



Soccer
Pages 14-16



Ramadan Kareem
Diwan Al-Naki
Mohammed Al-Naki
The family diwaniya
Will be receiving guests on Sunday, 9th March 2025
From 7pm
At Mansouriyah Area, Block No.1,
Jassim Al Wazzan Street, across Al Othman Mosque



Opinion

Money is the adornment of life, and it is truly life when used for good

Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

FOR many years, the diwaniya in Kuwait has been a special tradition for everyone. During the month of Ramadan, it becomes even more special, with beloved customs that set it apart. People eagerly visit diwanis to check in on one another, socialize, and exchange opinions.

Diwanis are often seen as small "parliaments" that play a significant social and political role. In the past, the majority of visitors to the diwanis were elderly, and young people rarely attended.

This year, the diwanis were distinguished by a notable presence of young people from the ruling family, many of whom are highly cultured, well-educated, and have a strong presence. Their participation makes it a joy to engage in conversations with them and gain insights into their perspectives. Most of them opened their diwanis for the first time this year, which showcased their interest in connecting with all segments of society. Communication with the people is the basis for understanding their issues and concerns.

It is important for individuals who are nominated for senior positions to remain in contact with the public. When rulers become detached from their people, they risk losing their prestige and relevance, which is detrimental.

For centuries, royal families worldwide have been keen to train about seven generations of potential rulers. This is because continuity in leadership is vital, and ruling families are committed to integrating their children into society from a young age, while also providing them with the best education.

In some monarchies, special schools have been established for royal family children up until high school. After that, they integrate into public univer-

sity education while simultaneously being trained in the traditions of leadership, ensuring they do not assume any position without the necessary experience. As a result, you often find some princes from European royal families starting their careers in various jobs or joining the military at lower ranks and then gradually working their way up until they attain high positions.

Continued on Page 5

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An aerial drone photo taken on March 7, 2025 shows buildings shrouded in fog in Kuwait City. (Xinhua)

Kuwait drops life terms to 20 years

Reform... not just punishment

KUWAIT CITY, March 8, (KUNA): Kuwait's Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah directed on Friday reducing the life-sentence term to 20 years, based on His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's directives.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement while visiting the Central Prison to share "Iftar" meal with prisoners and their families, the minister ordered forming a committee to look into the files of those who have life imprisonment sen-

tences three months before completing the 20-year term.

He called for listing those who meet the terms. The minister said this step comes as part of Kuwait's vision aiming to enhance rehabilitation approach inside correction and rehabilitation institutions to make balance for prisoners to help them rebuild their lives and integrate them into society, he added.

He congratulated these institutions, and those who implement law and responsible for prisons on the holy month of Ramadan.

He commended the qualitative shift witnessed by the sector of correctional institutions and the implementation of sentences in Kuwait in terms of facilities, and health and social services.

Continued on Page 5

Trump taps Yemeni-born Ghalib as new US ambassador to Kuwait

WASHINGTON, March 8, (KUNA): US President Donald Trump as designated Hamtramck (Michigan) Mayor Amer Ghalib as the new Ambassador to the State of Kuwait.

Trump, in remarks posted on "Truth Social," said he was elated that Ghalib would assume the task as the US Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, noting that the new envoy had worked diligently in Trump's electoral campaigns in Michigan.

The US president added that the new ambassador to Kuwait, a medicine PhD holder, would represent the US with pride in his new mission.

Ghalib, 45, born in Yemen, was elected in 2021 as the first Arab mayor in Hamtramck.

Trump also declared Duke Buchanan III would serve as the US Ambassador to Morocco.

Duke will play a pivotal role as "we strengthen peace, freedom, and prosperity for both of our countries," the US president said.

"I am proud to appoint Michel



US President Donald Trump with Hamtramck (Michigan) Mayor Amer Ghalib.

Issa as our United States Ambassador to Lebanon. Michel is an outstanding businessman, a financial expert, and a leader with a remarkable career in banking, entrepreneurship, and international trade. I have no doubt that he will serve our country with honor and distinction," he added.

Kuwait's southern region takes brunt of heavy rainfall

Public Works Minister Al-Mashaan oversees flood response

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: The country experienced rainy weather from Thursday morning to Saturday morning, triggered by a low-pressure system accompanied by a deep atmospheric disturbance. This led to varying levels of rainfall in different areas, with the highest recorded at 51 mm in Wafra Farms area in the southern region.

Rainfall ranged between 30 and 45 mm in most other areas, which caused water accumulation in certain spots due to the intense rainfall over short periods. This exceeded the capacity of the rainwater network in some areas, particularly in the Sabah Al-Ahmad residential area and its internal and external roads. As a result, full coordination was required among all relevant authorities.

Also, water accumulations were reported in several parts of Farwaniya and Jahra, and emergency teams promptly addressed the situation with their equipment.

In this regard, Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan said the ministry's teams have been directed to



KUNA photo

Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan during a tour on Friday evening, accompanied by Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari, to Sabah Al-Ahmad City to assess the impact of the rain and review the latest developments.

carry out field visits in various areas of Kuwait to ensure a quick and effective response to any challenges arising from the rainfall.

She made this statement during a tour she conducted on Friday evening, accompanied by Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for

Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari, to Sabah Al-Ahmad City to assess the impact of the rain and review the latest developments. Representatives from the Ministry of Public Works and Kuwait Municipality were also present.

Minister Dr. Al-Mashaan affirmed that efforts are underway to deal with surface water promptly to prevent any adverse impacts on traffic and property, adding that all complaints will be addressed promptly to ensure the safety of citizens and protect their properties.

Meanwhile, Minister Dr. Al-Mashaan, accompanied by the ministry's Undersecretary Eid Al-Rashidi, visited the joint operations room in Shuwaikh to monitor the aftermath of the rainfall that affected several areas in Kuwait during the weekend.

In a press statement, the Public Relations Department of the Ministry of Public Works explained that the purpose of the visit was to oversee the progress of work and ensure coordination between the relevant parties to effectively deal with the effects of the rain.

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait's airport back in action after emergency tarmac repair

KUWAIT CITY, March 8, (KUNA): The Directorate General of Civil Aviation declared on Saturday resumption of flights via Kuwait International Airport after temporary suspension due to emergency repairs on one of the tarmacs.

Abdullah Alrajhi, the acting deputy director, told KUNA that the airport was temporarily shut down early today due to emergency repairs on a tarmac,

adding that regular operations resumed at 10:25 a.m.

During the suspension, three flights were diverted to airports in neighboring countries and schedule of four others was changed, he said, adding that these flights had been re-scheduled to ensure that the coming planes arrive in Kuwait as soon as possible.

The airport is currently operating normally, he affirmed.

Financial outlook robust

Fitch affirms Kuwait's 'AA-' rating

KUWAIT CITY, March 8, (KUNA): Fitch Ratings has confirmed Kuwait's Long-Term Foreign-Currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at 'AA-' with a stable outlook.

A Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) statement said the rating is underpinned by Kuwait's robust financial and external balance sheets, despite the country's reliance on oil and a large public sector that could exert long-term fiscal pressure.

Kuwait's external balance sheet is the

strongest among all Fitch-rated nations. The agency forecasts that Kuwait's sovereign net foreign assets will increase to 601% of GDP in 2025, up from an estimated 582% of GDP in 2024.

The majority of these assets are managed by the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) and are held in the Future Generations Fund and the General Reserve Fund (GRF), the government's treasury account.

Continued on Page 5

Ramadan Timings

Iftar Sunday 17:53
Imsak Monday 04:44

News watch

Mol arrests 5, seizes 14 kilos of narcotics

KUWAIT CITY, March 8, (KUNA): The Interior Ministry announced on Saturday that the arrest of five individuals in possession of 14 kilograms of narcotics as well as 9,000 psychoactive pills.

A statement by the ministry revealed that the suspects -- two Kuwaitis, two illegal residents, and a Syrian national -- were arrested for holding in possession an assortment of narcotic materials.

KUWAIT CITY: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed on Friday, the State of Kuwait's strong condemnation and denunciation of the crimes committed by outlaw groups in Syria, and their targeting of security forces and state institutions.

A statement by the ministry said Kuwait stands by the Syrian Arab Republic, and supports all efforts and measures taken by the Syrian government to preserve its national security and stability. (KUNA)



2 'Dar Salwa' warmly welcomes well-wishers during holy month of Ramadan



8 KIB's Al-Suwaidan named CYSEC Cybersecurity Leader of the Year

9 ABK celebrates International Women's Day with commitment to empowerment and equality

Kuwait stands firm on Palestinian rights, Syrian unity in GCC confab

MAKKAH, March 8, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya has extolled the GCC's outstanding role in enhancing the region's security and stability frameworks, and overcoming challenges facing the Muslim and Arab worlds.

Speaking in a joint news conference with GCC Secretary General Jassem Al-Budaiwi on Friday, Al-Yahya, also head of the 163rd GCC Ministerial Council meeting, said the gathering discussed the latest developments of the joint GCC action and means of boosting cooperation in political, economic, security and developmental

fields, under the GCC leaders' directives.

On the sidelines of the 163rd session, some joint ministerial meetings with brothers in Egypt, Syria, Morocco and Jordan were held, he said, adding they were an opportunity to share views about international and regional issues.

He affirmed the GCC's unwavering position to inalienable rights of Palestinian people topped with establishing their independent state on the June 4 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Continued on Page 5



KUNA photo
Kuwait's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya speaks during a conference in Makkah on Friday.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 04:48 Asr 15:21
 Sunrise .. 06:07 Maghrib .. 17:52
 Zohr 11:59 Isha 19:08

Local

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Warm with light to moderate southwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 10-30 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

By Night: Rather cold and partly cloudy with light to moderate variable wind to light northwest-

Weather

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	22	15
Kuwait Airport	24	16
Abdaly	21	15
Bubyan	18	16

Jahra	24	16
Failaka Island	20	17
Salmiyah	21	16
Ahmadi	18	11
Jal Aliyah	22	15
Nuwaisib	18	17

'Dar Salwa' warmly welcomes well-wishers during holy month of Ramadan



HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled arrives.



His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad at the gathering.



Grandchildren of HH the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad and ministers.



His Highness Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Al-Sabah and dignitaries.



Grandchildren of HH the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad and a prominent guest Fahad Al-Sharekh.



Editor-in-Chief of Al-Seyassah and Arab Times with the Omani ambassador to Kuwait.

DAR SALWA warmly welcomed well-wishers during the holy month of Ramadan. The grandchildren of HH the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad, His Highness Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Al-Sabah and His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf recently.

They also welcomed many other guests, including senior leaders, social figures, current and former ministers, citizens, expatriates, and Arab and foreign ambassadors and diplomats.

In a warm and friendly atmosphere, all those present at the event exchanged Ramadan greetings and prayed for blessings and prosperity for Kuwait and all nations.

Kuwait's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad greeted His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince and all Kuwaiti people on the occasion of Ramadan. He prayed that Almighty Allah continues to bless the Arab and Islamic nations with goodness

and prosperity in this holy month.

Sheikh Sabah pointed out that the gathering is a manifestation of the authentic Kuwaiti traditions of cohesion, solidarity and support which are especially evident during Ramadan -- when the spirit of the one Kuwaiti family shines through.

Photos by Rizk Tawfik



Turkiye ambassador



Saudi ambassador



Bangladesh ambassador



Brunei ambassador

KUNA photos

Kuwait FM meets counterparts in Jeddah

JEDDAH, March 8, (KUNA): Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met on Friday with Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud on the sideline of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) extraordinary meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers, here in Jeddah.

During the meeting, the two sides delved into bilateral relations, ways of boosting them, and current regional and international developments.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya also met with Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan on the sideline of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) extraordinary meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers, here in Jeddah.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs met with Bangladeshi Foreign Minister Touhid Hossain on the sideline of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) extraordinary

meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers, here in Jeddah.

During the meeting, the two sides delved into bilateral relations, ways of boosting them, and current regional and international developments.

The Foreign Minister met with Uzbekistan Foreign Minister Bakhtiyor Saidov, on the sideline of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) extraordinary meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers, here in Jeddah.

Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdulah Al-Yahya met with Second Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Dato Yusof on the sideline of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) extraordinary meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers, here in Jeddah.

During the meeting, the two sides delved into bilateral relations, ways of boosting them, and current regional and international developments.

Kuwait hails women's role in multiple fields

World celebrates Women's Day

KUWAIT CITY, March 8, (KUNA): The Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry expressed on Saturday deep appreciation to the role of Kuwaiti women in various fields. In a statement marking the International Women's Day, the ministry affirmed that women played an essential role in building Kuwait's future sustainable development and prosperity.

The world marks on March 8th, International Women's Day, an occasion first adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 1975 to recognize women's struggles, celebrate their achievements, and their essential role in developing societies, promoting equality, and rejecting all forms of discrimination.

This year's theme, "For all women and girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment" calls for action that can unlock equal rights, power and opportunities for all and a future where no one is left behind.

This year also coincides with the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the most progressive global blueprint for advancing women's rights.

Kuwait places significant importance on women's rights, actively raising awareness of their societal role and implementing decisions that strengthen their status both locally and internationally, by supporting numerous legislative initiatives at the UN and other international forums to empower

women and enhance their position in society.

Global indicators reflect Kuwait's progress in women's empowerment, according to the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security, Kuwait advanced from 123rd to 61st place among 177 evaluated countries, and Kuwait has improved by 10 points in the Global Gender Gap Index.

Kuwait integrates women's empowerment into government policies and national plans, aligning its efforts with Article 29 of the Constitution, the New Kuwait Vision 2035, and the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5, which focuses on gender equality and empowering women.

Human dignity

Article 29 of the Constitution of Kuwait states: "All people are equal in human dignity, and in public rights and duties before the law, without distinction as to race, origin, language or religion."

Kuwaiti women have played a pioneering role in the country's development across various fields with the recognition of their political rights in 2005, reflecting the leadership's firm belief in their crucial role as an integral part of society.

Women in Kuwait have made significant contributions in all sectors, assuming leadership positions across government and industry, and by 2023, women held 28 percent of leadership positions in state institutions, with increasing representation in law enforcement, the oil industry, the judiciary, and diplomacy.

In 2024, four female directors were appointed in the Public Prosecution

Office, bringing the total number of female prosecutors to 88, alongside 19 female judges.

In the security sector, 19 women joined the National Guard for the first time in Kuwait's history, while the number of female police officers surpassed 900.

Women have also made significant strides in the economic sector, they occupy 41 percent of leadership positions at the Central Bank of Kuwait, and 35 percent in the banking sector.

In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 144 female diplomats now represent 22 percent of the diplomatic workforce, while 54 percent of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation employees are women.

Kuwait has taken pioneering initiatives to support women's rights in the region, Kuwait was the first Gulf country to implement a regional project, known as "Waraqati", which aims at promote women rights and empower them legally.

Kuwait has ratified several international conventions on women's rights, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Kuwait also works closely with the UN, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and other international and regional organizations to develop women's capabilities and ensure their active role in achieving development goals.

Kuwait seeks global expertise to achieve SDGs; 'vision prepared'

NEW YORK, March 8, (KUNA): Kuwait's Central Statistical Bureau (CSB) has underscored the significance of presenting Kuwait's vision at the 56th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSD), emphasizing the importance of international cooperation and knowledge exchange in the field of statistics.

Speaking to KUNA, Acting Director General of the Central Statistical Bureau, Wafa Al-Yahya highlighted that Kuwait's participation in the session reflects its commitment to developing international standards and practices to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Al-Yahya noted that the CSB has prepared a comprehensive vision covering various topics on the commission's agenda, including 20 documents outlining Kuwait's stance on key discussion points, which have been submitted to the UNSD's website under Kuwait's name.

Kuwait's vision includes several proposals and recommendations, such as adopting the 2025 System of National

Accounts as an international standard while ensuring flexible implementation.

The vision calls for strengthening regional and international cooperation in census-taking, adopting innovative methodologies to enhance inclusivity, and advancing digital infrastructure, and it advocates for greater collaboration with the UN Economic and Social Council and the modernization of the commission's operations.

Kuwait's recommendations further emphasize adherence to the fundamental principles of official statistics, updating the SDG indicator database, enhancing partnerships with relevant international organizations, and improving data quality related to migration while considering regional specifications.

Al-Yahya stressed the need to empower regional bodies, such as the GCC Statistical Center and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), to support member states in implementing international standards.

GENEVA, March 8, (KUNA): Kuwait's Permanent Mission in Geneva affirmed on Thursday that Kuwait has made achievements of pioneering milestones in combating AIDS, according to the United Nations reports.

Kuwait was ranked first among Middle Eastern and North African countries in achieving the 90 targets and steadily progressing towards the 95 targets, Kuwait's Diplomatic Attaché Sarah Salah Al-Hasawi said in a plenary meeting at the Human Rights Council on combating HIV/AIDS.

Al-Hasawi noted that these achievements were made, thanks to expanding free and confidential voluntary testing and providing pre-exposure and post-exposure prophylactic treatments in the country.

She emphasized that Kuwait has recruited people living with HIV in positions that pose no risk to them or others ensuring their social integration.

She further affirmed that Kuwait has adopted mandatory pre-marital medical screening in line with its commitment to health protection and continues to implement extensive awareness campaigns in schools and universities to combat stigma and encourage individuals to get tested without fear thereby enhancing effective prevention measures.

At the international level, Al-Hasawi stated that Kuwait has supported the Global Fund to Fight AIDS for over 20 years, contributing 27 million dollars to promote equitable access to treatment and advance the shared goal of eradicating AIDS by 2030.

She reiterated Kuwait's firm belief that the right to health is a fundamental human right and that combating HIV/AIDS requires non-discrimination the preservation of dignity the protection of the privacy of those affected and efforts to ensure a comprehensive global response.

Disease-hit people in top posts: UN

Kuwait pioneer in anti-AIDS battle

'Doing good, helping people cut tensions & depression'

"THE Imam of a mosque in London used to take the bus during his travels. Once, the Imam paid the fare and then sat. He discovered that the driver returned 20 pence to him over and above the supposed fare. He thought and said to himself that he should return the extra amount because it was not his right. Then, he thought again and said to himself: 'Forget it, the amount is small and no one will care about it. Also, the bus company gets a lot of money and nothing will be lost because of this amount. I will keep the money and consider it a gift from Allah and keep quiet.'" **Ahmad Al-Dawas** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The bus stopped at the station where the Imam wanted to go to, but before he left, he stopped for a moment, extended his hand and gave the driver the 20 pence and said to him: Here you go, you gave me more money than I deserve!"

"The driver took it and smiled and asked him: Aren't you the new Imam in this area? I have been thinking for a while about going to your mosque to learn about Islam, and I gave you the extra amount intentionally to see how you would react!"

"When the Imam got off the bus, he felt weakness in his legs, and he almost fell to the ground from the terror of the situation, so he held on to the nearest pillar to lean on, and looked at the sky and cried out: Oh Allah... I would have sold Islam for 20 pence!"

"Foreigners often speak, and their ideas are close and consistent with what our Islamic religion has brought. For example, an Indian writer believes that God created the universe in a balanced way, as God balances everything, since there is night and day, summer and winter, and there is no imbalance in the universe except in human behavior, so God takes revenge on the oppressor, and does justice to the oppressed, until the scale of justice is tilted and returns to a state of balance."

"American and Indian studies have shown that doing good and helping people (charity and zakat) reduces tension and depression, and benefits one's health, as a tense and sad person when he helps people feels that 'the weight of tension and the accompanying pain in his body' has been lifted from his shoulders, and happiness and comfort flow through his body."

"On June 5, 2014, the American newspapers 'National Post' and 'Financial Times' published an article titled, 'Fasting for two days activates the entire immune system, prevents cancer... amazing discoveries!'"

"An American non-Muslim said in an article in the American newspaper 'Time' on Dec 14, 2011, 'Forget about dieting and try fasting.'"

"Among the sayings of the Sikhs and Hindus is 'Love your brother like you love yourself.' This is exactly what they said. It is one of the honorable hadiths of the Prophet (PBUH). In Indian philosophy, there is a thought similar to Islamic thought: A person has peace of mind, because he believes that what happens to him comes through a divine command." "The generous person is the happiest." "You actually gain by doing good to people." "Do good and do not expect anything in return."

"In Asian countries, we find that their traditions require them to 'respect parents', which is an Asian custom, so parents live long in Asia because children care for their mothers and fathers for a long time."

"British studies have also proven that altruism (the opposite of selfishness) has health benefits for humans. From South African studies, they say: Always look at the positive side. (Be optimistic and you will find goodness). Some rich people left everything and returned to the Creator, gave money to the needy, and fought cancer with charity (Treat your sick with charity), and so on. There are many foreign studies on behavior that prove the truth of what Islam has brought, and due to space constraints, we will suffice with these examples."

Also:

"Happy Ramadan to you guys, and after the congratulations, and the mouthfuls and puddings that come with it, let me get to the point, it's a very nice WhatsApp that Sheikh Mahmoud sent to me, may Allah reward him, warning me and you of Ramadan thieves!" Kuwaiti writer **Mohammad Khalaf** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The disabled man said: May Allah spare us from their evil, O father of men, even Ramadan is not safe from them, nor from their cunning and tricks."

"The expert said: Let the man tell us the content of the message, and then each one of us will show his strength! Say, O honorable man, all men are men and we don't show off."

"The man said: May you not be disgraced, and may the lord of the diwan be disgraced. The first thief (TV) is a dangerous thief, a player who spoils people's fasting and reduces rewards because of his series, silly programs, and licentious evenings."

"As for the second thief, it is the markets, be careful of them because they specialize in wasting money, time and looking without calculation. To

overcome them, set your goals before going there."

"As for the third thief, my friends, it is staying up late. In Arabic, forget about Abu Abdo's story, in which he says that staying up late with friends cures the disease, because he has no story and because staying up late steals 'joy', the most precious times, and deprives you of praying at night and seeking forgiveness in the last third of the night."

"As for the fourth thief, it is stinginess, the enemy of manliness, as our elders said, because it deprives you of the reward and recompense of charity, which protects from the fire, especially the charity of the month of Ramadan."

"And the fifth thief, unfortunately, my friend, is the diwanias, because most of them are devoid of remembrance of Allah, and you have avoid these. May God protect you, because most of it is hearsay, and as if I am not, I fear that it will be regret for its owners and customers on the Day of Judgment, and I wish its doors would be closed!"

"Finally, the big kiss for the thieves, and whom I consider the righteous son of Satan, is his brothers, social media, if you exploit it in disobeying Allah, and may you be safe. I hope this message does not bother you."

"The beggar said: Have you ever asked yourself what is the feeling of the first toast loaf that we ignore, what is its sin that we treat it with such racism?"

"Meanwhile, Sheikh Zaghloul raised the noon call to prayer to our ears."



"The Minister of Finance stated that the 'public debt' policy is in its final stages and will be approved soon," columnist **Ahmad Yaqoub Baqer** wrote for **Al-Jarida** daily.

"There are three key points to consider in this regard:

1. Caution against using debt for current expenditures: The first point is the concern about using the debt amount for current expenditures, such as covering the budget deficit, when current spending constitutes about 90 percent. The minister did not specify how the 20 billion dinar debt would be allocated. She also did not reveal the development projects that would benefit from these funds or whether they would generate enough revenue to cover both the debt and its interest.

Furthermore, will these projects create real job opportunities for Kuwaiti youth? This concern is valid given that many countries have entered the borrowing trap, misused borrowed funds, and seen interest payments consume a large portion of their income. In fact, a major Arab country is currently spending 40 percent of its annual income on paying interest, rather than the debt principal itself.

2. The religious aspect: The Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah have warned us about the dangers of usury and its consequences, which lead to loss both in this world and the Hereafter. Allah has declared that He will obliterate it. Will the public debt be contracted through interest-based loans? The government should not overlook the Constitution and its explanatory memorandum, which emphasize the obligation to adhere to Islamic law to the best of its ability.

Relying solely on numerical calculations while neglecting the legal rulings is a mistake. Have all other options been exhausted, leaving only the door to usury? Haven't many countries suffered from compounded interest, leading them to enter agreements that allowed creditors to interfere in their internal affairs? Or didn't four million homes in the U.S. face foreclosure due to mortgage interest in 2008?"

