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## Opinion

### Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

## Arab money is stolen ... and international banks use it for loans

THESE are questions rising in the minds of people: Where does the money from the Middle East, and corrupt countries in Africa and Asia, go? Why do people in these countries continue to suffer from poverty despite having vast natural resources? If this fortune were properly utilized, would their circumstances likely be much better than they are today?

In response to these questions, a Western tycoon said, "Corrupt officials and rulers in Middle Eastern countries, where corruption and lack of transparency are widespread, often have bank accounts in many Western or European banks, with the majority of them in Switzerland. Most of this money is not invested in the countries from where they were stolen. Instead, it is deposited in accounts under secret numbers or fake identities. These accounts often go unchecked because their owners

may have died, been assassinated, had no heirs, or were overthrown by political opponents.

"As a result, using this money has become impossible due to the fear of accountability. Therefore, it effectively becomes the property of the bank and is included in its assets according to the laws in our countries. Some laws state that if no activity occurs in a bank account within 15 or 20 years, the bank has the right to seize the funds, which may include gold, jewelry, investment certificates, and stocks.

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Amiri Diwan photo

His Highness the Amir receives UAE's State Minister for Youth Affairs Dr. Sultan Al-Neyadi, and astronauts Nora Al-Matrooshi and Mohammad Al-Mulla at Bayan Palace on Monday.

### Kuwait Amir receives UAE Minister for Youth Affairs

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received UAE's State Minister for Youth Affairs Dr. Sultan Al-Neyadi, and astronauts Nora Al-Matrooshi and Mohammad Al-Mulla at Bayan Palace Monday morning.

Kuwait's Information and Culture Minister and State Minister for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi and other senior officials attended the reception.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also received UAE's State Minister for Youth Affairs Dr. Sultan Al-Neyadi, and astronauts Nora Al-Matrooshi and Mohammad Al-Mulla at Bayan Palace Monday morning.

Kuwait's Information and Culture Minister and State Minister for Youth Affairs Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi and Crown Prince's Office Director Lieutenant General Jamal Al-Theyab attended the reception. (KUNA)

## KUWAIT JOINS REGIONAL MARKETS DECLINE OVER OIL, TRADE FEARS

— Details Page 8 —

# Panic Monday sparks global sell-off

Equity carnage spreads across Europe and Asia

FRANKFURT, April 7, (AP): Global stock markets extended a severe plunge Monday, fueled by fears that U.S. tariffs would lead to a global economic slowdown. European and Asian shares saw dramatic losses, the leading U.S. index flirted with bear market territory in pre-market trading, and oil prices sagged.

The massive sell-off in riskier assets at the start of the trading week follows President Donald Trump's announcement of sharply higher U.S. import taxes and retaliation from China that saw markets fall sharply Thursday and Friday.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index lost nearly 8% shortly after the market opened and futures trading for the benchmark was briefly suspended. It closed down 7.8% at 31,136.58.

European shares followed Asian markets lower, led by Germany's DAX index, which briefly fell more than 10% at the open on the Frankfurt exchange, but recovered some ground to move down 5.8% in morning trading. In Paris, the CAC 40 shed 5.8%, while Britain's FTSE 100 lost 4.9% in the European morning.

U.S. futures signaled further weakness ahead. For the S&P 500, they lost 3.4%, while for the Dow Jones Industrial Average, they shed 3.1%. Futures for the Nasdaq lost 5.3%. If the pre-market futures losses materialize when the U.S. market opens, the S&P 500 will enter bear market territory - defined as a fall of more than 20% from the peak. The index was off 17.4% as of the end of last week.

On Friday, the worst market crisis since the COVID-19 pandemic shifted into a higher gear as the S&P 500 plummeted 6% and the Dow plunged 5.5%. The Nasdaq composite dropped 3.8%.

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## Amiri decree nullifies policy on cashing out unused leave

KUWAIT CITY, April 7, (KUNA): An Amiri decree was issued on Monday canceling a scheme to exchange unused leave days with cash during years of employment.

Amiri decree 63/2025, signed by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, canceled the third article of item 41 of the decree issued on April 4, 1979 concerning civil service. After the review and approval, the new decree was passed and the government was tasked with implementation after publishing the decree in the official gazette.

Turkish firm secures contract

## Kuwait moves forward with GCC railway network plans

By Mohammad Ghanem  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan on Sunday signed the contract for the study, design and preparation of tender documents for the first phase of the railway project with a Turkish global consulting firm in the presence of Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to Kuwait Tuba Sonmez.

Al-Mashaan confirmed that the project is in line with the vision of the leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to establish a passenger and freight railway network linking the GCC countries; spanning 2,177 kilometers -- starting from the State of Kuwait, passing through the other GCC countries and reaching the Sultanate of Oman.

She said the section designated for Kuwait is a track extending from Shaddadiya to Kuwait Railway Station with an area of two million square meters, and then to Nuwaiseb with a length of 111 kilometers.

"Once the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) awards the contract and obtains the approval of the State Audit Bureau (SAB), we will sign the design for this track. Upon completion of the design, the tender for implementation will be issued," Al-Mashaan explained.

Meanwhile, acting Assistant Under-



Photo by Rezk Tawfiq

Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al-Mashaan during the contract signing for the first phase of the railway project with a Turkish global consulting firm.

secretary for the Planning and Development Sector and Official Spokesperson of the ministry and the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) Eng. Ahmed Al-Saleh revealed in a statement on the sidelines of the contract signing that "the project is part of the Gulf railway network, which will be established in the coming years to connect the GCC countries."

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## Belgian ambassador highlights growing trade, visa exchange with Kuwait

# 'US tariffs will have little impact on GCC'

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh  
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Belgian Ambassador to Kuwait Christian Dooms said he does not believe that US President Donald Trump's tariffs will significantly impact the global and Gulf economies, particularly the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, due to their limited exposure to the US market.

In his statement on the sidelines of a press conference on the launching of Francophone Month at the end of April, Dooms pointed out that Kuwait has small oil exports to the United States, ranging between two to three percent; so the tariffs imposed by Trump will not affect the Kuwaiti economy, while a number of other Gulf countries will be affected.

Dooms praised the development of Belgian-Kuwaiti bilateral relations, which he described as "excellent". He said the two countries celebrated the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations last year.

He revealed that the Consular Section at the Belgian Embassy issued 2,800 visas last year; indicating the number is expected to increase this year. He added the volume of trade exchange between the two countries amounts to 800 million Euros.

Asked about the role of Kuwait



Photo by Mohammad Morsi

Belgian Ambassador to Kuwait Christian Dooms addresses the press on Monday, announcing the launch of Francophone Month celebrations at the end of April.

and other GCC countries in the current events in the region, he asserted that Kuwait plays an important role in humanitarian work and it is a strong advocate of the Palestinian cause. He stated that "in international forums, Kuwait always insists on the necessity of implementing the two-State solution. It also calls on the international community to recognize Palestine as a full member of the United Nations

-- a message that Kuwait repeatedly advocates for in international forums."

He disclosed that an economic delegation, representing 40 Belgian companies, is expected to visit Kuwait at the end of this month for two days. He said the program for the visit will include discussions with Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) to conclude commercial contracts, as well as promote Kuwait products.

He confirmed that political consultations between the two countries will be held in June, while the meeting between the European Union and the GCC countries will be held in October. He is hoping that his country's foreign minister will attend this meeting.

Regarding cooperation in the field of higher education and the number of Kuwaitis studying at universities in Belgium; Dooms said there are no accurate statistics, stressing that Belgian universities are of high standard and internationally recognized, and that studies there are available in English.

He also stated that he aspires for strengthening cooperation between the two countries in the healthcare sector, as his country is renowned for its expertise in this field. He said "I aspire to see Belgian doctors in Kuwait to share their extensive expertise in treating cancer and diabetes, which are prevalent here." He added his country suffers from a shortage of nurses; otherwise, he would have preferred to see Belgian nurses in Kuwait.

On the military and defense cooperation between the two countries, Dooms disclosed "we do not have a resident military attaché in Kuwait," explaining that his country has a military attaché in Abu Dhabi, representing all GCC countries.

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## GCC chief praises Kuwait role in Gulf cooperation



KUNA photo

Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council Jassem Al-Budaiwi receives Kuwait's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

RIYADH, April 7, (KUNA): Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Jassem Al-Budaiwi praised the valuable and significant efforts made by Kuwait in supporting the Council's journey.

The General Secretariat said in a statement on Monday that Al-Budaiwi received Kuwait's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Sabah Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah on Sunday at his residence in Riyadh.

During the meeting, Al-Budaiwi stressing that its initiatives and constructive stances reflect its constant keenness to enhance joint Gulf action and achieve the aspirations of the Council states towards more integration and solidarity.

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2 Ghana, Kuwait back peace, stability, sustainable development: envoy

5 'Jleeb crisis calls for radical solutions; labor residential cities must proceed'

## NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya met Monday the Head of the Red Crescent Society Khaled Al-Maqamis, where they touched on the society's activities and projects regionally and globally.

The two sides also discussed enhancing cooperation with international organizations affiliated with the United Nations, humanitarian non-governmental organizations, and civil society organizations to support joint efforts to respond to humanitarian emergencies. (KUNA)

## Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 04:10 Asr ..... 15:23  
 Sunrise .. 05:31 Maghrib .. 18:10  
 Zohr ..... 11:50 Isha ..... 19:28

## Local

## Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

**By Day:** Hot with light variable wind to light to moderate northeasterly wind, with speeds of 06-30 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

## Weather

**By Night:** Rather hot to mild with light variable wind to light to moderate southeasterly wind, with speeds of 06-28 km/h.

**Station** **Max Exp** **Min Rec**  
 Kuwait Airport 35 23

Abdaly 35 21  
 Jahra 36 25  
 Salmiyah 33 24  
 Jal Aliyah 34 23  
 Nuwaisib 33 24  
 Wafra 36 20



Ambassadors at the event.



Ghanaian ambassador at the cake-cutting ceremony.



The Ghanaian ambassador with dignitaries. Photos by Mohammad Morsi

## Embassy celebrates 68th 'versary of independence

## Ghana, Kuwait back peace, stability, sustainable development: envoy

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Minister of Justice Nasser Al-Sumait has affirmed that the Kuwaiti-Ghanaian relations are longstanding, dating back to more than 50 years. He recalled the stance of Ghana during the brutal Iraqi invasion, its support for Kuwait, and its deployment of troops to participate in the liberation of Kuwait.

Al-Sumait made the statement at the reception organized by the Embassy of Ghana on the occasion of the 68th anniversary of independence at the Crowne Plaza Hotel recently. Several ambassadors and heads of diplomatic missions attended the event.

He asserted "we extend a hand of communication to them on this happy occasion and wish them success in all fields."

He also confirmed coordination with the Ministry of Interior regarding the special prison for civilians.

Asked about the timing of the implementation of the Personal Status Law, he disclosed "a committee has been

formed for this purpose. It consists of distinguished judges, as well as the heads and directors at the Public Prosecution, with the assistance of specialists. The committee has started its work. We expect it to be ready within the coming months. The Personal Status Law has been reviewed in its entirety, including the stipulations on alimony."

On the introduction of new draft laws, he confirmed the comprehensive review of the legislative system in the country. "Kuwait has 982 laws in force. Our goal in the first phase is to review 10 percent of these laws and divide them into stages -- from most to least important -- within a year. The political leadership issued a directive to fully support women and this will be reflected in all amendments."

On the other hand, Ambassador of the Republic of Ghana to Kuwait Mohammad Habib Idris pointed out that Ghana and Kuwait share the fundamental values in terms of promoting peace, stability and sustainable development in various countries around the world.

He continued, "these principles led to the establishment of

official diplomatic relations between the two friendly countries 51 years ago. These relations have continued to grow steadily, characterized by fruitful initiatives and constructive cooperation at the bilateral and multilateral levels."

He added "this friendly relationship was clearly demonstrated in the meeting between former President of Ghana Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah on the sidelines of the 79th United Nations General Assembly in New York in September 2024."

He pointed out that in the field of trade, Ghana is a market for Kuwaiti products, such as refined petroleum derivatives and industrial chemicals, while Kuwait imports various products from Ghana like gold, lumber, cocoa products, tropical fruits and edible nuts.

Regarding food and aromatic oils, he indicated that global economic fluctuations are a major incentive to strengthen economic cooperation between Ghana and Kuwait to protect their economies from external shocks.

He added "we are working hard with Kuwait to sign and

implement a number of bilateral agreements and initiatives, most notably the agreement to protect and encourage investments, and the activation of the strategic partnership agreement signed by the two countries in July 2022 to finance projects in the fields of agriculture, education, health and entrepreneurship at a cost of KD20 million through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED). Political consultations will also be held between the two countries' foreign ministries in the coming days."

He highlighted bilateral cooperation in the field of development, explaining that Ghana has been benefiting from grants and loans provided by KFAED since 1977 -- totaling \$177 million, for projects in the fields of power generation, and hospital and road construction.

He revealed that 14 Kuwaiti charitable organizations are currently active in underprivileged Ghanaian communities; operating in the fields of health, education, drinking water provision, and mosque construction. He believes this is another evidence of the deep friendship between the two countries and their people.



Road maintenance underway.

Al-Seyassah photo

## Major road repairs in 34 areas

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: The Ministry of Public Works announced that major road maintenance will begin in 34 areas from April 5-10.

The Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART) will be working in eight of these areas, including Abdally Road, Fourth Ring Road intersection with Morocco Road, Fahaeel Road

(opposite Mishref-Salwa), flyover at the Fourth Ring Road intersection towards Salmiya, Subiya Road, Fourth Ring Road from the Morocco Road intersection to the Damascus Street intersection, Salmi Road towards Kuwait City, and Seventh Ring Road from Kilometer 24 to Kilometer 27 in both directions.

The Maintenance Engineering Sector will carry out work in the remaining 26 areas in the six governorates.

## Decree allows UAE embassy to own real estate in Kuwait

HQ, diplomats residences to be built on plot

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Decree No. 62/2025 has been issued to replace the text of Article 1 of Decree No. 140 for authorizing the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates to own real estate in Kuwait, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Decree states the following:

## Article One:

The text of Article 1 of Decree No. 140/2023 is replaced with the following: "The Embassy of the United Arab Emirates is authorized to own real estate in West Mishref, with a total area of 6,000 square meters, including 3,000 square meters of plot No. 10 in Block 1, and 3,000 square meters of Plot Nos. 69, 70, 71, and 72 in Block B. The land will be used to estab-

lish a headquarters for the military attaché and build residences for diplomats, as outlined in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Letter No. 686, dated May 23, 2024."

## Article Two:

The ministers, each within their respective capacities, shall implement this decree, which shall take effect from the date of issuance and be published in the official gazette.

## Power cuts in some areas as rising temp pushes up index

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Due to ongoing maintenance and soaring temperatures that reached 35 degrees Celsius at noon, the electricity load index has once again approached the red zone; peaking at 10,733 megawatts during peak hours -- from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Sources from the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy confirmed that several production units at the power stations are still under maintenance; but will soon be back to operation in order to help ease the strain on the power grid during peak hours. They added that 600 megawatts are currently being sourced from the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA) to overcome the challenges posed by the high temperatures.

Sources added the ministry continues to urge citizens and expatriates to conserve energy; particularly by reducing the use of air conditioners, which consume the largest portion of energy production.

Furthermore, the ministry announced that in order to maintain the stability of the country's electricity system; it may be necessary to implement power outages of up to two hours in certain residential, agricultural and industrial areas.

## Other Voices

## The ancient roots of lottery

By Ahmad alsarraf

THE word "lottery" comes from the Dutch word "lot", which means fate, luck, or chance. It reflects the essence of the lottery as a game of chance.

Over time, the term evolved in different languages, becoming "lotteria" in Italian, "loterie" in French, and "lottery" in English, and eventually spreading globally.

In Arabic, the concept of a lottery is derived from the word "nasib", meaning luck. Its roots can be traced back to ancient times. Early forms of lotteries were used to make decisions and distribute property by chance. Their history dates back to the Roman era, and even earlier. Both ancient and modern forms of lotteries have been used to fund government projects of a social nature, such as building hospitals, providing medicine, or financing major national infrastructure projects.

Strange and sometimes humorous criticisms and comments have been circulating on social media regarding the recent controversy surrounding the Hala February Festival prizes and bank raffle prizes. However, discussing these matters is currently prohibited.

First and foremost, distributing lottery prizes and other prizes is not a new practice in Kuwait. We have been familiar with lotteries since our childhood, when soft drink companies offered fun and useful prizes to those who found a picture printed under the cap of a bottle.

For a while, another commercial company distributed prizes based on stamps collected from customers' purchases at selected stores. Even the government-owned Kuwait Airways, in an effort to encourage travel, awards

passengers points for every flight they take. Once passengers accumulate a certain number of points, they can redeem them for free tickets.

The practice of distributing awards through lotteries by financial, commercial, or even governmental institutions to promote visits to a particular country or increase sales of a specific product or service is widespread globally.

The highest lottery prize in history was the \$2.04 billion Powerball jackpot, won by Edwin Castro on November 7, 2022.

Some people wonder why certain Kuwaiti banks are unique in offering such generous prizes and why no other banks around the world offer similar rewards. However, this is not accurate.

Since the beginning of the oil boom, Kuwait has been known for its high standard of living. Along with this prosperity, many citizens developed a strong desire to save money, while others rejected the notion of earning usurious interest on their deposits for religious reasons. As a result, large "interest-free" balances accumulated in banks, providing substantial returns for their shareholders for over seventy years.

This liquid cash prompted one bank to persuade regulatory authorities to permit the distribution of large monthly cash prizes to customers' non-interest-bearing accounts. Other banks soon followed suit. A fierce competition ensued among banks to capture the largest share of this "free" money, with some prizes reaching up to two million dinars. Some banks even introduced lotteries for customers who transferred their monthly salaries to their accounts.

This strategy is often based on precise bank calculations. The profits generated from investing these large, interest-free funds have enabled banks to offer huge annual prizes with little to no real cost.

email: a.alsarraf@alqabas.com.kw



Traffic police deployed near the Grand Mosque.



KRCS volunteers helped around during last ten days of Ramadan. Photos by Mohammad Morsi

## Male, female volunteer efforts during Ramadan win praise

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Khaled Al-Mughamis praised the tremendous efforts exerted by male and female volunteers in serving worshippers at the Grand Mosque during the holy month of Ramadan, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

He affirmed that the volunteers' contribu-

tions reflect the highest values of giving and dedication.

In a speech delivered during the volunteer recognition ceremony, Al-Mughamis stated that KRCS strives to achieve comprehensive development within society and contribute effectively to humanitarian work.

He highlighted that KRCS has always been at the forefront of supporting volunteer initiatives.

Al-Mughamis affirmed that volunteer work holds a special place in the hearts of Kuwaitis, who follow the example of their wise leadership and continue to strengthen its efforts in the vast field of humanitarian work.

## Illegals hiding in farms arrested

## 'I saw my friend hanging by rope'

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: An Asian, born in 1985, committed suicide by hanging himself in a desert area in the southern part of the country, reports Al-Anba daily.

A security source said the Operations Unit at the Interior Ministry received a call from an expatriate, stating that he saw his friend hanging from a rope inside a room.

Emergency, public security and ambulance patrols were dispatched to the location where they discovered that the Asian had already passed away.

A case was registered and investigations are ongoing to determine the circumstances, which prompted the Asian to end his own life.

**6 illegal expats arrested:** Ahmadi Security Directorate personnel arrested six expatriates of various nationalities for violating the Residency and Labor laws, and some who are wanted by law for committing crimes reports Al-Anba daily. This is part of ongoing security campaigns

aimed at eradicating the phenomenon of illegal marginal workers and wanted individuals in various parts of the country.

The recent arrests took place in Wafra farms. All those arrested were referred to the concerned security entity for the necessary legal action.

**Kuwaiti abused over parking:** A Kuwaiti man, in his 20s, lodged a report at Farwaniya Police Station claiming that an unidentified individual who was driving a Japanese-made car assaulted, insulted and slandered him, reports Al-Anba daily.

The incident occurred after a dispute over a parking space in front of a shopping mall. According to the citizen, while waiting for a car to vacate a parking space in front of the mall, he was approached by a vehicle driven by a man he did not recognize. When the citizen attempted to explain the situation to the driver, he was verbally abused and slandered. The driver then pushed and threatened him.

## KD35m donations collected during month of Ramadan

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: The initial proceeds from the fundraising project during the month of Ramadan has reached KD 35 million, reports Al-Anba daily. According to sources at the Ministry of Social Affairs, several charitable organizations have not yet submitted their final donations on the ministry's platform, but there are expectations that the final amount will reach KD 50 million.

They explained that nearly 30,000 requests have been registered on the Central Aid Platform, totaling 33,100 cases. During the month of Ramadan, 408 cases were offered assistance, with around 4,083 requests still under review. Meanwhile, 874 requests were rejected for failing to meet the required criteria.

Regarding the Debtors' campaign, the sources stated that as of yesterday, the platform had recorded nearly 5,500 requests, with expectations that the number will surpass 7,000 during the final week of the campaign.

They highlighted that the total funds raised for the campaign as of yesterday reached KD 12.5 million, with the number of donors exceeding 20,000.

# diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

## Al-Jarallah: honest, sincere, tolerant & man of integrity

"MY first meeting with my dear brother Ambassador Khaled Al-Jarallah (may Allah have mercy on him), 'Abu Hazem' -- the former Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister -- was in the mid-1980s in the Soviet capital, Moscow, as part of the delegation accompanying HH the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him) who was the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time." **Dr Khaled Ahmad Al-Tarrah** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.



Dr. Khaled Al-Tarrah

"The news about Khaled Al-Jarallah's death, 'Abu Hazem', during the last 10 nights of the holy month of Ramadan, was sad and heavy on the soul. Memories flooded back without warning, and the friendly and diplomatic conversations alternated between smiles and the pain of loss.

"In those sad moments, I immediately remembered my dear brother, Ambassador Ahmad Al-Fahad, Director of the Office of His Highness the Amir (may Allah protect him and grant him peace). He was 'Abu Hazem's' twin for decades, sharing diplomatic experience and rising through the ranks together. They were like brothers, friends and colleagues. But I find them more like siblings in life, because they were truly devoted to each other. Advice from one of them found its echo in the other.

"I knew 'Abu Hazem' as a wonderful person and a seasoned diplomat, whose smile often calmed angry souls at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, helping hearts and minds navigate calmly. That calm, beautiful smile absorbed the disputes that arose within the ministry and its foreign missions, as the case in other ministries and official bodies.

"Due to the busy schedule and an effort to avoid burdens, I stopped meeting and communicating with my brother Khaled Al-Jarallah. However, I made sure to contact him after his retirement, which was the least I could do. I found him with a smiling voice, a man of great heart, and a spirit that leaped toward tolerance and respect ... a man who maintained friendship and took real positions.

"Throughout his career and political life, Khaled Al-Jarallah was subjected to a barrage of criticisms, anger, jealousy, love, appreciation and gratitude ... many contradictions. We are not here to weigh who is right or wrong, but we agree that Khaled Al-Jarallah was one of the solution-makers at various levels in and outside Kuwait. He was Kuwait's wise envoy during diplomatic and political crises, and a disciple of the distinguished diplomatic authority -- HH the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad.

"I have many fond memories of the late Khaled Al-Jarallah, God willing, despite the distance of our relationship compared to others in the government family, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in particular. He was honest and sincere, offering advice on various occasions, including when he was subjected to a retaliatory attack and legal dispute by a party very close to me, that was against the 'Ministry of Foreign Affairs' and 'Abu Hazem.'

"Before the Iraqi opposition conference in London, I took the initiative to make a phone call and exchange ideas with my older brother, Khaled Al-Jarallah, about the need to represent Kuwait at the conference, as an extension of Kuwait's role in supporting the Iraqi opposition. The idea was welcomed, and thanks were expressed for the initiative. He asked for some time to consult with HH the late Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad. Indeed, without waiting long, the phone call came from my dear brother, 'Abu Hazem', requesting my attendance at the conference and officially representing Kuwait. The directive was implemented.

"I consider the discussion about Khaled Al-Jarallah unfair, even incomplete and unrealistic, if we exclude our dear brother, Ambassador Ahmad Al-Fahad, from the life, career and biography of 'Abu Hazem'. They are two people with one conscience.

"My sincere condolences and heartfelt sympathy for the family of Khaled Al-Jarallah and to my dear brother, Ambassador Ahmad Al-Fahad. We pray for Abu Fahad's health and well-being.

"May Allah have mercy on you, Abu Hazem ... my brother and friend ... you who dedicated your life to your country. "The life and career of Ambassador Khaled Al-Jarallah, may Allah have mercy on him, deserve documentation and publication."

