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Kuwait extends defense fund withdrawal period by 2 years

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: In an effort to enable relevant authorities to complete armament programs, keep pace with regional developments, and ensure the readiness of the armed forces, a Decree-Law (No. 61/2025) has been issued to extend the period stipulated in Law No. 3/2016, which authorizes the government to withdraw funds from the general reserve, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Article Î of Decree-Law No. 61/2025 states that "the period specified in Articles 1 and 2 of Law No. 3 of 2016 shall be extended for an additional two fiscal years." Article 2 mandates the Prime Minister

and the ministers, each within their jurisdiction, to implement the decree-law, which will take effect from the date of its publication in the official gazette.

The explanatory note clarifies that Law No. 3/2016 was enacted to authorize the government to withdraw a specific sum from the general reserve to enhance the state's defense capabilities over a tenyear period, starting with the fiscal year of 2015/2016, in order to keep pace with regional developments and ensure the preparedness of the armed forces.

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His Highness the Amir



His Highness the Crown Prince

HH Amir meets Crown Prince, Acting Premier

KUWAIT CITY, April 6, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace on Sunday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness also received Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

Also on Sunday, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace Acting Prime Minister Sheikh Fahad Yousef Saud Al-Sabah.

TRADE WAR TRIGGERS PANIC IN KUWAIT MARKET, RECOVERY SEEN Kuwait stocks plunge as US tariffs bite

KD 2.44 billion vanishes from Boursa Kuwait in sharp decline

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Boursa Kuwait closed today's trading session with a sharp decline, losing approximately KD 2.44 billion in market capitalization, which is a drop of 5.15 percent, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

This decrease reflects the global market downturn at the end of last week, driven by the ongoing trade war between the United States and other countries, as well as the sharp declines in oil prices.

The market capitalization of companies listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange dropped to KD 44.91 billion by the end of today's session, compared to KD 47.35 billion at the close of trading last Thursday.

The markets of Kuwait, Oatar, Oman, and Bahrain opened today's trading session with sharp declines exceeding five percent in the Saudi, Kuwaiti, and Qatari

The general market index dropped by 5.16 percent, or approximately 412.84 points, to reach 7,587.89 points The Premier Market index fell by 5.69 percent, or around 488.79 points, settling

at 8,106 points. Meanwhile, the Main Market index declined by 2.67 percent, or 192.66 points, to 7,013.23 points.

Global financial markets experienced a sharp decline over the course of two days following US President Donald Trump's imposition of tariffs on most of the United States' trading partners. These actions reignited fears of a potential global

The S&P 500 index dropped ten percent on Thursday and Friday, erasing more than \$5 trillion in market value

The total decline for the index reached 17.4 percent from its all-time high on February 19, 2025, marking one of the steepest two-day declines in seven decades. Meanwhile, Kuwaiti economists attributed the sharp decline in the performance of Boursa Kuwait to the negative repercussions of U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to impose tariffs on imports from various countries, including Kuwait.

In separate interviews with the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) on Sunday, experts highlighted the huge drop in stock market indices, driven by growing uncertainty in the investment arena

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Healthy eating initiative

Kuwait pushes for calorie

disclosure in food service

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Technical Committee at the Municipal Council has referred to the executive authority the

letter of Capital Governor Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Ali re-

garding the proposed mechanism on requiring restaurants and

implement the proposal based on the guidelines attached to it.

underway to lay down the rules and regulations on the calories

of meals and foods served in restaurants and cafés, in coopera-

tion with the concerned government agencies, specifically the

Sources said the regulations for implementing the proposed

mechanism will have a positive impact on the quality of food

services in Kuwait in general, and will contribute to promoting

Sources disclosed the new mechanism will most likely be

implemented in the Capital Governorate initially, and then

gradually expand to the rest of the restaurants and cafés in the

The newspaper obtained a copy of the guidelines for restaurants and cafés, upon which the Municipality based its

study; including a mechanism for measuring calories in meals

through laboratory analysis or by calculating the components

of meals and drinks or calculating the calories of the ingredi-

ents such that each gram of protein is equal to four kilocalo-

ries, one gram of carbohydrates is equals four kilocalories, and

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one gram of fat equals nine kilocalories.

a healthy eating pattern for citizens and expatriates.

Kuwait Municipality is currently studying a mechanism to

Municipal sources revealed to the newspaper that work is

cafés to list the calorie contents of food and beverages.

Food and Drug Administration.

Police arrest 36

Kuwait's new traffic fines begin April 22

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry is currently conducting a series of field awareness campaigns to inform motorists about the new Traffic Law penalties that will take effect on April 22.

The department disclosed that violations stipulated in Article 33 (bis) will result in KD150 fine. These violations include running a red light, reckless driving, endangering lives or properties, racing without a permit, performing stunts on the road, driving beyond the speed limit, driving auto-terrain vehicles (ATVs) or bicycles in undesignated areas, driving against traffic, driving an unlicensed or unregistered vehicle, using altered or fake license plates, transporting passengers without a permit, parking in spaces designated for those with disabilities, and obstructing traffic without a permit.

Repeat offenders under Article 33 (bis) may face imprisonment for up to three years and a fine of up to KD1,000.

In a related development, the department continued its traffic and security campaigns in different governorates over the past week.

These campaigns resulted in the arrest of 15 individuals proven to have violated the Residency Law, and 21 others who committed various crimes and evaded arrest.

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Photo by Mohammad Morsi

The return of students to schools on Sunday marked a noticeable rise in vehicular movement across the country.

Kuwait leads humanitarian advocacy at UN, supporting global justice and rights

NBK signs exclusive partnership with Harrods London, bringing unmatched benefits to customers



Al-Jarallah applauds 'The Last Journey,' calls for more political freedom in Kuwaiti theater

GENEVA, April 6, (KUNA): Kuwait asserted its firm position on humanitarian issues, particularly in Palestine, Syria, Sudan, and Myanmar, reiterating its commitment to international law, human rights protection, justice and dignity promotion in conflict zones, and holding violators accountable, especially oc-

According to official statements presented by Kuwait's permanent UN delegation during its participation in the 58th session of the UN's Human Rights Council, which concluded on April 4, the Palestinian cause remains a

cupying powers.

Kuwait's Permanent Representative at the UN and International Organizations headquarters in Geneva Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen, called on the international community to assume its moral and legal responsibilities towards Palestinian people, implement an immediate ceasefire, and ensure the unrestricted flow of aid.

He expressed Kuwait's strong condemnation of the Israeli occupation's incessant violations in the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly in Gaza and the West Bank, including settlement expansion, population displacement, and the denial of humanitarian

Kuwait also supported numerous draft resolutions, particularly those related to the Palestinian issue proposed by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), reaffirming its deep commitment to supporting the rights of Palestinian people and condemning the continued Israeli settlement activity, both in the occupied Palestinian territories and in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights.

Additionally, Kuwait supported the resolution on the effects of anti-personnel mines due to the painful experience its people endured because of anti-personnel mines planted during Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Al-Hayen noted that anti-personnel mines have caused immense human, economic, and environmental suffering, and that their effects are still present today, more than 35 years after its liberation.

For that reason, he reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to Ottawa's "Mine Ban Treaty" and called on non-States Parties to accede and support international mine clearance efforts, while simultaneously achieving sustainable development goals.

Moreover, Kuwait called for preserving Syria's unity, sovereignty, and independence, and for lifting sanctions imposed on Syrian people due to their direct impact on their living conditions.

Kuwait also called to support the Sudanese people and protect them from collapse, it expressed its concern over the humanitarian deterioration in Sudan, stressing the importance of a ceasefire and engaging in a comprehensive political process based on the Jeddah

Regarding the situation in Myanmar, Kuwait expressed its condemnation of the human rights violations committed against the Rohingya minority, calling on the international community to ensure the safe and dignified return of refugees and holding perpetrators accountable.

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Ambassador Nasser Al-Hayen, Kuwait's Permanent Representative at the UN and International Organizations headquarters

Newswatch

KUWAIT CITY: The **U.S.** Embassy in Kuwait declared that lying or submitting false or forged documents will result in a permanent travel ban to the United States, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The embassy stated via its X account that providing forged documents to support a visa application is a serious violation that can lead to visa ineligibility.

KUWAIT CITY: The Al-Ojairi Scientific Center stated that Kuwait is currently experiencing the "Dharaan" season, which began with "Tali' al-Muqaddam" and lasts for 13 days, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The center explained in a press statement that "Tali' al-Muqaddam," which starts on April 3 and is also known as "the second heat", consists of two bright stars and is the third of the spring rising. This season witnesses higher temperatures compared to previous periods, with rice and wheat being

planted and harvested. Headaches, common cold, and dust allergies are common during

DEIR AL-BALAH: Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip killed at least 24 people, including over a dozen women and children, local health officials said Sunday, as Israeli Prime Minister **Benjamin Netan**yahu headed to the United States to meet with President Donald Trump about the war.

Israel last month ended its ceasefire with Hamas and renewed its air and ground offensive, carrying out waves of strikes and seizing territory to pressure the militant group to accept a new deal for a truce and release of remaining hostages. (AP)

Kuwait-UAE talks focus on youth empowerment

KUWAIT CITY, April 6, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Information and Culture and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi discussed on Sunday with the United Arab Emirates Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Dr. Sultan Al-Neyadi ways to enhance bilateral relations and cooperation in various youth fields.

Al-Neyadi stressed during the meeting the need to continue cooperation between the two countries and implementing directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and President of the UAE, Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

Al-Mutairi said that strengthening joint work and exchanging experiences between youth institutions in both countries would help develop youth work and achieve sustainable development.

The two sides agreed on the importance of adopting a unified Gulf vision for youth issues that enhances the status of Gulf youth and expresses their aspirations.

Both sides also agreed on exchanging visits and expertise between delegations, which contributes to advancing cooperation, and empowering youth.

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Kuwaiti Minister Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi receives Dr.

Expected weather for next 24

By Day: Rather hot and partly cloudy to cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-40 km/h with a chance for rain that

Weather

might be thundery at times. **By Night:** Mild and partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times northwest-erly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-40 km/h with a chance for rain that might be heavy at times.

Station Kuwait Airport 25 24 27 22 25 22 21 Abdaly Jahra Salmiyah Jal Aliyah Nuwaisib Wafra

Other Voices

Media victor in exposing rampant corruption; gov't must back transparency

By Ahmad alsarraf

IT doesn't take much insight to see that corruption has affected most state institutions, with only a few remaining untouched. The majority of corruption cases that have been exposed are a result of relatively free media, and therefore, the government should support this transparency. The press, which represents the freedom of publication, speech, and

opinion, has earned its reputation as the fourth authority for good reason. There is no such thing as major or petty corruption, as most perpetrators of large crimes were once involved in smaller offenses. The state must adopt a less lenient approach towards violations or misde-

meanors, regardless of their scale. For years, violations of professional ethics by some doctors, lawyers, and others in similar fields have been overlooked.

Expensive advertisements, sometimes costing hundreds of thousands of dinars, have been published regularly, even on the front pages of newspapers. These advertisements often include descrip-

tions about the surgeries performed, despite the often questionable morality behind them.

A clear example of this is the existence of hundreds of distinguished dental clinics, yet only a few feel the need to promote their services commercially. Recently, one clinic even announced a partnership with a law firm, though I fail to see the humorous connection between a dental

There exists an ethical code or unwritten custom for certain professions, such as doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, chartered accountants, and others, that stresses the importance of trustworthiness and discourages being influenced by flashy advertisements. These professions should refrain from relying on commercial promotion, as it undermines their reputation and opens the door to exploiting patients and clients.

Moreover, staying silent about this issue undermines the principle of equal opportunity among professionals, as the honest and dedicated ones suffer both financially and morally, while others profit.

These advertisements often reveal personal details about clients and expose some of these professionals' accomplishments, such as showcasing their success in clearing someone of a serious charge or treating them for a medical condition.

The responsibility for stopping these violations does not rest solely with the entity that granted the advertisement license, but also with officials from dozens of other entities. These officials, who pass by massive advertisements that violate public order and sensibility almost every day during their supervisory duties, take no action.

Our appeal to the relevant supervisory authorities, including government agencies and officials of professional associations, is not to obstruct the spread of services, but rather to ensure they are offered honestly and professionally, without commercial influences that could compromise the quality of work.

If I may, Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad

Yousef Al-Sabah, I kindly urge you to encourage all relevant ministers to refrain from treating these violations leniently, regardless of their size or severity.

For many years, New York City was considered one of the most dangerous cities in America. When I first visited in 1977, the bank manager advised me to be cautious and avoid walking through most of its streets, even during the daytime.

When an active lawyer became the Mayor of New York, he transformed it into one of the safest major cities by prosecuting those responsible for minor offenses and misdemeanors, believing that they could eventually become the major criminals of tomorrow.

I wouldn't be surprised if one of the perpetrators of recent crimes in Kuwait admitted that what "encouraged" them to commit their crime was the sight of many violations being committed around them every day, without anyone being held accountable. Even if they didn't say it out loud, it is likely that this mentality lingered in their subconscious.

Recently, suspicious groups have exploited the good reputation of the "Friendship Society," which is known for its high credibility and transparency, by publishing fake job advertisements with the intent of collecting funds illegally.

I urge caution and call on the relevant authorities, especially the General Department of Cybercrime, to take the necessary measures to prevent the spread of such scams and deceptions.

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

'CBK cover to cleanse exchange market of all unlawful activities'

Closing small offices has boosted sales: exchange owners

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The decision of the Central Bank of Kuwait to supervise all exchange companies in the country and require them to have a paid-up capital of KD2 million has led to an unusual state of activity and congestion at major exchange companies, which are not covered by the decision, as they are affiliated with the Central Bank.

The staff of the newspaper visited the foreign exchange market, during which a number of exchange company owners and officials expressed their view on the March 31 deadline for adjusting the status of about 134 money exchange companies, in accordance with the new Central Bank decision, which aims primarily to cleanse the exchange market of money laundering and eliminate all illegal practices.

Mahdi Al-Rahmani, an official at an exchange company, said the decision to transfer the affiliation of all local exchange companies dealing with currency exchange from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to the Central Bank is an excellent step towards bringing all exchange offices under one umbrella.

Requirements

Al-Rahmani told the newspaper that the Central Bank's requirements stipulate that the capital of an exchange company must be KD2 million, which confirms the State is serious in its bid to combat any negative phenomenon in the exchange market in general.

"Companies that do not rely on strong capital distort the operations of strong exchange companies, especially since the Central Bank's oversight of its approved exchange offices and companies is



Photo by Rizk Tawfiq Customers at one of the money exchange offices.

strict and continuous," he asserted.

He explained that the Central Bank's decision to bring all exchange companies and offices under its umbrella led to the closure of some exchange offices that were unable to secure strong capital of up to KD2 million, despite the Central Bank giving these companies a grace period to settle their situation before the decision is implemented.

Asim Hussein, an official at another exchange company, revealed that the Central Bank conducts oversight every three months to monitor all exchange company transactions in the country.

He said the goal of bringing all exchange companies under the umbrella of the Central Bank is to completely eliminate money laundering operations carried out surreptitiously by small compa-

He pointed out that subjecting exchange offices -- which were only engaged in currency exchange within Kuwait, without conducting foreign remittances -- to oversight and transferring their supervision to the Central Bank, similar to official exchange companies and offices; regulates the exchange business in Kuwait general. "Requiring such a company to have a capital of KD2 million will inevitably shut down companies that lack significant influence in the exchange market," he added.

He revealed that implementing the decision to transfer money exchange offices to the Central Bank already led to increased activity among strong exchange offices and companies that conduct remittances outside Kuwait.

Ibrahim Hamed, head of an exchange office, disclosed that many exchange offices have closed due to the Central Bank's decision requiring centers that exchange local currencies to maintain strong capital.

Transfers

He stated that a number of these centers were conducting foreign transfers illegally, receiving the money from the customer and then corresponding with their representatives in other countries to transfer the money to the account illegally.

"This happened despite the fact that such companies are not authorized to transfer money abroad. It has negatively impacted the profits of major companies that handle both foreign transfers and currency exchange. Therefore, the decision to transfer all exchange offices to the Central Bank will ensure that only the fittest survive. We met with the head of the exchange office. Mahmoud Ziad, who said that the exchange market in Kuwait is one of the best in the world, subject to constant and strict State oversight. The transfer of currency exchange offices to the Cen-

tral Bank's oversight is welcomed," he added. He pointed out that this move will inevitably lead to purifying the local exchange market of any suspicious transactions. "Therefore, the recent decision to transfer all exchange offices to the Central Bank contributed to the closure of many currency exchange offices, which has contributed to the activity of major exchange companies," he stressed.

Adnan Al-Hamoud, head of an exchange office, asserted that most exchange institutions have complied with the law to ensure they do not violate the State's instructions to regularize their operations in accordance with the requirements of the Central Bank. He added the inspection teams from the Ministry of Commerce have been deployed in recent days to pursue, hold accountable and close companies that fail to comply with the law; especially since the State is serious about combating money laundering by all means.



Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance for Economic Affairs Talal Al-

Kuwait attends Cairo meet

Al role growing fast in economic and social sectors, says official

CAIRO, April 6, (KUNA): The extraordinary session of the Economic and Social Council of the League of Arab States at the senior officials' level began on Sunday, with Kuwait participating to discuss and prepare the draft agenda for the 34th Arab Summit and the 5th Arab Economic and Social Development Summit. In her opening remarks, Ambassador Haifa Abu-Ghazaleh, Assistant Secretary-General

and Head of the Social Affairs Sector at the Arab League, emphasized the growing role of artificial intelligence in economic and social sectors . She noted that technology and AI have become essential for the success of development projects across various sectors. Abu-Ghazaleh outlined the key topics to be discussed at the meeting, including food

security, solar energy, sheltering displaced families, and human resources investment. She also highlighted the importance of addressing the economic and social empowerment of Arab women. The focus, she said, would be on issues that prioritize the well-being of the Arab person, particularly in terms of stability, security, and peace in the region, to ensure successful development outcomes.

The Assistant Secretary-General also stressed the importance of preparing the Arab position for the upcoming Second World Summit for Social Development, which will address global social priorities.

Nawaf Al-Sada, Chairman of the meeting and representative of Bahrain, noted that the special session aimed to prepare the economic and social files for the 34th Arab Summit and the 5th Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, which will be hosted by Iraq in May. He reiterated Bahrain's commitment to enhancing Arab cooperation in economic and social issues, particularly in the areas of economic integration, food security, and the development of the digital economy and innovation.

Al-Sada further emphasized the need for progress in the Greater Arab Free Trade Area, intra-Arab investments, and trade, as well as the empowerment of women and youth to achieve sustainable growth and prosperity.

The Kuwaiti delegation is led by Talal Al-Namsh, Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance for Economic Affairs.

MoE completes over 90% of

CCTV installation in schools

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Ministry of Education has successfully com-

pleted the installation of advanced surveillance cameras to enhance security in

than 90 percent complete, with surveillance cameras installed in 140 locations. In a letter addressed to Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, the con-

tracting company stated that it is in the final stages of completing the installation and operation of cameras at the last ten sites. At the start of the contract, it had submitted proposals and alternative solutions for the proposed systems,

with the aim of improving the efficiency and quality of the security infrastruc-

ture at the ministry's sites. It outlined several of these proposals, including the

installation of American-made camera systems that adhere to the requirements

accessories sourced from globally recognized providers approved by the coun-

The company also recommended using infrastructure systems, cables, and

In its letter to Minister Al-Tabtabaei, the company requested a 60-day exten-

Numbers out for Article 8 inquiries

and restrictions set by the National Defense Authorization Act (NDÂA).

The project, which covers 150 schools and educational sites, is now more

various schools and affiliated entities, reports Al-Jarida daily.

sion to complete the installation at the remaining ten sites.

Ethiopian move revitalizes deal to export domestic help

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Ethiopia recently informed Kuwait of its full readiness to implement the domestic workers agreement and work on removing any obstacles hindering its execution. This includes initiating the labor export process from Addis Ababa, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting informed sources.

Bassam Al-Shammari, a specialist in domestic workers' affairs, explained that the Ethiopian authorities confirmed to Kuwait that the issue of determining monthly wages for domestic workers and the recruitment commission, which were the long-standing points of contention between the two sides, will now be determined based on the prevailing market rates.

The relevant authorities in Addis Ababa have yet to make a final decision on the wages and commission costs.

Al-Shammari emphasized that this important move by the Ethiopian side has revitalized the

He urged the relevant government agencies to take advantage of the initiative from Addis Ababa and work diligently to remove any obstacles that prevent the commencement of the recruitment process for Ethiopian domestic workers, and to reconcile any existing disputes.

Kuwait to deport two Arab expat brothers involved in violent fight

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: A violent altercation between two brothers, who are Arabs, took place in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, reports Al-Anba daily.

Following the incident, the brothers were arrested and referred to the concerned authority for the processing of their deportation.

According to a security source, an Arab expatriate filed a report against his brother who allegedly assaulted him. When patrol officers arrived at the scene, they detained the two men who are currently in police custody and will be deported soon.

Asian drug addicts nabbed: Ahmadi Governorate emergency patrols arrested an Asian, born in 1998, after finding methamphetamine in his possession during a recent crackdown in Mangaf, reports Al-Anba daily.

A security source stated that the emergency patrols got suspicious of the Asian while they were on duty in the governorate. They asked the Asian to stop and they immediately noticed the latter appeared confused. They asked the suspect to present his identification card, then a small pack of heroin fell from his bag while he was getting his card. Further search revealed another bag containing methamphetamine along with drug paraphernalia. The source added that the Asian requested for his release, but his plea was denied. He was referred, along with the seized items, to the Drugs Control General Department at the Interior Ministry. The necessary measures are being taken for his deportation.

In another incident, Farwaniya Governorate security personnel arrested an Asian after discovering he was in possession of narcotic pills for personal consumption.

A security source disclosed that patrol officers spotted the suspect walking in the governorate. When they signaled for him to stop, he tried to flee but was quickly apprehended. He was found to be carrying narcotics and has been referred to the Drugs Control General Department.

Private sector role eyed in providing homes - expert

By Mohammad Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Deputy Director General for Investment and Private Sector Projects at the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) Eng. Anwar Al-Hulaila has unveiled the plan to involve the private sector in providing housing units for Kuwaiti families in three residential cities --

Khairan, Sabriya and Nawaf Al-Ahmad. In a statement to Al-Akhbar TV, Al-Hulaila pointed out that empowering the private sector will contribute to the expansion of production capacity and the rapid completion of housing projects in residential cities in the future.

On the other hand, sources confirmed to the newspaper that previous oversight reports revealed concerns about the inability to provide housing care due to the annual accumulation of housing grant

applications; and the inflated costs of establishing new residential cities due to huge expenses and low

internal revenues. According to the sources, the reports stressed the need to allow the involvement of the private sector in providing housing care within an appropriate timeframe in order to trim down the waiting period for housing grant applicants.



KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Article 8 Kuwaiti Citizenship Affairs Office has announced the allocation of the numbers 97293232 and 97283232 for communication via WhatsApp to serve those who wish to submit inquiries related to Article 8 of the Nationality Law, reports Al-

try's important government sectors.

Jarida daily. It revealed that the working hours are from Sunday to Thursday, from 8:00 am to

KLA statistics: Statistics issued by the Kuwait Lawyers Association regarding its quarterly activities revealed that it organized around 615 events and activities in the first quarter of 2025, reports Al-Anba daily.

President of the association Attorney Adnan Abul confirmed that the total number of events and activities held from the beginning of the year until the end of March reached 615 or around seven per day.

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A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

Changing global scenario food for thought ... rethink policies

"THE current US administration appears to be seeking a global recession, with President Donald Trump imposing high tariffs that have led to the collapse of several European and Asian stock markets. This was the first consequence of such a move, which officials in most countries described as a severe blow to the global economy," Kuwaiti writer Salem Al-Wawan wrote for Al-Seyassah daily.

"It is important to note that 18 Arab countries, including Kuwait, will be affected by these tariffs, at a time the global economy has been suffering from an ongoing crisis since 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The global economy has not recovered as



Salem Al-Wawan

desired. "Therefore, the statements of the US Secretary of Commerce against Kuwait were not surprising. Despite the clarifications provided by Kuwaiti Ambassador to Washington Sheikha Zain Al-Sabah to Secretary Howard Lutnick, this did not help remove Kuwait from the new list announced by Trump regarding countries included in the punitive trade campaign, as most European, Chinese and Asian officials have announced.

"The Trump administration appears to be abandoning its allies, particularly Western ones, after threatening to change its strategy by joining NATO, which has fought several wars around the world and served as the foundation, while the United States reaped the ben-

"After this decision, the global situation has become more sensitive than before; hence, the need for everyone in the Arab world in general, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries in particular, to review their foreign policies, draw closer to Arab countries and strive to de-escalate tensions between them. This will enable them to deal with emerging changes, which will undoubtedly have negative repercussions on their economies and could alter the situation in the region in terms of development to a different and more severe form than it has witnessed in the past.

"It is imperative to prepare for the upcoming US President's tour of several Gulf countries. To date, Trump has not announced that Kuwait will be included in this tour. Were the statements of the US Secretary of Commerce a negative signal regarding a particular position? This has prompted some to wonder: Why was Kuwait excluded from the

"We must be optimistic and have good intentions toward the United States in spite our awareness that President Trump, who only makes decisions that exude self-interest, possesses tools with which to irritate those who oppose him. However, despite Lutnick's statements. US-Kuwaiti relations are so strong that any statement reflecting lack of awareness of the strength of these relations can be overlooked.

"However, this is not the place for us to delve into this now. What matters is that the tariffs are not merely a declaration for American domestic consumption. They are rather strategic steps at the heart of Trump's project, which he has been promoting since the first day he entered the White House for a third presidential term. Since his election, he has not offered any carrots, instead he threatened with sticks. This will undoubtedly be met with negative reactions, which could threaten global stability, or at the very least, bring about a recession that everyone knows could pave the way for war, perhaps, the third world war.

