



## KUWAIT EYES STRICTER TRAFFIC LAWS TO COMBAT RECKLESS DRIVING

# KD 300 fine for drivers on phone

### Road safety boost with harsher penalties

**KUWAIT CITY, May 23:** The Interior Ministry intends to impose harsher penalties on anyone who violates traffic regulations in a bid to enhance road safety and control reckless driving, says a reliable source from the government.

According to the source, the proposed amendments to the Traffic Law that will be approved soon include the following:  
- One to three years imprisonment or fine ranging from KD 1,000 to KD 3,000 for driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol.  
- Three months in jail or KD 300 fine for using a mobile phone while driving.  
- Three months imprisonment or fine of KD 500 maximum for driving beyond the speed limit.

- Two months jail time or fine of KD 200 maximum for violating the tinted windows regulation.  
The new law also addresses other reckless driving habits as follows:  
- KD 75 fine for leaving children or pets unattended in a car or allowing them to protrude from windows.  
- Fine ranging from KD 100 to KD 200 for allowing children under 10 years old to sit in the front seat or not using the child seat at the back seat.  
- Fine ranging from KD 250 to KD 500 for failure to give way to emergency vehicles like fire trucks, ambulances and police cars.  
- Imprisonment for three months or fine ranging from KD 200 to KD 500 for beating the red light.  
The source affirmed these stricter penalties aim to deter precarious behavior on the roads and to raise public awareness on the importance of adopting safer driving habits.

### Kuwait seeks key role

## Economic synergy via 'GCC Railway'

**KUWAIT CITY, May 23, (KUNA):** The State of Kuwait is seeking through the GCC Railway mega venture to play a key role in boosting pan-GCC economic integration and sustainable development in the regional countries.

Situated in the strategic northernmost of the Gulf, Kuwait aspires to be a regional hub for commerce and transports, with the forecast high flow of merchandise and passengers aboard the trains.

The planned 2,217-kilometer long railway stretches from Kuwait to Al-Dammam (Saudi Arabia), Bahrain and Qatar, via Salwa border exit. It also extends from Saudi Arabia to Abu Dhabi, Al-Ain and Muscat via Sahar, the GCC Secretariat General says on its official website.

The mega project was first broached at the 2009 GCC Summit, held in Bahrain, with proposals to link up the six GCC member states via the network, with aim to facilitate inter-GCC commerce, citizens' movement, backing up joint enterprises in line with the trade integration strategy.

Kuwait's Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) has been tasked, in coordination with relevant authorities, with taking charge of the project -- Kuwait's section -- benefits of which include slashing expenditures on renovating the roads and trimming fuel emissions. It is also expected to create new

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A man visits the International Gold and Jewelry Exhibition in Hawalli Governorate, Kuwait, on May 22, 2024. The International Gold and Jewelry Exhibition kicked off on Wednesday and will last until May 27 with the participation of more than 200 exhibitors.

Xinhua photo

## Kuwait weekend temps 43 to 45°C

**KUWAIT CITY, May 23, (KUNA):** The Kuwait Meteorological Administration predicts hot daytime temperatures and moderately hot nights over the weekend. A high-pressure system extending over the region will bring dry conditions with light to moderate northwesterly winds. Director Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi of the Meteorological Department informed Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that today will see temperatures reaching 43-45 degrees Celsius, with occasional gusts of northwesterly winds at speeds ranging from 10 to 42 kilometers per hour. Some areas may experience dust. Sea conditions will be light to moderate with waves up to 2-6 feet.

Tonight, temperatures will range between 29-31 degrees Celsius, with light to moderate northwesterly to variable winds at speeds of 8-32 kilometers per hour. Sea conditions will remain light to moderate with waves of 1-4 feet.

Tomorrow, Friday, temperatures will again peak at 43-45 degrees Celsius with similar wind patterns and sea conditions. Nighttime temperatures will range from 29-30 degrees Celsius with similar wind and sea conditions as the previous night.

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## NBK bags 2 awards from Euromoney



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## KFH wins Kuwait's Best Bank award



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### News watch

**KUWAIT CITY:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Thursday a cable of congratulations to the newly-elected President of Vietnam, To Lam.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir congratulated President Lam on being elected as president and taking the constitutional oath, wishing him success and long-lasting health, as well as further growth and progress of bilateral relations between both friendly countries.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a congratulatory cable on Thursday to the newly-elected President of Vietnam, To Lam.

In the cable, His Highness the Prime Minister congratulated President Lam on being elected and taking the constitutional oath. (KUNA)

**KUWAIT CITY:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Thursday two letters from the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev on ways to enhance ties on all possible levels.

A statement by the Foreign Ministry revealed that Azerbaijan's Ambassador to Kuwait Emil Karimov handed the letters to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. (KUNA)

## Labor ministers approve Qatar Declaration

# GCC-African dialogue on labor mobility vital: Kuwaiti official

**DOHA, May 23, (KUNA):** Acting deputy director-general for planning and administrative development of the Public Authority for Manpower Rabab Al-Eseimy has said the Doha Dialogue on Labor Mobility provides a real opportunity for GCC and African countries to exchange views on labor market.

The GCC-African cooperation helps both sides to maximize benefit from their human resources and promote the development march, she told KUNA after the opening session of the dialogue on Wednesday.

Eng. Al-Eseimy is taking part in the Doha Dialogue after attending the 61st coordinative meeting of the GCC ministers of labor yesterday.

She noted that she offered a presentation on the progress in the field of labor mobility and the role of Sahel app in organizing Kuwait's outsourcing of expertise from more than 130 countries.

The app helps Kuwait employers get the workforce they need and follow up the hiring and supervision systems in a smart way, she said, adding that she briefed the meeting on the occupational system of smart outsourcing.

The two-day Doha dialogue opened earlier today with 33 countries from the Gulf region and Africa taking part; Kuwait is represented at the gathering by Eng. Al-Eseimy and Abdullah Al-Harbi - a political science researcher of the public relations dept.

Meanwhile, labor ministers of the GCC states, Jordan, Lebanon and 25 African states have approved the Qatar Declaration on workers' mobility between the GCC member states and the African Union.

The declaration includes some measures and mechanisms of sustainable dialogue among these countries, with the aim of enhancing joint coordination, and facing current and future challenges in the origin and targeted countries regarding the mobility of African expatriate workers to the GCC states, Jordan and Lebanon.

The ministers participating in the meeting agreed to launch the "Doha Dialogue" as a consultative, voluntary, non-binding and

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## Gulf Bank earns Euromoney recognition



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Part of the Gulf-American working group meeting.

KUNA photo

## Kuwaiti military official participates in US-GCC Defense Working Groups

Air Vice Marshal Khaled Saad headed Kuwait's army delegation at the meeting of US-GCC Defense Working Groups on Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) and Maritime Security in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on May 22 and 23.

The meeting was held at the GCC headquarters, attended by

the General Secretariat of the council and representatives from the armed forces of the GCC countries.

During the meeting, the working groups discussed the strategic US-GCC partnership aimed at developing joint security and defense cooperation to enhance regional security and stability. (KUNA)

## Kuwait calls for efforts to find missing persons

**NEW YORK, May 23, (KUNA):** Kuwait Permanent Delegate to the United Nations Ambassador Tareq Al-Bannai reaffirmed the necessity for the Security Council to pursue a more holistic approach to complement existing measures for the protection of civilians in armed conflicts.

This came during Al-Bannai's speech on behalf of the International Alliance member states group at the Security Council meeting on protection of civilians in armed conflicts.

He stressed the importance of exchanging experiences, and providing all necessities to locate missing persons with the help of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

He added that this joint action could help reduce the number of missing people cases in the long term; which has a negative impact on their families.

He also referenced the UN Secretary General's annual report to the Security Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts, noting that the International Committee of the Red Cross reported 40,000 missing people in 2023.

Al-Bannai stressed the importance of discussing the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2474 on missing persons as a result of armed conflict in the upcoming Arria-formula Meeting in June.

The Global Alliance for the Missing, launched in 2021, is a group of states that aim to raise awareness of the issue.

## Call to resolve Filipino domestic workers issue

**KUWAIT CITY, May 23:** Domestic labor affairs expert Munir Al-Usaimi has stressed the need to address the shortage of domestic workers in the country, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Usaimi disclosed that he recently discussed the issue with acting Kuwaiti Ambassador to Ethiopia Nawaf Al-Mutairi and a number of Ethiopian officials.

He said a Kuwaiti delegation from the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) and owners of domestic labor offices will travel to Ethiopia on May 27 to sign the final agreement on sending domestic workers to Kuwait.

He affirmed that a few weeks after signing the agreement, the

domestic labor offices will be able to bring Ethiopian workers to Kuwait.

He said these workers will be tested to make sure they are free from physical and psychological diseases; stressing that any worker found to be afflicted with such diseases will be rejected.

He called on HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah to immediately address the issue of hiring domestic workers from the Philippines, as these workers are skilled and preferred by employers, so their return will greatly contribute to the ongoing efforts to solve the domestic worker crisis.

## Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 03:21 Asr ..... 15:20  
 Sunrise .. 04:52 Maghrib .. 18:38  
 Zohr ..... 11:45 Isha ..... 20:06

# Local

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

## Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Hot with light variable wind to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-28 km/h.  
**By Night:** Rather hot with light

## Weather

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec		
Kuwait City	39	32	Kuwait Airport	44
			Abdaly	43
			Jahra	44
			Salmiyah	38
			Nuwaisib	43
			Wafra	43
				29

## Kuwait partakes in tenth world water forum

# MEW prepares tender for electrical system consulting services

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy is gearing up to initiate a tender for consulting services pertaining to the operation and protection of the electrical system, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This move also involves studying energy trade exchange with the Gulf Electricity Interconnection Authority during the current fiscal year 2024/2025.

Sources within the ministry explained that the consulting services encompass several crucial tasks, including the development and expansion of the electrical network and capacity. This will involve participating in future technical aspects of electric power stations, such as the addition of new power generation units, and overseeing maintenance programs for these units.

The objective of this advisory work is to bolster the electrical network,

particularly in the realm of the unified Gulf interconnection network. This will involve collaborating on operational studies with the authority to ensure the stability of the electrical network, safeguarding it against any adverse effects stemming from the exchange of energy quantities between member states.

Meanwhile, the electrical load index in the country has continued its upward trend, particularly with rising temperatures. Yesterday afternoon, the index surpassed 14 thousand megawatts, coinciding with temperatures reaching 42 degrees Celsius.

On a different note, Kuwait, represented by the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, is actively participating in the Tenth World Water Forum under the theme "Water for Shared Prosperity."

The official delegation, headed by Acting Undersecretary Engineer Maha Al-Asousi and Director of the Chemical Works Department, Engineer Sarah Al-Mutairi, is attending the forum in the Indonesian city of Bali until the day after tomorrow.

In a statement, the ministry highlighted the forum's objective of promoting sustainable water management initiatives, including the utilization of water resources for hydroelectric power generation.

Discussions at the forum encompass topics such as water consumption rationalization, as well as the interlinkages between climate, water, food, energy, health, and politics. Participants express hope that the outcomes of the forum will influence the policies of participating countries through practical application of its recommendations.



FM receiving UN Secretary General's Special Representative for Iraq. KUNA photo

### Kuwait's FM receives UNAMI head

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya received on Thursday UN Secretary General's Special Representative for Iraq and Head of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) Jeanine Hen-

ne-Plasschaert on the occasion of her visit to the country.

During the meeting, both sides tackled the latest developments and UNAMI activities to help Iraq in this regard. (KUNA)

# Kuwaiti info minister expresses aspiration for GCC media co-op

Doha hosts 27th meeting of GCC information ministers

DOHA, May 23, (KUNA): Kuwaiti Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi expressed on Thursday his aspirations to reinforce media cooperation between GCC countries to create purposeful media content.

This came during his speech in the 27th GCC Ministers of Information meeting held in Doha.

The minister stressed the importance of creating purposeful content to cope with the requirements of the current phase that witnesses rapid evolution in artificial intelligence technologies.

He said that the message of the media in the GCC have evolved in terms of form, content and momentum in shedding the light on the civilization image of the GCC and its achievements in different fields of cooperation.

"One of the ways of enhancing this message is taking good care of the cadres and the quality of their training to do their jobs in content creation according to the visions of our political leadership," said Al-Mutairi.

He appreciated the joint keenness to cooperate for the good of the GCC countries aspiring to Gulf prospects promising further development and prosperity.

He also extended his appreciation to Qatar for hosting this meeting, in the hope of meeting again in the 28th GCC Ministers of Information meeting in Kuwait.

### Participation

Earlier, the 27th meeting of information ministers of GCC kicked off in the Qatari capital, Doha Thursday, with the participation of Kuwaiti Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi.

The Chief Executive Officer of Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) Sheikh Hamad bin Thamer, said in his speech that the challenges facing the Gulf society, whether internal, regional or international, places a responsibility to improve the performance and content of media outlets, deepening the positive values of Gulf society, integration and unity.

In this regard, Sheikh Hamad affirmed the strategy for joint media cooperation of the GCC, the general framework of which was approved by the Supreme Council of the GCC in its 43rd session.

He stated that for more than seven months, they have been following the tragic events in Gaza Strip, which became the top priorities of media outlets and platforms, explaining that the Israeli occupation directly and deliberately targets those working in the media field, noting the double standards in global media and its impact on shaping global public opinion.

This matter calls for emphasizing the importance of joint media efforts to coordinate and work to publish and broadcast Palestinian content in various languages to build international public opinion supportive of the Palestinian cause and legitimate rights, as it was emphasized by the GCC ministerial meeting in its 159th session, held in Riyadh recently.

He expressed his hope that the meeting's decisions would raise the level of integration in joint Gulf media work, in order to achieve a unified Gulf media



Left and right: The condolence book is being signed at the Iranian Embassy. Photos by Mohammad Morsi

# Large number of people offer condolences at Iranian Embassy on passing of president

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: For the third day, a large number of the Iranian community members and some Kuwaiti political, social and cultural figures flocked to the Iranian Embassy to offer their condolences on the passing of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, his Foreign Affairs Minister and a number of his companions.

At the end of the reception of the mourners, Iranian Ambassador Mohammad Totonji confirmed that the Islamic Republic of Iran lost in the plane crash very distinguished and high-ranking figures who had a pivotal and decisive role in managing the country, serving the people and defending their causes, especially the Palestinian cause.

"This role was characterized by honesty, sincerity and hard work in order to achieve stability, prosperity, and peace for the Iranian people. The official and international sympathy that we have witnessed over the past days indicates the success of Iranian diplomacy and its success in achieving rapprochement and understanding with most countries, especially with neighboring countries, at the

forefront of which is our dear Kuwait," he added.

He said nuclear technology during the era of the late President Ebrahim Raisi moved from the stage of research and studies to the stage of implementation, service and manufacturing -- a new and bold stage.

He stressed that what the martyred president built will be an immortal model in the minds of the Iranian people, and that the country is continuing on the right path whose features were drawn by Imam Khamenei.

He praised the remarkable presence of Minister of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah -- representative of HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, former Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, dignitaries, ambassadors of Islamic and European countries, and representatives of international organizations in Kuwait at the condolence ceremony in the Iranian Embassy.

He extended his appreciation and gratitude to the representative of His Highness the Amir, Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, and the accompanying delegation for offering condolences on the death of the late president in the capital, Tehran.



A photo from the event. Photo by Mohammad Morsi

### Kuwaiti students share insights from studying in Japan

# Embassy of Japan commends Center of Community Service and Continuing Edu

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: On Wednesday, May 22, the Embassy of Japan hosted the Ambassador's Commendation Ceremony at the Ambassador's residence to honor the Center of Community Service and Continuing Education.

Speaking on the occasion, HE Ambassador of Japan to the State of Kuwait, Morino Yasunari, expressed appreciation for the Center's long-standing commitment to offering Japanese language courses since 1996.

He also acknowledged the fruitful partnership between the Embassy and the Center, particularly in organizing the annual Japanese speech contest for the past 16 years.

During his address, the Japanese envoy revealed plans for the Embassy to initiate the Japanese Language Diwaniya "Dibaniya" on a regular basis, commencing this summer.

This initiative aims to provide a platform for Kuwaitis

studying Japanese to converse in the language.

Former Kuwaiti students who pursued education in Japan shared their unique experiences during the event.

Dr. Mishal Al-Mishan recounted his journey at the University of Tokyo, culminating in a doctoral degree. Bader Al-Failakawi presented insights from his studies at Himeji Dokkyo University in Hyogo prefecture and Daito Bunka University and Bader Al-Shawaf shared his experiences at Kyushu University and his time in the Kyushu region.

The ceremony attracted numerous Kuwaiti alumni of Japanese universities and participants of the Center's language programs, alongside distinguished guests with a shared interest in Japanese culture. The attendees engaged in discussions on avenues to further enhance and foster Japan-Kuwait relations across diverse domains.

vision.

In his speech, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic and Development Affairs at the General Secretariat of GCC Khaled Al-Sunaidi said that it is important to enact regulation for electronic commercial advertising for social media platforms in member states.

Al-Sunaidi noted the importance of preparing a plan for raising media awareness, in addition to creating an initiative on digital safety for children in GCC countries, which is what the General Secretariat has worked on for some time, in cooperation with member states.

He explained that the Electronic

Media Responsibility Committee in the GCC area submitted topics to the esteemed meeting for approval, in addition to the importance of having a joint work that highlights Gulf values locally and internationally, to enhance economic sectors' role in achieving future strategic objectives.

## Other Voices

### Is the 'downfall' inevitable?

By Ahmed alsarraf

There is a belief, or something similar to an illusion, that the West, with its entire civilization, is on the verge of collapse, and this has been circulating for several decades, and the majority of those who promote this statement are oppressed peoples, or religiously deceived, who usually have their own interpretation with regard to morality, and its translation.

On the ground, as long as the West is collapsing, there is therefore a need or necessity for the rise of another party to replace this collapsed and morally bankrupt West.

This alternative is not currently available, and has not been available since two hundred years ago, or since World War I, at least. There is no party that has ever been or will soon have the ability to replace the West, whether medically, militarily, scientifically, or in any other field.

All those who openly declare their hostility to the West are unable, or even willing, to harm it, as the progress that occurred there was mainly due to its dealings with the West, which if it stopped buying its products, would be hit by a recession.

Colleague Hamid Zanaz says in an article entitled "The Decline of Western Civilization... Reality or Just Wishes?", that many European, American and Islamic intellectuals see the collapse and fall of the West as a historical inevitability that has become imminent, and the German thinker Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) was the first to call for this in his book "The Decline of the West," which was published a hundred years ago, and was published in Arabic with distorted titles, as usual, and its author was one of those fascinated by Mussolini's fascism.

Although he refused to join the German Nazis, he contributed to the rise of Hitlerism through his harsh and persistent criticism of parliamentary democracy. And how, over the years, the book became one of the references for all those who believe in the death and end of the West.

The French poet and thinker Paul Valéry had previously written his book "The Crisis of Reason," in which he spoke about the death of European civilization and predicted its imminent demise. This was in the year 1919, and the West is still at the height of its power, technologically, culturally, scientifically, and mili-

tarly, and even in outer space, and in every conceivable field.

Zanaz adds that all countries, in their quest for development, imitate this "West, which some are waiting for its downfall," and do not hesitate to steal or imitate its innovations in the three fields of technology, legal, administrative, etc. So how can the one we seek to imitate be an entity on the verge of collapse?

Today, the West is a geographical, economic and military entity that brings together Western and Central Europe, Australia, a large part of the Americas, New Zealand, Israel and Japan.

Much has been said before about the danger of the latter and the Asian tigers to the Western economy, but nothing happened, and today they talk about the danger of China and others, not realizing that the economies of these countries have joined and become immersed in the economy of the West.

The economies of these countries also tend toward the totalitarian political system to implement major infrastructure and industrial projects rather than innovations. It is natural for a country with 22% of the world's population to regain its place within the global economy. This cannot cause any harm to the Western economy, on the contrary, as it opens up large, diverse markets to it.

As for India, it is a country shackled ethnically, religiously, socially and bureaucratically, and it still suffers from many problems at all levels. India will be an important customer and an economic power, but it cannot match China.

One of the most important features that make the West continue its strength and progress, and an attractive factor, is that it has enjoyed, for centuries, a standard of living and freedom that is the best in the world, and the souls and hearts of the majority still yearn to immigrate to the West, which is still at the height of its power due to the deepening of individual, religious and political freedoms that it produces.

That unquenchable intellectual ferment in which the West finds constant self-criticism constitutes a solid ground for its strength. What indicates the strength of the West is this tendency to learn its languages compared to other languages.

Therefore, the West is not only geography, but a civilization, which is currently prevalent, and will remain so for many decades to come. The knowledge available in America is similar to that available in Sweden, Denmark, France, and Germany, so how will the West end so easily? What do 'they' imagine?

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# diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## 'Exposing dual citizenship holders beneficial for both the countries'

"A PHRASE that has its own meaning and contains the insistence of the Guardian His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah – may God protect and preserve him and may goodness and growth continue at his hands – that the counterfeiter has committed an unforgivable sin and enjoyed rights that were not theirs, so the nation has the right to punish them and take back what they unjustly stole, and they lived in a homeland that was not theirs. Therefore, they are not safe and hence their stay in Kuwait cannot be approved," columnist **Dr. Saud Mohammed Al-Asfour**, wrote for *Al-Qabas* daily.



Dr. Al-Asfour

"The same applies to those holding the dual citizenship who, because they originally belonged to the country and enjoyed its bounties and blessings, then came to Kuwait to also obtain privileges that were not theirs by falsehood and slander, after knowing fully well that this was a violation of the laws based on premeditation and intent.

"Therefore, it is permissible for the state to give them a choice and then look into their case. The issue of revoking their nationalities according to its law, and the violation may be doubled if it is proven they hold the nationalities of three or more countries.

"As we have already noted in previous articles, the danger of those who hold dual citizenship may be great if they enter the legislative or executive authority, which are the two authorities that must enact laws, as well as monitor, implement laws, achieve the interests of the people, and represent Kuwait at various forums. It is difficult to secure their side if something happens to disturb the relationship between the two countries that granted them the citizenship.

"Loyalty to one nation and one leadership are among the requirements of true citizenship that every citizen must possess. Therefore, they cannot be neglected, because neglect leads to division, fragmentation, and betrayal, and the situation is not right in that way.

"I am certain that if more powers had been granted to the central agency to deal with the conditions of legal residents, headed by Saleh Al-Fadala the matter would have been extremely important, and the desired would have been achieved, because those countries also prevent duplication in their laws and punish. Therefore, the interest in exposing those who hold the dual citizenship is beneficial for both countries.

"Tampering with nationality files -- although most of it has occurred since ancient times -- is easy if the files are opened and the identification documents that reveal the falsity of grants are collected. The same applies to duplication. The matter becomes easier if the efforts of the countries granting these nationalities join forces with Kuwait.