**Also:**

"Rawdan Al-Mishari Al-Rawdan has passed away and is now in the mercy of God Almighty. May God forgive him. That kind soul, with his pure heart, ever-smiling face, gentle words, sweet company, and cheerful spirit, has left us", columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"He was a prominent figure among Kuwait's elite and one of its loyal sons, the virtuous Rawdan Al-Rawdan. May God have mercy on him and grant his family, relatives, loved ones, and friends strength and comfort during this difficult time.

"We accept what God has decreed for us, knowing that death, like life, is an undeniable reality. We are certain

that all who live must eventually pass away. Yet, we feel the deepest sorrow as we witness the loss of a shining star from Kuwaiti society, a true symbol of its people, those with clear historical imprints and the national legacy that Kuwait's history will always honor and cherish.

"The head of the esteemed Al-Rawdan family has passed away. The Al-Rawdan Diwan, a symbol of Kuwaiti history on Arabian Gulf Street, has stood as a witness to the nation's past. It is one of the remaining diwanias of Kuwait, established by the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad, may God have mercy on him.

"I had the privilege of knowing the respected Al-Rawdan, may God have mercy on him, when he served as a traffic officer in a significant role within that department.

"While many officers were confined to their offices, with access restricted to only a select few, Al-Rawdan's office was always open to all Kuwaitis, regardless of age, to offer assistance and help process their paperwork. It was this open-heartedness and commitment to service that made him widely known and beloved throughout Kuwait.

"After his retirement, he remained closely connected with people in all parts of Kuwait, frequently visiting and offering valuable advice and guidance.

"He loved all the people of Kuwait, always prioritized their well-being and maintained constant communication with them.

"May God have mercy on you, Abu Talal. May He reward you abundantly for your service to Kuwait and its people, and may He place your national work and dedication to Kuwait in the balance of your good deeds. May God bless your children."

□ □ □

"She said, 'We will be friends forever'... until they were assigned to the same department. After several years, they became bitter rivals. One of them frequently spoke ill of the other to gain the trust of their bosses and secure privileges", columnist **Sara Al-Noums** wrote for **Al-Rai** daily.

"When I discussed this with some friends, one disagreed, saying, 'This doesn't apply to everyone. My close friend works with me in the same ministry.' I asked, 'Do you work in the same department?' She replied, 'No.' I simply said, 'In a work environment, the one out of sight is often closest to the heart.'

"I am not here to dwell on negative things or suggest rejecting friendships, but it is true that many beautiful friendships fade when promotions, bonuses, and position allocations come into play. Competition and jealousy can flare up, leading some to become informants and spread gossip to tarnish the reputation of a colleague who was once a close friend. This happens more often than we realize, and many are hesitant to admit it, fearing criticism for choosing the wrong friends.

"When I asked Dr. Khaled Al-Saleh, a Kuwaiti psychiatrist, about friendships in the workplace, he explained: 'The work environment has the potential to harm deep relationships between friends. The competitive nature of work, daily mandatory meetings, and even mood fluctuations can affect the quality and dynamics of personal communication. Also, the lack of privacy in the relationship often leads to the interference and influence of others.'

"Imagine working in the same department as your spouse, or vice versa. How would you feel? I posed this question because of the unique depth that should exist in a marital relationship. Competitors will always try to influence personal relationships within the workplace.

"Having close friends in the workplace is a wonderful thing, and articles have even been written about the blessing of having a true friend at work. But hold on, since we spend so much time at work, and as social creatures, we naturally enjoy talking about things unrelated to work.

"An example came to my mind from a famous episode of the comedy series 'Friends', where one of the characters hires his friend as a colleague, despite the friend having no prior experience or knowledge of the work routine. Quickly, the friend gained popularity at work because he frequently talked about his social life, his wife, and his children, even fabricating stories about his kids attending the same school as a colleague's children. They believed him immediately and liked him. Meanwhile, his friend, who was focused on work and didn't share personal details, was seen as boring and unapproachable.

"It is great to be social at work, to care about everyone's social life, and to offer greetings, congratulations, and sometimes condolences. These gestures help you become close and well-liked by your colleagues. However, this doesn't necessarily mean you are a 'friend.' If you have a loyal friend who is also a long-time colleague, you are truly lucky and should be thankful for this blessing."

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

## Accounts training course for officers from April 6-June 4

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Under the patronage of Deputy Chief of Staff Major General Pilot Sabah Jaber Al-Ahmad, the Specialized Accounting Course No. 1 for officers was inaugurated on Sunday morning. The course will be held from April 6 to June 4, 2025, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

In a press statement, the Chief of Staff explained that the course aims to enhance the efficiency of financial officers in the Kuwait Army, and equip them to systematically apply the highest standards of governance, and sound financial and administrative systems. The first course will focus specifically on the financial and accounting affairs of a military nature.

The course was inaugurated in the presence of the Head of the Military Education Directorate Brigadier General Jassim Al-Omani, and the Director of the Budget Programming Directorate Brigadier General Faris Al-Habdan.



Al-Seyassah photo  
The officers taking part in the training course.

# It was love...young man acquitted of adultery; 'allegations incorrect'

Appeals court upholds acquittal of drug trafficker

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, April 7: The Court of Appeals upheld the acquittal of a young man accused of committing adultery with a Kuwaiti woman by deception, based on a forensic report that proved the inaccuracy of her statements and allegations.**

The defendant's lawyer, Attorney Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan, appeared in court and confirmed that the investigations into the incident indicated a romantic relationship between the young man and woman and did not reveal anything to the contrary. He cited the forensic report, which confirmed the inaccuracy of the statements of the supposed victim and that her allegations were false.

□ □ □

**Drug peddler acquitted:** The Court of Appeals upheld the acquittal of the expatriate nicknamed 'James Bond' of trafficking in hashish, marijuana, psychotropic substances and alcoholic beverages after he was arrested by narcotics detectives due

to the invalidity of the warrant issued by the Public Prosecution.

According to the case files, the incident is summarized in the testimony of the detective officer who stated that his confidential source informed him about an American nicknamed 'James Bond' possessing psychotropic substances with the intent to trade them.

After verifying the accuracy of the information, the officer obtained the warrant to arrest and search the suspect, as well as his residence and car. The officer said the accused was arrested in Mangaf while driving a black Yukon.

Upon searching him, the officer found nothing, but further questioning about the narcotics made him confess that he had a certain quantity in his car. He led the officers to a large cardboard box with the words 'HAPPY BIRTHDAY' written on it, containing the seized items. He admitted that these belonged to him and were intended for use and trafficking.

Attorney Ali Al-Wawan appeared in court on behalf of the accused and argued that the warrant, which the incident officer relied on to arrest the accused, was invalid; and that the consequences



Al-Wawan

of using it were invalid as well, as it was issued based on frivolous and illogical investigations and was issued after the arrest of the accused.

He also argued that the arrest and search of the accused and the procedures that resulted from them were invalid, as they were issued in circumstances other than those under the law, and that the crime of smuggling did not exist.

□ □ □

**Many cases of ex-MPs:** The Court of Cassation set June 20 as the date for announcing the final ruling on the cases of former MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaei who was sentenced to two years in prison, and Attorney Share' Al-Ajmi who was sentenced to four years, for challenging and interfering with the powers of His Highness the Amir. In another development, the Court of Appeals set June 9 and June 16 for the trial of former MPs Mohammad Al-Mutair and Shuaib Al-Muwaizri after they were acquitted by the Criminal Court.

Also, the Court of Appeals on Wednesday will announce its ruling on the vote-buying case against former MP Majed Al-Mutairi and others after they were convicted and sentenced to prison.

The Criminal Court had earlier sentenced Al-Mutairi to two years in prison with hard labor for vote-buying in the Fifth Constituency during the 2023 National Assembly elections.

## Shift to hi-tech as GTD launches new driving test vehicles

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Director of the Traffic Awareness Department at the General Traffic Department Colonel Fahd Al-Essa announced that the General Traffic Department's Education Sector launched the new driving test vehicle system yesterday in all testing sections in the six governorates, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

He revealed that this step was taken after the contract for the modern test vehicles was awarded to "Super Service" company.

Colonel Al-Essa explained that the new test vehicles represent a major shift towards modernization of the Education Department's testing sections.

These vehicles are equipped with advanced technologies and are much better than the vehicles that were previously rented out by driving schools to testers.

In addition, the new company has set up dedicated waiting rooms for testers in the education departments that are fully equipped with modern amenities and staffed

by specialized employees to manage the testing procedures.

Previously, the testers had to wait outside in various weather conditions amidst chaos and long lines to access the old test vehicles, which were rented from driving schools.

These driving schools are no longer present at the test locations. They have been allowed to conduct driving training, but only at their own premises, not near the test departments.

The new vehicles are equipped with modern cameras placed at all angles to capture the tester's performance during the test and to document any mistakes made in case of a dispute over the test results.

The vehicles are also fitted with an internal microphone connected to a wireless device, which allows the examiner, either on the test field or in the office, to communicate with the tester and guide them through the field test and its requirements.

The modern technologies in the vehicles will

help reduce the burden on driving examiners, who were previously stationed in the test areas under various weather conditions and exposed to potential risks.

This was particularly crucial as some individuals take their driving tests for the first time. In the past, traffic accidents had occurred in the test areas, involving either the testers or the equipment used during the tests.

With the introduction of the new vehicles, the Education Department has instructed all test section heads to prohibit citizens and residents from entering the testing sections with their own vehicles, as was previously allowed.

The only exception is for individuals with special needs, who are legally permitted to drive vehicles with special specifications.

Colonel Al-Essa added that the prices for the test vehicles, whether private, public, construction, or motorcycles, have been determined in coordination with the General Traffic Department.



The banned substance seized by customs.

## Customs foils attempt to smuggle 5 kg of 'kratom'

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: General Administration of Customs thwarted an attempt to smuggle over five kilograms of a banned substance "kratom" which was hidden in a personal shipment from the United States in the Customs Warehouse Department, reports **Al-Seyassah** daily.

The administration explained that a customs officer, during a routine inspection, became suspicious of a parcel that contained packs and a plastic bottle. After taking samples and conducting tests, it was determined that the contents contained "kratom", which is a substance listed on Kuwait's narcotics list.

A seizure report was filed, and the confiscated items were handed over to the Drug Control General Department for further legal action.

## Minister sacks 8 members of Sulaibikhat co-op board

By **Fares Al-Abdan**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Minister of Social, Family and Childhood Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah issued a decision to dismiss eight members of the Board of Directors of Northwest Sulaibikhat Cooperative Society and appoint their replacements.

The newspaper obtained a copy of the decision, stipulating that the term of the newly appointed members will be one year or until their replacements are elected, whichever comes first. The dismissed members are required to hand over all funds and documents in their possession to the Board of Directors within one week.

The decision noted serious financial and administrative violations in the report of the cooperative society's Audit Committee.



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'Chat with Hamad' offers instant help for students to boost academic performance

# Kuwait's Ministry of Education launches AI smart chat service

KUWAIT CITY, April 7, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ministry of Education announced Monday, the launch of the smart chat "Chat with Hamad", a modern technical solution that uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist with communication.

In a statement, the Ministry said that the "Chat with Hamad" service is one of the most leading digital communication services, allowing the public to in-

teract directly, ask questions, and receive immediate support.

This service helps provide accurate answers based on approved curricula, which helps students access correct scientific information, the Ministry added, it is also reviewed by a specialized team to ensure the quality and accuracy of the information provided.

The service, developed by the Information Systems

Department, supports communication in multiple languages and local dialects, in addition to using AI to provide answers that meet users' needs.

The Ministry revealed that the service allows users to select their class, semester, and subject, then pose the desired question and receive an immediate answer from the Student Library provided within the service.

The "Chat with Hamad" service does not replace the

textbook, but rather serves as an aid aimed at easing understanding of the curriculum content and improving students' academic achievement.

The services provided via "Chat with Hamad" are divided into several categories, including teacher and administrative services, student and parent services, school information, as well as individual services with written and visual content.

# Wedding hall owners to face hefty fines for public littering

15% SME allocation in industrial zones sought

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Kuwait Municipality confirmed that its cleaning teams are closely monitoring the enforcement of penalties against wedding hall owners who litter public spaces.

The municipality clarified that it will not show leniency towards the owner of the wedding hall in Al-Raqqa, whose license was re-

voked.

A video circulating on social media showed the hall's waste left at the site, with the area not restored to its previous clean condition.

The municipality stated that all legal measures will be taken against the license holder, including confiscating the KD 500 guarantee deposit and charging them for the cost of waste removal.

Meanwhile, Municipal Council member Munira Al-Amir put forward a proposal to allocate a fixed 15 percent of current and future

industrial zones to small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Al-Amir explained that she proposed allocating a percentage of existing sites rather than establishing entirely new industrial zones for SMEs; because integrating SMEs into existing industrial zones can be done quickly, while developing new industrial zones is a lengthy process.

She indicated that her proposal's primary goals are to support national manpower and encourage industrialization, which can drive the Kuwaiti economy.

# MoCI reshuffles leadership with key appointments

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajeel has issued a decision to appoint Marwa Al-Jaidan as the Director of the Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Department. In addition to her regular responsibilities, she will also assume the duties of the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, succeeding the former undersecretary Ziad Al-Najem, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Al-Ajeel also issued a decision to assign Director of Administrative Affairs Khalaf Al-Rashidi the duties of Assistant Undersecretary for Commercial

Control Sector, along with his current duties.

According to informed sources, the appointment of Marwa Al-Jaidan as Director of the Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Department, with additional duties as Undersecretary, reflects the ministry's commitment to revitalize its various sectors.

Al-Jaidan was one of the individuals promoted by Minister Al-Ajeel two months ago.

The recent promotions also included 11 auditors being promoted to director positions.

In another development, the Ministry of Com-

merce and Industry announced the dissolution and liquidation of approximately 161 different companies.

The ministry stated that any party objecting to the dissolution has the right to file a complaint with the Court of First Instance within 30 days of the announcement, which was published in the official gazette on Sunday.

The ministry added that filing a complaint with the court allows the partners to maintain their obligations to creditors until the court issues a final decision.

## Reforms reinforce future workforce

Education Minister approves strategic changes to 'foreign scholarship' rules

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

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Nader Al-Jalal has approved the amendments to the foreign scholarship regulations.

These changes aim to advance the foreign scholarship system, improve educational quality, and increase the effectiveness of academic outcomes to align with labor market needs, national development plans and global academic trends.

Al-Jalal confirmed these amendments are part of the strategic vision of the ministry to develop qualified national manpower that can effectively contribute to the development of the country. He added the ministry remains committed to providing optimal educational opportunities for students, while ensuring maximum benefit from foreign scholarship programs.

General application conditions

Following are the eligibility criteria for scholarships and grants

- Kuwaiti citizen,
- Not older than 25 at the time of application,
- Currently enrolled and have not been absent for more than one academic year at the time of application,
- Hold a high school diploma or its equivalent (as stipulated in Article Three of the regulations),
- Do not hold a bachelor's degree or its equivalent,
- Not employed by any government agency at the time of application,
- Not enrolled in an educational institution recommended by the National Authority for Academic Accreditation in one of the countries of study,
- Pursuing a major included in the scholarship or grant plan for the academic year of enrollment,
- Submit a study plan detailing the number of required units and their distribution over the semesters or academic years,
- Commit to not changing their major until graduation,
- Admitted at the beginning of the academic year or the first or second semester (not during the summer semester),
- Accepted into one of the granting countries and meet the scholarship requirements offered to Kuwait for the same academic year.

Conditions for students at universities with a year system

Students at universities that follow a year system may be included in the scholarship program if they:

- Successfully complete the first or preparatory year,
- Pass the French Studies Diploma (Deuxième Degree) with a grade of 'Assez Bien' (pretty good) and are admitted to the first academic year.

Conditions for students in universities with a credit hour system

Students at universities that follow a credit hour system may be included in the scholarship program if they:

- Complete at least 27 credit hours (semester system) or 42 credit hours (quarter system) or their equivalent,
- Earn these credit hours from an educational institution recommended by the academic staff in the same country.

General scholarship and grant conditions

To apply for a scholarship or grant, the student must be:

- Kuwaiti citizen,
- Between 16 and 23 years old,
- Holds a high school diploma (as stipulated in Article Three of the Regulations),
- Has a high school GPA that is not less than the minimum required for admission to the annual scholarship or grant plan,
- Does not hold a bachelor's degree,
- Has not previously received a scholarship or grant for a bachelor's degree

(unless the amount spent has been reimbursed),

- Has not been granted a scholarship and a grant simultaneously,
- Not employed by any government agency,
- Meet the conditions set by the granting country,
- Achieve the required score on the IELTS or TOEFL exam or pass the placement tests determined by the ministry within one full calendar year of the announcement of admission results,
- Submit a high school diploma or its equivalent within 60 days of the announcement of admission results,
- Sign a pledge (along with their guardian) to abide by the academic and financial terms and conditions of the scholarship or grant within 60 days of the announcement of admission.

General conditions for accepting a high school diploma for scholarships

- The high school diploma must be no more than two academic years old from the date of graduation (except for English high school diplomas),
- The diploma must be from a Kuwaiti high school diploma (unified system - scientific or literary) or an equivalent certificate approved by the Private Education Department at the Ministry of Education.

English high school requirements

- The student must pass at least eight courses, including two or more at the Advanced Level (A-Level) or Advanced Supplementary Level (AS-Level) and the remainder at the Ordinary Level (IGCSE), within 36 months of graduation;
- A-Level and AS-Level grades are not included in the percentage grade;
- Students are classified into Science or Arts sections based on their Science course grades;
- Only courses with a grade of C or higher are included, with one exception allowed.

Allowances and financial aid for scholarship students

- Students receive a one-time enrollment allowance (travel preparation) upon starting the scholarship,
- Monthly stipends are disbursed to new students from the date of their arrival in the country of study and up to two weeks before the start of studies,
- If the scholarship is suspended due to a delayed visa or other reasons beyond the student's control, a maximum of three months' stipend is disbursed,
- Distinguished students receive an additional monthly stipend of 50 percent of the regular stipend,
- The book, equipment and clothing allowance is disbursed at the beginning of each academic year,
- If the host country does not provide the book and equipment allowance, it is disbursed by the ministry,
- Students who undertake field training after graduation in the country of study are entitled to the scholarship stipend for up to one year,
- For mandatory field training outside the country of study, the ministry covers round-trip airfare, a daily allowance and program fees,
- Students training in Kuwait receive only a monthly stipend,
- After graduation, students receive a two-month stipend without bonuses or allowances,
- If the scholarship is suspended until graduation for up to one academic year, the two-month stipend is paid upon graduation,
- Students who complete their studies at least one semester early receive a financial reward equivalent to one-month stipend,
- Master's degree students receive round-trip airfare, a monthly stipend and other benefits.

The ministry covers all tuition fees and bank commission fees for transferring stipends to students abroad.

Students' right to receive the monthly allowance is not waived for compelling reasons that delay their arrival in the scholarship country, provided the delay does not exceed 30 days. If the delay exceeds 30 days, the student forfeits the allowance for the delay period and payment resumes upon arrival.



Dr. Al-Jalal

# APRIL

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# IEA affirms Kuwait's strategic role in shaping global energy stability

PARIS, April 7, (KUNA): The International Energy Agency (IEA) has highlighted the important role Kuwait and other oil-producing countries play in maintaining global energy security amid current international challenges, praising Kuwait's efforts to diversify its economy.

In an interview with KUNA, IEA's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Program Manager Farrah Boularas discussed preparations for an upcoming international summit on the future of energy security in London on April 24-25.

Boularas stressed that despite the shift toward low-carbon energy, ensuring the stability of traditional energy markets remains a priority, especially given geopolitical tensions and climate change.

She also added that Kuwait and other energy producers have a long-standing record of reliable supply, making them key players in maintaining global energy stability.

She noted that although oil and gas are expected to have a smaller share in the global energy mix, these countries must adapt to changes in energy demand and ensure eco-

nomics resilience amid climate challenges.

Boularas added that the region is strategically positioned to benefit from the energy transition by leveraging existing infrastructure and investing oil and gas revenues in clean technologies.

IEA continues to work closely with energy-producing states through its open-door policy to strengthen technical cooperation, noting that growing collaboration with Kuwait and other regional countries to reduce emissions and develop renewable energy.

She also revealed that the agency is preparing a key report on the future of electricity in the region, focusing on rising energy demand driven by climate change.

Regarding the London summit, Boularas said it would address the impact of geopolitics, technology, and economic challenges on energy security, and provide a platform for global leaders to strategize on current and emerging risks.

She concluded by affirming IEA's ongoing role in supporting global energy security through cooperation and sustainable energy transitions.

## LOCAL

## Kuwait's PM to represent Amir at Mercedes-Benz 50th anniversary

KUWAIT CITY, April 7, (KUNA): His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah expressed on Monday his honor in representing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at the 50th anniversary of Kuwait and Mercedes-Benz AG partnership in Germany, taking place next Thursday.

In a press statement, His Highness praised the historical ties between Kuwait and Germany, highlighting the wish to strengthen strategic cooperation and expand investment opportunities, which serves the interests of both countries and their peoples.

His Highness will head the delegation that includes the Minister of Oil and Board Member of Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) Tareq Al-Roumi, Director General of Kuwait's Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), Sheikh Dr. Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait Basel Al-Haroon.

The delegation also includes Undersecretary for Financial, Administrative, and Communication



KUNA photo  
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah

Affairs at the Prime Minister's Office Sheikh Khaled Al-Sabah, Managing Director of KIA Sheikh Saud Al-Sabah, Ambassador of Kuwait to Germany, Reem Al-Khaled, Head of the Kuwait Investment Office in London, Abdulmohsen Al-Mukhaizeem, Consul General of Kuwait in Frankfurt Adel Al-Ghunaiman, Members of the Board of Directors of KIA and Senior officials from the Prime Minister's Office.

'Healthy beginnings, hopeful futures'

## Kuwait marks World Health Day with priority on maternal health

KUWAIT CITY, April 7, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait is marking on Monday the World Health Day under the slogan "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures," with the World Health Organization (WHO) launching a year-long campaign spreading awareness on the health of mothers and newly-born.

WHO called on governments and the health community to reinforce global efforts to reduce deaths among mothers and infants, providing better healthcare during pregnancy and birth giving.

According to a new study by WHO, around 300,000 women die due to birth complications while over a million newly-born die in the first months of their lives and around one million were born dead.

In regards to the Health Ministry's efforts in this regard, official spokesman Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad affirmed that Kuwait would continue to provide utmost and best healthcare for mothers and children.

Pregnancy and infant-care programs are continually developed to ensure the best kind of medical assistance for these sectors, he affirmed, indicating that Kuwait Vision 2035 paid much attention to improving overall healthcare

in the country.

For her part, the head of the obstetrics and gynecology department at the Ministry of Health Dr. Amal Khedher reflected the ministry's keenness on providing top medical care and the best of treatment to women and children.

She mentioned the developing infrastructure for obstetrics and gynecology in Kuwait, saying that more departments, clinics, and health centers would be opened to service this important sector of society.

She added that the latest in surgical technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) would be used to boost health services in Kuwait, adding that staff were continuously trained to adapt to the newest technologies and health developments.

Coordinating with international institutes to provide better healthcare for women was also on the top of the country's medical care agenda, she asserted.

She pointed out that all plans for progress and development were in line with the Ministry of Health directives as well as the country's vision for development.

— See Also Page 13



Dr. Khedher



Dr. Al-Sanad

## 'Jleeb crisis calls for radical solutions; labor residential cities must proceed'

Officials urge swift Cabinet action on urban woes

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Minister of State for Municipal and Housing Affairs Abdullatif Al-Mishari has stressed the need to expedite the establishment of labor residential cities to address the problem in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.**

In a press statement after an inspection tour in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh accompanied by Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser, Deputy Chairman of the Municipal Council Khaled Mufleh Al-Mutairi, Environmental Affairs Committee Chairperson Alia Al-Farsi and acting Kuwait Municipality Director Manal Al-Asfou; Al-Mishari confirmed that the government is keen on finding radical solutions to the urban, planning, security and residential problems in the area that is now being used for other purposes.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Athbi Al-Nasser underscored the importance of addressing the problems in the area, especially since it is surrounded by several government facilities like the Kuwait International Airport, Jaber International Stadium and Kuwait University.

He described the area as "depressing", indicating it does not feel like Kuwait. "The streets, housing and infrastructure are in complete disrepair, some of which are beyond repair," he revealed. He affirmed that efforts are underway to find radical solutions to end the area's suffering.

He pointed out that one solution is the completion of labor residential cities, which are awaiting approval, in order to relocate the overcrowded workforce in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.

He added that recommendations will be prepared after the tour; confirming these recommendations will be submitted to the Council of Min-



Farwaniya Governorate photo  
Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah, Governor of Farwaniya, and His Excellency the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Housing Affairs, Eng. Abdullatif Al-Mishari, conduct a field visit to Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh area.

isters within days, with the hope of finding a radical solution.

