



# ARAB TIMES

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## HH Amir hosts Crown Prince, Prime Minister, other officials



Amiri Diwan photo  
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received on Sunday at Al-Seif Palace His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Later on, His Highness received First Deputy Prime Minister, Defense and Interior Minister Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud Al-Sabah, as he presented to His Highness the newly appointed Governor of Al-Ahmad Sheikh Humoud Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

### Opinion

## HH the Amir ... you promised and delivered; now, the concerns of your people are in front of you

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah

Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

WE do not exaggerate if we say that tranquility prevails in the country as the circus has ended. This was followed by the issuance of executive decisions that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah promised in his historic speech.

This is the first time we feel the presence of an operational government. Officials are directly hearing the voice of the people through their meetings with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah in the Ruling Family Diwaniya.

This is based on the directives of His Highness the Amir. It is like we are in front of a popular parliament, which has no intermediaries handling the concerns of the people according to their personal interests.

Previously, demands were ignored due to the deals made by officials and a parliamentarian; let alone the empty voices.

Today, this Amiri step is giving the people a platform to open up about their issues face-to-face with the leadership.

This is why such a meeting must be held periodically. People have a lot of complaints and demands, which were overlooked for many years when something like a fence separated the people from their leaders.

In countries where there are many restrictions, the citizen becomes hopeless; denouncing his country. No one listens to his voice, making him annoyed with State institutions.

We have to say that in a country with sagacious leaders, all its institutions are the eyes and ears of the ruler. Some of them operate with a high level of transparency, especially the institutions dealing with nationality and State security.

These institutions must be void of people who abuse their power to suppress others or those who differ in opinion by falsely accusing them of misconduct or even defaming them just to take revenge.

These institutions need people, who overlook their personal issues or do not get personal due to the trust bestowed upon them by the authority, in order to ensure that the welfare and wellbeing of the people are handled professionally.

Also, many countries have arbitration offices for the people to present their grievances. People handling these grievances are chosen carefully and are not known by the masses.

The only known thing is that such institutions

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## KUWAITIS OPT TO RETURN FROM BEIRUT DESPITE CURRENT STABILITY

### NewsWatch

### Kuwait acts on 'tax violations'

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: The Ministry of Finance has taken decisive action against three companies for non-compliance with Kuwait's income tax regulations, highlighting serious issues with their accounting practices, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Following a thorough examination of their financial records and documents, the Ministry sent notifications to these companies emphasizing the necessity of adhering to Kuwait's Income Tax Decree No. 3 of 1995, as amended by Law No. 2 of 2008, and its Executive Regulations, particularly regarding the maintenance of proper accounting books and records.

Sources said the Ministry of Finance estimated the profits of these companies based on available tax returns for previous fiscal years. It was found that some of these companies had failed to maintain the required accounting books and records, as mandated by Kuwaiti tax laws.

Consequently, the Ministry decided to estimate their profits at 30% of their revenues, disregarding the companies' reported operational results. In response to these findings, the Ministry of Finance has initiated steps to enforce Article Eight of the Income Tax Decree, which allows for the imposition of fines of 1% for every thirty days or part thereof in case of delayed payment.

Moreover, Article 24 of the Executive Regulations specifies a sixty-day period from the date of assessment notification within which companies may submit objections to their tax assessments. After this period, objections may not be considered.

The Ministry underscored the urgency of prompt payment in accordance with Kuwait's income tax provisions and alerted the companies to settle their outstanding tax liabilities swiftly. This action aims to ensure compliance with tax regulations and to uphold fiscal discipline in Kuwait's corporate sector.

**BAGHDAD:** Iraqi Prime Minister **Mohammad Al-Soudani** on Saturday inaugurated a new aerial defense operation center and revealed USD 3.8 billion would be earmarked to boost the armament of the national forces.

The new radar-equipped center has been established as part of a plan to renovate the infrastructure of observing and securing the Iraqi air space and enhancing prompt response to any threats, the prime minister's office said in a statement. It quoted Al-Soudani as saying that the center had been built in coordination with the French defense hardware company, Thales, adding that the government specialized USD 3.8 billion to upgrade the Iraqi forces' armament.

The role of the Iraqi security forces is crucial in the near future after the conclusion of the mandate of the international coalition forces, he said. (KUNA)

**WASHINGTON:** The US Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed three Iranian-backed Houthi uncrewed surface vessels (USV) in the Red Sea.

In a statement, USCENTCOM said on Saturday that it was determined these systems presented an imminent threat to US coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region, noting that this action was taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure.

Separately, Iranian-backed Houthis launched three anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM) from a Houthi controlled area of Yemen into the Gulf of Aden, which caused no injuries or significant damage.

Recent claims about a successful attack by Houthi forces on the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN-69) are categorically false, the statement added. (KUNA)

**DHAKA:** At least nine people died after a microbus and an auto-rickshaw carrying wedding party guests plunged into a canal following the collapse of a dilapidated bridge in **Barguna** district, some 180 km south of **Bangladesh's** capital Dhaka.

The accident occurred around 2:00 p.m. local time as the bridge gave way, sending both vehicles into the canal. **Kazi Sakawat Hossain Topu**, officer-in-charge of Barguna's local Amtali Police Station, told Xinhua. (Xinhua)

## 1st repatriation flight from Lebanon lands in Kuwait with 226 passengers



Kuwaiti returnees from Lebanon receive hugs and a warm welcome upon arrival at Kuwait Airport Terminal 4 on Sunday morning.

Photo by Mohamad Morsi

### Returnees laud leadership, govt's swift response

By Muhammad Al-Musleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff and Agencies

**KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Kuwait International Airport welcomed the return of 226 passengers, mostly citizens, on the first flight from Lebanon following warnings and calls to return issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs due to ongoing security developments in the region.**

The first Kuwait Airways Boeing 777 plane landed at 3 a.m. at T4 Airport. The flight had departed for Beirut Airport the previous evening, as announced by Kuwait Airways.

Many returning citizens expressed their gratitude to the political leadership and the government for their concern and efforts to ensure their safety. They appreciated the facilities provided from the moment they boarded the plane until their arrival back in Kuwait.

Passengers praised the smooth procedures and comfort provided by Kuwait Airways, as well as the facilitation of departure processes for those wishing to return. They noted that while conditions in Beirut are currently stable, they chose to return home in response to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' advisories, anticipating any potential emergencies.

Meanwhile, thousands of fighters from Iran-backed groups in the Middle East are ready to come to Lebanon to join with the militant Hezbollah group in its battle with Israel if the simmering conflict escalates into a full-blown war, officials with Iran-backed factions and analysts say.

Almost daily exchanges of fire have occurred along Lebanon's frontier with northern Israel

since fighters from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip staged a bloody assault on southern Israel in early October that set off a war in Gaza.

The situation to the north worsened this month after an Israeli airstrike killed a senior Hezbollah military commander in southern Lebanon. Hezbollah retaliated by firing hundreds of rockets and explosive drones into northern Israel.

Israeli officials have threatened a military offensive in Lebanon if there is no negotiated end to push Hezbollah away from the border.

Over the past decade, Iran-backed fighters from Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan

## Converting basement to warehouse 'illegal'

**KUWAIT CITY, June 23, (KUNA):** Kuwait Municipality warned homeowners on Sunday against renting out their house basements as warehouses for storing goods.

Inspection teams have recently noticed several random ads seeking to rent private basements in residential areas at high prices after the Municipality cleared out several commercial basements for violating safety codes, said Municipality Spokesperson Mohammad Sendan in a press statement.

"Many private homeowners are renting out their basements as warehouses for storing food, furniture, and flammable or toxic items to earn extra monthly

Continued on Page 5



Zain honors a Special Education graduate during its annual ceremony celebrating Kuwait's top high school achievers for the academic year 2023-2024. - See Page 2

## Kuwait steps up anti-terror fight

**KUWAIT CITY, June 23:** Kuwait has made significant strides both domestically and internationally to combat terrorism and extremism, focusing on cutting off their sources, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This includes the implementation of various legislations, laws, decisions, and regulations aimed at promoting moderation, rejecting violence, and combating extremist ideologies.

According to sources from the Ministry of Social Affairs, specifically the Department of Charitable Societies and Foundations, Kuwait has intensified its

Continued on Page 5

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Prayer Timings

Fajr ..... 03:14 Asr ..... 15:24
Sunrise .. 04:49 Maghrib .. 18:51
Zohr ..... 11:50 Isha ..... 20:23

Local

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

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:
By Day: Very hot and relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate northerly wind, with speeds of 08-35 km/h.
By Night: Hot to rather hot and

Weather relatively humid over coastal areas with light variable wind to light to moderate northwesterly wind, with speeds of 08-30 km/h.

Table with columns: Station, Max Exp, Min Rec. Rows: Kuwait City, 47, 35; Wafra, 47, 27.

Table with columns: Station, Max Exp, Min Rec. Rows: Kuwait Airport, 48, 31; Abdaly, 48, 32; Jahra, 50, 33; Salmiyah, 41, 33; Nuwaisib, 45, 28; Wafra, 47, 27.

Program dedicated to advancing excellence in healthcare

AUK unlocks opportunities ... hosts 'The London School of Economics'

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: The Office of Research and Grants (ORG) at the American University of Kuwait (AUK) hosted a workshop titled "The London School of Economics (LSE): The Kuwait Programme Opportunities" at the AUK theater.

The workshop delved into academic collaborations and fellowships between LSE and Kuwait, healthcare policy workshops, and research publications.

dates and eligibility criteria for candidates.

She also discussed papers and blogs related to the Kuwait Programme as well as details pertaining to the publication process.

At the beginning of the presentation, Masters was welcomed on stage by Dr. Iyad Abu Doush, ORG director and professor of computer science.

By hosting such workshops, AUK positions itself at the forefront of research initiatives in Kuwait, reaffirming its reputation as a dynamic hub for academic exchange and innovation in the region.



Group photo of the workshop organizers.

HH the Amir congratulates Luxembourg on Nat'l Day

KUWAIT CITY, June 23, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable to Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg on Sunday congratulating him on his country's National Day.

His Highness the Amir wished him a long healthy life and further prosperity for Luxembourg.

Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a cable to Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg, congratulating him on his country's National Day, and wishing him a long healthy life.

Also, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent a congratulatory cable to Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg on his country's National Day.

Realty owners take advantage of flaws in officials supervision

'Unauthorized constructions affect power, water networks'

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: The Mangaf fire incident has starkly exposed the widespread issue of building violations in Kuwait's investment and private sectors.

They constructed unauthorized studio apartments within buildings, often without proper approvals, thereby overloading the electrical network and exacerbating the country's current summer crisis with increased power demands.

During a tour of Farwaniya and Hawalli Governorates, it was observed that these violations commonly involved converting building entrances into makeshift studio apartments consisting of a single room with bathroom and kitchen facilities.

These unauthorized constructions not only strained state services but were also aimed at maximizing rental income from these makeshift units, typically found in buildings of up to nine floors.

Following the Mangaf fire, concerns were raised about the ineffectiveness of supervisory authorities in preventing such violations.

Sources from the electricity sector emphasized the critical importance of maintaining infrastructure integrity, stating that unauthorized constructions put undue pressure on the electrical and water networks, secondary electricity stations, sewage systems, and parking facilities.

This situation was exacerbated by the rapid increase in unregulated population density around investment buildings across various governorates.

In response to these issues, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Fahd Al-Yousef issued instructions to address these violations promptly.

This directive led to ongoing campaigns aimed at removing illegal constructions and mitigating their impact on infrastructure. Despite initial efforts to cut off power to these units, many violations persisted due to insufficient follow-up and enforcement in areas like Farwaniya and Hawalli.

Authorities reaffirmed the state's commitment to safeguarding public services from exploitation and abuse, ensuring that those responsible for unauthorized constructions face legal consequences.

The focus is on curbing the influence of profiteers who have exploited regulatory loopholes for personal gain, at the expense of infrastructure stability and public safety.

PAM allows registering 2 drivers under one vehicle

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: The Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) recently issued a decision allowing companies and institutions to register two drivers under one vehicle, reports Al-Shahed daily.

PAM clarified that the decision is applicable to trucks, half-lorries and other heavy vehicles, not the private cars; while stressing the need for employers to be committed to the number of employees specified by PAM.

The authority pointed out that the decision is in response to the recent complaints of employers and companies about the high salary of the drivers of such vehicles, stressing that the employees at the Labor Estimation Department will be closely monitored in the coming period to prevent manipulations to take advantage of the decision.



Algharabally and Al Enzi with the honored graduates.



Recognizing two distinguished graduates.



Honoring a top student.

Company organizes its annual ceremony

Zain recognizes Kuwait's top high school graduates for academic year 2023-2024

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Zain organized its annual honoring ceremony to recognize and celebrate Kuwait's top high school graduates for the academic year 2023-2024.



Recognizing a Special Education graduate.

The event was held at the company's headquarters in Shuwaikh and was attended by the students and their parents, along with Zain Kuwait CEO Nawaf Algharabally, Ministry of Education Assistant Undersecretary Maryam Al Enzi, and the Ministry's Official Spokesperson Ahmad Al Wehaida.

During the event, Zain honored the very top graduates in three categories: top graduates nationwide, top Kuwaiti graduates, and top graduates from Special Education Schools. Students from both science and humanities disciplines were recognized within each of these categories.

In his opening speech, Zain Kuwait CEO Nawaf Algharabally expressed the company's immense honor and pride in the distinguished graduates.

