



HH Amir hosts PM, new State Audit Bureau chief



Amiri Diwan photo
His Highness the Amir receives His Highness the Prime Minister.

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace

on Tuesday, who introduced to him newly appointed Chairman of the State Audit Bureau Essam Salem Al-Roumi. Senior officials attended the reception.

New work permit, transfer fees set for June 1 rollout

Kuwait updates system ahead of implementation

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has updated its automated system in preparation for implementing new regulations on work permits and transfers effective June 1, sources told Al-Anba daily.

According to the sources, the amendments include an additional fee of 150 dinars for issuing a work permit for the first time. Additionally, a transfer fee of 300 dinars will be imposed to transfer a worker from one company to another if the worker has not been in the country for three

years, provided the employer approves. The sources confirmed that the Authority's systems are ready to implement these changes from June 1.

Furthermore, inspection teams will be operational in all governorates from June 1 to ensure compliance with the new regulations.

Last week, a Seyassah report citing sources revealed that Decision No. 3/2024 has amended regulations for issuing work permits aimed at reducing the cost of hiring expatriate workers. The new regulations allow employers to obtain permits based on estimated workforce requirements for each business.

The decision explicitly states that employers are not required to transfer residency permits for locally hired workers, as this could contribute to visa trafficking and worsen shortages in sectors like construction, which have recently seen price increases.

Decision No. 3/2024, issued on April 20, specifies that employers can secure work permits based on numbers determined by the relevant department at the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM). It permits workers to change employers within the first three years, subject to sponsor approval and a fee of KD 300.

Day by Day

EACH passing day reveals new truths. In Lebanon, they say, "Ice melted and the meadow appeared."

Similarly, in Kuwait, the frost of corruption thaws, exposing flawed projects like poorly paved roads. We question whether those accountable for these roads can be held responsible. The blight of deteriorating

roads is not confined to a single region or jurisdiction; it afflicts the entirety of our infrastructure.

Nevertheless, with each sunrise, hope for a better tomorrow remains.

Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

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3 recognize Palestine

Kuwait Hospital in Rafah shuts amid Israel attacks

GAZA, May 28, (Agencies): The Israeli occupation forces' repeated attacks on the Kuwait Speciality Hospital in Rafah, one of a few places offering medical care for over 1.2 million people in the southern Gaza Strip city, have forced it to shut down Monday.

"Due to the Israeli occupation forces expansion of their military operation in Rafah and their repeated and deliberate attacks on the hospital and its vicinity, including a deadly bombardment of its main gate recently in which two of the medics were martyred in addition to the injury of five others in a previous attack, we announce that the Kuwait Speciality Hospital in Rafah is now out of service," Director of the Kuwaiti Hospital Dr. Suhaib Al-Hams said in a statement.

He pointed out that the doctors and other medical workers would move to the field hospital currently established at Al-Mowasi refugee camp.

In defiance to all international calls and the International Court of Justice demand, the Israeli Occupation forces continue and expanding their ground and air attack on the densely-populated city of Rafah since May 6th.

During their ongoing offensive, the Israeli forces carried out dozens of brutal massacres killing hundreds and injuring thousands of civilians and displaced people in city.

In other news, Spain, Norway and Ireland formally recognized a Palestinian state on Tuesday in a coordinated effort by the three western European nations to add international pressure on Israel to soften its devastating response to last year's Hamas-led attack. Tel Aviv slammed the diplomatic move that will have no immediate impact on its grinding war in Gaza.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez told his nation in a televised address from Madrid that "this is a historic decision that has a single goal, and that is to help Israelis and Palestinians achieve peace."

Israel's Foreign Minister Israel Katz quickly lashed out at Spain on X, saying Sánchez's government was "being complicit in inciting genocide against Jews and war crimes."

Ireland and Norway soon joined Spain in formalizing a decision they had jointly announced the previous week.

The Palestinian flag was raised in Dublin outside Leinster House, the seat of the Irish parliament.

"This is an important moment and I think it sends a signal to the world that there are practical actions you can take as a country to help keep the hope and destination of a two-state solution alive at a time when others are trying

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KRCS supports Sudan with medical supplies

KHARTOUM, May 28, (KUNA): Continuing its campaign, the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) dispatched the latest shipment of medical aid to the Sudanese Health Ministry, the shipment includes 5.6 tons of cancer treatment supplies and one thousand sanitary bags.

Speaking to KUNA, Abdulrahman Al-Oun, the Director General of KRCS, emphasized that aiding Sudan is a humanitarian duty, particularly given the difficult circumstances the country is currently facing.

Al-Oun affirmed the continuation of aid in partnership with KRCS and the Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS) to make sure the shipments are thoroughly distributed.

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KUNA photo
The KRCS team delivers medical aid to Sudan.



PM Diwan photo
His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the meeting of the Council of Ministers on Tuesday.

Kuwait gov't eulogizes former commerce minister

Cabinet approves draft decree for Tenders Board

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): Kuwait Cabinet, during its weekly meeting Tuesday chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, approved a draft decree forming the Central Agency for Public Tenders Board of Directors.

During the meeting, the cabinet was briefed by the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs, Dr. Noura Al-Mashan on the railway connection project between Kuwait and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Cabinet stressed the importance of the project, which will contribute to organizing and activating sustainable railway connectivity and

enhance trade exchange and economic growth between the two countries.

Kuwait's Cabinet also approved two draft decrees abolishing Law No. (40) of 1966 regarding mayors, abolishing the decree establishing the National Security Service, and submitting them to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

On the other hand, the Kuwaiti Cabinet expressed condolences to the Iranian leadership and people on the demise of Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi and foreign minister Hussein Amir Abdollahyan.

The Cabinet congratulated the newly appointed Head of the State Audit Bureau, Issam Salem

Al-Roumi on the new post, wishing him success.

The newly appointed Head of the State Audit Bureau, Issam Salem Al-Roumi, took the legal oath before the Council of Ministers during its weekly meeting, on Tuesday.

Also on Tuesday, the Council of Ministers eulogized former Minister of Commerce and Industry Faisal Abdulrazzaq Al-Khaled, who passed away yesterday.

The Council of Ministers, in a meeting chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, praised the public service of the deceased and prayed to Allah the Almighty to bestow his blessing upon him.

NewsWatch

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will attend and inaugurate the official opening of Al-Zour refinery operations at 10:30 am local-time on Wednesday, May 29, in Al-Zour petroleum complex. (KUNA)

KUWAIT CITY: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a cable of congratulations to the re-elected President of Lithuania, Gitanas Nausėda.

In his cable, His Highness the Amir congratulated President Nausėda on being re-elected as president, wishing him success and long-lasting health, and Lithuania and its people further growth and prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also sent a cable on Tuesday to the re-elected President of Lithuania Gitanas Nausėda.

In his cable, His Highness the Prime Minister congratulated President Nausėda on being re-elected as president. (KUNA)

CAIRO: The 22nd Arab conference for punitive and correctional institutions called Tuesday for employing the use of modern technology to enhance services provided to inmates, and benefit from prior experiences.

This came at the conclusion of the Cairo-hosted conference with representatives of Arab interior and justice ministries present as well as UN anti-drug and crimes office, and the Naif Arab University for Security Sciences. (KUNA)

Minister Al-Mashan, Chinese experts assess port projects

By Mohammed Ghanem
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Ministry of Public Works announced the visit of the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Dr. Noura Al-Mashan to the project site of Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port on Boubyan Island, and the sites of Shuaiba, Shuwaikh, and Doha ports, accompanied by a high-level Chinese government technical delegation that included experts and engineers specialized in mega development projects.

The visit was held in the presence of the Ambassador of

the People's Republic of China to the country Zhang Jianwei, and senior engineers and officials of the Ministry of Public Works specialized in major government projects.

The visit is in implementation of memorandum of understanding signed between the two countries during the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the People's Republic of China in September 2023 when His Highness the Amir held fruitful official discussions with His Excellency the Chinese President Xi Jinping concerning setting

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MPW photo
The Minister of Public Works and the Chinese government delegation during a visit to Mubarak Port.

Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:17 Asr 15:20
 Sunrise .. 04:50 Maghrib .. 18:40
 Zohr 11:45 Isha 20:10

Local

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

Expected weather for next 24 hrs:

By Day: Very hot with moderate to fresh northwesterly wind, with speeds of 20-50 km/h causing rising dust.
By Night: Rather hot with light

Weather

to moderate northwesterly wind to light variable wind, with speeds of 08-35 km/h.

Station	Max Exp	Min Rec
Kuwait City	44	32

Kuwait Airport	45	32
Abdaly	45	24
Jahra	46	31
Salmiyah	37	31
Nuwaisib	42	27
Wafra	44	27

Initiative instills the values of social solidarity, giving and charity in students

NBK engages 'Bankee' students in securing tuition fees for kids of needy families

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: In a step to foster solidarity and charity among youngsters, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) celebrated the completion of the donation drive of "Bankee" participating students to support the education of children of underprivileged families in Kuwait, which was organized in cooperation with Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS).

The bank took the initiative to provide donation boxes in schools participating in the "Bankee" program for school year 2023/2024 to allow students make donations from their accumulated balance of the program's virtual currency "Bankoz", which they received as rewards and incentives during its implementation, to support the education of the underprivileged students. This was coupled with an awareness campaign by the bank at participating schools to encourage students to donate, in cooperation with the KRCS. Teachers were also asked to frequently remind students of the donation box, and to explain to them the merits of this virtue and its positive impact on society, in an effort to promote giving and philanthropic work and instill the values of cooperation and solidarity in them from an early age.

Donated

Following that, NBK collected and monetized students' contributions into KD equivalent and donated the amount in the students' name for the child education project supervised by the KRCS, to cover the tuition fees of a group of underprivileged students; thus enabling them to pursue their education and avoid dropping out.

In a ceremony held by the bank, the donated amount was presented to the KRCS, in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority "Nazaha" and Creative Confidence Company, along with teachers from participating schools, donating students, and their parents.

In the first year of its official kick-off, Bankee program was implemented in 30 public and private schools, attracting remarkable engagement from participating students. The program not only improved their financial culture, but also had a tangible impact on many of them by cultivating key values including honesty and integrity, accountability and responsibility, collaboration and teamwork.

Miscellaneous initiatives

On this occasion, Manal Al-Mattar, Head of Group Corporate Communications at National Bank of Kuwait said, "NBK always seeks to cement its position as Kuwait's leading socially responsible corporation by launching miscellaneous initiatives covering all sectors of society," noting that "This initiative will have a positive impact on society on different levels."

"The initiative instills multiple values in the students participating in the "Bankee" program who donated their balances of the "Bankoz" virtual currency, notably solidarity and extending a helping hand to

others. Simultaneously, NBK's monetizing of these virtual balances and donating the amount to support the education of a group of low-income students in Kuwait underscores its unwavering dedication to supporting the underprivileged groups in society on one hand, and ongoing support of education within its sustainability strategy, which promotes education as a key pillar, on the other hand," she remarked.

"This donation magnifies students' benefit from the "Bankee" program, by going beyond educating them financially to cultivating many moral concepts and values, which helps raise a generation of Kuwaiti youth who are capable of playing an effective role in achieving the desired sustainable development of society at large in the future," she mentioned.

Child education

On her part, Maha Al-Barjas, Secretary General of the Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society extended appreciation to NBK, saying, "Through this initiative, NBK played two roles, one is educational, by fostering the culture of giving and charity among students who help their colleagues from underprivileged families who are financially incapable of pursuing their education. On the other hand, the bank demonstrated its pioneering role in charity and community service by providing a donation for the child education project supervised by the KRCS to be used in securing the tuition fees for a group of underprivileged students in Kuwait."

"Child education project resonates with Kuwait's government and people's dedication to addressing the issues of the underprivileged families," she stated, stressing that concerted efforts are needed to provide suitable educational opportunities for children and prevent dropping out.

It is worth mentioning that Bankee is Kuwait's first hands-on school financial literacy program, which was launched by NBK with the aim of promoting financial inclusion, especially among school students, in an effort to set the younger generation in Kuwait on a path to a resilient financial future. The program aims to familiarize students with key financial concepts including earning, spending and saving, and financial responsibilities using classroom economy model.

Having achieved a remarkable success in its pilot phase, Bankee encouraged more schools and students to join it when it was officially kicked off at the beginning of school year 2023/2024. Out of 150 applicants, 30 schools have been enrolled in the program so far, in addition to a special needs school for learning difficulties (Joan Al Kuwait Elementary School), with a total of 15,000 students and 3,000 teachers.

NBK has recently received the Bronze Award from Qorus in the Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) category for Bankee Program. This recognition underscores the bank's commitment to incorporating innovations that integrate sustainability and ESG standards into its activities.



Manal Al-Mattar, Somaya Al-Jassim, and Maha Al-Barjas in a group photo with students and their teachers.

Al-Mutairi inspects PADA auditor halls

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Al-Humaidi Al-Mutairi, the Acting Director of the Public Authority for People with Disabilities, accompanied by his Deputy for Educational and Rehabilitation Services, Mubarak Al-Badah, inspected the auditors' halls in the Authority's building in Hawalli.

The purpose of the tour was to assess the progress of work and the quality of services provided to people with disabilities and their families, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Kuwait outlines '21-'26 strategy for cutting-edge media sustainability

Al-Mutairi speaks in dialogue session at AMF in Dubai

DUBAI, May 28, (KUNA): Kuwait's Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi underscored the country's commitment to adopting advanced and innovative media models and methods, as part of the Ministry of Information's 2021-26 strategy to create sustainable and leading media content.

Speaking at the Arab Media Forum (AMF) in Dubai Tuesday in a dialogue session titled "Kuwait Towards a New Media Decade," Al-Mutairi underlined the significance of the forum's 22nd edition with the three themes of advanced narrative models of innovative media content, sustainability in media, and the role of artificial intelligence, which is consistent with the media strategy.

He gave details on Kuwait's media vision under the auspices of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, focusing on transparency, community participation, professional content, and technological advancement.

Al-Mutairi mentioned the goal of building a comprehensive media system using modern technology to provide platforms catering to citizens' needs and enhance their involvement with national issues, emphasizing the media's role in fostering positive community dialogue by sharing success stories, positive experiences, and strengthening communication between citizens and officials.

Media can unify national discourse, reflect shared values and challenges, and make educational and cultural programs to develop unity and solidarity, he pointed out.

He highlighted the media's role in promoting national values and cultural identity by raising awareness about peaceful coexistence and collaboration, as media can help build a strong, cohesive society capable of outlining developmental challenges.

On regional cooperation, Al-Mutairi stressed efforts with Gulf media institutions to unify media discourse, enhance content quality, and face common challenges through a joint Gulf media strategy under the guidance of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) leaders.

Media cooperation strengthens cultural and social ties among Gulf populations, he said, cultivating mutual understanding and integration, which reinforces a shared Gulf identity and sustainable development.

Regarding sustainable development, media can help achieve these goals by raising awareness about environmental, social, and economic



Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi



Photos by Mohammad Morsi

A photo from the Independence Day celebration.

Kuwaiti-Georgian relations 'good'

Embassy of Georgia marks Independence Day

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Georgian Embassy in Kuwait celebrated its Independence Day with a diplomatic and popular gathering, highlighting the strong and growing relations between the Kuwait and Georgia, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Ambassador Sadiq Marafi described Kuwaiti-Georgian relations as "good," emphasizing the positive trajectory of their partnership.

The event was also graced by Dean of Diplomatic Corps HE the Ambassador of Tajikistan to Kuwait Zubaydullo Zybzydoda.

In a statement, the embassy expressed gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad for his wisdom, which has contributed to Kuwait's stability amid regional challenges, fostering a conducive environment for bilateral cooperation.

The statement praised Foreign Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya for Kuwait's continued support for Georgia's autonomy and territorial integrity, as well as its engagement in global issues and multilateral cooperation.

The Georgian government is committed to deepening political

issues, encouraging sustainable practices, and involving society in development efforts, Al-Mutairi stated.

Media can advocate the preservation of natural resources and environmental balance through educational programs and community initiatives, contributing to a sustainable future for upcoming generations, he pointed out.

Discussing media as a form of soft power, Al-Mutairi underlined the importance of quality, credibility, and creativity in content delivery, mentioning that media can be an effective tool for cultural diplomacy and positive international influence by portraying a positive image of the society's values and culture, thereby boosting tourism, investment, and drawing in global talent.

He explained the need to balance freedom of expression with media regulation by establishing clear legal frameworks that ensure free speech while preventing the spread of rumors and misinformation, which requires cooperation between the government, media institutions, and civil society.

Balancing freedom of expression and media regulation augments pub-



From left: Ambassador of Tajikistan, Georgian Ambassador and Ambassador Marafi.

and economic ties with Kuwait, with a focus on enhancing cooperation in tourism, culture, and education.

Georgia aims to facilitate increased investment and commercial partnerships with Kuwait, leveraging its favorable business environment and its ranking among the top countries for ease of doing business.

Georgia presents significant opportunities for Kuwaiti investors, particularly in sectors such as hos-

pitality, real estate, and energy. The embassy highlighted the growing number of Kuwaiti tourists visiting Georgia, facilitated by direct flights and visa exemptions for Kuwaiti citizens and residents.

The embassy extended an invitation to Kuwaiti businessmen and the general public to explore the opportunities available in Georgia and to strengthen bilateral ties through business and cultural exchanges.

Fikr shared this information during his participation in the meeting of the Permanent Committee for Arab Media in Bahrain.

Kuwait is participating in the meeting with two significant agendas. Firstly, Kuwait extends its full support for the Professional and Media Excellence Award.

Secondly, and most importantly, Kuwait has been chosen as the capital of Arab media for 2025. Al-Fikr emphasized that this participation is a crucial step in completing the process of transferring the capital of Arab media from Bahrain to Kuwait.

Al-Fikr stated that Kuwait has diligently prepared for this role over the past seven months, ensuring that all necessary arrangements are in place. The media calendar for the event is ready, reflecting Kuwait's readiness to host and organize the event successfully.

The preparatory meetings for the 54th session of the Council of Arab Information Ministers kicked off in Manama, Bahrain. The 101st regular session of the Permanent Committee for Arab Information was part of these meetings.

'Pakistan keen on boosting exports'

'HH Amir's visit will have positive impact on Kuwait & Pakistan ties'

By Fares Al-Abdan

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Pakistani Ambassador to Kuwait Malik Farooq has affirmed the strong and deep-rooted ties between his country and Kuwait.

In an interview with the daily, Farooq stressed that the two countries are exerting tremendous efforts to coordinate their positions on global issues; particularly the Palestinian cause and the situation in Gaza.

He stated that both countries have identical positions on these issues.

He confirmed the positive impact of the visit of HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Pakistan in strengthening bilateral relations and pushing them forward in all fields.

He also revealed that the Joint Industrial Committee between the two countries will hold meetings from May 28-30,

indicating that several agreements and memorandums of understanding (MoUs) are expected to be signed between Kuwait and Pakistan as a result of these ongoing meetings for the fifth session of the committee.

Representatives of Kuwait Investment Authority attended the meetings to learn about the investment opportunities in Pakistan and the benefits offered to Kuwaiti businesspersons.

Farooq added that approximately 90,000 Pakistanis are employed in Kuwait, and they have gained the respect of both the government and the people.

He disclosed that the trade exchange between Kuwait and Pakistan amounted to \$2.3 billion in 2023, with the majority being oil imported by Pakistan. He added his country is keen on enhancing the export of commodities to Kuwait, particularly food and crops.

On the other hand, he pointed out that several Kuwaiti companies have started investing in Pakistan in the fields of food security and renewable energy; in addition to the establishment of a bank owned by Kuwaiti companies.

'PAMA working on developing its law'

By Mohammad Al-Misleh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Director of the Public Authority for Minors Affairs (PAMA) Hamad Al-Barjas revealed that the authority is working on studying the development of the Public Authority for Minors Affairs' law in a way that contributes to providing new facilities to those covered by the law.

In an exclusive statement issued to Al-Seyassah following the "Our Children's Summer" event yesterday, Al-Barjas explained that there are initiatives to amend the law, as the authority is moving to amend the article related to litigation in a way that allows and facilitates pleading

in the courts, similar to the legal administration in the Kuwait Municipality. The authority is in the process of amending some other articles of the law in a way that contributes to developing the funds of the Public Authority for Minors Affairs and increasing profits. All of these amendments are under study.

The authority has an investment strategy that has achieved, in the last five years, profits and returns of no less than 11 percent, which were poured into the accounts of the minors.

He affirmed the keenness of the authority to engage in thoughtful investment opportunities during the coming period, so that the projects have sustainable returns and low risks.

diwaniya ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'What Palestinian state do they talk about, who is their true rep?'

