



'Kuwait symbol of humanity ... wisdom'

Amir receives UN Sec-Gen Guterres

KUWAIT CITY, May 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Sunday at Bayan Palace United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on his visit to the country.

During the meeting, His Highness the Amir welcomed the UN Chief to Kuwait, thanking him for his support and cooperation.

His Highness the Amir presented Guterres with the Order of Kuwait – Riband of the Special Class, for his political efforts and significant services.

His Highness the Amir also assured Guterres that the State of Kuwait would always support humanitarian work.

On his part, the UN Chief said, "Kuwait is a symbol of humanity, wisdom and generosity."

He also thanked His Highness the Amir for the special order.

"I would like to receive it on behalf of the United Nations, and in particular, on behalf of the nearly 200 members of the UN who were killed in Gaza. I would like to express my deep gratitude for Kuwait's enduring commitment to peace, he added.

"I will never forget when I was UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and I was desperate at not being able to find support for Syrian refugees at that time. His Highness the late Amir of Kuwait,

Continued on Page 5



Amiri Diwan photo
His Highness the Amir presents Guterres with the Order of Kuwait.

HH Amir to grace opening of University City Monday

KUWAIT CITY, May 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will patronize and attend on Monday the opening of the Abdullah Al-Salem University City opening.

Continued on Page 5

Amir hosts PM-designate

KUWAIT CITY, May 12, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Sunday at Bayan Palace Prime Minister-designate Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Detentions, arrests for defaming Kuwait Amir

Citizen referred to Central Prison

By Jaber Al-Hamoud
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: The Public Prosecution has ordered the provisional detention of a citizen for 21 days and referred him to the

Central Prison.

The prosecution also decided to detain a former lawmaker on Sunday to complete investigation, and ordered the arrest of several others.

The defendants had published statements on their personal

Continued on Page 5

Newswatch

Official talks with HH the Amir set

Sultan of Oman to visit Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY: Secretary General of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) **Jamal Al-Loughani** affirmed on Sunday the importance of the oil and gas sectors in the process of finding solutions to environmental issues and climate change.

This came in a statement to KUNA by Al-Loughani during a training workshop on climate change, by OAPEC in cooperation with the UN's Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for diplomats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Al-Loughani added that OAPEC continued making efforts with member states, other Arab countries, as well as regional and international organizations in order to unify visions on environmental issues and climate change. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY, May 12, (KUNA): The Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq and the accompanying delegation will arrive to the State of Kuwait, Monday, on a state visit where he would hold official round of talks with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Oman's Ambassador to Kuwait Dr. Saleh Al-Kharousi said the visit of Sultan Haitham bin Tariq to Kuwait stressed the deep-rooted bonds and close collaboration between the wise leaderships of the two countries.

Speaking to KUNA in a statement, Al-Kharousi added the visit would lead to positive results for the two countries' peoples in all fields.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's visit to the Sultanate of Oman in February had key outcomes, as it was the first visit of His Highness the Amir to Oman since he came to office, the ambassador noted.

His Highness the Amir's visit came to materialize the strong desire and keenness between the two countries' leaderships to support their relations based on deep-

rooted and commonality, he said.

Al-Kharousi pointed to the directives of the two leaderships for high-level direct coordination between the two sides in multiple fields.

He pointed out that a mechanism for direct bilateral relations has been set that includes high-profile meetings, as Sultan Haitham will pay his first visit to Kuwait.

Relations between Oman and Kuwait are an international and regional model, and their cooperation is distinguished, he said, referring to common historic, social heritage, and clear political positions towards several international and regional issues.

These ties are an extension of close relations between the two leaderships of the two countries led by Sultan Haitham and His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the diplomat noted.

He pointed to the mutual meetings between the two countries' leaderships and officials that led to several achievements which serve the interest of Omanis and Kuwaitis.

Continued on Page 5

Opinion

Welcome to Oman's bright future

By Ahmed Al-Jarallah
Editor-in-Chief, the Arab Times

THE hearts of Kuwaitis are full of affection for Oman due to the fact that the relationship between these two nations is ancient, with all the meanings of true brotherhood.

For this reason, the visit of its supreme leader, Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, to his brother, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, on Monday comes within a long

history of fraternal relations between the two nations and their people.

If Kuwait is a country of humanity that has opened its heart and arms to everyone, then Oman is a country of brotherhood that preserves mutual support and

Continued on Page 5

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Al-Jarallah

Welcome to Kuwait



Kuwait extends its heartfelt greetings to
His Majesty Sultan
Haitham bin Tariq, the Sultan of Oman.



Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:29	Asr	15:20
Sunrise ..	04:58	Maghrib ..	18:31
Zohr	11:44	Isha	19:57

Local

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

Weather

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Hot and partly cloudy to cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times southerly wind to southeasterly wind, with speeds of 15-55 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery and a chance for rising

dust.

By Night: Mild, relatively humid especially over coastal areas and partly cloudy with light variable wind to light to moderate northeasterly wind, with speeds of 10-32 km/h with a chance for scattered rain.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	40	30
Kuwait Airport	42	27
Abdaly	42	26
Jahra	43	28
Salmiyah	39	28
Nuwaisib	39	26
Wafra	42	28

Kuwait takes part in Bahrain meeting

'Current global challenges need joint efforts to boost Arab-Arab cohesion'

MANAMA, May 12, (KUNA): Bahraini Minister of Finance and National Economy Minister Sheikh Salman bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa stated on Sunday that current global challenges require joint efforts to enhance economic and social integration in the region.

This came in a speech by Sheikh Salman bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa during his chairmanship of the opening of the preparatory meetings of the Arab League's Economic and Social Council for the 33rd Arab Summit, which will be held in Bahrain next Thursday.

The Bahraini Finance Minister praised the efforts of Saudi Arabia during its chairmanship of the previous session of the council and expressed his gratitude to the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States (LAS), Ahmad Aboul Gheit, and all the members of the General Secretariat for their efforts in preparing for the meeting.

He said that Bahrain's hosting of this meeting comes as an affirmation of the support and follow-up of the Bahraini Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, and everything that would enhance Arab solidarity and the process of construction and development to achieve a prosperous and sustainable future for Arab countries.

He emphasized that the current challenges require joint efforts to enhance

economic and social integration in the region through supporting infrastructure, transportation, energy, and food security projects that enhance our economic capabilities.

Sheikh Salman Al-Khalifa was confident that cooperation and enhancement of economic and social integration will achieve the aspirations of future generations towards prosperity and development.

He added that based on Bahrain's steadfast support for important issues regarding Arab countries, Bahrain underlined the urgent and immediate need for intervention to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza and the prevention of military expansion operations in order to preserve regional security, peace and stability.

He emphasized the importance of working with other Arab countries and international financial institutions and specialized organizations to overcome the humanitarian situation in Palestine and support peace in the Middle East by granting the Palestinian people their legitimate rights.

Kuwait participated in the meeting with a delegation headed by Kuwait's Ambassador to Bahrain, Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Preparatory meetings for the 33rd session of the Council of the League of Arab States scheduled to be held next Thursday began on Saturday in Bahrain.

Kuwait participated in yesterday's meeting with a delegation led by Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the League of Arab States, Ambassador Talal Khalid Al-Mutairi.



PM Diwan photo
Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah welcomes the UN chief Antonio Guterres.



PM Diwan photo
Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah holds talks with the UN chief Antonio Guterres.

PM-designate receives UN's Guterres

Prime Minister-designate Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Sunday at Bayan Palace United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, and accompa-

nying delegation on occasion of visit to the country.

The meeting, also attended by Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya, handled dis-

cussion on cooperation between Kuwait and the UN as well as regional and international developments and efforts boosting peace and security both regionally and globally. (KUNA)

'Deterrent sword in challenges'

Army chief visits 'Mechanized Brigade'

KUWAIT CITY, May 12, (KUNA): Chief of Staff of Kuwait's Armed Forces Air Marshal Bandar Al-Muzain said on Saturday that the Kuwaiti army is the country's "impenetrable defense and deterrent sword" against internal and external challenges.

Al-Muzain made the remarks while touring the 94th Saleh Al-Mohammad Mechanized Brigade, the Army General Staff said in a press release.

During the tour, the army chief listened to a briefing about tasks and duties carried out as part of the brigade's training plans and programs, along with existing cooperation and coordination with other military sectors.

Al-Muzain appreciated the high efficiency, capability and preparedness of the 94th Saleh Al-Mohammad Mechanized Brigade's staff, according to the release.

Cyber security

A delegation of the State of Kuwait discussed at a UN round table prospects of enhancing capacities in the realm of security technology and communication and strengthening cyber security. The Kuwaiti delegation, headed by President of the National Cyber Security Center Mohammad Boakri, took part in the high-level meetings during which the officials discussed with peers from other nations optimum means for enhancing cyber security and stimulating the international community to exert greater efforts at this level.

Boakri, during the round table talks at the UN headquarters, touched on governance and challenges facing the efforts to solidify cyber security in the State of Kuwait. The Kuwaiti delegation included the Deputy Foreign Minister for International Organizations Affairs Mohammad Al-Amiri and the Director of Information Technology at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Al-Qadiri.

Strong partnerships

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya said Kuwait strongly appreciates its partnerships with neighboring and friendly countries, as part of the country's stable policies towards regional and international events.

In a statement to KUNA to Saturday, minister Al-Yahya noted that Kuwait is exerting great efforts to enhance its regional and leadership role in key issues.

The recent visits of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to friendly countries is part of Kuwait's deep historic ties with its partners, said the minister.

He added that His Highness' visits included talks on key regional and international political topics, mainly the situation in Gaza. During the visits, His Highness Sheikh Meshal also signed several agreements and memorandums of understanding, related to economy and investment, Al-Yahya said.

Ramifications of Palestine crisis

Socioeconomic ramifications of Israeli aggression on Palestine and joint Arab developmental work were discussed during the preparatory socioeconomic council ministerial meeting for the 33rd Arab Summit in Manama. The meeting, taking place on Sunday, was chaired by Bahraini Minister of Finance Sheikh Salman bin Khalifa and attended by Kuwaiti delegation headed by Ambassador to Bahrain Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Sabah and Arab League Secretary General Ahmad Abulghait.

The Ministers discussed agenda submitted by the high officials meeting that was held yesterday Saturday.

On the agenda is a host of proposed topics including: Developments on the Arab Free Trade Area, Arab customs union, youth and peace strategy as well as technical training and education strategy, water security and Arab tourism.

Project on new social contract; dialogue towards safe fair and sustainable future, mechanisms connecting social development establishment to League, and suggestion put for by League's secretariat on Arab vision 2045, are all tabled topics.

Several issues have been proposed by Gulf States including Saudi topics on health sector and cyber security, Bahrain memorandum on financial technology and digitalization, and UAE women economic empowerment suggestion.

Other Voices

Time to clip wings of 'chaos'

By Ahmad alsarraf

What His Highness the Amir did, had to be done after some people went too far and the political game became boring and tiring, and dangerous for the stability of the nation, and even to its very existence, after street groups took control and imposed their bad parliamentary choices on us. Minutes after their victory was announced, they challenged everyone, without exception, until it became important for leaders to take action to address these challenges and ensure that the democratic process is respected and upheld. It's also crucial for political representatives to act responsibly and in the best interests of the people they serve, rather than pursuing personal gain or acting recklessly.

We were, and still are, confident in the validity of the option of democratic rule, but the actions, words, and statements of a significant number of representatives demonstrated the extent of the recklessness that we would see, the amount of deception that they would follow, and the extent of the assault that they would reach on the symbols of the state and its stability. They are the ones against whom there are suspicions. All of this is in implementation of the desires of those who move them and aspire to what they are not qualified for, neither practically, nor morally or administratively.

Finding a balance between democratic governance and stability can be challenging, but it's essential for the well-being of the country and its citizens. The recent election results and the behavior of certain political actors made everyone loyal to this country feel frightened. It was necessary to stop the danger with historic decisions that serve the public interest, by amending articles in the state's constitution for the good of the nation.

It was impossible to hand over the issue of this amendment and revision to a group led by their personal interests; or those subject to the pressures of the tribe and sect, and the pressures of the "parties" that contributed, materially and morally, to electing them to parliament, and guiding them to achieve their political goals, and on top of that, they are guided by their previous grudges, their previous history, and the way in

which they became citizens, and subsequently legislators, with no other concern than 'either you listen to us and fulfill our demands, or we will put brakes on the wheels of the ruling vehicle' thus obstructing the interests of citizens, paralyzing ministerial decisions, and turning the situation into an unbearable hell.

In such situations, it became necessary for the leadership to take bold steps, including constitutional amendments, to safeguard the public interest and maintain the security and stability of the homeland. While respecting democratic principles, it's crucial for leaders to prioritize the supreme interest of the nation above all else and to prevent destructive elements from obstructing progress and harming the interests of citizens.

Many people, including those who are classified as political and financial analysts, and also some who like to be called intellectuals, promote that the issues that are awaiting decision and decision-making, whether they are economic, social, financial, or urgent administrative appointments, which must have priority over other matters and issues, specifically opening files of forgers and citizenship issues.

This is a flawed and dangerous statement. The majority of those who would be responsible for making reform decisions and issuing legislation in the future are complaining of bad conduct and suspicions of tampering with their identity files, the identity of their relatives, and the national identity as a whole. So how is it permissible to assign these people a role in reforming the state's situation, and a role in making the most dangerous other decisions?

We all hope that the demands of those who are zealous of the interests of the state will be fulfilled, and that we will see all our ambitions for enlightenment and progress become a reality on the ground. I participated in all parliamentary elections, and I was, and still am, a champion and supporter of democracy and civil and political freedoms, but the predicament that some, aspiring and saboteurs, have led us to, has pushed us to strongly welcome the new decisions.

The Constitution, after more than 60 years, was in real need of amendment, and it was impossible to put the task of amendment in the hands of someone who could not be trusted, nor in his qualifications, nor in his loyalty, nor in the truth of his affiliation!

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New MoE app to help teachers address fingerprint issue

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: In a new development, educational sector sources have announced the launch of a mobile application called, 'Wajud-Tawajud', which allows fingerprint verification.

Sources stated that the Information Systems Department has fully developed the application, which is compatible with both iOS and Android devices. They affirmed that the ministry will make the application available for verifying the attendance of 'secondary control' staff in the scientific and literary departments, as well as religious studies.

Sources elaborated that the application is installed on mobile phones and works based on geographical location coordinates. It is linked to the

fingerprint attendance system via Bluetooth; thereby, enabling control officials to monitor the attendance of employees, ensure compliance with required work hours and track absenteeism, sources explained.

Sources stressed that the new application will help address the fingerprint issue faced by teachers assigned to do 'control' work, as they often face difficulties returning to their schools to verify their exit fingerprint due to their 'control' duties.

Sources revealed the application can be used to verify teachers' fingerprints when they are assigned certain tasks, attend workshops or participate in training sessions. These situations pose obstacles to fingerprint verification, but the ap-

plication can help overcome the problem, sources added.

Meanwhile, as the end-of-year exams for middle school, grades 10 and 11 students are scheduled to begin next Wednesday, the Ministry of Education's competent authorities are still holding meetings to address preparations for the high school exams, reports Al-Jarida daily quoting senior educational sources.

Sources informed the daily that the ministry's officials took a decision to restrict the rotation of heads and members of the high school exam monitoring committees within their respective educational districts. They explained that external rotation was deemed unnecessary and caused confusion, indicating

that implementing regional rotation during final exams is challenging, particularly when the schools involved are far from the committee members' original schools. This has prompted many teachers to refrain from participating in previous years, sources revealed.

Sources confirmed that acting Undersecretary of the Ministry Mansour Al-Daihani has approved the rotation lists for the monitoring committees in secondary schools, as well as the control members' committees and the correction committees in the scientific and literary departments. Sources added the decisions regarding rotation, monitoring, correction and control committees will be issued in the upcoming week.



KUNA photo
Kuwaiti Ambassador to the UK Bader Al-Awadhi during the event.

Culture bridges gaps: Al-Awadhi

Kuwaiti-hosted charity event part of 125th UK partnership 'versary

LONDON, May 12, (KUNA): Kuwait Embassy in London hosted, and patronized, late Saturday an international charity event as part of the 125th anniversary of the Kuwait-British partnership.

Mayor of Kensington Councilor Preeti Hudd, and her deputy Dori Schmetterling, Kuwait Ambassador to the United Kingdom Bader Al-Awadhi, attended the ceremony, in addition to Ambassadors and representatives of number of countries, including Mexico, Kenya, Tajikistan, Mongolia, Maldives, Pakistan, Morocco, and Algeria.

On the occasion, Ambassador Al-Awadhi expressed his pride and happiness of hosting and patronizing such sublime charitable, humanitarian, and cultural event.

In a speech delivered before the guests, Kuwait Ambassador stressed the importance of spreading the principles of understanding and dialogue between the coun-

tries of the world, considering culture as one of the important bridges promote human values worldwide.

On her part, mayor of Kensington Councilor Preeti Hudd praised such gesture form the Kuwaiti Embassy and the keenness of Kuwaiti Ambassador to attend, personally, such an event, which is considered the first of its kind to be held in the United Kingdom.

Various cultural activities were presented during the event, including displays of national traditional costumes and popular foods.

The proceeds from the ceremony and exhibition will go to charitable organizations, including the Felix Association, which is concerned with preserving food and nutritional materials and distributing them to the poor and needy. The ceremony was organized in coordination with the Young Diplomats Association in London, the International Hospitals Group, and Cleveland Specialized Hospital in London.

Workshop on cancer surgery begins

MoH staff to get 'good job' bonus

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi has authorized Undersecretary of the ministry Dr. Abdul-Rahman Al-Mutairi to disburse the 2023 excellent job performance bonus to all eligible employees, reports Al-Anba daily.

The minister has approved the following criteria for disbursing the bonus:

■ The employee must have served for a minimum of one calendar year – from Jan 1, 2023 to Dec 31, 2023 – within the ministry.

■ The employee must hold a position under the general salary scale or appointed to a salary level.

■ The employee's actual working period during the calendar year must be distributed over 70 percent of the number of shift days for workers under this system or 180 actual work days for other categories.

■ The actual working period is calculated after excluding periods of interruption; such as suspension from work, secondment, missions, leaves of any kind or duration, official holidays and rest days. Sick leave during hospitalization is included.

■ The employee was not subjected to disciplinary action in 2023.

■ The employee must not have taken

more than 15 days of sick leave in 2023, excluding hospitalization.

According to the Civil Service Commission (CSC), the excellent job performance bonus for Ministry of Health employees will be as follows:

■ Doctors, consultants and department directors: KD1,500

■ Pharmacists, technicians and supervisors: KD1,300

■ Department heads and nursing staff: KD1,000

■ Employees and administrators: KD800

■ Assistant and technical assistant positions: KD400

In other news, Kuwait Cancer Control Center has announced that the 12th Colorectal Cancer Surgery Workshop started on Sunday.

The workshop, which is held in the center's Oncology Surgery Department, is under the patronage of the health minister.

It will run for five days with the participation of a select group of international doctors specializing in colorectal cancer surgeries. Oncology surgery consultant at the center Dr. Medhat Atifa said these doctors will perform several surgeries during the workshop.



Turkey's support during invasion solidified ties; 'tourists feel safe'

"His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad expressed a strong desire to visit nations that stood by Kuwait during its ordeal of Iraqi occupation. Notably, Turkey's stance, led by the then President Turgut Ozal, was pivotal," columnist **Abdul Mohsen Muhammad Al-Husseini** wrote for *Al-Anba* daily.

"President Ozal firmly aligned Turkey with the international coalition supporting Kuwait's liberation, closing oil imports from Saddam's regime and opening Turkish military bases to coalition forces.

"This strategic move marked Turkey's commitment to the coalition against Saddam's aggression.



Al-Husseini

"Subsequently, Turkish-Kuwaiti relations flourished, with Kuwait actively contributing to Turkey's economic landscape through various ventures, including the establishment of commercial banks and participation in infrastructure projects such as the construction of Kuwait Airport T2 by Limak Company.

"At a grassroots level, many Kuwaiti citizens developed a preference for Turkey as a tourist destination, with some even investing in properties across Turkish cities.

"This deepening bond between Kuwait and Turkey stems from the sense of security and hospitality Kuwaiti tourists experience during their visits.

"Against this backdrop of amicable ties, the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad to Turkey was significant, acknowledging Turkey's steadfast support during Kuwait's liberation.

"Previously, His Highness had visited other nations that played instrumental roles in Kuwait's liberation, such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

"These nations, along with the United States, Britain, France, and other coalition members, contributed significantly to Kuwait's liberation. His Highness expressed gratitude to these brotherly and friendly nations, particularly highlighting Turkey and President Turgut Ozal for their resolute stance.

"In echoing His Highness's sentiments, it is imperative to ensure that the principles upheld at Abdullah Al-Salem Hall serve as a guiding beacon for our children and future generations, providing a noble example to follow."

Also:

"It has become clear from the first day of the start of the Zionist war of annihilation on the Gaza Strip, immediately after Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, that Israel has shown determination to expand the scope of this war into a comprehensive war targeting Iran and its agents. It began directly targeting Lebanese Hezbollah sites and Revolutionary Guard targets in Syria and Iraq," columnist **Dr. Noura Saleh Al-Majim** wrote for *Al-Qabas* daily.

"The scope of Israeli targeting developed quantitatively and qualitatively, to include intensifying operations against Hezbollah, and expanding the scope of assassinations of Hezbollah and Iranian Revolutionary Guard leaders. The peak of the targeting reached the attack on the Iranian consulate in Syria, which led to the killing of about seven leaders of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard which prompted Iran to respond to Israel directly, but also in a limited manner as a warning to Israel, and to save face as well.

"The question that must be raised here: Why is Israel aggressively seeking war with Iran? Is it also seeking to implicate Washington? In fact, Israel's insistence on war with Iran, specifically after the Al-Aqsa flood, is intertwined with many considerations, all of which drive -- from the perspective of the Zionist entity -- to the inevitability of war with Iran.

"The Tel Aviv government believes that Iran was the instigator and main planner of the Al-Aqsa Flood operation, which put the Zionist entity in a state of defense for survival. Therefore, the consideration of revenge against Iran coupled with the consideration of defending survival is a strong incentive for war with Iran.

"Perhaps it is the strongest incentive, as the defeat of Iran has become synonymous with the survival and security of Israel, especially since all resistance movements surrounding Israel, which pose a constant security threat to it, are considered by Israel to be supported by Iran.

"The Israeli government also believes that the Al-Aqsa flood constituted a golden opportunity to justify war on Iran and eliminate the nightmare of its nuclear program, especially in light of the ambiguity of negotiations to revive the nuclear agreement, which allows Iran to gain time to complete the process of fully enriching uranium and possessing the nuclear bomb.

"From another angle, the war with Iran will gain more legitimacy and continuity for the Netanyahu government, which faces a terrible dilemma as a result of the defeat of the Al-Aqsa flood and the failure to free the hostages held by Hamas.

"There are several fixed facts agreed upon traditionally or historically between Israel and the United States, which is the obligation to defend Israel's security, but in the event of a serious threat to it or exposure to aggression. Hence, it is also agreed upon, even if implicitly, that Israel will not be drawn into a war or major conflict, primarily defensive or deterrent, with-

out Washington's permission. Israel must take into account Washington's interests first and foremost, if it insists on a war that is harmful to America's interests.

"But it is clear that Israel has persisted in harassing Iran, which reached the point of attacking its consulate in Syria -- which is considered a declaration of war in international law -- that Israel has determined to drag Washington into a war with Iran. Israel certainly -- and it knows this -- cannot wage war with Iran alone.

"In principle -- and this is what Israel knows with certainty -- Washington absolutely refuses to engage in a war with Iran, nor even to get involved in any major war in the world, except for the possibility of war with China as a forced option if it annexes Taiwan by force. The irony here is that Iran is also absolutely unwilling to go to war with Washington. Both parties are fully aware of the disastrous repercussions of this war.

"However, Washington now finds itself in very serious dilemmas. It has become difficult to convince Israel to stop the widespread regional escalation, including Israel's intention to storm Rafah.

"In other words, Israel, led by its far-right governments, has become outside American control in a large and unprecedented manner as well. As a result of this, tensions began two months ago between the two parties that relations had not witnessed before, as Secretary of State (Antony) Blinken visited Israel about 6 times to pressure Israel to stop the escalation. (US President Joe) Biden put pressure on Israel to be satisfied with a limited response to Iran in response to its response.

"This is in addition to the explicit and implicit threat not to support Israel in a war with Iran, and to impose sanctions on Israel if it storms Rafah, and also to impose sanctions on Jewish settlers in the West Bank.

"In conclusion, Israel is striving to involve Washington in a war with Iran, which Washington rejects in its entirety. However, it is in a severe dilemma, as Israel has involved it in this war in a reckless escalation without Washington's permission, of course, and it will be forced to defend based on its eternal commitment to defending Israel.

"In our opinion, to avoid this terrible impasse, Washington must intensify its pressure on Israel through various means, accelerate the end of the war in Gaza, open a dialogue with Iran, and intensify its military presence in the region to deter this war in the first place."

"Silence of Social Affairs ... Previously, I was surprised by the silence of the Ministry of Social Affairs regarding the violations in the Cooperatives Sector. I did not know the reason, but after attending the General Assembly of Kaifan Cooperative Society, it became clear that a huge number of ministry officials came to supplement the number of attendees, not to monitor the progress of the General Assembly!" columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"When the discussion raged between the shareholders and the Board of Directors about the dismissal of five Kuwaiti employees from the cooperative on the pretext that they reached 60 years old and that this was the instruction of the ministry, a board member submitted a request to close the discussion and the ministry's representative did not object!

"How can a member of the Board of Directors request that the discussion be closed on a report to which he is a party and the subject of disagreement between shareholders and the board?"

