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Amir receives Eid well-wishes from Crown Prince, senior officials



Al-Shaheed Park comes alive on the second day of Eid Al-Fitr as visitors from across Kuwait gather to enjoy a stunning fireworks display. The vibrant colors lit up the night sky, filling the air with joy and celebration, thanks to the Ya Hala Shopping Festival. It was a breathtaking sight that brought smiles to faces young and old, perfectly complementing Kuwait City's skyline under the stars.

KUNA photo

Leaders pray for prosperity

KUWAIT CITY, April 1, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Saturday a message of congratulations on Eid Al-Fitr from His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

In the message, His Highness the Crown Prince expressed his honor to send sincere congratulations to His Highness the Amir on this occasion, praying sincerely to Allah to protect His Highness the Amir and wishing him perpetual well-being.

His Highness the Crown Prince also wished success to His Highness the Amir in leading the dear country to make further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince asked Allah to repeat this blessed occasion on Kuwait, and Arab and Muslim nations with progress, goodness and development.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir sent a message of thanks to His Highness the Crown Prince for these good and sincere feelings.

His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah Almighty to maintain security and safety as well as prosperity to the dear homeland, and wished success to all nationals for making further progress and accomplishments for the sake of homeland.

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Murder, assault cast dark shadow over Kuwait's Eid

Two disturbing crimes lead to quick arrests

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: Kuwait witnessed two horrific crimes during the Eid holidays. The first incident involved a Kuwaiti citizen running over his wife with his vehicle, resulting in her death in the Abdali desert, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The second incident involved a Kuwaiti citizen kidnapping a child, sexually as-

saulting him, and abandoning him on a street in Capital Governorate. Both criminals have been arrested and referred to the Public Prosecution.

In the first case, a Kuwaiti citizen in his thirties ran over his wife, who was in her twenties, with his vehicle in a desert area on Abdali Road, at Kilo 30 mark.

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Acting Prime Minister inspects border checkpoints, announces tech overhaul

KUWAIT CITY, April 1, (KUNA): The Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah, accompanied by Minister of Public Works Dr. Nora Al-Mashaan, visited on Monday the border checkpoints, Al Abdali, Al Salmi and Al Nuwaiseeb, examining the personnel tasks in preparation for updating the border points infrastructure and boosting missions' efficiency.

The Ministry of Interior said in a statement that the two ministers during the tour looked into future schemes designed to upgrade the infrastructure by means of applying high technology to speed up measures and establish an advanced work environment for the personnel.

Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef was briefed by Minister Al-Mashaan about these plans and work mechanisms of the Custom Directorate General and vehicles' check.

The statement quoted Sheikh Fahad

Al-Yousef as saying that the border checkpoints constitute a main artery for the state and a facade that mirrors Kuwait's image for the incomers, thus overhauling the sector is quite needed.

He stressed on the necessity to employ the high tech for the border checkpoints' systems, in line with Kuwait vision toward digital transformation, elevating level of the government works through smart solutions that quicken the inspection operations, the custom transactions and boosting cross-border passing safety.

The government is pursuing support for updating the border checkpoints' infrastructure with employment of advanced technology and creating an up-to-date work environment to render the tasks effective and bolster's Kuwait as a pivotal regional commercial hub.

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PM Diwan photo

Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah receives a briefing on the operational mechanisms at Kuwait's border ports, including procedures to ensure smooth movement and the roles of the General Administration of Customs and Vehicle Inspection.

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The official gazette 'Kuwait Al-youm' published Decree No. 55/2025 to revoke the Kuwaiti citizenship of an individual, along with Cabinet Resolution No. 278/2025, which revokes Kuwaiti citizenship from six individuals, including those who acquired citizenship as a result, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

KUWAIT CITY: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed on Sunday Kuwait's welcome of forming Syria's new government, wishing success in meeting Syrians' aspirations in security, safety and prosperity.

Kuwait looks forward to cooperating with the new Syrian government to move to wider horizons of bilateral historic relations between the two countries and boost them in different domains, the ministry affirmed in a statement. (KUNA)

BEIRUT: The Israeli military struck a building in Beirut's southern suburbs early Tuesday, killing at least four people, as the military said it had targeted a member of the Hezbollah militant group.

The airstrike came without warning days after Israel launched an attack on the Lebanese capital, Beirut, on Friday for the first time since a ceasefire ended fighting between Israeli forces and the Hezbollah militant group in November. The Israeli military then had warned residents in the crowded suburbs before the attack after two projectiles were launched from southern Lebanon, which Hezbollah denied firing. (AP)

Debtor imprisonment reinstated under Kuwait's Bankruptcy Law

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: Decree-Law No. 58/2025 amended Article 5 of Bankruptcy Law No. 71/2020 on "Arrest Orders, Subpoenas, and Detention of Debtors," outlining the controls to be incorporated into the amended Civil and Commercial Procedures Law, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Article 1 of the decree, which was

published in the official gazette Kuwait Al-youm, specifies that the phrase regarding the nullification of "Articles 292, clauses one, two, and four of Articles 293, 294, 295, and 296 of Decree-Law No. 38/1980," included in Article 5 of Law No. 71/2020, shall be deleted.

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Gold prices surge to KD 31.450 per gram

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: The price of 24-carat gold in Kuwait reached approximately 31.450 Kuwaiti dinars per gram on Tuesday, driven by a record-breaking surge in global gold prices, which exceeded \$3,148 per ounce for the first time in history.

Bader Al-Razihan, Head of Strategic Planning and Follow-up at Dar Al-Sabek Company, told Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that the sharp increase was fueled by geopolitical tensions and trade uncertainties, particularly U.S. President

Continued on Page 5

Firms face shutdown

Kuwait Central Bank takes over exchange companies oversight

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has confirmed that the deadline for owners of exchange companies and institutions to regularize their status has expired, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This is in accordance with the Cabinet's decision taken on June 11, 2024, which transferred the supervision and oversight of exchange shops from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to the Central Bank of Kuwait.

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Namaa Charity donates Eid clothing

Namaa Charity donated Eid clothing to 66 orphans in Lebanon and 100 more in Yemen.

Namaa charity official Abdulaziz Al-Ibrahim told KUNA on Tuesday that this is part of the charity's efforts

in providing support to orphans, enabling them to live a better life.

Al-Ibrahim called this a humanitarian duty and of priority to the charity.

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Seismologist recommends precautionary measures, not panic

Kuwait not immune to quakes, preparedness key

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: Seismologist Dr. Ferial Burbaie said the earthquake, which struck the eastern part of Saudi Arabia -- 250 kilometers from Kuwait -- at 11:42 pm on March 31 was the third in the southern Arabian Gulf region, at close proximity to each other and with the same magnitude (4 on the Richter scale).

In an exclusive statement to the newspaper, Burbaie disclosed that the latest earthquake had a depth of 10 kilometers and was located at approximately nine kilometers within a 100-kilometer radius.

Burbaie explained that noticeable damage usually occurs when the magnitude of the earthquake exceeds 4.5 on the Richter scale, which is equivalent to 345 billion joules, roughly equivalent to the explosive energy of 84 tons of TNT or 0.006 times the energy released by a nuclear bomb dropped on



Dr. Burbaie

Hiroshima.

Asked about the possibility of Kuwait being exposed to such earthquakes and whether Kuwaiti monitoring equipment is capable of detecting them; Burbaie stated that prediction is impossible, but it is possible to reduce the risks when they occur.

Geological and statistical studies indicate that the strongest earthquake in Kuwait cannot exceed a magnitude of 5.5, which is classified as a moderate earthquake compared to earthquakes in Iran, Japan, the Philippines and Alaska.

On mitigating the risk of earthquakes, Burbaie stated that "taking precautions, preparing and raising awareness are the only guaranteed ways to significantly mitigate the risk of earthquakes."

These precautions have three main axes as follows: First: Identify and study the locations and frequency of earthquakes by establishing seismic monitoring networks. The Kuwaiti National Earthquake Monitoring Network was established and has been operating regularly since 1997.

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KUNA photo

Part of the distribution of Eid clothing to orphans in Lebanon.



5 Businessman Abdulaziz Ahmed Al-Ghannam and his brothers organize Eid gathering

5 Khaled and Abdulaziz Al-Dughhaishem hosted a joyous Eid Al-Fitr gathering

diwaniya



ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Is new giant airport, tourism in Kuwait destiny interlinked?

"THE new State media outlet 'The News Channel' has not eliminated other news channels, as its owners imagined. The Ministry of Information took a risk professionally and financially by entering an already saturated media landscape, one with a high ceiling of freedoms and a space for professional expression that the ministry cannot overcome!" **Khaled Ahmad Al-Tarrach** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Our new giant Kuwait Airport witnessed an unreasonable number of statements from prime ministers and ministers, as well as visits to the site of the new aviation giant. No one has explained the reason for the delay in completion. However, the confidence of successive ministers and governments is reassuring. The modest government assessment and the non-technical opinion of the former National Assembly have nothing to do with it.



Khaled Al-Tarrach

"We are reluctantly overcoming the delay with the completion of the giant airport, as we have heard. But the question is: Will the new giant airport attract international airlines that have boycotted Kuwait Airport and civil aviation services? Will the giant Western airlines resume flights to Kuwait?"

"We have the right to naively question this, while the government has the right not to respond or comment intentionally or unintentionally. Western airlines have the right not to risk their lives again with Kuwait's old and new airports, as the experience is exhausting for the companies and passengers!"

"The current airport, despite my limited technical knowledge of aviation services, is characterized by a backward aspect -- the simultaneous handshake between departing and arriving passengers. This has certainly been avoided in the new giant airport, which will be packed with flights by Kuwait Airways and other airlines. Perhaps, some Western companies will be kind enough to reconsider!"

"The ministry's tourism promotion will certainly transform the giant airport into a tourist destination for celebrities to visit, photograph and enjoy its facilities, conservative services, and the luxury of mingling and not mingling!"

"The ministry spent and even drained public funds, as well as the time of the United Nations Development Programme in Kuwait on one or more studies to develop visions for tourism here. Nevertheless, luck was not on the side of the ministry at the time nor its Commerce counterpart to which the tourism sector was transferred. The sector returned to its compassionate base at the Information Ministry, without any financial or legal accountability for the exaggerated 'tourism' dream!"

"Will Kuwait's new giant open the doors to 'tourism' as envisioned by the Ministry of Information? Allah knows!"

"Is the fate of the new giant airport linked to the fate of 'tourism' in Kuwait?"

"Will the official and unofficial fatwa and religious authorities, in cooperation with the Civil Aviation Authority, set the terms and conditions for modest dress for foreign women when traveling from the new airport to the beaches and islands, without violating public morals?"

"Will the new airport complicate matters for transit passengers carrying prohibited items and unaware of the nature of the Dry City's laws?"

"Will civil aviation ban items over Kuwaiti airspace before landing at the new giant airport, as the case with the old one?"

"If it weren't for the government's projects, we wouldn't have found the material for satirical and serious writing. Thank you to the responsible authorities for the generous support of writers, journalists, tourism dreamers and those who profit from fictitious projects, positions and new tourism labels."

"Thank you to all the ministers who have dedicated their precious time and tremendous efforts to following up the new giant project, which may compete with others in the Gulf and steal countless numbers of travelers!"

"Thank you to the international airlines if they decide to return to the new giant airport, overcome the annoyances of the old airport, and fulfill the illusions of 'tourism'. We apologize for their refusal."

"However, Kuwait Airways will certainly compete with global aviation and international airports using public funds, even if the situation requires taking risks!"

Also:

"Bravo, Kuwaiti Ambassador Sheikh Zain Al-Sabah for meeting US Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick. Thank you for clarifying matters and revealing the truth regarding his statement, which undermined the historical relations and strong bonds of friendship between Kuwait and the United States of America."

Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"It is not a secret that the US secretary's statement, whether intentional or unintentional, was met with regret among Kuwaiti circles; given the commitment to ensure that Kuwaiti-American relations are not tarnished. The Kuwaiti ambassador's move was timely, appropriate and meaningful. It was exactly what we hoped for.

"Without a doubt, it was within the framework of good relations with US administration officials, which Ambassador Al-Sabah was able to build within a short period. Thank you, Her Excellency the Ambassador.

"We hope that Lutnick addressed the impact of his statement on Kuwaiti sentiments, especially after Ambassador Al-Sabah's clarifications regarding the balance of customs tariffs in bilateral trade with a strategic partner like the United States. Kuwait adheres to an open market policy and maintains stable customs tariffs with all parties.

"In my opinion, this move is in coordination with His Excellency Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya. It is part of an active diplomacy that deals with Kuwait's issues, interests and international relations. This diplomacy must continue, specifically in light of the current circumstances, in which a global trade war is escalating and could affect everyone, including us in Kuwait."

"There is no doubt that active diplomacy in our foreign policy must be accompanied by diligent efforts to improve our ranking in international indicators related to governance, competitiveness, resilience and others in a way that reflects Kuwait's reputation and international standing.

"Kuwait's significant contribution to supporting development initiatives in developing countries, as well as humanitarian and charitable works, must also be highlighted by our national media and diplomatic agencies."

"The recent escalation, followed by de-escalation between the United States of America and Kuwait, should be read not as a storm that has passed, but as a political message cloaked in soft pressure," **Abdulaziz Mohammad Al-Anjari** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The swift Kuwaiti response -- from the summoning of the US ambassador to the Kuwaiti ambassador's visit to the commerce secretary in Washington, to the phone call made by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio to his Kuwaiti counterpart, to Trump's praise of Kuwait during an official iftar -- undoubtedly constituted an organized and calm diplomatic response that contributed to absorbing the attack and containing its formal repercussions."

"Nevertheless, it would be wrong to consider what happened as an end to the danger or a denial of any US intention to pressure Kuwait. Washington did not retract its statements or deny their content, as it rather chose to calm the atmosphere without reneging on its intentions."

"More importantly, the US Secretary of Commerce himself did not offer an apology or even a public clarification. He did not say he was misunderstood, did not hint at a retreat, and did not make any subsequent statement."

"This conspicuous absence can only be explained by an implicit adherence to the statement and a refusal to bear any political or moral cost. It can also be seen as an indication of a clear disregard for the reaction, or at least a certainty that the Kuwaiti response will not go beyond a formal appeasement."

"The issues that the United States is believed to be seeking to advance toward Kuwait include:

- Encouraging Kuwait to invest in strategic American projects;
- Providing broader economic or trade facilities to American companies;
- Responding, even symbolically, to the path of normalization with Israel;
- Recalibrating Kuwait's position on Iran to align with Trump's escalating policy.

"In other words, Washington issued a subtle warning, monitored the Kuwaiti response, and contained it without backing away from its original message."

"As for praising Kuwait, it is part of traditional American political protocol that does not negate the underlying strategic considerations."

"What happened was a clever absorption of the attack, with no end to the danger. The challenge today lies not only in diplomatic responses, but in developing a Kuwaiti strategic vision that deconstructs American messages and prepares for the next phase, balancing sovereignty with the demands of the alliance, without acquiescence or impulsiveness."

— **Compiled by Mahmoud Attiyeh**



Chief of KFF Major General Talal Al-Roumi expresses condolences to colleagues.

Amir, leadership offer condolences on fireman's demise in line of duty



Major General Talal Al-Roumi accepts condolences from well-wishers.



Sergeant Salem Al-Ajmi is laid to rest for his final journey.