"Therefore, countries in the region must agree on a specific agenda that preserves the stability of the region as a whole, and on which they can meet the American president. There must be frankness about what benefits our countries and promotes development in the region. This has become the primary demand, as a result of decades of wars and crises that the region has witnessed, and for which, it has paid a high price.

"Trump's tour requires shrewdness in approaching the topics he touches on, even though its themes were revealed during the visit of the Ukrainian president to the White House.'

Also:

"Why do we borrow... And how will we repay? These are the two most important questions regarding Public Debt Decree-Law No. 60/2025 and they are the two major challenges. Without a clear government vision and the required development program, there is fear that this law will plunge us into what is known as the 'debt trap' -- a trap many developing countries find themselves in and have been unable to escape. This trap involves borrowing and then borrowing again to repay the debt," Adel Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi wrote for

Al-Seyassah daily. "The six objectives set forth in the aforementioned law are important, but the more important questions are: Do we have a clear vision for our national economy? Do we have the ability to transform borrowing into a means to change our economy from rentier to a productive one, helping us to

avoid the debt trap?
"The KD30 billion limit on borrowing set by the law is a reasonable percentage of GDP. However, it should not be compared to the high debt ratios of countries such as Japan, the United States of America and China. This comparison is meaningless, as such economies are productive and have tax

systems that enable them to manage and repay public debt. This is in contrast to our oil-dependent economy, whose revenues are allocated to finance government spending, most of which are on subsidies and salaries, with capital expenditure accounting for a small percentage. Will this situation lead to the use of debt to address the budget deficit?

"I do not object to the government having a legal mandate to borrow, as this is important, especially for credit rating agencies and investors. However, I fear that borrowing will turn into financing current spending, especially given the lack of clarity on an integrated development plan for our national econ-

omy.

"In my opinion, the six objectives justifying the law may be difficult to achieve, given that public finances and the economy are suffering from structural imbalances requiring reform, with public debt being one of the tools for this reform. What I mentioned is nothing but a point of view about Kuwait, and a sincere desire to enable it to attain its prestigious economic position, iust as it has attained a great international position. Allah is the Grantor of suc-

"The Cabinet will hold its regular weekly session after the Eid holidays, during which the ministers will certainly discuss how and where they spent the holidays – alone, with their families or with friends, or the travel quarter. Travel has a quarter and diwaniya gatherings have a quarter," Hassan Ali Karam wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"Experts give advice for free to others who have little or no experience in travel and friends. As for me, I say this: There are travel companions who you would repent tenfold if you traveled with them again, and there are friends you wish you could spend all your trav-

"Scholars and travel experts advise against traveling with sleepless nights, misers and envious people. I believe these people are right and their description of the travel quarter is spot on. It has been said that you only know your friend through travel. As for me, I have forgotten all travel friends except my suitcase, which is my only friend and travel companion. I have made the whole world my friend.



free person like himself. So, make the whole world your friend and your heart will be filled with love for others. Try it and you will discover that you are a different person, born again. Allah created us, not with enmity. but

as a title for all the

inhabitants of the Earth. "Here in Kuwait, travel has never been strange to us. This blessed land was brought together from the dispersed parts of the Earth, in the name of Allah and with His blessing. Travel was one of the means of grace that fate willed to bring together. Our forefathers sailed the seas and risked their lives for selfrealization and to declare that Kuwait was born to be a people and a nation,

builders of good for all of humanity. "I do not know if a report on the number of people leaving or arriving in the country will be on the agenda for the first session after the Eid holiday, but I am certain that the number of those leaving exceeds the number of those arriving dozens of times. I am concerned with the citizens, for we excuse our expatriate brothers if they seize the opportunity to travel to their countries during Eid to spend the holiday with their families and friends.

"But what motivates citizens to leave their homeland as if they were detained in a vast prison? Has the Council of Ministers asked why people flee the country on vacations and holidays, as if they were promised major prizes? You ask one of them, and the only response from travelers is: There is nothing in the country to enjoy. No plays, no movies,

"Don't you see how millions, even billions, are siphoned from citizens' pockets and accounts in just three, four or a week of travel? The Minister of Finance imposed taxes on certain categories of goods, at a time citizens are seeking a salary or pension raise.

"The government has laid down an optimistic plan to attract 100,000 tourists to Kuwait per year, which is an astronomical number. This is merely an assumption based on fanciful notions. Why would a tourist visit Kuwait? There are no recreational facilities, entertainment or other means of entertainment. Do tourism experts think that visitors to Kuwait are advocates of early bedtime, for example?

"Tourism is no longer entertainment, amusement or the devil's flute. The Kuwaiti tourism scene remains, and may remain for years to come, empty; even barren of any means of attracting tourists. Our artists have taken their instruments to entertain audiences in sisterly countries, while Kuwaiti audiences are forced to travel there to enjoy Kuwaiti theatrical performances, made in Kuwait. Why have you forced our artists to prefer exile to their homeland? I say, and my matter is in Allah's hands. We will continue to drain the millions, even billions, that we carry in our accounts, pockets and bags just for fun; while in Kuwait, joy remains forbidden, and

gloom is the slogan of the nation." — Compiled by Mahmoud Attiveh



A camping tent is abandoned by the owner in a dilapidated condition.

Owners charged for removing spring camps

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Municipality confirmed that inspection teams from the Public Hygiene and Road Occupation Department in Jahra Governorate will continue their efforts to dismantle non-compliant spring camps once the official camping season con-

In a press release, the Municipality

explained that the inspection teams issued 130 violation notices (warning stickers) to camps found to be operating beyond the specified period . Additionally, 37 illegal camps were removed in the northern region. The Municipality emphasized that camp owners who failed to dismantle their camps and clean up the areas after the

season will be responsible for the removal costs.

The Public Relations Department of Kuwait Municipality praised the licensed camp owners who voluntarily dismantled their camps . The department commended their cooperation and commitment to following the laws and regulations.

Police arrest 87 iuveniles driving

By Munif Nayef

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agen-

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry continued its traffic campaigns in various governorates last week

These campaigns resulted in the issuance of 54,849 violation citations; impounding of 26 vehicles; referral of 56 individuals to traffic police stations for committing serious violations; and referral of 87 juveniles to the Juvenile Prosecution for driving without a license.

The department's weekly statistics indicated that patrols impounded 52 vehicles wanted by law for being used in committing crimes; in addition to the arrest of 42 individuals wanted by law and nine individuals found to be in an abnormal condition.

The statistics also revealed that 1,156 traffic incidents were recorded - including 231 accidents which resulted in injuries. Patrols responded to these traffic incidents promptly.

Man acquitted of drug smuggling

Suspects absolved in drugs possession

By Jaber Al-Hamoud

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Court of Cassation upheld the ruling issued by the Court of Appeals, which overturned the verdict of the First Instance Court that sentenced a citizen to 10 years in prison with hard labor for smuggling

The highest court then acquitted the citizen of bringing hashish through air cargo for personal consumption and trafficking.

Attorney An'am Haidar, the defendant's law-

yer, asserted that investigations conducted by the Criminal Investigations Department in the Interior Ministry were invalid due to lack of seriousness. She pointed out the suspicions that surrounded such measures, indicating the evidence presented by her client that he committed the crimes attributed to him by the Public Prosecution was not enough to satisfy the court. The court stated in its ruling that the testimony

of the customs inspector -- the primary witness in the prosecution's investigations, stated that when he inspected the airborne parcel, he found a quantity of dried plants and two pieces that he suspected were narcotics. He informed his superior and handed over the parcel. The court concluded that this evidence is not

enough to convict the defendant, as it could not be used as evidence against him.

Drug carriers absolved: The Criminal Court acquitted some individuals of possessing psychotropic substances for personal consumption and trafficking. According to the case files, the incident officer received information that one of the defendants kept narcotics and psychotropic substances in his home and car for the purpose of trafficking and personal consumption. When this defendant was arrested, the incident

officer found narcotics and psychotropic substances in his possession. During questioning, the defendant admitted to obtaining drugs from another defendant who, in turn, confessed to getting the drugs from his girlfriend.

Attorney Jassim Bandar represented one of the defendants in court; arguing that the arrest and search procedures were invalid; hence, all the subsequent procedures were unacceptable as

Client goes haywire, stabs delivery boy multiple times

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: An unidentified individual stabbed a delivery worker last night several times in an attempt to murder him, reports Al-Jarida daily. According to security sources, the worker was transferred to Farwaniya Hospital in a critical condition.

As soon as securitymen received information about the incident, they rushed to Farwaniya Hospital and spoke with the victim. The delivery worker explained that he went to the customer to deliver a meal. Upon his arrival, the suspect, after receiving the meal, began stabbing him several times, the reason for which is unknown. The suspect then fled the scene, leaving him bleeding in

Securitymen managed to obtain the customer's personal information registered with the restaurant, and a case of attempted murder and robbery was filed. Necessary measures are being taken to apprehend the suspect and refer him to the Public Prosecution.

'Phones for my inmate son': Female inspectors from the Prison Security Department of the General Administration of Correctional Institutions foiled an attempt by an elderly woman to smuggle two mobile phones and two

Prison, reports Al-Jarida daily. According to security sources, the female inspectors from the Women's Inspection Section grew suspicious of the elderly woman when she approached the inspection area to visit her son and claimed that she was unable to stand during the inspection.

chargers during a visit to her son at the Central

However, the inspectors insisted on conducting a thorough search, which led to the discovery of two mobile phones and two chargers in her possession. The elderly woman was referred to the investigative authorities.

Gun found on citizen: A citizen was referred to the Weapons Investigations General Department for the possession of an unlicensed firearm, reports Al-Anba daily.

The citizen will later be referred to the Drugs Control General Department to determine the source of the drugs that caused him to lose consciousness and then fight with his family A security source revealed an elderly wom-

an reported that her son (30 years old) was in an abnormal condition and was carrying a firearm (a single gun). He left the house driving a Japan-made vehicle.

A case was registered and investigations are



A car parked under a shed erupts in fire.

Car erupts in fire

Kuwaiti trio rescued as boat sinks near beach

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Marine rescue firefighters successfully saved three citizens after their boat sank near the beach. The individuals were promptly transferred to the hospital for precautionary care, and their condition is reported to be stable, reports Al-Anba

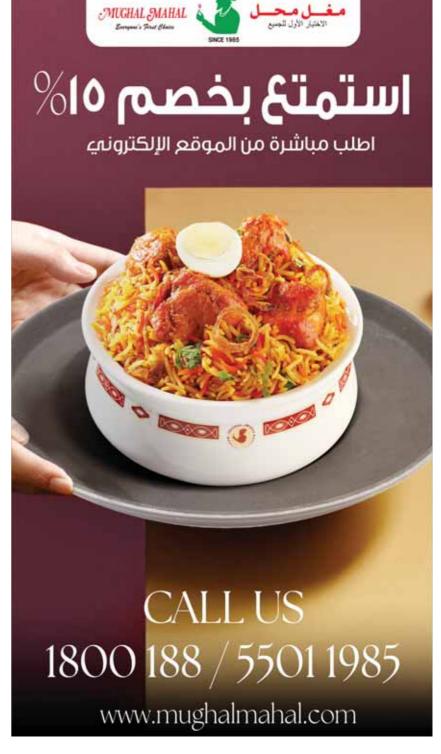
A security source revealed that a report was received yesterday from a citizen about the boat sinking at sea. Marine rescue teams immediately responded to the scene, where they located the three individuals clinging to the partially submerged boat.

The cause of the boat's sinking remains unclear, and the citizens were taken to the hospital for further

In an unrelated incident, a run-over accident occurred on one of the roads in Hawalli Governorate. The victim was transported to Mubarak Hospital, and the driver responsible for the incident has been de-

Additionally, another run-over incident was reported near a well-known mall in Jahra, where a person was injured. Traffic patrols quickly responded to the scene. According to a security source, the victim had been transported by a passerby to the hospital before the ambulance arrived.

And, a vehicle caught fire near a building in the Al-Amair area of Jahra the day before yesterday. Firefighters responded quickly and successfully put out the flames. Fortunately, there were no reported in-



MoH announces tender for 200 ambulances, hospital upgrades

Plan boosts emergency services

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Ministry of Health has announced its plan to float a tender for the supply of 200 new ambulances in fiscal 2025/2026 in order to develop the medical emergency fleet.

The ministry also published an announcement in the Official Gazette (Kuwait Al-Youm) about several tenders for the development of electronic systems in hospitals, provision of medical services, and expansion of medical facilities.

According to the ministry, these tenders are as

- Updating the electronic records system at Jaber Hospital, Farwaniya Hospital, Jahra Hospital, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital, and Kuwait Cancer
- Provision of specialists to develop and support the health and administrative systems;
- Provision of technical support services for servers and networks of the Information Systems Department and the main operations room at the ministry;
- Construction, completion and maintenance of various primary healthcare centers, including a specialized dental center in Adan, a health center in Abdullah Al-Mubarak (Block Six), a center in Sabah Al-Salem North (Block 10), a health center in Saad Al-Abdullah (Block Five), and the

Manara Center for Mental Health;

- Maintenance, construction and minor expansion of nine buildings, hospitals and centers;
- Replacement of central water-cooled chillers and their accessories at the post office station in
- Supply and installation of emergency generators and their accessories for various locations in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Health District;
- Completion of the kitchen building at Farwani-
- Increase the cost of the new Amiri Hospital switchboard and connection of its annex buildings to a unified central communications system;
- Supply, installation, operation and maintenance of the nurses' call system at Jaber Hospital; ■ 10 tenders for the purchase of medicines and medical supplies.

Demand spans all levels

PAM reports 32,020 new job seeker registrations

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The number of job seekers, who registered with the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) over the past six months, reached 32,020 - including 26 doctorate degree holders and 18,141 university graduates.

According to the statistics obtained by the newspaper; the number of master's degree holders who registered at the authority totaled 628; along with 6,758 diploma holders; 1,755 high school graduates with two or more years experience; 223 with oneyear high school; 712 with a primary school certificate; 408 high school graduates with one year experience; 355 with a two-year intermediate certificate; 628 who hold an intermediate certificate with three or more years experience; 497 who hold a secondary school certificate with at least one year experience; 865 with a secondary school certificate; and 87 with vocational training and parallel education.

New reservoirs, energy infrastructure on agenda

Ahmadi Committee to discuss major development proposals

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Ahmadi Governorate Committee at the Municipal Council, chaired by Nassar Al-Azmi, will hold its fifth meeting for the third legislative round on Wednesday.

The committee will discuss the following items in its agenda:

- Proposal of member Fahad Al-Khanin on the relocation of the street adjacent to the plots between Sector 62-Block One) and Block One park in Abu Halifa;
- Request of the Ministry of Public Works to cancel the allocation of reservoirs in South Sabah, which were previously allocated pursuant to a decision issued by the council;
- Request of the same ministry to al-

locate an alternative site in the northern part of the cancelled reservoir sites measuring 9,600 square meters, including three reservoirs and an above-ground power supply transformer (UDS). This will be deducted from the total area of the site allocated as afforestation area for the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR);

- Request of the same ministry to allocate a 440-meter-long, 700-meterdiameter pipeline to feed the reservoir in South Sabahiya;
- Request of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to allocate overhead lines with a length of 700 meters and a width of 200 meters to connect the main transformer station in Wafra (Z2) to the overhead lines.

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Ministry allocates KD4 mln for project

CAPT opens bids for Hawally water complex construction

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) has opened bidding envelopes for the construction of Hawally Water Distribution Complex and three related works.

The agency will submit the bids to the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy for the specialized committee to review them and conduct a technical study in this regard.

The study will be referred to the agency for the issuance of a decision on awarding the project; as well as to the State Audit Bureau (SAB) in preparation for signing the contract with the winning company and initiating the implementation procedures.

Sources revealed that the ministry has allocated about KD4 million in its annual budget for the construction of the complex.

They affirmed the importance of this project; through which the ministry will increase the storage capacity of fresh water by 66 million gallons per day, the pumping rate to 54.5 million gallons per day and the pumping of brackish water to 23.5 gallons per day.

They asserted that the complex is a vital facility, requiring continuous development to better serve the citizens and expatriates in the densely populated governorate.

In a related development, sources stated that the ministry has asked CAPT to award the tender for the construction of a freshwater filling station and related works in Dhahr to the company with the lowest bid -- KD3.469 million.

Sources indicated that CAPT authorized the ministry to prepare a valuation budget based on the lowest bid and then present its recommendation.

Sources explained that through the construction of the station, the ministry will supply fresh water to those residing in the area; particularly those in remote, border and agricultural parts.

Sources added the station is considered a strategic alternative in the event of an emergency, confirming it will also replace the water filling station in Mangaf that causes inconvenience to those residing in the area due to the influx of tankers.

Undersecretary oversees start of project

Shadadiya access road set in motion

By Mohammed Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works Eid Al-Rashidi supervised the launch of the construction project for the road connecting the Shadadiya Industrial Area to the Seventh Ring Road.

The project is part of ongoing ef forts to enhance infrastructure, support economic development in Kuwait, and improve transportation and logistics services. It will enhance industrial and commercial activity in the area, improve road networks, and enhance the efficiency of public services, all in line with the highest technical and environmental standards.

MEW opens applications for electricity connections in Al-Mutlaa's N5 suburb

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy announced the start of receiving applications for electricity connections to N5 suburb of Al-Mutlaa Residential City in parts of Block 1 and Block 2, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The ministry explained that there are

338 Plots in Block 1 and 128 Plots in Block 2. The ministry will now start receiving applications for electricity connections to a total of 466 Plots in these two blocks. Electricity was activated in parts of Block 1 and Block 2 in N5 suburb with the cooperation of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW).

Ministry eyes full digital integration

MoSA disburses more than KD18m in March aid for over 40,000 individuals

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Director of the Family Welfare Department at the Ministry of Social Affairs Hanan Al-Ghareeb revealed that the total social assistance for March amounted to KWD 18,157,847, and 40,713 individuals, reports Al-Anba daily.

Al-Ghareeb explained that the assistance is distributed among 21 segments of society, including those facing difficult circumstances, students studying abroad, housewives, the elderly, families with students, orphans, widows, divorcees, the sick, the financially weak, unmarried women, families of prisoners, recently released prisoners, families of recently released prisoners, foster parents, and Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis. The ministry also provides assistance to orphans, children of divorced parents, and those in the custody of their grandmoth-

Al-Ghareeb went on to explain that there is a debt collection committee in place, and the ministry has successfully recovered more than 50 percent of the debts accumulated in previous years. Also, a dedicated team has been reviewing the files of individuals whose citizenship has been revoked.

She revealed that the Ministry of Health has reached out to the Ministry of Social Affairs to establish an automated link for reviewing patient files.

Al-Ghareeb stressed that work is underway to establish links with both Kuwait University and the Ministry of Justice, indicating that once these links are completed, the ministry will have successfully connected with all relevant entities involved in social assistance cases.

4-step plan outlined for seamless rollout

Local firm proposes recycling initiative to schools with incentives for students

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: In an effort to promote environmental awareness, a local company has proposed to the Ministry of Education the installation of recycling machines in schools, reports Al-Rai daily.

The company explained that the initiative includes a points-based incentive program, where students will earn points for every recyclable item they deposit. These points can be redeemed for discounts at local stores and restaurants through partnerships established as part of the initiative.

In a letter addressed to the Minister of Education Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, the company requested support to implement the initiative, and help create a more sustainable future for students and schools.

The company outlined a four-phase implementation plan:

- Planning and preparation: The first

phase will focus on identifying schools for the pilot program, securing funding and partnerships, and developing educational

- Installation and training: The second

phase will involve installing the recycling machines in selected schools and training both staff and students on their use. - Launch and promotion: The third phase

involves launching the program and promoting the initiative through social media platforms and school newsletters. Monitoring and evaluation: The fourth

phase will focus on monitoring usage, collecting data on recycling rates, evaluating the program's impact, and making any necessary adjustments.

The company clarified that the recycling program will include the collection of materials such as plastic bottles and cans.

Drug user arrested along Faiha Road

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The emergency patrols at the Capital Police Station arrested a drug user in possession of 49 Lyrica pills, reports Al-Anba daily.

During investigations, he confessed to trafficking in drugs; and that he had an appointment with a 'customer'. He was immediately referred to the competent authorities.

The emergency patrols got suspicious of a vehicle on Faiha Road and the apparent confusion on the demeanor of the driver. It was noted that he was in an abnormal condition as a result of drug consumption. Upon inspection of the vehicle, the officers found the psychotropic pills.

It is worth mentioning that the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) in the Interior Ministry conducted a study on the drugs Pregabalin and Gabapentin, known by the trade names Lyrica and Neurontin, and confirmed the dangers of the two drugs and their potential misuse.

Accordingly, a meeting was held at the Public Prosecution Office, with officials from the Ministry of Health, DCGD and Criminal Evidence General Department in attendance. They discussed the dangers of the two drugs, given their use as alternatives to narcotics. A recommendation was made to criminalize the consumption of these drugs and include them in the list of psychotropic substances. The Ministry of Health then issued Minis-

terial Resolution No. 47/2021 to include the two substances in Schedule Four attached to Law No. 48/1987 on combating psychotropic substances and regulating their use and trade. This resolution shall be effective upon its publication in the Official Gazette (Kuwait Al-Youm). Following the issuance of the decision, it

is now necessary for anyone who possesses the two substances without a prescription to be referred to the Narcotics Prosecution Office to take legal action against them. The penalty for possession of these substances is imprisonment of up to five years, while the penalty for trafficking is up to 10 years.

Innovation and digital transformation set to dominate discussions

Abdullah Al-Salem University to host First Higher Education summit

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Chairperson of the Founding Board of Directors of Abdullah Al-Salem University Dr. Moudi Al-Hamoud said the First Higher Education in the Age of Innovation Summit will be held on April 16-17, under the patronage of Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal.

The summit will feature a select group of education leaders, decision-makers, and technology experts and researchers in and outside Kuwait. It will be held at the Sheikh Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Theater in the campus in Shuwaikh.

Al-Hamoud stated the summit stems from the commitment of the university to support innovation and excellence in higher education, in line with Kuwait Vision 2025

She affirmed the summit is scheduled at a strategic time; hence, the need for everyone to "reshape the concepts of higher education, and respond intelligently and flexibly to the rapid changes in the digital environment."

She said the summit is a national platform for unifying visions and guiding future policies toward an innovative and effective educational model based on artificial intelligence, data analysis and effective digi-

tal governance.

She added the summit will tackle several important topics; such as the digital transformation of universities, technology-enabled adaptive curricula, cybersecurity, data privacy, smart campuses, virtual and augmented reality in education, mechanisms for funding scientific research, and integration between educational institutions and productive sectors.

She disclosed the summit will be held simultaneously with an innovation and technology exhibition, through which the Kuwaiti University students will showcase their outstanding projects. "This reflects the

depth of young national talent and enhances their role in shaping Kuwait's digital economy," she asserted.

Abdullah Al-Salem University extended its sincere appreciation and gratitude to all supporting entities; and called on the universities, educational institutions, relevant government institutions and research centers to actively participate in this summit and contribute to laying the future foundations for an advanced national educational vision that integrates knowledge and technology, serves the country's sustainable development goals, and builds a creative human capital capable of competing regionally and globally.

1,443 successful reconciliations recorded in 2024

Poor communication and lack of respect among major causes of divorce in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Head of the Family Dispute Experts Section at the Family Consultation Department of the Ministry of Justice Mashael Al-Mishaal says there are ten main causes of divorce, with poor communication between spouses being the leading factor, reports Al-Anba daily.

In an interview, Al-Mishaal revealed that the department successfully prevented several divorces over the years, with 1,443 reconciliation cases recorded in 2024 alone.

She affirmed the importance of not using children as tools for pressure or revenge between the spouses.

Al-Mishaal said the department's primary goal is to repair relationships to maintain Kuwaiti families and prevent divorce from the early stages.

She explained that poor communication between spouses is one of the top causes of divorce. While it has decreased recently, it still remains a leading factor. Besides poor communication between spouses, other main causes of divorce in Kuwait include lack of respect, infidelity, and issues such as social media addiction and substance abuse. For expatriates, "divorce for harm" is common, where one spouse leaves the country to go to their home country, which often leads to divorce.

Regarding concerns over dramatic portrayals of Kuwait as a society filled with divorced individuals, Al-Mishaal described them as an inaccurate and exaggerated depiction.

She highlighted that there is significant awareness in Kuwaiti society, with many making efforts to resolve issues before they escalate.

Al-Mishaal elaborated on the department's efforts in 2024 to help reconcile couples and prevent

She explained that the main goal is to preserve the family unit and deal with issues at the earliest stages to prevent divorce. Before filing for divorce, couples are required to consult with the department's Family Dispute Resolution Section, where efforts are made to mediate and

resolve the matter amicably. If reconciliation attempts fail, the judge refers the case to the Family Dispute Experts Section for arbitration, where both parties receive advice and guidance to resolve their differences.

The department also offers a program called "Wafa" for couples-to-be, through which awareness and guidance on marital responsibilities and ways to prevent issues during married life are provided.

Al-Mishaal criticized the way divorce rates are often portrayed in an exaggerated manner in Kuwaiti dramas by depicting Kuwaiti society as one that is filled with divorced individuals.

She emphasized that Kuwait has a high level of awareness regarding family issues, with many people seeking the department's services before their problems escalate.

Al-Mishaal also highlighted the importance of family education, particularly through the "Wafa" program, which prepares couples for marriage and helps reduce the likelihood of divorce. The program provides future spouses with a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities within marriage.

She explained that for those who have already

divorced, the department offers post-divorce counseling to help individuals cope with emotional challenges and maintain their well-being. The Family Reconciliation Center provides these services, including consultations for children to ensure they receive the necessary support after a divorce.