"What was worse was that the request was voted on even though it violates the Cooperatives Law. The ministry's representative remained silent. He neither objected nor lifted a finger. So, why was he there at all? He witnessed grave violations against the Cooperatives Law, but he did nothing. I imagine that what happened at the abovementioned General Assembly will happen to the rest of the cooperatives!

"The problem is that the government is still talking about the Kuwaitization of cooperatives to replace expatriate brothers with Kuwaitis, yet the result is that the Kuwaiti is fired and an expatriate brother is appointed in his place. The ministry is just watching. It does not even object to the attempt to 'confiscate' the opinion of the general assemblies in favor of the boards of directors!"

"When the ministry relaxes its grip and the supervision of the Cooperative Sector on the progress of cooperative societies' work is relaxed, abuses increase, especially since the cooperatives manage millions of Kuwaiti dinars. Everyone knows that the closest path to illicit wealth these days is membership to the cooperatives' boards of directors, up to the point that competition has become more intense than competing for membership in the National Assembly!"

"I wish the assistant undersecretary for cooperative affairs, undersecretary or minister would ask for the minutes of the General Assembly held recently, to know the extent of the violations and how they silence mouths, not to mention the partisan mobilization that has become the norm for passing the financial and administrative report despite the transgressions!

"In the end, we ask the minister: How could you allow your Kuwaiti brothers to be fired from their jobs and be replaced by expatriates when your government calls for the Kuwaitization of cooperatives. If you know, then this is a disaster, and if you do not know, the disaster is greater... Good."

— Compiled by PFX Fernandes



The military delegation from the National Defense University in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is pictured with officials from the Kuwait Fund for Development.

Kuwait Development Fund hosts military delegation from Pakistan

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Within the framework of continuous cooperation between local institutions, Kuwait Fund for Development recently hosted in its headquarters a military delegation from the National Defense University in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan during their academic trip to the State of Kuwait with the aim of introducing the nature of the fund's work in the development field, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

During the visit, an introductory presentation on the fund's activities was conducted. Operations Department Supervisor for Southeast Asian and Pacific Countries Affairs Yousef Al-Badr reviewed the fund's achievements since its establishment and the nature of its work, which reflects Kuwait's foreign policy on development and humanitarian aid at the regional and global levels.

On the other hand, Economic Advisor

to the fund Dr. Nasser Al-Rifai presented an explanation about the fund's policy in financing development projects in developing countries, in addition to the mechanisms followed in submitting a loan application from beneficiary countries.

Meanwhile, Head of the delegation Brigadier General Amer Shehzad expressed his happiness over this visit, which aims to discover the development potential of Kuwait by learning about the nature of the fund's work, its development activities and humanitarian work extending to all parts of the world. He also expressed his deep appreciation for the role played by the fund as a representative of Kuwait, as it is the main arm of the country's foreign policy by assisting developing countries around the world without discrimination and supporting them in improving their economies, especially the fund's activities in Pakistan.

Hi-tech asphalt layer, machines 'employed'

Jahra Road repair in full swing

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: The Public Authority for Roads and Land Transport (PART) has embarked on utilizing cutting-edge international equipment for asphalt maintenance work, including the Mobile Feeder machine, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

This advanced machinery mixes and homogenizes asphalt components before transferring them to the asphalt spreading machine, significantly enhancing the quality of asphalt layer spreading in line with global standards for road maintenance and repair operations.

Director General of the Authority, Khaled Al-Osaimi, emphasized the implementation of these innovative technologies during ongoing maintenance work along the Jahra Road towards Kuwait City. He high-

lighted the Mobile Feeder machine as a pivotal addition to their arsenal, describing it as a "mobile factory" designed to ensure the homogeneity of asphalt mixtures and ease of use in highway maintenance.

Al-Osaimi outlined the key benefits of the new equipment, emphasizing its ability to uphold the highest international specifications in terms of surface flatness, temperature maintenance of asphalt mixtures, and overall asphalt quality. Furthermore, the machine facilitates the application of asphalt through brushing it in medium and fast stages simultaneously.

The Mobile Feeder machine, commonly used in construction, mining, and other industries, serves to efficiently and smoothly feed raw materials like gravel, sand, and stones to crushing, screening, or transportation equipment. Its integration into road maintenance operations underscores the Authority's commitment to leveraging cutting-edge technologies for enhanced infrastructure development.

1,950 kg of unfit food disposed off

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: The Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) has been exerting tremendous efforts to ensure food security in all food establishments, reports *Al-Anba* daily.

Inspection teams from the authority visited food establishments in Farwaniya Governorate, where they uncovered six violations; including keeping food materials in unhealthy conditions, opening a food establishment without a health license, workers handling food without health cards and employing workers without health cards.

These violations also led to the disposal of 1,950 kilograms of food found to be unfit for human consumption.

In Hawalli Governorate, inspectors found three violations of food workers without health certificates and three violations of employing workers without health certificates.

Furthermore, two establishments were ordered to close because they opened food facilities without obtaining health licenses from the authority. These establishments were also found to be non-compliant with public hygiene rules and regulations during work.

'Syringe' teacher gets bail

Ex-MP's secretary jailed for 5 yrs in false pledges

By Jaber Al-Hamoud/Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: The Court of Cassation upheld the ruling of a lower court to imprison a female citizen who works as a secretary to a former MP for five years with hard labor and fined her KD21,000 for committing fraud.

The defendant deceived citizens and Bedouns by promising to give them Amiri Diwan homes, citizenship, farms, livestock pens and chalets. She falsified the logos of the Amiri Diwan, Council of Ministers and National Assembly, through which she obtained KD 43,000 from the victims.

When the victims filed complaints, it was discovered that she tampered with the logos through the student service shops.

'Syringe' teacher gets bail: The detention renewal judge released on KD50 bail the female Syrian teacher accused of injecting a student with a needle that she obtained from the school clinic to intimidate the students and control the classroom.

The teacher's lawyer, Attorney Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan, stated that after the issuance of the decision to release his client, all accounts on social media sites that abused her will be legally pursued.

Al-Qattan explained that his client was in the classroom as a substitute for her colleague. She intended to use the needle to control the unruly students in the classroom, but she did not inject anyone with it as proven in the results of investigations, he clarified.

One hurt in 'chabra' fight: Two Lebanese men engaged in a fistfight at Vegetable Market (chabra) in Sulaibiya, and one of them sustained multiple injuries.

According to a security source, the two men had a heated argument, which escalated into a fistfight. One of them got injuries in his hand and other parts of the body. The injured submitted a medical certificate detailing the injuries he sustained, when he filed a case against the perpetrator, the source added.

5 caught gambling

Prostitution in garb of health care at parlors

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Personnel from the Protection of Public Morals sector of the Criminal Investigation Department have arrested 24 persons across different governorates for indulging in activities contrary to public morals, including engaging in vice and prostitution, reports *Al-Jarida* daily.

Additionally, several health institutes (massage parlors) found to be in violation were identified and referred to the appropriate authorities for further legal action.

The Ministry of Interior has urged the public to collaborate with law enforcement officials and promptly report any observed behaviors that contravene the law or offend public morals.

Reports can be made via the emergency hotline 112 or through the CID operations channels.

5 caught gambling: As part of ongoing efforts exerted by the security services to maintain security and fight corruption, personnel from the Criminal Security Sector of the Criminal Investigation Department (Farwaniya Governorate Investigation Department), have arrested five people after they were caught gambling red-handed, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

The daily added, the men were arrested in the suburb of Ardhiya.

The security sources said sums of money and gambling tools have been seized from the suspects. The seized items have been referred to the concerned authority, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Interior.



Patchwork continues on one of the roads.

Corpse on road

One dead in car crash

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: A collision between two vehicles on Al-Liyah Road resulted in the death of one person and the injury of another, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

The Public Relations and Media Department of the Directorate-General of Fire Department (DGFD) said firemen were rushed to the spot after receiving a report on the incident and the corpse of the victim was sent to Forensics department and the injured person was handed over to paramedics.

The cause of the accident is not known.

Dead man on road: A security source said a corpse of an unidentified person has been found near a public park in Khaitan, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

The daily added, security and forensic personnel went to the site after an unidentified passer-by called the Operations Department of the Ministry of Interior.

Initial reports say, the dead man is Egyptian. The corpse has been referred to Forensics to determine the cause of death.

Deportation for thieves: Personnel from the Criminal Security Sector have arrested two people who appeared in a video clip circulated on some social media sites, stealing electricity cables, reports *Al-Rai* daily.

The Public Relations and Security Media Department of the Ministry of Interior stated that the necessary legal measures are being taken against the accused, in preparation for their deportation from the country.

4 drug addicts held: The Public Security Sector in the Interior Ministry, represented by the Ahmadi Security Directorate, arrested four people in different locations for the possession of 2,811 psychotropic pills and six bags containing substances suspected to be narcotics and an undisclosed amount believed to be from selling drugs, reports *Al-Seyassah* daily.

These four individuals and the confiscated items were referred to the concerned authorities for legal action.

This is a continuation of the efforts of the ministry in combating drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as arresting violators and those wanted by law.

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Kuwait Olympic Committee board members attend 43rd General Assembly

Headquarters in Kuwait plays 'important' role: Olympic Council of Asia

KUALA LUMPUR, May 12, (KUNA): The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) stressed the important role played by its headquarters in Kuwait as it gave it stability and a launch pad for further progress.

held in Bangkok on Saturday with the participation of Kuwait Olympic Committee's board members Ali Al-Marri and Fatima Hayat.

Kuwait, praising Kuwait's efforts, for the past 42 year, in the development of the Asian Olympics.

headquarters' location in Kuwait. Al-Marri also said that 46 Asian countries participated in the council's meeting, held in Bangkok, where they discussed various topics, adding that the council voted on changing almost 70 percent of their constitution.



KUNA photo
Kuwait Olympic Committee's board members Ali Al-Marri and Fatima Hayat.

Joint team to check installation of solar panels at new airport project

Ministry of Education updates its mobile application

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Eng. Ahmed Al-Dosari, Director of the Renewable Energy Department at the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy, has announced the formation of a joint team between the ministries of Public Works and Electricity tasked to supervise the installation of solar panels in certain locations at the new airport; ensuring that they meet the specified requirements, reports Al-Anba daily.

project (T2), where the installation of solar panels to generate 17 megawatts of electricity was planned.

He revealed that the team responsible for the airport project provided a visual presentation that outlined the details of the solar panels. He also highlighted that the energy generated from renewable sources will be incorporated into the airport's power supply and will help reduce the electrical load once the project is operational.

He emphasized the ministry's commitment to implement the building code issued in 2018. This code requires government projects to produce 10 percent of their energy consumption from renewable energy.

Meanwhile, in accordance with the directives of Minister of

Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Adel Al-Adwani, the Ministry of Education has launched an updated version of its mobile application, reports Al-Anba daily.

This initiative is driven by the need to keep up with technological advancements, embrace digital transformation projects and move towards e-government. The application is now available for smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices.

Improvement

The Ministry of Education has stated that the new version of the application represents a significant improvement in providing electronic services across multiple platforms.

Currently, it is compatible with iOS systems, and it will be made available to Android users at a later date. The application offers a wide range of services, benefiting over 500,000 students, approximately 140,000 teachers and administrators, as well as thousands of parents.

For students, the application

offers various important services, including access to private academic data, the ability to view academic certificates, attendance records and the option to download the medical and transfer forms. It also provides seat number issuance service for Grade 12 students.

Parents can use the application to view their children's academic certificates, check attendance records, download the medical and transfer forms, change the student's account number in the teams program, and access other services.

In addition, the application allows all Ministry of Education employees, including teachers and administrators, to access their job-related information, view attendance and dismissal records, and utilize other administrative services in the initial phase. It is worth noting that more services will be added in the near future.

Moreover, the application provides visitors with services similar to those available on its website. Users can access the ministry's statistics and the academic calendar.



Ambassador Dr. Swaika with HE Sheikha Jawaher Ebraheem Duaj Al-Sabah.

Indian envoy meets with Sheikha Jawaher

The Indian Ambassador to Kuwait HE Dr. Adarsh Swaika met with HE Sheikha Jawaher Ebraheem Duaj Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Human

Rights of Kuwait. Discussions focused on excellent coordination and cooperation at UN and multilateral fora between both sides, including at the HRC.



The Kuwaiti delegation after the honoring ceremony.

Al-Sheikh stresses accord on strategic plan

Kuwait highlights significance of Gulf youth meeting in Qatar

BY Saudi Al-Ajmi

DOHA, May 12, (KUNA): Acting Director-General of the Kuwaiti Public Authority for Youth Nasser Al-Sheikh affirmed the importance of the 37th meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Youth and Sports of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), held in Qatar Saturday.

Speaking to KUNA, Al-Sheikh said that he represented Dawood Marafi, the Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs, Minister of State for Youth Affairs, and Minister of State for Communication Affairs, at the meeting with the aim of advancing youth activities in the Gulf region.

Al-Sheikh pointed out that the meeting witnessed agreement on the committee's strategic plan for the period from 2025 to 2030.

Al-Sheikh participated in a ceremony held to honor the "Executive Leadership", including Abdullah Al-Adwani, the Director of Recreational Activities at the General Authority for Youth. Additionally, Kuwaiti students Majed Al-Maneefi and Lulu Al-Shamlan were also honored in the category of "Creative and Outstanding Youth."

Al-Adwani stated to KUNA after the ceremony that his honoring was attributed to the dedication of all authority employees, as well as the direction provided by its current and former leaders.

Al-Adwani extended his gratitude to the State of Qatar for their warm reception and the generosity shown to the delegation. He also thanked the Secretariat General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for their diligent

efforts in preparing the ministerial meeting. Similarly, student Al-Menefi commended the Public Authority for Youth and the Debate Club in a statement, acknowledging their pivotal role in providing him with the necessary support for his participation in the debate championship in the U.S.

Al-Menefi mentioned his participation in two debate tournaments in the United States and also joined the World Debate Championship in Turkiye. Additionally, he won the Best Speaker Award twice in the United States and secured seventh place in the world rankings for the same category.

Earlier, addressing the gathering, Qatari Minister of Sports and Youth Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa said work should continue to meet the directives of the GCC leaders and fulfill the Gulf bloc's national vision and goals to serve Gulf young people.

He voiced hope that joint efforts targeting young people's empowerment would come to fruition, appreciating Oman's endeavors in this regard, during its previous GCC presidency.

For his part, Assistant Secretary-General of the GCC for Economic and Development Affairs Khaled Al-Sunaidi said that since the Gulf bloc was created, its leaders have been paying much attention to young people due to their crucial role in achieving sustainable development.

He underlined the Gulf governments' eagerness to answer the needs of young people and include them in their strategic plans and future national visions, given that youth aged 15-20 made up 24.6 percent of the GCC member countries' population in 2023.

Second Kuwait int'l family medicine confab to be held from May 16 to 18

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Dr. Hoda Al-Duwaisan, the Chair of the Advisory Council of the Kuwaiti Association of Family Physicians and General Practitioners, has announced the launch of the Second Kuwait International Family Medicine Conference, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The conference, held under the patronage of the Minister of Health, Dr. Ahmed Al-Awadi, and led by the Association's President, Dr. Mohammed Al-Azmi, will take place at the Jumeirah Hotel from May 16 to May 18.

Al-Duwaisan emphasized that the conference aims to strengthen primary health care by enhancing the medical knowledge of professionals in the field with the latest developments and innovations in compre-

hensive and preventive medical care.

Additionally, it aims to raise awareness about examining and managing chronic diseases while ensuring opportunities for professional development and training through seminars conducted by experienced lecturers both locally and regionally.

She noted that the conference will feature more than 20 lecturers from various countries, alongside 18 specialized lecturers from Kuwait, showcasing regional participation and collaboration with external parties.

Dr. Mishari Al-Osaimi, the Chairman of the Conference Organizing Committee, highlighted the conference's significance as a sustainable medical event in Kuwait, aligning with the Association's efforts to realize "Kuwait Vision 2035" and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

He emphasized the pivotal role of family doctors in achieving these goals, underscoring their importance in enhancing the quality of life for individuals, society, and the environment.



Dr Al-Duwaisan

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Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 76.230 net	BHD 170.247 net

Promo period from 2nd May to 31st May 2024

Terms & conditions apply*

Gulf Bank and INJAZ announce 2024 Company Program competition winners



Najla Al-Issa, Laila Hilal Al-Mutairi mediate between the two winning companies.



The bank team, including Salma Al-Hajaj, Dhari Al-Badr, Laila Hilal Al-Mutairi, and Najla Al-Issa.

'Ni'ma' wins university students category and Flash wins high school students category

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: INJAZ, Kuwait concluded the Company Program competition for the year 2024, sponsored by Gulf Bank. The competition took place over two days at the American University of the Middle East (AUM), during which the judging committee announced 12 winning projects from among the competing teams in various categories, including universities and school students.

Gulf Bank, the primary sponsor of the Company Program, recognized the winning teams in front of a large audience consisting of students, parents, volunteers, school teachers, and representatives from supporting companies and organizations.

Continuing its commitment to supporting youth and its long-standing partnership with INJAZ, Gulf Bank acknowledged the top two companies among the winners. These are "Ni'ma", which won the Best Student Company award in 2024, and Flash the winner in the High School Students' category. This recognition qualifies them to represent Kuwait in the regional Company Program competition involving 14 Arab countries, scheduled to be held in the United Arab Emirates, Dubai, during the last quarter of the current year.

Gulf Bank

Ms. Najla Al-Issa, Gulf Bank's Deputy Gen-

eral Manager and Chief Marketing Officer, expressed, "We extend our congratulations to "Ni'ma" and Flash for their well-deserved achievement of winning the Best Company Award for 2024. We commend the pivotal role that INJAZ plays in organizing this annual competition."

Al-Issa highlighted Gulf Bank's yearly dedication to sponsoring the training provided by INJAZ for the winning projects of the Company Program competition. These projects represent Kuwait in the upcoming regional Achievements competition, scheduled to take place in (country) next month, with the participation of 14 Arab countries.

She further remarked, "At Gulf Bank, we are proud of our enduring partnership with INJAZ spanning the past 18 years. Throughout this time, we have embraced and supported numerous ideas and companies, some of which have now become integral parts of Kuwait's current economic and business environment."

Al-Issa reaffirmed Gulf Bank's dedication to nurturing youth by supporting and enhancing their professional skills, empowering them to adapt to the evolving demands of the local and global job markets. This commitment aligns with Gulf Bank's 2025 strategy, prioritizing youth, and Kuwait Vision 2035, which highlights the significance of investing in young talents.

She mentioned that the Company Program competition is very popular among high school and university students. It gives them a unique chance to gain practical experience in starting and managing a real company. This is supported and sponsored by major institutions, with Gulf Bank in the forefront.

Al-Issa also pointed out the fruitful collaboration between Gulf Bank and INJAZ, which led to the training of around 18,000 students throughout the academic year 2023/2024. This training encompassed diverse educational levels, ranging from primary school to university, including recent graduates.

INJAZ, Kuwait

The CEO of INJAZ, Ms. Laila Hilal Al-Mutairi, praised the performance of the competing students. She highlighted that the trust of private sector institutions, companies, and supporting bodies is a key factor contributing to the ongoing success of INJAZ Kuwait.

She pointed out that the partnership with Gulf Bank is exceptional, being a strategic partnership that has lasted for many years. Gulf Bank plays a vital role in supporting the INJAZ's initiatives by providing volunteers, and contributing to the delivery of training programs to students.

She also mentioned, "Throughout its jour-

nally, INJAZ has provided training to over 120,000 students through various programs, focusing on enhancing youth skills in three key areas: Employability, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy. At INJAZ, we are dedicated to consistently providing resources that empower young people and prepare them to overcome future challenges.

It is important to mention that INJAZ Kuwait is a member of the global network of Junior Achievement Worldwide, a non-profit, non-governmental organization supported by Kuwait's private sector. Through strategic collaborations with Kuwait's business and education sectors, and with the assistance of skilled volunteers, INJAZ provides educational programs in both Arabic and English languages focused on entrepreneurial and leadership skills, aiming to foster successful careers.

Honoring the Judging Committee

The judging panel, headed by Ms. Najla Al-Eisa, the General Manager and Chief Marketing Officer from Gulf Bank, recognized and honored the participants in the Company Program competition.

Prominent Role of Gulf Bank Volunteers

Gulf Bank volunteers played a crucial role in guiding and supporting university and school students involved in the Company Program competition at every stage of the project. Addi-

tionally, they conducted programs like mentoring sessions and mock interviews for university students.

What is the Company Program?

The Company Program teaches students entrepreneurial skills, prepares them for the job market, and provides them with financial literacy. Tailored for both secondary and university students, it offers the chance to establish and run a real company.

Students go through the complete stages of starting a new project; starting with a business plan, feasibility studies, team building, fundraising, and finally innovating a product or service and selling it.

Programs and Training Courses

The list of programs and training courses offered by INJAZ Kuwait includes:

- How to Start
- Innovation Camp Workshop
- Company Program
- Little Innovator Workshop
- INJAZ Talks
- Lifetime Project
- My Career Path
- Datathon

Welcome to

Continued from Page 1

the true meaning of brotherhood with all honesty and gratitude.

Over the past decades, Muscat has proven its capability to overcome all difficulties in order to reserve a position for itself among the ranks of developed countries. It is capable of renaissance according to a studied vision – the basis of what the late Sultan Qaboos bin Saïd had drawn up, and followed by Sultan Haitham bin Tariq.

In the last four years of his rule, he worked with the idea of laying down the modern foundations for a State that was able to break away from the alignments to form the balance in relations between everyone. It brings the viewpoints of the opponents closer together, whether in the region or the world. For this reason, it became the millstone and the world's destination in terms of international agreements.

All of this would not have been possible if it were not for the personal characteristics of the Sultan who is educated, has vast experience in public work, well versed in the humanities, and was able to harmonize modernity and heritage to cultivate a unique experience in the region.

He also knows that a country cannot rise without drawing inspiration from history and building on it. Therefore, the Sultanate today continues to keep pace with the requirements of the times, while preserving its values and working on an infrastructure that is comparable to developed countries.

Furthermore, its foundation was based on an advanced educational system that urges the individual to serve his country from any position in line with the 'Oman Vision 2040'. The foundations of this vision were laid down by its current Sultan, as part of the plan of the late Sultan Qaboos bin Saïd. It is the continuation of a renaissance that has been expanding since 1970.

Nonetheless, since Sultan Haitham bin Tariq took over the reins of power in 2020, his country has been on the path of progress and prosperity. Oman has been blessed with many development projects.

Oman is also working to establish important economic partnerships in the region and the world, the basis of which is to work silently and to provide job opportunities for Omanis who have been engaged in all fields without affectation.

The reason is that they are building their country with their own hands. They rely on themselves as per the development plans included in the vision launched by Sultan Haitham bin Tariq in 2021. Hence, Oman is now considered a promising land for investment, as well as an example for developing countries to follow in terms of economic and social progress.

All this was achieved within a few years of the rule of the Sultan who reserved a place for his country in the region and the world. He maintained the trust given to him and he has been dedicated in serving his country; because he believes in his people and his ability to perform miracles whenever he has the capabilities to work comfortably and without obstacles.

Without a doubt, the visit of Sultan Haitham bin Tariq to Kuwait is an occasion aimed not only to deepen fraternal relations between the two countries and people, but also to establish major investment partnerships between Kuwaitis and Omanis.

Welcome, Sultan of glorified culture who loves Kuwait, just as Kuwait loves him and his people. He is a dear guest for all of us and the entire country – both the leadership and people.

Detentions, arrests

Continued from Page 1

accounts on the social networking site 'X' voicing objection to the rights and authorities of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

They have also been accused of defaming HH the Amir and criticizing the Amiri entity.

Amir receives

Continued from Page 1

Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, was the one who organized 3 international conferences to support Syrian refugees, and Kuwait made the largest donation," said Guterres.

Guterres stressed that he will always remember that Kuwait was always the mediator when any issues happened within the GCC.

HH Amir

Continued from Page 1

He would also honor excellent students at Kuwait University for the 2019-18, 2019-20, and 2020-21 semesters at a ceremony to be held at 10:00 am local-time in the University City's Al-Dana theater.

Sultan of

Continued from Page 1

Al-Kharousi said the Duqm Refinery and Petrochemical Industries Company (DRPIC) in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm that Sultan Haitham patronized its opening ceremony on February 7, 2024, in the presence of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, is a great achievement of which both countries are proud.

It is the largest combined joint investment project between the Omani OQ Group and the Kuwait Petroleum International Company, with a capital exceeding USD nine billion, he stated.

Opening the project embodied the deep-seated ties between the two countries over many years, and culmination in this common heritage that was supported by the two sides, he made clear.

Opening the refinery was not the only achievement made during that visit, as it also witnessed the completion of two other projects: Marafiq Company, which supports the refinery in terms of energy and water, with an investment amounting to 196 million Omani riyals (about USD 510 million) and the Omani Tank Company project for oil storage in Ras Markaz with an investment of 200 million Omani riyals (about USD 520 million), he elaborated.

The ambassador stressed continued work between the two sides to ensure safe and profitable operation of the refinery to be a global platform for innovation and leadership in refining amid major challenges facing gas and oil industry.

He indicated that the current cooperation, which translates the Kuwaiti-Omani partnership, mainly investment in petrochemical industries, materializes the current and future shared visions of the two sides and their aspirations for more cooperation aiming to consolidate close relations between the two brotherly countries and achieve their interests.

Nursing staff role in achieving quality healthcare vital: MoH

International Nurses Day celebrated

Kuwait launches forum for state development projects

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Engineer Badr Al-Salman, the head of the Federation of Kuwaiti Engineering Offices and Consulting Houses, has announced the establishment of the 'Forum for Major State Development Projects' in collaboration with the General Secretariat of the Supreme

Council for Planning and Development and the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The forum, themed 'Transparency, Achievement, and Sustainability, Principles of the New Era,' is scheduled to take place from the June 11 to 13 at the

Al-Hashemi Hall, Radisson Blu Hotel, Kuwait.