"May God protect the leadership and people of Kuwait from all harm, and protect us from the evil of those who harbor evil for the homeland and those who truly belong to it."

**Also:**

"A lively, serious and legitimate societal dialogue is taking place in Kuwaiti forums regarding correcting the course of the democratic experience and practice, and setting the necessary texts and provisions to control parliamentary work, which has lost its national compass and parliamentary values, gone beyond constitutional constants, and jumped the boundaries of separation of powers and wasted its authority," columnist **Dr Muhammad Al-Maqati**, wrote for *Al-Jarida* daily.

"There are two main trends in this responsible societal dialogue, and each opinion has its merit. The first believes that course correction will not be achieved except through amendments to and revisions of the articles of the Constitution.

"The other believes that course correction is achieved by amending the following six basic laws concerning nationality, elections, internal regulations, the judiciary, security and police and the parliamentary behavior.

"Whoever says to amend the Constitution and revise its provisions believes that the defects lies in the Constitution, and that the amendments must include its texts, including, for example, the following articles: 56, 82, 98, 99, 100, 101 and 109, so that a new paragraph is added to Article 56 that states: 'If it is not possible to include a member of the National Assembly, it is permissible to exclude the formation of the government without the presence of a member of the National Assembly within it.'

"The first paragraph of Article 82 must be amended to stipulate that: 'A member of the National Assembly must be a Kuwaiti founder or the son of a founder, even if he is descended (ie, in an original capacity).'

"Article 98 is extended to state: 'Within 45 days of its formation, each ministry shall submit its program to the National Assembly, and the Assembly may express whatever observations it deems appropriate regarding this program.'

"Article 99 states: 'Every member of the National Assembly may address the Prime Minister and the ministers with questions to clarify matters within their jurisdiction regarding a specific incident or topic, without elaboration, and only the questioner has the right to comment once on the answer.'

"The first paragraph of Article 100 must be amended to stipulate that 'every member of the National Assembly may direct to the Prime Minister and to the ministers interrogations on matters falling within

their jurisdiction, regarding specific facts or a specific subject, four months after the formation of the government, and it is not permissible to direct interferences.'

"During the constitutional period for submitting and finalizing the budget, the discussion in the interrogation shall not take place until at least eight days from the day of its submission, other than in cases of urgency and with the approval of the minister.

"The last paragraph of Article 101: 'Withdrawal of confidence from a minister shall be by a majority of three-fifths of the members who comprise the Council, with the exception of ministers, and ministers who shall not participate in the vote of confidence.'

"A final paragraph is added to the text of Article 109 as follows: '... Provided that it is not permissible to submit proposals for laws that involve a financial cost or to establish public joint-stock bodies, institutions, or companies whose jurisdiction to submit them is limited to the government due to their executive nature.'

"While the other opinion, and I lean towards it, is that this should be done through amending the basic laws that regulate these issues, which are the laws: citizenship, elections, the internal regulations of the National Assembly, the judiciary, the Constitutional Court, the police and security, and parliamentary conductor.

"Indeed, amending these laws have better scope, and through it is possible to establish controls and procedures that achieve the intent and objectives of the constitutional amendments, and the internal regulations can be the most appropriate place for these amendments, especially since they are based on Article 117 of the Constitution, which delegated all of this to the Council's regulations, with the establishment of a text by law.

"The Constitutional Court makes it mandatory for it to submit an amendment to any basic law, after it is approved by the Council, and before His Highness the Amir ratifies it, to consider the extent of its compatibility with the provisions of the Constitution.

"These are the two trends that are being presented in Kuwaiti society, and they are part of a conscious and vibrant societal dialogue through which Kuwaitis try to contribute to correcting the course of parliamentary practices, in a responsible and moderate manner, without exaggeration or neglect of their constitutional and democratic system, which was agreed upon by the people of Kuwait and their rulers in the Constituent Assembly, hoping that these discussions will be fruitful in achieving what is best for Kuwait, its people, and its parliamentary system under the constitution."

"Abdulaziz Al-Fulaj... Whenever influential persons in Kuwait like those who occupied public offices and honorable positions, as well as the symbols of honorable national work, goodness and generosity, pass away; their departure makes us sad, because it is difficult for us to replace them or find someone like them or with the same level of their generosity for the benefit of Kuwait and its people," columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"Recently, a symbol of Kuwait and one of its most prominent men -- a man of righteousness, goodness and piety -- passed away. Abdulaziz Saud Al-Fulaj passed away. May Allah have mercy on him and grant him a spacious place in Paradise, and give him with the best reward for everything he gave to his country and its people.

"Abu Anwar passed away, leaving behind a great legacy of national and charitable works that every Kuwaiti has the right to be proud of. He, may Allah have mercy on him, embodied the meaning of concealing charity work, such that his right hand hardly knew what his left hand spent. He lived a life full of achievements, without noise, advertising or love for appearance.

"A man of goodness, righteousness and unlimited giving passed away. He was one of the most important men in Kuwait. He knew the best in times of adversity. He was among the elites of the Kuwaiti society whose words were heard, whose opinions were considered, who was consulted in every big and small matter, and who advised only with the truth and the right opinion for the benefit of the nation and the citizen.

"Al-Fulaj, may Allah have mercy on him, was bold in expressing his opinion. He was not afraid of criticism. Throughout his life, he was engaged in official or private work for the benefit of his country. One of the most important things that distinguished him, may Allah have mercy on him, was that he did not interfere in whatever did not concern him, but if he intervened, he adjusted the scales.

"The people of his homeland love Kuwait and they loved him. He had a strong social influence that no one could deny. He was one of the few whose action preceded their words. He always sought reform through flowing generosity. He was a source of inexhaustible love and giving.

"Kuwait and its people will miss him. His loved ones gathered around him, including those who gave to charity secretly!

"We ask Allah Almighty, Lord of the Great Throne, to grant success to his successors for them to follow his path and to make them the best successor to the best predecessor, such that Diwan Al-Fulaj remains open as it was intended by the lover, the friend and the seeker of those in need. May Allah bless you, Abu Anwar. You deserve the blessings above and under the Earth. We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return."

– Compiled by PFX Fernandes



Chief of the General Staff viewing the Amiri Guard's units.

KUNA photo

## Kuwait's army chief praises Amiri Guard's exceptional defensive role

KUWAIT CITY, May 23, (KUNA): Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General Bandar Al-Mezian praised on Thursday the exceptional role played by the Amiri Guard in defense of the country and its leadership.

In a statement by the Defense Ministry, Al-Mezian -- who visited the Amiri Guard headquarters -- called on members to remain ready, steadfast, and vigilant in their

duties towards His Highness the Amir and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the country.

According to the statement, during his visit, Al-Mezian was informed about the duty and tasks undertaken by the Amiri Guard as well as the measures to training members of the guard.

## 'Interior' in major overhaul, 109 investigators promoted

Illegal person arrested with 40 narcotic pills

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: The First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef, has issued a decision to elevate 109 investigators within the General Department of Investigations of the Ministry of Interior, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

Additionally, it has been learned from reliable security sources that the First Deputy Premier is in the process of incorporating partial amendments into the organizational structure of the Ministry of Interior.



Al-Shehab

This follows the request for retirement from Major General Badr Al-Baloul, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Correctional Institutions and Sentence Implementation Affairs. Sheikh Al-Yousef has granted Major General Al-Baloul's wish, conferring upon him the rank of lieutenant general.

The same sources further indicate that the organizational structure adjustments will encompass the Assistant Undersecretary sector. Major General Walid Al-Shehab, currently serving as Director of the General Department of Control and Inspection, will be appointed as Assistant Undersecretary, with a promotion to the

## Verbal argument leads to 'shooting in air' at airport

First lieutenant reported

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: An officer with the rank of colonel, assigned at Kuwait International Airport, filed a case against a first lieutenant who is also working at the airport when the latter fired his weapon into the air due to a verbal argument that took place between them at work, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

No one was harmed in the shooting incident and the first lieutenant is said to have left the country.

A security source confirmed that the securitymen removed the bullet casings from the site of the incident. He said investigations are ongoing under the supervision of senior security officials.

A case was registered and the necessary measures are being taken to arrest the accused.

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### Crime Briefs

**E-CIGARETTES:** About 82 million people around the world use e-cigarettes, which are taken on millions of flights; but many travelers may not be aware of the danger they pose, as well as the rules and regulations surrounding their use and transportation during flights, reports *Al-Rai* daily quoting *Daily Mail*.

The British newspaper has warned against carrying electronic cigarettes when traveling by air, as this may cause a fire due to their lithium batteries.

According to Arabiya.net, the reason why lithium batteries for e-cigarettes are dangerous is that they are used to heat the coil component of the device that heats the e-liquid, as the process produces vapor that users smoke.

The British Civil Aviation Authority pointed out that lithium batteries are very safe, but because of their high energy, they can catch fire or explode if they are not handled carefully or if they are misused or have a manufacturing error.

It added that "e-cigarette batteries were the cause of a number of fires on aircraft and during ground handling. In 2016, a bag caught fire while being loaded on a plane, and it appeared that the cause of the fire was an electronic cigarette battery.

In 2019, a passenger's e-cigarette battery overheated and exploded, causing a fire on board an American Airlines plane.

□ □ □

**VENDORS:** In continuation of the efforts exerted by the public security sector to arrest outlaws, the Security Directorate of the Al-Ahmedi Governorate has arrested five street vendors during a campaign in Mahboula area, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

The men were caught selling used clothes and foodstuff. They have been referred to the concerned authority.

□ □ □

**THEFT:** Six people were arrested for stealing sheep in Abdally, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

As part of the efforts of the Criminal Security Sector to arrest wanted persons and outlaws, officers from the Jahra Governorate Investigation Department arrested six people for stealing sheep and selling them in the markets.

The arrested individuals were referred to the competent authorities to take the necessary legal measures against them.

□ □ □

**FIRE:** Firefighting teams took control of a house fire in the northwestern Sulaibikhat area, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

The teams began to fight and extinguish the fire. The accident resulted in a number of people being injured and they were handed over to the emergency medical department personnel.

### Elderly defrauded

## 3-man Syrian gang busted for stealing KD half million

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: The Capital Governorate Search and Investigation Department, under the directive of Major General Hamid Al-Dawas, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Criminal Security Affairs, has arrested a gang of three Syrians, including a juvenile, who stand accused of defrauding an elderly Kuwaiti citizen, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

Acting on a report filed at Rawda Police Station, detectives swiftly traced the electronic scam back to the perpetrators, who tricked the victim into divulging sensitive information, enabling them to siphon off half a million dinars from his bank account.

Through coordinated efforts with the Electronic Investigation Department, authorities pinpointed the culprits' location and took into custody the juvenile suspect, who subsequently confessed to his involvement and implicated his accomplices.

The investigation uncovered the gang's pattern of preying on both citizens and expatriates, with proceeds from their illicit activities used to purchase vehicles, electronics, and other personal items. As inquiries continue, authorities aim to ascertain the full extent of the group's criminal activities.

### Public Prosecution appointments

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: The Supreme Judicial Council has agreed to accept a new batch for appointment to the Public Prosecution office of both males and females, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

The sources explained that those wishing to apply for appointment to the Public Prosecution will be received from July 14 to August 15.

The sources pointed out two batches will be accepted this year, and graduates of the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 batches are eligible to apply.

The applicant must have a law or Sharia degree, and must not have previously been convicted of a disciplinary or criminal conviction for a felony or misdemeanor offense involving dishonor or dishonesty, or a lack of good behavior, and proven health fitness for the job.



**WEDDINGS, UPTO 140**



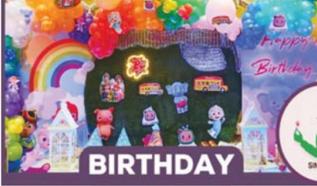
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**Exhibit celebrates global initiatives to save endangered heritage sites**

**NCCAL exhibition sheds light on cultural sites in conflict area**

**By Fares Al-Abdan**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Acting Secretary General of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Dr. Muhammad Al-Jassar confirmed that

the exhibition entitled "Reclaiming Our Past, Preserving Our Future, Protecting Threatened Heritage," showcases the works of ALIPH Foundation -- a non-profit organization in Switzerland.

In a press statement on the sidelines of the exhibition at Yarmouk Cultural Center organized by the European Union delegation under the auspices of Minister of Information Abdul Rahman Al-Mutairi, Al-Jassar disclosed the foundation takes care of world heritage sites and museums threatened by wars or natural disasters.

He pointed out that the role of this foundation is to rehabilitate such areas and protect the antiquities there. He said this is also considered part of protecting the identity of the users of the place, as the exhibition contains a group of examples that the institution has worked on.

He explained that one of their main sites is in Gaza to preserve important sites there, such as historical mosques. They have work in Yemen, Lebanon and Turkiye, and focusing on the Middle East and countries in conflict, he added.

On the other hand, European Union Ambassador to the State of Kuwait Anne Koistenin said: "The European Union delegation, in cooperation with NCCAL, Aliph and Dar Al-Athar Islamic Foundation, is proud of this exhibition, which comes within the activities of Europe Month in Kuwait and highlights the importance of protecting culture in conflict areas. The European Union will continue to call for global commitment to the 1954 Hague Convention relating to the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict, assist partners in protecting cultural heritage, and encourage documentation, investigation and accountability for crimes against cultural heritage. Through our joint efforts, we can ensure that future generations can inherit the rich history and diverse cultures that reflect our global heritage. Protecting and restoring these cultural treasures are necessary in order to enhance peace, understanding and resilience within societies around the world."



A group photo with the General Supervisor of the House of Islamic Antiquities, Sheikha Hessa Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.



Opening of the exhibition.



Photos by Rizk Taufiq  
Guests at the exhibition.



Dr Faiza Al-Kharafi honored.

**Dedication and achievements lauded**

**Dr Faiza Al-Kharafi champions scientific innovation as key to Kuwait's progress**

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Former Kuwait University Director, Dr. Faiza Al-Kharafi, highlighted the pivotal role of scientific innovation in Kuwait's advancement, emphasizing the imperative to promote science, knowledge dissemination, and technological growth in the country, reports Al-Qabas daily.

She was speaking at a ceremony organized by the Kuwait Chemical Society to bestow upon her an honorary membership from the Union of Arab Chemists. This recognition celebrated her outstanding achievements, significant contributions to the field of chemistry, and her instrumental role in its development.

Al-Kharafi attributed her scientific and academic successes to divine guidance, Kuwait's support, and the unwavering backing of her colleagues and family. She

expressed a profound sense of duty towards her country, viewing every accomplishment as a collective achievement for Kuwait.

Grateful for the honor bestowed upon her by the Union of Arab Chemists, Al-Kharafi commended their efforts and underscored the significance of collaboration and solidarity within the scientific community. She reaffirmed her commitment to advancing the field of chemistry for the betterment of Kuwait and its future prospects.

Haif Al-Hajraf, President of the Kuwait Chemical Society, hailed Dr. Faiza Al-Kharafi as a founding figure and a prominent luminary within the association. He lauded her as an influential Kuwaiti scientific figure, citing her profound impact on supporting science, scientists, and researchers in chemistry.

**Book via 'Sahel' for services: MoSA**

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: The Director of the Public Relations and Media Department, the official spokesman for the Ministry of Social Affairs, Ahmed Al-Anzi, announced that, within the framework of organizing work and implementing the open-door policy, citizens and clients can obtain appointments through the unified electronic application for

government services 'Sahel', reports Al-Jarida daily.

Al-Enezi added, that the Ministry is keen to translate the directives and instructions of the Council of Ministers regarding the implementation of the open-door policy, to overcome obstacles facing all citizens, and providing them with all aspects of care and attention in the best possible way.

**Municipal Council moves forward with Jahra development projects**

**4 out of 10 proposals approved**

**By Enas Awadh**  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Municipal Council member Abdullah Al-Enezi presided over the recent meeting of the Jahra Governorate Committee, which approved four out of 10 proposals and requests on its agenda as follows:**

■ Proposal of council members Abdullatif Al-Daei, Alia Al-Farisi, Sharifa Al-Shalfan and Abdullah Al-Enezi to establish a camping area in the northern part of the country.

■ Request of the Public Authority for Roads and Transport (PART) to allocate sites for open rainwater collection basins, open water channels, underground water connections, earth berms and rainwater drainage paths in Nawaf Al-Ahmad residential area.

■ Request of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to allocate a site for a mosque and parking lots along Jahra Expressway - Route 80, next to a gas station between Jahra Natural Reserve and the northwestern part of Jahra.

■ Request of PART to establish entrance and exit points in the northwestern of Jahra along Road 80 opposite the shooting club.

Meanwhile, the committee kept on its agenda the following:

■ Question of member Abdullah Al-Enezi regarding the road from Saleel Al-Jahra Bridge, which connects the Sixth Ring Road to Mutlaa City.

■ Request of Kuwaiti Dairy Company to license a canteen for its employees within the boundaries of the plot allocated to it measuring 70,000 square meters in Sulabiya Agricultural Area.

■ Request of the Public Sports Authority to allocate surface parking lots for the Equestrian Club in Jahra.

■ Al-Enezi's question about the non-completion of the project of the Technical Inspection Department at the Ministry of Interior in Jahra Governorate.

In addition, council member Farah Al-

Roumi presided over the meeting of the Practice of Engineering Professions Committee.

The committee endorsed the proposal to oblige engineering offices and consulting firms to include in their supervision contracts with property owners a clause stipulating commitment to what was stated in the pledge to supervise the implementation of the construction (structure) of the site by these offices and firms, as well as to add this clause to the supervision pledge.

Commenting on the committee's decision, council member Farah Al-Roumi affirmed the proposal will benefit all parties involved in the construction process, as the property owner will guarantee the quality of the concrete used in the construction. In the early stages of building the concrete structure, the defects (if any) will be detected immediately, thereby, avoiding losses if the defect is discovered after the completion of the concrete structure work. The proposal will also ensure that the engineering office, Al Dar Consulting, in the event that it implements all of its obligations stipulated in the contract concluded with the property owner, will not hold it responsible for the failure of the concrete at any stage of implementing the black structure work (if it occurs); hence, avoiding being charged compensation for damages that may befall the property owner as a result of this failure, Al-Roumi explained.

Al-Roumi pointed out in a press statement that the proposal will prevent the company supplying the concrete from completing the pouring of concrete which may not conform to the specifications, thus, avoiding any future losses resulting from this, as well as sparing the contractor from bearing the effects of pouring concrete that does not conform to specifications. This is in addition to reducing the number of complaints that will be submitted to the Kuwait Municipality from property owners, reducing the burdens of the Municipality in following up and verifying these complaints, reducing the number of lawsuits filed by property owners against the parties involved in the construction work or complaints submitted against them at the Public Prosecution, hence, reducing pressure on the judicial system and its supporting bodies in assessing these lawsuits and complaints.



Part of the Jahra Governorate Committee meeting.

**MoE committed to enrich talents of students through 'revised curricula'**

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Public Education Hessa Al-Mutawa emphasized the Ministry of Education's commitment to enriching students' artistic and cultural experiences through revised curricula, engaging activities, and art exhibitions, reports Al-Jarida daily.

She conveyed this sentiment during the inauguration of the "Jewels" art exhibition, showcasing the outcomes of training courses, at the Museum of Modern Art.

Among those present were Fahd Al-Hayyan, Director of the Development Department, along with several mentors.

Al-Mutawa highlighted the exhibition's purpose at the Museum of Modern Art,

which aimed to showcase the fruits of collaborative training efforts with the Development Department.

She elaborated that the exhibition featured artistic creations in metalwork and textile design, with participation from both male and female educators and art mentors. She commended the organizers for their dedication to the course's success. Amal Haider, the inaugural artistic director for artistic education in the Jahra Educational Zone, noted the diverse array of artworks on display, spanning plastic arts, metals, and textiles. She expressed gratitude towards the exhibition's organizers and expressed hope for more opportunities to exhibit talents in the future.

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Photos by Mahmoud Jadeed

Turkish Cuisine Week celebrates cultural fusion.

Historic agreements sealed during Amir's visit

Turkish Cuisine Week celebrates fusion of cultures, healthy living

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Turkish Ambassador to Kuwait Tuba Sönmez has confirmed the success of the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Turkiye, as it led to the signing of six agreements in various fields like defense, investment and trade; indicating that other agreements will be signed once Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visits Kuwait.

Speaking to journalists on the sidelines of the opening of the Turkish Cuisine Week in Kuwait that is being held from May 21-27, Sönmez revealed that 400,000 Kuwaitis have visited Turkiye since the beginning of the year. She said Kuwaitis are welcome to her country, wishing them a happy stay and that they enjoy historical, cultural, natural and civilizational diversity which Turkiye offers. She urged tourists to expand their vacation destinations in Turkiye in order to discover its hidden gems and picturesque regions.

"At the end of May every year, we celebrate Turkish



Group photo during the Turkish Cuisine Week.

Cuisine Week in various countries around the world to promote the rich and diverse Turkish cuisine, characterized by a rich heritage that embodies ancient Turkish

traditions -- from ancient civilizations to the modern era. Food is one of the pillars and most important elements of cultural exchange between peoples, and it

plays an important role in bringing them together. Turkish Cuisine Week is a call for everyone to return to healthy food and avoid fast food. During this week, workshops are conducted on how to prepare the most delicious food. Turkish dishes have delicious taste and great benefits," the Ambassador explained.

She pointed out that Turkish cuisine is economical and simple. "Food extravagance and wastage are avoided as we use available ingredients from the beginning of cooking and even while eating. This principle has been an integral part of Turkish culinary culture for thousands of years. We do not waste ingredients. Traditional dishes often include leftovers, turning stale bread into delicious meals like trite and papara or using vegetable peels and fish bones to prepare new dishes. Turkish Cuisine Week also conveys another message; that is, cooking is easy. Everyone can cook and prepare healthy and delicious meals." She added the Aegean region is distinguished by its Mediterranean diet, which is famous for its health benefits and delicious flavors.

Initiative curbs suspicious activities

MCI extends deadline for beneficiary declaration to enhance transparency

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Official sources disclosed that the Ministry of Commerce will prolong the deadline for declaring the actual beneficiary of company licenses by an additional month, extending it from one week, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This initiative aims to scrutinize the operations of these companies, ensuring their authenticity and transparency while bolstering transparency principles.

According to sources, this extension will enable the Ministry to assess the companies' economic viability, workforce numbers, operational activities, and funding sources. It will also address issues such as dormant licenses and unimplemented ones.

By establishing an accurate and

updated database of actual beneficiaries, the Ministry aims to combat suspicious activities and facilitate informed decision-making to uphold legal compliance. Data provided will undergo rigorous verification, with legal action planned against inaccuracies.

The Ministry outlined several points regarding procedures for identifying actual beneficiaries, emphasizing the decision's role in safeguarding company data from exploitation and aiding regulatory agencies and financial institutions in verification processes.

