to lectures and workshops.

On the other hand, Head of the Infection Prevention Unit Dr. Kholoud Al-Fadala organized 19 lectures in several health facilities and hospitals with the aim of educating health staff about the importance of hand hygiene and reducing the spread of infection; in addition to practical training for the medical staff in hospitals and specialized centers.

Bankruptcy of Mr. Mohammed Ibrahim Saleh Al-Shaya under the judgment issued in Lawsuit No. 1595 / 2002 Plenary Commercial / 2 Statement of Payables (Provisional Debts List) for Bankruptcy as at 31 December 2023 (based on the resolution of the Bankruptcy Judge dated 14 / 4 / 2024 Application No. 78 of 2022 registered under the automatic No.: 223938640

Payables resulting from the bankruptcy business and recorded in the books and in accordance (1) with the data provided by the bankrupt: 31 / 12 / 2023

S.N.	Creditor Name	Debt Type	Debt Bond	Lawsuit No.	Amount Due
(1)	Bankruptcy Manager / Faleh Rashid Saad Al-Azmi	Professional fees	Estimation of fees		11,500.000 K.D
(2)	Former Bankruptcy Manager / Ahmed Duaij Al-Duaij	Professional fees	Contract remuneration		36,000.000 K.D
(4)	Lawyer / Ahmed Maher Tolba	Professional fees	Contract remuneration		4,000.000 K.D
(7)	Simatco Soil Testing Company	Commercial	Book Debt		4,082.000 K.D
(5)	Labor dues for employees in the office currently	Labor	Book Debt		296,258.000 K.D
(6)	Othman Ismail Malallah	Commercial	Court judgment	Commercial Appeal 6/1412/98	321,000.000 K.D
(7)	Othman Ismail Malallah	Commercial	Court judgment	Plenary / 1 Civil 948/99	5,001.000 K.D
<b>Total</b>					<b>677,841.000 K.D</b>

Items No. 6 and 7 above are debts recorded in the books according to the beginning of the period and to which Item No. 5 (file debts) is added, executed below.

(2) Payables according to the Execution Files - Ministry of Justice : 31 / 12 / 2023

Execution File No.	Creditor Name	Debt Type	Automated Lawsuit No.	Execution File No.	Amount Due
(1)	Public Utilities Management Company	Commercial	214190130	162-21419013	4,511.000 K.D
(3)	Legal Representative of Markaz Company	Commercial	960064740	162-96006474	29,887.000 K.D
(5)	Othman Ismail Malallah	Commercial	970516590	169-97051659	1,400,020.000 K.D
(6)	Mufid Muhammad Abdul aal	Labor	102417650	269-102417765	20.000 K.D
(7)	Yasser Ahmed Haddad	Labor	112514770	269-11251477	21,768.960 K.D
(7)	Wael Ahmed Taha	Labor	112514770	269-11251477	6,602.121 K.D
(7)	Muhammad Ibrahim Rizk	Labor	112514770	269-11251477	3,111.614 K.D
(7)	Ibrahim Alsayed Saleh	Labor	112514770	269-11251477	6,602.121 K.D
(7)	Ihsan Mohamed Abdel Aal	Labor	112514770	269-11251477	5,630.680 K.D
(7)	Ahmed Abd El , Moneim Mohamed Salam	Labor	112514770	269-11251477	6,602.121 K.D
(7)	Tamer Fathi Mohamed	Labor	112514770	269-11251477	3,608.143 K.D
(7)	Ramadan Mohammed Abdul Majid	Labor	112514770	269-11251477	1,364.388 K.D
(8)	Director of Judicial Fees Department	Judicial Fees	163321260	269-16332126	541.565 K.D
(9)	Zainab Muhammad Mohib	Rentals	162579500	469-16257950	3,905.000 K.D
<b>Total</b>					<b>1,494,174.713 K.D</b>
<b>Total Debt</b>					<b>2,172,015.713 K.D</b>

The debts were calculated under Item No. (7) above according to the registrar on the debtor, noting that there is solidarity in these amounts with 2 defendants in the same labor lawsuit.

According to the provisions of Article (111) of Law No. (71) of 2020 promulgating the Bankruptcy Law: ("The debtor and every creditor, even if his name is not mentioned in the list of debts, may appeal to the bankruptcy administration against the debts included in the list, within ten days from the date of announcing the list, and the Bankruptcy Court shall have jurisdiction to decide on this grievance.")

Bankruptcy Trustee / Dr. Faleh Rashid Al-Azmi Bankruptcy Trustee Address Kuwait - Qibla Plot (11) Block (18) Munira Hamoud Al-Amiri Building Floor (1) Office (6) Tel: (+965) 22442424 / 99081 109 / 99105903

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GET  
**1 GM GOLD COIN**  
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## World News Roundup

## Europe

## US soldier arrested

## Putin begins fifth term as president

MOSCOW, May 7, (AP): Vladimir Putin began his fifth term Tuesday as Russian leader at a glittering Kremlin inauguration, setting out on another six years in office after destroying his political opponents, launching a devastating war in Ukraine and concentrating all power in his hands.

At the ceremony inside the gilded Grand Kremlin Palace, Putin placed his hand on the Russian Constitution and vowed to defend it as a crowd of hand-picked dignitaries looked on.

"We are a united and great people and together we will overcome all obstacles, realize all our plans, together we will win," Putin said after being sworn in.

Since succeeding President Boris Yeltsin in the waning hours of 1999, Putin has transformed Russia from a country emerging from economic collapse to a pariah state that threatens global security. Following the 2022 invasion of Ukraine that has become Europe's biggest conflict since World War II, Russia has been heavily sanctioned by the West and is turning to other regimes like China, Iran and North Korea for support.

Already in office for nearly a quarter-century and the longest-serving Kremlin leader since Josef Stalin, Putin's new term doesn't expire until 2030, when he will be constitutionally eligible to run again.

In a heavily choreographed performance, Putin was pictured in his office looking at his papers before walking along the Kremlin's long corridors, pausing at one point to look at a painting, on the way to his inauguration.

His guard of honor waited in the sleet and rain for hours, in temperatures hovering just above freezing, while Putin made the brief journey to the Grand Kremlin Palace in his Aurus limousine.

Russia defends veto: Russia on Monday defended its veto of a UN resolution urging all nations to prevent a nuclear arms race in outer space, challenging the US, Japan and their Western allies to support Moscow's rival resolution calling for a ban on all weapons in space "for all time."

Russia's UN ambassador, Vassily Nebenzia, said the United States and Japan, which sponsored the vetoed resolution, are guilty of "hypocrisy and double standards." He accused the US and Western nations more broadly of planning for the military exploration of outer space, including the deployment of weapons, in particular "strike combat systems."

US deputy ambassador Robert Wood countered, telling the UN General Assembly: "The truth is that Russia currently has several conventional anti-satellite weapons already in orbit, one of which it tested in 2019." He added Russia has threatened to target satellites with weapons, and said there "is credible information that Russia is developing a new satellite carrying a nuclear device."

American sentenced to 10 days: An American English-language tutor was arrested in Moscow on hooliganism charges for breaking into a children's library while intoxicated and was sentenced to 10 days in jail, state news agency RIA-Novosti reported Tuesday.

News reports said William Nycum was found in the library on Friday after breaking a window to gain entry.

Nycum was in Russia on a six-month tourist visa, staying with acquaintances and working as an English instructor, the reports said.

The arrest comes at a time of heightened tension between Russia and the United States centering on Russia's war in Ukraine, and increasing concern about Americans detained in Russia.

US soldier arrested in Russia: An American soldier visiting a girlfriend in Russia's port city of Vladivostok was arrested on charges of stealing from her and remains in custody, according to several US officials.

US officials said Monday the soldier, Staff Sgt Gordon Black, 34, was stationed in South Korea and was in the process of returning home to Fort Cavazos in Texas. Instead, officials said that Black, who is married, traveled to Russia to see a longtime girlfriend. His arrest only further complicates US relations with Russia, which have grown increasingly tense as the war in Ukraine drags on.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss personnel details.

'Russian plot to kill Zelenskyy foiled': Ukrainian counterintelligence investigators have foiled a Russian plot to assassinate President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and other top military and political figures, Ukraine's state security service said Tuesday.

Two colonels in the State Guard of Ukraine, which protects top officials, were detained on suspicion of enacting the plan drawn up by Russia's Federal Security Service, or FSB, a statement said. The colonels were recruited before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, according to the statement.

It quoted the head of the State Security Service, Vasyl Maluk, as saying the plot foresaw an attack before Russian President Vladimir Putin's inauguration for a fifth term on Tuesday. Maluk said that he personally oversaw the top-secret operation to track the plot.

Ukrainian claims of Russian efforts to kill Zelenskyy aren't new. Zelenskyy said in 2022 there has been at least 10 attempts to assassinate him, and now the war with Russia has stretched into its third year.

UK army personnel details exposed: British officials say the names and bank details of thousands of serving British soldiers, sailors and air force members have been exposed in a data breach at a payroll system.

The Ministry of Defense said Defense Secretary Grant Shapps would make a statement in the House of Commons on Tuesday afternoon "setting out the multi-point plan to support and protect personnel."

The ministry would not comment on a Sky News report that Chinese hackers are suspected of carrying out the cyberattack.

Cabinet Minister Mel Stride told Sky that "we are not saying that at this precise moment."

British media reported that the government will blame "hostile and malign actors" but will not name the country it believes is responsible.



Putin



US President Joe Biden speaks during an event to present the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy to the United States Military Academy Army Black Knights, in the East Room of the White House on May 6 in Washington. (AP)

## Biden presents Commander-in-Chief's Trophy to Army Black Knights

US President Joe Biden on Monday recognized the United States Military Academy with the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy for besting other service academies in football.

Army beat both the US Naval Academy and the US Air Force Academy during last year's season. The college, based in West Point, New York, posted an overall win-loss record of 6-6, including a

57-point victory over Delaware State University, one of Biden's favorite schools.

With Biden in the White House's East Room on Monday were 48 cadets who are set later this month to receive their diplomas and their military commissions.

"Everyone on this stage stepped up to serve, to lead, to join a long line of American servicemen, each

a link of a chain of honor," Biden said to the Army football team players who gathered around him.

The Air Force Falcons have won the trophy 21 times, compared with 16 for the Navy Midshipmen and 10 for the Army Black Knights.

The competition among the service academies began in 1972. The trophy, topped by three silver footballs, weighs 170 pounds (77 kilograms). (AP)

## Politics

## House member defends seat in Indiana primary

## Sanders runs for Senate re-election

WASHINGTON, May 7, (AP): US Sen Bernie Sanders of Vermont announced Monday he will run for re-election this year, squelching speculation that the 82-year-old progressive icon might retire at a time when the Democratic Party is anxious about the advancing age of its top leaders.

Hailing from a Democratic stronghold, Sanders' decision virtually guarantees that he will return to Washington for a fourth Senate term. And his announcement comes at a critical moment for Democrats as the party navigates a growing divide over Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza.

Sanders has criticized President Joe Biden's handling of the US relationship with Israel even as he's hailed much of Biden's domestic agenda ahead of what could be a tough re-election fight for Biden against presumptive GOP presidential nominee Donald Trump.

## Aid

Sanders said he wants the war in Gaza ended immediately, massive humanitarian aid to follow and no more money sent to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"We are living in a complicated and difficult political moment," Sanders told The Associated Press on Monday. "I very strongly disagree with Biden in terms of the war in Gaza."

At home, he said, the presidential election is between Biden and Trump, "and Donald Trump is in my view the most dangerous president, has been the most dangerous president in American history."

With the prospect of Trump's possible return to the White House, Sanders framed his bid to return to the Senate

as being driven by concerns about the future of democracy in the US in an announcement video, he said that in many ways the 2024 election "is the most consequential election in our lifetimes."

"Will the United States continue to even function as a democracy, or will we move to an authoritarian form of government?" he said. He questioned whether the country will reverse what he called "the unprecedented level of income and wealth inequality" and if it can create a government that works for all, and not continue with a political system dominated by wealthy campaign contributors.

Known for his liberal politics and crusty demeanor, Sanders has been famously consistent over his 40 years in politics, championing better health care paid for by the government, higher taxes for the wealthy, less military intervention and major solutions for climate change. He has also spent his career trying to hold corporate executives to account, something that he's had more power to do as chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

## Also:

NEW YORK: Donald Trump is accusing Joe Biden of offering a weak response to antisemitism, wielding the clashes on colleges campuses over the war in Gaza as a campaign issue. But Trump's attacks ignore his own long history of rhetoric that invokes the language of Nazi Germany and plays on politics.

The latest example came over the weekend, when Trump - accusing the White House of having a role in his multiple state and federal criminal prosecutions - told Republican donors gathered for a private retreat at his Florida

resort that Biden is running a "Gestapo administration," referring to the secret police force of Nazi Germany.

Trump's attempts to claim a moral high ground against antisemitism come as the Democratic president is navigating the intense divisions of the Israel-Hamas war and the resulting unrest from demonstrations.

Meanwhile, the judge in Donald Trump's hush money trial fined him \$1,000 on Monday and, in his sternest warning yet, told the former president that future gag order violations could send him to jail.

INDIANAPOLIS: A Ukrainian-born congresswoman who recently opposed sending aid to her war-torn country is defending her seat Tuesday against a fellow Republican who has outpaced her in spending and fundraising.

US Rep Victoria Spartz is the first and only Ukrainian-born House member and previously backed support for the country. But ahead of her primary contest, she reversed her position and voted against sending \$61 billion in aid to Ukraine. She defended the switch, arguing her loyalty is to America first and that she wanted to see policy on the U.S.-Mexico border included in the aid package, a position largely shared by her Republican challengers.

The election in the northern suburbs of Indianapolis will determine whether Spartz's maneuvers will pay off. More broadly, the race is a barometer of whether support for Ukraine is a powerful issue among GOP voters. The issue has become an increasingly divisive topic among Republicans in Washington, where many are pressing for a drawdown in aid.



Vladimir Putin walks to take his oath as Russian president during an inauguration ceremony in the Grand Kremlin Palace in Moscow, Russia on May 7. (AP)



Hidalgo



Abbott

## America

Tornado hits Oklahoma: A tornado destroyed homes and toppled trees and power lines when it roared through a small Oklahoma town, one of several twisters that erupted in the central United States amid a series of powerful storms that stretched into Tuesday. At least one death was reported.

The tornado ripped through the 1,000-person town of Barnsdall, about a 40-minute drive north of Tulsa, on Monday night.

At least 30 to 40 homes in the Barnsdall area were damaged, the Oklahoma Highway Patrol reported, and the state Department of Health reported a nursing home was damaged and patients were being evacuated. A natural gas leak and numerous road closings due to debris also were reported, according to Osage County Emergency Management. (AP)

'Man tried to shoot pastor': A man who tried to shoot a pastor during a service at a Pennsylvania church was thwarted when his gun didn't fire and he was tackled by a congregant, authorities said.

The chaos at the Jesus' Dwelling Place Church in North Braddock took place Sunday while the service was being livestreamed, state police said in a news release.

Bernard J. Polite, 26, of Braddock entered the church just after 1 pm and walked toward the front while the Rev Glenn Germany was giving a sermon, police said. The pastor told WTAE-TV in Pittsburgh that Polite smiled at him and they made eye contact just before Polite pointed the gun at him. Germany then ducked out of the way as a male congregant tackled Polite. (AP)

Floodwaters start receding: Floodwaters in the Houston area and parts of Southeast Texas began to recede on Monday, allowing residents to begin returning to their homes and assess damages after

days of heavy rainfall that pummeled the area and led to hundreds of rescues - including people who were stranded on rooftops.

While officials in Harris County, where Houston is located, reported no deaths or major injuries from the flooding, Gov Greg Abbott said there were at least three

deaths in the state. Among those killed was a 4-year-old boy in North Texas who died after riding in a car that was swept away in fast waters.

After days of heavy rainfall in the Houston area and other parts of Southeast Texas, Monday's weather was dominated by mostly sunny skies and little if any rain.

"We can absolutely see the light at the end of the tunnel, and we've made it through the worst of this weather event," Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo, the county's top elected official, told reporters Monday. (AP)

'Infant found safe': A Texas man has been arrested in connection with the shooting deaths of two New Mexico women, the wounding of a 5-year-old girl and the kidnapping of an infant, authorities said Monday.

Clovis police said the 26-year-old man from the Houston area was taken into custody at a residence in Abilene, Texas.

They said the man was being held by the FBI on suspicion of two open counts of first-degree murder, one count of first-degree kidnapping and two counts of child abuse.

Police said 10-month-old Eleia Maria Torres was found at the Abilene home with minor injuries and was recovering at a hospital.