"THE Zionist movement seized approximately 78 percent of the area of historical Palestine, and nearly a million Palestinians were killed and forcibly displaced to neighboring countries and other parts of Palestine," columnist **Suad Fahd Al-Mojil** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"Between 1947 and the 1948 conflict, roughly 750,000 Palestinians were displaced from their homeland, leading to a division of the region and its people between the emerging state of Israel, Jordan, and Egypt.



Suad Al-Mojil

"The subsequent Arab-Israeli war, known as the Nakba War, saw initial Arab victories halted by a Security Council ceasefire, influenced by US and British pressure.

"This resulted in 78 percent of historic Palestine falling under Israeli control. Later, the 1967 war saw Israel occupying the West Bank and Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

"Since 1994, the Palestinian Authority has aimed for an independent state in these territories, comprising just 22 percent of historical Palestine.

"Recent announcements by Spain, Norway, and Ireland to recognize a Palestinian state, alongside pledges from organizations like the African Union and the Non-Aligned Movement, have garnered widespread praise.

"The Arab Parliament has also supported calls for a ceasefire in Gaza and Rafah, emphasizing the need for Palestinian statehood.

"Anecdotes attributed to Israeli leaders like Moshe Dayan and Golda Meir underscored a perceived lack of understanding or action from Arab nations.

"The 2018 Israeli State Law, declaring Israel the nation-state of the Jewish people, exacerbates tensions by solidifying Jewish rights while undermining Palestinian claims, rendering the two-state solution impractical.

"Amidst these challenges, there's skepticism about the feasibility of a Palestinian state. The ongoing Gaza conflict prompts questions about who truly represents the Palestinian people and has the authority to decide the state's borders.

"The question today, as the Gaza war enters its eighth month: What Palestinian state are they talking about? Who is the true representative of the Palestinian people today? Who is authorized to decide or determine the borders of this state? Many questions come to the fore every time there is talk about the promised state, especially in light of the transformations and changes brought about by the Gaza war and the activity of the resistance."

Also:

"The decision to dissolve the National Assembly was made just before its scheduled opening session, with His Highness the Amir Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah characterizing it as a necessary measure to safeguard the country's interests amidst significant challenges," columnist **Dr. Bahija Behbehani** wrote for **Al-Qabas** daily.

"His Highness emphasized that the country was facing insurmountable difficulties and obstacles and stressed his commitment to prevent the misuse of democracy to undermine the state.

"In his address, the Amir cited various reasons behind his decision, including the interference of certain representatives in his constitutional prerogatives, particularly in matters concerning the selection of his crown prince.

"Additionally, he highlighted instances where representatives obstructed government formation or imposed unreasonable conditions on the Prime Minister.

"Some representatives even threatened immediate interrogations of former ministers, exacerbating tensions between the legislative and executive branches.

"These actions, deemed abnormal and unacceptable by the Amir, were seen as attempts by certain representa-

tives to assert dominance and leverage their positions for personal or factional gain.

"However, the Amir's decisive action thwarted these attempts, leading to the dissolution of the Assembly before it convened.

"Subsequently, those representatives who sought to overstep their bounds faced public backlash and retracted their accusations, highlighting their failure and subsequent retreat.

"Citizens expressed concern and indignation over the divisive rhetoric employed by these representatives, recognizing the potential harm it posed to national unity and stability.

"His Highness the Amir's leadership, marked by wisdom and determination, effectively preserved the nation, defended its interests, and upheld its unity amidst internal discord. While valuing genuine democracy, citizens reject the notion of a distorted democracy that jeopardizes security and hinders national progress.

"In closing, the Amir's actions are seen as a reaffirmation of truth prevailing over falsehood, echoing the divine decree that falsehood ultimately dissipates."

"The grace period... An Arab violated the Residency Law and his friend advised him to leave during the grace period in order to rectify his status, and then return. He said he will wait for the next grace period after a year and he will leave by then," columnist **Talal Al-Saeed** wrote for **Al-Seyassah** daily.

"The friend warned him about the difficulty of the situation once the current grace period ends, as violators will no longer be allowed to rectify their status. He pointed out 'every year, they say the same thing and then give us another grace period, so I will wait for next year because I have a job that pays well. I have yet to achieve my goal!'

"In the correct sense, the violator sets the date for his departure, not the Interior Ministry. This violator and many who are like him know the chaotic situation. Whoever does not leave this year will leave next year with the same grace period. This clearly indicates that the competent authorities are completely incapable of eliminating the Residency Law violators, until every expatriate can escape from the sponsor and work without residency, except the Filipino community, that is, after closing the fugitive shelter and tightening the grip!

"The grace period does not mean anything to us at all. It will not eliminate this phenomenon that has become widespread, up to the point that you can almost be certain no expatriate works for his sponsor and no expatriate is keen on renewing his residency!"

"We are concerned about what will happen once the grace period ends. Will the areas be combed seriously and carefully to arrest the violators and deport them? Or will they be left to work, transfer money, undergo treatment and shop without fear?"

"In the clear and comfortable sense, if the iron fist and the red eye were released for just one year, the face of Kuwait would change, as well as the violators whose exact number remains unknown. This is in addition to the phenomenon of those who hold 'purchased' residency and work in a way they unjustly and aggressively call 'free residency'.

"This means that the residency holder works wherever he wants. The truth is that he paid the sponsor in exchange for obtaining residency. Thus, he was released and only shows up if the worker is caught. The evidence of this is the owner of unlicensed taxis or the white ones, which are spread everywhere in Kuwait until they have their well-known stops. They even reached the airport with their own pricing that broke the market. They distribute their telephone numbers to customers while the government is watching.

"If the Kuwaiti street reluctantly accepts the grace period, it is undoubtedly waiting for the tightening of procedures at the end of this period. We hope this will be the last grace period... Good."

— **Compiled by PFX Fernandes**



Al-Jarida photo

Lieut-Gen Al-Muzain meets British military attaché Col Marriott.

Army Chief of Staff meets British military attaché

The Chief of the General Staff of the Army, Lieutenant General Pilot Bandar Al-Muzain, welcomed the British military attaché to the country, Colonel Neil Marriott, in his office. This meeting marked the beginning of Marriott's new assignment. General Al-Muzain extended his best wishes to Colonel Marriott for success in his role, aiming to enhance and develop joint military cooperation between the two allied nations, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

In a separate meeting, Major General Khaled Saad, Commander of the Air Defense Force, hosted Lieutenant General Derek France, Commander of the US Central Air Forces, along with his delegation. The discussions included friendly exchanges and focused on strengthening cooperation. Key topics of mutual interest were deliberated, particularly those central to the objectives of the meeting.

KISR using cutting-edge technology in addressing roads infrastructure

Electricity to 24 violating workshops cut off

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research has achieved a significant milestone in addressing the country's road infrastructure challenges, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Through a project initiated during Ramadan 2024, the institute focused on enhancing internal roads within the Shuwaikh area, employing modern theoretical and practical methodologies.

Utilizing cutting-edge rubber asphalt technology, a project team oversaw the maintenance and repaving of internal roads, showcasing the institute's commitment to innovative and sustainable solutions.

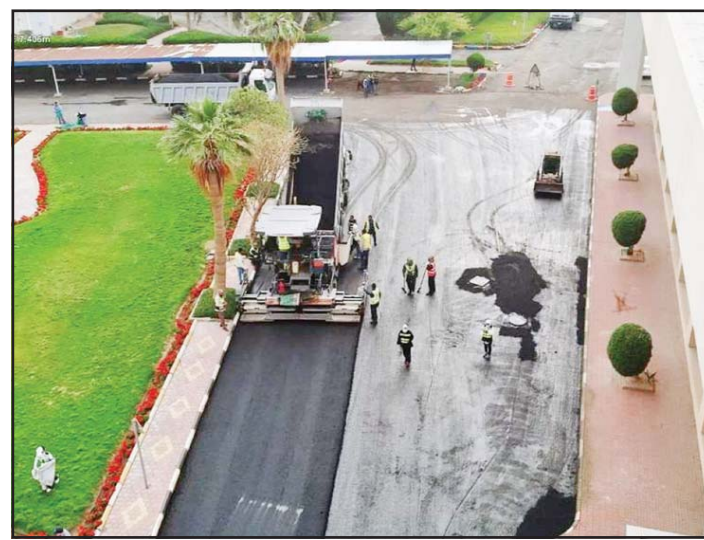
Collaborating with governmental bodies, contractors, and asphalt producers, the institute leveraged its expertise to implement high-performance techniques.

A key objective of the project was to elevate the technical capabilities of local professionals, fostering hands-on experience in road maintenance and rehabilitation.

Director of the Construction and Building Materials Program, Engineer Suad Al-Bahr, emphasized the institute's established reputation in materials research and its practical applications, highlighting its pivotal role in infrastructure enhancement.

Furthermore, the institute's endeavors extend beyond traditional road quality improvement, encompassing the adoption of groundbreaking technologies such as drone-assisted pavement assessment.

Dr. Haya Al-Mutairi, the project manager, underscored the significance of utilizing artificial intelligence for comprehensive road condition analysis, pioneering ad-



Al-Qabas photo

The new technology being applied by KISR.

vancements in assessment methodologies.

The project's meticulous planning included a thorough evaluation of existing roads using both traditional and advanced techniques.

Dr. Al-Mutairi emphasized the importance of quality assurance measures, including sophisticated tests like scanning electron microscopy and thermogravimetric analysis, ensuring the integrity of materials and technologies employed.

Dr. Salah Zoroub, the scientific advisor, highlighted the institute's ongoing efforts to develop asphalt mixtures with higher percentages of recycled materials, showcasing its dedication to sustainability.

Engineer Nayef Al-Othman, the project's technical advisor, emphasized the importance of analytical studies and meticulous planning in ensuring adherence to quality standards throughout the maintenance process.

The institute's commitment to excellence is evident in its strict adherence to quality standards and

comprehensive documentation of project activities.

Engineer Al-Bahr highlighted the successful application of rubber asphalt technology on Kuwait's roads, showcasing the institute's contribution to a more sustainable future.

Dr. Al-Mutairi emphasized the establishment of a detailed archival system to preserve project data for future reference, reflecting the institute's dedication to knowledge management. Dr. Zoroub reiterated the team's focus on quality control, ensuring compliance with stringent standards throughout the project implementation process.

Power to 24 workshops cut: A committee whose members are from the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Electricity and Water, Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN), Public Authority for Industry (PAI) and Kuwait Municipality, recently conducted an intensive campaign to uncover

violations and track down violators, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

Colonel Abdullah Buhassan from Public Relations and Traffic Awareness Unit at the General Traffic Department (GTD) in Ministry of Interior disclosed that the campaign resulted in cutting off electricity from 24 violating workshops and issuance of 11 violation citations, while the concerned individuals were summoned by the inspectors of the Ministry of Electricity and Water.

Buhassan confirmed that the Traffic and Operation Section continued the field campaigns in vocational and industrial areas as per the directives of Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic and Operations Major General Yousef Al-Khadda and under the supervision of Director General of GTD Brigadier Jamal Al-Foudari and Assistant Director for Technical Affairs at GTD Brigadier Ghazi Burqobah. He said these campaigns resulted in the issuance of 110 violation citations, impounding of three vehicles and discovery of 12 violations concerning the use of workshops as accommodation for workers. He added the PAI inspectors issued five violation citations, six by inspectors of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and nine by inspectors of the Ministry of Electricity and Water.

He revealed the inspectors of the Residency Affairs General Department arrested nine expatriates for violating the Residency Law; while the inspectors of Kuwait Municipality put 180 warning stickers on neglected vehicles, in addition to the issuance of 23 violation citations concerning advertisements and sanitation, impounding of nine neglected cars and arrest of eight expatriate vendors. He went on to say that violation citations were issued by inspectors of PAFN against delivery motorcycles and shops.

'Social Affairs' to amend work regulations for co-op societies

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Ministry of Social Affairs is considering significant amendments to Ministerial Resolutions No. 67 and 68 concerning the regulations governing work in cooperative societies, reports Al-Jarida daily.

These revisions pertain to the criteria and benefits for filling supervisory roles in cooperative societies for managers, deputies, and department heads. Despite over a year passing since the issuance of these decisions and the commencement of the recruitment process, the ministry has observed a limited number of citizens joining these associations and being appointed to positions.

In a bid to expedite recruitment within cooperative associations, the ministry is evaluating a new approach to achieve the objectives of the Kuwaitization decisions.

The aim is to accommodate as many eligible citizens as possible who have successfully passed interviews and met the recruitment criteria, attaining the required 80 percent quota.

It is emphasized that the Kuwaitization process enjoys extensive attention and unwavering support from the Council of Ministers, with close oversight from the minister of Social Affairs and the committee responsible for demographic modification and labor market development.

It is anticipated that the Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry, Abdulaziz Sari, will convene a meeting with the Quartet Committee responsible for assessing nomination files and conducting interviews for Kuwaitization of positions in cooperative societies.

The committee includes representatives from the Public Authority for Manpower, the Federation of Associations, and a representative from the association seeking to hire. The objective is to streamline the recruitment process.

In another development, the ministry is preparing for the final handover of the Social Welfare Unit building in Block (2) of the Al-Wafra Residential City project on Sunday morning, June 9.

This follows the completion of various works including insulation, internal sanitation, site preparation, electricity, telecommunications, and air conditioning. The building, spanning 1,000 square meters, boasts contemporary architectural designs.



Sari

Ex-MP Al-Fikr freed on KD 5K bail

Court upholds 7-yr imprisonment for obtaining citizenship through fraud

By **Jaber Al-Hamoud**

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Court of Appeals upheld the verdict issued to sentence a correspondent of Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Justice to seven-year imprisonment, and return a sum of KD 315,000, which he obtained from the Ministry of Justice, Public Authority of Housing Welfare and Kuwait Credit Bank by forging the nationality of a Kuwaiti citizen who had been missing since 1995 in conjunction with a fugitive Saudi who was convicted of the same punishment.

The Public Prosecution charged the suspect of forging citizenship and violating the laws by forging and providing data that was contrary to the truth.

the former MP Anwar Al-Fikr, and impose a travel ban on him. It also set the session of September 3 for pleading.

According to the case file, Al-Fikr was charged with challenging the rights and powers of His Highness the Amir of the country, attacking the authority of the Amir, and broadcasting false news that would weaken the country's prestige and harm its national interests.

However, he denied the allegations completely, saying, "His Highness the Amir has been a red line for me since the beginning of my political career, which has spanned 12 years."

During the court session, Al-Fikr's defense team asked for time to review and photograph the case documents, and requested the court to release their client with any guarantee the court deems appropriate, as he is a Kuwaiti citizen and is not expected to flee the country.

Ex-MP freed on bail: The Criminal Court has decided to release on bail of KD 5,000

PIFSS warns over fake news

Sick leave forger held

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Ministry of Interior has apprehended an individual involved in the forgery of sick leave certificates purportedly issued by the Ministry of Health, in exchange for monetary compensation. This operation was carried out by the Criminal Security Sector, specifically the General Department of Criminal Investigation, in cooperation with two accomplices located outside the country, reports Al-Jarida daily.

The ministry shared this information on its official account on the social networking site "X" on Monday evening, stating that the accused has been handed over to the appropriate authorities for legal action.

Warning over false news: The Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) has issued a warning to citizens regarding misinformation circulating on social media platforms, reports **Al-Jarida** daily.

The false news claims to offer investment opportunities associated with insurance or its affiliated companies, purportedly providing support for pensions after retirement for employees, business owners, and retirees.

The institution clarified that these rumors are spread by fake accounts, which may lead to financial losses if individuals engage with them or share personal information.

The organization emphasized the importance of caution and advised against interacting with such accounts or links.

It urged individuals to refrain from sharing personal data to prevent falling victim to scams.



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Kuwaiti leadership extends congratulations to Nepal's Prez on nat'l day

HH Amir, PM congratulate Azerbaijan's President on national day



KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Tuesday sent a cable to President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, congratulating him on his country's national day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished him good health and further progress and prosperity for Azerbaijan and its friendly people.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah on Tuesday sent a cable to President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, congratulating him on his country's national day.

Similarly, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Tuesday sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Nepal Ram Chandra Poudel on the occasion of his country's national day.

His Highness the Amir wished Ram Chandra Poudel lasting good health and his country more progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah on Tuesday sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Nepal Ram Chandra Poudel on the occasion of his country's national day.

Kuwait Amir, PM congratulates Ethiopian Prez on National Day

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a cable of congratulations to President of Ethiopia Sahle-Work Zewde, on the occasion of her country's national day.

In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished her everlasting health and well-

ness, and further progress and prosperity to her country and friendly people.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah sent on Tuesday a cable of congratulations to President of Ethiopia Sahle-Work Zewde, on the occasion of her country's national day.

KUNA photo
Representing Austrian President, Austrian Ambassador to Kuwait, Marian Warba handed the Golden Star award to Ambassador Sadeq Marafi.

Strengthening bilateral relations

Austrian Pres Van der Bellen presents Kuwaiti Ambassador with Golden Star

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (KUNA): President of Austria, Alexander Van der Bellen, awarded the "Grobes Goldenes Ehrenzeichen" Decoration with the Golden Star to Ambassador Sadiq Marafi, Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs, in recognition of his efforts in strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

Austrian Ambassador to Kuwait, Marian Warba, also awarded Ambassador Marafi with the highest category medal, symbolizing an advanced level of appreciation.

Ambassador Marafi told KUNA after the ceremony at the Austrian Embassy that such honor was the result of collective efforts to Kuwaiti diplomacy.

Marafi expressed his happiness with the positive impact on the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Furthermore, Ambassador Marafi clarified that during his mission, there were high-level visits between both countries, notably including the visits

of former Austrian President Heinz Fischer, former Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, and former Austrian Foreign Minister Karin Kneissl to Kuwait.

Ambassador Marafi emphasized the commitment to further bolstering bilateral relations between the two countries, under the leadership of His Highness the Amir of Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

For her part, Ambassador Marian Warba confirmed to KUNA that Ambassador Marafi's nine-year service in Austria included his contribution to the signing of a memorandum of understanding for regular political consultations between the two countries, which took place during the visit of former Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in June 2023.

The Austrian Decoration of Honor with the Golden Star represents official recognition from Austria, and it is awarded to individuals who have rendered distinguished services in the fields of politics, economics, science, culture, and the arts.

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs Dr. Maryam Al-Azmi said the Kuwaiti delegation for the 88th session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which was held recently at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, presented a comprehensive explanation of the procedures guaranteed by Kuwaiti laws to protect women against domestic violence, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Al-Azmi disclosed that the most important of these procedures is the formation of the National



KUNA photo
Dr. Maryam Al-Azmi

Committee to Protect Women against Violence in line with Law No. 16/2020. She said the committee consists of representatives of civil society institutions.

She confirmed that the council is com-

mitted to the implementation of the required legislation, such as the Children's Rights and Protection from Domestic Violence Law. She revealed the council established protection centers, in cooperation with civil society organizations, to deal with violence cases.

She stated: "The council has coordinated with the concerned ministries to lay down an integrated action plan on family development in order to provide care and basic services to families, unify the path and directions of governmental and voluntary social care, and propose the necessary means to activate the cognitive role of the family in maintaining family health."

She added the council is working hard to build regional and international partnerships on empowering women in cooperation with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). She cited as an example the project called 'Indicator Simulation Tool' for decision makers in the Arab region, which aims to raise Ku-

wait's indicators concerning women.

She also affirmed the formation of the national initiative team consisting of the representatives of the concerned institutions and civil society organizations to develop the skills of employees in relevant institutions. She added a four-day workshop will be held soon to train the team and create a road map to achieve the desired goals.

She continued saying that the council is working hard to strengthen its partnership with the concerned authorities to collaborate on training the employees, discuss ways to lay down a strategy for women and update the regulations related to the family.

She added that coordination is underway with Kuwait Institute for Judicial and Legal Studies to conduct a series of training courses for employees in public institutions to educate them about the regulations stipulated in the international agreements on women and how to implement these regulations.

Al-Azmi outlines initiatives to prevent domestic violence

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Wasatia Director joins AMMALE

Fatwa prohibits use of mosques for advertising and selling any product

KUWAIT CITY, May 28, (Agencies): The Fatwa Authority at the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs recently issued a fatwa prohibiting the use of mosques for advertising and selling any product or commodity; stressing that mosques and their premises were not built for this purpose and that they must be kept pure and protected, reports Al-Rai daily.

The authority issued the fatwa on May 22 in response to the report of an individual about the spread of such a negative phenomenon; indicating business persons like those selling perfumes and food items, banks and others provide their services for free to worshippers by setting up kiosks or tables in mosques and their premises. The report added that the commercial entity displays a signboard showcasing its products, along with documentary photographs and social media announcements about its activity.

The individual added: "This takes place inside the mosque or outside including the courtyard. What is the rule in this regard? Is it part of marketing projects in the mosque, considering the entities involved are profit-making, not charitable institutions? Or are these charity and donation drives conducted by business owners?"