Establishing a comprehensive database for legal entities engaged in financial or commercial activities will enhance control mechanisms and curb illicit practices.



The Ministry of Commerce and Industry building.

Ministry of Health 'expands' specialized services with Neurosurgery Department

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: The Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi, has issued a ministerial decision, pursuant to which the "Neurosurgery Department" would be established at Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital, within the framework of the Ministry's keenness to expand specialized services and facilitate access to integrated services for the convenience of citizens, re-

ports Al-Jarida daily.

The Ministry of Health said in a press statement, Wednesday, that this comes within its strategy to provide and make available high-quality services in all governorates of the country, taking into account population expansion, geographical expansion, ease and speed of obtaining the required service, and reducing the waiting period.

Kuwait weekend

Continued from Page 1

Looking ahead to Saturday, coastal areas can expect relatively hot and humid conditions with variable winds shifting to southeasterly at times, speeds ranging from 10 to 40 kilometers per hour. Maximum temperatures will reach 42-44 degrees Celsius with light to moderate sea conditions and waves of 1-3 feet. Saturday night will bring hot to moderate temperatures with winds shifting from southeasterly to northwesterly, speeds ranging from 8 to 30 kilometers per hour. Minimum temperatures will range between 28-30 degrees Celsius, with sea conditions remaining light to moderate and waves of 1-4 feet.

Economic synergy

Continued from Page 1

jobs and urban regions. Khaled Al-Osaimi, PART Director General, said in remarks to KUNA that the Authority for Partnership Projects had been tasked with conducting studies and executing the venture. A

feasibility study was complete in 2012 and revised in 2016, stipulating the approach to execute it in partnership between the public and private sectors.

A number of international consultancy houses had presented bids that were examined and relayed to the Central Agency for Public Tenders, Al-Osaimi indicated, as examining the bids would last for months, revealing that executing the Kuwaiti section of the network should be finalized by 2030.

The first section of the Kuwaiti railway stretches from the border town of Al-Nuwaiseeb in southern Kuwait to Al-Shedadiyah. Speed of the train to be operated is set at 200 kmph.

In the UAE, construction of the railway reaching the Saudi borders has been finalized. Galfar Engineering Company declared in April that it won the project to design and build a 303-km-long railway linking Abu Dhabi with Sahar in Oman -- at a cost of USD three billion.

The UAE news agency, WAM, quoted Minister of Energy and Infrastructure Suhail Al-Mazroui as saying that Al-Hafef Rail is complementary to the GCC Railway network and serves the approach of attaining GCC countries' economic merger.

In Qatar, authorities have finished

the designs of the domestic section of the Gulf Railway and Bahrain declared that a section of the rail would be built on a bridge reaching Saudi Arabia.

Last February, Director General of the Gulf Railway Authority Mohammad Al-Shabrami visited Kuwait and examined the executive plans of the railway's part in the country.

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia agreed on June 4, 2023, to establish a railway between Kuwait and Riyadh. The high-speed train to be operated will cross the long distance in approximately two hours and a half.

The Kuwaiti Government declared in February start of studying the Kuwaiti-Saudi project. Also in this vein, the CEO of Agility Tareq Al-Sultan told KUNA that the Riyadh-Kuwait train line would be a branch of the common train network.

GCC-African

Continued from Page 1

consultative platform to boost regional and international cooperation on recruitment among these countries. The declaration stressed the need of

investment or industrial building.

It prohibits requesting plans and regulatory approvals on paper. If the need arises, it should be referred to the regulatory authorities and will be done through a special electronic program. This is in addition to the obligation to match the cadastral plan of the property via the GIS system, which gives each parcel a real estate number without the

need to extract a paper cadastral plan.

It affirmed the commitment to issuing all types of building permits electronically, with the necessity of submitting all official and supporting documents related to the property by engineering offices.

With regard to shop licenses, the circular specified the period for completing the transaction within two days in residential areas, three

days for commercial use, and five days for other uses.

Moreover, the period for completing transactions related to the description certificate, receipt and strengthening of power supply was specified as from the date of submitting the application on the electronic program for each transaction within only one day for open space, three days for private housing and five days for other types of uses.

Kuwait Municipality revolutionizes new standards for building permit efficiency

Digital leap enhances accessibility and transparency

By Enas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Director General of Kuwait Municipality Saud Al-Dabbous recently issued an administrative circular; specifying the period for completing various transactions like receiving demarcation beams, description certificate, connecting and strengthening power supply, ending supervision, obtaining shop and building licenses; as well as obliging all sectors, departments and municipal branches in the governorates to adhere to the directive.

This is part of the Municipality's efforts to simplify procedures through the engineering departments, and to enhance the State's move towards digital transformation to achieve the New Kuwait Vision 2035.

Also, the administrative circular regarding building permits stressed the necessity of adhering to the steps for issuing a building permit for private housing within a maximum period of one day only, including study and approval; and a period of three days for a commercial,



KUNA photo

Director General of Kuwait Municipality, Saud Al-Dabbous, during a meeting of the municipality's coordination committee.

Overwhelming turnout reported

Minister opens office doors to citizens

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Minister of Social, Labor, Children and Family Affairs and State Minister for Youth Affairs Amthar Al-Hewaila has opened her office to the citizens, reports Al-Rai daily.

Al-Hewaila's office witnessed a big turnout as almost 80 citizens came to meet her. She affirmed her commitment to adopt the open door policy as per the directive of HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah and to fulfill the promise she made earlier.

She instructed the senior officials and employees to expedite the completion of citizens' transactions and remove any obstacles that hinder the process.

Previously, Al Hewaila announced receiving the citizens every Wednesday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at her office in the Ministries Complex. The necessary measures have been taken to organize the reception of citizens every week and prevent overcrowding.



Citizens flock to Social Affairs minister's office.

## World News Roundup

## Europe

**Macron calls for calm in New Caledonia:** French President Emmanuel Macron pushed Thursday on a visit to riot-hit New Caledonia for the removal of protesters' barricades and said police sent in to help battle deadly unrest in the French Pacific archipelago "will stay as long as necessary," even as security services back in France focus in coming weeks on safeguarding the Paris Olympics.

By canceling his previously announced schedule to fly across the globe from Paris to New Caledonia, Macron brought the weight of his office to bear on the crisis, which has left six dead and a trail of destruction on the archipelago where Indigenous Kanak people have long sought independence from France.

Pro-independence Kanak leaders, who a week earlier declined Macron's offer of talks by video, joined a meeting the French leader hosted in the capital, Nouméa, with rival pro-France leaders who want New Caledonia, which became French in 1853 under Emperor Napoleon III, to remain part of France.

Macron first called for a minute of silence for the six people killed in shootings during the violence, including two gendarmes. He then urged local leaders to use their clout to help restore order.

"Everyone has a responsibility to really call for the lifting of the barricades, the cessation of all forms of attack, not simply for calm," he said.

It was late Tuesday in Paris when he left on the 16,000-kilometer (10,000-mile) trip but, because of the distance and time difference, it was Thursday morning in New Caledonia when he arrived with his interior and defense ministers.

At Nouméa's La Tontouta International Airport, which remains closed to commercial flights, Macron said on arrival that he wanted "to be alongside the people and see a return to peace, calm and security as soon as possible." (AP)



Macron

**Russia missiles kill 7 in Ukraine:** Russian missiles slammed into Ukraine's second-largest city in the northeast of the country and killed at least seven civilians early Thursday, officials said, as Kyiv's army labored to hold off an intense cross-border offensive by the Kremlin's larger and better-equipped forces.

At least 16 people were injured as S-300 missiles struck the city of Kharkiv, regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said. The sound of 15 explosions reverberated around the city of some 1 million people.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called the attack "extremely cruel." He expressed renewed frustration at not getting enough air defense systems from the country's Western partners to prevent the barrages after more than two years of unrelenting war.

The city of Kharkiv, which is the capital of the region of the same name, lies about 20 kilometers (12 miles) from the Russian border. Moscow's troops have in recent weeks captured villages in the area as part of a broad push.

In what is shaping up to be Ukraine's biggest test since Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022, outnumbered and outgunned Ukrainian forces are being pressed at several points along the about 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) front line that snakes from north to south along the eastern side of the country. (AP)

**Deputy Russian military chief of staff jailed:** A deputy chief of the Russian military general staff has been arrested on charges of large-scale bribery, Russian news reports said Thursday, the latest in a series of bribery arrests of high-ranking military officials.

The arrest of Lt. Gen. Vadim Shamarin followed the arrest this week of Maj. Gen. Ivan Popov, a former top commander in Russia's offensive in Ukraine, also on bribery charges.

In April, Deputy Defense Minister Timur Ivanov was arrested for bribery. Ivanov was a close associate of Sergei Shoigu, whom President Vladimir Putin dismissed as defense minister soon after Putin's inauguration to a new term in May.

Lt. Gen. Yuri Kuznetsov, head of the defense ministry's personnel directorate, was arrested on bribery charges two days after Shoigu was replaced.

Shamarin is also the head of the defense ministry's main communications directorate. (AP)

**Ukraine losing ground, allies debate:** Ukraine's allies are wrestling with how to squeeze money out of frozen Russian assets to support Kyiv's war effort, a debate that is ever more urgent as Russia gains territory on the battlefield and as the outlook for Ukraine's state finances looks shakier.

What to do with the Russian central bank reserves frozen in response to the invasion of Ukraine is at the top of the agenda as finance officials from the Group of Seven rich democracies meet Thursday through Saturday in Stresa, Italy, on the shores of scenic Lago Maggiore.

The issue: Ukraine and many of its supporters have called for the confiscation of \$260 billion in Russian assets frozen outside the country after the Feb. 24, 2022, invasion. But European officials have resisted, citing legal and financial stability concerns. And most of the frozen assets are located in Europe.

A European plan to merely use the interest on the Russian funds would provide only a trickle of money every year - some \$2.5 billion-\$3 billion at current interest rates. (AP)

**Norway further tightens restrictions:** Norway on Thursday said it will further tighten its restrictions on the entry of people from Russia, saying those with tourist visas issued by Norway before regulations were tightened in 2022 or issued by another European country will be barred from entering the Scandinavian country as of next week.

Justice Minister Emilie Enger Mehl said the tightening was a response to "Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine." Norway has a 198-kilometer (123-mile)-long border with Russia in the Arctic.

Last week, Aftenposten, a major Norwegian daily, said Norway's domestic security agency, known by the acronym PST, was worried that Russians involved in intelligence gathering were entering at the sole border crossing at Storskog near the town of Kirkenes. (AP)

**UK politicians set off on 6-week campaign:** Britain's political party leaders were crisscrossing the country on Thursday, the first day of a six-week election campaign in which voters will decide whether to end the governing Conservatives' 14 years in power.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, battling to overcome the widespread sense that his party is on the ropes, gambled on an earlier-than-expected July 4 election, arguing his party can give the country security in turbulent times.

"We will stop the chaos," said Labour leader Keir Starmer, the current favorite to be Britain's next prime minister. He said that if the Conservatives "get another five years, they will feel entitled to carry on exactly as they are. Nothing will change." (AP)

**Dutch coalition gov't struggles to find PM:** The parties that agreed to form a Dutch coalition dominated by the far right are struggling to find a prime minister and warned Wednesday that the search might leave the Netherlands without a fully functional government for months.

Geert Wilders, who convincingly won the November election, told legislators it might take until after the summer to cobble together a technocrat government. He reiterated that he would not become prime minister as part of the outline coalition deal.

The initial candidate for prime minister that Wilders had in mind withdrew early this week following reported allegations of his involvement in medical patent fraud. (AP)



US Republican presidential candidate former president Donald Trump speaks at a campaign rally in Wildwood, NJ on May 11. Nikki Haley said on May 22 that she will be voting for Donald Trump in the general election, a notable show of support given their intense and often personal rivalry during the Republican primary calendar. (AP)

## Politics

## Ex-president allies face skepticism

## Haley says she will vote for Trump

WASHINGTON, May 23, (AP) — Nikki Haley said Wednesday that she will be voting for Donald Trump in the general election, a notable show of support given their intense and often personal rivalry during the Republican primary calendar.

But Haley also made it clear that she feels Trump has work to do to win over voters who supported her during the course of the primary campaign and continue to cast votes for her in ongoing primary contests.

"I will be voting for Trump," Haley, Trump's former UN ambassador, said during an event at the Hudson Institute in Washington.

"Having said that, I stand by what I said in my suspension speech," Haley added. "Trump would be smart to reach out to the millions of people who voted for me and continue to support me and not assume that they're just going to be with him. And I genuinely hope he does that."

## Consolidation

The comments in her first public speech since leaving the race are another signal of the GOP's virtually complete consolidation of support behind Trump, even from those who have labeled him a threat in the past.

Haley shuttered her own bid for the GOP nomination two months ago but did not immediately endorse Trump, having accused him of causing chaos and disregarding the importance of U.S. alliances abroad as well as questioning whether Trump, 77, was too old to be president again.

Trump, in turn, repeatedly mocked her with the nickname "Birdbrain," though he curtailed those attacks after securing enough delegates in March to become the presumptive Republican nominee. Trump's campaign did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Haley's announcement.

US President Joe Biden's campaign, meanwhile, has been working to win over her supporters, whom they view as true swing voters. Biden's team is quietly organizing a Republicans for Biden group, which will eventually include dedicated staff and focus on the hundreds of thousands of Haley voters

in each battleground state, according to people familiar with the plans but not authorized to discuss them publicly.

Despite Haley's announcement Wednesday, the Biden campaign made it clear they would continue to court voters who backed her in Republican primaries this year.

"Nothing has changed for the millions of Republican voters who continue to cast their ballots against Donald Trump in the primaries and care deeply about the future of our democracy, standing strong with our allies against foreign adversaries, and working across the aisle to get things done for the American people - while also rejecting the chaos, division and violence that Donald Trump embodies," Michael Tyler, the campaign's communications director, said in a statement. "Only one candidate shares those values, and only one campaign is working hard every day to earn their support - and that's President Biden's."

Meanwhile, Haley made several criticisms of Biden's foreign policy and handling of the U.S.-Mexico border in her speech Wednesday at the Hudson Institute, a conservative Washington think tank she recently joined as she reemerges in the political realm.

Earlier this month, Haley huddled in South Carolina with some of her donors, an event characterized as a "thank you" to her top supporters and not a discussion about Haley's future political plans or intended to push her backers toward any other candidate.

## Also:

**LANSING, Mich.:** Facing a room of Arab American activists from across the country angry at President Joe Biden's response to the Israel-Hamas war, a well-known adviser to Donald Trump was asked this week what the former president would have done differently had he been in office.

Richard Grenell, Trump's former ambassador to Germany, repeatedly pointed to Trump's governing record and said that other countries' fear of him decreased global conflict. But two people in the room said Grenell didn't provide the specific policy changes they

were hoping to hear, which left at least one leader dissatisfied and unwayed.

The nearly two-hour meeting marked the beginning of increased outreach by Trump allies in swing state Michigan, where key parts of Biden's coalition are angry with him over Israel's offensive following Hamas' Oct 7 attack. But any apparent political opportunity for Trump may be limited by criticism from many Arab Americans about the former president's ban on immigration from several majority Muslim countries and remarks they felt were insulting.

"We appreciate the outreach," said Khaled Saffuri, an Arab American political activist who was in attendance Tuesday night. "But it won't be easy to convince the community to switch from Biden to Trump, because even though we are angry with Biden, many still have a bad taste in their mouth from the four years of Trump."

Grenell was joined in the meeting by Michael Boulos, the husband of Trump's daughter Tiffany, and his father, Massad Boulos, a wealthy Lebanese businessman. Palestinian American UFC fighter Belal Muhammad also took part in the meeting, which wasn't an official campaign event.

The nearly 40 Arab American activists in attendance came from across the country. Some already support Trump while others were attending to hear directly from his surrogates, according to Yahya Basha, a Michigan doctor in attendance. "I think most people were there to hear what specific policy changes Trump would have. It was a lot of back and forth with questions," said Basha, who left the meeting still uncommitted to any candidate in November.

Grenell fielded questions related to a travel ban on majority Muslim countries enacted during Trump's presidency, which he denied was ever implemented, according to Saffuri. He was also asked about recent remarks from Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and a key adviser on the Middle East during his administration, on the potential of Gaza's "waterfront property."

Saffuri said the topic of Gaza was "never addressed correctly" by Grenell.



Servicemen of Ukraine's 93rd Mechanised Brigade fire a French MO-120-RT heavy mortar at the Russian forces on the front line near the city of Bahmut in Ukraine's Donetsk region on May 22. Russian missiles slammed into Ukraine's second-largest city in the northeast of the country and killed at least seven civilians on May 23 officials said, as Kyiv's army labored to hold off an intense cross-border offensive by the Kremlin's larger and better-equipped forces. (AP)



Adams



Biden

## America

**Biden tax trial set for Sept:** Hunter Biden is scheduled to stand trial on federal tax charges in September after a judge on Wednesday granted his request to delay the California trial that had been approaching next month.

US District Judge Mark C. Scarsi agreed during a hearing to push the case to Sept. 5 after defense lawyers said they need more time to prepare with Hunter Biden, who is also facing a separate trial on federal gun charges beginning June 3 in Delaware.

The president's son has pleaded not guilty to both indictments, which his lawyers have claimed are politically motivated. Both cases are being overseen by judges nominated by then-President Donald Trump, a Republican who is running to unseat the Democratic president in November.

The trials will add to an already acrimonious presidential election as Trump's allies again seize on embarrassing details from the younger Biden's troubled life to attack his father, even as Trump faces his own legal problems. Trump is charged in four criminal cases, including a hush money trial underway in New York. (AP)

**5 dead in Iowa tornado:** A deadly tornado that wreaked havoc in the small city of Greenfield, Iowa, left four people dead and nearly three dozen injured, officials said, while a fifth person was killed elsewhere.

The twister that tore through the city on Tuesday was rated at least an EF-3 by the National Weather Service and was so destructive that it took authorities more than a day to account for the area's residents.

It's believed that the number of people injured is likely higher, the Iowa Department of Public Safety said.

The fifth person was killed about 25 miles (40 kilometers) from Greenfield when her car was blown off the road in a tornado, according to the Adams County Sheriff's Office. Monica Zamarron, 46, died in the crash Tuesday afternoon, officials said.

Officials haven't yet released the names of the other victims. (AP)

**NYC starts to evict people:** New York

City stepped up its efforts to push migrants out of its overwhelmed shelters Wednesday as it began enforcing a new rule that limits some adult asylum-seekers to a month in

the system before they have to find a bed on their own.

Migrants without young children must now move out of the hotels, tent complexes



Britain's Prime Minister and Conservative Party leader Rishi Sunak holds a Q&A with staff of a West William distribution centre in Ilkeston in the East Midlands, Britain, on May 23 as part of a campaign event ahead of a general election on July 4. Britain's political party leaders were crisscrossing the country on Thursday, the first day of a six-week election campaign in which voters will decide whether to end the governing Conservatives' 14 years in power. (AP)

and other shelter facilities run by the city and find other housing after 30 days - or 60 days for those aged 18-23 - unless they provide proof of "extenuating circumstances" and are granted an exemption.

As of late Wednesday, 192 migrants had applied for an extension after hitting their limit, and 118 had been approved, Mayor Eric Adams' office said. Thousands more are expected to receive eviction notices in the coming months. (AP)

**Worker fatally shoots 2:** A disgruntled employee opened fire at a linen company near Philadelphia on Wednesday, killing two coworkers and injuring three others, authorities said.

The shooting took place at the Delaware County Linen at about 8:30 a.m. in the city of Chester, about 18 miles (29 kilometers) south of Philadelphia. The shooter fled in a vehicle but was soon captured in a traffic stop, Delaware County District Attorney Jack Stollsteimer said. The shooter's name has not been released, and the specific motive remains unknown. Earlier statements said he was a former employee.

"It speaks to guns in America," said Chester Mayor Stefan Roots, who said his small city has enjoyed a period of relative calm in recent years, with violent crime on the decline. "Violence is always unpredictable. We don't know what conditions people are under, in a city that's impoverished like ours." (AP)

## Lat/Am

## 'Absurd decision'

## Mexico's 'campaign' stage collapse kills 9

SAN PEDRO GARZA GARCIA, Mexico, May 23, (Agencies): A strong gust of wind toppled the stage at a campaign rally Wednesday evening in the northern Mexican state of Nuevo Leon, killing at least nine people - including a child - and injuring 63, the state's governor said.

The collapse occurred during an event attended by presidential long-shot candidate **Jorge Alvarez Máñez**, who ran to escape. Videos of the collapse on social media showed people screaming, running away and climbing out from under metal polls.

The victims "will not be alone in this tragedy," Máñez told reporters Wednesday night, adding that he had suspended upcoming campaign events.

Afterward, soldiers, police and other officials roamed the grounds of the park where the event took place while many nearby sat stunned and haunted by the tragedy.

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said he "sends a hug to family members, friends of the victims and political supporters." Condolences poured in from across Mexico, including by other presidential candidates.

In a video message, Nuevo Leon Gov Samuel García, a leading member of Máñez's Citizens Movement party, asked residents to shelter in their houses for the next two hours.



Máñez

## Accident

Máñez wrote in his social media accounts that he went to a hospital after the accident in the wealthy suburb of San Pedro Garza García, near the city of Monterrey. He said he was in good condition.

"The only important thing at this point is to care for the victims of the accident," he wrote.

Videos of the accident showed Máñez waving his arm as the crowd chanted his name. But then he looked up to see a giant screen and metal structure toppling toward him. He ran rapidly toward the back of the stage to avoid the falling structure, which appeared to consist of relatively light framework pieces as well as what appeared to be a screen with the party's logo and theater-style lights.

Máñez has been running third in polls in the presidential race, trailing both front-runner Claudia Sheinbaum of the ruling Morena Party and opposition coalition candidate Xóchitl Gálvez. Both sent their condolences, and Sheinbaum canceled a campaign event in nearby Monterrey the next day "in solidarity" with victims and their loved ones.

"My condolences and prayers with the families of the dead, and my wishes for a speedy recovery to all those injured," wrote Gálvez in a social media post.

The accident happened at the height of campaign season, with many events held this week and next in anticipation of the June 2 presidential, state and municipal elections.

The campaign has so far been plagued by the killings of about two dozen candidates for local offices. But it has not been marred by campaign accidents.

**Venezuela mine collapse kills 4:** At least four people were killed after a mine collapsed in south-east Venezuela's Bolívar state, authorities said on Wednesday.

"The National Risk Management System reports that the collapse of a mine was registered in the Purgatorio mining district," in the municipality of Sifontes, the deputy minister of Risk Management and Civil Protection, Carlos Perez Ampueda, said on social media platform X.

All four victims were found dead and "walled up" due to the collapse of the illegal mine, according to Perez Ampueda.