In conclusion, Al-Mishaal emphasized that children thrive best when raised in a stable family environment, with both parents actively involved.

She advised that even after divorce, parents should maintain a respectful relationship for the sake of their children's emotional well-being.

It is worth highlighting that the Family Dispute Experts Section at the Ministry of Justice continues to play a crucial role in resolving family issues and promoting a healthier, more stable family environment in Kuwait.

MoE faces pressure over delayed promotions by selection decision

Eligible employees await outcome

By Abdulrahman Al-Shammari

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The Ministry of Education employees, who are eligible for promotion by selection this year, are waiting for the ministry to approve the promotion decision; which was supposed to be issued before March 31.

This decision should be made within the last quarter of the fiscal year to prevent repeating the mistake made two years ago when the ministry delayed approving the promotion of more than 4,000 eligible employees. This exposed the ministry to regulatory observations and the dilemma of approving such decisions at the end of the fiscal year.

According to educational sources, the promotion by selection for 2025 is in accordance with the Civil Service Law. Article 24 of the law states that "an employee may be promoted by selection through the decision of the Minister, based on the proposal of the Personnel Affairs Committee."

The Personnel Affairs Control Unit in the Promotions and Allowances Section at the Human Resources Department is responsible for preparing the lists of employee eligible for promotion by seniority or selection.

Promotions must be implemented upon approval and notification of the relevant authorities, in accordance with the deadlines specified in the applicable rules and regulations.

In this context, sources questioned the readiness of the lists of 2025 promotion by selection, which requires an employee to obtain an 'excellent' rating in the job performance evaluations for 2023 and 2024. Sources stressed the need for the Administrative Affairs and Administrative Development Sector to closely monitor the storage of competency evaluations for employees in all work centers before March 31, 2025 to ensure protection of the rights of the employees.

Sources also wondered who will bear the responsibility for any delay in storing competency evaluations or issuing promotion decisions, especially if this results in the employee losing his right to promotion once the promotion decision is not issued before March 31.

Sources pointed out that Article 24 of the Civil Service Law states the promotion may not be retroactive to the date of the issuance of the promotion decision. "Therefore, a promotion by selection must not take effect prior to the date of issuance," sources explained.

Sources asked for clarification about the rumor on reserving numbers for ministerial decisions issued regarding promotion by selection, suggesting that these decisions were dated prior to their approval.

"The legal basis for this procedure remains unclear, considering that reserving numbers for decisions issued later constitutes a change in the actual date of issuance of the decisions.

Presumably, the decision number and date should be the same as the date of issuance," sources added.

Sources disclosed that promotion by selection includes all programs and job grades for employees in the ministry and its affiliated entities, who are eligible as at March 31, in accordance with the organizing systems and regulations and decisions of the Civil Service Commission (CSC); as the promotions include employees in public positions from the first to seventh grade, in addition to grades A and B and support jobs.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait stocks

They also highlighted a wave of sell-offs that affected many of the traded stocks.

According to the economic expert Mohammad Ramadan, Trump's move to impose tariffs exceeded global market expectations, and resulted in a negative reaction in most stock markets, including those in the region.

He explained that the response from affected countries and their financial markets remains uncertain. The future is unclear, as no one knows whether there will be retaliatory tariffs or negotiations among groups, which has in turn created an even more ambiguous situation. This uncertainty has led investors to adopt a more cautious approach and withdraw part of their funds from the market.

Investors are highly fearful because the decision was sudden and unexpected, and such surprises often trigger market declines.

Ramadan said, "It is still unclear what the consequences or actions from investors will be".

He believes that while there may be direct negative consequences in the short term, many issues can be dealt with in the medium term.

Ramadan said, "Markets are facing losses, especially due to the absence of positive indicators. As a result, we may see further declines or fluctuations until the situation becomes clearer to investors."

Meanwhile, Head of the Investment Funds and Portfolios Department at National Investments Company Mohammad Al-Hamad indicated that most financial markets experienced turbulence following the tariff decision, which caused widespread panic.

He explained that, while a ten percent tariff on Kuwait may not directly affect companies with substantial dealings in the U.S. markets, the psychological impact on the market has been significant, as it triggered panic.

The first quarter's performance had been positive and exceptional for several reasons, including developments surrounding mortgage issues, public debt, Gulf Bank's acquisition, mergers, and more. These developments have had a direct effect on investor sentiment.

Trump's presidency has been marked by "high volatility." However, Al-Hamad believes that if the situation stabilizes in the second quarter, particularly with the upcoming annual general meetings of companies, the market may experience greater stability and more positive developments.

Furthermore, a board member at Surooh Holding Company Sulaiman Al-Waqyan told KUNA that President Trump's message was that it is an "economic war" between major coun-

tries, which has had a negative impact on global stock markets, including the U.S. stock market, which is expected to drop by 25 to 30 percent.

Al-Waqyan said the Kuwaiti stock market will be moderately affected once the psychological shock from the significant declines in the general indices has been absorbed.

He indicated that most of the listed Kuwaiti companies are domestically focused, meaning the market will eventually return to normal.

Al-Waqyan expects the market to gradually regain its technical path once the negative effects of the downturn are absorbed. This will depend on any positive developments related to the tariff issue concerning Kuwait.

In addition, Head of Development

at Rasameel Investment Company Hamad Al-Musaad told KUNA that the move was harsher than expected by the markets, as it led to a sharp decline in U.S. futures contracts by nearly two percent immediately after the announcement and by nearly three percent the following morning. European markets also saw a decline of about two percent.

Al-Musaad predicts that the tariffs will generate revenues between \$500 billion to \$600 billion, which could help reduce the U.S. budget deficit and potentially lead to tax cuts.

He ruled out the possibility of an economic recession, as economic indicators show gradual improvement in both the U.S. and the European Union, with credit markets remaining stable. Therefore, despite short-term market fluctuations, the outlook remains positive.

It is worth mentioning that last Wednesday, President Trump imposed tariffs on U.S. imports from all countries worldwide based on the principle of "reciprocity," starting at a minimum rate of ten percent. This marks the most severe escalation in U.S. tariffs in two centuries.

The 10% tariff on all U.S. imports took effect on Saturday, with higher tariffs set to be imposed next Wednesday.

Kuwait-UAE

At the end of the meeting, both sides stressed the keenness of empowering the Gulf youth and supporting their ambitions, with both sides exchanging souvenirs to commemorate the meeting.

Kuwait leads

Furthermore, Kuwait reaffirmed its full support for the renewal of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food mandate, noting that this mandate has become crucial due to an increase in global food insecurity.

Access to food is a vital issue that

affects the right to life, and it is evident in the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly Gaza, where humanitarian aid delivery restrictions have led to catastrophic levels of hunger and suffering, the use of food as a weapon in conflict is a crime that must be addressed, emphasized Kuwait.

Kuwait's new

A security source informed the newspaper that while issuing traffic violation citations last week, the traffic officers apprehended the Residency

Law violators.

The source affirmed all those arrested were referred to the competent authorities to take the necessary measures against them, and then deport

Kuwait pushes

The guidelines stressed the need to display the calories of meals and drinks at the point where consumers select or purchase meals. This should be done in several locations like the checkout counter, electronic menu boards in restaurants, meal menus, drive-through food ordering areas, websites, and smart phone applications.

The guidelines stipulate appropriate ways to make meals low in calories like adopting cooking methods that do not lead to an increase in calories by avoiding or minimizing frying when preparing meals; and using other methods such as baking, grilling or steaming, instead of frying.

Kuwait extends

The government stated in the memorandum that the extension of this period for two additional fiscal years is necessary due to the imminent expiration of the time period specified by the aforementioned law and the ongoing need to complete approved defense projects.

The government affirmed that the extension is intended to allow the relevant authorities to complete military armament and equipment programs in accordance with previously established plans, without exceeding the amount specified in Law No. 3/2016, as there have been no changes to the allocated funding.

The memorandum further affirmed that the Supreme Defense Council continues to exercise its powers under the aforementioned law, including overseeing the allocation of approved funds and supervising the implementation of contracts to ensure the optimal use of financial resources and the achievement of established defense objectives.



During the last half-term break, the upper secondary students from Kuwait National English School in Hawally went with their teachers to Europe to visit Amsterdam, Cologne and ended in Frankfurt, and enjoyed the cold weather. It was an excellent opportunity to discover historical buildings, factories and to be exposed to the culture of other countries. They went to the cheese factory and A'DAM Lookout Swing in Amsterdam. They were lucky to visit the Mercedes Benz

factory in Frankfurt and also the Lindt Chocolate factory in Cologne as well as the famous Cologne Cathedral which is 600 years old. It has been a very successful, enjoyable and extremely well organised trip with different expert guides in the various places. Parents were all extremely happy being able to follow the trip with their children and on their return to see their excitement explaining what they had seen and learnt and the knowledge the students gained.



Georgia lawmakers' sudden exit came as some Senate 16 dead in flooding and tornadoes measures languished in House of Representatives

ATLANTA, April 6, (AP): Here's how a Georgia legislative session is supposed to end:

After a last-minute rush of negotiations, lawmakers jam through final agreements on a few more bills as the clock ticks past midnight.

Legislative staffers crowd into chambers as leaders thank employees against a soundtrack of paper being ripped into pieces.

Finally, the presiding officer recognizes the climactic motion to adjourn "sine die," a Latin phrase that means to leave without a day to return.

Then everyone tosses shredded paper into the air and cheers.

Friday, though, Georgia's state Senate just left.

The motion to adjourn by Republican Senate Majority Leader Steve Gooch of Dahlonega came shortly after 9 pm with none of the usual buildup. There was no thanks to the staff. Senators hadn't even torn up much

Georgia lawmakers can pick up bills in 2026 where they left off Friday, the second year of a two-year session, but they left plenty on the table.

Among items that didn't pass were proposals to force Georgia to leave a multistate election group, a push by Jones to establish more legislative control over rules enacted by state agencies, an effort to ban diversity programs in public schools and colleges and a bill to let people sue local governments for not cooperating with federal immigration officials



US State representatives toss papers in the air at the House of Representatives at the Capitol in Atlanta on Sine Die on April 4, the final day of the legislative session. (AP)

The sudden departure came after it became increasingly clear some Senate measures were languishing in the House and that Senate leaders had lost their appetite to bargain. It was possible to leave early because lawmakers had already agreed on a budget and other highest-priority legislation including tax cuts, a school safety bill, new limits on lawsuits and banning transgender girls and women from participating in women's sports.

The collision was reminiscent of the 2023 legislative session, the first year Burns and Jones led their chambers. Many big issues didn't pass after the chambers got into a standoff over the budget and licensing rules for hospitals. Then, it appeared Jones was trying to force his will on the House, a reversal of the traditional dynamic in Georgia, where the House has often

Ultimately, many issues derailed in 2023 ended up passing in 2024, including loosening hospital permitting requirements, imposing basic protections for renters and creating a voucher program to pay for private school and home-schooling.

As senators cheered their departure Friday, veteran state Rep. Alan Powell was at the microphone in the House proposing changes to a hotly debated bill to regulate automated speed detection cameras in school zones.

Suddenly, there was no reason for the Hartwell Republican to continue, as there were no senators left to agree

Republican House Speaker Jon Burns of Newington and his staff exchanged bewildered glances as House lawmakers murmured.

"It appears that the Senate has checked all their priorities, all their political priorities, and decided to end their night early instead of finishing their work on behalf of the people we represent," Burns told the House. "Of course, they're free to do as they please, but this chamber puts policy over politics."

Many longtime lawmakers were baffled. House Rules Committee Chairman Butch Parrish, a Swainsboro Republican who has served since the 1980s, said senators "broke new ground."

Representatives approved a few more bills that didn't need further Senate action, and then also went home

Jones downplayed any conflict. "What do you mean what happened?" Jones said afterward. "We ended session.

Jones said senators had achieved their goals and he had been bucking for an early adjournment all day.

as storms slash US South, Midwest



A resident is brought to dry land by boat after being rescued from flood waters by emergency responders from the Benton, Conway and Shannon Hills fire departments and the Pulaski County Emergency Management team in Shannon Hills, Ark on Ápril 5. (AP)

DYERSBURG, Tennessee, April 6, (AP): A storm system sweeping over large areas of the US South and Midwest resulted in at least 16 weatherrelated deaths by early Sunday, with overnight tornado and flash flood warnings setting up more severe weather that forecasters say could cause rising waterways for days to come.

Many of the impacted areas already are heavily waterlogged by days of severe storms that spawned deadly tornadoes. New tornado warnings were issued overnight in Alabama and Mississippi, along with flash flood warnings for several counties in Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee.

Saturday included more of the tor-

rential rain and flash flooding that has pounded the central US, rapidly swelling waterways and prompting emergencies from Texas to Ohio.

The 16 reported deaths since the start of the storms included 10 in Tennessee alone.

The National Weather Service said dozens of locations in multiple states were expected to reach what the agencv calls "major flood stage," with extensive flooding of structures, roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure

A 57-year-old man died Friday evening after getting out of a car that washed off a road in West Plains, Mis-

'It's just an administration of grievances'

Angry protesters from NY to Alaska assail Trump, Musk in 'Hands Off!' rallies

WASHINGTON, April 6, (AP): Crowds of people angry about the way President Donald Trump is running the country marched and rallied in scores of American cities Saturday in the biggest day of demonstrations yet by an opposition movement trying to regain its momentum after the shock of the Republi-

So-called Hands Off! demonstrations were organized for more than 1,200 locations in all 50 states by more than 150 groups, including civil rights organizations, labor unions, veterans and elections activists. The rallies appeared peaceful, with no immediate reports of arrests.

Thousands of protesters in cities dotting the nation from Midtown Manhattan to Anchorage, Alaska, including at multiple state capitols, assailed Trump and billionaire Elon Musk 's actions on government downsizing, the economy, immigration and human rights. On the West Coast, in the shadow of Seattle's iconic Space Needle, protesters held signs with slogans like "Fight the oligarchy." Protesters chanted as they took to the streets in Portland, Oregon, and Los Angeles, where they marched from Pershing Square to City Hall.

Demonstrators voiced anger over the administration's moves to fire thousands of federal workers, close Social Security Administration field offices, effectively shutter entire agencies, deport immigrants, scale back protections for transgender people and cut funding for health programs.

Musk, a Trump adviser who runs Tesla, SpaceX and the social media platform X, has played a key role in the downsizing as the head of the newly created Department of Government Efficiency. He says he is saving taxpayers billions

Asked about the protests, the White House said in a statement that "President Trump's position is clear: he will always protect Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid for eligible beneficiaries. Meanwhile, the Democrats' stance is giving Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare benefits to illegal aliens, which will

bankrupt these programs and crush American seniors.' In Boston, demonstrators brandished signs such as "Hands off our democracy" and "Hands off our Social Security.'

Mayor Michelle Wu said she does not want her children and others' to live



Protesters attend a demonstration at St James Park in San Jose, California on April 5, part of the nationwide 'Hands Off!' rallies against US President Donald Trump. (AP)

in a world in which threats and intimidation are government tactics and values

like diversity and equality are under attack. "I refuse to accept that they could grow up in a world where immigrants like their grandma and grandpa are automatically presumed to be criminals," Wu

Roger Broom, 66, a retiree from Delaware County, Ohio, was one of hundreds who rallied at the Statehouse in Columbus. He said he used to be a Rea-

gan Republican but has been turned off by Trump.
"He's tearing this country apart," Broom said. "It's just an administration of

Hundreds of people also demonstrated in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, a few miles from Trump's golf course in Jupiter, where he spent the morning at the club's Senior Club Championship. People lined both sides of PGA Drive, encouraging cars to honk and chanting slogans against Trump.
"They need to keep their hands off of our Social Security," said Archer Mo-

ran of Port St. Lucie, Florida.

"The list of what they need to keep their hands off of is too long," Moran said. "And it's amazing how soon these protests are happening since he's taken

The president golfed in Florida Saturday and planned to do so again Sunday, the White House said.

Activists have staged nationwide demonstrations against Trump and Musk multiple times since Trump returned to office. But before Saturday the opposition movement had yet to produce a mass mobilization like the Women's March in 2017, which brought thousands of women to Washington after Trump's first inauguration, or the Black Lives Matter demonstrations that erupted in multiple cities after George Floyd's killing by police in Minneapolis in 2020.

In Charlotte, North Carolina, protesters said they were supporting a variety of causes, from Social Security and education to immigration and women's reproductive rights.

'Regardless of your party, regardless of who you voted for, what's going on today, what's happening today is abhorrent," said Britt Castillo, 35, of Charlotte. "It's disgusting, and as broken as our current system might be, the way that the current administration is going about trying to fix things - it is not the way to do it. They're not listening to the people.'

Among thousands marching through downtown San Jose, California, were Deborah and Douglas Doherty.

Deborah, a graphic designer, is a veteran of the 2017 Women's March and was nervous that fewer people have turned out against Trump this time. "All the cities need to show up," she said. "Now people are kind of numb to it, which is itself frightening.

People gather during a demonstration to protest high housing costs in Barcelona, Spain on April 5. (AP)

Across Spain, tens of thousands march to protest growing housing crisis

Tens of thousands of Spaniards marched in protests held across the European country on Saturday in anger over high housing costs with no relief in sight.

Government authorities said that 15,000 marched in Madrid, while organizers said 10 times that many took to the streets of the capital. In Barcelona, the city hall said 12,000 people took part in the protest, while organizers claimed over 100,000 did.

The massive demonstration of social angst that is a major concern for Spain's left-wing government and town halls was organized by housing activists and backed by Spain's main labor unions.

The housing crisis has hit particularly hard in Spain, where there is a strong tradition of home ownership and scant public housing for rent. Rents have been driven up by increased demand. Buying a home has become unaffordable for many, with market pressures

and speculation driving up prices, especially in big cities and coastal areas. A generation of young people say they have to stay with their parents or spend big just to share an apartment, with little chance of saving enough to one day purchase a home. High housing costs mean even those with traditionally well-paying jobs are struggling to make ends meet. (AP)

"I'm living with four people and still, I allocate 30 or 40% of my salary to rent," said Mari Sánchez, a 26-year-old lawyer in Madrid. "That doesn't allow me to save. That doesn't allow me to do anything. It doesn't even allow me to buy a car. That's my current situation, and the one many young people are living through."
Housing Minister Isabel Rodríguez said on X that "I

share the demand of the numerous people who have marched today: that homes are for living in and not for

ity that controls issues such as planning and transportation

in an area that includes Bristol, Bath and the surrounding

countryside. He was elected to the post in 2017 but is due to

launched "People First," a campaign that

the Nobel Peace Prize in 2022.

KYIV, Ukraine, April 6, (AP): When she heard her front door open almost two years ago, Kostiantyn Zinovkin's mother thought her son had returned home because he forgot something. Instead, men in balaclavas burst into the apartment in Melitopol, a southern Ukrainian city occupied by Russian forces. They said Zinovkin was detained for a minor infraction and would be released soon. They used his key to enter, said his wife, Liusiena, and searched the flat so thoroughly that they tore it apart "into molecules." But Zinovkin wasn't released. Weeks after his May 2023 arrest, the Russians told his mother he was plotting a terrorist attack. He's now standing trial on charges his family calls absurd. Zinovkin is one of thousands of

civilians in Russian captivity. Ukrain-

ian President Volodymyr Želenskyy

insists their release, along with prisoners of war, will be an important step

So far, it hasn't appeared high on the

agenda in US talks with Moscow and

While politicians discuss natural

resources, possible territorial conces-

sions, geopolitical interests and even

Zelenskyy's suit in the Oval Office,

they're not talking about people," said

Oleksandra Matviichuk, head of the

Center for Civil Liberties, which won

Ukrainian and Russian rights groups

In January, the center and other

toward ending the 3-year-old war.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, emergency services personnel work to extinguish a fire following a Russian missile attack in Kyiv, Ukraine, on April 6. (AP)

says any peace settlement must prioritize the release of everyone they say are captives, including Russians jailed for protesting the war, as well as Ukrainian children who were illegally deported.

"You can't achieve sustainable

Thousands of Ukrainian civilians still held

by Russia with uncertain hope of release

peace without taking into account the human dimension," Matviichuk told The Associated Press.

KYIV, Ukraine: One person was killed Sunday as Russian air strikes hit the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, while the death toll from Friday's deadly attack on the central Ukrainian city of Kryvvi Rih continued to rise.

The Kyiv victim was found close to the strike's epicenter of the attack in the city's Darnytskyi district, Mayor Vitali Klitschko said. A further three people were injured in the strike, which saw fires break out in several nonresidential areas, damaging cars and buildings.

In a statement on social media, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the intensifying Russian attacks showed that there is still insufficient international pressure on Mos-

Europe

Labour suspends lawmaker: Britain's ruling Labour Party has suspended one of its lawmakers after he was arrested in connection with an inves-

tigation into allegations of rape and child offenses. Labour suspended Dan Norris,

65, who was elected to Parliament during last year's general election. The action means Norris, who represents North East Somerset and Hanham, will no longer be part of the Labour caucus, though he remains a member of the House of Commons.

Norris is also the mayor of the West of England, a regional author-



step down after local elections in May. (AP)

Firefighters in N.Ireland mop up: Firefighters in Northern Ireland were mopping up after a significant fire swept through forest land in the southeastern corner of the province overnight as concerns grow about unseasonably warm, dry weather across the United Kingdom.

The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service declared a major incident at 11:53 p.m. Saturday and more than 100 firefighters and 14 pieces of equipment were deployed in a rural area outside the community of Hilltown. The blaze was under control by the early hours of Sunday. The fire is believed to have been deliberately started, the fire service said. Authorities in Northern Ireland on March 28 decried a recent spate of deliberately set wildfires across the region. (AP)



French far-right leader Marine Le Pen, (center), arrives with far-right VOX party leader Santiago Abscal, (left) and Italy's Premier Matteo Salvini, (center top) at Patriots for Europe summit in Madrid Spain on Feb 8. (AP)

Supporters of French far-right leader Le Pen rally in Paris

PARIS, April 6, (AP): Supporters of French far-right leader Marine Le Pen were gathering in Paris on Sunday to protest her conviction for embezzlement and a five-year ban on running for office. Le Pen, who is appealing the verdict, has vowed "not to let the presidency be stolen." A rival leftist demonstration was assembling at Place de la République, denouncing what organizers called a "Trumpist turn" by Le Pen's National Rally (RN) party.

Despite the court ruling last Monday, polls are showing RN holding strong, even with Le Pen's protegee Jordan Bardella as a candidate in a 2027 presidential matchup.

Gabriel Attal's centrist Renaissance party held its own event in Saint-Denis, warning of an "existential threat to the rule of law." The ruling has reverberated beyond France, sending ripples through far-right circles across Europe and beyond after some parties, including Le Pen's, have gained ground in recent years.

'I'm very regretful that our listeners cannot receive accurate news'

Foreign journos at US-backed media fear being sent to homelands after Trump's cuts

WASHINGTON, April 6, (AP): After hiding in Thailand for seven years, two Cambodian journalists arrived in the United States last year on work visas, aiming to keep providing people in their Southeast Asian homeland with objective, factual news through Radio Free Asia.

But Vuthy Tha and Hour Hum now say their jobs and legal status in the US are at risk after President Donald Trump recently signed an executive order gutting the government-run US Agency for Global Media. The agency funds Radio Free Asia and other outlets tasked with delivering uncensored information to parts of the world under authoritarian rule and often without a free press of their own.

"It fell out of sky," Vuthy, a single father of two small children, said through a translator about the Trump administration's decision, which he says threatens to upend his life.

'I am very regretful that our listeners cannot receive the accurate news," Hour said, also through a translator.

Both men said they're worried about providing for their families and being

allowed to stay in the US. They say it's impossible to return to Cambodia, a single-party state hostile to independent media where they fear being persecuted for their journalistic work.

The administration has been dismantling or slashing the size of federal agencies, leading tens of thousands of government workers and contractors to be fired or put on leave. But the targeting of the US Agency for Global Media, whose decades-old networks aim to extend American influence abroad, means journalists who have defied authoritarian regimes to help fulfill a US mission of delivering pro-democracy programming could be deported and face harassment and persecution in their homelands.

Eleven journalists associated with the US-funded media outlets are behind bars overseas, including RFA's Shin Daewe, who is serving 15 years in Myanmar on a charge of supporting terrorism.

At least 84 US Agency for Global Media, or USAGM, journalists in the United States on work visas could face deportation, including at least



Vuthy Tha, a Cambodian reporter at Radio Free Asia who spent 7 years in a Thai refugee camp before arriving in the United States, poses for a portrait in the podcast room on April 1, at the RFA office in Washington. (AP)

23 "at serious risk of being immediately arrested upon arrival and potentially imprisoned," according to the advocacy group Reporters Without Borders and a coalition of 36 human rights organizations.

'It is outrageous that these journalists, who risk their lives to expose the extent of repression in their home countries, might be completely abandoned," said Thibaut Bruttin, director general of Reporters Without Borders.

'The US Congress must take responsibility for protecting these reporters and all USAGM-funded outlets, funded by Congress itself," Bruttin said. "This responsibility is not just moral - it stems from the United States' commitment to defending the principles of democracy and press freedom.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee did not respond to requests for comment. The White House did not comment.

The State Department said it is coordinating with USAGM on imprisoned journalists and that it condemns unjust detentions of journalists for exercising their freedom of expression.

A number of journalists for Voice of America, a news service also overseen by USAGM, have sued in a federal court. That includes two unnamed foreign journalists on tempo-

If deported, one could risk imprisonment for 10 years for his work for VOA, and the other, a member of a persecuted minority in his home country, could be in "physical dan-

ger," the lawsuit said. The court has temporarily halted contract terminations, preventing the visa holders from being forced to

leave for now. Both RFA and Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty, another USAGM-funded media outlet, also have sued

seeking restoration of funding.