Al-Salman highlighted that the forum aligns with the vision of His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, to propel Kuwait into a new phase marked by rapid achievement and transparency.



JOINT OPERATIONS WAFRA

SAUDI ARABIAN CHEVRON INC. (SAC) - KUWAIT GULF OIL COMPANY

Joint Operations (Saudi Arabian Chevron Inc. / Kuwait Gulf Oil Company), announces the under-mentioned Public Tenders for procurement of materials.

Kuwaiti and Saudi Merchants, registered with either Company wishing to participate in any of the under-mentioned Tenders are invited to collect the Tender documents from Purchasing Section, Purchasing & Logistic Division, Administration Building, Ground Floor, Joint Operations, Wafra, during the official working hours from 13 MAY 2024 up to 26 MAY 2024 for a non-refundable fee mentioned against each tender. Tender Fees to be deposited in the National bank of Kuwait (NBK) Account No. 1001132057. Saudi Suppliers can collect the tender documents from Saudi Arabian Chevron office in Al-Khobar Telephone No.: (013) 8645104 - Fax No.: (013) 8985436

The closing date for the following Tenders will be on **Monday, 3 JUN 2024 @ 09:00 AM.**

S.NO.	TENDER NO.	MATERIALS	FEES (IN KD)
1	013013-R1	PIPES (CARBON STEEL – STAINLESS STEEL)	5
2	015108	S/F MICROMOTION FLOW METERS	5
3	017041	PIPE FITTINGS	50
4	017042	MISC EATON CUTLER HAMMER ITEMS	5
5	017043	VALVES (CHECK – BALL – GATE)	5
6	017177	PRESSURE GAUGE SYSTEM	5
7	017179	INSERT SLEEVE	15
8	017180	FIBER OPTIC CABLE	25
9	017181	VALVES (BALL – GATE – GLOBE)	25
10	017220	VALVES (GATE – CHECK – BALL)	25
11	017400	MISC SPARE PARTS, PFISTERER	15
12	017588	BALL VALVES	25
13	017603	S/F SMITH PD METER	5

Notes: Gate Passes are required for Suppliers entering JO-Wafra Administrative Offices to collect the tender document and gate pass processing time is 48 hours. Please fill request for gate pass along with legible copies of Authorization letter, Civil ID, Car Registration, Supplier Registration (KGOC or SAC) to e-mail HBJH@chevron.com and CBMS@chevron.com at least 48 hours prior to arrival.

For additional information, you may contact: Telephone No.: 23983639 - Ext. : 2502 - 3477

World News Roundup

Europe

Fire in Warsaw mall

UK knife crime rise leads to crackdown

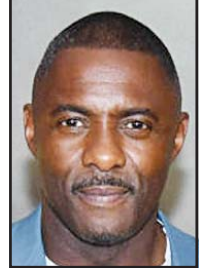
LONDON, May 12, (AP) — A familiar horror reached Pooja Kanda first on social media: There had been a sword attack in London. And then Kanda, who was home alone at the time, saw a detail she dreaded and knew all too well.

A man with a sword had killed a 14-year-old boy who was walking to school. Two years ago, her 16-year-old son, Ronan, was killed by two sword-wielding schoolmates while walking to a neighbor's to borrow a PlayStation controller.

"It took me back," Kanda, who lives near Birmingham, said about Daniel Anjorin's April 30 killing in an attack in London's Hainault district that also wounded four people. "It's painful to see that this has happened all over again."

In parts of the world that ban or strictly regulate gun ownership, including Britain and much of the rest of Europe, knives and other types of blades are often the weapons of choice used in crimes. Many end up in the hands of children, as they can be cheap and easy to get.

Although the number of fatal stabbings has mostly held steady in England and Wales over the past 10 years, headline-grabbing attacks and an overall rise in knife crime have stoked anxieties and led to calls for the government to do more.



Elba

Jumped

"Knife-enabled" crime - in which knives were used to commit crimes or someone was caught illegally possessing one - rose 7% in England and Wales last year," the government said last month, noting some localities were not included. In London, such crimes jumped 20%. The other two UK countries, Scotland and Northern Ireland, keep their own statistics.

With knives so readily available, there's only so much that can be done. Of the 244 fatal stabbings in England and Wales in the 12 months ending with March 2023 - the most recent figures available - 101 were committed with kitchen knives, far surpassing any other type of blade, according to the Office of National Statistics.

But the uptick in knife crime and a steady drumbeat of shocking attacks, including those that killed Ronan Kanda, Daniel Anjorin and three people in Nottingham last year, has pushed the issue to the forefront.

"It seems like every day something like this is reported in the press," Sanjoy O'Malley-Kumar, whose 19-year-old daughter Grace O'Malley-Kumar was among the Nottingham victims, said on "Good Morning Britain" after the recent attack in London.

In last week's local elections, candidates debated policies such as stop-and-search.

Even movie star Idris Elba has weighed in. "I can pick up a phone right now, type in knives and I'll get inundated with adverts for them," the London-born star of "The Wire" and "Luther" said during a protest in January.

Fire in Warsaw mall: A fire broke out on Sunday morning in a vast shopping center housing 1,400 shops and service outlets in the Bialoleka district in Poland's capital.

The fire brigade said more than 80% of The Marywilka 44 shopping complex was on fire, and 50 teams, including chemical and environmental rescue specialists, were carrying out rescue operations.

A police spokesperson told the news agency PAP there were no injuries reported. Authorities also sent a text message warning Warsaw residents about the fire and telling them to stay home with the windows closed. Footage aired by private broadcaster TVN24 showed thick black smoke rising over the area.

Mirbud, an industrial construction company listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange, owns the shopping center.

Thousands of civilians flee Ukraine: Thousands more civilians have fled Russia's renewed ground offensive in Ukraine's northeast that has targeted towns and villages with a barrage of artillery and mortar fire, officials said Sunday.

The intense battles have forced at least one Ukrainian unit to withdraw in the Kharkiv region, capitulating more land to Russian forces across less defended settlements in the so-called contested "gray zone" along the Russian border.

By Sunday afternoon, the town of Vovchansk, with a prewar population of 17,000, emerged as a focal point in the battle. Volodymyr Tymoshko, the head of the Kharkiv regional police, said Russian forces were in the outskirts of the town and approaching from three directions. A Russian tank was spotted along a major road leading to the town, Tymoshko said, illustrating Moscow's confidence to deploy heavy weaponry.

Meanwhile, a 10-story apartment block collapsed in the Russian city of Belgorod, near the border, injuring at least 19 people. Russian authorities said the building collapsed following Ukrainian shelling. Ukraine has not commented on the incident.

Lithuanians vote: Lithuanians are casting votes in a presidential election on Sunday at a time when Russian gains on the battlefield in Ukraine are fueling greater fears about Moscow's intentions, particularly in the strategically important Baltic region.

The popular incumbent, Gitanas Nausuda, is favored to win another five-year term in office. But there are eight candidates running in all, making it difficult for him or any other candidate to muster the 50% of the votes needed to win outright on Sunday. In that case, a runoff will be held on May 26.

Polls opened at 7 a.m. and close 8 pm (1700 GMT). Results are expected late Sunday night.

The president's main tasks in Lithuania's political system are overseeing foreign and security policy, and acting as the supreme commander of the armed forces.

Catalans vote: Catalonia is holding a regional election on Sunday whose outcome will reverberate in Spain's national politics.

The ballot will be a test both for the strength of the separatist movement in the wealthy northeastern part of Spain and for the policies of Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez. More than 5.7 million voters are eligible to choose lawmakers for the regional parliament based in Barcelona.

Separatists have held the regional government for more than a decade. But polling and a national election in July show that support for secession has shrunk somewhat since former regional president Carles Puigdemont led an illegal - and futile - breakaway bid in 2017.



US Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump speaks during his campaign rally in Wildwood, NJ on May 11. (AP)

Politics

Dems nominate Murphy for third term

Trump blames Biden for criminal charges

WILDWOOD, NJ, May 12, (AP) — Sandwiched between his appearances in court, Donald Trump headed on Saturday to the Jersey Shore, where he repeatedly blamed President Joe Biden for the criminal charges he's facing as the presumptive nominee prepare to face off in the November election and called his New York hush money case "a Biden show trial."

Blasting the Democratic president, Trump before a crowd of tens of thousands repeatedly characterized the cases against him as politically motivated and timed to harm his ability to campaign.

"He's not a smart man," Trump said of Biden. "I talk about him differently now because now the gloves are off."

Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, drew what his team called a "mega crowd" to a Saturday evening rally in the southern New Jersey resort town of Wildwood, 150 miles (241 kilometers) south of the New York City courthouse where he has been forced to spend most weekdays sitting silently through his felony hush money trial.

Lisa Fagan, spokesperson for the city of Wildwood, told The Associated Press that she estimated a crowd of between 80,000 and 100,000 attendees, based off her own observations on the scene Saturday, saying "dozens" of other events in the same space.

High-level

Trump was joined on stage by several high-level endorsers including North Dakota Gov Doug Burgum and NFL Hall of Fame linebacker Lawrence Taylor, who is still listed as a registered offender after pleading guilty in New York in 2011 to misdemeanor criminal charges of sexual misconduct.

The beachfront gathering, described by Rep Jeff Van Drew, R-N.J., as the largest political gathering in state history, was designed to serve as a show of force at a critical moment for Trump, who is facing dozens of felony charges in four separate criminal cases with the election less than six months away.

Hours before he was scheduled to take the stage, thousands of Trump loyalists donning "Never Surrender" T-shirts and red "Make America Great

Again" hats crowded onto the sand between the boardwalk and carnival rides to greet the former Republican president.

"The everyday American people are 100% behind him," said Doreen O'Neill, a 62-year-old nurse from Philadelphia.

"They have to cheat and smear him and humiliate him in that courtroom every single day," O'Neill said. "This country is going to go insane if they steal the election again."

Trump's extraordinary legal woes, which include three other unrelated criminal cases, have emerged as a central issue in the campaign.

Trump has repeatedly accused the Biden administration and Democratic officials in New York of using the legal system to block his return to the White House. Prosecutors allege the former president broke the law to conceal an affair with an actor that would have hurt his first presidential bid.

Filed

The hush money case was filed by local prosecutors in Manhattan who do not work for the Justice Department or any White House office. The Justice Department has said the White House has had no involvement in the two criminal cases against Trump brought by special counsel Jack Smith.

On Saturday, Trump posited that even those whom he accuses of politically motivated prosecutions didn't bring every case they could have, pointing to the boosts his campaign has sustained with each wave of charges.

"I heard they were going to do a couple of other things and they said from Washington ... 'we're indicting him into the White House,'" Trump said. "They said, 'Don't do it.'"

While Trump seized on his legal woes Saturday, a judge's gag order - and the threat of jail - limit Trump's ability to comment publicly on witnesses, jurors and some others connected to the New York trial, which is expected to consume much of the month. The judge in the case already has fined Trump \$9,000 for violating the order and warned that jail could follow if he doesn't comply.

The order doesn't include references to Judge Juan M. Merchan, whom

Trump called "highly conflicted" or District Attorney Alvin Bragg, both of whom Trump said are "doing the bidding for crooked Joe Biden."

Trump's responsibilities as a defendant have limited his ability to win over voters on the campaign trail.

He spent last week's off-day from court in the general election battlegrounds of Wisconsin and Michigan. And he was campaigning with tens of thousands of voters Saturday in New Jersey, a reliably Democratic state. Parts of New Jersey have deep-red enclaves and the southern shoreline in particular draws tourists and summer homeowners from neighboring Pennsylvania, a key swing state.

Biden, meanwhile, opened his weekend with a series of fundraising events on the West Coast.

Also:

UNCASVILLE, Conn.: Connecticut Democrats unanimously endorsed US Sen Chris Murphy for a third term on Saturday, praising his efforts on gun control, immigration reform and foreign policy.

Murphy's enthusiastic backing from the party faithful happened quickly at the Democratic State Convention, held at the Mohegan Sun resort and casino. He had no opposition.

With 1,425 delegates on hand, Murphy and other top state Democrats used the event to inspire support for the reelection of President Joe Biden in November and to keep Connecticut politically blue.

"The time is now. The place is here. Are you willing to fight?" asked Murphy, 50, who was met with cheers from the crowd.

The state's junior senator, Murphy pledged to keep pushing for a universal background check law on guns and a ban on assault weapons.

Murphy's challenger is set to be nominated on Monday at the Republican state convention. Beacon Falls First Selectman Gerard Smith, who has \$23,666 in cash on hand, and Matt Corey, a small businessman who challenged Murphy six years ago and recently announced his candidacy, are among the potential candidates.

Murphy has more than \$9 million in cash on hand.

of an armed man in a commercial area on Fairbanks Street and encountered a man with a handgun and a knife on Desoto Avenue, Atlanta Police Chief Darin Schierbaum said during a news conference.

"During that encounter there was a struggle, there was gunfire that resulted in three

of our officers being injured. It also resulted in the death of the individual that was armed with the handgun," Schierbaum said. The police department did not immediately identify the deceased man. Police did not believe anyone else was involved, Schierbaum said. The three officers were transported in po-

lice patrol vehicles to Grady Memorial Hospital. One officer was shot in the shoulder, another was shot in the leg and the third suffered a grazing wound. Two of the officers were expected to undergo surgery, Schierbaum said. (AP)

Menendez faces corruption trial: For the second time in a decade, US Sen Bob Menendez faces a corruption trial Monday with his political career and freedom on the line in a criminal case that already has forced him out of one of the most powerful posts in Congress.

The 70-year-old New Jersey Democrat and his wife are accused of accepting bribes from three wealthy businessmen in his home state and performing a variety of favors in return, including meddling in criminal investigations and taking actions benefiting the governments of Egypt and Qatar.

Menendez's lawyers say he stayed within the rules and did nothing illegal. He has optimistically spoken about mounting a reelection campaign the summer if he is acquitted.

But even if he escapes without a conviction, as he did in a previous corruption prosecution in 2017, the damage done to his reputation could make a political comeback next to impossible.

FBI agents who searched the senator's New Jersey home found a stash of gold bars, worth more than \$100,000, and more than \$486,000 in cash, some of it stuffed into the pockets of clothing hanging in his closets. (AP)



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak picks up a machete while visiting Harlow Police Station during a media visit in Essex, England on Feb 16. Knife crimes are on the rise in England and Wales, and a string of deadly attacks in recent years has stoked public anxiety and led to calls for the government to do more. (AP)



Menendez



Schierbaum

North America

Canada arrests Indian nat'l: Canadian police have arrested a fourth Indian national related to last year's murder of Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar, local media reported Saturday.

Amandeep Singh, who had already been in custody in Ontario for unrelated firearms charges, has been charged with first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder, Canada's Integrated Homicide Investigation Team announced Saturday afternoon. CTV News reported. The 22-year-old joined three other Indian nationals in their twenties, namely Karan Brar, Kamalpreet Singh and Karanpreet Singh, who are facing the same charges in connection to Nijjar's killing, said the report.

On June 18, 2023, Nijjar was assassinated outside the Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara temple in Surrey, Canada's British Columbia. Since then, the Sikh community in Canada has been exerting pressure on the Canadian government for a probe.

India has denied the allegations. Canada and India then engaged in tit-for-tat diplomatic expulsions. (Xinhua)

Blaze evacuates thousands: Canadian authorities are urging all remaining residents in the northeastern part of the province of British Columbia to leave immediately, despite improving weather conditions, after thousands have already been evacuated due to a fast-growing wildfire.

The blaze, which started Friday, almost doubled in size the following day, reaching about 17 square kilometers (4,200 acres). BC Wildfire Service maps showed the fire burning just a few kilometers (miles) west of Fort Nelson's city limits.

Online footage shared by locals showed thick plumes of smoke rising high into the sky with houses in the foreground. In some photos, haze seemed to cover wide areas.

He said the Parker Lake fire is one of three major wildfires near Fort Nelson, located in the far northeastern corner of British Columbia, about 1,600 kilometers (994 miles) from Vancouver. (AP)

Armed man killed in Atlanta: Three Atlanta police officers were hospitalized with gunshot wounds after an altercation that left a suspect dead Saturday evening, authorities said. Officers responded at 5:15 pm to a report



Children perform traditional dance during a celebration at the Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia, in Riga, Latvia, on May 11. Covering about 87 hectares, this biggest open-air museum in Latvia held its centennial celebration on Saturday. (Xinhua)

Africa

'Chad needs food aid'

Sudan's army fends off attack by group

CAIRO, May 12, (Agencies): Sudan's military and allied armed groups have staved off an attack by a paramilitary group and Arab militias on a major city in the western region of Darfur, officials and residents said on Saturday.

The attack on Friday was the latest by the Arab-dominated Rapid Support Forces against el-Fasher, the provincial capital of North Darfur province, where hundreds of thousands of people are sheltering, many of them having fled fighting elsewhere in Darfur.

The RSF, which has been at war with the military for more than a year, has built forces up in recent months to wrestle control of el-Fasher, the last city that is still held by the military in the sprawling Darfur region.



Griffiths

Sudan's conflict began in April last year when soaring tensions between the leaders of the military and the RSF exploded into open fighting in the capital, Khartoum and elsewhere in the country.

The conflict wrecked the country and pushed its population to the brink of famine. It killed more than 14,000 people and wounded thousands more amid reports of widespread sexual violence and other

atrocities that rights groups say amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Darfur witnessed some of the worst atrocities in the war, with the RSF taking control of many cities and towns across the region. Human Rights Watch said in a report last week that RSF attacks constituted a campaign of ethnic cleansing against the region's non-Arab population.

Clashed

The RSF and their allies launched the attack on el-Fasher's eastern side early Friday and clashed with military forces and other armed groups defending the city, said resident Amany Mohamed. She said the military and allied forces have repelled the attack.

"Yesterday was a very difficult day," she said over the phone on Saturday. "There were fierce clashes that lasted for six hours."

Another resident and an activist, Ibtisam al-Doum, fled with her family to a school-turned-shelter on the southern side of the city during heavy fighting on Friday. She said she saw hundreds of people escaping on foot to safer areas.

"The situation is catastrophic. We don't know when this will end," she said, speaking from the Jiser al-Jinan shelter. "What's happening is senseless."

The military-led camp and the RSF blamed each other for initiating Friday's fighting.

Local media reported heavy clashes in parts of the city including its power plant. Footage on social media platforms showed army troops and allied forces celebrating and captured fighters in RSF uniform being paraded in the streets.

Intensifying

"Reports of intensifying clashes in the city are deeply alarming," **Martin Griffiths**, the United Nations' relief chief, wrote on X and called for warning parties to de-escalate. "The people of Darfur need more food, not more fighting," he said.

The International Organization for Migration said the military launched airstrikes Saturday on the RSF positions in the northern and eastern parts of el-Fasher. It said Friday's fighting had forced about 170 households, or about 800 people, from their homes.

The United Nations last month said the RSF had encircled the city and warned an attack would have "devastating consequences" on its 800,000 people.

The RSF and allied Arab militias have launched a series of attacks el-Fasher and its surroundings in recent weeks, taking several villages on the northern side.

Such attacks "resulted in horrific reports of violence, including sexual violence, children injured and killed, homes set on fire and destruction of critical civilian supplies and infrastructure," Catherine Russell, executive director of UNICEF, said earlier this month.

"The fighting and growing fear of ethnically motivated violence has driven many families to overcrowded displacement camps such as Zamzam camp and informal gathering sites in and around el-Fasher city," she said.

Also:

UNITED NATIONS: Host to 500,000 refugees from neighboring Sudan, Chad needs food security and nutrition aid for one-third of its own 18 million population, UN humanitarianists said on Friday.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said the situation across the nation is being exacerbated by climate change, insecurity and the rise in food and fuel prices.

"Since March, the country is also facing torrential rains and floods in the south," OCHA said, adding that the refugees have significantly strained the humanitarian situation in the east of the country, and attacks by non-state armed groups in the Lake Chad Basin are driving further displacement.

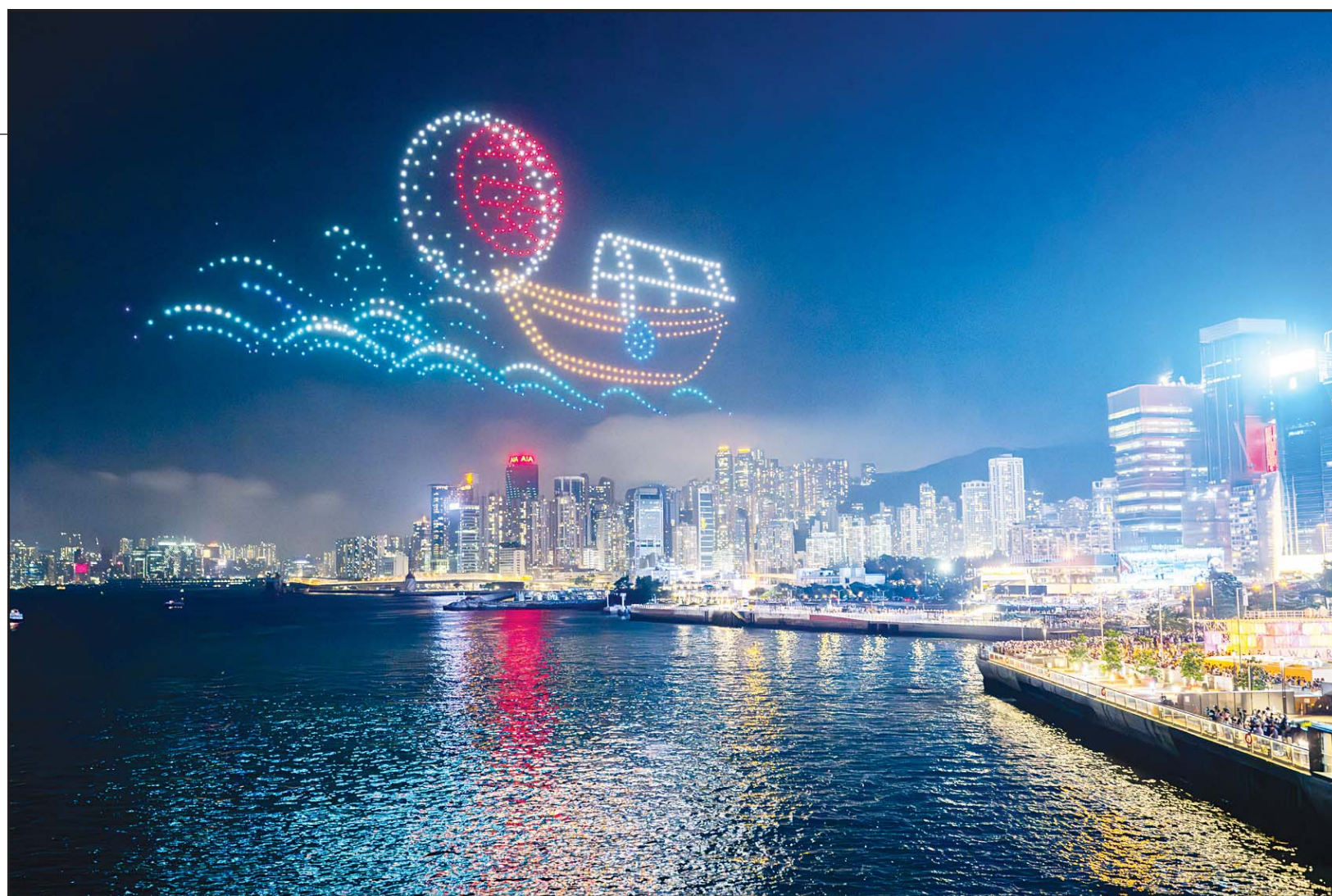
The UN agency said that a UN-backed analysis found that 2.4 million people are currently food insecure in the country, 300,000 of whom are severely food insecure. If no substantive assistance is provided, this number could grow during the lean season to 3.3 million.

HARARE: The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has called for an increase in child-centered climate investments to reduce the risk of shocks caused by climate change on children in the country.

With **Zimbabwe** currently facing the effects of climate-induced El Nino, many children in the country, among other vulnerable groups, are exposed to the impacts of the drought, UNICEF said in a statement on Friday.

"We are launching a petition to urge government entities, development partners, and the private sector to prioritize children in their climate investments. We are also calling for more funding of climate resilient programs to ensure continued access to health, education, water and sanitation services, nutrition, and child protection services, and for programs to strengthen the resilience of households to deal with the climate-related emergencies," UNICEF said.

The UN agency noted that Zimbabwe's children have not been spared from the risks posed by climate change-induced events, with the country ranking high risk in the 2021 UNICEF Children's Climate Risk Index.



A drone light show featuring traditional Chinese culture is staged in Hong Kong, south China on May 11. (Xinhua)

Asia

West Java province bus crash kills 11

Flash floods hit Indonesia; fifteen killed

PADANG, Indonesia, May 12, (Agencies): Heavy rains and torrents of cold lava and mud flowing down a volcano's slopes on Indonesia's Sumatra island triggered flash floods that killed at least 15 people and injured several others, officials said Sunday.

Monsoon rains and a major mudslide from a cold lava flow on Mount Marapi caused a river to breach its banks and tear through mountainside villages in Agam and Tanah Datar districts in West Sumatra province just before midnight on Saturday. The floods swept away people and submerged more than 100 houses and buildings, National Disaster Management Agency spokesperson Abdul Muhari said.

Cold lava, also known as lahar, is a mixture of volcanic material and pebbles that flow down a volcano's slopes in the rain.

By Sunday, rescuers had pulled out 11 bodies in the worst-hit village of Canduang and recovered four other bodies in the neighboring village of Sungai Pua, Muhari said.

The agency said in a statement that at least seven villagers were injured by the flash floods, and rescuers were searching for other possible victims. It said 60 people had fled to temporary government shelters.