Meanwhile, the Alliance of Mosques, Muslim Associations and Leaders in Europe (AMMALE) selected the Director of Wasatia (moderation) promotion center Dr. Abdullah Al-Shreika as a member of the Coordinating Council in Europe.

Secretary General of AMMALE's European Coordinating Council Farid Hannash said in a statement to KUNA that Kuwait's practice of moderation was in line with principles of Islam.

Hannash added that the partnership between the AMMALE's Coordinating Council and Wasatia promotion center would promote Islam and peace in Europe.

He added that the center propagated the essence of the message of Islam and the basis of safety for Muslims and the world, pointing out that the joining of Dr. Al-Shreika to AMMALE's Coordinating Council is an asset for the council.

In a similar statement to KUNA, Director Al-Shreika said that the center aimed through participating in the council to bring together the Islamic, cultural and intellectual competencies and institutions of Muslims in Europe.

Dr. Al-Shreika stressed the importance of promoting dialogue and coexistence between followers of religions and cultures in Europe in a way that ensured the preservation of Islamic identity and enhanced the means of introducing Islam, its tolerant moderation, and its universal human values.

Dr. Al-Shreika, also Secretary of the Supreme Committee for Moderation at the Kuwaiti Cabinet, pointed out the importance of participating in the representation of Muslims in all official and civil



PAFN inspectors recently carried out an extensive inspection campaign.

Inspection launched

PAFN sounds alarm on 'hypertension hazards'

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: In celebration of World Hypertension Day, the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) has published messages about the danger of consuming foods rich in saturated fats, salty foods and big quantity of sweets in order to raise public awareness on the need to cut down or eliminate the intake of these foods to prevent hypertension, reports Al-Anba daily.

The messages include a call for the public to eat more fruits and vegetables — fresh or dried.

In another development, PAFN inspectors recently carried out an extensive inspection campaign in Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate. This campaign resulted in the issuance of eight violation citations, signing of three pledges and shutting down one food-stuff company.

Another team of inspectors launched the same campaign in Hawally, leading to the issuance of 10 violation citations.

A similar campaign in Farwaniya resulted in the issuance of two violation citations and signing of two pledges, while 15 violation citations were issued in Kuwait City.

bodies, in public events related to the Islamic religion and the affairs of Muslim minorities, in public discussions, and in the media with full respect.

Regarding the committees of the Coordinating Council, he said that they consist of 22 committees.

The European Coordinating Council AMMALE is an independent institution established by activists and representatives of Islamic institutions from 17 European countries on October seventh, 2023 at the Grand Mosque of Paris.

Call for compliance, full implementation of regulations urged

Municipal Council member emphasizes improving investment climate

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: According to the Municipal Council member Munira Al-Amir, laws and regulations are one of the aspects of the process of improving the investment environment. There is a role that the investor must play in cooperation with the state and various financing bodies. It is the Municipal Council's duty to work on creating flexible regulations that suit the spirit of investment and its requirements.

She emphasized the need to achieve full compliance and actual implementation of the regulations, especially in the current period when the country is witnessing progress in investment construction and the methods of bypassing the regulations and the resulting problems of this bypass that are exported to the state and its various agencies later.

Al-Amir said this in a press statement issued on the sidelines of her presence at the workshop that was held through coordination between the Municipal Council and the Real Estate Union to discuss their proposals related to the regulations for investment housing under the title "Improving the investment environment in the investment sector".

She explained that the presence of the Municipal Council in the workshop and the keenness of its members to be present stems from their conviction of the necessity of listening to civil society with its various entities. Such meetings give an important societal dimension and also add to the vision of the members of the Municipal Council when dealing with relevant regulations or decisions.

The scope of awareness that takes place in this type of meeting is large for both parties, as the Municipal Council gets to know the investors' point of view, and investors also learn through the discussion what the state intends with its agencies regarding the issued regulations and the consequences of them.

Al-Amir stressed the constant need to remember the main goal of everyone, regardless of the interests, which is the interest of the nation. She said encouraging investment is an important matter for the state and its interests, but it must be done in accordance with the rules and procedures that it deems appropriate, adding that everyone must participate sincerely in achieving the lofty vision of Kuwait with all his ability and according to his position.

New work permit

Continued from Page 1

The following entities are exempt from these regulations: public sector companies, hospitals and clinics licensed by the Ministry of Health, private institutes, schools and universities, foreign investors accredited by the Direct Investment Authority, sports clubs, public benefit organizations and societies, cooperative societies, charities, agriculture, fishing, grazing, commercial real estate, industrial institutions, and small industrial enterprises.

KRCS supports

Continued from Page 1

On his side, Sudan's Deputy Minister of Health Ismet Mustafa expressed his sincerest gratitude to Kuwait for their support and assistance, affirming that Sudan needs the assistance from the friendly and neighbouring countries to face the health challenges they are facing.

Minister Al-Mashan,

Continued from Page 1

mechanisms for developing the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port's project on Boubyan Island.

The ministry explained that Minister Al-Mashan held discussions with the head and members of the Chinese government delegation who are visiting the country for a period of one week. They exchanged experiences and proposals related to implementation of huge development projects in the State of Kuwait.

In-depth technical and field discussions were also held with the head and members of the Chinese delegation on the importance of strengthening technical, construction and economic relations related to the implementation of huge development projects in the State of Kuwait.

They also presented the desired proposals and visions that would achieve the ambition of the senior political leadership to move forward in establishing the rules for the future plan for implementing the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port project.

The ministry added that the visit included field tours to several sites, including Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port, Doha Port, and Shuaiba Port.

It affirmed that serious future steps in this regard precede the visit of the

Chinese government technical delegation, and an expected visit by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Al-Yahya to the People's Republic of China to complete consultations on various development projects carried out in cooperation between the two sides. At the forefront of these projects is the Mubarak Port project.

The ministry indicated that Minister Abdullah Al-Yahya held a meeting on Monday with the Chinese Ambassador to the country Zhang Jianwei in the presence of the head and members of the Chinese government delegation concerned with completing consultations related to joint development projects between the two friendly countries.

In a press statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the meeting, which was held in the ministry's head office, reviewed the close bilateral relations and existing strategic cooperation between the two countries, and discussed frameworks for strengthening and developing them in various fields and at all levels.

It said, "The State of Kuwait thus resumes its steps towards the desired development with a mind that thinks, a team that plans, and hands that implement, to shape the features of its future, working in full swing for the sake of a new, more advanced, prosperous and successful Kuwait."

It is worth highlighting that the Mubarak Port project is today at the forefront of the Kuwaiti development and economic scene with the start of the actual resumption of its implementation. It is taking practical and realistic steps towards the same direction to be in the ranks of the development projects that the State of Kuwait is counting on during the next stage.

Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port is one of the largest ports in the Middle East. The port targets Central Asia and East Asia for reviving the Silk Road through the Kuwait Gate, maximizing the volume of local investments, and attracting foreign companies and investors.

The port contributes to raising the efficiency of the country's infrastructure, contributing to the development of the northern part of the country, and providing thousands of job opportunities for Kuwaiti youth, in addition to developing and reconstructing Boubyan Island to be a tourist destination.

Kuwait Hospital

Continued from Page 1

to sadly bomb it into oblivion," Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris said be-

fore his Cabinet meets to formally sign off on the decision.

Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide said in a statement that "for more than 30 years, Norway has been one of the strongest advocates for a Palestinian state. Today, when Norway officially recognizes Palestine as a state, is a milestone in the relationship between Norway and Palestine."

Meanwhile, the Israeli military says an initial investigation into a strike that sparked a deadly weekend fire in a tent camp in the southern Gaza city of Rafah has found the blaze was caused by a secondary explosion.

Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, the chief military spokesman, said Tuesday that the military fired two 17-kilogram (37-pound) munitions that targeted two senior Hamas militants. He said the munitions would have been too small to ignite a fire on their own and the military is looking into the possibility that weapons were stored in the area.

Palestinian health officials say at least 45 people, around half of them women and children, were killed in Sunday's strike. The fire also could have ignited fuel, cooking gas canisters or other materials in the densely populated camp housing displaced people.

The strike caused widespread outrage, including from some of Israel's closest allies. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said it was the result of a "tragic mishap."

New strikes in the same western Tel al-Sultan district of Rafah that was hit Sunday killed at least 16 Palestinians, the Palestinian Civil Defense and the Palestinian Red Crescent said Tuesday. Residents reported an escalation of fighting in the southern Gaza city once seen as the territory's last refuge.

An Israeli incursion launched in early May has caused nearly 1 million to flee from Rafah, most of whom had already been displaced in the war between Israel and Hamas. They now seek refuge in squalid tent camps and other war-ravaged areas.

The United States and other allies of Israel have warned against a full-fledged offensive in the city, with the Biden administration saying that would cross a red line and refusing to provide offensive arms for such an undertaking. On Friday, the International Court of Justice called on Israel to halt its Rafah offensive, an order it has no power to enforce.

Netanyahu has vowed to press ahead, saying Israeli forces must enter Rafah to dismantle Hamas and return hostages taken in the Oct. 7 attack that triggered the war.

Capital Committee, Governor unite for urban revitalization

Solutions in sight

By Inaas Awadh

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Members of the Capital Committee of the Municipal Council, headed by member Fahad Al-Abduljader, visited the Capital Governorate building where they met with the Capital Governor Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem.

Their visit was aimed to congratulate the governor on assuming the position, coordinate with him, and exchange ideas to improve the level of services in the governorate and find appropriate solutions to the various issues related to it.

Chairman of the Municipal Council's Capital Committee Fahad Al-Abduljader explained that the committee listened carefully to the Capital governor who presented the most prominent problems in the governorate's areas. The committee was keen to record them, most of which were related to cleanliness, abandoned cars parked in squares, abandoned buildings and bachelor's housing.

The committee thanked the governor for the problems and ideas he presented to improve the level of services in the Capital Governorate. He informed him that most of those issues that he raised were and are still the subject of extensive discussion in the Municipal Council, particularly in the committee.

Recommendations

The committee stressed the keenness to translate the ideas presented by the governor to solve these problems into effective proposals, as well as prepare a detailed report on the results of the visit, and develop the necessary recommendations to solve the problems of the Capital Governorate's areas.

The committee also met with the Deputy Director General for Affairs of the Capital and Jahra governorates Eng. Thamer bin Eid, and the Director of the Capital Municipality Eng. Mohammad Al-Mutairi.

During the meeting, many issues related to the Capital Governorate were raised including the "food truck" problems, especially in Adailiya.

Al-Abduljader said he stressed to the municipality the necessity for organizing the presence of food trucks in residential areas, especially in Adailiya, and controlling the chaos that is currently prevalent, as well as dealing with the traffic congestion and inconvenience it causes to citizens in their private homes.

He said, "The gathering of mobile vehicles in front of private housing is unacceptable. Specific places must be allocated that enable small business owners to make their projects successful without causing any distress to the residents of the area."

Meanwhile, on the sidelines of the visit and during the fruitful discussion, a member of the Capital Committee in the Municipal Council Munira Jassem Al-Amir presented an overview of her proposal to establish various mechanisms to

Al-Hajri stresses importance of supporting local produce

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: During a panel discussion organized by the Federation of Kuwait Industries, former Finance Minister Manaf Al-Hajri emphasized the importance of supporting local products in line with global trade agreements, reports Al-Qabas daily.

He highlighted Kuwait's right to prioritize its products due to industrial development delays, stressing the need for clarity in aligning national goals with international agreements.

Al-Hajri underscored successful initiatives such as the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, which supports local products while complying with international agreements. He urged policymakers to formulate clear national objectives reconciling with global and regional accords, emphasizing feasibility.

The discussion reflected on post-2008 economic shifts and increasing global protectionism. Al-Hajri noted productivity advancements in countries like Singapore and advocated for diverse policy approaches, including temporary subsidies and commercial diplomacy, to bolster local industries.

Hussein Al-Kharafi, head of the Federation of Industries, highlighted ongoing efforts to amend procurement laws, anticipating government decisions aligned with Kuwait's 2035 vision.

He emphasized the economic imperative of prioritizing the national product and cited potential budget allocations to bolster the industrial sector, contributing to economic diversification.

Dr. Sarah Al-Sultan, Kuwait University's Assistant Professor of Tax and Financial Law, addressed legal interpretations surrounding preference for Gulf products. While current laws prioritize national products over imports, ambiguity exists regarding Gulf products' classification. She advocated for legislative clarification retroactively, stressing the need for legislative interpretation or new regulations under current legislative authority.

In conclusion, the discussion emphasized Kuwait's right to support local industries while navigating international agreements. Policymakers are urged to clarify legal ambiguities and enact regulations promoting economic growth and industrial development in alignment with Kuwait's national objectives.

deal with the Capital Governorate as the face of the country, which is the image that is conveyed from Kuwait when it is mentioned.

She said, "Kuwait cares about all regions and takes into account all requirements. It is convinced that Capital Governorate must be treated differently. This is what it presented in its proposal to the executive body of the Kuwait Municipality." Al-Amir pointed out the municipality branch's visit to the governorate to stay updated on recent developments and discuss common topics with various departments.



AUS Class of 2024

The American United School in Kuwait held its sixth graduation ceremony for the academic year 2023 / 2024

on Wednesday, May 22, at the Grand Hyatt Kuwait. The number of graduates was 78, who have been accepted into prestigious universities worldwide in the United Kingdom, the United States, and locally at Kuwait University and private universities.



H.E. Ambassador Sheikhna Al Zain Al Sabah

The ceremony was attended by the Chairwoman of the United Education Company's Board of Directors, Sheikhna Dana Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the Vice Chairman of the United Education Company, Mr. Meshal Ali, the Chairwoman of the Board of Trustees, Sheikhna Fotouh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and the Director of the American United School, Michael Winger.

In her speech, Jude Al Obaid, the valedictorian, recalled the challenges and difficult times she and her fellow graduates faced, which they overcame with determination, patience, and perseverance. She praised the efforts of the teachers and the support of the school administration in overcoming all obstacles, developing their talents and skills, fully preparing them for university life, and enabling them to achieve their dreams and aspirations. Jude said, "Wherever life takes you, embrace the unknown, trust in your abilities, and write your stories with courage, passion, and purpose."

Her Excellency Ambassador Sheikhna Al-Zain Al-Sabah, the Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the United States, delivered the keynote address. She urged the graduates to strive, invest their energies and talents, and seize opportunities to achieve

success and excellence in all fields, serving their country and the world by relying on the knowledge they acquired during their educational journey over the past years and what they will achieve in the future. She said, "Your academic journey was not just about what you do and how you do it, but about the impact it has on others. So I wish you all many joyful moments. Be brave, be worthy, be compassionate, and above all, remember to do what you love, and everything else will follow. Good luck."

The American United School in Kuwait (AUS) was established in 2012 and is internationally accredited by the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA-CISS). It has 1,267 students enrolled in various educational stages, from kindergarten to high school.

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TENDER ADVERTISEMENT

Aramco Gulf Operations Company Limited ("AGOC") and Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (K.S.C.) ("KGOC"), (Al Khafji Joint Operations) invites intending bidders to participate for the **Tender No.: GT834PC23 - Construction of MSD Store at KJOH and Installation of Overhead Fire Suppression Water Sprinkler at KJO Hospital.**

Each intending bidder may purchase the tender documents upon payment of **Saudi Riyals Five Hundred (SR 500) or Kuwaiti Dinars Forty (KD 40) only** which is non-refundable by visiting our Contracts Department at Al-Khafji, Saudi Arabia, or KGOC's Kuwait Office located in Al-Ahmadi, Tender & Contracts Section. The bidder may visit our KJO website: www.kjo.com.sa and follows the path; E- Services □ Tendering □ Contractors □ Ongoing Tenders to review part of tender documents, before purchasing.

The sale of Tender Documents will be effective from **May 29, 2024, until 10:00 AM, June 11, 2024.**

A Pre-Tender meeting will be held at the Auditorium, "Office Park" Building, at Al-Khafji Joint Operations, Saudi Arabia, at **10:00 AM local time on June 11, 2024.** And the Site Visit will be held thereafter.

Attending the Pre-Tender Meeting is Mandatory.

The Bidder shall have experiences as being active for at least five (5) years in the field of Construction, including completing of at least one (1) project of similar scope or nature, which shall not be less than US\$ 1,500,000 in value as those in the tender.

The bid proposal shall be delivered by hand-delivery or thru courier service to the Contracts Department in Al-Khafji Joint Operations, Al-Khafji, Saudi Arabia on or before the closing date **14:00 Hours, Monday, July 15, 2024** of the time stipulated in the tender document.

For more information please contact

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Website: www.kjo.com.sa

World News Roundup

Europe

'9 unfairly detained'

Belgium commits \$1 billion aid to Ukraine

BRUSSELS, May 28, (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Tuesday received a second \$1 billion promise of military aid in as many days for his war with Russia during a whirlwind tour through the European Union.

The pledge for 2024 came from Belgium, which topped up the money with a commitment to give 30 F-16 fighter jets over the next four years.

"Our task is to use the first F-16 on the battlefield this year and in such way fortify our positions," Zelenskyy said.

The Netherlands added to the goodwill by promising to quickly assemble with key EU partners a Patriot air defense system, which Zelenskyy sees as key in stopping Russia from hitting his country's power grid and civilian areas, as well as military targets, with devastating glide bombs that cause wide destruction.

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg welcomed the move but insisted much more work was needed. "We have seen some progress, but more progress and more air defense systems are urgently needed in Ukraine," Stoltenberg said as he headed into a meeting with EU defense ministers.

A day earlier, Zelenskyy signed a security agreement with Spain that allocates 1 billion euros (\$1.1 billion) of military aid to Ukraine in 2024, and 5 billion euros (\$5.4 billion) by 2027.

The bilateral aid is essential since the 27-nation bloc is again struggling to overcome Hungary's objections to the EU itself providing billions of euros in military aid to Kyiv, which is in its third year of war following Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion.

An estimated 6.5 billion euros (\$7 billion) are stalled by the Hungarian government of Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who is considered Russia's staunchest ally in the EU. Single member states have wide veto powers and Hungary has long held up funds aimed at boosting Ukraine's defense efforts.

Implement

"That's the sad thing that we have the cash, we have the capacity, but we are still pending decisions to implement" aid decisions for Ukraine, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said.

Zelenskyy met with Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo on Tuesday, and as well as the immediate money, obtained a security agreement aimed at providing guarantees of military help until Ukraine joins the NATO alliance.

Since Russia launched a spring offensive around eastern Kharkiv, Zelenskyy has insisted Ukraine urgently needs seven more US-made Patriot air defense systems.

Dutch Defense Minister Kaja Ollongren, meeting with her EU colleagues, said that such a system will be built "in a short time frame." The Netherlands has the core components for a Patriot system and other EU nations will contribute other key parts and munitions.

"Ukraine is also fighting Europe's fight," she said.

Zelenskyy was to visit Belgium and Spain earlier this month but postponed all his foreign trips after Russia launched its offensive in the Kharkiv region.

Ukraine has repeatedly tried to strike behind Russian lines, often with drones, though Russia's response to the new technology used in unmanned vehicles has improved in recent months.

The onslaught unfolding as the weather improves has brought Ukraine's biggest military test since Russia's full-scale invasion began. Slow deliveries of support by its Western partners, especially a lengthy delay in U.S. military aid, have left Ukraine at the mercy of Russia's bigger army and air force.

Also:

WARSAW, Poland: Congolese authorities have released a Polish man who was sentenced there to life in prison on espionage charges, Poland's foreign minister said Tuesday.

Radek Sikorski wrote on social media platform X that **Mariusz Majewski** was back in Europe. Sikorski posted a brief video of himself apparently talking to Majewski over the phone to welcome him back. He did not say where exactly Majewski was.

The 52-year-old was detained by Congolese forces in February and later faced a military court in the restive Central African nation, accused of spying. Last week he received a life sentence in prison. No details were released as to where he was held.

Poland's Foreign Ministry protested Majewski's innocence. Last week President **Andrzej Duda** spoke on the phone with Congolese President **Felix Tshisekedi** seeking to obtain Majewski's release.

Poland does not have a diplomatic mission in Congo. Last week, Polish Foreign Ministry spokesman **Pawel Wronski** said without elaborating that Majewski "is not a spy, he is a member of a travelers club" and was just following his "passion in life."

Wronski said it was due to a chain of coincidental circumstances and events that he found himself in Congo and his "behavior was the result of a lack of knowledge of local customs."

Earlier this month, the Congolese army said it had foiled a coup attempt and arrested the perpetrators, including some foreigners. Several U.S. citizens are among those arrested.

ATHENS, Greece: Nine Egyptian men cleared by a Greek court of involvement in a migrant shipwreck disaster remain unfairly held in administrative detention days after they were freed from jail, their lawyers said Monday.