Trump's cuts come after the US last year helped free Alsu Kurmasheva - a dual US-Russian citizen and journalist with RFE/RL - in a highprofile prisoner swap that included

Wall Street Journal reporter Evan

Gershkovich. In February, the Trump administration announced the release of Andrey Kuznechyk, a Belarusian journalist with RFE/RL's Belarus service. The network still has four journalists jailed - one each in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Russia and Russiaoccupied Crimea.

Voice of America has a contributor jailed in Myanmar and another in Vietnam, said Jessica Jerreat, VOA's press freedom editor.



Officers check the scene of a helicopter crash in Daegu, South Korea on

S.Korea copter crash kills pilot

A helicopter crashed during an operation to extinguish a fire in southeastern South Korea on Sunday, killing its pilot, the local fire agency said.

A local fire office said that the fire at the hill in the city of Daegu had been put out about one hour after it had broken out.

The identity of the pilot and the cause of the crash weren't immediately known

The southeastern regions in South Korea suffered last month the worst-ever wildfires on record. Multiple blazes driven by strong winds and dry weather razed vast swaths of land and killed 31 people, including a pilot whose helicopter crashed during efforts to contain one of the

18 countries providing assistance to affected areas: Zaw Min Tun

UN urges relief efforts in Myanmar as earthquake death toll rises

BANGKOK, April 6, (AP): The death toll from last week's massive earthquake in Myanmar has risen to 3,354 state media said on Saturday, as UN agencies and foreign aid donors continued to ramp up their emergency re-

The 7.7 magnitude quake hit a wide swath of the country, causing significant damage to six regions and states including the capital Naypyitaw. The earthquake left many areas without power, telephone or cell connections and damaged roads and bridges, making the full extent of the devastation hard to assess.

It also worsened an already dire humanitarian crisis triggered by the country's civil war that has internally displaced more than 3 million people and left nearly 20 million in need, according to the United Nations.

The military government's leader, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, has said the earthquake was the second most powerful in the country's recorded history after a magnitude 8 quake east of Mandalay in May

A report in the state-run Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper on Saturday said that the death



Bhutan medical volunteers give treatments to a patient at their make-shift tent after last week's earthquake in Naypyitaw, Myanmar on April 4. (AP)

toll from the March 28 disaster has reached 3,354, with 4,850 injured and 220 missing. It also said rescuers had saved 653 survivors trapped under

Myanmar's military seized power in 2021 from the democratically elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi,

sparking armed resistance that is now believed by analysts to control more territory than the army

Members of the UN Security Council "recognized the need to strengthen rescue, relief and recovery efforts and to scale up immediate and rapid humanitarian assistance in response

to the requests to help the people of Myanmar, supported by the international community," its president, Jérôme Bonnafont of France, said in a press statement on Friday.

In an apparent reference to the fighting in Myanmar and concerns its military government would block or delay aid to areas under the control of resistance forces, the statement said the council's members "affirmed the importance of a safe and conducive environment to ensure the timely and effective delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance to all those in need, without disruption or discrimi-

Maj Gen Zaw Min Tun, spokesperson for the military government, told media on Saturday, as he arrived back from a regional summit held in Bangkok, that prime ministers and officials from attending countries, including India and Thailand, pledged to provide necessary assistance for relief efforts and rehabilitation in quake-hit

He said that 18 countries were providing assistance to affected areas, and more than 60 aircraft had flown in to transport rescuers and relief sup-



Colombia's President Gustavo Petro, center, stands for the playing of the national anthem during a meeting with delegates of the Comuneros del Sur, a dissident faction of the National Liberation Army or ELN, to discuss ongoing peace talks in Pasto, Colombia on April 5, (AP)

Rebel group begins handing weapons over to Colombian govt as peace talks advance

PASTO, Colombia, April 6, (AP): A rebel group called the Commoners of the South has begun handing its weapons over to Colombia's government, the Defense Ministry said Saturday, as part of peace talks expected to lead to the group's disarmament in the coming months.

The group of about 250 fighters operates in Colombia's Southwestern Nariño province and has been in negotiations with the government since last year.

"This is a historic moment," Defense Minister Pedro Sanchez said in a ceremony in the town of Pasto, where several accords with the group were outlined by officials.

Sanchez said that over the past two days, the Commoners of the South have handed over land mines, grenades and rockets to an army unit that is destroying them

"Farmers will be able to walk without the fear of coming

across a minefield," Sanchez said.

Until recently, the Commoners of the South was part of the National Liberation Army, or ELN, a group of about 6,000 fighters that is still fighting Colombia's government.

In May last year, the Commoners broke away from the ELN and began peace talks with the administration of President Gustavo Petro. That angered the ELN's leadership and stymied its negotiations with Colombia's government.

Petro, who was part of a rebel group in his youth, has been staging peace talks with nine separate rebel groups and drug trafficking gangs in Colombia under a strategy known as "to-

Most of these negotiations have failed to reduce violence and so far only the Commoners of the South have agreed to

begin a transition toward civilian life.

Africa

UN supports Somalia: The United Nations (UN) on Friday reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Somalia in the fight against explosive hazards, aiming for a safe and secure future for all citizens.

James Swan, UN secretarygeneral's special representative for Somalia, said improvised explosive devices (IEDs) continue to pose a significant threat to peace and security across Somalia, with 597 devices causing over 1,400 casualties

In a statement issued in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, to mark the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, Swan said landmines and

improvised explosive devices have disproportionately affected civilian populations.



cidents, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive response to address the

of explosive

ordnance in-

impact of such events. (Xinhua) Flood in Kinshasa kills 22: Major flooding in the Congolese capital

of Kinshasa has killed at least 22

port, authorities said Sunday. This event Most of the fatalities in Friday's urges global deluge were caused by collapsing walls, said a provincial health minisreduce the stigma faced by survivors

ter, Patricien Ngongo. The flooding had damaged the main road leading to the airport, but it has been reopened to light traffic and within 72 hours would be opened to all traffic, said Kinshasa Gov.

people and cut off access to over half

of the city and the country's main air-

Daniel Bumba The road also links Kinshasa to the rest of the Congo and officials worry

about the impact on trade. "We've been here since nightfall, but we're not making any progress, because we've been told that the road is cut in two, and we have goods that we're going to pick up," said Blaise Ndendo, a truck driver, (AP)

Argentine senate rejects President Javier Milei's two Supreme Court appointees

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, April 6, (AP): Argentina's senate has rejected the two Supreme Court candidates that President Javier Milei nominated by decree earlier this year, dealing a major blow to the libertarian leader.

The congressional defeat could complicate the implementation of Milei's radical state overhaul of Argentina, as analysts say the president had hoped to fill the Supreme Court vacancies with appointees who would rule favorably on challenges to his economic reforms.

Milei in February bypassed Congress to appoint two controversial Supreme Court candidates, invoking a clause in Argentina's constitution that he said empowered him to fill the vacant seats during the legislature's summer recess.

Politicians sharply criticized the move as an overreach of executive power, saying that a president has extremely limited authority to make judicial appointments during a congressional break.

"It's a serious institutional conflict that the executive branch has initiated against the legislative and judicial branches," said Sen. Anabel Fernández Sagasti from Unión por la Patria party, the hardline opposition bloc. "What we are discussing is an institutional as-



Argentine Supreme Court Justices. (from left), Manuel Garcia Mansilla, Ricardo Lorenzetti, Carlos Rosenkrantz and Horacio Rosatti, wait for the arrival of President Javier Milei to give his annual address to the nation, which marks the start of the legislative year in Buenos Aires, Argentina on March 1. (AP)

Both of Milei's candidates - federal judge Ariel Lijo and conservative law professor Manuel García-Mansilla - had failed last year to secure the two-thirds majority required to confirm the candidates in the senate, where the president's libertarian coalition holds just seven of

Milei resorted to presidential decree to fill the two vacant seats on the fivejudge court, testing the boundaries of his executive power as he has repeatedly done over the past year to overcome his minority in Congress.

Rubio says US revoking all visas held by South Sudanese passport holders

WASHINGTON, April 6, (Agencies): US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Saturday that the United States was revoking all visas held by South Sudanese passport holders, accusing the African nation's government of "taking advantage of the United States.'

"Every country must accept the return of its citizens in a timely manner when another country, including the United States, seeks to remove them," Rubio said in a statement, adding that "South Sudan's transitional government has failed to fully respect this principle."

Besides revoking visas, Rubio said the US would "prevent further issuance to prevent entry into the United States by South Sudanese passport holders.

South Sudan's political landscape is fragile and recent violence between government troops and armed opposition groups has escalated tensions.

Last week, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged regional and international leaders to prevent South Sudan from falling 'over the abyss" into another civil war. Guterres warned that the world's



From left: French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot, Britain's Foreign Secretary David Lammy, United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Germany's Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock during a meeting on the sidelines of the NATO foreign ministers at NATO headquarters in Brussels on April 4. (AP)

newest and one of its poorest countries is facing "a security emergency" with intensifying clashes and "political upheaval" culminating with last week's arrest by the government of First Vice President Riek

Machar.

In a press conference late Saturday, Rubio said, "It is time for the Transitional Government of South Sudan to stop taking advantage of the United

Kuwait oil price drops to \$72.96 pb

KUWAIT CITY, April 6, (KUNA): Kuwait crude oil price dropped by USD 4.56 to reach USD 72.96 per barrel on Friday vis-a-vis USD 77.52 pb on Thursday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation said on

In international markets, the Brent crude forwards dropped by USD 4.56 to settle at USD 65.58 pb, while those of the West Texas Intermediate crude edged down by USD 4.96, reaching USD 61.99 a barrel.



'First vertical prepaid Mastercard launched in Kuwait'

Gulf Bank sponsors 4th edition of 'Derasati' Exhibition, held over four days under patronage of the Minister of Education

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: In line with its continued commitment to empowering youth and advancing educational opportunities, Gulf Bank is proud to sponsor the 4th edition of the "Derasati" Exhibition. Held under the patronage of the Minister of Education, Mr. Jalal Sayed Abdulmuhsin Al-Tabtabei, the event will take place from April 7 to 10, 2025, at the Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref.

Bringing together over 120 local and international universities, training institutes, educational service providers, and representatives from the banking and automotive sectors, the "Derasati" Exhibition serves as a distinguished platform that connects students

with academic and industry experts. The event features a dynamic program of panel discussions, conferences, and workshops led by professionals, along with engaging competitions and valuable prize opportunities, offering attendees a gateway to diverse educational pathways and future career op-

Gulf Bank is offering exclusive deals to young participants interested in opening accounts, including the red student account and the red plus prepaid card. These accounts provide access to numerous exclusive offers and a cashback rate of 15%, with annual cashback rewards of up to KD 300.

The red plus prepaid card is the first of its



Gulf Bank logo

kind in the Middle East to offer cashback benefits specifically for youth. It offers the highest cashback program in Kuwait and is also the first prepaid Mastercard in the region with a vertical design.

Gulf Bank continues to be a strong advocate for Kuwaiti youth, committed to equipping the next generation with the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to succeed. This commitment is reflected in the Bank's strategic partnerships with youth-focused organizations, the creation of diverse career pathways, and a range of innovative banking products tailored to meet their aspirations and lifestyles.

Through its ongoing sponsorship of educational and career development events, Gulf Bank reaffirms its commitment to empowering youth and playing a key role in shaping a brighter, knowledge-driven future for Ku-

Gulf Bank aims to be Kuwait's leading bank, fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace to deliver exceptional customer service while contributing sustainably to the community. Through its extensive branch network and innovative digital services, the Bank empowers customers to conduct banking transactions conveniently and efficiently, ensuring a seamless experience.

In alignment with Kuwait Vision 2035, "New Kuwait," and its commitment to fostering collaborative partnerships, Gulf Bank is dedicated to driving robust sustainability initiatives across environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions. The Bank is committed to implementing strategically selected and diverse sustainability programs both internally and externally.

JMMC reviews output data

Small oil fields to see 10% output increase

Kuwait participates in 59th KOC advances offshore exploration with modern equipment **OPEC+** monitoring meeting

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Minister of Oil Tariq Sulaiman Al-Roumi led the Kuwaiti delegation at the 59th meeting of the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC), which was held via video conference on April 4, 2025. The delegation included Kuwait's OPEC Governor Mohammad Khader Al-Shatti, and Kuwait's National Representative to OPEC Sheikh Abdullah Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

During the meeting, the committee reviewed the crude oil production data from the past months and expressed appreciation for the additional voluntary production adjustments made by eight OPEC+ member countries, announced in April and November 2023, to support market stability.

The committee also highlighted the countries that have not yet achieved full compliance and compensation, stressing the critical need for full adherence and the submission of updated compensation plans to the OPEC General Secretariat by

In a statement issued by the Min-

istry of Oil, Minister Al-Roumi revealed that the meeting also covered the latest developments in global oil markets, taking into account the trade and economic challenges as well as geopolitical tensions, which necessitate heightened caution and vigilance to ensure market balance

and supply security. Al-Roumi praised the role of periodic OPEC+ meetings in monitoring market developments, stressing the need for proactive and rapid responses to emerging challenges.

He emphasized that close cooperation among member states is key to achieving sustainable stability, ensuring market balance, and supporting the goals of global economic

growth Al-Roumi reiterated Kuwait's continued leadership and responsible role in supporting initiatives that enhance market stability, contributing to shared goals and promoting sustainable development.

He also affirmed Kuwait's commitment to its production levels as outlined in the approved compensation plan.

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Offshore oil exploration undertaken by Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) is proceeding as planned; particularly since the KOC management is meticulously working with the implementing companies, reliable sources

Sources confirmed the use of advanced equipment in the offshore exploration operations, adding that KOC aims to construct offshore areas near the offshore exploration operations to guarantee the ease of such operations and the transportation of equipment.

Sources revealed that this year, KOC will float important tenders related to the development of exploration mechanisms in difficult onshore oil reservoirs; hence, allowing the company to continue developing both onshore and offshore operations.

Sources said KOC also intends to increase the production capacity of relatively

small fields, with an expected increase of 10 percent for these fields this year. "KOC is currently developing all fields surrounding the Burgan field, while striving to restore the strength of the Burgan field after its production declined in recent years. Production declined by approximately 250,000 to 300,000 barrels per day several years ago despite the fact that its previous production exceeded two million barrels per day," sources stated.

In another development, the same sources disclosed that KOC recently floated a tender to provide technical support services for the implementation of a biometric attendance management system and support services for the company, particularly since all KOC employees are required to use the smart fingerprint attendance system.

According to the sources, the KOC management, led by Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ahmed Al-Eidan, requested this tender in a bid to develop the systems used for employee attendance, especially since KOC is the largest economic entity engaged in oil exploration and extraction; and in doing so, it receives full support from Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC).

Sources said KOC continues to carry out procedures related to transfers, secondments and promotions based on well-thought-out plans to achieve the best

Sources also affirmed KOC's success in offshore exploration through the announcement of the first two offshore wells -- Al-Nukhdha and Al-Julai'a, in addition to the continuous exploration of more offshore fields. Sources pointed out that all of these efforts have ushered Kuwait into the era of offshore exploration, a field that has not been strongly addressed in the history of the oil sector in the country.

Kuwaiti equity market leads GCC with 9.7% Q1 gain: Markaz report

S&P GCC composite index down by 1.1% in March 2025

Both inside and outside branches

KFH enhances accessibility for customers with special needs



KFH branch

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) offers comprehensive banking services to its customers with special needs. This confirms KFH's commitment to meeting customer expectations and reinforcing its CSR leadership.

KFH is committed to ensuring that customers with special needs can easily access banking services. To achieve this, KFH provides trained staff to assist with banking transactions and offers alternative communication channels to meet individual

KFH is keen to enable all its customers, regardless of their disability, to benefit from its banking services. Therefore, KFH has allocated branches equipped with a thorough set of features and services that support its main objectives. These include designated parking for individuals with special needs and wheelchair-accessible entrances to ensure easy, quick access upon arrival, access to ATMs, headphone features in ATMs, safety deposit boxes, in addition to staff trained in sign language.

KFH employees receive extensive training in sign language to assist customers with hearing impairments. Moreover, account opening forms, contracts, and transaction

documents are printed in Braille. In the digital sphere, KFH doors are equipped with sensors to facilitate smooth transitions between customers, automatically closing until the transaction is completed. KFH is willing to conclude stra-

tegic partnerships with entities concerned with people with special needs and provide appropriate training. Notably, KFH have established a partnership with the Kuwait Society for the Handicapped (KSH) aimed at integrating individuals with disabilities into the community. This partnership focuses on providing training and development opportunities that lead to sustainable job placements, improved psychological well-being, and a more inclusive work environment for people with disabilities. Since this partnership in 2021, KFH has delivered extensive training programs to employees across KFH functions and departments, enhancing their ability to contribute meaningfully to the Bank.

In partnership with the Public Authority for Disability Affairs (PADA), KFH is the first bank in Kuwait to launch a comprehensive program to integrate people with special needs, offering them practical training programs and full-time

nancial Centre "Markaz" released its Monthly Market Review report for March 2025. Kuwait equity market has been the top performer among GCC markets in Q1 2025, gaining 9.7% for the quarter. Following five consecutive months of positive performance, Kuwait markets were slightly negativein March 2025. Kuwait's All Share Index declined by 0.3%, with mixed performance across sectors. Healthcare and insurance were the top gainers, rising by 9.9% and 3.3% respectively.

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Kuwait Fi-

The banking sector index gained 0.7% for the month. Among banking stocks, Burgan Bank and Commercial Bank of Kuwait were the top gainers, with a monthly return of 6.2% and 5.3%respectively. Commercial Bank of Kuwait's net profit for FY 2024 increased by 41.4% y/y due to higher loan loss recoveries, increase in net interest income and fee income. Among Premier market stocks, Integrated Holding Company and Jazeera Airways were the top gainers, rising by 8.6% and 6.9% respectively for the month. Integrated Holding recorded a net profit of KD 6.88 million for FY 2024, an increase of 67.7% y/y. Steady increase in demand for equipment services and reversal of provision for doubtful debt due to realization had contributed to the rise in

Kuwait has passed the long-awaited public debt law, which would enable the country to raise debt in the international markets. The new law sets the ceiling for public debt at KD 30 billion (USD 97.4 billion) and the ceiling for maturities of issued financial instruments at 50 years. In its budget for FY 2025/26,in the light of lower oil prices (estimated at USD 68/ barrel) and OPEC+ production cuts, the country has estimated a budget deficit of KD 6.3 billion. With the earlier debt law expiring in 2017, the country has been drawing from its General Reserve Fund to fund its deficit. The new law would enable it to finance the deficit by raising debt from international markets. Kuwait's CPI rose by 2.49% y/y in February 2025, remaining steady compared to 2.5% y/y increase in January 2025. The food and beverages segment continued to be the major driver, rising by 5.23% y/y.



Markaz logo

The S&P GCC Composite index declined by 1.1% in March 2025 with all GCC markets in red weighed by trade war concerns and geopolitical tensions. Saudi equity index declined by 0.7% during the month. ACWA Power and Saudi Aramco had declined by 7.6% and 1.3% respectively for the month.Saudi Aramco's net profit for FY 2024 declined by 12.4% y/y to USD 106.2 billion on the back of lower oil prices. Saudi Capital Market Authority has approved the listing of flynas, Saudi Arabia's budget airline, making it the third such listing from an airline company in GCC, after Air Arabia (UAE) and Jazeera Airways (Kuwait). Abu Dhabi's equity index declined 2.0% in March 2025, amid broad-based declines. Dubai's equity index declined by 4.2% for the month. Emirates NBD and Dubai Islamic Bank declined by 8.6% and 7.2% respectively for the month. Qatar's equity markets lost 2.0% for the month, despite positive corporate earnings and a 7.4% rise in natural gas prices during the month. Qatar's listed companies' net earnings increased by 8.7% y/y in 2024.

S&P has revised up Saudi Arabia's rating from A to A+, citing ongoing social and economic transformation. The country's real GDP grew by 4.4% y/y in Q4 2024, with non-oil GDP rising by 4.6%, and oil GDP rising by 3.4%. According to the Central Bank of UAE, the country's real GDP has grown by 3.9% y/y in 2024 on the back of strong performance of sectors such as tourism, transportation, financial services, construction and real estate. Itis projected to grow at 4.7% y/y in 2025 and 5.7% y/yin 2026 on the back of heavy investments in projects, unwinding production cuts by OPEC+ and implementation of reforms.

Global markets were negative during March 2025. MSCI World and S&P 500 indices declined by 4.6% and 5.8% respectively. Concerns over ongoing tariff announcements and economic weakness pressured markets during the month. Following levy of tariffs on imports from Canada, Mexico and China, U.S President Trump announced 25% levy on all imported automobiles. This has in turn raised concerns over the country's growth prospects with many market participants, such as Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley lowering their GDP forecasts for 2025 to 1.7% (down from 2.2%) and 1.5% (down from 1.9%) respectively. The U.S Fed has revised its expectation for inflation upwards to 2.7%, upfrom 2.5%, while revising its outlook on GDP growth downwards to 1.7%, from 2.1%. The MSCI EM index gained 0.4% during the month with 0.4%gain in Chinese equities and 5.8%gain in Indian equities. Chinese equities were supported by the government's pledge for stronger fiscal and monetary support for the economy while favorable economic data such as declining inflation have supported

U.S inflation stood at 2.8% y/yin February 2025, a slight decline from the 3.0% y/y reading in January 2025. Food prices had increased by 2.6% y/y. On a monthly basis, CPI increased by 0.2%, driven by shelter costs, which accounted for more than half of the increase. The U.S.labor market added 151,000 jobs in February, up from 125,000 jobs added in January. While sectors such as construction and healthcare have reported gains, there have been about 10,000 job cuts by the Federal government. With the U.S government looking to cut spending, it is widely expected that such job cuts would continue in the upcoming

The yield on the 10-year US treasury notes remained volatile and closed at 4.23%at the end of March 2025, down by 1 bps compared to the previous month. While the Fed's expectation of lower interest rates pressured yields, concerns over slower economic growth and higher inflation on the back of tariff imposition held up yields. During the month, U.S Fed kept rates unchanged at 4.25%-4.50% and maintained its expectation of lowering interest rates by 50 bps

Oil (Brent) prices closed the month at USD 74.7 per barrel, up by 2.1% during the month. While oil prices were weighed by OPEC+'s decision to hike output by 138,000 barrels per day from April 2025, concerns over tightening of supply supported prices during later part of the month.The U.S has imposed tariff on countries that purchase oil and gas from Venezuela, citing the country's lack of progress on handling migrant returns and electoral reforms. The country has also placed restrictions on Iranian oil trade. Gold prices closed at USD 3,084, gaining9.3%during the month and 19.0% during Q1 2025on the back of safe haven demand amid persistent tariff concerns and expectation of lower interest rates.

Recent levy of trade tariffs by U.S and retaliatory tariffs by countries like China present a downside risk to global economic activity. Such tariffs and efforts to reduce Federal spending in the U.S haveincreased uncertainty aroundthe country's growth prospects and inflation. These factors are likely to continue to impact GCC equity markets as well. However, with OPEC+'s planned unwinding of production cuts, the likely improvement in oil GDP and continued implementation of reforms could render some support to

New central bank governor calls for bank recapitalization

Lebanon's Souaid vows to tackle money laundering

BEIRUT, April 6, (AP): Lebanon's new central bank governor vowed that the institution will fight money laundering and the financing of terrorism and will work independently away from political intervention.

Karim Souaid, who was speaking after officially taking office in Beirut, added that he will work on restructuring the banking sector, public debt and returning

Lebanon's economy has been witnessing its worst crisis in its modern history since 2019 and the state must implement reforms demanded by the international community. Such reforms are needed to unlock international aid, and on top of that, Israel's 14-month war with Hezbollah that caused what the World Bank estimates was \$11 billion in damages and economic losses.

Lebanon's crisis is rooted in decades of corruption by the country's political and financial leaders that drained state resources and eventually led to a run on the banks in 2019 afterwhich people have lost access to their deposits. The situation has since been made worse with Covid-19, the massive Beirut port blast in August

2020 and the Israel-Hezbollah war.

Since the historic meltdown began Lebanon has been running on a cash economy and in October, the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force, or FATF, an international anti-money laundering watchdog, placed Lebanon on its "grey list."

"We will work on implementing international laws on top of them combating money laundering and supporting terrorism," Souaid said. The former asset manager added that banks in Lebanon should recapitalize by pumping new money and those that cannot and don't want to can merge with other lenders. He said that the priority will be to return deposits starting with people who have small accounts. He said the return of deposits should be the responsibility of the banks, central

Souaid said the central bank will study all economic recovery plans put forward by previous governments to help the small nation get out of the crisis

Wassim Mansouri, who had been acting central bank governor since July 2023, said the central bank's reserves stood at \$10.73 billion at the end of March.

'New US tariffs beneficial for Turkish exporters'

ISTANBUL, April 6, (KUNA): Turkish Vice President Cevdet Yilmaz said the 10 percent tariff recently instituted by President Donald Trump on US imports would

be relatively in favor of Turkish exporters. Though the tariff plays to our advantage so far, we keep watch on the situation, he said in statements to CNN Turk

on Saturday. Higher tariff rates usually force exporters to turn to markets other than the US, so Turkiye has to keep a wary eye on the situation, Yilmaz explained.

But the new US tariffs led to lower prices of staples in

Turkiye, which is a positive impact, he explained. However, he admitted that the new tariffs and subsequent countermeasures from other trading partners signaled that the world is moving towards more protection-

Last Wednesday, President Trump signed an executive order levying 25 percent tariffs on imported cars, and 20 percent on other imports from 100 countries, including

UK car production drops 13.9%

Jaguar Land Rover halts US shipments amid 25% tariff

LONDON, April 6, (AP): The maker of Jaguar and Land Rover cars is pausing shipments to the U.S. as Britain's struggling auto industry begins to respond to the 25% tax on vehicle imports imposed by President Donald Trump.