The bodies were being transferred by river to San Martín de Turubán and then to Tumeremo, he said.

This is the second deadly cave in at an illegal mine in southern Venezuela. In February, 16 people died after the Bulla Loca mine in the Bolívar state caved in.

Since last year, Venezuelan military and security forces have stepped up measures to eradicate illegal mining in the southern states of Amazonas and Bolívar.

**Argentina slams Spain decision:** Argentina on Wednesday described as "absurd" Spain's decision to withdraw its ambassador to the South American country over statements Argentine President Javier Milei made Sunday in the Spanish capital Madrid.

"Despite the Spanish government having been involved in our internal politics, it would never have occurred to us to withdraw our ambassador, because relations between peoples, diplomacy, trade and freedom between nations, have to be above all else," Argentina's presidential spokesperson Manuel Adorni said at a press conference.

On Sunday in Madrid, Milei used the term "guy" to refer to Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, without mentioning him by name, at a rally organized by the Spanish far-right Vox party.

Milei also described Sanchez's wife Begona Gomez as "corrupt," again without mentioning her directly. Sanchez said Wednesday that withdrawing Spain's ambassador was "an act of formal protest" as part of established diplomatic practice, and assured that "economic, cultural or academic relations" with Argentina will continue to be a priority of his administration.

A day earlier, Spanish Foreign Affairs Minister Jose Manuel Albares announced the withdrawal of the country's ambassador to Argentina, in the absence of an apology from Milei.

Milei has refused to apologize, saying the diplomatic scuffle began when Spanish government officials criticized him.

**Brazil's south sees deaths from disease:** The first two deaths from waterborne bacterial disease were reported in southern Brazil, where floodwaters were slowly receding, and health authorities warned additional fatalities were likely.

Rio Grande do Sul state's health secretariat confirmed the death of a 33-year-old man due to leptospirosis on Wednesday. On Monday, authorities registered that a 67-year-old man had died from the same infectious disease. Since the beginning of May, 29 cases of the waterborne disease have been confirmed in the state.

The flooding over about two weeks killed at least 161 people, with 82 still missing, state authorities said Wednesday. More than 600,000 people were forced from their homes, including tens of thousands who remain in shelters, they said.



Chinese President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, visits Rizhao Port to learn about the local progress in promoting the smart and green development of the port, expanding the opening up, in Rizhao, east China's Shandong Province on May 22. Xi inspected the city of Rizhao in east China's Shandong Province on Wednesday afternoon. (Xinhua)

## Asia

## Thai court agrees to hear case seeking PM removal

## SKorea, China, Japan to hold trilateral talks

SEOUL, South Korea, May 23, (AP): Leaders of South Korea, China and Japan will meet next week in Seoul for their first trilateral talks in more than four years to discuss how to revive their cooperation, South Korea's presidential office said Thursday.

Since their inaugural stand-alone trilateral summit in 2008, the three countries' leaders were supposed to hold such a meeting every year. But the summit has been suspended since the last one in December 2019, in China, because of the COVID-19 pandemic and often complicated ties among the Asian neighbors.

The trilateral meeting between South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, Chinese Premier Li Qiang and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida will take place in Seoul on Monday, Kim Tae-hyo, Seoul's deputy national security director, told a news conference.

Chinese President Xi Jinping will not be attending.

Li and Kishida were scheduled to arrive in South Korea on Sunday. They will meet Yoon bilaterally on Sunday afternoon before attending a welcoming dinner banquet with the South Korean president, Kim said.

"This summit will be a turning point for Korea, Japan and China to completely restore and normalize three-way cooperation systems," Kim said.

Kim said the three leaders were expected to discuss cooperation on six South Korea-proposed topics - personnel exchanges, climate change, trade, health and aging population, technology and disasters. He said these discussions will be included in a joint statement after their summit.

Kim said the three leaders will also discuss unspecified regional and international political issues and how to respond together to a global poly-crisis and contribute to international peace.

## Also:

**TAIPEI, Taiwan:** Taiwan scrambled jets and put missile, naval and land units on alert Thursday over Chinese military exercises being conducted around the self-governing island democracy where a new president took office this week.

China's military said its two-day exercises around Taiwan were punishment for separatist forces seeking in-

**BANGKOK, May 23, (AP):** Many of the more seriously injured people who were on the Singapore Airlines flight that hit severe turbulence need operations on their spines, a Bangkok hospital said Thursday.

Twenty people remained in intensive care and a 73-year-old British man died after the Boeing 777, which was flying from London's Heathrow airport to Singapore, descended following turbulent weather over the Andaman Sea on Tuesday.

A public relations officer for Samitivej Srinakarin Hospital, which has treated more than 100 people hurt from the ordeal, told The Associated Press that other local hospitals have been asked to lend their best specialists to assist in the treatments. He asked not to be named because of hospital policy.

Passengers have described the

"sheer terror" of the aircraft shuddering, loose items flying and injured people lying paralyzed on the floor of the plane.

It remains unclear what exactly caused the turbulence that sent the plane, which was carrying 211 passengers and 18 crew members, on a 6,000-foot (around 1,800-meter) descent in about three minutes. The flight from London to Singapore was diverted to Thailand.

In one of the latest accounts of the chaos on board, 43-year-old Malaysian Amelia Lim described finding herself face down on the floor.

"I was so afraid ... I could see so many individuals on the floor, they were all bleeding. There was blood on the floor as well as on the people," she told the online Malay Mail newspaper.

If eventually found guilty, Prime Minister **Srettha Thavisin** could be ousted from his position.

The court ruled that Srettha's appointment of **Pichit Chuenban** as minister of the Prime Minister's Office was in violation of Section 160 of the constitution, which requires those in ministerial positions to "be of evident integrity" and bars those who fail to comply with ethical standards.

Pichit was jailed for six months in 2008 on contempt of court charges after he tried to bribe a judge presiding over former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's land purchase case with 2 million baht (\$55,000) in a grocery bag.

Pichit resigned from his post Tuesday in what he described in his resignation letter as an effort to protect the prime minister.

The minister of the Prime Minister's Office is a position similar to the president's chief of staff in the United States. Pichit had been in the job for 23 days following a Cabinet reshuffle in late April.



Security forces stand around a stage that collapsed due to a gust of wind during an event attended by presidential candidate Jorge Alvarez Máñez in San Pedro Garza García, on the outskirts of Monterrey, Mexico on May 22. Mexico's President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador confirmed that 9 people were killed and 63 were injured. (AP)



Saïed



McCain

## Africa

**Tunisia sentences journalists:** A Tunisian court on Wednesday sentenced two TV and radio journalists to one year in prison for criticizing the government on their programs and on social networks.

Borhane Bsaïs and Mourad Zeghidi were each given six months' imprisonment for disseminating "fake news" and an additional six months for "making false statements with the aim of defaming others," in reference to Tunisian President **Kaïs Saïed**, court spokesperson Mohamed Zitouna said.

The sentences come less than two weeks after both were arrested. They are among a broader group of journalists, activists and lawyers charged under Decree 54, a law criminalizing the dissemination of "fake news" aimed at harming public safety or national defense.

The law, passed in 2022 to fight cybercrime, has been widely criticized by rights advocates who say the offenses are vaguely defined and are being used to crack down on the president's critics.

Both Bsaïs and Zeghidi denied the allegations. In court, they referred to laws protecting freedom of expression that Tunisia enshrined after its 2011 revolution, when it became the first country in the Middle East and North Africa to topple a longtime dictator. Both said they were simply doing their jobs, analyzing and commenting on political and economic developments in Tunisia.

"I am neither for nor against the president. Sometimes I support his choices, sometimes I criticize them. It's part of my job," Zeghidi said.

Bsaïs, host of the radio show "Emission Impossible" ("Impossible Program" in English) was accused of undermining the president on the air and in Facebook posts made between 2019 and 2022. It's unclear why authorities targeted old posts like his as they pursue a growing number of Saïed's political critics. (AP)

**'El Niño causes surge in hunger':** Extreme weather attributed to the El Niño phenomenon is causing a surge in hunger in several countries, including Zambia

and Afghanistan, the UN's World Food Programme said Wednesday, and called on donors for much-needed help.

El Niño is a natural, temporary and occasional warming of part of the Pacific that shifts global weather patterns, and



An Australian passenger, (center), who was injured on a flight that was battered by severe turbulence, talks to reporters at Samitivej Srinakarin Hospital in Bangkok, Thailand on May 23. The airline's Flight SQ321 was flying from London's Heathrow airport to Singapore when it hit the turbulence on May 21, bashing people around inside the plane. (AP)

studies say that as the world warms, they may get stronger.

Tens of millions of people in southern Africa rely on the weather to grow food to feed themselves.

In a statement, the WFP warned that southern Africa was the "epicenter of the crisis" after a cycle of floods and drought has battered the region over the last three years. Three countries, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia, are the worst affected and have seen between 40-80% of their staple corn crops wiped out by drought this season, leaving millions impacted, according to the UN food agency.

The WFP said executive director **Cindy McCain** had traveled to Zambia and seen how "severe drought has wiped out harvests in a region where 70% of the population relies on agriculture to survive."

"We can't ask millions to wait for the next harvest season - a year from now - to put food on their tables," McCain said in a statement. "These families need our support today while we help to build a more resilient future."

WFP said its "teams have started to respond but US\$409 million are needed for six months to assist 4.8 million people in Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe." (AP)

## Bursa Kuwait real estate firms witness slight revenue growth

During the first quarter ending on March 31, 2024, real estate companies listed on the Bursa Kuwait saw a subtle yet noteworthy uptick in their operating revenues, marking a modest increase from the corresponding period in 2023, as reported by Al-Jarida daily. The figures compiled by Al-Jarida showcase a 1.2 percent rise, translating to a 1.4 million dinar increment in revenues.

Leading the charge in terms of operating revenues was Mabanee Company, which boasted 33.1 million dinars, a

slight uptick from the previous 31 million. Following closely behind was the United Real Estate Company with 20 million dinars, though this marked a decline from their 23.4 million figures in the previous period.

Securing the third position was the Sahlia Real Estate Company, which saw a positive trajectory with operating revenues reaching 11.1 million dinars, up from 9.8 million. Kuwait Real Estate Company and Al-Tijaria Real Estate Company maintained their positions with

revenues of 8.2 million and 7.7 million dinars, respectively.

Among the notable performers experiencing significant growth in operating revenues was the Dar Al Thuraya Real Estate Company, demonstrating an impressive 330 percent surge, climbing from 55 thousand dinars to 237 thousand dinars. Following suit were Ajyal Real Estate Entertainment Company and Injazat Real Estate Development Company, with growth rates of 72.8 percent and 66.9 percent, respectively.

## Al-Zour Refinery project deadline shifts

Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) has recently announced an extension in the deadline for the submission of bids pertaining to a significant contract aimed at bolstering hydrogen production at the Al-Zour Refinery, according to a report from Al-Qabas daily. This decision, as conveyed by MEED magazine, pushes the new submission deadline to June 25, effectively superseding the previous cutoff of May 19. MEED magazine underscored the

importance of conducting a comprehensive study to assess the refinery's capacity in handling heavy oil and to define precise specifications for various units involved in the enhancement project. It is anticipated that contractors will await the results of this ongoing study before finalizing their bids.

This extension marks several delays since the project's inception last year, originally slated for bid submission by June 20, 2023.

## Market Movements

23-05-2024

	Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts		
JAPAN	- Nikkei 225	+486.12	39,103.22	SAUDI	- TASI	-161.04	11,995.99
PAKISTAN	- KSE 100	+248.81	75,161.31	DUBAI	- DFMGI	-34.23	4,023.64
				EGYPT	- EGX 30	-22.30	27,205.14

# Business

## Excellence in banking and sustainability recognized with Euromoney Awards

### NBK named Best Bank for Women Empowerment for NBK Rise & Best Bank for SMEs in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: In reiteration of its excellence in providing innovative banking products and services, as well as its leading strides in promoting sustainability, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) was recognized with two awards from Euromoney, the leading international business magazine, within its 2024 Awards for Excellence.

NBK was named "Best Bank for Diversity and Inclusion in Kuwait" for the "NBK RISE" Program and "Best Bank for SMEs in Kuwait" in the awarding ceremony held in Dubai last Wednesday.

The awards are a new addition to NBK's record of prestigious accolades, reaffirming its unique position as a leading bank in Kuwait and across the region.

#### Best Bank for Diversity and Inclusion

NBK received Euromoney's award for "Best Bank for Diversity and Inclusion in Kuwait" recognizing its Global Women Leadership Initiative "NBK Rise".

The award's criteria included showing a strong track record for initiatives promoting diversity and inclusion, demonstrating that diversity policy is having a positive effect on the performance of the bank and its offerings to clients.

This award reflects the bank's unwavering dedication to providing an ideal work environment in which everyone can flourish. NBK is always committed to continuing its efforts to foster a more inclusive work environment for its employees, in line with its firm belief that diversity and inclusion are among the key factors for institutional success.

The award also comes in recognition of the bank's significant strides to foster women empowerment, as the "NBK RISE" program represents an inspiring experience that is not exclusive for NBK, but brings together a number of leading corporations in Kuwait, who signed a pledge to increase the representation of women in leader-



National Bank of Kuwait team receiving awards on the sidelines of the ceremony held in Dubai.

ship positions, reflecting their commitment to join forces to achieve the goals of this global initiative.

NBK regards diversity and inclusion as a fundamental culture, as its recruitment policies are based on equal opportunities and largely promoting diversity by ensu-

ing that job applicants are provided with equal opportunities without any discrimination based on their gender, age, race, religion, nationality or any other demographic characteristics, thus fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace.

NBK is also keen to promote equal opportunities, equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace through various strategic initiatives and specialized programs to empower and develop female leaders, which helped increase the number of women in leadership and supervisory positions.

#### Best Bank for SMEs

This award recognizes the banks that can demonstrate outstanding commitment to the particular needs of small and medium-sized enterprises over the review period across financing, advice, trade, cash management and growth initiatives.

This award appreciates NBK's efforts to support financing of SMEs, and also demonstrates its leading position as the top local bank in providing diverse, smooth and fast banking products and services that meet all the needs of SME clients and enable their success and growth.

NBK always seeks to provide the SME sector with a comprehensive range of competitive financing options backed by its world-class banking platform. It constantly strives to deliver outstanding services through its experienced Relationship Managers and specialized service channels.

National Bank of Kuwait is considered the leading institution in providing corporate banking products and services to meet the needs related to business activities. The bank has a strong track record in supporting companies to achieve their aspirations, and providing apt financial solutions that drive their success, growth, and innovation, thus strengthening and developing national economy.

For more information about Euromoney awards, you can visit their website: <https://www.euromoney.com/awards/awards-for-excellence>

# KFH wins Kuwait's Best Bank at Euromoney '24

Kuwait Finance House Group racks up 4 more awards

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) was recognized for its leading position in the Islamic banking sector by winning five prestigious awards at Euromoney's Middle East Awards for Excellence 2024, held in Dubai.

The awards are Kuwait's Best Bank, Kuwait's Best Digital Bank – tam digital bank, Kuwait's Best Bank for ESG, and Kuwait's Best Islamic Bank. Additionally, KFH Capital, the investment arm of KFH Group, won the Islamic Finance Deal of the Year Award in Turkey for its role in the Republic of Turkey's USD 2.5 billion Sukuk.

KFH Deputy General Manager Public Relations and Media, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh, KFH Group Deputy General Manager Compliance and Governance, Meshal Alshayee, and KFH Deputy General Manager for Digital Transformation, Eng. Tareq Al-Ajeel received the awards on behalf of KFH. Meanwhile, Assistant Vice President of Debt Capital Markets Department at KFH Capital, Khalid Alshami received the award on behalf of KFH Capital.

The Euromoney Awards panel, comprised of journalists and a research team, selects winners based on a defined set of criteria. These criteria include financial solvency, performance indicators, the breadth and depth of financing services offered, as well as a bank's capacity for innovation, sustainable growth, and adaptation to evolving market conditions. The panel also considers how well banks meet customer needs, embrace technological advancements, and achieve success in their digital transformation strategies. Additionally, Euromoney recognizes the outstanding performance of winners over the past twelve months. These awards recognize Islamic financial institutions that have significantly contributed to the growth of the Islamic banking and finance market, while also making a positive impact within their markets.

Winning these awards further recognizes KFH's successes and achievements in its pursuit of becoming one of the 100 largest banks globally. KFH is also committed to leaving a clear mark by supporting development and economic growth in Kuwait.

#### Yousef Al-Ruwaieh

KFH Deputy General Manager Public Relations and Media, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh said that these awards reflect the appreciation KFH enjoys and its leading position in the banking industry, both generally and specifically within Islamic banking.

Al-Ruwaieh expressed KFH's pride in this achievement. These awards stand as a testament to the teamwork, sincere efforts, and dedication of KFH's work team. They also serve as a recognition of KFH's commitment to earning the trust of its esteemed customers, who are truly partners in KFH's success.

He pointed out that KFH is committed to achieving even greater success by continuing to strengthen its global position across the Group's global network, which spans 12 countries.

#### Meshal Alshayee

The Group Deputy General Manager for Regulatory Compliance and Governance at KFH, Meshal Alshayee highlighted that KFH's recognition as the most sustainable bank in Kuwait reflects the bank's commitment to implementing impactful sustainability initiatives. This includes adhering to ESG standards and contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). KFH's focus extends beyond just business

quality and performance efficiency. It also prioritizes achieving financial inclusion, empowering women, and meeting the evolving needs of its diverse customer base.

#### Tareq Al-Ajeel

KFH Deputy General Manager for Digital Transformation, Eng. Tareq Al-Ajeel said that the "Best Digital Bank in Kuwait" award for "tam" Digital bank is a well-deserved recognition of KFH's successful digital transformation journey. He added that KFH has implemented cutting-edge financial solutions and dedicated youth-focused digital banking services. Al-Ajeel also stressed KFH's commitment to continue developing pioneering digital banking initiatives that enhance the customer experience and meet their evolving aspirations.

#### Khalid Alshami

Assistant Vice President of Debt Capital Markets Department at KFH Capital, Khalid Alshami said winning the Islamic Finance Deal of the Year award for the Republic of Turkey's USD 2.5 billion Sukuk reflects KFH Capital's prestigious position and long experience in the Sukuk field. This Islamic instrument has become an increasingly popular choice for companies and governments to finance their development, expansion, and growth plans.

He explained that KFH Capital has successfully implemented major deals in Kuwait and the region, particularly in the Sukuk market. This experience solidifies its position as a provider of diverse and comprehensive Sharia-compliant investment products and services.

Alshami added that KFH Group has also played an important role in sustainability through green Sukuk, as KFH Capital has previously succeeded in arranging many issuances in this field, the most important of which are through the issuance of a USD 350 million Green Sukuk for KFH- Turkiye. This issuance is the first of its kind from an Islamic financial institution and the world's first tier 2 sustainability Sukuk.



Luciano Di Pietro, Meshal Alshayee, Yousef Al-Ruwaieh, Tareq Al-Ajeel, and Khalid Alshami with the awards of the KFH Group.

## Silver retreats from 11-year high

### Gold prices decline but maintain above \$2,400 as Fed meeting minutes awaited

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Gold prices experienced a slight decline today while retaining a position above the \$2,400 mark, as investors eagerly anticipated the release of the Federal Reserve's meeting minutes, seeking insights into potential interest rate adjustments. Instant transaction gold saw a 0.3 percent decrease to \$2,413.50 per ounce, following a record high of \$2,449.89 on Monday, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Similarly, US gold futures slipped 0.4 percent to \$2,416.80 per ounce.

The forthcoming minutes from the May meeting of the US Central Bank are highly anticipated, with traders

currently estimating a 64 percent likelihood of interest rate cuts by September.

Although recent data indicated a resumption of downward US inflation trends, Federal Reserve policymakers emphasized the need for several more months of observation to confirm a sustained return to the targeted two percent inflation rate before considering interest rate adjustments.

Investor interest in gold remains buoyed by low interest rates and geopolitical uncertainties. Tim Waterer, chief market analyst at KCM Trade, forecasts gold prices to maintain lev-

els above \$2,400 amid expectations of a potentially more accommodative interest rate environment later in the year.

However, Waterer suggests that reaching new record highs may necessitate a decline in the dollar or bond yields, or an uptick in demand for the precious metal.

In other precious metal news, silver experienced an 0.8 percent decline in spot transactions to \$31.70 per ounce after reaching an 11-year high on Monday. Conversely, platinum edged up 0.3 percent to \$1,049.55 per ounce, while palladium dipped 0.8 percent to \$1,017.73 per ounce.

## 'Regulatory concerns rise over Synapse's collapse'

### Thousands of US accounts frozen after Synapse Fintech shutdown

NEW YORK, May 23, (AP): The bank accounts of tens of thousands of U.S. businesses and consumers have been frozen in the aftermath of the abrupt shutdown and bankruptcy of financial technology company Synapse, which acts as a middleman between financial technology companies and banks.

Synapse filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in April and has shut down its services to some of its fintech or bank partners, including Evolve Bank & Trust. That has caused disruptions for customers of Synapse's partners, leading to accounts being frozen or showing funds not existing at all.

Synapse's shutdown has "needlessly jeopardized end users by hindering our ability to verify transactions, confirm end user balances, and comply with applicable law," said Memphis-based Evolve in a statement last week. Because Evolve is a bank and is required to comply with banking laws, it has to make sure all customer deposits are accounted for to the penny, which may take time.

Evolve also stressed that, despite customers' deposits being frozen, it is well capitalized. A source who is familiar with the size and scope of the number of accounts impacted at Evolve estimated the number of frozen accounts to be under 200,000. The person was not authorized to speak on the record.

Other banks or fintech companies that San Francisco-based Synapse partnered with included Tennessee-based Lineage Bank, as well as savings rewards company Yotta, a company that gives prizes to customers who save money. Reddit message boards for Evolve, Synapse and Yotta were full of customers complaining about being unable to access their funds.

The scale of Synapse's disruptions could widen. Synapse, in court documents, estimates that before it filed for bankruptcy it had roughly 100 customer relationships that exposed roughly 10 million Americans to their services. However, banking regulators believe that figure is extremely high and the number of impacted Americans will be thousands or tens of thousands.

Synapse's creditors have been pushing in court to convert the bankruptcy to Chapter 7, which would liquidate the company. In court, representatives for Synapse's customers argued that liquidation could make the disruptions to customers' funds even worse.

Fintech companies, more often than not, are not banks themselves due to the high cost and paperwork necessary to create a new bank. Instead these companies partner with banks - many of them smaller institutions with a minimal national profile - and use that bank as a place to store customer

funds without having to be a bank themselves.

In order to operate this way, fintech companies often need a middleman between the fintech company and the bank that can do the bookkeeping necessary to make sure customer accounts are credited and debited correctly. That's the job Silicon Valley-backed Synapse had.