KFF photos

Kuwait lays to rest martyr Salem Al-Ajmi

KUWAIT CITY, April 1, (Agencies): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to the family of martyr of duty First Warrant Officer Salem Al-Ajmi, who passed away yesterday in duty dealing with a fire incident.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir extended heartfelt condolences to the martyr's family, prayed to Almighty Allah to bless the martyr and grant his family patience and solace.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Fahad Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent a cable of

condolences to the family of martyr of duty (First Warrant Officer) Salem Al-Ajmi.

In the cable, His Highness the Crown Prince extended heartfelt condolences to the martyr's family, prayed to Almighty Allah to bless the martyr and grant his family patience and solace.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah too sent a cable of condolences to the family of martyr of duty (First Warrant Officer) Salem Al-Ajmi, who passed away in the line of duty dealing with a fire incident.

Kuwait bid farewell to martyred Sergeant Salem Al-Ajmi at Subhan Cemetery on Sunday, following his tragic passing on Saturday while performing his national duty during a fire incident.

According to a press statement issued by the

Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), Chief of KFF Major General Talal Al-Roumi, along with senior commanders and a large crowd of citizens and residents, led the mourners during the funeral.

Major General Al-Roumi conveyed the condolences of the acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef to the martyr's family.

He affirmed that Sergeant Salem Al-Ajmi had fulfilled his duties and responsibilities with exceptional dedication and sincerity.

Following the funeral, Major General Al-Roumi said Kuwait had embraced one of its finest sons, who sacrificed his life for the country's soil. He prayed to God Almighty to grant the martyr mercy, admit him into His vast Paradise, and provide his family with patience and comfort.

Minister issues order to promote over 1,000 officers

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: In line with the Ministry of Interior's commitment to supporting and motivating its members to strengthen the security system, Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousef Al-Sabah issued a ministerial decision to promote 1,001 officers from their current rank to the next higher rank, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

Also, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Lieutenant General Sheikh Salem Al-Nawaf

issued a decision to promote 4,187 non-commissioned officers.

In a statement, the ministry affirmed its commitment to recognizing the efforts of its police force members. It urged them to continue striving for excellence and enhancing the efficiency of the country's security operations.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) declared that electronic notifications for court cases

will be activated via the Sahel app from Tuesday, April 1, in accordance with Ministerial Decision No. 125/2025, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

This decision allows the Sahel app to be used as an electronic means of notifications, in addition to other digital methods. The Ministry clarified that this service will be considered effective from the date and time the notification is received through the app's server.



Scene of the collision.

KFF photo

One injured in 2-vehicle collision in 'Wafra' area

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: A collision between two vehicles in Wafra area resulted in both vehicles catching fire and left one person injured.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from Mishref Fire Station rushed to the location and extinguished the flames before handing the injured individual over to paramedics for treatment.

□ □ □

Worker perishes: The exterior cladding (limestone) of a house in Sabah Al-Salem collapsed, resulting in the death of an individual and injuries to another.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from Mishref Fire Station rushed to the location and immediately launched rescue operations. The incident resulted in the death of an individual and injuries to another. The site has been handed over to the relevant authorities for further investigation and necessary procedures.

□ □ □

KFF tackles fire: Fire broke out in the central kitchen of a confectionery company in Subhan.

According to a press release issued by Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from Subhan and Mishref fire stations rushed to the location and extinguished the fire. No casualties were reported.

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KUNA photo
Minister Al-Mukhaizeem listens to an explanation about the progress of work at the station during the inspection tour.

Energy Minister inspects Subiya power plant, assesses readiness

Al-Mukhaizeem commends workers' dedication

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: Minister of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem held an inspection visit to the Subiya Power and Water Distillation Plant on Tuesday. He was accompanied by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy Dr. Adel Al-Zamel and the acting Assistant Undersecretary for Power and Water Distillation Plants Mohammed Khazal.

Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem began his tour by visiting the Electrical Control Room (ECR), where he reviewed the progress of ongoing work and the procedures in place, and assessed the readiness of the power and water distillation plants for the summer of 2025.

The acting Director of the Subiya Plant Talal Al-Shamari gave a detailed presentation about the electrical control

system at the plant, which has an installed capacity of 7,100 megawatts, accounting for 35 percent of Kuwait's total energy production. The plant also has a water production capacity of 100 million imperial gallons per day.

During the tour, Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem visited several important areas, including the steam turbine hall, the Thermal Control Room (TCR), and the distillation unit control room. He also observed the modernization work being carried out on one of the steam turbines.

The minister took the opportunity to congratulate the workers on duty during Eid al-Fitr, commending the expertise of the ministry's staff and the Power Plants and Water Distillation Sector, which forms the backbone of the ministry and meets the country's electricity and water demands.

He affirmed the importance of developing and training human resources to deal with any challenges that may arise within the electricity or water network.

Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem expressed his gratitude to the ministry's employees for their dedication, particularly during official holidays.

He urged them to work as a team, highlighting that this collaborative approach positively impacts work quality, operational efficiency, and sustainability.

Crown Prince, PM express sympathy

Kuwait Amir sends condolences to Ruler of Umm Al-Quwain on mother's passing

KUWAIT CITY, April 1, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable to the UAE Federal Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Umm Al-Quwain Sheikh Saud bin Rashid Al Mualla to offer his sincere condolences over the passing away of Sheikh Saud's mother Sheikhha Hessa bint Humaid bin Abdulrahman Al Shamsi.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable to the UAE Federal Supreme Council Member and Ruler of

Umm Al-Quwain Sheikh Saud bin Rashid Al Mualla to offer his sincere condolences over the passing away of his mother Sheikhha Hessa bint Humaid bin Abdulrahman Al Shamsi.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a cable to the UAE Federal Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Umm Al-Quwain Sheikh Saud bin Rashid Al Mualla to offer his sincere condolences over the passing away of his mother Sheikhha Hessa bint Humaid bin Abdulrahman Al Shamsi.

SAB reviews 7 DGCA tenders

By Mohammad Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: The State Audit Bureau (SAB) is studying and auditing seven contracts related to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) with a total value of about KD5.6 million.

Sources informed the newspaper that these contracts include the provision of ground and technical services for general aviation at Kuwait International Airport, as well as the utilization of a certain space at the airport.

Sources affirmed that SAB is reviewing the bids for baggage handling services in Terminal Four, advertising management and investment in the same terminal, and passenger baggage handling services in Terminal One.

Sources said the bureau is auditing the contracts for cleaning services for DGCA buildings (first extension); and provision of preventive, operational and underwater maintenance to ensure the continuous and high-quality supply of data from the Automatic Weather Observation System (AWOS).

Sources stressed this is part of the efforts of SAB to monitor government contracts and tenders in order to ensure compliance with the related financial regulations and legislation, as well as to achieve the highest levels of transparency and integrity.



KFF photos
Fire Prevention Sector conducts inspection campaign.

KFF holds safety inspections campaign at movie theaters

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), represented by the Fire Prevention Sector, conducted an inspection campaign on Sunday evening at movie theaters to ensure compliance with safety and fire prevention requirements.

According to a press release issued by KFF, this initiative is part of ongoing efforts by the Fire Prevention Sector to reduce accident rates, implement preventive measures to protect lives and property from fire hazards, and enhance community safety.

British Council to conduct evaluation

New English proficiency test required for foreign mission employees, says source

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

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: Employees in foreign missions with the rank of advisor or below and the administrators will be required to pass an English language proficiency test, says an official source from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The source stressed that "no employee in these job grades is exempted from the test and anyone who wishes to continue working in foreign missions must pass it."

The source confirmed that "Saoud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute made an announcement regarding the English language proficiency test; indicating that in

compliance with the directive of the assistant minister, registration is now open for the fifth round of the test. The British Council has been selected as the accredited body to conduct this test."

The source said those who will take the test will be provided with the necessary instructions, disclosing the test will be conducted remotely. "The test will be standardized for employees in the missions and the headquarters, with different formats to ensure the integrity of the assessment," he explained.

He clarified all the concerned employees, including those who have not taken the test before or those who have taken it but did not pass, are required to take the test.

7th Ring Road-Kabad interchange fully open

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) Eng. Khaled Al-Osaimi has announced that the Seventh Ring Road interchange with Kabad Road is now fully open; following the completion of the lane leading to Fintas, reports Al-Anba daily.

This development is part of the authority's ongoing efforts to improve traffic flow, particularly during the Eid Al-Fitr holidays.

Al-Osaimi disclosed that the five-kilometer stretch on Salmi Road - from the Raqqa'i border towards Kuwait City - has

also been opened as part of the current phase of development.

He said the maintenance and expansion works continue on several major roads, with the goal of improving the efficiency of the transportation network and easing traffic movement.

He added the authority is steadfast in implementing its strategic plan to develop road infrastructure, adhering to the highest standards of quality and safety to support urban growth and meet the increasing traffic demands in the country.

House fire in Fahaheel leaves 2 people injured



KFF photo
Firefighters from Fahaheel and Ahmadi stations swiftly extinguished the blaze.

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: A fire broke out in a house in Fahaheel on Saturday evening, resulting in two people suffering from suffocation.

According to a press release issued by Ku-

wait Fire Force (KFF), firefighters from Fahaheel and Ahmadi fire stations successfully extinguished the fire, and the injured individuals were handed over to paramedics for treatment.

SAB approves tender for transformer station

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: The State Audit Bureau has approved a tender for the replacement of battery sets, their chargers, and energy-efficient LED lighting systems for 200 main transformer stations, valued at KD 1.138 million. The contract will be awarded to a specialized company for a period of two years, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources from the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy.

They explained that the approval of the State Audit Bureau came with the condition that the work related to this tender should not overlap or duplicate any ongoing or upcoming con-

tracts. It also stressed the need to adhere to the bid evaluation period specified in the referral letter from the Central Agency for Public Tenders, and ensure that any delays do not result in the withdrawal of the lowest bidder or impose additional burdens on public funds. The technical study duration was set at 50 days.

In addition, the State Audit Bureau has approved the contract of the Ministry of Electricity and Water with a company to supply and install main protection devices at several 132-kilovolt transformer stations (Phase 2). The contract is valued at KD 409.4 thousand, and will span a period of two years.

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Germany's DAX jumps 1.3%

World shares recover as markets waver under the threat of more tariffs

BANGKOK, April 1, (AP) World shares were mostly higher on Tuesday after U.S. stocks swayed under the approach of President Donald Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs.

Gold rose to over \$3,170.00 per ounce before falling back slightly.

Germany's DAX jumped 1.3% to 22,452.79 and the CAC 40 in Paris was up 1% at 7,866.97. Britain's FTSE 100 gained 0.9% to 8,659.13.

The future for the S&P 500 was unchanged while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 0.1%.

Instead of stocks, prices have been rising for investments considered to be safer bets when the economy is looking shaky. Gold rose early Tuesday to over \$3,170.00 per ounce before falling back slightly.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 was virtually unchanged at 35,624.48, as Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said he was imploring Trump to not impose higher auto tariffs on Japan, a longtime U.S. ally. A central bank survey found a worsening in business sentiment among big manufacturers.

In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng rose 0.2% to 23,173.75, while the Shanghai Composite index gained 0.4% to 3,348.44.

South Korea's Kospi jumped 1.6% to 2,525.44, while the S&P/ASX 200 surged 1% to 7,925.20.

Taiwan's Taiex shot up 2.8%, while the Sensex in India lost 0.2%. Bangkok's SET advanced 1.1%.

On Monday, the S&P 500 rose 0.6%. It finished March with a 4.6% loss for the first three months of the year, the worst quarter in two-and-a-half years.

The Dow climbed 1% and the Nasdaq composite slipped 0.1%, pulled lower by slides for Tesla, Nvidia and other Big Tech stocks.

Such neck-twisting turns have become routine for the U.S. stock market because of uncertainty about what Trump will do with tariffs - and by how much they will worsen inflation and grind down growth for economies. Wall Street's swings followed a sell-off that spanned the world earlier Monday as worries built about the effects of the tariffs that Trump says will bring manufacturing jobs back to the United States.

Wednesday, the United States is set to begin what Trump calls "reciprocal" tariffs tailored to match what he sees is the burden each country places on his, including things like value-added taxes. Much is still unknown, including exactly what the U.S. government will do on "Liberation Day."

If the April 2 tariffs end up being less onerous than investors fear - maybe Trump includes no additional tariff increases on China, for example - stocks could rally. But a worst-case scenario could make businesses so fearful they start cutting their workforces and stocks could sink much further. And it's possible April 2 won't clear the uncertainty.

Even if Trump's tariffs end up being less harsh

than feared, the lack of clarity might lead U.S. households and businesses to freeze their spending, stifling the economy.

Tesla fell 1.7% on Monday to bring its loss for the year so far to 35.8%. It's been one of the year's worst performers in the S&P 500 in large part because of fears that the electric-vehicle maker's brand has become too intertwined with its CEO, Elon Musk.

Musk has been leading U.S. government efforts to cut spending, making him a target of growing political anger, and protests have swarmed Tesla showrooms as a result.

On the winning side of Wall Street was Mr. Cooper, which jumped 14.5% after the home loan servicer said it's being bought by mortgage company Rocket in an all-stock deal valued at \$9.4 billion. The deal comes just weeks after Rocket acquired real estate listing company Redfin, and Rocket's stock fell 7.4%.

Newsmax surged 735% in a dizzying first day of trading for the stock of the news company. Its price was so volatile that trading of its stock was briefly halted a dozen times through the day.

In other dealings early Tuesday, U.S. benchmark crude fell 19 cents to \$71.28 per barrel, while Brent crude, the international standard, lost 18 cents to \$74.59 per barrel.

The dollar fell to 149.57 Japanese yen from 149.97 yen. The euro rose to \$1.0820 from \$1.0817.



Currency traders watch monitors near a screen showing the Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI) at the foreign exchange dealing room of the KEB Hana Bank headquarters in Seoul, South Korea, Tuesday, April 1, 2025. (AP)

US products targeted

Trump's threats fuel boycotts and rising resentment across Europe

BERLIN, April 1, (Xinhua) Bo Albertus, a Danish school principal, has been boycotting U.S. products since January by canceling his subscriptions to major American streaming services, choosing local alternatives, and even revisiting his old DVD collection.

Frustrated by U.S. President Donald Trump's increasingly aggressive geopolitical stance, Albertus co-founded the Facebook group "Boycott Goods from the USA" and has stopped dining at American fast-food chains.

Albertus is not unique amid anti-American sentiment, which has been on the rise across Europe, with more consumers distancing themselves from U.S. brands.

Boycott US products

On the social media platform Reddit, some 200,000 members of the group BuyFromEU share experiences and recommendations on replacing American brands like Netflix, McDonald's and Apple with European alternatives -- even down to everyday items such as socks, ketchup and headphones.

Similar movements are gaining momentum across Europe. In Sweden and Denmark, Facebook groups dedicated to boycotting U.S. products have attracted tens of thousands of members.

Edouard Roussez, a 33-year-old French farmer, was surprised by the rapid growth of his own boycott group on Facebook, which gathered over 25,000 members in just a month. His goal is to encourage fellow citizens to prioritize French and European goods over American products, strengthening local economies and reducing reliance on U.S. brands.

A recent survey by the French Institute of Public Opinion (Ifo) showed that 62 percent of French people are willing to boycott American products, with the strongest opposition coming from left-wing voters, seniors and higher-income groups.