Jaguar Land Rover Automotive, one of Britain's biggest carmakers, said Saturday that the pause would

take place this month. "The USA is an important market for JLR's luxury brands," the company said in a statement. "As we work to address the new trading terms with out business partners, we are taking some short-term actions including a shipment pause in April, as we develop our mid- to longerterm plans.'

Analysts said they expect other British carmakers to follow suit as the increased tariffs heap more pressure on an industry that is already struggling with declining demand at home and the need to retool their plants for the transition to electric

"I expect similar stoppages from other producers as firms take stock of what is unfolding," said David Bailey, an automotive industry expert and professor of business economics at the University of Birmingham.

The number of cars made in the U.K. dropped 13.9% to 779,584 vehicles last year, according to the SMMT. More than 77% of those vehicles were destined for the export market. U.K. factories export cars such as Nissan's Qashqai and Juke, BMW Mini, and Toyota Corolla, as well as Land Rover and Jaguar models.

"The industry is already facing multiple headwinds and this announcement comes at the worst possible time," Mike Hawes, chief executive of the U.K.'s Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, said last week. "SMMT is in constant contact with government and will be looking for trade discussions to accelerate as we need to secure a way forward that supports jobs and economic growth on both sides of the Atlantic.'

U.K. carmakers have already tak-

en steps to lessen the immediate impact of the tariffs by building stockpiles in the U.S. before the increase

"This was manufacturers like JLR trying to get ahead of the game in terms of getting inventory to the U.S. before the tariffs were imple-

British carmakers shipped 8.3 billion pounds (\$10.7 billion) worth of vehicles to the U.S. in the 12 months through September, making cars the single biggest goods export to the U.S., according to government statistics.

small part of overall trade between Britain and the U.S., which is heavily weighted toward services.

Britain exported 179.4 billion pounds (\$231.2 billion) of goods and services to the U.S. in the year through September, with services

took effect. SMMT figures show that exports to the U.S. jumped 38.5% from a year earlier in December, 12.4% in January and 34.6% in February.

mented," Bailey said.

But cars make up a relatively

making up 68.2% of that figure.

Italian Stock Exchange drops 6.53% amid US tariff fears

ROME, April 6, (Xinhua): The Italian Stock Exchange suffered a significant one-day decline on Friday, despite Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni downplaying fears over U.S. tariffs that triggered the sell-off.

The Milan-based bourse ended the day down 6.53 percent and the FTSE Italia All-Share is firmly in the red, down 6.44 percent at 36,716 points.

The FTSE MIB index has now lost ground in eight of the last nine trading sessions, pushed lower mostly by investor concerns over the economic impacts of U.S. sweeping global tariffs.

Stock markets across Europe lost ground in recent days, but Italy has proved particularly vulnerable due to what was already slow economic growth and the country's high dependence on exports. Around 10 percent of Italian exports across all sectors are destined for the United States.

Food and wine companies, Italian and French automaker Stellantis, and financial services companies have all been battered in recent sessions.

Meloni attempted to assuage investor, arguing that the impacts of the new U.S. tariffs were overblown.

I am obviously concerned because this is a problem we have to resolve," Meloni said Friday. "But I do not see it as the catastrophe I have been hearing about over the last few days. Paradoxically, the reaction has worried me more than the tariffs themselves.'

"We have to beware of all the scaremongering we've been seeing," Meloni added.

KIPCO

CONDOLENCES

The Management and Staff of **Kuwait Projects Company (Holding)** and its subsidiaries wish to offer their heartfelt condolences to

Mr. Sunny Bhatia **Group Chief Financial Officer**

on the sad demise of his

brother

May his soul rest in peace and may God grant comfort and strength to the bereaved family members

Warba Bank (K.S.C.P.) Shareholders' Public Subscription Announcement For the Bank's Share Capital Increase Amounting 2,183,600,000 Shares

Warba Bank (K.S.C.P) announces Issuing Shares for the Bank's share capital increase with preemption right to eligible shareholders at 100% (One Hundred Percent) of the Bank's authorized and paid-up capital for 2.183,600,000 (two billion, one hundred eighty-three million, six hundred thousand) shares at KD 436,720,000 (Four hundred thirty-six million, seven hundred twenty thousand)

Issuer and Issue Manager: Warba Bank (K.S.C.P), a Kuwaiti Public Shareholding Company, incorporated in the State of Kuwait

Commercial Registration No. 334402

Clearing and Depository Agent: Kuwait Clearing Company K.S.C.

We recommend reading and understanding the subscription prospectus, undertaking risk assessment and seeking professional advice before investing. This announcement does not contain all the information that prospective investors should consider before deciding to invest in the Issue Shares and does not purport to be complete.

Subscription Prospectus: Available for printing and downloading from Warba Bank's Website www.warbabank.com. A copy can also be obtained from Boursa Kuwait or the Bank's head Office at Sharq Area, Omar Ibn Al-Khattab Street, Al-Raya Tower, Mezzanine

Total Value of the Issue Shares: The total value of the issue shares shall be KD 436,720,000 (Four hundred thirty-six million, seven hundred twenty thousand), nominal Value of KD 218,360,000 (Two hundred eighteen million, three hundred sixty thousand) share premium of KD 218,360,000 (Two hundred eighteen million, three hundred sixty thousand).

Issue Share Price:

200 fils (Two Hundred Fils) per share ("Issue Price"), 100 fils (Hundred Fils) nominal value and 100 Fils

Type of Shares:

Schedule for Trading

Preemption Right:

Ordinary Shares. Minimum Subscription amount: 1 (One) Share.

Subscription Period: Subscription Period Allocated **Exercising Preemption Right:** (Hundred Fils) share premium.

From 10 April 2025 to 12 May 2025.

From 10 April 2025 to 24 April 2025.

From 10 April 2025 to 17 April 2025.

Preemption Right: Registered holders of Existing Shares recorded in the Bank's shareholder register at the Kuwait Clearing Company K.S.C. at the close of trading on Boursa Kuwait on the Record Date. i.e. Shareholders recorded in the Bank's shareholders register at Boursa as on 09 April 2025 according to cum-dividend date specified for 06 April 2025, and the holders of the Pre-Emption Rights to subscribe to the Issue Shares. For clarity, any trading on the Bank's shares prior to the Record Date, but for which the trade settlement process at Boursa Kuwait have not been completed as of the Record Date (Ex Rights Date) and as a result have not yet been recorded on the Bank's shareholder register, will not be considered in determining the Eligible Shareholders of record as of the Record Date.

Public Subscription Period for Additional Shares: From 01 May 2025 to 12 May 2025.

Subscription for Additional Issue Shares: In the event that the shares offered for subscription is not fully subscribed during the exercise period of rights issue, eligible shareholders have the right to subscribe for additional Issue Shares ("Additional Issue Shares") in addition to those who are not entitled to Issue Shares under the preemption right.

Subscription Instructions

First: Subscription through application or website:

The electronic system allows subscription to the share capital increase by 150,000 (One hundred fifty thousand) shares, equivalent to KD 30,000 (Thirty thousand) or less.

Payment shall be made by KNET service. The application shall not be deemed complete for the subscription process until all the aforementioned subscription steps are fulfilled. The Subscriber shall:

- 1. Login to the website via the link; https://www.ipo.com.kw, or download "IPO Kuwait" application.
- 2. Register the civil number for individuals/commercial register for corporate persons, in addition to the e-mail and telephone number, thus the system shall verify whether the subscriber is eligible to subscrib or not (verification shall be conducted during the period of exercising the pre-emption right only).
- 3. Record the number of shares to be subscribed.
- 4. The subscriber shall then be transferred to the payment page via KNET service, where the subscriber can pay from his/her/its own account (no other person may pay on behalf of the subscriber except in the cases provided for under law "Required documents shall be reviewed when submitting the subscription application". The Subscriber shall bear all legal consequences in case of violation).
- 5. If the payment process is successful, the system will display confirmation including the subscription payment details and will automatically send an email with a receipt, in PDF format, and a text message to the mobile phone to confirm the successful completion of the subscription process.
- 6. Subscription shall be implemented through the website or electronic application only. Hence, the shareholder shall subscribe for himself and pay from his own account, waive or sell the pre-emption right as per his desire, in the cases stipulated by law "review the required documents when submitting the subscription application". The subscriber shall bear all legal consequences in case of violation.
- 7. The system allows the shareholder to submit multiple subscription applications in case he does not subscribe to the full pre-emption right available thereto.

Second: Subscription to more than 150,000 (One hundred fifty thousand) shares:

- 1. The Subscriber shall log on the link https://www.ipo.com.kw, or through "IPO Kuwait" application, to print the subscription information document, including, for example, the subscriber's name, Civil ID number/commercial register in case of corporate persons, in addition to email, telephone number and the number and value of shares to be subscribed to.
- 2. All subscribers with pledged shares shall submit to the Clearing and Depository Agent an original and duly signed letter of approval by the pledgee creditor stating that subscription to the share capital increase is permissible. The letter of approval shall be submitted through the subscription website or through the application. The subscriber shall submit a separate application for the pledged shares and another application for free
- 3. Payment shall be made through the subscriber's bank, either by the subscriber visiting the bank to make the transfer, or through the electronic bank application, to make a bank transfer if this service is available. A copy of the subscription data printed document shall be printed out through the above link and the required amount shall be transferred to the bank account (non-profit-generating) designated for increasing the share capital of Warba Bank (as a net amount, without deducting any fees by both the transferring and the transferee banks) as mentioned below:

Name of Bank: Warba Bank 1224089030 Account Number:

IBAN: KW11WRBA000000000001224089030

Swift: WRBAKWKW Beneficiary: Warba Bank Capital Increase 2025

Reference / Description: Warba Bank capital increase2025 + subscriber's ID number

(civil Identity Card number) + subscriber's contact details (Telephone number) + Subscription Application Form Number

- 4. The Subscriber shall obtain an original deposit voucher for the transferred amount from his bank, with a copy of the printed and signed subscription document and shall upload it via the subscription application or website to complete the remaining procedures. The signature on the document shall then be matched with the signature in the passport or shall be validated at the relevant bank.
- 5. If the subscription process is successful after reviewing the application and attached documents, the system will automatically send an email with a receipt in PDF format, as well as a text message to the mobile phone to confirm the successful completion of the subscription process.
- 6. If the subscription application is rejected, the Subscriber shall contact the clearing agent, Kuwait Clearing Company, to amend or complete the requirements that were not provided or to rectify any incorrect documents.
- 7. If any subscription application is not completed or not accepted fully and properly within the specified period (attaching all required supporting documents) through the website or application, after paying the due subscription amount as mentioned in the Prospectus, the subscription application submitted by that Subscriber shall be deemed cancelled, null and void, noting that subscription amounts shall not be accepted in cash. Third: Subscription through the Portfolio Manager in the event that the shares are with
- The customer of the investment company that manages third parties' portfolios shall submit a written application to subscribe to the number and value of the shares desired to be subscribed to within the periods specified in the subscription Prospectus.
- 2. The customer of the investment company that manages third parties' portfolios shall follow the procedures stipulated in clause (Second) above
- 3. In all cases, the investment company shall follow the procedures specified (the required documents), specifically those mentioned in the clause pertaining to corporate subscribers.
- 4. The investment company that manages third parties' portfolios shall prepare the subscription application by itself, including all details required by the customer to authenticate his desire to subscribe to the share capital increase.
- 5. In all cases, the investment company shall bear any error in filling out the Subscription Application Form, or any failure to allocate due to non-payment of the value of the shares to be subscribed to.

In case any Subscriber fails to submit a fully completed and correct subscription application (attaching all required supporting documents) at the headquarters of the Clearing and Depository Agent after paying the due subscription amount, the Subscriber's application shall be deemed cancelled, null and void, noting that subscription amounts will not be accepted in cash.

For further details please visit Kuwait Clearing Company website.

Risk Management: Investment in the Issue shares is associated with some types of risks. These types of risks can be categorized as follows:

(A) Risks associated with the issuer

(B) Risks associated with regulatory systems

a company that manages third parties' portfolios:

(C) Market volatility risks and (D) Risks associated with the issue shares.

Therefore, such risks should be carefully studied before taking the decision for investment in the issue shares.

Neither Capital Markets Authority nor any regulatory body in the State of Kuwait shall bear any liability for the contents or accuracy of this announcement or for any loss arising from relying on this announcement.

For inquiries, please contact

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A first-of-its-kind collaboration in the local and regional market with a world-renowned luxury shopping icon

NBK signs exclusive partnership with Harrods London, bringing unmatched benefits to customers

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Strengthening its position as a pioneer in de-livering exclusive and distinguished offerings, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has forged an exclusive partnership with Harrods, London's iconic luxury department store and one of the world's most renowned shopping destinations. This strategic alliance unlocks a range of exceptional benefits and bespoke privileges for NBK customers while further elevating the unparalleled shopping experience at

This first-of-its-kind agreement in the Kuwaiti and regional market underscores NBK's commitment to enhancing its customers' banking experience by forging strategic partnerships with leading institutions across various sectors - both locally and globally. Through these collaborations, the bank continues to reward its customers with exclusive offers and benefits tailored to their diverse lifestyles.

The exclusive partnership agreement was signed in London by Mr. Mohammed Al-Othman, Chief Executive Officer, Consumer & Digital Banking Group at NBK, alongside Mr. Michael Ward, Managing Director of Harrods, and Dr. Saeeda Jaffar, SVP & Group Country Manager, GCC from

On this occasion, Al-Othman stated: "At NBK, we are committed to delivering an exceptional banking experience by leveraging our market leadership and strong partnerships with top companies and institutions both locally and internationally. Our goal goes beyond simply meeting our customers' needs - we continuously strive to ex-



Mohammed Al-Othman and Michael Ward during the exclusive partnership signing ceremony, attended by Dr. Saeeda Jaffar and representatives from the National Bank of Kuwait, Harrods, and Visa.

ceed their expectations.'

"2025 has marked a strong start for NBK in forging new strategic partnerships with leading institutions across various sectors. Following our exclusive agreement with Alshaya Group, we are now partnering with Harrods, one of the world's most renowned luxury shopping destinations. This collaboration reflects our ongoing commitment to enriching our customers' experience by offering them unparalleled benefits that extend beyond banking - catering to their lifestyles and continuously delivering added value through exclusive offers and exceptional privileges," he added.

He emphasized that NBK continues

to leverage its decades of expertise to deeply understand its customers' needs, assess their aspirations, and proactively cater to them. This commitment reinforces the bank's dedication to delivering an exceptional banking experience through a diverse range of distinguished products and services tailored to enrich their lifestyles.

Mr. Michael Ward, Managing Director of Harrods, said: "We are delighted to introduce these co-branded card partnerships with Visa and NBK, marking a key milestone in Harrods' international growth strategy. This collaboration allows us to strengthen our connection with valued customers, offering both loyal and new clientele in Kuwait an enhanced rewards experience that reflects the excellence and personal service synonymous with Harrods. We look forward to expanding our offering in the future and bringing the Harrods experience even closer to our customers, wherever they are.'

Mr. Shashank Singh, Visa's VP and General Manager for Kuwait and Qatar, commented: "Visa is committed to enhancing the payment experience for our cardholders.Our partnership with NBK and Harrods exemplifies this commitment, as we come together to offer a unique proposition that combines exclusive privileges and unmatched convenience for their customers. Cardholders will also benefit from

Al-Othman:

- We are dedicated to delivering an exceptional experience that extends beyond banking, catering to every detail of our customers' lifestyles
- Our partnership with Harrods, following our collaboration with Alshaya Group, sets the tone for a milestone year in 2025
- Leveraging our extensive expertise, we anticipate customer needs and continuously strive to exceed their expectations

■ The co-branded card partnerships with Visa & NBK mark a key milestone in Harrods' international growth strategy

Singh:

■ We are thrilled about this collaboration that will deliver exceptional value and convenience to Visa cardholders in Kuwait

Visa's advanced security technology, allowing them to use the NBK Harrods Visa card to pay with full confidence at home and our 150 million merchant partners globally. We are thrilled about this partnership and look forward to delivering exceptional value and convenience to Visa cardholders in Ku-

NBK remains committed to offering exclusive, value-added benefits and rewarding offers to customers across all segments, reinforcing its leadership in the banking sector locally, regionally, and globally.

London-based Harrods, has an area of more than one million square meters, is one of the world's most famous and iconic luxury department store, known for its designer retail, famous clientele, and beautiful exterior. Home to over 330 departments and

10

5000 brands across seven floors, Harrods has been attracting millions of travelers annually for over 150 years. It is renowned for its luxury offer-

ings, ranging from high-end fashion and jewelry to exquisite fine dining experiences.

In Harrods you can shop amongst high fashion boutiques, try out some new fragrances and spa treatments, or browse the newest innovations at a variety of tech stores. You can also dine at one of the restaurants serving a wide selection of food prepared using premium ingredients.

fears of a global trade war. The move,

Rate cut bets rise

Tariff tensions shake markets: EUR surges, US dollar, equities slide

By National Bank of Kuwait

Market Commentary

Over the past two weeks, the U.S. Dollar Index (DXY) has experienced significant volatility, primarily driven by geopolitical developments and shifting investor sentiments. On April 3, the EUR/USD pair surged to 1.1145, over 300 pips above its weekly opening. This sharp appreciation was attributed to market reactions to U.S. President Donald Trump's announcement of reciprocal tariffs on imports from various countries, including EU nations. While other countries such as China have reacted implementing 34% retaliatory tariffs on the US. The tariffs raised concerns about a potential global economic slowdown, leading to a sell-off in the U.S. Dollar, reaching 102.893. U.S. equities also experienced a sharp sell off, with the S&P 500 falling to 5,074.08, down from 5,680 levels earlier in the week. While the Nasdaq and Dow Jones fell by -5.82% and -5.50% respectively. Despite a strong U.S. jobs report, markets are currently pricing in a 50% probability of a rate cut in May.

United States Durable Goods Orders

U.S. durable goods orders unexpectedly rose 0.9% (\$2.7 billion) to \$289.3 billion, beating expectations of a 1% decline. This followed a strong 3.3% increase in January. Transportation equipment led the gains, particularly motor vehicles (4%) and defense aircraft (9.3%). Orders also rose for machinery (0.2%), fabricated metal products (0.9%), computers (1.1%), and electrical equipment (2%). However, capital goods orders fell 1.5%, and non-defense capital goods excluding aircraft an indicator of business investment-declined 0.3%, marking the first drop in four months. Business spending may be constrained by uncertainty over tariffs.

Personal Consumption Expendi-

tures Price Index The Federal Reserve's preferred inflation gauge, the core PCE price index, climbed 0.4% in February to its largest monthly jump since January 2024, pushing the annual rate to 2.8% slightly above forecasts of 0.3% and 2.7%, according to Commerce Department data released Friday. This measure strips out volatile food and energy costs and is seen as a clearer signal of underlying inflation trends. Meanwhile, the broader all-items PCE index rose 0.3% monthly and 2.5% annually, matching expectations. Markets reacted cautiously, with stock futures and Treasury yields dipping briefly after the report. The Fed prioritizes the PCE index because it better reflects shifting consumer habits and downplays housing costs compared to the CPI. Shelter inflation, a persistent driver, rose 0.3% in February. The data arrives amid fears that President Trump's proposed tariffs could reignite inflation, complicating the Fed's slow progress toward its 2% target. After cutting rates by 1% in 2024, the Fed has paused this year, wary of tariffs' price impacts. While tariffs are often seen as temporary shocks, economists warn Trump's sweeping trade policies and the threat of global retaliation could fuel lasting inflation pressures, upending earlier

ISM Manufacturing PMI

The Institute for Supply Management (ISM) recently shared its monthly Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) report, a key measure of U.S. factory activity. This index tracks trends in the manufacturing sector by surveying over 400 industrial companies. The latest PMI reading dropped to 49.0, which is below the critical threshold of 50. A number under 50 means the sector is shrinking rather than growing. This result was worse than what experts had predicted (49.5) and lower than the previous month's reading of 50.3, which had shown slight growth. The decline highlights ongoing struggles in manufacturing, such as delays in supply chains and other operational challenges. The PMI is calculated using five main factors: New Orders, Production, Employment, Supplier Deliveries, and Inventories, each weighted differently. When these areas slow down, the overall index falls. A weaker PMI often signals trouble for the economy, since manufacturing is a major part of U.S. economic activity. A lower-thanexpected reading like this could also weaken the U.S. dollar, as investors may worry about the country's economic strength. However, the report notes that monthly data can swing due to temporary factors like weather events, holidays, or logistical hiccups. For example, a harsh winter storm or a factory shutdown during a holiday might distort the numbers. This means the current contraction might not last, it could be a short-term dip rather than a long-term problem. Still, the drop raises concerns, and economists will watch future reports closely to see if this is a one-time issue or the start of a deeper slowdown. For now, the takeaway is that manufacturing is facing pressure, but the full picture will depend on how the sector performs in the coming months.

JOLTS Job Openings In February, U.S. job openings declined by 194,000 to 7.568 million, signaling a slowdown in labor demand amid growing economic uncertainty. The drop, reported by the Labor Department's JOLTS survey, comes as businesses react to a wave of tariffs imposed by the Trump administration on imports such as steel, aluminum, and automobiles. January's job openings were revised slightly upward to 7.762 million, while layoffs increased by 116,000 to 1.79 million, still historically low but showing signs of strain. President Trump's announcement of broad tariffs and the upcoming introduction of "reciprocal" global duties, labeled "Liberation Day," have dampened both business and consumer sentiment. Economists now see a higher risk of recession, driven by rising prices and supply chain disruptions. Many warn that these factors, along with a hiring freeze and significant planned federal workforce reductions, could further slow job growth and lead to more layoffs in the coming months.

ADP Non-Farm Employment Change

The ADP National Employment Report, released on the 2nd, showed that the U.S. private sector added 155,000 jobs in March-well above expectations of 118,000 and significantly higher than February's revised total of 84,000. The data, based on payroll information from around 400,000 U.S. businesses, indicates strong growth in non-farm private employment.

President Trump Speaks President Donald Trump stepped up U.S. trade actions by imposing the highest import taxes in a century, part of his push to change global trade. This move worried investors, who fear it could hurt U.S. growth by sparking a trade war. On Wednesday, Trump ordered a 10% tax on all imports, with even higher taxes on 60 countries including China, the EU, Japan, and Vietnam—claiming they sell more to America than they buy. China now faces over 50% taxes on many products. At a White House event, Trump said American workers had been "left behind" while other nations grew wealthy "at our expense," adding, "Now it's our turn to prosper." This move takes Trump's trade war to a new level, risking that other countries might strike back. Trump sees taxes on imports as a way to boost U.S. power, bring back factory jobs, and pressure other nations—rejecting the old idea that less trade restrictions help countries work together. Experts warn this could raise prices, slow growth, and maybe cause a recession.

Unemployment Claims

The Labor Department reported a slight decline in weekly unemployment claims, with seasonally adjusted initial filings dropping by 6,000 to 219,000 for the week ending March 29. While low layoffs continue to reflect a resilient job market, risks loom from trade tariffs and efforts to reduce federal government staffing. Though large-scale cuts to federal workers and contractors over 280,000 tracked since January across 27 agencies have not yet significantly impacted unemployment data due to legal delays, they signal potential strain. Meanwhile, the number of people continuing to claim jobless benefits rose by 56,000 to 1.903 million for the week ending March 29, hitting the highest level since late 2021. This uptick in ongoing claims suggests hiring has slowed, as fewer new jobs appear to be available.