The suspect apparently has no connection to the women killed or the two children and investigators are trying to determine a motive, according to police. (AP)



A staff member introduces an owl to the visitors during an open house event at the Orphaned Wildlife (OWL) raptor rehabilitation center in Delta, British Columbia, Canada, on May 4. The two-day open house event offered opportunities to the general public to visit the facility and learn about the conservation work done for wild birds, thereby increasing public awareness of raptors, their habitat, and the environmental impact on people. (Xinhua)

## Africa

## 'Floods affect 750K'

## S.Africa building collapse kills six

CAPE TOWN, South Africa, May 7, (Agencies): Rescue teams trying to find dozens of construction workers missing since a multi-story apartment complex collapsed in a coastal city in South Africa have made contact with 11 people buried alive beneath the mangled wreckage, authorities said Tuesday.

One man called his wife from underneath the rubble of the five-story building that had been under construction when it collapsed Monday, the head of the rescue operation said. That enabled emergency responders to locate the man, although he was still trapped and hadn't yet been brought out.

Six workers have been confirmed dead and there are fears that the death count could rise sharply. There is no news on 37 other people unaccounted-for amid the huge slabs of concrete and metal scaffolding that came crashing down when the building collapsed in the city of George, about 400 kilometers (250 miles) east of Cape Town.

Twenty-one other workers were rescued from the site and taken to various hospitals, with at least 11 of them suffering severe injuries, the George municipality said.

Colin Deiner, head of the provincial Western Cape disaster management services, said the search-and-rescue operation would likely take at least three days. "We are going to give it the absolute maximum time to see how many people we can rescue," Deiner said at a press conference. "It is very, very difficult if you are working with concrete breakers and drillers close to people."

Deiner said it would take most of Tuesday to rescue the 11 workers that rescue teams were in contact with, some of whom had limbs trapped under concrete and couldn't move. Four of the workers are in what was the basement of the building, Deiner said.

"Our big concern is entrapment for many hours, when a person's body parts are compressed," Deiner said.

Deiner said it was possible that there were more survivors deeper in the wreckage and a process of removing layers of concrete would begin after the 11 located workers were taken out.

**Togo president signs law:** Togolese President Faure Gnassingbe has signed a controversial new constitution that eliminates presidential elections, a statement from his office said late Monday. It's a move that opponents say will allow him to extend his family's six-decade-long rule.

Under the new legislation, parliament will have the power to choose the president, doing away with direct elections. The election commission on Saturday announced that Gnassingbe's ruling party had won a majority of seats in the West African nation's parliament.

Ahead of the vote, there was a crackdown on civic and media freedoms. The government banned protests against the proposed new constitution and arrested opposition figures. The electoral commission banned the Catholic Church from deploying election observers. In mid-April, a French journalist who arrived to cover the elections was arrested, assaulted and expelled. Togo's media regulator later suspended the accreditation process for foreign journalists.

**2 Kenya Airways staffers released:** The Republic of Congo's military has released two Kenya Airways staffers who were detained for two weeks in a cargo dispute, Kenya's foreign ministry said Monday.

The staffers' detention had led Kenya Airways to suspend flights to Congo, but the state-owned airline said flights would resume Wednesday.

The airline said it had rejected the cargo because it didn't have the required documentation. The nature of the cargo, described as "valuable," hasn't been disclosed.

Congo's military had arrested the staffers from the airline's offices in the main airport in the capital, Kinshasa.

A military court granted the airline's application for their release but the military continued to hold them.

Kenya and Congo have cordial relations, with Kenya participating in U.N.-backed peacekeeping missions in Congo.

**'E. Africa floods affecting 750K':** UN humanitarian aid on Monday nearly 750,000 people were affected by flooding in eastern Africa, with 234,000 displaced and more than 236 killed - more than 229 in Kenya alone.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) also said local authorities in Kenya reported more than 285,000 people were affected nationwide.

"The United Nations and our partners are supporting the government-led response and have reached more than 126,000 people with water and sanitation assistance, 31,000 people with food and cash assistance, more than 5,000 people with health services, and nearly 26,000 people with emergency shelter support," OCHA said.

The office said that in Somalia, more than 160,000 people were affected by flooding, with more than 37,000 displaced or relocated.

**'Authorities responsible for fire':** A report into a building fire that killed 76 people in South Africa last year has concluded that city authorities should be held responsible because they were aware of serious safety issues at the rundown apartment block at least four years before the blaze.

The nighttime fire at the five-story building in downtown Johannesburg on Aug. 31 was one of South Africa's worst disasters. At least 12 children were among the dead and another 86 people were injured, with some having to leap out of windows to escape the flames.

Others said they threw small children out the windows in the hope that they would be caught by people below. Many of the victims were burned beyond recognition having become trapped in the overcrowded building and it took authorities weeks to identify bodies using DNA tests.

Retired Judge Sisi Khampepe was put in charge of the inquiry, which began in October. She delivered the first part of her report on Sunday and concluded that the City of Johannesburg, which owns the building, had shown "total disregard" for its "calamitous state."



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi waves to people as he arrives to cast his vote during the third phase of general elections, in Ahmedabad, India on May 7. (AP)

## India votes in third phase of national elections

Millions of Indian voters across 93 constituencies were casting ballots on Tuesday as Prime Minister Narendra Modi mounted an increasingly shrill election campaign, ramping up polarizing rhetoric in incendiary speeches that have targeted the Muslim minority.

Tuesday's polling in the third round of multi-phase national elections has crucial seats up for grabs in states including Karnataka, Gujarat and Uttar

Pradesh. Most polls predict a win for Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party, which is up against a broad opposition alliance led by the Congress and powerful regional parties. The staggered election will run until June 1 and votes will be counted on June 4.

Modi, who voted in western Ahmedabad city on Tuesday, had kicked off his campaign with a focus on economic progress, promising he would make India a developed nation by 2047. But in recent

weeks, he and the ruling BJP have doubled down heavily on their Hindu nationalism platform, with Modi employing some of his most divisive rhetoric in his decade in power.

Analysts say the change in tone comes as the BJP aims to clinch a supermajority or two-thirds of the 543 seats up for grabs in India's lower Parliament by consolidating votes among the majority Hindu population, who make up 80%. (AP)

## Asia

## US, Philippine forces stage combat drills

## China's leader Xi begins Serbia visit

BELGRADE, Serbia, May 7, (AP): Chinese leader Xi Jinping's visit to European ally Serbia on Tuesday falls on a symbolic date: the 25th anniversary of the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade during NATO's air war over Kosovo.

US jets dropped five bombs on the Chinese Embassy compound in the Serbian capital on May 7, 1999, setting it ablaze and killing three Chinese nationals. Twenty other people were injured in the incident, which has burdened relations between the two powers ever since.

Xi referred to the bombing in an op-ed published in Serbia's "Politika" newspaper on Tuesday, saying that "we must not forget that 25 years ago today, NATO brazenly bombed the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia," according to translations carried by Chinese state media.

"The Chinese people value peace but will never allow historical tragedies to happen again," Xi added.

The Western military alliance had launched the air war in March that year to force then Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic to end a brutal onslaught against ethnic Albanian rebels in Kosovo.

The US at the time apologized and said the embassy bombing was a mistake that happened due to faulty intelligence. The intended target, Washington said, was the headquarters of a Serbian state arms exporter located on the same street, a few blocks away.

"Imagine that somebody would, even by accident, strike an American Embassy somewhere around the world. The reaction would be immediate," said Sven Biscop, a professor of European foreign and security policy at the Ghent University and Egmont Institute.

**Also:** **TOURMALET PASS, France:** France's president is hosting China's leader at a remote mountain pass in the Pyrenees on Tuesday for private meetings after a high-stakes state visit in Paris dominated by trade disputes and Russia's war in Ukraine.

state prosecutor's office said in an attempt to reconstruct the scene.

Chief state prosecutor Maria Elena Andrade Ramirez described what likely

would have been moments of terror that ended the trip for the three men.

She theorized the killers drove by and saw the foreigners' pickup truck and tents

and wanted to steal the truck's tires and other parts. But "when (the foreigners) came up and caught them, surely, they resisted."

She said that's when the killers would have shot the men. She said they were likely not attacked because they were tourists. "The evidence suggests they (the killers) did not know where they were from."

Andrade Ramirez said the reconstruction of events was based on the forensic examiner's reports, noting all three had bullet wounds to the head.

There was a hurried attempt to destroy evidence. The foreigners' tents were apparently burned. The pickup truck was driven miles away and burned. The assailants' truck was later found with a gun inside.

Then, at "a site that is extremely hard to get to," the bodies were dumped into a well about 4 miles (6 kilometers) away. Investigators were surprised when, underneath the bodies of the three foreigners, a fourth body was found that had been there much longer.

"They had to have previous knowledge of it," Andrade Ramirez said of the attackers, acknowledging the possibility they were behind the previous killing.

The well had been covered with boards. "It was literally almost impossible to find it," Andrade Ramirez said. It took two hours to winch the bodies out. (AP)



The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Director-General Audrey Azoulay presents Peng Liyuan, wife of Chinese President Xi Jinping, also a UNESCO special envoy for the advancement of girls' and women's education, with a ten-year service honor certificate, in Paris, France on May 6. Peng visited the UNESCO headquarters on Monday morning in Paris on invitation and met with Azoulay. (Xinhua)



Callum



Ramirez

## Lat/Am

**2 pilots killed in copter crash:** An Ecuadorian navy helicopter crashed on Monday in the southwestern coastal province of Santa Elena, killing two pilots onboard.

The Bell 430 helicopter was on a planned mission when it crashed at approximately 2:30 p.m. local time (1930 GMT) in the Juntas del Pacifico commune in Santa Elena, the navy said in a statement.

Rescuers have located the crash site of the helicopter and retrieved the bodies of the two pilots, according to the statement.

The cause of the helicopter crash, the second such incident for the Ecuadorian Armed Forces in less than two weeks, has yet to be revealed.

On April 26, an army helicopter crashed in the eastern Amazonian province of Pastaza, killing eight, including five soldiers and three civilians, while transporting humanitarian aid to flood victims. (Xinhua)

**Trip turns deadly for surfers:** Two Australians and an American were doing what they loved on the stunning, largely isolated stretch of Baja California's Pacific coast. Their last images on social media showed them sitting and gazing at the waves, contemplating the breaks.

What happened to end their lives may have been as random as a passing pickup truck full of people with ill intent. The surfers were shot in the head, their bodies dumped in a covered well miles away. How it unfolded was the stuff of nightmares.

Brothers Jake and Callum Robinson from Australia and American Jack Carter Rhoad had apparently stopped to surf the breaks between Punta San José, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) south of Ensenada, and La Bocana, further north on the coast. They were attacked there on April 28 or 29.

As soon as police arrived at their last known camp site, it was clear that something had gone violently wrong.

There were bloodstains and marks "as if heavy objects had been dragged," leading to suspicions of an attack, the Baja California



Emergency workers on the scene of a collapsed building in George, South Africa, on May 7. Six workers have been confirmed dead and there are fears that the death count could rise sharply. (AP)

	Change	Closing pts
DUBAI - DFMGI	+0.44	4,156.29
JAPAN - Nikkei 225	+599.03	38,835.10
EGYPT - EGX 30	+315.98	26,429.69
PAKISTAN - KSE 100	+32.01	72,754.19

	Change	Closing pts
SAUDI - TASI	-14.51	12,357.99
PHILIPPINES - PSEI	-33.91	6,618.58

# Business



Hong Kong business delegation at the KIA.



Hong Kong business delegation during a visit to the KISR.

## Delegation seeks collaborations in clean energy, AI, and more

# Hong Kong business delegation explores investment opportunities in Kuwait

By Paul Francis X. Fernandes  
Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The BridgeME Kuwait-Hong Kong Business Delegation from the Hong Kong Ambassadors Club (HKAC) recently visited Kuwait as part of the Middle East tour to explore investment opportunities in the country. The delegation included members of the fast-growing sectors like clean energy, smart logistics, AI/robotics, and mechanical and engineering contracting with representative companies of A-Grade Energy, Rice Robotics, Green Monday, and EcoConsortium Hong Kong.

The delegation is currently engaged in discussions regarding several Memorandums of Understanding, with ongoing deliberations on intention to sign agreements with the ministries of Commerce and Industry, Electricity and Water and Renewable Energy, Kuwait Investment Authority, KISR, the Kuwait Direct Investment and Promotion Authority, etc., fostering future collaborations and emphasizing the commitment to sustainable development and innovation with several government institutions, said The Honourable Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung GBM GBS JP, the Founder and Director of the Hong Kong Ambassadors Club, who was also co-led by Patrick Tsang, Chairman of family office Tsang's Group and HKAC and Andre Kwok, Chief of Staff of the family office, and also the Executive Director of the HKAC.

During an exclusive interview with the Arab Times the delegation members gave a brief insight of what the delegation has to offer investors, each bringing a wealth of experience and expertise to the table.

The Hon Jeffrey Lam, who is also the Non-Official Member of the Executive Council of the HKSAR, Managing Director of Forward Winsome Industries, added the Hong Kong Ambassadors Club comprises members from several individual companies.

The Hon Jeffrey Lam is also a member of the General Committee of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Hong Kong Industries. He also serves as a member of the Executive Council and the Legislative Council.

He went on to say, "Our overarching goal is to catalyze commerce and connectivity for a sustainable world. Hong Kong's unique position as a super-connector and its commitment to the "headquarters economy" strategy facilitate global business relationships, particularly with regions like the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

Patrick Tsang who is the Chairman of Tsang's Group and has worked on numerous IPO and M&A transactions said at the Hong Kong Ambassadors Club, "we curate events and initiatives that facilitate dialogue, forge alliances and shape the future of business and technology. A-Grade Energy Ltd, a clean tech company based in Hong Kong, is pioneering renewable energy solutions with a focus on solar glass and lithium battery storage, contributing to a low-carbon environment and advancing green technology globally.

Tsang who is also a qualified solicitor in England, Wales and Hong Kong; active in various charity and business associations and the first member from Hong Kong to join the Emirates Family Office Association said, "In this area The Hong Kong Ambassadors Club plays a pivotal role in nurturing vibrant ecosystems that drive trade, investment, innovation, and sustainable development.

Collaborations with leading tech manufacturers in China and partnerships with research institutions like HKUST underscore "our commitment to innovation and commercialization in renewable energy," he added. The companies with the Hong Kong Ambassadors Club - Bridge ME Limited and Tsang's Group, signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation & Technology Park (HSITP) and announced the partnership with the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks (HKSTP) respectively, where the advanced technologies companies from Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area of Mainland China will be spring-boarded to the Middle East market expansion through Kuwait.

As a prominent business family with deep roots in investment and commerce, originating from Hong Kong, Patrick Tsang said, Tsang's Group leads strategic investment initiatives to bolster innovation and global expansion in alignment with Hong Kong's Vision 2030+ and Innovation Technology Development Blueprint.

He added, Hong Kong boasts investor-friendly policies, including a tax-free regime, making it a prime destination for tech enterprises and family businesses. Moreover, the government's increasing budget allocation for technology innovation, notably the Hong Kong Investment Corporation with a budget of \$25.7 billion, reinforces its commitment to technological advancement.

The Greater Bay Area, he said, with a population of 86 million and a geographical size of 56,000 sq km, positions Hong Kong as a key market player.

Blue Sky Scaling, a technology business scaling platform under the investment and advisory company Bridge ME Limited, focuses on sectors vital for future growth, including renewable energy, bio-tech, artificial intelligence, robotics, mobility, software, and gaming & entertainment tech, he added.

Their efforts have resulted in significant milestones, such as the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Ministry of Investment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (MISA) and the BridgeME UAE-HK Smart City Business Delegation, fostering collaborations and sustainable development.

He went on to say, "Our overarching goal is to catalyze commerce and connectivity for a sustainable world. Hong Kong's unique position as a super-connector and its commitment to the "headquarters economy" strategy facilitate global business relationships, particularly with regions like the Middle East and Southeast Asia. The Hong Kong Ambassadors Club plays a pivotal role in nurturing vibrant ecosystems that drive trade, investment, innovation, and sustainable development.

"At the Hong Kong Ambassadors Club, we curate events and initiatives that facilitate dialogue, forge alliances, and shape the future of business and technology. A-Grade Energy Ltd, a clean tech company based in Hong Kong, is pioneering renewable energy solutions with a focus on solar glass and lithium battery storage, contributing to a low-carbon environment and advancing green technology globally," said Tsang.

"Collaborations with leading tech manufacturers in China and partnerships with research institutions like HKUST," he said, "underscore our commitment to innovation and commercialization in renewable energy."