3. The issue of future generations' reserves: The third point is that it is not in the country's best interest for the future generations' reserves to accumulate beyond a trillion dollars (as publicly announced) without being wisely used for economic purposes. This substantial amount will attract attention and become vulnerable to various demands for grants, borrowing, and even political exploitation and appeasement. This has been evident in statements from the U.S. President regarding defense costs, as well as in past instances like the French cannon and the Russian loan.

"It is certain that the reserve will face political pressures and demands for rebuilding and developing other countries, and it could also be at risk of being withdrawn for ineffective domestic current spending. Therefore, it would be preferable for withdrawals from the future generations' reserves to be regulated, with a clear determination and preparation of the project the withdrawn amount will be spent on. The project should demonstrate how it will generate revenues to cover the withdrawn amount and its returns, along with the expected number of job opportunities."

"This should be part of a precise, well-studied development plan, in addition to rationalizing expenditures and increasing non-oil revenues to address the budget deficit."

— **Compiled by Mahmoud Attiyeh/ Simi K. Kutty**



KUNA photos

Municipality teams in cooperation with other government bodies deployed to remove rainwater on streets.

Municipality teams mobilized to clear rainwater

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality stated that it mobilized its machinery, equipment, and cleaning workers to support the relevant authorities in removing surface rainwater from many streets and public squares

during the ongoing rainy season, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The department explained that teams from the Public Cleanliness and Road Occupancy departments in all governorates are working alongside the Ministry of Pub-

lic Works and other concerned authorities to remove water pools around the clock. Their efforts aim to remove water and clear roads, as well as ensure smooth traffic flow on streets and main roads amid the current wave of rainfall.

Man wanted for car theft at knife-point caught by police

5,000 'Lyrica' pills found on drug peddler

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: The General Department for Criminal Security, represented by the Capital Investigations Department's Al-Shamiya Investigations Office, arrested a suspect with a criminal record for stealing a vehicle from a Kuwaiti woman at knife-point in Shuwaikh after forcing her out of her vehicle and fleeing in the car, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Interior explained that, through intensive investigations, the criminal was identified due to his method of stealing, which involved walking around parking lots and targeting women inside their vehicles. He would then enter the vehicle, threaten the victim, and force her to

leave before driving off with the car.

After intensive search and monitoring efforts, Shamiya Investigations officers managed to locate the stolen vehicle in a parking lot next to a mosque, where tight security surveillance was placed. The suspect was seen walking toward the vehicle, and when officers attempted to arrest him, he tried to flee. However, the security force was able to control him and retrieve the vehicle key from him.

The accused admitted to committing the crime. It was discovered that he has a criminal record for theft and robbery, and he is also wanted in connection with another theft case.



Drug-peddler arrested: Officers from the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) arrested a man accused of selling Lyrica pills in Jahra after a police chase and a collision between detective patrols and the suspect's ve-

hicle. The suspect was found in possession of 5,000 pills, ready for sale, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

According to security sources, the suspect, realizing that detectives were closing in on him, fled in his vehicle, colliding with the detective patrols as he tried to head toward his home. Officers pursued the vehicle, using force when necessary, and arrested the suspect with the huge quantity of narcotic pills in his possession. The suspect, along with the seized narcotics, was referred to the competent authorities for further investigation.

During the chase, two detectives were injured and had to be transferred to the hospital for medical treatment. Assistant Undersecretary for Criminal Security Affairs Major General Hamed Al-Dawas and the Director General of DCGD Brigadier General Mohammad Qabazard visited the injured officers to check on their condition.

Carry out regular maintenance, KFF urges car owners

It's chaotic ... repairs, car fire bring traffic to standstill

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: The Fourth Ring Road is currently undergoing repairs in both directions, causing significant traffic congestion, particularly during rush hours, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

A vehicle fire recently exacerbated the situation for commuters near Surra and Rawda.

A source from Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) confirmed that the fire, which occurred on the Fourth Ring Road, led to the complete closure of the road going towards Salmiya.

Traffic was halted until officers from the Hawally Fire Station extinguished the fire and addressed the damage caused by the fire.

KFF said the cause of the fire could either be an electrical short circuit or a radiator failure due to lack of water. It emphasized the importance for both citizens and expatriates to follow safety protocols to prevent fire incidents. It advised ensuring the proper installation and maintenance of fire safety equipment; such as fire extinguishers, fire blankets, smoke detectors and gas detectors,

as well as learning how to use and maintain these tools effectively.

Furthermore, KFF urged vehicle owners to carry out regular maintenance, including changing engine oil, replenishing coolant levels, and avoiding the storage of flammable items inside vehicles. It also recommended ensuring the safety of electrical connections, refraining from leaving chargers or smart devices in high temperatures, and avoiding smoking in or around vehicles.



KUNA photo

Kuwait army's Ghaith task force was on alert and fully prepared to provide all types of logistical and humanitarian support due to the rains in the country.

'Duty Ghaith' on alert

Army, National Guard out to tackle rain emergencies

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: The General Staff of Kuwait Army stated that the Kuwait Army's 'Duty Ghaith' force has been supporting operations to remove and drain accumulated surface water from the main roads in Sabah Al-Ahmad, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The General Staff stated that the 'Duty Ghaith' force is on full alert and ready to provide various types of logistical and humanitarian support in response to the ongoing rainfall in Kuwait, in coordination with the Ministry of Public Works, Civil Defense, and other relevant state institutions.

The National Guard stated that the Fire Department's emergency teams have been assisting the Ministry of Public Works and Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) in managing surface water caused by the rainfall in Sabah Al-Ahmad area, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In a press statement, the National Guard explained that the emergency teams have been working to remove water pools in order to facilitate traffic movement on streets and main roads.

Woman killed, husband in ICU in 2-car Oyouon mishap

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: The body of an expatriate woman was referred to the Forensic Medicine Department at the Interior Ministry; while her husband, an Imam at an undisclosed mosque, was admitted to intensive care following a traffic collision between Oyouon and Waha, reports **Al-Anba** daily.

A security source confirmed that the other party involved in the accident, a Kuwaiti, was also injured and taken to Jahra Hospital. Traffic police have since inspected the scene to determine the cause of the accident.

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SMEs invited to explore university leasing opportunities

KU and PAAET open doors to investment in higher education

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: In a move aimed at optimizing the utilization of available resources and enhance financial sustainability, Kuwait University and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) are focusing on activating investment opportunities and fostering partnerships with the private sector.

This strategy involves making use of existing facilities and sites through long-term investment projects or providing temporary opportunities to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

In line with this approach, Kuwait University has announced the launch of temporary site leasing opportunities, in accordance with Ministry of Finance Circular No. 1/ 2023 and the Secretariat General Circular No. 2/2025, which outlines the guidelines for temporary site exploitation. This initiative aims to support SMEs by offering entrepreneurs the

chance to lease university spaces for short periods.

The university set several conditions for those wishing to take advantage of these opportunities. The leasing period is limited to a maximum of 20 working days and the available space is four square meters; but larger areas can be considered through new contracts. It encourages interested business owners to review the terms and submit their applications through the Purchasing Department's website.

Meanwhile, some sources close to PAAET informed the newspaper that the authority is working hard to identify new sites that can be offered for investment. These efforts aim to support the sustainability of the authority's financial resources, while enhancing its role in providing a modern educational environment.

The sources clarified that the authority seeks to utilize its facilities in innovative ways that generate financial returns, contributing to the advancement of its educational and training processes. This initiative is part of the au-

thority's strategic plan to improve the investment environment within its educational institutions, creating attractive opportunities that will help sustain and enrich the educational and training ecosystem, sources added.

According to the sources, the planned investment projects are expected to cover vital areas, including the development of service facilities, improvement of the training environment, and the establishment of initiatives that benefit both the students and employees of the authority. Investors are encouraged to stay informed about these developments and engage with the relevant departments to understand application processes and investment requirements once investment sites are identified and announced, they asserted.

Sources said Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal's directive in this regard is in line with the broader governmental goal of promoting investment and maximizing the use of resources in higher education institutions, whether through long-term partnerships

or temporary opportunities for entrepreneurs.

These initiatives are anticipated to contribute significantly to enhancing educational and training services, providing a more supportive environment for investment and entrepreneurship within the academic sector. This direction is also in line with the government's vision to foster greater public-private sector collaboration and leverage educational facilities to create investment opportunities that benefit both the academic institutions and the national economy.

Sources went on to say that Al-Jalal issued a directive on the preparation of a comprehensive study to identify all available investment opportunities within Sabah Al-Salem University City. "This study aims to generate alternative sources of income beyond the national budget, reducing the financial burden on the State; while creating self-sustaining revenues for the university, which can be reinvested to further develop its educational and research processes, in accordance with existing regulations," they added.

PACI awaits SAB nod on KD 23 mn smart ID deal

CAPT backs direct contract request

By Mohammad Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) is awaiting the approval of the State Audit Bureau (SAB) to sign a contract for the supply of smart civil identification card models and packaging requirements at a cost of KD 23.005 million for a period of three years.

On Feb 24, PACI addressed SAB in a bid to re-submit the request for approval in preparation for the

implementation of the contract terms.

PACI had earlier obtained approval from the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) to sign a contract directly with a company based on Article 19 of Public Tenders Law No. 49/2016. Majority of the CAPT members voted in favor; while three members, including the representative of the Ministry of Finance, voted against.

It is worth mentioning that CAPT rejected the request of PACI to reconsider and approve the direct contracting for the supply of smart civil identification card models based on Article 18 of the Public Tenders Law; which states "the relevant party may undertake the procurement process through limited tender or direct order, provided that permission is obtained from the agency."

Commercial violations uncovered

MoCI records 1,326 complaints in Feb

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

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Statistics from the Commercial Control Department at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for the month of February revealed the registration of about 1,326 complaints -- 1,181 complaints during inspection tours and 145 complaints received through

official channels.

The violations reported by the inspection teams headed by Director of the Commercial Control Department Faisal Al-Ansari are related to the prohibition and prevention of the circulation of some goods, recruitment of domestic workers, regulation of certain services, and the sale and distribution of vegetables and

fruits.

These violations include displaying and selling vegetables and fruits with unclear data; commercial fraud, such as importing counterfeit or spoiled goods or beyond their expiration date; and those related to special offers and discounts, fish auction markets, car rental services, counterfeit goods, cars and tyres.

Blaze contained
Fire strikes Shaab Al-Bahri Mosque

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Firefighters from Salmiya Fire Station controlled a fire that broke out at a mosque in Shaab Al-Bahri on Saturday.

According to a press release issued by KFF, the fire in the mosque was extinguished within a short time with no casualties reported.



Photo from the fire site.

KFF photo

Benefits settled
1,111 Kuwaitis lose citizenship

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

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs Dr. Khaled Al-Ajmi has announced that a total of 1,111 cases of individuals whose Kuwaiti nationality was revoked under Article Eight (foreign wives of Kuwaitis) of the Nationality Law and who were receiving social assistance have been documented.

In a press statement, Al-Ajmi disclosed that 27 female employees were stripped of their Kuwaiti citizenship. He said the ministry ensured that all the necessary procedures were followed, affirming that the salaries of these employees were reinstated upon completion of contract-related procedures.

He added that 15 female employees, whose citizenship was also withdrawn, are currently undergoing review, and their situations are being addressed.

Regarding contributions to cooperative societies by individuals whose citizenship was revoked, Al-Ajmi confirmed that their profits have been disbursed.

He also stated that the ministry is considering a legal amendment to allow continued participation in cooperative societies for those whose citizenship was withdrawn, enabling them to receive profits and maintain their contribution status. "However, such individuals will not be permitted to vote," he explained.



Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Sudan, Dr. Fahad Al-Thafeeri, with officials of the Red Crescent.

Kuwait's 35th relief plane arrives in Sudan with 40 tons of aid from KRCS

PORT SUDAN, Sudan, March 8, (KUNA): A relief plane belonging to the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) arrived at Port Sudan Airport on Thursday, carrying 40 tons of food supplies and tents to support and provide relief to displaced people.

Kuwait's Ambassador to Sudan Dr. Fahad Al-Thafeeri told KUNA that the plane would provide aid to displaced people in Darfur, noting that KRCS is considered the first Arab society to provide aid and relief to the people of Darfur.

He added that this flight is an extension of the air and sea bridges that were launched since the outbreak of the war in April 2023, in implementation of the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and an embodiment of the solidarity of the Kuwaiti people with Sudanese people.

He stressed that Kuwait would continue supporting Sudan until the end of the conflict, noting that today's plane is among a total of 35 relief planes that were launched previously, in addition



Part of the Kuwaiti aid transfer.

to three cargo ships carrying thousands of tons of food, medicine and tents.

Ambassador Al-Thafeeri expressed his appreciation for the fruitful cooperation with all Sudanese parties, hoping that this aid will contribute to alleviating the suffering of those affected and helping Sudan recover.



KFF photos

Officers from the Fire Support Center remove surface water in some streets of the Sabah Al-Ahmad residential area.

KFF assists in clearing surface water in Sabah Al-Ahmad to restore traffic flow

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Officers from the Fire Support Center contributed to the efforts to remove surface water in some streets of the Sabah Al-Ahmad residential area on Friday evening.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), the water was drained to facilitate traffic

with the cooperation of the Ministry of Public Works.

Fire brigades responded to support requests, and high-efficiency pumps with a total capacity of 6,000 gallons per minute were deployed. This led to a huge reduction in water levels in under two hours for restoring smooth traffic flow on the roads.



KUNA photo

Children hold flags to celebrate the opening of a water station.

Kuwait's IICO opens water station in Sudan

KUWAIT CITY, March 8, (KUNA): The Kuwait-based International Islamic Charity Organization inaugurated Thursday Al-Asayyab water station in the River Nile State to meet local communities' needs of clean and sustainable water supplies.

In a press statement, the IICO said the station, costing USD 43,763, produces 40 cubic meters of clean water per hour.

It serves as a vital source of potable water for over 12,000 people in the region who faced acute water shortages, particularly as many displaced individuals return to their areas after years of displacement.

It affirmed that the opening of the Al-Asayyab water station marks the start of its development initiatives in post-war Sudan.

Council urges balanced approach in studying housing issue

GCC commits to integrating informal sector into official economies: says Kuwaiti envoy

GENEVA, March 8, (KUNA): "The GCC countries are committed to integrating informal sector into their official economies as part of broader economic development strategies contributing to no more than 18 percent of the region's GDP," said a top Kuwaiti diplomat on Friday.

This statement was highlighted by the Chair of the GCC Ambassadors Council and the Permanent Representative of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen.

Speaking during the 58th session of the UN Human Rights Council, Ambassador Al-Hayen emphasized the priority of GCC countries on protecting labor rights and ensuring social security for all workers in line with their national and economic frameworks.

He underscored the significance of strengthening formal economies to drive economic growth financial stability and social inclusion by providing social and economic services to all segments of society.

Ambassador Al-Hayen noted that GCC governments have introduced several measures to support the integration of the informal sector including streamlining small business registration processes enhancing tax systems and promoting digital solu-



KUA photo

Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen, Permanent Representative of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva with Diplomatic Attaché Sarah Al-Hasawi.

tions to improve transparency and access to financial services.

He also highlighted the robust regulatory frameworks in place to protect workers from discrimination exploitation and abuse ensuring that all workers

are treated with dignity and fairness regardless of their employment status.

The Kuwaiti ambassador reiterated the GCC's commitment to supporting global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reduce inequalities and improve access to essential services stressing that policies to integrate the informal sector should be tailored to the specific national contexts of each country.

Ambassador Al-Hayen expressed the GCC's readiness to collaborate with international partners to exchange best practices and further advance efforts in this vital area.

The GCC affirmed on Friday the importance of adopting a balanced, fair approach in analyzing and studying the complicated housing problem in a manner that takes into consideration challenges facing each country in accordance with its potential.

The Chair of the GCC Ambassadors Council and the Permanent Representative of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen made the statement during the 58th session of UN Human Rights Council held in Geneva within the framework of interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing.



Ambassador Al-Mahmoud welcomes diplomats, officials at Ramadan Diwaniya.

Qatari Embassy hosts Ramadan gathering, fostering diplomatic ties

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: The Qatari Embassy Diwaniya hosted a Ramadan gathering on Thursday evening, led by Ambassador Ali Al Mahmoud. The event witnessed the attendance of several Royal Family members, ministers, officials, dignitaries, ambassadors, heads of diplomatic missions and public figures.

Attendees stressed the significance of such Ramadan events in strengthening relationships and building deeper ties.

Al-Mahmoud warmly welcomed the guests, engaging in thoughtful conversations that captured the essence and spirit of the holy month.



Qatari Ambassador welcomes dignitaries at Ramadan event.

Photos by Mohammad Morsi

Women's achievements honored

Australian envoy extends Ramadan greetings

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

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Australian Ambassador to Kuwait Melissa Kelly conveyed her warmest wishes, and that of Australia, for the holy month of Ramadan.

In her speech at the women's Ramadan ghabqa she hosted at her residence recently, Kelly expressed her gratitude for spending her third Ramadan in the country. She said "there is something truly special about Ramadan in Kuwait. It is a great honor for me, as an ambassador, to participate in the rich traditions and celebrations that take place throughout the month, which add a deeper significance to Ramadan."

She pointed out that the holy month offers an opportunity to connect with both the Creator and society, practice self-discipline, and reflect on the blessings in one's life. She added it also provides a chance to ask how one can contribute positively to family, to community and to the world.

She stated that this year's Ramadan coincides with International Women's Day, calling it "a celebration of women's empowerment. When women and girls are fully able to participate in our economies and societies, it strengthens our communities and makes the world a better place."



Kelly

She acknowledged that while gender equality is a simple concept, it still faces numerous challenges globally. "It is about ensuring all members of society can reach their full potential -having access to academic, economic and social opportunities; living free from violence; and being empowered to forge their own path. No country has yet achieved full gender equality. The global rates of gender-based violence and the ongoing work

are needed to address these issues," she explained.

Reflecting on the meaning of both Ramadan and International Women's Day, she expressed gratitude for the role models who are shaping a better society.

Speaking directly to the attendees, she said "you are all role models to me -- my fellow ambassadors, my colleagues at the Australian Embassy, many of whom are women; my Kuwaiti friends who balance leadership roles, manage families and businesses, and advocate for positive change; and to the women from all over the world who have called Kuwait home, building bridges with resilience and courage."

She concluded "this celebration is our way of recognizing you -- all the women who contribute to the betterment of Kuwait and the world. It is a personal thank you from me and the women of the Australian Embassy for your friendship and your continuous inspiration. You play an important part in making society and the world a more inclusive and compassionate place."

MoE sets new guidelines for additional work allowances

Measures cut down on unnecessary overtime

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: In a bid to regulate the disbursement of additional work allowances and ascertain adherence to established controls, the Ministry of Education issued a decision outlining the mechanism for assigning employees to additional work in various sectors and departments, in accordance with the approved flexible working hours.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the decision that includes a directive to attach copies of decisions regarding the partial reduction of official working hours during the assignment of additional work. This is to ensure alignment with

actual working hours, the decision explained.

It added that a statement must be provided detailing the approved timings for those assigned to additional work, allowing for verification that the concerned employees met the required working hours.

The ministry clarified that additional working hours will only be scheduled after the official working hours and in accordance with the approved flexible working hours. "This guarantees that there is no overlap between official and additional working hours," sources stated.

In a letter to Assistant Undersecretary for Financial Affairs Mohammad Al-Khalidi, the ministry emphasized the importance of abiding by regulatory procedures when disbursing additional work allowances.

"These measures aim to control expenditures and ensure that allowances are granted only to eligible employees, in line with overtime work regulations; while ensuring compliance with the actual working hours established under the flexible working hours system," the letter elaborated.

Continued from Page 1

Money is

When the late British Queen Elizabeth II turned eighteen, she began her military service as a junior officer, and learned car mechanics and to drive trucks and ambulances during World War II.

Many European princes, as well as royal families in neighboring countries, have always prioritized the proper upbringing of their youth, and established special schools for them. However, they have never isolated them from society.

It is important to nurture these young individuals, guide them to become social role models, and train them in the art of leadership for ensuring they are well-prepared to fill any vacant position seamlessly.

Allocating a big budget for public education is highly beneficial, as it empowers future generations to become self-reliant. Investing in the education and development of members of the ruling family holds even greater importance, as it prepares them to navigate the most challenging circumstances and effectively balance both public and private matters.

The ruling family enjoys a unique status among the people of Kuwait, as citizens eager to maintain strong

communication and harmony between the ruling family members and ordinary people. These are the future leaders, and each one of them must be well-prepared and knowledgeable about public affairs. This can only be achieved through proper training and education. Reaching this goal requires substantial financial investment, and the state should be generous in this regard.

The state's investment in members of the ruling family is of great importance. In Kuwait, for example, the explanatory memorandum of the Constitution prohibits members of the ruling family from running for parliamentary elections to ensure they do not compete with the people for representation.

A longstanding tradition also prevents members of the ruling family from engaging in trade, so they cannot exploit their prestige and the title of "Sheikh" to compete with the public for livelihoods. This is because they are seen as the future rulers. Therefore, it is essential to focus on the youth of the ruling family, and invest more in their rehabilitation, training, and education.

Kuwait must be rich in both human resources and financial wealth. However, wealth alone is meaningless without dignity and integrity.

Kuwait drops

This made Kuwait prisms a model in terms of adhering to humanitarian standards and international treaties, he stated.

The minister stressed the need of cooperation between official bodies and civil society to support correctional and rehabilitative programs.

Fitch affirms

The recently-appointed government has initiated reforms to reduce dependence on oil revenue, enhance government efficiency, and rationalize spending. The government has also introduced a 15% domestic minimum top-up tax (DMTT) on multinational companies, effective from January 1, 2025. This tax is expected to generate about 0.5% of GDP annually, with collections expected to start by 2027.

The government is also aiming to pass a liquidity/debt law, which would allow Kuwait to raise new debt, following the expiry of the previous debt law in 2017. However, the timeframe for this law's implementation remains uncertain. Despite this, the government should be able to meet its financing obligations in the coming years,

given the substantial assets at its disposal, the agency noted.

Fitch expects Kuwait's budget position to deteriorate in the fiscal year ending March 2026 (FY25), due to a decline in oil revenue from lower oil prices and OPEC+'s delay in unwinding oil production quotas. Non-oil revenue is expected to grow modestly in FY25, but it will likely fall short of the government's target of KWD2.9 billion (6% of GDP).

Kuwait stands

On Syria, Al-Yahya reiterated the GCC support for a political solution, in line with the UN Security Council Resolution 2254, in a manner that maintains Syria's unity and sovereignty, and ensures the return of refugees.

He also referred to the GCC's backing to end Syrians' sufferings, and continue relief efforts and humanitarian aid to help brothers in Syrians overcome these current challenges.

He indicated that some other regional developments of mutual concern were dealt with, re-affirming GCC states' commitment to continuing efforts to enhance collaboration and integration in varied fields as well as working with brothers and interna-

tional and regional partners to achieve security and stability in the region.

In reply to a question on reopening Kuwait Embassy in Syria, Al-Yahya said the embassy is open and diplomats would be named to resume their duties soon.

On backing Lebanon, he said cooperation with Lebanon would be done through development funds and direct investments. Concerning sanctions on Syria, Al-Yahya noted that "we would work to find the best solutions" and means to deal with the current situation, and urge friendly countries to lift sanctions.

Al-Yahya thanked foreign ministers of GCC States, Syria, Morocco and Jordan, as well as GCC Secretary General and Secretariat for their sincere efforts in organizing and preparing this successful meeting.

He also thanked Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan for warm reception and hospitality.

Meanwhile, GCC chief reviewed the topics discussed in the joint meetings with Egypt, Syria, Morocco and Jordan, as well as means of enhancing strategic relations and joint work in many domains, in a manner that contributes to achieving common interests and continuing consultation, coordination and exchange of views on regional and international issues of common in-

terest.

He pointed to the GCC ministerial meeting's discussion of some reports on following implementing the resolutions of the GCC supreme council issued by the 45th summit held in Kuwait in 2024.