Moreover, Al-Mutairi said "anyone who visits the area finds it is a state within a state. Everyone is aware of the magnitude of the disaster, which cannot be limited to the Municipality's work; given the environmental, health, security, electricity, water and other problems."

He pointed out that going out into the field to assess the latest developments in the area, which now requires intensified efforts, is an urgent necessity. He emphasized the need to find solutions and make proposals to address the issue and take the area out of the dark tunnel. He asserted that keeping the area in this condition is unacceptable; considering the stature and value of Kuwait, which has always flourished and shone with its civilized areas.

He said it was unfortunate that the Gulf Cup was hosted in previous months; while the area has been seen in such a deteriorating condition. He stressed the need for immediate intervention to address the problems in area and halt the environmental depletion of nearby areas.

He stated that the vision for reforms is part of studies submitted by the Municipality, but the vision, which is less costly for the State, is being considered to see the transformation of Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh from a disease-ridden area to one that reflects Kuwait's future vision, according to a feasible plan.

In addition, Al Farsi affirmed that Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh is a hidden gem, boasting a unique geographical location; but its current condition does not match the Kuwait of the future.

She pointed out that the area's management, operating system and level of services have direct impact on the behavior of individuals there and vice versa.

"The current situation is beyond chaotic in every respect. Solutions abound and can be studied, evaluated and implemented gradually. It will be a mistake to leave the area in its current state," she asserted.

She said she is pleased with her visit to the area along with Minister of State for Municipal Affairs, the Governor of Farwaniya, the Municipality Director, and representatives

from the Municipality and Ministry of Public Works.

She added the visit is one of the outcomes of a workshop held by the Environmental Affairs Committee at the Municipal Council; during which eight recommendations were presented, most importantly the need to coordinate a field visit with the concerned parties.

She stated that the recommendations approved by the Municipal Council were carefully studied by all parties participating in the workshop, and the responsible parties were identified for each recommendation.

She closed the most significant of these recommendations include the implementation of Municipality and Environment Public Authority sanitation regulations.

The sanitation issue in the area requires intensive work, intensified oversight, adherence to municipal regulations and systems, removal of violations and encroachments, development of an urgent emergency plan to repair deep potholes, develop infrastructure and sewage network, reduce the crowd and stop the misuse of real estate.

## Conditions set for May contract review

## SAB approves electricity import from GCCIA

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, April 7: The State Audit Bureau (SAB) has approved the request of the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy to import electricity from the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA) for the month of April at a total cost of \$23,544 million (equivalent to KD7,256 million) for 600 megawatts, say sources from the ministry.**

Source revealed the bureau stipulated that the contract for imports for April should be based on the actual electricity imported and adhere to Ministry of Finance Circular No.

3/2000 regarding contracting conditions in currencies other than the Kuwaiti dinar, as amended by Circular No. 14/2001.

The sources added the ministry contacted the bureau about prior oversight procedures and a review and audit of the import agreements for the months of April and May.

However, the bureau informed the ministry that it should resubmit the import agreement for May for prior approval after estimating the required value in accordance with the ministry's response dated March 27 of this year, provided that the submission is made well in advance of the start of imports.

Continued from Page 1

## Arab money

"We invest this money by lending it to poor countries that originally own it. In doing so, we earn high interest rates. In other words, we lend these countries their own money and profit from it. That is why we continue to support the corrupt."

As a result, there is one country where this stolen money is held in custody, "lost money", which has accounted for 10 percent of its national income since the early 1940s. Half of Switzerland's \$8.6 trillion in assets are owned by foreign clients, mostly from the Middle East and Africa. A large portion of this money has remained unused for years or has gone unaccounted for.

This banking expert said, "We are pleased with this situation. The officials and leaders in these countries steal from their people and send the money to us. We invest it in ways that benefit our countries and contribute to the well-being of our people, while their citizens continue to suffer from poverty, hunger, and backwardness, in order to repay the loans we grant them."

On the other hand, there are many failed countries, or nations whose rulers have brought them to poverty and suffering. Venezuela, for example, was once a prosperous oil-producing state. Today, it is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, with 96 percent of its population living below the poverty line. Venezuela serves as a real model of systematic plunder.

Those trillions of U.S. dollars could be invested in lifting people out of poverty and hunger, and in building a competitive economic, industrial, and service-oriented environment. With this money, infrastructure could be developed, and essential services could be improved. However, achieving this requires a strong national will and a commitment to governing the state in a way that prioritizes the welfare of its people.

Recent events, particularly with the U.S. President's decisions impacting more than 90 countries, have exposed the vulnerability of many of these countries to unforeseen crises.

On the other hand, countries that adopted principles of transparency and the rule of law are beginning to navigate through these challenges to overcome this crisis more effectively. In contrast, several Arab countries remain powerless.

Had the leaders of these countries invested their national wealth domestically and preserved the resources of sovereign funds instead of misappropriating them, the situation in many developing countries, those "sleeping nations" lying on a bed of thorny crises, could have been drastically different. This is due to the lack of self-confidence among their leaders and their failure to trust their own people.

## Panic Monday

"There's no sign yet that markets are finding a bottom and beginning to stabilize," wrote Deutsche Bank analysts in a research note.

Late Sunday, Trump reiterated his resolve on his decision to introduce tariffs of 10% to 50% on goods imported into the U.S., a move seen as massively disrupting world trade and supply chains across borders. Speaking

to reporters aboard Air Force One, he said he didn't want global markets to fall, but also that he wasn't concerned about the massive sell-offs, adding, "sometimes you have to take medicine to fix something."

Heavy selling kicked in after China on Friday matched Trump's tariff, upping the stakes in a trade war that many fear could end in a global recession. Even a better-than-expected report on the U.S. job market, usually the economic highlight of each month, wasn't enough to stop the slide.

"The idea that there's so much uncertainty going forward about how these tariffs are going to play out, that's what's really driving this plummet in the stock prices," said Rintaro Nishimura, an associate at the Asia Group.

Chinese markets often don't follow global trends, but they also tumbled. Hong Kong's Hang Seng dropped 13.2% to 19,828.30, while the Shanghai Composite index lost 7.3% to 3,096.58. In Taiwan, the Taiex plummeted 9.7%.

South Korea's Kospi lost 5.6% to 2,328.20, while Australia's S&P/ASX 200 lost 4.2% to 7,343.30, recovering from a loss of more than 6%.

Asian economies are heavily exposed to Trump's tariffs since they are dependent on exports, and a large share go to the United States.

"Beyond the market meltdown, the bigger concern is the impact and potential crises for small and trade-dependent economies, so it's crucial to see whether Trump will reach deals with most countries soon, at least partially," said Gary Ng of Naxos.

Oil prices also sank further, with U.S. benchmark crude down \$2.30 to \$59.69 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, gave up \$2.33 to \$63.25 a barrel. As with the larger sell-off, the drop was fueled by fears that the tariffs would slow economic growth. That would hit demand for fuel, and the drop comes after moves to increase production by the OPEC+ producers' alliance.

Exchange rates also gyrated. The U.S. dollar fell to 146.24 Japanese yen from 146.94 yen. The yen is often viewed as a safe haven in times of turmoil. The euro rose 0.3% to \$1.0992.

Nathan Thooff, chief investment officer and senior portfolio manager at Manulife Investment Management, said more countries are likely to respond to the U.S. with retaliatory tariffs. Given the large number of countries involved, "it will take a considerable amount of time in our view to work through the various negotiations that are likely to happen."

"Ultimately, our take is market uncertainty and volatility are likely to persist for some time," he said.

The Federal Reserve could cushion the blow of tariffs on the U.S. economy by cutting interest rates. That can encourage companies and households to borrow and spend. But Fed Chair Jerome Powell said Friday that the higher tariffs could drive up expectations for inflation and lower rates could fuel still more price increases.

Much will depend on how long Trump's tariffs stick and how other countries react. Some investors are holding onto hope he will lower the tariffs after negotiating "wins" from other countries.

Stuart Kaiser, head of U.S. equity strategy at Citi, wrote in a note to clients that earnings estimates and

stock values still don't reflect the full potential impact of the trade war. "There is ample space to the downside despite the large pullback," he said.

See Also Page 9

## GCC chief

Moreover, they discussed ways to enhance efforts for the progress of joint Gulf action towards more solidarity and integration in a way that reflects the visions of GCC leaders, and exchanged views on the latest developments regionally and internationally.

For his part, Ambassador Al-Sabah presented to Al-Budaivi a letter from Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya, which included an invitation to participate in the third GCC and Central Asia ministerial meeting on April 16, 2025 in Kuwait.

## Kuwait moves

He said the Turkish company will conduct the study and make the design for this project in cooperation with PART to pave the way for the preparation of the project tender.

He added the project is a specific component of the State of Kuwait, indicating that the total cost of the entire project will be determined after the completion of the study and design.

He also cited coordination among the GCC countries to agree on certain specifications; indicating that the train for the Kuwait-Riyadh line is expected to be fast, considering the coordinated efforts of the concerned authorities in Kuwait and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

It is worth noting that the value of contract for the study, detailed design and preparation of the railway tender documents (first phase) with the international consulting firm Royapi Turkiye is estimated at KD 2,460 million with a duration of 12 months.

## 'US tariffs

He pointed out that his country, which is a NATO headquarters in Brussels, has no heavy military industries, but this does not preclude cooperation with Kuwait within the Istanbul Initiative.

He stressed that he is making every effort to reach an agreement to operate direct flights between Kuwait and his country, indicating he has yet to receive confirmation on this matter. He had earlier received pledges from Kuwait Airways and Jazeera Airways that they could open direct flights to Belgium next year. He believes that direct flights will help increase the number of Kuwaiti tourists to Brussels and other Belgian cities, and will also facilitate Belgian visits to Kuwait, which boasts of beautiful landmarks, especially the rich Kuwaiti cuisine. He said the Belgian community in Kuwait does not exceed 60 people, expressing his great admiration for Kuwaiti traditions, particularly during the holy month of Ramadan and visits to diwanias.

He praised the role of Kuwaiti women, considering their involvement in all aspects of social and economic life in Kuwait. He expressed his astonishment at what is happening in Gaza; calling on the international community to continue pres-

## The Embassy of the United States of America Will Hold

## A Public Auction

The auction will be held on Saturday, April 12, 2025, in the parking lot outside of the front gate of U.S. Embassy in Bayan, Al-Masjed Al-Aqsa Street. Auction items will be available for public viewing starting at 8:00 a.m., with the auction officially commencing at 9:00 a.m. Auction items will include used vehicles, used shipping containers, used household/office furniture, office equipment, appliances, drapes, carpets, computers, printers, and various electrical and repair supplies that have reached the end of their useful life or are no longer needed by the U.S. Embassy. All items will be sold "as is" to the highest bidder, and all sales will be in local currency paid by K-Net cards or in cash.

The following used vehicles will be up for auction :  
1. Chevrolet, Tahoe, 2014  
2. Ford Explorer, 2015  
3. Ford Explorer, 2015

For more information please call :  
22591263 - 22591264  
22591094 - 22591267

Maryland lawmakers end 90-day session after tough budget year

## Tentative deal reached in House Republican fight over proxy voting for new parents

WASHINGTON, April 7, (AP) — A tentative deal has been reached with the Florida Republican leading a bipartisan push to allow proxy voting in the U.S. House for new parents, potentially ending a standoff that halted legislative work for days and threatened to delay a vote this week to advance President Donald Trump's agenda.

House Speaker Mike Johnson and Florida Rep. Anna Paulina Luna, who has been leading the bipartisan push on proxy voting, reached the deal, Luna said in a social media post on Sunday.

Rather than allow proxy voting, Luna said the agreement would formalize a "pairing" system long used in Congress where one member who is physically present in the House cancels out the vote of someone who is absent. Luna said the voting option would be open to all Republicans who are unable to vote, including new parents, the bereaved and lawmakers facing various medical and family emergencies.

"If we truly want a pro-family Congress, these are the changes that need to happen," Luna said.

No further details were immediately available. It was also unclear if the deal would be agreed to by the other lawmakers who had signed on to the proxy voting proposal.

The agreement with Luna could end days of back-and-forth over allowing new parents in Congress to vote by proxy for 12 weeks as they care for their newborns. Johnson has vigorously opposed the effort, calling it an affront to the Constitution that would open "Pandora's box."

But some Republicans refused to go along with Johnson's bid to kill the resolution, with nine of them defying him in a vote last week.

By reaching a deal, Republican leaders will likely be able to move ahead this week on key legislative priorities - most critically a revised version of the budget framework that opens the door to Trump's push for trillions of dollars in tax breaks. The Senate approved that budget framework early Saturday morning after grinding through a late-night session.

Trump had said he was in favor of allowing proxy voting for new parents after speaking with Luna, though he said he would defer to Johnson how the House should operate. "I don't know why it's controversial," Trump said.

Luna, who gave birth during her first term in Congress, had championed the proxy voting resolution alongside Democratic Rep. Brittany Pettersen of Colo-



US House Speaker Mike Johnson arrives before US President Donald Trump speaks during an event to announce new tariffs in the Rose Garden at the White House, on April 2, in Washington. (AP)

rado, who has a 4-month-old son. The effort drew significant bipartisan support, with 218 lawmakers - the majority of the House, many young parents themselves - signing onto a petition that could trigger a floor vote. The resolution would allow proxy voting for lawmakers who have given birth or pregnant lawmakers who are unable to travel safely or have a serious medical condition. It would also apply to lawmakers whose spouses are pregnant or giving birth.

Pettersen, who has carried her son onto the floor during recent House votes, said the institution needs to change with the times. About a dozen women have given birth while in Congress over the years, and there are many new fathers as well.

"It is unfathomable that in 2025 we have not modernized Congress," she said.

But Johnson, like GOP leaders before him, loathes proxy voting, which had been put in place for about two years during the COVID-19 lockdowns when Democrats had control of the House.

"It was quickly abused. Republicans put an end to it then, and we cannot allow it again," Johnson said in a social media post.

### Also:

**ANNAPOLIS, Md:** Maryland lawmakers were scheduled to end their legislative session late Monday in a challenging budget year that was aggravated by uncertainties with the Trump administration's downsizing of the federal government on a state that relies heavily on federal jobs and contracts.

Gov. **Wes Moore**, a Democrat, and lawmakers addressed a \$3.3 billion deficit by making cuts throughout state government and raising taxes and fees.

"We had very targeted revenue-raisers that were focused on those who have done the best over the last few decades and for user fees that people utilize across the state of Maryland," said Senate President **Bill Ferguson**, a Baltimore Democrat.

Republicans criticized the tax and fee increases, contending the state has spending problems and noting the deficit existed before Trump regained the White House in January. Sen. **Justin Ready**, the Senate minority whip, said during debate last week that "no other state in our region has this problem."

The budget measures raise about \$1.6 billion in revenues and include roughly \$2 billion in spending reductions. The state would still have about \$2.1 billion in its rainy day fund and a fund balance of more than \$300 million.

Many of the priorities of leadership in the General Assembly, which is controlled by Democrats, were either settled or nearing passage.

"We have a few open items, but for the most part all of the most important and critical issues that we set out from the beginning of the year are near or through the finish line, from the budget to an energy package, to protecting against an uncertain future that comes from the Trump administration," Ferguson said Friday.

Here is a look at some of the highlights of legislation lawmakers have approved: Lawmakers closed a big budget deficit with cuts throughout state government and tax increases.

## Some states choose different path

### State Supreme Courts become electoral battleground in US

TOPEKA, Kan., April 7, (AP) — The race for control of the Wisconsin Supreme Court drew \$100 million in campaign spending, attack ads and the attention of President Donald Trump and close ally Elon Musk.

While its spending set a record for a US judicial contest, the race that ended Tuesday was the apex of a trend building for years as state Supreme Court races across the country have gotten increasingly costly and vitriolic. The partisan tone of the Wisconsin race and the amount of money it drew from outside interest groups raise questions about whether elections are the best way to fill seats for bodies that are supposed to be nonpartisan and ultimately decide the fate of state laws and citizen ballot initiatives.

The politicized nature of the contests was illustrated starkly on Friday when a Republican-majority appellate panel in North Carolina sided with a Republican state Supreme Court challenger who is seeking to throw out thousands of ballots from last November's election.

These races have become priorities for both major parties because state high courts have been playing pivotal roles in deciding rules around redistricting, abortion and voting rights while also settling disputes over election outcomes.

Some states shifted toward electing justices "to bring the process out into the sunlight, to disempower powerful political actors from getting themselves



Justices listen to arguments during a school funding hearing before the Kansas Supreme Court in Topeka, Kan., May 22, 2018. (AP)

or allies on the bench, or to provide some level of public accountability," said Douglas Keith, senior counsel for the Brennan Center's judiciary program. "But with these modern judicial elections, these highly politicized races are not really serving any of those goals."

Not every state puts its Supreme Court seats up for a statewide vote. Some use appointment processes that allow candidates to avoid public campaigning and the influence of political donors. Keith said a merit-based selection process can result in Supreme Courts "that are not as predictable along political lines."

Seven states use partisan elections to select their Supreme Court justices while

14, including Wisconsin, use nonpartisan elections. Meanwhile, nine task governors with appointing justices, two use legislative appointments, four have hybrid models and 14 use a merit selection process that often involves nonpartisan nominating commissions.

Kansas is one of the states with an appointment process, a system that has been in place for six decades and has been largely nonpartisan. Bristling at some of the court's rulings in recent years, Republicans in the state now want to change that and move toward a system in which justices have to stand for election.

Opponents say Republicans' goal is clear in a GOP-leaning state: remaking the court in a more conservative

image.

When a vacancy on the seven-member court now occurs, applicants for the seat are screened by a nine-member commission. Five are lawyers elected by other lawyers and four are nonlawyers appointed by the governor. The commission names three finalists and the governor - currently a Democrat - chooses one.

The Republican-supermajority Legislature placed a proposed amendment to the Kansas Constitution on the ballot for the state's August 2026 primary election, rejecting arguments that the current system of filling vacancies on the state Supreme Court is notable for its lack of partisan politics and promotes judicial independence.

Backers of the proposal have criticized the state's top court for years over rulings protecting abortion rights and forcing higher spending on public schools. They argue that the court is too liberal and is out of step with voters, even though Kansas voters opted to protect abortion rights in 2022, just months after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v Wade*.

Republicans also say that in making Supreme Court candidates run for election, any politics in the process would be visible instead of "a black box."

"It is an elitist system, and that elitist system was designed by lawyers," Kansas' attorney general, Republican Kris Kobach, said of the current system. "It is obviously controlled by lawyers."

## America

**Ex-rep Love honored:** Family and friends of former US rep **Mia Love** were set to gather Monday in Salt Lake City to honor her life and legacy after she died of brain cancer in March at age 49.

Love, a daughter of Haitian immigrants, was the first Black Republican woman elected to Congress.

The former lawmaker from Utah had undergone aggressive brain tumor treatment for a glioblastoma and received immunotherapy as part of a clinical trial. She died at her home in Saratoga Springs, Utah, weeks after her daughter announced she was no longer responding to treatment.

State lawmakers and members of the public visited the Utah Capitol on Sunday evening to pay their respects at Love's flag-covered coffin behind ropes in the building's rotunda.

The public is invited to attend her memorial service Monday morning at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Institute of Religion on the University of Utah campus. It will be followed by an honor guard presentation.

Love, born Ludmya Bourdeau, represented Utah on Capitol Hill from 2015 to 2019. She and her husband, Jason, had three children, Alessa, Abigale and Peyton. (AP)

□ □ □



Love

**Police shoot man:** Police shot a meat cleaver-wielding man who apparently slashed and stabbed four of his young female relatives during a bloody rampage inside a Brooklyn home on Sunday morning, officials said.

New York City Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said the four girls - ages 16, 13, 11 and 8 - had serious stab and slash wounds but are expected to survive.

Tisch said the 11-year-old victim called police around 10:15 am to alert authorities that she and her siblings had been attacked by their uncle. Officers heard screams after they arrived at the home in southern Brooklyn and were met near an entrance by the suspect, who was holding a blood-covered meat cleaver and ignored several calls to drop the weapon. (AP)

□ □ □

**Rivers flood towns:** Days of unrelenting heavy rain and storms that killed at least 18 people worsened flooding as some rivers rose to near-record levels and inundated towns across an already saturated US South and parts of the Midwest.

Cities ordered evacuations and rescue crews in inflatable boats checked on residents in Kentucky and Tennessee, while utilities shut off power and gas in a region stretching from Texas to Ohio.

"As long as I've been alive - and I'm 52 - this is the worst I've ever seen it," said Wendy Quire, the general manager at the Brown Barrel restaurant in downtown Frankfort, Kentucky, the state capital built around the swollen Kentucky River.

"The rain just won't stop," Quire said Sunday. "It's been nonstop for days and days." (AP)

## Wulff calls for active commitment to democracy

### Former German president warns of far right

VIENNA, April 7, (AP) — Germany marked the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazis' Buchenwald concentration camp on Sunday as one of the country's former presidents warned against "radicalization and a worldwide shift to the right."

The governor of the state of Thuringia, Mario Voigt, and former German president Christian Wulff spoke at a ceremony in the city of Weimar, near Buchenwald, attended by scores of people.

Voigt, whose state includes Buchenwald, called it "a place of systematic dehumanization" and said that everything that happened at the death camp "was designed to break the human spirit and its dignity."

The Buchenwald concentration camp was established in 1937. More than 56,000 of the 280,000 inmates held at Buchenwald and its satellite camps were killed by the Nazis or died as a result of hunger, illness or medical experiments before the camp's liberation on April 11, 1945.

In his speech, Wulff issued a stark warning about the current global political situation.

"Due to the brutalization and radicalization and a worldwide shift to the right, I can now - and this makes me uneasy - imagine more clearly how this could have happened back then,"



Christian Wulff, former Federal President of Germany, gives the speech at the ceremony marking the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora concentration camps on April 6. (AP)

Wulff said, referring to Nazi terror and the developments leading up to it.

He called for active commitment to democracy and the preservation of humanity. He said: "We bear a permanent, ongoing, eternal responsibility from this because evil must never be allowed to prevail again."

Wulff also criticized the anti-immigrant and far-right Alternative for Germany party. He said that those who

"trivialize" the party "are ignoring the fact that the Alternative for Germany's ideology is creating a breeding ground for people to feel uncomfortable in Germany and that they are actually in real danger." Holocaust survivor Nafali First, now 92, spoke at the wreath-laying ceremony held at the camp's former roll call area. He spent ages 9 to 12 in four different concentration camps, including Auschwitz.

## Russia cuts jail sentence for US soldier convicted of theft

MOSCOW, April 7, (AP) — An appellate court in Russia's far east on Monday reduced the prison sentence for an American soldier convicted of stealing and making threats of murder, Russia's state news agency RIA Novosti reported.

Staff Sgt. Gordon Black, 34, flew to the Pacific port city of Vladivostok to see his girlfriend and was arrested in May 2024 after she accused him of stealing from her, according to US officials and Russian authorities. A month later, a court in Vladivostok convicted him and sentenced him to three years and nine months in prison. Black was also ordered to pay 10,000 rubles (\$115 at the time) in damages.

Black lost one appeal in a regional court that upheld his sentence, but the judge in the 9th Court of Cassation on Monday agreed to reduce his sentence to three years and two months in prison. Black's defense had asked the court to acquit him of making threats of murder and reduce the punishment for theft, a request the judge partially sustained, according to the RIA report.

Russia has jailed a number of Americans in recent years as tensions between Moscow and the West grew. Some, like corporate security executive Paul Whelan, Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich and teacher Marc Fogel, were designated by the U.S. government as wrongfully detained and released in prisoner swaps.



US Army Staff Sgt Gordon Black is escorted to a courtroom in Vladivostok, Russia on June 6, 2024. (AP)

A few others remain jailed in Russia on drug or assault convictions. They include Robert Gilman, 72, who was handed a 3 1/2-year sentence after being found guilty of assaulting a police officer following a drunken disturbance on a train, and Travis Leake, a musician who was convicted on drug charges and sentenced to 13 years in prison in July 2024.



Residential neighborhoods are seen in Doral, Fla. on April 5. (AP)

## Miami's 'Little Venezuela' fears US Pres Donald Trump's moves against migration

DORAL, Fla., April 7, (AP) — Wilmer Escaray left Venezuela in 2007 and enrolled at Miami Dade College, opening his first restaurant six years later.

Today he has a dozen businesses that hire Venezuelan migrants like he once was, workers who are now terrified by what could be the end of their legal shield from deportation.

Since the start of February the Trump administration has ended two federal programs that together allowed more than 700,000 Venezuelans to live and work legally in the US along with hundreds of thousands of Cubans, Haitians and Nicaraguans.