Non-Farm Payrolls

The U.S. labor market showed unexpected strength in March, with nonfarm payrolls surging by 228,000 jobs far exceeding forecasts of 137,000 and rebounding from a downwardly revised 117,000 in February. However, the unemployment rate ticked up to 4.2% (above the 4.1% estimate) as more workers returned to the labor force. While the headline jobs growth signals resilience, the report comes amid heightened anxiety over President Trump's new tariffs, which have sparked fears of a global trade war and rattled markets. Key details revealed mixed trends: Average hourly wages rose 0.3% monthly (matching expectations), but the annual pace slowed to 3.8%, the lowest since mid-2024. Healthcare led job gains (+54,000), followed by retail, social assistance, and transportation. Federal government jobs dipped slightly (-4,000), though layoffs linked to efficiency efforts (over 275,000 so far) were masked by counting severance-paid workers as employed. Despite the strong headline number, downward revisions to January and February data (now totaling 111,000 and 83,000 jobs, respectively) and ongoing tariff uncertainty cast doubt on future hiring. Markets largely shrugged off the report, with stocks remaining under pressure and investors fleeing to bonds

The Greenback was last seen trading at 102.893

United Kingdom

United Kingdom Consumer Price Index y/y

In February 2025, the UK's annual inflation rate fell to 2.8% from 3% in January, below the expected 3% but aligning with the Bank of England's forecast. The biggest downward pressure came from clothing prices, which declined for the first time since October 2021 (-0.6% vs. 1.8%), along with slower inflation in recreation and culture (3.4% vs. 3.8%) and housing and utilities (1.9% vs. 2.1%). Food inflation remained steady at 3.3%, while transport (1.8% vs. 1.7%) and restaurant/hotel prices (3.4% vs. 3.3%) rose faster. Core inflation eased to 3.5% from 3.7%, and the monthly CPI increased by 0.4%, rebounding from a 0.1% drop but below the expected

The GBP/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.2890

Europe

ECB President Lagarde Speaks

European Central Bank (ECB) President Christine Lagarde stressed the need for ongoing vigilance against inflation, despite growing uncertainty linked to U.S. trade policies under President Donald Trump. Speaking to France Inter Radio on March 31, she described the fight to stabilize prices as a "daily struggle," emphasizing that while the ECB is nearing its 2% inflation target, policymakers must remain steadfast. "We are almost where we should be, but we have to stay there it's a constant battle," she said. The ECB has lowered interest rates six times since June, but disagreements persist ahead of its April 17 meeting, partly due to Trump's announcement on retaliatory tariffs and their uncertain global impact. Lagarde acknowledged differing views among policymakers: Some advocate faster rate cuts, while others urge caution to assess risks. "Some want to gallop ahead; others prefer a slow trot," she remarked. With March eurozone inflation data due soon expected to show minimal improvement Lagarde urged patience, advising against speculation. "Let's analyze the data as it comes, without forecasting. Our focus must remain on price stability it's our compass," she said. She also criticized Trump's trade measures, warning that tariffs on sectors like autos would potentially harm the global economy. "Trade wars leave no winners, not even the U.S.," she stated. However, Lagarde framed the turmoil as an opportunity for Europe to assert independence in energy, finance, and strategic sectors. "We're two days away from a major geopolitical shift driven by U.S. decisions. Europe must seize this moment to take control of its future," she said, calling it an "existential moment" for the bloc to strengthen self-reliance and secure its economic

The EUR/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 1.0955

Asia-Pacific

China have reacted by implementing 34% retaliatory tariffs on the US

China has imposed extensive 34% tariffs on all U.S. imports, retaliating against President Donald Trump's latest trade measures and escalating effective April 10 one day after U.S. "reciprocal" tariffs take effect sent global markets tumbling, with the S&P 500 dropping 3.3% and Europe's Stoxx 600 falling 4.4% right after the news release. Trump, undeterred by the market instability, vowed on Truth Social, "CHINA PLAYED IT WRONG; THEY PANICKED THE ONE THING THEY CANNOT AF-FORD TO DO!" The new Chinese tariffs match Trump's recent hike, which raised average Û.S. duties on Chinese goods to a historic high surpassing his campaign threats. Beijing condemned the U.S. actions as "unilateral bullying," while also restricting rare earth exports and launching an investigation into DuPont's China operations. Analysts note China's retaliatory tariffs now average 50% on U.S. imports, marking a "significant escalation" in the conflict. Trump doubled down on his stance, insisting his policies "WILL NEVER CHANGE" and urging investors to capitalize on the moment: "THIS IS A GREAT TIME TO GET RICH, RICHER THAN EVER BEFORE!" However, experts warn the tit-for-tat measures risk destabilizing global trade norms, with Beijing accusing the U.S. of violating international rules and harming China's economic interests. As markets reel, neither side shows signs of backing down, deepening uncertainty for businesses and investors worldwide.

The USD/CNY currency pair was last seen trading at 7.2813

The Reserve bank of Australia

The Reserve Bank of Australia kept its key interest rate steady at 4.1% on Tuesday, despite faster-than-expected progress in lowering inflation, which fell to 2.4% in February. The RBA said it needs more assurance that inflation will stay on track to reach its target sustainably. It also expressed caution about the global outlook, noting that recent U.S. tariff actions are weakening global confidence, with potential for broader negative effects if trade tensions escalate or trigger retaliation.

The AUD/USD currency pair was last seen trading at 0.6041

Kuwaiti Dinar USD/KWD closed last week at

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.0821	1.0776	1.1144	1.0955	1.0860	1.1150	1.1014
GBP	1.2923	1.2850	1.3207	1.2890	1.2800	1.3200	1.2892
JPY	149.79	144.54	150.48	146.90	144.00	148.50	145.45
CHF	0.8805	0.8474	0.8855	0.8605	0.8400	0.8710	0.8515

Tariffs will make sneakers, jeans & almost everything Americans wear cost more

NEW YORK, April 6, (AP): Sending children back to school in new sneakers, jeans and T-shirts is likely to cost U.S. families significantly more this fall if the bespoke tariffs President Donald Trump put on leading exporters take effect as planned, American industry groups warn.

About 97% of the clothes and shoes purchased in the U.S. are imported, predominantly from Asia, the American Apparel & Footwear Association said, citing its most recent data. Walmart, Gap Inc., Lululemon and Nike are a few of the companies that have a majority of their clothing made in

Those same garment-making hubs took a big hit under the president's plan to punish individual countries for trade imbalances. For all Chinese goods, that meant tariffs of at least 54%. He set the import tax rates for Vietnam and neighboring Cambodia at 46% and 49%, and products from Bangladesh and Indonesia at 37% and 32%

Working with foreign factories has kept labor costs down for U.S. companies in the fashion trade, but neither they nor their overseas suppliers are likely to absorb new costs that high.

India, Indonesia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka also got slapped with high tariffs so aren't immediate sourcing alternatives

"If these tariffs are allowed to persist, ultimately it's going to make its way to the consumer," said Steve Lamar, president and CEO of the American Apparel & Footwear Association.

Another trade group, Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America, provided estimates of the price increases that could be in store for shoes, noting 99% of the pairs sold in the U.S. are imports. Work boots made in China that now retail for \$77 would go up to \$115, while customers would pay \$220 for running shoes made in Vietnam currently priced at \$155, the group said.

FDRA President Matt Priest predicted lower-income families and the places they shop would feel the impact most. He said a pair of Chinese-made children's shoes that cost \$26 today will likely carry a \$41 price tag by the back-to-school

shopping season, according to his group's calculations. The tariffs on the top producers of not only finished fashion but many of the materials used to make footwear and apparel shocked U.S. retailers and brands. Before Trump's first term, U.S. companies had started to diversify away from China in response to trade tensions as well as human rights and environmental concerns.

They accelerated the pace when he ordered tariffs on Chinese goods in 2018, shifting more production to other countries in Asia. Lululemon said in its latest annual filing that 40% of its sportswear last year was manufactured in Vietnam, 17% in Cambodia, 11% in Sri Lanka, 11% in Indonesia and 7% in Bangladesh.

Nike, Levi-Strauss, Ralph Lauren, Gap. Inc., Abercrombie & Fitch and VF Corporation, which owns Vans, The North Face and Timberland, also reported a greatly reduced reliance on garment-makers and suppliers in China.

Shoe brand Steve Madden said in November it would reduce imports from China by as much as 45% this year due to Trump's campaign pledge to impose a 60% tariff on all Chinese products. The brand said it already had spent several years developing a factory network in Cambodia, Vietnam, Mexico and Brazil.

Industry experts say reviving the American garment industry would be hugely expensive and take years if it were feasible. The number of people working in apparel manufacturing in January 2015 stood at 139,000 and had dwindled to 85,000 by January of this year, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Sri Lanka employs four times as many despite having a population less than one-seventh the size

Along with lacking a skilled and willing workforce, the U.S. does not have domestic sources for the more than 70 materials that go into making a typical shoe, the Footwear Distributors & Retailers of America said in written comments to Trump's trade representative.

Shoe companies would need to find or set up factories to make cotton laces, eyelets, textile uppers and other components to make finished footwear in the U.S. on a large scale,

the group wrote. These materials simply do not exist here, and many of these materials have never existed in the U.S," the organiza-

Features



past such political in-

packed audience now

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Kuwait's journalism legend attends first play in 20 years

Al-Jarallah applauds 'The Last Journey,' calls for more political freedom in Kuwaiti theater

By Faleh Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: The dean of Kuwaiti journalism and Editor-in-Chief of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah (Abu Mishaal) chose to put down his pen for a while, and step away from life's concerns and the clamor of the press, perhaps in an attempt to ease the burden of the troubling news that weighs heavily on his mind day and night. Accompanied by media personality Saud Al-Farhan, Abu Mishaal attended the play "The Last Journey", produced by artist Tariq Al-Ali and his partner Issa Al-Alawi, who warmly welcomed them at the Foroughi Theater.

This visit marked Al-Jarallah's first trip to the theater in over 20 years.

After the performance, which received widespread praise and applause, Al-Jarallah expressed his admiration for the artistic and visual quality of the play.

Addressing the play's star, artist Tariq Al-Ali, Al-Jarallah said, "If this is your theater, Tariq, go ahead

Despite his demanding schedule, Al-Jarallah found time to attend the theater, where he praised the direct approach and the political and social implications presented in "The Last Journey". He commended the play's exposure of corruption and corrupt individuals, which he sees as the essence of purposeful theater.

In exclusive statements, the editor-in-chief of Arab

Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah said, "Kuwaiti theater was a symbol of leadership when it exported the cultural scene to all Arab countries."

He affirmed that theater has always been an important indicator of societal issues, and the topics raised on its stage were given serious attention in many Arab

With his sharp political insight, Al-Jarallah attributed the long-term decline of Kuwaiti theater to previous National Assembly members, stating, "Unfortunately, we went through a period of parliamentary chaos that led to the decline of theater. Some politicians exerted pressure on the Ministry of Information, imposed their views and silenced opposing voices."

He indicated that theater, being an important sector, is naturally affected by the political environment.

Al-Jarallah expressed hope that Kuwait had moved past such political interference, noting that the theater's packed audience now serves as a testament to its relevance to the ongoing social and political revival in

He emphasized that the theater's role today is even more significant, as it reflects the current events and issues facing the nation.

Regarding the influence of theater on public decision-making, Al-Jarallah stressed that theater plays a crucial and effective role.

Citing Egypt's National Theater as a model, he revealed that in the 1960s and 1970s, the plays presented there influenced leaders like Jamal Abdel Nasser, Anwar Sadat, and Hosni Mubarak to implement reform decisions for the country.

with the late President Anwar Sadat, during which he asked Sadat if he had seen the play "The Mule in the Jug," which was being performed in 1967. The play. which accused the Egyptian government of being subservient to the Soviet Union, sparked controversy at the time. Sadat confirmed he had seen the play but denied any claim that the Egyptian government was subservient to the Soviet Union.

Al-Jarallah said Sadat's response underscored the idea that theater and its content do reach the authorities, who, at that time, did not intervene to stop or condemn the performance.

Censorship

In conclusion, Al-Jarallah urged the Minister of Information and Culture, the Minister of State for Youth Affairs, and the Chair of the National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters to ease censorship on theatrical productions, and allow theater to serve its vital role in critically examining and diagnosing societal issues.

He emphasized the need for members of the censorship committee to fully understand the vital role theater plays in shaping the country's cultural landscape. Such awareness would help revive the lost role of art critics, which has been absent for years.

Al-Jarallah expressed his enjoyment of the theatrical performance featuring iconic artist Tariq Al-Ali, particularly appreciating the actor's critique of the decline in Kuwaiti sports.

He highlighted how the play exposed the true nature of many who claim patriotism but reveal their true selves over time.

Al-Jarallah praised the directorial vision and innovative techniques used in the production, which effectively served the overall theme of the play.

In response, artist Tariq Al-Ali thanked Al-Jarallah for his attendance, stating that his presence at the Foroughi Theater was a direct endorsement of the theatrical movement and the efforts of theater artists in

Al-Ali highlighted that this support is in line with the long-standing calls from artists for the press to play a more prominent role in backing Kuwaiti theater.



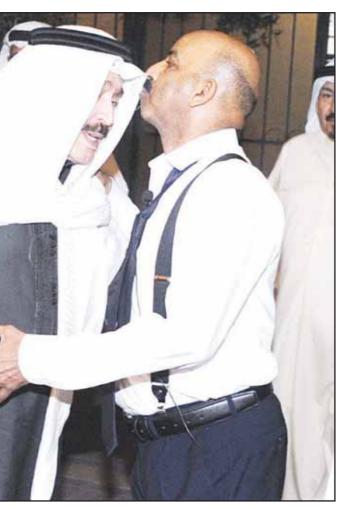
Ahmed Al-Jarallah (right)



Editor-in-Chief of Arab Times and Al-Seyassah newspapers Ahmed Al-Jarallah.



try.



A kiss on the forehead of Ahmed Al-Jarallah.

Artist Tariq Al-Ali thanked Al-Jarallah for his attendance, stating that his presence at the Foroughi Theater was a direct endorsement of the theatrical movement and the efforts of theater artists in Kuwait.



A scene from the play 'The Last Journey'



A scene from the play.



Ahmed Al-Jarallah (centre) with Tariq Al-Ali and Issa Al-Alawi



Photos by Rizk Taufik Ahmed Al-Jarallah and Saud Al-Farhan with the Foroughi Theater team.

Chinese expats hungry to see their movie on the big screen

Chinese community brings 'Ne Zha 2' to life on IMAX in US

COLUMBIA, Md., April 6, (AP): A group of Chinese people decided they wanted the nation's biggest movie to be big in the United States, literally. So they made it really big.

And therein lies a story

On a recent Saturday afternoon, more than 100 people gathered at an IMAX screening room in a movie theater outside Baltimore. Many were Chinese students and young professionals nearby, parents took their kids, some of whom dressed as the movie's main characters. Men and women wore Chinese traditional outfits. People lined up to sign their names onto a Chinese scroll and get tickets styled like traditional Chinese paintings. Some posed for pictures with red-tasseled spears and swords.

The screening was organized by volunteers among the Chinese community in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C., area. "Ne Zha 2," the movie they came to see, is a Chinese film that replaced "Inside Out 2" as the highest-grossing animated film ever at around \$2 bil-

You might never have heard of "Ne

Zha 2," though. It is not a big hit internationally. And that's exactly what the people behind the screening want to change.

In China, Ne Zha is a well-known traditional fairy character, a child godgeneral in heaven and also a naughty boy, who was introduced in a story called "Creation of the Gods" written about 400 years ago.

Sun Bohan, a 27-year-old student in Baltimore, wanted to watch the movie on IMAX. The problem? Every IMAX was playing "Captain America: Brave New World," which premiered on the same day. He asked around and learned the only option would be to rent a theater and pay for the showing at the IMAX. But Sun couldn't afford that on his own. So he posted on Xiaohongshu, a Chinese social media app; he also started a group on WeChat, China's most popular messaging plat-

More than 100 people joined his effort and supported it in different ca-

Raye Xia, a lover of manga, anime and games who had already watched



This photo provided by Jialin Sun shows Sun Bohan, the organizer of the movie screening and Hoff Xu, who cosplayed the character in the movie Ne Zha 2, posing for a picture at a screening in Columbia Md., on March

the movie four times, saw Sun's post and reached out. She spent hours painting a special ticket for the screening that depicted Ne Zha sitting on a

dragon under the iconic Washington cherry blossom trees near the Jefferson Memorial.

"It is really rare to see such events

in a small town. I love that I'm helping in my own way," said Xia, who cosplayed as a movie character at the

Hoff Xu, a student in Baltimore, stayed up until 3 a.m. the night before and made her own outfit with copper wire, binder clips and old clothes.

"It is not an easy thing for everyone to get together, so I thought I would love to add some effect and vibe to this immersive experience," Xu said.

Audience members love the cosplay outfits and lined up to take photos with those dressed up.

"As a Chinese, I am really proud to see a Chinese movie as the only one among the top 10 of something," said Zhao Yuanyuan, who brought her son Jiang Wei'en, 7, to see the movie together for the second time, "I hope he can be exposed to and carry on Chinese traditional culture and not forget his own roots.'

The communal experience of seeing the movie - and, in particular, the community built by advocating its showng - can help Chinese people in the US make in-person connections in the post-pandemic era. That's particularly true for a movie some feel isn't getting its rightful attention globally.

In the US, the gatherings reflect the anxiety among the Chinese community under the increasing institutionalized hostility toward immigrants, especially after President Donald Trump returned to office, says Belinda He, an assistant professor of Sinophone cinema and media studies at the University of Maryland. "The emotional connection could purely outweigh the aesthetic impact and shock that the movie itself brings to them," He said. "The more severe the institutionalized and structural exclusion here, the more people need to strive for some possibilities through real connections and a sense of belongings.'

Sun wasn't the only one with the idea. Other Chinese living in the U.S. have organized theater rentals in Indianapolis, Boston and New York City.

Ma Ruoyuan, 31, who works in finance, worked with a friend to organize two screenings that drew a total of 600 people to watch the movie in New



A story of loss and unexpected bonds

Watts, giant dog tackle grief in 'The Friend'

LOS ANGELES, April 6, (AP): Having it all means different things to everyone, but a rent-controlled apartment in Manhattan is probably pretty close to a universal dream even for non-New Yorkers. It's easy enough, then, to understand the profound conundrum facing Iris (Naomi Watts), a writer and professor who suddenly finds herself with a 150-pound Great Dane ward after an unexpected death in "The Friend."

Not only is her place a mere 500 square feet, but it's also one of those pesky buildings in which dogs are not welcome. Not even the cute, well-behaved ones.

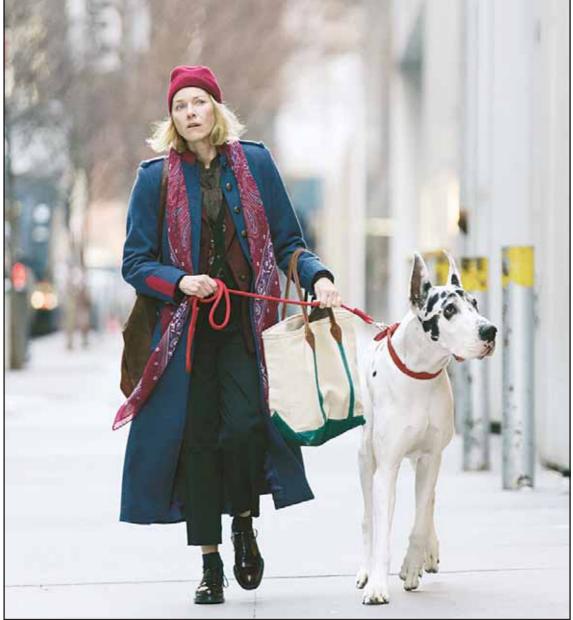
Dog lovers may find the choice simple (perhaps it should be) and the apartment rules cruelly restrictive, but this is a single woman living a writer's life in one of the most expensive cities in the world. And now she's grappling with the idea of saying goodbye to a major part of her identity because her dear friend and mentor Walter (Bill Murray) died without leaving behind a plan for his beloved dog Apollo (Bing). Or perhaps that's not entirely true: Iris was the plan. Walter just didn't tell her that before he killed himself. She's not even a self-proclaimed dog per-

Adaptation

The film is an adaptation of Sigrid Nunez's National Book Award-winning novel of the same name, made by filmmaking duo Scott McGehee and David Siegel ("What Maisie Knew"). Its appeal isn't mysterious - it's a classic New York movie about the most romantic New York profession, writing, with actors like Murray and Watts (and Bing) leading the charge.

These are characters who've lived lives, too. Walter died a celebrated but problematic author, known for his womanizing and multiple marriages. He left behind not just Apollo but three ex-wives (Carla Gugino, Constance Wu and Noma Dumezweni), a grown daughter (Sarah Pidgeon) not conceived in wedlock and a misconduct accusation. Iris and Walter also had a dalliance at one point, but settled into a friendship - his deepest, we're told.

This is perhaps the most mysterious element of the story - partially on purpose, since Walter is dead for most of the movie. We see him only in limited flashbacks and Murray wears the part well: a freewheeling, egotistical genius whose ways have skipped out of sync with the times but whose charisma keeps him surrounded by throngs of admirers. And afterward, Iris is questioning what it



This image released by Bleecker Street shows Naomi Watts in a scene from 'The Friend.' (AP)

all meant and perhaps how well she really did know this man: It's a kind of grief, that of a friend, that isn't regularly explored in films.

Iris is the most radical of female characters, even, depressingly in 2025: a single woman of a certain age and no ambition to be anything

Watts plays her with grace and dignity, as she struggles with her own writing. Even Apollo has a past: Walter found him alone in Central Park one day and took him in as his own. When Walter's gone, Apollo is perhaps the most outwardly depressed about the loss. His days are spent either sitting sadly on Iris' bed

including France's Grammy Awards

equivalent, Victoire de la Musique, in

2005, for "Dimanche à Bamako" and

again in 2013 for "Folila." "Dimanche

à Bamako" also won them one of the

BBC Radio Awards for World Music

Mali" was nominated for Best Con-

temporary World Music Album at the

Bagayoko's last world-class perfor-

mance with Doumbia was at the clos-

ing ceremony of the Paris 2024 Para-

He is survived by his wife and a

Grammys

lympic Games.

Their 2008 album "Welcome to

with literal hangdog eyes or acting out and destroying things in her

Journey

It's no spoiler to say that they'll both have to go on a journey to realizing that perhaps they can find solace in one another in the devastating absence of their larger-thanlife friend. McGehee and Siegel avoid hokey dog movie cliches and easy jokes about ownership learning curves and instead present a rather straightforward portrait of what it's like to suddenly inherit a very large living creature.

"The Friend" stretches on a bit too

long, but it's done with such care and a kind heart that it's not hard to give it two hours of your time. It's also one of those movies people complain they don't make anymore, although its existence is a reminder that they do still make "them," meaning smart, emotionally authentic stories about people who seem real. They just might require a little more effort to find than they used to.

'The Friend," a Bleecker Street release now in limited release and in theaters nationwide Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "a sexual reference and language." Running time: 123 minutes. Three stars out of four.

Variety

BAMAKO, Mali: Renowned guitarist and singer Amadou Bagayoko of Mali's music duo Amadou & Mariam has died. He was 70.

Mali's Minister of Culture Mamou Daffé paid tribute to the blind musician in a televised broadcast on state TV. He said that Bagayoko died Friday in the city of Bamako, his birth-place, but didn't give further details.

Bagayoko went blind when he was 15 because of a congenital cataract. He studied music at Mali's Institute

for the Young Blind, where he met his future Doumbia. They formed a band called Mali's Blind Couple in 1980, making their mark lo-

Mariam cally and internationally.

Their music, Bagayoko which blends traditional African influences with elements of rock, blues and pop, has won

them a global following. They pro-

duced over 10 award-winning albums,

LHASA: Culture and tourism authorities in southwest China's Xizang Autonomous Region have recognized a new group of 101 regional-level intangible cultural heritage (ICH) inheritors, bringing the total number of inheritors in Xizang to 1,790.

son, Sam, also a musician. (AP)

Xizang's fifth group of regionallevel ICH inheritors includes individuals selected from various fields, such as folk literature, Tibetan opera, traditional handicrafts, traditional sports

"The recognition of the fifth group of inheritors strengthens and improves the region's inheritor system, injecting fresh vitality into the preservation and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage," said Num, an official of the regional culture and tourism department's ICH division.

Official data shows that Xizang has established a four-tier ICH directory system, covering national, regional, municipal and county levels, and encompassing 2,760 representative projects. These include 106 national-level ICH projects and 117 national-level ICH inheritors, as well as 620 regional-level ICH projects and 623 regional-level inheritors. (Xinhua)

TORONTO: The Kat Florence Lumina, a flawless 181.61-carat Paraiba tourmaline, is completing its global debut tour with final exhibitions across Asia before making its way to Bonhams Hong Kong, where it will be

auctioned on May 22.

Discovered in 2003 by gem hunter Don Kogen during a routine expedition through the Mavuco district of Mozambique's Nampula province, the original crystal weighed an astounding 830 carats. Recognizing its extraordinary potential, Kogen estimated that a clean 300-carat stone could be

achieved, an ambitious yield by any standard.

Years later, in 2009, Guinness World Records recognized the 191.87-carat Ethereal Carolina Divine Paraiba as the largest Paraiba tourmaline ever recorded. That gem was valued between \$25 million and \$125 million and became the benchmark for

rarity and prestige.
In 2025, with the original crystal still uncut, Don's wife, world-renowned jewelry designer Kat Florence encouraged him to revisit the stone. The initial result was a 315-carat gemstone, remarkable in size but compromised in brilliance. Like many Paraibas over 100 carats, it displayed "windowing," a flatness that dulls fire and life at the center of the gem.

Kat, never one to compromise on perfection, envisioned more.

After thoughtful deliberation and months of precision work by Kat Florence's elite cutting team, the stone was reimagined and reborn as The Kat Florence Lumina; a perfectly proportioned, flawless, 181.61-carat Paraiba. It is now the largest known Paraiba tourmaline of its kind: unheated, vividly saturated, and masterfully cut to ignite brilliance from every angle.



Awards at Cipriani South Street on Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024, in

Model for philanthropy

Rihanna's CLF leads the way in celebrity giving

NEW YORK, April 6, (AP): Rihanna is accustomed to defying conven-

The nine-time Grammy winner has turned her wide-ranging string of hits, including "Umbrella" and "Work," into a business empire worth an estimated \$1.4 billion, placing her high on last year's Forbes list of the richest "self-made" American women. The Barbados native stunned entertainment's biggest stage with a pregnancy reveal during her solo 2023 Super Bowl halftime show. And her successful Fenty Beauty cosmetics brand revolutionized the makeup industry with its inclusive shades.

But it is not the megastar-turned-mogul's long-awaited follow-up to

2016's "Anti" album set to make waves this year. It's her philanthropy. Named after Rihanna's grandparents and funded partially through her brands, the Clara Lionel Foundation is coming off a "refresh" that is poised to direct more funds toward climate solutions and women's entrepreneurship in the under-invested regions of East Africa, the Caribbean and the U.S. South. After 13 years of relative anonymity, the nonprofit is ready for more visibility.

"Our founder is a woman from a small island nation who's got global reach. She's an entrepreneur. She's a mom. She's a creative," said Executive Director Jessie Schutt-Aine. "So, we want an organization that reflects that spirit and that energy. She's bold and she's ambitious. She's innovative. She always does things different. She's a game changer."

Philanthropists

Experts say it's rare to see such intentionality among famous philanthropists. Clara Lionel Foundation has also garnered praise for its embrace of "trust-based" giving, which empowers recipients with unrestricted funding. NDN Collective founder Nick Tilsen said CLF lets his Indigenous power-building nonprofit "do the work on our terms" - and that other funders should take notes.