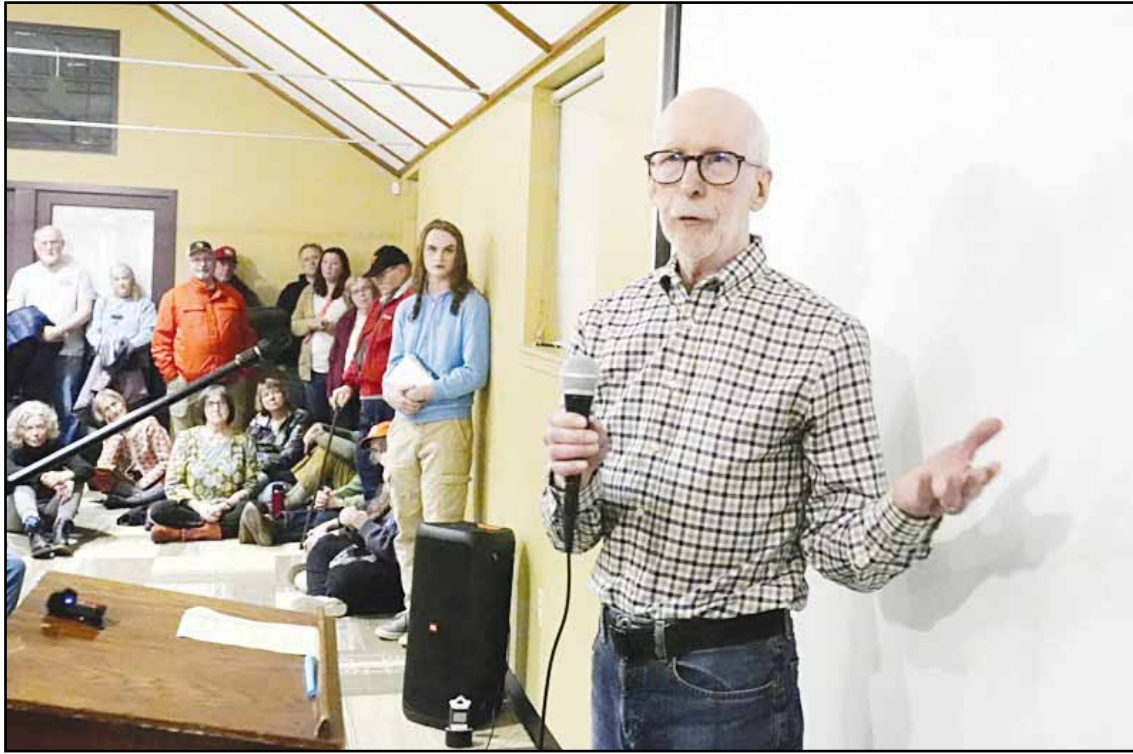
Public Works

From the operations room, Minister Al-Mashaan monitored the actions being taken to ensure the optimal handling of the current situation.

The department affirmed that its teams, including the cleaning and roadwork departments from all governorates, are working around the clock in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Works and other relevant authorities to deal with water accumulation, particularly on streets and main roads, during the rainy period.

Furthermore, the official spokesperson for the Ministry of Public Works Eng. Ahmed Al-Saleh explained that the country experienced a medium-strength rainfall wave, which intensified in some areas. Emergency teams worked tirelessly in critical locations and conducted inspections of the roads to prevent water accumulation on roads managed by the ministry.

INTERNATIONAL



David McFarlane speaks during a town hall meeting at the George Culver Community Library on March 6 in Sauk City, Wis. (AP)

Wisconsin Democrats vent, cry and issue call to action to counter Musk and Trump

SAUK CITY, Wis., March 8, (AP): They came to vent and to cry and to exhort.

The overflow crowd of frustrated Democrats who met this week in a small Wisconsin city's library voiced anger over President Donald Trump, his billionaire adviser Elon Musk and the direction of the country. One person called for riots. Another said he was embarrassed to be an American. But their barbs weren't limited to Republicans.

Some Democrats who gathered under St. Patrick's Day decorations in the Sauk City library's meeting room questioned their own party's messaging and expressed fear about losing a high-stakes upcoming state Supreme Court election.

The April 1 election will be a litmus test early in Trump's term in a key presidential swing state. Control of the court is on the line as it faces cases over abortion and reproductive rights, the strength of public sector unions, voting rules and congressional district boundaries.

Sauk County, home to small towns like Baraboo, Prairie du Sac and the tourist city Wisconsin Dells, has voted for the winner of the past five presidential races, including Trump in 2016 and 2024 and former President Joe Biden in 2020.

Wisconsin Democratic Party Chairman Ben Wikler called it "the most bellwether county in the most bellwether state."

More than 170 people turned out for the Thursday night event billed by Wisconsin Democrats as a "People v. Musk" town hall. They held signs that said "Don't Let Elon Musk Buy Wisconsin" and "Trump is Weak on Musk."

One by one they took the microphone to cajole, rage and commiserate. One transgender woman begged fellow Democrats to "not forget about us."

"We won't!" someone in the crowd shouted back.

The town hall was the first of several planned to generate excitement for the Democratic-backed candidate running in the state Supreme Court election,

Susan Crawford. She is running against Brad Schimel, a former Republican state attorney general supported by Musk.

Groups backed by Musk have poured more than \$5 million into the race, casting the election of Schimel as imperative to protecting Trump's agenda.

Wikler, who presided over the meeting, put the stakes of the race in stark terms: "We are in a fight for democracy itself."

Here is some of the attendees had to say:

Oostdik, a lifelong Democrat, told The Associated Press that she's frustrated with the Supreme Court campaign and previously called the Democratic Party to tell them "their PR is horrible" and "you guys are going to lose."

"Your ads, they're not good," she said of those for Crawford. "It's basically all about abortion, but there are a lot of people who are crossover voters. They're not necessarily in one camp or another. They don't have a broad strategy for capturing what other people may be interested in."

'Let's get this Bill done!': Trump

Republicans try to go it alone on govt funding as shutdown deadline nears

WASHINGTON, March 8, (AP): House Republicans are looking to do what, for them, is almost unheard of -- approving government funding on their terms with little help from Democrats.

Speaker Mike Johnson is teeing up a bill that would generally fund federal agencies at current levels for the remainder of the budget year ending Sept 30. That would mean defense and non-defense programs would be funded at 2024 levels. Congress must act by midnight March 14.

It's a risky approach. Normally, when it comes to keeping the government fully open for business, Republicans have had to work with Democrats to craft a bipartisan measure that both sides can support. That's because Republicans almost always lack the votes to pass spending bills on their own.

This time, Republicans have hopes

of going it alone. They plan to muscle the funding bill, known as a continuing resolution, through the House, and then dare Senate Democrats to oppose it and risk being blamed for a government shutdown.

Crucially, the strategy has the backing of President Donald Trump, who has shown an ability so far in his term to hold Republicans in line.

"Let's get this Bill done!" Trump said on social media.

Rep. Ralph Norman, R-S.C., says he has never voted for a continuing resolution, what lawmakers often call a CR, but he is on board with Johnson's effort. He says he has confidence in Trump and the Department of Government Efficiency, led by Elon Musk, to make a difference on the nation's debt.

"I don't like CRs," Norman said. "But what's the alternative? Negotiate with Democrats? No."



US Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., walks through the Capitol on March 3, in Washington. (AP)

"I freeze spending for six months to go identify more cuts? Somebody tell me how that's not a win in Washington," added Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, another lawmaker who has often frequently voted against spending bills but supports the six-month continuing resolution.

Republicans are also hoping that resolving this year's spending will allow them to devote their full attention to extending the individual tax cuts passed during Trump's first term and raising the nation's debt ceiling to avoid a catastrophic federal default.

But Democratic leaders are warning that the decision to move ahead without consulting them increases the prospects for a shutdown. One of their biggest concerns is the flexibility the legislation would give the Trump administration on spending.

"We cannot stand by and accept a

yearlong power grab CR that would help Elon take a chainsaw to programs that families rely on and agencies that keep our communities safe," said Sen. Patty Murray, the lead Democrat on the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Democratic leadership in both chambers has stressed that Republicans have the majority and are responsible for funding the government. But they also have been wary of saying how Democrats would vote on a continuing resolution.

"We have to wait to see what their plan is," Schumer said. "We've always believed the only solution is a bipartisan solution, no matter what."

House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries said earlier this week that the Democratic caucus would meet and discuss the legislation at the "appropriate moment." But he struck a more forceful tone Friday.



A car prepares to tow a stuck vehicle as cars sit in traffic backed up for more than 15 miles on a westbound stretch of Interstate 40 between Flagstaff and Williams, Arizona, March 7. (AP)

Storm dumps heavy snow on northern Arizona

A winter storm dumped heavy snow across northern Arizona on Friday, playing a major factor in a more than 15-mile (24-kilometer) backup on a major interstate.

Semitrucks and other vehicles were stalled on Interstate 40 westbound between Flagstaff and Williams late Friday as the sun set. The standstill dragged on for

hours.

The snow, along with a two-vehicle crash contributed to the backup, Arizona Department of Public Safety spokesperson Bart Graves said.

"We could not clear it quick enough to get traffic moving again because of the adverse snow conditions, he said.

An injury was reported in the crash but no deaths were reported around the region as a result of the storm, Graves said.

One driver got out of a vehicle and threw snowballs, while others nearby hooked a tow strap to a four-wheel drive vehicle to pull another vehicle out of deep snow. (AP)



People gather to take part at a protest called 'Slovakia is Europe' in Bratislava on March 7. (AP)

Slovakian crowds continue protest against PM's pro-Russian policies

Large crowds again took to the streets across Slovakia on Friday to voice their opposition to populist Prime Minister Robert Fico and his pro-Russian policies.

The wave of protests is fueled by Fico's recent trip to Moscow for talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, a rare visit to the Kremlin by a European Union

leader since Moscow's all-out invasion of Ukraine began more than three years ago and his recent remarks that Slovakia might consider leaving the 27-nation EU and NATO.

"Shame, Shame," people at the Freedom Square in Bratislava chanted. The crowds rallied in over 40 towns and cities at home and

abroad, organizers said. The protesters called Fico "a traitor." "Slovakia is Europe," they repeated.

Fico, who survived an assassination attempt in May 2024, has faced calls to resign over his comments about future EU and NATO membership and his claim that Russia had security reasons to invade Ukraine. (AP)

US cuts access to satellite images

Russia attacks Ukraine's energy supplies

KYIV, Ukraine, March 8, (AP): Russia attacked Ukrainian energy facilities with dozens of missiles and drones during the night, officials said Friday, hobbling the country's ability to deliver heat and light to its citizens and to power weapons factories vital to its defenses.

The overnight barrage - which also pounded residences and wounded at least 10 people - came days after the US suspended military aid and intelligence to Ukraine to pressure it into

accepting a peace deal being pushed by the Trump administration. Without US intelligence, Ukraine's ability to strike inside Russia and defend itself from bombardment is significantly diminished.

The US government said Friday it halted Ukrainian access to unclassified satellite images that had been used to help it fight back against Russia.

The US National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency told The Associ-

ated Press the decision reflected "the Administration's directive on support to Ukraine," without elaborating. The satellite imagery provider Maxar Technologies confirmed the U.S. government decision to "temporarily suspend" Ukrainian access.

Air-defense systems supplied by the West are crucial for Ukraine, but further US help is uncertain under President Donald Trump, who held a tempestuous - and televised - White House meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy last week in which he questioned Ukraine's determination to end the war. Zelenskyy has since said the blowup with the Trump administration was "regrettable."

European Union leaders, mindful they may need to shoulder more of the burden for arming Ukraine and strengthen their own defenses, agreed on a plan Thursday to significantly build up their military spending.

Ukraine is having a tough time on the battlefield. An onslaught by Russia's bigger army is straining short-handed Ukrainian forces at places along the 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) front line.

Officials from the US and Ukraine will meet in Saudi Arabia next week to discuss ending the war, which began more than three years ago when Russia launched a full-scale invasion. On Friday, President Trump said on social media he was "strongly considering" additional sanctions on Russia to force it into peace talks with Ukraine.

Canada looks set to pick new leader

TORONTO, March 8, (AP): Canada looks set to pick a measured former central banker to deal with the threats President Donald Trump's tariffs pose against a pillar of Western free trade.

Mark Carney, 59, could become the next prime minister when the governing Liberal Party of Canada announces a

replacement for Justin Trudeau in a leadership vote Sunday.

The opposition Conservatives hoped to make the election about Trudeau, whose popularity declined as food and housing prices rose and immigration surged. Trudeau announced his resignation in January but remains prime minister until a successor is chosen. Election laws mandate a vote before October but one is expected sooner.

Trump's trade war and his talk of making Canada the 51st state have infuriated Canadians, who are booing the American anthem at NHL and NBA games. Some are cancelling trips south and many are avoiding buying American goods when they can.

The surge in Canadian nationalism has bolstered the Liberal Party's chances in Parliamentary elections that are expected within days or weeks, and Liberal showings have been improving steadily in opinion polls.

EU downplays skepticism from Trump about NATO solidarity

MADRID, March 8, (AP): European Union leaders downplayed skepticism from U.S. President Donald Trump about solidarity among NATO members a day after they backed plans to spend more on defense amid wavering US support.

After European leaders committed Thursday to freeing up hundreds of billions of euros for security, Trump said he was "not so sure" that the military alliance would come to the United States' defense if the country were attacked.

"We are loyal and faithful allies," French President Emmanuel Macron said late Thursday in response, expressing "respect and friendship" toward US leaders and adding that France was "entitled to expect the same."

Māris Riekstins, Latvia's ambassador to NATO, stressed the military alliance remained the most important platform for addressing transatlantic security issues. He emphasized the commitment from his country - which shares a nearly 300-kilometer (186-mile) border with Russia - to defense spending.

The Baltic country last month said spending should be increased to 4% of GDP next year and move toward 5%.

Trump's repeated warnings that he would make European allies



French President Emmanuel Macron speaks during a media conference at an EU Summit in Brussels on March 6. (AP)

face the threat of Russia alone has spurred countries that for decades faltered on defense spending to find ways to bolster their security and back Ukraine in its war against Russia.

On Thursday, EU leaders signed off on a move to loosen budget restrictions so that willing EU countries could increase their military spending.

Following the emergency talks in Brussels, Trump again suggested that the US could abandon its NATO commitments if member countries didn't meet the alliance's defense spending targets.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, firefighters put out the fire following a Russian rocket attack in Dobropillya, Donetsk region, Ukraine on March 8. (AP)

Seoul stops some military drills after accidental bombing

S.Korea's impeached president Yoon released from prison

SEOUL, South Korea, March 8, (AP): South Korea's impeached conservative President Yoon Suk Yeol was released from prison on Saturday, a day after a Seoul court canceled his arrest to allow him to stand trial for rebellion without being detained.

TV footage showed Yoon waving his hand, clenching his fists and bowing deeply to his supporters who were shouting his name and waving South Korean and U.S. national flags. He climbed into a black van to travel to his presidential residence in Seoul.

In a statement distributed by his lawyers, Yoon said that he "appreciates the courage and decision by the Seoul Central District Court to correct illegality," in an apparent reference to questions over his arrest. He said he also thanks his supporters and asked those who are on hunger strike against his impeachment to end it.

Yoon was arrested and indicted by prosecutors in January over his Dec. 3 martial law decree that plunged the country into huge political turmoil. The liberal opposition-controlled National Assembly separately voted to impeach him, leading to his suspension from office.

The Constitutional Court has been deliberating whether to formally dismiss or reinstate Yoon. If the court



Impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol waves to his supporters as he comes out of a detention center in Uiwang, South Korea on March 8. (AP)

upholds his impeachment, a national election will be held to find his successor within two months.

The Seoul Central District Court said Friday it accepted Yoon's request to be released from prison, citing the need to address questions over the legality of the investigations on the president. Yoon's lawyers have accused the investigative agency that detained

him before his formal arrest of lacking legal authority to probe rebellion charges.

The Seoul court also said the legal period of his formal arrest expired before he was indicted.

Yoon's release came after prosecutors decided not to appeal the decision by the Seoul court. South Korean law allows prosecutors to continue to hold

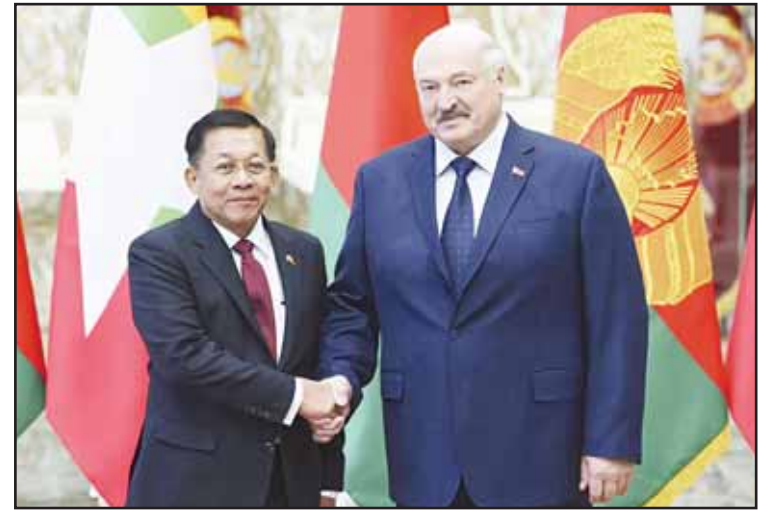
a suspect while pursuing an appeal, even after his or her arrest is canceled by a court.

The main liberal opposition Democratic Party, which led Yoon's Dec. 14 impeachment, lashed out at the prosecutors' decision, calling them "henchmen" of Yoon, a former prosecutor general. Party spokesperson Cho Seung-rae urged the Constitutional Court to dismiss Yoon as soon as possible to avoid further public unrest and anxiety.

Also:

SEOUL: South Korea suspended the training flights of air force aircraft and all live-fire drills following its fighter jets' accidental bombing of a civilian area, officials said Friday, posing a potential setback to its upcoming annual military training with the United States.

On Thursday, two South Korean KF-16 fighter jets mistakenly released four MK-82 bombs each on a civilian area in **Pocheon**, a city near the tense border with **North Korea**. The bombing, which injured nearly 30 people, two of them seriously, occurred when South Korean and US forces were engaging in a live-fire drill in connection with their broader Freedom Shield command post exercise set to begin Monday.



In this photo released by Belarus' Presidential Press Service, Myanmar's Military leader Senior Gen Min Aung Hlaing, (left), and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko pose for a photo prior to their talks in Minsk, Belarus on March 7. (AP)

Myanmar's head of military gov't announces dates for general poll

BANGKOK, March 8, (AP): Four years after seizing power from the elected administration, the head of the military government declared Myanmar will hold a general election within 10 months, state-run media reported Saturday.

Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing said Friday the election will take place either in December or January 2026 at the latest, according to the Global

New Light of Myanmar newspaper. He announced the dates in a press conference while on an official visit to Belarus, one of the few allies of Myanmar's military government, saying that 53 political parties have already submitted their lists to participate in the election.

However, Min Aung did not mention exact election dates.

Canada, Philippines to sign key defense act to boost combat drills and army ties

MANILA, Philippines, March 8, (AP): Canada and the Philippines, both vocal critics of China's increasingly aggressive actions in the disputed South

China Sea, have concluded talks for a key defense pact that would allow their forces to hold joint combat drills and boost defense engagements, the De-

partment of National Defense in Manila said Friday.

Canada and other Western nations have been reinforcing their military presence in the Indo-Pacific to help promote the rule of law and expand trade and investment in the region.

That dovetails with Philippine efforts under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to broaden defense ties with friendly countries to bolster his country's defense as it faces an increasingly assertive China in the disputed South China Sea.

The agreement with Canada "will establish a framework for increased cooperation, fostering closer collaboration between defense and military establishments, improving interoperability between forces and facilitating more effective joint exercises and capacity-building exercises," the Philippine defense department said.

It is expected to allow larger joint exercises, including in the South China Sea off the western Philippines.



In this handout photo provided by Public Affairs Office - Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine Navy personnel watch the Canadian vessel HMCS Montreal (FFH336) during the Multilateral Maritime Cooperative Activity being held in the West Philippine Sea, on Aug 7, 2024. (AP)

Ongoing talks with Ukraine, Russia

Zelensky to visit in April: South Africa

CAPE TOWN, South Africa, March 8, (AP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky will visit South Africa next month for talks with South African leader Cyril Ramaphosa on finding "a path to peace" with Russia, a spokesperson for Ramaphosa said Friday.

Zelensky's visit on April 10 will be a continuation of Ramaphosa's ongoing engagements with both Ukraine and Russia for "an inclusive peace process," spokesperson Vincent Magwenya said.

South Africa has adopted a neutral position in the war and has attempted to act as a mediator between the sides, although with limited success. Ramaphosa led an African peace mission to Russia and Ukraine in 2023 and met with both Zelensky and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Ramaphosa has held separate calls with both leaders since then. South Africa has ties to Russia through its membership of the BRICS bloc of developing nations and Ramaphosa had hoped to leverage that to find a way to advance talks.

Zelensky, meanwhile, has sought to shore up support for his nation after a disastrous meeting with US President Donald Trump last week. Trump has halted American military aid to Ukraine to pressure Zelensky to find an end to the



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky arrives for an EU Summit at the European Council building in Brussels on March 6. (AP)

three-year war, while the US excluded Ukraine and other European allies when it met with Russian officials in Saudi Arabia over a possible peace deal last month. South Africa says that Ukraine must be included in peace talks, echoing a call by European leaders.

Ramaphosa is due to meet with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council

President António Costa next week in Cape Town at an annual European Union-South Africa summit.

South Africa holds the presidency of the Group of 20 this year and has called for cooperation among that bloc - which includes the US, Russia, the UK, France and Germany - to find an end to the war in Ukraine.



Fritz Alphonse Jean, an economist and former central bank governor, who replaces Leslie Voltaire in the rotating presidency of the transitional presidential council, speaks during his installation ceremony in Port-au-Prince, Haiti on March 7. (AP)

New leader takes over Haiti's rocky presidential transitional council

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, March 8, (AP): The council tasked to prepare eventual presidential elections in Haiti swore in a new leader Friday, as the country keeps struggling with a persistent gang violence.

Fritz Alphonse Jean, an economist and former central bank governor, replaces Leslie Voltaire in the rotating presidency of the transitional presidential council, formed in 2024 after a violent gang siege of the capital that forced then Prime Minister Ariel Henry to resign.

During a ceremony in Port-au-Prince,

Jean described what Haiti is currently facing as a "war" and asked people to be united to address the security crisis.

"Our country is at war today," he said. "We need to be united to win this battle." The transitional presidential council works with Prime Minister Alix Didier Fils-Aimé and, amid its tasks, is helping run the country and organizing general elections, aimed for February 2026.

The country, and in particular the capital, face constant gang violence. The UN estimates that gangs already control 85% of Port-au-Prince.

Mexican drug cartel leader son gets life

WASHINGTON, March 8, (AP): The son of a Mexican drug cartel boss was sentenced Friday to life in prison for helping his father run one of the country's largest and most violent narcotics trafficking organizations.

Rubén Oseguera, known as El Menchito, is the son of fugitive Jalisco New Generation cartel boss Nemesio Oseguera. The son served as the CJNG cartel's second-in-command for seven years before his extradition to the U.S. in February 2020.

The younger Oseguera faced a maximum sentence of life in prison and a mandatory minimum of 40 years in prison when US District Judge

Beryl Howell sentenced him in Washington, D.C. One of the 35-year-old Oseguera's defense attorneys asked for a 40-year prison sentence, noting his client was only 14 when he was recruited to join his family's drug trafficking operation.

"You weren't a child when you were committing all these crimes, and you won't be sentenced as a child here," the judge told Oseguera.



Members of a French military flight crew talk on the tarmac at France's military air base in Dakar, Senegal on June 2, 2009. (AP)

North Korea unveils nuclear-powered strategic guided missile sub for first time

SEOUL, South Korea, March 8, (AP): North Korea unveiled for the first time a nuclear-powered submarine under construction, a weapons system that can pose a major security threat to South Korea and the US.