# Kuwait Ministry of Finance unveils plan for FY 2024/25

State-owned real estate evaluation initiative highlighted

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Ministry of Finance has unveiled its comprehensive plan for tenders, practices, and contracts slated for the fiscal year 2024-2025, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Among the 63 tenders and practices outlined, a significant initiative stands out: the evaluation of the state's private real estate assets. This endeavor aims to engage specialized real estate evaluation companies to optimize returns on state-owned properties.

In addition to real estate evaluation, the Ministry's plan encompasses various practices geared towards enhancing the efficiency and security of its automated information center.

These include initiatives such as license renewal and maintenance for the ministry's firewall devices, renovation, maintenance, and equipping of the main computer room, license renewal for antivirus programs, and evaluations of network security to identify potential vulnerabilities within the Ministry of Finance's network infrastructure.

These proactive measures underscore the Ministry's commitment to modernizing its operations, maximizing asset value, and bolstering cybersecurity measures to safeguard critical financial data. By implementing these initiatives, the Ministry aims to ensure robust governance and efficiency in its operations throughout the fiscal year.

The Ministry's practices included the following:

- Practicing the planning and budgeting system for the public sector
- Practicing the strategic plan system of the Ministry of Finance
- BEPS project to combat tax base erosion and profit shifting

## 'Shift towards quantitative analysis'

# CMA adopts proactive, risk-based supervision

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: The Capital Markets Authority (CMA) has undertaken significant developments in its supervisory methodology to align with international best practices, transitioning from traditional oversight to a more proactive and risk-based approach, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This shift aims to enhance the effectiveness of the Authority's supervisory role by focusing on identifying and addressing risks before they escalate, rather than reacting to events after they occur.

**Key elements of this new supervisory approach include:**

Proactive supervision -- The CMA is shifting towards proactive monitoring of risks, analyzing trends, and directing oversight resources based on identified risks. This contrasts with traditional supervision, which typically reacts to events after they have occurred.

■ The practice of providing electronic services to the tax administration

■ Maintenance and technical support for the KITAS automated tax system

■ Practice on providing support services in the financial fields and systems for the Ministry's financial and tax affairs sector

■ Supply, installation and operation of Integrated Tax Administration (ITAS) and electronic services

■ Practice maintenance of operational environment equipment for expropriation management

■ Exercising supervision over the

Risk-based oversight -- The CMA is adopting a risk-based approach to supervision, which involves obtaining a deep understanding of the nature of the businesses it supervises, monitoring risks, evaluating risk management effectiveness, and preparing risk matrices to determine the impact of various risks.

Data-driven decision making -- The CMA is leveraging quantitative and qualitative data to inform its supervisory decisions. This includes data on the size of assets, liquidity, solvency, profitability, governance, human resources, information security, internal audit, and risk management policies.

Electronic disclosure system -- The implementation of an electronic disclosure system will provide entities subject to supervision with objective observations, risks, and weaknesses detected in their risk management and internal control systems.

implementation of the Integrated Tax Administration System (ITAS) project and providing advisory services associated with it

■ The practice of providing special anti-virus software for the tax information exchange program, the automated system of the CRS, CBCR and FAT-CA agreements

■ The practice of supplying, operating and maintaining the tax information exchange program

■ Practicing specialist international tax consultants

■ The practice of providing and maintaining electronic services for tax administration

## Brent futures reach six-month high amid Iran-Israel tensions

# Oil prices rise in April on tighter fundamentals and geopolitical tensions

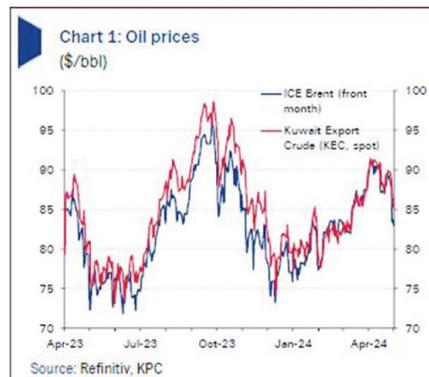
By National Bank of Kuwait

Oil prices rallied for a fourth consecutive month in April, supported by tighter global balances from extended OPEC+ cuts and heightened geopolitical risk premia linked to the Iran-Israel confrontation. The IEA sees oil demand growing by 1.2 mb/d at most over the next two years. Nevertheless, expectations of solid oil consumption this year in tandem with OPEC+ supply management should see market balances tighten further in Q3, supporting more elevated oil prices.

■ In a month marked by significant volatility, Brent futures soared to a six-month high of \$91.2/bbl in early April after tensions between Iran and Israel spilled over into a direct tit-for-tat confrontation. Brent trended lower by the month's close, settling at \$87.9/bbl (+0.4% m/m; +14% ytd) as markets perceived geopolitical risks to have eased somewhat. (Chart 1.) Moving into May, prices fell further last week on potential Gaza ceasefire talks and after a sizeable crude stock build in the US. Nevertheless, April was Brent's fourth straight month of gains. Local marker Kuwait Export Crude (KEC), meanwhile, gained 2.9% m/m in April to close at \$88.8/bbl (+11.6% ytd).

■ Market sentiment towards oil's prospects turned markedly more bullish in April amid tighter market balances and an escalating regional geopolitical confrontation that could threaten the supply picture even further. Brent net length topped three-year highs, reaching 335k futures and options contracts on a surge in speculators taking out "long" contracts (betting on prices rising). (Chart 2.)

■ In terms of oil market fundamentals, oil demand growth projections by the major reporting agencies, the International Energy Agency (IEA) and OPEC, for this year and 2025 remain far apart. The IEA, in its April report, lowered its projected oil demand growth estimate for the current year by 130 kb/d to 1.2 mb/d, citing weaker activity in OECD economies. OPEC, in contrast, maintained its more bullish projection of 2.25 mb/d on expected higher non-OECD oil consumption.



■ Lending some small support to a more bullish economic outlook (and therefore oil demand prospects) for 2024 was the International Monetary Fund, which, in its recently published April World Economic Outlook, revised up global GDP growth in 2024 by 0.1% pts to 3.2% y/y (the same rate as in 2023) and sees it maintained in 2025 as well. While the revision is a small one, it, nevertheless, highlights global economic resilience and solid underlying US economic activity despite tight central bank monetary policy. Recent GDP data pointing to better-than expected growth in both China and the Eurozone in Q1 will help strengthen the case for a more positive oil demand story this year—even if the US Fed signaled last week that due to persistently high inflation, the current level of US interest rates will persist for longer with fewer than 2 rate cuts expected by end-2024.

■ Looking ahead to 2025, both agencies expect oil demand growth slowing, albeit at different rates. The IEA sees it easing to 1.1 mb/d, driven solely by non-OECD countries as oil consumption is pared back in OECD



economies (-60 kb/d y/y). Meanwhile, OPEC pegs growth at a more robust 1.85 mb/d on consumption gains in both advanced and emerging economies.

■ On the supply side, combined data from OPEC secondary sources and S&P Global show aggregate OPEC+ crude production (quota members) in March declining by 49 kb/d to 34.4 mb/d. Among OPEC-9 members, crude output fell by 9 kb/d, with gains in Saudi Arabia (+20 kb/d) and Gabon (+15 kb/d) offset by declines in Nigeria (-38 kb/d) and Iraq (-23 kb/d). Kuwait, according to official data, continued to produce at 2.41 mb/d, in line with its OPEC+ quota for Q1 and Q2 2024.

■ Quota-exempt Iran, meanwhile, saw its output rise to the highest level in five and a half years (3.2 mb/d), though the recent passage of expanded sanctions by the Biden administration targeting foreign buyers of Iranian crude (so-called "Stop Harboring Iranian Petroleum Act"), including on transactions involving financial institutions in China—the largest importer of sanctioned Iranian oil—could lead to some slowdown in growth mo-

mentum. Venezuela's output, meanwhile, decreased by 13 kb/d in March to 809 kb/d after the US decided to reimpose sanctions over political concerns surrounding the prospect of less than free and fair democratic elections. The withdrawal of the US license should not affect the Venezuelan operations of US oil major Chevron, however.

■ The US continued to pump in April at a near record rate of 13.1 mb/d, not far off the 13.2 mb/d average the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) sees for 2024. For 2025, the EIA sees output expanding to 13.7 mb/d (+500 kb/d). According to a Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas survey, breakeven estimates for drilling new wells in the Permian Basin averaged \$65/bbl in Q1, well below current oil price levels, suggesting scope for potential growth amid OPEC+ supply restraint. Higher oil prices have, however, reduced the Biden administration's appetite to refill the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), cancelling a 3 mb buyback that was being planned.

■ The outlook for the oil market over the rest of 2024 is one of tighter supply, with balances slipping into deficit due to OPEC+ supply cuts and decent oil demand growth. This should lead to an acceleration in the drawdown of global oil inventories. OECD commercial stocks (including refined products) fell by 98 mb to 2,733 mb between October 2023 and February 2024. Under the IEA's baseline scenario, in which OPEC+ extends ongoing production cuts to year-end—a scenario that we also subscribe to—demand is expected to outstrip supply in every quarter of 2024, with the deficit peaking at -1.1 mb/d in Q3 2024.

■ Oil prices should remain well supported under these conditions, averaging \$85/bbl for the year. Moreover, at this juncture, we see the balance of price risks tilted to the upside, with the prospect of oil demand outperforming expectations higher than the likelihood of OPEC+ restoring supply or non-OPEC supply growing by more than expected in 2024. Moreover, we do not expect geopolitical risks, whether linked to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine or Gaza conflicts, to dissipate in the near term, which should imbue prices with upward bias.

'Q1 was a very strong quarter for loan growth'

# Gulf Bank holds its first quarter 2024 Earnings Webcast

Gulf Bank held its investors webcast on Monday 06, May 2024, to present and discuss the Bank's financial performance for Q1 - 2024. The webcast was organized by EFG Hermes and presented by Waleed Khaled Mandani, Acting Chief Executive Officer of Gulf Bank, and David Challinor, Chief Financial Officer of Gulf Bank.

### Operating Environment

Mr. Waleed Mandani, Acting Chief Executive Officer of Gulf Bank, commenced the webcast with key updates regarding Gulf Bank's operating environment during the first quarter of 2024. Mandani stated: "During the first quarter of 2024, the Kuwaiti economy has witnessed notable developments related to political changes and fiscal pressures, with the banking sector playing a pivotal role amidst dynamic market conditions which has impacted investor sentiment."

Mr. Mandani added "I am pleased to say that our performance for the first quarter of the year 2024 reflects the resilience of our business model and ability to navigate through challenges. While the first quarter results may reflect a fall in net profit growth compared to the same period of last year, we have witnessed significant expansion in our loan book during the first three months of the year, displaying robustness and effectiveness in maintaining our market share and meeting the evolving needs of our customers.

Moreover, we have improved our operating profitability lines, particularly in net interest income, operating income, and operating profit before provisions and impairments, reflecting our dedication to strategic growth and financial prudence." He added: "Following the completion of the implementation of phase I of the new core banking system during 2023, we are currently in the process of launching and implementing phase II of our core banking system. Gulf Bank is now ready to leverage these foundational changes to streamline its operations and enhance customer experience."

### Credit Cost & Asset Quality

Gulf Bank's Chief Financial Officer Mr. Challinor responded to questions related to credit cost and asset quality by saying: "Credit costs for Q1 came in at KD 11.4 million which was an increase from the Q4 level of KD 9.9 million. When we look at the asset quality indicators, we can see they are still holding strong. NPL percentage remains at 1.2% which is the same level Q4 23, and the stage 2 percentage is 3.4% which continues to be very low."

### Loan Growth

When questioned about the drivers for loan book growth during Q1 2024, Mr. Challinor noted: "Q1 was a very



Waleed Khaled Mandani  
Acting Chief Executive Officer of Gulf Bank



David Challinor  
Chief Financial Officer of Gulf Bank

### Waleed Khaled Mandani

- The banking sector played a vital role in facilitating economic activities and supporting businesses through financing and lending activities, especially in support of major development projects.
- I am pleased to say that our performance for the first quarter of the year 2024 reflects the resilience of our business model and ability to navigate through challenges.
- With the completion of the new core banking system, Gulf Bank will be ready to leverage these foundational changes to streamline its operations and enhance customer experience.

### David Challinor

- First Quarter was a very strong quarter for loan growth and a great start to the year.
- We have now established GB Invest, the banks wholly owned investment platform, which should help to drive fee income higher.
- Cost to Income ratio it now stands at 44.9% which is lower than Q1 2023 which was 46.1%, and lower than the full year 2023 which was 45.6%.

### Operating Expenses

In terms of operating expense and targets for cost to income ratio Mr. Challinor mentioned: "Q1 Operating Expenses were KD 21.7 which was lower than the Q4 number of KD 22 and only 1% above where we were in Q1 last year." He added: "In terms of the Cost to Income ratio it now stands at 44.9% which is lower than Q1 2023 which was 46.1%, and lower than the full year 2023 which was 45.6%. So, it's all heading in the right direction in terms of it dropping. We also had another quarter demonstrating a positive JAWS ratio, as the operating income growth exceeded the operating expense growth by almost 3 percentage points."

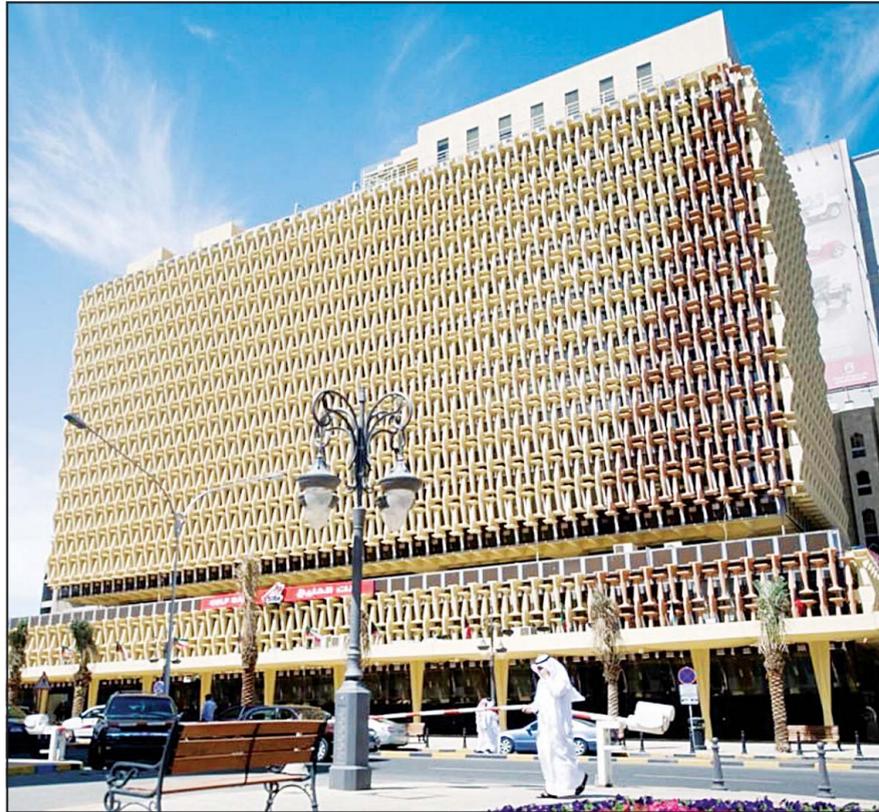
### Non-Interest Income

In discussing non-interest income and areas of improvement Mr. Challinor stated: "As I said during the earlier presentation, the Q1 2023 comparative represented the highest quarter (in the 2023 year) for non-interest income due to a one-off fee we received in relation to our cards business. Our Q1 24 number is broadly in line with Q4 and also higher than Q2 and Q3 last year. Nevertheless, we are continuing to focus our efforts to improve this line item and our ongoing investment in transformation will allow for an expansion in new fee generating products and services. In addition, we have now established GB Invest, the banks wholly owned investment platform, which should help to drive fee income higher."

strong quarter for loan growth and a great start to the year. Total gross loans and advances grew by circa KD 180 million or 3.2%, which is the strongest growth the bank has seen in almost 2 years. In comparison, the full year growth in 2023 was 1.2%, so we've already significantly outpaced last year's growth in just one quarter." He added: "If we look specifically at customer loan growth (which excludes lending to banks) this was up 2.6%, with the vast majority coming from our corporate business."

### Margins

Regarding margins and trends going forward Mr. Challinor remarked: "For Q1 the margin was 214 basis points which was up 7 points from a year ago. However, the margin for the full year in 2023 was 217 points so we've seen a drop in Q1." He added: "In terms of the outlook, the local market has healthy liquidity and new fixed deposits are being repriced lower than in previous periods, however we have seen some upward pressure on the cost of dollar funding primarily due to expectations of rate cuts being pushed out. So overall we could expect margin to be relatively stable if current dynamics continue. Obviously, the longer-term view on margin is going to be a function of benchmark rate moves but the timing and quantum's continue to remain very uncertain."