"They're not a foundation that's all up in your business, either," Tilsen said. "They support. They see the work. They allow us to do what we need

Rihanna started the foundation with a \$516,000 contribution after her grandmother died of cancer complications in 2012. That year, the musician established an oncology center at Barbados' main hospital to expand cancer screening and treatment. And the young foundation focused on healthcare and Barbados for much of last decade.

By 2019, though, CLF had begun prioritizing emergency preparedness. Grantmaking jumped to more than \$33 million in 2020 as the nonprofit provided much-needed pandemic relief and backed racial justice efforts. Post-pandemic spending slowdowns coincided with its internal transition, according to tax filings.

Priorities

A revamped team and refined priorities now match its broader ambitions. A new director for women's entrepreneurship, based in South Carolina, will build out that pillar's programs. Black Feminist Fund co-founder Amina Doherty now oversees programs and impact. Rounding out its five new pillars are climate solutions, arts and culture, health access and equity, and future generations.

The youth focus was commended by Ashley Lashley, a 25-year-old whose foundation has worked with CLF to address environmental challenges in her native Barbados. She often hears leaders say that 'youth are the future,' she said, but those statements rarely translate into actual support. "Rihanna's foundation is a prime example of how women in power can help contribute to work that is being done at the community level," Lashley said. Rihanna told The Associated Press she hopes CLF will continue to be a force for "global inclusion in philanthropy.

She reflected on the foundation's 13-year transformation in a statement: "Today we have global reach, but that notion of love for community and for our roots runs deep in the DNA of the foundation."

The latest example of that evolution is a partnership with The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Barbados' "invaluable history" as "an essential chapter in the broader story of the African diaspora" is threatened by climate change, according to a Mellon press release.

Rethinking Ioneliness

Beyond solitude: Being alone has its benefits

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

By Virginia Thomas Middlebury

Over the past few years, experts have been sounding the alarm over how much time Americans spend alone.

Statistics show that we're choosing to be solitary for more of our waking hours than ever before, tucked away at home rather than mingling in public. Increasing numbers of us are dining alone and traveling solo, and rates of living alone have nearly doubled in the past 50 years.

These trends coincided with the surgeon general's 2023 declaration of a loneliness epidemic, leading to recent claims that the U.S. is living in an "anti-social century."

Loneliness and isolation are indeed social problems that warrant serious attention, especially since chronic states of loneliness are linked with poor outcomes such as depression and a shortened lifes-

But there is another side to this story, one that deserves a closer look. For some people, the shift toward aloneness represents a desire for what researchers call "positive solitude," a state that is associated with well-being, not loneliness.

As a psychologist, I've spent the past decade researching why people like to be alone - and spending a fair amount of time there myself - so I'm deeply familiar with the joys of solitude. My findings join a host of others that have documented a long list of benefits gained when we choose to spend time by ourselves, ranging from opportunities to recharge our batteries and experience personal growth to making time to connect with our emotions and our creativity.

So it makes sense to me why people live alone as soon as their financial circumstances allow, and when asked why they prefer to dine solo, people say simply, "I want more me time.'

Mental

It's also why I'm not surprised that a 2024 national survey found that 56% of Americans considered alone time essential for their mental health. Or that Costco is now selling "solitude sheds" where for around US\$2,000 you can buy yourself some peace and quiet.

It's clear there is a desire, and a market, for solitude right now in American culture. But why does this side of the story often get lost amid the warnings about social isolation?

I suspect it has to do with a collective anxiety about being alone.

This anxiety stems in large part from our culture's deficit view of solitude. In this type of thinking, the desire to be alone is seen as unnatural and unhealthy, something to be pitied or feared rather than valued or encouraged.

This isn't just my own observation. A study published in February 2025 found that U.S. news headlines are 10 times more likely to frame being alone negatively than positively. This type of bias shapes people's beliefs, with studies showing that adults and children alike have clear judgments about when it is - and importantly when it is not - acceptable for their

peers to be alone.

This makes sense given that American culture holds up extraversion as the ideal - indeed as the basis for what's normal. The hallmarks of extraversion include being sociable and assertive, as well as expressing more positive emotions and seeking more stimulation than the opposite personality - the more reserved and riskaverse introverts. Even though not all Americans are extraverts, most of us have been conditioned to cultivate that trait, and those who do reap social and professional rewards. In this cultural milieu, preferring to be alone carries stigma.

But the desire for solitude is not pathological, and it's not just for introverts. Nor does it automatically spell social isolation and a lonely life. In fact, the data doesn't fully support current fears of a loneliness epidemic, something scholars and journalists have recently acknowledged.

Research

In other words, although Americans are indeed spending more time alone than previous generations did, it's not clear that we are actually getting lonelier. And despite our fears for the eldest members of our society, research shows that older adults are happier in solitude than the loneliness narrative would lead us to believe.

However, solitude's benefits don't automatically appear whenever we take a break from the social world. They arrive when we are truly alone - when we intentionally carve out the time and space to connect with ourselves not when we are alone on our

My research has found that solitude's positive effects on well-being are far less likely to materialize if the majority of our alone time is spent staring at our screens, especially when we're passively scrolling social media.

This is where I believe the collective anxiety is well placed, especially the focus on young adults who are increasingly forgoing face-to-face social interaction in favor of a virtual life - and who may face significant distress as a

Social media is by definition social. It's in the name. We cannot be truly alone when we're on it. What's more, it's not the type of nourishing "me time" I suspect many people are longing for.

True solitude turns attention inward. It's a time to slow down and reflect. A time to do as we please, not to please anyone else. A time to be emotionally available to ourselves, rather than to others. When we spend our solitude in these ways, the benefits accrue: We feel rested and rejuvenated, we gain clarity and emotional balance, we feel freer and

more connected to ourselves. But if we're addicted to being busy, it can be hard to slow down. If we're used to looking at a screen, it can be scary to look inside. And if we don't have the skills to validate being alone as a normal and healthy human need, then we waste our alone time feeling guilty, weird or selfish.

Americans choosing to spend more time alone is indeed a challenge to the cultural script, and the stigmatization of solitude can be difficult to change. Nevertheless, a small but growing body of research indicates that it is possible, and effective, to reframe the way we think about solitude. (AP)

Women are forgotten as they battle addiction, stigma

S. Leone declares emergency over 'drug'

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone, April 6, (AP): At a vast landfill in Sierra Leone 's capital of Freetown, smoke billows over decades of decomposing waste. Zainab sits there, squinting through the soot. It is her usual spot for buying kush, a cheap synthetic drug ravaging young people in the country.

'This kush is so addictive," "If I don't smoke, I feel sick.

Her current home, a shack of corrugated iron, contains only a tattered mattress where she brings her clients as a sex worker. She uses her income to sustain her drug addiction.

She is one of many women in Sierra Leone who, as a result of social factors that include living conditions and stigma, have not benefited from intervention efforts after the government a year ago declared a public health emergency over rampant kush abuse. The declaration was meant to enforce criminal, public health and prevention measures to reverse the trend in Sierra Leone, as kush spreads to other parts of West Africa. The drug has been seized in Gambia, Senegal and Guinea.

While officials say kush has become scarcer on the streets in Sierra Leone, critics say programs are still underfunded and inadequate.

Despite new criminal, public health and prevention measures, only about 300 people have gone through the country's official rehab program, according to available data. Most have

Women have been less visible in the crisis. Rights groups say they are historically left out.

Only one in 18 women with drug use disorders receive treatment compared to one in seven men, according

Safe, natural

New facelift tech

for youthful look

DUBAI, UAE, April 6, (AP): Dr. Bashar Bizrah, a

leading specialist in facelift

and neck lift surgery, has

introduced a revolutionary

facelift technique. Known

for his expertise in Deep Plane Facelift and Neck Lift

procedures, Dr. Bizrah's ap-

proach combines advanced

technology with surgical

precision to provide natural,

youthful results while priori-

the cornerstone of Dr. Biz-

rah's technique, goes beyond

traditional methods by ad-

dressing not only the skin but

also the deeper layers of the

face, including muscles and

connective tissue. This com-

prehensive approach results

in a more lasting, authentic

rejuvenation, eliminating

the "pulled" look often as-

sociated with conventional

Bizrah's technique is the

integration of real-time fa-

cial nerve monitoring dur-

ing surgery. This technol-

ogy enables surgeons to

track facial nerve activity

throughout the procedure,

ensuring high precision and reducing the risk of nerve injury. This advance-

ment allows for immedi-

ate adjustments during the

surgery, safeguarding the

natural movement and ex-

pression of the face.

A key feature of Dr.

facelifts.

The Deep Plane Facelift,

tizing patient safety.



Khadija Lansana, right, and her mother Melda, stands outside her boyfriend's home in Freetown, Sierra Leone, Friday, March 14, 2025. (AP)

to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The agency said women are usually more vulnerable to genderbased violence, economic discrimination and human rights violations.

The situation is not so different in Sierra Leone where various advocacy groups spoke about how women are not as visible as men in coming forward to receive support and often do not get adequate help. Far more men, though, use drugs compared to women, experts say.

Zainab said five years of smoking Kush has brought shame and isolation. She said no one has helped her, and spoke about days she gets so high that "I did not know what was happening around me."

But she wants to stop for her chil-

dren. One night while at work, flames engulfed their home with the two infants inside. They survived, but she entrusted them to an orphanage, haunted

Symptoms

"I would love to hear my children call me mummy again," she said, her scarred face breaking into a smile.

Kush is a depressant. Its short, intense effect often leaves users senseless. Symptoms of addiction range from sores to psychosis. Liver, kidney and respiratory problems are common.

The drug's evolving composition, low cost and widespread availability make it difficult to combat in Sierra Leone, one of the world's poorest countries. A recent report from the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime earlier this year found that nearly half of kush samples tested contained opioids up to 25 times stronger than fentanyl. The drug's content were largely unknown before now, hinder-

ing response efforts, experts noted. Kadiatu Koroma with the local Women for Women Foundation nonprofit said her organization has seen a rise in drug use among women and girls in recent years.

"When they are very drowsy ... men will just come and take advantage," she said. Left vulnerable after using the drug, the women "are impregnated and they don't even know the men who

At Sierra Leone's Kissy Psychiatric Hospital, health workers described encountering 25 different strains of the drug in the wider Freetown area.

In one of two female wards, nurse Kadiatu Dumbuya said 90% of kush addicts she has attended to during her six years in the hospital have their body" to feed the habit.

And yet, among the 50 people - majority of whom are kush users - who filed into one of Sierra Leone's two government-run rehab centers on a recent day, only three were women.

Only 300 people have accessed the seven-week program at the Hasting Military Center since it opened in February 2024, guarded by the military and surrounded by barbed wire. Just 40 of the beneficiaries are women.

Officials say the program is gender-sensitive, with men and women separated by a fence. However, staff said stigma and family pressure mean women often deny their addictions and refrain from seeking support.

Personalized AI companions for the future

Microsoft's AI head wants to create a lasting bond between chatbots, users

NEW YORK, April 6, (AP): Fifty years after the founding of Microsoft, the CEO of its artificial intelligence division has a big task: develop a new product line as integral to daily life as the software giant's past innovations.

"We're really trying to land this idea that everybody is going to have their own personalized AI companion," said Mustafa Suleyman in an interview with The Associated Press. "It will, over time, have its own name, its own style. It will adapt to you. It may also have its own visual appearance and expressions.'

Vision

Suleyman laid out that vision on Microsoft's 50th anniversary Friday. The celebration at Microsoft's headquarters in Redmond, Washington featured the first public gathering in more than a decade of co-founder and former CEO Bill Gates with his two successors Steve Ballmer, who led the company from 2000 to 2014, and the current

chief executive, Satya Nadella. Giving the mic to Suleyman, who joined the company and Nadella's senior leadership team just over a year ago to head a newly formed Microsoft AI division, signals how important getting its AI right is to the company's future - in

the next five years if not the next 50. The company's flagship product of this AI era, Copilot, already combines a chatbot with Microsoft's suite of workaday tools, from Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations to the Windows operating system that defines how most computers work. But Suleyman is striving for something that sounds a little more like science fiction - a technology that can form a

Paediatric visual assessment

Diabetic Retinopathy Screening

Glaucoma screening

Foreign Body removal



Microsoft AI CEO Mustafa Suley-man speaks during a presentation of the company's AI assistant, Co-pilot, ahead of a 50th Anniversary presentation at Microsoft headquarters, Friday, April 4, in Red-mond, Wash. (AP)

"lasting, meaningful relationship" with its users.

Software

"One that knows your name, gets to know you, has a memory of everything that you've shared with it and talked about and really comes to kind of live life alongside you," he said. "It's far more than just a piece of software or a tool. It is unlike anything we've really ever created."

Some of those updates - such as new "visual memory" capabilities that keep track of a user's digital activity, if they want that - roll out on mobile apps Friday. Other features are still in development, such as an animated avatar - a talking peacock in Suleyman's demo Friday - that would embody a person's

Suleyman, 40, came to Microsoft last year with plenty of credentials in the AI business. In his 20s, the British entrepreneur cofounded the legendary DeepMind AI research lab in London, which Google later purchased in 2014. He worked there until 2022, when he left to set up the new company Inflection AI with LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman. Microsoft then scooped up Suleyman and other Inflection leaders without formally acquiring the startup, attracting months of antitrust scrutiny.

He also cowrote a 2023 book, "The Coming Wave," focused on AI's promise and the need to limit its potential perils. But unlike DeepMind, or another famous AI research lab, San Francisco-based OpenAI, both of which have explicitly set out to build better-than-human AI known as artificial general intelligence, Suleyman is not too worried about such abstrac tions in his new job running Microsoft's consumer AI business.

"My goal is really to create a true personal AI companion," he said. "And the definition of AGI sort of feels very far out to me and sort of not what I'm focused on in the next few years."

The race to build the best AI personal assistant that sticks with consumers is a competitive one. In recent weeks, rivals including Google and Meta Platforms have shaken up the teams in charge of AI research or products. ChatGPT maker OpenAI, which is both Microsoft's most important AI partner and a growing competitor, has also reorganized its leadership. Amazon is also looking to catch up by imbuing its already-ubiquitous digital assistant Alexa with more advanced AI capabilities.







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Florida's Clayton delivers again to outduel Auburn's Broome

Houston rallies to beat Duke advance to face Florida for NCAA title

Sorry guys, "Phi Slama Jamma" is already taken. How 'bout something

simple, like "Comeback Kids." "National champs" might be a possibility, too.

Houston's no-room-to-breathe defense wiped away a 14-point deficit over the final eight minutes, erased Cooper Flagg and Duke's title hopes and brought the Cougars within a win of a championship of their own Saturday night with a 70-67 stunner over the Blue Devils.

Led by Joseph Tugler's four blocks and an amoeba-like defense that smothers everything, Houston held Duke to a grand total of one field goal over the last 10 1/2 minutes. The 67 points were Duke's second-lowest output of its now-ended

The Blue Devils' second-to-last attempt during their contest-ending 1-for-9 stretch was a step-back jumper in the paint by Flagg that J'Wan Roberts disrupted. The last was a desperation heave by Tyrese Proctor that caught nothing at the buzzer and sent Flagg and company shuffling off

This is the program's first trip to the final since 1984 - which marked the official close of the Phi Slama Jamma era, a fun-and-gun dunkfest that never won the title despite the efforts of Clyde Drexler and Hakeem Olajuwon, who was at the Alamodome for this one.

Lots has changed since then. One constant: Defense wins champion-

Houston has allowed the fewest points this season and even against Duke, with Flagg, Kon Knueppel (16 points) and a roster with five or six NBA prospects, it made things impossible down the stretch.

It was Roberts' two free throws with 19.6 seconds left that gave the Cougars their first lead since 6-5. Cryer made two more to push the



Houston's Emanuel Sharp (21) and J'Wan Roberts (13) celebrate as Duke's Sion James (14) sits on the floor after the national sémifinals at the Final Four of the NCAA college basketball tournament in San Antonio. (AP)

advantage to three. That matched Houston's biggest lead of the night. The Cougars (35-4), who have

never won a title, will play Florida on Monday night for the champion-

Florida's 79-73 win over Auburn in the early game was a free-flowing bundle of fun. This one would've looked perfect on a cracked blacktop and a court with chain-link nets. Neither team cracked 40% shooting.

That's just how Houston likes it. Two All-Americans, one chance to give their their team a chance to

win a national championship. Florida's NCAA Tournament continues thanks to more magic from guard Walter Clayton Jr. in the Gators' 79-73 victory Saturday night at the Final four.

For Auburn and forward Johni Broome, their season ended in tears and frustration wrapped up in missed shots, missed dunks and a sleeve covering a sore right elbow.

As he left the court, Broome heard some quiet words from the greatest player in Auburn history, Charles

Florida (35-4) advanced to Monday night's championship game against Houston (35-4), which beat Duke 70-67 in the second semifinal.

While Clayton was stitching together another tapestry of jaw-dropping scoring, weaving through the lane for layups and popping 3-pointers over smothering defenders as he scored 34 points, Broome's strong start faded badly.

He still had his right elbow wrapped in a sleeve after an injury in the South Region final against Michigan State. Broome is a lefthanded shooter and had said this week he didn't have any pain, but he often look uncomfortable, even as he muscled his way to the basket early.

Broome would sometimes clutch the elbow, or keep it at his side when he ran the court. He used his left arm to waive at the Auburn crowd to get loud, not his right.

But other times, he would grab a rebound with both hands or even scored an on a tough, right-handed

Delhi stays unbeaten in IPL



Rajasthan Royals' Yashasvi Jaiswal bats during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Punjab Kings and Rajasthan Royals at Maharaja Yadavindra Singh Cricket Stadium in Mohali, India. (AP)

Puniab suffers first loss to Raiasthan

CHENNAI, India, April 6, (AP): Delhi Capitals rolled to a third straight win when they beat Chennai Super Kings by 25 runs after Lokesh Rahul's halfcentury in the Indian Premier League.

By the end of the day, Delhi was the last unbeaten team after Punjab Kings fell to Rajasthan Royals by 50 runs.

Rahul's 77 off 51 balls, his maiden fifty for his new franchise, included six fours and three sixes, as Delhi notched 183-6.

In reply, Chennai was restricted to 158-5 as its top order floundered.

The only previous time Delhi started an IPL with three straight wins was in 2009.

Meanwhile, Punjab suffered a fifth loss in six games at its new home in Rajasthan powered to 205-4 as

Yashasvi Jaiswal regained form to score 67 off 45 balls. Riyan Parag added 43 not out off 25. Punjab could manage only 155-9 from 43-4 in 6.2 overs. Jofra Archer

took two wickets in the first over and Rajasthan earned a second win in

In Chennai, opting to bat, Delhi



Delhi Capitals' Mohit Sharma bowls a delivery during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals at M. A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai, India. (AP)

lost attacking opener Jake Fraser-McGurk for a five-ball duck. His wicket was taken by Khaleel Ahmed, Chennai's best bowler with 2-25 in

Abishek Porel joined Rahul and shared 54 off 36 balls. Porel hit four fours and a six in 33 off 20 before he was out caught off Ravindra Jadeja. Skipper Axar Patel's cameo of 21

off 14 helped Delhi get to 90-3 just past the halfway stage.

Rahul reached 50 off 33 deliver-

ies and received middle-order help from Sameer Rizvi (20) and Tristan Stubbs (24 not out off 12 balls).

Chennai stalled before it could start. Rachin Ravindra was out for 3, Devon Conway was caught for 13 and skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad removed for 5. Chennai was all but out at 41-3 in 5.3 overs.

Impact substitute Shivam Dube struggled with 18 off 15 balls and

Jadeja was out lbw for 2. Vijay Shankar scored 69 not out off 54 balls, including five fours and a six, but the run-rate required was overwhelming. He and Mahendra Singh Dhoni shared 84 off 57 but the chase was never really

Jaiswal's previous best this season was 29 but he struck it rich in Mullanpur with five sixes and three boundaries to score 50 off 40 balls. A fully fit Sanju Samson added

38, and the duo opened with 89 off 62 balls. Lockie Ferguson got rid of both

openers but Parag and Shimron Hetmyer combined for 47 off 25 balls. Parag hit three sixes and three fours in his unbeaten knock to power Rajasthan past 200.

When Punjab batted, Archer bowled Priyansh Arya first ball and bowled in-form skipper Shreyas Iyer

Marcus Stoinis (1) and Prabhsimran Singh (17) also fell cheaply and Punjab was in deep trouble. Nehal Wadhera turned the game around with Glenn Maxwell by putting on 88 off 52 balls.

But then both batters fell to consecutive balls from Sri Lanka spinners and Punjab was sunk.

Maxwell, 30 off 21, was caught off Matheesha Theekshana, and Wadhera, 62 off 41, was caught off Wanindu Hasranga.

Sporting KC ends record skid

Galaxy continues worst start by defending champ

SANDY, Utah, April 6, (AP): Diego Luna scored two goals five minutes apart in the first half and Real Salt Lake kept the defending-champion Los Angeles Galaxy winless with a 2-0 victory at America First Field on Saturday. Luna staked Real Salt Lake (3-4-0) to

a 1-0 lead in the 21st minute with assists from defender Alexandros Katranis and Diogo Gonçalves. Luna made it a twogoal lead unassisted in the 26th minute with his third netter of the season and his 16th in 73 appearances for the club over four seasons. Katranis notched his first assist this season and his sixth in 34 appearances. Gonçalves' helper was his second of the campaign and third in 16 career appearances. Luna becomes the youngest player

in Real Salt Lake history to reach 15 goals and 15 assists in a career, doing so at 21 years, 210 days of age.

Dejan Joveljic scored twice in the second half to help Sporting Kansas City end a club-record 13-match winless streak across all competitions with a 2-0 victory over St. Louis City at Children's Mercy Park, winning in the debut of interim manager Kerry Zavagnin.

Neither team scored until Joveljic used assists from Manu García and Nemanja Radoja to find the net in the 71st minute. Joveljic added some insurance when he scored unassisted off a carom in the 88th. It was his fourth goal in his first season with Sporting KC (1-5-1) after scoring 19 times for the MLS Cup-champion Los Angeles Galaxy last season.

It was García's second assist in his seventh career appearance and the first of the season for Radoja, who had seven in his first two seasons with the

John Pulskamp had four saves in his first clean sheet this season for Sporting KC. He has seven shutouts in 35 career starts with the club.

Wilfried Zaha scored on a late penalty kick and Idan Toklomati found the net in the final minute of regulation for his first career goal to rally Charlotte FC to a 2-1 victory over Nashville SC at Bank of America Stadium.

Zaha scored on a PK in the 85th minute to pull Charlotte (4-2-1) even. It was the second goal in six appearances and starts for the newcomer. The kick was awarded after he was fouled by Andy Najar.

Toklomati scored the winner in the 90th minute off Pep Biel's leagueleading fifth assist of the season. The 20-year-old striker entered as a substitute in the 76th minute. He has one start in seven appearances this season after playing 17 minutes last season in his only other match.

Nashville captain Walker Zimmerman suffered a head injury and was taken to a local hospital where he was later released.

Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting scored the winner on a penalty kick during firsthalf stoppage time as the New York Red Bulls rallied to beat the Chicago Fire 2-1 at Sports Illustrated Stadium.

Choupo-Moting put the Red Bulls (3-2-2) up 2-1 at halftime when he scored two minutes into stoppage time after Dylan Nealis drew a foul on Kellyn Acosta. It was the third goal for Choupo-Moting in his first season and his fourth straight match with a goal contribution.

The Fire (3-2-2) grabbed a 1-0 lead in the 32nd minute on the first career goal by Jonathan Bamba, who used assists from Philip Zinckernagel and Hugo Cuypers to send a left-footed



Seattle Sounders midfielder Cristian Roldan, left, and San Diego FC forward Tomas Angel battle for control of the ball during their MLS soccer match in San Diego. (AP)



Vancouver Whitecaps' Sebastian Berhalter (16) and Colorado Rapids' Omir Fernandez (11) vie for the ball during the second half of an MLS game in Vancouver. (AP)

shot from the center of the box into the net. It was the seventh career appearance for Bamba - all starts. Zinckernagel's assist was his third in six career appearances - all starts. Cuypers has two assists, matching last year's total in 31 appearances.
Aziel "AZ" Jackson scored a goal in

the 11th minute, Jacen Russell-Rowe added a goal and an assist and the Co-

lumbus Crew beat CF Montreal 2-1. AZ, on the counter-attack, ran onto a long arcing ball played ahead by Russell-Rowe and skipped a shot between defender Joel Waterman and goalkeeper Jonathan Sirois - who had charged off his line - that ricocheted off the back post into the net.

Russell-Rowe blasted a rising firsttouch shot, off a through ball from Steven Moreira, from the edge of the penalty area in the 26th minute to give

Columbus (4-0-3) a 2-0 lead. Prince Owusu scored in the 52nd minute for Montreal (0-5-2). Caden Clark banged a straight-away shot off the left post, but Owusu slipped behind the defense for the rebound and flicked a side-netter inside the right post to cut the deficit to 2-1. The offside flag initially went up but the goal counted after video review.

Victor Loturi appeared to have scored the tying goal in the 82nd minute but was deemed offside after video review and the Crew maintained

Journalism wins Santa Anita Derby, emerges as Kentucky Derby favorite

WASHINGTON, April 6, (AP): Journalism won the \$500,000 Santa Anita Derby by threequarters of a length Saturday, with trainer Bob Baffert's duo finishing fourth and fifth in the West Coast's major prep for next month's Ken-

Baffert fared better on the East Coast, with Rodriguez leading all the way to win the \$750,000 Wood Memorial by 3 1/2 lengths, earning enough points to move into the 20-horse field for the Kentucky Derby.

Journalism stamped himself as the favorite for the 151st running of the Derby on May 3. He overcame some trouble in the race and put away Citizen Bull, last year's 2-year-old champion, to win his fourth in a row.