State media on Saturday released photos showing what it called "a nuclear-powered strategic guided missile submarine," as it reported leader Kim Jong Un's visits to major shipyards where warships are built.

The Korean Central News Agency, or KCNA, didn't provide details on the submarine, but said Kim was briefed on its construction.

The naval vessel appears to be a 6,000-ton-class or 7,000-ton-class one which can carry about 10 missiles, said Moon Keun-sik, a South Korean submarine expert who teaches at Seoul's Hanyang University. He said the use of the term "strategic guided missiles" meant it would carry nuclear-capable weapons.

"It would be absolutely threatening to us and the US," Moon said. A nuclear-powered submarine



In this undated photo provided on March 8, 2025, by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, (bottom right), visits a shipyard to construct warships at an undisclosed place in North Korea. (AP)

was among a long wishlist of sophisticated weaponry that Kim vowed to introduce during a major political conference in 2021 to cope with what he called escalating U.S.-led military threats. Other weapons

were solid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missiles, hypersonic weapons, spy satellites and multi-warhead missiles. North Korea has since performed a run of testing activities to acquire them.



A yacht sits washed ashore in the Broadwater at Labrador following cyclone Alfred on the Gold Coast, Australia on March 8. (AP)

1 dead, several hurt as tropical low tracks across Australian e.coast

Flooding rains will continue for days to lash a region of the Australian east coast even though it avoided the destructive winds of its first tropical cyclone in 51 years, officials said on Saturday. One person was confirmed dead and several were injured.

Tropical Cyclone Alfred had been expected to become the first cyclone to cross the Australian coast near the Queensland state capital, Brisbane, Australia's third-most populous city, since 1974.

But it weakened Saturday to a tropical low, which is defined as carrying sustained winds of less than 63 kph (39 mph), then came to a near-standstill off the Brisbane coast for several hours.

The cyclone's remnant is forecast to track west across the Australian mainland in the coming days bringing heavy rain, Bureau of Meteorology manager Matt Collopy said.

"The real threat now is from that locally heavy-to-intense rainfall

which may lead to flash and riverine flooding," Collopy told reporters.

Cyclones are common in Queensland's tropical north but are rare in the state's temperate and densely populated southeast corner that borders New South Wales state.

A 61-year-old man who disappeared in a flooded river near the New South Wales town of Dorrigo was confirmed the first casualty of the crisis when his body was recovered on Saturday, police said. (AP)

France hands over army bases to Senegal

DAKAR, Senegal, March 8, (AP): France handed control of two military facilities to Senegal on Friday, beginning the formal process of withdrawing its military presence from the West African country amid its waning influence in the region.

The handover follows the declaration by Senegal's President Bassirou Diomaye Faye late last year that all foreign troops would leave the country.

"The French side handed over to the Senegalese side the facilities and housing in the Maréchal and Saint-Exupéry

districts on Friday, March 7, 2025," the French Embassy in Senegal said in a statement Friday. "Located near the Hann Park, these districts were ready to be returned since the summer of 2024."

France set up a joint commission with Senegal last month to organize the withdrawal, and the French army recently announced it had dismissed 162 Senegalese who worked on military bases in Dakar.

The French Embassy did not respond to an email late Friday seeking details on how many service members remain in Senegal.

Senegal's new government has taken a hard-line stance on the presence of French troops as part of a larger regional backlash against what many see as the legacy of an oppressive colonial empire.

France has faced opposition from some African leaders over what they described as a demeaning and heavy-handed approach to the continent. It has suffered setbacks in West Africa in recent years, including Chad, Niger and Burkina Faso, where French troops are no longer on the ground.

Kuwaiti oil price rises to \$73.61 pb

KUWAIT CITY, March 8, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 59 cents to USD 73.61 per barrel on Friday as opposed to USD 73.02 pb on Thursday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Saturday.

The prices of the Brent crude and West Texas Intermediate went up by 90 and 68 cents respectively settling each at USD 70.36 pb and USD 67.04 pb.

Business

Other Voices

Prices drop to 3-year low

OPEC+ to boost oil supply

By Kamel Al-Harami

Independent Oil Analyst

OPEC+ is set to start increasing oil supply to the market starting in April and will add about 120,000 barrels per day. This move has already caused prices to drop by \$3 a barrel, reaching their lowest point in the past three years, even though there are no signs of tightening supply in the oil markets.



Al-Harami

The markets are nervous about the upcoming tariffs on various countries imposed by the U.S. administration, which are likely to lead to a slowdown in global economic activity. The market is reacting to the U.S. demand for oil producers to lower prices, and it seems that this is on track, contributing to the drop in oil prices towards \$67 a barrel.

The decision by OPEC+ to release more oil into the market may have additional motivations and

consequences. It could be a strategic move to discourage non-OPEC producers from increasing their crude oil output. This could be a sign that OPEC+ is fed up with continuously curtailing and reducing its vast spare crude capacity, while other producers continue to increase their production and compete in the market, all while benefiting from the stability OPEC+ decisions provide to protect their investments.

At the expense of reducing its own production and price protection, the time has perhaps come for the oil organization to be firm and sacrifice its own crude oil throughput in the interest of a long-term OPEC+ strategy. This calls for oil price stability and the security of supply for global consumers.

The question is: Will the organization continue to release more oil into the market, up to 2.2 million barrels over the next 18 months, regardless of how low oil prices may fall?

The hope is that oil prices will not decline further, but if they do, will OPEC+ continue to increase supply, or will it pause to protect its own budget deficits and avoid exacerbating them further? [email: nafikuwaiti@yahoo.com](mailto:nafikuwaiti@yahoo.com)

Benchmark rises

Bursa sees mixed performance

KUWAIT CITY, March 8, (KUNA): Bursa Kuwait witnessed over the past week diverse performance with respect of value and volume of the traded stocks as well as number of the transactions, while the benchmark climbed.

Alshall index (value) reached in the end of Thursday's trades some 716.1 points, rising by 6.3 points, 0.9 percent compared to the past week's closure, rising by 79.9 points, some 12.6 percent compared to the 2024 closing,

according to an economic report published by AlShall Consulting Company on Saturday.

Number of the companies' stock prices of which climbed, last week, reached 14 vis a vis 10 the previous week. Those whose chips turned bearish amounted to 12 against 17, while those of three firms did not change -- against two.

Bourse Kuwait, since 2016, has been playing a pivotal role in the development and innovation in the financial market.

Kuwait equities continue to trend upwards

S&P GCC composite index falls 1.0% in February 2025

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" released its Monthly Market Review report for February 2025, stating that Kuwait equities continued to be among the top performing markets in GCC supported by positive earnings, with all sectors ending the month in green. Kuwait's All Share Index posted a monthly gain of 4.1%, the second highest monthly gains among GCC markets. Technology and healthcare were the top gainers, rising by 54.2% and 12.0% respectively. Key sectors such as basic materials, telecom, banks and real estate had gained 5.7%, 5.5%, 4.5% and 4.0% respectively in February 2025. Among banking stocks, Gulf Bank and Burgan Bank were the top gainers, with a monthly return of 11.7% and 9.2% respectively. Gulf Bank's operating profit increased by 3.2% y/y in 2024, but its net profit had declined by 15.5% y/y due to an increase in total provisions and impairments. However, Warba Bank's acquisition of a stake in the bank continued to drive prices up during the month. Among Premier market stocks, Ali Al-Ghanim Sons Automotive Company and Boursa Kuwait Securities Company were the top gainers, rising by 20.8% and 17.0% respectively for the month. Boursa Kuwait's net profit rose by 15.8% y/y in 2024 to KD 18.1 million.

Kuwait's cabinet has approved a draft budget for FY 2025-2026. The country expects a budget deficit of KD6.31 billion (USD 20.4 billion) for the fiscal year, an increase of 11.9% from the KD 5.6 billion shortfall estimated for FY 2024-2025. Oil revenues have been estimated at KD 15.3 billion (USD 49.6 billion), declining by 5.6% compared to last year's budget. The budget for FY 2025-26 is based on oil price assumption of USD 68 per barrel for the fiscal year, as against the current price of USD 73.2 per barrel. Kuwait's consumer price inflation rate was at 2.5% y/y in January 2025, unchanged com-



Markaz Logo

pared to previous month. Kuwait has updated its property law, allowing foreign entities licensed by the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), companies listed on the Kuwaiti stock exchange and licensed real estate funds and investment companies to own property in the country for their business operations or for employee housing.

The S&P GCC Composite index declined by 1.0% in February 2025 with mixed performance across GCC markets. Saudi equity index declined by 2.4% during the month weighed by performance of some blue chips. ACWA Power and Saudi Aramco had declined by 9.1% and 2.5% respectively for the month. Abu Dhabi's equity index declined 0.2% in February 2025, amid mixed performance among blue chips. Dubai's equity index gained 2.6% for the month. Emirates NBD gained 6.0% for the month. Emaar Properties gained 0.4% for the month, supported by 16% y/y increase in its net profit for 2024. The company's property sales surged by 72% y/y in 2024. Qatar's equity markets lost 2.1% for the month. Bahrain was the top gainer among GCC markets, gaining 4.3% for the month. The markets were supported by positive earnings reports from blue chips such as Aluminium Bahrain and National Bank of Bahrain.

Saudi Arabia's fiscal deficit for 2024 was at SAR 115.63 billion (USD 30.83 billion), increasing by 43% y/y. Total spending had increased by 6.3% y/y due to higher current expenditure. Revenue had risen by 3.9% y/y, supported by a 9.8% y/y rise in non-oil revenue. Oil revenue growth for the year was flat at 0.3%. Dubai's GDP rose by 3.1% y/y in 9M 2024. Fitch has opined that the outlook for GCC Corporates in 2025 remains stable supported by strong public-sector investments such as in transportation, urban planning and energy, as well as private-sector growth.

Global markets were negative during February 2025. MSCI World and S&P 500 indices declined by 0.8% and 1.4% respectively. Levy of tariffs by U.S. and weak economic data had driven markets lower during the month. The U.S. has levied 25% tariffs on imports from Mexico and Canada and has doubled the 10% tariff levied on Chinese imports. U.S. President also plans to impose tariff of about 25% on automobiles, pharmaceuticals, and lumber products. U.S. Fed Chair stated that the Fed was in no hurry to cut rates further given the strong labour market and elevated inflation levels during his meeting with the U.S. Senate. The MSCI EM index gained 0.4% during the

month, supported by 2.1% gain in Chinese equities. Following DeepSeek's success, investor interest in China's AI-related stocks has supported Chinese equities.

U.S. inflation stood at 3.0% y/y in January 2025, its highest rise since June 2024 and a slight increase from the 2.9% y/y reading in December 2024. The rise in inflation was due to a broad-based rise in prices across segments. The U.S. labor market appears to be cooling down as the U.S. economy added 143,000 jobs in January, down from 307,000 in December 2024. U.S. job openings also fell to a three-month low of 76 million in December 2024.

The yield on the 10-year U.S. treasury notes closed at 4.24% at the end of February 2025, down by 34 bps compared to the end of January, on the back of softer than expected employment data and concerns over the impact of levy of tariffs on growth and inflation.

Oil (Brent) prices closed the month at USD 73.2 per barrel, down by 4.7% during the month. Concerns over trade war amid mutual levy of tariffs by U.S. and China, U.S. President's pledge to boost oil production, weak economic data in major economies like U.S. and Germany had weighed on oil prices in February. Gold prices closed at USD 2,858.6, gaining 2.1% during the month, on the back of safe-haven demand amid concerns over the onset of a global trade war.

The outlook of global asset classes would continue to be shaped by Trump's trade and economic policies and evolving expectations on further interest rate cuts. While largely positive earnings announcements from GCC Corporates are indicative of the sustained momentum in the broader non-oil economy, lingering weakness in oil prices could impact OPEC+ production cut decisions and in turn weigh on oil GDP of GCC economies.

About Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz"
Established in 1974, Kuwait Financial Centre K.P.S.C "Markaz" is one of the leading asset management and investment banking institutions in the MENA region with total assets under management of over KD 1.41 billion (USD 4.57 billion) as of 31 December 2024. Markaz was listed on the Boursa Kuwait in 1997. Over the years, Markaz has pioneered innovation through the creation of new investment channels. These channels enjoy unique characteristics and helped Markaz widen investors' horizons. Examples include Mumtaz (the first domestic mutual fund), MREF (the first real estate investment fund in Kuwait), Forsa Financial Fund (the first options market maker in the GCC since 2005), and the GCC Momentum Fund (the first passive fund of its kind in Kuwait and across GCC that follows the momentum methodology), all conceptualized, established, and managed by Markaz.



Basil Al-Suwaidan receives the Cybersecurity Leader of the Year award.

Al-Suwaidan praises KIB team

KIB's Al-Suwaidan named CYSEC Cybersecurity Leader of the Year

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced that Basil Al-Suwaidan, General Manager of the Information Security, Privacy and Anti-Fraud Department, has been named the CYSEC Cybersecurity Leader of the Year at the 14th edition of the CYSEC Global Expo and Conference, recently held in Kuwait, as part of the CYSEC Awards 2025.

The award was officially presented to Al-Suwaidan at a distinguished ceremony held at Crowne Plaza Kuwait on the sidelines of the conference, which was sponsored by the National Cybersecurity Center.

The event was attended by leading cybersecurity professionals, industry experts, and key stakeholders from the bank.

The CYSEC Awards recognizes outstanding contributions and innovations in cybersecurity across Kuwait, honoring individuals and organizations that have made significant strides in securing critical infrastructure and advancing the cyber ecosystem.

The esteemed Leader of the Year recognition underscores Al-Suwaidan's exceptional leadership and influence in the field of cybersecurity, and his unwavering commitment to strengthening digital security in the banking sector, inspiring change and progress.

Expressing his gratitude, Al-Suwaidan stated: "I am deeply honored to receive the CYSEC

Cybersecurity Leader of the Year Award. This award highlights the critical role cybersecurity leaders play in shaping the digital future of the financial sector.

"In an era where cyber threats are becoming increasingly sophisticated, it is imperative that we remain proactive and adaptive in protecting financial institutions and customers from evolving risks."

He added: "At KIB, we are committed to upholding customer trust and safety by investing in advanced security technologies, robust risk management frameworks, and talent development.

"These efforts align with our strategic goal of deepening customer relationships and our long-term vision of becoming the Islamic bank of choice in Kuwait."

"More importantly, this award is a testament to the dedication and hard work of my team at KIB, whose relentless efforts continue to strengthen our cybersecurity framework."

KIB reaffirms its commitment to maintaining the highest cybersecurity standards in alignment with global best practices, recently receiving the ISO 27001:2013 Information Security Management System certification for the 11th year in a row.

The Bank remains dedicated to fostering a secure and resilient digital ecosystem, staying ahead of evolving threats to ensure that customer assets and data remain protected.

Guided by its mission to remain a top employer of choice and commitment to ESG

Burgan Bank celebrates Women's International Day amid culture of equity, inclusivity, & empowerment

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: In celebration of Women's International Day, Burgan Bank upheld its commitment to fostering a work culture of equity, inclusivity, and empowerment that attracts and retains the most aspiring national talents. On its mission to position itself as an employer of choice, Burgan, a certified Great Place to Work®, has successfully built an environment where all employees have numerous, equal-access opportunities for personal and professional growth, empowering the most driven and committed to advance to leadership roles within the institution and across the industry.

These yearlong, cross-departmental efforts echo the Bank's commitment to investing in Kuwait's professional calibers, empowering women in the workplace, and embedding environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles into all operations and initiatives.

"At Burgan, we pride ourselves on fostering a culture of equity and inclusivity that continues to attract the most adept national calibers across Kuwait's banking sector, allowing us to grow with confidence and resolve," said Mr. Naqeeb Amin, General Manager - Human Resources and Development at Burgan Bank. "As we celebrate the remarkable women of our team and the invaluable insights they bring to the institution, we renew our commitment to adopting an equity-centered approach to empowerment, which recognizes the different forms of support our diverse employees need to realize their full personal and professional potential."

Mr. Naqeeb added: "Empowering employees to achieve their best and continue to grow is a year-round project that demands a thorough and up-to-date understanding of employees' individual needs, aspirations, preferred learning styles, and unique challenges."

Among the most notable efforts for fostering an environment of equity and equal chances for success is the 'Lean-In Circle for Women Empowerment' program, which centers on discussing the unique challenges that women face in the workplace and providing them with dedicated mentorship and



Mr. Naqeeb Amin, General Manager - Human Resources and Development at Burgan Bank

enabling them to grow past these hurdles.

"Addressing women's unique challenges and aspirations, and ultimately achieving diversity in the workplace, isn't merely a mandatory standard or a quota that businesses need to fulfill; fostering diversity and inclusivity is at the core of any culture's sustainable growth, be it professional, social, or even ecological," commented Ms. Ghalia Al-Saleh, Senior Manager - Talent Acquisition at Burgan Bank. "Nonetheless, we are honored to have achieved the highest percentage of female employment in the domestic banking sector in 2025, with women making up 46% of our staff."

Ms. Al-Saleh underscored Burgan's relentless efforts to acquire and develop the most aspiring Kuwaiti professional talents in line with its commitment to the nationwide Kuwaitization strategy in addition to Burgan's strategy for investing in national human capital, which benefits both employees and undergraduate interns who aspire to build a career in banking and finance.

Besides programs such as the 'Lean-In Circle', Burgan Bank also organized its first 'Empower Her' summer internship, which hosted 18 young women, matching interns with mentors from the Bank's most inspirational and established female leaders. The internship's success was followed by the 'Empower Her' seminar, which was held under the auspices and sponsorship of Sheikha Danah



Ms. Ghalia Al-Saleh, Senior Manager - Talent Acquisition at Burgan Bank

Al Sabah, with the participation of prominent figures and impactful female industry leaders in the Kuwaiti banking and finance sector.

Burgan Bank upholds its commitment to female representation in the workplace, underscoring its vital importance in achieving fundamental industry-wide change, which depends on female representation in leadership roles and equal opportunity for claiming decision-making positions within institutions and across the country's various sectors.

It serves to note that Burgan Bank remains one of the most active contributors to achieving the 'New Kuwait' Vision 2035 goals through its dedicated strategy for investing in Kuwait's national calibers and human capital. Throughout the year, the Bank continues to offer its staff the best learning and development opportunities that meet their various needs and aspirations across all employment grades.

About Burgan Bank

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is a Kuwait-based conventional bank with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institution sectors. From its earliest days, the Bank has significantly sought to diversify its offering to cater to its growing retail and private banking customer base.

Burgan Bank has majority-owned subsidiaries, collectively known as the "Burgan Bank Group", in the MENAT region. This Group is supported by one of the largest branch networks across

the region and includes: Gulf Bank Algeria - AGB (Algeria), Tunis International Bank - TIB (Tunisia), and Burgan Bank Turkey. Furthermore, Burgan Bank has a presence in the UAE through its corporate office, Burgan Financial Services Limited.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years, through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Moreover, Burgan Bank's brand has been built on a foundation of real values - trust, commitment, excellence, and progression - which serve as a reminder of the high standards to which the Bank always aspires. In fact, the Bank's core philosophy of 'Driven by You' is the foundation on which its products and services are continuously developed.

Burgan Bank has achieved the LEED v4.1 O+M: EB Gold Certification for its Head Office in Kuwait City. The Bank has also obtained the ISO/IEC 27001:2022 Information Security Management Systems certificate (ISMS), ISO/IEC 27701:2019 Privacy Information Management Systems (PIMS), ISO/IEC 20000-1:2018 Information Technology Service Management System (ITSMS) and was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System (QMS), making it one of the few banks in the GCC and Kuwait to receive such certification for five consecutive times. At the same time, the Bank has the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twenty consecutive years. Moreover, in a testament to its dedication to the development of its human capital, Burgan Bank is the first bank in Kuwait to be certified as a Great Place to Work®, earning the distinct honor in 2023.

Burgan Bank is a majority-owned subsidiary of KIPCO (Kuwait Projects Company), one of the largest holding companies in the MENA region.

'Equality is not just a goal, it is our business imperative'

ABK celebrates International Women's Day with commitment to empowerment and equality

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: In celebration of International Women's Day, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) reaffirms its unwavering commitment to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and empowering environment where all employees, especially women, can thrive and succeed.

Recognizing the invaluable contributions of its female workforce, ABK continues its journey to promoting gender equality, as demonstrated by having signed the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) 'Equality Means Business' pledge, initiated by UN Women.

Commenting on this, Afrah Al Arbash, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK, said, "This is a commitment and powerful step towards equality and strengthening the rights of employees at work."

As ABK continues to champion gen-

der equality and the empowerment of women, it remains dedicated to cultivating a culture where every individual has the opportunity to excel. International Women's Day is a time to celebrate females' achievements and renew the Bank's commitment to making equality a reality in the workplace and beyond.

With women making up 41% of its talented workforce, ABK is proud to report that women held 29% of leadership roles in 2024, marking a progressive increase. These statistics reflect the Bank's dedication to creating pathways for female professionals to rise within the Bank.

ABK recognizes that gender diversity in the workplace is essential for success and advancement. It brings fresh and innovative ideas, fosters creativity, and develops more effective customer



Afrah Al Arbash – General Manager of Human Resources at ABK

solutions, while significantly improving performance. Moreover, the Bank

sees empowering women as crucial for enhancing its reputation as a responsible market player and as a vital factor in achieving sustainable development. This focus also attracts more talented females to join its team.

"At ABK, equality is not just a goal; it is a strategic business imperative to achieve inclusivity and diversity across the Bank. Through advanced workshops and exclusive training, we are committed to empowering our female leaders, providing them the tools and opportunities necessary to navigate future challenges and seize opportunities," said Al Arbash.

ABK's holistic approach also extends to the well-being of female employees. In alignment with this commitment, the Bank organizes wellness events tailored to women's unique needs and that em-

phasize the significance of self-care and work-life balance.

Moreover, ABK has introduced HR policies to foster an inclusive workplace for all employees that is based on a culture of respect and supports the various calibres that make success a reality.

"We believe that supporting and empowering women is integral to their success and, in turn, the success of ABK as a whole. Our mission is to ensure that no career ambition is hampered and that every woman at ABK has the support she needs to climb the career ladder," Al Arbash concluded.

ABK remains committed to empowering women, which is essential to achieving equality and driving growth. The Bank reaffirms its commitment to supporting and empowering women and building a more inclusive future for all.

eero Pro 6E to deliver faster, more reliable Wi-Fi

Zain partners with eero to bring mesh Wi-Fi technology to Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Zain has teamed up with eero, a global leader in mesh-networking technology and wireless solutions, and a subsidiary of Amazon. This collaboration brings the cutting-edge eero mesh technology to Zain customers in Kuwait, marking Zain as the first telecom operator in the Middle East and North Africa to work with eero.

The announcement was made at the Mobile World Congress 2025 (MWC) in Barcelona, attended by Zain Kuwait's Operational Marketing Director Charlie Asfour, Managing Director of Global ISP Business Development at eero John Caldwell, and Managing Director of EMEA Business Development at eero Nabil Elhawary.

Commenting on the partnership, Zain Kuwait Chief Commercial Officer Meshal Al-Kandari said: "We're delighted to collaborate with one of the global pioneers in wireless device solutions, bringing innovative digital experiences to our customers. eero devices offer technical features that enhance the user experience, providing in-home coverage, speed, stability, and reliability, to deliver an enhanced internet experience on Kuwait's biggest 5G network."

He added: "Our customers are deeply passionate about the digital lifestyle, which is why we've prioritized delivering innovative, 5G-powered experiences that cater to their needs and aspirations. These include top-tier entertainment plans, collaborations with leading global content providers, and a wide range of gaming options. This collaboration aligns perfectly with our vision of providing a fully comprehensive digital experience to our customers."

"At eero, our goal is to provide fast, reliable, and secure Wi-Fi to customers around the world," said Nick Weaver, CEO and co-founder of eero. "And



Charlie Asfour, John Caldwell, and Nabil Elhawary at MWC in Barcelona.

I'm always excited when we have the opportunity to bring our amazing products to new parts of the world. That's why we're thrilled to work with Zain to offer eero to their customers in Kuwait and the Middle East."