A judge in the southern town of Nafplio on Tuesday is expected to hear a legal appeal for their release, the lawyers told a press conference in Athens.

"The decision for their detention is not legal, and has no justification," said **Effie Dousi**, one of the lawyers.

The nine men were among the 104 survivors of an overcrowded fishing trawler that sank in international waters off southwestern Greece on June 14, 2023, en route from Libya to Italy.

A total 82 bodies were recovered, but hundreds more people are feared lost in one of the worst migrant shipwrecks in the Mediterranean Sea.

Greek authorities accused the nine of being among the trawler's crew - something the defense denied - and brought criminal charges against them including for people smuggling and causing a deadly shipwreck. But last week a judge in the southern city of Kalamata dismissed the case after a prosecutor argued that Greece lacked jurisdiction as the trawler sank outside its waters.



De Croo



US President Joe Biden, (left), joined by Vice President Kamala Harris, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Army Major Gen Trevor Bradenkamp, arrive for an Armed Forces Full Honors Wreath Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Va., on Memorial Day on May 27. (AP)

Politics

Biden marks Memorial Day with solemn remarks

'Each generation has to earn freedom'

WASHINGTON, May 28, (AP) — US President Joe Biden marked Memorial Day with a pledge that the country would continue the work of the nation's fallen toward a more perfect union, "for which they lived, and for which they died."

Delivering remarks at a solemn remembrance ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, Biden said each generation must ensure the sacrifice of the country's service members is not in vain.

"Freedom has never been guaranteed," Biden said under gray skies in the memorial amphitheater. "Every generation has to earn it, fight for it, defend it in the battle between autocracy and democracy, between the greed of a few, and the rights of many."

He added: "On this day, we came together again to reflect, to remember, and above all, to recommit to the future they fought for, a future grounded in freedom, democracy, opportunity and equality. Not just for some, but for all."

Before the ceremony began, Biden, joined by Vice President Kamala Harris and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, placed a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

In his remarks, Biden invoked the anniversary this week of the death of his son Beau, who served in Iraq and later died from brain cancer that the president attributes to his time stationed near toxic burn pits, to highlight the importance of honoring the service of those who came home with injuries, in addition to the dead.

"Last year, the VA delivered more benefits and processed more claims than ever in our history," Biden said, crediting the PACT Act which grants automatic coverage for certain health conditions suffered by veterans by presuming they result from their military service. "For too long after fighting for our nation, these veterans had to fight to get the right health care, to get the benefits they had earned, not anymore."

Also:

BOISE, Idaho: Idaho Democrats selected **Joe Biden** as their nominee for the White House, giving the president more delegates after he already

Voter outreach groups targeted by new laws struggle to do their work

WASHINGTON, May 28, (AP) — During the presidential election four years ago, the Equal Ground Education Fund hired over 100 people to go door-to-door and attend festivals, college homecomings and other events to help register voters across Florida. Their efforts for this year's elections look much different.

A state law passed last year forced them to stop in-person voter registration, cut staff and led to a significant drop in funding. Organizers aren't sure how robust their operations will be in the fall.

Genesis Robinson, the group's interim executive director, said the law has had a "tremendous impact" on its ability to host events and get into communities to engage directly with potential voters.

"Prior to all of these changes, we were able to operate in a space where we were taking action and prepare our communities and make

sure they were registered to vote - and help if they weren't," he said.

Florida is one of several states, including Kansas, Missouri and Texas, where Republicans have enacted voting restrictions since 2021 that created or enhanced criminal penalties and fines for those who assist voters. The laws have forced some voter outreach groups to cease operations, while others have greatly altered or reduced their activities.

The Florida law, signed by Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis last May, imposed a \$50,000 fine on third-party voter registration organizations if the staff or volunteers who handle or collect the forms have been convicted of a felony or are not US citizens. It also raised the fines the groups could face, from \$1,000 to \$250,000, and reduced the amount of time they are able to return registration applications from 14 days to 10 days.

clinched his party's 2024 nomination. Biden won the state Democratic caucus with 95% of the vote in a low-turnout election with just over 2,400 votes cast. The win gives the president all 23 delegates at stake.

The caucus was structured a bit differently than previous Democratic caucuses. Instead of listening to speeches and moving to various parts of the room to show their support for a candidate, voters were given ballots to fill out their choices.

Only registered Democrats and unaffiliated voters were allowed to participate. Unaffiliated voters first had to sign a pledge saying they are participating as Democrats and have not participated in any other presidential nomination contest this year. Voters who are 17 years old are allowed to caucus as long as they will turn 18 before the general election on

Nov. 5.

WASHINGTON: The Senate confirmed the 200th federal judge of President **Joe Biden's** tenure, about a month earlier than when **Donald Trump** hit that mark in his term, though Trump still holds the edge when it comes to the most impactful confirmations - those to the Supreme Court and the country's 13 appellate courts.

The march to 200 culminated with the confirmation of **Angela Martinez** as a district court judge in Arizona. The milestone reflects the importance that Biden, a former chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and Senate Majority Leader **Chuck Schumer**, D-N.Y., placed on judicial confirmations after Trump put his enormous stamp on the federal judiciary with the confirmation of three Supreme Court justices.



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak speaks to employees of a ceramic manufacturing plant during a Conservative general election campaign event in Stoke On Trent, England on May 28. (AP)



Moore



Beshear

North America

Canadian evacuees head home: Residents in the western Canadian city of Fort Nelson, British Columbia, were given permission Monday to return home after more than 4,700 were evacuated from the community for more than two weeks due to wildfires.

The Northern Rockies Regional Municipality and the Fort Nelson First Nation jointly rescinded their evacuation orders, lifting roadblocks and clearing the way for people to go home.

About 4,700 people were forced to leave their homes in Fort Nelson on May 10, when strong winds pushed the Parker Lake wildfire within a few miles of the town.

The wildfire is now classified as "being held." The BC Wildfire Service said rain on Sunday and the efforts of firefighters meant the 123-square-kilometer (47-square-mile) fire in the northeastern corner of the province was not expected to grow.

But the blaze hasn't been extinguished and the service says it expects parts of it to continue burning into the fall.

The fire destroyed four homes and damaged six other properties in the area.

In 2023, Canada experienced a record number of wildfires that caused choking smoke in parts of the US and forced more than 235,000 Canadians to evacuate their communities. (AP)

81-year-old arrested: An 81-year-old man who investigators say terrorized a Southern California neighborhood for years with a slingshot has been arrested, police said.

While conducting an investigation, detectives "learned that during the course of 9-10 years, dozens of citizens were being victimized by a serial slingshot shooter," the Azusa Police Department said in a statement.

The man is suspected of breaking windows and car windshields and of narrowly missing people with ball bearings shot from a slingshot, the statement said. No injuries were reported.

The man was arrested Thursday after officers served a search warrant and found a slingshot and ball bearings at his home in Azusa, about 25 miles (40 km) east of Los Angeles, police said.

Azusa police Lt Jake Bushey said Saturday that detectives learned that most of the ball bearings were shot from the suspect's backyard. (AP)

Powerful storms kill 22: A series of

powerful storms swept over the central and southern US over the Memorial Day holiday weekend, killing at least 22 people and leaving a wide trail of destroyed homes, businesses and power outages.

The destructive storms caused deaths in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Kentucky and were just north of an oppressive, early



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, (center), Belgium's Prime Minister Alexander De Croo, (second left), and Belgium's Defense Minister Ludvine De-donder, (right), listen to a briefing on an F-16 at Melsbroek military airport in Brussels on May 28. Zelenskyy on Tuesday met Belgian F-16 pilots, instructors and technical staff. Belgium has announced its decision to deliver F-16s to Ukraine, and to supply the first aircraft if possible later this year. (AP)

season heat wave setting records from south Texas to Florida.

Forecasters said the severe weather could shift to the East Coast later Monday and warned millions of people outdoors for the holiday to watch the skies. A tornado watch was issued from North Carolina to Maryland. Maryland's governor is **Wes Moore**.

Kentucky Gov **Andy Beshear**, who earlier declared a state of emergency, said at a Monday press conference that five people had died in his state. The fifth death was a 54-year-old man who had a heart attack while cutting fall trees in Caldwell County in western Kentucky, the governor's office said. (AP)

Chicago man sues police: A Chicago man convicted of murder based in part on testimony from a legally blind eyewitness is suing the city and the police department.

A judge convicted Darien Harris in 2014 in connection with a fatal shooting at a South Side gas station in 2011. He was 12 years into a 76-year prison sentence when he was freed in December after The Exonerated Project showed that the eyewitness had advanced glaucoma and lied about his eyesight issues. Harris was 30 years old when he went free.

Harris filed a federal civil rights lawsuit in April alleging police fabricated evidence and coerced witnesses into making false statements, the Chicago Tribune reported Monday. He told the newspaper that he is still struggling to put his life back together. (AP)

Lat/Am

Posse resigns

A 'woman' could be Mexico's next leader

MEXICO CITY, May 28, (Agencies): Concepción Alejo is used to being invisible.

Alejo, 43, touches her face up with makeup on a Tuesday morning, and steps out of her tiny apartment on the fringes of Mexico City. She walks until the cracked gravel outside her home turns into cobblestones, and the campaign posters coating small concrete buildings are replaced with the spotless walls of gated communities of the city's upper class.

It's here where Alejo has quietly worked cleaning the homes and raising the children of wealthier Mexicans for 26 years.

Alejo is among approximately 2.5 million Mexicans - largely women - who serve as domestic workers in the Latin American nation, a profession that has come to encapsulate gender and class divisions long permeating Mexico.

Women like her play a fundamental role in Mexican society, picking up the burden of domestic labor as a growing number of women professionals enter the workforce. Despite reforms under the current government, many domestic workers continue to face low pay, abuse by employers, long hours and unstable working conditions some equate to "modern slavery."

Now, as Mexico is on its way to elect its first female president, women like her who feel forgotten by their government hope that having a female leader might shift the balance in their favor.

"I've never voted all these years, because it's always the same for us whoever wins. ... When have they ever listened to us, why would I give them my vote?" Alejo said. "I have hope that at least by having a woman, maybe things will be different."

Still, as two female politicians - former Mexico City mayor Claudia Sheinbaum and former senator **Xóchitl Gálvez** - are leading the race to the June 2 presidential election, it's unclear how much it will shift the realities of working women in the country.



Gálvez

Moved

Born to a poor family in the central Mexican state of Puebla, Alejo dropped out of school at age 14 because her parents had no money to pay for her to continue studying. Instead, she and two of her sisters each moved to Mexico City to do one of the few jobs available to them as lower class women: domestic work.

Women in Mexico, like much of Latin America, work in informal jobs - tasks like selling things on the street without a fixed contract or benefits - in rates greater than their male counterparts, something experts following the topic attribute to misogyny in their cultures.

Like many young women coming to the city, Alejo began working as a live-in nanny, sleeping in a small room in the house of the family she worked for.

"It's like you're a mother. The kids would call me 'mama'," she said. "Their children were born and I would bathe them, care for them, do everything from the moment I awoke to the moment they slept."

While some domestic workers live separately from families, many more live with families and work weeks, if not months, without breaks. They're isolated from family and friends, in a custom that roots back to slavery, said Rachel Randall, a Latin American Studies researcher at the Queen Mary University of London.

"In a region like Latin America and the Caribbean, the history of slavery and colonialism continues to weigh on relationships to domestic workers even today in terms of class, race and gender dynamics," she said.

Alejo said the demands, combined with the low pay of domestic work, led her not to build a family or have children herself. Others told The Associated Press they were fired from their positions after they fell ill and asked for help and time off from the family they've worked with for years.

Escape

Carolina Solana de Dios, 47, said she started working as a live-in nanny when she was 15 to escape an abusive household. While she feels free from the abuse and knows her job is important, she added: "When you work in someone else's house, your life isn't your own."

At the same time, their help is essential for working women like 49-year-old Claudia Rodríguez, as they continue to fight to enter professional spaces historically dominated by men. Rodríguez, a single mother and owner of an IT company, said she's had to work twice as hard to get half as far as male counterparts.

In Mexico and much of Latin America, a gap has long divided men and women in the workplace. In 2005, 80% of men were either employed or looking for jobs, compared to 40% of women, Mexican government data shows.

That gap has slowly closed over time, and at the end of 2023, 76% of men were active in the workforce, compared to 47% of women. Large gaps in salary and leadership roles still exist.

Born in a town two hours from Mexico City, Rodríguez fled an abusive father with her mother and siblings, taking refuge in the capital. After watching her mother toil away selling food on the streets and any other job to pay rent, Rodríguez decided from an early age she didn't want to follow the same path.

Instead of pursuing her dream of professionally dancing, she began selling computers when she was 16.

Also:

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico: Lightning struck a beach in the northern coastal town of **Isabela** during inclement weather Monday, injuring three children, one seriously, Puerto Rican police said.

The children, whose ages ranged from 7 to 12, were taken to a hospital in the nearby town of **Aguadilla**, a police statement said. The oldest youngster was listed in serious condition, it said.

No further details were released.

Buenos Aires: Argentine President **Javier Milei's** cabinet chief **Nicolas Posse** has resigned, the presidency said Monday.

Current Interior Minister **Guillermo Francos** will succeed Posse "with the aim of providing greater political weight" to the office of the cabinet chief, the presidency said in a statement.

Posse, a 58-year-old industrial engineer, has served as chief of the Cabinet of Ministers since Dec. 10, 2023, when Milei took office.

Posse's resignation was due to a "difference in criteria and expectations in the progress of the government and the tasks entrusted to it," according to the office of the cabinet chief.



Taiwan President Lai Ching-te, (third from left), listens to the briefing during his visit at Taiwanese military in Hualien County, Taiwan on May 28. The visit came a week after Lai was inaugurated as president. (AP)

Asia

Typhoon leaves 7 dead in Philippines

Taiwan's legislature passes changes

TAIPEI, Taiwan, May 28, (AP): Taiwan's opposition-controlled legislature passed changes on Tuesday that are seen as favoring China and diminishing the power of the island's president.

The changes pushed by the opposition Nationalist Party and its allies give the body greater power to control budgets, including defense spending that the party has blocked in what many see as a concession to China.

The Nationalists officially back unification with China, from which Taiwan separated during a civil war in 1949. They took control of the legislature with a single-seat majority after elections in January, while the presidency went to Lai Ching-te of the Democratic Progressive Party, which favors Taiwan's de facto independence from China.

Thousands of people gathered outside the legislature to protest the changes. The legislative chamber was festooned with banners promoting both sides in the dispute, while arguments on the floor broke into shouting and pushing matches.

DPP legislators accused deputies from the KMT and the minority Taiwan People's Party of undermining Taiwan's democracy by expanding the legislature's oversight of the executive branch.

China sends planes and ships near Taiwan on a daily basis in a campaign aimed at wearing down Taiwanese opposition to unification and at deteriorating its defenses, which are strongly backed by the U.S., despite a lack of formal diplomatic ties.

Hong Kong police arrest 6: Hong Kong police on Tuesday arrested six people, including a former organizer of the city's decades-long annual vigil that commemorated China's Tiananmen Square crackdown, for allegedly publishing seditious social media posts, in what were the first publicly known arrests under the city's new national security law.

Secretary for Security **Chris Tang** said **Chow Hang-tung**, a former leader of the group behind the vigil, alongside five others, used a social media page to anonymously publish the posts. Police said their acts began in April and that the suspects were targeting a "sensitive date."

The authorities have not detailed the content of the posts. But the page started publishing a series of posts to mark the upcoming 35th anniversary of the 1989 crackdown, a politically sensi-

Uzbekistan & Russia sign agreement on construction of nuke power plant

MOSCOW, May 28, (AP): Russia and Uzbekistan signed an accord Monday for Moscow to build a small nuclear power plant in the Central Asian country, as Russian President Vladimir Putin held talks in the Uzbek capital with Uzbekistan leader Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

Mirziyoyev hailed the project as "vital" in remarks after the talks, noting that Uzbekistan has "its own large reserves of uranium." Putin, in turn, vowed to "do everything in order to work effectively on Uzbekistan's (nuclear energy) market."

If the agreement is implemented, the plant would become the first in Central Asia, further increasing Russia's influence in the region.

Russia's state news agency RIA Novosti quoted the Russian state-owned energy corporation, Rosatom, as saying that the project envisions building six reactors with the total capacity of 330 megawatts.

According to Russian media, the two countries were earlier discussing building a nuclear power plant of a larger capacity - of 2.4 gigawatts.

Also:

SEOUL, South Korea: A rocket launched by North Korea to deploy the country's second spy satellite exploded shortly after liftoff Monday, state media reported, in a setback for leader **Kim Jong Un's** hopes to operate multiple satellites to better monitor the US and South Korea.

Monday's failed launch came hours after leaders of South Korea, China and Japan met in Seoul in their first trilateral meeting in more than four years. It's highly unusual for North Korea to take provocative action when China, its major ally and economic pipeline, is engaging in high-level diplomacy with the region.

provincial police said.

Before flying to Brunei on Tuesday for a state visit, President **Ferdinand Marcos Jr** said more than 26,700 people were affected by the typhoon, including many who fled to evacuation centers in five provincial regions. Three airports and 29 seaports could not operate normally due to the typhoon while six cities and towns were hit by power outages, he said.

2nd landslide feared in PNG: Authorities fear a second landslide and a disease outbreak are looming at the scene of Papua New Guinea's mass-casualty disaster because of water streams and bodies trapped beneath the tons of debris that swept over a village, a United Nations official said Tuesday.

A mass of boulders, earth and splintered trees devastated Yambali in the South Pacific nation's remote highlands when a limestone mountainside sheared away Friday. The blanket of debris has become more unstable with recent rain and streams trapped between the ground and rubble, said Serhan Aktoprak, chief of the International Organization for Migration's mission in Papua New Guinea.

Public Works Minister Daniel Garwe, the number of food insecure people is now estimated at 9 million, up from the initial 7.7 million, constituting 60 percent of the country's population.

Launching a joint food aid appeal with the United Nations, Garwe thanked development and humanitarian partners for their support to date but urged them to step up their assistance to help those in need.

Last month, Zimbabwean President **Emmerson Mnangagwa** declared a state of disaster over the drought and indicated that the country requires 2.2 billion U.S. dollars to respond to the drought. (Xinhua)

Africans cast special votes: South Africans began casting their special votes in the 2024 national and provincial elections on Monday, according to the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).

Masego Sheburi, the IEC's deputy chief electoral officer, briefed the media in Johannesburg about the special voting process, which is available for those who are infirm, have impaired mobility, or wish to vote early due to potential unavailability on the general election day.

The IEC reported that a total of 1,668,076 South Africans have been approved for special votes, including 624,593 voters who will be visited by trained election officers at their homes or places of confinement. The special voting period will conclude on Tuesday. (Xinhua)



This photo taken on May 27, 2024 shows a collapsed residential building in Datong Township of Tongling City, east China's Anhui Province. A residential building partially collapsed on Monday afternoon in Datong Township of Tongling City, east China's Anhui Province, according to local authorities. The collapse occurred at around 1:40 pm. Rescue efforts are underway. (Xinhua)



Mnangagwa



Itno

Africa

Tunisia begins maritime drills: A maritime exercise kicked off in the Gulf of Tunis on Monday to enhance the country's maritime search and rescue capabilities, the Tunis Afrique Presse (TAP) reported.

The exercise, which is scheduled to continue until Wednesday, will focus on search and rescue at sea, Mehdi Seliti, head of the National Search and Rescue Operations Coordination Center, was quoted as saying during a ceremony at the La Goulette naval base in the northern suburbs of Tunis, the capital of Tunisia.

The objective of the exercise, dubbed "Safe Sea 24," is to evaluate the effectiveness of the existing system and identify its strengths and weaknesses in order to address any shortcomings, Seliti added.

Additionally, the exercise aims to establish coordination mechanisms among relevant stakeholders, refine first relief techniques through practice, and optimize the use of available systems, as reported by TAP. (Xinhua)

Itno appoints new cabinet: Chadian President **Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno** issued a decree on Monday forming a new cabinet led by Prime Minister Allamaye Halina, who was appointed last week.

The list of cabinet members was broadcast on national television and online platforms of the Chadian presidency.

The new cabinet comprises 27 ministers, with **Abderaman Koulamallah** appointed as foreign minister and **Issakha Malloua Djamous** as defense minister. (Xinhua)

Zambia distributes food: Zambia has started the distribution of relief food to areas of the country affected by drought, a senior official said Monday.

Cornelius Mweetwa, minister of information and media and also chief government spokesperson, said that the distribution of relief maize has begun following the approval of the food security drought response plan for the period April 2024 to May 2025.

He said that the government and other stakeholders have initiated responses, providing both cash and in-kind support to all 84 districts affected by the drought out of the country's 116 districts.

