



Sultan of Oman concludes fruitful state visit to Kuwait



Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq seen off by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as he departs Kuwait on Tuesday.

Amiri Diwan photos



Kuwait's Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah shakes hands with Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq as he concludes his two-day state visit to Kuwait.

Amiri Diwan photo

KUWAIT REITERATES APPOINTMENT POLICY, NO WALK-INS Biometric deadline pushed back for citizens, residents

Sept 30 extension for Kuwaitis, Dec 30 for expats

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Al-Sabah recently issued a directive to extend the deadline for taking biometric fingerprints — Sept 30, 2024 for citizens and Dec 30, 2024 for expatriates, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The minister took this decision to ease and accelerate the biometric fingerprint process for citizens and expatriates.

print process for citizens and expatriates.

To streamline the process, locations and working hours have been allotted at the personal identification sections in the Criminal Evidence General Department at the Interior Ministry.

The directive stressed the need to make appointments through the 'Meta' platform via the 'Sahel' application, indicating that walk-ins will not be accepted.

The ministry urged all those concerned to book their appointment before visiting the designated centers.

Kuwait, Oman ink 4 MoUs

KUWAIT CITY, May 14, (KUNA): The Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq and his accompanying delegation departed Kuwait on Tuesday following a state visit.

His highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah saw off the Sultan of Oman and his accompanying delegation at the airport.

He was also seen off by Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yousuf Saud Al-Sabah, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Shareeda Al-Muasherji, and Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Oil Dr. Imad Al-Atiqi and several other state officials.

Earlier, Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq and the accompanying delegation visited the Al-Salam Palace Museum on Tuesday.

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, head of the honorary delegation, accompanied Sultan Haitham during his visit.

At the museum, the Sultan was received by Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah.

During the tour of the museum, Sultan Haitham was shown historical artefacts and documents related to the history and culture of Kuwait, as well as the grand halls located in Al-Sala Palace where previous Kuwaiti Amirs frequented.

At the end of the tour, Sultan Haitham inked the register of honor at the museum.

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Mina Al-Zour drives economic, environmental gains: ministry

KUWAIT CITY, May 14, (KUNA): Kuwait accomplished significant economic and environmental benefits since the establishment and full operation of liquefied gas import facilities in Mina Al-Zour, Chief of Public Relations and Media at the Ministry of Oil Sheikhha Tamadhur Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah stated.

Sheikha Tamadhur said this on Tuesday during a discussion panel organized by the department in cooperation with Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) on liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry; its developments, challenges and horizons.

Economic benefits of LNG import facilities include saving up significant sums of money due to fuel consumption in electric power plants, while environmental benefits lie in limiting carbon emissions, and bettering air quality as LNG is considered an eco-friendly energy source, explained Al-Sabah.

Liquefied gas project is sufficient for Kuwait's current and future demand of clean energy, affirmed Al-Sabah adding that the projects provide fuel to electric power plants specially within peak summer times.

Mina Al-Zour import facility is considered largest in the world in storage capacity, as it is comprised of eight storages, each with a capacity of 225,000 cubic meters.

As for OAPEC's gas industry expert, Wael Abdulmuti, he explained that the process is done over four; extratidion, liquefying, transportation and re-gasification.

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NewsWatch

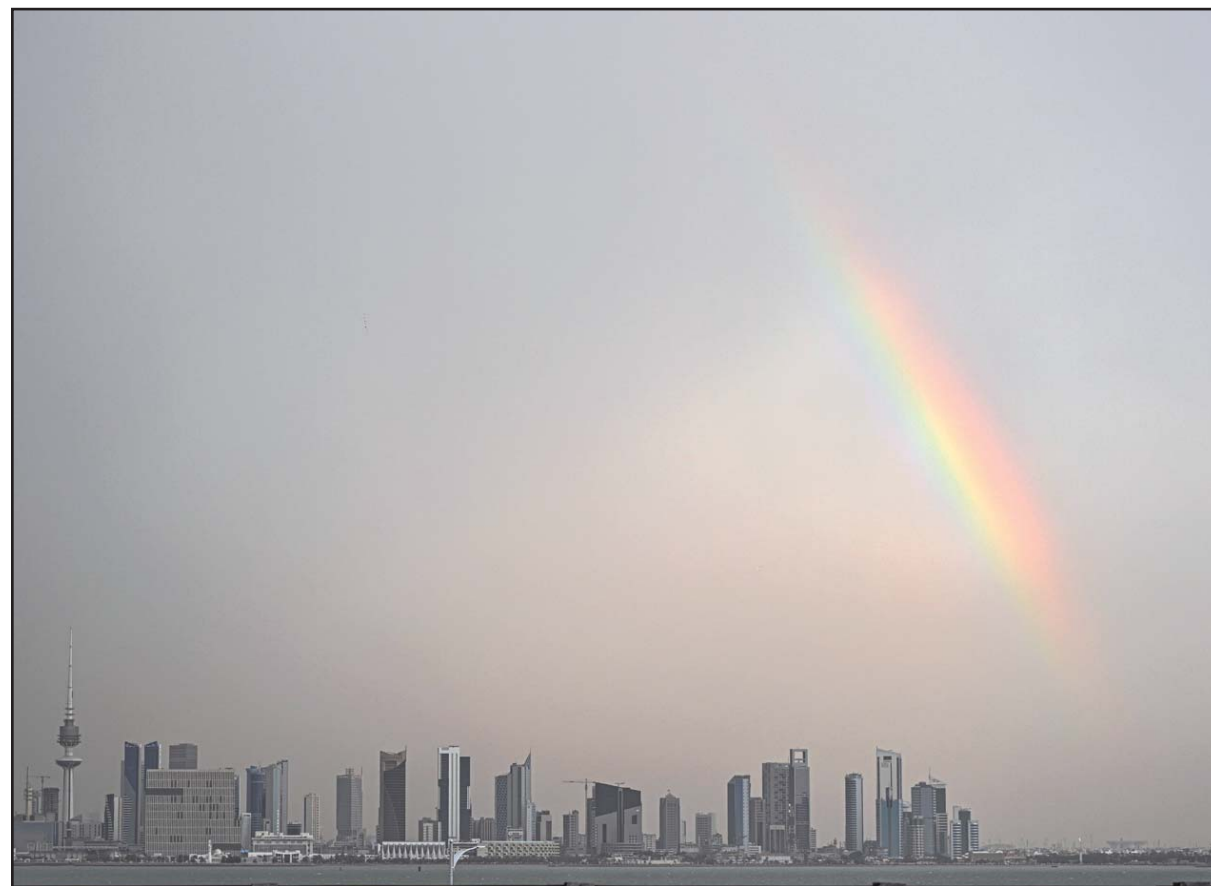
KUWAIT CITY: Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received a telephone call early on Tuesday from the UAE Vice President and Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

Sheikh Mansour expressed his heartfelt congratulations to Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah on his appointment as prime minister, extending good wishes to him and the State of Kuwait so it may witness further progress and prosperity under the sagacious leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Reciprocating, Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah expressed his utter gratitude and admiration for Sheikh Mansour for the good sentiments that depict the deep-rooted and brotherly relations between the two countries and peoples. He also wished him lasting health and wellbeing. (KUNA)

VIENNA: The demand for crudes from the OPEC+ will increase by about 900,000 barrels per day from the level estimated for 2023, said OPEC in its monthly report Tuesday.

The report stated that the demand for OPEC+ crudes in 2025 will also remain unchanged from the previous month's assessment, reaching 44.0 million barrels per day, about 800,000 barrels higher than the level estimated for 2024. (KUNA)



A rainbow appears in the sky over Kuwait City, Kuwait, on May 13, 2024. (Xinhua)

Rain expected in Kuwait Wednesday, Thursday

KUWAIT CITY, May 14, (KUNA): The Kuwait Meteorological Department forecasts scattered showers, possibly accompanied by thunderstorms, starting from

noon tomorrow, Wednesday, until the evening of Thursday.

Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi, the department's director, informed Kuwait News

Iran urges Kuwait for gas field talks

TEHRAN, May 14, (Xinhua): Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani called for Kuwait to re-engage in technical discussions to resolve the ownership dispute over the Arash gas field in the Gulf.

During a weekly press briefing in Tehran, Kanaani emphasized the necessity for technical and legal negotiations over media discourse to determine the respective shares of the Arash gas field, referred to as Durra by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The spokesman claimed that maritime boundaries between Iran and Kuwait remain undefined, making it premature to discuss the allocation of the field's resources.

Kanaani reiterated Iran's stance on resolving the matter through formal negotiations and expressed Iran's rejection of any one-sided measures disregarding its interests.

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Kuwait witnesses rapid IT progress

KUWAIT CITY, May 14, (KUNA): Dr. Ammar Al-Hussaini, the Acting Director General of the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) has affirmed that Kuwait is witnessing a speedy digital journey in information technology, with artificial intelligence (AI) playing a pivotal role.

Al-Hussaini told KUNA during the third "IDC Kuwait CIO Summit 2024" that it aims to highlight the essential role of digitization and AI in paving the way for unprecedented improvements in efficiency, productivity and profitability.

He stressed the government's commitment in enhancing its digital agenda in line with the

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Agency (KUNA) on Tuesday that the rain will coincide with brisk northerly to northeasterly winds, stirring up dust and reducing visibility in exposed areas. Additionally, sea waves are expected to rise during this period.

Al-Qarawi elaborated that the country is influenced by a surface depression along with a humid air mass, coinciding with a weak depression in the upper atmospheric layers. This combination is anticipated to bring about low and medium clouds, interspersed with cumulus clouds.

The depression is projected to diminish by late Thursday evening, allowing for the advance of a high-pressure air extension. Consequently, weather conditions are expected to stabilize, with clouds and rain chances gradually diminishing. The overall weather will be hot during the day and moderate at night.

On Monday, the Meteorological Department forecasted partly to mostly cloudy skies along the coastlines, with moderate to humid conditions. Winds are expected to shift from southeasterly to northwesterly, ranging from moderate to strong speeds, occasionally reaching 20 - 65 km/hour. There's a possibility of scattered rain, potentially accompanied by thunder, along with a chance of dust.

As night falls, temperatures will moderate, particularly along the coastlines, with partly cloudy skies.

FMs in Manama ahead of summit

MANAMA, May 14, (KUNA): The preparatory ministerial meeting for the 33rd Arab Summit, due on Thursday, kick-started in Manama on Tuesday with conferees set to examine the summit draft agenda that addresses issues related to joint action and various topics, namely Palestine.

Bahraini Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullah Al-Zayani took over the summit chairmanship from his Saudi counterpart, Prince Faisal bin Farhan, who had headed the 32nd session, amid attendance of Arab League Secretary General Ahmad Abul-Ghait and the State of Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Al-Yahya, who was on top of his country's delegation.

The ministers are looking into draft agenda of the forthcoming Arab Summit and final statement of the top-level Arab conference. The draft agenda includes eight main topics related to common Arab action in the political, economic, social, cultural, media and security realms, in addition to cooperation with regional and international blocs.

Among the issues on the table are the Palestinian cause, prospects of activating the Arab Peace Initiative, the Israeli occupation breaches in the occupied Jerusalem, supporting the State of Palestine's budget and the Palestinian people's steadfastness.

Also according to the draft agenda, the summiteers are scheduled to follow up on the Israeli occupation's settlement schemes, the racial discrimination wall, plights of the Palestinian prisoners and the refugees, issues related to the humanitarian mission of the UN agency for the refugees, the UNRWA, developments in the occupied Palestinian territories and Syria's Arab Golan.

They will also look into other topics such as solidarity with Lebanon, developments in Syria, supporting peace in Sudan, conditions in Libya and Yemen, backing Somalia, the Union of Comoros and a proposed settlement to the border strife between Djibouti and Eritrea.

Moreover in the summit schedule are Iran's occupation of the UAE three islands, Iran's intervention in domestic affairs of the Arab states, taking a unified stand vis a vis Turkish forces' breaches of Iraq's sovereignty, Turkish meddling in Arab countries' local issues and the Ethiopian dam question.

At the international level, it addresses the second Arab-Chinese Summit due to be hosted by Beijing, establishing a partnership forum between the Arab League and Asean, the Association of Southeast

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Al-Yahya

Prayer Timings

Fajr	03:28	Asr	15:20
Sunrise ..	04:57	Maghrib ..	18:32
Zohr	11:44	Isha	19:59

Local

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

Safe haven to guarantee rights: FM Al-Yahya

Kuwait marks 61 years of UN membership, vows to deepen partnership

KUWAIT CITY, May 14, (KUNA): On the eve of the 61st anniversary of joining the UN, Kuwait on Monday commended the decades-long fruitful relations with the international organization and affirmed commitment for taking this partnership to new high levels in the coming years.

"As we celebrate the passing of over six decades since Kuwait's joining the United Nations, we reiterate commitment to steering relations with the UN toward broader prospects for cooperation in the coming years," Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya said in a statement on Monday.

He pointed out that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has affirmed Kuwait's keenness on retaining and upgrading the deeply-rooted relations with the UN during his reception of the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Sunday.

Minister Al-Yahya pointed since joining the United Nations on May 14, 1963, the State of Kuwait enjoyed a close partnership with the United Nations.

"Kuwait saw the United Nations as a safe haven to guarantee its rights and have its voice heard, and the appropriate forum to harness its active diplomacy in good international efforts," he said.

"In turn, the United Nations, from day one as well, saw the State of Kuwait as a reliable partner who loves goodness and peace, a supporter of multilateral international action, and a participant in the noble efforts and good offices of the UN within the framework of its three basic pillars: peace and security, sustainable development, and human rights," he clarified.

Minister Al-Yahya recalled the pivotal

role of the UN in liberating Kuwait from the Iraqi occupation in 1991.

"This historical UN role has left an indelible memory in the minds of all Kuwaitis," he said, adding that Kuwait's liberation also has emerged as one of the most success stories of the UN intervention to establish and maintain international security and peace as part of its charter.

He shed light on Kuwait's national contributions to supporting the goals and objectives of the United Nations.

"During its membership in the Security Council for the periods 1978-1979 and 2018-2019, the State of Kuwait worked effectively with the other members to maintain international peace and security.

"In dealing with humanitarian crises, the State of Kuwait was and still is one of the first countries to support international humanitarian response plans to alleviate the suffering of the afflicted peoples."

"On the development level, the role of the State of Kuwait is pioneering in supporting people and communities in order to achieve sustainable development," the minister said.

The Kuwaiti top diplomat emphasized that the UN and the international community can also count on the continued active and vital participation of Kuwaiti diplomacy in United Nations councils, committees and meetings, especially the United Nations General Assembly, as well as the Human Rights Council, as the State of Kuwait is a member of the Council for the period 2024-2026.

On Sunday, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Sunday at Bayan Palace United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on the occasion of his visit to the country.

During the meeting, the two discussed the exemplary relations between Kuwait and the UN, mechanisms promoting further cooperation as well as efforts supporting international peace and security and coordination to achieve development and humanitarian initiatives.



Abdullah Al-Yahya

Sultan of Oman visits Al-Salam Palace Museum



The Sultan of Oman in the Al-Salam Palace.



The Sultan of Oman is presented a book on Kuwait history.



The Sultan of Oman viewing historical pictures of Kuwait rulers.



KUNA photos The Sultan of Oman presenting his views after the end of the trip to Al-Salam Palace.



KUNA photo

Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Manpower Marzouq Al-Otaibi holds talks with the Pakistani Ambassador to Kuwait Malik Muhammad Farooq.