The eero Pro 6E offers technical features to deliver a reliable home internet experience, supporting network speeds up to 2.3 Gbps. It also supports Wi-Fi 6E technology, which supports faster speeds and offers more bandwidth compared to previous generations of Wi-Fi technology. The device operates on 2.4 GHz, 5 GHz, and the new 6 GHz band.

Mesh networks allow multiple routers to work together to provide fast,

reliable and secure Wi-Fi. Unlike traditional home networks that rely on a single router, mesh networks consist of as many access points as a user needs to get coverage in the home. This design results in wider coverage, faster speeds, and greater stability compared to traditional networks.

eero devices deliver high speeds throughout the home, using eero's patented TrueMesh networking technology to dynamically find the optimal data path on the network, ensuring a reliable internet experience. The devices are easy to install, boast top security standards, receive regular updates for quality assurance, and can be conveniently controlled via the free eero app.

Trump's tariffs & government layoffs stir economic worries

Labor market shows mixed results

WASHINGTON, March 8, (AP): With his flurry of tariffs, government layoffs and spending freezes, there are growing worries President Donald Trump may be doing more to harm the U.S. economy than to fix it.

The labor market remains healthy with a 4.1% unemployment rate and 151,000 jobs added in February, and Trump likes to point to investment commitments by Apple and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company to show that he's delivering results.

But Friday's employment report also found that the number of people stuck working part-time because of economic circumstances jumped by 460,000 last month. In the leisure and hospitality sectors that reflect consumers having extra money to spend, 16,000 jobs were lost. And the federal government reduced its payrolls by 10,000 in a potential harbinger of the alarm being sounded by the stock market, consumer confidence and other measures of where the economy is headed.

Since January, the economic policy uncertainty index has spiked 41% to a level, 334.5, that in the past signaled a recession. Nicholas Bloom, a Stanford University economist and co-developer of the uncertainty index, said it's unclear how this will play out, but he's worried.

"I have an increasing fear we will enter into what may become known as the 'Trump recession,'" he said. "Ongoing policy turbulence and a tariff war could tip the U.S. economy into its first recession in five years." That last recession occurred under Trump because of the coronavirus pandemic.

For his part, Trump seems comfortable with the uncertainty that he's generating, saying that any financial pain from import taxes is a mere "disruption" that will eventually lead to more factories relocating to the United States and stronger growth.

If Trump's gambit succeeds, the Republican would cement his reputation as an unconventional leader who proved doubters wrong. But if Trump's tariffs backfire, much of the price would be paid by everyday Americans who could suffer from job losses, lower wages, higher inflation and, possibly, an injured sense of national pride.

In an interview to air Sunday on Fox News' "Sunday Morning Futures," Trump was pressed to provide some clarity on his tariffs agenda that has caused uncertainty to fester. The president largely hedged his answer and blamed the 6% drop in the stock market over the past two weeks on "big globalists."

"You know, the tariffs could go up as time goes by, and they may go up and, you know, I don't know if it's predictable," the president said.

The White House maintains that Friday's jobs report showed the administration's strategy is working because manufacturers added 10,000 jobs. Of the manufacturing gains, 8,900 jobs came from the auto sector, recovering some of the industry's job losses in January. The White House also suggested that the loss of leisure and hospitality jobs was the result of flu season and people having depleted savings and credit card debt because of President Joe Biden's term.

"I thought it was a really, really impressive jobs report," Kevin Hassett, director of the White House National Economic Council, said of Friday's numbers.

Hassett said the additional factory jobs were the result of companies "on-shoring" work because of the coming tariffs.

"This is the first of many reports that are going to look like this," Hassett said with regard to the hiring in the industrial sector.

The stock market selloff raises doubts about whether tar-

iffs will create the promised jobs.

"Markets anticipate," said John Silvia, CEO of Dynamic Economic Strategy. "The turn down the dark alley of tariffs signals higher inflation, slower economic growth and a weaker U.S. dollar. It is an economic horror movie in slow motion."

Trump has instigated a trade war in the last week with Canada, Mexico and China, only to then hit a monthlong pause on some of his import taxes because of the threat to U.S. auto factory jobs and because of Mexico's latest efforts to curbentanyl smuggling.

More tariffs are coming on April 2 for Europe, Trump says, possibly putting the United States into open conflict with a continent it helped rebuild after World War II. South Korea, India and Brazil could also face new tariffs, Trump said in his address to a joint session of Congress on Tuesday.

Silvia said Trump's tariffs need to be more targeted with regard to products and nations and set at lower rates, adding that doing so would provide an assurance that there is solid research backing the measures.

There were multiple signs of uncertainty and concerns about the tariffs in the Federal Reserve's beige book, a collection of anecdotes from hundreds of businesses that the Fed releases eight times a year.

Published Wednesday, the beige book included 47 references to uncertainty, up from just 17 in the previous edition in January.

"Many businesses noted heightened economic uncertainty and expressed concern about tariffs," the Fed's New York branch reported. "Looking ahead, businesses were notably less optimistic."

"This is the perfect storm for businesses," said Brian Bethune, an economist at Boston College. "How can you possibly plan anything in this environment?"

Still, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said Friday on CNBC that he sees positive momentum in combating inflation. He said crude oil prices have fallen since Trump's inauguration, as have the interest rates on 10-year U.S. Treasury notes and mortgages.

Still, interest rates on government debt are higher than they were last year in September, and the recent decline could reflect a slowdown in economic demand.

Bessent suggested a core problem is that the U.S. economy has become overly reliant on government deficits and that the Trump administration would be fostering stronger growth in the private sector.

"We've become addicted to this government spending, and there's going to be a detox period," he said.

This particular form of economic rehab is coming from Trump's Department of Government Efficiency, which is led by T-shirted tech mogul Elon Musk, the owner of Tesla, X and SpaceX, among other companies.

The alleged savings by DOGE are still too paltry to bend the troubling trajectory of the national debt that is largely being driven by tax revenues that are insufficient to cover the rising costs of Social Security and Medicare.

But the initiative has started to downsize the federal workforce in ways that could surface in future jobs reports. Roughly 75,000 employees took the deferred resignation plan. There are also thousands of probationary federal workers who were fired and tens of thousands of layoffs to come based on the administration's plans.

Asked Friday in the Oval Office if the government layoffs could hurt the overall labor market, Trump said the economy would be great.

"I think the labor market is going to be fantastic, but it's going to have high-paying manufacturing jobs," he said. "We had too many people in government. You can't just do that."

Tariff plans contributing to uncertainty

Fed's Powell says interest rates on hold with economic uncertainty widespread

NEW YORK, March 8, (AP): The Federal Reserve is likely to keep its key interest rate unchanged in the coming months as it waits for widespread "uncertainty" stemming from President Donald Trump's policies to resolve, Chair Jerome Powell said Friday at a conference in New York.

Powell said the Trump administration is making policy changes in several areas, including trade, taxes, government spending, immigration and regulation, and added that the "net effect" of those changes are what will matter for the economy and the Fed's interest rate policies.

"While there have been recent developments in some of these areas, especially trade policy, uncertainty around the changes and their likely effects remains high," Powell said. "As we parse the incoming information, we are focused on separating the signal from the noise as the outlook evolves. We do not need to be in a hurry, and are well positioned to wait for greater clarity."

Most economists say that Trump's plans to slap tariffs on a wide array of imports, including 25% duties on goods from Canada and Mexico that he partially delayed Thursday, will push up prices and slow growth. But many also expect that tax cuts and deregulation could boost the economy.

Powell's comments pushed some traders to pare back their forecasts for how many interest rate cuts the Fed may deliver this year. They had been banking on at least three following a stream of weaker-than-expected reports on the U.S. economy. But Powell reiterated the Fed is likely on hold for a while. That sent Treasury yields higher in the bond market.

Rate reductions could help bring down borrowing costs for mortgages, auto loans, credit cards, and business loans.

Powell, in a question and answer session, acknowledged that typically tariffs would cause a "one-time" price increase, rather than persistent inflation, and the Fed could ignore such a temporary effect. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent on Thursday made a similar argument: "We could get a one-time price adjustment," Bessent said, before adding, "I'm not worried about inflation."

Yet Powell also said there were other considerations the Fed has to take into account when deciding whether to keep its rate unchanged, or even raise rates. For example, Powell suggested tariffs might have more than just a one-time impact "if it turns into a series" of tariff hikes, or "if the increases are larger, that would matter."

"What really does matter is what is happening with long-term inflation expectations," Powell added. Powell noted that shorter-term expectations have risen, partly out of concern about tariffs, though longer-term expectations have been stable. Expectations that prices will

rise can worsen inflation if they cause consumers and businesses to change their behavior in anticipation. Some companies might charge more when they expect their own costs to increase.

When Trump imposed tariffs in his last administration, Powell noted, the Fed ended up reducing its key rate, "because growth weakened so much."

Powell said the economy remains mostly healthy despite "elevated uncertainty." He characterized Friday's jobs report, which showed employers added 151,000 jobs and the unemployment rate ticked up to 4.1%, as in line with the "solid" gains of the past six months.

He also noted that there were signs consumer spending has slowed compared with the healthy gains in the second half of last year, and said surveys of consumers and businesses "point to heightened uncertainty about the economic outlook." Further complicating matters, he acknowledged that measures of consumer sentiment "have not been a good predictor" of consumer spending in recent years.

The Fed's own beige book, a collection of anecdotes from hundreds of businesses, mentioned uncertainty 47 times in its latest edition released Wednesday, up from just 17 times in January. The Fed publishes the beige book eight times a year.

Powell spoke at a conference organized by the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business.

President Donald Trump's on-again, off-again tariff policy and rapid-fire layoffs of government workers has created a spike in uncertainty among businesses and caused a sharp drop in consumer confidence. Many economists have marked down their estimates for the economy's growth to as low as 1% at an annual rate in the first three months of this year, down from 2.3% in last year's final quarter.

Yet as Fed governor Christopher Waller noted Thursday, there are "good news" cuts and "bad news" cuts. "Bad news" cuts occur if the Fed reduces rates out of concern that the economy is slowing, while "good news" reductions are those that reflect a sense by the Fed that inflation is returning to its target of 2%.

Waller added that he still believes it will be possible for the Fed to engineer "good news" rate cuts later this year, though he dismissed the potential for a cut at the Fed's next meeting this month.

After cutting its key rate three times last year to about 4.3%, Powell indicated in January that the Fed would pause any further cuts amid signs that inflation has remained stuck above its target. The central bank's preferred inflation gauge shows that prices rose 2.5% in January compared with a year ago. Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, core prices rose 2.6%, the smallest increase since June.

US employers add solid 151,000 jobs last month though unemployment up to 4.1%

WASHINGTON, March 8, (AP): U.S. employers added solid 151,000 jobs last month, but the outlook is cloudy as President Donald Trump threatens a trade war, purges the federal workforce and promises to deport millions of immigrants.

The Labor Department reported Friday that hiring was up from a revised 125,000 in January. Economists had expected 160,000 new jobs last month.

The unemployment rate rose slightly to 4.1% as the number jobless Americans rose by 203,000.

Employment rose in healthcare, finance and transportation and warehousing. The federal government shed 10,000 jobs, the most since June 2022, though economists don't expect Trump's federal layoffs to have much of an impact until the March jobs report. Restaurants and bars cut nearly 28,000 jobs last month on top of a loss of almost 30,000 in January.

"The labor market continues to hold up, but we're still a far cry from where we were a year or two years ago," said Sarah House, senior economist at Wells Fargo. House expects hiring to slow and unemployment to creep higher as Trump continues to cut spending on programs and slash the federal workforce, while imposing tariffs on America's trading partners.

The spending cuts "are likely to spill

over into the private sector, hitting contractors and nonprofits, and we still have a trade war that is picking up," House said. "There are multiple battles for the labor market to fight off, multiple shocks it's having to work through in the months ahead."

The economy's unexpectedly strong recovery from the pandemic recession of 2020 set loose an inflationary surge that peaked in June 2022 when prices came in 9.1% higher than they'd been a year earlier.

In response, the Federal Reserve raised its benchmark interest rate 11 times in 2022 and 2023, taking it to the highest level in more than two decades. The economy remained sturdy despite the higher borrowing costs, defying expectations of a recession, thanks to strong consumer spending, big productivity gains at businesses and an influx of immigrants who eased labor shortages.

The American job market has remained remarkably resilient, but it has cooled from the red-hot hiring of 2021-2023. Employers added a decent average of 168,000 jobs a month last year. But that was down from 216,000 in 2023, 380,000 in 2022 and a record 603,000 in 2021 as the economy rebounded from COVID-19 lockdowns.

Inflation came down - dropping to 2.4% in September -- allowing the

Fed to reverse course and cut rates three times in 2024. The rate-cutting was expected to continue this year, but progress on inflation has stalled since summer, and the Fed has held off.

Average hourly earnings rose 0.3% last month, down from a 0.4% increase in January.

Fed officials will likely see the figures as supporting their current wait-and-see approach toward interest-rate cuts. With inflation still modestly above the Fed's 2% target, several have made clear in recent remarks that they would like to see more progress before cutting their benchmark rate any further.

Steady hiring and an expanding economy make it easier for the Fed to stay on the sidelines. Should companies start laying off workers and the unemployment rate rise, pressure could rise on the Fed to cut rates. On Thursday, Fed governor Chris Waller suggested a cut was unlikely at the central bank's March meeting, adding that Fed officials would like to see more data before making any further moves.

Rick Gillespie, chief commercial officer at Columbus, Ohio-based Revive Environmental Technology LLC, said he is bullish about the prospects for the environmental contamination mitigation and water treatment company despite the uncertain economy.

20 customers winning cash prizes worth KD1,500 each

KFH announces the winners of Al-Rabeh draw

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of the AlRabeh draw with 20 customers winning cash prizes worth KD1,500 each for the 7th and 8th weeks of 2025. Additionally, KFH announced Dalal Al-Fhaid as the monthly winner of 1 kilo Gram of KFH Gold for the month of February 2025.

The winners of KD 1,500 are: Ghanimah Al-Shaban, Ali Al-Daihani, Falah Al-Zaabi, Mohammad Al-Khaateb, Nwayer Al-Rasheedi, Mohammad Zard, Mohammad Al-Zoabi, Randa Antar, Abdullah Al-Ajmi, Ahmed Kamaleldin, Mariam Al-Musalam, Mohammad AbdulKhalik, Essa Al-Hamr, Ali Al-Ajmi, Mohammad Abdulwahid, Ahmed Al-Rasheedi, Rashed Al-Shatti, Hasan Al-Enezi, Khaled Al-Kazi, Khaled Al-Maousherji.

The AlRabeh campaign provides prizes and draws that offer customers several chances of winning "week-

ly, monthly and quarterly". The campaign crowns 536 winners throughout the year.

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

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

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

to enter the draw provided that the transfer of salary to Al-Rabeh account is constant.

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

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



The campaign visual

Philippine Institute of Civil Engineers, Kuwait Chapter celebrates its 11th Founding Anniversary with the induction of officers and new members

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: The Philippine Institute of Civil Engineers (PICE), Kuwait Chapter, International Charter No. I-10, proudly celebrated its 11th Founding Anniversary alongside the Induction of Officers and New Members last Friday. The event was honored by the presence of H.E. Jose A. Cabrera III, Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait, and Honorable Vice Consul Jordan Ysabel G. Morales, along with esteemed guests from the Philippine Professional Organizations (PPO), including PPO President Joel Javier, RN, along with PPO officers.

The celebration featured several key moments, including the oath-taking ceremony of the newly elected 2025 officers, officiated by Hon. Vice Consul Jordan Ysabel G. Morales. Additionally, certificates of appreciation were presented to the 2024-2025 Board of Directors, recognizing their invaluable contributions. The event also honored the Special Professional Licensure Examination (SPLE) passer for Master Plumber, Life Members, and new members, highlighting their dedication and achievements.

Another notable segment was the recognition of the Technical Speaker, Engr. Eugene R. Torralba, Structural Engr., M. ASEP, Asean Engr., LM PICE for the insightful Technical Presentation conducted before the anniversary celebration, as well as the monitor for the Revit Workshop held in January 2025. These initiatives reinforced PICE Kuwait Chapter's commitment to professional growth and continuous learning.

The evening was further enriched by inspiring messages from H.E. Jose A. Cabrera III, the PICE National President Engr. Frederick Francis M. Sison, and the 2024 PICE Kuwait Chapter President Engr. Jolas A. Famularcano, all of whom emphasized the importance of leadership, collaboration, and innovation in the field of civil engineering.



Engr. Roderick Mangampo, the newly inducted PICE Kuwait Chapter President along with the recently elected officers, took their oath of office, pledging to lead with dedication and uphold the core values of the organization. The warm welcome extended to new members signified the continuous growth and strengthened unity within the PICE Kuwait Chapter community.

As the organization moves forward into another year of service, excellence, and camaraderie, we express our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of this milestone celebration. This anniversary serves as a testament to how far we have come and as inspiration for the journey ahead.

"One Vision, One Team: 11 Years of Building Tomorrow Together."

PICE BOD 2025

Officers
Engr. Roderick Mangampo **President**
Engr. Adrian De La Cruz **1st Vice President**
Engr. Barhom Ibrahim **2nd Vice President**
Engr. Nasser Villanueva **Secretary**
Engr. Adonar Gorme **Treasurer**

Engr. Jekey Sedeño **Auditor**
Engr. Karl Dexter John Sualibio **Business Manager**
Engr. Romeo Penaso **Public Relations Officer**
Engr. Ramonito Casinilio **Sergeant-At-Arms**
Constitutional Committees Engr. Al Glenn Pantilagan **Committee On Membership (COME)**

Engr. Roderick Mangampo **Committee On Continuing Professional Advancement (COCPA)**
Engr. Fred Anthony Uera **Committee On Honor and Special Professional Licensure Examinations (COHSPL)**
Engr. Dioscoro Janoras Jr. **Committee On PICE Kuwait Affairs (COPKA)**

Support Committees
Engr. Elly Castillon **Committee On Ethics and Compliance (COEC)**
Engr. Marlon John Solomon **Committee On Constitutional Amendments and Oversight (CCAO)**
Engr. Kaycee Benavidez **Committee On Secretariat (COSEC)**
Engr. Danilo Dumale **Committee On Treasury (COTRE)**

Engr. Almarozette Calamba **Committee On Audit and Evaluation (COAE)**
Engr. Julius Gamiao **Committee On Ways and Means (COWME)**
Engr. Marianne Espina **Committee On Publications and Information (COPI)**
Engr. Ronmel Palacios **Committee On Sports, Socials and Recreation (COSSR)**



Photos during the event.

Kuwait's Health Minister, Indian Ambassador grace IDF's annual cultural extravaganza

Indian Doctors Forum commemorates 20th edition of Health Guide

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Indian Doctors Forum (IDF) Kuwait, a premier Socio-cultural Association of Indian Doctors in the state of Kuwait. The Forum commemorated the release of 20th edition of their most popular Health Guide - Smart Health followed by the Annual Cultural Extravaganza- Docfest 2025 at Hotel Regency on 21st February, 2025.

The event was graced by the magnanimous presence of the Chief Guest of the event HE Dr Ahmad Abdulwahab Al Awadhi, the Hon Minister of Health Kuwait, Guest of Honors, HE Dr Adarsh Swaika, Ambassador of India in Kuwait and Dr Abdulla Al Banna, Vice President of Kuwait Medical Association.

The event was ornamented by the presence of a galaxy of dignitaries including Sheikhha Umm Rakan Al Sabah, Sheikh Salman Badr Al Sabah, Sheikhha Al Abdullah, Sheikhha Dosari, Sheikhha Anisa Al Sabah, many prominent Doctors, HODs of various departments of MOH, and many administrative heads of different Governmental organisations.

IDF was pleased by the attendance of Senior businesspersons and Presidents and representatives of different associations in Kuwait and the Sponsors of Health Guide 2025.

Dr Philipose George, General Secretary of IDF welcomed the assembled dignitaries and Guests. He focused on the community health promotional activities which are regularly conducted by IDF

In his speech, Dr Sameer Humad, President of IDF welcomed the audience and highlighted the issue of raising health awareness. He expressed his gratitude to all the guests, dignitaries and to all the doctors and their families for attending the event.

Dr Sushovana Sujit Nair, the Vice President IDF anchored the program perfectly and Dr Mohan Ram, Vice President IDF expressed the vote of thanks.

The inaugural speech was given by HE Dr Ahmad Al Awadhi in which he conveyed his congratulations to IDF, diaspora of Indian Doctors in Kuwait and to the Indian Community at large. He highlighted the close bond between India and Kuwait.

HE Dr Adarsh Swaika praised the Indian doctor's dedication and work ethics. Dr Abdulla Al Banna highlighted the valuable contribution made by the Indian Doctors.

Dr Arijit Chattopadhyaya, the Chief Editor of the Health Guide together with

his team of Co-editors informed about the topic Smart Health and implication of Artificial Intelligence and Gene Therapy in Healthcare.

The official part of the program concluded by the release of Health Guide by HE Ahmad Al Awadhi.

The official part of the event was followed by lighting the lamp by the president and dignified ladies to inaugurate the start of the Cultural Event.

The entire Cultural Program was conducted with perfection, innovation, thought provocation and mind blowing, gorgeousness by the Cultural Secretary Dr Anila Albert and Dr Fibiha Nidal. The Theme- Yeh Mera India was depicted from different angles starting from cultural diversities, achievements of India in sports, scientific field and defence, glories of the past and present of India.

The houseful of audience was spellbound by the performances of the doctors and their family members. The Audio visual and sound effect was extremely well coordinated and attractive. Choreography of the dances was excellent.

Relentless effort by the President and the Office Bearers with the huge enthusiastic audience made the event a complete success. IDF is committed to Human Welfare and conducting such cultural events in the days to come.



Photos during the event.

Heart disease and Alzheimer's led to actor's death

Hackman died a week after wife's death from hantavirus

SANTA FE, N.M., March 8, (AP): Forensic experts came to a heartrending conclusion Friday about the manner of death for actor Gene Hackman: he died of heart disease with complications from Alzheimer's disease on an empty stomach a week after a rare, rodent-borne disease took the life of his wife at their home in Santa Fe.

The partially mummified remains of Hackman, 95, and Betsy Arakawa, 65, were discovered Feb. 26 when maintenance and security workers showed up at the home and alerted police.

Authorities unraveled the mysterious circumstances and revealed that Arakawa likely died Feb. 11 at home from hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, a rare but potentially fatal disease spread by infected rodent droppings.

Hackman, in the advanced stages of Alzheimer's, apparently was unaware that his wife was dead.

"He was in a very poor state of health. He had significant heart disease, and I think ultimately that's what resulted in his death," chief medical investigator Dr. Heather Jarrell said. "It's quite possible he was not aware she was deceased."

Both deaths were ruled to be from natural causes.

Santa Fe County Sheriff Adan Mendoza said Arakawa's last known outing was a round of errands and shopping Feb. 11. She visited a pharmacy, pet store and grocery before returning to the couple's gated neighborhood that evening.

Arakawa stopped answering emails that day. The couple's cellphone communications have not yet been analyzed.

Hackman's pacemaker last showed signs of activity a week later, indicating an abnormal heart rhythm Feb. 18, the day he likely died, Jarrell said.

Hackman was found in the home's entryway, and Arakawa was found in a bathroom. Their bodies were decomposing with some mummification, a consequence of body type and climate in Santa Fe's especially dry air at an elevation of nearly 7,200 feet (2,200 meters).

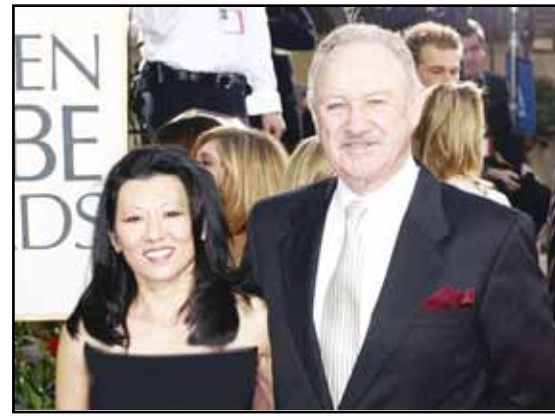
The revelations about the manner of the couple's deaths jolted Santa Fe, the state capital city known as a refuge for celebrities, artists and authors.