The disaster came just two months after heavy rains triggered flash floods and a landslide in West Sumatra's Pesisir Selatan and Padang Pariaman districts, killing at least 21 people and leaving five others missing.

The 2,885-meter (9,465-foot) Mount Marapi erupted late last year killing 23 climbers who were caught by a surprise weekend eruption. The volcano has stayed at the third highest of four alert levels since 2011, indicating above-normal volcanic activity under which climbers and villagers must stay more than 3 kilometers (1.8 miles) from the peak, according to Indonesia's Center for Volcanology and Geological Disaster Mitigation.

Marapi is known for sudden eruptions that are difficult to predict because the source is shallow and near the peak, and its eruptions are not caused by a deep movement of magma, which sets off tremors that register on seismic monitors.

Also:

BANDUNG, Indonesia: A bus slammed into cars and motorbikes after its brakes apparently malfunctioned in Indonesia's West Java province, killing at least 11 people, mostly students, and injuring dozens of others,

Cambodian politician charged with inciting disorder for criticizing govt

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, May 12, (AP): The leader of a recently formed Cambodian opposition party has been charged with inciting social disorder, his lawyer said Saturday, in the third major legal action this month targeting critics of the government of Prime Minister Hun Manet.

Sun Chantry of the Nation Power Party, established late last year, was formally charged Friday by the Phnom Penh Municipal Court and sent to pre-trial detention in the northwestern province of Pursat, according to Choung Chou Ngy. He said his client could be sentenced to six months to two years in prison if convicted, and that on Monday he will seek his release on bail.

Cambodia's government has long been accused of using the judicial system to persecute critics and political opponents. The government insists it promotes the rule of law under an electoral democracy, but political parties seen as mounting strong challenges to the ruling Cambodian People's Party have been dissolved by the courts or had their leaders jailed or harassed.

Sun Chantry, 41, was arrested

on Thursday at Phnom Penh International Airport after returning from a trip to Japan where he held a meeting with several hundred Cambodian overseas workers. He spoke there about the desire for the government to allow more freedom for opposition parties.

Also:

MELBOURNE, Australia: An Australian judge on Friday extended a ban on X allowing videos of the stabbing of a Sydney bishop in his church last month after government lawyers condemned the social media company's free speech argument for keeping the graphic images circulating.

Australian Federal Court Justice **Geoffrey Kennett** extended his order that X Corp, the company rebranded by billionaire **Elon Musk** when he bought Twitter last year, block users from sharing videos of the April 15 attack.

The attack led to terrorism-related charges for the alleged attacker, a teenager, and triggered a riot outside the church.

The order has existed since April 22 and Kennett will decide on Monday whether it will continue in its current form.

ated the injured.

Road accidents are common in Indonesia due to poor safety standards and infrastructure.

MANILA: One person died and five others were severely injured after their car fell off a bridge in Camarines Sur province, southeast of the Philippine capital, amid a heavy downpour on Sunday morning, local media reported.

A local news outlet, quoting the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, said the sedan car was traveling southbound when the accident occurred around 11:30 a.m. local time in Ragay town.

A picture of the accident showed the car landing on its roof in the shallow river below while six rescuers tried to rescue the people trapped inside the car.

The driver died at the scene, while the five injured people, including a child, were taken to a nearby hospital.



Sudanese children suffering from malnutrition are treated at an MSF clinic in Metche Camp, Chad, near the Sudanese border on April 6. Many people here fled the fighting in Sudan's vast western region of Darfur, where attacks by the Arab-dominated Rapid Support Forces on ethnic African civilians have revived memories of genocide. The United Nations says close to 9 million people have fled their homes. (AP)



Noboa



Elbé

Lat/Am

Storms death toll 136: The death toll from the storms and floods in south Brazil's Rio Grande do Sul state has climbed to 136, with 125 people still missing and 756 more injured, the state's civil defense agency said Saturday.

Since the rains began on April 29, the state has so far recorded 339,925 people displaced, 71,398 in shelters and more than 2 million affected in 444 of the 497 municipalities.

Rescue efforts and climatological alerts for new rainfall continue in flooded areas, according to the agency.

It rained again in Porto Alegre, the state capital, on Saturday, halting the decline in the level of the Guaiba River.

The river has flooded and devastated much of the city and caused the Salgado Filho International Airport to suspend operation.

As of Thursday, federal agencies had sent nearly 2,000 tons of donations to Rio Grande do Sul. (Xinhua)

Ecuador shooting kills 8: A shooting attack during a birthday party at a bar in Ecuador on Saturday left eight people dead, police said, as the country experiences an escalating wave of gang-fueled violence.

It was unclear if the attack in the coastal province of Santa Elena was directed at the person whose was holding the celebration.

Local police said the attackers rode up in a taxi and two motorcycles. They opened fire at the bar in the town of Chanduy, 185 miles (300 kilometers) southwest of Quito. Some of the victims were found outside the bar.

The victims included five men and three women and none of the victims had criminal records, police said. Santa Elena has become one of Ecuador's most violent regions, in part because it has three ports. Seaports are often used to smuggle drugs.

Local gangs, which in some cases work with Mexican cartels, have caused homicides to increase significantly in recent years.

Ecuador saw at least 7,600 killings in 2023, up from about 4,400 in 2022. So far this year, there have been about 1,875 homicides in Ecuador. Ecuador's president is **Daniel Noboa**. (AP)

'Arrest Haiti police chief': A growing number of civilians and police officers are demanding the dismissal and arrest

of Haiti's police chief as heavily armed gangs launched a new attack in the capital of Port-au-Prince, seizing control of yet another police station early Saturday.

Armed men raided the coastal community of Gressier in the western tip of Port-au-Prince late Friday, injuring people, burning cars and attacking homes and



Rescuers collect the belongings of victims from the wreckage of a bus after an accident in Subang, West Java, Indonesia, on May 11. The bus carrying high school students and teachers returning from an outing smashed into cars and motorbikes in Indonesia's West Java province, killing at least 11 people, mostly students, and injuring dozens of others, officials said on May 12. (AP)

other infrastructure as scores of people fled into the nearby mountains following a barrage of gunfire overnight.

It was not immediately known if anyone died.

Videos posted on social media showed people fleeing into the early dawn balancing bags and suitcases on their heads as men clad in sandals and carrying heavy weapons celebrated with gunfire.

"The town is ours," said one man who filmed himself with others who were armed, noting they were in Gressier. "We have no limits."

The attack comes roughly a week after gang attacks in central Port-au-Prince forced more than 3,700 people to flee their homes.

"The situation is critical and catastrophic," Garry Jean-Baptiste, a spokesman for the SPNH-17 police union, told The Associated Press.

He called **Frantz Elbé**, director of Haiti's National Police, incapable and incompetent: "Monsieur Elbé has failed."

Jean-Baptiste said the union wants a newly installed transitional presidential council to demand Elbé's resignation and order justice officials to launch an investigation into the crisis.

"Police continue to lose their premises and equipment and officers," he said, adding that at least 30 police stations and substations have been attacked and burned in recent months. (AP)

Change Closing pts

Change Closing pts

SAUDI
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'Balancing liquidity across asset classes'

Crucial role of liquidity in asset allocation strategies, reports NBK Wealth

Kamco Invest reports net profit of 1.5 million dinars for Q1 2024

EPS of 4.28 fils per share

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Kamco Invest, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse with one of the largest AUMs in the region, announced its financial results for the first quarter ended 31 March 2024. The Company reported a net profit of KWD1.5mn (EPS:4.28 fils) compared to a loss of KWD1.6mn during the same period in 2023 (EPS:-4.57 fils).

Total revenue rose by 155.2% to reach KWD6.7mn (Q1 2023: KWD2.6mn), whereas revenues from fees and commissions increased by 7.4% to reach KWD3.5mn (Q1 2023: KWD3.3mn).

During the first quarter, assets under management grew by 5.1% to reach USD15.6bn as of 31 March 2024, due to new money raised in various products during the period, as well as the performance of portfolios and funds. Equity funds and managed portfolios continued to outperform their respective benchmarks. Kamco Islamic Fund continued to be the best performing in the Kuwait Islamic equity funds category, achieving a return of 8.7% during the period. Similarly, the Kamco Investment Fund and Kamco Premier Market Index Fund maintained their positions amongst the top performing conventional equity funds ranking second and third with performances of 9.5% and 7.3%, respectively. The ranking is based on the funds' disclosures on Boursa Kuwait.

The Alternative Investments team continued to undergo plans to exit legacy assets held by the private equity funds and work on new initiatives and products. The team is also evaluating several investment opportunities in real estate, private equity, and venture capital, which led to a partnership agreement with Santander Asset Management, specialists in private debt instruments.

The Investment Banking team



Faisal Sarkhou



KAMCO Financial Performance

continued to advise their clients with several transactions in the pipeline expected to close dur-

ing the year across Equity Capital Markets, Debt Capital Markets, and Mergers & Acquisitions

(M&A). During the quarter, the team successfully acted as Joint Lead Manager on a USD500mn Sukuk issuance.

First Securities Brokerage Company, Kamco Invest's brokerage arm, continued to strengthen its competitive position and attracted new clients through its online trading platforms.

Regional offices continued to strengthen their presence in their markets by improving their services and contributing more to the company's core businesses, particularly in asset management. Kamco Invest - Saudi signed a strategic partnership with Flexam Invest to offer leasing opportunities to their clients.

Total assets increased by 11.1% during the period to reach KWD143.2mn, whereas shareholders' equity rose by 3% to KWD61.5mn. The Company's book value increased from 174fils as of end of 2023 to 180 fils as of 31 March 2024. The Company also enjoys a strong financial position and a "BBB" long-term credit rating and "A3" short-term rating with stable outlook by Capital Intelligence in their latest review in May 2023.

Commenting on the results, Faisal Mansour Sarkhou, Chief Executive Officer, said, "We are pleased with the Company's performance, positively impacting key financial ratios. The positive performance came despite the challenges and negative market sentiments that are impacted by rising interest rates, financial market volatility, and geopolitical conflicts. During the period, we were able to attract new clients, further growing the assets managed on behalf of clients. Moving forward, we will continue to work on strengthening the Company's financial position and operational performance by introducing new services and products. Additionally, we aim to expand our team and broaden their skills and expertise, especially in Saudi Arabia and the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), which contribute to improving our fees and commission income."

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Liquidity is a crucial consideration in asset allocation strategies, enabling investors to access funds promptly when needed. It provides flexibility and the ability to adapt to changing financial needs and market conditions. In this article, we will explore the importance of incorporating liquidity considerations into investment strategies.



NBK Wealth logo

ter risk-adjusted returns and navigate changing market conditions.

Liquidity Minimizes Drawdown and Preserves Financial Stability

In a portfolio, liquidity plays a critical role in minimizing drawdown and preserving overall financial stability. It acts as a safeguard by offering immediate access to funds for short term financial needs without the need to sell long-term assets at unfavorable prices. This helps prevent forced selling during market downturns, which can exacerbate portfolio losses.

Capitalizing on Buying Opportunities and Market Turbulence

Maintaining liquidity in a portfolio allows investors to capitalize on buying opportunities during market turbulence. Investors can take advantage of discounted asset prices and potentially enhance portfolio returns by strategically deploying funds when markets are down.

Diversification for Risk Management

Diversifying across asset classes with varying levels of liquidity is essential for risk management. Balancing liquid assets with illiquid investments spreads risk and reduces the impact of market volatility on the overall portfolio. This diversification approach enhances resilience and stability, ensuring the portfolio can withstand market volatility and potential drawdowns.

Maximizing Portfolio Utility for High-Net-Worth Individuals

High-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) often face a challenge in managing their investment portfolios as they hold a mix of assets, including illiquid investments like private equity or real estate, alongside the need for liquidity and flexibility. Adding incremental exposure to liquid assets such as cash, bonds, and publicly listed equities can be beneficial, providing quick access to funds during market volatility and stability in portfolio management.

Liquidity Allocation and Portfolio Construction

The strategic significance of investments in highly liquid public markets within an outcome-based investment solution is crucial when viewed through the lens of liquidity. Achieving the optimal balance between liquid and illiquid investments in a global multi-asset portfolio centers on a liquidity risk-based allocation approach that mixes the liquidity/return trade-off alongside individual investors' liquidity needs and time horizon considerations. By strategically considering the liquidity profile of assets in the portfolio, investors can achieve bet-

Maximizing Liquidity and Flexibility with ETFs and Mutual Funds

Incorporating Exchange-Traded Funds (ETFs) and mutual funds into a diversified portfolio of liquid and illiquid assets can be a strategic approach to enhancing liquidity, managing risk, and navigating market volatility. These investment vehicles offer diversification, professional management, and trading liquidity, enabling investors to make quick adjustments in response to changing market conditions.

Liquidity Considerations in Volatile Markets

During periods of heightened market volatility, liquid assets play a crucial role in a portfolio for several reasons. Liquid assets such as cash, bonds, and publicly listed equities can be easily bought or sold on the market, providing investors with the flexibility to promptly adjust their portfolio allocations in response to changing market conditions. This ability to swiftly reallocate capital helps manage risk and take advantage of investment opportunities.

Blending Liquid and Illiquid Assets for a Well-Balanced Portfolio

Traditional asset classes are essential components of a well-rounded portfolio, but it is crucial to also acknowledge the value that illiquid assets bring. Alternative asset classes can play a significant role in diversification and potentially increase returns.

However, it is important to limit exposure to alternative assets due to their inherent illiquidity and higher risk profile when blending them with liquid assets to achieve a well-balanced risk-return profile.

Key Takeaways

1. Incorporating liquidity into investment strategies safeguards portfolios during market downturns, enabling opportunistic investing and enhancing risk management and diversification.
2. Balancing illiquid investments with liquid assets boosts portfolio resilience and adaptability to market changes.
3. Liquidity plays a pivotal role in strengthening portfolios by efficiently addressing short-term financial needs.
4. Timely access to liquidity facilitates swift capital deployment in seizing market opportunities, enhancing overall financial stability.
5. Considering liquidity factors empowers investors to strengthen their portfolios, navigate market volatility, and optimize investment outcomes.

New instant payment service revealed

KNet organizes forum on embracing change

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: The Shared Automated Banking Services Company, known as "KNet," recently organized a forum under the title 'Embracing Change Together', which saw full participation from all company employees, reports Al-Qabas daily.

The forum featured a panel discussion involving members of the company's executive management.

During the event, CEO Issam Al-Khasnam highlighted KNet's notable achievements, particularly in upgrading technical infrastructure and advancing products and services within Kuwait's payments sector.

Emphasizing KNet's core objective of pioneering innovative electronic payment solutions locally and regionally, Al-Khasnam unveiled plans for the imminent launch of a new instant payment service aimed at providing users with unprecedented speed and security in transferring funds between personal bank accounts.

Al-Khasnam outlined KNet's strategic focus on establishing a secure and reliable payment environment

through infrastructure reinforcement and the development of new payment systems. The company is also committed to enhancing service efficiency in both local and regional markets. As part of this strategy, KNet is poised to introduce a new payment gateway offering enhanced safety and efficiency.

Additionally, Al-Khasnam discussed KNet's SoftPOS service, designed for business owners in the retail sector selling low-value goods. SoftPOS enables merchants to transform Android Smartphones into versatile point-of-sale devices, facilitating secure financial transactions. This initiative aims to reduce cash circulation and promote financial inclusion.

Looking ahead, KNet aims to expand its payment systems infrastructure to deliver high-quality, user-friendly products and services aligned with modern financial technologies. The company prioritizes service quality and safety to meet user expectations and requirements effectively.



Photo taken during the forum meeting.



Al-Rashoud and Al-Dardari following the signing of the agreement.



Al-Rashoud, Al-Dardari with officials from both sides.

Alliance aims to reach 100 million farmers

KFH signs 'Global Takaful Alliance' agreement with United Nations Development Programme

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) signed the first-of-its-kind Global Takaful Alliance agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at KFH's headquarters. The two parties also discussed establishing a strategic partnership to finance sustainable development projects in Kuwait, the region, and around the world.

The agreement was signed by Dr. Abdallah Al Dardari, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States at the UNDP, and Abdulwahab Al Rushood, KFH Acting Group CEO, KFH Kuwait CEO, Khaled AlShamlan, and other officials from both parties witnessed the signing.

Following the signing of the agreement, Dr. Abdallah Al Dardari said: "We were honored to meet today with top executives at KFH, a world leading Islamic financial institution. We discussed various topics, with a particular focus on forming a strategic partnership to finance sustainable development projects throughout Kuwait, the Arab region, and beyond."

AlDardari added: "By signing the Takaful agreement, KFH becomes a member of the Global Takaful Alliance. This alliance aims to provide Takaful insurance to 100 million farmers worldwide. It will also empower these farmers by enabling them to access financing and financial instruments to expand their businesses."

"The agreement with KFH establishes collaboration on several aspects. The focus will be on supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through Islamic financing solutions for sustainable operations and achieving business sustainability. The discussions also addressed fintech companies and explored ways to strengthen cooperation with them," He added.

He emphasized that the two parties have agreed in principle to create a sustainable financing platform, the Green Finance Facility. This initiative aims to connect Islamic finance with sustainable development projects across the Arab region, Africa, and beyond. The rationale behind this lies in the inher-

ent compatibility of Islamic finance principles with the goals of sustainable development.

Praising KFH's excellence in sustainability efforts, Al Dardari commended the bank as a role model for the financial institutions and the private sector. He further emphasized the importance of the strong partnership between the two parties, stating that this collaboration is crucial for UNDP's continued progress on various sustainable initiatives.

KFH Acting Group Chief Executive Officer, Abdulwahab Al Rushood KFH Acting Group Chief Executive Officer, Abdulwahab Al Rushood emphasized KFH's continued efforts to strengthen its leadership role in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He also underscored the importance of solidifying the (ESG) principles across all KFH's operations. Additionally, he highlighted the significance of the partnership with the UNDP.

"KFH pioneered both impact measurement reporting and the issuance of sustainable Sukuk. The strong demand for these Sukuk reflects the growing trend towards sustainability. KFH further solidified its leadership in sustainability by issuing sustainability report and the Kuwaiti banking sector's first-of-its-kind carbon footprint report. The bank also launched the 'Keep it Green' campaign, which has spurred numerous sustainability initiatives," he added.

Al Rushood highlighted the alignment between KFH's focus on supporting SMEs, sustainable projects, and collaboration with Fintechs, and the UNDP's priorities and sustainability standards.

He emphasized that Islamic finance has long been differentiated by its focus on developmental and sustainable goals, creating a positive impact on individuals, society, the economy, and overall development. KFH's extensive presence in 12 countries worldwide strengthens its role in implementing sustainability on a large scale. This, in turn, contributes significantly to a comprehensive sustainability strategy.

35% rise in net profit, 50% increase in EPS

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait Group holds Q1 2024 analyst conference call

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently hosted its Q1 2024 analyst conference attended by Abdulla Al Sumait, Acting Group Chief Executive Officer; Shiamak Soonawalla, Group Chief Finance Officer; Abdulaziz Jawad, Chief Strategy Officer; and Yaqoub Almulla, Senior Manager of Investor Relations.

The conference entailed a review of the Group's financial indicators during the quarter, as well as the expectations and upcoming projects, with the aim of maintaining its leading position in the banking sector and improving customer service according to the highest standards in the industry.

Al Sumait claimed, "ABK is poised to capitalize on growth opportunities in the market with a commitment to continue to drive innovation, invest in technology, and enhance our product and service offerings to meet customers' evolving needs."

He added, "Regarding our key financial highlights and performance during this period, we have achieved a 35% rise in Net Profit amounting to KD 14.5 million, a 50% increase in EPS to 6 fils, and an NPL Ratio of 1.34%. These figures highlight our resilience and proven track record in navigating economic fluctuations and effectively addressing local, regional, and global challenges."

Al Sumait affirmed that the Group maintained positive momentum during the quarter, reflected in its improved profitability and asset quality ratios. "We remain confident in our ability to seize growth opportunities and strengthen its position in the banking sector," he said.

Dedication and Excellence

Al Sumait elaborated that the Group continues to benefit from its local and tactically widespread international presence. He said, "Notably, our international operations significantly contributed to our operating income and asset portion. By expanding our regional presence, the Group has achieved significant success in Egypt through securing important investment and financing deals. Furthermore, ABK continues to take precautions and develop prudent plans to address the economic challenges in Egypt." The Group also persists in its efforts through its Dubai International Financial Center (DIFC) branch to gain the trust of global investors, secure loan deals, and enhance financial performance.

Al Sumait highlighted that the Group's strong commitment to implementing digital transformation plans remains steady, as it continues to integrate cutting-edge technologies into banking systems. He shared, "We are pleased to announce the full renovation and re-opening of our Al-Jabriya branch, demonstrating our dedication to providing our customers with innovative banking solutions. We are planning to introduce more digital branches in the future to offer seamless service to our customers."

In Q1 2024, the Group signed a \$250 million credit facility agreement with South Korea's Daewoo Engineering and Construction Company. This partnership, in collaboration with Commercial Bank of Kuwait and Burgan Bank, underscores the strong relationships and trust that the Group has cultivated with global institutions across different sectors, thanks to its unique solutions, professional approach, and ability to meet diverse needs.

Furthermore, the Bank launched a series of new and uplifted products and services, of which included the unique cashback credit card proposition and increase in affluent elite and youth segments. Commenting on this success, Al Sumait said, "As we reflect on our accomplishments in Q1 2024, we remain committed to investing in the growth and development of our workforce."

Financial Performance

On his part, Soonawalla commented, "Our financial performance shows significant enhancements in profitability, efficiency, asset quality, and strong capital position. We have made a good beginning and, at this stage, remain optimistic about our performance for the remainder of the year."

In terms of operational performance, our operating income has reached KD 51.9 million an increase of 21%, while our Operating Profit of KD 27.8 million has increased by 25%. With regards to asset quality, Non-performing Loan Ratio stood at 1.34%, while the Loan Loss Coverage Ratio was at 462%, reflecting ABK's prudent provisioning quality and strong credit metrics. Furthermore, it currently holds KD 223 million of provisions in excess of IFRS requirements, providing adequate protection against downside risks.

Soonawalla shed light on the fact that the Group continues to improve on its operational efficiency, with a Net Interest Margin of 2.3% and an Operating Profit to average assets ratio of 1.74% reflecting the Group's strong performance and greater emphasis on profitability. Additionally, Return on Average Equity reached 9.6%, a 60% increase compared to the same period in 2023.

He added that the Group's Total

Interest Income reached KD 116.2 million, marking a substantial increase of KD 20.4 million or 21% compared to the same period in 2023. Soonawalla claimed that this growth can be largely attributed to higher asset levels and a more favorable interest rate environment. During the same period, the Group's interest expense increased by 24% to KD 79.2 million as deposits got repriced at a higher rate in line with interest rate hikes during 2023.

Soonawalla further discussed that the Group's Assets reached KD 6.5 billion, a 7.4% noticeable increase, and its loan portfolio grew by 6% to KD 4.3 billion, reflecting a strong and robust balance sheet. Additionally, Total Deposits amounted to KD 3.9 billion, accounting for 66.1% of Total Liabilities. Meanwhile, the liquidity position remains robust, with a Net Stable Funding Ratio of 113% and a Liquidity Coverage Ratio of 260%, well above regulatory requirements.

The Group CFO also discussed the important factors impacting changes in income, margins, and costs, highlighting that the total Operating Income has experienced a notable 21%.

Furthermore, fees and commissions made a significant contribution to earnings, with a noticeable growth of 45%, amounting to KD 11.1 million in Q1 2024. Soonawalla disclosed that the Group's fees and commissions come from a variety of sources across different regions and business sectors, with the majority stemming from core banking operations.

Economic Indicators

In his part, Jawad said, "Global recovery shows elasticity once again, changing by region with a baseline forecast for the world economy to continue growing at the same pace as last year by 3.2% according to the IMF. S&P Global Market Intelligence's forecast of global growth has also been revised upward in comparison to last year, with annual real GDP growth now projected at 2.6%, up from 2.3% at the beginning of the year. This upward revision also reflects slightly higher forecasts for growth in several countries internationally."

He added that nevertheless, growth in GCC countries remained remarkably resilient, including during challenging political scenarios. This was a result of higher energy prices and strong capital inflows in the region. Jawad pointed out that the GCC also witnessed expansions in the non-oil sector as per PWC, which is estimated to have grown by 4.3% as to date with government investments linked to various economic diversifications taking place across the GCC in 2024.

Moving to Kuwait, the Chief Strategy Officer shared, "IMF forecasts a slight real GDP reduction of -1.4% this year as a result of OPEC oil production cuts, and faces lower inflationary pressures which are expected to ease to 3.0% this year as per S&P. Projects have also been temporarily halted due to unforeseen changes in the domestic political scene, but is expected to pick up gradually towards the second half of 2024 with a planned project pipeline of KD 6.3 billion."

A Journey of Growth

Transitioning to ABK, this quarter witnessed sizable growth and notable achievements. Jawad stated, "Our dedication remains on path and stable by reaffirmed 'A' ratings from Fitch and 'A2' ratings from Moody's." He was also pleased to report that this growth journey remains successful in line with the ABK2X strategy where some initiatives have been extended to the broader group entities, expanding the impact beyond the initial scope and creating effective synergies between subsidiaries.

Jawad added, "Our ABK2X strategy continues to drive tangible outcomes with growth across our products and customer base. ABK introduced the new Elite Plus segment in January 2024 to expand our offering to the Elite segment and also successfully launched two more card products to the market, the ABK cashback credit card and the Elite Plus credit card. We have received great market feedback, witnessed our highest-ever monthly credit card sales where it and our market share growth of new credit cards more than doubled vs. Q1 2023."