In the largest Venezuelan community in the United States, people dread what could face them if lawsuits that aim to stop the government fail. It's all anyone discusses in "Little Venezuela" or "Doralzuela," a city of 80,000 people surrounded by Miami sprawl, freeways and the Florida Everglades.

People who lose their protections would have to remain illegally at the risk of being deported or return home, an unlikely route given the political and economic turmoil in Venezuela.

"It's really quite unfortunate to lose that human capital because there are people who do work here that other people won't do," Escaray, 37, said at one of his "Sabor Venezolano" restaurants.

Spanish is more common than English in shopping centers along Doral's wide avenues, and Venezuelans feel like they're back home but with more security and comfort.

A sweet scent wafts from round, flat commeal arepas sold at many establishments. Stores at gas stations sell

flour and white cheese used to make arepas and T-shirts and hats with the yellow, blue and red stripes of the Venezuelan flag.

John came from Venezuela nine years ago and bought a growing construction company with a partner. He and his wife are on Temporary Protected Status, or TPS, which Congress created in 1990 for people in the United States whose homelands are considered unsafe to return due to natural disaster or civil strife. Beneficiaries can live and work while it lasts but TPS carries no path to citizenship.

Born in the US, their 5-year-old daughter is a citizen. John, 37, asked to be identified by first name only for fear of being deported.

His wife helps with administration at their construction business while working as a real-estate broker. The couple told their daughter that they may have to leave the United States. Venezuela is not an option.

"It hurts us that the government is turning its back on us," John said. "We aren't people who came to commit crimes; we came to work, to build."

A federal judge ordered on March 31 that temporary protected status

would stand until a legal challenge's next stage in court and at least 350,000 Venezuelans were temporarily spared becoming illegal. Escaray, the owner of the restaurants, said nearly all of his 150 employees are Venezuelan and more than 100 are on TPS.

The federal immigration program that allowed more than 500,000 Cubans, Venezuelans, Haitians and Nicaraguans to work and live legally in the US - humanitarian parole - expires April 24 absent court intervention.

## INTERNATIONAL

## US blocks sea salt imports from S.Korea salt farm over forced labor concerns

SEOUL, South Korea, April 7, (AP): The United States has blocked imports of sea salt products from a major South Korean salt farm accused of using slave labor, becoming the first trade partner to take punitive action against a decadeslong problem on salt farms in remote islands off South Korea's southwest coast.

US Customs and Border Protection



A salt farm owner walks around his salt farm on Sinui Island, South Korea on Feb 19, 2014. (AP)

issued a withhold release order against the Taepyeong salt farm, saying information "reasonably indicates" the use of forced labor at the company in the island county of Sinan, where most of South Korea's sea salt products are made.

Under the order issued last Wednesday, Customs personnel at all US ports of entry are required to

hold sea salt products sourced from the farm.

Taepyeong is South Korea's largest salt farm, producing about 16,000 tons of salt annually, which accounts for approximately 6% of the country's total output, according to government data, and is a major supplier to South Korean food companies. The farm, located on Jeungdo island in Sinan and leasing most of its salt fields to tenants, has been repeatedly accused of using forced labor, including in 2014 and 2021.

South Korean officials stated that this was the first time a foreign government had suspended imports from a South Korean company due to concerns over forced labor.

In a statement to The Associated Press on Monday, South Korea's Foreign Ministry said relevant government agencies, including the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, have been taking steps to address labor practices at Taepyeong since 2021. While not providing direct evidence, it said it assesses that none of the salt produced there now is sourced from forced labor. The ministry said it plans to "actively engage" in discussions with the US officials over the matter.

## Australia's opposition party backs down on working from home policy

MELBOURNE, Australia, April 7, (AP): Australia's opposition party Monday withdrew election promises to prevent public servants from working from home and to slash more than one-in-five federal public sector jobs.

Opposition leader Peter Dutton announced his conservative Liberal Party had dropped its pledge that public servants would be required to work in their offices five days a week except in exceptional circumstances.

"I think we made a mistake in relation to this policy," Dutton told Nine Network television. "I think it's important that we say that and recognize it and our intention was to make sure that where taxpayers are working hard and their money is being spent to pay wages that it's being spent efficiently."

The opposition also withdrew a promise to use forced redundancy payments to slash 41,000 jobs from the 185,000 positions in the Australian Public Service. The reductions would instead be achieved through natural attrition and an employment freeze, he said.

Dutton's announcements were the first significant policy shifts since



Australia's leader of the opposition Liberal Party, Peter Dutton refuels a car in Carrick, Tasmania on April 6. (AP)

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese called the May 3 election last month. Albanese urged voters not to believe that Dutton now supported flexible work arrangements for public servants.

"He's now pretending that that program won't proceed," Albanese told reporters.

Members of the center-left Labor Party government have accused their conservative opponents of mimicking U.S. President Donald Trump and his billionaire adviser Elon Musk who has spearheaded the so-called Department of Government Efficiency efforts to downsize and overhaul the U.S. government.

## Medical helicopter crashes into sea off Japan killing 3

## Japanese emperor visits Iwo Jima to honor dead in one of WWII's fiercest battles

IWO-TO, Japan, April 7, (AP): Japan's Emperor Naruhito visited Iwo Jima on Monday and paid tribute to thousands of Japanese and Americans who died in one of World War II's bloodiest battles.

Naruhito and his wife, Empress Masako, prayed at three memorial sites - one for the Japanese soldiers, another for the islanders and a third for both Japanese and American war dead. The couple offered a bouquet of white flowers and poured water over a cenotaph from a ladle to console those who died under the heat while suffering from hunger and thirst. They were due to meet with representatives of bereaved families and descendants of former island residents.

The visit by the royal couple, both born after the war, is the first to Iwo Jima.

Naruhito, in his 65th birthday remarks in February, noted the 80th

anniversary of the end of WWII and stressed the importance of remembering the wartime history and telling younger generations about the tragedy. Japan fought the war and invaded large areas of Asia in the name of his grandfather, Emperor Hirohito.

The battle of Iwo Jima lasted from Feb. 19 to March 26, 1945, as the United States tried to take control of a key strategic point to advance to mainland Japan. Despite expectations by the U.S. they would overwhelm the Japanese within days, Japanese soldiers used underground tunnels and resisted for five weeks, in a part of war history that has inspired many novels and movies.

Nearly all of the more than 21,000 Japanese and nearly 7,000 U.S. troops were killed. More than half of the remains of the Japanese are still unaccounted for. All 1,100 residents of Iwo Jima except for 103 men drafted



Japanese Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako offer flowers to Iwo Jima war veterans monument as they visit the island of Iwo Jima, which is now officially called Iwo To in Japan on April 7. (AP)

as military employees were forcibly evacuated to mainland Japan. Of the 103, 82 were killed in the fighting.

The emperor's Iwo Jima visit comes 10 days after Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and Defense Minister Gen Nakatani joined U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth in a memorial service marking the end of the battle.

Former residents and their descendants are allowed to visit the island for memorial events but not to live there.

Following a 23-year US occupation, Iwo Jima was returned to Japan in 1968 as part of the Ogasawara island group, but is now home to only 380 service members of the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force. The island is also used for US military aircraft landing exercises.

Also:

TOKYO: A medical transport helicop-

ter fell into the sea in southwestern Japan, killing the patient and two other people, the Japan coast guard said.

The pilot, Hiroshi Hamada, 66; Kazuto Yoshitake, a helicopter mechanic and a 28-year-old nurse, Sakura Kunitake, were rescued by the coast guard after they were found in the waters clinging to inflatable lifesavers. The three suffered hypothermia but were conscious, an official with the coast guard told The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

Yoshitake's first name was initially given with a different spelling, but the coast guard corrected it later.

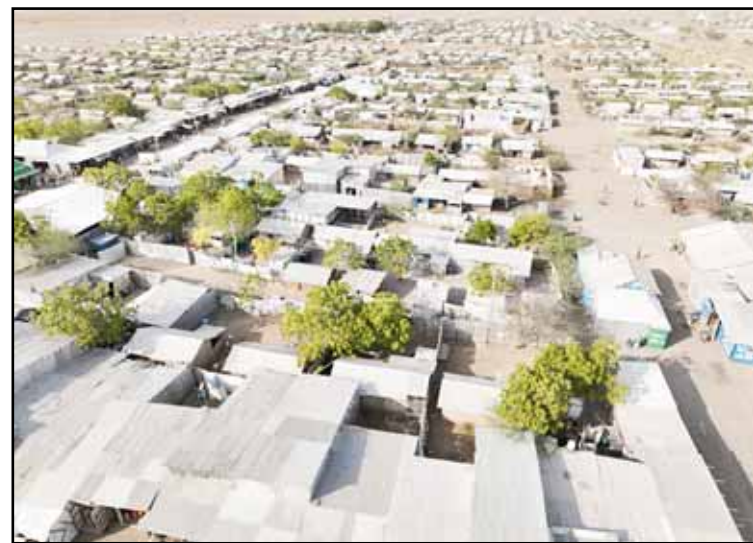
The bodies of medical doctor, Kei Arakawa, 34; Mitsuki Motoishi, 86, the patient, and her caretaker Kazuyoshi Motoishi, 68, were later recovered by a Japan Air Self-Defense Force helicopter.

## Can one of Africa's largest refugee camps evolve into city?

KAKUMA, Kenya, April 7, (AP): Windswept and remote, set in the cattle-rustling lands of Kenya's northwest, Kakuma was never meant to be permanently settled.

It became one of Africa's most famous refugee camps by accident as people escaping calamity in countries like South Sudan, Ethiopia and Congo poured in.

More than three decades after its first tents appeared in 1992, Kakuma houses 300,000 refugees. Many rely on aid to survive. Some recently clashed with police over shrinking food rations and support.



General view part of Kakuma refugee camp in Turkana county, Kenya, Saturday, Feb. 15, 2025. (AP)

Now the Kenyan government and humanitarian agencies have come up with an ambitious plan for Kakuma to evolve into a city.

Although it remains under the United Nations' management, Kakuma has been redesignated a municipality, one that local government officials later will run.

It is part of broader goal in Kenya and elsewhere of incorporating refugees more closely into local populations and shifting from prolonged reliance on aid.

The refugees in Kakuma eventually will have to fend for themselves, living

off their incomes rather than aid. The nearest city is eight hours' drive away.

Such self-reliance is not easy. Few refugees can become Kenyan citizens. A 2021 law recognizes their right to work in formal employment, but only a tiny minority are allowed to do so.

Forbidden from keeping livestock because of the arid surroundings and the inability to roam widely, and unable to farm due to the lack of adequate water, many refugees see running a business as their only option.

Startup businesses require capital, and interest rates on loans from banks in Kakuma are typically around 20%. Few refugees have the collateral and documentation needed to take out a loan.

Denying them access to credit is a tremendous waste of human capital, said Julienne Oyler, who runs Inkomo, a charity providing financial training and low-cost loans to African businesses, primarily in displacement-affected communities.

"We find that refugee business owners actually have the characteristics that make world-class entrepreneurs," she said.

"They are resilient. They are resourceful. They have access to networks. They have adaptability. In some ways, what refugees unfortunately have had to go through actually makes a really good business owner."

Other options available include microloans from other aid groups or collective financing by refugee-run groups. However, the sums involved are usually insufficient for all but the smallest startups.

## Subcontinent

**9 militants killed:** Pakistani security forces raided a militant hideout in the restive northwest near the Afghan border, killing nine militants, the military said Monday.

The military said in a statement that a high-value militant Shireen was among those insurgents killed in Dera Ismail Khan, a city in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

All the militants who were killed were the "Khwarizj," a phrase the government uses for Pakistani Taliban, and Shireen was behind last month's killing of an army Capt Hasnain Akhtar in a shootout in the region, the military said. (AP)

**American held in India:** Indian

police have arrested a 24-year-old American YouTuber who visited an off-limits island in the Indian ocean to try to make contact with an isolated tribe known for attacking intruders.

**Mykhailo Viktorovych Polyakov,** from Scottsdale, Arizona, was arrested on March 31, two days after he set foot on the restricted territory of North Sentinel Island - part of India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands - in a bid to meet people from the reclusive Sentinelese tribe, police said.

A local court last week sent Polyakov to a 14-day judicial custody and he is set

to appear again in the court on April 17. The charges carry a possible sentence of up to five years in prison and a fine. Indian authorities said they had informed the US Embassy about the case.

Visitors are banned from traveling within 3 miles (5 kilometers) of the island, whose population has been isolated from the rest of the world for thousands of years. The inhabitants use spears and bows and arrows to hunt the animals that roam the small, heavily forested island. Deeply suspicious of outsiders, they attack anyone who lands onto their beaches.

In 2018, an American missionary who landed illegally on the beach was killed by North Sentinel islanders who apparently shot him with arrows and then buried his body on the beach. In 2006, the Sentinelese had killed two fishermen who had accidentally landed on the shore. (AP)



Polyakov

## 'We have a way out of this'

## Bolsonaro leads rally in support of amnesty law

SAO PAULO, Brazil, April 7, (AP): Former Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro led a rally Sunday in support of an amnesty law that could free him from criminal charges and eliminate the prison sentences of dozens of supporters who stormed the nation's congress two years ago to protest the election of his successor, Luis Inacio Lula da Silva.

Bolsonaro has been charged by Brazilian prosecutors of trying to organize a coup following his defeat to Lula in the October 2022 election, with investigators saying he plotted with 33 others to poison Lula and kill a supreme court judge.

In March, a panel of supreme court judges accepted the charges and launched a trial against Bolsonaro, where the former president will face five counts that include attempting to stage a coup, involvement in an armed criminal organization, and threatening the state's assets and heritage sites.

On Sunday, Bolsonaro dismissed the charges, which he claims are part of a political persecution against him.

Speaking to thousands of supporters who gathered in one of Sao Paulo's main avenues wearing yellow Brazil soccer jerseys, Bolsonaro said he had faith in the Brazilian people and hoped that Congress would approve an amnesty law drafted by his allies.

"We have a way out of this," Bol-



Sao Paulo Governor Tarciso de Freitas, right, and former president Jair Bolsonaro wave to supporters during a demonstration demanding amnesty for those arrested for 2023's alleged coup attempt, in Sao Paulo on April 6. (AP)

sonaro said.

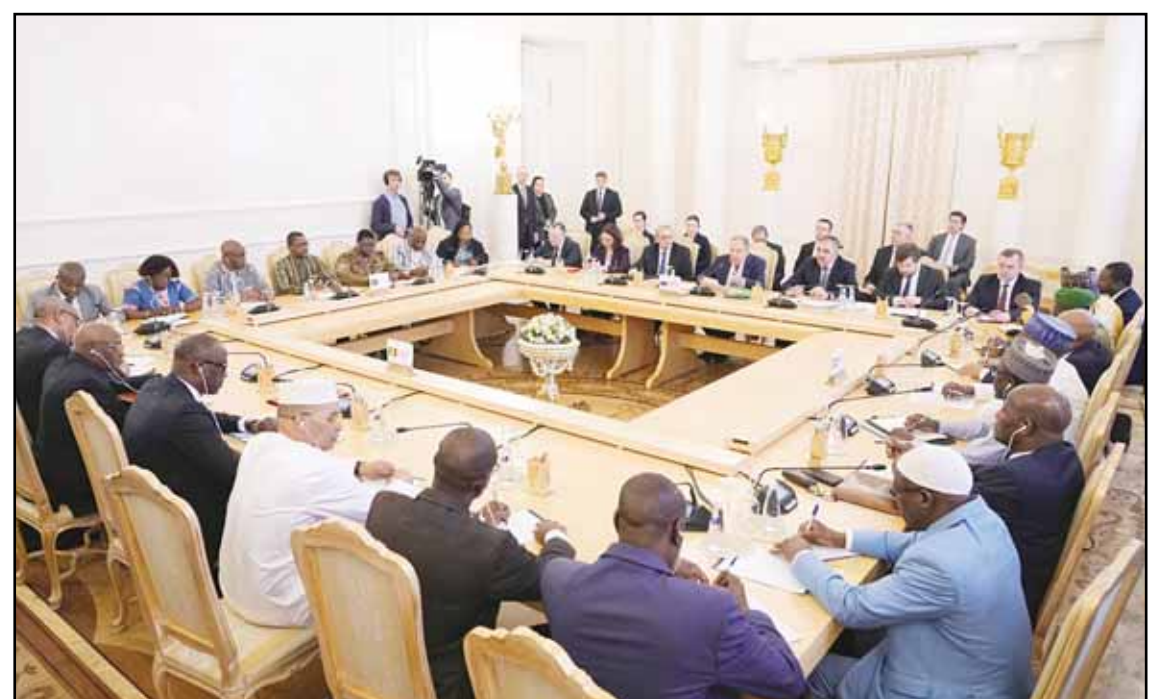
Bolsonaro, a conservative who has long expressed his admiration for President Donald Trump, said that Brazilian courts were trying to "hunt him" with "lawfare" just like courts in France recently went after far-right leader Marine Le Pen.

The former president was barred from running for office until 2030 by

Brazil's electoral court, for making unfounded claims about the nation's electoral system, that suggested voting machines had been rigged.

Bolsonaro has said he will challenge that ruling and is planning to run for office in the 2026 presidential election.

"To hold elections in 2026 without Jair Bolsonaro, is to negate democracy," Bolsonaro said during Sunday's rally.



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, rear right, gestures as he speaks during a meeting of foreign Ministers of the Confederation of Sahel States in Moscow, Russia, on April 3. (AP)

## Sahel alliance recalls ambassadors from Algeria after downing of Malian drone

DAKAR, Senegal, April 7, (AP): A military alliance between Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger withdrew their respective ambassadors from Algeria in response to the downing of a Malian drone last week, the group said late Sunday.

The Alliance of Sahel States, which goes by its French acronym AES, blamed Algeria on social media for the drone's downing and condemned it as an "irresponsible act" that violated international law.

The act was "contrary to historical relations and fraternal relations between the peoples of the AES Confederation and the Algerian people," the group said.

Malian Prime Minister Gen. Abdoulaye Maiga, in a statement on the Malian Foreign Ministry's social media, denied claims by the Algerian government that the drone had violated Algeria's airspace by over 2 kilometers (1.2 miles). He claimed that "this action proves, if proof

were needed, that the Algerian regime sponsors international terrorism."

Mali in the statement also summoned the Algerian ambassador, withdrew from a 15-year-old regional military group that includes fellow AES member Niger, and will file a complaint with "international bodies" about the incident.

The development comes as tensions are on the rise between Algeria and its southern neighbors, including Mali.

After coming into power, the juntas in the three AES countries left the Economic Community of West African States, the nearly 50-year-old regional bloc known as ECOWAS, and created their own security partnership, the Alliance of Sahel States, in September last year.

Some analysts described it as an attempt to legitimize their military governments amid coup-related sanctions and strained relations with neighbors.

Rida Lyammouri, a Sahel expert at

the Morocco-based Policy Center for the New South, said the latest war of words was unlikely to escalate beyond that. He doubted the Malian government's ability to conduct a thorough investigation because the crash "took place in an area it doesn't control, and what remains of the drone has been recovered by groups opposed to the government."

"That being said things are unlikely to escalate beyond the communication war. Mali, and other AES members would not engage militarily against Algeria, and vice versa. This will most likely only further existing diplomatic tensions at the moment," continued Lyammouri.

Algeria once served as a key mediator during more than a decade of conflict between Mali's government and Tuareg rebels. But the two countries have grown apart since a military junta staged coups in 2020 and 2021, putting military personnel in charge of Mali's key institutions.

## CBK Bonds and related Tawarruq

THE Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the most recent issues of CBK Bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KWD (200) million for (3) months with Rate of Return (4.125%).

# Business

In line with its efforts to boost banking awareness among its customers

## KIB warns of fraudulent schemes targeting users of WAMD service

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) reaffirmed its commitment to enhancing banking awareness among its customers, as part of the "Let's Be Aware" (Diraya) campaign, launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and the Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) in cooperation with local banks. The campaign aims to educate customers about the risks of banking fraud and to promote financial inclusion within the community.

In this context, the Bank warned of an increase in fraud attempts involving the WAMD instant transfer service. Scammers typically contact individuals, claiming they have mistakenly transferred funds to their accounts, and then request a refund through payment links sent via WhatsApp or SMS. These fake links are often designed to steal sensitive financial information, such as bank card details, OTP numbers, or login information for online or mobile banking services, leading to theft of money from customers.

Mohammed Al-Sarraf, Assistant Manager – Anti-Fraud Unit at KIB,

said: "We are committed to protecting our customers from all forms of fraud and urge everyone to stay vigilant and report any suspicious payments to their bank immediately. They should also refrain from interacting with individuals claiming to have received funds by mistake. They should also avoid engaging with suspicious links received through social media."

Al-Sarraf added that KIB remains committed to educating customers on essential precautions when using the WAMD service – such as verifying recipient details and their phone number, confirming the transfer amount before sending, and saving the recipient's number in their contact list to ensure secure transactions.

It is worth noting that KIB consistently monitors emerging fraud tactics and works to keep customers informed by offering guidance and practical tips to help protect them from potential scams. The Bank also shares awareness materials across its social media platforms to ensure the Diraya campaign's messages reach the widest possible audience and to empower



KIB's Mohammed Al-Sarraf

customers to navigate evolving banking challenges. These efforts reflect KIB's ongoing commitment to deepening its relationship with customers by fostering trust in its services and reinforcing the values of security and transparency in all banking transactions.

**About KIB**  
Kuwait International Bank (KIB)

is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Shari'ah, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007. In 2018, KIB embarked on a new phase of its journey full of innovation and development. As part of its new strategic direction, the Bank focuses on offering a next-level customer experience under the slogan: "Bank for Life".

Through a network of branches spread across the State of Kuwait, KIB offers a broad range of banking products and services, as well as innovative digital banking solutions in line with international best standards. As part of its duty towards the community, the Bank also encompasses a leading social responsibility program that aims at positively impacting all members of the community through a wide range of impactful initiatives and activities.

Today, KIB has taken concrete steps in implementing its new strategic objectives. The Bank has cemented its role as a key player in



'Let's Be Aware' (Diraya) campaign

the local banking industry and has continued to maintain its strong financial performance; enabling it

to be globally recognized for its strong credit rating and financial position.

## Boursa Kuwait ends Monday in the 'red'

General index drops 0.70%

KUWAIT CITY, April 7, (KUNA): Boursa Kuwait ended Monday's trading session in the red, with the general index shedding 53.03 points, or 0.70 percent, to settle at 7,534.86 points. The session saw a total of 375.2 million shares traded across 28,128 cash transactions, with a market value of KD 115.6 million (approximately USD 354.8 million).

The Main Market Index recorded the sharpest decline, dropping 68.93 points or 0.98 percent to

close at 6,944.30 points. A total of 134.8 million shares changed hands through 9,927 transactions, amounting to KD 17 million (around USD 52.19 million) in value.

Meanwhile, the Premier Market Index dipped 51.68 points, or 0.64 percent, ending the session at 8,054.40 points. It saw a volume of 240.4 million shares traded via 18,201 transactions, with a turnover of KD 98.6 million (about USD 302.7 million).

Similarly, the Major 50 Index declined by 51.48 points, or 0.77 percent, to close at 6,604.90 points. Trading volume stood at 115.13 million shares through 8,579 deals worth KD 14.3 million (approximately USD 43.9 million).

## CAPT extends KOC master plan bid deadline to June 1

By Najeh Bilal

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: The Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) announced the postponement of the deadline for submitting bids for the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) master plan for facilities in the southern, eastern, northern and western parts of the country to June 1, instead of April 27.

CAPT also postponed deadline for submitting bids for the injection maintenance project of KOC to May 6, instead of April 6.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) issued a public tender for the provision of technical support services for computer

users. The preliminary meeting will be held on April 21, and the closing date will be May 13.

The Higher Procurement Committee for KPC Tenders announced through 'Kuwait Al-Youm' that, at the request of the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC), the tender for the provision of technical services with specialized technical personnel for the liquefied gas filling branch in Umm Al-Aish has been issued. The deadline for submitting bids is May 27.

Also, Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) announced a public tender to utilize and invest in the spaces allocated for the opening of a café in its main building and the deadline for submitting bids is on July 10.

DUBAI, April 7, (AP): Middle East stock markets tumbled Monday as they struggled with the dual hit of the United States' new tariff policy and a sharp decline in oil prices, squeezing energy-producing nations that rely on those sales to power their economies and government spending.

Benchmark Brent crude is down by nearly 15% over the last five days of trading, with a barrel of oil costing just over \$63. That's down nearly 30% from a year ago, when a barrel cost over \$90.

That cost per barrel is far lower than the estimated break-even price for Saudi Arabia and most other countries producing energy in the Middle East. That's coupled with the new tariffs, which saw the Gulf Cooperation Council states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates hit with 10% tariffs. Other Mideast nations face higher tariffs, like Iraq at 39% and Syria at 41%.