He highlighted that their achievements are a testament to their hard work, determination, and pursuit of excellence. Algharabally noted that the graduates have shown not only academic excellence but also leadership, creativity, and resilience, which are traits essential for success in any field.

He also extended his deepest congratulations and gratitude to the families of the graduates, acknowledging that their support and guidance were crucial for the students' success.

Algharabally emphasized that the achievements of each student are not only personal milestones but also accomplishments for the entire nation.

Ministry of Education Assistant Undersecretary Maryam Al Enzi expressed the Ministry's appreciation to Zain for holding this initiative every year, where the company celebrates the nation's top graduates and sheds light on their most distinguished achievements. She noted that such efforts contribute to supporting the educational ecosystem locally.

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Request of the Ministry of Communications to allocate a site for the third major fiber optic network project in Subiya.

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Other Voices

Abdullah Al-Bustani & Columbus

By Ahmed alsarraf

IN my last article, I stated that Columbus was Spanish when, in fact, he was Italian by birth and later pledged allegiance to Spain.

Christopher Columbus, credited with the discovery of the Americas half a millennium ago, embarked on his historic voyage from Spain, sailing westward toward Asia.

Born in 1451 in Genoa, Italy, Columbus began his seafaring career at the age of 14, working aboard merchant ships.

By 1473, he was serving Genoese merchants and gained experience navigating ships involved in extensive maritime commerce. He furthered his education in Portugal, where he learned to read and studied mathematics, astronomy, navigation, and maps and eventually settled in Lisbon, a hub of European maritime activity at the time.



alsarraf

Columbus's ambition to find a westward route to the Indies intensified due to various factors, including insights gleaned from geographical maps produced by his brother, accounts of Portuguese voyages, and discoveries of artifacts near Atlantic islands.

Relying on the latest scientific knowledge, including the work of Italian Paolo Toscanelli (1397-1492) and German Martin Behaim (1459-1507), who specialized in mathematics and astronomy, Columbus conceived his plan to reach East Asia by sailing west.

In 1484, Columbus proposed his expedition to King John II of Portugal, who declined to sponsor it. Turning to the Catholic monarchs of Spain, Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand, Columbus faced years of setbacks before securing their support on April 17, 1492.

Their backing was contingent upon Columbus's commitment to commercial objectives, namely discovering a shorter and less costly sea route to access the lucrative markets of China and Japan.

Setting sail from Spain on August 3, 1492, with three ships, Columbus tra-

versed the Atlantic Ocean and reached the Caribbean islands two months later.

His second voyage in 1498 led to the discovery of the North American continent. Subsequently, Columbus faced imprisonment on allegations of mistreating indigenous peoples before embarking on his final voyage in 1502, during which he discovered numerous new islands.

Although Columbus died under the misconception that he had reached the Indies, it was the Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci who later realized that the vast lands discovered constituted a new continent, not Asia. Consequently, the "New World" was named "America" in honor of Vespucci on Martin Waldseemüller's 1507 map.

Columbus returned to Spain from his final voyage in 1504, aged 53 and in failing health. He spent his remaining years in melancholy and mental distress, passing away in 1506 in Valladolid, Spain, and was laid to rest in the Carthusian monastery of Santa María de las Cuevas in Seville.

The story recounted in "People are Races" by Lebanese writer Salam Al-Rassi regarding an exhibition in Chicago in 1893 honoring Columbus's memory lacks verifiable evidence, but it remains a poignant tale worth sharing.

The anecdote describes how, on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of America's discovery, poets were commissioned to compose verses in various languages to adorn the base of Columbus's statue. Among these verses were purportedly lines by Lebanese poet Abdullah Al-Bustani, expressing a sentiment of honoring Columbus's endurance and sacrifice.

While the authenticity of this narrative cannot be confirmed through available research, its poetic resonance endures.

It serves as a reminder of the power of storytelling and the enduring allure of crafted narratives, even when historical accuracy may be elusive. As the saying goes, "the most beautiful poetry is often the most fictitious," highlighting the ability of art to transcend factual constraints and evoke profound emotions.

□ □ □

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Strategic collaboration demonstrates commitment to humanitarian causes

# Boursa extends partnership with UNHCR on World Refugee Day



A group photo of campaign participants.

KUNA photo

## Divers relieve coral reefs of hard waste off Kuwaiti shores

Teams of Kuwait Diving Club and the Kuwait Olympic Committee on Saturday cleaned the coral reefs around Umm Al-Maradem island. Up to 50 divers took part in the operation, aimed at enhancing environmental awareness and affirming the national responsibility to preserve the marine environment, said Talal Al-Serhan, the club chair in remarks to KUNA.

The divers, assisted by peers from the Coast Guards and the Ministry of Interior, removed plastic and metallic litter. Al-Serhan noted that the activity coincided with the International Olympic Day, marked by athletes and associations worldwide with diverse communities' actions. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Boursa Kuwait reaffirmed its commitment to supporting humanitarian causes by extending its strategic partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for the fourth consecutive year on World Refugee Day 2024, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This partnership underscores Boursa Kuwait's dedication to making a positive impact within the community it serves and highlighted the following key partnership points.

**Support and Contributions --** Over the past four years, Boursa Kuwait has actively supported UNHCR's projects aimed at alleviating the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). This support has included contributions to shelter, food, and emergency aid initiatives benefiting over 1,600 families in the Middle East.

**Focus Areas --** Boursa Kuwait's contributions have specifically targeted emergency efforts in regions such as Sudan, Syria, and Lebanon. This includes support for UNHCR's annual winter assistance program, which provides crucial aid during harsh conditions.

**Advocacy and Awareness --** The partnership emphasizes raising awareness within society about the critical importance of assisting individuals affected by conflict, persecution, and displacement. Boursa Kuwait encourages listed companies and private sector entities to join efforts in supporting UNHCR and addressing the needs of refugees worldwide.

**Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) --** Boursa Kuwait's initiative aligns with the

UN's SDGs, particularly focusing on goals related to poverty eradication, hunger elimination, good health, quality education, clean water and sanitation, reducing inequalities, and fostering partnerships for sustainable development.

**Corporate Sustainability Strategy --** The partnership reflects Boursa Kuwait's broader corporate sustainability strategy, which integrates social responsibility governance, best practices in the sector, and stakeholder expectations. It aims to establish enduring partnerships that leverage expertise from diverse fields to drive sustainable impact.

**World Refugee Day 2024 --** On June 20th, World Refugee Day commemorates the resilience and courage of refugees worldwide. This year's theme, "For a World Welcoming Refugees," emphasizes global solidarity in supporting refugees and creating inclusive environments for their integration and empowerment.

**UNHCR's Appreciation --** Nisreen Al-Rubaian, UNHCR representative in Kuwait, expressed gratitude for Boursa Kuwait's continuous support, highlighting the pivotal role of such partnerships in improving conditions for refugees globally amidst ongoing and unresolved crises.

Boursa Kuwait's ongoing collaboration with UNHCR underscores its commitment to corporate social responsibility and its role in contributing positively to humanitarian efforts. By leveraging its platform and resources, Boursa Kuwait aims to foster sustainable development and make a meaningful difference in the lives of refugees and IDPs worldwide.

## 68 psychiatric clinics in all governorates

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: The Ministry of Health has confirmed the establishment of 68 psychiatric clinics within primary health care centers (dispensaries) across all governorates of Kuwait, reports Al-Jarida daily.

To access these services, individuals are required to schedule an appointment in advance through the ministry's official website.

This initiative aims to provide accessible mental health care services to residents throughout the nation.

# Addressing controversial issues crucial for Kuwait's future development & prosperity

## Educational sector requires urgent attention

**KUWAIT CITY, June 23: The report from Al-Shall addresses significant issues in Kuwait's education system and the recent controversy over leaked exam questions highlighting the deep-rooted challenges that have affected educational standards and governance for decades, reports Al-Qabas daily.**

The report begins by tracing problems back to the early 1990s, following Kuwait's liberation, when policies like "Study a year, skip two years" were implemented. This initiative was perceived as a means to placate public discontent, rather than a genuine effort to improve education.

It symbolized a commodification of education, reducing it to a transactional process rather than a foundational pillar of societal development.

Over time, educational quality deteriorated, compounded by incidents such as the acceptance of under qualified individuals into professional fields due to nepotism or influence. These practices undermined educational integrity and contributed to a culture where educational credentials were often devalued.

The recent controversy involving leaked exam questions exemplifies broader systemic failures. Despite previous pledges to safeguard exam integrity, leaks continue to occur, affecting tens of thousands of students and officials.

This indicates a lack of effective governance, where policies intended to prevent such incidents have proven inadequate.

The report argues that addressing leaked exam questions in isolation misses the larger crisis in Kuwaiti education -- a crisis characterized by systemic corruption, lack of oversight, and a decline in ethical standards.

The focus on punitive measures against those responsible for leaks, while necessary, does not address the underlying issues that perpetuate such practices.

The environment within Kuwaiti education is described as deeply corrupted, where deception and forgery have become normalized. This environment not only harms educational outcomes but also jeopardizes the future of the country, especially given the significant role of the public sector in Kuwait's economy.

The report advocates for comprehensive reforms that go beyond addressing immediate incidents like exam leaks. It calls for surgical removal of systemic tumors within Kuwait's educational infrastructure, implying a need for fundamental restructuring and governance reforms to restore integrity and effectiveness.

While the banking sector in Kuwait shows positive financial indicators, the educational sector faces profound challenges that require urgent and sustained attention to restore trust, integrity, and quality. Addressing these issues is crucial for Kuwait's future development and prosperity.

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|--|--|
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Promo period from 23<sup>rd</sup> June to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024

Terms & conditions apply\*



The Kuwait Airways team participating in the exhibition.

## Kuwait Airways participates as official carrier at Travel and Tourism Exhibition

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Kuwait Airways recently participated in the Tourista Travel and Tourism Exhibition as the official carrier of the event, held at the Capital Mall on June 21 and June 22, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The exhibition provided a platform for Kuwait Airways to showcase its role as a prominent national carrier in the region and highlight the offerings of its Holidays Office.

Hamad Al-Uthaina, Acting Director of Corporate Communications and Public Relations at Kuwait Airways, expressed the airline's pleasure in participating in the Tourista exhibition, which specializes in tourism and brings together numerous travel and tourism agents.

He emphasized that such exhibitions not only create new business opportunities but also keep participants informed about the latest trends and developments in the aviation sector.

Al-Uthaina highlighted Kuwait Airways' commitment to supporting local exhibitions, considering them integral to Kuwaiti society and crucial for the development of the tourism and travel sector.

He underscored that Kuwait Airways participated in Tourista through its Holidays

Office, which showcased attractive travel packages featuring discounts of up to 30 percent on economy class and 25 percent on business, first, and royal classes.

The Holidays Office also offered various travel packages for cruise trips to destinations suited for this type of travel.

Regarding pricing and services, Al-Uthaina mentioned that Kuwait Airways has been diligent in providing the best prices and offers to its customers, following directives from the Board of Directors. These efforts included forming a Prices Committee to ensure competitive pricing and enhance service quality.

He emphasized Kuwait Airways' commitment to customer satisfaction by engaging with them through various media channels and participating actively in local and regional events and exhibitions.

Looking forward, Kuwait Airways intends to continue offering special promotions and services through the summer period, allowing travelers to explore a wide range of options through the Holidays Office. This approach aims to enhance customer experience, providing comfortable and enjoyable travel opportunities with exclusive offers.

## Promoting culture of knowledge-sharing amongst employees

## Markaz conducts series of awareness seminars on combatting cyberattacks

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" organized a series of awareness seminars for its employees and board of directors on the cyber threat landscape. The educational session, titled "Fraud and Cyberattacks: Detection and Prevention," aimed to raise awareness and empower the attendees to identify and counter any forms of phishing, ransomware, or malware assaults. The internal seminars were presented by Rahaf AlGharaballi, Senior Analyst, Risk Department at Markaz and Noor AlMuhanna, Analyst, Compliance Department at Markaz.

The seminars highlighted the diverse and ever-evolving threats in the cyber world, providing valuable insights on how to navigate these risks and avoid falling victim to attacks. The knowledge-sharing sessions also delved deep into the topic, presenting the evolution of cyberattacks and the significant increase in incidents following the COVID-19 pandemic. In the modern world, where data is extremely valuable, safeguarding sensitive information is paramount for any business.

The awareness seminars also illustrated how the cyber threat landscape has advanced with the advent of artificial intelligence through multiple case studies. These interactive sessions concluded by presenting concrete, actionable solu-



Group photo during the Markaz awareness seminars for its employees and board of directors on the cyber threat landscape.

tions to detect and prevent cyber threats. It also outlined the immediate measures to be adopted at the onset of an attack.

Commenting on the initiative, Pradeep Rajagopalan, EVP of Analytics and Internal Controls at Markaz, stated, "In today's ever-evolving digital landscape, it is imperative for businesses to remain vigilant against the potential risks posed by cyber threats.