In Italy, the anti-America sentiment is taking an increasingly aggressive turn. A fire broke out at a Tesla dealership on the outskirts of Rome early Monday, destroying at least 17 electric vehicles. While investigations are underway, the Rome fire brigade said, "We cannot rule out any possibility at this stage, including arson." In March, left-wing Antifa activists in Milan vandalized several Tesla cars in broad daylight, causing significant damage.

Larry Gerston, professor emeritus of political science at San Jose State University, told German broadcaster ZDF that the boycott is triggering a chain reaction that could potentially lead to a global recession. Laying blame on Trump, he warned, "He is on the verge of starting an unnecessary trade war."

"Standing against Trump"

Geopolitical tensions and anti-American sentiment have intensified following Trump's renewed interest in acquiring Greenland, the world's largest island and an autonomous territory of Denmark.

Local residents in Greenland's capital Nuuk strongly opposed the idea. "I don't want to be part of America. He (Trump) can try, but he won't succeed," said Nikolaj Davidson in an interview with Xinhua.

"We're standing against Trump," said Roland Hermarij, another Nuuk resident. "He acts like he can buy us, but we won't accept that. He's after our minerals, oil and gold -- he sees Greenland as a resource, not a home. I bet."

Tensions mounted further with the arrival of U.S. Vice President JD Vance and his wife, Usha, at Pituffik Space Base in Greenland on Friday. The visit provoked a strong backlash from Danish and Greenlandic political leaders, as well as local residents, who condemned it as "uninvited" and "provocative."

"Nobody wanted them here," Gaba, a local resident, told Xinhua, criticizing the disruptive presence of military aircraft. "It was impossible to ignore. Two Hercules planes flew overhead, loud and intrusive, disturbing our peace. They weren't invited -- neither officially nor privately by our governments."

Echoing Gaba, Herik Skjedsbjerg, a local shop worker, said: "The U.S. consulate asked if they could come shop in our store. We told them no. That makes our position clear -- Greenland does not want to be part of the United States."

Strained transatlantic ties

Viktor Bergmann, a Czech investment advisor, criticized U.S. economic policies and protectionist tariffs as "entirely short-sighted measures."

Trump has announced 25 percent tariffs on all car imports starting Wednesday, along with a 200 percent tariff on champagne, wine and other alcoholic drinks from the EU.

"The result will be rising prices on both sides, increased inflation and growing discontent, potentially leading to social unrest and high unemployment," Bergmann said.

With Europe's economy facing mounting challenges, Bergmann stressed the urgency for the continent's automotive industry, an economic cornerstone, to adapt swiftly. As production shifts to the United States, European manufacturers must explore alternative strategies to remain competitive.

Mario Boselli, chairman of the Italy China Council Foundation, echoed these concerns, describing the U.S. unilateral trade policies as a "significant threat to global trade and economic stability."

In a recent interview with Xinhua, he strongly opposed Washington's latest tariff measures, calling them a "grave mistake in every sense." He suggested that these shifting dynamics could push Europe to reconsider its broader economic strategy.

A survey by Croatian National Television in late March found that 56.6 percent of respondents expect U.S.-Europe relations to deteriorate further.

Europe says that it holds a lot of trade cards

BRUSSELS, April 1, (AP) A top European Union official warned the U.S. on Tuesday that the world's biggest trade bloc "holds a lot of cards" when it comes to dealing with the Trump administration's new tariffs and has a good plan to retaliate if forced to.

U.S. President Donald Trump has promised to roll out taxes on imports from other countries on Wednesday. He says they will free the U.S. from reliance on foreign goods.

He's vowed to impose "reciprocal" tariffs to match the duties that other countries charge on U.S. products, dubbing April 2 "Liberation Day."

"Europe has not started this confrontation. We do not necessarily want to retaliate, but if it is necessary, we have a strong plan to retaliate and we will use it," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen told EU lawmakers.

The commission, the EU's executive branch, negotiates trade deals on behalf of the bloc's 27 member countries and manages trade disputes on their behalf.

"Europe holds a lot of cards, from trade to technology to the size of our market. But this strength is also built on our readiness to take firm counter measures if necessary. All instruments are on the table," von der Leyen said, at a European Parliament session in Strasbourg, France.

The commission already intends to impose duties on U.S. goods worth some \$28 billion in mid-April in response to Trump's steel and aluminum tariffs. The EU duties will target steel and aluminum products, but also textiles, home appliances and farm goods.

A lot remains unknown about how Trump's levies will actually be implemented, notably the "reciprocal" tariffs, and the EU wants to assess their impact before taking retaliatory action.

"So many Europeans feel utterly disheartened by the announcement from the United States," von der Leyen said. "This is the largest and most prosperous trade relationship worldwide. We would all be better off if we could find a constructive solution."

BoJ survey says big manufacturers are gloomier as Trump tariffs loom

Shrinking population drags on Japan's growth

TOKYO, April 1, (AP) Business sentiment among large Japanese manufacturers has worsened for the first time in a year, partly because of worries about U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs, according to a survey by Japan's central bank released Tuesday.

The Bank of Japan's "tankan" quarterly survey said an index for large manufacturers that shows the percentage of companies foreseeing good conditions minus those feeling pessimistic fell to plus 12 from plus 14 in December, the first dip in four quarters.

Major manufacturers include the key auto and electronics sectors, whose exports to the U.S. are a major driver for the Japanese economy.

A shrinking population has also dragged on Japan's growth, while rising wages and a tourism boom have helped.

U.S. auto tariffs are a worry for major manufacturers like Toyota Motor Corp. and Nissan Motor Corp.

Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said Tuesday that his government was engaged in last ditch efforts to get the United States to exclude his country from auto tariffs. He said he was willing to fly to Washington to directly negotiate with Trump if necessary.

The U.S. will begin collecting 25%



A container ship is loaded and unloaded at a container terminal at a port of Kawasaki near Tokyo on March 9, 2022. (AP)

tariffs on auto imports on Thursday, with taxes on fully-imported cars kicking off at midnight, U.S. time. The tariffs are set to expand to applicable auto parts in the following weeks, through May 3. Japanese automakers also have plants in Mexico. Trump's tariffs on imports from Mexico took effect last month.

The Bank of Japan holds a monetary

policy meeting ending April 1 to mull further interest rate raises, and the tankan findings will be among the key data looked at to make the decision.

Japan's export-dependent economy has also been hit by slowdowns in overseas demand, as well as rising material costs, worsened by the weakening yen. The U.S. dollar has been trading near 150 yen, up considerably from

110-yen levels marked five years ago.

The tankan showed sentiment for large nonmanufacturers rose from plus 33 to plus 35, boosted by healthy tourist traffic.

Also Wednesday, the Japanese government reported the nation's unemployment rate stood at 2.4%, a slight improvement from the previous month.

Greek venture one of several others

Europe races to secure critical minerals as global supply tensions mount

ATHENS, Greece, April 1, (AP) A top European Union official visited a strategic metals site in central Greece on Thursday, after the bloc announced plans to accelerate production of its own critical minerals and reduce dependence on China.

Stéphane Séjourné, an executive vice president at the European Commission, toured an aluminum plant that will soon extract gallium - a silvery, melt-in-your-hand metal used in advanced semiconductors, 5G antennas, solar panels and military radar systems.

The Greek venture is one of dozens of projects announced by Séjourné this week, aimed at boosting the 27-nation bloc's self-sufficiency in key minerals as demand for high-tech materials surges and geopolitical tensions rise.

"This site is one of the 47 strategic projects selected to increase our production of critical raw materials and reduce our dependence on third countries," Séjourné wrote in an online post after the tour in Greece.

European officials say global supply-chain

vulnerabilities have been exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and more recently by trade disputes - including export controls imposed by China last year on high-tech materials.

Greece's gallium project - the only one of its kind on the list - will tap into domestic bauxite sources and integrate extraction with the country's existing aluminum infrastructure.

Once operational, the plant, operated by Greece's Metlen Energy & Metals company, is expected to produce up to 50 metric tons annually starting in 2027 - enough to meet most of Europe's projected demand, according to EU and Greek officials.

"This is a significant investment of strategic importance - directly linked to the autonomy and security of both Greece and the entire European continent," Development Minister Takis Theodorikakos said.

EU funds will be part of a 22.5 billion euro (\$24.2 billion) investment into mining and pro-

cessing schemes for 17 minerals listed as critical across 13 EU member states.

The minerals are vital ingredients in sophisticated products, including electric vehicles, battery parts, lightweight alloys for transport, and medical devices.

At a presentation of the projects in Brussels earlier this week, Séjourné said he hoped to build public support for domestic mining.

"I need to say this clearly: We do not want to replace our dependency on fossil fuels with a dependency on critical raw materials," he said. "Chinese lithium must not become the Russian gas of tomorrow."

The EU countries hosting the strategic projects are Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and Sweden. The materials covered include aluminum, boron, cobalt, copper, gallium, germanium, graphite, lithium, magnesium, manganese, nickel, platinum group metals, rare earth elements, and tungsten.

Eurostat: European Union annual inflation rate slows in March

BRUSSELS, April 1, (KUNA) The European Union's statistical office, Eurostat, announced on Tuesday that the annual inflation rate slowed in March 2025. Inflation reached 2.2

percent, compared to 2.3 pct in February, bringing the rate closer to the European Central Bank's 2 pct target.

Eurostat reported that the services sector was the largest contributor to the

rise in the annual inflation rate in the euro area, recording 3.4 pct compared to 3.7 pct in February, followed by the food, alcohol and tobacco sector at 2.9 pct compared to 2.7 pct in February.

Non-energy industrial goods prices registered a 0.6 pct decline, unchanged from February, while energy prices registered a decline of -0.7 pct, compared to 0.2 pct in February.

Asian giants, China, Japan and S. Korea agree on bolstering inter-Asia trade

BEIJING, April 1, (KUNA) Asia's giants China, Japan and South Korea agreed on Sunday on bolstering the inter-Asian investment and trade cooperation to face mounting trends of protectionism.

The Chinese news agency, Xinhua, said the accord among the regional powers came during the 13th edition of the three countries ministers of industry and commerce, co-headed by Chinese Minister of Commerce Wang Wenao Taw, his Japanese

counterpart Yuji Muto and the South Korean Minister of Trade,

Ahn Duk-geun, held in Seoul.

The Chinese minister affirmed in a statement that the global economy is slowing down due to rising protectionism, urging Seoul and Tokyo to safeguard the global plural commercial system and seek to strengthen the regional economic integration as a prelude to give a push to the global economy.

He affirmed that Beijing remained committed to expanding the regional cooperation and partaking in enterprises in Japan, South Korea and other nations.

The three powers, moreover, agreed on enhancing the cooperation within the framework of the International Trade Organization, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (ECEP) and speed up the discussions on the free trade deals among the three.

Business Plus



Auto tariffs could add billions to US insurance claims

Trump's 25% auto tariffs set to raise car prices and repair costs



A person looks at a new vehicle at a Toyota dealership in El Monte, Calif., Thursday, March 27, 2025. (AP)

NEW YORK, April 1, (AP) — Even if you're not in the market for a new car, U.S. President Donald Trump's 25% tariffs on auto imports could make owning one more expensive.

The new taxes, which are set to begin April 3 and expand in the following weeks, are estimated to raise the average cost of a car imported from another country by thousands of dollars. But repairs for vehicles that currently use foreign-made parts are also expected to get pricier — and, as a result, hike insurance costs farther down the road.

While the White House says these tariffs will foster domestic manufacturing and raise \$100 billion in revenue annually, economists stress that straining the auto industry's global supply chain brings significant disruptions. Dealerships and car repair shops will likely have little choice but to raise prices — leading drivers across the country to pay more for everyday maintenance.

Here's what you need to know. It depends on what you need fixed and where you go in to get your car serviced. But some industry analysts warn that drivers could see costs jump as early as the coming weeks or months.

"If you are bringing your car to get repaired, chances are, it's

going to have a part that comes from another country," said Jessica Caldwell, head of insights at auto-buying resource Edmunds. "That price that you pay is likely going to be directly affected by the increase (from these tariffs)."

Trump's Wednesday proclamation on auto tariffs points specifically to engines, transmissions, powertrain parts and electrical components. That covers a lot of repairs as is, Caldwell notes, and the administration has also signaled the possibility of future expansion.

And while automakers may develop new pricing strategies for new vehicles impacted by tariffs, Caldwell expects they will be less likely to absorb the costs of individual parts — leaving consumers with the bill perhaps more imminently.

Much of the car repair market has heavily relied on imports, particularly from America's biggest trading partners. According to February numbers from the American Property Casualty Insurance Association, a trade group that represents home, auto and business insurers, about 6 in every 10 auto replacement parts used in U.S. auto shop repairs are imported from Mexico, Canada and China.

"You can't walk into a dealership today and not see a United

Nations of parts," said Skyler Chadwick, director of Product Consulting at Cox Automotive. But sourcing and supply varies between each servicer, he adds, making it all the more complex to nail down when exactly prices will rise after these tariffs take effect.

Desiree Hill, owner of Crown's Corner, an auto repair and mechanics shop in Conyers, Georgia, says the auto tariffs were already hurting her business. She was working on repairing a vintage 1960 Opel Rekord car and ordered a part from Germany, but the manufacturer canceled the order due to the tariffs.

"I can't get (the part) anywhere in our country. Period. So that that was very disappointing," she said.

About half of the cars she works on are foreign-made, so the tariffs will make repairing those cars more difficult.

"Unfortunately we don't have a choice but to raise prices if they are raised on us," she said. "We can't take that kind of loss."

Car repair prices have already been on the rise for years, with analysts pointing both to growing labor costs and more expensive components needed for vehicles with advanced technology.

Edward Salamy, executive director of the Automotive Body Parts

Association, also says car companies have been trying to "gain a monopoly" to limit remedies to their own parts or processes, reducing options for consumers.

Tariffs, he said, will just exacerbate the issue: "Many of these distributors will have no choice but to raise their list price."

Joshua Allrich, who operates a family-owned used car dealership called Allrich Auto in Atlanta, is among those concerned about facing higher costs while also trying to save his customers money.

"It's going to make things a lot more expensive," Allrich said, adding that, while he's looking forward to the possibility of people rushing to buy cars before the tariffs take effect, his business will soon have to adjust. "My wheelhouse is economy cars, affordable cars. And now, this tariff is going to directly hit us because it's gonna just make things go up."

Chadwick says that dealers and other servicers will need to be as transparent as possible as these tariffs take effect while also preparing to have difficult conversations about rising prices with customers.

He adds that tariffs are also going to put pressures on the reselling market. Used cars often have to be serviced before dealerships can sell them back to customers —

again opening the door for higher repair costs due to tariffs. And "all that cost goes right back into the consumer" through what they end up having to pay for the vehicle, he explains.

In efforts to delay impacts, some dealers and repair shops might turn to stocking up on inventory before tariffs hit, particularly for parts that get requested the most. Analysts say many have long-anticipated the threat of auto tariffs, and are already grappling with the impact of Trump's new steel and aluminum levies that took effect earlier this month.

But stockpiling can only go so far. And for small business owners, spending money for a lot of inventory at once can be risky, especially when Trump's on-again, off-again tariff threats raise questions about how long they will last.

If they end up being short-lived, Caldwell said, "Do you really want to buy a bunch of inventory that you're going to have to sit and hold on (to) for quite some time?"

Because accidents involving new parts will see increased costs for repairs, insurance premiums will also likely rise due to tariffs.