PAM DG, Pakistan envoy hold talks

Kuwait to open doors for more Pakistani professionals: official

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Marzouq Al-Otaibi, Acting Director General of the Public Authority for Manpower, recently met with Malik Muhammad Farooq, the Ambassador of Pakistan, to explore avenues for bolstering cooperation in the recruitment and employment of Pakistani professionals, reports Al-Jarida daily.

In a press release issued on Sunday, the Authority highlighted the signing of a memorandum of understanding during the meeting, underscoring the urgency of addressing key issues related to Pakistani labor and working collaboratively to resolve them. Al-Otaibi emphasized the Kuwaiti labor market's attractiveness to workers possessing the requisite skills and specialties, crucial for fulfilling the market's demands and furthering economic development.

Al-Otaibi reiterated the Authority's unwavering commitment to continually re-

fining the recruitment process, aligning it with the nation's developmental objectives while ensuring mutual benefits for both workers and their countries of origin. He commended the longstanding and robust ties between Kuwait and Pakistan, affirming the Authority's dedication to nurturing and sustaining this valuable relationship.

In response, Ambassador Malik Muhammad Farooq expressed gratitude towards Kuwait and the Public Authority for Manpower for their diligent efforts in addressing the concerns of the Pakistani community within the country. He underscored the shared commitment to enhancing bilateral relations in a manner that advances the interests of all stakeholders.

The meeting signals a concerted effort to streamline and enhance the labor recruitment process, fostering closer collaboration between Kuwait and Pakistan for the benefit of both nations.

MoE outlines school fund system

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: The Ministry of Education (MoE) has outlined executive procedures for the school fund in the upcoming academic year 2024/2025 that must be followed by all school administrations, reports Al-Anba daily.

This information is contained in a bulletin that the ministry sent to all schools, including religious education institutes and special education schools. The procedures are as follows:

■ It is necessary to adhere to Ministerial Resolution No. (197/2000) and Bulletin No. 15 of 1996.

■ Cash amounts exceeding KD50 should not be kept and must be deposited into the school fund account before the end of the fiscal year.

■ Any outstanding amounts will be deducted from the fund, and the remaining scheduled payment will be disbursed.

■ The school is not allowed to split purchases of the same materials within a 30-day period.

■ Forms related to the school fund publication should not be deleted or altered.

■ In the event of retirement or resignation of one of the parties, the process of changing authorized signatories should be carried out with sufficient notice.

■ It is strictly prohibited to withdraw the entire payment from the fund at once. Instead, withdrawals should be made in monthly payments, matching the invoices submitted. A detailed annual bank statement must be attached, and the value of payment invoices should not be less than KD500.

■ Checks should be used for invoices totaling more than KD100, with the condition that the check is issued in the name of the supplier (company or service provider).

■ Coordinating purchases between different departments to avoid duplicate purchases from the same company.

■ There should be cooperation between accounting units and financial management.

■ All parties involved must ensure the closure of the fund by March 31, 2025.

The ministry stressed that it is crucial for all concerned entities to fully abide by the provisions outlined in this bulletin.

217,000 students go to '23/'24 final exams

Staff rotated to prevent 'cheating'

By Abdul Rahman Al-Shammari
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: The 2023/2024 academic year final exams for students in sixth to 11th grades – around 217,000 students – will start on Wednesday.

The Ministry of Education has completed preparations for the exams period in coordination with the educational districts and school administrations to ensure the organized conduct of exams and provide an appropriate environment for students to take the tests.

The total number of intermediate stage students is about 130,000; while the number of students in the 10th and 11th grades in the scientific and literary sections reached 87,000 – 44,725 Grade 10 students and 42,365 Grade 11 students.

Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Public Education Affairs Hessa Al-Mutawa set the regulations for the final exams, the most important of which is rotating the heads of the high school committees from their original workplaces and not assigning anyone with a first-degree or second-degree relative to chair the exam committees.

The daily obtained a copy of Al-Mutawa's letter to the general directors of the

educational districts and the director of the Religious Education Department, stating the regulations for selecting the chairs of the examination control committees for the second semester of the 2023/2024 academic year, to provide them with the proposed names of the chairs of the committees according to the locations that have been approved for the 12th grade exams, and that the committee chair should not be at his original workplace and that there is no exchange between committee chairs in two workplaces.

She pointed out that the head of the middle school committee that was chosen as head of the 12th grade examination control committee will be an assistant director at the secondary level; with no first or second degree relative in the 12th grade and provided he is the assistant principal, not the principal.

She requested that the districts assign a member of the supervisory body with the title of senior technical mentor, technical mentor, school principal or assistant school principal as a resident supervisor in accordance with the tasks assigned at the headquarters of the second-round committees for the secondary school classes. She explained there are four schools for boys and four schools for girls, taking into account the appointment of chairs and members of examination control and grading committees for the 10th, 11th and 12th grades.



Ambassador Zhang Jianwei

Chinese envoy, Kuwaitis attend language course

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei attended the opening ceremony of the first Chinese language learning class for Kuwait civil servants hosted by the Kuwait China Culture Center. Dr. Mohammad Al-Jassar, Secretary-General of National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), Mr. Xia Jianfeng, Director of the Cultural Center, and about 40 Kuwaiti friends attended the event.

Ambassador Zhang said that in recent years, more and more Kuwaiti friends hope to learn Chinese, understand China, and strengthen cooperation with China. The Chinese Embassy in Kuwait is willing to actively build a Chinese learning and exchange platform and welcomes more friends to learn Chinese language and culture to gain an in-depth experience of China's development and better promote exchanges and cooperation between the two countries in various fields.

'Amir dissolution move to heal political divide'

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Former MP Dr. Jenan Bushehri recently stated that: "Based on the constitutional oath I took before the Almighty and the Kuwaiti people, an oath that does not end with the termination of a position or the conclusion of National Assembly membership, I affirm that loyalty to our homeland and the Amir is an unwavering constant that cannot be influenced by any action or decision," reports Al-Rai daily.

She pointed out that "at this critical stage in our country's history, the preservation of internal security and stability is of utmost importance as we strive to prevent any attempts, regardless of their source, to undermine the security and safety of our nation and its people. The Amir decree to dissolve the National Assembly and suspend certain constitutional articles has been issued to heal the deep rift that has affected parliamentary life. We must carefully consider the undeniable political factors mentioned by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may Allah protect and preserve him, as well as the serious imbalances that have affected the three State



Bushehri

authorities. This necessitates prioritizing wisdom over recklessness and dialogue over controversy. We must chart a new path that achieves the desired reforms in our nation and restores the constitutional responsibilities and tasks of the legislative authority as soon as possible, and as envisioned by our founding fathers."

She further stated: "The suspension of constitutional articles related to the legislative authority does not imply, in any way, disregarding the remaining constitutional articles and provisions. The absence of parliamentary oversight does not mean the absence of popular oversight. From this perspective, the government must safeguard the constitutional freedoms and freedoms of citizens, most notably the responsible freedom of opinion and expression, as long as it remains within the confines of the law."

'Avoid making fake reservations to obtain Schengen travel visas'

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has advised citizens to avoid making fake reservations to obtain travel visas to Schengen countries, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to the ministry, this practice hinders applicants from obtaining a visa and often leads to the rejection of their application by the concerned embassy.

In a recent press statement, the ministry emphasized the importance of dealing with accredited offices through the concerned embassies. It urged citizens to access the official websites of these embassies and refrain from dealing with unaccredited offices or intermediaries.

It also highlighted the need to submit the visa application well in advance of the travel date and to adhere to the specified date provided by the authorized office for obtaining the visa. This will help prevent delay in the issuance of the visa, it added.

Moreover, it reminded citizens to bring all the required documents. Citizens are urged to stay updated on bulletins issued

by the concerned embassies and to ensure that information is obtained from official sources. In case of emergency outside the country, citizens should contact the ministry 24/7 using the emergency numbers of Kuwait's diplomatic missions abroad. There is also a call center number available for citizens in and outside Kuwait (+159 965), the ministry stated.

In another development, the ministry affirmed Kuwait's solidarity and sympathy with the friendly people of Afghanistan in light of the devastating floods that have affected the country, resulting in the loss of dozens of lives, injuries to hundreds of people, and the destruction of numerous buildings and homes in Baghlan province in northern Afghanistan.

In another press statement, the Ministry extended Kuwait's sincere condolences to the people of Afghanistan and the families of the victims affected by this disaster. It also wished speedy recovery for the injured.

Join the digital revolution: explore new digital economy program

Maastricht launches MBA in Healthcare for first time in Kuwait

Huwaila committed to welfare of family; rights of women, children

Minister's vision for corruption-free future

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

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Dr. Amthal Al-Huwaila, Minister of Social Affairs, Labour, Family and Child-

hood Affairs, and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, has emphasized her commitment to prioritizing family welfare, women's and children's rights, and youth empowerment in the upcoming period.



Ambassador poses for a photo with PAM officials.

Indian envoy holds meeting with PAM chief

The Indian Ambassador to Kuwait, HE Dr Adarsh Swaika along with his accompanying delegation held a meeting with HE Marzouq Dhaifullah Al-Otaibi, Acting Director of the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM), to explore avenues for enhancing bilateral cooperation.

The Public Authority for Manpower stated that Al-Otaibi commended the longstanding and distinguished relations between Kuwait and India across various spheres.

Al-Otaibi affirmed the authority's commitment to fostering and strengthening these relations, emphasizing its earnest efforts to attract skilled workers who cater to the needs of Kuwait's labor market and its economic development.

During the meeting, discussions revolved around the recruitment and employment of Indian professionals, as well as addressing pressing labor issues collaboratively with relevant authorities.

Al-Otaibi also underscored the pivotal role of the authority in ensuring legal protection for workers and maintaining conducive work environments that safeguard the rights of all workers, including the Indians working across various sectors.

In response, Dr Swaika expressed gratitude to Kuwait, especially to the authority, for its efforts in addressing issues concerning the Indian community, acknowledging the support provided.

In response to her appointment in the new government formation, Al-Huwaila affirmed her dedication to fulfilling the directives of His Highness the Amir, particularly in combating corruption and safeguarding democracy for the betterment of Kuwait and its people.

She pledged to translate the noble directives of His Highness the Amir into tangible actions to compensate for any previous shortcomings in Kuwait's progress and development, emphasizing the weight of responsibility and the importance of integrity.

Al-Huwaila vowed to diligently serve Kuwait's interests across various sectors within her ministries, committing to root out corruption with unwavering determination.

She emphasized her administration's goal to contribute to Kuwait's growth and international reputation positively.

Echoing the vision articulated by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, Al-Huwaila expressed her aspiration to construct a "new Kuwait" devoid of corruption, aligning her efforts with this noble objective.

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Dr. Abdullah Al-Sanad, the official spokesperson for the Ministry of Health, highlighted the importance of acquiring administrative skills, particularly for health practitioners, as they are crucial for delivering top-quality services, communicating effectively with all stakeholders, and managing health institutions and facilities. Additionally, he also stressed the importance to continue to develop the various professional skills, and that it is a pleasure for him to experience the medical staff retaining the passion for science and continuous education, after many years of study and professional practice, through the Master of Health Care Administration portal, expressing his reassurance for a promising future for the health system in the State of Kuwait.

Mr. Khaleel Al Abdullah, Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Maastricht School,

announced introduction of a new major every year to keep pace with the global developments, such as the digital economy program to be introduced next year. He also shared his hope that the institution will help cultivate accomplished and impactful managers and leaders who will drive the development objectives and sustained growth of the State of Kuwait.

Mrs. Yasmine Al-Muslim, the CEO of Maastricht School, said: We do consider them as students in the traditional sense, but rather as partners with whom we exchange knowledge, science and experience, while our partnership with them will continue after the graduation in several aspects, including teaching after obtaining PhD, teaching assistant, consulting with their institutions and others, stressing that the medical cadres joining the school is a safe way to realize their ambitions.



Top and above: Some photos from the event.



Al-Jarida photo
Al-Sayer during a meeting with Al-Khatib and Al-Mamouri.

Arab relief officials 'praise' KRCS humanitarian efforts

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Two Arab relief officials have commended the Kuwait Red Crescent Society for its significant role in delivering relief aid to those in need worldwide, particularly in the Gaza Strip, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Following their meeting with Dr. Hilal Al-Sayer, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, the officials emphasized the importance of cooperation, partnership, and coordination with the society, recognizing its outstanding contribution to relief and humanitarian efforts.

Dr. Younis Al-Khatib, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, praised the Kuwait Red Crescent as a key supporter and collaborator, highlighting Kuwait's ongoing support for the Palestinian people, even in the most challenging circumstances.

He acknowledged Kuwait's aid to Gaza, including the recent assistance and the deployment of a volunteer medical delegation.

Discussions during the meeting focused on the Kuwait Red Crescent's efforts in Gaza, including the operation of a field hospital in Rafah, as well as its projects across Palestine, encompassing Jerusalem, the West Bank, and other cities.

Dr. Yassin Al-Mamouri, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, also commended the Kuwait Red Crescent's significant contributions to relief and humanitarian work, particularly in Iraq, Syria, Sudan, and Gaza. The meeting addressed various topics, including the inauguration of a health center in Basra, southern Iraq.

Dr. Al-Sayer reiterated the Kuwait Red Crescent Society's commitment to providing support to those in need through collaboration and coordination efforts. He emphasized the society's dedication to participating in humanitarian endeavors on behalf of Kuwait, extending support and assistance to those affected by disasters.

23rd meeting gets underway

GCC news agency directors meet aims to achieve total cooperation in media field

KUWAIT CITY, May 14, (KUNA): The 23rd Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) news agencies directors' meeting commenced Monday, aiming to achieve total cooperation through a myriad of different fields in media.

The virtual meeting took place on Monday in participation with the Deputy Director General of the Administrative, Financial, and Communications Affairs Sector at Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Mohammad Al-Mannai.

The meeting highlighted various issues, including a study on the fabricated and misleading news submitted by KUNA, the joint application efforts of Gulf news agencies, and the adoption of the 2023-2030 general strategic framework for further media cooperation between GCC countries.

During the meeting, it was deemed agreeable to conduct and hold training courses in GCC news agencies and photo exhibitions for the Supreme Council of GCC leaders.

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May Room Promotion

Weekdays (Saturday - Wednesday)	
Queen Cabana (2 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.	2 Bedroom Chalet (4 persons inclusive of breakfast) per night.
NOW	NOW
BHD 60.984 net	BHD 136.198 net
Weekends (Thursday & Friday)	
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*

Le Fleischer holds press conference

French envoy urges Kuwait to apply for Francophonie summit participation

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: The French Ambassador to Kuwait, Claire Le Fleischer, remarked on Kuwait's potential participation in the upcoming Francophonie Summit in France this October. She noted Kuwait's expressed interest in joining the Francophonie but highlighted the necessity of an official application before the summer deadline, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Speaking at a press conference hosted at her residence during the festivities attended by His Highness Sheikh Nasser Mohammed, Le Fleischer elaborated on the Council for the Promotion of Francophonie in Kuwait's endorsement of Kuwait's bid for membership in the International Organization of Francophonie. She emphasized the significance of Kuwait's accession as a notable achievement.

While acknowledging Kuwait's

current non-membership status, Le Fleischer highlighted ongoing constructive dialogues between French authorities and Kuwaiti counterparts since September. She reiterated the Council's readiness to support Kuwait throughout the nomination process should Kuwait decide to pursue membership.

Emphasizing Kuwait's strong affinity for the French language and culture, Le Fleischer lauded His Highness Sheikh Nasser Mohammed's unwavering dedication, dubbing him the spiritual father of Francophonie in Kuwait. His consistent advocacy and support since the 1980s culminated in his honorary presidency of the Council for the Promotion of Francophonie in Kuwait in 2021.