It's not clear what role U.S. banking regulators can play in the chaos resulting from Synapse's collapse. Synapse isn't a bank, so its regulation is not handled by the Federal Reserve or the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Because none of the banks that Synapse has worked with have failed, there is no eligibility for FDIC deposit insurance to be paid out.

It is possible the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which has law enforcement authority, could open an investigation into Synapse's behavior and its impact on customers.

Traditional bankers as well as consumer advocates have long criticized the fintech business model, where these companies appear to be banks but have none of the protections of banks due to customer funds being stored elsewhere.

"The disorderly failure of Synapse and the impact on end users is likely to confirm policymakers' and regulators' worst fears about the operating model and fintech in general," wrote Jason Mikula, a former Goldman Sachs banker who has been writing about the problems at Synapse.

## BUSINESS

## Germany's economy expected to grow

Germany's central bank (Deutsche Bundesbank) said on Wednesday that it expects the country's economy, the largest economy in Europe, to grow gradually after witnessing a 0.2 percent growth in the first quarter of this year.

This came in a report from Bundesbank's headquarters in Frankfurt, where they attributed these expectations to the services and consumption sectors, which will be reflected in the overall economic growth in the com-

ing months.

The German economy, which relies mainly on the export sector, saw a 0.2 percent contraction last year, which was due to the decline in the performance of most economic sectors, especially the consumption sector.

This was all indicated by economic institutes, specifically (Ifo), and the German government, which is due to rising prices and the inflation rate, against the backdrop of rising energy prices. (KUNA)

## Pakistan to increase petroleum products' production

Pakistan's Minister for Petroleum Musadik Masood Malik, said on Wednesday that his country would increase the production of indigenous petroleum products to reduce import bills. "Pakistan currently spends over 18 billion U.S. dollars annually on energy imports ... The country is expediting oil and gas exploration within the country," the minister said while addressing an energy symposium here.

Highlighting that the country is actively trying to attract global players in exploration activities, Malik said that Pakistan is open

for business and committed to completely digitizing the regulatory process to increase transparency. "Investment processes and information regarding oil and gas exploration have been digitized and simplified to facilitate this. We welcome foreign companies to invest in this sector," he added.

Talking about the surging cost of energy prices in the country, the minister underlined that the government is committed to ensuring an uninterrupted and affordable energy supply, saying it is a top priority. "To reduce electricity tariffs, vari-

ous proposals are being implemented. By supplying local gas to efficient power plants, the cost of electricity could be reduced as compared to imported LNG," he said, adding that modern systems, including comprehensive monitoring of the gas network using technology, are being used to combat urban gas losses.

The minister also called for increased utilization of Pakistan's abundant renewable energy resources, especially as the country's solar energy costs have significantly decreased. (Xinhua)

# Gulf Bank earns 'Euromoney' recognition for social responsibility, community engagement

Event attended by companies, banks and major institutions from the region

**KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Euro money magazine has named Gulf Bank the best in Kuwait for social responsibility. The announcement was made at a grand ceremony in Dubai last weekend, where the 2024 Excellence Awards were presented. The event was attended by numerous companies, banks, and major institutions from the region.**

This award recognizes Gulf Bank's outstanding commitment to social sustainability, as well as its significant efforts in supporting and empowering youth, women, and individuals with special needs, both within the bank and in the broader community. These efforts are evident through a diverse and carefully curated range of initiatives and services designed to meet their needs and aspirations.

#### International Recognition

On this occasion, Gulf Bank's Chief Marketing Officer, Ms. Najla Al-Eisa, said in a press statement after receiving the award, "We are delighted with this new international recognition of Gulf Bank's outstanding role in social responsibility. This honor strengthens our determination and commitment to our values and our leading role in serving the community."

She added, "We take pride in our close engagement and communication with the community. We ensure our presence among them during various



Najla Al-Eisa receives the award during the Euromoney ceremony.

- **Najla Al-Eisa:** Gulf Bank's exceptional role in social responsibility is recognized internationally.
- These awards reinforce our commitment to our values and our leading position in serving all segments of the community.
- We are proud to consistently engage and communicate with the community during various occasions.
- We have initiated numerous community events and initiatives that cater to the aspirations of our customers and the public.
- The "Sawa'ed AlKhaleej" team actively participates in various events organized or supported by the bank.
- The bank contributes significantly to raising awareness through its "Diraya" and "A Step Towards Change" campaigns.

events, whether directly through diverse activities or via media and social media channels."

She noted that Gulf Bank has launched numerous community events and initiatives that meet the aspirations of customers and the public from different segments and age groups, making it deservedly the closest and most responsive to the community's interests. She mentioned that the "Sawa'ed AlKhaleej" team, a volunteer group of Gulf Bank employees, actively supports our efforts to promote social sustainability principles at the various events organized or sponsored by Gulf Bank.

#### Social Initiatives

Al-Eisa highlighted some of the social initiatives and events that Gulf Bank has launched or sponsored recently. These include the ninth edition of the Gulf Bank Marathon, the only marathon in Kuwait with international recognition, and the 18th consecutive sponsorship of the Company Program competition, organized annually by INJAZ Kuwait. Additionally, Gulf Bank organized the third edition of the Datathon competi-

tion to empower data specialists, students, and those interested in data and analytics. They also sponsored the "Kilmitain" forum to support creative industries in Kuwait.

She remarked that in Ramadan 2024, the bank organized and sponsored several significant initiatives, such as distributing thousands of Iftar meals, providing Ramadan food packages, donating to those affected by the war in Gaza, and organizing "Nuqsat Al-Khaleej" to support small and medium-sized enterprises, among other successful events.

#### Promoting Awareness

Furthermore, Al-Eisa emphasized Gulf Bank's significant role in enhancing financial literacy through its continued support for the "Diraya" awareness campaign, now in its fourth consecutive year. This campaign, organized by the Banking Association in collaboration with the Central Bank of Kuwait, aims to promote financial education. Additionally, Gulf Bank launched the "A

Step Towards Change" campaign, with the goal of instigating a cultural shift towards reducing plastic usage.

Al-Eisa concluded by stating, "Gulf Bank has set a distinguished example of sustainability within the community. This is evident through initiatives such as the issuance of its annual Sustainability Report and the recent launch of an ambitious Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) governance strategy spanning from 2024 to 2030. This strategy serves as a clear roadmap for the next six years."

It's worth mentioning that "MEED" magazine recently honored Gulf Bank with two awards, acknowledging its endeavors in implementing diversity and inclusion initiatives and empowering women in the MENA region.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large.

With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple and seamless banking experience.

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



Best Bank in Social Responsibility Award.

## Corporate earnings reported by cos. listed on Bursa Kuwait up by 2.0%

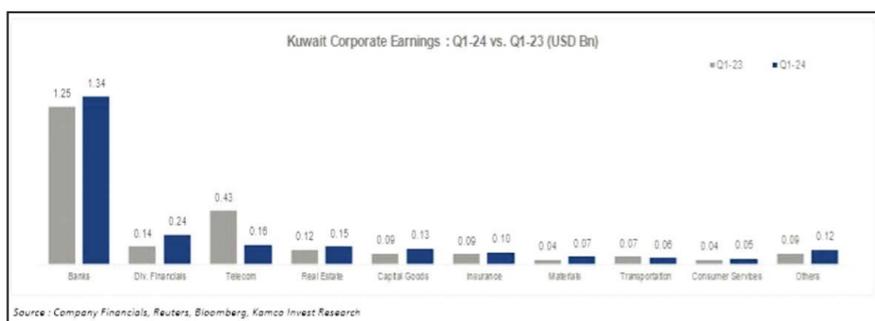
# Net profits slide due to Energy, Telecom & Cap. Goods sectors

By Kamco Invest

Aggregate net profits reported by companies listed on GCC exchanges dropped to the second lowest level in nine quarters during Q1-2024 at USD 56.4 Bn as compared to USD 61.8 bn in Q1-2023. The decline was mainly led by a y-o-y decline in profits for the Energy, Telecom and Capital Goods sectors partially offset by higher profits reported by mainly by Banks, F&B and Real Estate companies. The sequential performance was positive with higher profits for the top three sectors partially offset by fall in profits for Real estate and F&B sectors resulting in a q-o-q profit growth of 2.6%. The Materials sector showed healthy improvement in profits during the quarter.

Net profits for the Energy sector witnessed the biggest y-o-y decline during Q1-2024 mainly led by fall in volumes sold by companies in the sector, partially offset by higher crude oil prices as compared to Q1-2023. Average Brent crude prices was up by 2.2% during Q1-2024 at USD 82.9 per barrel as compared to the average for Q1-2023. Net profits reported by Aramco dropped by 11.9% y-o-y during the quarter, accounting for bulk of the decline in profits at the GCC level. Excluding Aramco's results, the profit decline for GCC listed companies came in at -5.3%.

On the other hand, healthy profits for the GCC banking sector helped to partially offset the bulk of the decline in earnings. Aggregate earnings for the GCC banking sector surged 11.5% y-o-y or by USD 1.5 Bn to reach USD 14.5 Bn in Q1-2024. The q-o-q growth was albeit marginal at 0.6% vs. Q4-2023. The y-o-y growth reflected double digit growth in earnings for four out of seven markets while the remaining three also reported healthy growth. Earnings for the UAE banking sector improved by a healthy 15.2% to reach USD 5.5 Bn while the Saudi banking sector recorded a y-o-y growth of 8.2% during Q1-2024. The growth in earnings came despite a marginal decline in net interest income as elevated interest income was offset by higher interest expenses. A fall in operating expenses and lower impairments sup-



ported earnings.

Profit for the GCC energy sector plummeted 17.7% y-o-y during Q1-2024 to reach USD 29.8 Bn as compared to USD 36.2 Bn during Q1-2023. The decline came after half of the companies in the sector reported a y-o-y decline in profits. In terms of q-o-q performance, net profits remained almost flat during the quarter with a marginal growth of 0.6%. The biggest y-o-y percentage decline in profits was recorded by Taqa at 81.8% or a decline of USD 2.6 Bn reaching USD 576 Mn in the quarter. The decline was led by one-off gains during the corresponding quarter last year and excluding these gains, the company's net profit surged 7% as compared to Q1-2023. The company reported 5.3% growth in revenues that reached AED 13.7 Bn. Profit for the sector saw a much smaller decline of 4.1% during Q1-2024.

Net profits for the GCC telecom sector declined by 13.3% y-o-y to reach USD 2.4 Bn in Q1-2024. The decline was led by a steep fall in profits for six out of fifteen telecom operators in the region. Zain KSA reported the biggest decline in profits that reached USD 17.7 Mn during Q1-2024 vs. USD 303.0 Mn during Q1-2023 due to one-off gain related to sale of telecom towers during the previous year's quarter. This was also reflected in the financials for the Zain Group. Meanwhile, profits for Ooredoo Kuwait declined by almost 80% y-o-y during Q1-2024, also due to one-off gains related to legal claims during Q1-2023. In the case of

Omantel, the profit decline of 39.2% y-o-y during Q1-2024 was led by higher service expenses during Q1-2024 as well as higher non-operating gains during Q1-2023. These aforementioned decline in profits were partially offset by higher profits reported by Etisalat, STC and Mobily during Q1-2024.

Net profits in the GCC Real Estate sector witnessed a marginal y-o-y growth of 3.6% during Q1-2024 to reach USD 1.9 Bn. The trend at the country level remained mixed with companies in Abu Dhabi and Kuwait witnessing healthy y-o-y growth of 50.5% and 23.4%, respectively, while Saudi and Bahraini companies in the sector reported declines. The growth in Abu Dhabi reflected higher profits reported by Aldar Properties led by higher revenues during the quarter.

#### Kuwait

Corporate earnings reported by companies listed on Bursa Kuwait increased by 2.0% y-o-y during Q1-2024 to reach USD 2.41 Bn as compared to USD 2.36 Bn in Q1-2023. The biggest impact on aggregate earnings came from the Diversified Financials sector which showed a 64.8% jump in profits that reached USD 237.1 Mn in Q1-2024 from USD 143.9 Mn in Q1-2023. Banks, Real Estate and Materials sectors also contributed to earnings growth during the quarter. In terms of sequential performance, the aggregate growth in profits stood at 45.3% as compared to Q4-2023.

In the Banking sector, NBK reported a net profit of USD 476.4 Mn for Q1-2024 up 9.2% vs. a profit of USD 436.5

Mn in Q1-2023 mainly led by higher net operating income which increased by 11.2% to USD 1.0 Bn, and lower impairment losses that were partially offset by higher operating expenses as compared to Q1-2023. Net profits for Boubyan Bank reached USD 81.2 Mn for Q1-2024 up by 21.2% compared to USD 67.0 Mn from Q1-2023 mainly due to the increase in the net financing income by USD 23.2 Mn in addition to the increase in net fees and commission income and decrease in impairments. Meanwhile, Gulf Bank posted a net profit decline that reached USD 41.8 Mn in Q1-2024 from USD 56.3 Mn Q1-2023 on account of higher provisions and impairment losses of USD 20.5 Mn partially offset by an increase in operating income.

In the Diversified Financials sector, Asiya Capital Investment Co. witnessed strong y-o-y jump in Q1-2024 net profit that reached USD 19.2 Mn from a net loss of USD 0.3 Mn during Q1-2023 which was mainly due to the unrealized gain in financial assets. Similarly, Kuwait Financial Centre posted a net profit of USD 9.0 Mn in Q1-2024 vs a net loss of USD 10.3 Mn in Q1-2023 led by the increase in the fair value of financial assets. On the other hand, NOOR Financial Investment Co. witnessed a net profit decline of 19.0% that reached USD 32.2 Mn in Q1-2024 from USD 39.8 in Q1-2023 mainly due to non-recurring reversal of USD 28.0 Mn impairment on the wakala investment that was reported as income in the Q1-2023.

## Tesla's 'milestone' Shanghai battery factory breaks ground

SHANGHAI, May 23, (Xinhua) U.S. carmaker Tesla broke ground on a mega factory in Shanghai on Thursday to manufacture its energy-storage batteries, Megapacks, a project hailed by the company as a "milestone."

The latest move underscores Tesla's commitment to investing in the world's second-largest economy, defying the rhetoric of "decoupling" and "de-risking" from China ratcheted up by some U.S. politicians.

The new plant spans an area of approximately 200,000 square meters, with a total investment of around 1.45 billion yuan (about 203.94 million U.S. dollars), according to the administration of Lin-gang Special Area of China (Shanghai) Pilot Free Trade Zone.

The mega factory is the first of its kind built by Tesla outside the United States and the company's second plant in Shanghai, following the inauguration of its gigafactory in 2019 which involved an initial investment of over 50 billion yuan.

"I believe the new plant is a milestone for both Shanghai and Tesla," the company's vice president Tao Lin told Xinhua in an exclusive interview.

"In a more open environment, we can create a new Tesla speed at the Megapack factory, and supply the global market with large-scale energy-storage batteries manufactured in China," she added.

At Thursday's ground breaking ceremony in Shanghai, Tesla representa-

tives and local government officials formally initiated the construction of the Megapack factory, which is expected to begin mass production in the first quarter of 2025, with an initial capacity of 10,000 Megapack units a year.

"With Tesla's benchmark project, we anticipate that within the next three to five years, an industrial cluster centered around energy storage will rapidly emerge," said Lu Yu, an official from the Lin-gang Special Area Administration.

After the ceremony, Tesla signed a deal with Shanghai Lingang Economic Development (Group) Co., Ltd., securing the first batch of orders for its Megapacks in China.

Gong Wei, vice president of Lin-gang Special Area, said the Megapacks would be used for energy storage in a data center in the Lin-gang Special Area, as part of its efforts to achieve carbon peaking and carbon neutrality.

Tesla's deep involvement in the energy storage industry now rivals its electric vehicles in importance, Tao said, adding that its energy storage products are currently applied in over 65 countries and regions.

The U.S. company already has a factory for its Megapacks in California, which has an annual capacity of 10,000 units.

Each Megapack unit can store over 3.9 megawatt-hours of energy, sufficient to power approximately 3,600 households for one hour.



This aerial photo released by Xinhua News Agency shows a view of the land allotted for Tesla's new mega factory project is seen in the Lingang new area of the China (Shanghai) Pilot Free Trade Zone in east China's Shanghai, on Dec. 22, 2023. Chinese state media have reported Thursday May 23, 2024 that electric vehicle maker Tesla has begun construction of the factory in Shanghai to make its Megapack energy storage batteries. The \$200 million plant in Shanghai's Lingang pilot free trade zone will be the first Tesla battery plant outside the United States. (AP)

## Europe needs to double investments in power grids by 2050: study

ATHENS, May 23, (Xinhua) European countries need to double their investments in power distribution grids by 2050 or risk missing emissions targets set out by the European Green Deal, according to a study released

here on Wednesday.

Distribution grid investments should increase from an average 33 billion euros (35.78 billion U.S. dollars) to 67 billion euros per year from 2025 to 2050. This amount is roughly 20 per-

cent of what the EU spent on fossil fuel imports in 2023, the results of a study published by the Eurelectric showed.

The Eurelectric, the federation of the European electricity industry, represents more than 3,500 European

utilities active in power generation, distribution and supply across the continent. On the opening day of a forum held here, the federation presented the "Grids for Speed" study, detailing investment needs for the sector.



Zain contributed to presenting a musical performance dedicated to H.H. the Amir.



H.H. the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a commemorative gift from Bader Al-Kharafi.



Qadsia players celebrating the win.



Huge crowds attended the thrilling match.

## H.H. the Amir receives commemorative gift from Zain Vice Chairman

# Zain sponsors spectacular Amir Cup final ceremony at Jaber Stadium

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Zain has sponsored the grand ceremony accompanying the thrilling final match of the 62nd edition of the Amir Cup, held under the patronage and presence of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Qadsia SC were crowned champions of the much-cherished cup after defeating Salmiya SC in the exciting final, were over 19,000 spectators cheered on their teams at Jaber Al Ahmad International Stadium.

During the ceremony, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a commemorative gift from Zain Vice Chairman and Group CEO Bader Al-Kharafi.

Zain's support to the grand finale, which was organized by the Kuwait Football Association, included a spectacular musical performance dedicated to H.H. the Amir, performed by Kuwaiti stars Nabeel Shuaib and Mutref Al Mutref. In addition, the ceremony featured draws with valuable

prizes for the spectators, including 4 cars and 50 smartphones.

The thrilling final saw Qadsia SC winning their 17th Amir Cup title after defeating Salmiya SC 1-0. After the match, club board members, players, and technical staff, along with match officials, had the privilege of meeting H.H. the Amir, where he presented the cherished cup to Qadsia captain Bader Al Mutawa.

Zain's support to the Amir Cup competition came under the umbrella of its strategic partnership with the Kuwait Football Association. Zain is the Official Sponsor of the KFA's competitions throughout the 2022-2026 seasons, including the Kuwait Premier League (Dawri Zain), the Zain First Division League, H.H. the Amir's Cup, and the KFA Cup (Zain Cup).

Zain believes the private sector has a key role in developing the local sports and youth sectors, and it makes this belief a reality by sponsoring and supporting some of the biggest sports programs in the nation.

## ABK unveils Shaikhah Humoud AlSabah as Alfouz draw winner

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced Shaikhah Humoud Al-Sabah as the KD 10,000 Alfouz weekly draw winner on Monday, 20 May 2024, whereby the draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Since its launch, the Alfouz account continues to offer an impressive weekly draw of KD 10,000. The Bank has recently expanded its offering by adding a new alluring monthly draw of KD 20,000, and an exceptional quarterly draw of KD 100,000.

The account also retains its hallmark mega annual draw of a KD 5,000 monthly salary

for ten years. Furthermore, the Bank now offers customers an increased opportunity to win for every KD 10 as opposed to KD 100 previously.

ABK encourages everyone to open an Alfouz draw account and/or increase their balances to have more chances in winning in the upcoming monthly draw winner announcement, which will take place on Monday, 27 May 2024. The higher the deposits, the higher the chances to win.

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



Alfouz weekly draw winner



Photos during the event.

## Top beauty brands shine at LuLu's beauty promotion

# LuLu Hypermarket launches 'LuLu World Of Beauty'

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: LuLu Hypermarket, the retailer of choice among discerning shoppers in the region, launched the 'LuLu World of Beauty' promotion that captivated the interest of beauty enthusiasts and shoppers alike.

LuLu world of Beauty, which runs from 22-28 May across all outlets of the hypermarket, offers an array of value-packed promotions on cosmetics, perfumes, and wellness products. The event was inaugurated on 22nd May at the hypermarket's Fahaeel outlet by popular beauty vloggers and fashion influencers, along with top management of the sponsors and the LuLu Hypermarket Kuwait.

The sponsors of the event ensured that LuLu World of Beauty provided an extraordinary experience for shoppers who had the opportunity to explore a vast range of high-quality beauty products. Main sponsors such as Nivea, P&G, Unilever, Yardley, L'Oréal, Johnson & Johnson, Colgate & Dabur added their own touch of excellence to the event, enhancing the overall beauty extravaganza.

One of the major highlights of the event was the live demonstrations conducted by famous beauty brands. Experts from these brands showcased their expertise, unveiling the latest trends and techniques in the world of beauty. In addition to the live

demos, various sponsors and co-sponsors set up exhibition stalls, showcasing their finest beauty products and providing shoppers with the opportunity to examine an extensive range of beauty options and interact with knowledgeable representatives.

Adding to the excitement, free sampling beauty kits were distributed by the generous sponsors. Customers eagerly embraced the chance to try out new products and experience the quality and effectiveness of these items firsthand.

To further enhance the customers' experience, the promotional event offered free live styling and make-up services. Professional stylists and make-up artists were on hand to provide personalized consultations and create stunning looks for customers.

The success of LuLu World of Beauty can be attributed to the perfect combination of impeccable planning, the support of top beauty brands, and the enthusiasm of the attendees. LuLu Hypermarket once again proved its commitment to delivering an exceptional shopping experience that goes beyond expectations, while providing shoppers with an extensive range of products, superb quality and exceptional customer service.



Photos from the International Women's Group's 35th anniversary celebrations.

## Event highlights members' legacy and leadership

# IWG-Kuwait celebrates 35 years of cross-cultural empowerment

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: The International Women's Group (IWG) celebrated its 35th anniversary with a spectacular event that brought together members, dignitaries, and its leaders in a grand celebration of the organization's enduring legacy of empowering women and fostering international connections. Held on the evening of May 19, 2024, at The Crowne Plaza, the event was a resounding success, highlighting the achievements and contributions of past and present members.

The evening commenced with Mrs. Antonia Dimitrova, spouse of the Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria and IWG President for 2023-2024, warmly welcoming the Honorary President of IWG, H.E. Sheikha Hanouf Badar Al Muhammad Al Sabah, along with five former IWG presidents.