Furthermore, ABK's targeted acquisition campaigns resulted in increasing market share among key salaried Kuwaiti segments and expats. By focusing on key segments, it was able to improve its share of the incremental loan market to reach +15% during Q1 2024. Jawad added, "We also launched an upgraded A+ youth segment offering to increase our share of youth."

Egypt and the UAE

On the international business side, the Egyptian economy experienced a recent flotation of the EGP and a sharp raise of the local interest rate, which is meant to combat inflationary waves and attract foreign investments. These factors will, in turn, result in an improved operating environment for ABK-Egypt.

Shifting to the UAE, Jawad claimed, "We are proud to announce



Mr. Abdulla Al Sumait - Acting Group Chief Executive Officer



Mr. Shiamak Soonawalla - Group Chief Finance Officer



Mr. Abdulaziz Jawad - Chief Strategy Officer

that ABK-UAE has received CBK approval to market their products in Kuwait. It has also launched a new mortgage lending program catering to customers' financial needs in

both the UAE and Kuwait." ABK Capital and Sustainability Jawad also highlighted that the Bank's investment arm, ABK Capital, has initiated the revamp of its

5-year strategic plan, aimed at enhancing growth opportunities and solidifying its market position as a leading player in the financial services industry.

He also shared, "We have recently achieved a new milestone with the recent approval of our enhanced 5-year group ESG strategy, built on six fundamental pillars. This is in addition to our persistent efforts in equipping staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively integrate sustainability and ESG principles into daily operations. Doing so enables us to further foster a culture of sustainability and responsible banking practices throughout the organization."

Jawad also disclosed that ABK is currently conducting internal data collection to evaluate its progress this year, all of which should be published in our upcoming sustainability report.

Concluding his statement, Jawad said, "ABK is committed to meticulously executing its strategy, positioning the Bank to generate lasting value and foster prosperity for all stakeholders as we look forward to the first half of 2024."

Central Bank reports decrease in domestic public debt instruments

Credit facilities to residents reach 48.104 bln dinars

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: The Central Bank of Kuwait's recent monthly monetary statistical bulletin for March 2024, as detailed in Al-Shall's weekly economic report, indicates a decrease in the balance of total domestic public debt instruments by 50 million dinars, settling at 210 million dinars compared to the previous year, reports Al-Jarida daily.

This represents around 0.4 percent of the estimated GDP for 2024, valued at approximately 53.199 billion dinars.

Furthermore, the report elaborates on the average interest rates on public debt instruments over varying periods. Local banks continue to handle 100 percent of the total local public debt instruments.

Additionally, the bulletin sheds light on credit facilities to residents provided by local banks, totaling around 48.104 billion dinars by the end of March

2024. Notably, there was a 2.0 percent increase from the previous year.

Regarding Kuwait Finance House (KFH), the report outlines its financial performance for the first quarter of the year. While net profits experienced a slight decline compared to the same period in 2023, the bank's total assets saw a marginal increase to reach 37.023 billion dinars.

However, liabilities witnessed a decrease, indicating a mixed performance in profitability indicators compared to the previous year.

Additionally, the report examines the performance of financial markets, noting a negative trend in April for the majority of markets, attributed partly to geopolitical events and delays in anticipated interest rate adjustments.

The outlook for May remains uncertain, influenced by geopolitical developments and interest rate expectations.

These analyses provide insights into Kuwait's economic landscape, encompassing fiscal indicators, banking performance, and market trends, essential for informed decision-making and strategic planning.

AGM approves decision to distribute cash dividends of 20 fils per share

Advanced Technology Company announces FY 2023 results

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Advanced Technology Company (ATC), the leading distributor of comprehensive health and environmental care solutions across the public and private sectors, yesterday held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM), led by ATC Vice Chairman Faisal Sarkhou, who announced the Company's financial results for the fiscal year ended 31 December 2023.

The Company posted yearly revenue of 168.6 million dinars, a 1.9% increase over FY 2022, and earnings of 5.03 million dinars, down 28.2% year over year. The higher cost of revenue from health services, coupled with rising interest rates resulted in a 57.2% increase in financing costs, totaling 10.8 million dinars in 2023. Earnings per share reached 33.53 fils per share in 2023, compared to 46.75 fils per share in 2022.

"Although partially offset by reduced SG&A costs, the decrease in net profit was largely attributable to the Company's acquisition of Kuwait Medical Centre Holding



Faisal Sarkhou



Ghassan Mamlouk

Company (KMCH). ATC acquired control over KMCH in a bid to strategically strengthen its presence in the country's expanding healthcare services sector. This segment in particular demonstrates significant growth potential, having contributed 11.4%, or 19.2 million dinars, to total revenue in 2023," Faisal Sarkhou, Vice Chairman, ATC said.

"We are currently focused on implementing several major projects

aimed at driving the company's business growth in the coming years. These initiatives are designed not only to enhance our long-term competitive position and achieve a sizeable, sustainable market share but also to accelerate our growth trajectory in the years ahead," Sarkhou added.

"Guided by our vision and driven by innovation, ATC remains steadfast in advancing healthcare excellence by

providing innovative solutions. We aim to create lasting value through operational excellence and by forging strategic ties with prominent local and international medical partners. These efforts underscore our commitment to elevating Kuwait's medical landscape and delivering long-term value to our shareholders," Ghassan Mamlouk, CEO, ATC said.

"ATC is dedicated to delivering innovative healthcare and environmental technology solutions to enhance customer satisfaction and create long-term shareholder value through disciplined execution, strategic partnerships, and principled leadership. Our goal is to emerge as the foremost end-to-end healthcare and environmental solutions provider in the region," the CEO added.

"We anticipate delivering several projects in the coming years that will bolster ATC's revenue growth and advance the country's healthcare system by expanding the medical infrastructure and enhancing the quality of services offered to the community," the CEO added.



Al Othman honors Al MUSAIBEEH at the ceremony.



AUM President Prof. Georges Yahchouchi with Zain's HR team.

Company recently supported AUM's 10th Career Fair

Zain recognized at AUM Corporate Award ceremony

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Zain was recently recognized at the American University of the Middle East (AUM) Corporate Award ceremony, held at the university's Cultural Center in the Egaila Campus. The recognition came to shed light on Zain and AUM's extended partnership over the years, and to highlight the company's ongoing efforts to bolster national talents in the local private sector.

During the ceremony, HUMANSOFT Vice Chairman Tareq Al Othman awarded Zain Kuwait Corporate Relations Department Manager Hamad Al MUSAIBEEH in recognition of the company's continuous support to the annual AUM Career Fair, which Zain recently sponsored with the attendance of AUM President Professor Georges Yahchouchi, PhD.

The step came in recognition of the strategic role Zain continues to play in presenting local talents with career opportunities in the private sector to foster a strong presence for the national workforce in the job market, with a focus on STEM areas and digital capacities that have become a priority in today's markets.

Zain expressed its gratitude to AUM for this recognition, which is an acknowledgment from one of the nation's top academic institutions of the company's role in contributing to develop the education and human resources sectors, which play a significant role in enhancing the local business and

economic landscapes.

The company recently sponsored AUM's 10th Career Fair, organized by the Tawteen Career Development and Recruitment center. This year, the event featured over 50 employers from across the most vibrant industries who presented their career opportunities to fresh graduates and job seekers.

Through its dedicated booth at the career fair, Zain presented its available job vacancies, explained its internal policy, and showcased its wonderful workplace environment. Zain's team also provided a detailed explanation of the nature of work at various departments and divisions and answered all questions and inquiries.

Zain continues to support and actively participate in major career fairs in Kuwait in collaboration with the biggest academic institutions from both the public and private sectors. The company strives to attract national talent to join the Kuwaiti private sector with the goal of fostering sustainable growth.

Through such contributions, Zain seeks to stimulate the local job market, exchange experiences, and offer career opportunities to students, fresh graduates, and those who are looking for their next career journey. The company is keen on offering job seekers with career opportunities that best suit their skills, competencies, and passions to progress national economy and increase national talent representation in the Kuwaiti private sector.

Tourism cruise sector in the Mideast is poised for growth

A recent report highlighted the significant potential of the tourism cruise sector in the region, despite challenges such as the Red Sea crisis. While the sector in the Middle East still lags behind other regions, tourism experts believe there are ample opportunities for growth, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Major tourist cruise operators have adjusted their itineraries and trips in response to the Red Sea incidents, with some even canceling them. However, Saud Al Muhairi, head of cruise

and yacht tourism at the Department of Economy and Tourism in Dubai, emphasized the immense potential in the Gulf region's cruise tourism sector. He suggested that holding events on cruise ships, especially smaller ones, could be an innovative approach to attract tourists.

Al Muhairi highlighted the importance of partnerships between cruise tourism companies for the sector's continued success. Despite recent challenges, the sector has seen growth over the past year and a half, driven by strong

demand and increased interest in cruise tourism.

Dave Goodger, managing director of EMEA Tourism, acknowledged a decrease in the prevalence and occupancy rates of cruise ships in the Red Sea this year. However, he emphasized the resilience of the cruise ship sector, noting that while there are temporary impacts, the future remains bright.

Goodger pointed out a demand for both longer and shorter cruises, stressing the importance

of providing diverse offerings to meet the needs and preferences of customers.

Lakshmi Durai, CEO of Cruise Explore in the Middle East, emphasized the importance of having more cruise ships in the region to benefit the entire sector. He highlighted the opportunity to attract people who traditionally spend vacations on land to consider vacations at sea. Durai emphasized the need for comprehensive cruise trips that include visits to multiple tourist sites to appeal to potential customers.

BoE hinting at a possible interest rate cut in the near future

The ever so tight US labor market begins to crack

By National Bank of Kuwait

United States

Prelim UoM Consumer Sentiment

Consumer confidence in the US economy is sinking. A key survey by the University of Michigan shows a sharp drop in sentiment, reaching a six-month low. This is driven by the fact that inflation is picking up again, leading consumers to worry about their spending power. That, along with the fact that consumers believe that prices will keep climbing in the future, dampening their overall economic outlook. This shift in sentiment makes it less likely that the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates anytime soon.

Unemployment Claims

The latest data suggests a slowdown in the US job market. New unemployment claims reached a high not seen in over eight months, at 231,000 for the week ending May 4th. This comes after reports showed the economy added the fewest jobs in six months in April and job openings hit a three-year low in March. These signs of cooling are raising the possibility that the Federal Reserve might cut interest rates twice this year.

The US Dollar index closed the week at 105.301.

United Kingdom

Monetary Policy Summary

The Bank of England is hinting at a possible interest rate cut in the near future, despite keeping rates at a 16-year high of 5.25%. This decision comes as inflation shows signs of cooling down, reaching a two-and-a-half year low of 3.2%. While still above the Bank's 2% target, the downward trend is encouraging. Forecasts by the Bank of England predict inflation dipping below the target in the coming months, although a temporary rise is expected later in the year. This, combined with a growing sentiment within the Bank's committee favoring a rate cut, suggests a policy change might be on the horizon. However, BoE Governor Andrew Bailey remains cautious, wanting more confirmation that lower inflation is here to stay before taking action. A June rate cut is a possibility, but not yet a certainty. The Bank is looking for sustained evidence that inflation is under control before it eases its grip on interest rates.

GDP

The UK economy is showing signs of recovery. On a monthly basis, there was a growth of 0.4%, following

Highlights

- Consumer confidence in the US economy is sinking.
- The latest data suggests a slowdown in the US job market.
- The Bank of England is hinting at a possible interest rate cut in the near future, despite keeping rates at a 16-year high of 5.25%.
- The UK economy is showing signs of recovery.
- Retail sales in the Eurozone increased at its fastest rate since September 2022.
- The Eurozone final services PMI was revised up to 53.3, up from early estimates of 52.9.
- The Reserve Bank of Australia maintained interest rates at a 12 year high of 4.35%.
- Bank of Japan Governor Kazuo Ueda signaled that he is open to further rate hikes and tightening should the situation require it.

smaller increases in February and January. While on a quarterly basis, there was a growth of 0.6%, reversing the declines seen in the previous two quarters. This means the economy is finally expanding again after a period of contraction. The biggest contributor to growth was the services sector, with a 0.7% increase in Q1 2024. Additionally, also grew in Q1 2024 (0.8%), but at a slower pace than the previous month.

The GBP/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.2521

Europe

Retail Sales

Retail sales in the Eurozone increased at its fastest rate since September 2022. The month-over-month figure advanced by 0.8%, beating expectations of a 0.6% increase, and marginally higher than the downward revised 0.3% figure for the previous month. On an annual basis, sales grew by 0.7%, reversing the 0.5% contraction seen in February, and marking the first positive rate since September 2022. Increases in sales were boosted by food and drinks products increasing by 1.2%, while non-food products remained stable for the month.

Rates - 12th May 2024

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.0760	1.0722	1.0790	1.0769	1.0700	1.0860	1.0817
GBP	1.2543	1.2443	1.2594	1.2521	1.2360	1.2600	1.2533
JPY	152.87	152.80	155.95	155.72	155.00	157.00	153.61
CHF	0.9050	0.9034	0.9098	0.9063	0.8960	0.9140	0.8972

PMIs

The Eurozone final services PMI was revised up to 53.3, up from early estimates of 52.9. The upward revision was seen in the French services PMI, which was revised to 51.3 up from 50.5. The German final services PMI remained at 53.2, while the Italian and Spanish PMIs remained at higher levels of 54.3 and 56.2 respectively.

The EUR/USD currency pair closed the week at 1.0769.

Asia Pacific

RBA Monetary Policy Statement

The Reserve Bank of Australia maintained interest rates at a 12 year high of 4.35% in line with market expectations. The decision comes amid a hotter than expected quarter to March inflation reading, and weak retail sales data. Australian consumers are increasingly pulling back on spending as elevated interest rates squeeze households, however the central bank warned that despite weakness in consumer spending, "The process of returning inflation to target is unlikely to be smooth." Furthermore, the central bank warned that "it will be some time yet before inflation is sustainably in the target range and will remain vigilant to upside risks." However, the Board also adopted a dovish tone by stating that it is "not ruling anything in or out." Despite recent setbacks, the central bank is sticking to its projection that inflation will fall to its target range by the end of 2025. Markets are pricing the RBA to hold interest rates at the current level for the

rest of this year.

BOJ Governor Kazuo Ueda Speaks

Bank of Japan (BoJ) Governor Kazuo Ueda stated on Wednesday that it is "important for fx moves to reflect fundamentals." Furthermore, he stated that "if risk of weak yen affecting trend inflation significantly is high, we may need to respond with monetary policy" signaling that he is open to further rate hikes and tightening should the situation require it. Additionally, Ueda warned that "sharp, one-sided" yen declines hurt the economy and is undesirable. Despite the warnings, Ueda stated that inflation was "firmly" moving towards the central bank's 2% target. Moreover, he stated that if "inflation undershoots or downside risks heighten, we must maintain current accommodative financial conditions for a longer period." In terms of bond purchases, Ueda stated that the central bank will continue to maintain the size of purchases however acknowledged that they will eventually need to reduce it in the future. The remarks by Ueda failed to convince markets that the central bank will deliver a second-rate hike in the near future and caused the yen to decline further.

The USD/JPY currency pair closed the week at 155.72, while the AUD/USD currency pair closed the week at 0.6601.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti Dinar

USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30750.

GCC IPOs raise \$931 mn in Q1 '24 Kuwait delegation 'visits' Canton Fair

KSA led the region raising a total of USD 503 mln from 8 offerings

KUWAIT CITY, April 12: Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" released its research report titled "Initial Public Offerings (IPO) in the GCC markets", stating that the region has raised total proceeds of USD 931 million through 9 offerings during the first three months of 2024, marking a year-on-year decline in value by 73% compared to the first quarter of 2023, where issuers raised USD 3.5 billion through 12 offerings.

Geographical Allocation:

Markaz's report stated that Saudi Arabia led the region in terms of IPO proceeds during the quarter, raising a total of USD 503 million from 8 offerings constituting 54% of total GCC IPO proceeds. This represented an increase of 594% in the value of Saudi IPOs compared to Q1-2023. In the UAE, IPO proceeds totaled USD 429 million during the period with 1 offering constituting 46% of total GCC IPO proceeds. However, this marked a decline of 87% in UAE proceeds compared to the same period of last year. Other GCC countries did not have any IPOs during the period.

Sector Allocation:

The Transportation sector accounted for nearly 46% of the total proceeds during the period through the offering of Dubai based Parkin Company which marked the largest IPO during the period raising a total of USD 429 million.

The Food & Beverage sector raised more than USD 314 million through the IPO of Saudi Modern Mills Company, constituting 34% of total GCC IPO proceeds raised during the period. This was followed by IPOs from the Pharmaceutical, Healthcare Equipment, and Materials sectors that constituted 14%, 2%, and 1% respectively. Other IPOs primarily include companies from the Consumer Services, Financial Services, Commercial Services and Technology sector among others.

Exchange Allocation:

Saudi Arabia recorded 54% of the total IPO proceeds with the value of USD 445 million in the Main Market and USD 57 million in Nomu-Parallel Market. United Arab Emirates markets constituted 46% of total GCC IPO during Q1-2024 with a value of USD 429 million listed on Dubai's exchange (DFM).

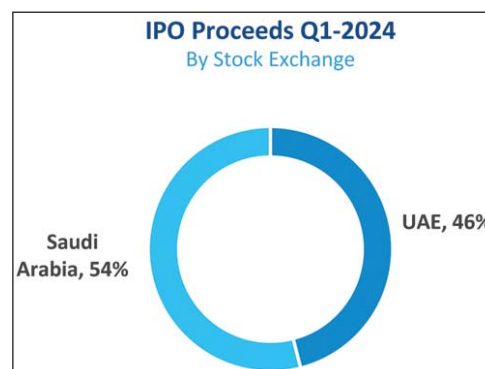
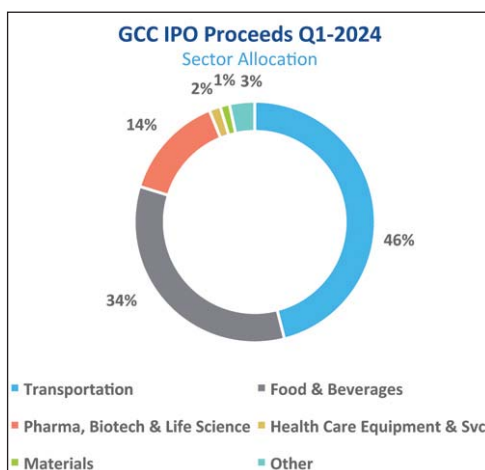
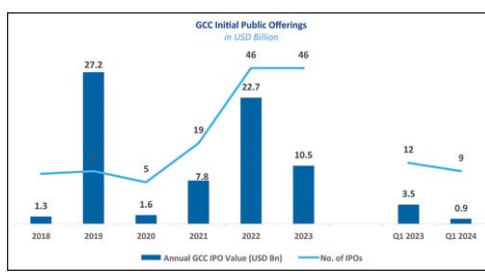
Top 5 GCC IPOs by Proceeds during Q1-2024:

Markaz's report highlights the top 5 GCC IPOs by proceeds during Q1-2024. Parkin Company raised a total of USD 429 million in proceeds from floating 749 million shares, or 25% stake, which was covered 165 times. Parkin Company IPO proceeds constituted 46% of total GCC IPO proceeds in the period. The company was listed on DFM on the 21st of March 2024.

Modern Mills Company IPO raised a total of 314 million USD in proceeds making it the second largest IPO in 2024. The company was listed on March 27th on Tadawul's Main Market and offered 24 million shares, or 30% stake. The offering was covered 21 times and the proceeds

Selected GCC IPO Pipeline:

Company	Country	Sector	Market	Offering Size (shares)	Status
Qomel Company	Saudi Arabia	Healthcare	Nomu - Parallel	500,000	Closing 25 April 2024
Mohammed Hadi AlRasheed Company	Saudi Arabia	Construction	Nomu - Parallel	1,440,000	Closing 6 May 2024
Yaqeen Capital Company	Saudi Arabia	Financial	Nomu - Parallel	3,000,000	Closing 12 May 2024
Lulu Group International	Saudi Arabia/ UAE	Retail	NA	NA	Expected for H2 2024
Spinneys Dubai LLC	UAE	Retail	NA	NA	Expected for H2 2024



constituted 34% of total GCC IPO proceeds in Q1 2024.

Middle East Pharmaceutical Industries Company IPO raised a total of USD 131 million in proceeds. The company offered 6 million shares or 30% stake. The IPO proceeds constituted 14% of total GCC IPO proceeds in Q1 2024 and was covered 54 times. The company was listed on Tadawul's Main Market on February 27th.

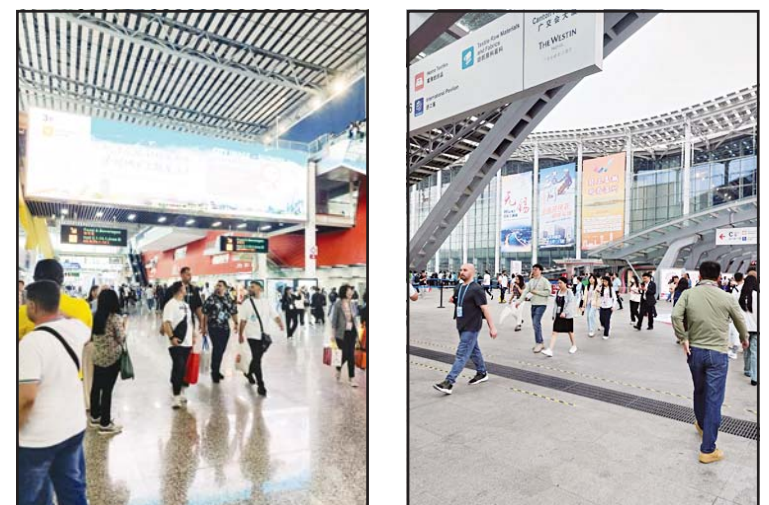
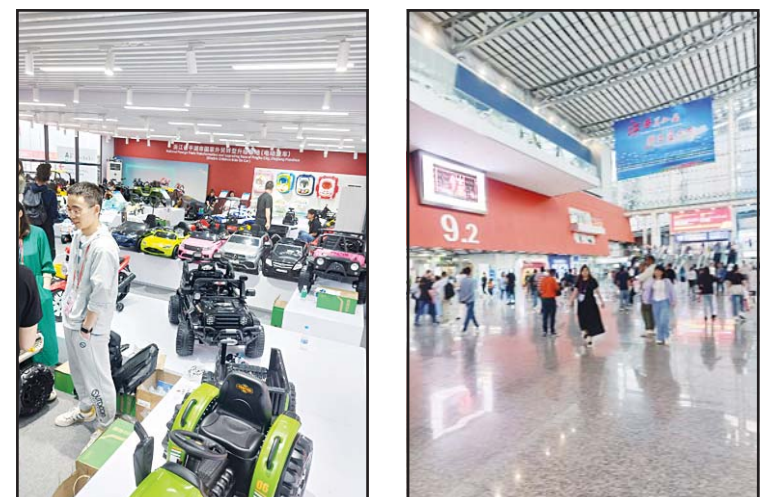
Almodawet Specialized Medical Hospital Company IPO raised a total of USD 14 million in proceeds. Almodawet Specialized Medical Hospital Company offered 475 thousand shares or 20% stake and was covered 1.36 times. The proceeds constituted 2% of total GCC IPO proceeds in Q1 2024. The company was listed on Tadawul's Nomu Parallel Market on the 25th of February.

Taqat Mineral Trading Company raised a total of USD 11.7 million in proceeds through the sale of 2.4 million shares, or 20% stake, and was cov-

ered 1.09 times. Taqat Mineral Trading Company IPO constituted 1% of total GCC IPO proceeds of Q1 2024. The company was listed on Tadawul's Nomu Parallel Market on the 28th of March.

About Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz"

Established in 1974, Kuwait Financial Centre K.P.S.C "Markaz" is one of the leading asset management and investment banking institutions in the MENA region with total assets under management of over KD 1.30 billion (USD 4.24 billion) as of 31 March 2024. Markaz was listed on the Boursa Kuwait in 1997. Over the years, Markaz has pioneered innovation through the creation of new investment channels. These channels enjoy unique characteristics and helped Markaz widen investors' horizons. Examples include Mumtaz (the first domestic mutual fund), MREF (the first real estate investment fund in Kuwait), Forsa Financial Fund (the first and only options market maker in the GCC since 2005), and the GCC Momentum Fund (the first passive fund of its kind in Kuwait and across GCC that follows the momentum methodology), all conceptualized, established, and managed by Markaz.



Top and above: Photos from the Canton Fair.

By Saeed Mahmoud Saleh Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

GUANGZHOU, China, May 12: Citizens and expatriates from Kuwait frequent Guangzhou, China mostly for trade purposes as Chinese goods have successfully entered the country's markets, since Chinese companies and factories offer a variety of products at different prices based on quality while ensuring merchants a good profit margin.

The delegation visited China Import and Export Fair, also known as the Canton Fair -- a crucial platform for China's foreign trade and serves as a window to its opening up strategy. It plays a significant role in promoting China's foreign trade and facilitating economic and trade exchanges between China and the rest of the world. The Canton Fair provides

an excellent opportunity for Chinese and foreign businesspersons to engage in commercial deals.

At the fair, merchants can find a wide range of products, including food, cars, clothing, toys, technology, and furniture, all under one roof. The exhibition takes place in large, extended halls that may require more than a day to fully explore.

For 67 years since its establishment in 1957, Canton Fair is being held in Guangzhou every spring and autumn. It is the oldest and largest fair of its kind, attracting buyers from all over the world.

The current session of the fair -- the 134th edition -- has welcomed visitors from 229 countries and regions. The exhibition has seen a total of 197,869 in-person attendees and 453,857 online participants.