Le Fleischer underscored Kuwait's significant interest in French language and culture, with approximately 500,000 Kuwaitis demonstrating keen interest. Notably, French has become the third most taught language in Kuwait, with around 30,000 students enrolled across public and private schools. Annually, around 10,000 students successfully obtain the French Baccalaureate degree.

Some of the objectives of the Council for the Promotion of Francophonie

- Strengthening the work carried out by the International Organization of Francophonie
- Introducing Kuwaitis of all ages, especially the younger generations, to the collective face of Francophonie
- Strengthening French communication networks in Kuwait and facilitating cooperation
- Organizing French-speaking diwanayahs

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- Strengthening the work carried out by the International Organization of Francophonie
- Introducing Kuwaitis of all ages, especially the younger generations, to the collective face of Francophonie
- Strengthening French communication networks in Kuwait and facilitating cooperation
- Organizing French-speaking diwanayahs



Photo taken during the press conference event.

Al-Qabas photo

Iran urges

Continued from Page 1

The Durra gas field, situated in the Gulf, continues to be a focal point of geopolitical tensions among Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait.

Saudi Arabia and Kuwait signed a development agreement in March 2022, claiming the field in its entirety, while Iran has condemned the accord as "illegal" and contrary to earlier negotiations.

Mina Al-Zour

Continued from Page 1

The liquefying stage is considered of the highest expense taking up around 50 percent of total cost, mentioned Abdulmuti.

Gas transportation fleet includes some 730 vessels transporting liquefied gas from 21 exporting countries, the large fleet appealed to newer markets, illustrated the gas expert.

Arab states make up around 28 percent of total liquefied gas exports, with more than 112 million tons for the year 2023.

Several factors contributed to supporting LNG trade, expounded Abdulmuti, including desire to diversify resources and revenues, environmental dimensions and seasonality of demand in some markets.

Mina Al-Zour, operational since 2021 is of a unique status in the region, remarked Abdulmuti adding that it had enabled Kuwait to diversify its gas supply sources.

Kuwait witnesses

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait Vision 2035 (New Kuwait) and the Kuwait 2040 Upstream Strategy, as well as adopting emerging technologies in both the public and private sectors.

Al-Hussaini added that the summit would enhance constructive discussions between leading technology companies in the region and influential decision-makers in the field of ICT, in addition to providing an important platform to explore the advanced role of AI in shaping the future of IT and accelerating digital transformation in all of Kuwait.

A group of speakers will participate in the one-day summit, to discuss several topics about AI and its impact on technology, the summit's program includes expert-led sessions and panel discussions.

Sultan of Oman

Continued from Page 1

On Monday Kuwait and Oman hammered out four memoranda of understanding for furthering industrial, investment, economic and diplomatic cooperation.

The memos were signed on the sidelines of the Kuwaiti-Omani trade and investment forum held at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry on the occasion of the Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq Al Said's state visit to Kuwait.

The signed memos deal with cooperation in standardization, direct investment, diplomatic studies and training as well as cooperation between the Kuwait Investment Authority and the Omani Investment Authority.

Speaking during the forum, Kuwait's Minister of Trade and Industry and Minister of State for Communications Affairs Omar Al-Omar said trade relations between the two Arabian Gulf countries have been remarkably developed over the past years.

He noted that the value of non-oil trade exchange between the two countries has reached over KD 124 million (about USD 403.2 million) in 2023, compared to KD 103 million (about USD 334.9 million) in 2022, up 20.4 percent.

"This reflects the strength and diversity of trade relations and their continuous growth and development," Minister Al-Omar said.

He stated that forum serves as a platform for exchanging visions and ideas; exploring investment opportunities; discussing challenges and obstacles facing investors; and putting forward recommendations for improving trade and investment exchange.

He stressed Kuwait's keenness to overcome the challenges and difficulties that may face Omani companies wishing to enter the Kuwaiti market and to facilitate the entry of Kuwaiti companies into the Omani market.

In his speech, the Omani Minister of Trade, Industry and Investment Promotion Qais Al-Yousef said the forum, attended by an elite group of business owners from both sides, is the best evidence of the two countries' interest in enhancing trade and investment cooperation.

The Sultanate of Oman seeks to diversify its imports and enhance its exports, he said, urging business owners from both sides to explore the emerging opportunities in the

Omani and Kuwaiti markets.

Al-Yousef pointed out that the two governments seek to provide all facilities, incentives and capabilities to allow the private sector to contribute to achieving prosperity and sustainable growth in the two countries.

He affirmed that the sisterly State of Kuwait is a vital strategic partner for the Sultanate of Oman.

Additionally, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held an official session of talks Monday with Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq at Bayan Palace.

During the talks, the deep-rooted ties between the two countries were touched on as well as boosting bilateral relations in various fields, said Minister of State for Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah.

The talks also dealt with ways of expanding frameworks to support and enhance the progress of the GCC, the most prominent issues of common interest, and the discussions of some matters in light of the latest events regionally and globally.

The talks were attended by Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah and top officials from both countries.

Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq Al-Said also received Monday Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace.

The meeting was attended by the Head of the accompanying honorary delegation, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Later that evening, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held a dinner banquet Monday in honor of Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq Al-Said and his accompanying delegation, on the occasion of his state visit to Kuwait.

FMs in

Continued from Page 1

Asian Nations, supporting Egypt's nomination of Dr. Khaled Al-Anani for the director general's post of the UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Furthermore, the agenda includes various economic, social, media and legal files as well as the climatic change issue, the Arab human rights strategy and the common anti-terrorism strategy.

The other scheduled topics are maintaining the Arab nation's security, fighting terrorism, setting up an Arab organization for combating terrorism, resolutions filed by the Council of Economic and Social Affairs and the planned final statement of the summit.

Preparatory meetings for the summit started in Bahrain last Saturday.

Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya met Tuesday Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud, on the sidelines of the preparatory ministerial meeting for the 33rd Arab Summit.

During the meeting, both sides touched on the bilateral ties between the two countries and the latest regional and global events as well as the items of the ministerial meeting agenda.

An Arab Ministerial Working Group held on Tuesday a meeting ahead of the Bahrain summit scheduled Thursday to devise a plan in support of Somalia's sovereignty.

During the preparatory Foreign Ministers meeting for the Arab Ministerial Group in favor of Somalia's autonomy presented pending approval at the Summit in Bahrain.

The meeting was headed by the Somali Group and includes committee members from Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Mauritania, Djibouti, and the Secretary-General of the Arab League Ahmad Aboul Gheit.

The meeting resumed its agenda to implement League Council Resolution No. (8988) from January 17, 2023 supporting Somalia's territory and sovereignty defense.

The Working Group reaffirmed the Arab position in rejecting and voiding the Memorandum of Understanding signed between Ethiopia and Somaliland, underscoring the Arab League Council's solidarity and support of Somalia.

Resolution 8988 rejected current and future legal, political, commercial, or military implications hostile towards Somalia, highlighting the diplomatic ties between the Arab League and Somalia.

The meeting addressed the Arab role and plan in supporting Somalia's sovereignty fully, as well as supporting Somalia's efforts in defending its territories through combating terrorist attacks threatening it.

Somalia's efforts in confronting threats to its lands and territories, affecting its people and economy, are accepted and supported by the Arab League and the Arab Ministerial Working Group.

In a scene that reflects Arab's solidarity and unity, streets of the Kingdom of Bahrain were decorated with banners titled "Arab leaders welcome to Bahrain of harmony, love and peace."

The banners featured photos of Arab leaders and some with the phrase "Welcome to Bahrain Arabism" as Bahrain is hosting the 33rd Arab League summit.

Cultural activities helpful to boost Kuwait-UK ties: envoy

Al-Sadu Society kicks off London exhibition

LONDON, May 14, (KUNA): The State of Kuwait Ambassador to the United Kingdom Badr Al-Awadhi has affirmed significance of cultural and artistic exhibitions for bolstering the bonds of friendship and cooperation between Kuwait and the UK.

The ambassador made the remarks as he inaugurated Al-Sadu Society's exhibition at the Kuwaiti Embassy in London, held late on Monday, in an event that coincided with the two countries' celebration of the 125th partnership anniversary.

The ceremony was attended by the British Minister of State for the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia and the United Nations, Lord Tariq Ahmad, Arab and foreign diplomats, British MPs and academics.

Ambassador Al-Awadhi expressed gratitude to the two countries' foreign departments, Al-Sadu Society, represented by Chairperson Sheikha Bibi Duaij Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, for supporting such a distinguished cultural event that promotes creative works of Kuwaiti citizens.

Diplomacy

Cultural activities contribute to diplomacy and constitute a substantial foundation for strengthening bonds and ties between the two countries, he said.

On his part, Lord Ahmad lauded the society's organization of the exhibition marking the 125th anniversary of the Kuwaiti-British partnership.

Lord Ahmad said his participation in the event sincerely reflected the special status of the State of Kuwait in the UK and London's keenness on promoting the bilateral relations.

Such activities contribute to interaction among nations and give a chance to the youth to partake in shedding light on the national heritage, he added.

On her part, Sheikha Bibi expressed gratitude to the Kuwaiti ambassador and his staff for giving a hand in organizing the gallery.

The exhibition aims at promoting the national Kuwaiti heritage in a fashion mixing ingenuity and modernity, she said.

AlSadu Society launched the exhibition as part of the International Crafts week event, which coincides with the 125th anniversary of the Kuwaiti-British partnership.



The Kuwaiti Ambassador to the UK and the British Minister of State for the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, and the UN attended the opening of the Sadu Society exhibition at the London Embassy.



KUNA photos Ambassador Ahmad Al-Awadhi and Lord Tariq Ahmad attend the opening of the Sadu Society exhibition in London.

'New law, decisions in each gov't agency level vital'

No decision on unifying job bonus amounts

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has not issued any decision or instruction to implement or conduct a study on unifying the excellent job performance bonus amounts across government agencies, reports Al-Anba daily quoting sources.

Sources explained that unifying the amounts of bonuses in all ministries, government agencies and institutions requires a new law and decisions at the level of each government agency.

Sources said the first step will be the cancellation of the current system applied in each government

agency, which is based on academic certificates and varies from one agency to another. Sources pointed out that issuing a decision to unify the bonus amounts without canceling the current system will result in conflict; as the existing employees will continue to receive the present bonus amount, while new employees will receive the new amount.

Sources revealed that by the end of this year, the fingerprint attendance system will be activated for all employees in ministries, institutions and government agencies using the CSC's automated system to ensure that they receive the full

bonus.

Sources stated that this activation aims to implement the annual job performance evaluation according to the standards and regulations of the CSC, ensuring that employees receive the 30 percent attendance rate they are entitled to. If this rate is achieved, employees will know before the end of the year that they will receive the full bonus, sources added.

Sources clarified that activating the fingerprint attendance system does not involve deducting employees' salaries. "The CSC has no relation to the process of salary deductions," they stressed.

supervised the development and organization of the event.

Marking the occasion, Sheikha Bibi Al-Duaij invited visitors to this exhibition to enjoy and taste the artistic creations of skilled craftsmanship, their contemporary translation, the basics of Sadu in-

criptions and designs, their bright colors, decorations, and cultural meanings and history.

AlSadu Society is a non-profit, self-sustained organization dedicated to preserving, documenting, and promoting Kuwait's rich and diverse textile heritage.

Al-Fares, Farah Bastaki, Nadi Al-Marzouq, Hussam Al-Rashid, Kawthar Al-Saffar, Laila Al-Hamad, Manal Al-Maimoni and Munira Al-Sharhan.

The society's Art and Design Committee, headed by Sheikha Bibi Duaij Al-Jaber Al-Sabah,

World News Roundup

Europe

Blinken in Kyiv

Russia prez to make 'state visit' to China

BELJING, May 14, (AP): Russian President **Vladimir Putin** will make a two-day state visit to China this week, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said Tuesday, in the latest show of unity between the two authoritarian allies against the US-led Western liberal global order.

Putin will meet Chinese leader Xi Jinping during his visit starting on Thursday, the ministry said, saying the two leaders would discuss "cooperation in various fields of bilateral relations ... as well as international and regional issues of common concern." No details were mentioned.

The Kremlin in a statement confirmed the trip and said Putin was going on Xi's invitation. It said that this will be Putin's first foreign trip since he was sworn in as president and began his fifth term in office.

China has backed Russia politically in the conflict in Ukraine and has continued to export machine tools, electronics and other items seen as contributing to the Russian war effort, without actually exporting weaponry.

China is also a major export market for energy supplies that keep the Kremlin's coffers full.

China has sought to project itself as a neutral party in the conflict, but has declared a "no limits" relationship with Russia in opposition to the West.

The sides have also held a series of joint military drills and China has consistently opposed economic sanctions against Russia in response to its now two-year-old campaign of conquest against Ukraine.

The two continent-sized authoritarian states are increasingly in dispute with democracies and NATO while seeking to gain influence in Africa, the Middle East and South America.



Putin

Russia arrests another official: Russian authorities arrested another senior Defense Ministry official on charges of bribery, authorities said Tuesday, days after President Vladimir Putin replaced the defense minister in a Cabinet shake-up and amid expectations of further purges at the ministry.

The Investigative Committee, Russia's top law enforcement body, wrote in a statement that Lt. Gen. Yury Kuznetsov, the chief of the ministry's main personnel directorate, was arrested on charges of bribery and placed in custody pending investigation and trial.

Kuznetsov is accused of accepting an exceptionally large bribe, a charge punishable by up to 15 years in prison, the statement said. The official's home and other properties were searched, and the Investigative Committee reported, and the authorities seized gold coins, luxury items and 100 million rubles (just over \$1 million) in cash.

Putin replaced Sergei Shoigu as defense minister Sunday in a Cabinet shakeup.

'US arms to make a difference': US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Tuesday that American military aid on its way to Ukraine will make a "real difference" on the battlefield, as the top diplomat made an unannounced visit to reassure an ally facing a fierce new Russian offensive.

In increasingly intense attacks along the northeastern border in recent days, Moscow's troops have captured around 100 to 125 square kilometers (about 40 to 50 square miles) of territory that includes at least seven villages, according to open source monitoring analysts. Though most of those villages were already depopulated, thousands of civilians in the area have fled the fighting.

EU nations endorse reforms: European Union nations endorsed sweeping reforms to the bloc's failed asylum system on Tuesday as campaigning for Europe-wide elections next month gathers pace, with migration expected to be an important issue.

EU government ministers approved 10 legislative parts of The New Pact on Migration and Asylum. It lays out rules for the 27 member countries to handle people trying to enter without authorization, from how to screen them to establish whether they qualify for protection to deporting them if they're not allowed to stay.

Hungary and Poland, which have long opposed any obligation for countries to host migrants or pay for their upkeep, voted against the package but were unable to block it.

Davkova seeks to calm disputes: European Union candidate North Macedonia sought Monday to calm disputes with EU neighbors Greece and Bulgaria that flared up following the landslide election victory of a conservative-backed coalition and president.

North Macedonia changed its name from Macedonia after a 2018 landmark agreement with Greece that ended a years-long quarrel over the name, which had been claimed by Greece for one of its regions. At a swearing in ceremony Sunday, President Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova referred to her country as "Macedonia," prompting a heated response from Athens.

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis called the remarks "illegal and unacceptable," in an online post Monday, adding: "We declare categorically that we will not accept any further missteps of this nature."

Activists criticize Tusk gov't: Refugee rights activists on Monday criticized Poland's pro-European Union government for plans to tighten security at the border with Belarus and for continuing a policy initiated by predecessors of pushing migrants back across the border there.

The activists organized an online news conference after Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk made his first visit to the border area since he took office in December. Tusk met Saturday in that eastern region with border guards, soldiers and police, and vowed that Poland would spare no expense to strengthen security.