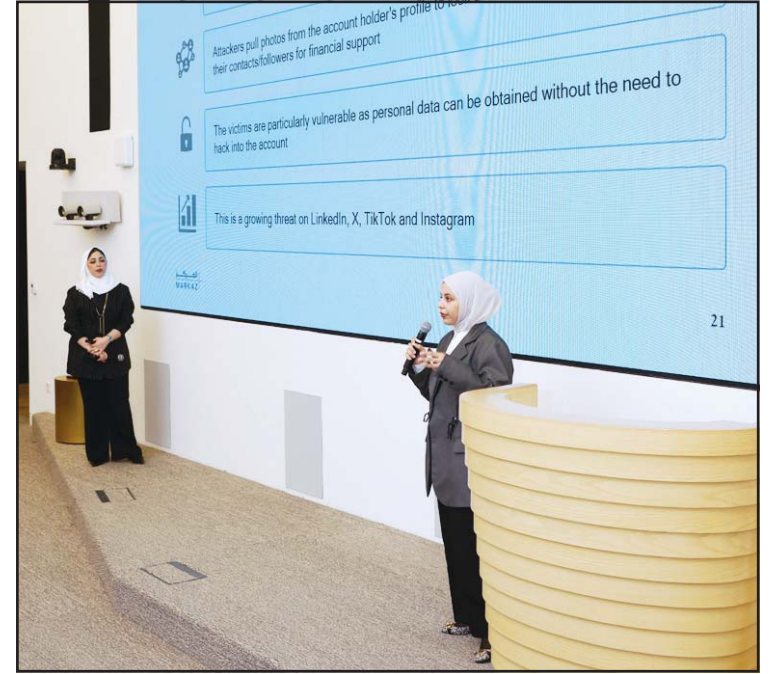
Markaz is committed to safeguarding the data of our valued clients and securing our organi-

zational assets from any possible cyberattacks. The Risk and Compliance departments continuously work with stakeholders to ensure that our network security systems are foolproof. Furthermore, our internal educational initiatives play a pivotal role in empowering employees and equipping them with the knowledge and appropriate tools to mitigate online fraud and cyber risks. This underscores our dedication to upholding excellence in compliance and risk management."

Markaz's efforts to frequently conduct awareness seminars for its employees on diverse and relevant topics reflect its commitment to fostering a collaborative and knowledge-sharing work culture. This initiative also falls in line with the company's corporate social responsibility strategy and its key pillars - Building human capacity, aligning business environment with the principles of sustainable development and promoting good governance in the business environment.



Board of directors.



Rahaf AlGharaballi and Noor AlMuhanna.

## Balancing innovation with legal precision

## Electronic arbitration revolutionizes dispute resolution in the digital era

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: The concept of electronic arbitration represents a significant evolution in dispute resolution, particularly suited to the digital age where commercial transactions increasingly occur online, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Unlike traditional arbitration, which relies on physical meetings and documents, electronic arbitration leverages information and communication technologies (ICT) to conduct proceedings entirely over the internet or through other modern means like computers and fax.

The following are the advantages of Electronic Arbitration:

■ Encouragement of Investment: Facilitates and encourages investment through online platforms and e-commerce.

■ Speedy Resolution: Allows for faster resolution of disputes compared to traditional methods.

■ Cost Reduction: Reduces expenses associated with travel, physical hearings, and document handling.

■ Ease of Obtaining Rulings: Provides convenience in accessing and receiving arbitration rulings electronically.

The following are the disadvantages:

■ Application of Jus Cogens Rules: Electronic arbitration may not

apply mandatory international law rules (jus cogens), potentially leading to issues with the enforceability of arbitration awards.

■ Trust Issues: Concerns about the reliability and trustworthiness of electronic transactions and the enforceability of arbitration awards issued electronically.

■ Confidentiality Concerns: Risks regarding the confidentiality of arbitration proceedings conducted online, as sensitive information may be vulnerable to unauthorized access or breaches.

Addressing these challenges requires the development of robust legislative frameworks and international standards governing electronic transactions and arbitration in international commerce.

Such frameworks should adapt to technological advancements, ensuring they remain relevant and effective in safeguarding the integrity and confidentiality of arbitration processes conducted electronically.

In conclusion, while electronic arbitration offers numerous advantages in terms of efficiency and accessibility, it necessitates careful consideration of legal frameworks to mitigate risks and ensure its effectiveness and trustworthiness in resolving disputes arising from electronic commercial transactions.

## AI-Mutawa calls for enhanced protections for subcontractors in Kuwaiti government projects

## Delays threaten companies' financial stability

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Tariq Al-Mutawa, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Sudair Trading and Contracting Company, emphasized the critical need for the Central Agency for Public Tenders to establish a robust mechanism to resolve issues and ensure the rights of subcontracting companies involved in government projects, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Al-Mutawa has highlighted several pressing concerns faced by approved subcontractors in Kuwait.

Firstly, he pointed out that subcontractors approved by regulatory authorities often encounter delays in receiving payments owed to them after completing subcontractors for projects awarded to large, often non-local companies through government tenders.

These delays, according to Al-Mutawa, have significant negative impacts on the market dynamics and operational capabilities of subcontracting firms,



A site under construction; (inset): Tariq Al-Mutawa the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Sudair Trading and Contracting Company.

potentially jeopardizing their financial stability and ability to undertake future projects.

Al-Mutawa underscored that some entities responsible for project oversight withhold payment to subcontractors due to observations or disputes with the primary contractors.

He emphasized that if there are is-

sues or observations, they should be promptly addressed by identifying the responsible party and ensuring that subcontractors receive their due payments for work completed satisfactorily.

Moreover, Al-Mutawa expressed concern over the prolonged duration subcontractors wait to receive their

payments, which in some cases exceeds five years after project completion. He estimated that the outstanding dues to subcontractors collectively amount to at least 100 million dinars.

These delayed payments not only hinder the subcontractors' financial liquidity but also affect their ability to fulfill obligations to banks and other financial commitments, potentially leading to financial crises and bankruptcy threats.

Al-Mutawa stressed the urgent need for regulations and mechanisms to safeguard subcontractors' rights, asserting that they play a crucial role in project execution, contribute positively to the economy by employing local workers, and deserve protection and support through legislative and regulatory frameworks.

He called for the issuance of new laws and decisions to organize and strengthen the subcontracting sector, ensuring its sustainability and continued contribution to the local market.

Al-Mutawa urged for the development of a comprehensive roadmap to ensure timely and fair payment of subcontractors' financial dues, emphasizing the importance of organizing and supporting this vital sector for the benefit of Kuwait's economic development and stability.

## Biometric measures rolled out

## Kuwait Airport preps summer travelers

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Director of the Airport Security General Department at Kuwait International Airport Brigadier Bader Al-Shaya said the preparation for the travel season, which coincides with the summer vacation, is ongoing to ease the departure and arrival procedures, reports Al-Rai daily.

Al-Shaya affirmed the department is working hard to remove obstacles that travelers might face during the summer vacation season, which lasts for 105 days -- from the beginning of June until Sept 15. He said the total number of passengers within this period is estimated at 5.5 million -- 2.7 million departures and 2.8 million arrivals on board 42,000 flights. He added all the passport control counters have been activated, especially during the peak period (16 in Terminal Four, 20 in Terminal One and eight in Terminal Five), indicating it takes only seven seconds to stamp a passenger's passport and 20 seconds in case the employer is under training.

Regarding citizens and expatriates banned from traveling for not paying debts and fines, Al-Shaya confirmed the establishment of centers at the airport for those who cannot pay online. He revealed the concerned institutions with payment centers at the airport include the Ministry of Electricity and Water, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Communications and General Traffic Department in Ministry of Interior. He added the travel ban is nullified as soon as the debt or fine is paid.

He stated the department, in coordination with airline companies, is keen on foiling attempts to enter Kuwait illegally. He disclosed that several individuals have been arrested for illegal entry, pointing out this is a confirmation that Kuwait is not a haven for people smugglers. He cited as an example those who tried to enter the country on forged passports and those who used the passports of others. He asserted such individuals are sent back to their countries of origin upon completion of the necessary legal measures.

He went on to say that those residing in other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries can obtain a visit visa upon arrival as per ministerial decision no. 2030/2008 and its amendments. He revealed the decision stipulates that the visa applicants must have a residency permit in any of the other GCC countries valid for at least six months. He clarified this is applicable to doctors, chief executive officers, owners of companies, businesspersons, engineers, pilots, diplomats and highly qualified individuals. He added the wife, children and domestic workers accompanying the concerned individual are exempted from the aforementioned requirements.

Moreover, he revealed that the biometrics of almost one million passengers arriving at the airport have been taken since the beginning of the process; while a number of centers were established at the airport for this purpose.

said Sendan.

The Municipality will be on the lookout for such violators, Sendan confirmed, adding that citizens and residents can report any violations to the Municipality Hotline (139) or WhatsApp number (24727732).

## Kuwait steps up

## Continued from Page 1

efforts by involving well-established charitable societies in these initiatives.

The Ministry has circulated directives to the heads of these societies, emphasizing their role in Kuwait's international commitments to counter extremism and terrorism.

These efforts have contributed positively to Kuwait's international standing, leading to its transition from the "gray" list to the "white" list alongside countries recognized for their rigorous efforts against money laundering and terrorist financing, as reported by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

In a different area of focus, the

## KFH warns against donations to unknown entities

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) advises customers to exercise caution when donating or making financial contributions through websites on certain occasions.

In a press release, KFH highlighted how fraudsters exploit specific events. They do this by sending phishing emails that request donations through bank transfers or payments on fake websites. Their ultimate goal is to steal money from unsuspecting victims.

KFH warned about the dangers of new phishing scams that have recently emerged. The bank advised customers to verify the website's safety, legitimacy, and authenticity before making any donations.

As part of its ongoing support for



Diraya logo

Diraya campaign to promote banking awareness, in collaboration with the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwait Banking Association, KFH explained that scammers are employing new methods of fraud.

The rise of digital payments and the growing reliance on smart-

phones and the internet have created new avenues for fraudsters. They exploit this by targeting the millions of customers who conduct their transactions and daily business online. These fraudsters attempt to trick users into revealing sensitive account information, ultimately aiming to steal their money.

Fraudsters can leverage advanced AI and vast datasets to analyze online purchases and identify patterns that suggest potential victims with vulnerable accounts.

KFH added that fraudsters can target anyone, regardless of age or social status. They employ various tactics, including enticing but fake offers, seemingly urgent bank warnings about account problems, suspicious friend requests online, or pleas for help over the phone.

porous and unmarked border.

Some of the groups have already staged attacks on Israel and its allies since the Israel-Hamas war started Oct. 7. The groups from the so-called "axis of resistance" say they are using a "unity of arenas strategy" and they will only stop fighting when Israel ends its offensive in Gaza against their ally, Hamas.

"We will be (fighting) shoulder to shoulder with Hezbollah" if an all-out war breaks out, one official with an Iran-backed group in Iraq told The Associated Press in Baghdad, insisting on speaking anonymously to discuss military matters. He refused to give further details.

The official, along with another from Iraq, said some advisers from Iraq are already in Lebanon.

An official with a Lebanese Iran-backed group, also insisting on anonymity, said fighters from Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces, Afghanistan's Fatimiyoun, Pakistan Zeinabiyoun and the Iran-backed rebel group in Yemen known as Houthis could come to Lebanon to take part in a war.

## HH the Amir

## Continued from Page 1

are considered the administration that prevents the use of "wasta" (influence), which distracts them from performing the duties assigned to them.

They deliberate on grievances and then present the best solutions to the executive office. They are the open eyes of the ruler in terms of implementing justice.

Without a doubt, any leader is a human being with limited energy and cannot follow up all State affairs on his own.

Therefore, we seek the help of honest individuals with a conscience, who work silently and whose main concern is the country and its interests.

Today, there are many of these people in Kuwait. We clearly see the work of some of them in the most difficult circumstances, because difficulties reveal the true nature of a person.

Hence, the meeting of His Highness the Crown Prince with the citizens is a

successful step and a genuine fulfillment of the promises of His Highness the Amir.

Everyone sees that it is within what His Highness the Amir promised to his people. Today, we are in an era of loyalty and firmness. It was said in the past: "Prosperity requires loyalty and a generous person. If he promises, he fulfills the promise."

Thus, we are facing a man of decision who fulfills his promises. For this reason, Kuwait is awaiting many Amiri promises that will come one after the other. This has started to emerge from the cycle of conflict of interests between parliamentarians and ministers, as well as the exploitation of influence, in order to move towards the leadership again.

## Converting basement

## Continued from Page 1

income, which endangers properties and human lives and is a serious violation of municipal regulations and law,"

## World News Roundup

## Europe

## Japan royal family in UK

## Ukrainian drones kill 4 in Russia &amp; Crimea

KYIV, Ukraine, June 23, (AP): Russian authorities said four people died in Ukrainian drone and missile attacks on Sunday, a day after Russia's bombing of Ukraine's second largest city of Kharkiv killed three people and left dozens in hospitals.

Three people - including two children - were killed by falling debris when five Ukrainian missiles were shot down in Sevastopol, a port city in Russia-annexed Crimea, said Mikhail Razvozhaev, the city's Moscow-installed governor. Close to a hundred people were injured, he said.

One person was killed and three injured in Russia's Belgorod region, bordering Ukraine, when three Ukrainian drones attacked the city of Grayvoron, regional Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov said.

Air defenses overnight shot down 33 Ukrainian drones over Russia's western Bryansk, Smolensk, Lipetsk and Tula regions, the Russian Ministry of Defense said Sunday. No casualties or damage were reported.

The attacks came after Russia struck Kharkiv on Saturday afternoon with four aerial bombs, hitting a five-story residential building and killing three people. Regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said that 41 people were still being treated for injuries on Sunday.