Obituary

Famed filmmaker behind cult classics

Roger Corman, Hollywood's 'King of the Bs,' dies at 98

LOS ANGELES, May 12, (AP) — Roger Corman, the “King of the Bs” who helped turn out such low-budget classics as “Little Shop of Horrors” and “Attack of the Crab Monsters” and gave many of Hollywood’s most famous actors and directors early breaks, has died. He was 98.

Corman died Thursday at his home in Santa Monica, California, according to a statement released Saturday by his wife and daughters.

“He was generous, open-hearted and kind to all those who knew him,” the statement said. “When asked how he would like to be remembered, he said, ‘I was a filmmaker, just that.’”

Starting in 1955, Corman helped create hundreds of B-movies as a producer and director, among them “Black Scorpion,” “Bucket of Blood” and “Bloody Mama.” A remarkable judge of talent, he hired such aspiring filmmakers as Francis Ford Coppola, Ron Howard, James Cameron and Martin Scorsese. In 2009, Corman received an honorary Academy Award.

“There are many constraints connected with working on a low budget, but at the same time there are certain opportunities,” Corman said in a 2007 documentary about Val Lewton, the 1940s director of “Cat People” and other underground classics.

“You can gamble a little bit more. You can experiment. You have to find a more creative way to solve a problem or to present a concept,” he said.

The roots of Hollywood’s golden age in the 1970s can be found in Corman’s films.

Jack Nicholson made his film debut as the title character in a 1958 Corman quickie, “The Cry Baby Killer,” and stayed with the company for biker, horror and action films, writing and producing some of them.

Other actors whose careers began in Corman movies included Robert De Niro, Bruce Dern and Ellen Burstyn.

Peter Fonda’s appearance in “The Wild Angels” was a precursor to his own landmark biker movie, “Easy Rider,” co-starring Nicholson and fellow Corman alumnus Dennis Hopper. “Boxcar Bertha,” starring Barbara Hershey and David Carradine, was an early film by Scorsese.



Corman

Corman’s B-movie directors were given minuscule budgets and often told to finish their films in as little as five days. When Howard, who would go on to win a best director Oscar for “A Beautiful Mind,” pleaded for an extra half day to reshoot a scene in 1977 for “Grand Theft Auto,” Corman told him, “Ron, you can come back if you want, but nobody else will be there.”

Mentor

“Roger Corman was my very first boss, my lifetime mentor and my hero. Roger was one of the greatest visionaries in the history of cinema,” Gale Ann Hurd, whose notable producing credits include the “Terminator” film franchise, “The Abyss” and “The Walking Dead” television series, said in a post on X, formerly Twitter.

Initially only drive-ins and specialty theaters would book Corman films, but as teenagers began turning out, national chains gave in. Corman’s pictures were open for their time about sex and drugs, such as his 1967 release “The Trip,” an explicit story about LSD written by Nicholson and starring Fonda and Hopper.

Meanwhile, he discovered a lucrative sideline releasing prestige for-

eign films in the United States, among them Ingmar Bergman’s “Cries and Whispers,” Federico Fellini’s “Amarcord” and Volker Schlöndorff’s “The Tin Drum.” The latter two won Oscars for best foreign language film.

Corman got his start as a messenger boy for Twentieth Century-Fox, eventually graduating to story analyst. After quitting the business briefly to study English literature for a term at Oxford University, he returned to Hollywood and launched his career as a movie producer and director.

Despite his penny-pinching ways, Corman retained good relations with his directors, boasting that he never fired one because “I wouldn’t want to inflict that humiliation.”

Some of his former underlings repaid his kindness years later. Coppola cast him in “The Godfather, Part II,” Jonathan Demme included him in “The Silence of the Lambs” and “Philadelphia” and Howard gave him a part in “Apollo 13.”

Most of Corman’s movies were quickly forgotten by all but die-hard fans. A rare exception was 1960’s “Little Shop of Horrors,” which starred a bloodthirsty plant that feasted on humans and featured Nicholson in a small but memorable role as a pain-loving dental patient. It inspired a long-lasting stage musical and a 1986 musical adaptation starring Steve Martin, Bill Murray and John Candy.

In 1963, Corman initiated a series of films based on the works of Edgar Allan Poe. The most notable was “The Raven,” which teamed Nicholson with veteran horror stars Boris Karloff, Peter Lorre and Basil Rathbone. Directed by Corman on a rare three-week schedule, the horror spoof won good reviews, a rarity for his films. Another Poe adaptation, “House of Usher,” was deemed worthy of preservation by the Library of Congress.

Variety



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Anya Taylor-Joy in a scene from ‘Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga.’ The film will world premiere at the 77th Cannes Film Festival. (AP)

Film

‘Furiosa,’ ‘Megalopolis’ and a #MeToo reckoning

A combustible Cannes set to unfurl

CANNES, France, May 12, (AP) — The Cannes Film Festival rarely passes without cacophony but this year’s edition may be more raucous and uneasy than any edition in recent memory.

When the red carpet is rolled out from the Palais des Festivals on Tuesday, the 77th Cannes will unfurl against a backdrop of war, protest, potential strikes and quickening #MeToo upheaval in France, which for years largely resisted the movement.

Festival workers are threatening to strike. The Israel-Hamas war, acutely felt in France, home to Europe’s largest Jewish and Arab communities, is sure to spark protests. Russia’s war in Ukraine remains on the minds of many. Add in the kinds of anxieties that can be expected to percolate at Cannes — the ever-uncertain future of cinema, the rise of artificial intelligence — and this year’s festival shouldn’t lack for drama.

Being prepared for anything has long been a useful attitude in Cannes. Befitting such tumultuous times, the film lineup is full of intrigue, curiosity and question marks.

The Iranian director Mohammad Rasoulof, just days before his latest film, “The Seed of the Sacred Fig,” is to debut in competition in Cannes, was sentenced to eight years in prison by the Islamic Revolutionary Court. The film remains on Cannes’ schedule.

Arguably the most feverishly awaited entry is Francis Ford Coppola’s self-financed opus “Megalopolis.” Coppola, is himself no stranger to high-drama at Cannes. An unfinished cut of “Apocalypse Now” won him (in a tie) his second Palme d’Or more than four decades ago.

Even the upcoming U.S. presidential election won’t be far off. Premiering in competition is Ali Abbasi’s “The Apprentice,” starring Sebastian Stan as a young Donald Trump. There will also be new films from Kevin Costner, Paolo Sorrentino, Sean Baker, Yorgos Lanthimos and Andrea Arnold. And for a potentially powder keg Cannes there’s also the firebomb of “Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga.” The film, a rolling apocalyptic dystopia, returns director George Miller to the festival he first became hooked on as a juror.

“I got addicted to it simply because it’s like film camp,” says Miller, who became enraptured to the global gathering of cinema at Cannes and the pristine film presentations. “It’s kind of optimal cinema, really.

The moment that they said, ‘OK, we’re happy to show this film here,’ I jumped at it.”

Cannes’ official opener on Tuesday is “The Second Act,” a French comedy by Quentin Dupieux, starring Léa Seydoux, Louis Garrel and Vincent Lindon. During the opening ceremony, Meryl Streep will be awarded an honorary Palme d’Or. At the closing ceremony, George Lucas will get one, too.

But the spotlight at the start may fall on Judith Godrèche. The French director and actor earlier this year said the filmmakers Benoît Jacquot and Jacques Doillon sexually assaulted her when she was a teenager, allegations that rocked French cinema. Jacquot and Doillon have denied the allegations.

Representation

Though much of the French film industry has previously been reluctant to embrace the #MeToo movement, Godrèche has stoked a wider response. She’s spoken passionately about the need for changes at the Cesars, France’s equivalent of the Oscars, and before a French Senate commission.

In that same period, Godrèche also made the short film “Moi Aussi” during a Paris gathering of hundreds who wrote her with their own stories of sexual abuse. On Wednesday, it opens Cannes’ Un Certain Regard section.

“I hope that I’m heard in the sense that I’m not interested in being some sort of representation of someone who just wants to go after everyone in this industry,” Godrèche said ahead of the festival. “I’m just fighting for some sort of change. It is called a revolution.”

It’s the latest chapter in how #MeToo has reverberated at the world’s largest film gathering, following an 82-woman protest on the steps of the Palais in 2018 and a gender parity pledge in 2019. Cannes has often come under criticism for not inviting more female filmmakers into competition, but the festival is putting its full support behind Godrèche while girding for the possibility of more #MeToo revelations during the festival.

“For me, having these faces, these people — everyone in this movie — gives them this place to be celebrated,” said Godrèche. “There’s this thing about this place that has so much history. In a way, it mystifies movies forever. Once your film was in Cannes, it was in Cannes.”

Some of the filmmakers coming to the festival this

year are already firmly lodged in Cannes lore. Paul Schrader was at the festival almost 50 years ago for Martin Scorsese’s “Taxi Driver,” which he wrote. After a famously divisive response, it won the Palme in 1976.

For the first time since his 1988 drama “Patty Hearst,” Schrader is back in what he calls “the main show” — in competition for the Palme d’Or — with “Oh, Canada.” The film, adapted from a Russell Banks novel, stars Richard Gere (retreating with Schrader decades after “American Gigolo”) as a dying filmmaker who recounts his life story for a documentary. Jacob Elordi plays him in ‘70s flashbacks.

After the Cannes lineup was announced, Schrader shared on Facebook an old photo of himself, Coppola and Lucas — all primary figures to what was then called New Hollywood — and the caption “Together again.”

Who ultimately goes home with the Palme — the handicapping has already begun — will be decided by a jury led by Greta Gerwig, fresh off the mammoth success of “Barbie.” But this year’s slate will have a lot to live up to. Last year, three eventual best picture nominees premiered in Cannes: Justine Triet’s Palme-winner “Anatomy of a Fall,” Jonathan Glazer’s “The Zone of Interest” and Martin Scorsese’s “Killers of the Flower Moon.”

What tends to really define a Cannes, though, is emerging filmmakers. Among those likely to make an impression this year is Julien Colonna, the Corsican, Paris-based director and co-writer of “The Kingdom.” The film, an Un Certain Regard standout, is a brutal coming of age about a teenager girl (newcomer Ghjuvanna Benedetti) on the run with her father (Saveriu Santucci), a Corsican clan leader.

“We wanted to propose a kind of anti-mob film,” Colonna says, referencing the prevalence of “Godfather”-inspired gangster dramas. “As a viewer, I’m quite bored of this. I think we need to move to something else and propose a different prism.”

“The Kingdom,” Colonna’s debut feature film, arose out of his own anxieties around the birth of his child six years ago. It’s an entirely fictional movie but it has personal roots for Colonna, who was inspired by the memory of a camping trip that he realized years later was “an entirely different matter for my father.” He shot the most of the film in Corsica within a few miles of his hometown.

ABUJA, Nigeria: Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, says it’s been “humbling” to find out through a genealogy test that she is partly Nigerian as she met with women in the West African nation Saturday.

On her second day in Nigeria, where she is visiting for the first time with Prince Harry to also promote mental health for wounded soldiers and young girls, Meghan acknowledged Nigeria as “my country.” She added: “It’s been eye-opening to be able to know more about my heritage.”

“Never in a million years would I understand it as much as I do now. And what has been echoed so much in the past day is, ‘Oh, we are not so surprised when we found out you are Nigerian,’” she said at the event on women in leadership co-hosted by Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, a Nigerian economist and head of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

“It is a compliment to you because what they define as a Nigerian woman is brave, resilient, courageous, beautiful,” Meghan told the audience.

The Duchess of Sussex had announced on her podcast in October 2022 that she found out through the DNA-based test that she was “43% Nigerian.”

Her first reaction after finding out was to tell her mother, she said at the event in Nigeria’s capital, Abuja. “Being African American, part of it is really not knowing so much about your lineage and background ... and it was exciting for both of us,” she said.

Mo Abudu, the anchor and chief executive of EbonyLife media group, then asked the audience to suggest a Nigerian name for Meghan.

“Ifeoma,” someone shouted from the excited crowd, a name from Nigeria’s Igbo tribe which means ‘a treasured thing.’

“Omwale” another suggested, from the Yoruba tribe, which means ‘the child has come home.’ Meghan joined female industry leaders such as Okonjo-Iweala to discuss the importance of mentorship for young women and the career challenges women face in a country like Nigeria, where it is not common for women to be in top leadership and political positions. (AP)

BEIJING: American sci-fi “Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes”

continued to top the Chinese mainland’s daily box office chart on Saturday, data from the China Movie Data Information Network showed.

The film, directed by **Wes Ball** and written by **Josh Friedman**, grossed over 27.17 million yuan (about 3.83 million US dollars) on the second day of its release.



Meghan



Harry

It was followed by the Chinese comedy “The Last Frenzy,” which raked in over 20.87 million yuan on the day.

Hong Kong action crime thriller “Twilight of the Warriors: Walled In,” came in third with more than 19.80 million yuan of daily box office sales. (Xinhua)

BEIJING: A dance drama “Journey to the West,” jointly produced by Chinese and French artists, has recently started its tour in the two countries.

Directed and choreographed by Chinese dancer **Wang Yabin**, with music composed by French composer **Laurent Petitgirard**, the drama depicts the memories of

the Monkey King about the search for the sacred scriptures, during which he overcomes various challenges and finally achieves harmony between the internal and external worlds.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between **China and France.** (Xinhua)

People & Places

Music

Makes history

Switzerland's Nemo wins Eurovision '24

MALMO, Sweden, May 12, (AP): Swiss singer Nemo won the 68th Eurovision Song Contest early Sunday with "The Code," an operatic pop-rap ode to the singer's journey toward embracing a nongender identity.

Switzerland's contestant beat Croatian rocker Baby Lasagna to the title by winning the most points from a combination of national juries and viewers around the world. Nemo, 24, is the first nonbinary winner of the contest that has long been embraced as a safe haven. Nemo is also the first Swiss winner since 1988, when Canadian chanteuse Céline Dion competed under the Swiss flag.



Nemo

"Thank you so much," Nemo said after the result from Saturday's final was announced soon after midnight. "I hope this contest can live up to its promise and continue to stand for peace and dignity for every person."

At a post-victory news conference, Nemo expressed pride in accepting the trophy for "people that are daring to be themselves and people that need to be heard and need to be understood. We need more compassion, we need more empathy."

Nemo's victory in the Swedish city of Malmö followed a turbulent year for the pan-continent pop contest that saw large street protests against the participation of Israel that tipped the feelgood musical celebration into a chaotic pressure cooker overshadowed by the war in Gaza.

Hours before the final, Dutch competitor Joost Klein was expelled from the contest over a backstage altercation that was being investigated by police.

Nemo - full name Nemo Mettler - bested finalists from 24 other countries, who all performed in front of a live audience of thousands and an estimated 180 million viewers around the world. Each contestant had three minutes to meld catchy tunes and eye-popping spectacle into performances capable of winning the hearts of viewers. Musical styles ranged across rock, disco, techno and rap - sometimes a mashup of more than one.

Change

Eurovision organizers ordered a change to the original title of her song, "October Rain" - an apparent reference to the Oct. 7 Hamas attack that killed about 1,200 people in Israel and triggered the war in Gaza.

The show was typically eclectic Eurovision fare, ranging from the pop-zombie folk hybrid of Estonia's 5Minust x Puulup to the folk-inflected power pop of Greece's Marina Satti and Armenia's Ladaniva and the goofy 1990s nostalgia of Finland's Windows-95man, who emerged from a giant onstage egg wearing very little clothing.

Britain's Olly Alexander offered upbeat dance track "Dizzy," while Ireland's gothic Bambie Thug summoned a demon onstage and brought a scream coach to Malmö, and Spain's Nebulossa boldly reclaimed a term used as a slur on women in "Zorra."

Nemo had been a favorite going into the contest, alongside Baby Lasagna, whose song "Rim Tim Tagi Dim" is a rollicking rock number that tackles the issue of young Croats leaving the country in search of a better life.

The contest returned to Sweden, home of last year's winner, Loreen, half a century after ABBA won Eurovision with "Waterloo" - Eurovision's most iconic moment. ABBA did not appear in person in Malmö, though their digital "ABBA-tars" from the "ABBA Voyage" stage show did.

A trio of former Eurovision winners - Charlotte Perrelli, Carola and Conchita Wurst - performed "Waterloo" in tribute.

Though Eurovision's motto is "united by music," this year's event has proven divisive. Protests and dissent overshadowed a competition that has become a campy celebration of Europe's varied - and sometimes baffling - musical tastes and a forum for inclusiveness and diversity.

Thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators marched for the second time in a week on Saturday through Sweden's third-largest city, which has a large Muslim population, to demand a boycott of Israel and a cease-fire in the seven-month Gaza war that has killed almost 35,000 Palestinians, according to the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory.

Several hundred gathered outside the Malmö Arena before the final, with some shouting "shame" at arriving music fans, and facing off with police blocking their path. Climate activist Greta Thunberg was among those escorted away by police.

Klein, the Dutch performer, was ejected from the competition after a female member of the production crew made a complaint, competition organizer the European Broadcasting Union said. The 26-year-old Dutch singer and rapper had been a favorite of both bookmakers and fans with his song "Europapa."

Dutch broadcaster AVROTROS, one of dozens of public broadcasters that collectively fund and broadcast the contest, said that as Klein came offstage after Thursday's semifinal, he was filmed without his consent and in turn made a "threatening movement" toward the camera. The broadcaster said Klein didn't touch the camera or the camera operator, and called his expulsion "disproportionate."

Tensions and nerves were palpable in the hours before the final. Several artists were absent from the Olympics-style artists' entrance at the start of the final dress rehearsal, though all appeared at the final.

Also:

FRANCE: In her first Eras Tour concert since the release of "The Tortured Poets Department," Taylor Swift shook up her setlist.

At Thursday night's show at the La Défense Arena in Paris, fans were treated to the inclusion of new songs from the record-breaking album released in April.

According to fan videos and news outlets, Swift performed "But Daddy I Love Him," "So High School," "Who's Afraid of Little Old Me," "Down Bad," "Fortnight," "The Smallest Man Who Ever Lived" and "I Can Do It with a Broken Heart," all from the new release, dressed in black and white to match her 11th studio album's visuals.

The billion-dollar Eras Tour is meant to be a career retrospective, with Swift performing more than 40 tracks reflecting 17 years of recorded music. "The Tortured Poets Department" was her first brand-new release since the tour's start.

The Paris show included several new costumes, and some edits to make room for the new material. Her "Folklore" and "Evermore" sections were woven into one, Billboard reported.



Last year's winner Loreen of Sweden performs during the Grand Final of the Eurovision Song Contest in Malmö, Sweden, Saturday, May 11. (AP)



Taylor Swift performs at the Paris Le Defense Arena as part of her Eras Tour concert in Paris, Thursday, May 9. (AP)



Larson



Harrelson

Variety

OMAHA, Neb.: The \$200,100 winning bid for a private lunch with software titan Marc Benioff might appear disappointing at first glance after years of multimillion-dollar bids for a private meal with investor Warren Buffett, but the winner also pledged to donate a total of \$1.5 million to the California homeless charity that benefits from the auction.

The weeklong eBay auction that raises money for the Glide Foundation in San Francisco wrapped up Friday night. This is the first year that a meal with Benioff, who is Salesforce's Chairman and CEO, was the prize after Buffett raised \$53 million for Glide over more than two decades of lunches.

The winner of the Benioff auction chose to remain anonymous much like many of the winners of a steak lunch with Buffett over the years. The 93-year-old Buffett decided to make the 2022 auction his last one as he continued to cut back on his public appearances, but just last weekend Buffett, who leads the Berkshire Hathaway conglomerate, spent all day answering questions from thousands of his shareholders at the company's legendary annual meeting. The final Buffett auction attracted \$19 million. (AP)

DARLINGTON, S.C.: Kyle Larson made one thing clear: He's no Swiftie, even if he did surprise his daughter with a birthday trip to Paris this week to see Taylor Swift in concert.

Yes, Larson wore a Swift-themed T-shirt and a couple of friendship bracelets given to him by wife Katelyn and 6-year-old Audrey.

"I don't feel like I'm a Swiftie at all," Larson said Saturday at Darlington Raceway. "I do appreciate her music and how hard she works, but I'm not a Swiftie."

Larson, the 2021 NASCAR Cup Series champion, is more comfortable as one of the hottest and busiest drivers on the circuit. He is coming off a history-making victory last week at Kansas, where he edged Chris Buescher by 0.001 second - the closest finish in Cup Series history. (AP)

Music

Group blends cultures in latest album

Grupo Frontera's music has no limits

NEW YORK, May 12, (AP): A lot can happen in two years. Just ask Grupo Frontera, who released their highly anticipated sophomore album, "Jugando Que No Pasa Nada," Friday.

The sextet began as a local band in Texas' Rio Grande Valley, playing events like quinceañeras - a hobby for its members who held very different jobs: wedding photographer, car dealership manager, gate repairer and so on. Then, viral fame arrived in 2022 when their spirited cover of "No Se Va" by the Colombian pop-rock band Morat made the rounds on TikTok and later, the Billboard Hot 100.

Eventually, they quit their jobs, and the hits - and accolades - kept coming. They linked up with superstar producer Edgar Barrera, who hails from their corner of Texas and worked on both their albums. Last year, Grupo Frontera released their biggest track to date, "Un x100to," a collaboration with Puerto Rican reggaeton superstar Bad Bunny, peaked at No. 5 on Billboard's all-genre Hot 100. That song earned them a Latin Grammy.

They've sold out arenas and by the time their debut album, "El Comienzo," was released last August, they'd already established themselves one of the most exciting new voices in Latin music.

On the 12-track "Jugando Que No Pasa Nada," they've continued to push boundaries.

"Every album, every song that we release, is like 'Man, we gotta make a song better than the last one,'" says Julian Peña Jr., the band's percussionist and hype man. "We have a lot of things that we're exploring with, and we know a lot of people are going to like it."

"We're trying to pressure ourselves into expanding our horizons a

little bit," adds bassist Brian Ortega. "We have a little bit of everything."

Ortega hopes that people connect with the diversity of sounds. And there is a lot to dig into. Songs move from electronic music to R&B to bachata to George Strait-inspired country, with Grupo Frontera's characteristic cumbias norteñas still very much at the center of all that they do, amplified by the difference in tastes across this band. Singer Adelaida Solís III, whom they call "Payo," is the youngest, and loves tumbados. Older members love cumbia, a style of dance music from Colombia, says Juan Javier Cantu, accordion player and vocalist.

"It's a mixture of modern and old school. So we're, like, in between," he says. "That's why you have a lot of versatility on the album."

Collaboration

That makes for an interesting mix, as does the collaborators they brought forth. Featured are Maluma and Morat - a full circle moment if there ever was one - from Colombia. There's also Christian Nodal from Mexico and a particularly wild cut featuring Nicki Nicole from Argentina.

On the club-ready "Desquite" with Nicole, Grupo Frontera found inspiration in late '00s, early '10s music, specifically the Mexican pop DJ group 3BallMTY. Cantu says they wanted to bring back that sound - but "make it fresh with the music we're doing," he says, and with "the lyrics of today."

Thematically, "Jugando Que No Pasa Nada" is a romantic journey: From the kiss-off opener "F--- Amor," which Peña Jr. describes as being from the perspective of, well, someone fed up with love - to "Ibiza," which "tells you the story about a guy saying, 'You know what? I al-

ready bought all the cars that I want. I bought my mom a house. I got everything I want, but I also got enough for you. So come on over,'" he says.

In cultural conversation, Grupo Frontera is often viewed as front-runners of the growing global interest in regional Mexican music - a catchall term that encompasses mariachi, banda, corridos, norteño, sierrero and other genres - alongside their friends and collaborators Peso Pluma, Fuerza Regida, Carín León and so on. And they are. But it's not only because they play music true to their geography - it is because they've modernized their genres, often weaving into other musical styles. And because people all over the world are listening.

"We are regional Mexicans because our instruments are traditional and the vibe we give," says Cantu.

"It's regional to us, but the people made it global," Peña Jr. jumps in. "We're playing our music, but now it's global. And it's an amazing feeling."

That exchanging of ideas and cultures is at the heart of "Jugando Que No Pasa Nada."

"This album is kind of like a buffet," jokes Ortega. "There's the pizza, there's the fish sticks, there's the chicken wings. But you know what? It's a little bit of everything. ... But what ties it all together is that we don't leave the essence of the cumbia."

For a band that's managed to take deeply beloved music, modernize it and present it to the world - what's next? They say they'd love to tour in Europe, headline Coachella and Madison Square Garden, go to the "gringo Grammys," says Cantu.

But more than that, they want their fans to listen to this album and "feel their emotions, the instruments," he says.

NEW YORK: Some stars known for their work onscreen - **Ted Danson, Woody Harrelson and Jon Stewart** - are entering into the world of podcasts.

Danson and Harrelson have signed up for "Where Everybody Knows Your Name with Ted Danson and Woody Harrelson (Sometimes)," which will be launched

June 12 by SiriusXM.

The title, of course, is a reference to their years together on the NBC sitcom "Cheers," and to the fact that Harrelson's participation is more limited. He'll be on with Danson "when he can find him," SiriusXM said.

The podcast will consist of their conversations with the likes of **Will Arnett, Kristen Bell, Laura Dern, Jane Fonda, Conan O'Brien, Nick Offerman** and others. (AP)



Grupo Frontera arrives at the Latin American Music Awards in Las Vegas on April 20, 2023. Their sophomore album 'Jugando Que No Pasa Nada' released on Friday. (AP)

PRAGUE: The two-day Prague Dragon Boat Festival kicked off on Saturday, bringing together players from countries such as the **Czech Republic, China, and Germany** to race on the Vltava River in Prague.

The 23-member Chinese team from **Pu-jiang County, eastern China's Zhejiang Province**, took part in the event for the first time.

Petr Klima, President of the Czech Dragon Boat Association and the organizer of the event, told Xinhua that the festival, now in its 27th edition, is "the oldest dragon boat race in the Czech Republic."