Tusk said Belarus was escalating a "hybrid war" against the EU, using migrants to put pressure on the border.

Cave-in leaves 3 missing in Poland: A cave-in at the Myslowice-Wesola coal mine in southern Poland early Tuesday left three miners missing and 12 hurt, mining authorities said Tuesday.

The cave-in happened around 3:30 am some 870 meters (2,800 feet) underground in an area where 15 miners were working, said Rajmund Horst, the deputy head of the company that runs the mine.

He said 11 miners were immediately brought to the surface with various injuries. Nine of them remain hospitalized.



King Frederik and Queen Mary of Denmark are welcomed by Norway's King Harald, Queen Sonja, Crown Prince Haakon and Crown Princess Mette-Marit at Honnørbrygga upon their arrival in Oslo on May 14. (AP)

Danish king, Australian-born wife visit Norway

Europe's oldest monarch, King Harald V of Norway, on Tuesday welcomed Denmark's King Frederik and his Australian-born wife, Queen Mary, on their second official visit abroad after the Danish monarch's mother abdicated this year.

The 87-year-old Harald returned to work last month following two surgeries to implant pacemakers. The Norwegian royal household said he would scale back official activities, but Harald has said he has no plans to abdicate, unlike his second cousin

Queen Margrethe II of Denmark, who stepped down after a 52-year reign.

The Danish royal couple arrived in Oslo on their 10th wedding anniversary. Earlier this month, Frederik and Mary made their first state visit to Sweden. (AP)



British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak delivers a speech on national security at the Policy Exchange, in London on May 13. Sunak warned of a dangerous future for the UK in a pitch to voters Monday as he fights to hang on to power ahead of a national election that could see Conservatives ousted after 14 years. (AP)



Rosa



Hilgers

America

Fla man gets 3 yrs: A 21-year-old Florida man was sentenced Monday to three and a half years in prison for firebombing a Southern California Planned Parenthood clinic in 2022, federal prosecutors said.

Xavier Batten pleaded guilty in January to one felony count of possessing an unregistered destructive device and one misdemeanor count of intentionally damaging a reproductive health services facility.

US District Judge Cormac J. Carney also sentenced Batten, of Brooksville, Florida, to three years of probation and ordered him to pay \$1,000 in restitution, the US Attorney's Office said in a statement. Carney said Batten had committed a "cowardly crime" that showed "no empathy for women and their rights," according to the statement. He has been in federal custody since July 2023.

The clinic in Costa Mesa was bombed on March 13, 2022. Surveillance footage showed two men throwing a Molotov cocktail at the front door of the medical facility. The clinic was closed at the time and no one was injured. (AP)

Bridge span comes down: Crews set off a chain of carefully placed explosives Monday to break down the largest remaining span of the collapsed Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, and with a boom and a splash, the mangled steel trusses came crashing down into the river below.

The explosives flashed orange and let off plumes of black smoke upon detonation. The longest trusses toppled away from the grounded Dali container ship and slid off its bow, sending a wall of water splashing back toward the ship.

The collapse killed six construction workers and halted most maritime traffic through Baltimore's busy port. The controlled demolition will allow the Dali to be refloated and restore traffic through the port, which will provide relief for thousands of longshoremen, truckers and small business owners who have seen their jobs impacted

Politics

Group takes rare step of targeting Rep Good

DeSantis plans to raise money for Trump

DES MOINES, Iowa, May 14, (AP): Florida Gov Ron DeSantis is planning to raise money for former President Donald Trump in the coming weeks, putting into action the commitment he made at a meeting with Trump last month to help his former rival for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, according to two people familiar with the matter.

The people spoke on the condition of anonymity because the details have not been finalized and plans could still shift in the weeks ahead. Still, DeSantis is making calls to donors while his finance team works quickly to put together a schedule that would include stops in Florida and Texas, the people said.

DeSantis is taking concrete steps toward a political reconciliation with Trump, who for months taunted his GOP opponent as "DeSantimonious" as the Florida governor argued Trump's time had come and gone. The developments also show DeSantis' effort to offer among his most prized assets - his prolific fundraising network - in a gesture that could pay dividends if he runs for president again in 2028, when Trump would be ineligible to run if he wins this November due to constitutional term limits.

Commitment

"He's shown his commitment to the president and that's why I say we'll follow his lead, and why I think donors will follow his lead," said Roy Bailey, a Dallas investor who was a co-chairman of DeSantis' national finance committee during his presidential campaign, but was not among those to confirm the planning. "We will be focused on past DeSantis donors who have yet to donate to President Trump. We're going to try to mine those donors for him. That will create a lot of value."

DeSantis, viewed after his dominant reelection in 2022 as a potentially viable Trump rival, raised more than \$183

million toward his ultimately unsuccessful Republican presidential primary campaign. The vast majority, more than \$145 million, was raised for the super PAC Never Back Down, which could take unlimited sums. DeSantis also raised more than \$200 million toward his 2022 Florida campaign.

"We are actively working on plans to fundraise in support of President Trump, as well as other Republicans up and down the ballot," DeSantis spokesperson Taryn Fenske said in a text message to The Associated Press.

Also:

WASHINGTON: A political action committee that helps Republicans get elected to Congress is doing the unusual - spending more than \$450,000 to defeat a GOP incumbent. That incumbent, conservative two-term Rep **Bob Good**, R-Va., voted to remove former Rep **Kevin McCarthy** as House speaker last fall.

It's just the latest example of how money is flowing into races involving some of the eight Republican lawmakers who voted along with Democrats to oust McCarthy. About \$3.3 million has been spent on ads in the Virginia race going into Friday, according to the media tracking firm AdImpact.

The ad buy underscores the internal divisions that have cracked open in the Republican Party since McCarthy's ouster. The rancor has split the party on important House votes and spilled over into some of this year's primary elections, too.

The latest round of ad buys was unveiled on Monday and comes from Defending Main Street, a super PAC affiliated with nearly 90 Republican lawmakers in the Republican Main Street Partnership. The group describes its members as "conservative, governing Republicans." It's just the second time the group has worked to unseat a Republican incumbent.

The first incumbent the group sought

to unseat was then-Rep. **Steve King** of Iowa in 2020. King was removed from his committee assignments after lamenting that white supremacy and white nationalism had become offensive terms. He ended up losing in the GOP primary. Now the group is focused on Good.

"We spend 99% of our money protecting incumbents and adding more mainstream conservatives to the House, but this was a unique situation," said **Sarah Chamberlain**, the group's president and CEO.

Good has pushed Republicans to seek deeper federal spending cuts, even if that means risking a government shutdown. He leads the most conservative members of the Republican conference as chairman of the House Freedom Caucus, and has opposed the spending agreement McCarthy worked out with President Joe Biden so the government could continue paying its bills. When Speaker **Mike Johnson** split up a \$95 billion aid package for **Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan** into three separate votes, he voted no on each piece.

Chamberlain said her group would have worked to defeat Good even if he had not voted to oust McCarthy because of his voting record. The ad purchased by the group doesn't mention Good, but features an endorsement from a former local sheriff for Good's opponent, state Sen. **John McGuire**, a former Navy SEAL.

"Defending Kevin is not what Main Street does, though we 100% supported Kevin and are sorry that everything happened," Chamberlain said of McCarthy.

Groups coming in to support McGuire don't make it a race about McCarthy, who recently himself called on his followers on X to contribute to the challenger's campaign, saying McGuire "is ready to answer the call to serve our country again. Chip in \$5 today."

by the closure. (AP)

Attorneys general sue WH: A large group of Republican attorneys general on

Monday took legal action against the Biden administration and California over new emissions limits for trucks.

Nebraska Attorney General **Mike Hilgers** is leading the group of GOP attorneys general

who filed a petition with the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit to overturn an Environmental Protection Agency rule limiting truck emissions.

A separate lawsuit against California claims a phased-in ban on internal-combustion trucks is unconstitutional and will hurt the US economy. "There's not one trucking charging station in the state of Nebraska," Hilgers later told reporters. "Trying to take that industry, which was built up over decades with diesel and fossil fuels-based infrastructure, and transforming it to an electric-based infrastructure - it's probably not feasible." (AP)

66 probation officers on leave: The Los Angeles County Probation Department announced Monday that it has put 66 of its officers on administrative leave in the past five months for alleged offenses including excessive force, abuse and drug possession.

The department said the announcement was intended as an effort to "regain public trust" as it roots out employees who engage in misconduct at the nation's largest probation agency with 2,800 sworn officers.

"We are releasing this information in the spirit of greater transparency and to assure our stakeholders - especially the families of youths in our juvenile facilities - that we will not tolerate anything that impedes our mission to provide a safe, nurturing and structured environment for those entrusted to our care," Probation Chief **Guillermo Viera Rosa** said in a statement. (AP)



Dancers perform during the Mother's Day Traditional Powwow in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, on May 12. Hundreds of indigenous people from various tribes across Canada gathered on Sunday to celebrate Mother's Day with a powwow, a traditional social gathering featuring music and dance. (Xinhua)

Total revenues amount to \$193 million

Egypt Kuwait Holding achieved net profit of \$62.6 mln in the first quarter of 2024, with an increase of 4.3 pct

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: EKH strategic investments continue to bear fruit with the Group recording a top-line of USD 193.0 million in 1Q 2024, demonstrating solid profitability with gross profit margin and EBITDA margin recording 44% and 40%, respectively; attributable net income reached USD 62.6 million, supported by resilient performance and growth across the business.

EKH recorded revenues of USD 193.0 million in 1Q 2024, primarily impacted by the softness in urea prices globally following the all-time peak reached in 2022, as well as the devaluation of the EGP towards the end of the quarter. Despite the volatile operating conditions, EKH's profitability reflects continued resilience, with gross profit and EBITDA margins standing at 44% and 40%, respectively. Net profit closed at USD 71.9 million, resulting in a net profit margin of 37%, while EKH's attributable net income rose by 4.3% year-over-year to USD 62.6 million.

Supported by EKH's solid performance and strong cashflows, the company distributed a dividend of USD six cents per share to shareholders in April 2024, affirming the company's unwavering commitment to delivering sustainable value to shareholders. EKH has successfully distributed over USD67 million in dividends in FY 2023 and approximately USD 800 million since inception.

Commenting on the Group's performance, EKH Chairman, Loay Jassim Al-Kharafi said: "During the first quarter of the year, we continued to reap the rewards of the strategic investments we've diligently made over the past year, aimed at diversifying, and strengthening our portfolio. We worked meticulously to grow our earnings, despite challenging macroeconomic conditions, building a solid base for the rest of the year and reiterating EKH's resilience and ability to deliver superior returns."

"In 2024, we will focus on directing our main efforts towards exploring expansion opportunities in regional markets and venturing into new and diverse sectors. Our goal remains to foster sustainable growth and optimize revenue streams in foreign currencies. Concurrently, our team remains unwavering in its commitment to enhancing profitability. With steadfast confidence in our new executive management, we plan on capitalizing on these achievements to propel the company along its growth trajectory."

Commenting on the Group's performance, EKH CEO, Jon Rokk: "I am pleased to report on EKH's performance during my first quarter as Company CEO. During 1Q 2024, the Company achieved revenues of USD 193 million, accompanied by a gross profit margin of 44%. This resulted in a notable y-o-y increase of 4.3% in net profit attributable to the Company, reaching USD 62.6 million."

"Our strategic investments in Fertilizers and Petrochemicals front have ensured resilience and yielded positive results despite challenges such as global urea price volatility and the EGP devaluation. Specifically,



Loay Jassim Al-Kharafi, EKH Chairman



Jon Rokk, EKH CEO

investments in SpreaMisr have opened up lucrative opportunities, driven by increased production capacities in the existing production lines and the operation of new production lines. Meanwhile, at AlexFert, revenues are gradually rebounding following peaks in urea prices, with our increased ownership of 75.33% significantly enhancing USD-denominated revenues."

"In the Energy and Energy-Related segment, ONS

has showcased robust performance driven by expansion efforts, including enlarging our concession area to 440 km² and drilling two new wells. Meanwhile, NatEnergy's downstream natural gas distribution subsidiaries have prioritized expanding household installations, while Kahraba continued to reap the rewards of our new concession awarded in 2022 for the 10th of Ramadan South Industrial Developers Zone, effectively doubling its dis-

tribution volumes y-o-y."

"In our Insurance & Diversified segment, Delta Insurance's growth has offset the adverse effects of EGP devaluation, while Bedayti, our microfinance subsidiary, has experienced rapid growth since its establishment, with revenues up by 32% y-o-y and net profit up by 18% y-o-y in the 1Q 2024."

"Lastly, I am pleased to add that we are working hard to ensure that our Nilewood production facility, a joint venture with renowned German MDF producer Holzwerkstoffe GmbH, is on track to commence operations, marking growth and diversifying revenue streams as well as positively impacting our bottom line."

"As we move forward into 2024, our primary focus remains on executing growth initiatives to enhance scale and create value for our stakeholders while also exploring opportunities for regional expansion and diversification into new sectors, all with the aim of driving growth and resilience across our business."

Egypt Kuwait Holding Co. Cash Dividends

The company distributed cash dividends of six cents per share for 2023, with USD 67 million in total. This distribution was made possible by the company's outstanding performance and strong cash flows. Consequently, the total cash dividends distributed since the company's establishment amount to \$800 million approximately.

About Egypt Kuwait Holding Company

Founded in 1997, Egypt Kuwait Holding Company is listed on both the Kuwait and Egyptian stock markets. Over the past decades, it has emerged as one of the largest, leading, and fastest-growing investment companies in the Middle East. Its diverse portfolio spans five major sectors: fertilizers, petrochemicals, gas upstream and distribution, power production and distribution, insurance and non-bank financial services. The Egypt Kuwait Holding Company is aiming to continue achieving high return on investment rates for its investors based on a strong investment portfolio and a competent management team



Alexandria Fertilizers Company

KIC reports gross profit of KD 3.6m

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Kuwait Insurance Company announced the results of the first quarter of the current year, where the Gross profit for the current period amounted to KD 3.6 million (USD 11.7 million) compared to KD 3.4 million (USD 11 million), which shows an increase equal to 4.7%.

The Gross Written Premium for the current period amounted to KD 23 million (USD 75 million), compared to KD 15.8 million (USD 51.3 million) for the same period last year, which shows an increase of KD 7.3 million (USD 24 million), equal to 46.3%. Earned premium amounted to KD 20 million (USD 65 million) for the current period, compared to KD 12.4 million (USD 40 million), which shows an increase of KD 7.6 million (USD 25 million), equal to 61.4%.

Operating profit amounted to KD 2.2 million (USD 7.14 million), compared to KD 2.1 million (USD 6.8 million) for the same period last year.



Sami Sharif

The company's CEO, Mr. Sami Sharif, stated that the successes we are achieving are the results of the huge effort made in the previous years to build the foundations that enable us to enjoy the sustainable growth in profits and in premiums and due to the strong and stable financial foundation. The company won the award "Most Financially Stable Insurance Company" for the year 2023 from "The Global Economics" magazine, which specializes in launching annual classifications in the fields of economy and business. Additionally, KIC also received the award for "Best Company in General Insurance for the year 2023" from "International Finance" magazine.

Mr. Sami Sharif mentioned that in addition to the sales and profits, this year was also full of other accomplishments, such as, the reaffirmation of our company's credit ratings from AM Best and Moody's credit rating agencies with an A- (Excellent) and A3 respectively, both with a stable outlook and we are proud in continuing with these ratings as we lead among the various local and regional companies of the insurance sector.