In a video address following the attack, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged Ukraine's partners to bolster its air defenses.

"Modern air defense systems for Ukraine - such as Patriots, accelerated training of our pilots for F-16s, and most importantly, sufficient range for our weapons - are truly necessary," he said.

Two people were wounded by falling debris when two Russian missiles were shot down over the Kyiv region overnight, Ukraine's air force commander Mykola Oleschuk said.

Regional Gov Vadym Filashkin of Ukraine's partly occupied Donetsk region said that Russian attacks on Saturday killed two people and wounded four.

## Signal

Meanwhile, behind the smiles, the balloons and the red-carpet pageantry of President Vladimir Putin's visit to North Korea last week, a strong signal came through: In the spiraling confrontation with the U.S. and its allies over Ukraine, the Russian leader is willing to challenge Western interests like never before.

The pact that he signed with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un envisions mutual military assistance between Moscow and Pyongyang if either is attacked. Putin also announced for the first time that Russia could provide weapons to the isolated country, a move that could destabilize the Korean Peninsula and reverberate far beyond.

He described the potential arms shipments as a response to NATO allies providing Ukraine with longer-range weapons to attack Russia. He bluntly declared that Moscow has nothing to lose and is prepared to go "to the end" to achieve its goals in Ukraine.

Putin's moves added to concerns in Washington and Seoul about what they see as an alliance in which North Korea provides Moscow with badly needed munitions for its war in Ukraine in exchange for economic assistance and technology transfers that would enhance the threat posed by Kim's nuclear weapons and missile program.

The new agreement with Pyongyang marked the strongest link between Moscow and Pyongyang since the end of the Cold War.

Kim said it raised bilateral relations to the level of an alliance, while Putin was more cautious, noting the pledge of mutual military assistance mirrored a 1961 treaty between the Soviet Union and North Korea.

## Also:

**LONDON:** Emperor Naruhito of Japan and his wife Empress Masako arrived in the UK on Saturday ahead of a long-awaited official state visit originally scheduled for 2020 before the coronavirus pandemic delayed those plans.

The smiling couple, who landed late afternoon at Stansted Airport north of London, will spend seven days in the UK carrying out private engagements before the official state visit begins on June 25. The couple have connections to the UK, having studied at the University of Oxford at different times.

The trip was intended to be the 64-year-old emperor's first overseas visit after he ascended the Chrysanthemum Throne in 2019. But it was delayed by COVID-19. He later attended Queen Elizabeth II's funeral in September 2022.

The state visit begins Tuesday, when King Charles III and Queen Camilla will formally welcome the emperor and empress before they take a ceremonial carriage ride to Buckingham Palace. Naruhito will also lay a wreath at the tomb of the unknown soldier in Westminster Abbey then return to the palace for a state banquet.

**LONDON:** The chief data officer of Britain's Conservative Party has taken a leave of absence, British media reported Sunday, following growing allegations that the governing party's members have been using inside information to bet on the date of Britain's July 4 national election.

The Sunday Times and others reported that Nick Mason is the fourth Conservative official to be investigated by the UK's Gambling Commission for allegedly betting on the timing of the election before the date had been announced.

The Times alleged that dozens of bets had been placed with potential winnings worth thousands of pounds.

Two other Conservative election candidates, Laura Saunders and Craig Williams, are under investigation by the gambling watchdog. Saunders' husband Tony Lee, the Conservative director of campaigning, has also taken a leave of absence following allegations he was also investigated over alleged betting.

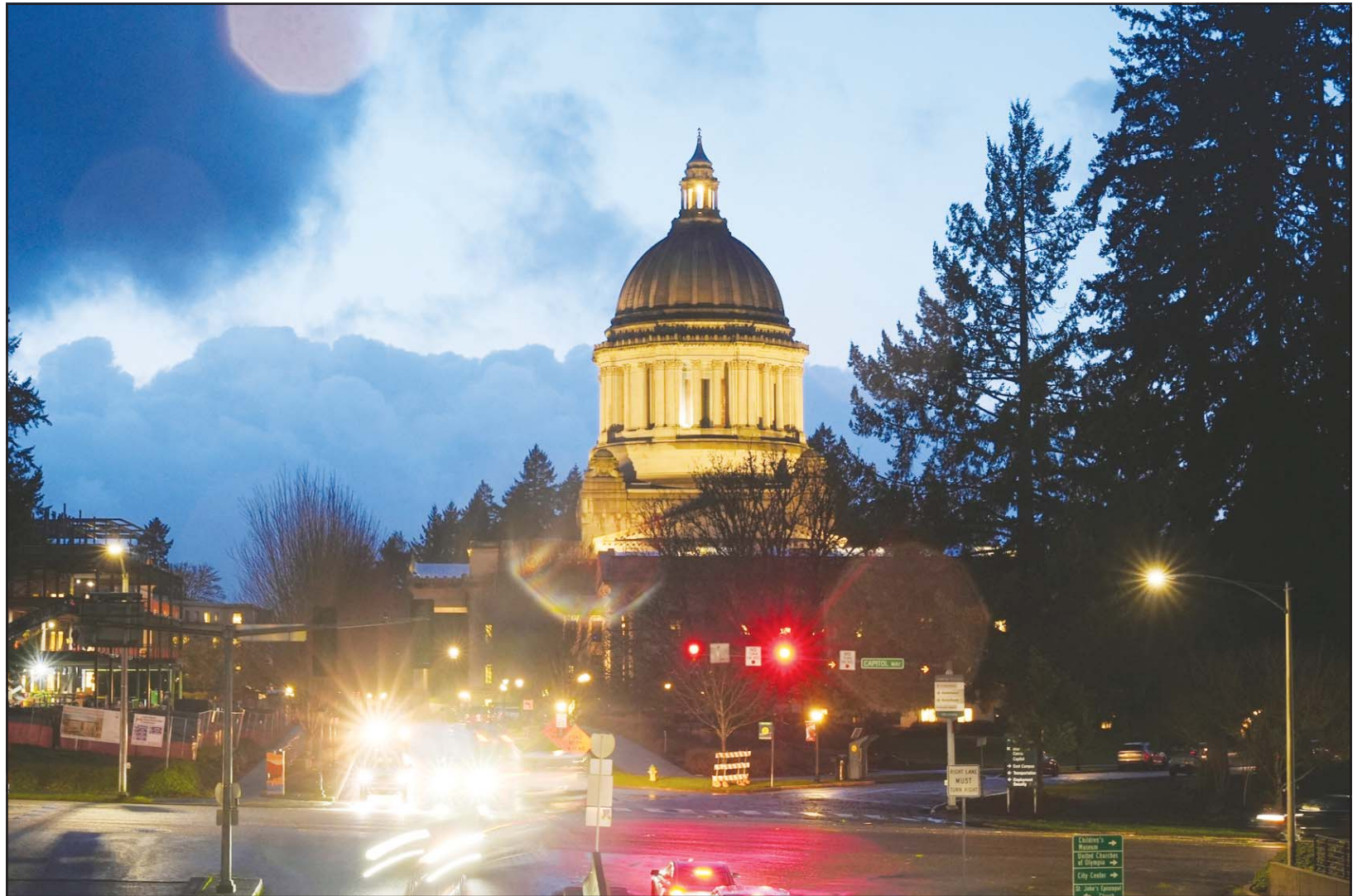
The growing scandal, which came just two weeks ahead of the national election, has dealt a fresh blow to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservative Party, which is widely expected to lose to the opposition Labour Party after 14 years in power.

Sunak said this week that he was "incredibly angry" to learn of the allegations and said that anyone found to have broken the law should be expelled from his party.

Saunders, a candidate standing in Bristol, southwest England, has said she will cooperate fully with the investigation. Williams was Sunak's parliamentary private secretary as well as a candidate.



Zelenskyy



The Washington state Capitol building is pictured on Jan 9, 2024, in Olympia, Washington. King County Superior Court Judge Michael Scott on June 21 has paused parts of a new Washington state parental rights law derided by critics as a 'forced outing' measure. (AP)

## Politics

## 'It'll be showdown between Biden, Trump'

## Kennedy Jr fails to qualify for CNN's debate

COLUMBIA, SC, June 23, (AP): Independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr has failed to qualify for next week's debate in Atlanta, according to host network CNN, falling shy of benchmarks both for state ballot qualification and necessary polling.

The missed markers mean that the June 27 showdown will be solely between Democratic President Joe Biden and presumptive Republican nominee Donald Trump. That denies Kennedy a singular opportunity to stand alongside the leading candidates in an attempt to lend legitimacy to his longshot bid and convince potential supporters that he has a shot at winning. In a statement Thursday, Kennedy called his exclusion from the debate "undemocratic, un-American, and cowardly."

Both the Biden and Trump campaigns fear that Kennedy could play spoiler in what's anticipated to be a close general election.

## Participate

According to the criteria set out by CNN, candidates would be invited to participate in the debate if they had secured a place on the ballot in states totaling at least 270 votes in the Electoral College, the minimum needed to win the presidency.

Biden and Trump have easily cleared the polling threshold but won't be certified for the ballot until their parties formally nominate them later this summer. Both have secured enough delegates to lock in their nominations.

Kennedy's campaign says he has satisfied the requirements to appear on the ballot in 22 states, with a combined 310 electoral votes, though not all have affirmed his name will be listed. California, the largest prize on the electoral map with 54 votes, will not certify any candidates until Aug 29.

Candidates were also required to reach a polling threshold of 15% in four reliable national polls by June 20, another metric CNN said Kennedy failed to meet. According to the network, Kennedy has received at least 15% in three qualifying polls so far and is currently on the ballot in six states, making him currently eligible for 89 Electoral College votes.

Last month, Kennedy filed an elec-

tion complaint alleging CNN is colluding with Biden and Trump to exclude him from the June 27 debate, alleging that the participation requirements were designed to ensure only Biden and Trump would qualify and claiming that he is being held to a higher standard.

CNN has said the complaint is without merit. Kennedy's campaign did not immediately respond to a message Thursday seeking comment on CNN's announcement and asking if he planned to take any further action about his exclusion.

Last month, Biden and Trump agreed to the CNN debate and a second on Sept. 10 hosted by ABC, bypassing the nonpartisan commission that has organized debates for nearly four decades.

After winning a coin toss, Biden's campaign chose the right podium position, meaning that he will be on the right side of viewers' screens, with Trump on the left, according to CNN. Trump's campaign then opted to deliver his closing statement after Biden.

Both campaigns have agreed to appear at podiums, and microphones will be muted except for the candidate whose turn it is to speak.

## Also:

**HARRISBURG, Pa:** Independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr filed paperwork to get on the ballot for the November election in swing-state Pennsylvania, the state's election office said.

Kennedy's filing comes six weeks before the Aug. 1 deadline, after which the paperwork can be challenged in court.

The campaigns of both President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump fear that Kennedy could play a spoiler role in what's anticipated to be a close election, especially in Pennsylvania, the nation's fifth-most populous state.

To qualify for the ballot in Pennsylvania, Kennedy must file 5,000 signatures of registered voters.

With its 19 electoral votes, Pennsylvania is a top-tier prize that has swung between the parties in the last two presidential elections. Both were closely contested: In 2016, Trump won Pennsylvania by 44,000 votes over Democrat Hillary

Clinton, and four years later Biden beat Trump by 81,000 votes.

Libertarian Jo Jorgensen was on the ballot in 2020 and collected just over 79,000 votes, while three minor-party candidates on the ballot in 2016 — the Libertarian Party's Gary Johnson, the Green Party's Jill Stein and the Constitution Party's Darrell Castle — and got nearly 190,000 votes combined.

Kennedy's petitions could be challenged in court by the two major parties, and both Trump's and Biden's campaigns have sought to portray him as an adversary. Legal challenges must be filed no later than Aug 8.

Kennedy, an environmental lawyer and prominent anti-vaccine activist, abandoned his Democratic primary challenge to Biden last year and began campaigning as an independent.

Among the obstacles he faces is a requirement to secure ballot access state by state. That requires him to collect millions of signatures that must be verified by election officials before his candidacy is approved.

Kennedy's campaign has previously said he has satisfied the requirements to appear on the ballot in 22 states, with a combined 310 electoral votes, though not all have affirmed that his name will be listed.

**COLUMBUS, Ohio:** A county judge stripped Republican Ohio House Speaker Jason Stephens of his control over the GOP caucus' campaign fund on Friday, escalating intraparty tensions in the chamber headed into November's election.

Franklin County Common Pleas Judge Mark Serrott issued his preliminary injunction from the bench in a lawsuit filed against Stephens in October by a rival GOP contingent. The dispute was prompted by Stephens, a fellow conservative, relying on the combined votes of all House Democrats and just a minority of House Republicans to win the speakership.

Serrott said the faction representing a majority of the House Republican caucus should make decisions about the fund, since majorities rule in a democracy, in order to comply with state law.



A person holds a dog while being evacuated in the bucket of a front end loader in Hawarden, Iowa on June 22 in the wake of flooding from the Big Sioux River. Massive upstream rainfall sent the river over its banks in Hawarden causing massing flooding that prompted evacuations. (AP)



Grisham



Criswell

## America

**FBI offers reward for info:** Federal authorities offered a reward for information about those responsible for igniting a pair of New Mexico wildfires that killed two people and destroyed hundreds of homes in the past week.

The FBI on Saturday offered up to \$10,000 for information in connection with the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire in southern New Mexico, which forced thousands to flee.