"All of us that knew him should have been checking on him," said Stuart Ashman, co-owner of Artes de Cuba gallery, who cherished his encounters with Hackman at a local Pilates exercise studio. "I had no idea. ... It's just really sad. And that she died a week before him. My God."

Experts believe Hackman was severely impaired due to Alzheimer's disease and unable to deal with his wife's death in the last week of his life - or seek help after she died.

"Their (the authorities') explanation, I thought, was quite clear and plausible, said Dr. Victor Weedn, a forensic pathologist in Virginia. "I believe they really discovered what truly happened in this case."

Most older Americans with Alzheimer's disease and



Actor Gene Hackman arrives with his wife, Betsy Arakawa, for the 60th Annual Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills, Calif., Jan 19, 2003. (AP)

related dementias live at home, and many receive care from family or friends.

Hantavirus typically is reported in spring and summer, often due to exposures that occur when people are near mouse droppings in homes, sheds or poorly ventilated areas. This is the first confirmed case of hantavirus in New Mexico this year.

While hantavirus is found throughout the world, most

cases in the U.S. have been found in western states. The virus can cause a severe and sometimes deadly lung infection.

Jarrell said it was not known how quickly Arakawa died.

One of the couple's three dogs, a kelpie mix named Zinna, also was found dead in a crate in a bathroom closet near Arakawa, while two other dogs survived.

Dogs do not get sick from hantavirus, said Erin Phipps, a veterinarian with the New Mexico Health Department. A necropsy will be done on the dog.

The sheriff considers this an open investigation until they receive results of the dog's necropsy and finish checking into data from personal cellphones retrieved from the home.

Hackman, a Hollywood icon, won two Oscars during a storied career in films including "The French Connection," "Hoosiers" and "Superman" from the 1960s until his retirement in the early 2000s.

Arakawa, born in Hawaii, studied as a concert pianist, attended the University of Southern California and met Hackman in the mid-1980s while working at a California gym.

Hackman dedicated much of his time in retirement to painting and writing novels far from Hollywood's social circuit. He served for several years on the board of trustees at the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe, and he and Arakawa were investors in local businesses.

Obit

The Tonyies

R&B pioneer Wiggins dies

LOS ANGELES, March 8, (AP): D'Wayne Wiggins, a founding member of the Grammy-nominated group Tony! Toni! Tone! behind the classic 1990s jams "Anniversary," "It Never Rains (In Southern California)" and "Lay Your Head on My Pillow," has died. He was 64.

Wiggins died Friday morning after battling bladder cancer for over the past year, according to a statement released by his family on social media.

"D'Wayne's life was incomparable, and his music and service impacted millions around the world, including in his hometown of Oakland, California," his family said in a statement. "He was a guitarist, producer, composer, philanthropist, mentor and founding member of Tony! Toni! Tone! He was deeply passionate about providing artist development and mentorship to emerging young musicians, helping to shape the early careers of many."

His family added: "Through this fight, he remained committed and present for his family, his music, his fans and his community."

Wiggins was a vocalist and bass guitarist of the beloved R&B group, which included his brother Raphael Saadiq and their cousin Christian Riley. The group became mainstays of the New Jack Swing movement, blending R&B, jazz and traces of gospel melodies.

Record

The Oakland, California, natives burst onto the music scene with their 1988 debut album, "Who?" with songs like "Baby Doll" and "Little Walter." But it was their 1990 New Jack Swing-infused "Feels Good" record that gave the group mainstream success, peaking at No. 9 on Billboard's Hot 100 chart.

They released two more studio projects together, with party hits like "Let's Get Down," featuring DJ Quik, and timeless slow jams including "Whatever You Want," "It Never Rains (In Southern California)," "Lay Your Head on My Pillow" and "Anniversary," a standard in the Black music romance canon. Their "It Never Rains" version was a cover of the 1972 hit by British singer-songwriter Albert Hammond.

The blood relatives also couldn't predict how their success would affect their relationship. The Tonyies went their separate ways after their fourth album, 1996's platinum-selling "House of Music." Fame, finances, miscommunication and creative differences were unsustainable for the group.

Wiggins and Riley toured under the group's name between 1998 and 2018, with Amar Khalil taking over lead singing duties. Wiggins also produced and helped grow young artists who would become some of today's brightest young stars, including Zendaya, H.E.R., Kehlani and even Destiny's Child.



D'Wayne Wiggins of Tony! Toni! Tone! poses for a portrait in New York on Sept. 27, 2023. (AP)

Film



This image released by Music Box Films shows, (from left), Patrick Garrigan, Chris Goodwin, Peter Minkarah, Stephen Radochia, Ari Brisbon, Ray Hryb, and David Pridemore in a scene from 'Eephus.' (AP)

Film honors the humble weekend warriors of baseball

'Eephus' celebrates baseball's true passion

By Jake Coyle

In Carson Lund's "Eephus," two teams - the Riverdogs and Adler's Paint - gather on a neighborhood field for a baseball game. The leaves are already starting to turn - "It's getting late early," as Yogi Berra said - and this is to be the final game for their adult rec league. The field is to be demolished.

No one would confuse them for all-stars. A suicide squeeze unfolds in creaky slow-motion. The rotund left fielder mutters "Mother McCree" under his breath when the ball is hit in the gap. But, regardless of skill level, they all care sincerely about the game.

"Eephus," as leisurely as a late-August double header, simply unfolds along with their game. Except to chase a foul ball or two, the movie stays within the lines of Soldier Field, the nondescript Massachusetts baseball field they're playing on sometime in the 1990s. It spans nine innings, with dugout chatter and fading light. In this slow-pitch gem of a baseball movie - a middle-aged "Sandlot" - time is slipping away, but they're going down swinging.

Money, analytics and whatever's on ESPN can sometimes cloud what sports is to most people: A refuge. "Eephus," in that way, is a change-up of a baseball movie, an elegiac ode to

the humbler weekend warriors who are driven by nothing but genuine affection for the game. Richly detailed and mordantly deadpan, "Eephus" adopts their pace of play, soaking up all the sesame-seed flavor that goes along with it.

The title comes from an unnaturally slow pitch not slung but lobbed toward home. When I was a kid pitching, I liked to uncork one from time to time, much to my coach's dismay. The metaphor isn't hard to grasp. One player describes it as a pitch you can get bored watching, even making you lose track of time.

Much of the same applies to "Eephus," which drifts player to player, play to play, less as an ensemble piece than like a roving spectator. The guys, themselves, have no more than a handful of fans, including the diehard scorekeeper Fanny (Cliff Blake). Frederick Wiseman, the great documentarian whose films chronicle nothing so much as institutions kept alive over time, is the voice of the announcer.

Earlier called Lund's film an ode, but it's not a sentimental movie. Time's passage, which no ballgame or perfectly thrown eephus can halt, grows increasingly disquieting as the afternoon light gives way to nightfall. That, to finish the game, they play into near-total darkness, with only headlights to see the ball, is a sign of desperation as much as it is commitment. After all, one

guy in the dugout is listening to a radio broadcast of a ballgame, from 1972.

What's being lost? It's not a strip mall the field is to be turned into but something harder to quibble with: a school. They could drive half an hour to another field, but that's said to be half Little League, half farmer's market. They aren't a collection of pals, either. They don't hang out away from the diamond. Things they don't talk about: work, families, politics. Things they do: eyecare for the ump.

In the annals of baseball movies, "Eephus" doesn't belong in the Hall of Fame with "Bull Durham" or "A League of Their Own." The closest it gets to the big leagues is an appearance by Bill "Spaceman" Lee, the 1970s southpaw and eephus adherent.

But "Eephus" is just as deserving of a place in that hardball pantheon, only in some minor ball realm, well below single A. Here, they don't throw "high cheese" but such meatballs that, as one player riffs, you could call it pasta primavera. To call this a field of dreams would be pushing it. But it's a lovely way to pass some time.

"Eephus," a Music Box release is not rated by the Motion Picture Association but contains coarse language. Running time: 98 minutes. Three stars out of four. (AP)

Variety

NEW YORK: Ricardo Scofidio, an architect who transformed an abandoned railway into New York City's popular High Line park and was among the first in his profession to win a MacArthur Foundation "genius grant," has died. He was 89 and had worked on museums, college buildings and other projects around the world.

Scofidio died in New York Thursday with his wife and architecture partner, Elizabeth Diller, by his side, said their firm, Diller Scofidio + Renfro.

Named, along with Diller, as among Time magazine's "100 Most Influential People" in 2009, Scofidio strove "to make space on his own terms," the firm said.

Known for bringing an avant-garde art sensibility to architecture, the firm has created adventurous designs in prominent places, from The Broad museum in downtown Los Angeles to a massive artificial cloud above a Swiss lake for a 2002 art expo.

"One of the things that is important to us is taking that leap of faith and believing in yourself that you are going to get there," Scofidio told interviewer Charlie Rose in 2009. (AP)

□ □ □

NEW YORK: George Lowe, the voice behind the irreverent animated superhero on Adult Swim's "Space Ghost Coast to Coast," has died. He was 67.

He died Sunday in Lakeland, Florida, two of his business representatives said. Lowe had been struggling to recover from elective heart surgery in November, his family said in a statement. "Over the past few months, his family and friends have been by his side in

support and care for him," the statement said.

Lowe's booming voice and off-the-wall humor turned "Space Ghost Coast to Coast" into a cult classic among young adults and teens.

The show debuted in 1994 and aired for more than a decade on Cartoon Network as part of its Adult Swim nighttime programming block. It was Cartoon Network's first original production and set the foundation for several other original series including "The Powerpuff Girls," "Courage the Cowardly Dog" and "Johnny Bravo." (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Actor Emily Osment has filed for divorce from her husband of less than five months, musician Jack Anthony Farina.

The 32-year-old Osment filed the petition to end her marriage to the 42-year-old Farina in Los Angeles Superior Court on Friday.

The court filing says the two were married on Oct. 12 and separated Dec. 7. It cites irreconcilable differences as the reason. They have no children.

It was the first marriage for Osment, the younger sister of "The Sixth Sense" actor Haley Joel Osment. She came to fame for playing the title character's best friend on the Disney Channel's "Hannah Montana" from 2006 to 2011. She subsequently starred in the sitcoms "Young & Hungry" and "Young Sheldon," and currently appears on the "Young Sheldon" spinoff, "Georgie & Mandy's First Marriage." (AP)



Osment

Festival organizers reveal lineup

Olivia Rodrigo, Neil Young set to headline 2025 Glastonbury

LONDON, March 8, (AP): Glastonbury Festival is clearly aiming to go out with a bang this summer before taking one of its regular fallow years off to allow the southwest England farmland where the music fest takes place to recover after hosting some 200,000 revelers.

Festival organizers announced the lineup on Thursday, including the headline acts, for arguably the world's most famous music festival. This year, it will take place at Worthy Farm from June 25 to June 29.

The main news is that English band The 1975 will headline the main Pyramid Stage on the festival's Friday night, while American singer and actress Ol-

ivia Rodrigo will take top billing on the Sunday evening.

Neil Young, the legendary 79-year-old Canadian-American singer-songwriter, was previously announced as the headliner for the Saturday night, while his Scottish peer Rod Stewart had been confirmed for the coveted legends slot on the Pyramid Stage on Sunday afternoon.

Not making the top of the bill, but very much in vogue and likely to draw huge crowds, is Charli XCX, who will perform on the Other Stage on the Saturday night. Last week, the singer behind the "Brat summer" phenomenon, won five Brit awards.

The word "brat," used by the singer as the title of her sixth studio album, was declared word of the year by Collins Dictionary. For those not in the know, it's been defined as "characterized by a confident, independent, and hedonistic attitude."



Rodrigo

Music

Superstar singer strikes a chord with new album

Lady Gaga rekindles passion for music with 'Mayhem'

LOS ANGELES, March 8, (AP) — When Lady Gaga walked into a New York City bar she frequented five years ago, the memories hit hard: Back then, she wrote songs there, feeling lost and disconnected from herself.

But this time was different. While sitting in the bar, Gaga felt a sense of peace and rejuvenation, reminiscent of her teenage years spent scribbling lyrics on napkins.

In recent years, Gaga rediscovered her passion for music by taking a step back from the limelight, cutting ties from fake friendships, swapping the spotlight for quiet nights at home and surrounding herself with people she truly trusts. That personal transformation became the soul of her new album, "Mayhem," which was released Friday.

"I reclaimed myself as an artist," said Gaga, a 14-time Grammy and one-time Oscar winner who returned to her dark pop music roots on the album, which spans 14 tracks. Her new project follows last year's "Harlequin," a jazz-inspired companion album for

the film "Joker: Folie à Deux," which stalled at No. 20 on the Billboard 200.

But Gaga's singles for the 14-track "Mayhem" have been received well on the charts, including "Disease," "Ab-racadabra" and "Die With a Smile," a collaboration with Bruno Mars, spending five weeks on the Billboard Hot 100 at No. 1 and winning a Grammy for best pop duo/group performance earlier this month.

While recording "Mayhem," Gaga refused to rest on her past hits or accolades to define her new work. She credited her renewed creative drive to a journey of self-discovery, which ultimately empowered her to step back into the spotlight for several big moments last month. The superstar performed with Bruno Mars at the Grammys - including a tribute song "California Dreamin'" to Los Angeles wildfire victims, closed out the FireAid benefit concert with "All I Need is Time" and delivered a surprise performance singing "Hold My Hand" before the Super Bowl in New Orleans.

Next month, Gaga will headline



(Pic A) Lady Gaga performs during the 67th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles on Feb. 2, 2025. (AP)

Coachella and perform a free concert on Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana Beach in May.

"I built a routine in my daily life

around music all the time, and not around self-promotion," said Gaga, 38, who was a producer and co-executive producer with her fiancé Michael Po-

lansky, 41, on "Mayhem." "When my life was circulating self-promotion, I think I lost a lot of my passion. When my life was around my family, my partner and my music, it gave me back that realism."

In an AP interview, Gaga digs deeper into what it took to regain her passion, showing she's more than just a character and her pulling double duty on "Saturday Night Live" on Saturday.

While Gaga was dropping early hits like "Just Dance" and "Poker Face," she noticed critics who downplayed her role in the success, giving more credit to producers and even stylists.

With "Mayhem," Gaga aimed to showcase that her talent was the true driving force behind her rise. Fueled by the skeptics, the singer is determined to show she's the architect of her success, not just another industry creation.

self my own inventions."

When Gaga began recording her new album, she focused on crafting the kind of dark pop melodies that defined her early career, pairing them with lyrics that spoke in code. She said it all came back naturally, giving her reassurance that she was on the right path to fully owning her identity as an artist instead of a made-up character.

"This was a way for me actually to feel like I wasn't. That it was the real me," she said. "I was the creator. This was my work. It was just not a character I was playing. It was something that I made."

Early in her career, fame came with a price that Gaga wasn't willing to pay. She felt isolated, trapped in transactional relationships and struck in an environment that prioritized competition over creativity.

The spotlight began to feel like an endless race, draining her passion for making music. She began to notice a shift as her sales climbed beyond the first 10 million records.

Fashion

Kenzo puts a British spin on streetwear

Sarah Burton's Givenchy debut is a bold reset

PARIS, March 8, (AP) — Givenchy's new creative director debuted on Friday in one of Paris Fashion Week's most anticipated moments and a long-awaited reset for a house that, in recent years, has struggled to find its footing.

For Sarah Burton, who took over the reins last September, Givenchy's legacy has loomed large - immortalized in Audrey Hepburn's little black dress in Breakfast at Tiffany's, then upended by Riccardo Tisci, who spent 12 years reshaping the brand with his gothic, street-inflected vision before departing in 2017.

Since then, the house has been adrift, caught between its classical heritage and the aftershocks of Tisci's reign.

With Burton - known for her emotionally charged, intricately crafted collections during her long stay at Alexander McQueen - at the helm of Givenchy, the question remained whether she would radically upend the house or retrace it to its roots.

The answer became clear on Friday - a carefully executed recalibration rather than an overhaul.

"To go forward, you have to go back to the beginning. To me, that's about the atelier. It's the heart and soul of Givenchy," said Burton.

Even before the first look appeared, the front-row chatter was split between anticipation for Burton's debut and the less glamorous disruption outside - an unexploded World War II bomb found on Friday near Paris's Gare du Nord, France's busiest rail station, which had snarled travel, delaying flights for jet-setting fashion editors and VIP guests.

Still, an atmosphere of controlled intimacy prevailed inside Givenchy's Avenue George V ateliers, a deliberate move by Burton to strip away theatrics and focus on craft. Among those taking it all in was Gwendoline Christie, her statuesque presence a perfect match for Burton's vision of femme-power. Nearby, Rooney Mara, Vanessa Kirby and Yseult watched on.

The collection was atelier-driven, precise and grounded in the language of couture. It reflected Burton's aesthetic sensibilities honed over 27 years at Alexander McQueen, where she softened McQueen's savage armor into a celebration of powerful femininity. There, she worked with everything from Tudor references to biological forms, deconstructing and reconfiguring clothing as both protection and vulnerability.

Givenchy, however, is a different house - one of graceful restraint - and Burton approached it with studied reverence, rather than McQueen's fantasticality.

That balance - between past and future, heritage and renewal - was clear in a pale yellow hybrid onesie that was simultaneously 1960s and 2060s, both vintage and futuristic. It was also evident in one of the collection's defining silhouettes: dresses draped effortlessly from the neck, suspended in air like modern sculptures - both couture and sporty.

Kenzo

Kenzo's latest evolution at Paris Fashion Week on Friday traded its signature jungle prints for something sharper: punk-infused tailoring, underground energy, and a touch of British irreverence.

For its first dedicated women's show in eight years, the LVMH-owned house embraced a rebellious streak. Shawl-collared tuxedo jackets melted into kimono shapes, harem pants slouched low, and lingerie peeked from waistbands. The soundtrack? Sex Pistols, Patti Smith and Blondie - setting the mood for a collection that felt more East London than Parisian cool.

With creative director Nigo absent, his new womenswear studio, helmed by Givenchy alum Joshua A. Bullen, took center stage.

The mix of Savile Row struc-



A model wears a creation as part of the Victoria Beckham Fall/Winter 2025-2026 Womenswear collection presented in Paris, Friday, March 7. (AP)



A model wears a creation as part of the Victoria Beckham Fall/Winter 2025-2026 Womenswear collection presented in Paris, Friday, March 7. (AP)

ture, deconstructed streetwear, and subversive details hinted at a fresh direction. And in a final, cheeky touch, guests left with T-shirts and crayons in metallic envelopes stamped with

Issey Miyake
The Paris Fashion Week collection felt soft and elemental, as if blown



A model wears a creation as part of the Yohji Yamamoto's collection presented in Paris. (AP)



A model wears a creation by Issey Miyake. (AP)



Models present creations by Issey Miyake. (AP)

Kenzo's latest emblem: a wide-eyed rabbit, ready to run.

Because at Kenzo, the tension between past and present isn't just explored - it's worn.

Issey Miyake

The Paris Fashion Week collection



A model wears a creation by Issey Miyake. (AP)



Models present creations by Victoria Beckham in Paris. (AP)

ments that shift, adapt and invite the wearer to complete them. Inspired by Erwin Wurm's performative sculptures, the show at Carrousel du Louvre saw models folding, bending, and reshaping their clothes, turning dressing into an act of creation.

Precision and effortlessness coexisted in every piece. Jackets snapped into rigid curves yet moved with ease. Shirts twisted into new forms, sleeves and panels shifting unpredictably. Sheer pleats flickered with movement, distorting as the body walked. Knits, expected to be soft, were pressed into sharp, sculptural shapes. Paper-woven fabrics mimicked stone but flexed like fabric. Every material challenged expectation, resisting easy definition.

Chloé

If any one piece defines Chloé under Chemena Kamali, it's the blouse. Billowy, ruffled, effortless, and deeply romantic, it captured the essence of her third collection for the house at Paris Fashion Week.

Kamali's Chloé woman moves through time, referencing history but never stuck in it, just like the women who sat in the front row, Jerry Hall and Georgia May Jagger, icons of past and present Chloé cool.

Chloé has long been a house that champions women, both in its design ethos and leadership. While some major womenswear brands continue to be helmed by men, Chloé has laudably remained a platform for female designers, shaping fashion through their perspective. German-born Kamali, now three collections in, continues to refine her vision within that tradition. This season, blouses weren't just a focal point, they were the foundation. Cut in ivory and peach silk, some had commanding sleeves and meaty cuffs that gave them the oomph of jackets.

Variety

NEW YORK: Dolly Parton has released a breathtaking new ballad in tribute to her late husband, Carl Dean.

Dean, who was Parton's devoted husband of nearly 60 years, died Monday. He avoided the spotlight and inspired her timeless hit "Jolene." He was 82.

"I fell in love with Carl Dean when I was 18 years old. We have spent 60 precious and meaningful

years together. Like all great love stories, they never end. They live on in memory and song," Parton wrote on Instagram Friday morning. "He will always be the star of my life story, and I dedicate this song to him."

The song, titled "If You Hadn't Been There," enters the pantheon of great, big-hearted Parton ballads. "If you hadn't been there/ Well, who would I be?" she sings. "You always see the best in me/ You're loving arms have cradled me." The music swells and on the chorus, she's joined by a choir, her voice soaring. (AP)

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates: Iranian officials have flogged a popular singer who posted a song online urging women to remove their mandatory headscarves over a conviction for possessing and consuming alcohol, his lawyer and authorities said.

Mehdi Yarahi was flogged on Wednesday, his lawyer Zahra Minuei wrote on the social platform X.

Iran's semiofficial Fars news agency, quoting an anonymous official, said the sentence was for him drinking and having alcoholic drinks, not his music.

The lashes were "fully carried out in Branch 4 of the Enforcement of Sentences Office at the Tehran Morality Security Prosecutor's Office, and Mr. Mehdi Yarahi's case has been closed," Minuei said. (AP)

NEW YORK: A lawyer for actor Blake Lively asked a federal judge Thursday to impose strict rules to prevent anyone associated with Justin Baldoni getting personal or intimate information about her or other celebrities while potential evidence is shared among attorneys as her sexual harassment claims against her costar in "It Ends With Us" proceeds toward trial.

Meryl Goverski, representing Lively, told Judge Lewis J. Liman in a telephone conference that some materials must be shared only between lawyers to protect her client and others. The judge did not immediately rule.

Lively sued Baldoni, his production company and others in New York in late December for sexual harassment and attacks on her reputation and sought unspecified damages. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Pamela Bach, an actor and the ex-wife of "Baywatch" star David Hasselhoff, has died at 62.

The Los Angeles medical examiner's office reports that she died Wednesday and determined her death was a suicide. Also known as Pamela Hasselhoff, Bach appeared on "The Young and the Restless" and met her future husband on the set of his series, "Knight Rider."

She also appeared on "Baywatch." Bach and Hasselhoff were married in December 1989, and had two daughters, Taylor and Hayley. Hasselhoff filed for divorce in January 2006 and the former couple had a contentious split, with Bach accusing him of domestic abuse.

A video of Hasselhoff drunkenly eating a burger led to him temporarily losing visitation privileges with his daughters, but they were restored after two weeks. (AP)

Dental experts weigh in who benefits from fluoride

Do you need fluoride treatment after a teeth cleaning?

NEW YORK, March 8, (AP): When Tristen Boyer recently had a couple of cavities filled, her dentist suggested she get fluoride treatment afterward. She has Crohn's disease, which puts her at increased risk for tooth decay.

"It's something I felt like I should get done," the 22-year-old University of Kentucky student said. "It's something I'm going to keep doing."

Dentists and hygienists often propose fluoride treatments to patients in the dental chair to prevent cavities and strengthen teeth. But the relatively simple procedure - which involves applying a varnish, gel or foam directly to the teeth - isn't always covered by insurance, especially for adults.

So when is it worth getting? Here are some ways to figure that out.