Aiming to focus on the importance of corporate social responsibility, Kuwait Insurance Company signed a memorandum of understanding with the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity. KIC aims to contribute by sponsoring specialized and diverse programs in the fields of science and technology for children and youth to hone their skills and develop their talents and abilities. The company also sponsored the Kuwait Sustainability Exhibition to promote the culture of sustainability in society and spread awareness about the importance of creating a sustainable society for future generations. The company, in cooperation with the Kuwait Food and Relief Bank for the second year in a row, carried out its charitable campaign "Iftar for the Fasting Person" by distributing Iftar meals to fasting workers and people with limited income.

Kuwait Insurance Company is keen in investing and developing the staff by providing training and enrolling them for educational programs, which will develop them in providing insurance services to organizations, individuals, and stakeholders. With this step, they not only serve the interests of the society but also of the State of Kuwait. We still look forward to accomplishing a lot in the coming years and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed in achieving our goals, including the Board of Directors, the shareholders, and the company's employees.

China, US top-level dialogue on artificial intel set

GENEVA, May 14, (AP): High-level envoys from the United States and China are set to meet in Geneva on Tuesday for talks about artificial intelligence, including the risks of the fast-evolving technology and ways to set shared standards to manage it.

The meeting, billed as an opening exchange of views, is the first under an inter-governmental dialogue on AI agreed during a multi-faceted meeting between U.S. President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping in San Francisco in November.

Both the U.S. and China see AI as crucial for national security and economic growth, with Biden administration officials saying they plan to focus on the development of safe, secure and trustworthy AI. The officials insisted on anonymity to preview the meeting

on a phone call with reporters.

They also said the U.S. would outline how it was addressing possible risks from the technology by creating voluntary commitments with the sector's leading companies and requiring safety tests of AI products. The U.S. government also sees efforts undertaken on AI by China as possibly undermining the national security of America and its allies, and Washington has been vying to stay ahead of Beijing on the use of AI in weapons systems.

China's official Xinhua news agency, citing the Foreign Ministry, said the two sides would take up issues including the technological risks of AI and global governance.

The National Security Council at the White

House said the U.S. team is being led by presidential adviser and senior director for technology and national security, Tarun Chhabra, and the State Department's acting special envoy for critical and emerging technologies, Seth Center.

The meeting underlines the wider race by governments around the world to figure out how to rein in artificial intelligence even as the technology makes rapid advances and is poised to transform many aspects of daily life, from education and the workplace to copyright and piracy. Government leaders from a number of countries are expected to meet in Seoul next week for the second edition of talks on the safety of cutting-edge AI models, after a first round last year at a former wartime code-breaking base in Britain.

Egypt Kuwait Holding

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First Quarter 2024 Results

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193

Million Dollars

Net Profit Attributable to Shareholders

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Million Dollars

With an Increase of 4.3%

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Company collaborates with SACGC, Warba Bank & ALGAS Events

Zain fosters tech innovation in Kuwait with global success stories

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Zain hosted a special talk at its headquarters in Shuwaikh featuring Canadian technopreneur Bertrand Nepveu, the creator of the technology behind the Apple Vision Pro mixed reality headset. Nepveu took the stage to share his success story and key chapters from his journey in entrepreneurship and tech innovation. The session came in collaboration with Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC) – a center of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), Warba Bank, and ALGAS Events.

During his visit to Zain, Bertrand Nepveu met with Zain Vice Chairman and Group CEO Bader Al Kharafi, Zain Group Board Member and Omantel CEO Talal Mamari, Zain Kuwait CEO Nawaf Algharabally, and Zain's executive management team.

This session came as part of a series of insightful talks the four partners hosted in Kuwait to introduce the local community to this global success story, making the most out of Bertrand Nepveu's first ever visit to the Middle East.

The series included a special session for Zain and strategic partners' employees at the company's HQ, a public session for tech enthusiasts and entrepreneurs at Four Seasons Hotel, and a special session for university students held at Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST).

Bertrand Nepveu was born into a family with a rich entrepreneurial legacy, where he inherited his love for innovation and creativity. Since 2005, he worked on developing his passion for virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR) experiences when he founded his own startup, Vravana.

Bertrand's journey took a transformative turn when he and his team collaborated with Apple in California. Together, they pushed the boundaries of technology, culminating in the creation of the Apple Vision Pro mixed reality head-



From the special talk at Zain's headquarters.

set. Bertrand's visionary leadership played a pivotal role in shaping the future of mixed reality experiences.

During the session, Nepveu shared with Zain and strategic partners' employees the biggest milestones of his success story, and how he transformed his passion for technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship into real-world success.

He also shared the biggest challenges he faced in his journey and how he overcame them. Towards the end of the session, the employees asked Nepveu their own questions to make the most out of this experience.

This session came under Zain's Innovation Nation initiative that strives to foster creativity, innovation, digital upskilling, and entrepreneurship in the community. The initiative strives to share global success stories with students and entrepreneurs across Kuwait and has contributed to empowering thousands of aspiring young people through tens of interactive programs.

This session also adds to the long list of programs co-presented by Zain and Sabah Al Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity under their joint vision to achieve a number of strategic pillars, like fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, upskilling young people, empowering startup owners, investing in youth's digital skills, and more.



Nepveu meets Bader Al Kharafi and Zain's executive management team.

Bader Faisal Al Sayer highlights importance of inspiring success stories

Al Sayer holds Toyota achievement awards ceremony

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Honoring exceptional Kuwaiti men & women who have made significant contributions to society and business in Kuwait Committed to support the community and Kuwaiti talents, Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Est. Co recently held Toyota Achievements Awards Ceremony in association with CP Magazine to celebrate the exceptional achievements among Kuwaiti male and female across different domains. The ceremony was attended by Mubarak Naser Al Sayer CEO, Bengt Schultz COO, Martin Ahern Senior Business Director Toyota Sales, Bader Faisal Al Sayer Head of Toyota Marketing, Hamad Al Fouzan Senior Manager Product Planning and Sales Administration along with the representatives from press and media.

Congratulating the winners of the competition Mubarak Naser Al Sayer said "you have become role models in society because you have shown a strong and effective presence in your fields of specialization".

"Since the launch of the award program, we have received many requests for participation, and in this regard, we extend our sincere thanks to our partners CP Magazine for their cooperation with us in this field and helping us to share wonderful stories of the successes of distinguished people who live



among us in this community" added Mubarak Al Sayer.

The Toyota Achievement Awards serves as an opportunity for the public to express gratitude and appreciation towards local heroes whose endeavors have positively impacted society.

Bader Faisal Al Sayer said, "These success stories will serve as inspiration that illuminates the paths of future generations to serve as living examples to be followed to achieve more achievements and goals despite any challenges or difficulties".



Photos during the event

Anwar Al-Mutairi wins KFH Gold

KFH announces winners of AlRabeh draw for May 2024

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of the AlRabeh draw with 30 customers winning cash prizes worth KD1,500 each for the 16th until the 18th week of 2024. Additionally, KFH announced Anwar Al-Mutairi as the monthly winner of 1 kilo Gram of KFH Gold for the month of April 2024.

The winners of KD 1,500 each are: Bandar Al-Otaibi, Mohammed Khattab, Huda Al-Sahhaf, Fatima Al-Khamees, Ali Abualneil, Adel Dewdar, Amro El-Metwaly, Maya Assaf, Fatima Al-Adwani, Abdulaziz Al-Kandari, Yousef Al-Awadhi, Yousef Abdullah, Meshref Al-Daihani, Osama Abdullatif, Badreyah Musallam, Wahid Rezeq, Muneefeh Al-Enezi, Saad Al-Ajmi, Ahmad Al-Enezi, Fawaz Al-Sulaili, Salam Bakr, Osama Mohammed, Dalal Muhanna, Ali Al-Daihani, Ahmad Al-Rashed, Eman Al-Dhafaeri, Bader Al-Mutairi, Bader Al-Daihani, Ibrahim El-Sheqaqi, Rashed Al-Azmi.

The AlRabeh campaign provides prizes and draws that offer customers several chances of winning "weekly, monthly and quarterly". The campaign crowns 536 winners throughout the year.

The draw took place under the supervision of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The campaign is part of KFH's ongoing efforts to offer exceptional products and services that meet customers' aspirations, enhance the Bank's leadership in the local and global markets, as well as reflect its excellence in offering innovative

banking solutions as per the highest quality standards.

The Al-Rabeh account is a salary account available to customers wishing to transfer their salaries and manage their personal accounts. Customers can open Al-Rabeh account in any of KFH branches in Kuwait, or through the Bank's online channels. The account can be opened in the Kuwaiti Dinar and is targeted for customers wishing to transfer their salaries and manage their personal accounts. Salary transfer is a prerequisite for customers to enter the draw provided that the transfer of salary to Al-Rabeh account is constant.

Regarding the terms and conditions of the prizes and draws, a customer is able to deposit 3 salaries during the 3 months prior to the draw, and the minimum balance of the account should not be less than KD 50 at the end of each month during the 3 months prior to the draw. Ten draws take place on a weekly basis for amount of K.D 1,500 for 10 winners each, 1 KG of KFH gold will be drawn monthly for one winner and K.D 25,000 for one winner every quarter, reaching a total number of 536 winners during the year.

KFH is keen to further meet customers' requirements and aspirations and their increasing needs as well as offer innovative and modern services, therefore achieving customer satisfaction, which is one of the fundamentals at KFH. The Bank has achieved a qualitative shift in the level of financial services by utilizing technology.



Uzbekistan Ambassador holds talks with LuLu Hypermarket Director

In a move to strengthen economic ties and promote Uzbek exports to Kuwait, the Ambassador of Uzbekistan H.E. Dr. Ayubkham Yunusov held a business meeting with the Director of LuLu Hypermarket Kuwait, Mohamed Haris, on May 13, at the LuLu Kuwait regional office.

The discussions centered on exploring the potential for importing a variety of Uzbek products into the Kuwaiti market, with a particular emphasis on fresh fruits

and vegetables, dried fruits, and other high-quality produce. This initiative aims to diversify LuLu Hypermarket's offerings and provide Kuwaiti consumers with access to new and exciting products from Uzbekistan.

The Uzbek delegation accompanying the ambassador and participating in the business meeting included First Deputy Minister, Xolmurodov Nozimjon Qosimovich, Head of Department for Mid-

dle East and Africa, Nizomitdinov Jaxongir Muhitdin, Chief Specialist, Karimjanov Sardor Ulugbek, Deputy Head of Department, Nazarov Munis Ibrokhir, and First Secretary Bahrom Turdialiev.

The discussions revealed a strong mutual interest in collaboration with LuLu Hypermarket expressing their keen interest in importing Uzbek products, recognizing the potential to enhance their product selection and cater

to the evolving needs of their customers.

The business meeting signifies a positive step towards fostering stronger economic ties between Uzbekistan and Kuwait. By facilitating the import of high-quality Uzbek products, the collaboration with LuLu Hypermarket has the potential to benefit both nations — offering Kuwaiti consumers new choices and promoting Uzbek exports in the region.

ABK partners with CyberMAK for digital transformation

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: As part of its strategic digital transformation plan, Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently announced its strategic partnership with CyberMAK Information Systems to enhance its banking services and customer experience through 'Digital Employee' technology from Automation Anywhere.

This initiative is part of the Bank's ongoing internal cross-collaborations between Operations and Digital Transformation with an aim of improving operational efficiency to deliver advanced, innovative banking services to enhance customer service.

Elaborating on this initiative, Mohammed Al Bloushi, General Manager of Operations at ABK, explained how this solution automates repetitive tasks, resulting in enhanced efficiency and therefore, reduced time and effort for completing banking transactions.

Al Bloushi stated that, "The adoption of this technology mirrors ABK's dedication to sustain-



Mohammad Al Bloushi – GM of Operations at ABK

ably deliver advanced services. This commitment aims to meet customer needs with top-notch standards in a quicker and more efficient manner." He continued, "The Bank plans to forge more partnerships in the future to align with the ongoing digital transformation in the banking sector and consistently meet evolving cus-



Khalil AlQattan – Acting GM of Digital Transformation

tomers demands."

Khalil AlQattan, Acting General Manager of Digital Transformation and Innovation at ABK, emphasized, "Leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) technology offers numerous benefits. This advancement enhances customer service to the highest banking standards, ultimate-

ly elevating the Bank's competitive edge in the local market."

He further elaborated, "Automation software aids in error reduction by minimizing human mistakes and enhancing operational accuracy through the use of AI. This mechanism mitigates risks and enhances customers service quality." AlQattan further explained that this leads to cost savings where the automation decreases operational costs by allowing employees to focus on tasks beyond routine operations.

Furthermore, it accelerates operations by enabling banks to expedite various aspects, such as request processing, report generation, and account management.

Concluding his statement, AlQattan reiterated the Bank's dedication to investing in digital transformation by leveraging cutting-edge technologies. He emphasized the importance of fostering partnerships with specialized technical entities to meet the Bank's goals of delivering advanced and innovative banking services to all customers.

Win with your salary

536 Winners

Your chance to win is bigger

الراجح

What's On



Photos from the event.

IDF releases new health guide 'Travel Medicine'

Indian Doctors Forum marks 20 years of service

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Indian Doctors Forum (IDF) celebrated its glorious 20th Anniversary at Jumeirah Beach Hotel on 10th May 2024.

Indian Doctors Forum is an esteemed association of Indians expatriate doctors in Kuwait. It was established in 2004. Since the inception, it is destined to humanitarian activities like conducting Medical Camps, Blood Donation Camps, Awareness Programs, Speeches, and Seminars. The philanthropic activities of the association are principally targeted towards the underprivileged population irrespective of nationalities. Its role in the torrid period of deadly Covid had been exemplary.

Along with its humanitarian activities, the Forum also carries out socio-cultural events; the biggest and most cherished among them is Docfest.

This year's event was graced by His Excellency, Ambassador of India, Dr Adarsh Swaika. Among the guests, Sheikh Dosari, His Excellency Ambassador of South Africa and His Excellency Ambassador of Serbia, secretaries and officials of Indian Embassy and many eminent persons and dignitaries were present.

The evening started with National Anthem of Kuwait and India, followed by recitation of Holy Quran. After the Welcome Speech by Dr Ashok Deb, the Joint General Secretary, the President of Indian Doctors Forum- Dr Diwakara Chaluvaiiah explained the role of the forum. He thanked all the general members, executive committee members and office bearers for successfully launching the event in a very challenging situation.

Philanthropy

The Guest of Honour HE Ambassador of India expressed his warm greetings to the members of forum and inspired them to continue their philanthropic activities. He emphasised the role of the doctors in the society. He believes that the bilateral tie between India and Kuwait would be stronger by means all such noble works.

Joint Cultural Secretary Dr Fibisha Balan expressed her pleasure to all the guests, dignitaries and members of Indian Doctors Forum.

Thereafter the 19th issue of Health Guide of Indian Doctors Forum was released by His Excellency

Ambassador of India. The topic of this year is "Travel Medicine". Dr Radhakrishna Panicker, the Chief Editor, expressed his satisfaction for successfully composing the book which will be a very useful health guide for all.

Dr Ramesh Pandita, Haematologist was felicitated on stage for achieving an exceptional landmark of receiving the award on his name from Ministry of Health for his outstanding works in the field of haematology.

This year the theme of the Docfest was "Glory of Ancient India". A group of extremely skilled professional classical artists of Prabhath Kalavidaru from Bangalore associated with the members and their families of Indian Doctors Forum presented a mesmerising dance drama titled "Bhavya Bharatha Katha" which showcased the Glory of Ancient India. Their presentation was witnessed and cheered by a huge audience which entirely filled the Badriya Auditorium. The group was awarded with memento. Indian Doctors Forum is very much optimistic in launching some more socio-cultural events in future.