The five-horse field at Santa Anita was the smallest for the 1 1/8-mile race since 2006. Ridden by Umberto Rispoli, Journalism ran the distance in 1:49.56. Sent off as the even-

money favorite, he paid \$4 to win. Baeza finished second and 40-1 shot Westwood was third. Both are trained by John

The Baffert-trained Citizen Bull and Barnes finished fourth and last, respectively.

In New York, Rodriguez broke from the rail and ran 1 1/8 miles on a fast track in 1:48.15 under Hall of Famer Mike Smith in light rain and 45-degree temperatures at Aqueduct.

The victory was worth 100 qualifying points for the Derby, potentially giving Baffert three entrants as he seeks a record-setting seventh victory in his return to the race from which he was banned for three years. Baffert sent Rodriguez to New York to split

up his Derby contenders. The colt was sent off at 7-2 odds in the 10-horse field and paid \$9.30 to win the 100th edition of the Wood. He is a son of 2020 Kentucky Derby winner Authentic.

"Bob told me this horse is probably quicker than you think," Smith said. "He can get uptight pretty easy, and the whole key was just letting him alone out there. I don't think he necessarily has to have the lead. He just wants to be left alone. Smith has twice won the Kentucky Derby

Rodriguez would be his first mount since 2022.

At 59, he would be the oldest jockey to win.

kistan Cricket Board condemned the verbal abuse of its players allegedly by Afghan spectators during Pakistan's third one-day international at New Zealand on Saturday "During the match today, foreign

spectators hurled inappropriate remarks at (Pakistan) cricketers present on the field," the PCB said in a statement after the 43-run loss to New Zea-

land at Mount Maunganui. Khushdil Shah stepped in when anti-Pakistan slogans emerged from the

stands, the PCB said. "Afghan spectators escalated the situation by using further inappropriate lan-

abused its players in New Zealand ISLAMABAD, April 6, (AP):The Paguage in Pashto," the PCB said.

Pakistan claims Afghan spectators

tors," the governing board added. New Zealand swept the three-match series 3-0. The tourists lost the five-

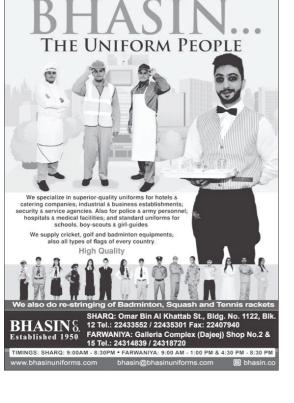
ejected the "two disruptive specta-

Stadium officials intervened and

match T20 series 4-1. Opening batter Imam-ul-Haq was

retired hurt after sustaining mild facial injury, caused by an accidental throw from a New Zealand fielder in the third over of Pakistan's run-chase.

Imam underwent a CT scan Tauranga Hospital and it "reported as normal." He was diagnosed with a mild concussion, the PCB said. He was declared fit to fly back home with the team.



Clippers blow out Mavs as Zubac makes history

Bane scores 38 in Grizzlies victory

INGLEWOOD, Calif., April 6, (AP): Ivica Zubac was 11 for 11 from the floor for 25 points, Kawhi Leonard and James Harden scored 29 each, and the Los Angeles Clippers blew out the Dallas Mavericks 135-104.

Zubac also had 10 rebounds and is the first player in NBA history to have 25 points and 10 rebounds without any turnovers or misses. His perfect shooting night is a franchise record for most makes without a miss in

The Clippers have won four in a row and six of their last seven games. Anthony Davis had 27 points, and Kai Jones added 18 on 9-for-9 shooting to

lead the Mavericks.

Davis grabbed his left knee in the first half and his stomach multiple times in the second, though he continued to play. After being acquired in a trade with the Los Angeles Lakers, Davis missed time with an abdominal injury.

Grizzlies 109, Pistons 103

In Detroit, Desmond Bane scored 38 points, Zach Edey had a career-high 21 rebounds and the Memphis Grizzlies held off the Detroit Pistons.

Ja Morant was a late scratch for the Grizzlies, who had lost seven of nine, because of an illness. Jaren Jackson had 27 points and 11 rebounds.

Cade Cunningham, returning after missing six games with a calf strain, had 25 points and nine rebounds for the Pistons, who have lost three of four. Ausar

Thompson added 18 points and 11 rebounds.

Detroit trailed 91-85 when center Isaiah Stewart sat with five fouls. With Detroit's usual starter, Jalen Duren, missing the game with an injury, the Pistons were forced to use 6-foot-6 Thompson against the 7-3 3/4 Edey.

Timberwolves 114, 76ers 109

In Philadelphia, Anthony Edwards scored 37 points, Rudy Gobert added 23 points and 19 rebounds and the Minnesota Timberwolves extended their winning streak to five games with victory over the Philadelphia 76ers.

Julius Randle chipped in 15 points and Donte DiVincenzo 13 for the Timberwolves, who won for the sixth time in seven games.

Quentin Grimes led Philadelphia with 28 points on 10-for-18 shooting, including 6 for 10 from long distance. Guerschon Yabusele scored 19 points, Lonnie Walker IV had 18 and Jared Butler 16 as the Sixers lost their 11th straight game and for the 14th time in 15 games. Philadelphia last won on March 16, at Dallas.

After Philadelphia rallied to within 111-109 with just under 15 seconds remaining, Edward fought off a double-team, rising up to hit a 3-pointer at the shot-clock buzzer, making it 114-109. Yabusele missed a 3-pointer with 5 seconds left and Edwards grabbed the rebound, sealing the win.

Bucks 121, Heat 115 OT

In Miami, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 36 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists, Kevin Porter Jr. had 24 points off the bench and the Milwaukee Bucks beat the Miami Heat in overtime.

Porter had 12 rebounds, eight assists and a layup with 11 seconds left in overtime for a 119-115 lead.

Bam Adebayo had 31 points, 12 rebounds and five assists for Miami, which got a season-high 24 from Alec Burks and 20 from Davion Mitchell.

The Bucks (43-34) clinched a playoff berth earlier Saturday when New York beat Atlanta, then moved past Detroit - which lost to Memphis - into the No. 5 spot in the Eastern Conference

Miami (35-43) fell a half-game behind Chicago in the race for No. 9 in the East. The Heat are 1 1/2 games behind No. 8 Atlanta and three games behind No.

Chukwuemeka scores for Dortmund

Buendia late goal gives subdued Leverkusen victory in title chase

HEIDENHEIM, Germany, April 6, (AP): Emiliano Buendia's stoppagetime winner against Heidenheim boosted Bayer Leverkusen's faint hopes of defending the Bundesliga title.

Four days after a shock German Cup semifinal loss to third-division Arminia Bielefeld, Leverkusen created few meaningful chances until substitute Buendia curled a shot from outside the penalty area in off the post in the 1-0 win.

Leverkusen restored a six-point gap to league leader Bayern Munich, which

beat Augsburg 3-1. Six games remain. Last-minute goals were a headline feature of Leverkusen's Bundesligawinning campaign last season, but a team once viewed as near unbeatable was largely second best to 16th-placed Heidenheim. At times, Leverkusen seemed headed for what would have been a fifth loss in seven games across competitions.

Carney Chukwuemeka got his first start and first goal since joining Borussia Dortmund on loan from Chelsea as Freiburg was beaten 4-1.

After Karim Adeyemi's goal gave Dortmund the lead, Chukwuemeka hit a shot which took a deflection off a defender and looped over the goalkeeper.

After injuries disrupted Chukwuemeka's development at Chelsea, the goal was his first in any competition for over a year.

Serhou Guirassy and Jamie Gittens also scored in what was one of Dort-



Leverkusen's Jeremie Frimpong, left, and Heidenheim's Frans Krätzig vie for the ball during the German Bundesliga soccer match between 1. FC Heidenheim and Bayer Leverkusen, at the Voith-Arena in Hei-denheim, Germany. (AP)

mund's most commanding performances since Niko Kovac took over as coach just over two months ago.

Dortmund is up to eighth in the Bundesliga standings - one place behind Freiburg and four points off the Champions League places - ahead of its Champions League quarterfinal with Barcelona on Wednesday. After a German Cup semifinal loss in his first game, Zsolt Low got his first win as the Leipzig coach, 3-1 over Hoffenheim.



Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo (34) is fouled by Miami Heat guard Pelle Larsson, left, during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Miami. (AP)

'Throughout the season, this team has shown something'

Enrique's guile guides perfect PSG to 13th Ligue 1 title

PARIS, April 6, (AP): Luis Enrique was mobbed by his staff members and thrown into the air in celebration after Paris Saint-Germain won Ligue 1 with six games to spare.

The coach did not escape a drenching either, as he was doused from water bottles after the 1-0 win over Angers secured the record-extending 13th French title without having lost yet.

Only a draw was needed but teenage forward Désiré Doué got the only goal at a festive Parc des Princes bathed in sunshine. That made it 23 wins in 28 games so far, with 80 goals scored and 26 conceded.

After second-placed Monaco lost at Brest 2-1 later, PSG had a massive lead of 24 points.

It was PSG's 11th French championship and fourth straight in 13 seasons since Qatari backer QSI took over the club. The previous two came in 1986 and 1994.

"The club has so many achievements. The objectives are to play attractive soccer and to go and win trophies," Luis Enrique said.

On a lap of honor, they stopped at the Auteuil section of the stadium and celebrated with the fans. "The fans are so proud of us and we gave them this title," Luis Enrique

said. "Throughout the season, this team has shown something. The fact that other soccer fans, who are not PSG fans, like our style of play is a huge honor for us.' For PSG captain Marquinhos it was a 10th Ligue 1 winners' medal after

joining the club in 2013 from Roma as a highly rated 19-year-old central In the post-galactico era, with the team shorn of stars such as Lionel Messi, Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Kylian

Mbappé, and Neymar, Marquinhos felt there was more unity. "We're seeing beautiful things this year, a communion. This title recognizes the work we've done," he said. "I



PSG's players celebrate winning the French League One championship title after the soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Angers at Parc des Princes Stadium in Paris. (AP)

didn't win the title twice (in 2017 it went to Monaco and in 2021 to Lille). That's why I told everyone to celebrate the title because it hurts when you don't win it."

Having won the French Super Cup and Ligue 1, PSG remains in the hunt for a quadruple of trophies. It hosts Aston Villa on Wednesday in the quarterfinals of the Champions League, a trophy PSG has never won. Then the French Cup final against Reims on May 24.

And to cap a dominant season made easier by the lack of a consistent rival, with Marseille and Monaco failing to sustain a challenge, PSG could also become the first French side to go through an entire league unbeaten.

PSG labored against an Angers side battling relegation and which has lost its last five games without scoring.

Midfielder Vitinha had a long-distance shot brilliantly saved by Angers goalkeeper Yahia Fofana late in the first half. But otherwise PSG failed to trouble

the visitor until the 55th minute, when Doué adroitly volleyed in Georgia winger Khvicha Kvaratskhelia 's pinpoint cross to the back post. Ligue 1 top scorer Ousmane Dembélé came on in the second half but

failed to add to his league-leading 21 Philipp Köhn was restored as Monaco's No. 1 after being dropped earlier

this season. After being at fault for both goals

against Brest, he may find himself back on the bench. Köhn scored an own goal in the 42nd

minute and then completely misjudged a bouncing shot in stoppage time.

The defeat weakened Monaco's grip on second place in a hard-fought battle for Champions League qualification next season, with the top four qualify-

Attacking midfielder Rayan Cherki's winner helped Lyon beat Lille 2-1 and move up to fourth place.

Defender Bafodé Diakité put Lille ahead in the first minute following a corner. Veteran forward Alexandre Lacazette equalized from the penalty spot late in the first half.

With 20 minutes to go midfielder Corentin Tolisso nodded the ball down to Cherki, who drilled a low shot inside the right post and then fell on his back in celebration.

Milan fights back from two goals down to draw at home to Fiorentina

Thuram bags a bizarre goal as Inter concedes draw at Parma

Thuram enjoyed a bittersweet return to the city of his birth as he scored a bizarre goal that even had his famous father shaking his

His goal extended Inter Milan's lead to 2-0 by halftime at Parma but the Serie A front-runner couldn't hold it and ended up drawing 2-2

Inter inched four points clear of second-placed Napoli, which visits Bologna on Monday.

Parma's fourth straight draw moved it four points above the relegation zone.

Inter is in the hunt for a treble which it achieved in 2010, under Jose Mourinho. The Nerazzurri drew with AC Milan 1-1 in the first leg of their Italian Cup semifinal midweek and play at Bayern Munich in the Champions League quarterfinals on Tuesday.

Despite the intense schedule, coach Simone Inzaghi opted not to rotate his squad and Inter took the lead in the 15th minute thanks to

several strokes of fortune. Lautaro Martinez's attempt at a one-two was intercepted by a Parma defender but the ricochet came to Federico Dimarco, whose cross was deflected by another Parma player to a completely unmarked Matteo Darmian. And his effort clipped the right post but



Inter Milan's Carlos Augusto, right, fights for the ball with Parma's Drissa Camara during the Serie A soccer match between Parma and Inter, at the Ennio Tardini Stadium in Parma, Italy. (AP)

rolled in.

Inter goalkeeper Yann Sommer made two fantastic saves inside the opening 20 minutes before the visitors doubled their lead in even stranger circumstances.

Thuram spectacularly shinned a cross from Henrikh Mkhitaryan but it looped up in the air and goalwards. Pontus Almqvist tried to clear it off the line but the Parma winger kicked it off his own face and in.

Thuram's father, World Cup winner Lilian Thuram, was watching from the stands and both he and his son looked embarrassed.

Thuram was born in Parma while his father was playing for the team.

It was Thuram's 14th league goal this season - 17th across all competitions - and a personal record for the France international.

Parma got back into the match on the hour mark when halftime substitute Adrián Bernabé drilled into the bottom right corner from 20 meters for his first goal in Se-

Another substitute helped Parma turn the match around completely nine minutes later when Jacob Ondrejka's effort was deflected past Sommer.

AC Milan also had to fight back from two goals down to draw 2-2 at home to Fiorentina.

The Rossoneri got off to a dreadful start as they found themselves 2-0 down inside 10 minutes. Milan defender Malick Thiaw bundled the ball into his own net in the seventh minute and Moise Kean volleyed in Fiorentina's second three minutes later.

United States international Yunus Musah was at fault for both goals and he was hauled off in the 23rd, moments after his compatriot Christian Pulisic combined with Tammy Abraham for the latter to pull one back for Milan.

Musah appeared distraught and was consoled by coach Sérgio Conceição.

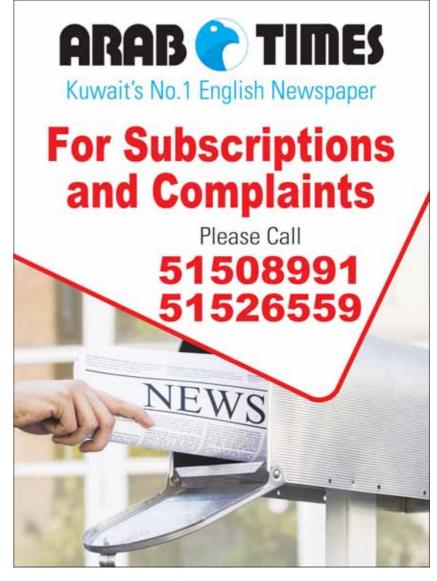
His replacement, Luka Jović, scored the equalizer - against his old club - in the 64th.

Milan remained ninth, four eighth-placed below Fiorentina, which was level on points with the two clubs immediately above it. Bottom club Monza looks ever

to Como 3-1 left it 10 points from Como moved 10 points above

the bottom three.

more doomed after losing at home





Fulham's Timothy Castagne, left, challenges for the ball with Liverpool's Cody Gakpo during the English Premier League soccer match between Fulham and Liverpool, at Craven Cottage, Lon-

Sports

Bronze for Kuwait as GCC Beach Games begin



Kuwaiti flag bearer hoists the national flag during the opening ceremony.



The bronze-winning sailing team.

Oman welcomes over 330 athletes

MUSCAT, April 6: The third edition of the **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Beach** Games officially kicked off in Muscat, Oman, under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Sultan bin Shihab Al Said. The opening ceremony was held at the scenic Lake Theater in Qurum Natural Park and welcomed over 330 athletes, including 65 representing Kuwait. The multi-sport event runs until April 11.

The ceremony was attended by prominent sports officials, including Sheikh Fahad Al-Nasser, President of the Kuwait Olympic Committee, and Sheikh Khaled Al-Badr Al-Sabah, President of the Kuwaiti and Asian Aquatics Federations. Kuwaiti sailor Amina Shah proudly carried the national flag during the athletes' parade, accompanied by members of the administrative delegation and team players.

Kuwait is participating in six events: beach soccer, beach volleyball, sailing, paragliding (air sports), athletics, and the equestrian discipline of tent pegging.

The Kuwait Paragliding Team – featuring Ibrahim Al-

Rashoud, Ahmed Al-Mas, Mohammed Al-Dosari, and Talal Al-Mutawa – continues its competition today (Monday) with three scheduled rounds, following its first-round per-

Ahmed Al-Shallahi, Chairman of the Kuwait Air Sports Club, expressed his confidence in the team's ability to achieve strong results. He thanked the Kuwait Olympic Committee and its President, Sheikh Fahad Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, for their continued support and for ensuring optimal preparation and conditions for the athletes.

Kuwait's national sailing team clinched a bronze medal in the Optimist team competition on the opening day. The team and Abdulaziz Al-Mansour. The UAE claimed the gold medal, while the host nation, Oman, secured silver.

The beach volleyball tournament draw divided the teams

into four groups: Group 1: Kuwait 2, Oman 3, Qatar 1

Group 2: Kuwait 1, Oman 1, UAE 1 Group 3: Oman 2, Saudi Arabia 2, Bahrain 1

Group 4: Qatar 2, Saudi Arabia 1, Bahrain 2, Oman 4 Kuwait 1 will face UAE 1, and Kuwait 2 will take on Oman 3, with both matches scheduled for 9:00 AM at the northern Al Hail Beach courts.

Kuwait's beach volleyball squad includes Taha Sadiq, Jassim Al-Sabbagh, Nawaf Al-Rashidi, and Abdulwahab Talib.



Al-Hajri shines with flawless equestrian league 5th round

KUWAIT CITY, April 6: Hamad Al-Hajri delivered a flawless performance to win the fifth round of the Kuwait Equestrian League, claiming victory in the prestigious Grand Prix. Competing at a height of 140 cm, Al-Hajri completed the round in an impressive 31.48 seconds without incurring any penalties.

Following Al-Hajri in the rankings were top riders Nick Channing, Steven Daniels, Fawaz Al-Subaie, Yara Al-Hunaidi, Abdullah Al-Awadhi, and Fawaz Al-Rashed. The winners were honored by Sufyan Buqmaz, Managing Director of the Kuwait Equestrian Federation.

In the Medium Prize round (130 cm), jockey Rakan Al-Hasawi took first place after a strong performance against a competitive field. He was trailed by Nick Channing, Abrar Al-Musallam, Hamad Al-Hajri, and Ghazi Al-Fulaij.

The tournament's opening day featured an exciting fourth round (135 cm), where Fawaz Al-Subaie emerged victorious. He was followed closely by Abdullah Al-Awadhi, Nick Channing, Fawaz Rashid, and Marshood Al-Mar-

comprised Ali Anki, Hamad Al-Masoud, Bader Bu Hamad,

Verstappen holds off McLarens to win 4th straight Japanese GP

Norris and Piastri complete podium

SUZUKA, Japan, April 6, (AP): Max Verstappen won Sunday's Japanese Grand Prix to break a "mini-slump" of two wins from 16 races but needed a drive that his Red Bull team engineer called "perfection" to get it

It was Verstappen's fourth straight victory on the Suzuka circuit in central Japan and breaks the momentum of the Piastri, who won the season's first two races in Australia and China.

"We still have work to do," Verstappen said. "But it does show if we nail everything we can be up there."

He did just that.

The four-time defending Formula 1 champion, Verstappen started from pole position after setting a courserecord time in qualifying, which he called "insane." Norris placed second and Piastri was third. The track was dry despite rain earlier in the day to produce an incident-free race.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc finished fourth followed by George Russell of Mercedes and teammate Kimi Antonelli in sixth. Japanese driver Yuki



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands celebrates with his trophy on the podium after the Japanese Formula One Grand Prix at the Suzuka Circuit in Suzuka, central Japan. (AP)

Tsunoda finished 12th in his first drive with Red Bull's top team.

"We keep pushing," Verstappen said. "Unbelievable. A great weekend

Norris leads the driver's standings after three races with 62 points to 61 for Verstappen.

The weekend turned when Verstappen took the pole on his record lap

Liverpool beaten by Fulham

Saturday in qualifying. And there was only one incident of note in Sunday's race - one that's being dubbed the "grass-cutting moment." Most of the leaders pitted around

the 20-lap mark with Verstappen and Norris exiting the pits at almost exactly the same time with Norris forced to drive over the grass, unable to get by Verstappen and he tried to

"He drove himself into the grass," Verstappen said on the radio.

Norris said he had no bone to pick with Verstappen.

"He had the position and the right to do what he did," Norris said. Race stewards agreed.

After the race, Verstappen saluted Japanese engine maker Honda, which this season will end its run of supplying the Red Bull team. And of course the win came on the Suzuka circuit, which Honda runs.

"If was fun, just pushing very hard at the end," Verstappen said. "The two McLarens were pushing very hard. We didn't give up improving the car and today it was in its best form."

pion - and reached just one final in seven seasons with Mbappé - yet looked the most impressive team in the round

of 16, eliminating Liverpool, the likely

The bottom half of the draw has

three domestic league leaders and one

team struggling in eighth place in its

Bayern Munich hosts Inter Milan on

Barcelona starts heavily favored

Tuesday in the stadium that stages the

Wednesday at home to Borussia Dort-

mund, which might need to win this

Champions League just to get an entry

Real Madrid faces a path toward

a record-extending 16th Champions

League title just as difficult as the epic

run of comeback wins in 2022: Mbap-

pé's PSG, Chelsea, Manchester City

and Liverpool in the final.

champion of England.

final on May 31.

into the next one.

Vinícius misses a penalty

Barca fails to capitalize on Real loss

BARCELONA, Spain, April 6, (AP): Vinícius Júnior missed a penalty and Real Madrid conceded an injury-time goal in a stunning 2-1 home loss to Valencia that shook its La Liga title

The shock result for Madrid was softened hours later when league leader Barcelona was held at home by Real Betis to 1-1. That meant Hansi Flick's side extended its lead to only four points over its fierce rival. There are eight rounds

left including a clasico in May. Hugo Duro came off Valencia's bench and headed home the winner that silenced Santiago Bernabeu Stadium deep in stoppage time.

Goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili saved Vinícius' early penalty and mo-ments later Mouctar Diakhaby headed the visitors in front in the 17th minute. Vinícius scored from close range to

equalize in the 50th, but Mamardashvili and the defense held on until Duro struck and gave Valencia its first away win of the season. Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti de-

fended his team's effort, even saying that Madrid "deserved" to win the game and Vinícius' penalty was one of the match's "details that doomed us." But the Italian manager conceded

that the unexpected loss was a blow in "It is much harder now to fight for

the league, but we only have one idea and that is to fight until the end because we still have a chance after this game," Ancelotti said.

He had to play third-string goalkeeper Fran González, who made his first-team debut for Madrid at age 19, because Thibaut Courtois and Andriy Lunin were injured. Ancelotti said he hopes both of his more experienced goalies will be fit in time to face Arsenal.

"We hadn't won on the road and there is not a better place to do so than here," Valencia midfielder Javi Guerra said. "There are three vital points for us and at a stadium where very few teams

get a good result." The victory confirmed the team's improvement since Carlos Corberán replaced Ruben Baraja in December. It has risen from the relegation zone to 15th



Barcelona's Lamine Yamal, left, and Betis' Romain Perraud compete for the ball during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Barcelona and Real Betis at the Lluis Companys Olympic stadium in Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

Southampton relegated from Premier League

MANCHESTER, England, April 6, (AP): Southampton became the first team to be relegated from the Premier League this season after a 3-1 defeat to Tottenham on Sunday.

With just 10 points from 31 games, last-placed Southampton cannot finish above Wolverhampton Wanderers in

Top of the table Liverpool lost 3-2 at Fulham, but remains 11 points clear of second-placed Arsenal, which drew 1-1 with Everton on Saturday.

Southampton's relegation is the joint fourth earliest in the Premier League era. Derby's drop on March 29 in 2008

is still the earliest relegation since the league began in 1992. Huddersfield and Fulham suffered earlier relegations than Southampton, which is now joint with Leicester in 2002. Meanwhile, Two English clubs

stand in the way of a stellar Champions League semifinal between Real Madrid with Kylian Mbappé and his long-time previous team Paris Saint-Germain. Mbappé and Madrid are at Arsenal

on Tuesday for the first leg of their quarterfinal. The return game is on PSG, fresh from winning the French

league title with an unbeaten record for coach Luis Enrique, hosts Aston Villa on Wednesday.

The new Champions League for-



Chelsea's Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall, foreground and Brentford's Mikkel Damsgaard vie for the ball, during the English Premier League soccer match between Brentford and Chelsea, at the Gtech Community Stadium, in London. (AP)

mat with a tennis-style seeded knockout bracket set through to the final put those four teams in the same half of the

Madrid already won six of the past 11 Champions League titles even before adding Mbappé for this season

when his contract in Paris expired. PSG has never been European cham-

This time, after eliminating Man City and Atletico Madrid, coach Carlo Ancelotti must next outsmart Arsenal and Mikel Arteta who are left with one realistic chance of a trophy.

Mbappé and defender Antonio Rüdiger - who scored the decisive penalty in a shootout to beat Atletico - were cleared Friday by UEFA to play in London. Their one-game bans for excessive celebrations were deferred for one-year probationary periods.

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