The VIPs entered to the sound of uplifting music. The audience greeted the five distinguished IWG presidents with enthusiastic applause as they took the stage, each adorned with a sash symbolizing their leadership and contributions to the organization.

### Milestones

The formal program was emceed by Mrs. Layla Boulos, who introduced the Honorary President H.E. Sheikha Hanouf Al Sabah and the former presidents: Mrs. Jasmin Shuhaibar, Mrs. Rima Khaldi (Palestine), Mrs. Ghada Shawky (Egypt), and Mrs. Antonia Dimitrova.

Following the introductions, Mrs. Dimitrova delivered a heartfelt welcome speech, highlighting the significant milestones achieved by the IWG over the past 35 years. She spoke of the organization's role in uniting women from diverse cultural backgrounds, emphasizing the importance of mutual understanding and support.

"We are reminded of the remarkable journey that began three and a half decades ago," said Dimitrova. "In 1989, IWG began as a small group of visionary women, headed by the spouse of the then Ambassador of the Netherlands, Mrs. Hanneke Veling, may her soul rest in peace. Those energetic ladies planted the seeds of initiative and laid the foundations of



Honorary President of IWG, H.E. Sheikha Hanouf Badar Al Muhammad Al Sabah.

this group, which has overcome the challenges of time and grown stronger with each passing year."

She extended sincere compliments and blessings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and congratulated His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al Ahmad Al Sabah on assuming his duties at the head of the new government, wishing him success in his mission.

Mrs. Dimitrova emphasized the dedication of IWG members, stating, "IWG owes its remarkable viability and success to you, dear members, to your commitment and dedication. You are the core of IWG, and with your enthusiasm and creativity, our group will continue to pursue its noble objectives of promoting cultural exchange and friendship."

She also expressed special gratitude to Honorary President H.E. Sheikha Hanouf Bader Al Mohamed Al Sabah for her continuous support. "We are immensely happy that Her Excellency has joined us today for this celebration," she said.

Furthermore, Mrs. Dimitrova thanked the Kuwaiti institutions, civil society organizations, and private entities that support IWG's initiatives, as well as the diplomatic missions and international organizations

accredited to the State of Kuwait for their ongoing cooperation. She also expressed appreciation to the media and press for their support.

In turn, H.E. Sheikha Hanouf Badar Al Muhammad Al Sabah, addressed the group saying: "For many years, Kuwait has welcomed people from all over the world. This brings together a richness of cultures that strengthens our nation. The International Women's Group celebrates this by bringing women together from different backgrounds to share their stories.

By learning from each other, we gain a deeper understanding of the world and appreciate the beauty of our differences. This welcoming spirit is what makes Kuwait such a special place."

The celebration then continued with a historical video featuring several former presidents, representing the Netherlands, Malta, Pakistan, Italy, Palestine and Egypt; past underscoring the international and interconnected nature of the group by bringing voices from around the world to the event.

### Presentation

To mark IWG's Coral Anniversary of 35 years, Dr. Shaker Hamza Al Hazeem from KISR delivered an enlightening presentation on Kuwait coral, followed by an award ceremony recognizing his contributions. The audience was then treated to a special video showcasing a dive conducted by Dive 36 to display the IWG banner underwater.

A commemorative song especially written for IWG's 35th anniversary was sung by member Mrs. Shireen Hattar, accompanied by musician and composer, Mr. Joudat Marrash. The duo's songs, with lyrics displayed on stage and screen, resonated with the audience, and the rest of the musical performances added a lively and festive atmosphere to the evening. Both artists were later honored with special awards for their contributions.

In a special segment, three outstanding IWG members – Mrs. Jasmin Shuhaibar, Mrs. Vera Al Mutawa, and Mrs. Farah Attai – were recognized with special awards for

their exceptional dedication and service throughout the years.

Mrs. Dimitrova then took the stage to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the outgoing Vice-Presidents, Mrs. Polina Dalmini and Mrs. Saia Berdibay. She also expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the remaining seven ladies of the Executive Board: Mrs. Veara Al-Mutawa, Mrs. Farah Attai, Mrs. Kamelia Al-Mutawa, Mrs. Aziza Khan, Mrs. Layla Boulos, Mrs. Manar Alamat and Mrs. Afi Khan for their unwavering support and tireless dedication.

### Vision

The evening then proceeded to the announcement of the new IWG board. Mrs. Dimitrova introduced Mrs. Polina Dalmini, spouse of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Eswatini, as the new president, along with three vice presidents: Mrs. Rana Abu Shakra, spouse of the Ambassador of Jordan; Mrs. Laura Duclaud, spouse of the Ambassador of Mexico; and Mrs. Baigalmaa Bayantsagaan, spouse of the Ambassador of Mongolia. Mrs. Dalmini shared her vision for the future of the IWG, promising to build on the strong foundation laid by her predecessors. She also expressed her gratitude to the Executive Board and members for their trust and support.

The celebration culminated with a symbolic cake-cutting ceremony featuring Sheikha Hanouf and both the outgoing and incoming boards. The specially designed cake was a highlight, immensely admired by all.

The evening ended on a high note with a special raffle for members. The event concluded with a sumptuous buffet dinner prepared by the chefs of the Crowne Plaza, accompanied by live music, allowing guests to continue celebrating and networking in a festive atmosphere.

The 35th anniversary of the IWG was a testament to the strength and solidarity of women leaders and members who have contributed to the organization's rich history. It was a night to remember, filled with reflection, recognition, and anticipation for the future, with all attendees wishing for many more years of growth, mutual understanding, and community.



Group photo of attendees.

## Dr. Fridon empowers students

# Dartmouth prof shares research skills at AUK

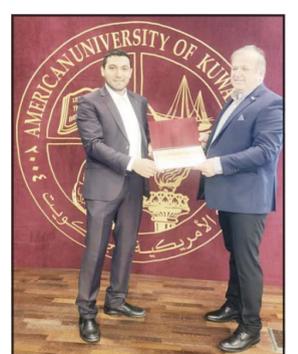
KUWAIT CITY, May 23: The American University of Kuwait (AUK) recently hosted Dr. Fridon Shubitidze, a distinguished professor of Engineering from Dartmouth College, for a series of insightful talks and workshops.

In one session exclusively for the College of Engineering and Applied Science (CEAS) faculty, Dr. Fridon delved into the multifaceted use of electromagnetic fields and waves in both geophysical exploration and medical advancements. He highlighted the potential of his research in these areas, sparking enthusiasm among attendees.

Students enrolled in the Signals and Systems course also had the privilege of attending Dr. Fridon's lecture, titled from Maxwell's Equations to Sensing Technologies. This educational talk served as a bridge between theoretical concepts and practical implementations, inspiring future engineers, and scientists.

Continuing his contributions, he shared his expertise in grant proposal writing during a workshop organized by the Office of Research and Grants (ORG). Faculty members gained valuable insights into crafting successful proposals, drawing from Dr. Fridon's extensive experience in securing funding for research projects.

Equally significant was the enlightening research talk featuring Dr. Fridon as the keynote speaker. During the talk, he



Dr. Iyad Abu Doush and Dr. Fridon Shubitidze.

unveiled his groundbreaking research in developing advanced sensing technologies capable of detecting subsurface targets, spanning from unexploded ordnance to underground utilities.

Dr. Fridon's accolades, including the 2019 Medal of Honor from the President of Georgia, underscore his remarkable contributions to science and technology. His workshops not only equipped the AUK community with valuable skills but also reaffirmed the University's commitment to fostering research excellence.

## 130 students participate in the contest

# Brainobrain hosts 3rd National Abacus Competition in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Brainobrain hosted the 3rd National Abacus Competition "Brainobrainfest 2024" on 27th April 2024 at International British School, located in Fahaheel, Kuwait. This abacus competition is designed based on skills and mathematical ability assessment to bring out the talents within the kids. It was graced by Arul Subramaniam, Technical Director of Brainobrain International and Falah Al-Dihani, General Manager, Sridhan General

Trading & Contracting Company.

This year, approximately 130 students participated in a thrilling 3 minutes abacus competition and 25 students, who have already completed Brainobrain abacus program have attended Brainobrain graduation ceremony. The kids participating in Brainobrain competition solves sixty mathematical calculations within 3 minutes. The elder kids derive answers through mental arithmetic skills whereas the junior kids derive

the answers using the abacus tool. The winners were classified into three categories: Champions, Gold toppers and Silver toppers.

Brainobrain's Advanced Abacus Skill Development Programme for 5-14 years children is designed to tap the hidden potentials of our young children, thus empowering the future-leaders and young-genius in them.

Brainobrain Course mainly focuses on developing the Brain Skills,

Life Skills and NLP Skills through carefully crafted syllabus and modules. Brainobrain is empowering the young geniuses of 75+ countries through 975 franchise centres. It has transformed the lives of more than 400,000 children worldwide through its high-quality programmes.

To know more details about Brainobrain Abacus Classes:

Visit [www.brainobrainkuwait.com](http://www.brainobrainkuwait.com) | Contact +965 98740146 | Email: [brainobrainkuwait@gmail.com](mailto:brainobrainkuwait@gmail.com)



A photo from the event.

# Charlie Colin, founding member of band Train, dies at 58

NEW YORK, May 23, (AP) — **Charlie Colin**, bassist and founding member of the American pop-rock band Train, best known for their early-aughts hits like “Drops of Jupiter” and “Meet Virginia,” has died. He was 58.

Colin’s sister Carolyn Stephens confirmed her brother’s death to The Associated Press Wednesday. He died after slipping and falling in the shower while house-sitting for a friend in Brussels, Belgium, celebrity website TMZ.com reported.

Colin grew up in California and Virginia and attended Berklee College of Music in Boston.

He played in a group called Apostles after college with guitarist Jimmy Stafford and singer Rob Hotchkiss. The band eventually dissolved, and Colin moved to Singapore for a year to write jingles.

Eventually, Colin, Hotchkiss and Stafford relocated to San Francisco, where Train formed in the early ‘90s with singer Pat Monahan. Colin brought in drummer Scott Underwood to round out the group, according to an interview with Colin and Hotchkiss in Berklee’s alumni magazine.

As a founding member of Train, Colin played on the band’s first three records, 1998’s self-titled album, 2001’s “Drops of Jupiter” and 2003’s “My Private Nation.” The latter two releases peaked at No. 6 on the Billboard 200 chart.

“Meet Virginia,” from Train’s debut album broke the top 20 of the Billboard Hot 100, but it was their sophomore album, “Drops of Jupiter,” that confirmed the band’s success.

The eight-times platinum title track “Drops of Jupiter (Tell Me)” — which features the Rolling Stones’ session pianist Chuck Leavell and Leonard Cohen’s string orchestrator Paul Buckmaster and was written about the death of Monahan’s mother — hit No. 5 on the same chart. It also earned two Grammys, for best rock song and best instrumental arrangement accompanying vocalist(s).

Colin left Train in 2003 due to substance abuse. “Charlie is one incredible bass player, but he was in a lot of pain, and the way he

was dealing with it was very painful for everyone else around him,” Monahan told NBC San Diego.

In 2015, he reunited with Hotchkiss to start a new band called Painbirds, alongside Tom Luce.

In 2017, he formed another band, the Side Deal, with Sugar Ray’s Stan Frazier and the PawnShop Kings’ Joel and Scott Owen.

On Wednesday, a tribute to Colin appeared on the official Facebook and X social media pages for the band Train. “When I met Charlie Colin, front left, I fell in love with him. He was the sweetest guy and what a handsome chap. Let’s make a band that’s the only reasonable thing to do,” it reads.

“His unique bass playing a beautiful guitar work helped get folks to notice us in SF and beyond. I’ll always have a warm place for him in my heart. I always tried to pull him closer but he had a vision of his own. You’re a legend, Charlie. Go charm the pants off those angels.”

Prior to his death, Colin documented his time in Brussels, writing “Officially my favorite city,” in a March Instagram post.



Colin

Obituary

Variety



Kelly Rowland poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film ‘The Count of Monte Cristo’ at the 77th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, Wednesday, May 22. (AP)

Film

‘Anora,’ ‘The Substance’ illuminate complex realities

## Cannes films explore beauty’s paradox

CANNES, France, May 23, (AP) — “Beauty is like war,” says Gary Oldman, in character, in Paolo Sorrentino’s “Parthenope.” “It opens doors.”

“Parthenope,” in which Oldman plays the author John Cheever, premiered Tuesday in Cannes. It’s just one of the films at this year’s festival to consider beauty: its disruptive power, its cost and the sometimes dangerous portals it might pry ajar. After the competition lineup — the films vying for the Palme d’Or — got a lackluster start last week, Cannes was enlivened by a string of films both fleshy and carnal.

Foremost among them was Sean Baker’s “Anora,” in which Mikey Madison stars as a 23-year-old Russian American stripper in Brighton Beach-Coney Island section of Brooklyn. Baker, the director of “The Florida Project” and “Red Rocket,” has a keen eye for the way social stratification seeps into even the most intimate relationships of his protagonists.

“There’s a million stories to be told in the world of sex workers,” Baker told reporters Wednesday in Cannes. “It’s a livelihood, it’s a career, it’s a job and it’s one that should be respected. In my opinion, it should be decriminalized and not in any way regulated because it is a sex worker’s body and it is up to them to decide how they will use it in their livelihood.”

“Anora,” which will be released later this year by Neon, the indie distributor with an enviable Palme d’Or record, has been arguably the breakout of this year’s Cannes. It begins with writhing slow-motion bodies in the strip club where Anora (Madison) works. It’s there that “Ani” meets a young and goofy Russian client named Ivan (Mark Eidelstein) who quickly becomes enraptured and hires her to sleep with him for a week.

On a ketamine-induced Las Vegas escapade, they impulsively get married. Ivan is the son of a Russian oligarch so Ani thinks she’s hit the jackpot. But soon after they return, Ivan’s father’s loyal henchmen — themselves working-class underlings — arrive to secure an annulment. What follows is farcical and funny until it’s devastating, with a final act that expresses something tragic about transactional sex, and maybe even love.

It’s also a fierce and fiery tour-de-force performance by Madison, for whom Baker wrote the film, and who might just run away with Cannes’ best actress prize.

“What happened here?” asks the goon squad’s head honcho upon arriving at the helter-skelter scene after the frantic and barely successful entrapment of Ani.

“She happened,” one answers. Coralie Fargeat’s “The Substance,” perhaps the most debated film of Cannes, is a blunt and gory body-horror satire about beauty standards. It, too, is a showcase for its lead actress. Demi Moore plays a middle-aged Hollywood star, Elisabeth Sparkle, who senses her status slipping. To rekindle her youth, she begins taking a mysterious serum that spawns a younger version of herself, played by Margaret Qualley.

### Obsession

The rub? They have to trade places every seven days. Any overage — getting too hooked on youth — will dearly cost her. What evolves is an extended and increasingly gruesome metaphor for a male-dominated movie industry (Dennis Quaid plays a misogynistic, over-the-top executive) and for the self-inflicted obsession of trying to stay superficially young. It’s Botox as a monster movie.

“I don’t know any woman that doesn’t have an eating disorder or some other thing that they do that does violence to their bodies,” Fargeat told reporters in Cannes. “I think this violence is very extreme.”

“The Substance,” which was acquired for distribution by Mubi after its premiere, was divisive — hailed by some as an instant body-horror classic and derided by others for its hyper-stylized and ironically superficial characters. What’s more certain is that “The Substance” is a triumphant film for Moore, 61, who throws every bit of herself into the role, with seemingly none of her character’s self-consciousness.

With its megawatt red-carpet pageants, the Cannes Film Festival, itself, is not immune to shining a harshly objectifying glare over all those that enter its cauldron of celebrity. (Elisabeth could easily be imagined having the same pangs of insecurity

before coming here.) But it’s part of the festival’s grand contradictions: what it exalts inside its cinemas is often in direct opposition to all that’s transpiring just down the Croisette.

Sorrentino, the Italian director of “The Great Beauty” and “The Hand of ...,” has long been a regular in Cannes, and beauty has in many ways always been his primary subject. It’s more explicitly so in “Parthenope,” which stars newcomer Celeste Dalla Porta as the title character, a woman of such beauty that helicopters hover above to get a closer look.

“Are you aware of the disruption your beauty causes?” asks Oldman’s Cheever, a brief and melancholy acquaintance.

But while Sorrentino is clearly beguiled, too, his movie follows Parthenope on a more existential quest. She resists many of her suitors and instead devotes herself to academia and inner life. The definition of beauty in “Parthenope,” which A24 will release, continually broadens: to its Naples setting, to cinema, to something achingly soulful.

“During the journey I made in making this film, it was as if I had to get rid of a younger side of me, that carefree one,” said Porta. “and enter the world of grown-ups and focus on what I want to do in life.”

### Also:

**CANNES:** Accepting the Kering Women in Motion award, Universal chief **Donna Langley** noted she was not like past recipients, such as **Michelle Yeoh** and **Isabelle Huppert**, both of whom were among the attendees Sunday night. “In many ways, I’m the killer of art,” joked Langley. “I’m the suit.” The dinner, held beside a former monastery atop the old part of Cannes overlooking the whole city, is one of the swankier affairs of the festival. Part of the fun of this year’s gathering was that it reunited, as Cannes president **Iris Knobloch** noted, the two women behind “Barbenheimer”: Langley, who greenlit “Oppenheimer,” and “Barbie” director **Greta Gerwig**. The Cannes jury president fittingly wore pink for the occasion. At a Cannes where #MeToo is gaining new prominence, it was a moment to celebrate. Langley, the widely respected studio chief, noted roles like hers “have the power and the privilege to say ‘yes.’”

Features

ARABO TIMES

FRIDAY-SATURDAY, MAY 24-25, 2024

**ALBANY, N.Y.:** The New York state Senate on Wednesday passed a bill to explicitly allow evidence of prior sexual offenses in sex crimes cases, a move to change the legal standard **Harvey Weinstein** used to overturn his rape conviction.

The Senate approved the bill by a vote of 55-4. The proposal now moves to the state Assembly.

Lawmakers began pushing the measure weeks after the state’s high court tossed Weinstein’s conviction in a ruling that found a trial judge unfairly allowed women to testify about assault allegations that weren’t part of the criminal charges against Weinstein.

The state does allow such evidence in limited instances, such as to prove a motive or plan, but the rules are determined by existing legal precedent, rather than state law.

The bill would make clear that evidence of previous sexual offenses can be heard in sex crimes cases, even if those prior allegations are not directly part of the underlying criminal charges. The proposal would also give judges discretion to not allow such testimony if it would create “undue prejudice” against a defendant. (AP)

**LONDON:** It was nice while it lasted.

An environmentally themed mural by elusive street artist **Banksy** that appeared last week on a London street has been encased in plastic and surrounded by fencing after an apparent act of vandalism.

The work is on a four-story wall near a public housing project. Beside a real and severely pruned cherry tree, the artist stenciled a small figure holding a pressure hose. Swaths of green paint across the wall stand in for the tree’s absent leaves.

The work quickly attracted crowds including Banksy fans from around the world. Two days later, it was splashed with white paint.

The mural was then covered in transparent plastic by the building’s owner, and a sign appeared saying the area was under video surveillance.

On Wednesday, workers began to erect wooden boards around the site.

The local authority, Islington Council, said it was fencing off the site to protect the art and residents from the impact of visitors.

“We’ve had a lot of concerns from our residents about disruption from the numbers of visitors to the artwork, which is right outside their homes,” the council said in a statement. It said the fencing would include clear plastic panels “to protect the artwork and allow clear views.” (AP)

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.:** Nashville council members have rejected



Weinstein



Wallen

plans for a glowing sign to be erected at **Morgan Wallen’s** new bar along the city’s neon-lit strip of honky tonks, citing his use of a racial slur that caused controversy in 2021 and recent criminal charges accusing the country star of throwing a chair off a rooftop near two police officers.

The Nashville Metro Council voted 30-3 Tuesday evening

against the proposed sign at Morgan Wallen’s This Bar & Tennessee Kitchen, which is set to open this weekend. The sign would have hung over a public sidewalk, similar to those at many neighboring bars. Such a sign requires local government approval and usually isn’t a controversial process.

During debate, council mem-

bers called Wallen’s comments hateful and his actions harmful. They also said the performer has received multiple second chances.

“I don’t want to see a billboard up with the name of a person who is throwing chairs off of balconies and who is saying racial slurs,” said Councilmember Delishia Porterfield, who is Black. (AP)

## About 20 pct of adolescents have chronic disease

## Weight-loss medications use soars among US children

NEW YORK, May 23, (AP): At 17, Israel McKenzie was so burdened by obesity that he stopped going to high school in person and was embarrassed to speak to people at his restaurant job.

"I was in a really dark place," says McKenzie, whose weight had climbed to 335 pounds on his 6-foot-1 frame, despite repeated efforts to diet and exercise. "I had given up hope."

But last year, the weight-loss drug Wegovy helped him shed 110 pounds in nine months, making the rural Tennessee teen part of a surge of adolescents and young adults using diabetes and obesity medications known as GLP-1 receptor agonists, new research shows.

Even as millions of older adults clamor for drugs such as Ozempic and Wegovy, monthly use of the medications soared in people aged 12 to 25. That's according to the new analysis of dispensing records from nearly 94% of US retail pharmacies from 2020 to 2023.

The report, published in the journal JAMA on Wednesday, used the IQVIA prescription database to compile the first look at the national uptake of GLP-1 drugs among that age group. Nearly 31,000 children aged 12 to 17 and more than 162,000 people aged 18 to 25 used the medications in 2023 alone, said Dr. Joyce Lee, a University of Michigan pediatrician and diabetes expert who led the research.

## Diabetes

"What it's suggesting is that it's one of the tools in the toolbox and there are more providers prescribing this medication for the population," she said.

The report shows that the number of 12- to 25-year-olds using any GLP-1 drug - including older medications first approved to treat diabetes in 2005 and for weight loss in 2014 - climbed from about 8,700 a month in 2020 to more than 60,000 a month in 2023, a nearly 600% increase. The rise occurred even as prescriptions of other drugs among those patients fell by about 3%.

Those who received the drugs were just a fraction of young people who struggle with obesity, Lee noted. About 20% of US children and adolescents and about 42% of adults have the chronic disease, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In early 2023, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended that children and teens with obesity be evaluated early and treated aggressively, including with surgery and medication if warranted.

McKenzie, the Tennessee teen, said he began gaining weight five years ago, during puberty.

"I started turning to food for all of my problems," he said.

The extra weight made his asthma worse and put him in danger of developing diabetes, his doctor said. He tried to follow medical advice by cutting out sugary soda and snack foods and exercising more, but the efforts failed to make a difference.

"My old doctor told me there was nothing he could do," he said. "He told me it was my fault."

In early 2023, McKenzie connected with Dr. Joani Jack, a pediatric obesity specialist at Children's Hospital at Erlanger in Chattanooga, Tennessee, who regularly prescribes GLP-1 drugs for kids.