International Museum Day
Amricani Cultural Centre
Saturday 18 May, 2:30 – 7 PM

Dar al-Athar at-Islamiyyah/The al-Sabah Collection is celebrating International Museum Day on Saturday, 18 May with a full schedule of activities.

2:30 – 7:00	Motif Worksheets
2:30 – 7:00	Parent Guides
2:45 – 7:00	Tours
3:15	Calligraphy Workshop
4:00	Project Zero (teachers) Workshop & Tour
4:00	Interactive Storytime – Museum Trip
4:45	Family Tour
5:00	An Art Full Education (Reggio) Workshop
5:00	Repeating Geometric Patterns Workshop
6:00	Home of Kind Words Curator Tour
6:30	Family Tour

Please note, items in bold require pre-registration.

For more information or to register, email: amricanieducation@gmail.com

A flyer of the event.

Empowering creativity

Dasman Bilingual School holds visionary Art Expo

By Paul Francis X. Fernandes
Arab Times/Al-Seyassah Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: In the heart of Kuwait City, the Dasman Bilingual School organized the Art Exhibition that seamlessly merged tradition with modernity.

This groundbreaking two-day event, which was inaugurated by the school's superintendent, Samar Dizmen, not only celebrated artistic expression but also served as a catalyst for social change with a primary focus on inspiring and empowering budding talents.

Spearheaded by Art Coordinator Khalid Ali, this innovative art exhibition blended traditional artistic expression with modern IT and tech influences.

Inspire

The primary goal, Ali said, was to inspire and empower students, particularly the young artists, to fearlessly showcase their work without concerns of judgment or prejudice. This unique exhibition not only brought canvases to life but also served as a platform for students to address social issues prevalent in the community through their art.

Ali emphasized the exhibition's broader aim was to arm and motivate budding artists globally, with a special focus on the Middle East, to express themselves through art. Drawing from personal experiences and the wisdom of older generations, Ali highlighted the enduring power of art as a medium for communication and social commentary.

In an era dominated by technology

and social media, he said, visual communication has become increasingly paramount, shaping the perspectives of today's youth.

Ali stressed the importance of nurturing visual learning, particularly in a generation raised with constant exposure to technological devices.

By providing opportunities for students to engage with art, Ali said, the exhibition aimed to foster mutual understanding and empathy among peers, encouraging them to explore and express their ideas and emotions in ways beyond conventional language.

High School art teacher Ali Hoballah underscored the event's purpose saying it was to showcase the remarkable talent of students and offer them a platform to unleash their creativity through art. While some students exhibited a natural affinity for art, others benefited from guidance and mentorship to refine their skills and discover the depth of artistic expression.

The exhibition, which is an annual event, not only celebrated artistic talent but also aimed to instill in students a deeper appreciation for art and its potential to evoke emotions and provoke thought.

Positive feedback from visitors, he said, serves as validation for the students' efforts, motivating them to pursue their artistic endeavors with newfound confidence.

Hoballah expressed optimism about the future, noting that some students displayed a level of proficiency comparable to professional artists, hinting at promising career paths in fields such as architecture and interior decoration.



Latifa Al-Mulla working on her portrait.



From left: Art Coordinator Khalid Ali, HS Art teacher Hoballah and Kristy Clark compliance manager: health and safety and safeguarding, Cognita Middle East.



Art coordinator talking to one of the student artists.



Some of the students at the exhibition.



A collage of photos from the event.

Pakistan amb joins drive

PAK organizes blood donation drive on Int'l Thalassemia Day

By M. Irfan Shafiq

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: The Pakistani Blood Donors Association (Kuwait Chapter), aka PAK Donors, organized a successful blood donation drive yesterday to mark International Thalassemia Day. The event, held at the Kuwait Central Blood Bank in Al Jabriya, Kuwait, attracted over 250 registered donors. The drive was dedicated to fighting thalassemia under the slogan "Donate Blood, Save a Child".

The efforts of PAK Donors were honored by the presence of the Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait, H.E. Malik Muhammad Farooq, and the WHO representative to Kuwait, Dr. Asad Hafeez. Asha's Restaurant and CityBus Kuwait partnered with PAK Donors, contributing significantly to the event's success. Asha's Restaurant, renowned for its cuisine and hospitality, and CityBus, the flagship brand of City

Group Company KSCP, is the first privately held public transport provider in Kuwait, showcasing its commitment to social responsibility by supporting the noble cause of blood donation.

Various dignitaries, including community heads and representatives from Coast Investment and Development Co., participated in the event, emphasizing the Pakistani community's dedication to serving humanity in Kuwait. Nouman Aslam Ghuman, the In-charge Coordinator of PAK Donors, expressed pride in organizing the 24th blood donation drive and reiterated the organization's commitment to spreading awareness about blood donation's importance.

The event received support from the Kuwait Central Blood Bank, sponsors, donors, volunteers, and media partners, highlighting the collective effort to combat thalassemia and save lives.

Cannes opens with Gerwig's jury and Palme d'Or for Streep

CANNES, France, May 14, (AP) — The Cannes Film Festival opens Tuesday with the unveiling of Greta Gerwig's jury and the presentation of an honorary Palme d'Or for Meryl Streep, as the French Riviera spectacular kicks off a potentially volatile 77th edition.

A 10-day stream of stars will begin flowing down Cannes' famous red carpet beginning with the opening night film, "The Second Act," a French comedy starring Lea Seydoux, Vincent Lindon, Louis Garrel and Raphaël Quenard. During the opening ceremony, Streep will be given an honorary Palme.

In the days to come, Cannes will premiere George Miller's "Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga," Francis Ford Coppola's self-financed "Megalopolis" and anticipated new movies from Paolo Sorrentino, Yorgos Lanthimos, Andrea Arnold and Kevin Costner.

But much of the drama surrounding this year's Cannes has been off screen.

After French actor Judith Godrèche earlier this year accused two film directors of rape and sexual abuse when she was a teenager, the French film industry has been dealing with arguably its defining #Me-Too moment. On Wednesday, Godrèche will premiere her short "Moi Aussi."

Festival workers, fed up with short-term contracts that leave them unqualified for unemployment benefits in between festivals, have threatened to strike.

And on Monday, the Iranian filmmaker Mohammed Rasoulof, whose film "The Seed of the Sacred Fig" is premiering next week in competition in Cannes, said he had fled Iran after being sentenced to

eight years in prison and flogging. The film is said to be a critical depiction of the Iranian regime.

Many, though, will be focused on the stars parading Cannes' carpet. They'll include Emma Stone, Anya Taylor-Joy, Demi Moore, Selena Gomez, Nicolas Cage and Barry Keoghan. At the closing ceremony on May 25, George Lucas is to receive an honorary Palme d'Or.

Regardless, the 77th Cannes will have a lot to live up to. Last year's festival, widely celebrated for its robust lineup, produced three Oscar best picture nominees: "Anatomy of a Fall," "The Zone of Interest" and "Killers of the Flower Moon." To help rekindle last year's spirit, Messi, the canine star of "Anatomy of a Fall," is back in Cannes for a series of brief French TV spots.

A good Cannes will help France keep the global spotlight through the summer. The festival will be followed by the French Open, the Tour de France and, most notably, the summer Olympics in Paris. On May 21 in Cannes, the Olympic flame will be carried up the steps to the festival's hub, the Palais des Festivals.

Also:

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.: New Mexico is standing in for California in a new film as Jamie Lee Curtis' production company and others tell the story of a bus driver and a school teacher who rescued students during the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in California's history.

The 2018 blaze killed 85 people and nearly erased the community of Paradise in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Some residents have returned to help make something new, while others are still haunted by their

memories.

Curtis was among those marking the five-year anniversary in November when she posted on social media about the people of Paradise having suffered an unimaginable inferno and talked about the bravery of residents and the heroes who suited up and responded.

She said at the time she was proud to be producing a film based on the stories in Lizzie Johnson's novel: "Paradise: One Town's Struggle to Survive an American Wildfire."

"The Lost Bus" was a project that started in 2022. Now, filming is underway in and around Santa Fe and Española and in Ruidoso, a mountainous area of southern New Mexico that also has seen its share of wildfires - including a deadly fire in 2022 that was sparked by a downed power line.

From California to New Mexico and other parts of the West, wildfires have become more volatile amid drier and hotter conditions that have been exacerbated by the effects of climate change. So far this year, more than 2,812 square miles (7,283 square kilometers) have burned - more than double the 10-year average, according to the National Interagency Fire Center.

The film will star Matthew McConaughey and America Ferrera under the direction of Paul Greengrass. Emmy Award winner Brad Ingelsby, Greg Goodman and Jason Blum's production company Blumhouse will join Curtis' Comet Pictures in producing the film.

"The Lost Bus" will focus on bus driver Kevin McKay and teacher Mary Ludwig, who helped navigate a bus full of children through the deadly wildfire.

Film

Variety



From left: Said Fadel, Samir al Borno, Abood Qassim, Rahaf Shamaly, Ahmed Haddad, Fares Anbar and Hamada Nasrallah of the Gaza Strip-based Sol Band pose for a photograph in Doha, Qatar, Thursday, May 2. (AP)

Music

Sol Band escapes war horrors but faces uncertain futures

Palestinian band finds refuge in music

DOHA, Qatar, May 14, (AP) — They stroll Doha's waterfront promenade and sing softly about children who are now "birds in heaven," flying free of the pain of the war in Gaza.

For the Palestinian group Sol Band, it seems surreal that weeks ago they were hiding from Israeli shelling. "I just want the war to end," said Rahaf Shamaly, the band's main vocalist and only woman. "I want to return to Gaza, walk and clean up its streets, hug my family, and sing with the band in the place where we started from."

Five of the band's seven musicians returned to Gaza in August to work on their next album.

"We had a lot of music and performances planned," said Fares Anbar, the band's percussionist.

But on Oct. 7, Hamas, along with other militants, attacked southern Israel, killing 1,200 people and taking 250 others hostage. Israel retaliated with a military campaign that has so far killed more than 35,000 people and leveled large swaths of Gaza.

In April, the five bandmates were able to leave Gaza via Egypt to Qatar.

The band - which formed in 2012 and plays both traditional Arabic songs and their own modern pop songs - has long served as a refuge for its members who grew up in Gaza amid grinding poverty and other hardships. Their home, a 360-square-kilometer (140-square-mile) enclave, has been blockaded for years by Egypt and Israel. Its population of 2.3 million Palestinians has suffered through previous rounds of war between Israel and Hamas, which has ruled the strip since 2007.

"Living under a siege, an occupation, and living through very difficult circumstances ... music was my only escape since I was a child," the band's founder and percussionist, Said Fadel, said.

Music shaped Fadel's life. His grandfather was one of the first percussionists in the area and his grandmother played the oud, a lute-like stringed musical instrument common in the Middle East and Africa.

Of Sol Band's songs, "Raweq Wa Haddy," or "Chill Down," is their most famous. The lyrics that promise "great days coming back," now seem a lifetime away for people who are moving from place to place, hiding

from airstrikes.

After returning to Gaza in August to record, the five members of the band filmed themselves surviving the attacks and shared the videos online whenever an internet connection allowed. Music remained their lifeline and their main hope; they created songs, often amid the rubble, with sounds of explosions in the background. They filmed music videos from where they sheltered, urging people not to lose hope and remain resilient in the face of adversity.

Some songs touched on those killed by Israeli airstrikes, particularly children.

"My children are birds in heaven, lucky is heaven to have them," one song goes. "All my life I hoped to raise them and see them grow up before my eyes."

Culture

In shelters and camps across Gaza, Sol Band's five members held activities for displaced children to keep their minds off what was happening. Anbar, the band's percussionist, even taught some how to keep a beat as a drummer.

They posted videos of themselves in tents, playing the guitar and drums, with smiling children who sang along. "The children's interaction with the music, and how they forgot everything that is happening around them ... it proved to me the importance of music in our lives and the effect it has in the Gaza Strip," he said.

The five band members who left Gaza via Egypt to Qatar had been scheduled to perform on the first stop of their tour "The Journey Begins" at a Palestinian culture festival in Doha. Though the band has achieved fame internationally, like other Palestinians they hold travel documents that often involve complicated requirements, and at times they face outright visa rejections.

"Our passports are Palestinian, (and our) birthplace Gaza," Anbar said. "This made it very difficult for us to get visas."

With pending shows in Belgium and Tunisia, there is little guarantee that they will make it there. And if their visa situation is not sorted out in Qatar, the five will eventually have to return to Gaza - and an uncertain future.

"Would the plans we had before the war still happen?" asked Hamada Nasrallah, a vocalist. "We have no clear answers."

Also:

BRUSSELS: The Eurovision song contest continued to spawn unprecedented controversy, days after the winner was crowned, with the 27-nation European Union lambasting organizers for their "incoherence" in banning its flag from the concert hall during the final.

In an unusually sharp letter, EU Commission Vice President Margaritis Schinas wrote to the organizer, the Swiss-based European Broadcast Union, that its ban contributes to "discrediting a symbol that brings together all Europeans."

In a contest already full of controversy, the European Commission said Monday it plans "a very lively discussion" with the organizers over the ban. Even though the 27-nation EU did not compete as such, many of its member states did, and the star-spangled blue flag is often seen as a unifier for all involved.

Schinas wrote that "such actions have cast a shadow over what is meant to be a joyous occasion for peoples across Europe and the world to come together in celebration."

The flag is on show at countless events and across the EU nations and often flies alongside the national colors from tiny city halls to massive governmental buildings.

Schinas was especially bitter since the ban came only a month ahead of EU-wide parliamentary elections where the EU as an institution is fiercely debated and often attacked by extremist parties.

"The incoherence in the EBU's stance has left myself and many millions of your viewers wondering for what and for whom the Eurovision Song Contest stands," the letter said.

During the weeklong contest, organizers were already roiled by the protests linked to the war in Gaza and Israel's participation in the event on top of the disqualification of the Dutch participant. Swedish police said Monday that Joost Klein will likely be charged for making illegal threats. The nature of the alleged threats was not disclosed.

Features

ARABIC TIMES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2024

BERLIN: The memoirs of former German Chancellor Angela Merkel will be released in November, nearly three years after her 16-year tenure leading one of Europe's biggest powers ended.

The roughly 700-page volume, titled "Freiheit" ("Freedom"), will be published on Nov. 26, publisher Kiepenheuer & Witsch announced



Hayek



Merkel

Monday. Merkel co-wrote the book with her longtime assistant and adviser, Beate Baumann.

Merkel, a former scientist who grew up in communist East Germany, became Germany's first female chancellor on Nov. 22, 2005. The 69-year-old steered Germany through a succession of crises including the global

financial crisis, Europe's debt and migration crises and the coronavirus pandemic.

The publisher quoted Merkel in a statement as saying that "for me, freedom is not stopping learning, not having to stand still but being able to go further, even after leaving politics." The company said the book will appear "worldwide

in over 30 countries" but didn't elaborate.

Merkel has generally kept a low profile since handing over to current Chancellor Olaf Scholz in December 2021. She has stayed out of the political fray and away from events of her center-right party, the Christian Democratic Union. (AP)

Drug safety in pregnancy: Heart Organoids provide insight into medication risks

Scientists create mini human hearts to study birth defects

By Brett Volmert, Aitor Aguirre and Aleksandra Kostina
Michigan State University

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

How did your heart form? What triggered your first heartbeat? To this day, the mechanisms of human heart development remain elusive.

Researchers know the heart is the first organ to fully function in the growing human embryo. It begins as a simple tube that starts to pump blood by the fourth week of gestation. By the ninth week, the heart is fully formed. The heart is critical to early development because it provides essential nutrients throughout the developing fetus.