Gulf Bank headquarters.

### What that means for you

## Fed indicated rates will remain higher for longer

NEW YORK, May 7, (AP): Mortgage rates, credit card rates, auto loan rates, and business loans with variable rates will all likely maintain their highs, with consequences for consumer spending, after the Federal Reserve indicated Wednesday that it doesn't plan to cut interest rates until it has "greater confidence" that price increases at the consumer level are slowing to its 2% target.

The central bank kept its key rate at a two-decade high of roughly 5.3%, where it has been since last August.

Here's what to know: Credit card rates are at or near all-time peaks, and mortgage rates have more than doubled in recent years.

According to LendingTree, the average credit card interest rate in America today is 24.66%, unchanged from last month, though that rate has risen for 24 of the last 26 months.

"That isn't likely to fall anytime soon, despite the Fed taking its foot off the gas," said LendingTree Credit Analyst Matt Schultz. "That's likely the unfortunate reality for the next several months."

In the battle against credit card debt, 0% balance transfer cards "are still your best weapon," according to Schultz, but "they're getting harder to get and their fees are rising."

With delinquencies and debt totals also increasing for consumers, some banks are becoming more hesitant about taking on transferred balances, he said, meaning consumers will need good credit to get approval.

Yields on savings accounts and certificates of deposit (CDs) have been hovering at high levels, thanks to the Fed's increased interest rates, according to Ken Tumin, banking expert and founder of DepositAccounts.com. That said, "several banks have been lowering deposit rates (with the expectation that the Fed will start cutting rates at some point this year."

Certificate of deposit rates have been the first to fall, and a few online banks have also started lowering online savings account rates. Ally Bank dropped its rate to 4.25% from 4.35% and Discover to 4.25% from 4.30%.

Even so, most online banks held their online savings account rates steady in 2024, and several online banks still offer yields of 5.25%. The highest online yield is currently 5.55%, with the average online 1-year CD yield 4.94% as of April 1st, according to DepositAccounts.com.

The average savings account yield for all banks and credit unions, of which the vast majority are brick-and-mortar, is 0.52% as of April 24th.

The Fed doesn't directly set mortgage rates, but it does influence them. The bond market, inflation, and other factors all contribute to the high mortgage rates currently facing consumers.

The average rate on a 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage recently rose to above 7% for the first time since November. LendingTree Senior Economist Jacob Channel notes that mortgage rates can shift even as the Fed holds its benchmark rate steady, and that consumers should consider many economic data points before deciding to take on a mortgage.

"Even in the face of relatively steep mortgage rates and high prices, now could still be a good time to buy a home," he said. "Timing the market is virtually impossible... In that same vein, there are a lot of people who won't be able to buy until the market becomes cheaper."

High shelter and rent costs have contributed to steep inflation in recent months.

A Bankrate study found that renting is cheaper than buying a typical home in all 50 of the largest U.S. metro areas. As of February, the typical monthly mortgage payment on a median-priced home in the U.S. was \$2,703, while the typical national monthly rent was \$1,979. That's a nearly 37% gap between the costs of renting and buying a home.

"While it would be nice if the Fed could fix everything on its own, it probably can't, at least not without causing a great deal of weeping and gnashing of teeth," said Channel.

While vehicle prices have steadied through late 2023 and early 2024, Bankrate Chief Financial Analyst Greg McBride predicts that high interest rates on auto loans will linger for those with weak credit profiles. Borrowers with stronger credit may see more competitive rates, but the Fed's decision will continue to make auto loans expensive, even if vehicle prices decline. The average car loan hasn't been this pricey since 2008.

McBride predicts five-year new car loan rates will reach an average of 7.0% and four-year used car loans, 7.5% by the end of 2024.

In the past year, borrowers have fared especially expensive monthly payments due to high interest rates, and auto loan delinquency reached its highest rate in nearly thirty years. The average monthly car loan payment was \$738 for new vehicles and \$532 for used ones in the fourth quarter of 2023, according to credit reporting agency Experian.

# US employers 'scaled' back hiring last month

175,000 jobs added

### There's a reason for that

## Jet maker Airbus is staying humble even as its main competitor Boeing flounders

FRANKFURT, Germany, May 7, (AP): In the latest round of their decades-long battle for dominance in commercial aircraft, Europe's Airbus established a clear sales lead over Boeing even before the American company encountered more fallout from manufacturing problems and ongoing safety concerns.

Airbus has outpaced Boeing for five straight years in plane orders and deliveries, and just reported a 28% quarterly increase in net profit. It was already winning market share by beating Boeing to develop a line of fuel-efficient, mid-sized aircraft that are cheaper for airlines to fly.

And now Boeing is facing a government-mandated production cap on its best-selling plane.

Yet the European company is unlikely to extend its advantage in the Airbus-Boeing duopoly much further despite having customers clamoring for more commercial aircraft, according to aviation analysts. The reason: Airbus already is making planes as fast as it can and has a backlog of more than 8,600 orders to fill.

Its ability to leverage Boeing's troubles therefore is "very limited," according to Jonathan Berger, managing director at Alton Aviation Consultancy. Between strained supply chains and the long lead times for a hugely complex and highly regulated product, a jetliner ordered from Airbus today may not arrive until the end of the decade.

Boeing also has a huge order backlog for more than 5,660 commercial planes. The mismatch between the post-COVID demand for flights and the aircraft supply pipeline is bad news for travelers as well as airlines.

"This has been an incredibly strong market recovery, and people need more jets than they're getting," said Richard Aboulafia, a managing director at AeroDynamic Advisory. "And until they get those jets, you don't have enough capacity. Guess what goes up? Ticket prices."

At the beginning of the year, Boeing seemed finally to be recovering from two crashes of Max jets in 2018 and 2019 that killed 346 people in Indonesia and Ethiopia. Then, on Jan. 5, a door plug blew out of an Alaska Air-

lines 737 Max 9, and the company has been reeling ever since.

Boeing has since slowed manufacturing at the order of the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration. It lost \$355 million in the first quarter because of a decline in aircraft deliveries and compensation it paid to airlines for a temporary grounding of Max 9s. The Max was Boeing's answer to Airbus' A320 family of planes.

Airbus, which is registered in the Netherlands but has its main headquarters in France, is taking a conspicuously cautious and even modest stance toward its recent success and its rival's woes. CEO Guillaume Faury has said he's "not happy" about Boeing's troubles and they're not good for the industry as a whole.

In an April 25 call with journalists, Faury was reserved about how much the company could speed up production, even with 8.7 billion euros in cash on hand. Airbus was managing "a diversity of challenges" in getting the parts it needs, he said, and must "make sure that we ramp up at a pace that is compatible with the weakest suppliers."

it was the lowest monthly gain since October. With the nation's households continuing their steady spending, many employers have had to keep hiring to meet their customer demand.

Though the unemployment rate ticked up from 3.8% to 3.9% in April, it was the 27th straight month in which the rate has remained below 4%, tying the longest such streak since the 1960s.

"Certainly a cooler jobs report than we've seen," said Michael Pugliese, senior economist at Wells Fargo. "But it's not like it was disastrous: 175,000 is still pretty strong, and unemployment below 4% is still pretty healthy." He expects hiring, which averaged a vigorous 242,000 from February through April, to continue to decelerate.

Last month's hiring was led by healthcare companies, which added 56,000 jobs. Warehouse and transportation companies added 22,000 and retailers 20,000. Government at all levels, which had been hiring aggressively, added just 8,000 jobs in April, the lowest monthly total since December 2022.

Local governments didn't add any jobs at all last month. Paul Ashworth of Capital Economics noted that state and local government revenue has recently slumped.

Temporary help jobs fell by more than 16,000. These positions are often seen as a potential indicator of where the job market is headed because companies sometimes try out temps before committing to full-time hires.

The share of the adult population that either has a job or is looking for one was unchanged at 62.7%, well below pre-pandemic levels.

America's job market has repeatedly proved more robust than almost anyone had predicted. When the Fed began aggressively raising rates two years ago to fight a punishing inflation surge, most economists expected the resulting jump in borrowing costs to cause a recession and drive unemployment to painfully high levels.

The Fed raised its benchmark rate 11 times from March 2022 to July 2023, taking it to the highest level since 2001. Inflation did steadily cool as it was supposed to - from a year-over-year peak of 9.1% in June 2022 to 3.5% in March.



Zeyad AlOmar and officials from Kuwait Banking Association meet with program graduates.

## 'Employees' commitment to developing their skills and talents paves way for career growth'

# Kuwait Finance House honors employees for completion of KGDP

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) honored its employees who successfully completed the 11th edition of the Kuwaiti Graduates Development Program (KGDP), held from March 19th to December 21st, 2023.

During the honoring ceremony, KFH Group Chief Human Resources and Transformation Officer, Zeyad AlOmar said: "KFH's success in achieving its core objectives and strengthening its strategic position is primarily thanks to the efforts and excellence of its human capital. Recognizing this, KFH's management is committed to continue employee investment, supporting their skill development and enriching their experience."

AlOmar praised the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) for its efforts and the cooperation with the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) in developing the skills of banking sector employees and supporting new graduates in the field through the KGDP.

He explained that the program equips fresh graduates with the skills necessary for the job market. This comprehensive program combines theoretical and practical training, enriching participants' experience and preparing them to be a competent workforce.

AlOmar congratulated KFH employees who had completed the program and wished them contin-

ued success. He added, "I assure you that hard work and continuous improvement of your talents will pave the way for career growth and success. At KFH, we are keen on attracting the top young talent and offering them the opportunity to become future leaders."

It is worth noting that the KGDP program is launched as part of the Kafa'a initiative by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) in collaboration with Kuwaiti banks. Managed by the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS), the program is considered one of the best choices for fresh graduates interested in entering the banking and financial industry. It offers a diverse range of specialized training content in the sector.

This annual program, run by CBK and local banks, selects participants for a year-long training and hiring initiative, after which they are officially appointed to banking positions.

Additionally, the program includes lectures and online training workshops in collaboration with specialized prestigious companies in the field. It also encompasses practical training within local Kuwaiti banks. After completing the local round, participants are sent abroad to familiarize them with the latest banking and financial techniques and introduce them to external banking practices and international experience.

Upto 50% discount

## Behbehani Tire Center offers exclusive deals for 'summer'

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: With the return of the summer season, and in its customary commitment to offering the best deals for those looking to change their car tires, Behbehani Tire Center, the exclusive distributor of Pirelli tires in Kuwait, has launched a new discount campaign offering up to 50% off selected range of tires.

Pirelli tires are well-suited to the Gulf and Kuwaiti climates, thanks to their precision engineering, which ensures superior performance and high stability on all roads. This makes them capable of withstanding tough weather conditions, high temperatures, and high speeds, particularly during the scorching summer season, where old and worn-out tires pose a risk to driving safety.

With this exceptional offer, the opportunity is available to anyone wishing to equip their car for the summer season to take advantage of substantial discounts by visiting one of Behbehani tire

centers. These centers are fully equipped with the latest devices, equipment, and technologies, staffed by highly experienced technicians who undergo training courses conducted by Pirelli's global factories to ensure service efficiency and quality.

You can visit one of the four branches of Behbehani Tire Center, including the largest center in the Middle East, located in Shuwaikh on the Fourth Ring Road directly next to Ali Abdulwahab. This center also features a dedicated section for changing truck and motorcycle tires. Alternatively, you can visit our second center in Shuwaikh Industrial Area next to Abyat showroom on the road branching off from Canada Dry Street, or our centers in Al Rai or Ahmadi. Here, you can relax in comfortable waiting lounges that we have prepared for your convenience while our specialized technicians with extensive experience change and install your car tires and balance them."



Pirelli summer offer

## 'Exclusive offer reflects commitment to elevating lifestyle aspirations'

# National Bank of Kuwait offers exclusive discount at Harvey Nichols for privilege banking customers

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), Kuwait's leading bank, is committed to elevating the lifestyle aspirations of its valued Privilege Banking Customers. This commitment is reflected in their latest exclusive offer – a 10% discount at Harvey Nichols, the renowned luxury fashion retailer.



Intekhab Abbas

This exclusive offer caters to the discerning taste of NBK's Privilege Banking clientele. They can indulge in a world of renowned fashion labels and exquisite jewelry, all at an exceptional value. The discount applies to a wide range of products, including clothing and jewelry, excluding perfumes and cosmetics.

To avail the discount, customers simply need to present their NBK Private or Privilege Debit Card and pay using any of the following eligible NBK Credit Cards

- NBK Visa Infinite Privilege Credit Card
- NBK KWT Visa Infinite



Harvey Nichols

### Credit Card

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- NBK-Kuwait Airways Visa Signature Credit Card
- NBK Visa Infinite Credit Card
- NBK Visa Signature Credit Card
- NBK World Mastercard Credit Card

Commenting on this tie-up with Harvey Nichols, Intekhab Abbas, Marketing Segment Man-

ager, Consumer Banking Group at National Bank of Kuwait said, "This offer comes within our constant endeavors to give our customers more luxury. It aims to ensure a unique shopping experience tailored to the needs of this segment and redefining their luxurious lifestyle."

NBK offers Privilege Banking Customers an exclusive array of services that has been strengthened to ensure a quality customer experience. These

services include: a Dedicated Global Relationship Manager taking care of all their local and global banking needs, as well as a wide range of preferential services and financial products, Premium Services Lounges and Premium Concierge Service. Furthermore, Privilege Customers can avail the advantages of Family Banking Services, Global Banking, NBK Home Banking and Multicurrency cash delivery in Kuwait.

In addition to "Harvey Nichols Discount", NBK has recently enhanced Privilege Banking benefits by introducing a new travel experience that redefines the travel experience for our Privilege Customers. Customers can now enjoy exclusive services such as Fast Track check-in, Extra luggage, Seasonal free Limousine ride during travel season, Exclusive Hotel Offers, Free Luggage Delivery, Discounted Umrah Packages, Visa Assistance, and discounts on luggage at Samsonite.

As NBK maintains its dedication to top-notch Privilege Banking services, we continue to innovate and provide customers with unparalleled banking experience.

## 'Kuwait's prime account with high returns, many winners'

# KIB announces winners of Al Dirwaza account's 'monthly and weekly draw'

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced the winners of the monthly and weekly draw held under the Al Dirwaza account's 2024 campaign, which is distinguished by the highest number of winners throughout the year. The monthly and weekly draw, based on customers' April deposits, recently took place in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as representatives from the Bank.

Ammar Abduhalim Darwish and Sultan Turki Hameed Alazmi were named the lucky winners in the monthly draw, with each customer walking away with a prize of KD 5,000. As for the weekly draw, the KD 1,000 prize was awarded to Khalid Farouk Azab Mohamed Mobasher, Jassim Hamad Jassim Alsayegh, Nawaf Abdullah Dalil Almutairi, Nabeel Abdulaziz Mohammad Jawad Abdal, Diala Assaad Aboudara, whilst the KD 500 prize was awarded to Meshwet Judai Meshwet Alajmi, Adnan Khodr Chaker, Saad Mejbel Awadh Alqahs, Asma Yousef Fehan Wgeet, Naser Alebid, Saud Faisal Enad Alenezi, Saleh Sharea Shebeeb Aldhafeeri.

It serves to note that AlDirwaza account is a savings account for individual customers, based on the Wakala investment principle, launched by KIB as one of its banking products for individuals.

The account is currently the best of its



Al Dirwaza 2024 campaign

kind in the sector, with annual expected profits of up to 2% disbursed on a monthly basis, where the customer gets an expected profit of 2% for the first 3 months from the account opening date and up to 1% expected rate onward. The expected profits are automatically deposited into the customer's account within the first day of the beginning of each month.

Al Dirwaza account holders are eligible to

enter the weekly, monthly and annual draws on the condition of maintaining at least KD 100 in their account.

For the weekly and monthly draws, each KD 1 that has completed a full month's cycle in the account will count for one chance, and chances are calculated based on the lowest monthly balance preceding the draw. As for the mega draw, chances are calculated for each KD 1 that completes a two-month cycle in the account – based on the lowest two monthly balances prior to the draw.

Al Dirwaza account is also in compliance with the provisions of Islamic Sharia and approved by the KIB's Sharia Supervisory Board. Furthermore, the account comes with a wide range of benefits, including the ease of opening the account, which does not require a salary transfer, and the customer's ability to open it remotely without visiting a branch through KIB Online on the Bank's website or KIB Mobile application on smartphones.