"In the Year of the Dragon, we have a very special guest, this is the Chinese team. We are so happy to have them here," he said, noting that dragon boating is a Chinese sport and tradition. (Xinhua)

A rural Ugandan community is a hot spot for sickle cell disease

Ugandan woman empowers others living with sickle cell

MBALE, Uganda, May 12, (AP): Barbara Nabulo was one of three girls in her family. But when a sister died, her mother wailed at the funeral that she was left with just one and a half daughters.

The half was the ailing Nabulo, who at age 12 grasped her mother's meaning. "I hated myself so much," Nabulo said recently, recalling the words that preceded a period of sickness that left her hospitalized and feeding through a tube.

The scene underscores the lifelong challenges for some people with sickle cell disease in rural Uganda, where it remains poorly understood. Even Nabulo, despite her knowledge of how the disease weakens the body, spoke repeatedly of "the germ I was born with."

Sickle cell disease is a group of inherited disorders in which red blood cells - normally round - become hard, sticky and crescent shaped. The misshapen cells clog the flow of blood, which can lead to infections, excruciating pain, organ damage and other complications.

Malaria

The disease, which can stunt physical growth, is more common in malaria-prone regions, notably Africa and India, because carrying the sickle cell trait helps protect against severe malaria. Global estimates of how many people have the disease vary, but some researchers put the number between 6 million and 8 million, with more than 5 million living in sub-Saharan Africa.

The only cure for the pain sickle cell disease can cause is a bone marrow transplant or gene therapies like the one commercially approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in December. A 12-year-old boy last week became the first person to begin the therapy.

Those options are beyond the reach of most patients in this East African nation where sickle cell disease is not a public health priority despite the burden it places on communities. There isn't a national database of sickle cell patients. Funding for treatment often comes from donor organizations.

In a hilly part of eastern Uganda that's a sickle cell hot spot, the main referral hospital looks after hundreds of patients arriving from nearby villages to collect medication. Many receive doses of hydroxyurea, a drug that can reduce periods of severe pain and other complications, and researchers there are studying its effectiveness in Ugandan children.

Nabulo, now 37, is one of the hospital's patients. But she approaches others like her as a caregiver, too.

After dropping out in primary school, she has emerged in recent years as a counselor to fellow patients, speaking to them about her survival. Encouraged by hospital authorities, she makes weekly visits to the ward that has many children watched over by exhausted-looking parents.

Nabulo tells them she was diagnosed with sickle cell disease at two weeks old, but now she is the mother of three children, including twins. Such a message gives hope to those who feel discouraged or worry that sickle cell disease is a death sentence, said Dr. Julian Abeso, head of pediatrics at Mbale Regional Referral Hospital.

Some men have been known to divorce their wives - or neglect them in search of new partners - when they learn that their children have sickle cell disease. Frequent community deaths from disease complications reinforce perceptions of it as a scourge.

Nabulo and health workers urge openness and the testing of children for sickle cell as early as possible.

Abeso and Nabulo grew close after Nabulo lost her first baby hours after childbirth in 2015. She cried in the doctor's office as she spoke of her wish "to have a relative I can call mine, a descendant who can help me," Abeso recalled.

"At that time, people here were so negative about patients with sickle cell disease having children because the complications would be so many," the doctor said.

Nabulo's second attempt to have a child was difficult, with some time in intensive care. But her baby is now a 7-year-old boy who sometimes accompanies her to the hospital. The twin girls came last year.

Speaking outside the one-room home she shares with her husband and children, Nabulo said many people appreciate her work despite the countless indignities she faces, including unwanted stares from people in the streets who point to the woman with "a big head," one manifestation in her of the disease. Her brothers often behave as if they are ashamed of



A laboratory technician examines sickle cell blood samples, at the Mbale Regional Referral Hospital in Mbale, Uganda, Wednesday, April 24. (AP)

Overweight issues

Scientific solutions urged for 'obesity'

BEIJING, May 12, (Xinhua): The 10th China Obesity Science Conference, jointly organized by the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC) and several other organizations in Beijing, concluded on Saturday.

The two-day event underscored the seriousness of obesity as an escalating public health concern and the importance of scientific interventions and proper policies to tackle it.

According to a 2020 report by China's National Health Commission (NHC), 34.3 percent of the country's citizens aged 18 and above were overweight and 16.4 percent were obese. Research predicts that the overweight and obesity rate among Chinese adults might reach 65.3 percent by 2030.

Overweight and obesity are regarded as a major obstacle to realizing China's long-term health goals, such as raising the average life expectancy to 79 by 2030, as proposed in the country's Outline of Healthy China 2030.

Speaking at the conference, Guo Yanhong, director of the Health Emergency Response Office of the NHC, said that addressing obesity is a key point in preventing and treating chronic diseases, and stressed the necessity to promote healthier lifestyles.

Guidelines

In February, the NHC released two dietary guidelines aimed at addressing obesity in both adults and children. The guidelines offer advice on food choices for adults, children and adolescents, and provide recipes tailored to various dietary habits across different regions of China and throughout the four seasons.

In March, the China Obesity Federation was established in Beijing with support from researchers, scholars and organizations related to obesity prevention and treatment. According to initiators of the federation, which include the National Clinical Research Center for Digestive Diseases, a key objective is to enhance public awareness and understanding of healthy weight loss.

Ji Linong, director of endocrinology at Beijing University People's Hospital, said China's medical institutions have been innovating their obesity diagnosis and treatment methods. He emphasized the importance of a patient-centered weight management model that integrates plans from doctors across relevant disciplines and scientifically employs various management approaches, including lifestyle adjustments, medication and surgical interventions.

According to Chen Wei, chief physician of the clinical nutrition department at the Beijing-based Peking Union Medical College Hospital, one of China's top-tier medical institutions, his department handles approximately 20,000 medical visits annually for weight loss treatment.

Chen and his team have been researching physiological and triggering factors for weight rebound among individuals who have experienced repeated failures in weight loss attempts. He noted that each patient harbors specific factors contributing to obesity, such as emotional eating, low metabolic rate and insulin resistance.

Based on each individual case, Chen and his colleagues provide customized weight loss plans and ensure patients safely lose weight under medical supervision.

her, she said.

Once, she heard of a girl in her neighborhood whose grandmother was making frequent trips to the clinic over an undiagnosed illness in the child. The grandmother was hesitant to have the girl tested for sickle cell when Nabulo first asked her. But tests later revealed the disease, and now the girl receives treatment.

"I go to Nabulo for help because I can't manage the illness affecting my grandchild," Kelemesiya Musuya said. "She can feel pain, and she starts crying, saying, 'It is here and it is rising and it is paining here and here.'"

Reassurance

Musuya sometimes seeks reassurance. "She would be asking me, 'Even you, when you are sick, does it hurt in the legs, in the chest, in the head?' I tell her that, yes, it's painful like that," Nabulo said.

Nabulo said she was glad that the girl, who is 11, still goes to school.

The lack of formal education is hurtful for Nabulo, who struggles to write her name, and a source of shame for her parents, who repeatedly apologize for letting her drop out while her siblings studied. One brother is now a medical worker who operates a clinic in a town not far away from Nabulo's home.

"I am very happy to see her," said her mother, Agatha Nambuya.

She recalled Nabulo's swelling head and limbs as a baby, and how "these children used to die so soon." But now she knows of others with sickle cell disease who grew to become doctors or whatever they wanted to be. She expressed pride in Nabulo's work as a counselor and said her grandchildren make her feel happy. "At that time," she said, recalling Nabulo as a child, "we didn't know."



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, the Northern Lights, or Aurora Borealis, are seen near Nanshan scenic spot in Urumqi in northwestern China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Saturday, May 11. (AP)

Solar storm lights up skies with minimal impact

A powerful solar storm put on an amazing skyward light show across the globe overnight but has caused what appeared to be only minor disruptions to the electric power grid, communications and satellite positioning systems.

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said extreme geomagnetic storm conditions continued Saturday, and there were preliminary reports of power grid irregularities, degradation of high-frequency communications and global positioning systems.

But the Federal Emergency Management Agency said that, so far, no FEMA region had reported any

significant impact from the storms. The US Department of Energy said Saturday it is not aware of any impact from the storms on electric customers.

NOAA predicted that strong flares will continue through at least Sunday, and a spokeswoman said via email that the agency's Space Weather Prediction Center had prepared well for the storm.

On Saturday morning, SpaceX's Starlink satellite internet service said on its website that service had been degraded and its team was investigating. CEO Elon Musk wrote on the social platform X overnight that its satellites were "under a lot

of pressure, but holding up so far." Brilliant purple, green, yellow and pink hues of the Northern Lights were reported worldwide, with sightings in Germany, Switzerland, China, England, Spain and elsewhere.

In the US, Friday's solar storm pushed the lights much farther south than normal. The Miami office of the National Weather Service confirmed sightings in the areas of Fort Lauderdale and Fort Myers, Florida. Meteorologist Nick Carr said another forecaster who lives near Fort Lauderdale photographed the lights and was familiar with them because he previously lived in Alaska. (AP)

Munk to serve gourmet meal in stratosphere

Michelin chef taking fine dining to space

COPENHAGEN, May 12, (AP): Ever since humans have journeyed to space, their meals there have proved to be, well, nothing to write home about.

But that could change after a Michelin-starred chef teamed up with the Florida-based startup Space Perspective to take fine-dining to our upper atmosphere in late 2025.

Six guests are set to ascend aboard Spaceship Neptune to the stratosphere, where they will enjoy an immersive dining experience served up by Danish Michelin-starred chef Rasmus Munk.

Munk, 33, will travel with the guests and serve the meal himself, from a small kitchen. He says his menu will be inspired by the impact of space innovation.

"We want to tell stories through the food," Munk says. "We ... want to talk and highlight some of the research that's been done through the last 60 years."

"I think that will make an even stronger impact when you're up there and looking down," added Munk, who will fly with the six ticket buyers.

Spaceship Neptune is more of a balloon than a rocket. The company says its pressurized capsule, attached to a balloon, will lift to an altitude of around 100,000 feet (30,480 meters) above sea level where guests will dine while watching the sun rise over the curvature of the Earth.

Organizers are promising an out-of-this-world experience for those with an appetite for adventure. But such an astronomical menu comes with a fittingly astronomical price tag - \$495,000 per ticket.

Organizers say the trip will last six

hours and that they are they are still in discussion with potential participants.

It's one of the latest offerings by private firms that include Blue Origin, Virgin Galactic, and SpaceX.

The flight won't technically reach "space" - Spaceship Neptune will ascend to around 19 miles (30 kilometers), well below the Karman line, the boundary separating Earth's atmosphere and outer space, which is some 62 miles (100 kilometers) from Earth.

Munk's menu is expected to be a far cry from meals eaten by past and present astronauts.

The first man in space, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, squeezed beef and liver paste into his mouth from an aluminum tube.

Packaged

To save on weight, astronauts aboard the International Space Station usually dine on dishes packaged in rehydratable containers, including soups and casseroles.

There have been some exceptions. In 2006, French master chef Alain Ducasse created special gourmet food that could be used for celebratory meals aboard the ISS. The tinned dishes included typical Mediterranean ingredients, such as olives, tomatoes, quails and swordfish.

Though Munk is mysterious about his menu, he says he's planning to incorporate glow-in-dark stars made from aerogel and jellyfish protein.

"We are also working on an edible piece of space junk from a satellite," he said. "And then, we want to talk about some of the things going on on the planet ... from deforestation to temperatures rising and the garbage in

our seas," he added. Munk's Alchemist restaurant in Copenhagen, the Danish capital, has held two Michelin stars since 2020, and last year was ranked fifth best restaurant in the world.

Guests dine on a menu of 50 edible "impressions," and the experience is accompanied by performers and installations, all set in the restaurant's own architecture - a former theater set building workshop in Copenhagen.

At the restaurant's center is a large planetarium dome, where guests eat surrounded by projections of Earth seen from space, oceans, forests, even a beating heart.

"I think fine dining, in general, is changing a lot," Munk says. "And I think you, as a guest, require more an experience in the future."

Danish food and wine writer Rasmus Palsgaard says gastronomy is becoming more about the experience, and less about what's on the plate.

"More wealthy people or big companies have a desire to really create something special that is more than a meal," he says. "It's about much more than just the food being served in front of you."

Also:

JIUQUAN: China on Sunday launched a Long March-4C rocket, placing a satellite in space.

The rocket blasted off at 7:43 a.m. (Beijing Time) from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China and sent the satellite Shiyun-23 into preset orbit.

The satellite will mainly be used for space environment monitoring.

It was the 52nd flight mission of the Long March series rockets.

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A nearly two-hour delay reduced the game to 16 overs per side

Kolkata qualifies for playoffs after rain-affected win over Mumbai

KOLKATA, India, May 12, (AP): Indian Premier League leaders the Kolkata Knight Riders became the first playoff team after beating Mumbai Indians by 18 runs in a rain-shortened match.

A nearly two-hour delay reduced the game to 16 overs per side, and Kolkata put up 157-7 then restricted Mumbai to 139-8.

Kolkata confirmed a spot in the final

CRICKET

four. Five other teams, including defending champions the Chennai Super Kings, were in realistic contention for the remaining three spots. Five-time champion Mumbai was already eliminated from contention.

Put into bat, Kolkata's in-form opener Phil Salt and Sunil Narine were out cheaply at 10-2. Jasprit Bumrah

bowled Narine for a golden duck.

Skipper Shreyas Iyer was out for 7, and Venkatesh Iyer stepped up to resurrect the innings.

Venkatesh Iyer scored 42 off 21 balls, including six fours and two sixes. He shared 37 with Nitish Rana, who scored 33, and was out caught off wrist spinner Piyush Chawla. Andre Russell (24) and Rinku Singh (20) hit two sixes each in cameos that helped Kolkata cross 150. Ramandeep Singh added an unbeaten 17 off eight balls.

Mumbai's chase lost momentum. Ishan Kishan gave them a cracking start with 40 off 22 balls, including five boundaries and two sixes. But his opening partner Rohit Sharma labored to 19 off 24 balls.

They put on 65 off 42 balls, then wickets fell in a heap. Kishan holed out off Sunil Narine, and Sharma was dismissed within six deliveries by Varun Chakravarthy. Defeat was certain when

Zimbabwe win final T20 by 8 wkts to avoid series sweep

DHAKA, Bangladesh, May 12, (AP): Zimbabwe avoided a series clean sweep by beating Bangladesh by eight wickets in the fifth and final Twenty20 match.

After being put in to bat, Bangladesh made 157-6 but Brian Bennett's 70 off 49 balls, with five fours and as many sixes, set the platform for Zimbabwe's victory with nine balls to spare.

Skipper Sikandar Raza finished with 72 off 46 balls and combined with Bennett for a 75-run stand for the second wicket after Shakib Al Hasan struck early to dismiss Tadiwanashe

Suryakumar Yadav on 11 was caught in the deep off Russell, 2-34.

Russell also accounted for hard-

Marumani for 1.

"Like we said in the last three games we were working our way closer and closer to the victory margin," Raza said. "It's nice to contribute. The only

CRICKET

jigsaw puzzle that's missing is me scoring runs. If I can contribute towards the success of the team it will give me immense pleasure. And today is one of those days."

hitting Tim David, who was out for a three-ball duck.

Skipper Hardik Pandya's batting

Unlike the past four matches, Zimbabwe was able to resist a top-order collapse as Raza and Bennett dealt with Bangladesh's bowling with a good balance of caution and attack.

Bennett raised his maiden fifty off 36 balls, nudging Mustafizur Rahman to long-on for a single.

Pacer Mohammad Saifuddin had him caught by Rishad Hossain at long-on with a short ball in the 16th over but Zimbabwe were already in control at 113-2.

Raza, who hit six fours and four sixes for his 14th T20 fifty, then expertly

led the tourists to victory and deny Bangladesh its first five-match series clean sweep.

Put into bat first, Bangladesh rode on Mahmudullah's 44-ball 54 after a top order-collapse had left them at 15-3.

"The way we played in this series there's a lot of areas we can improve," Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto said. "Obviously, I think we didn't start well today. But there was an opportunity in the middle. Shakib also batted in the middle couple of overs."

woes continued when he was out caught for 2.

Tilak Varma scored 32 off 17 balls

and Naman Dhir offered a six-ball cameo for 17 at the death, but Mumbai fell to a ninth defeat in 13 games.

Messi plays through a scare, Inter Miami rally past Montreal for fifth straight win



Inter Miami midfielder Benjamin Cremaschi (30) gets by CF Montreal's Ariel Lassiter to score during the second half of an MLS soccer match in Montreal. (AP)

Brawl breaks out after New York City tops Toronto

MONTREAL, May 12, (AP): Lionel Messi played the entire game despite a first-half injury scare, Benjamin Cremaschi broke a tie in the 59th minute and Inter Miami overcame an early two-goal deficit to beat Montreal 3-2 on Saturday night for its fifth consecutive Major League Soccer victory.

Luis Suarez got his 11th goal of the season for Inter Miami, and Matias Rojas scored off a free kick. Jules-Anthony Vilsaint and Bryce Duke scored for Montreal (3-5-3).

Inter Miami (8-2-3) extended its unbeaten streak to seven matches (5-

SOCCER

0-2) despite Messi being held without a goal or an assist for the first time in his nine MLS appearances this season. Inter Miami is 7-0-2 in those nine games; one of its losses came against Montreal in March, a game where Messi didn't play.

Playing in Canada for the first time, Messi briefly left late in the first half after some sort of issue with his left knee after being fouled by defender George Campbell. The eight-time Ballon d'Or winner as the world's best player went down immediately, holding his knee and writhing in pain.

Inter Miami's medical staff went onto the field to treat Messi, who got up after about two minutes and walked to the Miami sideline. He was not subbed out, which allowed him a chance to return moments later.

And for whatever reason, the match changed at that moment.

Inter Miami was down 2-0 when Messi got hurt; it was 2-1 when he returned and tied moments after he got back onto the field. Rojas scored off a free kick - one that Messi would have

Liu breaks men's 50m rifle 3 positions world record twice at ISSF World Cup

BAKU, May 12, (Xinhua): China's Liu Yukun broke the world record of the men's 50m rifle 3 positions twice in two days as China topped the medal tally with seven golds at the International Sports Shooting Federation (ISSF) World Cup in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Liu improved the world record by 1.2 points in the first competition on Thursday, winning gold with 467.3 points. He carried on his momentum in Saturday's second competition, raising his own record to 468.9 points, an average of over 10.4 points on each shot.

Liu was almost in a competition of his own on Saturday, scoring 156.6 points after the first 15 shots in kneeling

position, 2.3 ahead of second-placed Miran Maricic of Croatia. 27-year-old Liu accumulated 315.1 points after another 15 shots in prone, cementing a 4.2-point lead. Despite a 9.5 in the penultimate standing shot, Liu was able to

SHOOTING

put the gold medal safely in his pocket and lower his own world record.

Reigning world champion Alexander Schmiril of Austria had to settle for silver with 463.2 points, and Jiri Privratsky of the Czech Republic, winner of the Baku World Cup last year, finished

third with 452.4.

Olympic silver medalist Sheng Lihao also bagged two gold medals in Baku, taking the men's 10m air rifle gold with 251.8 points on Monday, two days after winning the mixed team gold with partner Huang Yuting.

His teammate Du Linshu finished runner-up in both events, before taking his third silver in Baku in the 50m rifle 3 positions on Thursday after an unstoppable Liu.

Veteran Li Yuehong repeated his world championships victory over Clement Bessaguet of France in the men's 25m rapid fire pistol event on Saturday, thanks to a perfect final series.

ordinarily taken - to get Inter Miami on the board, and Suarez tapped in a goal off a corner kick late in first-half stoppage time.

Suarez became the third player in MLS history to score 11 goals in his first

800 minutes of a season, joining Mamadou Diallo (11 in 2000) and Ola Kamara (11 in 2021).

The go-ahead goal came when Rojas sent a ball into open space and Cremaschi ran it down - then made a second

effort to nudge the ball just clear of two defenders and into the net for a 3-2 lead. Messi had two chances in the final minutes to extend the lead, both narrowly missing.

Rookie Malachi Jones and Andrés Perea scored second-half goals and Matt Freese made nine saves as New York City FC held on for a 3-2 victory over Toronto FC with a brawl taking place after the final whistle.

A melee ensued after the match involving players from both sides. Toronto goalkeeper Sean Johnson, a former New York player, was in the middle of it - seemingly trying to play peacekeeper.

Santiago Rodríguez staked New York City (5-5-2) to a 1-0 lead on a penalty kick in the 25th minute. Rodríguez scored for a fourth time this season - sending a right-footed shot to the bottom right corner of the net following a hand-ball foul on Toronto midfielder Matty Longstaff.

NYCFC took a 2-0 lead into half-time on Jones' first career goal. Fellow rookie Hannes Wolf picked up an assist when Jones - a 20-year-old forward - scored in the 44th minute.



Alex Palou of Spain holds the trophy after winning the IndyCar Grand Prix auto race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway in Indianapolis. (AP)

Nadal reconsidering his 'status' for French Open

ROME, May 12, (AP): Fifteen days before he is scheduled to play in what will likely be his final French Open, Rafael Nadal is so unsatisfied with his level of tennis that he's still debating whether or not to go to Roland Garros.

Nadal's surgically repaired hip and his 37-year-old legs didn't provide him with the necessary means to be competitive enough on Saturday as ninth-ranked Hubert Hurkacz overwhelmed the 22-time Grand Slam champion on the Spaniard's beloved clay for a 6-1, 6-3 victory in the third round of the Italian Open.

It was Nadal's first match against a top-10 player in 1½ years and he couldn't have been more disappointed.

"Tough day for me in all ways because I felt more ready than what I showed," Nadal said. "I am little bit more unpredictable today, not playing enough for the last two years. Too many doubts."

In terms of games won - just four - it was the most lopsided loss for Nadal on clay in 21 years, since also winning only four games against Gaston Gaudio in Hamburg in 2003 when he was only 16.

Now Nadal will need to dig deeper on the practice court if wants to be competitive one last time at the French Open, where he is the record 14-time champion. Roland Garros starts on May 26.

Nadal said he had two options for Paris. Nadal is still regaining his fitness after missing nearly all of 2023 with a hip injury that required surgery,

TENNIS

Against the big-serving Hurkacz, appeared slow at times and lacked the lucidness to finish off points.

Twice in the first set, Nadal missed drop shot attempts to hand Hurkacz breaks of his serve.

Then early in the second set, Nadal lacked oomph on a backhand volley, allowing Hurkacz to reply with a forehand up the line that clipped the net and landed in for another break.

On the changeovers, Nadal sat hunched over, sweat dripping from his headband and deep in thought for solutions that he couldn't find.

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Flamengo beat Corinthians to reach Brazil's Serie A summit

RIO DE JANEIRO, May 12, (Xinhua): Former Fiorentina striker Pedro and Lorrán Lucas scored either side of halftime as Flamengo secured a 2-0 home victory over Corinthians in Brazil's Serie A championship on Saturday.

Pedro sent a cool finish into the bottom-right corner in the 22nd minute, and Lorrán doubled the advantage just after the hour by combining with Gerson and slotting his shot past Carlos Miguel.

The result leaves Flamengo top of the standings with 11 points from six outings, a point ahead of second-placed Athletico Paranaense,

who have a game in hand.

Corinthians are 15th in the 20-team standings with just one victory and five points so far.

Colidio brace guides River Plate past Central Cordoba.

Facundo Colidio scored twice as River Plate rose to the top of Argentina's Primera Division standings on Saturday by cruising to a 3-0 home win over Central Cordoba in their opening match of the season.

Colidio struck in the sixth and 30th minutes

before Ezequiel Barco completed the rout with an 86th-minute strike from long range.

Central Cordoba were forced to play for more than an hour with only 10 men after Santiago Laquidain was shown a straight red card for a bad challenge on Claudio Echeverri.

"We are in a process of evolution in which we're focusing on finding the best options at our disposal," River Plate manager Martín Demicheli told reporters after the match.

"Everyone in our squad has a role to play and we need them to be ready. The result today is very encouraging."

Kuwait Club consolidate Zain Premier League lead

Al-Arabi edge past Al-Salmiya

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Kuwait Club asserted its dominance in the Zain Premier League by securing a resounding 5-1 victory over Al-Nasr in the 7th round of the championship group.

With this triumph, Al-Abyad remains at the top of the league table with 60 points, closely followed by Al-Arabi trailing by 3 points. Meanwhile, Al-Nasr sits in sixth place with 24 points.

From the onset, Kuwait Club took control of the match, despite missing key players, and capitalized on numerous opportunities to seize the lead. Mohammed Dahham broke the

deadlock in the 21st minute, only for Al-Nasr's Mohamed Al-Farsi to level the score in the 23rd minute.

However, Juma Saeed restored Kuwait Club's lead just before half-time, followed by an own goal from Obaid Rafi in stoppage time. Dahham extended the lead in the 50th minute, with Bahraini professional Mohammed Al Marhoon sealing the victory in the 72nd minute.

In another match, Al-Arabi secured a narrow victory against Al-Salmiya, maintaining its pursuit of Kuwait Club at the top of the table.

Reflecting on the match, Al-Salmiya's Croatian coach, Ante Misha, expressed his intention to rotate players due to fatigue from recent fixtures, especially with the upcoming Amir Cup final against Al-Qadisiya.

Misha acknowledged his team's slow start but praised its resilience as it regained focus throughout the game. Despite missing several chances, Mi-



Al-Salmiya's Croatian coach, Ante Misha.

SOCCER

sha remained optimistic, emphasizing the importance of the upcoming final and the need to minimize errors.

He highlighted the team's preparations for the final, viewing every match as valuable rehearsal. Looking ahead, Misha sees its upcoming fixture against Kuwait Club as crucial preparation for the Amir Cup final, underscoring their determination to clinch the title.