But due to its early formation, the heart is exposed for a long duration to substances a pregnant person might come into contact with, such as medications or pollutants. This may be a main reason why congenital heart disease is the most common type of birth defect in people, occurring in over 1 in 100 births worldwide.

Traditionally, scientists have used animal and cell models to study heart development and disease. However, researchers haven't been able to produce a cure for congenital heart disease in part because these models are unable to capture the complexity of the human heart. Due to ethical limitations, using human embryos for these studies is out of the question.

To help researchers study heart development and complications in pregnancy, our team of biomedical engineers and cardiovascular scientists have spent the past several years trying to create the next best thing: mini human hearts in the lab.

Organoids are complex 3D cellular structures that replicate significant aspects of the structure and function of a specific organ in your body. While organoids are not completely synthetic, functioning organs (yet), they still possess immense power to mimic key aspects of physiology and disease in the lab.

Research

We created our heart organoids using a type of cell called a pluripotent stem cell. Although using these cells in research used to be controversial because they were originally derived from human embryos, this is no longer a concern, as they can be produced from any adult. Pluripotent stem cells have the potential to become any type of cell in the body. This means that cells from nearly any part of your body - typically blood or skin cells - can be turned into your own stem cells to grow your own mini heart.

By manipulating the ability of pluripotent stem cells to become any type of cell in the body, we guided these cells to become heart cells. The cells were able to self-assemble, replicating the main stages of human heart development during pregnancy. Our heart organoids have blood vessels and all the cell types found in the human heart, such as cardiomyocytes and pacemaker cells, which give them an edge over 2D cellular models. Furthermore, the electrophysiology and bioenergetics of these heart organoids are very similar to human embryonic hearts in ways that animal models aren't.

Our heart organoids beat like a tiny baby's heart, all while smaller than a grain of rice.

One area we're exploring with our heart organoids is maternal and fetal cardiac health. Maternal factors such

as diabetes, hypertension or even depression can increase the risk of heart disease in newborns. Studying conditions that increase the risk of congenital heart disease can prevent and reduce the incidence of cardiovascular diseases worldwide.

We can mimic these maternal environments and simulate how they influence fetal heart development with heart organoids. For example, we used heart organoids to show that diabetes, a very common condition, increases the risk of heart disease in embryos. Compared to heart organoids created in healthy conditions, mini hearts exposed to diabetic conditions developed heart abnormalities like those of human fetuses and newborns with diabetic cardiomyopathy.

Our study found that diabetes-related developmental abnormalities of the heart are likely caused by an imbalance of omega-3 fatty acids, the building blocks of cell membranes and signaling molecules. However, dietary supplementation of omega-3 fatty acids could partially restore this imbalance and prevent diabetes-induced congenital heart defects.

Medications

The drugs pregnant people take can have significant health effects on both the parent and the fetus. Medications approved for use during pregnancy are not always safe, since adequate testing is complicated. Ethical concerns limit working with biological material from people, so researchers are left with animal models that aren't able to replicate human physiology closely enough.

Testing medications on human heart organoids allows researchers to better explore and predict potential harmful effects during pregnancy. One example is ondansetron (Zofran), a drug commonly prescribed to prevent nausea and vomiting during pregnancy. Although it has been linked with an increased risk of congenital heart disease, whether it causes the disease hasn't been confirmed.

We showed that heart organoids exposed to ondansetron had disturbed development of ventricular cells and impaired function, similar to what's seen in newborns exposed to ondansetron. Our findings provide data that may help update clinical guidelines on the use of the drug.

Another example concerns the use of antidepressants during pregnancy, which is associated with an increased risk of congenital heart defects. Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, or SSRIs, the most prescribed antidepressants in pregnant people, work by increasing the availability of serotonin in the body. Serotonin is an important molecule in cardiac development. Maternal serotonin, along with antidepressants, readily pass to the embryo and alter serotonin levels in the developing heart.

In the future, we plan to expose heart organoids to antidepressants and study their effects on the incidence of congenital heart defects. The results of such research on human heart organoids may also inform recommendations for drug replacement or repurposing.

Heart organoids have the potential to help scientists more precisely study how the human heart forms and how it develops disease. In the realm of medical innovation, we believe human heart organoids grown from stem cells are the beating promise of a healthier future. (AP)



ATC organizes workshops and lectures on genetics and heredity in collaboration with KMGCC and Illumina.

Workshops, lectures raise awareness on genetic diseases

ATC, Illumina hold Genomics Symposium

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Advanced Technology Company (ATC), the leading distributor of comprehensive medical equipment and supplies in Kuwait, partnered with Illumina, a global leader in DNA sequencing and array-based technologies, and the Kuwait Medical Genetics Center (KMGCC) to host the Illumina Genomics Day symposium at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Kuwait earlier this week.

Medical professionals from both the public and private sectors attended the event, which aligns with ATC's broader goal to support the Ministry of Health in enhancing the standard of healthcare in Kuwait.

The symposium kicked off with a workshop on data analysis for rare diseases followed by panel discussions with speakers from Illumina and KMGCC on genetic testing for reproductive carrier screening, prenatal diagnosis, the benefits of

rare disease genomics, and the role of genomics in healthcare research in Kuwait and around the world.

"Kuwait, like countries across the Middle East, is significantly underrepresented in public genetic databases despite the high prevalence of genetic diseases and health challenges in the region," said Dr. Mohammed Al-Ali, Next Generation Testing Department Director, KMGCC, during a panel discussion on the future of personalized healthcare in Kuwait.

"Symposiums like these play an integral role in educating decision makers and the public about the economic burden that genetic diseases present and the need to invest in genomic research and training initiatives," Al-Ali added.

Treatment

During the event, the speakers discussed the importance of early disease diagnosis in enhancing treatment success rates. They highlighted the crucial role genomics plays in identifying and detecting genetic alterations well before symptoms manifest through an expanding array of testing solutions like those provided by Illumina.

"In the past it took almost 10 years to sequence an entire human genome; with our latest technologies, we can sequence a 128 human genomes in just 48 hours. This is unlocking a whole new era for the understanding of diseases" said Ana Carrera, Marketing Director - Emerging Markets, Illumina.

"Our primary objective is to enhance Kuwait's healthcare sector by focusing on patient care through education and by leveraging strategic partnerships with global solutions providers like Illumina. Educating future generations is a priority, which is why we are hosting this event to spotlight the evolving field of genomics," said Adnan Kouly, Biotechnology Product Manager - Specialty Diagnostics, ATC.

"We aim to demonstrate how the public can directly benefit from the latest technological advancements, which emerge on a weekly, if not daily, basis. Ultimately, our focus remains on advancing patient diagnosis and shaping the future of healthcare," Kouly added.



A photo from the debate organized by ktech.

Business Foundation Nexus Team wins debate

ktech hosts debate: Video gaming enhance or hinder development?

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: A thought-provoking debate was organized and held at Kuwait Technical College (ktech) on the topic: "Video Gaming: Enhancing or Hindering Development". The event took place on the 14th of May which brought together students, faculty and community members to discuss the effects of video gaming on individuals and society.

The debate teams composed of student and faculty members. From the IST (Information Systems and Technology) and EGS (English and General Studies) departments, the Tech Prose Squad Team consisted of Ms. Rasha Shalabi - Lecturer at the IST Department, Dr. Saud Buhamdi - Assistant Professor, EGS department, students Ali Al Kandari, Ali

Turkiand Thamer Al Mraished arguing that video gaming enhances development.

On the other side, we had the Business Foundation Nexus Team from the Business Management and Foundation Department. Ms. Berlanti Odeh - Senior Lecturer, Business Management Department, Mr. Mohammad Al Qallaf - Instructor, Foundation Studies, and students Khaled AlSendi, Abdulaziz Al Attar and Hazem Yousef arguing that video gaming hinders development.

The debate sparked insightful arguments from both sides of the issue touching upon the influence of gaming on cognitive skills, social interactions, mental health and its role in human development and society. The audience too were deeply engaged which was

evident from the lively Q&A session which marked the finale of the event.

The external judges who were experts from different walks of life had a challenging task of assessing the arguments and declaring the winner. One judge stated that Business Foundation Nexus Team from the Business Management and Foundation Department won by a small margin. The judges praised the debate as dynamic and well-informed, with charismatic participants presenting compelling arguments supported by rich facts.

The commitment to fostering intellectual dialogue and critical thinking at ktech among students is vital and we look forward to hosting more events that encourage such discussions in the future.

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SPORTS

Building better society: Special Oly Kuwait's vision for inclusion

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Rehab Boursesli, National Director of Special Olympics Kuwait, emphasized the imperative of heightened efforts across all sectors of society to tangibly realize the concept of inclusion for individuals with disabilities. She delivered this message during her lecture at a symposium organized by the Information Systems and Operations Management Club at the College of Administrative Sciences, titled "Exploring Special Olympics." The event featured Boursesli alongside Dr. Ali Dashti from the Information Systems Department, and was attended by members of the Board of Directors as well as athletes from Special Olympics Kuwait and Al-Amouh Sports Club.

During the symposium, Boursesli commenced by shedding light on Kuwait's longstanding commitment, dating back to the 1950s, towards the welfare of individuals with disabilities. She traced the evolution of these efforts, culminating in the enactment of Law 8 of 2010, which extends beyond the provisions and aspirations of the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Boursesli elaborated on the overarching objectives of the Special Olympics, which revolve around fostering an inclusive society for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Kuwait Club on cusp of securing title



Kuwait Club defender blocks a shot from Al-Qadisiya player.

ties. This is achieved through a multifaceted approach, encompassing sports, healthcare, and social programs for athletes, as well as training and awareness initiatives for their families. Additionally, the Special Olympics offers training programs catering to coaches, medical professionals, and volunteers, thereby contributing to the holistic development and well-being of individuals with disabilities.

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Kuwait Club aims to clinch the basketball league title as it faces off against Al-Qadisiya at 7:30 PM today at Al-Itihad Hall in the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Indoor Hall Complex in the third match of the Playoff final round.

In the previous encounter, Kuwait Club narrowly won 88-86, following its decisive 96-69 triumph in the opener. This places it on the cusp of securing title for the seventh consecutive season. Despite Al-Qadisiya's

BASKETBALL

commendable performance in the recent match following the return of their American professionals, Illinois and Lowry, from injury, Kuwait managed to maintain its edge and clinch its second victory.

In a related development, the draw has placed Kuwait Club and Kazma in the same group (second) for the West Asian Basketball League Championship's final round. They will be joined by Iranian Gorgan and Indian Tamilnadu, while the first group comprises Bahrain's Manama, Lebanese Riyadi, Al-Hikma, and Kazakhstan's Astana.

The tournament, adopting a group format, will take place in the Qatari capital, Doha, from May 25 to June 1. The top two teams from each group will advance to the semi-finals.



The swimmers pose with Hussein Al-Musallam.

Asia, Africa and Oceania swimmers gear up for Paris Games with 'intense' training

BANGKOK, May 14: Swimmers from Asia, Africa, and Oceania are gearing up for the upcoming Olympic Games, slated to commence on July 26th in Paris, by undergoing rigorous daily training at the International Aquatics Federation headquarters for development on the Thai island of Phuket.

These training sessions are integral components of the International Federation's initiatives aimed at enhancing swimming worldwide. Currently, 38 swimmers hailing from 38 different countries across Asia and Africa are actively participating in the training

regimen in Phuket.

It's worth noting that similar training and development centers have been established in various locations such

OLYMPICS

as Bahrain, Hungary, the United States, Australia, and France. This strategic plan was set in motion following Hussein Al-Musallam's assumption of the presidency of the International Federation in 2021 in the Qatari capital, Doha.



Rehab Boursesli, National Director of Special Olympics Kuwait.

Best of the Rest

Sao Paulo beat Fluminense:

Robert Arboleda scored late as Sao Paulo's impressive run of form continued on Monday with a 2-1 home victory over Fluminense in Brazil's Serie A.

Igor Viničius gifted the visitors the lead with an own goal just before the half hour. But Damian Bobadilla slotted a shot into the bottom-right corner after combining with Juan Silva.

Arboleda put his side ahead with a low 84th-minute strike after a scramble inside the six-yard box, and Sao Paulo secured their third win in four games.

"Our attitude has changed and we're beginning to believe in ourselves," the Ecuador international defender said. "We have a great squad. It's just a matter of working hard and staying committed." The result lifted Sao Paulo to fifth in the 20-team standings with 10 points from six outings, five points ahead of 17th-placed Fluminense. (Xinhua)

Teixeira to miss Hainiu game:

Shanghai Shenhua striker Joao Teixeira, still nursing a leg injury, will miss Wednesday's Chinese Super League (CSL) game against Qingdao Hainiu, according to the Shanghai side's head coach Leonid Slutsky.

The Portuguese player is recovering but not yet match fit, Slutsky said at the pre-match press conference on Tuesday.

"About when he will come back, it's very difficult to tell. He's improving, but not ready for the game," he said.

Teixeira picked up the injury in the second half of Shanghai Shenhua's 4-0 victory over Zhejiang FC last Sunday after he collided with an opposition player.

Medical examinations conducted by the club's medical team confirmed that he suffered a minor ligament tear in his left leg.

Shanghai Shenhua leads the CSL table with 27 points from 11 games, while Qingdao Hainiu struggles in second from the bottom with eight points. (Xinhua)

Coutinho on Vasco radar:

Philippe Coutinho could return to his original club Vasco da Gama in Brazil's upcoming mid-season transfer window, according to media reports in the South American country.

The Rio de Janeiro outfit is preparing an offer to sign the 31-year-old on loan with an option to make the deal permanent, Globo Esporte reported on Monday.

Coutinho, who spent this season at Qatar's Al-Duhail, has two years left on his contract with Aston Villa but is not expected to

be a part of the Premier League side's plans next season.

The former Brazil international joined Vasco da Gama as a 16-year-old and made 19 first-team appearances for the club before earning a move to Inter Milan.

In addition to the Italian Serie A games, he has had spells at Espanyol, Liverpool, Barcelona and Bayern Munich.

Brazil's winter transfer window runs from July 10 to September 2. (Xinhua)

Slavko to officiate final:

Slovenian referee Slavko Vincic will officiate the Champions League final between Real Madrid and Borussia Dortmund, UEFA said.

The 44-year-old Vincic, who also worked the 2022 Europa League final when Eintracht Frankfurt beat Rangers, will be in charge of the June 1 game at Wembley Stadium.

It continues a good run for Slovenian referees in major European games.

This will be the fourth UEFA final handled by a Slovenian referee since Damir Skomina was picked for the 2017 Europa League title game. Dutch referees are next best with three men's finals in that time.

Also Monday, UEFA picked English referee Rebecca Welch for the Women's Champions League final. István Kovács of Romania for the Europa League final and Artur Soares Dias of Portugal for the Europa Conference League final.

Vincic has handled five Champions League games this season without awarding a penalty kick or showing a red card. Among his games was Dortmund's 4-2 win over Atletico Madrid in the second leg of the quarterfinals.

He also refereed two games at the 2022 World Cup, including eventual winner Argentina's 2-1 loss in its opening match against Saudi Arabia.

Kovács also will work his second European final. He refereed the inaugural Europa Conference League final in 2022 when Roma beat Feyenoord.

All three men picked Monday are on UEFA's team of match officials for the European Championship that starts June 14 in Germany.

The Europa League final between Bayer Leverkusen and Atalanta is in Dublin on May 22.

The Women's Champions League final between defending champion Barcelona and Lyon is on May 25 in Bilbao, Spain.