An agency statement said it was seeking public assistance in "identifying the cause" of the fires near Ruidoso, New Mexico, that were discovered June 17. But the notice also pointedly suggested human hands were to blame, saying the reward was for information leading to arrest and conviction of "the person or persons responsible for starting the fires."

The South Fork Fire, which reached 26 square miles (67 square kilometers), was 26% contained on Saturday, while the Salt Fire, at 12 square miles (31 square kilometers), was 7% contained as of Saturday morning, according to the National Interagency Fire Center. Full containment was not expected until July 15.

Recent rains and cooler weather have assisted more than 1,000 firefighters working to contain the fires. Fire crews on Saturday took advantage of temperatures in the 70s Fahrenheit (21 to 26 Celsius), scattered showers and light winds to use bulldozers to dig protective lines.

Deanne Criswell, administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, met with Gov Michelle Lujan Grisham, Crawford and Mescalero Apache President Thora Walsh Padilla on Saturday. (AP)

**Maine doctor convicted:** A Maine doctor who runs an addiction treatment center has been convicted on multiple counts of illegally distributing opioids including oxycodone, hydromorphone and fentanyl.

Dr Merideth Norris, 53, of Kennebunk, Maine, was found guilty in federal court Friday of distributing the opioids at her practice.

According to court documents, she did so without a legitimate medical purpose and knowing that some patients were battling an opioid addiction.

She prescribed the drugs, according to court documents, even after patients failed

drug tests or were known to redistribute the drugs in the community.

A federal jury convicted Norris on 15 counts of distributing controlled sub-

stances and she faces up to 20 years on each count.

Prosecutors accused Norris of putting her patients' safety at risk, according to the



Japanese Emperor Naruhito, (center left), and Empress Masako, (center right), smile as they depart for the state visit to Britain, at Haneda airport in Tokyo, Japan on June 22. Japanese Crown Prince Akishino is seen at left, while Crown Princess Kiko is at second left. (AP)

Portland Press Herald, and failing to heed warning signs like failed drug tests among her patients or advisories from insurance companies about her prescribing of dangerous combinations of opioids and other drugs.

Her defense team tried to make the case that Norris helped patients reduce their medications and that the charges ignored the complexity of treating people who were addicted to opioids and struggled to find a doctor, the newspaper said. (AP)

**Kentucky shooting kills 1:** One person is dead and seven others were injured after a shooting at a Kentucky nightclub early Saturday morning, authorities say.

Louisville Metro Police Department officials said they responded to a call of several people shot at the H2O nightclub in Louisville just before 1 a.m. One man, 40-year-old Joseph D. Bowers of Indianapolis, was pronounced dead at the scene. Another adult was transported to UofL Hospital with gunshot wounds police believe to be "critical and life-threatening."

Six other people transported themselves to area hospitals with injuries that were not life-threatening.

The Louisville Metro Police Department's Homicide Unit is investigating the case. There are currently no suspects.

"The relationship of the victims, if any, is not known at this time," police said in a statement later Saturday. (AP)



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# Business

## Kuwait's economic policy department scales back operations post-pandemic

Fiscal policy department lacks leadership

**KUWAIT CITY, June 23: The Department of Macroeconomic and Fiscal Policy, under Kuwait's Ministry of Finance, has seen a shift in its operational status following the Covid-19 pandemic, reports Al-Jarida daily.**

Established in 2009, the department became more active during the pandemic, playing a significant role in coordinating economic policies and strengthening ties with both local and international economic entities. This period of activation was crucial for making important financial decisions and implementing economic reforms aligned with Kuwait's strategic goals.

However, according to sources, the department has now reverted to a more passive state. It currently lacks both a director and an executive team, and its responsibilities, particularly those related to formulating economic policies and providing technical and economic opinions, are either being handled directly by the Ministry of Finance or outsourced to other entities that may not have the requisite expertise.

Previously integral to forecasting expenditures and revenues, as well as contributing to economic reforms and the government's agenda, the department's role has diminished. This change comes as the Ministry of Finance considers integrating the department into its budget management structure, moving away from its previous direct affiliation with the Minister's Office.

Initially established under a co-operation agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the

department was tasked with monitoring developments in Kuwait's economic sectors and making economic forecasts for the short and medium term. It has historically played a crucial role in international coordination efforts, working closely with global financial bodies like the World Bank and the IMF.

The reduction in the department's role has raised concerns about Kuwait's economic strategy and its ability to navigate future economic challenges effectively. Critics argue that scaling back the department's influence may lead to less coordinated financial decisions and a lack of strategic alignment in Kuwait's economic policies.

In summary, while the Department of Macroeconomic and Fiscal Policy initially played a pivotal role in Kuwait's economic landscape, recent developments suggest a shift towards reduced operational capacity and a potential reevaluation of its organizational structure within the Ministry of Finance.

The sources highlighted the extended role of the Department of Macroeconomic and Fiscal Policy within Kuwait's Ministry of Finance, emphasizing its critical contributions to economic coordination with international bodies like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Over the past four years, this department has played a pivotal role in engaging with global advisors, discussing macroeconomic plans, managing public finances, overseeing financial reforms, and enhancing Kuwait's economic profile through strategic budgetary reforms.

During its active period post-Covid-19 pandemic, the department's advisory role was instrumental in forecasting economic trends, providing insights on rationalizing

## Eurozone economic recovery slows in June

## Central Banks diverge in monetary policy amid varied economic data and inflation pressures

By National Bank of Kuwait

### United States

#### US CPI Shows No Growth in May

The US Consumer Price Index was unchanged in May 2024 on a seasonally adjusted basis after rising 0.3 percent in April. Over the past 12 months, the all-items index increased by 3.3 percent before seasonal adjustment. Shelter costs rose by 0.4 percent, and the food index increased by 0.1 percent, with a notable rise in the food away from home index. Energy prices fell by 2.0 percent, driven by a 3.6 percent decrease in the gasoline index. The all-items less food and energy index rose by 0.2 percent in May m/m.

#### Federal Funds Rate Unchanged

The Federal Reserve announced that economic activity has continued to expand at a solid pace, with job gains remaining strong and unemployment low. Inflation has eased but remains elevated. Thus, the Federal Reserve has decided to maintain the target range for the federal funds rate at 5.25 to 5.50 percent. As well as continue to reduce their holdings of Treasury securities and mortgage-backed securities to achieve maximum employment and 2% inflation over the longer run.

#### US Retail Sales Rises in May

Retail sales in the US rose by 0.1% in May as seen in the month-over-month figure, higher than the previous -0.2% figure seen in April, while still lower than expectations of a 0.3% rise. Meanwhile core retail sales were unchanged from the previous month at -0.1%, lower than expectations of a 0.2% rise. The figure indicates that the US economy is losing some momentum in the consumer space even as employment data shows a resilient labor market.

#### Flash Services and Manufacturing PMI Increase

The S&P Global Flash US Composite PMI rose to 54.6 in June 2024, marking a 26-month high. The services sector led the expansion, with business activity growing at its fastest pace since April 2022. Where the Services PMI increased to 55.1, up from 53.4 in May. Manufacturing output also improved, though at a slower rate at 51.7 up from 51.0. Employment rose for the first time in three months, and input cost inflation

| Currencies | Previous Week Levels |        |        | This Week's Expected Range |         | 3-Month Forward |
|------------|----------------------|--------|--------|----------------------------|---------|-----------------|
|            | Open                 | Low    | High   | Minimum                    | Maximum |                 |
| EUR        | 1.0700               | 1.0668 | 1.0720 | 1.0691                     | 1.0730  | 1.0741          |
| GBP        | 1.2656               | 1.2620 | 1.2676 | 1.2645                     | 1.2680  | 1.2655          |
| JPY        | 158.93               | 158.66 | 159.79 | 159.79                     | 161.00  | 157.59          |
| CHF        | 0.8914               | 0.8903 | 0.8944 | 0.8937                     | 0.9040  | 0.8842          |

slowed to a five-month low. Future sentiment remained optimistic, though manufacturing optimism hit its lowest level in 18 months amid concerns about the demand environment and election-related uncertainty.

The US Dollar index closed the week at 105.796.

### Europe

#### Flash Eurozone PMI Shows Slowed Recovery

The eurozone's economic recovery slowed in June 2024, as indicated by the HCOB Flash Eurozone Composite PMI dropping to 50.8 from 52.2 in May. Manufacturing output fell sharply to a six-month low, with the PMI at 45.6, while the services PMI also decreased to 52.6, a three-month low. New orders declined for the first time in four months, particularly impacting manufacturing. Employment growth slowed, reflecting reduced business activity. Germany showed slight growth, whereas France saw a contraction in output for the second month.

The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.0691.

#### Swiss National Bank Cuts Interest Rates

The Swiss National Bank lowered its policy rate by 0.25 percentage points to 1.25 percent, effective June 21, 2024. This decision was made to maintain appropriate monetary conditions amid decreasing underlying inflationary pressures. The SNB indicated that they are committed to adjusting their policy to ensure inflation remains within the range consistent with price stability over the upcoming period. While inflation in Switzerland is currently driven by higher prices for domestic services, the SNB forecasts average annual inflation of 1.3 percent for 2024.

### United Kingdom

#### UK Headline CPI Hits Bank of England Target

After nearly three years of exceeding its target, UK inflation has finally reached the Bank of

## GCC exports decline in April

## Kuwaiti exports rise 7% in first four months of 2024

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

**KUWAIT CITY, June 23: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry reported that Kuwaiti exports reached a value of 103 million dinars in the first four months of 2024, reflecting a 7% increase compared to the same period in 2023, which saw exports valued at 96 million dinars.**

However, the ministry's statistics for April revealed a significant month-on-month decline. Kuwaiti exports in April fell by 51% to 19 million dinars, down from 40 million dinars in March. Exports to Gulf Cooperation Council countries dropped by 58%, amounting

to about 12 million dinars. Exports to other Arab countries decreased by 29%, reaching 6 million dinars compared to March.

Exports to European countries stood at 953 thousand dinars, a 27% decrease from the previous month. Conversely, exports to African countries saw a substantial rise of 96%, totaling 161 thousand dinars in April compared to 82 thousand dinars in March. Exports to Asian and Australian countries amounted to 68 thousand dinars. Meanwhile, exports to the Americas plummeted by 95%, reaching just 13 thousand dinars compared to 28 thousand dinars in March.

Expenditures, determining budget allocations, and offering technical opinions on inflation and other economic matters.

This proactive stance not only supported Kuwait's efforts in combating inflation but also facilitated its participation in government programs, economic reforms, and development initiatives crucial for the country's growth.

However, recent developments indicate a decline in the department's operational capacity. Currently lacking both a director and an executive team, the department's influence has diminished, raising concerns about its ability to maintain a strategic eco-

nomical direction within the Ministry of Finance. Critics argue that scaling back the department's role may lead to less disciplined and coherent financial decisions, potentially undermining Kuwait's economic stability and long-term growth objectives.

In conclusion, while the Department of Macroeconomic and Fiscal Policy initially played a pivotal role in Kuwait's economic strategy and international relations, its current state of contraction raises questions about the future direction of Kuwait's economic policies and the effectiveness of its financial management framework.

## KFH & NBK dominate sector

## Kuwaiti banking sector sees 6.6% profit increase in Q1/24

**KUWAIT CITY, June 23: The report on the Kuwaiti banking sector for the first quarter of 2024 highlights several key financial indicators and performances of the nine banks operating in Kuwait, reports Al-Jarida daily.**

The banking sector collectively achieved a net profit of approximately 411 million dinars for the first quarter of 2024, which represents an increase of 6.6 percent compared to the same period in 2023 (where profits were about 385.4 million dinars) compared to the fourth quarter of 2023, profits increased by 19.2 percent, from about 344.8 million dinars.

The total allocations held by the banks during the first quarter of 2024 amounted to about 66.5 million dinars, showing a decrease from about 89.4 million dinars in the same period last year. This decrease of approximately 25.6 percent is close to the percentage increase in profits, indicating prudent financial management amidst local economic conditions.

The so-called conventional banks reported profits of about 212.4 million dinars, comprising 51.7 percent of the total net profits. This reflects a 9.0 percent increase compared to the first quarter of 2023. Islamic banks reported profits of about 198.6 million dinars, representing 48.3 percent of total profits.

The P/E ratio for the banking sector on an annual basis was approximately 16.1 times, which improved slightly from about 16.5 times in the same period last year.

The ROA increased slightly to

about 1.39 percent compared to 1.35 percent in the previous year, while the ROE also saw a slight increase to about 12.2 percent from 12.1 percent in the same period last year.

The following is the profit distribution among banks:

■ Kuwait Finance House (KFH) recorded the highest profits among the banks, amounting to about 162.8 million dinars, representing 39.6 percent of the sector's net profits.

■ National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) followed with profits of about 146.6 million dinars, accounting for 35.7 percent of total profits.

■ Concentration of Profits: KFH and NBK together accounted for 75.3 percent of the banking sector's total profits, indicating a concentration of profits among the largest banks.

The remaining seven banks shared about 24.7 percent of the sector's profits, with Commercial Bank of Kuwait having the highest share at approximately 6.9 percent and Warba Bank the lowest at about 1.2 percent.

■ The Gulf Bank was the only bank among the nine to experience a decrease in profits, with a decline of approximately -25.6 percent. Its profits for the first quarter of 2024 were about 12.9 million dinars, down from about 17.3 million dinars in the same period last year.