Meanwhile, the victory chant echoes through Al-Jahra only when the clock strikes 5:40 pm at Friendship and Peace Stadium for the Al-Shabab clash, and again at 8:20 pm at Nasser Al-Osaimi Stadium for the Kazma versus Khaitan showdown, marking



Players challenging for the ball during a league game.

the fifth round of the relegation group skirmishes in the Zain League.

Kazma sits comfortably atop the Premier League standings, boasting a 32-point lead over its nearest rivals. Al-Shabab trails behind with 17 points, securing second place, while Khaitan follows closely with 15 points, just one shy of Al-Jahra in fourth.

In the opening bout, Al-Jahra clings to the hope of securing the coveted second spot, a lifeline to remain in the Premier League. Victory is imperative to bolster morale for the final showdown, knowing that a draw diminishes its prospects, while defeat spells relegation to the first division.

Conversely, Al-Shabab strives for a

crucial win to secure its survival, banking on Kazma's assistance in the subsequent match. A loss would plunge it into dire straits, especially with Kazma looming in the final round.

In the latter encounter, Khaitan aims to keep their qualification hopes alive, understanding that only a win can sustain its contention. A loss or draw,

coupled with an Al-Shabab victory, condemns it to first division exile.

Khaitan acknowledges the challenge ahead, facing a youthful squad eager to make its mark. Recent matches have showcased its prowess, netting an impressive 16 goals in the past four rounds, a testament to its determination.

Kuwait Club seek to extend series lead over Al-Qadisiya

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: Kuwait Club aims to secure its second triumph over Al-Qadisiya, bolstering its quest for the Basketball League title.

Following its recent conquest of the Gulf Region title in the West

BASKETBALL

Asian League, Kuwait Club cruised to a comfortable victory of 96-69 in the first encounter last Friday. The playoff finals are structured as a best-of-five series, with the championship claimed by the team securing three wins.

With aspirations of clinching their sixth consecutive title, Kuwait Club is eager to seize another win, inching closer to championship glory. Meanwhile, Al-Qadisiya, returning to the finals after a five-year hiatus, seeks to disrupt its opponent's momentum and level the playing field.

Kuwait Club boasts a formidable lineup under the guidance of their German coach, Peter Schumers. Led by the dynamic American professional Young, alongside Marcus and Haitian standout Lalan, the team possesses a strong roster of local tal-



Kuwait Club and Al-Qadisiya players battling for the ball.

ents including the Hamad brothers, Muhammad Adnan, Imran Gohar, and Turki Hammoud, among others.

In contrast, Al-Qadisiya faces challenges with the underperformance of American professional Tilmon, brought in as a replacement for the injured Alono. The team further suffered setbacks with the injury of prominent professional Robert Lowry. Coach Anthony Stebbing relies on the efforts of Americans Martic and Teran, supported by Muhammad Ashkanani, Abdul Mohsen Mortada, and Rashid Riyadh in today's crucial matchup.

Best of the Rest

Djokovic follows Nadal: Novak Djokovic put on one of his worst performances at one of his favorite tournaments as he was upset by 29th-seeded Alejandro Tabilo in the third round of the Italian Open on Sunday.

It was Djokovic's first match since accidentally getting knocked on the head by a water bottle while signing autographs after his opening win on Friday.

Djokovic started off with a double-fault and it didn't get much better for the six-time Rome champion.

The top-ranked Djokovic lost his first two service games and went on to lose the match 6-2, 6-3 in just 68 minutes, handing Tabilo the victory when he double-faulted - his fifth of the match - and the boos rang out at the Foro Italico.

The third-round loss marked Djokovic's worst performance at the Italian Open. He had lost only once before to an opponent outside the top 10 at Rome, where he had never gone out before the quarterfinals.

Djokovic followed Nadal with an early exit after the record 10-time Rome champion lost his third round match to Hubert Hurkacz 6-1, 6-3 on Saturday. (AP)

America, Guadalajara qualify: Mexico international striker Julian Quinones scored in second-half stoppage time as Club America progressed to the Liga MX semifinals with a 1-1 home draw against Pachuca.

Oussama Idrissi put the visitors ahead just after the half hour with a 12-yard finish into the top corner.

Quinones, a 57th-minute replacement for Javieri Dilrosun, equalized in the 94th minute by slotting home from close-range after Illian Hernandez's header was parried clear by Carlos Moreno.

The result left the sides tied 2-2 on aggregate but America advanced

by virtue of their higher position in the standings at the end of the regular season.

In Saturday's other quarterfinal second leg, Guadalajara drew 0-0 at Toluca to secure a 1-0 win on aggregate. (Xinhua)

Uganda makes changes: Uganda's 7s team head coach Tolbert Onyango has made some changes to the squad ahead of the World Rugby HSBC 7s Challenger.

The final round of the World Rugby HSBC 7s Challenger 2024 will take place May 18-19 in Munich, Germany.

Onyango told Xinhua on Saturday, "We got a mix of experienced players and guys who have been in the camp for quite some time over a year now. I think it's an opportune time for us to get them tested at the top level." The coach made it clear that five players who will be making their first appearance in the 2024 HSBC 7s Challenger are Mubarak Wandera, Karim Arinaitwe, Mark Osuna, Allan Olango and Aaron Tukey.

New captain William Nkore said that he is glad to be given this opportunity to lead the team away in Germany. "Although it has been very tough, we need to go all out and prove a point in Munich and that will call for good teamwork." Uganda Rugby Cranes are currently placed 8th on the log with 14 points, while Uruguay leads with 36 points. Kenya is tied on 36 points with Uruguay, but falls in second place because of a lower try average. Mexico are bottom of the 12-team log with only 2 points.

While the men will be battling in Munich, Uganda's women's team could have a better chance when the last round is played in Krakow, Poland. Uganda's women's team is placed fourth on the log with 25 points behind leaders China, Argentina, and Belgium. (Xinhua)

LONDON, May 12, (AP): In the race to secure the last promotion spot for the Premier League, Norwich and Leeds drew 0-0 in the first-leg of their Championship play-off semifinal on Sunday.

There was nothing to separate the teams at Carrow Road, with neither goalkeeper overly troubled.

The match will be decided at Elland Road on Thursday night when both teams will have to hope they can produce more creativity and cutting edge.

Leeds finished the regular season in third place in England's second tier on 90 points. That was 17 more than sixth-placed Norwich, which had been down in 17th in November when many supporters wanted manager David Wagner sacked.

Wagner survived and the man who took Huddersfield up via the play-offs in 2017 found himself pitted in the 2024 version against fellow German Daniel Farke, who had led Norwich to automatic promotion as Championship winners in 2019 and 2021.

Nottingham Forest was still not mathematically sure of avoiding relegation from the English Premier League after losing at home to Chelsea 3-2 on Saturday.

Forest is almost safe, though, as it will require a huge swing in goal difference to be overtaken by Luton in the final round of games on May 19.

Forest was three points above third-from-last Luton and had a superior goal difference of 12.

Chelsea boosted its ambitions of playing in a European competition next season by coming from behind thanks to goals by Raheem Sterling in the 80th minute and Nicolas Jackson in the 82nd.

SOCCER

Mauricio Pochettino's team moved level on points with sixth-placed Newcastle and three points clear of eighth-placed Manchester United, which hosts title-chasing Arsenal on Sunday. After that, Man United, Newcastle and Chelsea will each have two games left. Man United hosts Newcastle in one of them.

Sixth and seventh place are likely to earn spots in the Europa League or Europa Conference League, respectively.

After Luton's 3-1 loss at West Ham earlier Saturday, Forest knew a point would be good enough to retain its league status.

However, the hosts fell behind to a goal from Mykhailo Mudryk, who cut inside off a pass from Cole Palmer and slotted home a low finish in the eighth minute.

Willy Boly was left unmarked to head home the equalizer at a free kick in the 16th and Callum Hudson-Odoi - a former Chelsea player - curled Forest ahead in the 74th.

Chelsea finished strongly, though, with Sterling producing a similar finish to Hudson-Odoi to make it 2-2 soon after coming off the bench, and Jackson grabbing the winner by heading home a cross from fit-again Chelsea club captain Reece James.

It secured Chelsea a third straight league win and the possibility for an expensively assembled team to conclude an underwhelming campaign with a place in Europe next season.

Fast-finishing Chelsea hold off Forest

Leeds and Norwich draw 0-0 in semifinal first leg

Mainz ease relegation worries after stunning Dortmund

BERLIN, May 12, (Xinhua): Mainz scored three goals in a frenetic first half to stun uninspired Borussia Dortmund 3-0 in Bundesliga's 33rd round.

The Nullfunfer started highly motivated against the Champions League finalist, knowing that a win would lift them out of the relegation zone.

The hosts pressed Dortmund onto the back foot as Nadiem Amiri rattled the crossbar in the seventh minute before Silvan Widmer's header hit the left post moments later.

Mainz broke the deadlock with 12 minutes gone when Leandro Barreiro exchanged a one-two with Widmer before drilling the ball into the bottom left corner past goalkeeper Alexander Meyer.

Meyer remained in the thick of things and helped Mainz to double the lead as he unleashed an offside free kick into the path of Lee Jae-sung, who made no mistake to send the ball into the roof of the net in the 19th minute.

Relegation-threatened Mainz pressed relentlessly and tripled its lead four minutes after Lee benefitted from Barreiro's good build-up work and assist.

Mainz should have extended the lead, but Lee and Barreiro lacked in accuracy in front of the target. And Dortmund posed absolutely no threat to the host's well-positioned bulwark.

West Ham manager David Moyes said farewell to London Stadium while Luton was left almost certainly waving goodbye to the English Premier League after a 3-1 defeat.

Albert Sambi Lokonga looked set to spoil Moyes' party and give Luton a chance of taking the survival fight to the final day when he headed the visitors into a sixth-minute lead.

But second-half goals from James Ward-Prowse, Tomas Soucek and teenager George Earthy gave Moyes a winning sendoff in his final home match in charge.

In contrast, Luton manager Rob Edwards and some of his players were in tears, seemingly resigned to an immediate return to the Championship, as they applauded the travelling support after the final whistle.

Luton, which is in third-to-last

place, was three points behind Nottingham Forest but with a much inferior goal difference with one game left.

After months of speculation, and following just four wins from 21 matches since the turn of the year, West Ham finally announced on Monday that Moyes was leaving after four-and-a-half years in charge.

Julen Lopetegui is set to usher in a new era at the club, but Saturday gave West Ham fans - even those fed up with Moyes and his perceived defensive tactics - the chance to thank the Scot for his second spell in charge: The successive top-seven finishes, the three seasons in Europe and, of course, that night in Prague last summer when West Ham won the Europa Conference League for a first major trophy since 1980.

Substitute Benjamin Sesko converted a penalty to secure fourth-placed Leipzig a 1-1 stalemate with Werder Bremen.

Wasteful Freiburg shared the spoils with Heidenheim following a 1-1 draw, and Eintracht Frankfurt held Borussia Monchengladbach 1-1 to maintain their chances for a top-six finish.

On Friday, Stuttgart edged Augsburg 1-0 thanks to Serhou Guirassy's sole goal, helping the Swabians to leapfrog Bayern Munich in the standings.



Chelsea's Moises Caicedo (left), and Nottingham Forest's Morgan Gibbs-White (right), challenge for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Nottingham Forest and FC Chelsea in Nottingham, England. (AP)



Southampton's Taylor Harwood-Bellis (centre), attempts a header as West Bromwich Albion goalkeeper Alex Palmer tries to punch clear, during the English Football League Championship play-off, semi-final, first leg soccer match between West Bromwich Albion and Southampton, at The Hawthorns, in West Bromwich, England. (AP)



Real Madrid team players celebrate on an open-topped bus in Cibeles Square a week after clinching La Liga title in Madrid, Spain. (AP)

Sports

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Madrid rest starters in rout of Granada

Real celebrate title with fans

MADRID, May 12, (AP): Real Madrid celebrated its Spanish league title with fans on Sunday, meeting with government officials and parading through the streets of the capital.

Madrid clinched its 36th league title last weekend, with four rounds to spare, but it couldn't celebrate the triumph right away because it still had to play the second leg of the semifinals of the Champions League.

Madrid rallied with two late goals by striker Joselu to defeat Bayern Munich 2-1 on Wednesday at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium, advancing 3-2 on aggregate to the final against Borussia Dortmund on June 1 in London.

"I'm sure that in three weeks we will be back here," Madrid midfielder Toni Kroos said while addressing the crowd on Sunday.

Several thousand fans greeted the squad as it paraded through the city and headed to the club's traditional celebration spot at Cibeles square.

The league trophy was handed to the team during a ceremony at the club's training center.

Madrid usually also celebrates its titles with fans at the Bernabeu, but the stadium was being used for a concert on Sunday.

Madrid won 4-0 at relegated Granada on Saturday, with Granada players keeping the guard of honor tradition of lining up to applaud the champions as they entered the field before kickoff.

Most players and club president Florentino Pérez spoke to the crowd, which chanted some of the team's traditional fighting songs.

SOCCER

"This team overcame a situation that looked irreversible," Pérez said, referring to the series of injuries that affected players early in the season, including serious knee ligament tears by Thibaut Courtois, Éder Militão and David Alaba.

Captain Nacho Fernández led a round of applause to the three injured players.

Meanwhile, Madrid's backups eased to 4-0 win at the relegated Granada as Carlo Ancelotti rested most of his top players to avoid costly injuries before the Champions League final.

Defender Antonio Rudiger was the only first-choice player who Ancelotti started for a Spanish league game that was inconsequential for either side.

Madrid clinched its 36th Spanish league title last weekend. It is now fully focused on the European final against Borussia Dortmund on June 1 in London after eliminating Bayern Munich on Wednesday.

Granada didn't have much to play for either after Mallorca's 1-0 win at Las Palmas meant the team from southern Spain was relegated. Granada is in 19th place and joins bottom side Almeria in going to the second division. Cadiz is in danger of becoming the third team to drop.

Little used left back Fran García scored and assisted Turkish teenager Arda Güler in the first half. Brahim Díaz made his case for some playing time in the title game against Dortmund after the creative forward scored two second-half goals.

Thibaut Courtois was back in goal for his second appearance of the season after he recovered from an ACL tear and a knee injury. Ancelotti said on Friday he has yet to decide if Courtois or Andriy Lunin, who has played most of the season, will be his pick against Dortmund.

Luka Modric and Eduardo Camavinga, players with real chances to see minutes in the Champions League final, also started.

"My goal is to arrive to the final with the entire team in peak form, and I think we will do that," Ancelotti said.

Ancelotti and Madrid players will celebrate their league title with supporters in central Madrid on Sunday.

Alexander Sorloth scored his second goal with a stoppage-time header to snatch Villarreal a 3-2 comeback win over Sevilla.

The victory kept alive Villarreal's chances of catching Real Betis in seventh place and the Europa Conference League spot.



Dallas Mavericks guard Luka Doncic handles the ball as Oklahoma City Thunder guard Luguentz Dort (5) is knocked down on a pick by Dereck Lively II (2) in the first half of Game 3 of an NBA basketball second-round playoff series, in Dallas. (AP)

St. Pauli promoted back to Bundesliga

HAMBURG, Germany, May 12, (AP): St. Pauli returned to the Bundesliga on Sunday with a 3-1 win over relegated Osnabrück in Germany's second division.

Oladapo Afolayan scored twice and set up Marcel Hartel for St. Pauli's third goal as the home team moved top of the league with an unassailable six-point lead over third-place Fortuna Düsseldorf with one round remaining.

The top two in the division are promoted, while the third-place finisher - now certain to be Düsseldorf - faces a two-leg playoff against the team that finishes third from bottom in the Bundesliga - currently Union Berlin - to see which will play in the top division next season.

The playoffs are scheduled for May 23 and 27.

Holstein Kiel, one point behind St. Pauli, secured its first ever promotion to the Bundesliga.

St. Pauli was relegated from the Bundesliga in 2011. It will be the first time that the left-wing cult club from Hamburg's red-light district will play in a league above city rival Hamburger SV.

Hamburg, the longest surviving founding member of the Bundesliga, was finally relegated in 2018 after several close shaves. It lost 1-0 at Paderborn on Friday, ensuring it will spend another season in the second division.

SOCCER

Meanwhile, Benedikt Pichler's early goal was enough to earn Bundesliga promotion for Holstein Kiel after drawing at home with Fortuna Düsseldorf 1-1.

Pichler scored in the second minute to ensure Kiel will finish among the top two in Germany's second division for automatic promotion to the top-flight.

"We've rewarded ourselves for a fantastic season," Kiel captain Philipp Sander said. "I don't think I'll sleep tonight."

Kiel supporters stormed the field and set off flares inside the ground after the final whistle, while supporters outside set off fireworks.

Kiel was founded in 1900 and won a German Championship in 1912. In recent years, it was promoted to the third division in 2013, and reached the second division in 2017 for the first time in 36 years.

Kiel will be the 58th club in the Bundesliga since the league's formation in 1963, and the first from the northern state of Schleswig-Holstein.

Düsseldorf was already assured of finishing at least third for the two-leg playoff against the team that finishes third from bottom in the Bundesliga - currently Union Berlin - to see which one will play in the top division next season.

St. Pauli, which hosts relegated Osnabrück on Sunday, is virtually assured of promotion. A draw will be enough on Sunday, though the question of which team finishes second division champion still needs to be answered.

Kiel was on 65 points with one game to play, St. Pauli had 63 with two remaining, and Düsseldorf followed on 60 before its final game.

Celtics bounce back as Mavs take series lead over Thunder

Tatum scores 33 points

CLEVELAND, May 12, (AP): Jayson Tatum scored 33 points, Jaylen Brown added 28, and the Boston Celtics looked more like themselves after stumbling at home, beating the Cleveland Cavaliers 106-93 on Saturday night in Game 3 to take a 2-1 lead in the Eastern Conference semifinals.

Kyrie Irving scored 22 points, including a running left-hander in the lane in the final minute to help Dallas hold on, and the Mavericks beat the Oklahoma City Thunder 105-101 for a 2-1 lead in the Western Conference semifinals. Luka Doncic also had 22 points to go with 15 rebounds, and P.J. Washington Jr. scored 27, just two shy of his playoff high from Dallas' Game 2 victory.

The top-seeded Celtics didn't mess around after dropping Game 2 on their home parquet floor by 24.

That lackluster performance - Boston was favored by double digits - was reminiscent of the first round, when the Celtics lost Game 2 against Miami before winning three in a row to eliminate the Heat.

Tatum scored on a three-point play and the Celtics opened the second half with 14 straight points to take a 23-point lead.

That was way too much for the Cavs, who overcame a 22-point deficit in the fourth quarter to stun Boston in March.

Donovan Mitchell scored 33 points for Cleveland, but the All-Star guard aggravated a left knee injury in the fourth quarter and was labored. With Boston up 13 and in control, Mitchell left the court with 1:19 left and walked



Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum (0) dunks between Cleveland Cavaliers guard Max Strus, left, and guard Caris LeVert during the second half of Game 3 of an NBA basketball second-round playoff series in Cleveland. (AP)

directly to the locker room.

Cleveland got within nine three times in the fourth but the Celtics, who went just 8 of 35 on 3-pointers in Game 2, got back-to-back 3s from Payton

BASKETBALL

Pritchard and Derrick White to take off the Cavs' comeback.

Down by 23 and unable to stop Tatum, the Cavs clawed back.

They cut Boston's lead to 15 by the end of the third, and scored the first six points in the fourth, sending their towel-waving crowd at Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse looking for another upset into a frenzy.

But whenever the Celtics needed a bucket, they went to either Tatum or Brown, who broke down Cleveland's

Kuwait wins first gold in UAE

ABU DHABI, May 12, (KUNA): Sheikhha Al-Hindi of Kuwait clinched her nation's inaugural gold medal in the girls' singles category at the Gulf badminton tournament within the Special Olympics UAE, held in Abu Dhabi.

Al-Hindi demonstrated exceptional skill and unwavering determination in her matches against competitors from Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Speaking to KUNA after her victory, the Kuwaiti athlete expressed her profound joy at this remarkable accomplishment, viewing it as a significant motivation to continue honing her athletic abilities.

While celebrating her triumph, Al-Hindi affirmed her commitment to pursuing further sports victories in the future, commending the dedication of officials and coaches who supported her journey.

The Special Olympics UAE commenced in Abu Dhabi on Thursday, aiming to foster unity among athletes and partners across the Gulf region while promoting camaraderie and sportsmanship. Delegations from Special Olympics programs in Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and the UAE are actively participating in this inspiring event.

defense for layups or made tough, contested jumpers.

Doncic already had a balky right knee and an achy left ankle when he fell hard on his back while battling his primary defender, Lu Dort, for a loose ball.

Not only did Doncic win the ensuing jump ball, the NBA scoring champion tracked down the loose ball that followed with his Dallas Mavericks clinging to a late lead.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 31 points, 10 rebounds and four blocks, but was called for a charge with Doncic defending on a drive with 29 seconds left and the Thunder trailing by five.

Chet Holmgren, who scored 13 points, also had four blocks as Oklahoma City finished with 10. But the Thunder were outbounded 16-5 on the offensive glass by the scrappy Mavs, who had a 16-9 edge in second-chance points.

Top-seeded Oklahoma City has lost consecutive games after starting 5-0 in the playoffs. Game 4 is Monday night

in Dallas.

Irving bounced back from just the third single-digit scoring game of his lengthy playoff career with 14 points in the second half, including six consecutive Dallas points in the fourth quarter that helped the Mavs to their biggest lead of the final period at nine.

The Dallas lead was three after a missed 3-pointer from Gilgeous-Alexander when Irving drove across the lane and hit a runner for a 104-99 lead with 39 seconds to go.

The eight-time All-Star, coming off just eight shots and nine points when Dallas evened the series in Oklahoma City, was 10 of 17 from the field and had seven assists to lead the team for the second game in a row.

Washington had a 19-point first half for the second consecutive game, once again finishing three points shy of the combined total before the break for Irving and Doncic. Washington was 3 of 6 from 3-point range in the first half and 5 of 12 for the game.

Salwa Al-Sabah Club tops Women's Category

Al-Fahaheel Club secures table tennis Excellence Cup



Excellence Cup winners Al-Fahaheel celebrate on the podium.

KUWAIT CITY, May 12: In a thrilling conclusion to the 2023-2024 season, Al-Fahaheel Club's table tennis team emerged victorious, claiming the prestigious Excellence Cup with 27 points, securing the top spot. Kuwait followed closely in second place with 23 points, while Al-Sahel Club secured third place with 20 points.

The season's closing ceremony, held at the Federation's headquarters in Ardiya, was graced by the presence of Sheikhha Naima Al-Ahmad, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Salwa Al-Sabah Club, and Eng. Falah Al-Otaibi, Chairperson of the Table Tennis Federation.

The highlight of the ceremony was the men's singles final, where Muhammad Hamiya triumphed over Salem

TABLE TENNIS

Al-Hassan with a convincing three games to one victory. Preceding this, the third-place match saw Abdullah Al-Bahrani dominating Jaber Al-Balhan with a three-nil win.

Sheikha Naima Al-Ahmad commended the Table Tennis Federation's Board of Directors for their outstanding efforts, expressing satisfaction with the elevated levels witnessed in the sport. She emphasized the pride in the Federation's work and expressed hopes for continued progress in future season

Pulisic nets 2

AC Milan end winless run by thrashing Cagliari

MILAN, May 12, (AP): United States standout Christian Pulisic scored twice as AC Milan beat Cagliari 5-1 in Serie A, although he had a very different name on the back of his jersey.

In an initiative proposed by Milan -

and followed by five other Serie A clubs - the players wore jerseys featuring maternal surnames. Pulisic had 'Harlow.'

Second-placed Milan remained seven points above Bologna, which moved into third after winning at Napoli 2-0,

and eight points above Juventus ahead of the Bianconeri's match against already-relegated Salernitana on Sunday.

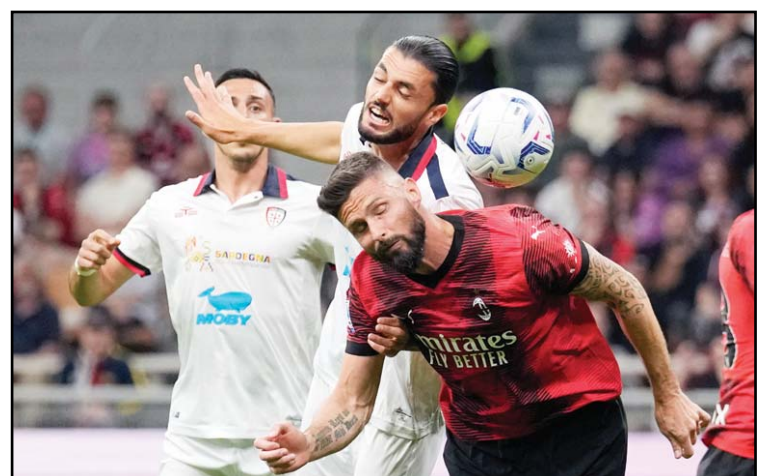
Cagliari remained three points above the drop zone. Milan was looking to snap a six-match winless run, and broke the deadlock 10 minutes from time when the ball bounced around the area to an unmarked Ismael Bennacer, who volleyed his team into the lead.

Leao hit the crossbar in the second half before setting up Pulisic in the 59th minute to double Milan's lead.

SOCCER

Nahitan Nández pulled one back for Cagliari four minutes later but Milan restored its two-goal advantage in the 74th with a 30-yard rocket from Tijjani Rejnders.

Cagliari came incredibly close to reducing the deficit again 10 minutes from time when Gaetano Oristanio's in-swinging corner came off the right post and back out to Eldor Shomurov, who then hit the crossbar.



AC Milan's Olivier Giroud (right), jumps for a header with Cagliari's Alberto Dossena during the Serie A soccer match between AC Milan and Cagliari at the San Siro stadium, in Milan, Italy. (AP)