"With these measures and the expected retaliatory measures that could be adopted by other countries, the stability and predictability of international trade could be undermined," the accounting firm PwC said in an advisory to its Mideast clients.

The Dubai Financial Market exchange fell 6% after it opened for the week, with market leader Emaar Properties down 9%. The Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange fell 4%.

Markets that opened Sunday saw losses as well. Saudi Arabia's Tadawul stock exchange fell over 6% in trading then, with further losses of 3% after opening Monday. The giant of the exchange, Saudi Arabia's state-owned oil company Aramco, fell over 5% on its own on Sunday, with more losses Mon-



Emiratis are seen in the Dubai Financial Market in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Monday, April 7, 2025. (AP)

day, wiping away billions in market capitalization for the world's sixth-most-valuable company.

The drop in Aramco, whose shares also power Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's expansive plans to reshape the kingdom's economy, ties directly back to the overall price of oil.

Last week, OPEC+ members Algeria, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Oman, Russia, Saudi Arabia and the UAE agreed to speed up the introduction of more oil into the market. This month marks the first oil production increase by the group since 2022.

"OPEC+ has shifted its market management strategy from a steady

incremental increase in output to monthly announced targets, bringing forward higher output levels for May this year," an analysis published Monday by the state-majority-owned Emirates NBD Bank of Dubai said. "That will leave oil markets grasping with additional volatility as they assess the negative impact on global trade of the tariffs announced by the Trump administration."

The Qatar Stock Exchange fell over 4% Sunday and a further 2% as trading resumed Monday. Boursa Kuwait fell over 5% on Sunday, with slight losses again Monday.

The Pakistan Stock Exchange fell rapidly Monday, with Islama-

bad facing 29% tariffs from the U.S. The exchange suspended trading for an hour after a 5% drop in its main KSE-30 index.

"We may face this situation until the uncertainty ends at the global market," said Mohammed Sohai, the chief executive at Topline Securities.

Pakistan's Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said over the weekend that Islamabad will send a delegation to the United States soon to negotiate. The U.S. imports around \$5 billion worth of textiles and other products from Pakistan, which heavily relies on loans from the International Monetary Fund and others.

Event empowers students and parents to explore educational opportunities

## Kuwait Finance House a strategic partner of Derasti Exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Kuwait Minister of Education, Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabei, commended Kuwait Finance House (KFH) for its pioneering role in supporting students, youth and education. He appreciated KFH's initiatives and partnerships in empowering young people and helping students achieve their aspirations.

He made these remarks during his visit to the KFH booth at the fourth edition of the Derasti Exhibition, where the Bank is a strategic partner. Held from April 7 to 10 at the Kuwait International Fairground, Derasti brings together a wide range of local and global universities.

**Head of Public Relations and Media - Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh**

KFH Head of Public Relations and Media, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh, affirmed that the strategic partnership with Derasti reflects KFH's commitment to social responsibility and its leading role in empowering youth and supporting students.

He added that KFH's participation also reflects its keenness to be involved in educational events and exhibitions, which serve as a valuable platform for students to explore academic institutions and study opportunities. Al-Ruwaieh commented, "These efforts aim to provide students with the support they need and help meet their evolving aspirations."

He mentioned that Derasti Exhibition hosts over 120 local and international universities, in addition to training institutes and educational service providers. It also features panel discussions with distinguished academics and experts addressing study opportunities and developments



Minister of Education Eng. Sayed Jalal Al-Tabtabei, with Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh and Nehal Al-Musallam.

in the education sector. "KFH's participation in these purposeful events highlight its commitment to meaningful engagement within the community," he added.

Al-Ruwaieh pointed out that this significant event presents a valuable opportunity for students and youth to explore various academic disciplines, universities, and

### Al-Ruwaieh:

- KFH is keen to participate in youth empowerment events

### Al-Musallam:

- A dedicated team assists Hesabi Youth account holders and all customer segments

educational services that assist them set priorities and shape their futures. It also offers a great chance for parents to gain insights and support their children in making informed decisions about fields of study aligned with their potential and passions.

### KFH Deputy General Manager Products – Nehal Al-Musallam

KFH Deputy General Manager Products, Nehal Al-Musallam, said that KFH welcomes all exhibition visitors at its booth. A dedicated team is providing direct assistance and responding to inquiries for Hesabi Youth account holders and all customer segments. She emphasized that KFH offers banking solutions designed to match the needs and lifestyles of its customers, providing them with seamless and distinguished banking experience.

Al-Musallam pointed out that the Hesabi Youth Account offers a wide array of exclusive benefits and round-the-clock banking services.



## US tariffs aim to close trade gaps

### Clarifying Trump's new tariff plan & its economic impact

WASHINGTON, April 7, (AP): After weeks of anticipation and speculation, President Donald Trump followed through on his tariff threats this week by declaring a 10% baseline tax on imports from all countries and higher tariff rates on dozens of nations that run trade surpluses with the United States.

Global markets cratered the day after the announcement and then fell further when China announced it would retaliate with tariffs equal to the ones the U.S. is imposing.

In announcing what he has called reciprocal tariffs, Trump was fulfilling a key campaign promise by raising U.S. taxes on foreign goods to narrow the gap with the tariffs the White House says other countries unfairly impose on U.S. products.

Trump's higher rates would hit foreign entities that sell more goods to the United States than they buy. But economists don't share Trump's enthusiasm for tariffs since they're a tax on importers that usually get passed on to consumers. It's possible, however, that the reciprocal tariffs could bring other countries to the table and get them to lower their own import taxes.

The Associated Press asked for your questions about reciprocal tariffs. Here are a few of them, along with our answers:

It is often unclear what the president's endgame is, which adds to the uncertainty surrounding his trade wars. He has given different reasons for his sweeping import taxes, and sometimes they contradict each other.

Trump has said that tariffs can raise money for the U.S. Treasury, protect U.S. industries, draw factories to the United States and serve as a negotiating tactic to get other countries to bend to his will, whether it means getting them to reduce their own tariffs or to crack down on the illegal flow of drugs and immigrants into the United States.

But if tariffs mean Americans buy fewer imports or if companies relocate factories to the United States, then revenue from tariffs will fall, undercutting his plan to use them as a money generating alternative to the income tax.

#### Reciprocal

Trump and his own aides have also offered competing explanations for the sweeping "reciprocal" tariffs he announced Wednesday.

The president on Thursday said the levies "give us great power to negotiate" and were coaxing other countries into offering to lower their own trade barriers. "Every country is calling us," Trump said. "That's the beauty of what we do. We put ourselves in the driver's seat."

The same day, White House trade adviser Peter Navarro told CNBC that the tariffs were meant to stay: The idea is to get companies to produce goods in America, not abroad, bringing down longstanding U.S. trade deficits. "Let me make this very clear," he said. "This is not a negotiation. This is not that. This is a national emergency."

Currency manipulation takes place when a country deliberately pushes the value of its currency lower, which makes its companies' exports cheaper in foreign markets and gives them an unfair competitive advantage. It can do this by selling its own currency and buying another country's - usually the U.S. dollar - in foreign exchange markets.

In announcing sweeping tariffs this year, Trump has accused other countries of using this tactic to gain an unfair edge over American companies. China, in particular, was notorious for years for manipulating its currency lower to boost exports. But last November the Biden administration's Treasury Department concluded that "no major U.S. trading partner" had manipulated its currency to gain an unfair advantage in the fiscal year that ended in June 2024.

#### Currency

The U.S. dollar's status as the world's "reserve currency" - used far more than others in global commerce - tends to keep its value high, which can put U.S. exporters at a disadvantage.

According to the Trump administration, the European Union's tariffs and trade barriers against the U.S. amount to a 39% tariff on U.S. goods, while China's, it says, are 67%, and India's 52%.

Those are much higher than what other sources say. The World Trade Organization puts the EU's average tariffs on all imports at 2.7%, China's at 3%, and India's at 12%.

The Trump administration says it is including currency manipulation, government subsidies, and other barriers to trade in its calculations. Trump said Wednesday he was being "kind" and then charging half what other countries imposed on the U.S. So the U.S. will as of April 9 impose 20% duties on imports from Europe, 26% on India, and 34% on China. For China, that's in addition to other duties, which means some Chinese goods will face duties as high as 79%.

Many countries do take other steps besides tariffs to restrict access to their markets. The EU, for example, restricts imports of hormone-treated beef from the U.S. And the U.S. government has long complained that China doesn't protect intellectual property, such as software made by American companies.

Still, those factors don't explain how the administration came up with such high numbers for other countries' tariffs. Instead, the White House says it did a simple calculation: It took the size of each country's trade imbalance on goods with the United States and divided that by how much America imports from that nation.

It then took half that percentage and made it the new tariff rate. Tariffs are taxes on imports, collected when foreign goods cross the U.S. border by the Customs and Border Protection agency. The money - about \$80 billion last year - goes to the U.S. Treasury to help pay the federal government's expenses. Congress has authority to say how the money will be spent.

#### Lawmakers

Trump - largely supported by Republican lawmakers who control the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives - wants to use increased tariff revenue to finance tax cuts that analysts say would disproportionately benefit the wealthy. Specifically, they want to extend tax cuts passed in Trump's first term and largely set to expire at the end of 2025. The Tax Foundation, a nonpartisan think tank in Washington, has found that extending Trump's tax cuts would reduce federal revenue by \$4.5 trillion from 2025 to 2034.

Trump wants higher tariffs to help offset the lower tax collections. Another think tank, the Tax Policy Center, has said that extending the 2017 tax cuts would deliver continued tax relief to Americans at all income levels, "but higher-income households would receive a larger benefit."

It depends on how businesses both in the United States and overseas respond, but consumers could see overall prices rising within a month or two of tariffs being imposed. For some products, such as produce from Mexico, prices could rise much more quickly after the tariffs take effect.

Some U.S. retailers and other importers may eat part of the cost of the tariff, and overseas exporters may reduce their prices to offset the extra duties. But for many businesses, the tariffs Trump announced Wednesday - such as 20% on imports from Europe - will be too large to swallow on their own.

Companies may also use the tariffs as an excuse to raise prices. When Trump slapped duties on washing machines in 2018, studies later showed that retailers raised prices on both washers and dryers, even though there were no new duties on dryers.

A key question in the coming months is whether something similar will happen again. Economists worry that consumers, having just lived through the biggest inflationary spike in four decades, are more accustomed to rising prices than they were before the pandemic.

Yet there are also signs that Americans, put off by the rise in the cost of living, are less willing to accept price increases and will simply cut back on their purchases. That could discourage businesses from raising prices by much.

#### Grants

The U.S. Constitution grants the power to set tariffs to Congress. But over the years, Congress has delegated those powers to the president through several different laws. Those laws specify the circumstances under which the White House can impose tariffs, which are typically limited to cases where imports threaten national security or are severely harming a specific industry.

In the past, presidents generally imposed tariffs only after carrying out public hearings to determine if certain imports met those criteria. Trump followed those steps when imposing tariffs in his first term.

In his second term, however, Trump has sought to use emergency powers set out in a 1977 law to impose tariffs in a more ad hoc fashion. Trump has said, for example, that fentanyl flowing in from Canada and Mexico constitute a national emergency and has used that pretext to impose 25% duties on goods from both countries.

Congress can seek to cancel an emergency that a president declares, and Sen. Tim Kaine, a Democrat from Virginia, has proposed to do just that regarding Canada. That legislation could pass the Senate but would likely die in the House. Other bills in Congress that would also limit the president's authority to set tariffs face tough odds for passage as well.

# Trump refuses to relent on tariffs despite market drop

More than 50 nations seek trade negotiations with US

**WEST PALM BEACH, April 7 (AP): US President Donald Trump said Sunday that he won't back down on his sweeping tariffs on imports from most of the world unless countries even out their trade with the U.S., digging in on his plans to implement the taxes that have sent financial markets reeling, raised fears of a recession and upended the global trading system.**

Speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One, Trump said he didn't want global markets to fall, but also that he wasn't concerned about the massive sell-off either, adding, "sometimes you have to take medicine to fix something."

His comments came as global financial markets appeared on track to continue sharp declines once trading resumes Monday, and after Trump's aides sought to soothe market concerns by saying more than 50 nations had reached out about launching negotiations to lift the tariffs.

"I spoke to a lot of leaders, European, Asian, from all over the world," Trump said. "They're dying to make a deal. And I said, we're not going to have deficits with your country. We're not going to do that, because to me a deficit is a loss. We're going to have surpluses or at worst, going to be breaking even."

The higher rates are set to be collected beginning Wednesday, ushering in a new era of economic uncertainty with no clear end in sight. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said unfair trade practices are not "the kind of thing you can negotiate away in days or weeks." The United States, he said, must see "what the countries offer and whether it's believable."

Trump, who spent the weekend in Florida playing golf, posted online that "WE WILL WIN. HANG TOUGH, it won't be easy." His Cabinet members and economic advisers were out in force Sunday defending the tariffs and downplaying the consequences for the global economy.

"There doesn't have to be a recession. Who knows how the market is going to react in a day, in a week?" Bessent said. "What we are looking at is building the long-term economic fundamentals for prosperity."

U.S. stock futures dropped on Sunday night as the tariffs continued to roil the markets. S&P 500 futures were down 2.5% while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average shed 2.1%. Nasdaq futures were down 3.1%. Even the price of bitcoin, which held relatively stable last week, fell nearly 6% Sunday.

Asian shares, meanwhile, nose-dived. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index lost nearly 8% shortly after the market opened. By midday, it was down 6%. A circuit breaker briefly suspended trading of Topix futures after



US President Donald Trump appears on a television screen at the stock market in Frankfurt, Germany, Thursday, April 3, 2025. (AP)

an earlier sharp fall in U.S. futures. Chinese markets also tumbled, with Hong Kong's Hang Seng dropping 9.4%, while the Shanghai Composite index lost 6.2%.

Trump's tariff blitz, announced April 2, fulfilled a key campaign promise as he acted without Congress to redraw the rules of global trade. It was a move decades in the making for Trump, who has long denounced foreign trade deals as unfair to the U.S. He is gambling that voters will be willing to endure higher prices for everyday items to enact his economic vision.

Countries are scrambling to figure out how to respond to the tariffs, with China and others retaliating quickly.

Top White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett acknowledged that other countries are "angry and retaliating," and, he said, "by the way, coming to the table." He cited the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative as reporting that more than 50 nations had reached out to the White House to begin talks.

Adding to the turmoil, the new tariffs are hitting American allies and adversaries alike, including Israel, which is facing a 17% tariff. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is set to visit the White House and speak at a press conference with Trump on Monday, with his office saying the tariffs would be a point of discussion with Trump along with the war in Gaza and other issues.

Another American ally, Vietnam, a major manufacturing center for clothing, has also been in touch with the administration about the tariffs. Trump said Vietnam's leader said in a telephone call that his country "wants to cut their Tariffs down to ZERO if they are able to make an agreement with the U.S." And a key European partner, Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, said she disagreed

with Trump's move but was "ready to deploy all the tools - negotiating and economic - necessary to support our businesses and our sectors that may be penalized."

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick made clear there was no postponing tariffs that are days away.

"The tariffs are coming. Of course they are," he said, adding that Trump needed to reset global trade. But he committed only to having them "definitely" remain "for days and weeks."

In Congress, where Trump's Republican Party has long championed free trade, the tariff regiment has been met with applause but also significant unease.

Several Republican senators have already signed onto a new bipartisan bill that would require presidents to justify new tariffs to Congress. Lawmakers would then have to approve the tariffs within 60 days, or they would expire. Nebraska GOP Rep. Don Bacon said Sunday that he would introduce a House version of the bill, saying that Congress needs to restore its powers over tariffs.

"We gave some of that power to the executive branch. I think, in hindsight, that was a mistake," said Bacon, adding that getting a measure passed would be challenging unless the financial markets continue to react negatively and other indicators such as inflation and unemployment shift.

Wyoming's John Barrasso, the No. 2 member of the Senate's GOP leadership, said Trump is "doing what he has every right to do." But, he acknowledged, "there is concern, and there's concern across the country. People are watching the markets."

"There'll be a discussion in the Senate," Barrasso said of the tariffs. "We'll see which way the discussion goes."

Trump's government cost-cutting guru, billionaire businessman Elon Musk, had been relatively silent on Trump's tariffs, but said at a weekend event in Italy that he would like to see the U.S. and Europe move to "a zero-tariff situation." The comment from the Tesla owner who leads Trump's Department of Government Efficiency drew a rebuke from White House trade adviser Peter Navarro.

"Elon, when he is on his DOGE lane, is great. But we understand what's going on here. We just have to understand. Elon sells cars," Navarro said. He added: "He's simply protecting his own interest as any business person would do."

Trump indicated he disagreed with Musk, saying Sunday of the European Union, "They want to talk, but there's no talk unless they pay us a lot of money on a yearly basis."

Lawrence Summers, an economist who was treasury secretary under Democratic President Bill Clinton, said Trump and his economic team are sending contradictory messages if they say they are interested in re-activating manufacturing while still being open to negotiating with trade partners.

If other countries eliminate their tariffs, and the U.S. does, too, he said, "it's just making a deal, then we don't raise any revenue nor do we get any businesses to relocate to the United States. If it's a permanent revenue source and trying to get businesses to relocate to the United States, then we're going to have these tariffs permanently. So the president can't have it both ways."

Bessent was on NBC's "Meet the Press." Hassett and Summers appeared on ABC's "This Week." Lutnick and Barrasso were on CBS' "Face the Nation" and Navarro was interviewed on Fox News Channel's "Sunday Morning Futures."

## Commerce Minister calls US tariffs the 'Root of the Problem'

# China slams US tariffs as economic bullying

BANGKOK, April 7, (AP): China on Monday accused the U.S. of unilateralism, protectionism and economic bullying with tariffs, while calling on representatives of American companies including Tesla, to "take concrete actions" to resolve the tariffs.

Putting "America First" over international rules harms the stability of global production and the supply chain and seriously impacts the world's economic recovery, Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Lin Jian told reporters.

Last week, Trump put an additional 34% tariff on Chinese goods as part of "Liberation Day," coming on top of two rounds of 10% tariffs already declared in February and March, which Trump said was due to Beijing's role in the fentanyl crisis. China and other governments retaliated quickly. China announced its own 34% tariff rate on U.S. goods, mirroring Trump's tariff rate for China.

On Monday, Beijing struck a note of confidence even as markets in Hong Kong and Shanghai tumbled. The People's Daily, the Communist Party's official mouthpiece, had strong words. "The sky won't fall," it declared, even if the U.S. tariffs have an impact.

"Faced with the indiscriminate punches of U.S. taxes, we know what we are doing and we have tools at our disposal," it added.

Beijing had announced a slew of countermeasures Friday evening aimed at Trump's tariffs. As part of these measures, China suspended sorghum, poultry and bonemeal imports from some American companies, and put more export controls on rare earth minerals, critical for various technologies, while launching a lawsuit at the World Trade Organization.

It is unknown if China's leader, Xi Jinping, will meet with Trump to make a deal on the tariffs.

Lin directed questions about a possible meeting to other departments.

"Pressure and threats are not the way to deal with China. China will firmly safeguard its legitimate rights and interests," Lin added.

Still, over the weekend, Chinese government officials met a slew of American business representatives including for Tesla, GE Healthcare and others.

"The root of the tariff problem is in the U.S.," said Ling Ji, a vice minister of Commerce, at the meeting with the 20 American companies, according to a readout of the meeting. "We hope the American companies can address the problem at its root, ... issue reasonable statements, take concrete actions, and work together to safeguard the stability of the global supply chain."

Ling also promised that China will remain open to foreign investment and that it was safe to invest.

EU and UK set for key summit to strengthen relations in May

## Von der Leyen calls for EU-US tariff negotiations

BRUSSELS, April 7, (KUNA): European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen emphasized on Sunday the European Union's commitment to engaging in negotiations with the United States regarding the comprehensive US tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump on April 2, stressing the EU's readiness to defend its interests through "proportionate countermeasures if necessary."

In a phone call with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, von der Leyen expressed her "deep concern" about the tariffs announced by President Trump and the "damage they cause to all countries, both through their direct and indirect effects, including their impact on the world's poorest nations." She confirmed in a statement that these tariffs represent a "major turning point for the US."

Von der Leyen clarified that the EU is determined to work with its partners to address this "new reality for the global economy," noting

that each trading partner will respond to the new situation "according to its own priorities."

In this context, the European Commission President reiterated the bloc's "strong" commitment to working closely with the United Kingdom on security and defense, as well as the shared and lasting support for Ukraine.

She also expressed concern over the stalling of peace efforts due to Russia.

Additionally, von der Leyen and Starmer discussed preparations for the upcoming EU-UK Summit, scheduled to take place on May 19 in London, which will provide an "important opportunity" to strengthen cooperation between the EU and the UK in key areas, including security and defense, trade, and the economy, according to the statement.

# Business Plus



Experts urge focus on grid expansion, not just generation

US energy market has its troubles, though it may not be 'national emergency'



This Montana refinery processes crude oil imported from Canada. (AP)

By Seth Blumsack  
Penn State

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



President Donald Trump's declaration of a "national energy emergency" on his first day in office - and which he reiterated during his address to Congress on March 4, 2025 - might have seemed to echo other national emergencies, like those presidents declared in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

But there has never before been a national energy emergency. During the energy crises of the 1970s, President Jimmy Carter declared local or regional energy emergencies in a handful of states. These actions suspended some environmental regulations, such as air-pollution limits for coal-fired power plants, for very short periods to make sure those states' residents had enough electricity.

When a president declares a national emergency, he claims significant powers under the National Emergencies Act, which allow him to take steps to solve the emergency. In this situation, Trump might seek to override environmental

regulations, order utility companies to buy power from particular power plants, or invoke the Defense Production Act to secure materials needed for power plant construction.

Six weeks into his presidency, Trump had not taken any action to address this emergency, though during his speech to Congress he said he wants to increase drilling and build a new natural gas pipeline in Alaska. And Trump's discussion of energy policy has not directly referred to the consumer price hikes expected as a result of the 10% tariffs he imposed on Canadian oil, gas and electricity starting on March 4, 2025.

Critics of the president's declaration have described it as a "giveaway" to the fossil fuel industry in the form of looser regulations and measures to make it easier to drill for oil on government-owned land. In fact, the executive order's definition of "energy" excludes energy generated from wind and solar, as well as efforts to conserve energy - all of which were major parts of the Biden administration's energy strategy.

As someone who has studied energy markets for decades, I have seen several events that might qualify as energy-related emergencies, such as meltdowns at nuclear power plants around the world, shortages

of electricity and natural gas, and massive power blackouts.

But over the past 15 years, the United States has become a global energy superpower even without any emergency declarations. The advent of hydraulic fracturing unleashed a wave of oil and gas production, even as U.S. energy demand barely budged. In a time of such energy abundance, there is no clear emergency on the scale of the energy crises of the 1970s. But there are some causes for concern.

One goal Trump's declaration sets out is to increase what the executive order calls the nation's "energy security." Usually that phrase refers to an ability to operate using energy produced within the U.S. rather than overseas - particularly from countries that have longstanding conflicts or disagreements with the United States.

Based on raw numbers, however, the U.S. is already quite energy secure. In 2023, the nation produced nearly 13 million barrels of oil per day, which is more than any country has ever produced in the history of the oil business. Since 2015, when a federal ban on oil exports was lifted, the U.S. has been increasing the amount of oil it exports every year. And for the past several years, the U.S. has been the world's leading exporter of gasoline, sending 10% of its total annual production

to other countries.

Since the start of the shale-fracking boom in the mid-2000s, U.S. production of natural gas has also been increasing. The country's natural gas exports have also risen over the past 10 years, though they have been limited by the number of ports that can handle liquefied natural gas cargo.

The U.S. produces plenty of oil to meet its demands, but not the kinds of oil that American refineries are designed to process into useful fuels.

Therefore, despite the increases in domestic production, the U.S. is still a net importer of crude oil. In 2023, the U.S. imported almost twice as much oil as it exported. And U.S. refineries' output of gasoline and heating oil depends on imported oil. Most oil refineries in the U.S. are quite old and were engineered to process so-called "heavy" crude oil produced in countries such as Canada, which is historically the United States' biggest source of imported oil.

Most of the recent increase in U.S. oil production comes from hydraulic fracturing of shale and is so-called "light" crude oil. Refining light crude would require new refineries or a major reengineering of existing refineries, with new equipment, expanded capacity or both.

Making those changes would be

very expensive. So refinery owners are hesitant to make these kinds of investments because there is a risk that the investments won't pay off. Because U.S. refineries produce so much gasoline and have limited capacity, the U.S. also continues to import some refined petroleum fuels such as jet fuel.