Additionally, Al Dirwaza account automatically grants customers instant issuance of an ATM card, with a KD 2,000 ATM daily withdrawal limit, as well as the ability to issue credit cards against the cash collateral in the account. To open the account and participate in its draws, a minimum of KD 100 is required and can only be withdrawn upon account closure.

# AP images of migrants' struggle recognized with Pulitzer Prize

NEW YORK, May 7, (AP) — The images, captured by Associated Press photographers throughout 2023 and recognized Monday with a Pulitzer Prize, spotlight the humanity of an unprecedented global migration story often overlooked in a storm of statistics and political rhetoric.

In the middle of the Central American jungle, a woman fleeing upheaval in her native Haiti struggles to cross a river while holding a girl on her shoulders. After weeks of desperation, migrants pass a toddler under a tangle of concertina wire strung across the edge of U.S. soil.

Well before the year began, AP's journalists knew that surging migration through the Americas was a major story. But to tell it fully, they focused on showing that "migration is more than numbers. It has to do with people, with the stories behind the reasons for them to leave their countries," said Eduardo Castillo, AP's news director for Latin America and the Caribbean.

On Monday, eight AP staff and freelance photographers — six from Latin America and two from the US — were awarded this year's Pulitzer for feature photography for images documenting the anxiety, heartbreak and even the brief moments of joy that mark the migrants' journey.

"Simply put, this was AP at its best — leveraging our global footprint and deep expertise to cover a fast-moving story with high impact," Executive Editor Julie Pace said in a note sent to the news staff Monday. "It's also particularly heartening that the Pulitzers have recognized AP's work on international migration given that this has been a global coverage priority for us for the past several years."

The AP was also a Pulitzer finalist in 2019 for its coverage of family

separation during the Trump administration.

While the award came in the feature category, the work was all part of everyday news coverage, Castillo said. The images, he said, are a testament to efforts by the journalists — staff photographers Greg Bull, Eric Gay, Fernando Llano, Marco Ugarte and Eduardo Verdugo, and longtime AP freelance photographers Christian Chavez, Felix Marquez and Ivan Valencia — to connect with migrants.

The photos reflect a recognition by the AP that surging migration was drawing increased attention from the public and policymakers, and warranted increased coverage. Taking advantage of its staffing throughout Latin America and along the U.S.-Mexico border, the news agency assigned journalists to document the poverty, violence, persecution and natural disasters that are driving the surge of departures and shaping the migrants' path.

The result was a series of "poignant photographs chronicling unprecedented masses of migrants in their arduous journey north," Pulitzer Administrator Marjorie Miller said in announcing the award.

The photos were taken at several pivotal moments, including the end of pandemic-era restrictions last May that had allowed the U.S. to quickly turn away migrants and a large increase in border arrivals last September that overwhelmed immigration authorities and communities.

The US alone has seen more than 10 million migrants arrive at its borders over the last five years. Many come from countries including Venezuela and Ecuador that had not been large drivers of immigration in earlier years.

The photographers worked to show how many of those migrants em-

bark on their journey through the Darien Gap, the dense and roadless jungle that stands between South and Central America.

Other images show migrants crowded onto a northbound freight train in the middle of a Mexican night as it winds toward the US border, and others in a makeshift camp of brush and branches near the US border.

In totality, they show one of the biggest stories of our time, requiring the AP photographers spread across multiple countries to work with both great diligence and empathy, said Ricardo Mazalán, Latin America deputy director of storytelling and photos.

**Also:**

**NEW YORK:** Vladimir Kara-Murza, who has written columns as a contributor for The Washington Post from his prison cell in Russia, has won the Pulitzer Prize for commentary.

Kara-Murza, 42, is a Russian politician, author and historian who has been imprisoned in Russia since April 2022. He was convicted of treason last year for denouncing the war in Ukraine.

He is serving 25 years, the most severe sentence given to a Kremlin critic in modern Russia. He is among a growing number of dissidents held in increasingly harsh conditions under President Vladimir Putin's political crackdown.

The prize was awarded to Kara-Murza "for passionate columns written at great personal risk from his prison cell, warning of the consequences of dissent in Vladimir Putin's Russia and insisting on a democratic future for his country," according to the Pulitzer announcement on Monday.

Pulitzers

Variety



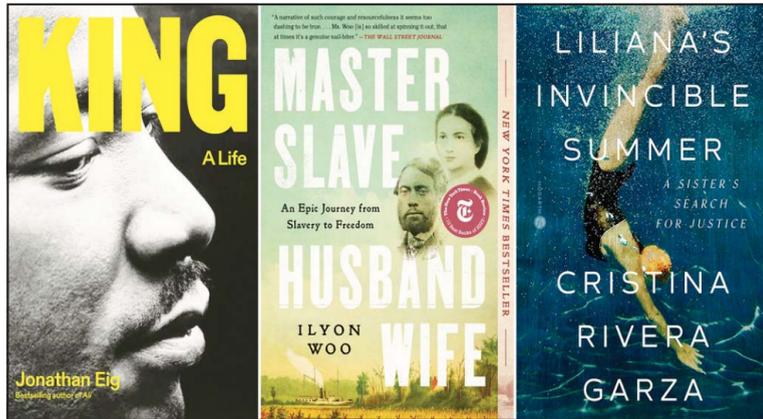
Migrants cross the Rio Bravo on an inflatable mattress into the United States from Matamoros, Mexico, on May 9. The image was part of a series by Associated Press photographers that won the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for feature photography. (AP)



Evgenia Kara-Murza, human rights activist and wife of prisoner Vladimir Kara-Murza, speaks with the staff of The Washington Post as they learn they have won three Pulitzer Prizes during a newsroom gathering in Washington, Monday, May 6. (AP)



Hannah Dreier, (second from right), as colleagues applaud during a Pulitzer Prize gathering in the newsroom of The New York Times in New York, Monday, May 6. Dreier won a Pulitzer in investigative reporting for her stories on migrant child labor across the United States. (AP)



This combo photo shows cover art for "King: A Life" by Jonathan Eig, (left), "Master Slave Husband Wife: An Epic Journey from Slavery to Freedom" by Ilyon Woo, (center), and "Liliana's Invincible Summer: A Sister's Search for Justice" by Cristina Rivera Garza, winners of the Pulitzer Prize. (AP)

Pulitzer Awards

Stories of race, slavery and civil war honored

## NY Times, Washington Post win Pulitzers

NEW YORK, May 7, (AP) — The New York Times and The Washington Post staff won national reporting for its "sobering examination" of the AR-15 semi-automatic rifle, which came with some gut-wrenching photos.

The Post's David E. Hoffman won in editorial writing for a "compelling and well-researched" series on how authoritarian regimes repress dissent in the digital age. Sarah Stillman won in explanatory reporting for her report on the legal system's reliance on felony murder charges. Contributor Medar de la Cruz won in illustrated reporting and commentary for his story humanizing inmates in the Rikers Island jail in New York City.

The staff of Lookout Santa Cruz in California won in the breaking news category for what the prize board called "nimble community-minded coverage" of flooding and mudslides. On its website Monday, Lookout Santa Cruz said that it made its coverage free at a time of crisis in the community, and also used text messages to reach people without power.

"In short, we did our jobs," the staff said in an unsigned article, "and we heard so many thanks for it. The Pulitzer is icing on that cake."

The Pulitzers gave a second award in national reporting to the Reuters staff for an "eye-opening" series that probed Elon Musk's automobile and aerospace businesses.

In local reporting, Sarah Conway of City Bureau and Trina Reynolds-Tyler of the Invisible Institute won for an investigative series on missing Black girls and women in Chicago, which showed how racism and the police contributed to the problem.

The Pulitzer in criticism went to Justin Chang of The Los Angeles Times for evocative and genre-spanning coverage of movies. The Pulitzer board's second special citation went to the late hip-hop critic Greg Tate.

Meanwhile, stories of race, slavery and the Civil War, real and invented, were winners this year for the Pulitzer Prizes.

Jayne Anne Phillips' "Night Watch," a mother-daughter saga set in a West Virginia asylum right after the war, was cited for fiction. Jacqueline Jones received

the history prize for "No Right to an Honest Living: The Struggles of Boston's Black Workers in the Civil War Era" and Ilyon Woo's "Master Slave Husband Wife: An Epic Journey from Slavery to Freedom" won in biography.

Phillips, a West Virginia native who often sets her books in her home state, sees "Night Watch" as the third of a trilogy of novels about war, following the Vietnam-era narrative "Machine Dreams" and the Korean War story "Lark & Termit," which draws in part on a Pulitzer Prize-winning Associated Press investigation into the No Gun Ri massacre.

She began "Night Watch" eight years ago, and found the Civil War era increasingly, and uncomfortably timely.

"The Civil War still has such an enormous hold on this country," she said. "I hope people can pick up a piece of fiction and put their politics aside and enter into feeling what it was like for people at that time."

Jones, a longtime faculty member of the University of Texas at Austin who has been a Pulitzer finalist twice before, noted that so much remains to be written about the Civil War because until recently narratives focused on the battlefield. She began working on "No Right to an Honest Living" because she wondered how Black people were treated in Boston at a time when the city was a center of anti-slavery activism.

"It turns out, the radical abolitionists represented a very small minority in Boston and that the social division of labor was really discriminatory," she said.

The drama prize was awarded to Eboni Booth's "Primary Trust," about a Black bookstore worker's unexpected journey after he loses his longtime job, while a second biography prize was awarded Jonathan Eig for his Martin Luther King biography "King."

Booth, a New York City native who graduated from the University of Vermont and Juilliard's playwriting program, started as a stage actor and has also written for Hulu's "We Were the Lucky Ones" and HBO Max's "Julia."

Her play, about a lonely, full-grown man with an imaginary friend who drinks away his life at a tiki bar until he is aided by some residents of his small town outside Rochester, New York.

**LOS ANGELES:** Jeannie Epper, a groundbreaking performer who did stunts for many of the most important women of film and television action of the 1970s and '80s, including star Lynda Carter on TV's "Wonder Woman," has died. She was 83.

Epper died of natural causes Sunday at her home in Simi Valley, California, family spokesperson Amanda Micheli told The Associated Press.

Considered one of the greatest at her craft — Entertainment Weekly in 2007 called her "the greatest stuntwoman who ever lived" — Epper came from a family dynasty of stunt performers that included both her parents, John and Frances Epper. Her 70-year career as a stuntwoman and stunt coordinator began when she was 9.

"It's all I really know, outside of being a mom or a grandma," Epper said in a 2004 documentary, "Double Dare," directed by Micheli.

Her siblings, Tony, Margo, Gary, Andy and Stephanie, all also worked in stunts. Steven Spielberg called them "The Flying Wallendas of Film," according to The Hollywood Reporter, which first reported Epper's death.

Her children Eurlayne, Richard and Kurtis, and her grandson Christopher followed her into the stunt business.

She found it difficult to get much stunt work as a woman early on but saw a major surge in opportunity as women got more action-oriented roles in the late 1970s. (AP)

**NEW ORLEANS:** An extra day and the lure of an appearance by the Rolling Stones pushed attendance at the 2024 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival to a half a million people, organizers said Monday.

That was the second highest attendance in the festival's history — just behind the 600,000 attendees in 2001. In 2023, more than 460,000 people passed through the festival's gates.

"This year's Festival presented as plainly as ever the beauty of Jazz Fest," festival producer Quint Davis said in a statement. "Watching the Rolling Stones perform with New Orleans and Louisiana stars Irma Thomas and Dwayne

Dopsie was to witness the power of the Festival to demonstrate the connection of our culture to some of the greatest music of our time."

The historic, sold-out appearance of the Rolling Stones last week was the triumphant conclusion of a multi-year effort to bring the band to the event, after cancellations in 2019 and 2021. Few



Epper

Scott

festival performances have been more anticipated, and even fewer, if any, better received by fans, Davis said in a statement. (AP)

**LOS ANGELES:** Public television host and cookbook author Lidia Bastianich, "The Young and the Restless" actor Melody Thomas

Scott and "The Bold and the Beautiful" producer Edward Scott will be the Lifetime Achievement honorees at the Daytime Emmys in June.

Bastianich has created Daytime Emmy Award-winning cooking shows over the last 25 years on PBS, including "Lidia's Kitchen." The 77-year-old chef has also

published numerous cookbooks.

Melody Thomas Scott has played Nikki Newman on the CBS soap opera "The Young and the Restless" for 45 years. She was nominated for a Daytime Emmy as lead actress in 1999. She made her movie debut at 8 years old in the Alfred Hitchcock thriller "Mamie." (AP)

Features

ARABO TIMES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2024

## People &amp; Places

Jennifer Lopez and Zendaya lead A-list fashion

## Met Gala in full bloom on green carpet

NEW YORK, May 7, (AP): The Met Gala and its fashionista A-listers on Monday included Jennifer Lopez, Zendaya and a parade of others in a swirl of flora and fauna looks on a green-tinged carpet lined by live foliage.

Lopez went for silver leaves in a second-skin goddess gown and Zendaya was all vamp and fantasy in a rare double appearance on the steps of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Both were co-chairs of the annual fundraiser, and both received cheers from the crowd of fashion enthusiasts packed behind barriers outside.

Lopez (in Schiaparelli) was all va-va-voom in a near-naked gown. She's got the Met Gala down: It's her 14th.

Zendaya put on her fashion face in peacock hues of blue and green, with a head piece to match and leaf accents. The look was Maison Margiela by John Galliano. She walked again to close the carpet in black Givenchy Haute Couture gown also by Galliano with a head piece stuffed with flowers by Alexander McQueen.

It's been five years since Zendaya last attended the gala. Lopez went with Tiffany & Co. diamonds, including a stunning bird motif necklace with a diamond of over 20 carats at its center.

## Flowers

Flowers were everywhere, in line with this year's theme: "The Garden of Time," inspired by J.G. Ballard's 1962 short story of the same name.

Mindy Kaling is sure to make the best-dressed lists in sand-colored swirls that towered over her head at the back. No worries about dinner. The back was removable. Her look was by Indian couturier Gaurav Gupta.

Usher held a single red rose in a dark and eery black suit and cape, a wide-brim black hat on his head and a black brooch on one lapel. The look was Alexander McQueen by Seán McGirr.

Gigi Hadid brought the drama in a look by the drama king himself, Thom Browne. Her white gown was adorned with 2.8 million microbeads with yellow flowers and green thorns. She was high glam in a wavy bob and crimson lips.

If there's a queen of the Met Gala besides the evening's mastermind, Anna Wintour, it's Sarah Jessica Parker. The long-time attendee takes each year's theme seriously, researching every detail. This year she was in an Alice in Wonderland look with a lavender overlay and a Philip Treacy topper on her head. The dress was by Richard Quinn. Her long hair tumbled behind her back in beachy waves, a look that built into a beauty trend of the evening.

If Parker is a queen, Ayo Edebiri is a gala baby. It was her first one and she showed out in a youthful white look fading into a garden full of colorful flowers at the bottom by Loewe.

Serena Williams took metallic gold to another level in a shining one-shoulder statement look. Ariana Grande was all Glinda the Good Witch, making the most of her pale-colored strapless Loewe look with 3D eyelashes at the side of each eye. She arrived with her "Wicked" co-star Cynthia Erivo, dressed in black with pink petals in a darker, edgy look by Thom Browne.

Cardi B., who has THE most fun at the Met Gala, struck a pose or three in a statement black gown with a huge tulle train. It was by Windowsen. She paired the look with green jewels and a high black turban. She needed multiple helpers to move her dress up the stairs.

## Storybook

Penelope Cruz, meanwhile, went goth in black by Chanel. It had a bustier top and a Sleeping Beauty-like off-shoulder silhouette. There was another Sleeping Beauty-ish guest: Kendall Jenner in a Givenchy look done by Alexander McQueen in 1999.

Kendall's sister, Kylie Jenner, was more Old Hollywood than storybook in a chic Oscar de la Renta low-cut strapless look, a white bloom in her clicked-back updo and a train behind. Oddly, older sister Kim Kardashian tightly covered up her gorgeous silver corset look with a leaf motif by Maison Margiela with a lumpy gray sweater.

Dua Lipa was a whole different kind of princess. She went full rock 'n' roll in black by Marc Jacobs, who accompanied her. Her lace and feather look was slow slung at the hip with a deep plunge at the neck.

The princess vibes were in apparent reference to the Met's spring exhibition that the gala kicks off. It's called "Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion." While it doesn't actually have to do with Disney, or even princesses, some of the 400 guests went there.