"I told him I've seen 10 other people just like you today and we have lots of tools and treatment options," Jack said. Those typically include intensive behavioral and nutrition interventions combined with medication, if necessary.

In McKenzie's case, Jack prescribed the weight-loss drug Wegovy, which in late 2022 was approved for use in US children over age 12. More than 6,000 kids in that age group received Wegovy in 2023, the new data show. More than 7,600 received Ozempic, which is approved to treat diabetes in adults, but can be used off-label in adolescents. Others received older GLP-1 drugs such as Saxenda and Trulicity.



Israel McKenzie stands for a portrait in Chattanooga, Tenn., on Tuesday, May 21. In 2023, the weight-loss drug Wegovy helped him shed 110 pounds in nine months, making him part of what new research shows is a sharp surge in the use of powerful medications to treat diabetes and obesity in adolescents and young adults. (AP)

## Bird flu in Australia

## US confirms second human bird flu case

NEW YORK, May 23, (Agencies): A Michigan dairy worker has been diagnosed with bird flu - the second human case associated with an outbreak in US dairy cows.

The male worker had been in contact with cows at a farm with infected animals. He experienced mild eye symptoms and has recovered, US and Michigan health officials said in announcing the case Wednesday.

A nasal swab from the person tested negative for the virus, but an eye swab tested Tuesday was positive for bird flu, "indicating an eye infection," US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention officials said.

The worker developed a "gritty feeling" in his eye earlier this month but it was a "very mild case," said Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, Michigan's chief medical executive. He was not treated with oseltamivir, a medication advised for treating bird flu, she said.

## Animals

The risk to the public remains low, but farmworkers exposed to infected animals are at higher risk, health officials said. They said those workers should be offered protective equipment, especially for their eyes.

Health officials say they do not know if the Michigan farmworker was wearing protective eyewear, but an investigation is continuing.

In late March, a farmworker in Texas was diagnosed in what officials called the first known instance globally of a person catching this version of bird flu from a mammal. That patient reported only eye inflammation and recovered.

Since 2020, a bird flu virus has been spreading among more animal species - including dogs, cats, skunks, bears and even seals and porpoises - in scores of countries.

The detection in US livestock earlier this year was an unexpected twist that sparked questions about food safety and whether it would start spreading among humans.

That hasn't happened, although there's been a steady increase of reported infections in cows. As of Wednesday, the virus had been confirmed in 51 dairy herds in nine states, according to the U.S. Agriculture Department. Fifteen of the herds were in Michigan.

The CDC's Dr. Nirav Shah said the case was "not unexpected" and it's possible more infections could be diagnosed in people who work around infected cows.

U.S. officials said they had tested 40 people since the first cow cases were discovered in late March. Michigan has tested 35 of them, Bagdasarian told The Associated Press in an interview.

Shah praised Michigan officials for actively monitoring farmworkers. He said health officials there have been sending daily text messages to workers exposed to infected cows asking about possible symptoms, and that the effort helped officials catch this infection. He said no other workers had reported symptoms.

That's encouraging news, said Michael Osterholm, a University of Minnesota epidemiologist who has studied bird flu for decades. There's no sign to date that the virus is causing flu-like illness or that it is spreading among people.

"If we had four or five people seriously ill with respiratory illness, we would be picking that up," he said.

## Also:

**SYDNEY:** The health authority in the Australian state of Victoria issued a public health alert on Wednesday, as the country recorded its first ever human case of avian influenza, also known as bird flu.

According to the Victorian Department of Health, this case of H5N1 avian influenza occurred in a child who returned from overseas in March this year.

After experiencing a severe symptom, the infected patient has made a full recovery.

The health department noted that there is no evidence of transmission across the state, with the chance of additional human cases remaining very low, given that the disease does not easily spread between people.

During the day, the state's agriculture authority reported that the avian influenza virus was found in poultry at an egg farm near Meredith, a rural township located around 80 km west of Melbourne. Testing has shown that it is not related to the human case.

McKenzie said he had no notable side effects from the medication, but Lee noted that some young people report nausea, vomiting or constipation, including symptoms so serious that they stop the drugs.

It's important to understand the surging use of these medications in young people, Lee said. The drugs are meant for continuing use, so "we really need to think about the long-term safety and effectiveness of these medications for this population," she said.

In addition, the drugs are expensive and often difficult to obtain, either because of supply problems or because they're not covered by insurance.



Normothermic machine: Cleveland Clinic are using new technology to help preserve livers before they are transplanted.

## Breakthrough in organ preservation

## New tech benefits liver transplants

CLEVELAND, May 23: When it comes to organ donations, every second counts, and that is why surgeons at global health system Cleveland Clinic are using new technology to help preserve livers before they are transplanted.

"Many have seen the ice coolers that we use to store the organ between the donor and the recipient. And when we get back to the transplant center, we take the organ off ice and do the transplant, but ice storage is not the healthiest way of sustaining an organ that's going to be transplanted," explained David Reich, MD, surgical director of the liver transplant program for Cleveland Clinic Florida. "And so, the new machine perfusion technologies that

we have keep the organ somewhat alive between the donor and the recipient."



Dr Reich

chance to better examine the liver and determine if it is healthy enough to be

transplanted, or they can further rejuvenate the liver," he adds.

Research shows perfusion has helped reduce the risk for complications as well, according to Dr. Reich.

"We have better results when we use perfusion. Patients go home from the hospital sooner, they have fewer complications, they have better safety in the operating room during the transplants, and then during their post-operative and longer-term journey," Dr. Reich noted.

Dr. Reich said research continues on the use of this new technology, but it is already showing a lot of promise and is starting to be used for other types of organ transplants.

## Turbulence costs aviation industry millions annually

## Climate change blamed for turbulence surge

LONDON, May 23, (Xinhua): Recent research found that severe clear-air turbulence in the North Atlantic has increased by 55 percent since 1979. Though they seldom cause casualty on commercial flights, industry experts suggest keeping seatbelts on throughout the flight can reduce injury risks when encountering violent currents.

Substantial evidence now shows that turbulence has been increasing because of climate change.

"Our latest future projections indicate a doubling or trebling of severe turbulence in the jet streams in the coming decades if the climate continues to change as we expect," Paul Williams, a professor of atmospheric science in the Department of Meteorology at the University of Reading, United Kingdom, told Xinhua in an interview on Tuesday. "I think it's probably going to be a fairly global phenomenon, this bumpier sky that we're going to see," Williams said.

Turbulence researcher Mark Prosser emphasized that the first thing to remember was that turbulence has always been a flying feature. "It's a natural feature of the atmosphere, and in particular, clear-air turbulence, which we've looked at in our research paper," he said.

"When we analyzed the last 40 years

of data across the world, we found that there had been a marked increase. So between 1982 and 2020, particularly in the middle latitudes of the Northern Hemisphere, and within that over the United States and over the North Atlantic in particular, there has been a big increase. The biggest increase was 55 percent over the North Atlantic," Prosser added.

Research shows turbulence costs the aviation industry hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars every year, including around 500 million dollars in the United States alone, Prosser said.

## Fatalities

Severe turbulence on the Singapore Airlines flight SQ321 from London to Singapore left one passenger dead and 30 others injured, forcing an emergency landing at Suvarnabhumi Airport in Thailand's capital Bangkok on Tuesday.

"Turbulence fatalities on commercial flights are fortunately very rare but have sadly increased by one today," Williams said.

The last clear air turbulence-related death on Cirium, an aviation analytics company's database, involved a United Airlines Boeing 747 in 1997, when more than 100 passengers were injured and one was killed.

"As far as I am aware, there has not

been a turbulence fatality on a commercial flight since 2009," said Williams.

"It's just a risk you take when you fly. Sometimes, you can encounter strong turbulence. The risk of dying is still extremely small, though. That's worth bearing in mind," said Prosser.

Commenting on what passengers can do to minimize the risks, Prosser recommends seatbelts.

"It's a good idea to keep your seatbelts loosely fastened throughout any journeys you take on planes, not merely when the plane is taking off or landing," Prosser said.

"Usually you'll get some turbulence, and the pilot might tell everyone to put their seatbelts on, and then people hopefully follow that advice. And then you might encounter some harder turbulence, and the pilot will try and reduce or increase their altitude to avoid this patch of sky," he said.

"There is a method to better spot turbulence before it's encountered. However, I'm not sure whether it's in widespread use. It involves attaching a device to the front of the plane that emits a laser beam, and this laser beam can give you a few seconds' notice if the air in front of it is highly turbulent. That's enough time to enable the pilot to say, everyone get their seatbelts on," he added.

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## The 15-man squad includes players born in India, Pakistan, NZ and S.Africa

# US, Canada squads at the T20 WC a melting pot of nationalities

WASHINGTON, May 23, (AP): The U.S. cricket team which will co-host the Twenty20 World Cup may be a fitting cross-section of its country as a roster of migrants, a melting pot of nationalities and cultures.

The 15-man squad includes players born in India, Pakistan, New Zealand and South Africa. Home-grown players include vice-captain Aaron Jones, who was born in Queens, and allrounder Steven Taylor, of Hialeah, Florida.

The team provides a snapshot of U.S. cricket at this formative stage, as Major League Cricket jostles for its place in a crowded sporting market. The squad includes foreign players drawn to America by the MLC and local players given the chance to play cricket at a professional level in the United States.

The home team's most recognized member is the former New Zealand allrounder Corey Anderson. The 33-year-old Anderson played 13 tests, 49 one-day internationals and 31 T20 internationals for New Zealand between 2013 and 2018 in a career lim-

ited by injuries.

He earned a place in cricket history for his 36-ball century in a one-day international between New Zealand and the West Indies on New Year's Day, 2014. Anderson also has played in T20 leagues in Australia, India, the Caribbean and United Arab Emirates before

### CRICKET

finding an MLC home at the San Francisco Unicorns.

Anderson made his first half-century for the U.S. in its T20 win over Canada last month.

Mumbai-born Harmeet Singh, who played for India at two Under-19 World Cups, was the star for the 19th-ranked U.S. team earlier this week in an upset win over Bangladesh. It the only the second win over a full ICC member for the U.S.

He scored 33 from the 13 deliveries he faced and shared an unbeaten, match-winning 62-run partnership with Anderson, who was unbeaten on 34.

"It means a lot to us to put on a show against Bangladesh. We are no walkers," Harmeet told ESPNcricinfo. "I think our potential is immense."

The U.S. meets Canada in the tournament opener on June 1 and then there'll be a step up for both teams in Group A, which also includes India and Pakistan, fierce cricket rivals with enormous support, and Ireland.

Among the other foreign-born players on the U.S. squad coached by ex-Australia batter Stuart Law is right-arm fast bowler Ali Khan, who moved with his parents from Pakistan to the United States when he was 18.

He first played for the U.S. team in 2016 and has also played in the Indian Premier League, Caribbean Premier League and Pakistan Premier League, in Global T20 Canada and the Afghanistan Premier League.

Captain Monank Patel, a wicket-keeper-batsman, was born in India and settled in New Jersey after moving permanently to the U.S. in 2016. He played at a junior level for Gujarat in India and played the first of his 47 one-day internationals and 23 T20 in-

ternationals for the U.S. in 2019.

Andries Gous, another wicket-keeper-batsman, was born in Welkom, South Africa, played for South Africa at under-19 level and played 60 first-class matches before relocating to the U.S. in 2021. He and Patel were the highest scorers for the U.S. in the recent five-match series against Canada.

Allrounder Milind Kumar is another India-born player who accumulated nine centuries in 60 first-class appearances for Delhi before making his home in the U.S.

The Canada team scheduled to meet the U.S. in the opening match is also a team drawn from many places and shaped by the evolution of a professional league at home.

Canada will be led by the veteran left-arm spinner Saad bin Zafar, who was born in Pakistan. He moved to Canada to study and was first named in the Canadian T20 team in 2008. Now 37, he has played 38 T20 internationals and once took two wickets without conceding a run in four overs in a T20 against Panama.



In this file photo, England's Jofra Archer participates in a training session ahead of their second T20 cricket match against Bangladesh in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on March 11, 2023. The return of fast bowler Jofra Archer has boosted England's chances of becoming the first team to win consecutive Twenty20 World Cups. (AP)

Jamaica-born batter Aaron Johnson, Pakistan-born left-arm fast bowler Kaleem Sana and Guyana-born right-arm quick Dillon Heyliger

reflect the international makeup of the team which is coached by former Sri Lanka international Pubudu Dassanayake.

# Rajasthan sends Bengaluru 'packing' in the IPL playoff



Rajasthan Royals' Yashasvi Jaiswal plays a shot during the Indian Premier League eliminator cricket match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Rajasthan Royals in Ahmedabad, India. (AP)

## Royals end Kohli's hopes

AHMEDABAD, India, May 23, (AP): Rajasthan Royals ended Virat Kohli's hopes of winning his first Indian Premier League title when they beat Royal Challengers Bengaluru by four wickets in the playoff.

Bengaluru batters couldn't convert good starts into a formidable total with Kohli contributing 33 off 24 balls in a sub-par score of 172-8 after Rajasthan won the toss and elected to field.

### CRICKET

Rajasthan stuttered briefly in dewy conditions when Mohammed Siraj (2-33) picked up the wickets of Riyan Parag (36) and Shimron Hetmyer (26) in the 18th over before they reached 174-6 with an over to spare. Rovman Powell (16 not out) struck Lockie Ferguson for two fours and followed it with a straight six to end Rajasthan's four-match losing streak.

The defeat ended Bengaluru's brilliant comeback into the world's richest domestic T20 league that saw them squeeze into the playoff on the back of six straight victories after they had lost seven of their first eight league games.

Rajasthan, meanwhile, had won eight of their first nine games before losing four in a row. They will take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in qualifier 2 on Friday with the winner advancing to Sunday's final against Kolkata Knight Riders.

Bengaluru missed early chances when Cameron Green couldn't grab a difficult one-handed catch of top-scorer Yashasvi Jaiswal (45) in the slip and Glenn Maxwell fluffed a dolly catch of Tom Kohler-Cadmore in the deep.

Rajasthan was cruising along at 81-1 before Bengaluru had a sniff when Jaiswal attempted an extravagant ramp shot against Green and gloved a catch to wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik. Captain Sanju Samson also threw away his wicket when he got stumped off Kam Sharma's wide delivery and Kohli made it 112-4 with his superb throw from the

NEW DELHI, May 23, (AP): In the ever-growing Twenty20 cricket landscape, India boasts the richest and most-watched league in the world. Yet all that investment and attention hasn't translated into international success for India's national team.

Rohit Sharma's India squad travels to the T20 World Cup in the United States and Caribbean in search of a second title to end a long drought.

Undoubtedly, the Indian Premier League is flush with cash and talent, attracting the best cricketers from across the world.

Since the advent of IPL, though, India hasn't lifted the World Cup trophy. After winning the inaugural T20 World Cup in South Africa in 2007, India has only reached one more final - losing to Sri Lanka in 2014.

The title drought crosses formats, too. India last won an International Cricket Council title in 2013 - the Champions Trophy in England. It last lifted the Cricket World Cup in the 50-

over format in 2011.

Last year was an exceptional one in that sense - India lost the World Test Championship final to Australia in England and, a few months later, also lost the 50-over World Cup final to

### CRICKET

Australia, this time on home soil.

That caused major anguish in a cricket-mad country of 1.4 billion, considering India was on a 10-0 winning streak and a hot favorite going into the final.

Seven months later, Sharma and star batter Virat Kohli are leading the campaign in what in all probability will be their last T20 tournament in India's blue.

Sharma has been a part of every Indian squad at the T20 World Cup. Kohli made his debut in the 2012 edition, making this his sixth attempt at the title.

Kohli has scored 1,141 runs at an average of 81.50 and strike-rate

131.30 in his 27 games at the tournament. Sharma has scored 963 runs in 39 games at a strike rate of 127.88.

Both players missed all of India's T20 internationals between the 2022 semifinal loss in Australia and January of this year, leading to some speculation they'd miss out on the 2024 World Cup starting June 1.

That was dispelled by both BCCI secretary Jay Shah and chief selector Ajit Agarkar. Now, there will be big focus on their contributions - in terms of runs and strike-rate.

Sharma only managed 417 runs for Mumbai Indians in the club's unsuccessful 2024 IPL campaign. Kohli, meanwhile, topped the run charts for Royal Challengers Bengaluru with 741 runs in 15 matches, averaging 61.75. But his strike-rate earlier in the season was criticized by some TV broadcast analysts.

In a news conference to confirm the India squad, Agarkar brushed off any concerns regarding Kohli's strike-rate.

deep to run-out Dhruv Jurel.

Parag and Hetmyer then raised 45-run stand but Siraj's twin strike gave

Bengaluru a glimmer hope before Powell's three decisive blows against Ferguson ended Bengaluru's dream



Rajasthan Royals' Yuzvendra Chahal bowls a delivery during the Indian Premier League eliminator cricket match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Rajasthan Royals in Ahmedabad, India. (AP)

## Chinese doping case

### Lawmakers demand action and answers from concerned leaders

WASHINGTON, May 23, (AP): A bipartisan group of U.S. senators sent a letter Wednesday to the leader of the World Anti-Doping Agency asking for answers about the case in which 23 Chinese swimmers were cleared to compete at the Tokyo Olympics despite positive tests for a banned drug.

That letter came a day after a bipartisan group from the House sent a similar request to IOC President Thomas Bach and a letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland and FBI Director Christopher Wray asking for a briefing on federal investigators' knowledge of the case.

"It is not just this one incident that causes concern for many athletes, anti-doping agencies, and fans across the world, but it is the fact that WADA has long shown questionable ethical behavior," said the letter sent from Sens. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., John Hickenlooper, D-Colo., and Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn.

Last month, German broadcaster ARD and the New York Times reported that Chinese authorities determined the swimmers who had tested positive for a banned heart medication would not be punished because they had accidentally ingested the banned heart medication found in a hotel kitchen.

The story triggered a harsh backlash from WADA critics who said the agency did not follow its own rules when it decided to accept China's explanation for the positives instead of further pursuing the case. WADA has argued it handled the case appropriately and that, given the circumstances, it would have had virtually no chance of winning the case on appeal.

Three of the swimmers who were cleared won gold medals less than a

year later in Tokyo.

"This scandal raises serious legal, ethical, and competitive concerns and may constitute a broader state-sponsored strategy by the People's Republic of China (PRC) to unfairly compete at the Olympic Games," Reps. John Moolenaar, R-Mich., and Raja Krishnamoorthi, D-Ill., wrote to Wray and Garland.

Moolenaar is chair and Krishnamoorthi is ranking member on the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party.

They and the senators also focused on reporting by The Associated Press that pointed out China had donated nearly \$2 million above its required annual dues to WADA programs in the two years before this case erupted. The lawmakers questioned whether WADA's sponsorship deal with a Chinese-based sports products company was a conflict of interest.

"The global anti-doping system - a bedrock of the international sports community - is built upon trust and accountability," the senators wrote in their letter to WADA President Witold Banka. "When WADA loses the international community's trust, it can no longer effectively do its job."

WADA appointed a Swiss prosecutor to conduct an investigation into the case and the agency's handling of it. Critics have said the terms of that investigation aren't broad enough and have asked for a wider probe, along with full disclosure of notes involved in the case file.

"While the recent appointment of a special prosecutor to investigate these claims is a step in the right direction, that appointment is not enough - real accountability from an independent auditor is imperative," the senators wrote.

## Seattle holds off Clark & Fever

SEATTLE, May 23, (AP): The decisive losses Caitlin Clark and the Indiana Fever endured to start the WNBA season were easier to handle than the last two setbacks that were decided by a total of six points.

Jewell Loyd scored 21 of her 32 points in the first half, Sami Whitcomb scored all 10 of her points in the fourth quarter, and the Seattle Storm held off Clark and the Fever 85-83 on Wednesday night, two days after Indiana's 88-84 loss to the Connecticut Sun.

"These two definitely hurt the most. We're what, six points away from being 2-3 instead of 0-5," Clark said. "It's just that close and there's so many instances going back and watching the film and little things you can easily fix and clean up that would go a really long way."

Loyd, last year's leading scorer in the WNBA, shook off a sluggish start to the season to post the 22nd 30-point game of her career. Loyd and Whitcomb combined for 18 of Seattle's 27 points in the fourth quarter, and the Storm (2-3) needed all those points to hold off a late rally and keep the Fever (0-5) winless.

"I just kind of cleared my head. I was in a good headspace coming into today's game. ... I just kind of reset and changed my routine a little bit and then caught a little rhythm," Loyd said.

Clark finished with a team-high 21 points two days after rolling her left ankle in the home loss to Connecticut. She struggled early against Seattle, but sparked a third-quarter rally and helped give the Fever a 60-58 lead going into the fourth.

While most of the sellout crowd of 18,343 - the largest for a game in Seattle - wore the green and gold of the Storm, there was a healthy smattering of Indiana and Iowa No. 22 jerseys and shirts for Clark.

The third quarter was a stretch where she looked like the Clark everyone came to know collegiately at Iowa when she was the national player of the year.

"It's still a process of learning

when to be assertive," Clark said. "Sometimes it's hard when you start off a little bit cold."

Seattle led by as many as seven early in the fourth quarter. Clark's three free throws with 1:50 left pulled the Fever within 79-77, but Seattle got baskets from Jordan Horston and Ezi Magbebor on consecutive possessions.

The final minute was filled with debated calls and multiple officials' reviews. The Fever pulled within 84-83 after two free throws by Clark. Seattle committed a turnover with 11 seconds left, giving Indiana a chance to win.

### BASKETBALL

Clark stumbled after the inbound pass and a jump ball with 4.7 seconds left between Aliyah Boston and Horston was tipped to Nneka Ogumike, who hit one of two free throws. Indiana was out of timeouts and could only get Boston's desperation attempt at the buzzer that was off line.

Ogumike added 22 points after missing the past two games with an ankle injury.

"Today was one of those days where I knew I had to push through some things," Ogumike said. "I just pride myself on being efficient in every way."

Clark put on a show the last time she was in the building during the 2023 NCAA Women's Tournament when she helped lead Iowa to the Final Four, including a triple-double in the regional final.

On Wednesday, Clark missed her first four shots before scoring on a baseline drive early in the second quarter. Her first 3-pointer didn't come until midway through the third quarter and she finished 6 of 16 shooting, including 2 for 8 from behind the arc.

Seattle rookie Nika Muhl made her debut for Seattle after missing the first four games of the season due to visa issues. Muhl checked in late in the third quarter to a rousing ovation, only to see Clark knock down a 3 over her.

## Al-Arabi play Al-Fahaheel

League title on the line as Kuwait Club meet Al-Qadisiya

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff  
KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Kuwait Club is on track to clinch the Zain Premier League title if it secures a win over Al-Qadisiya at Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium. This match is part of the ninth round of the Cham-

### SOCCER

ampionship League. Simultaneously, Al-Fahaheel will host Al-Arabi, and Al-Salmiya will face Al-Nasr.