Concern over the nation's aging electric power grid is another focus of Trump's energy emergency declaration. Experts have been issuing warnings for years. A 2024 study on the national transmission grid commissioned by the U.S. Department of Energy has concluded the U.S. needs to double the size of the grid in the next couple of decades.

For the first time in nearly half a century, the U.S. is facing the prospect of rapidly increasing electricity demand. The demand for power has always gone up and down a bit with population and the health of the economy, but this time is different. Growth in electricity demand is now driven by the construction of massive data centers and by electrification of cars and heating and cooling systems. The Department of Energy reports that data center electricity use in particular has tripled in the past 10 years and could easily double in the next few years. At that rate, data centers could account for over 10% of all electricity demand in the country before 2030.

The U.S. supply of power generation in many regions is not ready for this surge in demand. Many power plants - particularly the older ones and those that burn coal - have shut down in the past several years, driven by a combination of economic pressures and environmental regulations. Building new power plants in many parts of the U.S. has become bogged down in regulatory red tape, public opposition and economic uncertainty. The North American Electric Reliability Corp., which develops standards for grid reliability, has placed over half of U.S. states at some level of risk for not having enough power generation to meet anticipated future demand.

Under Trump's energy emergency declaration, the administration seems likely to take actions that will make it easier to drill for more oil and gas. And the federal government may also make it easier to build power plants that run on coal, natural gas and possibly nuclear fuel.

But expanded fracking, in and of itself, will probably not address any energy security issues in the U.S., unless there are major investments in refineries to handle the increased oil production. Reducing the barriers to building power plants addresses a much more pressing problem, but the country would still need to expand the transmission grid itself, which does not get as much attention in the president's declaration.

Time will tell whether the energy emergency declaration will be used to solve real problems in the nation's energy supplies, or whether it will be used to further bolster oil and gas producers that have already made the U.S. a global energy powerhouse. (AP)

‘Expanded fracking won't solve refinery issues.’

Research links effort to perceived value in art, fitness, and career mastery

Future effort diminishes value, while past effort increases it, study finds

By Piotr Winkielman  
University of California, San Diego

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



When deciding if something is worth the effort, whether you've already exerted yourself or face the prospect of work changes your calculus. That's what we found in our new research, published in the Journal of Experimental Psychology: General.

When you consider a future effort, more work makes the outcome less appealing. But once you've completed the work, more effort makes the outcome seem more valuable. We also discovered that hiding behind this general principle of timing there are individual differences in how future and past effort shapes people's value for the fruits of their labor.

In our experiment, we gave participants a choice between a fixed amount of money and a household item - a mug - that they could take home if they exerted some amount of physical effort, roughly equivalent to walking up one, two or three flights of stairs.

This setup allowed us to determine the value each person placed on the effort - did it add to or subtract from the value of the item? For instance, if putting in a little more effort made someone switch their decision and decide to go with the cash instead of the mug, we could tell that they valued the mug plus that amount of effort less than that sum of money.

We also manipulated the time aspect of effort. When the effort was in the future, participants decided whether they wanted to go with the cash or get the mug with some effort.

When the effort was in the past, participants decided whether they wanted to cash in the mug they had already earned with effort.

As we had expected, future effort generally detracted from the value of the mug, but the past effort generally increased it.

But these general trends do not tell the whole story. Not everyone responds to effort the same way. Our study also uncovered striking individual differences. Four distinct patterns emerged:

- For some people, extra effort always subtracted value.
- Others consistently preferred items with more work.
- Many showed mixed patterns,

where moderate effort increased value but excessive effort decreased it.

Some experienced the opposite: initially disliking effort, then finding greater value at higher levels.

These changing patterns show that one's relationship with effort isn't simple. For many people, there's a sweet spot - a little effort might make something more valuable, but push too far and the value drops. It's like enjoying a 30-minute workout but dreading a 2-hour session, or conversely, feeling that a 5-minute workout isn't worth changing clothes for, but a 45-minute session feels satisfying.

Our paper offers a mathematical model that accounts for these individual differences by proposing that your mind flexibly computes costs and benefits of effort.

Why should timing even matter for effort? It seems obvious that reason and nature would teach you to always avoid and dislike effort.

A hummingbird that prefers a hard-to-get flower over an easy equal alternative might win an A for effort, but, exhausted, would not last long. The cruel world requires "resource rationality" - optimal, efficient use of limited physical

and mental resources, balancing the benefits of actions with the required effort.

That insight is captured by the classic psychological "law of less work," basically boiling down to the idea that given equivalent outcomes, individuals prefer easier options. Anything different would seem irrational or, in plain language, stupid.

If so, then how come people, and even animals, often prize things that require hard work for no additional payoff? Why is being hard-to-get a route to value? Anyone who has labored hard for anything knows that investing effort makes the final prize sweeter - whether in love, career, sports or Ikea furniture assembly.

Could the answer to this "paradox of effort" be that in the hummingbird example, the decision is about future effort, and in the Ikea effect, the effort is in the past?

Our new findings explain seemingly contradictory phenomena in everyday life. In health care, starting an exercise regimen feels overwhelming when focusing on upcoming workouts, but after establishing the habit, those same exercises become a source of accomplishment. At work, professionals might avoid learning difficult

new skills, yet after mastering them, they value their enhanced abilities more because they were challenging to acquire.

Sayings like "No pain, no gain" or "Easy come, easy go" populate our language and seem fundamental to our culture. But researchers still don't fully understand why some people value effortful options more than others do. Is it physical aptitude, past experiences, a sense of meaning, perception of difficulty as importance or impossibility, moralization of effort, specific cultural beliefs about hard work? We don't know yet.

We're now studying how effort shapes different aspects of value: monetary value; hedonic value, as in the pleasure one gets from an item; and the aesthetic value, as in the sense of beauty and artistry. For instance, we're investigating how people value artful calligraphy after exerting different amounts of effort to view it.

This work may shed light on curious cultural phenomena, like how people value their experience seeing the Mona Lisa after waiting for hours in crowds at the Louvre. These studies could also help researchers design better motivation systems across education, health care and business. (AP)

‘Effort in the past often makes the prize sweeter.’

'Giant' and 'Benjamin Button' shine at UK stage awards

## John Lithgow wins best actor at Olivier Awards

LONDON, April 7, (AP) - American actor John Lithgow won the best actor trophy at the London stage Olivier Awards on Sunday for exploring the dark side of children's writer Roald Dahl in "Giant."

Backwards-biographical story "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" was named best new musical at the awards, Britain's equivalent of Broadway's Tony Awards.

"Conclave" star Lithgow added the Olivier to an awards shelf that already includes multiple Tony, Emmy and Golden Globe trophies, for depicting the author of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" in Mark Rosenblatt's play, which confronts Dahl's antisemitic views.

"I think I'm going to faint," said an emotional Lithgow, 79. He said he wanted to assure Britons that the transatlantic "special relationship is still firmly intact."

"It's not always easy to welcome an American into your midst, and at this particular moment, it's probably a little more complicated than usual," he said.

Lesley Manville, whose resume includes a stint as Princess Margaret in "The Crown," took the best actress prize for her performance as shocked royal spouse Jocasta in "Oedipus." Director Robert Icke's modern-day reimagining of the ancient Greek tragedy - which opens on Broadway later this year - was named best revival of a play.

Imelda Staunton - Queen Elizabeth II in two final seasons of "The Crown" - won the fifth Olivier of her career, best actress in a musical, for "Hel-

lo, Dolly!" Best actor in a musical went to John Dagleish as the titular man who ages in reverse in "Benjamin Button." The musical is based on a story by F. Scott Fitzgerald that also inspired a 2008 movie starring Brad Pitt.

The Oliviers were handed out in a ceremony at London's Royal Albert Hall hosted by Broadway, TV and runway star Billy Porter and British soul singer Beverley Knight.

Stars in the audience included recent Academy Award winner Adrien Brody - a best-actor Olivier nominee for death-row stage drama "The Fear of 13" - and Cate Blanchett, recently seen on the London stage in "The Seagull."

"Giant" won three prizes including best new play. "Benjamin Button" also won three, as did a boisterous outdoor production of "Fiddler on the Roof" at Regent's Park Open Air Theatre, which was named best musical revival.

Maimuna Memon was named best supporting actress in a musical for Tolstoy-inspired "Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812." Layton Williams took the equivalent supporting actor prize for campy Celine Dion celebration "Titanique."

For plays, supporting performer prizes went to Elliot Levey for "Giant" and Romola Garai for "The Years." Norwegian director Eline Arbo was named best director for "The Years," an adaptation of Nobel Literature laureate Annie Ernaux's autobiographical book.

The prizes, which recognize achievements in theater, opera and dance, were founded in 1976 and named for the late



John Lithgow poses for photographers upon arrival at the Olivier Awards on April 6, in London. (AP)

actor-director Laurence Olivier. Winners are chosen by voting groups of stage professionals and theatergoers.

The winners of the 2025 Olivier Awards handed out Sunday for achievement in London theater, opera and dance:

- New Play: "Giant"
- New Musical: "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button"
- New Entertainment or Comedy: "Titanique"
- Family Show: "Brainiac Live"
- Revival: "Oedipus"
- Musical Revival: "Fiddler on the Roof"
- Actress-Play: Lesley Manville, "Oedi-

- pus"
- Actor-Play: John Lithgow, "Giant"
- Actress-Musical: Imelda Staunton, "Hello, Dolly!"
- Actor-Musical: John Dagleish, "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button"
- Supporting Actor-Play: Elliot Levey, "Giant"
- Supporting Actress-Play: Romola Garai, "The Years"
- Supporting Actress-Musical: Maimuna Memon, "Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812"
- Supporting Actor-Musical: Layton Williams, "Titanique"
- Director: Eline Arbo, "The Years"
- Outstanding Musical Contribution: Darren Clark and Mark Aspinall, "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button"
- Theater Choreography: Christopher Wheelton, "MJ The Musical"
- New Opera Production: "Festen"
- Outstanding Achievement in Opera: Allan Clayton, "Festen"
- New Dance Production: "Assembly Hall"
- Outstanding Achievement in Dance: Eva Yerbabuena, "Yerbabuena"
- Set Design: Tom Scutt, "Fiddler on the Roof"
- Lighting Design: Paule Constable and Ben Jacobs, "Olivier!"
- Sound Design: Nick Lidster, "Fiddler on the Roof"
- Costume Design: Gabriella Slade, "Starlight Express"
- Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theater: "Boys on the Verge of Tears," Soho Theatre



Rose Ayling-Ellis poses for photographers upon arrival at the Olivier Awards on Sunday, April 6, in London. (AP)

Major donation

## American masterpiece joins UK's Tate Modern collection

LONDON, April 7, (AP) - Britain's Tate Modern art museum on last Thursday unveiled one of the most significant gifts it has received in years - a masterpiece by an American abstract expressionist that hung for years on a bedroom wall in Miami.

Joan Mitchell's painting "Iva" is the centerpiece of a major donation from Florida-based philanthropists Jorge M. Pérez and Darlene Pérez that also will help Tate expand its collection of works by Latin American and African artists.

The 20-foot-long (6-meter-long) triptych featuring bold strokes of purple, red, yellow and white - painted in 1973 and named for Mitchell's much-loved German Shepherd - went on public display Thursday next to a roomful of murals by US artist Mark Rothko that is one of Tate Modern's biggest draws.

Tate director Maria Balshaw said the big, bold Rothko canvases are among the museum's "crown jewels," and Mitchell's "spectacular" painting "will truly shine" in their company.

Balshaw said Mitchell - like

many female artists "underappreciated" during her lifetime - should take her rightful place alongside her male peers.

Prices for Mitchell's work have soared since her death in 1992, with an untitled painting selling at Christie's auction house in 2023 for \$29 million. Such prices put her works beyond the reach of most public art museums.

Tate - a group of British galleries with its origins in the late 19th-century - is working to rebalance a collection long dominated by white male artists. It has purchased more works by women than men in every year since 2019.

The Pérez donation includes works by artists from Africa and the African diaspora, to be given to Tate over the coming years, and a multimillion-dollar endowment that will fund curators for African and Latin American art at Tate Modern.

Jorge Pérez, an Argentina-born real estate developer, said it's important that art from Africa and Latin America "get the exposure in great museums, in great cities of the world, which they haven't had."

Film



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Emma Myers in a scene from 'A Minecraft Movie.' (AP)

Movie breaks video game adaptation record

## 'Minecraft Movie' delivers major box-office hit

LOS ANGELES, April 7, (AP) - Hollywood needed "A Minecraft Movie" to be a hit, and it delivered in its opening weekend, significantly narrowing this year's box office deficit.

No one guessed just how big it would be. In its first few days in theaters, the movie earned a staggering \$157 million in ticket sales from theaters in the US and Canada, according to studio estimates Sunday. Internationally, it's looking at an additional \$144 million for a global debut of \$301 million. And with school spring breaks ongoing, "A Minecraft Movie" is just getting started.

"We're just thrilled that audiences are responding and that everyone's going to the theater," said Pamela Abdy, the co-chair and CEO of the Warner Bros. Motion Picture Group.

Not only is it the biggest opening of 2025, "A Minecraft Movie" also broke the record for a video game adaptation, a distinction previously held by "The Super Mario Bros. Movie" (\$146 million). Going into the weekend, analysts projected "Minecraft" might hit \$80 million. Instead, it nearly doubled that figure.

"You can't underestimate the value of earnest, entertaining, joyous cinema," said Michael DeLuca, also co-chair and CEO. "People really want an escape, especially when it involves the whole family."

Nothing is guaranteed in the movie business, but an offering based on the best-selling video game of all time makes for a good start. It hardly mattered that the block-based game doesn't exactly have a narrative. Many of its 200 million active monthly players turned out in droves anyway.

DeLuca said it's one of the "broadest playing movies" they've ever seen, meaning it's working in all



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Jennifer Coolidge in a scene from 'A Minecraft Movie.' (AP)

sizes of cinemas all over the world.

The PG-rated movie, directed by Jared Hess ("Napoleon Dynamite"), was a co-production of Legendary Entertainment and Warner Bros. It cost a reported \$150 million to make, not including marketing and promotion expenses. Jack Black and Jason Momoa lead the ensemble cast (Danielle Brooks, Emma Myers and Sebastian Eugene Hansen). Their characters are transported into an imaginative dimension called the Overworld and need to go on a dangerous, and immensely silly, adventure to get home.

"We made the movie for the fans and the fans exceeded our expectations," DeLuca said.

Critics were largely mixed on "A Minecraft Movie," but audiences gave it a more promising B+ CinemaScore and 4/5 stars in PostTrak exit polls. Men made up around 62% of the audience, and 64% were under the age of 25. Warner Bros. went big on its release, opening the film in 4,263 locations domesti-

cally and 36,000 screens internationally.

"Younger audiences love going to the movie theater, believe it or not," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "This is the perfect small screen to big screen alliance. It became a must-see theatrical event. Awareness was off the charts."

Video game adaptations have had some pivotal successes in recent years, including "The Super Mario Bros. Movie," the "Sonic" series and "Five Nights at Freddy's."

"Video games were once a genre that had very mixed results at the box office, but the code has finally been cracked," Dergarabedian said.

Second place at this week's box office went to the Jason Statham action pic "A Working Man," which added \$7.3 million in its second weekend. Third place was occupied by the second installment in the episodic "The Chosen: Last Supper" series. Part two (made up of episodes three through five) earned \$7 million over the weekend. The third and final batch of episodes arrive in theaters on April 11.

"Snow White" slid to fourth place in its third weekend, bringing in \$6.1 million. It's now made over \$168 million globally.

It's been a difficult start to 2025 for Hollywood and movie theaters, with disappointments including "Snow White" and "Mickey 17." But one hit can change the tides significantly, especially with in-theater marketing pushes in full swing for the pivotal summer movie season, which kicks off the first weekend in May.

Before this weekend, the box office was running at a 13% deficit compared with last year. Now the gap is down to 5%.

## Jay North, TV's mischievous Dennis the Menace, dies at 73

LAKE BUTLER, Fla., April 7, (AP) - Jay North, who starred as the tow-headed mischief maker on TV's "Dennis the Menace" for four seasons starting in 1959, has died. He was 73.

North died Sunday at his home in Lake Butler, Florida, after battling colon cancer, said Laurie Jacobson, a longtime friend, and Bonnie Vent, who was his booking agent.

"He had a heart as big as a mountain, loved his friends deeply. He called us frequently and ended every conversation with 'I love you with all my heart,'" Jacobson wrote in a tribute on Facebook.

North was 6 when he was cast as the smiling troublemaker in the CBS sitcom adaptation of Hank Ketcham's popular comic strip that took place in an idyllic American suburb.

Often wearing a striped shirt and overalls, Den-



Actor Jay North, in character as Dennis the Menace, shows his ever-present slingshot to show co-star Gale Gordon, on set in Hollywood, March 29, 1962. (AP)

niss' mischievous antics frequently frustrated his retired next-door neighbor George Wilson, played by Joseph Kearns. Dennis' patient parents were played by Herbert Anderson and Gloria Henry.

The show ran on Sunday nights until it was canceled in 1963. After that it was a fixture for decades in syndication.

Eddy Barrón sings corridos of hope and valor

## Mexican soldier fights to reclaim music from cartel influence

MEXICO CITY, April 7, (AP): At a Mexican military base, Captain Eduardo Barrón picks up not a rifle but a microphone. Swaying boot-to-boot, he belts out a song as the sounds of trumpets and accordions roar from a band of a dozen camouflage-clad soldiers.

The rhythmic style - known as a corrido - is recognizable to just about every soul in the Latin American nation of 130 million. But Barrón's lyrics diverge sharply from those blaring on speakers across Mexico.

"I still remember the day I joined the military," he crooned. "This is a dream my soul longed for, and if I were to live another life, I'd become a soldier again."

Barrón, who performs under the name "Eddy Barrón," began releasing music videos and songs on Spotify last year in coordination with the Mexican military. His lyrics extol the army's virtues, celebrate proud parents and honor the fallen.

They stand in stark contrast to the controversial narco corridos, a subgenre that has sparked controversy as famed artists pay homage to cartel bosses, portraying them as rebels go-



Captain Eduardo Barrón sings a corrido during a performance for the media at a military base in Mexico City, Monday, March 10, 2025. (AP)

ing against the system.

Faced with the challenge of addressing a musical style that depicts cartel violence, local governments across Mexico have increasingly banned performances and pursued criminal investigations of bands and

musicians. Mexico's president even vowed to reduce the popularity of narco corridos while promoting other, less violent musical styles.

But Barrón, 33, is taking a different approach. Instead of censorship, he wants to build upon the momen-

tum with his own military corridos, an effort to both infuse the genre with more socially acceptable lyrics and recruit young people to the military.

"Narco life is in style and they make it sound really pretty ... but the reality is different," he said. "We're playing our part to invite young people to join this movement of positive music."

Barrón's military ballads are part of a wider government push spearheaded by Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum, who has proposed that the government promote corridos about "love, falling out of love and peace."

She even announced a government-sponsored Mexican music competition in the northern state of Durango showcasing music that avoids "glorifying violence, drugs and discrimination against women."

"It will completely change Mexican music," she said.

But in a subculture long defined by resistance and putting words to the harsh realities facing the poor, the government's initiatives around the genre have been met with skepticism about official attempts to promote family-friendly narratives.

"I don't think using corridos as a way to incorporate other kinds of narratives, is a bad idea," said José Manuel Valenzuela, a Tijuana sociologist who studies the genre. "There are a lot of songs that sing of peace and love. It's just that those aren't the ones that are turning out to be hits ... because we're living in a moment of aggrieved youth."

Corridos were born in the 19th century, their classical band instruments and the accordion rooted in German and Polish migration to Mexico. At a time of widespread illiteracy, they were used widely to pass on oral histories.

The ballads took off during the Mexican revolution, when they were used to share stories of war heroes and glory from the conflict.

That is why Barrón says he didn't invent military corridos, but that he's simply bringing them back.

"Corridos come from the revolution, and we're doing the same thing as those soldiers and revolutionaries, albeit in a different age, but the result is the same," he said.

The genre evolved over generations, from singing about smuggling

tequila during the 1920's Prohibition era in corridos tequileros to grappling with the rising wave of cartel violence in Mexico with narco corridos.

"All the big social issues are told through corridos," Valenzuela said. "It's a metaphor to speak about what we've been living through."

Barrón said he would play guitar with his father's Mexican regional music band as a teenager, and write his own music. He would bring his guitar to play on deployments after he joined the army at 20.

In 2021, he said he began writing his own songs about his time in the military and singing with a military FX Band, named after the type of gun the military uses. But the music never went public.

Around 2023, the genre exploded when artists like Peso Pluma, Fuerza Regida and Natanuel Cano began to mix the classic style with trap music in what are known as corridos tumbados. That same year, Peso Pluma bested Taylor Swift as the most streamed artist on YouTube.

A year later, the Mexican army decided to post Barrón's music under his artistic name.

### Music



South Korean band Tomorrow X Together performs at the AXE Ceremonia music festival at Bicentenario Park in Mexico City, Saturday, April 5. (AP)

### Books

Perfect escape

## 'Elphie' explores Elphaba's origin

NEW YORK, April 7, (AP): For fans, like me, looking to fill their "Wicked" obsession, "Elphie," the fifth book in the Wicked Years series, provides the perfect escape into the world of Oz, with a new look at Elphaba Thropp, the beloved green heroine, before she was known as the Wicked Witch of the West.

From her struggles with familial jealousy, her thirst for knowledge and her encounters with the marginalized talking animals of Oz, "Elphie" explores the moments in Elphaba's life that shaped who she is. Devoted fans and readers new to the series will be able to dive in deeper to the social and political issues of Oz and gain a deeper insight into Elphaba's plight for sentient animals, a cause that will later mark her as wicked.

With a subtle political distress throughout the novel and lack of love in Elphaba's life, the novel can feel melancholy at times. But, that is the core of who Elphaba is.

Elphaba's progress from child to an adolescent with better understanding of the world, her wants and needs, guide Gregory Maguire's novel. As Elphaba starts her journey of discovery the novel's pace is slow and steady. But as she begins to understand herself and the joy and wonders of Oz, the novel's becomes a tad more lively.

In contrast to the rest of the series, in "Elphie" Maguire takes to writing in short chapters with short sentences, reflecting the overall dysfunction occurring in Oz and in Elphaba. The rhythm Maguire create also make the book easy one to breeze through.

Compared to previous books in the series, there is less happening to drive the narrative. Instead, "Elphie" serves as a psychological backstory to understand Elphaba's character, explaining what made her one of the most iconic witch in literacy, theater and film.

Making the novel one Elphaba fans must hold space for.

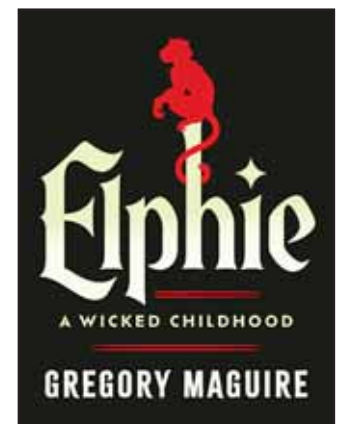
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Removing books from library shelves is no longer just a story of objections from a local community or an individual parent, the American Library Association says.

In its new State of American Libraries Report released Monday, the ALA found more than 70% of attempted bans of a given title or titles come from organized groups and elected officials, and just 16% originated with a parent.

The most commonly criticized books, including **Maia Kobabe's** "Gender Queer" and the late **Toni Morrison's** "The Bluest Eye," can be found on such websites as [www.ratedbooks.org](http://www.ratedbooks.org) and through lists compiled by Moms for Liberty and other conservative activists.

"We can trace many of the challenges to lists of books that have been distributed by Moms for Liberty and other groups," said **Deborah Caldwell-Stone**, who directs the association's Office for Intellectual Freedom.



This book cover image released by William Morrow shows 'Elphie: A Wicked Childhood' by Gregory Maguire. (AP)

### A new case raises questions

## How South Korea treats celebs in crisis?

SEOUL, South Korea, April 7, (AP): A young actor's suicide in South Korea. Allegations of an underage relationship. They are part of a growing drama in the Asian entertainment world that raises questions about society's treatment of celebrities in crisis, with harsh media and online commentary amplifying their lowest moments.

Recently, South Korean actor Kim Soo-hyun publicly denied allegations that he dated the late actor Kim Sae-ron when she was under the age of sexual consent. His emotional press conference followed Kim Sae-ron's suicide in February, which reignited allegations that they were romantically involved.

Here's what we know about the case.

Kim Sae-ron was once one of South Korea's most promising film stars. She began acting at age 9 in the 2009 film "A Brand New Life," which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival. She gained further recognition with "The Man from Nowhere" (2010) and "A Girl at My Door" (2014), also invited to Cannes.