But that may be farther into the future. Bob Passmore, department vice president of personal lines at the American Property Casualty Insurance Association, expects consumers to see an impact on their insurance bill in 12 to 18 months at a minimum. That's because increased prices have to hit claims costs, then be implemented after new rates are filed and approved.

Still, the trade association has estimated that personal auto insurance claims costs alone could rise a total of between \$7 billion and \$24 billion annually.

It wasn't immediately clear how large providers of auto insurance were preparing for the impacts of these tariffs. Allstate, State Farm, Geico and Progressive did not immediately respond to The Associated Press' requests for comment on Friday.

But even if it takes long to trickle down, these tariff-related hikes would again arrive as consumers have already faced rising insurance costs. The Insurance Information Institute estimated average U.S. auto premiums increased 14% in 2023 and 12% in 2024.

Mark Friedlander, the institute's senior director of media relations, said via email that the research trade nonprofit projected a 7% average premium increase for auto insurance across the U.S. in 2025 at the start of the year — but that didn't account for potential tariff impacts, which will drive them even higher.

Increased costs spanning from tariffs cause a "chain reaction for insurance," Caldwell adds. "This is a total ownership cost increase, rather than just a purchase increase."

New dam plans spark controversy over displacement of farming communities

Panama Canal faces water shortages amid drought & climate change

By Karina Garcia

Universidad Tecnológica de Panamá

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

The Panama Canal is one of the most important waterways in the world, with about 7% of global trade passing through. It also relies heavily on rainfall. Without enough freshwater flowing in, the canal's locks can't raise and lower ships traveling between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Droughts mean fewer ships per day, and that can quickly affect Panama's finances and economies around the world.

But the same freshwater is also essential for Panama's many other needs, including drinking water for about 2 million Panamanians, use by Indigenous people and farmers in the watershed, as well as hydro-power.

When the region experiences droughts, as it did in 2023-2024, the resulting water shortages can lead to increasing water conflicts.

One of those conflicts involves a new dam the Panama Canal Authority plans to begin building in 2027. It would be designed to secure enough water to keep the canal, which contributes about 4.2% to the country's gross domestic product,

operating into the future, but it would also submerge farming communities and displace over 2,000 people from their homes.

This recent drought wasn't an anomaly. As an academic who studies the effects of rising temperatures on water availability and sea level rise, I'm aware that as the climate warms, Panama will likely face more extremes, both long dry spells and also periods of too much rain. That will force more trade-offs between residential needs and the canal over water use.

The Panama Canal was built over a century ago at the narrowest point of the country and in the heart of its population center. The route was historically used by the Spanish colonies and later for a rail line between the oceans.

The idea of a canal connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans began as a French endeavor, led by architect Ferdinand D. Lesseps, designer of the Suez Canal in Egypt. After the French effort failed, the U.S. government signed a treaty with newly independent Panama in 1903 to take over the project.

The U.S. acquired the rights to build and operate the Panama Canal in exchange for US\$10 million and annual payments of \$250,000. Later, the Torrijos-Carter Treaty in 1977 committed the U.S. to transfer the control of operations to Panama at the end of 1999.

The canal project was designed to

take advantage of the region's tropical climate and abundant average rainfall.

It harnessed the water of the Chagres River basin to run three sets of locks — chambers that, filled with fresh water, act like elevators, lifting or lowering ships to compensate for the difference in water levels between the two oceans.

To ensure enough water would be available for the locks, the canal's designers changed the shapes of the region's mountains and rivers to create a large watershed — over 1,325 square miles (3,435 square kilometers) — that drains toward the canal's human-made lakes, Gatun and Alajuela.

About 65% of the water that flows from the watershed today goes to operate the locks. The majority of that water is quickly lost to the oceans.

Even the two newest locks, built in 2016, only reuse about 60% of water on each transit — 40% is flushed to avoid saltwater from the oceans intruding into the watershed.

Panama's wet tropical weather is predominantly influenced by its location near the equator, the trade winds and the oceans. Most of its rain falls during the wet season, from May to November. However, weather records show a drop in average precipitation starting around 1950.

The driest years resulted in dan-

gerously low water levels in Gatun Lake that made canal operations difficult, including in 1998, 2016 and most recently 2023-2024. El Niño weather patterns can mean particularly low rainfall.

In December 2023, the Panama Canal Authority was forced to limit the number of daily transits to 22, compared with 36 to 38 usual crossings, because too little freshwater was available.

To avoid steep financial losses, the Panama Canal Authority raised prices and auctioned transit opportunities to the highest bidders. Without those measures, the authority estimated it would lose \$100 million a month from reduced ship traffic because of the water shortage.

Ecosystems also need enough water, and changes in forest tree composition have become evident on Barro Colorado Island in Gatun Lake in response to rising temperatures and more frequent droughts.

Climate change is also creating greater variability in rainfall. Too much rain can also be a problem for canal operations. In December 2010, the biggest storm on record caused landslides and \$150 million in damage that interrupted transits on the canal.

Temporary measures for saving water have been already implemented. The Panama Canal Authority shortened the chamber size in some of its locks to use less water

for smaller vessels and minimized direction changes.

In January 2025, the authority approved plans to build the new dam on the Indio River to increase water available for the canal.

The dam could solve some water concerns during drier periods for the canal.

However, it also illustrates the country's water conflicts. Once filled, the dam's reservoir will submerge over 1,200 homes by some counts, and more people in the region will lose access to land and travel routes. The Panama Canal Authority promises that residents will be relocated, but some of those living in the region fear they will lose their livelihoods, along with the communities their families have lived in for generations.

Residents across Panama, meanwhile, regularly hear media campaigns that encourage them to save water. An Environmental Economic Incentives Program promotes forest conservation and sustainable family agriculture to conserve water resources.

The Panama Canal is a crucial part of international trade, and it will face more periods of water stress. I believe responding to those future changes, as well as market and societal demands, will require innovative solutions that respect ecosystem limits and the needs of the population. (AP)

Dealers and repair shops stockpile parts.

Water shortages force Panama Canal to limit daily ship transits.

Order to ensure price transparency and market order in ticket sales

Trump signs executive order on ticket scalping with Kid Rock

WASHINGTON, April 1, (AP): President Donald Trump invited Kid Rock into the Oval Office on Monday and signed an executive order that he says will help curb ticket scalping and bring "commonsense" changes to the way live events are priced.

"Anyone who's bought a concert ticket in the last decade, maybe 20 years - no matter what your politics are - knows that it's a conundrum," said Kid Rock, who wore a red bedazzled suit featuring an American flag motif and a straw fedora.

Designed to stop "price-gouging by middlemen," the order directs Attorney General Pam Bondi and Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent to ensure that scalpers offering tickets at higher prices than their face value comply with all Internal Revenue Service rules.

It also orders the Federal Trade Commission to ensure "price transparency at all stages of the ticket-purchase process" and to "take enforcement action to prevent unfair, deceptive, and anti-competitive conduct in the secondary ticketing market," which the Trump administration argues can restore sensibility and order to the ticket market.

Trump said he knows Kid Rock, a longtime supporter whose real name is Robert James Ritchie, as simply

"Bob."

"He's been a good friend for a long time," Trump said. The president said rising fees for concerts and other events have "gotten worse and worse with time." Kid Rock agreed.

"You can buy a ticket for \$100. By the time you check out, it's \$170. You don't know what you've been charged for," Kid Rock said. "But, more importantly, the bots, you know, they come in, they get all the good tickets to your favorite shows you want to go to, and then they're resold immediately for sometimes 400-500% markup."

Enforce

The order mostly directs federal agencies to enforce existing laws. Still, it marks a rare instance of policy cross-over with the administration of Democratic President Joe Biden, which used the FTC to target "junk fees," or levies tacked on at the end of the purchase process that can mask the full price of things like concert tickets, hotel rooms and utility bills.

Under Biden, the Justice Department also sued Ticketmaster and its parent company, Live Nation Entertainment, last year. It accused them of running an illegal monopoly over live events and asked a court to break up

the system that squelches competition and drives up prices for fans.

Live Nation said Monday evening that "scalpers and bots prevent fans from getting tickets at the prices artists set, and we thank President Trump for taking them head-on."

"We support any meaningful resale reforms," the company said in a statement, adding that that included backing caps on resale prices. Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino also thanked Trump and Kid Rock in a post on X.

Those companies have a history of clashing with major artists, including Bruce Springsteen and Taylor Swift, whose summer 2022 stadium tour was plagued by difficulty getting tickets. Country music star Zach Bryan even released a 2022 album titled "All My Homies Hate Ticketmaster."

A representative for Bryan said he had "nothing to add" when asked to comment on the executive order.

The Biden administration used such initiatives as a way to protect consumers from rising prices that were already inflated. Trump, meanwhile, campaigned on combating high ticket prices, calling them "very unfortunate."

Kid Rock, known for hits like "Cowboy" and "Bawitdaba," called Trump's order a "great first step" and



Kid Rock holds a signed executive order regarding ticket scalping after President Donald Trump signed it at the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, Monday, March 31, 2025. (AP)

said he'd eventually like to see a cap on resale prices on tickets - while quickly adding, "I'm a capitalist." He also said he'd spoken to Ticketmaster, which he described as "on board" with the change.

The White House says America's live concert and entertainment indus-

try has a total nationwide economic impact of \$132.6 billion and supports 913,000 jobs. "But it has become blighted by unscrupulous middle-men who impose egregious fees on fans with no benefit to artists," according to a fact sheet it released Monday.

Trump's order further directs federal

officials and the FTC to deliver a report in six months "summarizing actions taken to address the issue of unfair practices in the live concert and entertainment industry and recommend additional regulations or legislation needed to protect consumers in this industry."

"Ticket scalpers use bots and other unfair means to acquire large quantities of face-value tickets, then re-sell them at an enormous markup on the secondary market, price-gouging consumers and depriving fans of the opportunity to see their favorite artists without incurring extraordinary expenses," the White House fact sheet said.

It also noted that higher prices don't mean additional profits for artists but instead go "solely to the scalper and the ticketing agency."

Kid Rock agreed that such markups don't benefit artists like himself, then chuckled while offering, "I'll be the first one to say, and I know the president doesn't like when I say this, but, I'm a little overpaid right now."

"It's kind of ridiculous. I would rather be, you know, a hero to working-class people and have them be able to come attend my shows and give them a fair ticket price," he said. "I can't control that right now so hopefully this is a step to make that happen."

'A Minecraft Movie'

Jack Black, Jason Momoa bring gaming world to life

LOS ANGELES, April 1, (AP): When Jack Black got the call to star in the "Minecraft" movie, the perks were plenty. He got to work alongside Jason Momoa, reunite with "Nacho Libre" director Jared Hess and engulf himself into a beloved gaming universe.

But before agreeing, Black turned to the real decision-makers: his sons, who are avid Minecraft players. They didn't just give their approval, but practically begged him to take the role.

Like his sons, Black has noticed the buzz since the release announcement of "A Minecraft Movie," which hits theaters Friday. The actor was already familiar with the video game, having played it occasionally with his sons while preparing for the live-action adaptation.

"My boys were playing it, and I wanted to speak their language," said Black, who stars as the main protagonist Steve, who becomes an expert Minecraft after being sucked into the Overworld dimension. His character eventually teams up with a band of misfits who are mysteriously pulled through a portal into this new realm by a cubic object that thrives on imagination.

The film also stars Momoa, Emma Myers, Danielle Brooks, Jennifer Coolidge and Sebastian Hansen.

Before his character found himself in the Overworld, Black immersed himself in the Minecraft gaming world alongside his sons. He spent over 100 hours playing the game while on set.

"I put the work in," he said. "You got to put the days of work in. Watch YouTube videos to get some tips on how to survive that first night in the Overworld. I was pretty versed in it."

Platforms

After Minecraft's 2009 release, it took only two years to reach a million players. Since then, it has sold over 235 million copies across various gaming platforms, cementing its status as a global phenomenon with its blend of creativity, exploration and survival elements.

The game's open-ended design lets players carve out their own experience, whether it's surviving against mobs, mining for resources, farming or using block-based structures to craft artistic masterpieces. It has also fostered a thriving multiplayer community where players collaborate to build their worlds together, while its educational applications extend to coding, architecture and problem solving.

At its core, Minecraft is a limitless digital sandbox, where imagination transforms simple blocks into everything from cozy homes to sprawling cities.

Minecraft creators' gameplay

videos have generated millions of pageviews on YouTube.

Those are some of the elements that drew Myers and Hansen into the game during their childhoods.

"I played a lot during COVID," said Hansen, 14, who plays Henry, a shy but creative and intellectual kid trying to navigate his new high school. Once his character gets thrown in the Overworld, he feels comfortable with the environment.

"I played it a lot during my childhood, watching videos and stuff all the time," he said.

Myers began playing the pocket edition with her friends around age 10. She said the digital and real-world elements seamlessly complement each other.

Versatile

"I think it's very versatile," said the 22-year-old actor who plays Natalie, a character who put her life plan's on hold to take care of Henry, her younger brother. "I think Minecraft kind of forces you to be creative and ... problem solve in ways that you probably wouldn't think of in the first place."

The road from console to cinema hasn't always been smooth.

Many video game adaptations have struggled at the box office, but recent hits like the "Sonic" series, "Five Nights at Freddy's" and "The Super Mario Bros. Movie" have proven the genre's potential.

These three films have dominated the box office, with "Super Mario Bros." raking in more than \$146 million during its 2023 opening weekend, according to Comscore. The three "Sonic" films have debuted between \$58-72 million, while "Five Nights at Freddy's" pulled in more than \$80 million.

That's a significant leap from other adaptations like "The Angry Birds Movie 2," which Comscore records show had a lukewarm \$10 million opening in 2019. Other attempts such as "Mortal Kombat" (\$23 million in 2021) and "Resident Evil: Welcome to Raccoon City" (\$5.3 million that same year) struggled to gain traction.

Black, who has starred in popular films like "School of Rock" and the "Kung Fu Panda" series, said he's never been a part of such a highly-anticipated movie as "Minecraft."

If you ask Hess, it's certainly not. For him, the game is a family affair, woven into his household dynamics as he and his kids frequently explore the Overworld together.

That made it an easy sell for him to direct "A Minecraft Movie."

"The game is one of my favorite games of all time, and it was such an important part of our family life," said Hess, 45, who directed films including "Napoleon Dynamite," "Masterminds" and "Nacho Libre."

Television



Liza Minnelli performs at the 2011 TV Land Awards on Sunday, April 10, 2011, in New York. (AP)

A star shaped by her mentors

Minnelli film explores rise of an icon

LOS ANGELES, April 1, (AP): Documentary filmmaker Bruce David Klein had finished shooting for the day when he was told that his subject, Liza Minnelli, wanted to see him privately. He found her sitting on the edge of her bed.

"She grabbed my hand. She started petting it and she looked up at me with those luminous, dark eyes and said, 'Bruce, don't put in anything phony in the movie. Don't make me look like a phony,'" he said.

After years of arguing with his subjects that they needed to be truthful on film, Minnelli's request was refreshing. And accepted. The result is the unvarnished documentary "Liza: A Truly Terrific Absolutely True Story." The film, which lands on PBS on Tuesday as part of its American Masters series, offers fresh insight into an EGOT winner who overcame addiction, insecurity and the shadow of her mother - Judy Garland - to become a beloved American icon.

"We could probably have made three dozen different films on Liza's life," says Klein, who has previously made documentaries on Meat Loaf and Carl Lach. "It's a big epic subject that she is."