"Cabinet appreciated the report from the Office of the Vice-President, through the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit, indicating that 84.5 percent of the 84 districts have received maize for the targeted beneficiaries under the maize distribution program," he said in a statement following a cabinet meeting.

topic in Hong Kong and mainland China, on April 30.

"(They) provoke hatred against the central government, the Hong Kong government and the city's judicial institutions, and aim to incite netizens to organize or participate in illegal activities during a later period," the police statement said.

Philippine typhoon kills 7: A typhoon has finally moved away from the Philippines, leaving at least seven people dead, mostly due to floods or toppled trees, and forcing the closures of several seaports, stranding thousands of passengers, officials said Tuesday.

Typhoon Ewiniar crept by the country's eastern coast late Friday night and lingered over the Philippine islands for several days, before shifting northeastward away from the archipelago. All storm warnings were lifted Tuesday.

The typhoon's shift in direction spared the densely populated capital, Manila, from a potentially damaging hit.

At least six villagers drowned in floodwaters or died after being hit by falling trees during the sudden deluge in the hard-hit province of Quezon,

Zambia declared the drought a national disaster and emergency in February this year and made a humanitarian appeal for assistance in April. (Xinhua)

Zimbabwe raises aid appeal: Zimbabwe

raised its aid appeal to 3.3 billion US dollars on Monday, up from the initial 2.2 billion dollars announced last month to cater to 60 percent of the country's population that will be food insecure until March next year due to drought.

According to Local Government and



Supporters of Umkhonto weSizwe party react during an election meeting in Mpumalanga, near Durban, South Africa on May 25, in anticipation of the 2024 general elections scheduled for May 29. (AP)



Adel Al Waqayan

KIPCO appoints Al Waqayan as Group Treasurer

KIPCO – Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) – announced the appointment of Mr Adel Jaseem Al Waqayan as Group Treasurer.

Mr Al Waqayan joined KIPCO as Treasurer in 1995. Prior to that, he was the Chief Foreign Exchange and Money Market Dealer at Burgan Bank for 13 years. For almost three decades, Mr Al Waqayan has managed KIPCO's cash flow, invested returns, and contributed to local and international refinancing deals. He

was the Chairman of the Kuwait Financial Markets Association in 2006 and is currently Chairman of the Chairman's Club. Mr Al Waqayan holds an MBA from USI University, USA.

Commenting on the appointment, Sheikh Dana Naser Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, KIPCO's Group Chief Executive Officer, said:

"As we continue to work on diversifying our investor base with the aim of maintaining the company's financial flexibility, Adel's knowledge and expertise will be an invaluable to our efforts. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Adel and wish him all the best in his new role."

On his part, Mr Al Waqayan said, "I am delighted for this opportunity to continue to serve KIPCO and to work across the Group's many businesses. I look forward to working alongside my colleagues to create greater value for our stakeholders."

oil surges

The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 81 cents to USD 84.40 pb on Monday, compared to USD 83.59 pb last Friday, said the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) on Tuesday.

On a global scale, the price of the Brent crude future contracts went up by 1.04 USD to 83.65 pb, so did the West Texas Intermediate crude, going up 93 cents to USD 78.65 pb. (KUNA)

Market Movements

28-05-2024

Change	Closing pts		Change	Closing pts
SAUDI	-	TASI	-171.28	11,659.94
DUBAI	-	DFMGI	-40.57	3,986.89
JAPAN	-	Nikkei 225	-44.65	38,855.37
PHILIPPINES	-	PSEI	-70.26	6,501.34
EGYPT	-	EGX 30	-82.43	27,194.51

Business

Boursa Kuwait boosts IR knowledge among 'capital market' participants

Focus on AI and ESG metrics at Boursa Kuwait IR workshops

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Boursa Kuwait hosted investor relations workshops in collaboration with Instinctif Partners, a strategic reputation advisory firm based in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, at the bourse's premises on Monday, May 27, 2024, targeting companies listed in the Kuwaiti capital market.

The workshops aimed at enriching the awareness and understanding of the latest, best-in-class standards and practices in IR, an important aspect of communicating with investors and ensuring the timely and accurate dispersion of information, which in turn helps create trust and transparency in capital markets and allows investors



Al-Sanousi

to fully analyze listed companies and their performance and make astute investment decisions.



Matt Smallwood

The workshops were run by Matthew Smallwood, Managing Partner, Samah Ragab, Associate Partner and Duaa Kamin, Consultant at Instinctif Partners, who shared their perspectives and expertise with over 30 IR practitioners.

The workshops explored the latest trends and challenges shaping the IR industry, including the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) metrics and reporting. The experts from Instinctif also highlighted how to build an effective IR program, utilizing efficient communications and building tools to support those activities, including developing the company website and mastering the art of presentations. The workshops also shed light on how to cultivate strong investor relationships by building successful long-term partnerships based on trust and capitalizing on data-driven insights. In addition, the workshops offered a deep dive into crafting award-winning annual reports that showcase a company's value proposition, strategic direction, and operating landscape.

Senior Director of Marketing and Corporate Communications Mr. Naser Meshari Al-Sanousi commented on the



Instinctif workshop

workshops, saying, "Boursa Kuwait is dedicated to fostering a culture of sustainable excellence and enhancing the overall awareness and knowledge of the best standards, practices and trends adopted worldwide and encouraging them to be implemented across the Kuwaiti capital market. These workshops are a key initiative in our strategy to maintain a sound capital market infrastructure, one that can attract new investors and cultivate long-lasting relationships with the international investment community. I would like to thank the listed companies for their contribution to the success of this event and extend deep gratitude to Instinctif Partners for organizing this initiative and look forward to more collaborations in the future."

Boursa Kuwait's organization of this and other similar initiatives stems from the company's strategy to ensure that Kuwaiti capital market participants are informed and knowledgeable of the latest trends globally, specifically in the IR industry, which is fast becoming a vibrant industry and a key tenet of a company's strategy, as the IR function provides an essential communications point between listed companies and their investors, whether current or prospective.

Investor relations in the Kuwaiti capital market is quickly gaining traction, as companies wishing to list on the "Premier" Market are obligated to allocate a unit or department dedicated to investor relations. That department is responsible for educating shareholders about the company's activities, financial performance and strategic directions. It is also responsible for answering shareholder inquiries and questions, communicating with shareholders to exercise their rights to attend

and vote in general assemblies as well as building links between the Board of Directors, Executive Management, current and potential investors and all interested parties.

It is worth noting that companies listed in the "Premier" Market segment accounted for 72% of the traded value in the first quarter of 2024, while "Premier" Market companies' share of traded volume came in at 53% for the same period. Additionally, the "Premier" Market's market capitalization during the first quarter of 2024 was over KD 36 billion, representing 83.5% of the total market capitalization of KD 43.1 billion.

This is due to the reclassification of the Kuwaiti capital market into an "Emerging Market" in some of the world's leading index providers and the inclusion of Kuwaiti listed companies, many of whom are "Premier" Market companies, into these indexes. Additionally, companies listed in the "Premier" Market regularly participate in Boursa Kuwait's Corporate Days, organized in collaboration with world-renowned financial institutions and showcasing the investment opportunities that reside in the Kuwaiti capital market. Putting these companies in touch with some of the world's leading investment firms and financial institutions, the events aim to highlight these companies' financial health and business strategies and outlooks helping investors gain an in-depth understanding of the benefits and opportunities of investing in Kuwaiti companies.

Commenting on the collaboration with Boursa Kuwait, Matthew Smallwood, Managing Partner at Instinctif Partners, said: "It was a pleasure representing to a responsive and knowl-

edgeable audience at Boursa Kuwait. Attendees were excited and showed great ambition to adopt the best-in-class standards and practices to become high-quality practitioners in the field of Investor Relations. A critical pillar of a company's reputation, IR can contribute to better investor interactions and conversations, making it easier to attract new investors and retain old ones, which in turn helps deliver a valuation that companies deserve, thanks to the higher levels of transparency and trust. I would like to thank Boursa Kuwait for this opportunity and look forward to more collaborations in the future."

Boursa Kuwait's collaboration with Instinctif Partners highlights its commitment to enhancing its corporate communications and investor relations and ensuring their alignment with global best practices. It underscores the bourse's proactive approach and its dedication to fostering an efficient and transparent capital market, one that can become a vital contributor to the State of Kuwait's vision to transform into a leading cultural, financial and investment hub in the Middle East.

The initiative forms part of Boursa Kuwait's efforts to create a lasting meaningful impact on the communities where it operates as part of its Corporate Sustainability strategy and ongoing efforts to equip all market participants with an in-depth understanding of the functioning of capital markets and various tools and techniques required to make informed investment decisions and effectively meet investors' needs. It is also in line with Goal 4 – Quality Education – and Goal 17 – Partnership for the Goals – of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

CEO highlights global connectivity

HSBC named Best Investment Bank in Kuwait for fifth consecutive year

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: HSBC has been named the Best Investment Bank in Kuwait for the fifth year in succession at the Euromoney Middle East Awards for Excellence, 2024.

HSBC Middle East received three additional awards for the Middle East's Best Investment Bank, Middle East's Best Bank for Sustainable Finance and Middle East's Best Bank for Financing. Other country awards included Egypt's Best Bank for Diversity & Inclusion, Qatar's Best Bank for Corporates, Saudi Arabia's Best Investment Bank and UAE's Best International Bank.

Samer Alabed, CEO of HSBC Kuwait, said: "We continue to deliver on our purpose which is opening up a world of opportunity for our customers in Kuwait and around the Middle East, a region which is integral to global financing flows. These awards are reflective of our regional scale and heritage which, combined with our global network and international expertise, gives us the ability to connect clients across the world to opportunities in the Middle East."

HSBC Kuwait continues to support important initiatives on the country's growth agenda, providing a full suite of investment bank-



Samer Alabed, CEO of HSBC Kuwait.

ing services to support clients across the economic spectrum, including government related entities, local corporates and financial institutions. As a strategic priority, HSBC focuses on its strengths to deliver outstanding results for clients, such as leveraging its unique global network and expertise to support access to capital markets.

Taken together, this series of significant awards demonstrate the breadth of HSBC's network, the depth of its expertise, and its access to deep pools of finance.

Full-year net profits reach KD 83.6m

Agility holds its successful annual general assembly meeting for '23

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Agility, a global leader in supply chain services, infrastructure, and innovation, held today its Ordinary Annual General Assembly Meeting for the year 2023, with a quorum of 65.6%.

The company's shareholders approved all items on the agenda, including Agility's audited financial statements, and the Board of Directors' recommendation to distribute a cash dividends of 10%, equivalent to 10 fils per share for the year 2023. Those dividends are eligible for shareholders registered on the company's shareholders' records on the settlement date which is June 13th 2024.

Agility Vice Chairman Tarek Sultan said: "Agility delivered on a track record of positive momentum in 2023, despite ongoing volatile markets and the challenging macro environment. Agility ended the year with a 42.4% growth in EBITDA, driven by strong performance across our operating entities. We enter 2024 optimistic about the future and the opportunities to grow both globally and in Kuwait, driving value for our shareholders, employees, customers, and communities."



Tarek Sultan, Vice Chairman

"As always, we thank our shareholders, customers, employees, and partners for their trust and support in Agility," Sultan concluded.

Agility reported full-year net profits of KD 83.6 million, or 32.7 fils per share, an increase of 22%. Full-year EBITDA was up 42.4% to KD 257.2 million and revenue increased 56.7% to KD 1,353 million.

Oil and gold prices see increases amidst overall market downturn

Boursa Kuwait sees losses in second week of trading

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: During the second week of trading on the Boursa Kuwait, major indices experienced notable losses; the general market index dropped by 0.68 percent, closing at 7080.50 points, with a total liquidity of 47.7 million dinars, reports Al-Jarida daily. A total of 208.6 million shares were traded through 14,597 transactions, resulting in 124 shares trading with profit, 34 shares in loss, and 73 shares remaining unchanged.

Similarly, the Premier Market Index decreased by 0.77 percent, closing at 7,722.92 points, with a liquidity of 36.3 million dinars. Trading saw 100 million shares exchanged through 8,283 transactions, with 33 shares gaining profit, 20 shares in loss, and 3 shares unchanged.

The main market index also experienced a decline of 0.26 percent, closing at 5,947.13 points, with a liquidity of 11.3 million dinars.

Trading witnessed 108.5 million shares exchanged through 6,314 transactions, with 91 shares gaining profit, 24 shares in loss, and 14 shares remaining unchanged.

At the start of trading, Boursa Kuwait observed relatively weak activity, with initial liquidity lower than the monthly average. Trading focused on small and medium-sized stocks, with leading stocks stabilizing initially before facing increased pressure. Factors contributing to this pressure included the upcoming review of MSCI Morgan Stanley indicators and geopolitical tensions following military actions in Rafah.

Despite initial gains, small active stocks later experienced losses due to profit-taking operations, resulting in the overall market ending in the red. Liquidity remained close to previous levels, with selling liquidity dominating transactions.

Additionally, recent amendments to the Boursa Kuwait's trading rules allowed registered brokers to authorize unregistered brokers to receive orders. These amendments aim to streamline trading processes while maintaining accountability.

In the wider GCC market, most indices experienced declines, possibly influenced by geopolitical events and anticipation of MSCI's review. However, there were increases in oil and gold prices during trading.

Deputy MD highlights Al-Zour refinery's role

KPC expands into European markets

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has capitalized on significant economic opportunities in Europe following the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Leveraging the production output of the Al-Zour Refinery, KPC successfully penetrated European markets, responding to the Ministry of Electricity and Water's shift towards natural gas usage over high-quality, low-sulfur fuel oil.

In a strategic move to adapt to evolving market demands, KPC implemented successful strategies to overcome marketing challenges, focusing on maximizing the refinery's output value.

This included diversifying product offerings, developing petroleum derivatives for export, and integrating petrochemical units to exploit fuel oil. By redirecting a substantial portion of production to global markets, KPC has contributed to alleviating the acute fuel shortage in Europe and anticipated global demand growth.

In response to the European Union's ban on Russian refined petroleum imports, KPC significantly increased its exports of fuel oil, diesel, and jet fuel to Europe, playing a crucial role in mitigating supply deficits. The corporation's efforts have been pivotal in stabilizing European fuel markets amid geopolitical uncertainties.

Walid Al-Mukhaizeem, Deputy Managing Director of Sales for Global Marketing at KPC, highlighted the Al-Zour Refinery's pivotal role in Kuwait's oil sector, emphasizing its advanced environmental standards and ability to refine various Kuwaiti crude oil types.

The refinery's operations contribute to maximizing economic returns and reducing Kuwait's carbon footprint through the production of environmentally friendly fuels.

Al-Zour Refinery's focus on producing low-sulfur fuel oil aligns with global environmental standards, aiding Kuwait in reducing sulfur emissions and supporting sustainable energy initiatives. The refinery's production also meets local energy needs while enabling Kuwait to establish a strategic presence in global markets.

Through increased production volumes, KPC has secured significant market shares in Europe and North and South America, solidifying its position as a major player in the global energy market. Expansion into strategic regions and enhanced marketing strategies have further elevated KPC's role in the global bunker fuel supply chain.

Despite global investments shifting towards clean energy, Kuwait has remained committed to refinery development, investing billions of dollars in new facilities. The Middle East, particularly the Gulf region, has emerged as a primary alternative destination for European energy imports, further consolidating Kuwait's position in the global energy landscape.

The Al-Zour Refinery stands as a testament to Kuwait's commitment to refinery excellence, boasting one of the world's largest refining capacities. Once fully operational, the refinery's total output is expected to significantly contribute to Kuwait's refining capacity, further solidifying its role as a key player in the global energy market.

Distinguished figures attend summit in Istanbul

Kuwaiti banking leaders emphasize economic cooperation

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Kuwait Banks Union actively participated in the 2024 Arab International Banking Summit held in Istanbul, Turkey, from May 23 to 24, 2024, reports Al-Qabas daily.

Organized under the patronage of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the event welcomed distinguished figures including Sheikh

Ahmed Duaij Al-Sabah, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Banks Union and Commercial Bank of Kuwait, and Sheikh Mohammed Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman of Kuwait International Bank's Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and Union of Arab Banks Board Member.

The summit saw notable attendees such as Turkish Minister of Finance and

Treasury Mehmet Simsek, Central Bank of Turkey Governor Dr. Fatih Karahan, and Turkish Banks Association President Alpslan Sakar, alongside various banking, economic, and governmental leaders. Focused on fostering Arab-Turkish and international economic relations, the summit featured discussions on mutual investment, banking cooperation, and economic growth.

BUSINESS

Japan keeps economic view unchanged

The Japanese government has retained its assessment of the country's economy as recovering moderately despite some stalling, adopting the same view for the fourth straight month.

"The Japanese economy is recovering at a moderate pace, although it recently appears to be pausing," the Cabinet Office said in a monthly report for May.

Most of the assessments on key components of the economy were

retained, from private consumption, business investment and exports, according to the report.

The government revised up its assessment on industrial production for the first time in 12 months, noting that the sector "shows signs of picking up recently," after saying industrial production "was on the way to picking up" in the April report.

The upward revision reflected the resumption of operations at some

automobile factories following a data-rigging scandal in the auto sector that dragged on economic growth as well as a recovery of production at electronic parts factories damaged in the Noto Peninsula earthquake on New Year's Day.

The government said moderate economic growth will continue, but warned of the negative effects of inflation, the conflict in the Middle East and developments in currency and other capital markets. (Xinhua)

Algeria, Slovenia ink deal to boost gas exports

Algeria and Slovenia signed on Monday several cooperation agreements, including a deal to boost Algeria's gas exports to Slovenia, Algeria's official APS news agency reported.

The deal was signed between Algerian energy giant Sonatrach and Slovenia's natural gas trader Geoplin in Algeria's capital Algiers, in the presence of Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune and Slovenian Prime Minister Robert Golob, according to the report.

Under the deal, Algeria will increase its natural gas exports to Slovenia via the gas pipeline linking Algeria to Italy across the

Mediterranean.

Also on Monday, the two countries inked a cooperation agreement to grant both countries' diplomatic passport holders short-term visa exemption.

In addition, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the two sides regarding artificial intelligence.

The Algerian president also discussed international issues, including the developments in the Gaza Strip, with the Slovenian prime minister, who started a state visit to the North African nation on Monday. (Xinhua)

Freight train services 223 cities in 25 European cities

BRI stabilizes China-Europe trade, transport, says rail CEO

VIENNA, May 28, (Xinhua): The China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is bringing stability to people and trade routes, the chief executive officer (CEO) of Austrian Federal Railways (OeBB) has said.

Geopolitical conflicts and crises, which are harmful to rail transport and the economy, have made the BRI "even more important," Andreas Matthae said in a recent interview with Xinhua.

As of Saturday, the total number of trips under the BRI flagship program -- China-Europe freight train -- has surpassed 90,000. This extensive network currently serves 223 cities in 25 European countries and over 100

cities in 11 Asian countries, according to China State Railway Group Co., Ltd.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted supply chains and rail transport between China and Europe, Matthae said OeBB had "good growth figures and high hopes that rail traffic would increase significantly." The freight train service between Vienna and the southwestern Chinese city of Chengdu was launched in 2018.

However, Matthae said he is confident that "we will soon reach the previous levels again," and remains stubborn on the positive development of China-Europe relations.

As a leading freight transport company in Austria and Hungary, OeBB stands ready to contribute to expanding China-Europe economic relations with its transport and logistic services, he added.

Matthae also told Xinhua that OeBB has expanded its footprint in China, with its subsidiary, Rail Cargo International Freight Forwarding Co., Ltd., established in Shanghai last year. The subsidiary focuses on providing rail freight services for Chinese and European exporters.

The OeBB CEO is set to visit China in the coming weeks for talks with officials on deepening cooperation on logistics and the railway sector in the central Chinese city of Zhengzhou.



Pedicab drivers move on a street in Manila, Philippines, on May 6, 2022. As economies in Asia and the Pacific slow and grow older, countries need to do more to ensure that workers get the education, training and social safety nets needed to raise incomes and ensure social equity, a United Nations report said Tuesday, May 28, 2024. (AP)

UN releases report

Education, social safety nets are vital for Asia to grow rich

TOKYO, May 28, (AP): As economies in Asia and the Pacific slow and grow older, countries need to do more to ensure that workers get the education, training and social safety nets needed to raise incomes and ensure social equity, a United Nations report said Tuesday.

The report by the International Labor Organization said that growth in productivity has slowed, hurting incomes and undermining the purchasing power of the region's 2 billion workers. By improving productivity, governments can boost incomes and better prepare for the aging of their work forces, the report said.

Two in three workers in the region were in informal employment in 2023, such as day labor, lacking the kinds of protections that come from formal jobs.

"The lack of job opportunities that meet decent work criteria, including good incomes, not only jeopardizes social justice in the region, but it also presents a risk factor for the labor market outlook," the report said.