Her career halted in May 2022 after she crashed her car in Seoul while driving under the influence. Despite offering a public apology and reportedly paying compensation to shops that lost power because of the crash, she faced relentless negative attention.

Media and online commentators scrutinized her personal life. YouTube gossip channels accused her of exaggerating financial difficulties and questioned her sincerity. Critics, and her family, say it contributed to her declining mental health.

She killed herself on Feb. 16, Kim Soo-hyun's birthday.

Kim Soo-hyun, 37, also has been one of South Korea's most recognized actors, known for dramas such as "My Love from the Star" (2013) and "Queen of Tears" (2024) as well as films like "The Thieves" (2012) and "Secretly, Greatly" (2013).

Speculation about a relationship with Kim Sae-ron began last year when she posted a photo of them together, quickly deleted. Gold Medalist, the agency co-founded by Kim Soo-hyun, denied the relationship, according to South Korean media.

Days after Kim Sae-ron's death, a YouTube channel known for its politically charged content, HoverLab, alleged that she and Kim Soo-hyun had been in a six-year romantic relationship beginning in 2015, when she was 15 and he was in his late 20s. The channel released what it called evidence including photos, videos and letters. Kim Soo-hyun has called them fabricated.



South Korean actor Kim Soo-hyun sheds tears as he was speaking at a news conference in Seoul, South Korea on March 31, 2025. (AP)

Kim Sae-ron's family had approached HoverLab to release the materials, calling it an attempt to restore Kim Sae-ron's image.

On March 27, a lawyer representing Kim Sae-ron's family presented to journalists what the family claimed was a photo of an undelivered letter written in 2024 in which Kim Sae-ron described Kim Soo-hyun as her "first and last love" and referenced a five-to-six-year relationship.

The letter was written after she failed to reach Kim Soo-hyun to discuss a debt she owed his agency, according to the lawyer. After Kim Sae-ron's contract ended and wasn't renewed, the agency asked her to pay back 700 million won (about \$520,000) in damages related to her drunk-driving case. Her family says the demand placed severe pressure on her.

Kim Soo-hyun has acknowledged that he dated Kim Sae-ron but insisted their relationship began after she became an adult. He called claims of an underage relationship false and damaging.

"It is also not true that the deceased made a tragic choice because of my avoidance (of her), or because my agency pressured her about debt," an emotional Kim told Monday's press conference.

He refused to answer a question from the AP about when he first met Kim Sae-ron.

Whether any laws were broken depends largely on timing.

South Korea raised its age of sexual consent from 13 to 16 in 2020. Kim Sae-ron was born in 2000, and the family alleges the relationship began in 2015, when she was 15 and Kim Soo-hyun was 27.

Kim Soo-hyun maintains that their relationship lasted from summer 2019 to fall 2020, when Kim Sae-ron was a legal adult.

Kim Soo-hyun's agency has taken legal action against the family of Kim Sae-ron and HoverLab, which first aired the underage relationship claims, for distributing private photos and videos of the actor, including images of Kim Soo-hyun kissing the late actor. Kim's agency said Kim Sae-ron had visited his apartment and his family was present. The agency said they were not dating at the time.

On Monday, Kim Soo-hyun's lawyer announced a civil lawsuit seeking 12 billion won (approximately \$8.15 million) in damages against the YouTube channel and Kim Sae-ron's family, along with criminal complaints alleging defamation and violation of privacy laws. Kim Soo-hyun and his agency also sued the YouTube channel operator for stalking.

The family's legal representative and HoverLab both told the AP on Wednesday that they plan to sue Kim Soo-hyun and his agency for making false claims about his relationship with the late actor.

Kim's death reignited criticism of South Korea's relentless tabloid and digital media culture. Her family has singled out videos with speculative, unverified content portraying her as emotionally unstable and morally questionable.

Suing for defamation is often a lengthy, costly battle for South Korean celebrities, as many platforms, like YouTube, are based overseas. Punishments are typically light, with fines or suspended sentences.

Other high-profile cases following negative online attention have included the deaths of K-pop singers Sulli and Goo Hara in 2019 and "Parasite" actor Lee Sun-kyun in 2023.

Fashion brand Prada has ended its collaboration with Kim Soo-hyun. South Korean cosmetics company Dinto terminated its one-year contract with him, citing the seriousness of the controversy. 7-Eleven Taiwan canceled a Kim Soo-hyun fan event last month, citing schedule changes.

An online petition last week calling for the age of consent to be raised from 16 to 19 has gathered nearly 40,000 signatures on the National Assembly's website.

Suggested reforms in South Korea meant to discourage harsh online comments have not been passed.

## HEALTH

## Acute anemia, malnutrition

## World Health Day marked amid Gaza's health crisis

GENEVA, April 7, (KUNA): As the World Health Day is marked on April 7, celebrations will also kick off a year-long campaign focusing on maternal and newborn health titled "Healthy Beginnings Hopeful Futures".

While the world celebrates the occasion, the Gaza Strip's healthcare system is on the brink of collapse with a combination of severe malnutrition and lack of access to healthcare endangering mothers and their unborn children.



Harris

Speaking to KUNA World Health Organization (WHO) spokesperson Margaret Harris described the health conditions for pregnant women in Gaza as "beyond anything a human can imagine."

"When a pregnant woman is suffering from acute malnutrition the fetus often fails to develop properly," Harris said.

"This can lead to intrauterine growth restriction increasing the risk of miscarriage premature birth or babies born full term but severely underweight due to prolonged hunger."

She added that babies born under such circumstances often face a long uncertain road to recovery if they recover at all.

WHO estimates indicate there are more than 50,000 pregnant women in Gaza with around 5,500 expected to give birth next month.

Approximately 1,400 will require cesarean sections at a time when hospitals and healthcare facilities have been largely destroyed and essential services are critically lacking.

According to WHO, one in four pregnant women in Gaza is experiencing severe complications.

Around 25 percent suffer from acute anemia while 23 percent face the threat of preterm labor.

## Prenatal

Harris also noted that due to the widespread food shortages, 99 percent of breastfeeding women were struggling to produce milk while half a million women and girls of reproductive age lack access to basic prenatal and postnatal care.

Harris reported that 90 percent of pregnant and lactating women were enduring extreme food insecurity as a result of the ongoing blockade, soaring food prices and the lack of nutritional variety in meals.

Of over 100,000 children in Gaza, nearly 3 percent required treatment for severe acute malnutrition with more than 60,000 cases reported among children aged 6 to 59 months, revealed the WHO.

Additionally 16,500 pregnant and lactating women need urgent treatment for acute malnutrition.

Harris also expressed serious concerns over WHO's ability to respond to the crisis following the US government's decision to cut funding which previously accounted for about 30 percent about USD 100 million of funding for the health cluster.

"However this year has already seen a dramatic shortfall with 47 million dollars lost representing 43 percent of the resources that should have been in operation by now."

"WHO is now facing a 47 million dollars funding shortfall in 2025 representing 43 percent of resources leaving core services such as medical supplies emergency health teams and fuel for health facilities without necessary support."

She warned, "If health programs are cut one million people in Gaza and the West Bank could be left without access to critical services placing them at risk within an already collapsing health system," adding also that the impact of these funding cuts goes far beyond short-term programs putting at risk WHO's plans for post-war reconstruction of Gaza's healthcare system.

## Maternity

Chris Sidoti, the Commissioner of the UN Human Rights Council's Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territories including East Jerusalem and Israel, confirmed that life for mothers and children has become almost impossible due to the conditions in Gaza with Israel's systematic destruction of healthcare infrastructure.

He said that one of the most significant violations documented by the Commission was the targeting of specialized maternity care centers, such as the "Basmat" fertility center, which was destroyed by Israeli occupation forces as a direct attack on the reproductive capacity of Palestinians.

The Commission found it to be a form of genocidal act aimed at impairing births in the Gaza Strip.

He added that the attacks on maternity hospitals have resulted in the deaths of many women and infants exacerbating the physical and psychological harm to Palestinians.

Sidoti emphasized that the violations in the West Bank and Gaza became increasingly similar although the situation in Gaza is harsher.

He confirmed that the violations have become widespread systematic and more extreme.

"We have reached a point where it is no longer possible to claim that these are individual actions by rogue soldiers. We must acknowledge that since the 7th of October 2023 these practices have become widespread and systematic and therefore are part of the operational procedures of the occupying soldiers both in Gaza and the West Bank" he said.

He clarified that sexual violence had also been used in the past though less widespread and less extreme.



Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi, Minister of Health, addresses the audience.



Opening of the exhibition accompanying the conference.



Photos by Samer Shiqer

Some photos from the event.

Over 120 new childhood cancer cases annually

## Kuwait hosts second conference on Pediatric Hematology and Oncology

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadhi said the recent statistics from the Department of Pediatric Hematology and Oncology showed that around 120 cases of childhood cancer are recorded annually; including 70 leukemia cases, 50 solid tumors, and 15 central nervous system tumors -- about 20 percent of the total number of cancer cases recorded in the country.

In a press statement on the sidelines of the launching of the Second Kuwait Conference on Pediatric Hematology and Oncology organized by the Department of Pediatric Hematology and Oncology at the National Bank of Kuwait Specialized Children's Hospital on Monday; Al-Awadhi confirmed that the ministry is fully prepared to meet the need of citizens and expatriates for various types of treatment and medications. He stressed that the Kuwaiti government spares no effort in providing medicines regardless of the cost.

He asserted the ministry is implementing an ingenious plan to expand services and construction work in hospitals, specialized centers, primary healthcare centers, logistical support centers and ambulance centers.

He also affirmed the upcoming opening of maternity hospitals in Sabah Health District, maternity and childhood hospitals in Adan, and hospitals for communicable diseases; adding that an emergency center in Mutlaa and the Wafra Specialized Clinic will open next week.

He pointed out that the recent years witnessed re-

markable developments in the country's treatment system, along with a decline in the number of cases sent for treatment abroad due to the introduction of modern treatments and the training of national medical personnel on the latest internationally approved treatment protocols.

He disclosed the conference focused on tumors affecting the lymphatic system, such as lymphoma -- one of the most common tumors among children; scientific progress in the diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic leukemia; innovations in cellular and molecular therapies; and latest developments in the field of cellular and immunotherapy, including targeted immunotherapy using antibodies and CAR T-cell therapy, which is considered a qualitative leap in the treatment of malignant tumors and increasing the chances of recovery.

## Commitment

Meanwhile, Head of the Department of Pediatric Hematology, Oncology and Stem Cell Transplantation at the National Bank of Kuwait Specialized Children's Hospital, President of Kuwait Children's Association and Chairperson of the conference Dr. Sondos Al-Sharida stressed in her speech that the conference conveys a message of humanitarian and moral commitment to the children facing serious health challenges.

She revealed the Hematology and Oncology Department has 64 beds and the day care ward has 12 beds; indicating the occupancy rate ranges from 50 to 60 percent, while the number of admissions annually

is 1,154 and the number of admissions to the day care ward is 6,143.

She added the number of patients in the emergency room reached 3,588 annually; 5,554 in outpatient clinics; 3,427 chemotherapy cases; 450 therapeutic phlebotomy cases; and 750 surgical procedures and intravenous catheterizations.

She affirmed these figures reflect the reliance on care services outside the hospitalization period through the day care ward, outpatient clinics or the emergency room. She thinks this demonstrates the effectiveness of the current treatment system in reducing the length of hospital stay, which supports improving the quality of life for patients.

She stated that the conference tackled a range of cancerous and non-cancerous diseases, neurological tumors and other complex conditions, and the latest developments in the treatment of blood cancer; particularly the innovations in the field of cytokine and immunotherapy.

She said the conference included a review on recent developments in the treatment of brain tumors, advanced immunotherapies and their promising results, the latest therapeutic strategies for lymphomas, and the best ways to manage their complications.

She disclosed the conference included a series of scientific workshops on the latest innovations and advanced technologies. She is hoping for the development of medical skills and to enable the specialized personnel to keep pace with the latest global developments to contribute to the provision of more accurate and efficient medical services.



Palestinians search for survivors amid the debris of a building destroyed by an Israeli airstrike in Deir al-Balah, Gaza Strip, on Monday, April 7. (AP)

## Second child dies in US amid worst measles outbreak

NEW YORK, April 7, (AP): A second school-age child who was hospitalized with measles is the third measles-related death in the US since the virus started ripping through West Texas in late January.

The child died Thursday, according to state health officials. The child was 8 years old, according to a statement from Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. A spokesperson for UMC Health System in Lubbock, Texas, confirmed the child was unvaccinated and being treated for measles complications.

The US now has more than double the number of measles cases it saw in all of 2024, with Texas report-

ing another large jump in cases and hospitalizations on Friday. Other states with active outbreaks - defined as three or more cases - include New Mexico, Kansas, Ohio and Oklahoma. The virus has been spreading in undervaccinated communities.

The multi-state outbreak confirms health experts' fears that the virus will take hold in other US communities with low vaccination rates and that the spread could stretch on for a year. The World Health Organization said last week that cases in Mexico are linked to the Texas outbreak.

Measles is caused by a highly contagious virus

that's airborne and spreads easily when an infected person breathes, sneezes or coughs. It is preventable through vaccines, and has been considered eliminated from the U.S. since 2000.

Here's what else you need to know about measles in the US.

Texas' outbreak began more than two months ago. State health officials said Friday there were 59 new cases of measles since Tuesday, bringing the total to 481 across 19 counties - most of them in West Texas. The state also logged 14 new hospitalizations, for a total of 56 throughout the outbreak.

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Bell settles for third

# Hamlin holds off Byron in overtime at Darlington Raceway

DARLINGTON, S.C., April 7, (AP) — Denny Hamlin did his job so his pit crew could do its most stellar stop at the perfect time.

Hamlin came into the pits after a final caution and told himself to hit every mark, then let his guys take over.

And that's what the Joe Gibbs Racing group did, pulling off a perfect winning moment that sent Hamlin out with the lead. He took over on the final restart and held off William Byron to win the Goodyear 400 on Sunday.

It was Hamlin's 56th career NASCAR win, his fifth at Darlington Raceway and his second straight this season. "When you think about 56 wins, that's a huge deal," said Gibbs, Hamlin's longtime car owner.

Hamlin said he hung on throughout as Byron and others looked like they might pull out victory. Instead, Hamlin waited out his time and then pounced as he broke away during the green-white-checkered finish.

"I can still do it, I can do it at a high level and look forward to winning a lot of races this year," Hamlin said.

Hamlin won for a second straight week after his success at Martinsville.

Hamlin chose the outside lane for a final restart and shot out to the lead and pulled away from series points leader Byron and NASCAR wins leader Christopher Bell.

Hamlin looked like he'd have a strong finish, but not a winning one as Ryan Blaney passed Tyler Reddick for the lead with three laps left. But moments

later, Kyle Larson spun out forcing a final caution and the extra laps.

It was then time for Hamlin's Joe Gibbs Racing pit crew to shine as it got him out quickly and in the lead.

Byron, who led the first 243 laps, was second with Hamlin's JGR teammate Bell in third.

Reddick was fourth and Blaney was fifth. The rest of the top 10 finishers were Chris Buescher, Ross Chastain, Chase Elliott, Ty Gibbs and Kyle Busch. Hamlin credited the past two victories to his pit crew.

Blaney had thought he was clear to his first-ever Darlington victory after getting by Reddick late. When he saw the caution flag for Larson's spin, he said he thought, "Oh, no! I thought we had the race won." So did Byron, who sought was to become the first NASCAR driver in nearly 25 years to lead every lap on the way to victory. He got shuffled down the standings during the last round of green-flag pit stops and could not recover.

Kyle Larson, who won the Southern 500 here in 2023, had high hopes for a second Darlington win. But he slid into the inside wall coming off the second turn on lap three and went right to garage where his team worked the next couple of hours to get him back on track. Larson returned on lap 164 after falling 161 laps off the pace. Larson finished next to last in 37th.

Greg Biffle, the last NASCAR driver to win consecutive Cup Series victories at Darlington in 2006 and 2007, drove the pace car for the Goodyear 400 on Sunday.



Denny Hamlin, front, celebrates on Victory Lane after winning a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Darlington Raceway in Darlington, S.C. (AP)

## Gill guides Gujarat to 7-wicket win over Hyderabad



Gujarat Titans' Sherfane Rutherford plays a shot during the Indian Premier League cricket match between Sunrisers Hyderabad and Gujarat Titans at Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Hyderabad, India. (AP)

HYDERABAD, India, April 7, (AP) — Shubman Gill scored a well-calculated 61 runs not out as Gujarat Titans beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by seven wickets with 20 balls remaining in the Indian Premier League on Sunday.

It was Gill's first half-century of the season and it helped Gujarat climb to second in the points ta-

ble with a third consecutive win. Gill hit nine fours in his 43-ball knock.

Spin all-rounder Washington Sundar contributed 49 off 29 in the successful chase as Gujarat finished with 153-3 in 16.4 overs.

Hyderabad earlier suffered another poor batting display and was restricted to 152-8 in 20 overs af-

ter losing the toss. Pacer Mohammed Siraj picked up 4-17 in four overs.

Sunday's doubleheader was reduced to a single game. Kolkata Knight Riders was supposed to host Lucknow SuperGiants but it was shifted to Tuesday after a request from Kolkata police due to religious festivities in the city.

# Harman wins Texas Open for first title since British Open

Sagstrom ends 5-year drought

SAN ANTONIO, April 7, (AP) — Brian Harman handled the wind and the chill Sunday with a pair of key birdies on the back nine Sunday in the Valero Texas Open, closing with a 3-over 75 for a three-shot victory, his first title since the 2023 British Open.

Harman began the final round with a three-shot lead and it soon became a tight battle with Andrew Novak, who was going for his first PGA Tour victory and a spot in the Masters.

Harman never lost the lead, though it dropped to one shot until birdies on the 12th and 14th holes. He followed that with a pair of bogeys, but left the mistakes at the end to Novak.

Ryan Gerard had a 69 - one of only seven rounds under par - to finish runner-up. Novak's bogey-bogey finish for a 76 dropped him into a tie for third with Maverick McNealy (72).

The five-year wait to end her LPGA Tour victory drought appeared to be a matter of time when Madelene Sagstrom went 4-up just six holes into the final of the T-Mobile Match Play.

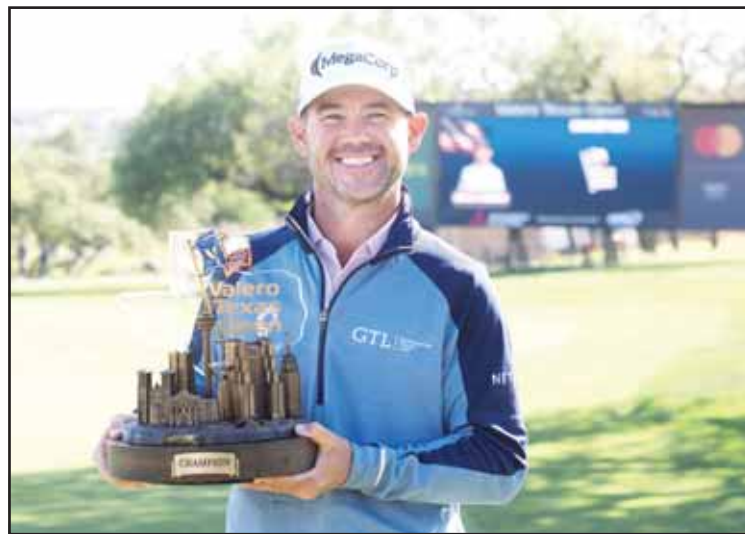
Then it nearly got away from her, and Sagstrom even briefly fell behind at one point.

She righted herself, however, as Lauren Coughlin struggled down the stretch, for a 1-up victory Sunday at a Shadow Creek course that proved a difficult challenge for both players.

Sagstrom took the lead for good with a par at the par-5 16th hole. Coughlin made a double bogey on the hole.

Perhaps it was a fitting when the world's top-ranked players fell one after another at the picturesque but demanding course that someone ranked 67th claimed the \$300,000 winner's share. The Swede's other win came in 2020 at the Gainbridge LPGA at Boca Rio.

Marc Leishman played bogey-free on the Blue Monster for a 4-under 68



Brian Harman holds the trophy after winning the Valero Texas Open golf tournament at TPC San Antonio in San Antonio. (AP)

at Trump National Doral and a one-shot victory over Charl Schwartzel in LIV Golf Doral, his first victory on the Saudi-funded circuit.

U.S. Open champion Bryson DeChambeau, who led going into the final round, made bogey on the par-5 opening hole, had two double bogeys and shot 75 to finish fifth.

Leishman picked up three of his birdies on the par 5s and closed with



Madelene Sagstrom hits out of a bunker on the fourth hole during the final round of the LPGA T-Mobile Match Play golf tournament in North Las Vegas, Nev. (AP)

Football Hall of Fame Invitational.

Cabrera, a former Masters and U.S. Open champion, was imprisoned for threats and harassment against two of his ex-girlfriends. He was released on parole in August 2023 and cleared to return to the PGA Tour Champions later that year.

He returns to the Masters next week - former champions have lifetime exemptions - and the 55-year-old Argentine known as "Pato" will arrive with his first victory in more than 10 years.

The victory means Cabrera is now fully exempt on the 50-and-older circuit through 2026. And he goes to the Masters on a high note.

Jeremy Gandon won the Club Car Championship for his first Korn Ferry Tour title, blasting out of a bunker to 3 feet for birdie on the first hole of a playoff with Rick Lamb.

Gandon won in his 15th start on the tour. The 28-year-old Frenchman made 16 starts last season on the PGA Tour Americas. He played at Kansas State.

Tied for the third-round lead with two-time PGA Tour winner Russell Knox, Gandon closed with a 3-under 69 to match Lamb (67) at 17-under 271 on the Deer Creek layout at The Landings Golf & Athletic Club.

Knox (70) was a stroke back with Cole Sherwood (64) and Garrick Higgo (67).

Mimi Rhodes of England won her second straight title on the Ladies European Open, closing with a 2-under 71 for a one-shot victory over Casandra Alexander in the Joburg Ladies Open.

Maxwell Moldovan made eagle on the par-5 closing hole at the Rio Olympic Golf Club to post a 3-under 68 for a one-shot victory over George Markham in the Brazil Open on the PGA Tour Americas.

Lala Anai closed with a 2-under 70 and defeated Mi-Jeong Jeon in a playoff to win the Yamaha Ladies Open Katsuragi on the Japan LPGA.

Yewon Lee closed with a 2-under 70 for a one-shot victory in Doosan E&C We've Championship on the Korea LPGA.

Kopecky makes history in women's race

## Pogacar wins Tour of Flanders with another blistering attack

OUDENAARDE, Belgium, April 7, (AP) — Another blistering attack from Tadej Pogacar saw the world champion win the Tour of Flanders cobbled classic for the second time.

In the women's race, Belgian world champion Lotte Kopecky made history as the first female cyclist to win three editions of the event.

Pogacar had plenty of time to raise his arms above his head and soak up the applause of the crowd as he soloed to victory after taking off on the third and final ascent of the Oude Kwaremont.

The three-time Tour de France champion had launched his last and decisive attack on the penultimate climb - about 18 kilometers (11 miles) from the finish - and not even defending champion Mathieu van der Poel could stay on his wheel.

"I'm so happy to win in this jersey this race," said the UAE Team Emirates rider. "The plan was to go from (Oude Kwaremont) and we followed the plan even though we had some crashes in the team ... but we made it and we stick to the plan."

Pogacar finished 1 minute, 1 second ahead of Mads Pedersen, who edged out Van der Poel in a four-man sprint for second, just ahead of Wout van Aert and Jasper Stuyven.

Also known as De Ronde (The Tour), the Tour of Flanders is one of cycling's most challenging one-day races and was first held in 1913. This year's 268.9-kilometer (167-mile) route featured 16 short but punishing climbs and several cobblestone sections.

It was a second victory for Pogacar after he won in 2023. The Slovenian didn't defend his title last year, when Van der Poel claimed a record-equaling third win.

It was expected to be another episode of the great rivalry between Pogacar and Van der Poel, who had

won the recent Milan-San Remo, and so it proved.

Van der Poel had escaped unscathed from an early crash and the duo played cat and mouse with each other in the final 50 kilometers (31 miles), with each matching the other's attacks, before Pogacar left the Dutch cyclist and the other hopefuls in the distance.

"I was already on the limit from quite far," Van der Poel said. "The crash of course was not ideal, but I think we put up a good fight with the team and I did everything I could and I'm happy with the podium."

"Of course it's never good to be in a crash but I think the damage was still quite okay for the crash, I was lucky."

The Tour of Flanders is one of the "monuments" of cycling - the five most prestigious one-day events in the sport - along with Milan-San Remo, Paris-Roubaix, Liege-Bastogne-Liege and the Giro di Lombardia.