Overall, the report underscores a positive growth trajectory for the Kuwaiti banking sector in the first quarter of 2024, with most banks showing increased profitability and resilience in navigating economic challenges.

## Value stocks at historically low valuations, reports NBK Wealth

**KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Value investing involves selecting stocks listed in the public markets trading at a price below their fair or intrinsic value. The concept of value investing was popularized by Benjamin Graham and the approach was adopted by many successful investors such as Warren Buffett.**

Stocks can become undervalued for several reasons, often related to market psychology, company-specific factors, or broader economic conditions. Regardless of the reason for a stock becoming undervalued, it represents an opportunity for a value investor to capitalize on.

Fund managers use a range of techniques and metrics to assess intrinsic value and screen for potentially undervalued stocks such as price relative to earnings, book value or cash flow where a lower ratio may indicate that a stock is undervalued. The fund manager should then also evaluate the quality of the company's top and executive management, its business model, the outlook for the business, industry trends and the company's standing relative to its competitors (peer analysis) before making an investment decision.

Value investing carries risk just like all other investments, one key to long term success is to invest with a margin of safety. The margin of safety refers to the difference between the intrinsic value of a stock and its market price. It acts as a buffer against errors in estimation or unforeseen events, offering a cushion for potential losses. When buying undervalued assets, it can take time before the market recognizes their true worth and therefore value investors typically have at least a 3-5 year horizon.

Stocks that appear to be undervalued but fail to realize their potential are referred to as value traps and should be avoided by

conducting thorough research to understand the company's prospects. An active manager with strong research capability can add significant value by helping investors avoid value traps and constructing robust, diversified portfolios of value stocks.

Growth stocks (stocks expected to grow at an above-average rate) typically perform better during periods of strong stock market performance and when corporate earnings are on the rise. However, during economic slowdowns, growth stocks tend to underperform value stocks. Value tends to outperform growth during periods of weak stock market performance and in the early stages of an economic recovery. Value stocks typically offer higher dividend yields, which is particularly relevant for investors with a focus on income generation.

In recent years, value has significantly underperformed growth, leading to growth stocks being valued at near all-time highs relative to value stocks. Due to the recent outperformance, investors in the US large cap market have overweighted their portfolios towards growth stocks, driven partly by the strong performance of the so-called "Magnificent Seven". Long-term investors should be cautious of having a significant overweight exposure to value stocks, as relative valuations can vary significantly throughout an economic cycle.

In conclusion, value stocks are currently at historically low valuations compared to growth stocks, key indices are overweight growth due to recent outperformance of the growth style. A long-term horizon is key for an investor that wants to explore value opportunities and an active manager can add significant value by identifying attractive stocks and ensure a robust portfolio construction with sufficient diversification.

Chart 1 - Active vs. Passive Management<sup>2</sup>







## Abrar Al-Ibrahim leads jewelry fundamentals workshop

# Gulf Bank resumes GB Masterclass series with jewelry focus

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: As part of its ongoing efforts to engage with the community, Gulf Bank has resumed its GB Masterclass series, which was initiated in collaboration with a team of experts and specialists from various fields. The latest session focuses on Jewelry Fundamentals and is conducted in partnership with the renowned Kuwaiti designer, Abrar Al-Ibrahim.

Designer Abrar Al-Ibrahim hosted a lecture and interactive workshop at The Avenues, attracting a significant audience of women passionate about diamonds, jewelry, and gemstones. The session covered topics such as diamond and gemstone examination, selection, evaluation, and design.

Gulf Bank is committed to actively interacting and communicating with the wider community and its clients year-round. This commitment is exemplified through thoughtfully curated programs aimed at promoting sustainability principles in society. Through the GB Masterclass series, developed in collaboration with a diverse group of experienced experts and specialists, Gulf Bank addresses topics of wide interest to its audience.

It's important to highlight that last year, the bank arranged numerous lectures and workshops covering diverse fields including Makeup, Fashion Styling and Getting Ready for Ramadan. These sessions, which catered to the



Gulf Bank engages community with interactive jewelry workshop.

interests of both the public and clients, each lasted for two consecutive hours.

The bank expressed pride in its close ties to the community, continuously working towards meeting the aspirations of both the public and clients through a variety of meaningful initiatives and events. It looks forward to introducing more initiatives in the future.

Gulf Bank's vision is to be the leading Kuwaiti Bank of the Future. The

Bank is constantly engaging and empowering its employees as part of an inclusive and diversified workplace in recognition of every employee's role in delivering customer excellence and serving the community at large. With its extensive network of branches and innovative digital services, Gulf Bank is able to give its customers the choice of how and where to conduct their banking transactions, all while ensuring a simple

and seamless banking experience.

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

## Easy access to Al Najma account via app

# Al-Tijari announces winner of Al Najma account draw

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Commercial Bank of Kuwait conducted the weekly draw for Al Najma Account on Sunday, June 23, 2024. The draws were conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Mr. Mansour Al-Dhafiri.

The result of the draw were as follows:

1. Al Najma weekly draw – the prize of 5,000/- Kuwaiti Dinars went to the winner Miss. Sabah Kassem Al Kamash

The Bank stated that Al Najma Account prizes are distinguished by the diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that the account offers weekly prize of KD 5,000/-, monthly prize of KD 20,000/- and a semi-annual prize of KD 500,000 in addition to the mega annual prize of KD 1,500,000.

Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 200, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 200 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes. As for the chances of winning, the more



Commercial Bank of Kuwait conducts Al Najma Account weekly draw

balance a customer maintains in Al Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.

The Bank revealed that Al Najma account is available to everyone, and anyone can open Al Najma account through CBK mobile application in simple steps from anywhere and at any time.

## Bank introduces digital account opening

# Warba reveals winners of weekly Sunbula draw

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Warba Bank - the best bank in banking services for the corporate sector and banking services for the investment sector in Kuwait - announced the winners of the weekly Sunbula draw. Warba Bank will continue to make draws for 10 weekly winners for the Sunbula account in the presence of a representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Warba Bank employees.

As for the lucky customers for the weekly Sunbula draw, 10 winners were chosen from Warba Bank's customers, each of whom received 1,000 Kuwaiti dinars. The Winners are: Mr. Adel Abdul Hamid Al-Qallaf, Mr. Ayman Abdul Rahman Al-Ammar, Mr. Mubarak Saud Hamad Al-Suwailih, Mr. Majdi Rushdi Salim Al-Ashqar, Mrs. Buthaina Salem Muhammad Al-Shammari, Mr. Saad Muhil Shaalan Al-Anazi, Mr. Ahmed Abdul Rahman Al-Mulhim, and Mr. / Walid Mahmoud Taher Abu Saa, Mr. Ali Mansour Naji Al-Ajmi, and Mr. Zabin Hazmi Zabin Al-Maya Al-Azmi.

The Sunbula account is the perfect choice for all those who wish to save money and achieve great financial returns on their balances at the same time; in addition to multiple opportunities to win cash prizes throughout the year.

With regards to the conditions for winning the Sunbula, Mr. Abdulaziz Soud Al-Bekheet - Director Region Retail Banking Group-states: "Only 100 KD is required to enter the weekly Sunbula draws and other major draws, whereby the customer still gets one chance per every 10 KD in the account, and the chances are calculated according to the lowest balance in the account during a month. Therefore, a full month must have passed in the account to qualify for the weekly draw, and two full months for the major draws to calculate the opportunities. There are no restrictions or



Abdulaziz Al-Bekheet

limits for withdrawal and deposit, the higher the deposited amount, the greater the customer's chances of winning".

Notably, in accordance with the terms of its ambitious five-year strategy, Warba Bank has launched its latest banking solutions service "Customer Onboarding". This will enable non-Warba Bank customers to apply for opening an account in an easy digital way through the bank's website without the need to visit any of the bank's branches, and within only five minutes - through the new and unique automated system used to enable this service - new customers will be able to complete the request to open an account at any time and any place.

It is worth mentioning that Warba Bank is one of the banks that achieved great successes in a short period of time, as it occupied a leading position in the field of digital Islamic banking services for individuals, and it is one of the most local banks in terms of the number of shareholders, and these are among the most prominent elements that make the bank close to all members of society.



IVECO delivers daily 4x4 trucks to Kuwait's MEW.

## High-performance IVECO trucks boost MEW's capabilities

# KAICO delivers eight 'IVECO Daily 4x4' trucks to Ministry of Electricity & Water & Renewable Energy's partner company

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: Kuwait Automotive Imports Company (Alshaya & Alsagar), the authorized distributor of IVECO in Kuwait, is pleased to announce the successful delivery of 8 units of IVECO Daily 4x4 trucks to the Ministry of Electricity & Water & Renewable Energy (MEW)'s partner company.

This significant delivery, executed in partnership with one of our valued customers, marks a key milestone in enhancing the operational capabilities of the MEW.

The IVECO Daily 4x4, delivered to the MEW, represents a full line-up of go-anywhere vehicles, offering unmatched versatility and performance essential for the Ministry's demanding field operations. Featuring a solid load-bearing chassis and high-performance suspensions, it is ideal for customization across various missions. The Daily 4x4 excels in navigating tough terrains and mixed roads, ensuring seamless operation with both all-road and off-road versions.

The Daily 4x4 vans come equipped with versatile transmission options, featuring either the HI-MATIC automatic transmission, known for

its seamless multi-brand compatibility, or manual transmission. These choices endow the vehicle with exceptional off-road prowess while delivering superior comfort and user-friendly operation.

Mr. Ashish Tandon, the General Manager of KAICO, expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership, stating, "We are beyond delighted to contribute to enhancing the Ministry's operational fleet with these high-performance trucks, which will undoubtedly support their critical work in managing Kuwait's energy and water infrastructure."

Vinukumar Nair, Sr. Divisional Manager - Fleet & Leasing, highlighted the importance of this delivery, saying, "We are proud to deliver these exceptional IVECO Daily 4x4 trucks to our valued customers. This collaboration underscores our commitment to providing high-quality, reliable vehicles that meet the specific needs of our clients. We are confident that these trucks will significantly contribute to the Ministry's operational efficiency and success."

The collaboration between KAICO, our valued customer, and the Ministry of Electricity & Water & Renewable Energy reflects a shared commitment to innovation, excellence, and sustainability.

This partnership is poised to set a new standard in the provision of specialized vehicles for essential government operations.

### About IVECO

IVECO, a European (Italian) world-leading manufacturer of trucks and vans, provides a comprehensive range of vehicles tailored to meet diverse needs, locations, and missions. Specializing in innovative and sustainable transport solutions, IVECO is renowned for its durability, efficiency, and advanced technology. IVECO trucks and vans are engineered to perform exceptionally well under various climates, cargos, and missions, making them ideally suited for the demanding working conditions and extreme environments of this region.

### About KAICO

Kuwait Automotive Imports Company (KAICO) is a leading automotive distributor in Kuwait, representing some of the world's most renowned automotive brands. With a strong commitment to customer satisfaction and quality service, KAICO has established itself as a trusted name in the automotive industry.



KIB Excellence Program

## KIB honors its Q1 2024 top-performing employees

As part of its ongoing efforts to encourage its staff and invest in its outstanding talents, Kuwait International Bank's (KIB) Retail Banking Department (RBD) organized its quarterly Excellence Recognition event during which the top-performing employees for the first quarter of 2024 were announced and rewarded. This celebration, which took place at the Bank's head office, reflects KIB's commitment to acknowledging its high-potential talents and encouraging them to take active steps toward further development, with the full support of the Bank in the form of resources, training material, and other growth opportunities.

In this regard, Mohammed Dashti, Senior Manager - Service Quality Unit at KIB, said: "At KIB, we always strive to live up to our main slogan, 'Bank for Life', and firmly believe that employees across all departments are the backbone and driving force of this institution. Our Excellence Recognition Program is only one of many efforts that we are adamant about developing to recognize dedicated and accomplished individuals for their contribution to accomplishing the Bank's goals and strategic objectives. Only when we motivate our staff to find what they excel at and support them to pursue it can we continue to grow and flourish on all

levels."

He added: "On behalf of KIB's Executive Management, I would like to express my sincere pride in the Bank's ambitious employees who continue to set an example of professional excellence and whose devotion remains a fuel that drives this institution toward new frontiers of success."

Leading up to the quarterly Excellence Recognition event, candidates are assessed based on their customer service performance as well as general KPIs. After the top employers for Q1 2024 were announced, managers were given the floor to deliver a word of grat-

itude to the outstanding employees, encouraging them and others to maintain their unwavering commitment to achieving excellence in their lines of work.

It serves to note that KIB remains committed to placing its employees at the center of the Bank's priorities and is one of the leading financial institutions on the human capital development front. Through its human capital development arm, KIB Life Academy, the Bank has delivered numerous programs that guarantee the ongoing personal and professional growth of its employees, such as its flagship program, Waed, among others.



# Swift's UK Eras Tour launch sparks 'So Long, London' rumors

LONDON, June 23, (AP) — Taylor Swift fans enjoy parsing the singer-songwriter's lyrics for references to her romantic life and insights into her state of mind.

But the pop superstar's fans in the UK didn't have to listen closely to her latest album, "The Tortured Poets Department," to get the sense that Swift had soured on the country's capital city after long making it a regular hangout and then her second home. The record's fifth track is titled "So Long, London."