Al-Abyad, leading the standings with 63 points, needs a victory today to secure the league championship for the nineteenth time in its history, regardless of the outcome of its final match against Al-Arabi, who are second with 58 points. If Kuwait Club draws or loses and Al-Arabi wins, the title decision will be postponed until their decisive match next Monday.

Kuwait Club aims to continue its dominance over Al-Qadisiya, particularly this season, having already defeated it three times—once in the Super Cup (1-0) and twice in the league (1-0 and 2-0), with one match ending in a 1-1 draw.

Kuwait Club's Tunisian coach, Nabil Maaloul, understands that despite his team's strong record against Al-Qadisiya, it faces an opponent



A file photo of Kuwait Club and Al-Qadisiya players in action.

buoyed by its recent Amir's Cup win against Al-Salmiya. Maaloul aims to secure a victory and complete its championship journey without risking a decisive match against Al-Arabi next Monday.

On the other hand, Al-Qadisiya coach Muhammad Al-Mashaan hopes to capitalize on his team's high morale and break its losing streak against Kuwait Club. Al-Qadisiya is out of the title race since the sixth round, sitting in third place with 51 points.

In the second match, Al-Arabi

will be focusing on its game against Al-Fahaheel while keeping an eye on the Al-Qadisiya vs Kuwait Club match, hoping its traditional rival can halt the leader. Al-Arabi is expected to achieve another victory over Al-Fahaheel (31 points), having beaten them three times this season (twice 2-1 and once 2-0).

In the third match, Al-Salmiya (32 points) aims to hold onto fourth place, while Al-Nasr, sixth in the standings with 25 points, seeks a final victory in the competition after a series of defeats in recent rounds.

## Health screening program for Special Olympics members

KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Special Olympics Kuwait recently organized the second health examination program for athletes with mental disabilities.

The program involved conducting medical examinations for approximately 150 athletes from schools, institutions, and associations dedicated to supporting people with mental disabilities. This included athletes from the Ambition Club. The event was attended by representatives from Special Olympics Middle East and North Africa, along with numerous volunteers, including doctors and specialists from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Health.

Hanaa Al-Zawawi, Chairman of the Kuwaiti Special Olympics Board of Directors, emphasized the importance of these medical examinations for athletes with mental disabilities. She noted that many of these athletes are unable to express their pain, which can lead to future setbacks both athletically and health-wise.

Al-Zawawi explained that the health examination program comprises seven different clinics: oral and dental health, eye health, hearing health, mental health, prevention and nutrition, physical therapy, and foot health.

She also highlighted that the health examination program is a key component of the Special Olympics health initiative, which includes other elements such as the Healthy



The health screening program in progress.

Families Forum, Healthy Communities, and Enhancing Physical Fitness.

Rehab Boursli, the National Director of the Kuwaiti Special Olympics, added that the doctors and specialists involved in examining and following up with athletes with mental disabilities are accredited by

the regional and international Special Olympics. This accreditation ensures they are well-versed in the health issues facing these athletes, with the aim of preparing them for participation in competitions and tournaments. The health screening program in progress.

## Gulf Cup set to take place in Kuwait from Dec 21: AGFF

KUWAIT CITY, May 23, (KUNA): The 26th Gulf Cup football tournament is set to take place in Kuwait from December 21, 2024, to January 1, 2025, according to a recent announcement from a regional football authority.

The Arab Gulf Football Federation, in a statement released after a meeting of its executive council at its headquarters in Doha, disclosed this decision. Among the topics discussed during the meeting was the proposal to organize an exhibition showcasing memorabilia from past tournaments alongside the main event. Additionally, plans for

the Gulf Clubs championship, slated for September 24 to April 25, 2025, were confirmed, with matches to be conducted on a home-and-away basis.

The council also reached an agreement to host the U-23 Gulf tournament in Kuwait this October. Furthermore, discussions encompassed arrangements for a Gulf futsal tournament, a women's football championship, and various other competitions. The Arab Gulf Football Federation, comprising eight member states, was established in May 2016.

# Doncic leads strong close by Mavs for win over Wolves in West finals Game 1



Dallas Mavericks guard Kyrie Irving and Minnesota Timberwolves guard Anthony Edwards (5) reach for rebound during the first half of Game 1 of the NBA basketball Western Conference finals in Minneapolis. (AP)

Edwards stifled for 19 points

MINNEAPOLIS, May 23, (AP): Luka Doncic led a strong finish for the Dallas Mavericks, swishing crucial shots down the stretch, drawing a couple of fouls and even playing strong defense.

The Mavericks might not be the favorites in yet another series, but they stole home-court advantage from the Minnesota Timberwolves with this promising start.

Doncic had 15 of his 33 points in the fourth quarter and Kyrie Irving scored 24 of his 30 in the first half to lift the Mavericks to a 108-105 victory over the Timberwolves in Game 1 of the Western Conference finals on Wednesday night.

Dallas had a 62-38 advantage in points in the paint to offset a 6-for-25 shooting performance from deep.

"We made important ones," said Doncic, who scored seven straight points over 63 seconds early in the fourth quarter to fuel a 13-0 run by the Mavericks for a 97-89 lead.

The Mavericks trailed 102-98 after a 3-pointer by Anthony Edwards with 3:37 left, before an 8-0 run the Wolves

### BASKETBALL

didn't stop until a tip-in with 10.5 seconds to go. For the first time in six tries under coach Jason Kidd, the Mavericks won the first game of a playoff series.

Jaden McDaniels had his third straight 20-plus-point game with 24 points for the Wolves, but Edwards—who earned his first All-NBA selection prior to the game, on the second team—was stifled for 19 points in a team effort from the Mavericks. Karl-Anthony Towns needed a late burst to get to 16 points and finished 6 for 20 from the floor.

The star power in this series is strong, and for the first night at least the Mavericks got what they needed from their leading duo while the Wolves largely struggled to run the offense around theirs.

"Terrible offense down the stretch: bad shots, turnovers, no composure," Wolves coach Chris Finch said. "We've

## Resurgent Lyon loom in French Cup final

Departing Mbappé chases a last trophy with PSG

PARIS, May 23, (AP): This time, it's really the end.

After missing Paris Saint-Germain's last two league games, Kylian Mbappé should start in the French Cup final against Lyon on Saturday for his final match in a PSG shirt.

The forward, who is widely expected to join Real Madrid, was given some free time by coach Luis Enrique last weekend and was spotted enjoying himself at the Cannes film festival while PSG wrapped up a 12th victorious league campaign in less glamorous settings.

Mbappé told PSG in February he will leave at the end of the season - Saturday night - and confirmed it this month. Over the last three months, Enrique has tried to make PSG less reliant on his star striker, arguing that he needed to start thinking about the future knowing that Mbappé would not be around next season.

Although Enrique has yet to decide on his starting XI for Saturday's final at Lille's Stade Pierre-Mauroy, snubbing Mbappé, or even leaving him on the bench, would equate to a slap in his face.

Mbappé is the club's all-time top scorer with 256 and has won six Ligue 1 titles and three French Cups with PSG. Although he didn't lead the club to a Champions League trophy in his seven seasons in Paris, he largely contributed to helping

PSG reach a respected status on the continent.

Leaving him on the sidelines on the night he could cap his PSG journey with yet another title seems highly unlikely, although Enrique has warned his players he will select only those who deserve it. "We'll see who's ready, who's not ready (to play), who wants to, who doesn't want to," Enrique said.

Like Mbappé, Ousmane Dembélé did not play against Nice

### SOCCER

and Metz in the closing league rounds but should be back to face a resurgent Lyon side led by former Arsenal striker Alexandre Lacazette.

Lyon has been in impressive form in recent months and Enrique can't afford to take the five-time Cup champion lightly.

Since Pierre Sage was appointed coach last November when Lyon was at the bottom of the league, the team has been transformed into a winning machine. After sealing European soccer next season, Lyon can cap a remarkable second half of the season with its first silverware since 2012.

got to be better in clutch moments."

Towns came to life with a long jumper, a lob to Rudy Gobert for a slam and a 3-pointer on a 2-minute burst to give the Wolves the lead back with 4:39 to go on the way to a 10-0 run that Doncic ended

with a 3-pointer. P.J. Washington, who had 13 points and seven rebounds, hit from deep to put the Mavericks back in front with 1:56 to go.

Towns thought he tied the game with a putback dunk on the next possession,

but that was waved off for basket interference.

Minnesota hosts Game 2 on Friday night. Edwards, who went scoreless in the third quarter, added 11 rebounds and eight assists.

"He's an amazing player. We have to put multiple bodies on him," Doncic said. "If he's going 1-on-1, it's kind of tough to stop him."

Naz Reid had 15 points and Kyle Anderson added 11 points off the bench for the Wolves, who had two days off after dethroning defending champion Denver with a Game 7 comeback from a 20-point deficit to win the second-round series.

The transition was sharp from the Nuggets and NBA MVP Nikola Jokic's deliberate and powerful style to the pick-and-roll-heavy Mavericks, who frequently lost their opponents off screens for wide-open dunks.

They moved with a purpose that kept the Wolves from consistently setting their half-court defense around the NBA Defensive Player of the Year Gobert at the rim.



Dallas Mavericks guard Jaden Hardy (1) drives against Minnesota Timberwolves guard Nickeil Alexander-Walker (9) during Game 1 of the NBA basketball Western Conference finals in Minneapolis. (AP)

## Al-Qadisiya suffer first loss in the Handball Premier League

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

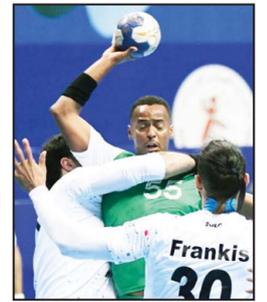
KUWAIT CITY, May 23: Al-Qadisiya suffered its first loss in the Premier Handball League, falling to Kazma with a score of 26-31 in the second round of the league. This round also saw Al-Arabi's first defeat, losing to Kuwait Club with a score of 22-32, while Al-Salmiya experienced

### HANDBALL

its second loss in the Premier League, this time to Burgan with a score of 24-38.

With the results of the second round of the Premier Handball League, the competition heats up, entering a critical phase where losing points in the first leg may be irreparable in the return leg. All matches are crucial among the six participating teams.

After the second round, Kuwait Club leads with 28 points, followed by Al-Qadisiya with 25 points. Kazma is close behind with 24 points, Al-Salmiya



Players challenge for the ball.

with 21 points, Al-Arabi with 19 points, and Burgan with 18 points.

The tight competition among the teams signals intense upcoming rounds. Three matches are scheduled for today in the third round: Burgan will face Al-Arabi at 4:30 pm, followed by a clash between Al-Salmiya and Al-Qadisiya at 6:00 pm. The day concludes with a highly anticipated match between Kuwait Club and Kazma at 7:30 pm.

## Best of the Rest

**Garcia leaves Bilbao:** Athletic Bilbao have confirmed that midfielder Dani Garcia will leave the club after six years in which he made 194 appearances.

The club highlight that Garcia has made at least 30 first team appearances in every one of his seasons at the club, except the last two, with 29 games in the 2022-2023 campaign and 18 in the current season in which he helped them win the Copa del Rey after 40 years.

The veteran joins club captain Iker

Muniain and forward Raul Garcia in leaving Athletic at the end of the campaign, with Raul Garcia confirming his retirement, while Muniain is likely to end his career playing in Mexico.

Garcia has been linked to a move to Valencia for next season, or to Olympiakos, with the Greek side coached by Jose Luis Mendilibar, who was Garcia's coach at Eibar before he joined Athletic. (Xinhua)

**Lewandowski willing to stay:** FC Barcelona striker Robert Lewandowski ensured that he won't leave the club this summer as he "wants to win more titles with the team." According to some Spanish media, Barcelona is considering selling the forward, which would allow the club to bring in other players. An important factor is the Pole's high salary, which media reports suggest amounts to approximately 30 million euros per year.

"For me it's very clear that I will play for Barca next season. I want to win many cups here. I think not only about myself, but

Lopetegui confirmed as coach of West Ham

LONDON, May 23, (Xinhua): West Ham United have confirmed former Spain national team coach Julen Lopetegui as their new first-team coach with a two-year contract.

Lopetegui, who has also coached Real Madrid, Sevilla and Wolverhampton Wanderers, replaces David Moyes, whose departure from the London Stadium was announced by the club last week after his contract ended after leading West Ham to the 2023 Conference League and ninth place in the Premier League this campaign.

"I think the last few years have been very good years to have this base, of course, but my ambition as a coach is always to be better and better," said Lopetegui on his arrival.

The 57-year-old said he was "100 percent" committed to West Ham and that he had turned down offers from other clubs.

"I am very happy that West Ham chose me because I chose West Ham too, so we are really happy about this," he said, insisting he would be ambitious in East London and aimed to make a "big noise." "That's why we came here, and we are excited by this challenge. Of course, we are going to do our best to help the club and the team to achieve the best level and to achieve our aims," commented the Spaniard.

also about my teammates. I'd like to give many more things to the team and the club," Lewandowski said in an interview with Spanish media Mundo Deportivo on Thursday.

The 36-year-old doesn't think about retiring as he believes he is still able to compete at the highest level. (Xinhua)



Leverkusen's Jeremie Frimpong (right), fights for the ball with Atalanta's goalkeeper Juan Musso during the Europa League final soccer match between Atalanta and Bayer Leverkusen at the Aviva Stadium in Dublin, Ireland. (AP)

# Sports

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## Lookman shines as Atalanta win Europa League title

Leverkusen's impossible unbeaten dream ends

**DUBLIN, May 23, (AP): Spoiler alert. Atalanta winger Ademola Lookman was unstoppable and Bayer Leverkusen's impossible dream of completing an entire season unbeaten with a hat trick of titles proved to be just that.**

Instead, Lookman was the hat trick hero in Atalanta's 3-0 win over Leverkusen in the Europa League final on Wednesday.

It was a beating few saw coming for the new German champion whose European record unbeaten run was stopped at 51 games by a team that had won 3-0 in Liverpool in the quarterfinals.

Lookman, the London-born Nigeria international, was ruthless punishing big errors by Leverkusen players to score twice in the first 26 minutes of a game where the favorites never looked

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at ease. He capped his solo show with an arrowing shot in the 75th.

"It's one of the best nights of my life," said the 26-year-old Lookman, who was loaned out and then sold by both Everton and Leipzig before finding the club that fully appreciated him. "I've always had the confidence."

In any normal season, or a typical European final, Atalanta and its veteran coach Gian Piero Gasperini would be the feel-good soccer story.

What is not to love for neutral fans in the big-money Super League era? A well-run club from a small provincial city playing attractive soccer on a modest budget for a loyal coach to lift its first top-level trophy for 61 years.

Instead, it fell to Atalanta to play the bad guy and stop Leverkusen's shot at European soccer immortality.

"There is still scope for meritocracy and ideas and not cold hard numbers and Super Leagues," said Gasperini, noting - on the day his former club Inter Milan had a forced change of owner due to financial turmoil - that Atalanta succeeded in turning a profit.

Leverkusen coach Xabi Alonso must now lift his players for the German Cup final on Saturday. They will start as heavy favorite to beat second-tier Kaiserslautern in the Olympic Stadium, Berlin.

As the minutes ticked down in Dublin, he finally watched his team lose standing still and alone in front of the team dugout. He alternated between pushing his hands deep in the pockets of his slim-fit black jeans, then folding his arms.

A few meters away, a sprightly 66-year-old Gasperini - his black rain jacket zipped high against the evening chill - was dancing with his players and staff in anticipation of the final whistle.

Alonso's big selection call Wednesday was to prefer Exequiel Palacios in midfield, over Robert Andrich, but the 2022 World Cup winner with Argentina was at fault for the opening goal.

Palacios, defending the far post, was utterly unaware of Lookman behind him when a ball across the goalmouth from Davide Zappacosta eluded every-



Atalanta's players celebrate with the trophy after winning the Europa League final soccer match between Atalanta and Bayer Leverkusen at the Aviva Stadium in Dublin, Ireland. (AP)

one. Lookman darted in on Palacios' blind side to score with a rising shot.

It was 2-0 in the 26th when Leverkusen yet again gave away the ball in the heart of its own half. Amine Adli's aimless header back toward his own defense bounced to Lookman.

The former Everton player eluded Granit Xhaka's tackle and curled his right-footed shot into the corner of the net beyond goalkeeper Matej Kovar diving to his left.

It was the fourth time Leverkusen had trailed 2-0 in a Europa League knockout round game since March but its unbeaten run had never seemed more at risk. The season-long flurry of late and stoppage-time goals eluded Leverkusen this time.

Even before the Atalanta goals, fans from Bergamo - outnumbered about 12,000 to 9,000 by Leverkusen's in the 47,135 crowd - mostly outsang their German counterparts on an overcast and breezy evening in the Irish capital. Among them was the mayor of Bergamo, Giorgio Gori, choosing to sit with fans instead of the VIPs.

The players responded with physical commitment from the opening minutes, harassing Leverkusen out of its typically elegant style with tight marking.

Leverkusen repeatedly gifted Atalanta the ball in its own half and created little. When scoring chances did come, Alex Grimaldo lobbed the ball weakly into the arms of goalkeeper Juan Musso who had advanced off his line, and Jeremie Frimpong's volleyed shot went high over the goal.

## Al-Qadisiya clinch Al-Ittihad Basketball Championship title

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, May 23:** In the 58th edition of the Al-Ittihad Basketball Championship, Al-Qadisiya emerged victorious, defeating Kazma 97-92 in a thrilling final match held at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Indoor Sports Complex.

Kuwait Club secured third place by defeating Al-Qurain with a score of 111-94. This marked a significant shift as Kuwait Club relinquished the championship throne, which it had held for the past seven editions.

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Al-Qadisiya Club now boasts the most championship wins with 26 titles, followed by Kuwait Club with 16 titles, Al-Arabi Club with nine, and Kazma Club with three. Additionally, Al-Jahra, Al-Sahel, and Al-Nasr have each clinched the championship once.

The final match was graced by the presence of the Basketball Association's Board of Directors, including Dhari Burgess, Sheikh Fahad Talal Al-Fahad, and Hassan Abu Al-Has-



Al-Qadisiya players celebrate the championship trophy with a fan.

san. Burgess congratulated Al-Qadisiya Club on its victory, highlighting the significance of their return to the podium after a six-year hiatus.

Sheikh Fahad Talal Al-Fahad attributed Al-Qadisiya's success to the

meticulous work of the club's administrative and technical bodies, as well as the dedication of the players. He expressed gratitude to the fans for their unwavering support, acknowledging the formidable challenge

posed by Kazma. Looking ahead, Al-Fahd emphasized Al-Qadisiya's aspirations for future Asian and Arab competitions, anticipating further growth and development for the team.

## China claim 6 gold medals, 2 Asian records on Day 7 at Para Athletics World Championships

**KOBE, Japan, May 23, (Xinhua):** Chinese athletes swept six gold medals at the Para Athletics World Championships here on Thursday, breaking two Asian records.

On the tracks at the Universiade Memorial Stadium, China's para runners celebrated triple one-two victories.

The men's 100m finals saw Deng Peicheng of T36 class clinch gold by clocking 11.95 seconds, with his teammate Yang Yifei finishing the second. In the T11 category of men's 100m finals, Di Dongdong won with 11.28 seconds while Ye Tao got the silver.

In the women's 400m T53 final, Chinese wheelchair racer Zhou Hongzhan won the gold with a championship-record time of 54.57s, followed by her teammate Gao Fang who finished by 55.78s.

Chinese athletes also bagged the golds from women's 400m T54, women's shot put F64 and women's shot put F35.

"Paris 2024 would be my seventh Paralympic Games and I might continue competing if conditions allow," said women's shot put F64 champion Yao Juan.

Chinese female athletes refreshed two Asian records during the day, as Wu Qing won the silver in the shot put F33 final with a throw of 7.54m, while Shi Yiting finished second in the 200m T36 final by clocking 28.06s.

By Thursday, which is the seventh competition day of the nine-day tournament, China continued to top the

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medal tally with 24 golds, 22 silvers, and 18 bronzes.

The World Championships, held in



China's Jin Hua (C), Dai Yunqiang (L) and Luo Xingchuan pose for photos after the Men's 1500m T54 Final at the Para Athletics World Championships held in Kobe, Japan. (Xinhua)

## Fagioli in Italy's provisional Euro 2024 squad

**MILAN, May 23, (AP):** Nicolò Fagioli has been included in Italy's provisional squad for the European Championship despite having only just returned from a seven-month ban for betting violations.

Luciano Spalletti named 30 men on Thursday for Italy's defense of its title.

Fagioli was suspended in October and also had to undergo treatment for a gambling addiction. The Juventus midfielder made his return as a substitute on Monday in a 3-3 draw against Bologna.

Fagioli played in six of Juventus'



In this file photo, Juventus' Nicolò Fagioli celebrates after scoring the team's second goal, during the Serie A soccer match between Juventus and Inter at Juventus Stadium, Turin, Italy. (AP)

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eight Serie A matches before the ban and is considered one of Italy's top young midfielders.

He made one appearance for Italy, in November 2022 as a late substitute in a win over Albania.

However, there was no space for Fagioli's Juventus teammate Manuel Locatelli, one of the Euro 2020 champions.

Riccardo Calafiori has been summoned by Italy for the first time after Bologna's impressive season. The defender helped Bologna qualify for the Champions League for the first time in its history.

Torino defender Raoul Bellanova and Hellas Verona midfielder Michael Folorunso have also been included after being called up for the first time for the friendlies in March.

### Italy:

**Goalkeepers:** Gianluigi Donnarumma (Paris Saint-Germain), Alex Meret (Napoli), Ivan Provedel (Lazio), Guglielmo Vicario (Tottenham).

**Defenders:** Francesco Acerbi (Inter Milan), Alessandro Bastoni (Inter Milan), Raoul Bellanova (Torino), Alessandro Buongiorno (Torino), Riccardo Calafiori (Bologna), Andrea Cambiaso (Juventus), Matteo Darmian (Inter Milan), Gio-

vanni Di Lorenzo (Napoli), Federico Dimarco (Inter Milan), Gianluca Mancini (Roma), Giorgio Scalvini (Atalanta).

**Midfielders:** Nicolò Barella (Inter Milan), Bryan Cristante (Roma), Nicolò Fagioli (Juventus), Michael Folorunso (Hellas Verona), Davide Frattesi (Inter Milan), Jorginho (Arsenal), Lorenzo Pellegrini (Roma), Samuele Ricci (Torino).

**Forwards:** Federico Chiesa (Juventus), Stephan El Shaarawy (Roma), Riccardo Orsolini (Bologna), Giacomo Raspadori (Napoli), Mateo Retegui (Genoa), Gianluca Scamacca (Atalanta), Mattia Zaccagni (Lazio).