The two Pogacar has yet to win are Milan-San Remo and Paris-Roubaix, which has even tougher cobbles than Flanders. Pogacar is going to attempt the grueling French classic for the first time next Sunday.

"It's a completely different race, but I will accept the challenge and try to do my best," Pogacar said. "I know this Flanders suits me a bit better, but you never know."

It was a closer Tour of Flanders for Kopecky, who edged a four-way sprint finish ahead of Pauline Ferrand-Prevot, Liane Lippert and Katarzyna Niewiadoma-Phinney.

Kopecky also won in 2022 and 2023.

Elisa Longo Borghini was also chasing a third victory but crashed about 40 kilometers into the race. The Italian struggled for a further 10 kilometers before abandoning.



Belgium's Lotte Kopecky, center, of the Team SD Worx-Protime, crosses the finish line to win the Tour of Flanders in Oudenaarde, Belgium. (AP)

## Brooksby claims first ATP Tour title

HOUSTON, April 7, (AP) — Qualifier Jenson Brooksby earned his first ATP Tour title by beating Frances Tiafoe 6-4, 6-2 in the final of the U.S. Men's Clay Court Championship.

Brooksby, a 24-year-old from California, saved five match points during the tournament, including one in his semifinal victory over top-seeded Tommy Paul. Brooksby eliminated the three highest-seeded men in the field, including No. 2 Tiafoe and No. 3 Alejandro Tabilo.

Ranked outside the top 500 entering the event in Houston, Brooksby is expected to climb inside the top 175 in Monday's ATP rankings. He is the first American man to win an ATP singles trophy this season and the first qualifier to win this tournament since Fernando Gonzalez of Chile in 2000.

Brooksby returned to the tour at the Australian Open in January after a two-year absence that included a pair of wrist operations, a shoulder injury, a coaching change and a suspension related to missed doping tests.

He spoke to The Associated Press in December about being diagnosed with autism as a child, the first time he had discussed the subject publicly.

The Charleston Open is keeping Credit One Bank as its title partner through 2031 along with the tennis tournament paying equal prize money to women and men starting in 2026.

Credit One Bank announced the rights extension Sunday on the final day of this year's event. Prize money for the WTA-500 level event will be the same as the men's ATP-500 level event. That will make the Charleston Open the first standalone WTA 500 tournament to hike prize money before the 2033 goal for all weeklong WTA 1000 and 500 events to pay the same prize money to women as for men.

The 500 level is two below Grand Slams and one level below Masters 1000s. Amber Greenwalt, Credit One Bank's senior vice president of brand and advertising, said the tournament has had a legacy of empowerment since 1973. This tournament was the first where women were offered \$100,000 in prize money in 1973 and first to be broadcast live on network television. Inaugural champ Rosie Casals's \$30,000 check was the largest payout to a woman that year.

"This commitment reflects our dedication to advancing equity both on and off the court, as we continue to champion progress and opportunity for all," Greenwalt said in a statement.

The 2025 Charleston Open prize money will be \$1.06 million and had been set to rise to approximately \$1.15 million for 2026. The purse will match the ATP 500 event, which typically is more than \$2 million with the amount finalized once the official prize money is released for the 2026 season.

"We are proud to take this action as part of our ongoing commitment to acknowledging the hard work and dedication of our athletes, leading by example for the next generation," tournament owner Ben Navarro said.

## SPORTS

## Al-Arabi finalizes preparations for Challenge League semifinal 1st leg

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Al-Arabi will wrap up its final training session this evening ahead of its crucial AFC Challenge League semi-final first-leg clash against Turkmenistan's Arkadag, scheduled for tomorrow.

The Kuwaiti side recently held a preparatory training camp to gear up for the encounter, while Arkadag's delegation has also arrived in Kuwait and commenced their pre-match training sessions.

The two sides are familiar foes, having previously met in the group stage last October, where Al-Arabi edged Arkadag 3-2 in a tightly contested match in Kuwait.

Head coach Nasser Al-Shatti has focused on sharpening his players' concentration and minimizing errors—particularly those that proved costly in recent Zain Premier League fixtures. Al-Arabi was held to consecutive 1-1 draws by Al-Salmiya and Al-Fahaheel. It now



Al-Shatti watches from the sidelines as Al-Arabi player controls the ball.

trails league leader Kuwait City by four points, with four rounds remaining.

The technical staff is actively working on tactical adjustments to reignite

the team's winning form and restore the players' confidence, as Al-Arabi continues to chase silverware on multiple fronts this season.

## A day of draws in Zain First Division League

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: The standings in the Zain First Division League remained unchanged following the conclusion of round 12, as both matches ended in draws.

Sulaibikhat and Burgan played to a 1-1 draw at Jaber Al-Mubarak Stadium, while Al-Sahel and hosts Al-Shabab also settled for the same result.

Despite not featuring in this round, Al-Jahra held onto the top spot with 15 points. Meanwhile, Sulaibikhat and Al-Shabab, tied in second place, both moved up to 13 points. Burgan sits fourth with 11 points, followed by Al-Sahel in fifth with 10 points.

The league will now pause until April 15 to make way for the preliminary round of the Amir's Cup. According to the draw, Kazma will face Al-Jahra next Thursday, while Al-Shabab will take on Khaitan. Friday's matchups include Al-Sahel against Al-Salmiya, and on Saturday, Burgan will face Al-Qadsiya.



Players jump for the ball during the Zain First Division League match.

Al-Sulaibikhat's match against Al-Arabi is scheduled for May 2 due to Al-Arabi's involvement in the AFC Challenge League.

## Atalanta slips again in Serie A

Juventus draws at Roma



Atalanta's Isak Hien and Lazio's Mattia Zaccagni, Lazio's Fisayo Dele-Bashiru, right, fight for the ball during the Serie A soccer match between Atalanta and Lazio at the Gewiss Stadium in Bergamo, Italy. (AP)

**MILAN, April 7, (AP): Atalanta's title chances have already effectively slipped away and now it could be at risk of dropping out of the top four of Serie A.**

Third-placed Atalanta lost 1-0 at home to Lazio for its third straight league defeat.

That has seen Gian Piero Gasperini's team fall 10 points behind league leader Inter Milan and left it looking nervously over its shoulder.

Atalanta is only two points ahead of Juventus after the Bianconeri drew 1-1 at Roma. Lazio, which came into the match without a victory in Serie A in more than a month, moved to within three points of Atalanta.

Both teams were lacking in confidence and that perhaps explained the cagey first half.

Atalanta appeared reinvigorated after the break and had two quick chances, with Lazio goalkeeper Chrĭstos Mandas making an extraordinary save to deny the league's top scorer Mateo Retegui at point-blank range.

However, it was Lazio which broke the deadlock nine minutes into the second half, through half-time substitute Gustav Isaksen.

Fisayo Dele-Bashiru nodded a long ball over the top down to Isaksen, who scuffed a shot past Marco Carnesecchi.

Roma's streak of seven straight league wins - with only one goal conceded - was ended by Juventus, in Igor Tudor's second match in

charge of the Bianconeri.

It was an aggressive start from Juventus, and Roma goalkeeper Mile Svilar had to palm Nico González's header onto his right post.

Juventus took the lead shortly before halftime. Khéphren Thuram's cross was cleared by Zeki Çelik but only to the edge of the area where Manuel Locatelli volleyed it into the ground to bounce into the bottom left corner.

It was the first goal Roma had conceded in Serie A since March 2. Claudio Ranieri's half-time substitution had an immediate impact as Eldor Shomurodov leveled three minutes after coming on, heading in the rebound from three yards after Michele Di Gregorio had parried Evan N'Dicka's attempt.

Roma moved to within three points of the top four.

Lecce was loudly jeered by its home fans despite rallying to draw 1-1 against Venezia in a relegation dogfight and ending a run of five straight defeats.

Federico Baschiroto headed in the equalizer for Lecce in the 65th after home defender Antonino Gallo hand bundled into his own net at the start of the second half.

Lecce remained in the last position of safety in Serie A, two points above Empoli which drew 0-0 against Cagliari.

Venezia was in penultimate position, five points below Lecce.

Torino forward Che Adams had a penalty saved in a 1-1 draw at home to Hellas Verona.

## Kuwait Club, Burgan remain strong heading into Round 2

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Three matches are scheduled for today in the second round of the 58th edition of the Premier Handball League at the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex. The action will begin at 4:30 pm with Kuwait Club facing Salmiya, followed by Burgan taking on Al-Arabi at 6:00 pm, and the final match of the day will feature Kazma against Sulaibikhat.

Currently, Kuwait Club leads the standings with 28 points, followed by Burgan with 23 points. Kazma sits in third on goal difference, with 23 points as well. Al-Arabi has accumulated 18 points, while both Salmiya and Sulaibikhat are tied with 16 points.

Under the 2024-2025 season league format, the top six teams at the end of the preliminary round will advance to the Premier League, which is divided into three divisions, while the remaining teams will compete in the First Division, split into two divisions. Points from the preliminary round will carry over to both leagues. The league will take a break from



Player attempts to score during the Handball Premier League match.

April 21 to May 15 to allow for Kuwait's participation in the 10th Arab Cup, which will be hosted in Kuwait from May 4 to 12. The tournament will feature teams from Kuwait, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Iraq, Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt.

The First Division League kicked off the day before yesterday, with Al-Qadsiya securing a 35-25 victory over Al-Yarmouk, and Al-Nasr defeating Al-Sahel 45-31.

### Best of the Rest

**Juric out at relegated Southampton:** Ivan Juric was fired by Southampton on Monday after the last-placed Premier League club was relegated - marking his second sacking of the season.

Simon Rusk was named Southampton's interim manager and will be assisted by Adam Lallana.

In November Juric was also fired by Roma after being in charge of the Italian side for under two months, then hired by Southampton in December to replace Russell Martin. He had signed an 18-month contract with Southampton.

With just 10 points from 31 games, Southampton's fate was sealed with a 3-1 loss to Tottenham on Sunday.

"We can confirm that we have today reached an agreement with our men's first team manager, Ivan Juric, to end his spell at the club," Southampton said in a statement.

"Ivan came to Southampton at a tough time and was tasked with trying to improve a squad in a difficult situation," the club added. "Unfortunately, we haven't seen performances progress the way we had hoped, but we would like to thank Ivan and his staff for their honesty and hard work as they fought against the odds to try and keep us up."

Southampton won only one of 14 Premier League matches under Juric and only two overall, with the other victory coming in the FA Cup. (AP)

**Lyon's hopes take a hit:** Lyon's hopes of qualifying for the Champions League have been dealt a blow with the news that Ernest Nuamah won't play again this season due to a serious knee injury.

The seven-time French champions said on Monday that the Ghanaian winger ruptured the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee during Lyon's 2-1 win over Lille in the French league over the weekend.

With six matches left to play, Lyon sits in fifth place in the standings, just two points behind third place Monaco. The top three teams qualify for the Champions League group stage.

Lyon was already deprived of the injured Malick Fofana, also a winger, and will need to rethink its attacking setup before the Belgian player returns to action. (AP)

### Martínez has record hat trick in Earthquakes rout of DC United

## Messi extends goal streak as Miami keeps pace in Eastern Conference

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., April 7. (AP): Lionel Messi scored for the third time in four Major League Soccer matches this season, helping Inter Miami get a 1-1 tie with Toronto FC on Sunday night.

It was Messi's 40th goal across all competitions since joining Inter Miami, extending his franchise record. The goal Sunday was a left-footed volley from the top of the 18-yard box about five minutes into first-half stoppage time.

The tie left Inter Miami (4-0-2) one point behind Columbus in the Eastern Conference, with one match in hand.

Messi's goal tied the match, three minutes after Federico Bernardeschi opened the scoring for Toronto (0-4-3). Messi had what appeared to be a goal wiped out earlier in the first half after it was determined he committed a foul shortly before that score.

Toronto had the lead for only the second time all season - the first was a 19-minute stretch against Chicago last month. This time, Messi took it away quickly.

Messi has had at least one point in all four MLS matches in which he has appeared this season for Inter Miami, which is 8-1-2 overall this

season when adding in four victories in CONCACAF Champions Cup matches. The loss was a 1-0 decision against LAFC in a Champions Cup match last week; the second leg of that matchup is Wednesday in Fort Lauderdale.

Josef Martínez found the net in the second minute of second-half stoppage time to polish off a league-

record seventh hat trick, leading the San Jose Earthquakes to a 6-1 romp over D.C. United and moving him into the No. 6 spot on the league's all-time goals list.

Martínez scored in the 16th minute after Cristian "Chicho" Arango scored in the 8th to give the Earthquakes (3-3-1) a 2-0 lead. Martínez made it 4-1 in the 81st minute.



Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi scores his side's first goal during stoppage time in the first half of an MLS soccer match against Toronto FC in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (AP)

He capped the scoring after substitute Amahl Pellegrino found the net in the 90th. San Jose's other goal came on a penalty kick by Cristian Espinoza that made it 3-0 in the 20th minute.

Martínez went six years, 259 days between hat tricks - the second longest streak in league history behind Dwayne De Rosario (7 years, 313 days).

Martínez has 120 goals in 190 career appearances since joining the league in 2017, including four in his first season with San Jose. He moved ahead of Bradley Wright-Phillips. Jaime Moreno (133) and Jeff Cunningham (134) are next on the list. Chris Wondolowski is the all-time leader with 171, scoring his final 167 for the Earthquakes.

Arango scored for the fourth time in his first season with San Jose and has 57 goals in 99 career appearances.

Espinoza collected two assists, tying him with Charlotte FC's Pep Biel for the league lead with five. Espinoza's first goal this season came on the PK, giving him 33 in 194 career appearances.

Niko Tsakiris, Jamar Ricketts, Mark-Anthony Kaye and Pellegrino all had assists for San Jose.

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Bayern's goalkeeper Jonas Urbig catches a ball during a training session in Munich, Germany, ahead of the Champions League quarterfinal soccer match between FC Bayern and Inter Milan. (AP)

# Sports

## 29th Arab Junior Squash Championship to kick off in Kuwait on Thursday

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: The 29th Arab Junior Championship for Under-15 and Under-19 Individuals and Teams will begin next Thursday at the Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah International Squash Center, located at the Federation's headquarters in South Sura. Six countries, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, and Yemen, will join Kuwait in this exciting tournament.

The tournament draw is scheduled for tomorrow, Wednesday, at 8:00 PM. Singles competitions will take place in both morning and evening sessions on Thursday and Friday. The team championship will begin on Saturday, with the event concluding on the 15th of this month.

Kuwait has been preparing intensively with daily training sessions held in both the morning and evening. The under-19 team features Abdulrahman Al-Maghribi, Jassim Al-Gharib, Khaled Al-Fawzan, Abdullah Hani, Abdulrahman Al-Sanea, and Abdulrahman Al-Kandari. The under-15 team includes Issa Al-Najadah, Saleh Al-Kandari, Salman Al-Saleh, Abdullah Mayouf, Hamoud Al-Sawagh, and Zaid Al-Najjar. The under-15 squad is coached by Ahmed Abdel-Aal Sebaci and Majed Khan, with fitness coach



Kuwait squash team preparing for the Arab Championship.

Captain Ahmed Al-Sayed. The delegation is led by Abdullah Al-Subaie, Director of National Teams.

The Arab Squash Federation has appointed a technical committee for the event, chaired by Fayez Al-

Mutairi, the Secretary-General of the Arab Federation. The committee also includes Hamed Al-Omran,

Secretary-General of the Kuwaiti Federation, Yousef Al-Maliki (Qatar), and Samer Al-Khatib (Saudi

Arabia). Referee Abdulhadi Al-Aryan has been nominated as the tournament's general referee.

## Sulaibikhat on track for success: Helmy

By Khaled Al-Enezi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Ahmed Helmy, the coach of Sulaibikhat Club's U12 volleyball team, is confident in his team's progress as it currently sits in fourth place in the league standings. Reflecting on its recent victories over strong teams like Al-Qadsiya and Al-Arabi, he believes the team is on track for success.

"The players have shown great potential and spirit," Helmy said, highlighting the promise of players like Abdulaziz Mohammed, Hassan Talal, Abdulrahman Al-Otaibi, Abdullah Al-Shammari, Hamad Al-Mutairi, Duajj Al-Naama, Khaled Al-Muwaizri, Khaled Al-Failakawi, Abdullah Al-Muwaizri, Ahmed Al-Badali, and Faisal Al-Shammari. "With proper guidance and training, these players have the ability to achieve even greater success."

Helmy's goal for the team is to break into the top three and reach the podium, a goal he considers



Al-Sulaibikhat youth volleyball team.

well within their reach. He also praised the support of the club's board and the coaching staff, particularly Egyptian coach Ahmed Refaat, who has been closely monitoring the team's performance and

has promised generous rewards for the players at the end of the season. The coach emphasized that the focus is not just on immediate success but also on building future talent. "We aim to create successive

generations of players with high potential and experience, to eventually contribute to our national teams," Helmy added, underscoring the long-term vision for the club's youth development.

## Nuggets drop fourth straight as Lakers dominate Thunder

Sengun powers Rockets past Warriors, Curry struggles

DENVER, April 7, (AP): Obi Toppin scored 22 points in his second start of the season, and the Indiana Pacers overcame Pascal Siakam's absence to hand the reeling Denver Nuggets their fourth consecutive loss Sunday, 125-120.

Myles Turner's 24 points led the Pacers, who overcame a 13-point first-half deficit and an off-night by Tyrese Haliburton, whose nine points on eight shots were less than half his scoring average.

The Nuggets lost their fourth straight despite Nikola Jokic's 41 points, 15 rebounds, and 13 assists and Christian Braun's career-high 30 points.

**Lakers 126, Thunder 99**  
In Oklahoma City, Luka Donic scored 30 points and the Los Angeles Lakers routed the league-leading Oklahoma City Thunder.

Austin Reaves scored 20 points and LeBron James added 19 points and seven assists for the Lakers, who have won four of five.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 26 points and Jalen Williams added 16 for the Thunder.

Oklahoma City remained two games ahead of the Cleveland Cavaliers in the race for the league's best record with five games to play.

**Rockets 106, Warriors 96**  
In San Francisco, Alperen Sengun had 19 points and 14 rebounds, Dillon Brooks scored 24 points and the Houston Rockets snapped the Golden State Warriors' five-game winning streak with a matchup of Western Confer-



New York Knicks' Josh Hart, left, and Phoenix Suns' Bradley Beal, right, chase after the ball during the second half of an NBA basketball game in New York. (AP)

ence powers.

Stephen Curry was held to three points on 1-for-10 shooting - missing seven of eight 3-pointers - for his lowest total this season in a game he was healthy. Curry scored two points Dec. 19 at Memphis, but suffered a pelvic contusion in a hard fall.

**Kings 120, Cavaliers 113**  
In Cleveland, Zach LaVine scored 37 points, including 11 in the decisive fourth quarter, and the Sacramento Kings remained in position for a play-in spot with victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers. DeMar DeRozan scored 28 points and Domantas Sabonis added 27 points and nine rebounds for the Kings, who moved into ninth place in the Western Conference with their second straight victory.

Ty Jerome led Cleveland with 20

points and Donovan Mitchell added 19. Jerome saw his first action since March 25 after he had missed five games due to left knee tendinitis.

**Celtics 124, Wizards 90**  
In Boston, Luke Kornet scored 13 points and had 14 rebounds, Al Horford had 11 points with 10 boards and the Boston Celtics ran away from the undermanned Washington Wizards to win.

Derrick White added 19 points for Boston, making five of the team's 24 3-pointers. The Celtics had a season-high 62 rebounds.

Justin Champagnie scored 15 points with 13 rebounds and Alex Sarr scored 16 for the Wizards.

**Nicks 112, Suns 98**  
In New York, OG Anunoby scored 19 of his 32 points in a perfect third quarter

to keep up the best scoring stretch of his career, even with Jalen Brunson returning to New York's lineup, as the Knicks beat the Phoenix Suns.

Brunson had 15 points and six assists after missing 15 games with a sprained right ankle that he sustained exactly a month earlier. The Knicks didn't need much from their All-Star guard, especially while Anunoby was going 7 for 7 in the third quarter, 5 for 5 from 3-point range.

**Bucks 111, Pelicans 107**  
In New Orleans, Gary Trent Jr. scored a season-high 29 points, and the Milwaukee Bucks improved their hold on fifth place in the Eastern Conference by defeating the New Orleans Pelicans.

Brook Lopez had 20 points and 12 rebounds for the Bucks (44-34), who won their fourth straight, and took a full game lead on idle Detroit (43-35).

**Hawks 147, Jazz 134**  
In Atlanta, Onyeka Okongwu had 27 points and 12 rebounds, Trae Young added 23 points and 15 assists and the Atlanta Hawks beat the Jazz, extending Utah's losing streak to nine games.

Caris LeVert scored 21, Dyson Daniels 19 and Vit Krejci made five 3-pointers and finished with 17 points on 6-of-6 shooting for the Hawks, who never trailed.

**Trail Blazers 120, Spurs 109**  
In Portland, Toumani Camara had 23 points and 11 rebounds and the Portland Trail Blazers held off a late rally by the San Antonio Spurs for a 120-109 victory on Sunday night.

Both teams were mathematically alive for a play-in spot going into the game, but were eliminated by Sacramento's 120-113 victory over Cleveland. Stephen Castle finished with 22 points for the Spurs.

## Qadsiya eyes redemption in Gulf Champions League final

By Hassan Mosa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Qadsiya will look to bounce back from its early exit in the Zain Premier League title race by securing a strong result in the first leg of the Gulf Champions League final against Iraq's Duhok, scheduled for 7:45 pm tonight at Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium.

The "Yellow Castle" fans are eager to see their team take a crucial step toward lifting its third Gulf title, having previously won the championship in 2000 and 2005. The players, too, are determined to deliver a memorable result to compensate for their domestic disappointment.

Qadsiya reached the final by finishing second in Group B with nine points, earning two wins, three draws, and a loss. In the semifinals, it edged past the UAE's Al-Nasr 1-0 in the first leg and losing 2-1 in the return leg, before clinching a 4-3 win on penalties.

In preparation for the final, Montenegro head coach Zeljko Petrovic opted to rest key starters in last Friday's league clash against Al-Salmiya. The squad then entered a focused training camp ahead of tonight's crucial encounter.

Despite missing Moroccan midfielder Mehdi Berrahma and Moaz Al-Dhafiri due to suspension from accumulated yellow cards, Qadsiya is expected to benefit from the return of several players. Khaled Ibrahim, Ismail Khafi, Abdulaziz Wadi, Abdullah Mutawa, and Adhbi Shehab, all of whom missed recent fixtures, are likely to feature.

Meanwhile, Duhok is aiming to continue its impressive run in the tournament as it chases its first-ever Gulf Champions League title.

The Iraqi side advanced to the final after finishing second in Group A with nine points, behind UAE's Al-Nasr. In the semifinals, Duhok stunned Saudi Arabia's Al-Ettifaq with back-to-back 1-0 victories.

Domestically, Duhok has been in strong form, most recently defeating league leader Al-Zawraa in the Iraqi Premier League. Although currently in seventh place,



Petrovic and Dhafiri speak to the media.



Al-Rashidi and Jarrah in Al-Qadsiya gear up for training.

it remains in contention with five games in hand and only 12 points separating them from the top.

Showing their intent, Duhok arrived in Kuwait on a private jet with a 70-member delegation, including seven media representatives. To avoid scheduling conflicts, it held its training sessions at Sabah Al-Salem Stadium rather than Mohammed Al-Hamad Stadium.

The match will be officiated by a Saudi crew led by referee Majed Al-Shamrani, with assistants Hisham Al-Rifai and Omar Al-Jamal. Shukri Al-Hanfoush will serve as the fourth official. Emirati officials Saqr Al-Zaabi and Yasser Al-Marshadi will operate the VAR system.

## Gulf Tennis Championships set for April 11 in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, April 7: Kuwait is set to host the Gulf Tennis Championships for Under-12, Under-16, and General Age National Teams from April 11-17, organized by the Kuwait Tennis Federation. The event will take place at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah International Tennis Complex in Al-Zahraa, with the participation of

six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

The Kuwait Tennis Federation is working diligently to ensure the success of this prestigious Gulf event. The Federation is committed to providing the heads and members of the participating GCC delegations with all the necessary support and amenities to make their stay comfortable.

Preparations for the tournament have been finalized, and a meeting of the Technical Committee is scheduled for next Thursday. The meeting will be chaired by Mohammed Ali Al-Shaheen, Chairman of the Technical Committee of the GCC Tennis Federations from Qatar, alongside Ali Hayat, Vice President of the Kuwait Tennis Federation and Tournament Director, and international referee Barak Jawahery, who will serve as the tournament's general referee.



The Kuwait Tennis Federation logo.