Klein uses old performance clips and new interviews with friends and admirers like Ben Vereen, Mia Farrow, Chita Rivera, George Hamilton, Joel Grey, John Kander, Darren Criss and Michael Feinstein - plus revealing sit-downs with Minnelli herself.

The filmmaker didn't want to do a conventional biopic: "It sounds pretentious, but I did learn over years of doing this that the smartest thing to do was to let the material speak to me instead of applying a

preconceived notion of what the film would be."

A light bulb went on when he and Minnelli, 78, first sat down and he asked her about Fred Ebb, the lyricist half of the legendary Broadway songwriting duo with Kander that wrote "Cabaret" and "Chicago."

"Oh, Freddy," she said. "He invented me."

From there, Klein realized that Minnelli had leaned on five key mentors after her mother died in 1969, people who helped shape the then-raw performer - Ebb, Kay Thompson, Charles Aznavour, Bob Fosse and the designer Halston.

Confidence

"I think the greatest gift that these mentors gave to her was confidence - self-confidence," says Klein. Most superstars like to boast they did it all alone. Not Minnelli: "In Liza's case, she actually was very much in favor of giving credit and being humble that way."

The documentary makes the case that Aznavour - called the French Frank Sinatra - helped her deliver a song closer to the heart, and that Fosse gave her dancing both precision and discipline.

Thompson, an actor, singer and author, mentored her like a quirky godmother and Halston made her glamorous. Ebb was like a big brother who supplied her with many important lyrics, including for her landmark 1972 concert film "Liza With a Z."

"People do ask me a lot what was the most important moment and what was the height of Liza's career. And they expect me to say 'Cabaret,' but absolutely, positively, it's 'Liza With a Z,'" says Klein.

"That was the moment that you saw all five of her key mentors and her friends and everything all come together to lift Liza into the stratosphere."

Vereen, in a separate interview, agrees with the premise the film makes about her mentors but adds that they were also fighting for her attention.

"I think they all clinged onto her because of her legacy and, of course, her talent," he says. "I wouldn't say 'used' but it was a chance for them to do their thing - whatever they did - and she got the benefit of it. We all did." Klein wasn't frightened to go to uncomfortable places, like the root of Minnelli's addictions - "I didn't want anyone to know that I was less than perfect," she tells the filmmaker - and her romances, which often were disastrous.

A portrait emerges of a woman both strong-willed and a people-pleaser. "She has that steely power-confidence, and she has that insecurity-vulnerability, and she has both in spades, and they kind of clash inside of her," says Klein.

Minnelli was what today is called a "nepo baby" - born on the third base of fame - but she may have had a harder time finding her own superstar level. She was constantly compared to Garland - the star of the immortal "Wizard of Oz" - and rudely put down for her unconventional beauty. Her father, Vincente Minnelli, was an Oscar-winning director.

"This idea of a double-edged sword of privilege with her was one of the surprising things I learned," says Klein. "For her to get from third base to home was actually harder than for many of us to rounding the bases because of the expectations."

Variety

TOKYO: An independent investigation of a sexual assault case linked to one of Japan's top celebrities said Monday that Fuji Television Network failed to support its female employee, adding that management lacked human rights awareness.

The report centers on Masahiro Nakai, a former leader of Japan's once-popular boy band SMAP, and how Fuji Television handled the 2023 case in which Nakai allegedly sexually assaulted a Fuji announcer at a dinner at his home. He later reached a settlement with the woman.

The allegations surfaced in December and triggered claims of systematic cover-ups by Fuji TV executives. Pub-

lic outrage led to advertising losses at Fuji, one of the networks where Nakai worked. Top management of the company have resigned. Nakai in January announced his retirement.

The report by a lawyer-led panel is the first outside investigation into the case, and concluded that Nakai sexually assaulted the woman.

Fuji TV's initial internal investigation denied any wrongdoing at the company. Former Fuji TV president Koichi Minato in January apologized but said

he prioritized the woman's confidentiality and her mental condition.

Fuji TV failed to provide necessary care for the woman and did not report to a compliance office despite her consultations with supervisors and two doctors who examined her, the report said, noting the network management's "low levels of understanding of sexual violence and human rights awareness." (AP)

NEW YORK: Oscar-winning director Oliver Stone, whose 1991 film "JFK" portrayed President John F. Kennedy's assassination as the work of a shadowy government conspiracy, is set to testify to Congress on Tuesday about thousands of newly released government documents surrounding

the killing.

Scholars say the files that President Donald Trump ordered to be released showed nothing undercutting the conclusion that a lone gunman killed Kennedy. Many documents were previously released but contained newly removed redactions, including Social Security numbers, angering people whose personal information was disclosed.

The first hearing of the House Task Force on the Declassification of Federal Secrets comes five decades after the Warren Commission investigation concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald, a 24-year-old former Marine, acted alone in fatally shooting Kennedy as his motorcade finished a parade route in downtown Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963. (AP)



Danielle Brooks, (from left), Emma Myers, Sebastian Hansen, Jennifer Coolidge, Jack Black and Jason Momoa pose for photographers upon arrival at the world premiere of A Minecraft Movie on Sunday, March 30, 2025, in London. (AP)



Soma Sara, founder of Everyone's Invited — a charity that focuses on exposing 'rape' culture and child-on-child-sexual violence, in London, Monday, March 31, 2025. (AP)

UK schools to screen Netflix drama to start talks on online harm

'Adolescence' to educate UK teens on social media

LONDON, April 1, (AP) — The makers of hit Netflix show "Adolescence" have sparked a conversation in Britain and beyond on how to protect children from violent misogyny and other harmful content on social media.

Now they have the ear of British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who welcomed the filmmakers to Downing Street on Monday for talks on child protection. Starmer's office said he backed an initiative by Netflix to stream the drama series for free to secondary schools across the country, so that as many teens as possible can watch it.

The show, filmed in England, explores the difficult questions that arise when a 13-year-old boy is accused of the fatal stabbing of a girl in his school — and how much social media interactions that are largely impenetrable to parents and teachers may have played a part.

Netflix says since the drama launched in March it has amassed 66.3 million views worldwide and has become one of the most talked-about U.K. series in recent memory.

Starmer said it was difficult watching the drama with his 14-year-old daughter and 16-year-old son. But showing the drama widely in schools will "help students better understand the impact of misogyny, dangers of online radicalization and the importance of healthy relationships," his office said.

"It seems like the whole nation is talking about 'Adolescence' and not just this nation," Starmer said. "As a dad, I have not found it easy to watch this with children, because it connects with the fears and worries that you have as parents and adults."

"There isn't one single policy lever to pull. It's actually a

much bigger problem than that," he added. "And that's the devastating effect that the problem of misogyny has on our society."

Jack Thorne, a co-writer on the show, said the team behind "Adolescence" made it to provoke a conversation.

"So to have the opportunity to take this into schools is beyond our expectations," he said. "We hope it'll lead to teachers talking to the students, but what we really hope is it'll lead to students talking amongst themselves."

Actor Stephen Graham, a co-creator of the drama who stars as the boy's father, has told The Associated Press he wanted the narrative to focus on the seemingly ordinary life of the accused.

Crime

He said that when a knife crime among young people takes place, the first reaction may be to question the background of the murder suspect and how they were raised.

"But what if it's not the family?" Graham asked. "We're all maybe accountable. School. Society. Parents. Community."

Soma Sara, who founded a charity focused on highlighting child-on-child sexual violence and what she calls "rape culture" in schools, said recent evidence shows that the problem is "aging down" to children younger than 10 — and it may be too late to tackle misogynistic attitudes by the time children turn 13.

Her charity, Everyone's Invited, has collected thousands of anonymous testimonies from women and girls describing groping, assault, sexist name-calling, inappropriate touch-

ing and other abusive behavior they experienced on school grounds. Of those submissions, about 1,600 took place in elementary schools, she said.

"The testimonies show how early this starts, and how it's children abusing children — that's just the devastating reality," Sara said.

Sara said that banning social media among children, like Australia did last year for those under 16, isn't pragmatic. Instead, her group is leading education programs in schools to help children understand how to critically evaluate the pornography or misogynistic narratives they are exposed to.

"We feel the generational gap has never been wider. Parents need to be digitally literate themselves, and understand all these apps — Snapchat, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok — because that's what your children are spending hours scrolling," she said.

The success of "Adolescence" has come during growing concern over children's use of smartphones and the easy availability of pornography and extreme misogynistic content on social media pushed by controversial influencers like Andrew Tate and his brother, Tristan. The dual US and British citizens face charges of human trafficking and forming an organized criminal group to sexually exploit women.

Gavin Stephens, chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, warned last week that "the harmful effect of Tate is plain to see."

Police in the UK are now dealing with more than a million crimes related to violence against women and girls each year, or a fifth of all recorded crime.

Variety

SANTA FE, N.M. — A court on Monday cleared the way for the release of investigative records from the deaths of **Gene Hackman** and his wife, Betsy Arakawa, as long as depictions of the deceased couple are blocked from view.

The ruling from a New Mexico judge allows the possible release of redacted police body camera video and other investigative materials, including images of the couple's dead dog.



Hackman

All photos, video and documents from the investigation had been restricted from release by an earlier, temporary court order.

"There shall be no depiction of either body in any video production" or photographic image of the bodies, Santa Fe-based Judge Matthew Wilson said in response to questions from attorneys on his ruling.

A representative for the Hackman family estate had urged a New Mexico judge to keep the records sealed to protect the family's constitutional right to privacy.

The partially mummified remains of Hackman and Arakawa were found in their Santa Fe home on Feb. 26, when maintenance and security workers showed up at the home and alerted police. (AP)

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NEW YORK: When comic Amber Ruffin was announced as the featured entertainer at this year's White House Correspondents Association dinner, the group's president said she'd be "roasting the most powerful people on all sides of the aisle and the journalists who cover them."

But after Ruffin referred to the Trump administration as "kind of a bunch of murderers" on a podcast last week, and made clear her focus would largely be on the president, she was out.

Over the weekend, WHCA president Eugene Daniels said his group wanted to refocus the ritzy annual event on journalistic excellence and wouldn't have a comedian. Daniels, host of an upcoming MSNBC weekend show, made no mention of Ruffin's comments in a statement and didn't return a request for comment on Monday. (AP)

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WASHINGTON: EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin says he is closing a one-room museum at the agency's Washington headquarters, saving taxpayers \$600,000 a year in operating costs.

Zeldin, who has vowed to slash agency spending, said in a video posted Monday that the museum cost \$4 million to build and attracted fewer than 2,000 visitors since it opened last year.

The museum is "yet another example of waste by the Biden administration," he said, adding that it is overly focused on environmental justice and climate change, two Biden administration priorities.

While admission is free, the museum's operating costs — coupled with low attendance — means it costs taxpayers about \$315 per visitor, Zeldin said. "This shrine to EJ (environmental justice) and climate change will now be shut down for good," he said. (AP)

Stage



Florescia Cuenca appears during rehearsals for the Broadway production of 'Real Women Have Curves' on March 28, 2025, in New York. (AP)

Musical highlights Latino immigrant stories

'Real Women' brings Latino culture to Broadway

NEW YORK, April 1, (AP) — The immigrant experience takes center stage on Broadway this spring as "Real Women Have Curves: The Musical" explores Latino culture in America with a predominantly Latino cast playing characters not usually portrayed on the biggest stages.

"We are here. We are the largest consumer demographic in North America," said director and choreographer Sergio Trujillo, a Tony- and Olivier Award-winner.

"We represent the vast majority of immigrants in this country. We believe in making a better life for ourselves. We believe in the American Dream. We are a hardworking, devoted, happy and joyful community. I want to be able to represent all of those wonderful colors in what I know how to do and that's through musicals."

Based on the play by Josefina López that inspired the HBO's film, "Real Women Have Curves: The Musical" follows Ana Garcia, as she dreams of flying away from East Los Angeles and her family's sewing factory. But when her family receives a dress order that could make or break their businesses, she finds herself juggling her ambitions, her mother's expectations and a community of women trying to make it work despite the odds.

Preview performances for "Real Women Have Curves: The Musical" are set to begin Tuesday at the James Earl Jones Theatre, ahead of opening night on April 27.

Along with "Buena Vista Social Club," which opened on March 19, the musical is one of the few shows on Broadway since "In the Heights" and "On Your Feet!" with a predominantly Latino cast.

The musical works to encapsulate the long hours many Latino workers worked and sacrificed to make their children dreams come true.

Trujillo was drawn to do the show because he was inspired by the movie's message of resilience and the authenticity of the Latino immigrant experience. The son of a seamstress, Trujillo said him directing and choreographing is in honor of his mom.

Trujillo, who is of Colombian heritage, said the musical is a way for him to empower the Latino community, through a story where they can see themselves.

For Aline Mayagoitia, the musical marks her Broadway debut and she couldn't be more excited. Mayagoitia plays a factory worker from Guatemala, a character she says she never imagined seeing on Broadway. She said she's honored to serve as representation for the experiences of many Latinos in the US.

"To demonstrate that on stage, on Broadway, I think is pretty historic," Mayagoitia said. "I've never seen that on stage. And I think, sadly, because of the way things are happening right now in our country, it is going to hit really hard."

Perspective

Having moved to the US from Mexico City at the age of 10, she has an inside perspective into the struggles of many of the show's characters. Mayagoitia said she understands the pressure there is when you grow up in a family with different immigration statuses.

Having each actor on stage understand the Latino immigrant experience is a bonus as they can bring that to their role, Trujillo said.

"These are actors who know it, who live it, who breathe it, who understand it," Trujillo said.

Trujillo said the show will be one where all Latinos can see themselves and celebrate their community and the show's cast album will be a big part of that. The music specifically represents the Mexican American experience, he said.

"That was an opportunity to be able to find ways in which we can create a sound and reflect the beauty, joy and passion of our culture," Trujillo said.

Mayagoitia said she feels the show's score is true Latino pop. She said it feels like the music she grew up listening in Mexico. Joy Huerta, the show's co-composer and lyricist, said she was excited to be part of the show because she felt its message is one that can still resonate with the Latino community.

"I liked all the possibilities of things we can do in terms of representation and visibility and just a story that many people can relate to," Huerta said.

Huerta said each song in the show represents the Latino culture but have a bicultural element to show the how the characters have adapted into the U.S. but still keep their roots in mind.

The songs are also a bit of English and Spanish, Huerta said. He said it was a way to show all audiences an insight into Latino culture.

"It's just represents our culture so much," Huerta said. "Being bilingual and bicultural has been a really big part of my life," Mayagoitia said.

Huerta said when they started working on the show five years ago she could not predict what would be happening in the US right now. But that is why she thinks the show will "transcend generations."

"I cannot emphasize enough the fact that this is a human story," Huerta said.

Trujillo said he hopes young Latinos who see the show with their families can stay true to their dreams and stick to what they believe in while still respecting the sacrifices of those that came before them.

"My hope has been to inspire and ignite the passions of young audiences," Trujillo said.

Mescal, Keoghan, Quinn, Dickinson to star

Sony reveals Beatles biopics cast at CinemaCon 2025

LAS VEGAS, April 1, (AP) — Hollywood studio executives are making their case for teaming up with a little help from John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr — along with the newly announced stars set to play them.

Sony Pictures kicked off the annual CinemaCon convention and trade show in Las Vegas on Monday by touting their four upcoming biopics told from the perspective of each member of The Beatles.