Showing the potential for improvement, labor productivity grew at an average annual rate of 4.3% in 2004-2021, helping to raise incomes per worker in terms of purchasing power parity, which compares standards of living in different countries using a common currency, to \$15,700 from \$7,700. But it has slowed in the past decade, the report said, hindering progress toward greater affluence.

It highlighted various challenges, especially unemployment among young people not in school, which is more than triple the adult rate, at 13.7%.

Increasing use of artificial intelligence and other automation technology will cause some people to lose their jobs, it said, with women engaged in clerical and information technology work most likely to be affected as companies roll back their reliance on offshore call centers that have provided good quality jobs in countries like the Philippines and India.

Other factors such as trade disputes

and political turmoil threaten to disrupt jobs in some industries, but aging poses an even bigger challenge as countries grow old before they become affluent.

The ratio of people in Asia aged older than 65 to those 15-64 years old is projected to double to nearly a third by 2050 from about 15% in 2023, the ILO report says.

In places like Japan, short-handed employers have moved to alleviate work loads by using robots and computerized ordering in restaurants, cutting hours and installing self-checkout machines.

The report noted that a key reason why some countries face labor shortages despite having ample numbers of unemployed or underemployed workers is a mismatch between jobs and skills and education.

"The region still has huge potential for upskilling, productivity improvements and efficiency gains, which can alleviate demographic pressures on the labor market," it said.

The report noted that more than a third of workers in the region have educational levels too low for their occupations, compared with 18% of workers in high-income countries.

Among other findings: People in Asia and the Pacific still work more hours than workers in other regions, at 44 hours per week on average, though that is down from more than 47 hours in 2005.

In 2023, nearly 73 million workers in the region lived in extreme poverty, with daily incomes of less than \$2.15 in purchasing power parity per person.

Despite raising retirement ages, total labor force participation in the Asia-Pacific region fell from 67% in 1991 to about 61% in 2023. It's projected to fall to 55% by 2050.

The need for workers to provide long-term care in the region is forecast to more than double to 90 million by 2050 from 46 million in 2023. That would raise the proportion of people working in the field to 4.3% of the total from 2.3% now.

Tempted to try a no-buy year? Here are some tips from people doing it

NEW YORK, May 28, (AP): The rules of a no-buy challenge are self-imposed and simple: Make a list of the non-essential items you won't spend money on for a set period of time and stick to it. Easier said than done.

Many people start such challenges at the beginning of the year and commit to keep going until the end of it. But any time can be the right one for those looking to tackle their credit card debt, declutter their homes or to spend less time shopping. Some challenge participants begin with a no-spend month.

"I commend anyone who realizes they're just buying too much because North America is very consumer-focused and there's too much waste," said Carrie Rattle, the CEO of financial coaching company Behavioral Cents.

Thinking of what you would be better off living without? These are some recommendations from experts and people already participating in the challenge.

Whether it's makeup, ordering take-out food or buying unnecessary trinkets in the \$1 section at Target, knowing your vulnerabilities will help you make a realistic plan for staying on track.

Before starting her no-buy year, Mia Westrap, a Ph.D. student in Southampton, England, took a close look at what she spent money on during the previous few months. She decided that unnecessary food and beverages were her weakness.

"I figured out that I was spending four figures on just carbonated drinks and Pepsi Max," she said.

One of the fun parts of a no-buy challenge is that there are no set rules. Individuals choose what to include and exclude. San Diego resident Anea Wadsworth, 22, used to love spending hours looking at clothes and quirky knickknacks at Target and Goodwill. But when she moved back home after graduating college, she realized how many things she had accumulated through the years.

"When I have those decluttering moments and I look through all my stuff, I was finding things that I bought and spent a lot of money on and then never ended up wearing," Wadsworth said. For her challenge, she chose to not buy new clothing items and prioritized spending on experiences with her loved ones. Wadsworth also started her challenge by doing it month by month.

AI-empowered 'innovation' revs up China's manufacturing sector

A sophisticated solution emerges as a game-changer

BEIJING, May 28, (Xinhua): A revolution propelled by the advances in automation and artificial intelligence (AI) is brewing in the bustling heart of the country's manufacturing sector, and injecting new momentum into its sustainable growth.

The once prevalent image of China's bustling assembly lines, filled with tireless workers laboring around the clock, is now gradually receding from China's industrial landscape.

Over the past three years, China has been at the forefront of innovation, launching a series of smart manufacturing pilot initiatives. This has resulted in 421 national-level showcase factories, complemented by a network of more than 10,000 provincial-level digital workshops and intelligent factories.

The country's government work report this year unveiled an AI Plus initiative, a strategic move designed to propel the digital economy's expansion and spearhead the transformation and modernization of manufacturing sectors.

Higher efficiency A sophisticated solution has emerged as a game-changer for Lenovo, the world's premier computer manufacturer, in tackling its complex order processing challenge with finesse.

LCFC, Lenovo's flagship manufacturing hub in eastern Chinese city of Hefei, is a global powerhouse of personal computer production.

The facility handles an impressive influx of over 8,000 new orders daily, a staggering majority of which are customized small orders of no more than 5 units, each with unique configurations.

As the scale of production lines expands and the volume of daily order scheduling surges, the manual operations' efficiency and quality have hit a critical juncture.

In 2021, Lenovo's AI engineers developed an algorithm that enabled the company to streamline its operations, ensuring a seamless and efficient approach to managing the intricacies of their order fulfillment challenges.

"Our R&D team, leveraging the power of AI algorithms, analyzed five key categories encompassing 47 distinct factors, ranging from personnel and machinery to materials, processes, and the production environment," said Li Jincheng, LCFC's senior manager of production planning management.

"By delving into vast datasets related to customer orders, component supplies and product planning, our team has meticulously explored two times ten to the nineteenth power unique sorting methods, an exhaustive approach pivotal in striking an optimal balance between delivery efficiency and production cost-effectiveness," said Li.

Its entire production scheduling, previously demanding a dedicated team's six-hour daily commitment, has been dramatically streamlined to mere 1.5 minutes, according to Fan Wei, director of machine learning at Lenovo Research Institute's Artificial Intelligence Lab.

"This transformation has led to a remarkable 16 percent surge in production efficiency," said Fan. "Therefore, the manufacturing output of personal computers has seen a substantial 23 percent boost, while the backlog of orders has been significantly reduced by 20 percent."

In 2021, the intelligent system was shortlisted for the Franz Edelman Award, a prestigious honor in the field of global operations research and management science.

Industries powered by AI have experienced an increase in total factor productivity, an indicator widely recognized as a defining characteristic of new quality productive forces.



Photo taken on March 5, 2020 shows a worker at the manufacturing shop of LCFC (Hefei) Electronics Technology Co., Ltd. in Hefei, capital of east China's Anhui Province. (Xinhua)

Ghana's cbank assures adequate reserves to meet 'forex' demand

ACCRA, May 28, (Xinhua): Ghana's central bank has assured that it has ample reserves to meet the growing demand for foreign exchange in the country, despite persistent pressure on the local currency.

Speaking at a press briefing, Bank of Ghana Governor Ernest Addison said that the central bank has increased its reserves by more than 2 billion U.S. dollars since the beginning of the economic reforms supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) a year ago.

These new funds include disbursements from the IMF and additional support from the World Bank, the bank's own dollar purchases, and other sources, Addison added.

He attributed the recent pressures in the forex market to the government's arrears payments to independent power producers, other govern-

ment capital expenditures, higher imports and other factors. The governor also noted increased pressure from importers using informal channels to buy forex, leading to speculation in the market.

"These conditions have fed into sentiments and contributed to additional pressures. On a year-to-date basis, the Ghanaian cedi (local currency) depreciated by 14.6 percent against the dollar as of May 22, 2024, compared to 21.8 percent depreciation for the first five months of 2023," he said.

Despite these challenges, Addison said, "The Bank of Ghana has adequate reserves to manage these shocks to the foreign exchange market, having added over 600 million U.S. dollars to the current foreign exchange reserve levels over the first five months of the year." He said that an expected 360-million-dollar third

tranche disbursement from the IMF later in June will further strengthen the bank's reserve position.

Moreover, the improved reserve position is supported by strong liquid monetary gold levels of over 26.6 tons, estimated at 2.1 billion dollars, resulting from a successful domestic gold purchase program, Addison added.

With reserves sufficient for more than three months of import cover, the governor affirmed that the central bank remains fully committed to providing stability in the exchange rate of the cedi.

In recent years, Ghana has faced an economic crisis marked by ballooning public debt, high inflation, exchange rate volatility and unemployment. Last year, the country secured a 3-billion-dollar loan from the IMF, aiming to revive the economy.

nesses, envisioned a future where AI technology drives and fosters a slew of emerging industries and innovative frontiers.

Better quality At a data center in Shanghai's North Bund, expansive screens pulse with live operational data from a staggering 700,000 textile machinery units nationwide in over 9,000 textile enterprises.

Bolstered by AI's prowess, small and medium-sized textile firms have now hopped aboard the fast-moving train of intelligent manufacturing.

The "miniature robots" integrated into weaving machines, which are developed by the startup Zhijing Technology, has made simultaneous weaving and quality inspection possible.

Equipped with AI-empowered visual recognition, those machines can identify flaws on-the-fly during the weaving process and instantly trigger alarms, an innovative approach that ensures a "non-stop" inspection, significantly enhancing efficiency and quality control.

"Now, with just a few taps on my phone, I can check the production data of each machine and remotely understand the factory's production status," said Gu Chang, owner of a medium-sized textile factory in southwest China's Sichuan Province.

"Thanks to the deployment of those robots, our two workshops are now churning out an impressive 250,000 meters of fabric daily, with machine efficiency nearing 95 percent, a benchmark that is considered exceptionally

high within our industry," said Gu.

"In the past, weaving was heavily dependent on individual expertise, a process susceptible to mistakes," said Guan Ruifeng, vice president of Zhijing Technology.

"The AI system has significantly streamlined operations and enhanced product consistency, cutting down the sampling time from the previous three to five days to 24 hours at the shortest," said Guan.

"By concentrating on the digital transformation requirements of local traditional sectors and fostering the synergy between general artificial intelligence and emerging industries as well as the real economy, we can develop an array of holistic, diverse, and frequently utilized application solutions," said Zhao Chunjiang, an academician at the Chinese Academy of Engineering.

Emerging industry Micro-Intelligence is a "unicorn" enterprise based in Changzhou, a city that has risen to prominence as the nation's hub for the manufacturing of power batteries.

The AI-powered quality inspection robots the company offered has amassed a database of over 100 million defect samples for products manufactured through one-time molding processes, assisting to address a range of post-assembly concerns for electric motor stators, including coil winding irregularities, poor assembly and deformation of critical parts.

As labor costs rise, skilled "master craftsmen" proficient in quality inspec-

tion is growing increasingly scarce. Deploying the intelligent robots, more than 2,700 factories spanning 18 cities nationwide has been able to reduce its quality inspection workforce by over 10,000 personnel.

Also, such applications have bolstered the reliability of China's new energy vehicles and amplified their appeal and competitiveness on the global market stage.

The core artificial intelligence industry in China achieved a remarkable scale of 578.7 billion yuan (about 80 billion U.S. dollars) in 2023, supported by a thriving ecosystem of 4,482 enterprises, according to data from the China Academy of Information and Communications Technology.

"Industrial digitalization represents a market worth a trillion yuan market, and it also relates to 10,000 smaller markets," said Huang Shi, a researcher from the Strategy and Industry Research Institute of China Mobile Research Institute.

Huang acknowledged the complexity of the manufacturing sector, where scenarios are highly fragmented, making the exploration of exemplary AI applications a considerable challenge.

"Despite those challenges in the short run, China's robust industrial base, expansive market size and diverse application scenarios confer a significant advantage in harnessing the potential of artificial intelligence," said Du Chuanzhong, director of the Industrial Economic Research Institute at Nankai University.

Empowering employees for customer excellence and community service

Gulf Bank collaborates with AMC for credit analysis training program

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The Talent Development Team at Gulf Bank's Human Resources Management collaborated with the American Management Center (AMC) to design a training program on credit analysis. The goal was to enhance the skills of Wealth Management staff, aligning with the bank's ongoing efforts to promote professional growth among its employees.

Tailored specifically for Gulf Bank's Wealth Management department, the program aimed to equip employees with essential skills for conducting thorough credit and financial analyses for both Wealth Management clients and high-profile bank customers. It covered topics such as individual credit and financial analysis, understanding credit risk, and detailed financial data analysis. These topics aimed to improve decision-making related to credit, and build stronger relationships with clients, enhancing their confidence in the bank's premium services.

Ms. Salma Al-Hajjaj, Gulf Bank's General Manager of Human Resources, emphasized the program's significance as a reflection of the bank's commitment to excellence. By empowering the Wealth Management team with advanced skills, the bank aims to maintain high professional standards and ensure customer satisfaction. Al-Hajjaj also stressed Gulf Bank's dedication to providing quality services tailored to our Wealth Management clients' needs and aligned with their lifestyles. They focus on attracting high-net-worth individuals seeking distinguished banking services by enhancing their workforce's capabilities through continuous training and staying updated on industry developments.

She highlighted the bank's efforts to offer distinctive banking services by understanding and meeting clients' needs. Gulf Bank dedicates specific branches to distinguished clients, equipped with advanced banking technologies to ensure privacy, comfort, and efficient service delivery.

Additionally, private Wealth Management clients receive personalized attention from an account manager who oversees all their banking needs. They benefit from various perks such as access to air-



Salma Al-Hajjaj

■ **Salma Al-Hajjaj:** The program reflects our commitment to upholding the highest standards of professionalism and ensuring the satisfaction of our valued customers. - We are dedicated to providing quality services tailored to our Wealth Management clients' needs and aligned with their lifestyles.

port lounges, travel discounts, comprehensive insurance through credit cards, and other exclusive benefits.

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

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

ABK shares saving tips

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is proud to announce its continued commitment to raising financial awareness as part of its ongoing contribution to the Central Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Banking Association's Let's Be Aware 'Diraya' campaign. The Bank recognizes the crucial role of imparting financial knowledge and has taken proactive measures to instill a culture of saving through informational outreach efforts.

Financial literacy is pivotal in empowering individuals to make informed financial decisions, and savings plays a vital role in achieving financial stability. ABK acknowledges the significance of cultivating a culture of saving and has dedicated communication efforts to disseminate valuable information and tips to promote this endeavor.

Emphasizing the importance of saving and financial literacy, Loai Muqames, CEO-Kuwait at ABK, said, "At ABK, we are committed to equipping our customers with the knowledge and tools they need to make sound financial choices. Saving is a fundamental aspect of financial well being, and we are determined to foster a culture of responsible saving among individuals and communities."

In this regard, Muqames shared a series of useful tips. He advised to start small, encouraging individuals to begin saving with manageable amounts, gradually increasing their contributions over time. He also advised to set targets, emphasizing the importance of setting specific saving goals, whether for emergencies, education, or long-



Mr. Loai Muqames CEO-Kuwait at ABK

■ **Loai Muqames:** We are committed to equipping our customers with the knowledge and tools they need to make sound financial choices

term investments. Finally, he emphasized the need to budget wisely, encouraging everyone to look into effective budgeting strategies to ensure consistent and sustainable saving habits.

Through its educational initiatives and outreach programs, ABK aims to empower individuals with the knowledge and skills to effectively manage their financial resources. The Bank remains committed to supporting the Let's Be Aware campaign in line with its corporate social responsibility efforts. Concluding his statement, Muqames said, "ABK looks forward to continue contributing its efforts to foster a financially informed community."

Partnership with Alghanem moringa farm

Warba Bank participates in distributing 500 moringa seedlings

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Warba Bank announced its participation in distributing 500 moringa seedlings in partnership with Alghanem Moringa Farm and in cooperation with Al-Khيران Mall and Tamdeen Group, as part of the "Plant it for Free" initiative. This comes as part of the Bank's strategy for social responsibility, and out of belief in its pioneering role in spreading awareness of the importance of preserving the environment and agriculture.

On this occasion, the Director Marketing and Corporate Communications at Warba Bank, Ayman Salem Al-Mutairi, said: "We at Warba Bank are happy with this participation, which comes as part of the Bank's strategy for social responsibility, and out of belief in its pioneering role in spreading awareness of the importance of preserving the environment and agriculture. Planting and greening the areas of Kuwait is considered part of Warba Bank's efforts to enhance awareness of the importance of preserving and protecting the environment and its initiatives to provide support and harness all its capabilities to support and participate in the "Plant it for Free" initiative."

He explained that such strategic partnerships that Warba Bank concludes with these institutions reflect the vital role that the private sector plays in serv-

ing society, in general, and the great importance that Warba Bank, in particular, attaches to environmental issues and the necessity of preserving it in cooperation with specialized and concerned authorities. Warba has previously supported and participated in many activities related to the environment in cooperation with some other parties.

Al-Mutairi stressed that Warba Bank seeks to be a role model in enhancing contributions towards the environment, and adopting environmentally friendly work practices to achieve a sustainable development impact.

In turn, the CEO of Alghanem Moringa Farm, Fatma Al-Ghaith, appreciated the effective role of "Warba" and its initiative to provide financial and moral support and harness all their capabilities to support and participate in the "Plant it for Free" initiative, which was held at AlKhiran Mall on Friday.

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

Over 500 participants compete in gaming tournament

Al Mulla Motors hosts gaming tournament for youth

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Al Mulla Motors Company – a subsidiary of Al Mulla Group and the sole authorized distributor of Mitsubishi Motors vehicles in Kuwait since 1972 – has recently organized a community engagement evening that included popular electronic gaming tournament among youth. More than 500 participants from various age groups of young men and women in Kuwait competed in these games. This event coincided with a visit from a high-level delegation from Mitsubishi Middle East and Africa to Kuwait, including Mr. TakamiJunya, President of Mitsubishi Motors Middle East and Africa, and Mrs. Fatima Hadiri, Sales Manager at the company, along with the management team of Al Mulla Motors led by Mr. Hisham Fakih, Director of Al Mulla Automotive within Al Mulla Group.

Following the great success of this community initiative last year, Al Mulla Motors decided to repeat this exciting experience for the second consecutive year as part of the company's CSR policies to support various community activities and events in Kuwait aimed at developing youth skills, encouraging them to enhance their abilities, and fostering a spirit of competition among them. Additionally, it introduced them to the latest models of sports and youth cars from Mitsubishi Motors.

Commenting on the event, Mr. Takami Junya, President of Mitsubishi Motors Middle East and Africa, said: "I welcome all and I thank Al Mulla Motors - Mitsubishi Kuwait team for organizing this great and exciting event." He added: Now, some of you might be thinking, "Mitsubishi? That's just another car brand." But let me tell you, Mitsubishi is much more than that. It's a symbol of Japanese craftsmanship, reliability, and a commitment to excellence that spans over a century. Just like you are challenged in a game, sometime for hours or even days, moving from one level to another to be victorious. It is the same for us at Mitsubishi Motors. For many years we have been overcoming many challenges, learning, evolving & innovating to produce a line-up of cars that meets your demands and needs."

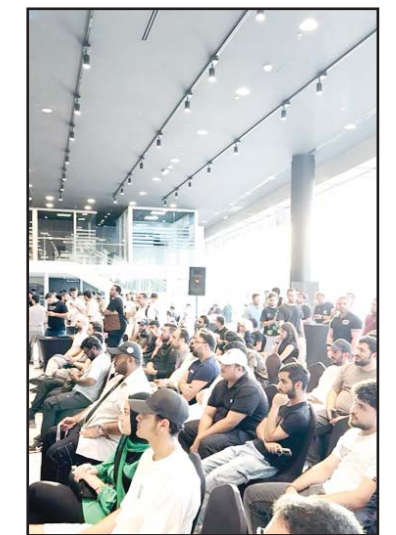
Mr. Hisham Fakih, Director of Al Mulla Automotive at Al Mulla Group, said: "We are always pleased to keep up with the interests of the youth, encouraging them to develop their skills and enhance the spirit of competition among them. Therefore, we are keen to organize such events regularly to understand their interests and, at the same time, introduce them to the latest Mitsubishi models that meet their aspirations and exceed their expectations."

This tournament, in which youth competed amidst the enthusiasm and presence of many supporters, is the first of its kind in Kuwait. It combines:

- FC24 Ultimate Team
- Tekken 8
- FC24 Kick Off

After hours of intense competition in electronic games among participants aged between 18 and 32 years, the winners of the top three positions were announced. The first-place winner received a cash prize of KD 250, the second place received KD 150, and the third place received KD 100.

Al Mulla Motors continuously strives to support the youth by organizing numerous activities and events for them, aimed at nurturing their talents, ideas, and preferred activities. The exciting educational event also included a showcase of new Mitsubishi cars designed specifically for the youth category, featuring unique and sporty designs equipped with the highest standards of technology



and safety, including the leading Outlander, the youthful ASX, the modern Eclipse Cross to meet all their needs.