The Fiorentina vs. Olympiakos final of the Europa Conference League is in Athens on May 29. (AP)

'Substitute' Duran scores two late goals in Villa thriller with Liverpool

Aston edge closer to next year's Champions League

BIRMINGHAM, England, May 14, (AP) — Substitute Jhon Duran was a late savior for Aston Villa, scoring twice in the last five minutes against Liverpool to grab a remarkable 3-3 home draw and edge his team closer to next year's Champions League.

Watched by Villa fan Tom Hanks, who was in the ground in a claret tracksuit top, Villa played its part in a thrilling match in front of a packed house that Liverpool coach Jürgen Klopp described as "rocking."

A win would have confirmed a place in the English Premier League top four for Unai Emery's side and a place in the European Cup for the first time since 1983.

But the home side went behind in the second minute with a bizarre own goal from goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez, and although Youri Tielemans equalized soon after, goals from Cody Gakpo and Jarell Quansah put Liverpool in the driving seat.

Until Duran's appearance after 79 minutes.

The Colombian scored in the 85th and 88th, the second an astonishing lob executed on the run that sent Villa and its supporters wild with joy.

"We created chances but we didn't score," Tielemans told

broadcaster Sky Sports. "We got the draw and fought right until the end and that's the most important thing. Unfortunately, we couldn't score more, we felt like we deserved more in the first half. It's unlucky but we'll take the draw."

Villa remained in fourth place, five points ahead of Tottenham.

The top four qualify for the Champions League. Liverpool was third, 14 points clear of Villa.

The atmosphere was electric at kickoff but the power was quickly sapped for the home side when Liverpool had the ball in the back of the net after just 62 seconds. Harvey Elliott's cross from the right took a deflection and the wrong-footed Martinez fumbled the ball into his own net.

It took the home side just 15 minutes to recover. Ollie Watkins did well on the left flank and cut the ball back for the unmarked Youri Tielemans to slam home from around 16 meters.

Liverpool regained the lead but only after a lengthy VAR review. Luiz Diaz fed Joe Gomez on the overlap and his low ball across goal was turned in by Cody Gakpo.

Jarell Quansah made it three early in the second half when he headed home a cross from Elliott to bag his first league goal.

And then it was Duran Duran when the Colombian slotted home from just outside the box and then scored that astonishing lob.

"Jhon Duran is a special player,"



Aston Villa's Jhon Duran celebrates after scoring his side's second goal during the English Premier League soccer match between Aston Villa and Liverpool at the Villa Park stadium in Birmingham, England. (AP)

Emery said on Sky Sports. "He was very clinical and today was important for him."

The Aston Villa players will tuned into Tuesday's Spurs-Man City game. Anything other than a Spurs win means Villa are into the Champions League.

"There's some of us that have never been close to the Champions League in our life," Villa captain John McGinn said. "We'll have our Man City tops on tomorrow."

Meanwhile, Former France center back Raphael Varane will leave Manchester United when his contract expires at the end of the

season.

The 31-year-old Varane joined United in 2021 but has struggled to reproduce the kind of form he showed in a trophy-laden, decade-long spell at Real Madrid before that.

Injuries have also played a part, restricting Varane to 93 appearances in his three seasons at United. "To you guys, supporters of Manchester United, it's been an amazing few years to play for this special club and wear that shirt," Varane said on Tuesday on social media. "The first time I went to Old Trafford as a Man United player was insane, the atmosphere was amazing."

"I fell in love with the club, with the fans. You have to play for Man United to understand what that represents. For my kids, it's home here. It's going to be a special place for me, for life."

Despite United languishing in eighth place in the English Premier League, Varane said he was "very positive for the future" following the arrival of Jim Ratcliffe as a co-owner.

"The new owners are coming with a clear plan and a great strategy," Varane said, ahead of the home match against Newcastle on Wednesday.

"I'll see you at Old Trafford to say goodbye for the last game at home this season and it's going to be very emotional day for me, for sure."



Aston Villa's Leon Bailey (left), challenges for the ball with Liverpool's Alexis Mac Allister during the English Premier League soccer match between Aston Villa and Liverpool at the Villa Park stadium in Birmingham, England. (AP)



Boston Celtics forward Jayson Tatum (center), drives against Cleveland Cavaliers forwards Dean Wade (32) and Evan Mobley (left), during the second half of Game 4 of an NBA basketball second-round playoff series in Cleveland. (AP)

Sports

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Celtics on the brink of reaching East finals

Thunder overcome Mavs defense knot even series

CLEVELAND, May 14, (AP): Even when it's supposed to be somewhat easy, the Boston Celtics have a weird way of making things hard.

On Monday night, they nearly stumbled against an overmatched Cleveland team.

Jayson Tatum scored 33 points with LeBron James watching from a court-side seat and the Celtics beat the severely short-handed Cavaliers 109-102 in Game 4 to take a commanding 3-1 lead in their Eastern Conference semifinal series.

Jaylen Brown added 27 for the Celtics, who can close out Cleveland with a win in Game 5 on Wednesday night at home.

"It took us a little while to get going, and stop ball watching and play some basketball," Brown said.

BASKETBALL

Game 6, if necessary, would be back at Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse on Friday.

The Cavs got pushed to the brink of elimination with two top players in street clothes on the bench, as Donovan Mitchell (calf) and Jarrett Allen (ribs) sat out with injuries. Their status going forward is uncertain.

It was nothing new for a Cleveland team that dealt with injuries all season, but it was a big ask for the Cavs to try and survive without Mitchell, their All-Star guard who has carried the offensive load throughout the postseason, or Allen, their leading rebounder.

Still, the Cavs gave the top-seeded Celtics, who have shown a tendency to relax at the wrong time, all they could handle.

Tatum had his second straight strong performance, adding 11 rebounds and five assists. Iruke Holiday had 16 points for Boston, which improved to 4-0 away from home in the postseason.

Darius Garland scored 30 and Evan Mobley and Caris LeVert 19 apiece for the Cavs, who stayed connected with the Celtics and only trailed by 10 going into the fourth.

Boston went up 15 on a jumper by Brown, but Cleveland responded with



Oklahoma City Thunder's Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (2) and Dallas Mavericks' Dante Exum (0) chase after the ball in the first half in Game 4 of an NBA basketball second-round playoff series in Dallas. (AP)

a 10-2 run as Garland and Dean Wade made 3-pointers.

The Cavs were still within 102-97 when Max Strus missed a 3-pointer that would have put immense pressure on the Celtics, but Brown buried a 3 - after colliding with official Tyler Ford - with 1:08 left to give Boston some breathing room.

Brown said Ford nearly cost the Celtics dearly by getting in his way.

The Cavs felt the discrepancy at the free-throw line - Boston attempted 24 free throws to Cleveland's seven -- was a major element.

James, who played 11 seasons in

two separate stints for Cleveland, was back in his former home arena - a visit certain to drive speculation about where he might play next.

The NBA's career scoring leader can opt out of his contract with the Los Angeles Lakers this summer, and James has said he's not made any firm decisions. The 39-year-old sat across from Boston's bench in between his wife, Savannah, and agent Rich Paul. James got a monstrous ovation from Cleveland's crowd when he was shown on the scoreboard during a timeout in the first quarter.

Despite dealing with a left knee

injury for months, Mitchell averaged 29.6 points in the first 10 playoff games - scoring 50 in a Game 6 loss to Orlando.

He injured his calf in the waning moments of Cleveland's loss in Game 3 on Saturday and was added to the injury report as questionable on Sunday. Mitchell underwent round-the-clock treatment but didn't have enough time to heal. The five-time All-Star didn't comment following the game, nodding politely on his way out of the locker room.

Allen sat out the seventh straight game with a painful injury the center sustained in the opening round.

With Holiday scoring seven straight points, the Celtics went ahead by 13 in the second quarter and appeared ready to run away from the Cavs.

But Cleveland stormed back as Strus, who has struggled with his outside shot throughout the playoffs, made consecutive 3-pointers in a 13-3 run that helped the Cavs close within 62-57 at halftime.

Boston's center Kristaps Porzingis missed his fifth straight game, but the Celtics were encouraged he was able to do some on-court work.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 34 points and the Oklahoma City Thunder

overcame a Dallas franchise playoff-record 13 blocks, rallying for a 100-96 victory to even their Western Conference semifinal series at 2-2.

Chet Holmgren and Lu Dort hit clutch 3-pointers late, and Jalen Williams drove for a dunk and a 94-91 lead with 1:29 remaining as Dallas players and coaches screamed for a double-dribble call.

The teams split a pair on each other's home court. Game 5 is Wednesday night in Oklahoma City.

The Mavericks' last chance to tie came with 10.1 seconds left when, trailing by two, Luka Doncic had two free throws. But the Dallas superstar missed the first, part of a dismal 12-for-23 effort by the Mavs from the line. Oklahoma City was 23 for 24.

Backed by one of their best defensive efforts of the season, the Mavs led by 14 early in the second half. But their offense disappeared from there, and the Thunder slowly came back.

Oklahoma City went in front for the first time since early in the game - and for good - on Holmgren's 3 for an 89-86 lead with 3:24 remaining.

P.J. Washington led Dallas in scoring again with 21 points, while Doncic had 18 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists. Kyrie Irving had his second single-digit scoring game of the series with nine points.

Dort's clutch 3 came on a 3-of-10 shooting night from deep as he finished with 17 points. Holmgren had 18 points and nine rebounds.

Dereck Lively II and Derrick Jones Jr. had four blocks apiece for Dallas, each getting one in the final seconds of the first half to continue the defensive tone that had already been set.

That defensive struggle turned downright ugly in the third quarter, with the Thunder outscoring Dallas 22-15 to cut their deficit to four - the closest they had been since the middle of the first quarter. Oklahoma City shot 33% in the third to 25% for the Mavs.

Dallas wasn't much better in the fourth, shooting 42% and going just 1 of 5 from long range while the Thunder finally started seeing shots go in after shooting 34% through three quarters.

Gilgeous-Alexander, who along with Holmgren did most of the shot-making while their teammates struggled, got the Thunder even on a jumper with four minutes to go.

Siwan announces retirement ceremony after storied career



Former Kuwait handball player Faisal Siwan.

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: Faisal Siwan, former star of Kuwait handball team and Sulaibikhat Club, has announced the date of his retirement ceremony, scheduled for June 9th at the conclusion of the current handball season 2023-2024. The retirement match will feature former Kuwaiti stars.

Currently serving as the director of national teams in the Handball Federation, Siwan's handball journey began in 1992 at Sulaibikhat Club. His exceptional talent propelled him to the first team in 1998, where he became instrumental in executing coaches' strategies.

Siwan later played for Al-Qurain Club from 2012 to 2014 and then joined Al-Kuwait Club from 2014 to 2016 before stepping away from the game.

Throughout his career, Siwan represented the junior and youth teams in 1997. He played for the senior team from 1999 to 2014,

securing league titles and cups with both Sulaibikhat and Kuwait Club. His achievements also include winning the Gulf Cup in 2004, the Arab Club Championship in 2003, and the Asian Cup in 2009. Additionally, he clinched the Arab Championship in 2014 with Al-Qurain and competed in foreign tournaments with clubs like Al-Wahda in Saudi Arabia and Al-Fahaheel in the Asian Cup.

HANDBALL

Siwan's international accolades include five World Cup finals appearances from 2001 to 2009 and winning the Asian Cup twice in 2002 and 2004 with Al-Azraq.

In other handball news, the 13th and final round of the Handball League will feature two matches today. Kazma will face Al-Salmiya at 5:00 PM, while Al-Qadisiya will play against Sulaibikhat at 6:30 PM. Additionally, Al-Arabi secured victory 38-29 over Al-Nasr.

Kuwait Club lock horns with Al-Salmiya League braces for thriller as Al-Arabi face Al-Salmiya

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 14: The Zain Premier League's championship group competitions kick off with the eighth round, featuring a clash between Al-Fahaheel and Al-Nasr at Al-Shabab Stadium at 07:10 pm.

Tomorrow, fans eagerly anticipate the showdown between Al-Arabi and Al-Qadisiya, dubbed the "Derby," followed by Kuwait Club facing Al-Salmiya to conclude the round.

In today's match, Al-Fahaheel (30 points) aims for its second victory, striving to maintain its fourth-place position after a morale-boosting win against Al-Qadisiya in the last round, ending a streak of defeats.

Coach Firas Al-Khatib of the Syrian team seeks to extend Al-Fahaheel's dominance over Al-Nasr, having won their previous three encounters this season with scores of

SOCCER

4-2, 2-1, and 3-1.

Meanwhile, Al-Nasr sits sixth in the standings (24 points), eager for its first victory in the group stage despite facing challenges, including player absences due to injuries and suspensions, as acknowledged by Coach Zaher Al-Adwani.

In the relegation group, Al-Jahra's missed opportunities in the first half, combined with Al-Shabab goalkeeper Saad Al-Anzi's outstanding performance, led to its 2-0 defeat against "Sons Al-Ahmadi" at the Friendship and Peace Stadium, sealing its relegation from the Kuwaiti Premier League.

Khaitan revived its hopes with a narrow 1-0 win over Kazma at Nasser Al-Osaimi Stadium.

With Al-Jahra's relegation confirmed, the battle for the second relegation spot tightens between Khaitan (18 points) and Al-Shabab (20 points), while Kazma secures its spot in the Premier League with 32 points.

The sixth and final round, scheduled for the day after tomorrow, will see Al-Shabab facing Kazma, and Khaitan taking on Al-Jahra.

Kuwait Club lock horns with Al-Salmiya

Scrutiny ramps up on US firm

EPL says, Everton still 'in discussions' with 777

LONDON, May 14, (AP): Everton remains in negotiations with Miami-based 777 Partners over a takeover of the club, the English Premier League said on Tuesday, despite the investor plunging into legal and financial turmoil.

777 reached an agreement with Everton in September to buy out the 94.1% stake of the club majority shareholder, Farhad Moshiri. The deal was subject to the approval of English soccer authorities, and it has yet to be finalized by the Premier League eight months later.

The prospective sale has been thrown into doubt because 777 is facing a \$600 million fraud lawsuit in a federal court in New York and its Australian airline is grounded. It has raised concerns about the group's suitability as a soccer club owner and how it could pass the Premier League owners and directors test. While speaking at a parliamentary committee meeting of the British government, Premier League chief executive Richard Masters was asked about the competition's role in overseeing the potential deal.

"I want to be clear what the Premier League's role in this is, as regulator - it's to perform a test, it is not to decide who the current owner wants to sell his club to," Masters said. "That is his decision. At the moment, he wants to continue to have discussions with 777 about it."

Masters was attending the committee meeting to discuss the proposed Football Governance Bill that would establish

an independent football regulator, charged with ensuring the financial sustainability of clubs and leagues in England. Part of the regulator's remit would be to strengthen tests over who can own a team.

It was put to Masters by a lawmaker that the case involving 777 and Everton wasn't showing the league governing by "objectivity and certainty," and might be one where a regulator would have already rejected any deal.

"The Premier League has made it very clear the conditions that have to be met by 777 if it wishes to become owner of Everton," Masters said. "At the moment, because the takeover has not been confirmed, I'll leave it to the committee to make its own conclusions for where we are with that."

Just last week, Standard Liege - a Belgian team among the European clubs owned by 777 - was unable to play a league game because protesting fans blocked the team bus from reaching the stadium.

Fans of Standard have stepped up protests against 777, with the club under another temporary transfer embargo.

777's other clubs include Genoa in Italy's Serie A, Hertha Berlin in Germany's second division and Vasco da Gama in Brazil. Josimar, a Norwegian soccer magazine that has published extensively on 777's issues this season, has reported that company owners Josh Wander and Steven Pasko have left the board of directors of its soccer investment division.



Players fight for the ball during the Zain Premier League game.