At their presentation on the main stage at Caesar's Palace, the studio confirmed and brought out the long-rumored leads for each film — Paul Mescal as McCartney, Joseph Quinn as Harrison, Barry Keoghan as Starr and Harris Dickinson as Lennon. Director Sam Mendes said all four films will

premiere April 2028, calling it the "first binge-able theatrical experience."

"I've been trying to make a story about The Beatles for years," Mendes said.

Convention

The convention draws thousands of movie theater employees from around the world each year, as all the major Hollywood studios make big presentations packed with film clips, trailers and stars to make the case that their upcoming slate will lure audiences to theaters.

Sony also brought out Oscar-winning filmmaker Danny Boyle to debut the new trailer for "28 Years Later," his long-awaited zombie apocalypse sequel to "28 Days Later" hitting theaters in June,

as well as the team behind "Spider-Man: Beyond the Spider-Verse" to tease their third film in the Spider-Verse trilogy.

CEO Tom Rothman encouraged movie theater owners to get creative with weekend discounts, and Sony executive Adam Bergerman made the case for keeping films in cinemas for longer.

The convention comes fresh off an Oscars rallying cry for seeing movies in theaters.

Although a fuller release schedule is expected this year compared to 2024's depleted calendar thanks to dual historic strikes, Hollywood marked the first quarter of 2025 with a sizable box office deficit. Sales are down 11% from the same point in 2024, and nearly 40% from 2019, according to media analytics company Comscore.



Paul Mescal, (from left), Joseph Quinn, Barry Keoghan, and Harris Dickinson, cast members of the upcoming films about The Beatles, speak during the Sony Pictures presentation at CinemaCon on March 31, 2025, at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. (AP)



Astronauts Suni Williams, (from left), Nick Hague, and Butch Wilmore pose for a photo at Johnson Space Center on Monday, March 31, 2025, in Houston. (AP)

Astronauts accept blame

Wilmore, Williams ready to fly again on Boeing Starliner

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., April 1, (AP) - NASA's celebrity astronauts Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams said Monday that they hold themselves partly responsible for what went wrong on their space sprint-turned-marathon and would fly on Boeing's Starliner again.

SpaceX recently ferried the duo home after more than nine months at the International Space Station, filling in for Boeing that returned to Earth without them last year.

In their first news conference since coming home, the pair said they were taken back by all the interest and insisted they were only doing their job and putting the mission ahead of themselves and even their families.

Wilmore didn't shy from accepting some of the blame for Boeing's bungled test flight.

"I'll start and point the finger and I'll blame me. I could have asked some questions and the answers to those questions could have turned the tide," he told reporters. "All the way up and down the chain. We all are responsible. We all own this."

Both astronauts said they would strap into Starliner again. "Because

we're going to rectify all the issues that we encountered. We're going to fix them. We're going to make it work," Wilmore said, adding he'd go back up "in a heartbeat."

Williams noted that Starliner has "a lot of capability" and she wants to see it succeed. "We're all in," she said.

The two will meet with Boeing leadership on Wednesday to provide a rundown on the flight and its problems.

"It's not for pointing fingers," Wilmore said. "It's just to make the path clearer going forward."

The longtime astronauts and retired Navy captains ended up spending 286 days in space - 278 days more than planned when they blasted off on Boeing's first astronaut flight on June 5. The test pilots had to intervene in order for the Starliner capsule to reach the space station, as thrusters failed and helium leaked.

Their space station stay kept getting extended as engineers debated how to proceed. NASA finally judged Starliner too dangerous to bring Wilmore and Williams back and transferred them to SpaceX. But the launch of their replacements got stalled, stretching their mission beyond nine months.

First polar orbit space tourists

Bitcoin investor buys entire SpaceX flight for polar trip

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., April 1, (AP) - A bitcoin investor who bought a SpaceX flight for himself and three polar explorers blasted off Monday night on the first rocket ride to carry people over the North and South poles.

Chun Wang, a Chinese-born entrepreneur, hurtled into orbit from NASA's Kennedy Space Center. SpaceX's Falcon rocket steered southward over the Atlantic, putting the space tourists on a path never flown before in 64 years of human spaceflight.

Wang won't say how much he paid Elon Musk's SpaceX for the 3 1/2-day ultimate polar adventure.

The first leg of their flight - from Florida to the South Pole - took barely a half-hour. From the targeted altitude of some 270 miles (440 kilometers), their fully automated capsule will circle the globe in roughly 1 1/2 hours including 46 minutes to fly from pole to pole.

"Enjoy the views of the poles. Send us some pictures," SpaceX Launch

Control radioed once the capsule reached orbit.

Wang has already visited the polar regions in person and wants to view them from space. The trip is also about "pushing boundaries, sharing knowledge," he said ahead of the flight.

Now a citizen of Malta, he took along three guests: Norwegian filmmaker Jannicke Mikkelsen, German robotics researcher Rabea Rogge and Australian polar guide Eric Phillips.

Mikkelsen, the first Norwegian bound for space, has flown over the poles before, but at a much lower altitude. She was part of the 2019 record-breaking mission that circumnavigated the world via the poles in a Gulfstream jet to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin's moon landing.

The crew plans two dozen experiments - including taking the first human X-rays in space - and brought along more cameras than usual to document their journey called Fram2 after the Norwegian polar research ship from more than a century ago.

Until now, no space traveler had ventured beyond 65 degrees north and south latitude, just shy of the Arctic and Antarctic circles. The first woman in space, the Soviet Union's Valentina Tereshkova, set that mark in 1963.



Wang

Volunteering lowers blood pressure and slows aging

Helping others could help your health: study

By Cal J. Halvorsen,
Washington University in St. Louis and
Seoyoung Kim, University of Michigan

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

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As gerontologists - social scientists who study aging populations - we envision a future in which older people leave a doctor's visit with a prescription to go volunteer for something.

Does that sound far-fetched? There's scientific research backing it up.

While spending more than a dozen years researching what happens when older adults volunteer with nonprofits, including charitable organizations, we've found that volunteers consider themselves to be in better health than their peers who don't. In addition, their blood pressure is lower, and they appear to be aging more slowly than other people of the same age.

Other researchers have found that volunteering is associated with a lower risk of having a heart attack.

The mental health benefits are just as striking. Volunteering is tied to having fewer symptoms of depression and being more satisfied with your life. It often brings an instant boost in mood - along with a deeper sense of meaning and purpose.

Even engaging in what's known as "informal helping" - lending a hand to friends, neighbors or community members in need, without getting paid or participating in an organized program - can help you in similar ways.

There are also health benefits for those who start volunteering much earlier in life.

Children and teens who volunteer tend to have better health and lower levels of anxiety and fewer behavioral problems than those who don't volunteer.

The number of US adults at least 62 years old - the earliest age at which you can claim Social Security retirement benefits - has grown by nearly 35 million since 2000, while the number of children

and teens under 18 has fallen by nearly 1.5 million. There are now about 76 million Americans over 62 and 71 million under 18.

This change has been gradual. Following a long-term demographic shift, record numbers of Americans are reaching retirement age.

The benefits of volunteering aren't just for the volunteers themselves.

The total value of the hours of unpaid work volunteers put in totals an estimated US\$170 billion each year, according to AmeriCorps, the federal agency focused on national and community service.

And participating in community service programs can lead to better job prospects for volunteers, that same agency has found.

Benefits

AmeriCorps Seniors, which focuses on engaging volunteers ages 55 and older, runs programs that offer major benefits to their communities. These include the Foster Grandparent program, which connects older adult mentors to children, and the Senior Companion program, which connects volunteers to older adults seeking some help to continue living independently in their own homes.

A current AmeriCorps Seniors pilot program is helping adults 55 and up, who can have more trouble landing new jobs than younger people, gain new job skills through their community service.

People of all ages can get together through volunteering. Some organizations intentionally encourage this kind of intergenerational cooperation, including CoGenerate and Generations United.

Researchers have also found that volunteering may increase trust within a community, especially when it brings together people from different backgrounds.

It can strengthen "social cohesion," a term researchers use to describe how much people bond and help each other, and reduce prejudice.

Volunteers' views on social issues may change through their work, too: More than 4 in 5 adults

over 55 who tutored public school students to strengthen their reading skills in the national Experience Corps program, for example, stated that their views on public education evolved as a result. Those volunteers expressed more support for public education and said they'd be more likely to vote in favor of spending on schools.

Our findings are backed by science, but they also have roots in American history.

Alexis de Tocqueville - a French philosopher and diplomat who arrived in the United States in 1831 to study the new nation's penal system - was so impressed by the scale of volunteering in the US that he wrote about it in his 1835 book "Democracy in America."

Tocqueville observed that "Americans of all ages, all conditions, all minds" were likely to unite in many kinds of groups or associations.

More recently, former US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy has said that volunteering can strengthen communities, and that "community is a powerful source of life satisfaction and life expectancy."

If you aren't volunteering today, here are a few ideas to help you begin.

Start small. Try joining an organization or association in your community, taking part in neighborhood cleanups or volunteering at your local senior center, animal shelter or museum. Love gardening? You can take care of local parks, conservation areas, community gardens and more.

Once you're ready for a bigger commitment, consider becoming a mentor through programs such as OASIS Intergenerational Tutoring or Big Brothers Big Sisters.

And consider a more extensive level of commitment to organizations or causes you care deeply about. This might include joining a nonprofit board of directors, volunteering more hours, or taking on a volunteer leadership role.

At a time when trust is eroding and divisions seem insurmountable, volunteering offers something rare: an evidence-backed way to reconnect with communities, institutions and each other. (AP)

Device converts thoughts into speech

A stroke survivor speaks again with help of experimental brain implant

NEW YORK, April 1, (AP) - Scientists have developed a device that can translate thoughts about speech into spoken words in real time.

Although it's still experimental, they hope the brain-computer interface could someday help give voice to those unable to speak.

A new study described testing the device on a 47-year-old woman with quadriplegia who couldn't speak for 18 years after a stroke. Doctors implanted it in her brain during surgery as part of a clinical trial.

It "converts her intent to speak into fluent sentences," said Gopala Anumanchipalli, a co-author of the study published Monday in the journal Nature Neuroscience.

Other brain-computer interfaces, or BCIs, for speech typically have a slight delay between thoughts of sentences and computerized verbalization. Such delays can disrupt the natural flow of conversation, potentially leading to miscommunication and frustration, researchers said.

This is "a pretty big advance in our field," said Jonathan Brumberg of the Speech and Applied Neuroscience Lab at the University of Kansas, who was not part of the study.

A team in California recorded the woman's brain activity using electrodes while she spoke sentences silently in her brain. The scientists used a synthesizer they built using her voice before her injury to create a speech sound that she would have spoken. They trained an AI model that translates neural activity into



In this photo provided by researchers at UCSF and UC Berkeley, a UCSF clinical research coordinator connects a neural data port into the head of Ann, a participant in a study on speech neuroprostheses, in El Cerrito, Calif., on May 22, 2023. (AP)

units of sound.

It works similarly to existing systems used to transcribe meetings or phone calls in real time, said Anumanchipalli, of the University of California, Berkeley.

The implant itself sits on the speech center of the brain so that it's listening in, and those signals are translated to pieces of speech that make up sentences. It's a "streaming approach," Anumanchipalli said, with each 80-millisecond chunk of speech - about half a syllable - sent into a recorder.

"It's not waiting for a sentence to finish," Anumanchipalli said. "It's

processing it on the fly."

Decoding speech that quickly has the potential to keep up with the fast pace of natural speech, said Brumberg. The use of voice samples, he added, "would be a significant advance in the naturalness of speech."

Though the work was partially funded by the National Institutes of Health, Anumanchipalli said it wasn't affected by recent NIH research cuts. More research is needed before the technology is ready for wide use, but with "sustained investments," it could be available to patients within a decade, he said.

Mass vaccination

Ethiopia starts cholera shots

ADDIS ABABA, April 1, (Xinhua) - The Ethiopian government has launched a cholera vaccination campaign in the southwestern part of the country, targeting about one million people at risk.

In a statement issued Sunday, the Ethiopian Ministry of Health said the vaccination will be conducted in all zones of the country's Gambella Region and refugee camps during the coming week.

It came as the World Health Organization (WHO) and various other humanitarian agencies called for concerted efforts to contain the "rapidly spreading" cholera outbreak across the Gambella Region, bordering South Sudan.

Ethiopian Minister of Health Medkdes Daba, addressing the launching event, said that in addition to expanding access to cholera vaccines, maintaining environmental and personal hygiene are essential proactive measures to prevent cholera outbreaks.

On Monday, the international medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) warned that the humanitarian crisis is "rapidly unfolding" on both sides of the South Sudan-Ethiopia border, as escalating violence, displacement and "a widespread cholera outbreak" are pushing communities to the brink.

Noting that South Sudan has been grappling with cholera outbreaks since last year, the MSF said the latest wave, which began in Upper Nile State, is now spreading further in the country and across the border into Ethiopia's Gambella Region.

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Booker helps Texas reach its first women's Final Four since 2003

Bueckers carries UConn to record 24th women's Final Four

SPOKANE, Wash., April 1, (AP) — Paige Bueckers carried UConn to its record 24th Final Four of the women's NCAA Tournament, scoring 31 points Monday night in a 78-64 victory over Southern California, which couldn't overcome the loss of injured star JuJu Watkins.

UConn (35-3) heads to Tampa, Florida, to face overall No. 1 seed UCLA on Friday.

Freshman Sarah Strong added 22 points and 17 rebounds for the second-seeded Huskies, who have won a record 11 NCAA titles, all under coach Geno Auriemma. Their most recent championship was in 2016, the last of a run of four straight.

Rayah Marshall scored 23 points and 15 rebounds for top-seeded USC (31-4) which also lost to UConn in the Elite Eight last year when Watkins was a freshman.

Fans undoubtedly anticipated a rematch between Bueckers and Watkins when the brackets were announced, but the matchup lost some luster when Trojans' star guard tore an ACL in the second round and needed surgery.

While the Trojans got past Kansas State in the Sweet 16 without Watkins, they had a tougher challenge against UConn and Bueckers, the likely No. 1 overall pick in next month's WNBA draft.

Rori Harmon put her hands on her knees and bowed her head as the clock wound down. The Texas senior guard doesn't like crying, but she gave herself a moment to reflect on the past 10 months.

This time last year, Harmon was sidelined by a knee injury. She could only watch as the Longhorns were eliminated in the Elite Eight of the women's NCAA Tournament.

It came full circle Monday night. Madison Booker scored 18 points, Harmon added 13 and No. 1 seed Texas used its stifling defense to reach the Final Four for the first time since 2003, beating well-traveled point guard Hailey Van Lith and second-seeded TCU 58-47.

"Just to see us get to the Final Four after recovering and coming back from my ACL injury in 10 months," Harmon said, "I thought it was an amaz-

ing thing, and I was just really proud of myself in that moment."

The Longhorns (35-3) will face defending champion South Carolina on Friday night in Tampa, Florida, for a spot in the national title game.

Texas won a regional final for the first time in four tries under coach Vic Schaefer, who previously made two Final Four trips with Mississippi State. The Longhorns' 35 wins are one more than its only national title-winning squad had in 1986 under Jody Conradt, who was in the stands Monday night and led Texas to its three previous Final Fours.

Van Lith scored 17 points for TCU (34-4) in her collegiate finale, but Texas neutralized the Horned Frogs' star center, Sedona Prince, who had four points and nine rebounds before fouling out with 6:32 left.