About Al Mulla Motors:

Al Mulla Motors is committed to ensuring the best possible experience for customers through passion and innovation in everything we do. Every year, Al Mulla Motors supports the needs and demands of the modern market by empowering its employees with the latest global work technologies and the best training courses, aiming to maintain its leading position in customer satisfaction.

With its commitment to focusing on customer satisfaction, Al Mulla Motors offers Mitsubishi car owners the best prices and services in Kuwait. For more information, please visit our website: <https://www.mitsubishi-motors.com.kw>, and follow our social media accounts on Facebook @Mitsubishimotorskuwait, Instagram @Mitsubishimotorskuwait, Twitter



Photos during the event.

com.kw, and follow our social media accounts on Facebook @Mitsubishimotorskuwait, Instagram @Mitsubishimotorskuwait, Twitter @MitsubishiKW, Youtube @Mitsubishi AIMulla, Tiktok @MitsubishiKuwait and LinkedIn @Mitsubishimotorskuwait.

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'Plant it for Free' campaign

Hollywood's blockbusters miss the mark on climate change

PORTLAND, Maine, May 28, (AP) — Aquaman might not mind if the oceans rise, but moviegoers might.

That's one of the takeaways from a new study conducted by researchers who set out to determine if today's Hollywood blockbusters are reflective of the current climate crisis. The vast majority of movies failed the "climate reality check" proposed by the authors, who surveyed 250 movies from 2013 to 2022.

The test is simple — the authors looked to see if a movie presented a story in which climate change exists, and whether a character knows it does. One film that passed the test was the 2017 superhero movie Justice League, in which Jason Momoa's Aquaman character says, "Hey, I don't mind if the oceans rise" to Ben Affleck's Bruce Wayne.

But most movies fell short — fewer than 10% of the 250 films passed, and climate change was mentioned in two or more scenes of fewer than 4% of the films. That's out of touch with a moviegoing public that wants "to see their reality reflected on screen," said Colby College English professor Matthew Schneider-Mayerson, lead researcher on the study.

"The top line is just that the vast majority of films, popular films produced over the last 10 years in the United States, are not portraying the world as it is," Schneider-Mayerson said. "They are portraying a world that is now history or fantasy — a world in which climate change is not happening."

Researchers at Maine's Colby College published the study in April along with Good Energy, a Los Angeles-based environmental consultancy. The results were peer reviewed, and the authors are seeking publication in scientific journals. The researchers view the test as a way for audience members, writers and filmmakers to evaluate the representation of climate change on screen.

Some results were surprising. Movies that at first glance appear to have little overlap with climate or the environment passed the test. Marriage Story, Noah Baumbach's emotive 2019 drama about the collapse of a relationship, passed the test in part because Adam Driver's character is described as "energy conscious," Schneider-Mayerson said.

Disaster

The 2022 whodunnit Glass Onion and the 2019 folk horror movie Midsommar were others to pass the test. Some that were more explicitly about climate change, such as the 2021 satire Don't Look Up, also passed. But San Andreas, a 2015 movie about a West Coast earthquake disaster, and The Meg, a 2018 action movie set in the ocean, did not.

The authors narrowed the selection of movies by excluding films not set on Earth or set before 2006 or after 2100. They found streaming services had a higher percentage of movies that included climate change than the major studios did.

The study is "valuable for marketing purposes, informational purposes, data accumulation," said Harry Winer, director of sustainability at the Kanbar Institute of Film and Television at the New York University Tisch School of the Arts. Winer, who was not involved in the study, said it could also help serve as an incentive to connect audiences with climate stories.

"The audience will be more open to hearing a dialogue about what is right and what is wrong," Winer said. "It's a conversation starter."

The study authors said they see the climate reality check as a kind of Bechdel-Wallace test for climate change. Alison Bechdel, a cartoonist, is credited with popularizing that test in the 1980s by incorporating her friend Liz Wallace's test about gender representation in film into a comic strip. The test asks if a movie includes at least two female characters who have a conversation about something other than a man.

Bechdel herself spoke highly of the study's climate test, which she described as "long overdue" in a social media post during this year's Academy Awards season. Bechdel said in an e-mail to The Associated Press that "for a movie set in the present to ignore this existential threat just doesn't make sense anymore" in the age of climate change.

"I do worry that screenwriters might do it in a kind of rote way, which could be counterproductive, just like rote 'strong female characters' are," Bechdel said. "But injecting an awareness of our communal plight into the stories we ingest seems like a no-brainer."

Film

Variety

Features



This image released by Netflix shows Glen Powell in a scene from 'Hit Man.' (AP)

Film

A suspenseful action-comedy-romance

Powell delivers star power in 'Hit Man'

By Lindsey Bahr

For a guy like Glen Powell, the ascent to movie stardom isn't really a question. It's more like an inevitability.

Blessed with that square jawline, those bright green eyes, a flop of dirty blonde hair and the kind of symmetrical smile that would seem suspect if it weren't so darn charming, he's a Disney prince before they all became the bad guys. And he's got the kind of effortless, high-wattage charisma that ensures a career beyond soaps and procedurals, the typical resting ground for the laughably handsome. Powell has something, you believe, going on behind the eyes.

This is all to say that suspension of disbelief is a prerequisite going into "Hit Man," a decently entertaining action-comedy-romance about a fake hit man from filmmaker Richard Linklater, who co-wrote the script with Powell. It's making a brief stop in theaters starting Friday before hitting Netflix on June 7.

Based on a "somewhat true story" though it may be, this is a film that asks its audience to buy into the idea that the characters in this film believe that Powell's face is bland and forgettable. This has everything to do with his character, Gary Johnson, a philosophy professor in New Orleans who lives a quiet, solitary life in the suburbs tending to his two cats, birding, tinkering with electronics and helping the local police install surveillance equipment for sting operations. He drives a Honda Civic and wears ill-fitting polo shirts, knee-length jean shorts and socks with his semi-orthopedic sandals. And, of course, like many hot guys in disguise before him, he's got a pair of wire-rimmed glasses. Why he dresses like your middle-aged uncle in 1992 is anyone's guess. Were he in Bushwick, it might not even look odd. But this is a movie and we know that Gary is predestined for a glow-up.

Not that "Hit Man" allows itself to have any fun with the makeover aspect. No, once plain Gary is thrown into this amateur undercover work (by Retta and Sanjay Rao), we only get to see the final looks he

wears to meet all the people looking to hire a hit man. He dips into the theatrical for these occasions, sporting wigs, makeup, accents and fake tattoos in his attempt to be what he thinks each specific person thinks a hit man should be, which is moderately amusing.

But besides a brief bit showing him watching a wig-and-makeup YouTube tutorial, his transformations are not exactly investigated. There's no shopping montage, no Harvey Fierstein-type character helping him find his way around the college theater department's costume room, and no apparent budgetary concerns or discussions, which seems odd for a guy who is only doing this undercover stuff for an extra paycheck.

Laughter

In a movie that perhaps had a better engine behind it, questions like these might evaporate with the laughter and enjoyment of a fairly silly premise. "Hit Man" does not quite have that, though. Again, that suspension of disbelief is necessary.

Things do pick up with the introduction of The Girl, Madison (Adria Arjona, terrific despite being awfully underdeveloped), an unhappy wife looking to get rid of her cruel husband. Gary meets her as "Ron," who acts and dresses like the leading man of an action movie, or a cocky off-duty movie star, with well-fitting jeans and tight henleys and cool-guy jackets showing off his inexplicably ripped physique.

And he treats Madison differently than the many other characters he's helped put behind bars whose stupidity, trashiness and ugliness are all played for madcap comedic effect. She, he decides, doesn't really want this — a grace he extends to no one else. He talks her out of hiring him to kill the bad husband, whom she promptly leaves without incident before moving into a nice house and beginning a steamy romance with Ron.

Again, questions arise about how this woman whose husband didn't allow her to work and who was so scared of him that she was ready to hire a hit man has managed to escape so smoothly. But, you know,

good for her and good for us because the chemistry between her and Powell is electric and ravenous, up there with George Clooney and Jennifer Lopez in "Out of Sight."

But the honeymoon only lasts so long and things soon get tricky as Ron starts to become Gary's dominant character. This all builds to a fairly exciting third act with the introduction of an actual murder and the possibility of being exposed by an increasingly suspicious and crooked cop (played with slimy perfection by Austin Amelio). And you can't help shake the feeling that it needed something else: a bigger twist, a stickier conflict, some heightened stakes.

"Hit Man" was a movie that got some breathless praise out of the fall film festivals, which might be to its detriment. It's perfectly enjoyable: a glossy, easy-to-digest Powell showcase that isn't trying to be anything but fun. But the second coming of the action-comedy-romance, it is not.

"Hit Man," a Netflix release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "language throughout, sexual content and some violence." Running time: 115 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

Also:

LOS ANGELES: George Clooney's "The Boys in the Boat" (Tuesday on Prime Video) is an almost daringly old-fashioned sports drama that makes "Seabiscuit" look comparatively cutting edge. It tells the true-life tale of the University of Washington rowing team who in 1936 reached the Olympics in Berlin. In her review, AP National Writer **Jocelyn Noveck** wrote that "Clooney has gone for stirring and a bit stodgy, pleasing and a bit predictable."

In the Nordic Western "The Promised Land" (Thursday on Hulu), the frontier is Denmark's remote Jutland heath, where a retired army captain (Mads Mikkelsen) travels with royal permission to cultivate a farm in 1755. His adventures, a loosely true history adapted from **Ida Jessen's** 2020 bestseller "The Captain and Ann Barbara," give Mikkelsen a sweeping backdrop for his magnetic presence. (AP)

ARABIC TIMES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2024

BEIJING: Chinese comedy "The Last Frenzy" maintained its dominance at the box office chart on the Chinese mainland on Monday, securing the top position for 10 consecutive days, according to data from the China Movie Data Information Network.

The film, which explores life's choices in the face of death, raked in 6.09 million yuan (about 0.86 million U.S. dollars) on the day, bringing its total revenue to 702 million yuan since its release on May 1.

It was followed by the action crime thriller "Twilight of the Warriors: Walled In," which garnered box office sales of 5.63 million yuan on Monday.

The domestic crime film "Three Old Boys" came in third with daily earnings of 2.22 million yuan.

The total box office revenue on the Chinese mainland stood at 25.64 million yuan on Monday.

Despite the deluge of over 30 new releases in the past fortnight, "The Last Frenzy" and "Twilight of the Warriors: Walled In" maintain their grip atop the daily box office charts, hitting theaters during the May Day holiday.

As the Chinese film market gears up for Dragon Boat Festival, also known as the Duanwu Festival, in early June, anticipation among audiences is palpable, eagerly awaiting the cinematic offerings set to grace screens during this festive season.

The pre-sale box office revenue of the upcoming three-day Dragon Boat Festival holiday has exceeded 20 million yuan, according to movie data platform Maoyan. (Xinhua)

LOS ANGELES: Mike Tyson was recovering Monday after falling ill a day earlier during a flight from Miami to Los Angeles, his representatives said.

The 58-year-old boxing legend "became nauseous and dizzy due to an ulcer flare up 30 minutes before landing" on Sunday, his publicist's office said in a statement.

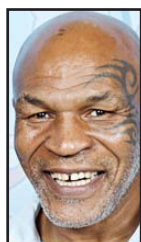
"Thankfully Mr. Tyson is doing great," the statement said. "He is appreciative to the medical staff that were there to help him."

American Airlines Flight 1815 was met by first responders upon landing at LA International Airport "due to the medical needs of a customer," an airline statement said.

Tyson is preparing to fight the 27-year-old social media star-turned-boxer **Jake Paul** this

summer at the 80,000-seat home of the Dallas Cowboys. Netflix will carry the fight live, a first for the streaming platform. (AP)

VALLETTA: A concert titled "East Meets West: A Glimpse of the Silk Road" was staged Wednesday night at the University of Malta, enchant-



Tyson



Paul

ing an audience of some 400 with a fusion of traditional Chinese musical instruments and the cello.

The concert, jointly hosted by the Network of International Cultural Entities and the China Cultural Center in Malta, opened with a Chinese classic "Spring Blossoms on a Moonlit River," depicting a charming scenery of

a quiet spring night. It was performed by the Chinese Orchestra of the China National Opera and Dance Drama Theater.

A bamboo flute solo, "Love for Qinchuan," demonstrated the hospitality and boldness of the people in northwest China's Shaanxi Province. The duet "Fisherman's Song at Eventide" performed on

guzheng, a Chinese plucked zither, and cello portrayed a tranquil scene of the setting sun reflecting off the azure waves while fishermen enjoyed their leisurely moments. The cheerful melody of erhu solo "The Grapes are Ripe" conveyed the joy of harvest among the people in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. (Xinhua)

People & Places

Music

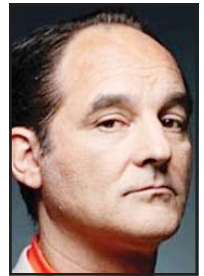
Bridging cultures

China's jazz scene: Captivating crowds

BEIJING, May 28, (Xinhua): As dusk fell, Laurent Maur and his band began their show, enveloping the audience in a graceful jazz sound created by rhythmic drumming and an interweaving melody of harmonica and flute, dissolving the summer fatigue.

The performance by Maur, a French harmonica player, marked the opening of the 2024 Taihu Jazz Festival, a five-day event that began on Wednesday at the Taihu Stage Art Center, a branch of China's National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in Beijing. The festival has welcomed over 200 jazz musicians from home and abroad.

Liu Mingxin, a Beijing resident and jazz enthusiast, hurried to the jazz festival in Tongzhou District with her friend immediately after finishing work. "We often attend concerts and music festivals together. Jazz makes me feel relaxed and I can really feel the music," said the 30-year-old.



Maur

During his performance, Maur enthralled the audience with his original creations themed on Sino-French friendship. "Music possesses incredible power to connect people from different countries, and I believe it also plays a very important role in cultural exchanges between China and France," he said.

Maur holds a profound love for China. Since 2010, he has made numerous trips to the country, including a 28-day performance tour across 24 cities. "When we performed in China, the audiences were very enthusiastic and really got into it," he said.

Launched in 2021, the Taihu Jazz Festival has been held for four years now. Li Xiaochuan, a renowned Chinese jazz trumpeter, is a regular attendee. This year, he performed a variety of original music infused with Chinese elements.

Universal

Compared to other music genres, jazz appears more niche. According to Li, jazz emerged in Shanghai during the 1920s and 1930s and experienced a thriving period in Beijing during the 1990s. Today, jazz has also gained popularity in Chinese cities such as Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Xi'an and Chongqing.

"Jazz is a universal language with inclusiveness, and in China, it is reaching ordinary audiences," said Li, adding that it is the rise of jazz festivals and clubs, as well as jazz education, that is promoting jazz in the country.

Having performed both at home and abroad, Li, 42, found that compared with their foreign counterparts, Chinese audiences are younger and more curious about jazz, providing a positive impetus for the industry.

"I noticed in China that young people go to jazz shows, which is great," said Balazs Bagyi, a Hungarian jazz drummer, who was also invited to perform at this year's jazz festival.

"In Western Europe and North America, jazz audiences are getting older and older, but here in China, we have new audiences," said Bagyi. "Some people think jazz music is for the trained ears, but I think it is for the open heart and open mind."

According to Guan Jianbo, vice president of the NCPA, to make jazz more accessible to the public, this year's jazz festival has set up three affiliated stages that are free to visitors, inviting more than 40 young jazz bands to perform.

Jin Zhilin, a junior majoring in vocal jazz at the Beijing Contemporary Music Academy, started a jazz band with her peers last year, and they have prepared eight songs to perform at the jazz festival.

"This is our first time to participate in the jazz festival. I think it is a great opportunity to let more people know about jazz as well as our band, and we really cherish the stage," she said.

Living close to the Taihu area, Chen Jianlin and his wife came to enjoy the performances of young jazz bands while taking a leisurely stroll nearby. "The music festival enriches our daily lives, and I am looking forward to more activities like this," said the 39-year-old.

"For the audience, jazz is not only a music genre, but also reflects a way of life," said Hu Na, associate professor at the National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts. According to her, the development of jazz in China is attributable to the diverse needs of the Chinese music market and audience groups, as well as the Chinese government's efforts to foster an open and inclusive environment for cultural exchange.

According to data from the China Association of Performing Arts, the number of large and medium-sized concerts and music festivals (with more than 2,000 audience members) nationwide reached 5,600 in 2023, an increase of 100.36 percent compared with 2019. Accordingly, the total number of attendees reached nearly 35.52 million, up 208.5 percent from that in 2019.

Also:

BATH, Britain: After a tea master elegantly rinsed the teapot and teacups with hot water, brewed the tea and poured it, a dozen of people from across Britain lifted their cups and tasted the tea with great appreciation. And the room was suffused with a refreshing aroma of tea.

The Chinese tea-serving ceremony and tasting took place during the "Tea for Harmony" cultural salon on Friday in the English city of Bath. The salon featured various tea and tea culture from Hubei Province, central China, including black brick tea, Yihong black tea and Enshi Yulu Tea.

"The ceremony, which is quite calm in itself, prepares you to enjoy and also builds up the expectancy," Neil Beer from Wales told Xinhua after experiencing all three kinds of tea. He was especially impressed by the black brick tea because it had "layers in terms of taste."

This marked the first time he was involved in a tea ceremony, which he thought could set a peaceful tempo and slow one's pace down in a world where everything is "rush, grab, drink, go."

"Culture and food are two wonderful ways to bring people together in harmony and friendship, and it is wonderful to be here at such a prominent event to celebrate one of China's most fascinating cultural experiences, which is the tea ceremony," said **Dianne Francombe**, chief executive officer of the Bristol and West of England China Bureau.

Apart from tea ceremonies and tastings, other performances such as Chinese calligraphy and music played with traditional Chinese instruments were also showcased during the salon.



This image released by O&M/DKC shows Sarah Pidgeon, from left, Julia Canfield and Tom Pecinka during a performance of 'Stereophonic.' (AP)

Stage

Broadway debut to Tony nomination

Pidgeon hits high note in 'Stereophonic'

NEW YORK, May 28, (AP): Sarah Pidgeon is making her Broadway debut this season in a celebrated, thoughtful show about how art is created. And getting her first Tony Award nomination. And in a play that's transformed her into a member of a rock band. And notching her first cast album.

"I'm having so many pinch-me moments," the actor says. "I am living the dream, and I didn't have the dream because I hadn't read the script yet. I didn't know it existed."

Pidgeon co-stars as rising singer-songwriter Diana in "Stereophonic," playwright David Adjmi's story of a Fleetwood Mac-like band in the mid-'70s recording music over a life-changing year, with personal rifts opening and closing and then reopening.

Diana's boyfriend is the band's perfectionist guitarist and de facto leader, and cracks soon appear in their relationship as business and personal needs clash.

"I'm breaking up with my boyfriend every night, and I'm fighting for independence and agency as an artist and as a person," says Pidgeon. "I'm not alone. I think every character in the show is under an insane amount of stress and anguish."

In one memorable moment, Diana struggles to hit a high B. She has to sing the same line over and over until she can hit that note. "Her voice is literally cracking as her relationship is also cracking," the actor says.

"Stereophonic," the most-nominated play in Tony Awards history, has become a hit as a hypermaternalistic meditation on the thrill and danger of collaborating on art - the compromises, the egos and the joys.

"Although these people are rock stars and playing Madison Square

Garden, they're still very much human," Pidgeon says. "While in the frame of being world renowned musicians, they still struggle with the same things that our audience does when they come and see us."

Pidgeon didn't set out on a Broadway career. She is a classically trained pianist who did some musicals in high school, theater in summer camp and graduated from Carnegie Mellon University in 2018. "I consider myself an actor who can sing," she says.

Pidgeon has appeared in the Hulu limited series "Tiny Beautiful Things," which earned her a Hollywood Critics Association Award nomination, and the Amazon Prime series "The Wilds." She auditioned for "Stereophonic" when it was off-Broadway, not expecting a Broadway transfer or cast album.

Humanity

"What drew me to this play was just how it fearlessly went towards humanity and the ugly aspects of it that make it so beautiful. I think that's what I look for in my projects," Pidgeon says.

On Tony night, for the best featured actress in a play award, she's up against her co-star Julia Canfield, Quincy Tyler Bernstine from "Doubt: A Parable," Celia Keenan-Bolger in "Mother Play" and Kara Young from "Purlie Victorious."

To sound like a '70s rock star, Pidgeon made playlists and listened to recommendations, like the Mamas and the Papas and plenty of "Rumors." Her father is a big Bob Seger fan, and she grew up listening to Adele. "I think I had her album '21' and was learning to drive in Ann Arbor, Michigan, belting 'Rolling in the Deep.'"