As Swift brings her blockbuster Eras Tour to London's Wembley Stadium this weekend, some Swifties therefore are wondering if they are witnessing the beginning of an extended goodbye.

London isn't ready to see her go. The area around Wembley was transformed for the shows, with fans posing in front of a giant mural of the singer and traveling stairs christened "Swiftie Steps" and other tributes.

Swift announced that 88,446 people were in attendance at Friday's show in what she called "the most exhilarating city in the world." Among the famous attendees: Prince William celebrating his 42nd birthday at the show and posing for a photo with Swift along with two of his children, Prince George and Princess Charlotte.

Swift gave fans a wink and a nod toward her London life during one of her two solo acoustic surprise songs: a piano medley that opened with the London-set "The Black Dog" and segued into "Come Back, Be Here" and then "Maroon."

In addition to this weekend's shows, Swift will return to Wembley for five more in August to close the tour's European leg.

London is the only city on the tour where Swift is stopping twice.

Some worry the arrangement may represent a swan song of sorts, while others think it just reflects a new era in Swift's bond with the Big Smoke. Whether "So Long, London" turns out to be a final chapter or a bookend to her valentine to the city, the song "London Boy," Eras is arriving as an emotional milestone.

## Relationship

"Her relationship now kind of assumes London won't be somewhere she will be. It's not like there is an American football player living here," said Maggie Fekete, 22, a Canadian graduate student who credits the London references in Swift's music with orienting her when she moved to the city three years ago. "I think there will be a lot less London in her music, which is sad."

Stella Elgood, 25, of London, said Friday she assumed Swift would sing "So Long, London" at some point during her eight nights in the city but that Swift "will always be welcome."

"Especially since she dated Harry Styles, she's been here in the Zeitgeist," Elgood said.

For those who haven't been paying attention, Swift had a series of romances with famous British citizens (including Styles in 2012) that ended last year, when she started dating Kansas City Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce. The speculation surrounding "So Long, London" and a mournful companion song that mentions a London pub, "The Black Dog," stems from the 2023 breakup of Swift and English actor Joe Alwyn, who were together for over six years.

Alwyn is assumed to have inspired "London Boy," a song from her 2019 album "Lover." A special-edition "Lover" CD included what ap-

peared to be a January 2017 diary entry in which Swift talked about being "essentially based in London" but trying to lay low. British tabloids later reported that Swift spent much of the COVID-19 pandemic sheltering with Alwyn in north London.

The Sun newspaper reported in December that the multiple Grammy-winner had bought a large property in the area and was remodeling it to be her base in Europe. After Swift released "The Tortured Poets Department" last month, however, a writer for the British edition of ELLE magazine observed that Londoners had an opening "for an all-American A-lister who can slot into her place in our collective consciousness."

"We had Swift before we lost her to her record-breaking, box office-breaking Eras Tour and now, it would appear that her vacant position has been filled by Zendaya," writer Naomi May playfully posited before listing the various locations the American actor had been spotted with her longtime boyfriend, British actor Tom Holland.

Either way, the capital is putting on quite a show of its own to make sure Swift and her fans feel appreciated. Guides are offering walking, bus and taxi tours that retrace her footsteps, including a kebab shop whose owner says his establishment is supplying sandwiches for the singer and her crew on Friday.

Before the end of August, Swifties can partake in a full diet of Swift-themed brunches and dance parties, or ride the London Eye Ferris wheel accompanied by a string quartet playing her music. Souvenir stalls in Camden Market, one of the places mentioned in "London Boy," stocked up on Swift-specific caps, T-shirts, bags and stickers in preparation.

Music

## Variety

Features

ARABO TIMES

MONDAY, JUNE 24, 2024



This image released by Searchlight Pictures shows Jesse Plemons in a scene from 'Kinds of Kindness.' (AP)

## Film

Lanthimos' 'Kinds of Kindness' is infuriatingly opaque

# Emma Stone forays into fearlessness

By Jocelyn Noveck

If our world should one day cease to exist, and some improved civilization from another galaxy stumbles upon our popular culture and seeks to understand all the fuss about Emma Stone - well, we now have the film clip they should see.

She's not even speaking, so translating Earth language won't be an issue. She's simply dancing. It's toward the end of her latest collab with Yorgos Lanthimos, the challenging, intriguing, perplexing-if-not-downright-infuriatingly-opaque "Kinds of Kindness." Stone is doing an improvised victory dance, and it's glorious. What's clear is that the Stone-Lanthimos pairing, in their third feature together, is continuing to nurture an aspect of Stone's talents that increasingly sets her apart: Her fearlessness and the obvious joy she derives from it.

Then again, it's possible we especially love this scene because by now we're parched - thirst is actually a theme of the film, but let's forget that for a second - for a wee bit of joy. There's barely an ounce of it in "Kinds of Kindness," nor is there much beauty (unlike the gorgeous period romps many know Lanthimos best for, "The Favourite" and last year's sumptuous "Poor Things.") Nor is there any recognizable kindness to speak of - "recognizable" being the operative word here. Which might be the point of the title. Or not.

So what is "Kinds of Kindness"? OK, here goes. Lanthimos, working for a fifth time with screenwriter Efthimis Filippou ("The Lobster"), has created a triptych - three mini-films with the same cast. A solidifying troupe of Lanthimos regulars appears, with Willem Dafoe, one of the most distinctive actors in the universe, rejoining Stone's Bella from "Poor Things," joined now by a terrific Jesse Plemons, who won the best actor prize at Cannes, as well as Hong Chau, Margaret Qualley, Mamoudou Athie and Joe Alwyn.

These three segments, which together run close to three hours, are separate stories with different characters, and an overarching theme that can best be ex-

plained by parsing the lyrics of a Eurythmics song.

"Sweet dreams are made of this," goes the iconic song, with which Lanthimos begins his movie. Then, more importantly: "Some of them want to use you. Some of them want to get used by you. Some of them want to abuse you. Some of them want to be abused." Yup, all these things happen in "Kinds of Kindness," a meditation on our free will and the ways we willingly forfeit it to others - in the workplace, at home, and in religion. For all these characters, something about being subjugated by someone else provides a perverse sense of comfort.

In the first segment - easily the tightest, most entertaining and impactful - our protagonist, Robert (Plemons), works for some sort of shady business run by Raymond (Dafoe), who controls everything Robert does.

## Voyage

And we do mean everything. What he eats, drinks, wears, where he lives with his wife - also hand-chosen for him - even what time they get intimate, and whether they procreate. Raymond decides it all, and that's fine with Robert - it even gets him cool gifts, like a smashed John McEnroe racket - until he's asked to basically commit manslaughter.

He underperforms and is fired. Then, he becomes obsessed with getting back into his boss' good graces, whatever it takes.

Stone appears 40 minutes into the movie, a cog in the same wheel. But she takes center stage in the next installment, as Liz, beloved wife of Daniel, a suburban cop (Plemons, with shorter and lighter hair). Liz, a scientist, has vanished during a sea voyage - she's "traveled the world and the seven seas," to continue with the Eurythmics lyrics.

Finally she's rescued, and returns home to her loving husband. Loving, that is, until Daniel starts suspecting she's not really Liz (she may also be a cannibal). She sure looks like Liz, but her shoes don't fit. Also, she likes chocolate now and can't remember Daniel's favorite song. So, he starts testing her, ask-

ing her to do awful things. And for some reason, she does.

We won't spoil any of the mini-endings, though you may find they're not really endings anyway. (If the lack of clarity in this review is annoying you, well, welcome to this movie? Should that have been an exclamation point? We're suddenly feeling insecure even about punctuation.) But the "whoa, what?" feeling you may have at the end of the second part can't fester, because soon we're in a cult, where the only liquid members can drink is sanctified by the tears of creepy leader Omi (Dafoe, who else?) and wife Aka (Chau.)

Stone and Plemons reunite here as cult members tasked with finding a woman, out there somewhere, who's able to raise the dead. For this holy search for a spiritual leader, Emily (is this a nod to Stone's real name?) has left a husband (Alwyn) and young daughter behind. She drives a purple sports car with increasing abandon (speaking of fearless, Stone has said she did much of her stunt driving). But she, too, messes up, and is left begging to be allowed back in.

Will she find what she is looking for? Well, that depends on whether she knows what it is. Characters here actually seem to find what they think they seek - but it leads them, of course, down dark paths. But hey, everybody's lookin' for something, the song tells us. Not to be trite, but who are we to disagree?

In any case, seeking a neat conceptual bow to wrap this all up - as in Bella's satisfying empowerment in "Poor Things" - will lead nowhere. So maybe the best lyric we can take from the Eurythmics is the simplest one of all:

"Keep your head up. Movin' on."

"Kinds of Kindness," a Searchlight Pictures released in theaters Friday, has been rated R by the Motion Picture Association "for strong/disturbing violent content, strong sexual content, full nudity and language." Running time: 144 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four. (AP)

**DUBAI, United Arab Emirates:** Iran's Supreme Court overturned the death sentence of a government critic and a popular hip-hop artist, **Toomaj Salehi** - who came to fame over his lyrics about the death in police custody of **Mahsa Amini** in 2022 - his lawyer **Amir Raisian** said Saturday.

In a post on social media platform X, Raisian said that the court assessed the case and found Salehi's past six years in prison as "excessive" since the punishment was more than what was allowed by law. He added that another branch of the court will now review the case.

Salehi's death sentence in April by a Revolutionary Court in the central city of **Isfahan** created confusion as even Iran's state-run IRNA news agency and the judiciary did not formally confirm it. Such courts in Iran often involve closed-door hearings with evidence produced secretary and give limited rights to those on trial.

The news quickly drew international criticism from the **United States** and **United Nations** experts, who condemned it as a sign of Tehran's continuing crackdown against all dissent following years of mass protests.

Salehi was released from prison last November after spending a year there on charges that his supporters said were based on the hip-hop artist's music and participation in the protests that broke out in Iran over the death of Mahsa Amini, 22. Amini died in the custody of the country's morality police after being detained for wearing her hijab too loosely.

Salehi rapped about Amini in one video, saying: "Someone's crime was dancing with her hair in the wind." In another verse, he predicts the downfall of Iran's theocracy.

Shortly after his release last year, Salehi was sent to prison again after saying in a video message that he was tortured after his detention in October 2022. State media at the time released a video showing him blindfolded and apologizing for his words, a statement likely to have been made under duress. Later in 2023, a court sentenced Salehi to more than six years in prison. (AP)

**MIAMI BEACH, Fla.:** Rapper **Travis Scott** was arrested in Miami Beach early Thursday on misdemeanor charges of trespassing and public intoxication after officers say they found him at the city's marina shouting obscenities at people on a yacht and disobeyed their order to leave.

Officers went to the marina



Scott



Salehi

shortly before 1 a.m. after receiving a call about people fighting on a yacht, according to a police report.

When they arrived, they found Scott, 33, standing on the dock yelling at people on the ship, the report says. Officers told him to sit down, but he kept standing back up and yelling. They could smell

alcohol on his breath, the report says.

The man who called police did not want to press charges, so Scott was allowed to leave.

As he walked away, however, Scott kept turning to yell obscenities at people on the yacht. He left as a passenger in a waiting car, but returned five minutes later and

ignored officers' orders to again leave, the report says.

Officers say he then began yelling again, disturbing people in nearby boats and buildings. When officers asked if he had been drinking, he replied, "It's Miami." He was arrested. Scott was released from Miami-Dade County Jail before noon after posting a \$650 bond. (AP)

People & Places

# PARIS

a guy thing



Hermes



Hermes



Hermes



Hermes

Subdued collection

## Van Noten bids adieu with fabrics, fantasy

PARIS, June 23, (AP) — The curtain fell and the disco ball was raised celebrating 38 years and 150 collections of Dries Van Noten, who staged his final fashion show Saturday at Paris Fashion Week. The Belgian fashion maestro, a member of the influential "Antwerp Six" known for his innovative and unexpected elegance, announced his retirement in March of this year.

Meanwhile, golden feathers cascaded down models' concealed faces at Loewe for a show that evoked myths and sartorial whimsy. It set the stage for a more subdued collection this season from Northern Irish designer Jonathan Anderson — but one which continued to blend fantasy with high fashion. Here are some highlights of Saturday's spring 2025 menswear shows:

His departure marks the end of an era. To the sound of Donna Summer's "I Feel Love," Dries Van Noten took his final curtain call at a warehouse in northern Paris in front of an 8-meter-high disco ball, at the helm of a bedazzling silver runway that had just acted as the stage of his swan song — his 150th show.

Van Noten is one of the famed "Antwerp Six" designers, including Ann Demeulemeester, who all trained at Antwerp's Royal Academy of Fine Arts in the early '80s, and had an important impact on global fashion. His career, which has spanned five decades since his first menswear line in 1986, has been marked by a fusion of familiar and unfamiliar elements, creating a sense of surprise and poetry in his collections. He is revered across the fashion industry for his unique aesthetic.

It's no wonder the great and the good of fashion, including Diane von Fürstenberg, Thom Browne, and Pierpaolo Piccioli, attended the event to celebrate his career.

The Saturday night collection gleamed. It was a varied display playing loosely on the theme of wrapping up or exposing. Known for his innovative use of fabrics and textures, Van Noten showcased plenty of disco-ready sheen and shimmer.

It was all about the fabrics. He employed semi-sheer crinkled polyamide resembling glass and "one-sided foils that shift, liquid-like, between silver and gold." This inventive fabric manipulation resulted in a spring show that balanced fun and somber styles — as wisps of the fragile silver foil runway floated up in the air, almost weightlessly.