If there's a high risk of tooth decay, then professional fluoride treatments can help.

But if "you haven't seen any decay in years, you're probably OK. What you're doing at home is probably enough," said Dr. Robert Weyant at the University of Pittsburgh.

Besides looking at cavity history, your dentist may also ask about risky behaviors, such as drinking lots of soft drinks, and your oral health regimen.



Alexander Daniel, DDS, holds a sample of fluoride at the Johns Hopkins Outpatient Center, Feb. 28, 2025, in Baltimore. (AP)

Patients "who don't have access to fluoridated water, don't use fluoridated toothpaste or don't floss regularly" may be good candidates for fluoride treatments, said Dr.

Alex Daniel of Johns Hopkins University.

Treatments may also benefit certain groups more than others. Women in menopause, for example, experience hormonal changes that can lead to oral health problems. And people taking certain medications can get dry mouth, which means fewer bacteria-killing enzymes and potentially more decay.

For patients deemed to be at risk, dentists generally recommend treatments every three, six or 12 months.

Dental fluoride prevents decay by helping tooth enamel - the hard outer layer of the tooth - better resist acid caused by bacteria in the mouth.

"Acid dissolves away tooth enamel, which weakens it - which is what makes cavities," said Ohio dentist Dr. Matthew Messina, a spokesman for the American Dental Association.

Fluoride, a mineral, strengthens the enamel, making it harder.

The scientific evidence behind fluoride treatments is stronger for children than adults. But whether the benefit is stronger for kids is uncertain, Weyant said, because there hasn't been as much research in adults.

Dentists said there are no safety concerns about the treatment. The only real side effect is an uncommon one called fluorosis, a cosmetic discoloration of the teeth if someone gets a little too much fluoride.

Dental experts acknowledged that recent opposition to fluoride in drinking water by some - including Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the nation's new health and human services secretary - may give some people pause. But even if you use fluoride toothpaste, drink fluoridated water and get occasional in-office fluoride treatments, dentists said you're getting a relatively small amount of the mineral that poses no danger.

Fluoride treatments cost anywhere from around \$25 to \$55. Though many insurers cover the cost for kids, adults generally pay out of pocket.

Boyer, who used to get the treatments as a child, paid \$30 for her first adult treatment. Though she wishes it was covered by insurance, she said that's a small price to pay to prevent decay, expensive dental procedures and possible tooth loss.

"We only have one set of teeth," she said. "The longer you can keep them, the longer you should."

Mission ends

US lunar lander declared dead

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., March 8, (AP): A private lunar lander is no longer working after landing sideways in a crater near the moon's south pole and its mission is over, officials said Friday.

The news came less than 24 hours after the botched landing attempt by Texas-based Intuitive Machines.

Launched last week, the lander named Athena missed its mark by more than 800 feet (250 meters) and ended up in a frigid crater, the company said in declaring it dead.

Athena managed to send back pictures confirming its position and activate a few experiments before going silent. NASA and other customers had packed the lander with tens of millions of dollars' worth of experiments including an ice drill, drone and pair of rovers to roam the unexplored terrain ahead of astronauts' planned arrival later this decade.

It's unlikely Athena's batteries can be recharged given the way the lander's solar panels are pointed and the extreme cold in the crater.

"The mission has concluded and teams are continuing to assess the data collected throughout the mission," the company said in a statement.

The bigger, four-wheeled rover never made it off the fallen lander, but data beamed back indicates it survived and could have driven away had everything gone well, said Lunar Outpost, the Colorado company that owns it.

This was the second landing attempt for Intuitive Machines. The first, a year ago, also ended with a sideways landing, but the company was able to keep it going for longer than this time. Despite all the problems, the company's first lander managed to put the U.S. back on the moon for the first time in more than 50 years.



This photo shows the Athena, a private lunar lander, after landing sideways in a crater near the moon's south pole. (AP)

Women reveal their hidden struggles

Women raise awareness about menopause symptoms and work

NEW YORK, March 8, (AP): It took five years for Crystal Burke to put a name to the symptoms that haunted her.

Heart palpitations. Insomnia so severe she slept only two to four hours a night. A newfound struggle to make decisions in her job as a nurse. Confusion when dealing with statistics, which she used to handle with ease.

"It affected my work, it affected my relationships, it affected everything," Burke said. "I felt lost. I didn't talk to anybody about it."

Then Burke saw an advertisement about a face cream which contained estrogen, one of the two hormones ovaries produce less and less of with aging. She began talking with friends about her symptoms. And she connected the dots: menopause.

At just 38, Burke had thought she was too young to be going through the life stage when menstrual periods stop and women no longer can become pregnant. But menopause is more than the pop culture stereotype featuring women in their 50s having hot flashes. Symptoms can start much earlier - during perimenopause, the time leading up to menopause - and go well beyond hot flashes.

The many manifestations include insomnia, migraines, brain fog, loss of concentration, memory problems, mood swings, depression, anxiety, heart palpitations, hair loss and weight gain. If that wasn't enough, some people experience heavy, painful periods or recurring urinary tract infections.

Chronic insomnia can make it difficult to concentrate. Brain fog leaves the afflicted struggling to find words during meetings. But social stigma and a lack of information have left menopausal people dealing alone with severe symptoms that may impact their work. Many stay silent, fearing they'll be viewed as underperformers or weak.

Some women in senior leadership



Women attend the International Women's Day celebration at the Mobolaji Johnson Stadium in Lagos, Nigeria, Friday, March 7, 2025. (AP)

positions leave their jobs or reduce their hours as a result of debilitating side effects from menopause, said Lauren Redfern, executive director of Hormonally, a nonprofit that provides workplace training and education about women's health. But those who feel supported by employers during the transition are more likely to remain at work, she said.

"When you open up a space to talk about these things, people are desperate to have a conversation," Redfern said. "The symptoms are so diverse and so far-reaching and so prolific they impact every area of someone's life."

Menopause affects about half the world's population at some point in life. Yet due to the epidemic of silence around it, women, nonbinary people and transgender individuals often don't recognize the onset of unpleasant physical and emotional changes as side effects of declining hormone levels.

Finding health care providers who

are trained to identify and treat their symptoms can be challenging. Some startups have sought to change that by providing access to referrals or telehealth appointments with doctors or therapists who specialize in treating menopausal patients.

"When you don't know that something can get fixed, it's very scary," said Midi Health founder Joanna Strober, whose company connects women with professionals who understand menopause. "If you think, 'For the rest of my life I'm going to have brain fog and not remember anyone's name, and I'm going to keep losing my car in the parking lot and I'm going to keep gaining weight,' then it's very demoralizing."

Burke found relief when she began hormone replacement therapy. Inspired to help others, she co-founded The Menopause Clinic in Louisiana to offer telehealth services focused on menopause.

Measles cases top 200 in US

Nearly 100 die from cholera in Sudan's White Nile state

CAIRO, March 8, (Agencies): Nearly 100 people died of cholera in two weeks since the waterborne disease outbreak began in Sudan's White Nile State, an international aid group said.

Doctors Without Borders - also known as Médecins Sans Frontières or MSF - said Thursday that 2,700 people have contracted the disease since Feb. 20, including 92 people who died.

Of the admitted cholera patients who died, 18 were children, including five children who are no older than 5, and five others who were no older than 9, Marta Cazarola, MSF emergency coordinator for Sudan, told The Associated Press.

Sudan plunged into war nearly two years ago when tensions simmered between the Sudanese army and its rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces group, or RSF, with battles in Khartoum and across the country.

RSF launched intense attacks last month in the White Nile State that killed hundreds of civilians, including infants. The Sudanese military announced at the time that it made advances there, cutting crucial supply routes to RSF.

During the RSF attacks in the state on Feb. 16, the group fired a projectile that hit the Rabak power plant, causing a mass power outage and triggering the latest wave of cholera, according to MSF. Subsequently, people in the area had to rely mainly on water obtained from donkey carts, because water pumps were no longer operational.

"Attacks on critical infrastructure have long-term detrimental effects on the health of vulnerable communities," said Marta Cazarola, MSF emergency coordinator for Sudan.

Measles: A historic measles outbreak in West Texas is just short of 200 cases, Texas state health officials said Friday, while the number of cases in neighboring New Mexico tripled to 30.

Most of the cases across both states are in people younger than 18 and people who are unvaccinated or have an unknown vaccination status.

Texas health officials identified 39 new infections of the highly contagious disease, bringing the total count in the West Texas outbreak to 198 people since it began in late January. Twenty-three people have been hospitalized so far.

Last week, a school-age child died of measles in Texas, the nation's first measles death in a decade. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced this week that they were sending a team to Texas to help local public health officials respond to

the outbreak.

New Mexico health officials had been reporting for weeks a steady number of cases in Lea County - which borders the epicenter of Texas' outbreak. But on Friday, state health officials provided The Associated Press a week-by-week count that shows cases have steadily increased from 14 cases in the week of Feb. 9 to 30 this week.

A spokesman for the health department said more cases are expected and that many of the cases reported Friday weren't identified until after people's illnesses had run their course. The department has said it hasn't been able to prove a clear connection to the Texas outbreak, though on Feb. 14, it said a link is "suspected."

On Thursday, New Mexico health officials confirmed an unvaccinated adult who died without seeking medical care tested positive for measles. The state medical investigator has not announced the official cause of death, but the state health department said Friday it is "measles-related."

Malaria: Uganda on Friday began distributing more than 2.2 million doses of malaria vaccines, with support from Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, ahead of a nationwide vaccination campaign set to launch next month to combat the disease and reduce child mortality.

Minister of Health Jane Ruth Aceng flagged off the vaccine distribution to 105 districts with high and moderate malaria transmission rates, calling it "a major milestone" in Uganda's fight against the disease, according to a ministry statement.

The vaccines are part of a 3.5-million-dose rollout, made possible through Gavi's support and co-financed by Uganda, with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) handling procurement and air freight.

Health authorities said the malaria vaccine would be integrated into Uganda's routine immunization schedule starting in April 2025, targeting children aged six months to five years.

"The introduction of the malaria vaccine in Uganda is a historic step forward in our fight against this deadly disease. With the support of Gavi, UNICEF, and other partners, we are ensuring that every eligible child has access to this life-saving intervention," said Aceng.

Malaria remains the leading cause of illness and death among young children in Uganda, and the vaccine is expected to significantly reduce severe illness and deaths among children under five.

Ebola cases in Uganda rise to 14 amid new cluster

KAMPALA, Uganda, March 8, (AP): Uganda's Ebola caseload increased to 14 in the last week, Africa's top public health agency said Thursday, with a new cluster emerging from a 4-year-old child who recently died of the infectious disease.

Three of five new cases have been confirmed as Ebola, with two cited as probably Ebola, Dr. Ngashi Ngongo of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention told reporters.

The Africa CDC reported that there was no direct epidemiological link between the new cluster and another one accounting for nine previous Ebola cases, including the first victim of the outbreak.

Ebola is now spreading in five of Uganda's 146 districts, it said. That includes Kampala, the capital, where the outbreak was declared on Jan. 30. Two Ebola deaths have been confirmed.

Local health officials have not been

giving regular updates on the outbreak, raising concerns about a lack of transparency. At least three hospitals in Kampala have handled confirmed or suspected Ebola cases without later informing the public of it.

Dr. Charles Olaro, the director of health services in the Ministry of Health, told The Associated Press he believed the situation was under control. Officials were not required to give updates on every incident, he said.

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Mainz keeps Champions League dream alive

Cornet rescues point for Genoa

MONCHENGLADBACH, Germany, March 8, (AP): Mainz continued its push for a place in next year's Champions League with an accomplished 3-1 win at Borussia Mönchengladbach that lifted it into third place in the Bundesliga.

Paul Nebel got the opener before halftime with a deflected shot that stranded Mönchengladbach goalkeeper Jonas Omlin.

Dominik Kohr doubled the advantage six minutes into the second half when he pounced on a rebound in the box and fired home.

Stefan Lainer got the home side back into the game with less than 20 minutes left but Nadiem Amiri restored Mainz's two-goal cushion just four minutes later.

The result extended Mainz's unbeaten league run against Mönchengladbach to nine league games and kept it on course for its best ever Bundesliga finish, above its fifth place in 2012.

Mönchengladbach was in eighth place.

In Cagliari, Cagliari and Genoa shared the points in a cagey 1-1 draw in Serie A.

The home side came into the game after straight losses to Bologna and Juventus and only four goals in its last six league matches.

But it took the lead in the 18th minute when Nicolas Viola took a nice pass from Roberto Piccoli and finished coolly into the bottom corner.

Maxwel Cornet, the forward on loan from West Ham, equalized for Genoa two minutes into the second half with his second goal in four games.

Toulouse, A last-minute defensive mix up allowed Frank Magri to rescue a point for Toulouse against high-flying Monaco in a stodgy 1-1 draw in Ligue 1.

Japanese winger Takumi Minamino gave Monaco the lead 17 minutes when he tapped in a cross from Mika Biereth.

That looked certain to give Monaco its first away win since before Christmas but its goalkeeper and a defender collided on the edge of their own box in the 90th minute and allowed Magri to steal in and score.

Keeper Radoslaw Majecki redeemed himself seconds later with a world-class save to stop Toulouse from taking all three points but the draw cost Monaco ground in the race for a top-three finish.

The top three qualify automatically for next season's Champions League



Mainz's goalkeeper Robin Zentner watches a ball from Mönchengladbach's Tim Kleindienst during the German Bundesliga soccer match between Borussia Mönchengladbach and 1. FSV Mainz 05 at Borussia-Park stadium in Mönchengladbach, Germany. (AP)

and Monaco is fourth, two points behind Nice and three ahead of Lille, which has a game in hand against bottom club Montpellier on Saturday.

Toulouse remained eighth, a point ahead of Lens and Brest.

Players from both clubs wore jerseys with "WO=MAN" on the back instead of their names as part of a French league initiative around International Women's Day.

'It's a great honor for our country to have it'

Trump to lead task force preparing for 2026 World Cup

WASHINGTON, March 8, (AP): President Donald Trump created a task force Friday to prepare for the 2026 World Cup, which will bring the globe's premier soccer tournament to North America at a time when his on-again, off-again tariffs have ratcheted up tensions across the continent.

"I think it's going to make it more exciting," Trump said of playing the World Cup amid sharp rhetoric between leaders of the host nations. "Tension's a good thing."

The task force, which Trump will chair, will coordinate the federal government's security and planning for the tournament, which is expected to draw millions of tourists to the United States, Canada and Mexico.

"It's a great honor for our country to have it," Trump said of the World Cup after meeting with officials from FIFA, the international soccer governing body. He said he'd like to attend multiple games.

Preparations are ramping up across the continent alongside tensions between the United States and its neighbors as Trump has repeatedly threatened to impose tariffs before backing off, spooking markets and leading to fears of a trade war and economic downturn. He also speaks pejoratively



US President Donald Trump, from left, holds the new FIFA Club World Cup official ball as FIFA President Gianni Infantino and Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem watch in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington. (AP)

of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and muses about Canada becoming a U.S. state, which has boosted national pride north of the border.

For 2026, the World Cup will expand to 48 teams playing 104 matches across three nations, the first time the

tournament will be split between countries. Seventy-eight of 104 matches will be played in the U.S., with 13 games each in Mexico and Canada, and as many as six matches a day. The final will be played July 19 at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey.

FIFA President Gianni Infantino said the task force will ensure that each of the visitors who will travel from around the world "feels safe, feels happy and feels that we are doing something special."

"So we're here to create and to make the best show on the planet ever," Infantino said. He gave Trump a personalized game ball and unveiled an elaborate trophy that will go to the winner of the 2025 FIFA Club World Cup, which will pit top soccer clubs against each other this summer ahead of next year's match-up of national teams.

Trump later brought Infantino to show off the trophy at the start of a White House cryptocurrency summit. The United States, where soccer has grown in popularity but remains a niche sport, represents a major growth area for soccer, he said.

Infantino likened producing the World Cup to holding three Super Bowls daily for a month, a dizzying security and logistical challenge for the host governments.

The Trump administration will face a second test on the global sports stage in 2028, when the summer Olympics will be held in California, the first time the Games will have been in the U.S. since Salt Lake City hosted in 2002.

Eto'o wins appeal to run for spot on Africa soccer's governing body

ZURICH, March 8, (AP): Soccer great Samuel Eto'o has successfully overturned a move to block him from running for a position on the sport's governing body in Africa.

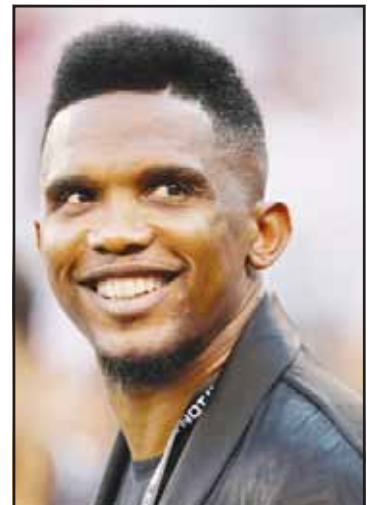
The Swiss-based Court of Arbitration for Sport said it had found in Eto'o's favor after he appealed a decision by the Confederation of African Football to exclude him as a candidate to join its executive committee.

The 43-year-old former striker, who played for top clubs like Barcelona, Inter Milan and Chelsea, has been president of the Cameroon soccer federation since 2021. He has courted controversy during that time.

In September, he was banned by FIFA from attending any national team games for six months after being judged to have breached disciplinary rules relating to "offensive behavior and violations of the principles of fair play" and misconduct of officials.

In July last year CAF fined the four-time African footballer of the year \$200,000, saying he had "seriously violated the principles of ethics, integrity and sportsmanship" by becoming a brand ambassador for a betting organization. It was reported in February the fine had been quashed on appeal.

The 54 member federations elect their leadership in Cairo next Wednesday when CAF president South African billionaire Patrice Motsepe is opposed for a second four-year term. FIFA president Gi-



In this file photo, Samuel Eto'o watches warmups before an International Champions Cup soccer match between Atletico Madrid and Real Madrid in East Rutherford, N.J. (AP)

anni Infantino is due to attend and Eto'o has now been handed a late reprieve by CAS to compete for a seat on the ruling executive committee.

"The CAS panel considered that it was presented sufficient information to overturn the CAF executive committee's decision concerning Mr Eto'o's ineligibility," CAS said in a statement. "It will be for the CAF extraordinary general assembly meeting on 12 March 2025 to make its own evaluation of the candidates."

China targets three points against Saudi Arabia in WC qualifier

Chhetri comes out of retirement at 40 to help India in Asian Cup qualifying

NEW DELHI, March 8, (Agencies): Sunil Chhetri is coming out of retirement at age 40 to help India in qualifying for the 2027 Asian Cup.

India recalled the veteran striker this week for the March 25 qualifier against Bangladesh.

Chhetri is third among active international scorers with 94, an elite list topped by Cristiano Ronaldo (135) and Lionel Messi (112).

"The qualification for the Asian Cup is very crucial for us," India coach Manolo Marquez said. "Given the importance of the tournament and the matches ahead, I discussed with Sunil Chhetri about making a comeback to strengthen the national team. He agreed, and so we have included him in the squad." Chhetri has been in fine form in the Indian Super League, scoring 12 goals in the regular season to help Bengaluru FC qualify for the championship playoff series.

India's national team, meanwhile, has been struggling and has failed to win any of its last 12 games.

The Blue Tigers have qualified for three of the last four Asian Cups and will prepare for the Bangladesh game with a warmup against Maldives on March 19. India will also face Hong Kong and Singapore in Group C. Only the group winner will qualify for the 2027 tournament, which will take place in Saudi Arabia.

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China is determined to secure a win against Saudi Arabia in the upcoming FIFA World Cup qualifier, according to forward Lin Liangming.

The Chinese national team is undergoing an intensive training camp in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, in preparation for the crucial match set for March 20.

"Our goal is clear: to claim all three points," Lin said. "Over the past two days, our training has focused on competitive drills with high intensity. The head coach has also highlighted that we will be conducting targeted sessions in the coming days to fine-tune our strategies." Midfielder Wang Shangyuan expressed confidence that the training camp will help the team elevate their

performance ahead of the challenging clash with Saudi Arabia.

"The match in Saudi Arabia will undoubtedly be tough, but we are using this training camp in Dubai to ensure everyone reaches their peak condition. We want to be fully prepared for the game," Wang said.

He also noted that the recent start of the domestic league has left players in varying states of fitness, making the training camp essential for the team.

Head coach Branko Ivankovic has included several young players in the training camp, a move Wang believes will benefit the team in the long run.



In this file photo, India's Sunil Chhetri controls the ball during the Asian Cup Group B soccer match between Syria and India at Al Bayt Stadium in Al Khor, Qatar. (AP)

Best of the Rest

Boca extends winning run: Boca Juniors continued its resurgent form in Argentina's Primera Division Apertura tournament with a 3-0 away win over Central Cordoba on Friday.

Milton Gimenez put the visitors ahead with a 16th-minute strike before Jose Florentin inadvertently turned the ball into his own net.

The host was reduced to 10 men on the stroke of halftime when Jonathan Galvan was shown a straight red card for violent conduct.

Miguel Merentiel put the result beyond doubt with a composed finish after combining with Luis Advincula.

Boca, which has won each of its past three league matches, is now second in the 15-team Group A standings, a point behind leader Argentinos Juniors.

Central Cordoba is seventh, six points further back.

Elsewhere in the Primera Division on Friday, Argentinos Juniors won 2-1 at Banfield and Velez Sarsfield edged to a 1-0 home victory over San Martin. (Xinhua)

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Hamburger sells record tickets: Hamburger SV says it has sold a record 57,000 tickets for its women's team's German Cup semifinal against northern rival Werder Bremen.

Hamburg's Volksparkstadion is sold out for the derby on March 23, meaning spectators will set a new German record for attendance in women's soccer.

"It's more than a sold-out soccer match," Hamburg board member Eric Huwer told the club website on Friday. "It's Hamburg's commitment to girls' and women's football as well as to our club."

The team's biggest crowd to date was 19,710 fans for a city derby against St. Pauli last September.

German soccer's biggest attendance at a women's game was 44,808 at the 2023 German Cup final between Wolfsburg and Freiburg in Cologne. (AP)

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Goalkeeper's ban doubled to 6 games for kicking Mateta in the head

LONDON, March 8, (AP): Millwall goalkeeper Liam Roberts said he received abusive messages and threats after he kicked Crystal Palace's Jean-Philippe Mateta in the head last weekend.

Roberts' three-game ban was doubled to six games after the English Football Association wanted him to be given extra punishment.

During an FA Cup fifth-round match last Saturday, Roberts' dangerous challenge left Mateta needing 25 stitches on a severely lacerated ear. "I am devastated by what happened," Roberts said in a statement. "I unequivocally accept the red card as awarded and accept my punishment. Furthermore,

it has been extremely unpleasant to observe suggestions that I intended to harm a fellow professional. I have categorically never stepped onto a football pitch with the intention of hurting anyone."

Roberts said he received "unthinkable amount of abusive messages and threats towards my family and I." He was sent off after eight minutes of the match between the London rivals. A standard three-match ban is issued for straight red cards, but the FA asked for a bigger suspension and an independent panel upheld the claim.

"The FA claimed that - in the circumstances - the standard punishment for this offense was

clearly insufficient, and Liam Roberts subsequently denied this," the governing body said in a statement on Friday.

Mateta was substituted and taken to hospital for specialist treatment. He was discharged later Saturday.

"In all the time I've watched football I've never seen a challenge like it," Palace chairman Steve Parish told the BBC during the halftime break. "That is the most reckless challenge on a football pitch I think I've ever seen." Roberts said he reached out to Mateta to check on his condition and the Palace forward "reassured me not to worry."

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SPORTS

Von Allmen's 'victory' pushes downhill title race to the wire



From left, second placed Switzerland's Marco Odermatt, the winner Switzerland's Franjo von Allmen and third placed Switzerland's Stefan Roggentin celebrate after an alpine ski, men's World Cup downhill, in Kvitfjell, Norway. (AP)

Brignone extends overall lead, Shiffrin skis out

KVITFJELL, Norway, March 8, (AP): In yet another Swiss duel in World Cup men's downhills, Franjo von Allmen edged teammate Marco Odermatt to win Saturday and send their season-long title contest to the final race in the United States.