Harmon guarded Van Lith most of the night. "That to me is vintage Rori," Schaefer said. "She embraces the defensive challenge. She loves it. She eats it for breakfast."



UConn guard Paige Bueckers (5) goes to the basket during the second half of the Sweet 16 of the NCAA college basketball tournament against Oklahoma in Spokane, Wash. (AP)

'Tension's a good thing'

Will Trump's tariff wars affect WC or Olympics?

WASHINGTON, April 1, (AP) — Seven years ago, when a joint bid by the United States, Canada and Mexico was awarded the 2026 World Cup, rifts created by tariffs - yes, back then, too! - and a proposed border wall were glossed over because of the neighbors' longstanding political and economic alliances.

"The unity of the three nations" was the overriding theme articulated by Carlos Cordeiro, then-president of the U.S. Soccer Federation. "A powerful message," he called it.

Well, here we are now, with the soccer showcase arriving in North America in about 15 months, and President Donald Trump back in office - inciting trade wars between the neighbors, not to mention across the globe, by levying tariffs that come, then go, then return, with more promised, including what the Republican calls "reciprocal tariffs" starting Wednesday.

It's hard to know how, exactly, the current geopolitical fissures, made all the more stark every time Trump or those in his administration talk provocatively about making Canada the 51st state, might affect the World Cup, its organization and coordination, fans' travel plans and more.

"Oh, I think it's going to make it more exciting," was Trump's take during an Oval Office appearance with FIFA President Gianni Infantino last month. "Tension's a good thing." Given that the U.S. also is preparing to welcome the world for FIFA's Club World Cup in June, golf's Ryder Cup in September and the Los Angeles Olympics in 2028, the question becomes: Will the world want to come? And, taking Trump's border and visa policies into account, will the world be able to? Alan Rothenberg, who ran the 1994 World Cup and successfully oversaw the bid to host the 1999 Women's World Cup as then-president of U.S. Soccer, thinks the answers to those questions are "Yes." Pointing to concerns about the last two World Cups, in Russia in 2018 and Qatar in 2022, he noted those still attracted attendance totals above 3 million apiece.

"People love the United States around the world - frankly, we wouldn't have the immigration issue that we're dealing with if that weren't the case - so a lot of this is government-to-government," Rothenberg said. "A passionate soccer fan is not going to be held up by that." He doesn't think one of the host nations would drop out of the World Cup, say, or that other countries might boycott, as happened at the 1976, 1980 and 1984 Summer Olympics.

"More than anything, they'll see it as an opportunity for, perhaps, rapprochement, rather than escalating the tensions," Rothenberg said.

"Besides, from an organizing standpoint, if either Canada or Mexico withdrew" from the World Cup, he said, "the U.S. would pick up the games in a heartbeat." Still, as the White House stance on tariffs and Russia's war in Ukraine have put Europe on edge, and relations with other countries have become fraught, it might not be a surprise if soccer stadiums for the U.S. games at the World Cup offer the same sort of anti-American sentiment heard when spectators in Canada booed "The Star-Spangled Banner" during hockey's 4 Nations Face-Off in February.

FIFA, soccer's governing body, did not respond to Associated Press requests for comment, but Infantino has never hidden his admiration for Trump, which he often demonstrates via social media. They have met at least five times since the U.S. election in November.

Last week, when Kirsty Coventry was elected president of the International Olympic Committee - becoming the first woman in that position - she was asked how she would work with Trump and what she would tell athletes about traveling to the U.S. for the next Games.

"I have been dealing with, let's say, difficult men, in high positions since I was 20 years old," Coventry said with a chuckle, "and first and foremost, what I have learned is that communication will be key. That is something that will happen early on. And my firm belief is that President Trump is a huge lover of sports. He will want these Games to be significant. He will want them to be a success." Referring to concerns about whether the administration might deny some athletes visas, she added: "We will not waiver from our values ... of solidarity in ensuring that every athlete that qualifies for the Olympic Games has the possibility to attend the Olympic Games and be safe during the Olympic Games." The overriding assumption among those involved in the Olympics is that Trump will assure the 2028 Games are a success.

Indians crush Knight Riders by 8 wickets for first victory



Mumbai Indians' Will Jacks plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Mumbai Indians at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, India. (AP)

Kumar grabs the best IPL bowling figures on debut

MUMBAI, India, April 1, (AP): Mumbai Indians crushed defending champions the Kolkata Knight Riders by eight wickets to finally post a win in the Indian Premier League.

Five-time champion Mumbai lost its first two games and turned its fortunes around thanks to debutant Ashwani Kumar, a left-arm pacer.

Kumar grabbed the best IPL bowling figures on debut - 4-24 - as Kolkata was routed for 116 runs in 16.2 overs.

Opener Ryan Rickelton then scored 62 not out off 41 balls to lead Mumbai to 121-2 in 12.5 overs with 7.1 overs to spare.

Kolkata suffered a second loss in three games. Made to bat, Kolkata's top order was dismantled by Mumbai's pacers. Deepak Chahar, who picked up 2-19 in two overs, first sent back Quinton de Kock for 1. At the other end, Trent Boult bowled Sunil Narine for a two-ball duck.

Kumar's first wicket was Kolkata skipper and Mumbai local Ajinkya Rahane for 11. When Chahar dismissed Venkatesh Iyer for 3, Kolkata was 41-4 in 5.4 overs.

Angkrish Raghuvanshi tried to stem the rot with 26 off 16 balls but Kumar simply broke through the middle order.

Rinku Singh was caught in the deep for 17, and Manish Pandey was sent in as an impact substitute but Kumar sent him back for 19. Any chance of a Kolkata revival vanished when Kumar bowled Andre Russell for 5.

Allrounder Ramandeep Singh's 22 off 12

pushed Kolkata past 100 but it was still a dismal total.

Star batter Rohit Sharma entered as an impact substitute for Mumbai but suffered another embarrassing stay at the crease. He scored only 13 off 12. Sharma has crossed 20 only once in his last 10 IPL innings.

Rickelton, though, was in fine form as he hit five sixes and four boundaries to steam to 50 off 33 balls, his maiden IPL half-century. He added 46 off 34 balls for the first wicket before Sharma was caught off Russell.

Will Jacks (16) put on 45 off 32 with Rickelton before he fell to Russell as well.

But Rickelton couldn't be dug out and Mumbai finally got to celebrate.

Mumbai next plays Lucknow SuperGiants on Friday, while Kolkata hosts Sunrisers Hyderabad on Thursday.

Leipzig turns to former assistant Löw to save its season

Bayern reportedly against giving Müller another season

BERLIN, April 1, (AP) — Bayern Munich favorite Thomas Müller could be about to end his career as media reports suggest the club will not extend his contract at the end of the season.

The 35-year-old Müller's current deal runs only through June and both SportBild and Kicker magazine were reporting that Bayern would prefer to save his considerable wage packet than offer him a new one.

Müller made his Bayern debut under Jürgen Klinsmann in 2008 and his breakthrough came under Louis van Gaal the following season. He has since made more appearances than any other player at the club,

742 across all competitions (with 247 goals) including super cups and club world championships.

He has gone on to win a record 12 Bundesliga titles and two Champions League titles - and he may win more because Bayern leads the former by six points with seven games remaining, and faces Inter Milan in the Champions League quarterfinals. Munich hosts the final in May.

Müller, who joined Bayern's youth setup in 2000, brings vast experience and intelligence to the team, but his playing time has been limited. Of his 23 Bundesliga appearances, 15 were as a substitute this season.

It's similar in the Champi-

ons League with just three starts from 10 appearances. If he plays at all it's often just for the final minutes. Last weekend, he went on in the 85th against St. Pauli, and the 87th against Stuttgart last month.

SportBild reported that Bayern's board member for sport Max Eberl informed the player's representatives two weeks ago that the club decided not to renew his deal, in contrast to the new contracts for teammates Manuel Neuer, Alphonso Davies, Jamal Musiala and Joshua Kimmich, all recently announced.

Müller reportedly wanted to play on for another season.

Bayern may opt to give

the player a short contract extension so he can play at the inaugural Club World Cup in the United States this summer, but Müller will likely have to be content with "just" 13 Bundesliga titles.

Müller retired from international soccer after the European Championship last year, having clocked 131 appearances for Germany. He wore No. 13 for Germany, and always said it was his lucky number.

Leipzig is betting on Thomas Tuchel's former assistant Zsolt Löw to save its season.

The 45-year-old Löw - no relation to former Germany coach Joachim Löw - was to take charge of his first train-

ing session as Leipzig's interim coach on Monday, a day after the club fired Marco Rose.

The Hungarian coach has two days to prepare the team for its German Cup semifinal at Stuttgart on Wednesday, but his principal task will be to ensure Leipzig qualifies for the lucrative Champions League.

Despite losing all but one of the eight games it played in Europe's premier competition this season, it's likely to have been worth around 50 million euros (\$54 million) plus matchday revenue to the Red Bull-owned club.

Leipzig is currently sixth in the Bundesliga, three points behind fourth-place

Mainz, with seven rounds of the season remaining.

"The team now has a duty to turn things around together with Zsolt," Leipzig sporting director Marcel Schäfer said.

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Alexander-Arnold's possible move to Real doesn't affect Slot

Liverpool expects attendance record for Merseyside derby at Anfield

LIVERPOOL, April 1. (AP) Liverpool expects to set an attendance record for a Merseyside derby at Anfield for Wednesday's Premier League match against Everton.

The record crowd for a match between the rivals at the famous stadium was 56,060 for a 0-0 draw in 1963.

Wednesday will be the first time the teams have faced each other at Anfield since expansion work was completed at the stadium last year, with attendances now rising above 60,000. The renovated stadium's official capacity is 61,276, which is below its all-time record attendance of 61,905 set in 1952 for an FA Cup match against Wolverhampton Wanderers.

Liverpool manager Arne Slot predicts the home crowd will be an advantage to his players after February's 2-2 draw with Everton in a bad tempered match when Slot was one of four people sent off.

Slot said Tuesday he expected another difficult game.

"I expect the same," he said. "But with one difference: that every time the Everton players do something well, they don't get the cheers and the reactions from 50,000 people. ... Our players will get that reaction after every tackle they make, after every pass they do and that is a different emotion."

Liverpool is on course to win a record-equaling 20th English league title this season. It leads the standings by 12 points over second-placed Arsenal.

If it lifts the title, it would equal with Manchester United's record. Liverpool's bid to clinch a record-tying Premier League title hasn't been affected by persistent reports linking Trent Alexander-Arnold with a move to Real Madrid at the end of the season, manager Arne Slot said Tuesday.

Sections of the British media reported during the international break that Madrid is in discussions about finalizing a deal to bring in Alexander-Arnold, who is in the last year of his contract at Liverpool and would be available on a free transfer. Neither club has publicly commented on a potential deal.

Slot said his club has lived the entire season with speculation about Alexander-Arnold as well as both Mohamed Salah and Virgil van Dijk, who are also out of contract at the end of the season.

"It's a situation that is there for eight or nine months now," Slot said, "and I think all these three players have performed so well under these circumstances, so it doesn't affect me at all."

Slot said there would not have been so much talk about Alexander-Arnold in recent weeks had he been fit and played for England in World Cup quali-

fiers. Instead, he is recovering from hurting his ankle when Liverpool was eliminated from the Champions League by Paris Saint-Germain on March 11.

That means Alexander-Arnold will miss the Premier League game against local rival Everton on Wednesday. Ahead of the midweek round, Liverpool leads by 12 points over second-place Arsenal with nine games remaining as the clubs look to seal a 20th English league title, tying the record with Manchester United.

"He is injured," Slot said of Alexander-Arnold, "and that means for him he is fully focused on his recovery and for us it means we are trying to help him to be back as soon as he can. For the rest, for the last eight months, it went up and down maybe with all the talks about him, Virgil or Mo, but we have never been focused on those talks."

"We have been focused on what we have to do. For Virgil and Mo, that is trying to win the Merseyside derby and for Trent it is making sure he is fit as soon as he can (be)."

The 26-year-old Alexander-Arnold has played his entire career at Liverpool and won every major honor with the Merseyside club, including the Premier League and Champions League.

Thrills assured as Atletico hosts Barca for Copa del Rey final spot



Barcelona's Jules Kounde, left, and Girona's Ladislav Krejci vie for the ball during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Barcelona and Girona in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

Non-stop for Barcelona following the international break

MADRID, April 1, (Xinhua): Atletico Madrid and FC Barcelona face off in a second semifinal in the Copa del Rey that promises to be a treat for neutral fans.

The first leg between them ended 4-4 after an incredible match in Montjuic, where Atletico led 2-0, before Barca completely overturned the tables and looked to be cruising 4-2, only for Atletico to score two late goals.

The two teams met in La Liga in Atletico's Metropolitan Stadium three weeks ago, with Atletico

leading again thanks to goals from Julian Alvarez and Alexander Sorloth, before an incredible Barca fightback gave Hansi Flick's side a 4-2 win.

That defeat, coupled with a draw last weekend, means Atletico is effectively out of the race for the La Liga title and after its painful UEFA Champions League exit to Real Madrid, the Copa del Rey is its only hope of silverware this season.

It has been non-stop for Barcelona following the international break, with a home game against Osasuna last Thursday, followed by another match against Girona on Sunday, meaning Wednesday's game will be the club's third in

just seven days and Flick has tried to juggle his squad accordingly.

Raphinha hasn't played since returning from playing with Brazil, while Frenkie de Jong was a second-half substitute against Girona and both will start on Wednesday, along with Alejandro Balde, who was also rested at the weekend.

Pau Cubarsi should also be fit after recovering from the ankle problem he picked up on Spain duty and will probably partner Inigo Martinez in central defense.

Although Atletico has conceded eight goals in the last two meetings with Barca, Diego Simeone's side has been one of the few teams

to get some joy against Barcelona's high defensive line and off-side trap.

Alvarez and Antoine Griezmann will probably start, along with Samuel Lino and Marcos Llorente, with Alvarez scoring in the last two games against Barca, while Sorloth has hit the target in all three of Atletico's meetings with the Catalans this campaign, including the 2-1 win in Montjuic in La Liga just before Christmas.

All three games between the two sides this season have seen vital goals scored in injury time, which implies Wednesday's game will also go the distance and extra time is a very real prospect.

Kuwait Club eyes another win, Al-Qadisiya seeks redemption

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: Two exciting matchups are set to take place this evening in the General Basketball League. Al-Arabi will face Kuwait Club at 5:00 pm at the Basketball Association Hall in Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex, followed by a clash between Al-Nasr and Al-Qadisiya at 7:30 pm in the same venue.

As the second half of the season nears its conclusion, competition is intensifying ahead of the decisive semifinals. Sulaibikhat and Al-Qurain are locked in a battle for the fourth and final semifinal spot, adding further excitement to the league.

In the first game, defending champions Kuwait Club who lead the standings with 25 points, is strong favorite to secure a comfortable win against Al-Arabi, who currently sit in seventh place with 17 points and is out of contention for the top spots.

The second match promises to be more competitive, as sixth-placed Al-Nasr (21 points) takes on fourth-placed Al-Qadisiya (22 points). Al-Qadisiya faces a tough challenge following heavy losses to Al-



Kuwait Club player prepares to shoot free throws

Qurain and Sulaibikhat, as well as its recent elimination from the West Asian League Championship (Super League) at the hands of Saudi Arabia's Al-Ittihad.