Amid all the princesses was the Mad Hatter, Barry Keoghan, in an earthy Burberry velvet Victorian look



Sarah Paulson



Demi Moore



Zendaya



Sarah Jessica Parker



Lizzo



Gigi Hadid



Jennifer Lopez



Mindy Kaling



Meg Ryan



Ed Sheeran



Penelope Cruz



Nicki Minaj



Ariana Grande

with a high-necked bow shirt underneath. He, of course, had a top hat.

Demi Moore stuck to the garden in a Harris Reed look with huge wings encircled by arrows and hand-painted with pink and white blooms.

Diesel broke through on the gala carpet on Dove Cameron. It was about as unlike Diesel as it gets, also going for the garden. The look had sleeves attached to her train.

Lily Gladstone went for black by Gabriela Hearst.

"We wanted me to feel draped in the power of my ancestors," she said. "For Kiowa and Blackfeet, our ancestors are the stars, that's where we come from. ... I feel like it's so long overdue that we have so much Indigenous representation and this sort of upper echelon world of high luxury fashion, because that is our aesthetic, you know, Natives have always loved luxury."

Brooke Bobb, fashion news director for Harper's Bazaar, saw a multitude of meanings in all of the evening's black and florals.

"There was a lot of black, perhaps a gothic ode to the 'Sleeping Beauties' title of the actual exhibition but also maybe an accidental nod to the fact that in this chaotic world we're

living in right now, not everything, not even fabulous, prime-time televised fashion, is coming up roses," she said.

There was no Rihanna and no Taylor Swift.

"Zendaya came out swinging for a second time in a finale look to close the carpet but overall, the whole red carpet experience felt like it was stuck in some odd time warp, somewhere between the Met Gala's glory days and the now, a moment when the camp of it all and social media vitality tend to override fashion for the pure love of fashion," Bobb said.

Colman Domingo donned a white jacket with a cape and extra-wide trousers, holding a bouquet of white calla lilies, while Tyla chose a Balmain gown made to look like sand using actual sand on fabric molded to her body. She needed help with the hourglass she held as she made her way up the museum stairs. Domingo's designer was Willy Chavarria.

Sam Smith wore silver and gold metal roses tucked into the waist of

a jacket, and Jack Harlow also channeled florals, but subtly with a silver and pearl floral boutonniere.

Wintour wore a black coat adorned with multicolored flowers by Loewe. Her fellow co-chair Bad Bunny donned all black custom Maison Margiela Artisanal by John Galliano. Among those who had way BIG fun with the nature and garden theme was Lana Del Rey. She walked up the museum steps as an actual tree, her face shrouded by fabric held up by her branches. The look was by Alexander McQueen.

A pregnant Lea Michele wore Rodarte, inspired by the brand's 2012 spring/summer collection.

"I'm honored to be here and bring my baby with me," Michele said. "I don't think I was allowed a plus one, but I'm bringing" one, she said with a laugh. "I'm so grateful. I feel really beautiful, you know, in this pregnancy."

Nicki Minaj also went out of the box in a bright metallic yellow dress with large flowers dangling and bobbing as she moved.

Larry Curran, a stylist and inde-

pendent brand consultant, saw big wins among a specific brand: "Is this the year people stop asking how to pronounce Loewe?"

It's Loo'-wev-ay.

Danielle James, beauty director for Elle.com, said top trends of the night also included bold blush and baby bangs.

"I loved seeing Ayo Edebiri's berry cheeks, taking the strawberry makeup trend to another level. Nell Diamond gave us a flush of poppy-red on her cheeks. Gigi Hadid's gave us an eye-catching look with bold red cheeks and a bold red lip that we'll be sure to see on many nights out this summer. After seasons of no makeup makeup and minimalist looks, color is here!"

## FDA permits yogurt labels to highlight diabetes prevention

## Can yogurt reduce the risk of Type 2 diabetes?

NEW YORK, May 7, (AP): Sharp-eyed grocery shoppers may notice new labels in the dairy aisle touting yogurt as way to reduce the risk of Type 2 diabetes.

That's because the US Food and Drug Administration recently said it's OK for producers of yogurt to make that claim - even though the agency acknowledged that it's based on limited evidence.

Danone North America, the US branch of the French firm that makes several popular yogurt brands, asked the FDA in 2018 for clearance to make what is known as a "qualified health claim." FDA gave Danone the nod in March.

The way FDA sees it, there's some support - but not significant scientific agreement - that eating at least 2 cups of yogurt per week may reduce the risk of developing the disease that affects about 36 million Americans.

Those are claims that lack full scientific support but are permitted as long as the product labels include disclaimers to keep from misleading the public.

They have been allowed for dietary supplements since 2000 and for foods since 2002, ever since the FDA faced lawsuits challenging the standard of requiring scientific agreement for product claims. Back then, lawyers successfully argued that such standards violated free speech rights guaranteed in the US Constitution.

Rather than fight proposed label changes in court, the FDA created a new category, separate from authorized health claims, in which products must prove significant scientific

agreement among qualified experts that they reduce the risk of a disease or a health-related condition.

## Information

Examples of qualified health claims include reports that consuming some types of cocoa may reduce heart disease and that cranberry juice might cut the risk of recurrent urinary tract infections in women.

Danone submitted information from studies that observed participants over time and found a link between eating yogurt and lower markers of diabetes. The FDA agreed that there is "some credible evidence" of benefit of eating yogurt as a whole food, but not because of any particular nutrient in it.

In other words, there is no direct evidence that yogurt can prevent diabetes - only weak evidence that eating yogurt may be associated with reducing certain biomarkers that are related to increase risk of the disease.

Critics questioned approval of the claim, saying it's not based on gold-standard randomized controlled trials that could have proven whether yogurt actually reduces Type 2 diabetes risk.

No single food can reduce the risk of a disease tied to overall diet, the advocacy group Center for Science in the Public Interest said. In fact, the label change might raise the risk of diabetes by encouraging consumption of yogurt types that include added sugars and mix-ins such as cookies and pretzels.

Marion Nestle, a food policy expert, said qualified health claims based on limited evidence are "ridiculous on their face."

## Endangered fish breed

## Fat-nurtured microbes in gut promote cancer progression

GUANGZHOU, May 7, (Xinhua): A team of Chinese cancer researchers has uncovered a novel mechanism through which obesity-related microbes in one's gut can promote cancer progression. It involves the release of specific chemicals that can have a significant impact on the growth and spread of cancer cells.

A high-fat diet (HFD) is widely considered a significant risk factor for the malignant progression of various cancers, largely due to its disruptive effects on intestinal microbiota. However, the precise role of HFD in the development of cancer was previously not fully understood.

The researchers from Sun Yat-sen University established multiple models in cancer-bearing mice and found that fat-nurtured microbiota released abundant leucine, an amino acid found in many proteins.

An elevated leucine level in peripheral blood has been found to be associated with poor clinical outcomes in female patients with breast cancer, according to a study published on Monday in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States.

In addition, abnormal gut microbiota are implicated in the development of resistance to chemotherapy and some immune therapies for breast cancer, lung cancer, and melanoma.

The findings of this study open a broad avenue for anticancer therapeutic strategies by targeting the ab-

errant metabolism of gut microbiota, the researchers said.

## Also:

**CHENGDU:** Chinese scientists have bred Sichuan taimen, an endangered fish species listed as a national first-class protected animal.

Scientists from the Sichuan Academy of Agricultural Sciences, the Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences, and other institutions successfully established the only artificial population of Sichuan taimen in China in 2016, laying the foundation for the conservation of the species' genetic resources and the restoration of its natural populations.

This year, the research team successfully induced multiple batches of the species' parent fish, and more than 3,500 offspring at the age of two months have survived so far. This achievement marks the complete artificial breeding of Sichuan taimen.

The researchers will continue to promote the recovery and reconstruction of the species' wild populations, and conduct ecological restoration of their habitats, said **Du Jun**, an official with the fisheries institute of the Sichuan Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

They will identify suitable spawning habitats to conduct research on natural reproduction techniques while enhancing artificial breeding technology for the species, Du added.

## Genetic link to late-onset form discovered

## Gene linked to Alzheimer's risk may actually cause some cases

WASHINGTON, May 7, (Agencies): For the first time, researchers have identified a genetic form of late-in-life Alzheimer's disease - in people who inherit two copies of a worrisome gene.

Scientists have long known a gene called APOE4 is one of many things that can increase people's risk for Alzheimer's, including simply getting older. The vast majority of Alzheimer's cases occur after age 65. But research published Monday suggests that for people who carry not one but two copies of the gene, it's more than a risk factor, it's an underlying cause of the mind-robbing disease.

The findings mark a distinction with "profound implications," said Dr. Juan Fortea, who led the study the Sant Pau Research Institute in Barcelona, Spain.

Among them: Symptoms can begin seven to 10 years sooner than in other older adults who develop Alzheimer's.

## Patients

An estimated 15% of Alzheimer's patients carry two copies of APOE4, meaning those cases "can be tracked back to a cause and the cause is in the genes," Fortea said. Until now, genetic forms of Alzheimer's were thought to be only types that strike at much younger ages and account for less than 1% of all cases.

Scientists say the research makes it critical to develop treatments that target the APOE4 gene. Some doctors won't offer the only drug that has been shown to modestly slow the disease, Leqembi, to people with the gene pair because they're especially prone to a dangerous side effect, said Dr. Reisa Sperling, a study coauthor at Harvard-affiliated Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

Sperling hunts ways to prevent or at least delay Alzheimer's and "this data for me says wow, what an important group to be able to go after before they become symptomatic."

But the news doesn't mean people should race for a gene test. "It's important not to scare everyone who has a family history" of Alzheimer's because this gene duo isn't behind most cases, she told The Associated Press.

More than 6 million Americans, and



A section of a human brain with Alzheimer's disease is displayed at the Museum of Neuroanatomy at the University at Buffalo, in Buffalo, N.Y., Oct. 7, 2003. A long-feared gene appears to do more than raise people's risk of Alzheimer's: Inheriting two copies can cause the mind-robbing disease, according to research published in the journal Nature Medicine on Monday, May 6. (AP)

millions more worldwide, have Alzheimer's. A handful of genes are known to cause rare "early-onset" forms, mutations passed through families that trigger symptoms unusually young, by age 50. Some cases also are linked to Down syndrome.

But Alzheimer's most commonly strikes after 65, especially in the late 70s to 80s, and the APOE gene - which also affects how the body handles fats -- was long known to play some role. There are three main varieties. Most people carry the APOE3 variant that appears to neither increase nor decrease Alzheimer's risk. Some carry APOE2, which provides some protection against Alzheimer's.

## Genetic

APOE4 has long been labeled the biggest genetic risk factor for late-in-life Alzheimer's, with two copies riskier than one. About 2% of the global population is estimated to have inherited a copy from each parent.

To better understand the gene's role, Fortea's team used data from 3,297 brains donated for research and from

over 10,000 people in U.S. and European Alzheimer's studies. They examined symptoms and early hallmarks of Alzheimer's such as sticky amyloid in the brain.

People with two APOE4 copies were accumulating more amyloid at age 55 than those with just one copy or the "neutral" APOE3 gene variety, they reported in the journal Nature Medicine. By age 65, brain scans showed significant plaque buildup in nearly three-quarters of those double carriers - who also were more likely to have initial Alzheimer's symptoms around that age rather than in the 70s or 80s.

Fortea said the disease's underlying biology was remarkably similar to young inherited types.

It appears more like "a familial form of Alzheimer's," said Dr. Eliezer Masliah of the National Institute on Aging. "It is not just a risk factor."

Importantly, not everyone with two APOE4 genes develops Alzheimer's symptoms and researchers need to learn why, Sperling cautioned.

"It's not quite destiny," she said. The drug Leqembi works by clear-

ing away some sticky amyloid but Sperling said it's not clear if carriers of two APOE4 genes benefit because they have such a high risk of a side effect from the drug - dangerous brain swelling and bleeding. One research question is whether they'd do better starting such drugs sooner than other people.

Masliah said other research aims to develop gene therapy or drugs to specifically target APOE4. He said it's also crucial to understand APOE4's effects in diverse populations since it's been studied mostly in white people of European ancestry.

As for gene tests, for now they're typically used only to evaluate if someone's a candidate for Leqembi or for people enrolling in Alzheimer's research - especially studies of possible ways to prevent the disease. Sperling said the people most likely to carry two APOE4 genes had parents who both got Alzheimer's relatively early, in their 60s rather than 80s.

## Also:

**BERLIN:** The number of cases of the pathogenic fungus candida auris in Germany has risen significantly, according to a study released by the National Reference Center for Invasive Fungal Infections (NRZMyk) on Thursday.

Between 2022 and 2023, the number of registered cases of candida auris jumped from 12 to 77, revealed the study, which was published in the journal Epidemiologisches Bulletin of the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) for infectious diseases.

"The enormous increase surprised us," said **Alexander M. Aldehohn** from the Institute of Hygiene and Microbiology at the University of Wuerzburg (JMU).

It is important to detect and combat outbreaks in hospitals at an early stage because they are "very difficult to get under control later on," he said.

Since the yeast candida auris was first described in Japan in 2009, a continuous increase in cases has been observed worldwide, according to the study.

## SpaceX launches 23 more Starlink internet satellites

## Boeing scraps astronaut launch over valve issue

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., May 7, (Agencies): Boeing called off its first astronaut launch because of a valve problem on the rocket Monday night.

The two NASA test pilots had just strapped into Boeing's Starliner capsule for a flight to the International Space Station when the countdown was halted, just two hours before the planned liftoff.

United Launch Alliance CEO Tory Bruno said an oxygen pressure-relief valve on the upper stage of the company's Atlas rocket started fluttering open and close, creating a loud buzz.

The valve may have exceeded its 200,000 lifetime cycles, Bruno said, which means it would have to be replaced, pushing the launch into next week. But if engineers can determine the valve is still within that limit, the launch team could try again as soon as Friday.

It was the latest delay for Boeing's first crew flight, on hold for years because of capsule trouble. Bruno said similar valve trouble had occurred in

years past on a few other Atlas rockets launching satellites. It was quickly resolved by turning the troublesome valves off and back on. But the company has stricter flight rules for astronaut flights, prohibiting valve recycling when a crew is on board.

"And so we stayed with the rules and the procedures, and scrubbed as a result," Bruno said at a press conference.

NASA's commercial crew program manager Steve Stich acknowledged it was a tough call.

"We're taking it one step at a time, and we're going to launch when we're ready and fly when it's safe to do so," Stich told reporters.

Within minutes of the countdown halting, Boeing's new astrovan was back at the launch pad to retrieve Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams from their pad at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station.

Starliner's first test flight without a crew in 2019 failed to reach the space station and Boeing had to

repeat the flight. Then the company encountered parachute issues and flammable tape.

## Also:

**LOS ANGELES:** US private space company SpaceX launched 23 more Starlink satellites into orbit on Monday.

The satellites were launched aboard a Falcon 9 rocket from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in the US state of Florida, according to SpaceX.

Falcon 9's first stage returned and landed on the "Just Read the Instructions" dronship, which was stationed in the Atlantic Ocean, according to the company.

SpaceX later confirmed the deployment of the 23 satellites.

Starlink will deliver high-speed broadband internet to locations where access has been unreliable, expensive, or completely unavailable, according to SpaceX.

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## WTT 2024 Saudi Smash witnesses series of setbacks

## Chinese star players stunned in singles events

JEDDAH, May 7, (Xinhua): The WTT 2024 Saudi Smash witnessed a series of upsets for the Chinese table tennis team as Ma Long, Liang Jingkun, Lin Gaoyuan, and Wang Manyu all suffered defeats in the round of 32.

Reigning men's Olympic champion Ma Long suffered a straight-set loss to South Korea's Jang Woo-jin, 11-13, 6-11, 8-11, while

## TABLE TENNIS

Lin Gaoyuan was eliminated by Danish player Jonathan Groth, losing 11-8, 11-7, 12-14, 13-11 despite a brief comeback in the third game.

World No. 4 Liang Jingkun was also upset in the men's singles second round, giving away an early lead to lose to Iranian veteran Noshad Alamiyan 12-14, 11-6, 8-11, 11-9, 11-5. After falling behind 1-7 in the decisive fifth game, Liang narrowed the gap to 5-8, but Alamiyan clinched the match with three

## Yadav unbeaten ton helps Mumbai end losing streak in IPL

MUMBAI, India, May 7, (AP): Suryakumar Yadav's masterful unbeaten century led Mumbai Indians to a seven-wicket win over Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Indian Premier League on Monday.

Yadav's unbeaten 102 in 51 balls included six sixes and 12 boundaries at Wankhede. He ensured Mumbai cruised to 174-3 with 16 balls to spare in reply to Hyderabad's 173-8.