Patterns

Van Noten also incorporated a traditional Japanese marbling technique called suminagashi, dating back 1,000 years. This method involves floating ink on water and then transferring it to material, creating unique, organic patterns. Here, foliage and flower prints evoked fireworks bursting against the night sky.

Throughout his career, Van Noten has been celebrated for riffing on historical and subcultural references. This final show was no exception, seamlessly integrating disco influences with his unique take on modern gender-fluid masculinity. A sheer, almost-seedy pink trench caught the slight silhouette of the male model's bare arm in a subtle peek-a-boo trick.

Van Noten's mastery of unexpected color combinations was also on display, including saturated mixes like a combination of pink, with green and deep burgundy. His ability to juxtapose formal and casual wear — like pairing elongated double-breasted suits with playful, shimmering pieces — highlighted his signature style.

As the 66-year-old takes his final bow, the fashion world reflects on the legacy of a designer who continually pushed boundaries, redefined elegance, and brought a distinctive Belgian touch to the global stage.

# Style



Hermes



Hermes



Hermes



Hermes

Fashion

side of Mexico's capital lights up with the multicolored glow of lightsabers, as a man slashing a white luminescent sword through the air shouts: "Check the defense!"

Onlookers watch curiously and a dog-walker asks about the duel, which breaks out four nights a week. The Jedi Knight Academy, founded in 2019, is a light-saber combat and choreography school in Mexico City and a dream come true for fans of the Star Wars franchise.

"When students arrive some of them drop the saber. They don't know how to handle it properly, and with the passing of time you see them grow," said instructor **Ulises Vázquez**, also known as the Jedi master. "Today they are youngsters who became excellent athletes and excellent lightsaber fight-

ers and fencers." During daily three-hour sessions, fans of the **George Lucas** saga can learn how to perform lightsaber combat in true **Luke Skywalker**-style.

Based on **Jedi and Sith** teachings — initially based on ancient sword-fighting techniques — these duels and choreographies between Jedi are not only fun and spectacular to watch, but also a complex discipline that integrates elements of martial arts like kendo, aikido and tai chi.

Classes usually start with meditation and a warmup. Instructors then show students different exercises, which they perform again and again as they strive for perfection. Some later duel with protective equipment that looks like a galactic fencing uniform. Their sabers are made of ballistic-grade polycarbonate and illuminated from within in a rainbow of colors. (AP)

**GENEVA:** A Swiss museum on Thursday pulled down five paintings, including a van Gogh and a Monet, after the foundation that owns them called for a deeper look at their origins following new US guidelines on how to handle artworks once confiscated by the Nazis.

The Foundation E.G. Bührle Collection, which owns the works formerly shown at the Kunsthaus Zürich museum, said it was looking to reach a "fair and equitable solution" with the legal successors of the former owners, who were not identified.

The foundation's board called for a new assessment of the works under new "Best Practices" published by the US State Department in March on how to deal with Nazi-confiscated art, as an upgrade to principles adopted in 1998.

"This is an important step in implementing the new Best Practices, now endorsed by 24 countries, including Switzerland," Stuart Eizenstat, US Secretary of State **Antony Blinken's** special adviser on Holocaust issues and a key architect of the principles, said in an email.

The works include the oil paintings "Jardin de Monet à Giverny" by **Claude Monet** from 1895, and "Der alte Turm" by **Vincent van Gogh**, of 1884. The other three are 19th-century works by French painters **Gustave Courbet**, **Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec** and **Paul Gauguin**.

A sixth painting, **Edouard Manet's** "La Sultane," was also considered as "a case deserving particular attention," the foundation said in a statement last Friday. (AP)



Xi



Lucas

**MEXICO CITY:** A park on the south

Variety

**DUSHANBE:** A readers' seminar on the book "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China" was successfully held here in the capital of **Tajikistan** on Saturday.

More than 150 representatives across various sectors of **China** and Tajikistan, including politics, academia, and publish-

ing, attended the event.

The attendees believe that the book deeply explains the meaning and development context of **Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era**, and concentrates on President Xi's in-depth thinking on China's national governance and global governance issues.

The publication of the Tajik version of the book provides an authoritative reading material for Tajik readers

to understand China in the new era and Chinese modernization, said the attendees.

Under the leadership of President Xi, China's successful experience and remarkable achievements in governance have provided valuable references for developing countries, the participants said.

China upholds the common values of humanity, including peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy,

and freedom, playing an active role in building a community with a shared future for mankind, implementing the three major global initiatives, jointly building the Belt and Road, fostering exchanges between Eastern and Western civilizations, and promoting global prosperity and stability, they added. (Xinhua)









Turkey's goalkeeper Altay Bayindir makes a save during a Group F match between Turkey and Portugal at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Dortmund, Germany. (AP)

# Sports

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Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah highlights Kuwait's commitment to sports

## Al-Shemlan wins bronze as Asian Fencing Championship kicks off

KUWAIT CITY, June 23, (Agencies): The Asian Fencing Tournament kicked off in Kuwait, featuring up to 350 champions representing 36 countries. The inauguration was attended by the Minister of Social Affairs, Family Affairs, and Childhood, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah, head of the Asian Fencing Confederation Sheikh Salem Al-Qasimi, and the head of the Kuwaiti Olympic Committee, Sheikh Fahad Al-Nasser Al-Sabah.

In his keynote statement at the inauguration ceremony, Abdulkarim Al-Shamlan, head of the Kuwait Fencing Federation, emphasized Kuwait's long-standing tradition of hosting international sports events.

In the first competition, Korean fencer Oh Sang-uk won the gold medal in the saber category, defeating China's Changping, who secured the silver. Kuwaiti Yusuf Al-Shemlan and Iranian Mohammad Rahbari each took bronze.

In the epee category, China's Yu Sihang claimed the gold trophy, overcoming her compatriot Sun Yiwen, who took silver. South Koreans Kang Young-mi and Song Se-ra each earned a bronze medal.

Al-Huwailah, highlighted Kuwait's efforts in organizing and hosting the tournament, in line with the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-

### FENCING

Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah a patron of sports and athletes. She added that this initiative is also under the guidance of His Highness the faithful Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and closely followed by His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Al-Abdullah, the Prime Minister, to support and care for the youth and athletes of both genders.

## Portugal book spot in round of 16 as Belgium get campaign on track

Al-Huwailah emphasized that the political leadership believes that the advancement of nations is now measured by excellence in fields related to human capital development, particularly focusing on youth, with sports being a key area. She noted that this tournament stands out, attracting significant attention from the sports media across Asia, and raises its technical level as it is the final championship on the continent before the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. Al-Huwailah welcomed the guests, wishing all participat-

ing teams' success and a pleasant stay in Kuwait, their second home.

Abdul Karim Al-Shamlan, President of the Kuwaiti Fencing Association, confirmed Kuwait's role as a hub for sports gatherings, fostering a spirit of sportsmanship and communication among global communities. He expressed his hopes for the success of all participants, noting that the results of the Asian Championship will impact the Olympic classification of the players. Al-Shamlan highlighted the championship's competitive nature and its importance to the teams involved.

Lots of selfie-seekers for Ronaldo

**DORTMUND, Germany, June 23, (AP):** By the end, it was hard to know what Cristiano Ronaldo was more frustrated about.

Failing to score for the second straight game at the European Championship or having to fend off repeated attempts for selfies by his adoring fans.

In what proved to be a wild and potentially dangerous match for the five-time world player of the year, Ronaldo had no goals, one assist and no less than four selfie-seeking field invaders for company in Portugal's chaotic 3-0 win over Turkey that secured his team a spot in Euro 2024's round of 16.

Ronaldo, one of the world's most popular and well-known sport stars, was the center of attention as always at Westfalenstadion.

Just not how he might have expected.

"That's the price you pay for being so recognized in the world of football," said Bernardo Silva, Ronaldo's Portugal teammate.

Making a record 27th appearance at the Euros, Ronaldo did get his first goal involvement of this tournament when he set up the third by Bruno Fernandes in the 55th minute with an unselfish pass across the face of the six-yard box after being played clean through.

### SOCCER

Ronaldo, the most prolific scorer ever in men's international soccer with 130 goals, rarely passes up such opportunities to add to his remarkable tally.

Perhaps he just wanted another record. This was his eighth assist at a European Championship, more than anyone else.

"It was a pure moment of Portuguese football," Portugal coach Roberto Martinez said in praise of Ronaldo, his captain. "It should be shown in every academy in Portugal and world football, because it showed that the team is the most important thing."

Then things got a bit silly - and potentially unsafe - for the former Real Madrid, Manchester United and Juventus striker.

Ronaldo was fine posing for a photograph with a young boy who evaded stewards to get on the field in the 69th minute and whipped out his cell phone. That fan sprinted off before finally being grabbed and escorted away by security.

However, Ronaldo certainly wasn't amused when two other fans with phones at the ready tried the same trick in the final few minutes of a game that flew out of control. He threw his arms up in disgust the first time and appeared to actively try to avoid the next one as he defended a corner.

It wasn't clear if those fans got their wish before being taken away.

After the final whistle, there were more security breaches as a fan wearing a red Portugal jersey attempted to get close to Ronaldo while holding a phone. He was soon tackled to the ground. Then two more supporters were prevented from confronting Ronaldo as Portugal's players walked off the field, having just come from saluting their law-abiding fans in the stands.

"It's a concern," Martinez said, "because today we were lucky that the intentions of the fans were good."

"If those intentions are wrong, the players are exposed. I don't think that should happen on a football pitch."

Ronaldo missed out on a chance to score a record-extending 15th European Championship goal against a Turkey team that was its own worst enemy at times.

Not least in the 28th minute when, trailing 1-0 to Silva's strike seven minutes earlier, Turkey center back Samet Akaydin delivered a back-pass that rolled to the side of his goalkeeper and straight into the net. Remarkably, it was a sixth own-goal already at these Euros - and certainly the most embarrassing, with Akaydin later being taken off injured to complete a miserable evening for the defender.

Portugal backed up its opening 2-1 victory over the Czech Republic and has qualified with a game to spare from Group F, guaranteeing a last-16 match in Frankfurt on July 1. Martinez may choose to rest Ronaldo and more of his



A young pitch invader takes a selfie with Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo during a Group F match between Turkey and Portugal at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Dortmund, Germany. (AP)



Belgium's Kevin De Bruyne, (front), vies for the ball with Romania's Marius Marin during a Group E match between Belgium and Romania at the Euro 2024 soccer tournament in Cologne, Germany. (AP)



Abdul Karim Al-Shamlan celebrates with bronze medalist Yusuf Al-Shemlan on the podium.

Three referees travel to Saudi Arabia

## Kuwait U-20 team wraps up training ahead of Championship

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, June 23: The Kuwait under-20 youth football team will participate in its final training session before competing in the West Asian Championship, which begins tomorrow in Taif, Saudi Arabia, and continues until July 5. The team will open the tournament by facing Oman tomorrow as part of Group 1, which also includes host Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

The team prepared for the West Asian Championship through an external camp in Cairo, Egypt, where it played a test match against the Egyptian youth team, which ended in a 0-4 defeat.

Croatian coach Dario is set

### SOCCER

to exclude five players from the current squad of 28, finalizing a roster of 23 players for the West Asian Championship.

Vice President of the Football Association, Haif Al-Mutairi, stated after the match that trial matches offer an opportunity to exchange experiences and develop skills among players, especially before the start of international and Arab tournaments. He praised the spirit of the youth team players and encouraged them to avoid mistakes in friendly matches and perform well in regional and international competitions to achieve favorable results and rankings for the Kuwaiti fans.

## Max holds off Norris to win Spanish GP

MONTMELÓ, Spain, June 23, (AP): Max Verstappen steered his Red Bull to victory at the Spanish Grand Prix on Sunday to increase his lead in the

Formula 1 drivers championship.

Verstappen started from second on the grid behind pole-sitter Lando Norris. But the three-time champion



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands leads the group during the first laps of the Formula 1 Spanish Grand Prix at the Barcelona Catalunya racetrack in Montmelo, near Barcelona, Spain. (AP)

whipped past the McLaren driver by the first turn and then overtook George Russell on lap three of 66 and never looked back.

Norris tried to mount a late challenge but Verstappen upped the pace to cross first. Norris was second, followed by Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes in third.

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Verstappen said that his moves to get past Norris and Russell so early proved crucial so he could build an advantage and keep the hard-charging Norris at bay.

"I think what made the difference in the race was the beginning," Verstappen said. "I took the lead and had my buffer. After that we had to drive a defensive race."

After the conclusion of the West Asian Championship, the national youth team will return to Kuwait for local training before leaving on July 17 for an external camp in Serbia, which will



A Kuwaiti dribbles past an opponent during Kuwait, Egypt friendly game.

continue until August 6. During this camp, it will prepare for the Asian Cup qualifiers, which will be hosted by Kuwait in September. The national youth football team will compete in Group 3 alongside South Korea, the UAE, Lebanon, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

Following the Serbia camp, the team will participate in a four-team friendly tournament in Azerbaijan over two weeks, before returning to Kuwait to hold two trial matches.

Meanwhile, referees Hashem Al-Ibrahim and Abdullah Al-Kandari, along with assistant referee Abdul-Rahman Al-Kandari, traveled to Taif, Saudi Arabia to officiate the West Asian Youth Championship matches.