With high stakes and tight competition, tonight's matchups could prove crucial in shaping the playoff picture.

Munoz named Al-Qadisiya coach

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: Al-Qadisiya has officially announced the appointment of Spanish coach Javier Munoz as the new head coach of the first basketball team, replacing American coach Antonio Stebbing, who resigned.

Munoz takes charge of the Yellows at a challenging juncture in the season, following the team's elimination from the Gulf region semifinals of the West Asia Super League against Saudi Arabia's Al-Ittihad. The team also suffered back-to-back league defeats to Al-Qurain and Al-Sulaibikhat.

Tensions arose after Al-Qadisiya's two consecutive losses to Al-Ittihad, despite winning the first leg in Kuwait. Disagreements between the former coach and players ultimately led to Stebbing's resignation.



Javier Munoz

Munoz brings prior experience in Middle Eastern basketball, having coached the Syrian national team two years ago. His tenure with Al-Qadisiya begins today with a crucial match against Al-Nasr.

Best of the Rest

Fernandes exit rumors dismissed:

Manchester United coach Ruben Amorim has said that Portuguese midfielder Bruno Fernandes is "not going anywhere" after recent reports suggesting that Real Madrid are interested in signing the 30-year-old playmaker.

Fernandes has been United's standout player in a difficult season, with 14 goals and 14 assists in all competitions where he has been one of the club's few consistent performers.

That has seen him linked with Real Madrid, who are on the lookout for a creative midfielder to replace 39-year-old Luka Modric, but when asked about a possible sale to Madrid, Amorim was clear in his reply.

"No, it's not going to happen," replied the coach, who insisted Fernandes was vital for the club's rebuilding.

"I want Bruno here because we want to win the Premier League again so we want the best players," continued Amorim, who insisted that United would be able to keep their star player. (Xinhua)

CAS hearing set for April 23 in Madrid

FIFA plans playoff game for final Club WC spot after León expelled

GENEVA, April 1. (AP) The final entry for this summer's Club World Cup in the United States could be decided in a playoff game between Los Angeles FC and Mexican team América, depending on the outcome of a legal case involving a team that was kicked out of the tournament.

Mexican club León was expelled by FIFA this month for breaching tournament rules as it has the same owner of another team taking part - Pachuca - leaving one slot open at the 32-team event.

FIFA said late that it has drawn up plans for a playoff game between LAFC and América to fill that place but is awaiting the outcome of at least one legal case at the Court of Arbitration for Sport before confirming it will take place.

FIFA said LAFC would be in the playoff because it finished as runner-up to León in the 2023 CONCACAF Champions League, while América is the next-best ranked team in the FIFA Club World Cup confederation ranking.

It was unclear why América - one of Mexico's best-supported teams - is eligible to be included when FIFA rules cap each country at two entries unless it has more than two winners of a continental championship in the qualifying period.

"The winner of the playoff would qualify unless legal proceedings rule otherwise," FIFA said in a state-

ment.

Those legal proceedings include León preparing an appeal at CAS against the FIFA expulsion order, plus a separate case brought by Costa Rican club Alajuelense which believes it has a claim on qualifying instead.

The entry being fought over by lawyers is worth an initial \$9.55 million payment from FIFA plus a share of the \$1 billion in total prize money depending on results in the group stage and knockout rounds. The winner of the tournament is expected to earn up to \$125 million.

Sports' highest court said Monday it will hold a hearing April 23 in Madrid in the case that has been brought by Alajuelense.

In the expected second case, CAS said it had not yet received a formal appeal from León.

The opening game at the Club World Cup between Lionel Messi's Inter Miami and Al Ahly of Egypt will be played June 15 and León had been scheduled to play the following day.

The primary path for teams worldwide to qualify for the first edition of FIFA's relaunched and expanded

club tournament was to win a continental title from 2021 through 2024. Qualified teams include Real Madrid, Manchester City, and Seattle Sounders.

The rules regarding multi-club ownership were in place last June when Pachuca won the CONCACAF Champions Cup, one year after León won the previous edition. Both are owned by Grupo Pachuca, whose owner said in December that León was put up for sale to comply with FIFA rules.

Though teams from the same country cannot be drawn together in the same Club World Cup group, they could meet in a knockout rounds game.

FIFA drafted tournament regulations in October - including "Article 10: Multi-Club Ownership" - but let León and Pachuca both enter the draw on Dec. 5, where Ivanka Trump and her son Theodore helped start the ceremony in Miami. The golden Club World Cup trophy has been sitting in the Oval Office with U.S. President Donald Trump.

León was scheduled to play Chelsea, then Esperance from Tunisia in Nashville and Flamengo of Brazil in Orlando.

Fans were able to buy tickets, and make travel and hotel plans, for more than three months before FIFA announced its appeal judges' decision that León was out.



In this file photo, FIFA President Gianni Infantino arrives at the FIFA congress on the eve of the opener of the 2018 soccer World Cup in Moscow, Russia. (AP)



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Indiana Pacers guard T.J. McConnell (9) drives on Sacramento Kings guard Malik Monk (0) during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Indianapolis. (AP)

Sports

Lakers solidify hold on fourth in West

Hornets snap 5-game losing streak

LOS ANGELES, April 1, (AP): Luka Doncic had 20 points and nine assists, and Gabe Vincent added 20 points on six 3-pointers in the Los Angeles Lakers' 104-98 victory over the Houston Rockets on Monday night.

LeBron James finished with 16 points and eight rebounds for the Lakers, who solidified their hold on fourth place in the Western Conference.

Dorian Finney-Smith also scored a season-high 20 points and hit six 3-pointers while Los Angeles sent second-place Houston to only its second loss in 14 games.

After James hit two free throws with 11.1 seconds left to put the Lakers up 102-98, he soared across the key to block Alperen Sengun's layup attempt. Dillon Brooks then missed a 3-point attempt to seal the Lakers' 29th home victory.

Amen Thompson scored 20 points and Brooks had 16 for the Rockets, who had won three straight.

The Lakers' two superstars both looked weary, and much of LA's offense consisted of Doncic and James drawing defenders before kicking to Finney-Smith and Vincent for 3-point attempts.

Hornets 110, Jazz 106

In Charlotte, Miles Bridges had 26 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists and the Charlotte Hornets defeated the Utah Jazz 110-106 to snap a five-game losing streak.

Mark Williams added 18 points and 13 rebounds for the Hornets, who held the Jazz to 41% shooting.

Keyonte George had 20 points and Brice Sensabaugh added 19 points on five 3-pointers for the Jazz.

The Hornets (19-56) led by 14 points in the first half after hitting 11 of 22 3-pointers, but the Jazz battled back to tie the game late in the third quarter on a 3-pointer by George. Utah pulled even multiple times, but could never get over the top and take the lead.

The Jazz (16-60) have lost six



Chicago Bulls center Nikola Vucevic (9) drives against Oklahoma City Thunder center Isaiah Hartenstein, left, during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City. (AP)

straight and have the league's worst record.

Pacers 111, Kings 109

In Indianapolis, Aaron Nesmith scored 17 of his 24 points in the second half. Obi Toppin added 19 and Indiana rallied from a 16-point deficit in the second half to beat Sacramento.

Tyrese Haliburton had 18 points and 11 assists against his former team for the Pacers. Jarace Walker scored 15 points.

DeMar DeRozan led the Kings with 31 points and eight assists. Former Pacers center Domantas Sabonis

had 25 points and 16 rebounds. Zach LaVine finished with 20 points for Sacramento, which led 76-60 midway through the third quarter.

Celtics 117, Grizzlies 103

In Memphis, Jayson Tatum had 25 points and 14 rebounds. Al Horford scored 26 points and Boston swept a six-game road trip for the first time in franchise history with a win over Memphis.

Victories at Utah, Portland, Sacramento, Phoenix, San Antonio and Memphis eclipsed the previous road win streak of five in February

1973. The run also helped Boston tie a franchise record with 32 road wins, accomplished in 1972-73 and 1974-75) and trailing Chicago (33, 1995-96) and Golden State (34, 2015-16).

Kristaps Porzingis added 19 points as Boston won its ninth straight and closed out a 13-1 March.

Ja Morant scored 26 points, Santi Aldama 21 and Jaren Jackson Jr. added 20 points and 15 rebounds as the Grizzlies closed within seven points with three minutes left, but couldn't complete the comeback in losing for the sixth time in seven

games.

Clippers 96, Magic 87

In Orlando, Kawhi Leonard and Norman Powell each scored 21 points, Ivica Zubac added 18 points and 20 rebounds and Los Angeles beat Orlando.

James Harden added 20 points and six steals for the Clippers, who won for the 11th time in 14 games.

Thunder 145, Bulls 117

In Oklahoma City, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 27 points and 12 assists in just 27 minutes, and Oklahoma City rolled to a victory over

Chicago for their 10th straight victory.

Isaiah Joe came off the bench to make eight 3-pointers and lead Oklahoma City with 31 points. Jalen Williams scored 23 points for the Thunder, who led by 43 points and shot 53% from the field and 53.5% from 3-point range.

Oklahoma City, which improved to 63-12, won 15 straight earlier this season.

Heat 120, Wizards 94

In Washington, Bam Adebayo had 28 points and 12 rebounds, Tyler Herro added 27 points and Miami rolled past Washington for their fifth consecutive victory.

The Heat (34-41) became the third team in NBA history to immediately follow a losing streak of at least 10 games with a winning streak of at least five games. The 2021-22 Houston Rockets lost 15 straight and then won seven in a row, and the 2017-18 Chicago Bulls lost 10 straight before winning seven in a row.

Nets 113, Mavericks 109

In Dallas, Keon Johnson scored 24 points and Brooklyn beat Dallas to win consecutive games for the first time since the All-Star break.

D'Angelo Russell added 18 points and 11 assists for the Nets (25-51), who last won two in a row during a three-game winning streak from Feb. 7-12. Playing without leading scorer Cam Johnson, who has a back injury, Brooklyn rallied from a 10-point deficit midway through the fourth quarter with a 12-0 run.

Daniel Gafford scored 17 points in his first game since Feb. 10 for the Mavericks (37-39), who were trying to reach .500 for the first time since March 10.

Anthony Davis had 12 points and seven rebounds in 28 minutes in his first home game since being injured Feb. 8 in his initial Mavericks appearance following the trade that sent superstar Luka Doncic to the Los Angeles Lakers. Davis returned last week and played three road games.

The Mavericks are ninth in the West, a half-game ahead of 10th-place Sacramento.

Celta, Palmas share eventful draw

Torino strikes late to draw at Lazio, extend unbeaten streak



Lazio's Mattia Zaccagni, left, and Torino's Samuele Ricci battle for the ball during the Italian Serie A soccer match between SS Lazio and Torino FC at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome. (AP)

VERONA, Italy, April 1, (AP): Substitute Gvidas Gineitis scored with eight minutes left for Torino to draw at Lazio 1-1 in Serie A and extend its unbeaten run to five games.

Adam Marušić put the home side ahead with a stunning strike 12 minutes into the second half.

Lazio had a penalty award withdrawn after a video review 10 minutes later and it continued to create most of the chances.

But Lithuanian midfielder Gineitis side-footed home the equalizer and lifted Torino to within one point of the top half of Serie A. Paolo Vanoli's men remain unbeaten since a Valentine's Day defeat at Bologna.

Lazio, meanwhile, was seventh, equal on points with city rival Roma.

Earlier, Verona and Parma drew 0-0, a result that did not ease either side's relegation worries.

Neither club was able to impose itself in a game of few chances. Daniel Mosquera came closest for Verona when his early header came back off the post.

With eight games left in the season, Parma was just three points above the drop zone. Verona was two places and four points above it and still not out of danger.

Parma's last win was on Feb. 22. Verona, meanwhile, missed a chance to record back-to-back wins for the first time in more than a year.

Las Palmas is still waiting for its luck to turn. The Canary Islanders drew with Celta Vigo 1-1 in La Liga on Monday in a match where their goalkeeper was taken off on a stretcher and a late winner was disallowed.

The club is without a win in 12 games and sits second from bottom on the table. Wearing an unfamiliar black strip for the first time, Celta took the lead seconds before halftime when Alfonso González cut inside from the left and curled a beautiful shot into the far corner from the edge of the box.

Kuwait faces Comoros in Arab Cup play-offs

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 1: Kuwait has been drawn to face Comoros in the play-offs for the finals of Arab Cup. Other matchups in the same round include Oman vs. Somalia, Bahrain vs. Djibouti, Syria vs. South Sudan, Palestine vs. Yemen, Lebanon vs. Libya, and Mauritania vs. Sudan. The play-off matches are scheduled for November 25 and 26, with each tie being a single-leg encounter. The winners will advance to the finals, which will take place in Qatar from December 1 to 18.

Comoros has shown strong performances in the African qualifiers

for the 2026 World Cup, making it a formidable opponent.

The draw excluded several top-ranked teams, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, Iraq, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, and Jordan, from the play-offs.

The previous edition of the tournament was held in Qatar in 2021, featuring 16 teams. Algeria emerged as champions, defeating Tunisia 2-0 in the final.

Historically, Iraq holds the record for the most Arab Cup titles, winning the tournament four times. Saudi Arabia follows with two titles, while Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco have each won the competition once.



Arab Cup trophy

Striker expected to be sidelined for 'between 5 to 7 weeks'

Man City looks to adapt without Haaland

MANCHESTER, England, April 1, (AP): Manchester City striker Erling Haaland is expected to be sidelined for "between five to seven weeks" with an ankle injury, manager Pep Guardiola said Tuesday.

Guardiola gave a more precise timeframe than was offered Monday by City, which only said Haaland was seeking specialist consultation to confirm the full extent of the injury and should be fit to "play a further part in the remainder of this season."

If the Norway international was to miss five weeks, he would likely be back for the final three league matches of the season and the FA Cup final on May 17 - should City beat Nottingham Forest in the semi-finals.

If he misses seven weeks, Haaland would be set to return around the time of the FA Cup final and



Manchester City's Erling Haaland, left, duels for the ball with Bournemouth's Lewis Cook during the English FA Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Bournemouth and Manchester City at the Vitality stadium in Bournemouth, England. (AP)

might only be able to play in City's final Premier League match. City is heading to the United States in

June for the 32-team Club World Cup.

City, which has won the last four Premier League titles, is in fifth place and battling to just finish in the Champions League qualification positions. This season, that is set to be the top five.

City will play Forest in the FA Cup semifinals being staged at Wembley Stadium on the weekend of April 26-27.

Guardiola, who said he was given Haaland's likely injury timeframe by club doctors, expressed his frustration that injuries have ruined City's season. Key midfielder Rodri has been out since September with ACL damage and City has been badly affected by injuries to its center backs, especially.

"Sometimes there are years when this kind of thing happens," Guardiola said. "It's happened all

season and it could not be different at the end of the season.

"With all the injuries we have had this season, so sorry for them - and Erling as well."

Haaland had just scored his 30th goal of the season during the FA Cup win at Bournemouth on Sunday when he tumbled in a challenge by Lewis Cook and saw his left ankle get trapped under the midfielder.

Omar Marmoush came on as a substitute, scored the winner and is likely to be tasked with replacing Haaland on a longer-term basis. There are no other senior strikers in City's squad.

"We will find a solution with the players we have," Guardiola said.

"We don't have another player with his skills or specific qualities. But we have to adapt. For many years we have played in different ways up front."