Mumbai ended a four-match losing streak. Captain Hardik Pandya (3-31) and leg-spinner Piyush Chawla (3-33) earlier squeezed Hyderabad to a total that became competitive only by captain Pat Cummins' late 35 not out off 17 balls.

straight points.

Conversely, top-ranked Wang Chuqin showcased his prowess by smoothly defeating Romanian player Ovidiu Ionescu 3-0 (11-5, 11-3,

Mumbai rose on the table from last to second to last. Fourth-placed Hyderabad needs at least two wins from its last three home games to seal a playoff spot.

Mumbai's top order struggles continued when it slipped to 31-3 at home after Rohit Sharma top-edged Cummins on 4.

## CRICKET

Yadav survived early swing produced by Bhuvneshwar Kumar and took aim at the short square boundaries. He shared the match-winning unbeaten 143-run partnership with Tilak Varma, who scored 37 off 32 balls.

Yadav shrugged off discomfort

in his legs and raised his half-century off 30 balls. Then he cut loose against Cummins, who conceded 18 runs off his last over. Yadav reached his century with a six off T Natarajan over extra cover that also sealed the game.

Earlier, Travis Head launched Hyderabad with 48 off 30 and survived being clean-bowled off a no-ball by IPL debutant pacer Anshul Kamboj.

But Kamboj, who conceded 32 off his first two overs, recovered well and clean-bowled Mayank Agarwal.

Chawla got the big wicket of Head on the backward square leg boundary. Chawla also dismissed Heinrich Klaasen on 2 off a brilliant googly. Pandya ran through the lower order.



Mumbai Indians' Tilak Varma plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Mumbai Indians and Sunrisers Hyderabad in Mumbai, India. (AP)

next round. Wang Yidi also delivered a solid performance, defeating South Korean player Kim Na-yeong 3-0 to advance to the round of 16.

In the mixed doubles, the top-

ranked duo of Sun Yingsha and Wang Chuqin easily moved into the quarterfinals with a decisive 3-0 victory, maintaining their strong form in the tournament.

## Palace rout 'demoralized' Man Utd in RefCam debut

Moyes leaving West Ham at end of the season

LONDON, May 7, (AP): A referee wore a camera for the first time in an English Premier League match as Crystal Palace beat up Manchester United 4-0.

Footage from the device worn by Jarred Gillett, dubbed the RefCam, was not broadcast live but will be wound into a program made by the league to show the ups and downs of refereeing at the highest level.

What it will also show is a couple of United's woeful defending.

Defenders backed off Michael Olise and allowed him to stride forward unchallenged and score the opener after 13 minutes.

Jean-Philippe Mateta made it 2-0 five minutes before halftime when he skinned Jonny Evans and hammered the ball into the roof of the net.

## SOCCER

The United defense failed to deal with a ball into the box and Tyrick Mitchell slid in to poke home a third nearly an hour in.

The fourth came soon after when Casemiro was dispossessed by Daniel Muñoz, who cut the ball back for Olise to score his second.

It was a particularly rough day for Casemiro, United's captain for the day also had two goals chalked off.

United could claim it was missing captain Bruno Fernandes, as well as regulars Scott McTominay, Harry Maguire and Marcus Rashford but it was still dominated by a side that started the day six places behind it in the table.

The defeat was United's 13th in the league. It remained in eighth spot, outside the automatic European places.

"It's clear, it's obvious, this is underperforming," United coach Erik ten Hag told Sky Sports. "We didn't act how we wanted to and it's not good enough. We are very disappointed.

"There are always reasons, everyone sees our backline, we have huge problems. At the end of the day, we have to deal with it and we should have done better."

Ten Hag's men have three more league games to go before facing Manchester City in the FA Cup final



Manchester United's Kobbie Mainoo, right, challenges for the ball with Crystal Palace and Manchester United at Selhurst Park stadium in London, England. (AP)

on 25 May. The winner of the cup qualifies for the Europa League.

Palace remained in 14th place. David Moyes will leave his role as West Ham manager when his contract expires at the end of the season.

West Ham made the announcement to end speculation about Moyes' future, with the club having reportedly interviewed other managers already.

The BBC reported on Monday that Julen Lopetegui, the former Spain and Real Madrid coach, has agreed to come in as Moyes' replacement. West Ham said only that the recruitment process for Moyes' successor had begun and the club would be making no further comment.

Moyes is in his second stint at the club after returning in December 2019. In the last 4 1/2 years, he has led the team to the Europa Confer-

ence League title last season - its first major trophy since 1980 - and two top-seven finishes in the English Premier League.

"David has been responsible for a period of great progress and success in our history," West Ham joint-chairman David Sullivan said, "and we are extremely grateful for all of his hard work, commitment and dedication to the role."

"David has been an absolute professional to work with and he will leave with our greatest respect and good wishes - he deserves to be held in the highest esteem for the service he has given to West Ham United."

The club said Moyes' departure was by mutual consent and that announcing it before the end of the season gives him the opportunity "to get the send-off he deserves from the

West Ham supporters."

"The club is in a stronger position than when I returned back in 2019," said Moyes, whose position has come under scrutiny after a recent run of poor results including a 5-0 loss at Chelsea on Sunday.

"When I joined West Ham for a second time, the club was one place above the relegation zone, and it has been a terrific journey to have achieved three consecutive seasons in Europe."

The 61-year-old Moyes previously managed Everton, Manchester United and Sunderland in the Premier League.

Lopetegui's last job was at Wolverhampton in the Premier League. He quit days before the start of this season after less than a year in charge.

## Ghana's quartet qualifies

## Kiplangat to lead Uganda's marathon team in Paris '24

KAMPALA, May 7, (Xinhua): Reigning world marathon champion Victor Kiplangat will lead Uganda's athletics team at the upcoming 2024 Paris Summer Olympics.

Dominic Otuchet, President of the Uganda Athletics Federation (UAF), confirmed in an interview with Xinhua on Monday that despite multiple athletes meeting the qualifying standards, only the top three men and women have been selected for the team.

24-year-old Kiplangat, who clinched gold at the 2023 World Athletics Championships in Budapest, will be joined by Stephen Kissa and Andrew Kwemoloi on the men's team.

## ATHLETICS

"I continue to work hard because there is still some time left before the Olympics," said Kiplangat, who finished 15th at the Tokyo Marathon 2024 in March.

For the women's team, the lineup includes Stella Chesang, the 2019 Commonwealth Games 10,000-meter gold medalist, alongside Mercyline Chelangat and Rebecca Cheptegei.

"I am very happy that I have made the team and this will be my first time to compete in such a highly formida-

ble race," said Chesang.

Otuchet expressed confidence in the selected athletes, noting their extensive experience and ongoing preparations. He emphasized that the six marathon runners representing Uganda are all seasoned athletes capable of winning medals at the Olympics.

Ghana's 4x100m relay team delivered an outstanding performance at the World Athletics Relays Championship in the Bahamas, securing their spot in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

After a challenging start, where they finished eighth in the first heat due to a baton drop during a change-over, the team made a formidable comeback in the second heat.

The quartet, consisting of Ibrahim Fuseini, Isaac Botsio, Benjamin Azamati, and Joseph Paul Amoah - who is also an African Games 200m gold medalist - achieved a season-best time of 38.29 seconds in their second race. This strong performance not only marked a significant improvement from their initial outing but also ensured their qualification for the Olympics.

In this impressive run, Ghana outpaced Nigeria, which also secured Olympic qualification with a time of 38.57 seconds, finishing second in the heat.

## Best of the Rest

**System to protect athletes:** The International Olympic Committee (IOC) said on Tuesday that a new AI-powered monitoring system will protect athletes and officials from online abuse during the 2024 Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games.

"Paris 2024 will mark the first time that AI will be in use to provide safe online spaces for such a large number of athletes competing in so many sports at the same time," according to an IOC statement.

IOC said the AI-powered system will monitor thousands of accounts on all major social media platforms and in over 35 languages in real time, and any identified threats will be flagged.

IOC said the system was successfully piloted during Olympic Esports Week in 2023, analyzing more than 17,000 public posts, flagging 199 potentially abusive messages from 48 authors targeting accounts from a study set of 122 players and two official IOC accounts. (Xinhua)

**Romania readies for event:** Romania is gearing up for the European Mountain Bike Championships set to take place from May 8-12 at Cheile Gradistei

in Brasov County.

The event will see 450 athletes from across Europe vie for victory, including some renowned names such as Frenchwoman Pauline Ferrand-Prevot, Dutchwoman Puck Pieterse, and French riders Joshua Dubau and Victor Koretzki.

Leading Romania's charge are the defending champion Vlad Dascalu, who secured the European title in XCO last year, and Ede Molnar, the reigning European champion in Cross Country Eliminator. Adding to Romania's strength is Wendy Bunea, a rising junior cyclist making waves in European competitions. (Xinhua)

**Advincula extends contract:** Boca Juniors have extended the contract of Peru international defender Luis Advincula for another two years, the Argentine club said.

Advincula, who had been in the final year of his contract, will be tied to the Buenos Aires outfit until December 2026, according to a statement on Boca's official website.

The 34-year-old full-back has made 119 first-team appearances for the Xeneize since joining the club from Spain's Rayo Vallecano in July 2021.

## Baldé header steals dramatic win for Lyon at Lille

## Atalanta come from behind to beat Salernitana and improve CL chances

ROME, May 7, (AP): Atalanta came from a goal down to beat Salernitana 2-1 in Serie A and improve its chances of a place in next season's Champions League.

The Bergamo-based club rose above Roma and into fifth place. The top five qualify automatically for the Champions League.

Atalanta rested some regular starters with one eye on Thursday's second leg of the Europe League semifinal against Marseille.

It went behind after 18 minutes when Loum Tchouaoua scored against the run of play.

But Atalanta woke up in the second half. Gianluca Scamacca converted a nice headed assist by Mario Pasalic and six minutes later Teun Koopmeiners stroked home from outside the box.

Salernitana remained on the bottom of the table and will spend next season in Serie B.

Udinese equalized deep in stoppage time to draw with Napoli 1-1 at home and earn a vital point in its

fight against relegation.

Substitute Isaac Success was surrounded by defenders but managed



Atalanta's Berat Djimsiti, top, challenges for the ball with Salernitana's Lorenzo Pirola during the Serie A soccer match between Salernitana and Atalanta at the Stadio Arcehi in Salerno, Italy. (AP)

to squeeze a shot home in the second minute of stoppage time.

Until then, it had looked like a certain defeat for the home side after Victor Osimhen scored his 15th league goal five minutes into the second half.

Osimhen rose to power home an inviting cross from Matteo Politano. The Nigeria international also had a goal chalked off 10 minutes from the end.

Mama Baldé got the winner with a superb header in the second minute of stoppage time to shock a home side that led 1-0, 2-0, and 3-2.

Lyon's fourth win in five league games ended Lille's run of three consecutive home victories.

Bafodé Diakité put Lille ahead with a fine header after 20 minutes, and Edon Zhegrova added a second 16 minutes later when he fired a low shot home from outside the box.

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Zain executive management presented 'Best Player' award to winners

## Dawri Zain continues to celebrate league's top players



Nawaf Algharabally and Salah Al Qenaei with the winners and Zain, KFA officials.

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Zain continues to award the top performing players of Dawri Zain's Premier League and First Division competitions. The recognition came during the special event held at the company's headquarters in Shuwaikh in partnership with the Kuwait Football Association (KFA), where Zain's executive management presented the 'Best Player of the Round' award to the winners.

In attendance were Zain Kuwait CEO Nawaf Algharabally, KFA Secretary-General Salah Al Qenaei, Zain Kuwait Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer Waleed Al Khashti, Head of the Technical Committee Abdulaziz Hamadah, committee members Hussain Hakem and Hussain Al Mutairi, along with the winning athletes and Zain and KFA officials.

Zain presented the following Zain Premier League players with the 'Best Player of the Round' award (KD 500): Qadisiya SC's Eid Al Rashidi (14th round), Kuwait SC's Mohammed Daham (15th round), Jahra SC's Othman Al Rashidi (16th round), Khaitan SC's Yaqoub Al Tararwah (17th round), and Qadisiya SC's Bader Al Mutawa (18th round).

In addition, the following Championship Group's rounds winners were also awarded at the ceremony: Qadisiya SC's Bader Al Mutawa (1st round of the Championship Group), Qadisiya SC's Eid Al Rashidi (2nd round of the Championship Group), Kuwait SC's Youssef Nasser (3rd and 4th rounds of the Championship Group), and Qadisiya SC's Khalid Al Rashidi (5th round of the Championship Group).

The company also presented the following Zain First Division League players with the 'Best Player of the Round' award (KD 200): Tadamun SC's Abdulaziz Al Bishir (11th round), Sahel SC's Faleh Al Ajmi (12th round), Burgan SC's Mishal Al Rashidi (13th round), Yarmouk SC's Mishari Al Azmi (14th round), Sulaybikhat SC's Fahad Al Holi (15th round), Tadamun SC's Abdulrahman Ajaj (16th round), Sahel SC's Fahad Al Salamah (17th round), and Yarmouk SC's Nasser Al Failakawi (18th round).

Prior to the new season's kick-off, the Kuwait Football Association formed a special committee to outline the standards and criteria on which the prize winners will be selected. The committee is membered by former international players and experts Abdulaziz Hamadah (committee head), Hamad Al Enzi, Ahmad Mousa, Hussain Hakem, and Hussain Al Mutairi.

Zain remains a strong supporter of local athletes and believes that last season's prizes contributed to elevating the league's performance and



Awarding Qadisiya SC star Bader Al Mutawa.



Awarding Kuwait SC star Youssef Nasser.



Awarding Qadisiya SC goalkeeper Khalid Al Rashidi.

bringing excitement to all fans. For this reason, the company has pledged not only to continue this support, but to also add new prize categories to reflect its interest in shouldering the local sports sector.

This season, Zain's cash prizes for athletes in the top flight are as follows: Player of the Season: KD 10,000, Best Player in the Round: KD 500 (per round), Season's Top Scorer: KD 5,000, Season's Top Local Scorer: KD 5,000, Season's Best Goalkeeper: KD 5,000, Season's Best Coach: KD 3,000, Season's

Rising Star: KD 2,000, and Best Photo of Season: KD 1000. For the Zain First Division League, the company also presents a new Best Player in the Round prize of KD 200 (per round).

The company also presents a total of KD 10,000 of cash prizes to the winners of the first three places in the Dawri Zain Fantasy League, the first ever local fantasy league game. With this, the total of Zain's prizes for athletes and fans reaches over KD 60,000, the biggest prize pool in the local league's history.

## 9-man Kuwait Club maintain lead in Zain Premier League

Maaloul's tactical mastery secures victory over Al-Fahaheel

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Tunisian Kuwait coach Nabil Maaloul orchestrated a triumphant performance securing three crucial points against Al-Fahaheel despite facing adversity in the Zain Premier League group match, Maaloul's team persevered with only nine players after the expulsion of Mohamed Freih in the 40th minute and Youssef Nasser in the 55th minute. Youssef Nasser (17) and Muhammad Al-Marhoon (67) netted goals for Kuwait Club.

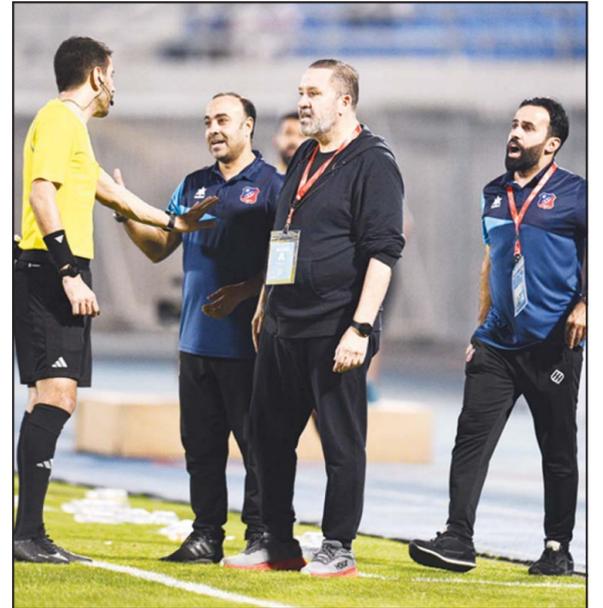
## SOCCER

Maaloul's adept leadership instilled confidence in his player's post-expulsions, guiding them effectively while Al-Fahaheel struggled with confusion and haste. Firas Al-Khatib, the Syrian team's coach, appeared unable to manage the situation effectively, leaving his team seemingly incomplete on the field. Notably, Al-Fahaheel, not contending for the title, faced less pressure compared to Kuwait Club.

With 57 points, Kuwait Club maintained its lead in the Premier League.