Von Allmen, the new world champion aged just 23, finished 0.28 seconds ahead of Odermatt, who needed an agile recovery midway down the 1994 Olympics slope to stay upright.

Stefan Roggentin completed a Swiss sweep of the podium in third, trailing 0.38 behind Von Allmen. The result was unofficial as low-ranked skiers raced.

Switzerland waited 29 years to finish 1-2-3 in a World Cup men's downhill at Crans-Montana on Feb.

22. The next one came just 14 days later.

Both times Von Allmen won and Odermatt was runner-up. Odermatt smiled in the finish area Saturday and as a show of respect pointed toward his good friend sitting course-side in the leader's box.

In both of Odermatt's downhill wins this season - at Val Gardena, Italy in December and storied Swiss venue Wengen in January - Von Allmen was second.

Von Allmen earned 100 World Cup points and Odermatt got 80. That cut Odermatt's lead in the downhill standings to 83 and he needs just a top-14 result on March 22 at Sun Valley, Idaho, to retain his downhill title.

Odermatt is cruising toward a fourth straight overall World Cup title with a 520-point lead over Henrik Kristoffersen, who races only in slalom and giant slalom. The 27-year-old Odermatt can confirm his title Sunday by winning a scheduled super-G.

Von Allmen's breakout season

now counts two wins in World Cup downhills, one in super-G and two worlds gold medals last month at Saalbach, Austria, in downhill and team combined.

He clocked the fastest speed Saturday at close to 130 kph (81 mph) - slicker than the squirrels caught on camera scampering across the snow to the forest behind the safety fences - on the 3.04-kilometer (1.9-mile) course used at the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Games.

Italian star Dominik Paris had denied Switzerland victory in Friday's downhill when Odermatt was second and Roggentin third. Paris placed sixth Saturday trailing 0.59 behind Von Allmen.

Federica Brignone is still a relentless winner in giant slalom races and Mikaela Shiffrin is still searching for form after her serious crash in November.

Brignone was fastest in both runs of a World Cup giant slalom Saturday to score a dominating victory and take another big step toward a

second career overall title.

Shiffrin failed to finish in the first run, going out when she skied wide after taking too much speed into a right-hand turn.

Brignone raced last in the afternoon as the first-run leader and extended her margin to 1.36 seconds over Alice Robinson. Lara Colturi was third, trailing Brignone by 1.43.

Brignone has won every giant slalom race she has completed this season, including a world championships gold medal last month. She failed to finish in three World Cup races.

Robinson's consistent results means she still leads Brignone in the giant slalom standings by 20 points with one race left on March 25 at Sun Valley, Idaho.

However, Brignone is racing toward a second overall World Cup title at age 34.

With 100 points earned for Saturday's win, she leads by 322 over Lara Gut-Behrami, the defending champion, who placed ninth.

Al-Qadsiya and Kuwait Club cruise in the Merge League

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Al-Qadsiya and Kuwait Club secured dominant wins over Al-Yarmouk and Al-Tadamon, respectively, in the second round of the "Merge" Basketball League at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex.

Al-Asfar delivered a commanding performance, crushing Al-Yarmouk 137-51 to maintain its lead at the top of the standings with 20 points. Meanwhile, Al-Yarmouk remained in eighth place with 11 points.

In the second matchup, "Al-Abyad" overpowered "Al-Aneed" with a decisive 107-44 victory, lifting the "Sons of Kaifan" to second place with 17 points, while Al-Tadamon stayed at the bottom of the table with nine points.

Al-Qadsiya controlled the game from start to finish, dominating all four quarters (29-10, 65-20, 91-39, and 137-51). Saad Al-Rifai shined for "Al-Asfar," scoring 28 points in a stellar performance.

Similarly, Kuwait Club left no room for resistance in its matchup, securing a 63-point win over Al-Tadamon. Kuwait Club saw contributions from multiple players, including Hussein Al-Khabbaz, Abdulrahman



Kuwait Club player dribbles the ball as an opponent defends during the Merge League match

Al-Juma, Imran Jawhar, Fahd Al-Dhafiri, Alexander Al-Ghais, Youssef Al-Hamdan, Musaed Al-Otaibi, and 17-year-old rising star Adam Asadullah. Turki Hamoud Al-Shammari also stood out, tallying 16 points, three rebounds, and five assists.

Al-Hilal's Al-Dossari equals assist record

RIYADH, March 8: Al-Hilal star Salem Al-Dossari reached a historic milestone during his team's 2-0 victory over Al-Feiha in the 24th round of the Roshn League.

Al-Dossari provided the assist for Aleksandar Mitrovic's goal, marking his 53rd career assist in the Saudi League. According to the official Roshn League statistics account on "X," this achievement makes him the joint all-time assist leader in the league's history, alongside Yahya Al-Shehri.

With 10 assists this season, Al-Dossari is poised to surpass Al-Shehri and claim the top spot outright in the upcoming matches.

In other league action, Al-Ahli and Al-Khaleej played to a 2-2 draw, while Al-Nasr and Al-Shabab also ended their match with the same result.



Al-Hilal star Salem Al-Dossari

Best of the Rest

Spirit wins Challenge Cup: Aubrey Kingsbury made a crucial save in a shootout and the Washington Spirit beat the Orlando Pride 4-2 on penalties after a 1-1 draw on Friday night to win the National Women's Soccer League Challenge Cup.

Kingsbury stopped Ally Lemos' attempt before Tara McKeown converted the Spirit's fourth penalty kick.

It was revenge of sorts for the Spirit, who finished as runners-up to the Pride in the 2024 standings and lost to Orlando in last November's championship game. It was the Spirit's second-ever trophy after the 2021 NWSL Championship.

The Spirit made it 1-1 on a direct free kick by Leicy Santos from 30 yards out in the 72nd minute.

Rafaelle scored in the first half for Orlando. The Brazilian, who was making her first appearance for the Pride since July 2024, finished off a rebound from a free kick by Marta with her left foot just before halftime.

The NWSL opens its regular season next week. (AP)

Sanchez, Aranguiz return to Chile squad: Veterans Alexis Sanchez and Charles Aranguiz have been recalled to Chile's squad for World Cup qualifiers against Paraguay and Ecuador, the Chilean football federation said on Friday.

Uruguayan forward Sanchez has not represented his country since June last year while Universidad de Chile midfielder Aranguiz last played for the Roja in October 2023.

Manager Ricardo Gareca also included Argentina-born forward Fernando Zampedri in his 24-man squad after the 37-year-old was granted Chilean citizenship last month.

Zampedri has scored 122 goals in 199 appearances across all competitions for Universidad Catolica following his 2020 move to the Chilean club from Argentina's Rosario Central.

Chile will meet Paraguay in Asuncion on March 20 and Ecuador in Santiago five days later.

Gareca's men are currently ninth in the 10-team South American zone standings with nine points from 12 qualifiers. (Xinhua)

Schelotto in line for Velez job: Former Paraguay manager Guillermo Barros Schelotto is set to take charge of Argentine top-flight club Velez Sarsfield, according to widespread media reports.

The 51-year-old agreed to a two-year contract following several days of negotiations in Buenos Aires, news outlet TyC Sports reported.

It added that Barros Schelotto's backroom staff would include his brother, Gustavo, and Federico Insua.

Velez's head coaching role became vacant on Monday, when Sebastian Dominguez was sacked amid a poor run of results.

The Buenos Aires outfit is currently last in Group B of Argentina's Primera Division Apertura tournament with just five points from nine games. It marks a sharp reversal of fortunes for the club, which secured its 11th Argentine top-flight title in December.

Schelotto has been out of work since parting ways with Paraguay's national team in September 2023. His 13-year managerial career has also included spells at Lanus, Palermo, Boca Juniors and LA Galaxy. (Xinhua)

Kazma leads volleyball league with perfect record

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: Kazma now leads the Kuwait Volleyball League standings alone after securing a dominant 3-0 victory over Al-Sulaibikhat (25-21, 25-20, 25-19) in their recent matchup at the Volleyball Association Hall in Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex.

Al-Qadsiya also claimed comfortable straight-sets win over Al-Yarmouk (25-10, 25-12, 25-16).

With this latest victory, the "Orange" remains unbeaten with 21 points from seven matches, while Al-Shabab dropped to second place with 18 points. Meanwhile, "Sons of Ahmadi" will face Kuwait Club at 9:00 pm. Kuwait Club sits third in the standings with 15 points from five matches. Al-Qadsiya holds fourth place with 12 points, followed by Al-Nasr (11 points), Zubaigan and Al-Arabi (9 points each), Al-Sulaibikhat (6 points), Al-Yarmouk (5 points), Al-Tadamon (3 points), and Al-Sahel (2 points).

In other news, the Asian Volleyball Federation Coaches Committee held its first meeting via video conference, led by Federation President Ramon Suzara of the Philippines. The meeting focused on strategies to develop volleyball coaching across Asia.

Committee member Badr Al-Kous revealed that five proposals aimed at improving coaching standards were approved during the meeting. Among the key initiatives is the establishment of volleyball academies across the five regions of the Asian Federation to enhance youth development in the sport.



Players vie for the ball during the volleyball league in Kuwait.

Zheng and Wang reach third round

Griekspoor stuns top-seeded Zverev at Indian Wells

INDIAN WELLS, Calif., March 8, (Agencies): Tallon Griekspoor upset No. 1 seed Alexander Zverev 4-6, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (4) in a second-round match at the BNP Paribas Open.

The loss came eight days after Zverev also was the top seed when he was upset by American teenager Learner Tien 6-3, 6-4 in Acapulco, Mexico.

The Zverev-Griekspoor match lasted 3 hours, 7 minutes. Griekspoor collapsed on the court after converting his sixth match point for his first win over an opponent ranked in the top five.

The 28-year-old from the Netherlands improved to 2-6 against Zverev, currently ranked No. 2.

"It was such a mental thing. I lost to him five times last year and had absolute heartbreak at Roland Garros where I was up a double break in the fifth," Griekspoor said. "I played so many battles against him and had chances but they all went his way. I am incredibly proud of myself from this performance and to get it over the line."

Griekspoor, ranked No. 43, will face Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard in the third round.

Zverev trails Jannik Sinner in the rankings. He will remain at No. 2 even if No. 3 Carlos Alcaraz defends his Indian Wells title.

Chinese Olympic champion Zheng Qinwen beat former world No. 1 Victoria Azarenka of Belarus 6-3, 6-4 to advance to the third

round of the WTA 1000 event at Indian Wells.

Eighth-seeded Zheng secured her first victory against Azarenka in their three encounters. Having received a first-round bye, Zheng marked a strong start to her campaign here.



In this file photo, Victoria Azarenka of Belarus plays a forehand return to Lucia Bronzetti of Italy during their first round match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia. (AP)

"It's my first time beating Azarenka, such a great player. I tried to play solid, hit a lot of rally with her because Azarenka is very consistent. If I don't take my chance, you can see in the second set, I was 2-0 up, but she came back," Zheng said. "She beat me twice when I was 19 and 21, so I'm very happy to win this match." China's Wang Xinyu progressed to the third round of the WTA 1000 event at Indian Wells with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Latvia's Jelena Ostapenko.

Despite combining seven aces with six double faults, world No. 42 Wang won 76 percent of points on her first serve to prevail in an hour and 27 minutes.

Ostapenko, who is ranked 26th, lacked sharpness following her first round bye. The 27-year-old put just 49 percent of her first serves in play and converted just one of four break points.

Aiming for her first WTA singles title, 23-year-old Wang will meet American world No. 4 Jessica Pegula in the third round.

The winner of this year's edition will earn 1.2 million U.S. dollars and 1000 ranking points.

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Lauren Price celebrates her win over Natasha Jonas in a IBF, IBO and WBC world welterweight bout at the Royal Albert Hall in London. (AP)

Sports

Three matches postponed

No surprises in Crown Prince Cup

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, March 8: The start of the Crown Prince Cup saw no major surprises, with the "big teams" securing comfortable victories. Kuwait defeated Al-Tadamon 5-0, Al-Salmiya triumphed over Burgan 5-1, Kazma beat Al-Yarmouk 3-1, and Khaitan overcame Al-Shabab 4-1 on penalties (0-0 in regular time).

The preliminary round also saw the postponement of the matches between Al-Jahra and Al-Jazeera, and Al-Arabi and Al-Sahel, as well as Al-Qadisiya and Al-Nasr, due to Al-Arabi's participation in the Asian Challenge Cup and Al-Qadisiyah's involvement in

the Gulf Champions League.

In the opening match, Kuwait Club ensured that Al-Tadamon wouldn't repeat its quarter-final elimination from last season, as it delivered a dominant 5-0 win to secure its spot in the quarter-finals, awaiting the winner of the Al-Jahra vs. Al-Jazeera match.

Mohammed Daham stole the show, scoring a hat-trick with goals in the 19th, 52nd, and 77th minutes. Ahmed Al-Dhafiri added the fourth in the 80th minute, and Amr Abdel Fattah sealed the victory in the 90th minute.

In the second match, Khaitan defeated Al-Sulaybikhat on penalties after a 0-0 draw, setting up a quarter-final clash with Kazma, who had earlier defeated Al-Yarmouk.

Khaitan took the lead in the 8th minute with Khaled Shaman's goal, but Al-Yarmouk quickly responded with an equalizer. Mishaal Al-Shammari then added a second goal, and Hussein Ismail's strike in the 62nd minute gave Al-Yarmouk hope. However, Jarrah Naif's late goal in the 90+8th minute sealed the victory for Khaitan.

Finally, Al-Salmiya had a tough time before eliminating Burgan. After conceding a penalty goal in the 20th minute, Al-Salmiya equalized with a penalty from Alex Lima in the 62nd minute. The match went to extra time, where Al-Salmiya netted four more goals through Fawaz Ayed, Bader Jamal, Moaz Al-Asema, and Mohammed Al-Huwaidi to secure their place in the next round.



Yarmouk player kicks the ball as Kazma player watches during the Crown Prince Cup soccer match in Kuwait.

Collection of biggest medals complete

Kimberley wins women's skeleton world championship at Lake Placid

LAKE PLACID, N.Y., March 8, (AP) — For Kimberley Bos of The Netherlands, the collection of the biggest skeleton medals is complete. Bronze at the Beijing Olympics in 2022, silver at the world championships two years ago and now, finally, she has gold.

Bos is the new world champion of her sport, turning in the fastest times in the final two runs to win the title at Mount Van Hoevenberg - the fifth different woman to win the season's biggest skeleton race in the last five years.

"This year I was like, 'I really want it.' But you have to have it come to you," Bos said. "You can't force sliding."

It's the first skeleton world gold medal for the Netherlands and extends a run where a different woman has stood atop the podium after the year's biggest race. Tina Hermann of Germany won the world title in 2021, Hannah Neise of Germany won Olympic gold in 2022 (there are no world championships in Olympic years), Susanne Kreher of Germany won worlds in 2023, Canada's Hallie Clarke was the world champ last year and now, Bos reigns supreme.

Bos' four-run time was 3 minutes, 40.06 seconds, and her final margin of 0.67 seconds matched the biggest by a woman at the world championships in a decade. Lizzy Yarnold of Britain won by the same margin at St. Moritz for the world title in 2015.

"It's really cool. I don't think I quite know yet what that means, but it means a lot to me because I really



Kimberley Bos, of The Netherlands, celebrates her first place win during the medal ceremony at the skeleton world championships in Lake Placid, N.Y. (AP)

wanted to win a world championship," Bos said. "Honestly, being in the lead after the first day, I was like, 'Well, I have a good shot. I might as well make use of it.'"

Mystique Ro of the U.S. finished second in 3:40.73 and Anna Fernstaedt of the Czech Republic - whose career seemed in jeopardy after being diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes three years ago - was third in 3:40.81.

"This is the cherry on top," Fernstaedt said. "I'm very happy."

Bos was second behind Austria's Janine Flock in the overall World Cup standings this season despite having only one medal in eight races this season - that being a win at Sigulda, Latvia. Flock moved up in the final heat on Friday night and finished fifth, one spot behind Brazil's Nicole Rocha Silveira.

Jokic makes NBA history as Nuggets outlast Suns in OT



Oklahoma City Thunder forward Jaylin Williams, top right, and Portland Trail Blazers forward Toumani Camara, bottom left, try to grab the ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City. (AP)

Fox struggles in 1st game in Sacramento since trade

DENVER, March 8, (AP): Nikola Jokic had 31 points, 21 rebounds and a career-high 22 assists and the Denver Nuggets outlasted the Phoenix Suns 149-141 in overtime Friday night after losing a 21-point lead.

Jokic became the first NBA player with a triple-double of at least 30 points, 20 rebounds and 20 assists. He tied his own team record with his 29th triple-double of the season, stretching his career total to 149.

Aaron Gordon made a career-high seven 3-pointers and had 27 points for Denver. Kevin Durant scored 29 points for Phoenix, hitting a 3-pointer at regulation buzzer to send it into overtime.

Jokic opened the extra period with a floater in the lane to spark a 7-0 run. The Nuggets led by 11 after Christian Braun's dunk and layup with 51 seconds left.

Three nights after overcoming a 23-point deficit to beat the Los Angeles Clippers 119-117 at home, the Suns trailed 85-64 in the third and cut it to heading into the fourth.

Kings 127, Spurs 109

In Sacramento, Zach LaVine scored 36 points and the Kings beat the San Antonio Spurs in De'Aaron Fox's first game as a visitor in Sacramento.

Fox faced his original NBA team for the first time since being traded to the Spurs last month in a three-team deal that brought LaVine to Sacramento.

But it was LaVine who shined by scoring 16 points to break the game open in the second quarter on the way to his sixth straight game with at least 20 points.

DeMar DeRozan added 22 points and Keegan Murray scored 19 to give the Kings their fifth win in six games.

Fox shot just 6 for 17 and finished with 16 points. Stephon Castle led the Spurs with 25 points.

Cavaliers 118, Hornets 117

In Charlotte, Donovan Mitchell scored 24 points and the NBA-leading Cleveland Cavaliers rallied to defeat Hornets for their 13th straight victory, 118-117 over the Charlotte.

Darius Garland added 20 points to help the Cavaliers improve to 53-10. Evan Mobley scored 19 points, De'Andre Hunter had 15, Jarrett Allen 14 and Sam Merrill



Denver Nuggets center Nikola Jokic (15) pulls in a rebound as Phoenix Suns center Nick Richards defends in the second half of an NBA basketball game in Denver. (AP)

12.

Thunder 107, Trail Blazers 89

In Oklahoma City, Aaron Wiggins scored 30 points, Jaylin Williams had his first career triple-double, and the Western Conference-leading Oklahoma City Thunder beat the Portland Trail Blazers with MVP candidate Shai Gilgeous-Alexander on the bench.

Gilgeous-Alexander was held out for rest, missing just his second game this season. The Thunder were also without Chet Holmgren (lower right leg contusion) and Isaiah Hartenstein (broken nose).

They still had more than enough to win their sixth straight game. The Blazers got within two points midway through the fourth quarter, but Williams and Wiggins responded with 3-pointers and the Thunder cruised from there.

Grizzlies 122, Mavericks 111

In Dallas, Ja Morant scored 31 points, including the game's final seven, and Desmond Bane had 27 points and a career-high 16 rebounds as the Memphis Grizzlies rallied in the fourth quarter to beat the Dallas Mavericks.

Reserve Brandon Williams scored a career-high 31 points and Najj Marshall had career bests with 29 points and 17 rebounds for the Mavericks, who have lost four consecutive games and six of their last seven.

Timberwolves 106, Heat 104

In Miami, Mike Conley, Naz Reid and Donte DiVincenzo each scored 15 points each and the Minnesota Timberwolves beat the Miami Heat for their fourth straight victory.

Anthony Edwards, Jaden McDaniels and Julius Randle finished with 13 each. Edwards, who averages 27.5 points per game, attempted a season-low 10 shots and made four. Nickeil Alexander-Walker was Minnesota's seventh double-figure scorer with 12 points.

Raptors 118, Jazz 109

In Toronto, Immanuel Quickley scored a season-high 34 points and the Toronto Raptors overcame a dominant rebounding effort by Walker Kessler to beat the Utah Jazz.

Quickley added five rebounds, five assists and three steals in the Raptors' third straight win. Scottie Barnes had 22 points, 12 rebounds and six assists.

Kessler led the Jazz with 18 points while setting career highs with 25 rebounds and eight blocks. Keyonte George also scored 18 points for the Jazz.

Best of the Rest

Takeda takes 2-shot lead: Rio Takeda of Japan shot a 3-under 69 on Saturday to hold a two-shot lead after three rounds of the LPGA's Blue Bay tournament on China's southern island of Hainan.

Takeda was on 9-under 207 going into Sunday's final round. The 21-year-old Takeda is looking for her second LPGA tournament victory after winning the Toto Japan Classic four months ago in a six-hole, sudden-death playoff.

Takeda was two shots ahead of Gigi Stoll, Austin Kim and Cassie Porter. Stoll shot a 68, Kim finished with a 70 and Porter was on even-par 72.

Jeno Thitikul, the LPGA's No. 2-ranked player, was three shots back in a group of four players. She shot a 68.

Local favorite Ruoning Yin of China shot a 71 but was 10 shots off the pace. Yin is the LPGA's No. 4-ranked player. (AP)

Price becomes unified champ: Unbeaten Lauren Price was too fast for the veteran Natasha Jonas as she won their unification world welterweight title fight comfortably at the Royal Albert Hall on Friday.

Price, of Wales, was the paper-thin favorite but impressively overwhelmed Jonas and won by unanimous decision, relieving the Englishwoman of her WBC and IBF belts to add to her IBO belt.

The 2021 Olympic champion improved her record to 9-0 while Jonas' seven-win streak since a 2021 loss to Katie Taylor ended without dispute in a matchup of southpaws. Jonas, 10 years older than Price at 40, struggled to hit Price and lost for only the third time in 20 fights.

England's Caroline Dubois successfully retained her WBC lightweight belt by majority decision after weathering a stirring final-round comeback by South Korea's Bo Mi Re Shin, who earlier absorbed a lot of punishment. (AP)

Wrestling tournament kicks off: The 2025 International Wrestling Challenge Tournament opened Saturday afternoon in Turpan, northwestern China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

The competition features five weight categories - 65kg, 74kg, 86kg, 97kg, and 125kg. Six teams from China's Xinjiang, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Cuba are competing, with 73 athletes participating, including several Olympic-level wrestlers.

Arturo Silot Torres, who represented Cuba in the 97kg category at the Paris Olympics last year, is competing in Xinjiang for the first time.

"I'm very happy to train and compete with high-level athletes of different styles. It's been very helpful for my progress," said the Cuban. "I hope there will be more opportunities for us to exchange and improve together in the future." "The purpose of this tournament is to strengthen international sports cooperation and enhance athletes' ability to handle high-pressure competitions," said Adil Balat, deputy director of the Xinjiang Combat Sports Training Center. (Xinhua)

Wang, Chen on initial entry list: Wang Yidi and Chen Xingtong lead the initial entry list released on Saturday for next month's World Table Tennis (WTT) Champions Incheon.

Joining world No. 3 Wang and fourth-ranked Chen in the women's singles event are their compatriots Kuai Man and Qian Tianyi, Japan's Hina Hayata, Miwa Harimoto, Satsuki Odo and Mima Ito.

Shin Yu-bin flies the flag for South Korea on home soil, while other prominent figures include Romania's Bernadette Szocs and Adriana Diaz of Puerto Rico.

World No. 4 Tomokazu Harimoto of Japan leads the men's action along with Brazilian Hugo Calderano and Felix Lebrun of France, with host representatives including 12th-ranked Jang Woo-jin, An Jae-hyun, Cho Dae-seong and Oh Jun-sung.

Patrick Franziska and Qiu Dang, both of Germany, Sweden's Truls Moregard, and Frenchman Alexis Lebrun add further firepower, while China's Lin Gaoyuan and Xiang Peng also aim to go deep in the competition. (Xinhua)