Maaloul commended referee Abdullah Al-Jamali, labeling his decisions in the match as "world-class" and asserting their correctness. Despite significant numerical disadvantages for over a half, Maaloul praised his team's discipline, expressing optimism for the remaining four rounds.

Highlighting ongoing competition between Kuwait Club, Al-



The match official having a word with Kuwait Club technical bench.

Arabi, and Al-Qadisiya, Maaloul emphasized that final-round confrontations between these teams remain pivotal.

Maaloul declined to comment on player Jumaa Saeed's frustration at non-participation, indicating it will be addressed internally.

Firas Al-Khatib acknowledged a strong first half for Al-Fahaheel but lamented missed opportunities and the impact of absent key players. Al-Fahaheel failed to capitalize on Kuwait Club's numerical disadvantage, displaying poor performance according to Al-Khatib, who accepted responsibility for the defeat. He expressed hope for redemption in future matches.

Regarding contract renewal with Al-Fahaheel next season, Al-Khatib stated no decision had been made yet.

## Best of the Rest

**Forest lose appeal:** Nottingham Forest lost its appeal against a four-point deduction for breaching the Premier League's financial rules, a ruling that keeps the team in relegation danger with just two games remaining this season.

The league said Tuesday that an appeal board has upheld the decision taken by an independent commission in March, which dropped Forest into the relegation zone.

Forest has since climbed back out of the bottom three and is in 17th place in the 20-team league, three points above the relegation zone.

Forest went above the threshold by 34.5 million pounds.

The club launched an appeal on two grounds - that the commission failed to regard the 47.5 million-pound (\$60-million) sale of Brennan Johnson soon after the three-year assessment period ended as a mitigating factor and that some or all of the points deducted should have been suspended. (AP)

**Brazilian clubs hit by floods:** Three Brazilian top flight clubs have called on the country's football association to suspend their league matches for at least 20 days because of severe floods in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul.

Internacional, Gremio and Juventude made the joint request on Monday as Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva asked Congress to recognize a state of emergency.

At least 83 people have been killed over the past seven days as a result of the heavy rains while another 111 are reported missing.

"The absolute priority at this moment is to support thousands of people who have been hit," Internacional said in a statement. "We ask for understanding, solidarity, empathy and support at such a delicate and extraordinary moment." Large swathes of state capital Porto Alegre were inundated, rendering the stadiums and training facilities of Internacional and Gremio unusable. (Xinhua)

## Al-Razihan's stellar performance acknowledged by Kuwait Sports Authority

KUWAIT CITY, May 7: Bashar Abdullah, the Deputy Director of the General Sports Authority for Competitive Sports Affairs, warmly welcomed a delegation from the Gymnastics Federation, along with Nour Al-Razihan, a national rhythmic gymnast, to his office at the Authority's headquarters. Nour recently achieved a notable milestone for Kuwaiti gymnastics by securing the eighth position in the 20th Asian Championship held in Uzbekistan.

## GYMNASTICS

Abdullah commended Nour's dedication and her outstanding performance in the championship, encouraging her to continue striving for excellence in future competitions. He reiterated the Authority's unwavering support for her and all exceptional athletes representing Kuwait on the international stage.

Expressing gratitude, Abdullah extended thanks to Nour's family and the Gymnastics Federation for their steadfast support. He also lauded the efforts of Fatima Hayat, the head of the Women's Sports Committee in the Olympic Committee,

for her commitment to enhancing women's sports.

Abdul Latif Murad, the Secretary General of the Gymnastics Federation,

conveyed appreciation to Abdullah for the warm reception and the ongoing support extended to the Federation and its members.



Bashar Abdullah, the Deputy Director of the General Sports Authority for Competitive Sports Affairs, warmly welcomes a delegation from the Gymnastics Federation.

## Badosa shows signs of her old form

ROME, May 7, (AP): Paula Badosa showed signs of her former top-five form during a 6-2, 6-3 victory over 17-year-old Mirra Andreeva in the first round of the Italian Open on Tuesday.

Badosa was ranked as high as No. 2 before she missed the second half of last year due to a back injury that has also slowed her this season. She's now No. 126.

Badosa jumped out to a 5-1 lead in the first set before a 45-minute rain delay and then picked up where she left off against the 40th-ranked Andreeva, who was the WTA tour's newcomer of the year in 2023.

Badosa reached the quarterfinals in Rome last year but that turned out to be her penultimate tournament of the season.

It was Badosa's first win since beating Simona Halep at the Miami Open last month in Halep's

return from a doping ban. It also ended Badosa's six-match losing streak against players ranked in the top 40 that had stretched back to Rome last year.

## TENNIS

Also on the red clay at the Foro Italico, Shelby Rogers routed Italian wild-card entry Lisa Pigato 6-1, 6-0.

The only other matches scheduled on the opening day featured 2021 U.S. Open runner-up Leylah Fernandez against Ana Bogdan and Yulia Putintseva against Martina Trevisan.

The men's tournament starts on Wednesday with Novak Djokovic as the top seed and 10-time champion Rafael Nadal also entered. But Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz both withdrew due to injuries.



Napoli's Andre-Frank Zambo Anguissa (left) and Udinese's Thomas Kristensen battle for the ball during the Serie A soccer match between Udinese and Napoli at the Bluenergy Stadium in Udine, Italy. The game ended 1-1. (AP) — See Page 14

# Sports

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Kuwait Club players pose with officials after the closing ceremony.

## Kuwait Club's junior team clinches tennis championship title

The Kuwait Club's junior team clinched the championship title in the under-12 category of the Tennis League.

The tournament, hosted at the Yarmouk and Kuwait Clubs, and

organized by the Kuwait Tennis Federation, concluded with the Kuwait Club defeating Sulabikhat 3-0 in the final match. Yarmouk defeated Khaithan 2-1 to earn third place.

The final match and the subsequent award ceremony were graced by the presence of Abdul-Rida Al-Gharib, the Vice President of the Kuwait Tennis Federation, and Abbas Al-Busairi, the

technical director. Overseeing the tournament was international referee Ahmed Salman Hashem, supported by a panel of referees from the Kuwait Tennis Federation.

## Hridoy shines with half century

Bangladesh beat Zimbabwe to clinch T20 series

CHATTOGRAM, Bangladesh, May 7, (AP): Towhid Hridoy hit his maiden half-century as Bangladesh beat Zimbabwe by nine runs in the third T20 on Tuesday to take an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match series.

Put into bat first, Bangladesh compiled 165-8 with Hridoy hitting a 38 ball-57 and then defended the total by restricting Zimbabwe to 156-9.

Faraz Akram and Wellington Masakadza, the two changes Zimbabwe made for this match, combined for a national record of 54 runs for ninth wicket to raise the team's hopes but the Bangladeshi bowlers held their nerve.

"Glad with the way the boys played, they showed a lot of character, especially Hridoy and Jaker Ali," Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto said. "We didn't bowl well in the last five overs, we will need to improve on that front. We'll look to come back strongly in the next game."

Bangladesh was reduced to 29-2 after losing out-of-form opener Liton

Das and captain Najmul Hossain Shanto, giving Zimbabwe a chance to stay alive in the series.

Hridoy counterattacked to keep the runs flowing but Zimbabwe hit back again when Akram undid Tanzid Hasan with a short-of-length delivery for 21 as Bangladesh was left at 60-3 in ninth over. Jaker Ali and Hridoy put on 87 off 57 balls, helping Bangladesh reach a solid total.

Hridoy raised his first T20 fifty off 34 balls by steering fast bowler Luke Jongwe to deep cover for a single.

Fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani, who claimed 3-14 from four overs, finally broke the partnership by rattling the stump of Hridoy with a toe-crusher yorker after the batter had smashed three fours and two sixes in his knock.

Two balls later, Muzarabani again executed a yorker to precision to deny Jaker Ali a half-century. Jaker struck three fours and two sixes for his 34-ball 44. In reply, Zimbabwe's top-order failed to click again as four of the first five batters were out for a single-digit figure.

Brunson becomes fourth NBA player with 4 consecutive 40-point games in postseason

## Timberwolves blitz reeling champions Nuggets to extend series lead

## Kuwait Club edge Manama to win the West Asian League Championship title

American stars instrumental in the victory

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

MANAMA, May 7: Kuwait clinched the West Asian Basketball League Championship title for the Gulf region by triumphing over the host team, Manama, Bahrain, with a score of 99-92 in a high-stakes showdown at the Khalifa Sports Hall in Bahrain's

### BASKETBALL

capital. This victory unfolded in the decisive third encounter of the "Playoff" final round.

This victory marks Kuwait Club's third Gulf region title, having previously won against Manama last year, only to fall short in the final match of the



Kuwait Club player dunks during the final.

continental championship, once again to Manama.

The finalists, alongside Kazma, secured a spot in the final round, which includes three teams from the Central Asian region: Lebanese Riyadi and

Al-Hikma, Iranian Gorgan, as well as champions from India and Kazakhstan, next June.

Al-Abyad's American Mitchell Young, who replaced compatriot Anthony Carr, showcased an outstand-

ing performance. Young's adept leadership in team attacks and active participation in critical moments of the match, netting 25 points, were instrumental in the victory.

Kuwait Club demonstrated early dominance with a robust defense, particularly stifling Manama's key players, Americans Ebenakis and Traven. Meanwhile, Al-Abyad's Cadi Lallan from Haiti, Hamad Adnan, and Turki Hamoud, alongside match standout Young, excelled, closing the first quarter with a 34-31. Kuwait Club ended the second half with 56-51 advantage.

Meanwhile, Manama surged in the third quarter, narrowing the gap to 78-77.

In the final quarter, Young delivered an exceptional performance, asserting his presence in critical moments with ball control, penetrative drives, and scores from under the basket, supported by Hamad, Muhammad Adnan, Turki Hammoud, Abdul Rahman Al-Sahu, Lalan, and Marcus Hunt. This surge reestablished White's ten-point lead to 95-85, securing the victory in the closing moments of the game.

DENVER, May 7, (AP): The Minnesota Timberwolves, led by Anthony Edwards and Karl-Anthony Towns, overpowered the Denver Nuggets on Monday night in a stunningly efficient 106-80 thrashing of the reigning but reeling NBA champions.

The Wolves held Denver to an ugly 29-of-83 shooting night, and the most impressive thing about that was the absence of their best defender, 7-foot-1 center Rudy Gobert, who was back in Minneapolis for the birth of his son.

Gobert's fingerprints were all over this masterpiece, Chris Finch suggested.

Towns and Edwards both scored 27 points as the Wolves improved to 6-0 in the playoffs and gave themselves a chance to close out the fuming Nuggets with wins Friday night and Sunday in Minneapolis.

So flustered were the Nuggets by the second quarter that coach Michael Malone threw a fit at an official and scuffling point guard Jamal Murray threw a heat pack onto the court in frustration as Towns was about to score on a layup.

### BASKETBALL

Malone said he had no idea it was Murray who tossed the heat pack, saying, "I knew a heating pack was on the floor, but it was not in my field of vision." Nor did the officials see him throw it, added crew chief Marc Davis.

"We weren't aware it had come from the bench. If we would have been aware it came from the bench, we could have reviewed it under the hostile act trigger. The penalty would have been a technical foul," Davis told a pool reporter.

Murray, who has shot 9 for 32 in this series, left Ball Arena without comment for the second straight game. He is likely to be fined by the NBA for his actions.

Aaron Gordon led Denver with 20 points, Nikola Jokic had 16 points and 16 rebounds but their third-leading scorer was sub Justin Holliday with 13 points. Murray scored eight points on 3-of-18 shooting.

Kyle Anderson replaced Gobert in the starting lineup and had eight assists and nine rebounds and reserves Naz Reid and Nickeil Alexander-Walker both scored 14.

During a 43-18 first-half flourish by the Timberwolves - Edwards was on the bench for much of it, no less - the Nuggets grew so frustrated that Malone ran way out onto the court and got in Davis' face for an extended blowup during a timeout but avoided a technical.

"Although Coach Malone was visibly upset about both his team and the officials, I did not hear him say anything unsportsmanlike that warranted a technical foul," Davis explained.

Frustrated by their slow starts - the Nuggets have trailed by double digits in six of their seven playoff games and by nine in the other - Malone challenged his team to get off to a strong start for once.

Only Gordon heeded his coach's call, scoring 13 quick points, including a 3-pointer that brought the Nuggets to 18-17 late in the first quarter.

Things unraveled for Denver after that. Trailing 61-35 at the break, the Nuggets' 26-point halftime deficit was Denver's largest in a home playoff game in franchise history.

Now the Nuggets, who lost consec-



Minnesota Timberwolves forward Jaden McDaniels, (right), drives to the basket as Denver Nuggets guard Jamal Murray defends during the second half of Game 2 of an NBA basketball second-round playoff series in Denver. (AP)



Josh Hart (3) drives past Indiana Pacers' Isaiah Jackson (22) during the first half of Game 1 in an NBA basketball second-round playoff series in New York. (AP)

utive games just once during the season, find themselves needing to beat Edwards four times in five tries to advance to the Western Conference finals again, a seemingly impossibility given both teams' level of play at the moment.

Edwards, for one, expects to see

New York Knicks' Josh Hart (3) drives past Indiana Pacers' Isaiah Jackson (22) during the first half of Game 1 in an NBA basketball second-round playoff series in New York. (AP)

a different Nuggets team at Target Center this weekend.

Jalen Brunson scored 43 points, becoming the fourth player in NBA history with four straight 40-point games in the postseason, and the New York Knicks beat the Indiana Pacers 121-117 in Game 1 of the Eastern Conference semifinals.

Brunson had 21 in the fourth quarter, rallying the Knicks after they trailed by nine early in the period, and joined Hall of Famers Jerry West, who had six consecutive 40-point games in the postseason, and Michael Jordan and Bernard King (both with four).

Donte DiVincenzo hit the tiebreaking 3-pointer with 39 seconds remaining and scored 25 for the Knicks, who opened the second round with the type of close finish that their first-round victory over Philadelphia was full of. Josh Hart added a playoff career-high 24 points and added 13 rebounds and eight assists.

The No. 2-seeded Knicks will host Game 2 on Wednesday.

Myles Turner scored 23 points for the sixth-seeded Pacers, who got strong play from their bench and were in good shape to follow their first-round ouster of Milwaukee by jumping to the lead against the Knicks.

"We are ready for 90, 120 minutes, and a penalty shootout"

## Muller calls Bayern's duel against Real 'knife-edge issue'

BERLIN, May 7, (Xinhua): For Thomas Muller, self-confidence and efficiency are the keys to success for Bayern Munich when crossing swords with Spanish giant Real Madrid.

"It's a game on eye level, an issue on the knife-edge," the 34-year-old Bavarian icon said ahead of the second leg in the semis of the 2023-24 UEFA Champions League.

The Bayern striker said football is about efficiency, and a duel on that level "is about millimeters when we create chances." Wednesday evening's encounter will be Muller's 151st Champions League appearance, and his sixth at the Santiago Bernabeu.

"It's important to show we are the indomitable Bavarians," he added. Following the 2-2 draw in Munich a week ago, Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer spoke of a final "we are facing. I expect an exceptional game." The circumstances couldn't be trickier for the Bavarians.

Not only has Real Madrid won 18 of its 19 Champions League duels when not losing the first leg, but also a tense atmosphere is surrounding the Bundesliga outfit.

The search for a successor for departing Thomas Tuchel seems to have turned into a never-ending story after several candidates reportedly rejected the club's offer, such as Leverkusen's Xabi Alonso and Austrian national coach Ralf Rangnick.

Latest media reports talk of Bayern eyeing Manchester United coach Erik ten Hag, who coached Bayern's ama-

teur side from 2013 to 2015.

Speculations seem to grow by the minute as the TV station Sky is reporting several leading players have voted in favor of a stay of Tuchel. "At present, all is said about this," the Bayern coach replied.

Despite a poor league campaign and a setback in the German Cup, the duel against the Spaniards is providing the chance to create some sort of happy end.

At least, when it comes to the Champions League, Tuchel and his team seem to have developed a wagon castle mentality.

Ahead of the Bavarians' most important game of the season, defender Matthijs de Ligt and striker Jamal Mu-

siala returned to regular team training.

The likely return of Dutch international De Ligt is said to improve the quality of Bayern's back row.

"We need to be ready for 90, 120 minutes, and a penalty shootout, and we are," Muller said and praised his side's latest upswing. "It's on us to get the ball over the line." Real Madrid entertain Bayern Munich in the second

### SOCCER

leg of their Champions League semifinal on Wednesday night with the tie finely balanced.

Two goals from Vinicius Jr helped



Real Madrid's goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois, third from right, trains with team-mates in Madrid, Spain. (AP)