She is a little anxious about her voice but so is her character, so she uses it: "So much of this singing isn't necessarily about perfection. It has so much to do with vibe and energy and emotion," she says. "That is sort of giving me a lot of freedom to explore."

To make "Stereophonic," Pidgeon and her co-stars have become a real band, some learning to play their instrument for the first time. Pidgeon learned to play the tambourine. "You think it's easier than it is," she says.

It's Pidgeon singing lead on "Bright," one of the terrific songs by former Arcade Fire member Will Butler. Actually, there are three versions of "Bright," as the band changes directions. Pidgeon is also featured on several other songs and fragments.

"I can't believe that there's something physical that I can show because theater is so fleeting. The fact that there is something like a hard copy of this experience and sort of this meta version of this play, in the form of a record, is sort of insane."

Butler is also pleased, crediting the cast for stepping up outside their comfort zone: "To have Sara Pidgeon singing a song she just learned and just discovered her own voice - it's like a very special thing."

A Broadway debut, a Tony nomination, a cast album - which she hopes to send as a streaming link if future auditions require proof of singing - and a whole bunch of new friends. She's not sure what's next.

"If I've learned anything about this career that I have no idea what is going to happen," she says. "Whatever I do next after this project, it's going to be really hard to beat this."

The Tony Awards will be held June 16.



Dakota Fanning, a cast member in 'Ripley,' poses at a screening of the television series at Netflix FYSEE, Friday, May 24, in Los Angeles. (AP)



De Armas



Wang

Variety

ANKARA: Turkish archaeologists have unearthed a pair of 2,000-year-old statues depicting the Greek deities Zeus and Aphrodite, Culture and Tourism Minister **Mehmet Nuri Ersoy** announced Monday.

The statues, dating to the Roman imperial era, were discovered at a complex containing two-story shops and a stoa -- a colonnaded gallery -- in the ancient city of **Aspendos**, located in southern **Antalya** province, said Ersoy in a post published on social media platform X.

This discovery comes amid ongoing large-scale excavations in Aspendos. Ersoy previously stated in March that only 2 percent of the ancient city has been unearthed since work began in 2013 and the Turkish government aims to excavate, restore, and repair 30 percent of the city within the next four years.

The initial phase of the project focuses on the western excavation area, specifically the complex containing the two-story shops and stoa, according to the minister. (Xinhua)

SHANGHAI: Renowned Chinese writer **Wang Anyi** was named Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, **France's** highest order of merit, on Friday in Shanghai.

Wang was presented the award by Bertrand Lortholary, French ambassador to **China**, for her outstanding contributions to literature and China-France cultural exchanges.

"Literary exchange has become one of the cherished traditions fostering mutual understanding and connection between China and France," said Wang, 70.

Born into a literary family, Wang has produced a vast array of outstanding literary works in the course of her career, including approximately 100 short stories and more than 20 novels.

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

As a devoted admirer of French literature, Wang has dedicated much of her time to promoting French literature in China and has strengthened exchanges with numerous French authors.

Over a dozen of her works, such as "The Song of Everlasting Sorrow," have been translated and published in France.

"Literary creation requires both talent and practice. Writing novels is truly a craft, and my primary quality is diligence," Wang said. "I hope the garden of literature and art remains lush and flourishes in every season."

The Legion of Honor, established in 1802, is **France's** highest distinction. It is awarded to individuals, both military and civilian, who have made contributions to France and its ideals. (Xinhua)

BARCELONA, Spain: Louis Vuitton unveiled its latest fashion designs at Barcelona's **Park Güell** on Thursday, providing the clothes with drama to finally match **Antoni Gaudí's** architectural masterpiece.

Nicolas Ghesquiere's ambitions for the Parisian house's 2025 Cruise collection were unveiled before an A-list crowd, including actresses **Ana de Armas**, **Jennifer**

Connelly and **Saïre Ronan**.

Louis Vuitton usually unveils its ready-to-wear collections in the French capital, while choosing exotic and attention-grabbing locations for its destination cruise collections.

Where tourists tread daily in tank tops, shorts and flip flops, this UNESCO World Heritage Site for one night was home to cutting-edge garments that blended with its earthly tones that are at once organic and yet seemingly ethereal.

The models weaved their way through the 86 Doric columns that hold up a vaulted square in the center of the park that overlooks Barcelona and the Mediterranean Sea



Actor Will Smith meets fans as he attends the European premiere of the film 'Bad Boys: Ride or Die' at the Zoo Palast in Berlin, Monday, May 27. (AP)

in the distance.

The show notes said Ghesquiere had been inspired by Gaudí's "legacy in constant mutation" and **Spain's** rich artistic heritage.

"As if in homage to such opulent purity, the Maison's rigorous spirit embraces the country's passionate character," the notes read. "The fervor of its colors, its loyalty to tradition elevated into artistic expression, dark and light that never appear contradictory."

Dramatic silhouettes contrasted with the soft curves of Gaudí's organic structures, which were then reflected in the dresses that draped and folded into volumes that defied gravity.

And then there were flashes that delighted: a pair of equestrian boots that finished in a bunch of tassels. (AP)

HOHHOT: A greater flamingo, typically found in tropical and subtropical areas, was recently spotted for the first time in **Ulan Suhai Lake** in north **China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region**, according to local authorities.

The sighting, which occurred on May 24, confirms an increase in bird diversity at the lake wetland, bringing the total number of bird species at the lake to 260.

The **Ulan Suhai Lake**, also known as **Wuliangsu Lake**, is the largest lake wetland in the Yellow River basin and plays a key role in water regulation, water purification, and flood prevention.

It also functions as a natural ecological barrier controlling sandstorm sources in the cities of **Beijing** and **Tianjin**.

"The greater flamingo is a 'vagrant bird' in **Ulan Suhai Lake**. We have arranged staff to patrol the key lake areas and prevent human activities from disturbing them," said **Chen Feng**, director of the **Ulan Suhai Lake Nature Reserve** authority. (Xinhua)

World Digestive Health Day raises awareness on gut health

Expert offers tips on how exercise can lead to a healthy gut

CLEVELAND, May 28: Exercise is one of the most powerful ways to boost the gut health, which can lead to better digestion, improved immunity and help to prevent health conditions such as heart disease and autoimmune conditions, according to an expert from global health system Cleveland Clinic, speaking ahead of World Digestive Health Day on May 29.

"Exercise is probably the best 'medicine' we have for our health," says gastroenterologist **Christine Lee, MD**. "It's something nearly everyone can do to feel better, and it doesn't have to cost a thing."

For those who are new to exercise, or who have health issues, particularly heart, lung, or back conditions, it is important to seek advice from a healthcare provider, and start slowly. Dr. Lee advises, "If you haven't exercised in a while, then a brisk walk may be a good place to start. If you already work out regularly, you need to make sure you are doing something vigorous enough that gets your heart pumping."



Dr Lee

Ideally, an individual should aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise, five or more days a week. "However, if you can't hit that goal, don't give up. Any amount of activity is better than none," Dr. Lee says.

There are five main ways to exercise can improve gut health, according to Dr. Lee:

Improving gut motility

Regular exercise helps the digestive tract function optimally, Dr. Lee says. "Your digestive tract is lined by muscles, and moving your body is good for muscle strength, your gut included. When we're physically inactive, the muscles in our gut also become less active. Over time, they can experience a decrease in coordination and strength," she explains.

Boosting circulation

During exercise, the heart pumps harder and faster, which improves circulation, that is, blood flow to the muscles, including the gut. "Exercise improves circulation throughout your body. When your digestive tract is better perfused – or has good blood flow – it becomes stronger and healthier, which creates a better environment to maintain the right balance of healthy bacteria," says Dr. Lee.

Keeping your metabolism healthy

The metabolism is the body's process of turning calories into energy, and physical activity and regular exercise can improve the metabolism. According to Dr. Lee, "When your metabolism slows down, your gut motility slows down. When your gut motility slows down, this can create problems such as bloating, abdominal pains, indigestion, overgrowth of bad bacteria, bacterial translocation – that is, the passage of bacteria from the GI tract to other tissues or organs – panniculitis, diverticulosis, diverticulitis, mega colon, prolapse, hernias, and hemorrhoids, to name just a few."

Setting you up for sleep

"Good-quality sleep is also important for your gut health. Unfortunately, it's not as simple as lying down and drifting off to sleep. If you find it hard to fall asleep or stay asleep, getting regular exercise can be the natural remedy you need," says Dr. Lee. "Regular exercise earlier in the day can lead to better quality sleep habits and can improve some sleep disorders. When you sleep, your body, including the gut, gets the opportunity to perform cell repairs. This is vital for maintaining a healthy body and immune system," she adds.

Toning your digestive muscles

Exercise can strengthen the muscles that make the gut's contractions – known as peristalsis – more powerful and more effective. Dr. Lee explains, "As gut muscles become stronger, they are more efficient at expelling waste. Higher quality peristalsis is a key part of your digestive health because it moves the waste out of your body before it can disrupt your microbiome."

Commenting on the best exercise for gut health, Dr. Lee advises people to do any type of aerobic or resistance exercises they enjoy and that work with their schedule and fitness level. "People hear the word 'exercise' and think they have to join a gym, but that's not always the case," clarifies Dr. Lee. "Raking leaves, vacuuming, moving furniture, mowing the grass or dancing to your favorite music can be a great form of exercise. Signs that you are exercising at a good intensity include increasing your heart rate, requiring deeper breathing, and working up a sweat."

Subscription fee subsidized

Kuwait Medical Assn facilitates access to UpToDate for doctors

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Dr. Ibrahim Al-Tawala, President of the Kuwait Medical Association, announced the successful registration of doctors on the UpToDate medical platform, a renowned global medical resource known for its latest medical recommendations and extensive drug database, reports Al-Jarida daily.

Supervised by over 7,400 experts worldwide, UpToDate boasts more than two million subscribers in the medical field.

Al-Tawala stated that the Medical Association subsidized 85% of the official subscription fee, offering doctors access at a reduced rate to support their professional development.

Over 1,200 subscriptions were swiftly purchased within an hour of availability, reflecting strong demand among the 3,000 doctors who sought access.

Al-Tawala urged both governmental and private research institutions to consider providing complimentary subscriptions to all doctors in Kuwait.

Rising temperatures put millions at risk

Heat waves deadly for older adults

By Deborah Carr, Boston University; **Enrica De Cian**, Ca' Foscari University of Venice; **Giacomo Falchetta**, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, and **Ian Sue Wing**, Boston University

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

A deadly heat wave gripped large regions of Asia for weeks in April and May 2024. As temperatures climbed past 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43.3 Celsius) in India on May 7, campaigning politicians, local news announcers and voters waiting in long lines passed out from the oppressive heat.

From as far north as Japan to as far south as the Philippines, the relentless heat wreaked havoc on everyday life. Students and teachers in Cambodia were sent home from school, as their hand-held fans provided little protection against the stifling heat and humidity in their poorly ventilated classrooms. Farmers in Thailand saw their crops wither and mourned the loss of livestock that perished under the punishing sun. Hundreds of people died from the heat.

Most of the planet has suffered the dire effects of extreme heat in recent years.

A weekslong heat wave in the southwestern United States in 2023 was described as "hell on earth" in Phoenix, where temperatures hit 110 F (43.3 C) or higher for 31 straight days. At the same time, Europe saw unprecedented high temperatures that killed hundreds and contributed to devastating wildfires in Greece.

Regardless of where or when a heat wave strikes, one pattern is a constant: Older adults are the most likely to die from extreme heat, and this crisis will worsen in the coming years.

Population

We study climate change and population aging. Our research documents two global trends that together portend a dire future.

First, temperatures are hotter than ever. The nine-year period from 2015 and 2023 had the highest average temperatures since global records began in 1880.

Second, the population is aging worldwide. By 2050, the number of people ages 60 and older will double to nearly 2.1 billion, making up 21% of the global population. That proportion is 13% today.

These combined forces mean that ever-rising numbers of vulnerable older adults will be exposed to intensifying heat.

To understand the risks ahead, we developed population projections for different age groups and combined them with climate change scenarios for the coming decades. Our analyses show that by 2050, more than 23% of the world population ages 69 and older will be living in regions where peak temperatures routinely surpass 99.5°F (37.5°C), compared with just 14% today.

That means that as many as 250 million additional older adults will be exposed to dangerously high temperatures.

Mapping the data shows that most of these older adults live in lower- and middle-income countries with insufficient services and limited access to electricity, cooling appliances and safe water.

In historically cooler regions in the Global North, including North America and Europe, rising temperatures will be the main force driving older adults' heat exposure. In historically hotter regions in the Global



Patients of heatstroke receive treatment at a hospital in Karachi, Pakistan, Thursday, May 23. (AP)

Dangerous heat forecast

Heatstroke 'sickens' hundreds in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, May 28, (AP): Doctors treated hundreds of victims of heatstroke at hospitals across Pakistan on Thursday after an intense heat wave sent temperatures above normal levels due to climate change, officials said.

Temperatures soared as high as 49 degrees Celsius (120 degrees Fahrenheit) the previous day in Mohenjo Daro. The city, known for its archaeological sites, is in southern Sindh province, which was badly hit by climate-induced monsoon rains and devastating floods in 2022. The heat wave is forecast to continue for at least a week.

Authorities have urged people to stay indoors, hydrate and avoid unnecessary travel. But laborers say they don't have a choice because they need to work to feed their families.

"Pakistan is the fifth most vulnerable country to the impact of climate change. We have witnessed above normal rains, floods," Rubina Khurshed Alam, the prime minister's coordinator on climate, said at a news conference in the capital, Islamabad.

Barakullah Khan, a civil defense official, asked people not to place cooking gas cylinders in open areas as a safety measure. He warned those living near fields that snakes and scorpions could enter homes and storage places in search of cooler spaces.

This month, temperatures are likely to soar to 55 C (131 F), weather forecasters said.

South such as Asia, Africa and South America, population growth and increases in longevity mean that steeply rising numbers of older adults will be exposed to intensifying heat-related risks.

Policymakers, communities, families and older residents themselves need to understand these risks and be prepared because of older adults' special vulnerabilities to heat.

High temperatures are oppressive for everyone, but for older adults they can be deadly.

Extreme heat worsens common age-related health conditions such as heart, lung and kidney disease and

can cause delirium. Older people don't sweat as much as younger people, which makes it harder for their bodies to cool down when temperatures spike. These problems are intensified by common prescription medications, such as anticholinergics, which further reduce the capacity to sweat.

Spending time outdoors in hot humid weather can cause dehydration, a problem worsened by the side effects of prescription medications such as diuretics and beta-blockers. Dehydration can make older adults weak and dizzy, increasing their risk of falls and injury. These threats are even worse in regions lacking access to safe and affordable drinking water.

Poor air quality makes it difficult to breathe, especially for those who already have lung problems such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD.

For older adults with physical health problems, temperatures as low as 80 F (26.7 C) can pose significant danger. And when humidity is as high as 90%, even 78 F (25.6 C) can be hazardous to older adults.

Harmful

Nighttime heat is especially harmful for older adults whose homes lack air conditioning or who can't afford to run their air conditioners for long periods. The ideal temperature for older adults' restful sleep is between 68 and 77 F (20 and 25 C), and sleep quality diminishes as temperatures rise. A night of restless sleep can make an older adult more depressed and confused during their waking hours. Medications also can lose their effectiveness if stored in places much warmer than 77 F (25 C).

Being stuck indoors when temperatures are unbearable can make older adults bored, depressed and isolated. People with cognitive impairments may underestimate the dangers of extreme heat or may not understand the heat advisories.

Those who have physical mobility limitations or lack access to transportation can't easily travel to public cooling centers – if there is one nearby – or find relief in nearby "green and blue areas," such as parks and lakes.

These threats are especially dire in low- and middle-income nations, where older adults are more likely to live in substandard housing and lack access to high-quality health care or ways to cool down in the heat. We talk about this as "systemic cooling poverty."

Policymakers can work to cut greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels in vehicles, power plants and factories, which drive global warming, and develop effective plans to protect older people from heat risk. Older adults and their caregivers also can take steps to adapt.

But efforts to help need to be tailored to each region and population.

Wealthy municipalities can increase public investments in early warning systems and ride services to cooling centers and hospitals. They can use geographic information systems to identify neighborhoods with high concentrations of older adults and expand power grids to manage increasing demand for air conditioning.

In regions with substandard housing, limited access to clean water and few public supports such as cooling centers, much larger changes are necessary. Providing better health care, water and housing and reducing air pollution that can mitigate health problems during heat waves require significant changes and investments many countries struggle to afford.

The World Health Organization and Pan American Health Organization warn that this decade will be critical for preparing communities to handle rising heat and the risk to aging populations. Across all regions, researchers, practitioners and policymakers could save lives by heeding their call. (AP)

Uganda tackles yellow fever with vaccination campaign, travel restriction

Study shows single infusion yields asthma remission in mice

BEIJING, May 28, (Agencies): A team of Chinese scientists have developed a promising therapy using genetically engineered immune cells, which has been shown to induce long-lasting remission of asthma in mice following a single injection.

Asthma, the most prevalent respiratory disease, affects about 300 million people and causes more than 250,000 deaths annually. Pharmaceutical innovators are advancing the development of a long-acting therapy designed to provide patients with enduring symptom relief with a single administration of medication.

The study published on Monday in the journal Nature Immunology reported an encouraging animal experiment result, in which a single infusion of genetically engineered immune cells in mice led to sustained repression of lung inflammation and alleviation of asthmatic symptoms,

without any conditioning regimen.

Researchers from Tsinghua University engineered chimeric antigen receptor T (CAR-T) cells to target and eradicate eosinophils, a type of white blood cell that plays an important role in asthma patients.

CAR-T therapy has already been used in the cancer treatment. It tends to harvest immune cells called T cells from a patient's blood and then genetically modify them in the lab to produce special structures called chimeric antigen receptors (CAR) on their surface.

The altered T cells are then reintroduced into the patient, where the cells' new receptors enable them to recognize and latch onto cancer cells to neutralize them.

In the new study, the engineered cells have demonstrated sustained functionality for a minimum of one year, and can also prevent inflammation in the airways.

Also:

KAMPALA, Uganda: Uganda has rolled out a nationwide yellow fever vaccination campaign to help safeguard its population against the mosquito-borne disease that has long posed a threat.

By the end of April, Ugandan authorities had vaccinated 12.2 million of the 14 million people targeted, said Dr. **Michael Baganizi**, an official in charge of immunization at the health ministry. Uganda will now require everyone traveling to and from the country to have a yellow fever vaccination card as an international health regulation, Baganizi said.

Ugandan authorities hope the requirement will compel more people to get the yellow fever shot amid a general atmosphere of vaccine hesitancy that worries healthcare providers in the East African nation.

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Maresca to leave Leicester City for Chelsea

Premier League undergoes postseason managerial upheaval

Bochum stay in Bundesliga after 'comeback win' over Dusseldorf



Bochum players celebrate after winning a Bundesliga soccer match against Fortuna Dusseldorf in Dusseldorf, Germany. (AP)

Victors rally back from a 3-0 first leg defeat

BERLIN, May 28, (Xinhua): Bochum rallied back from a 3-0 first leg defeat and overpowered Dusseldorf 6-5 (3-3) on penalties to stay in Germany's top-flight following the second leg of the relegation, Bochum started highly motivated into the second leg, knowing that only three-goal lead would force second division outfit Dusseldorf into the overtime.

However, Dusseldorf staged a lively start and nearly extended their lead to 4-0 on aggregate but for all that Ao Tanaka's shot got blocked by defender Ivan Ordets in the last nick of time.

Bochum responded well and opened the scoring with its first clear-cut opportunity as Philipp Hofmann headed home Kevin Stoger's free kick cross into the area, cutting Dusseldorf's aggregate lead to 3-1 with 18 minutes gone. The visitors remained dangerous and gained momentum in front of the target before the half time as Kevin Schlotterbeck headed narrowly wide in the 41st minute while Lukas

SOCCER

Daschner's effort from 20 meters rattled the side netting moments later.

Daschner remained in the thick of things and got his dangerous shot blocked by Tim Oberdorf five minutes into the second half.

Bochum eventually reduced Dusseldorf's aggregate lead to 3-2 as Stoger's cross into the penalty area found Hofmann for the second time in the 66th minute.

Dusseldorf was shocked and had to witness that Bochum levelled the tie four minutes later when Stoger converted a handball penalty after making it 3-0 on the scoreboard.

The hosts couldn't put up resistance whereas Bochum missed the chance to take the lead as Takuma Asano squandered two promising chances in the closing stages.

After an evenly balanced overtime the penalty shoot-out had to bring decision. Both teams missed one penalty before Dusseldorf's Takashi Uchino pulled over the target in the sudden death.

Player apologizes for hitting spectator with a ball

Alizé Cornet retires from tennis after loss to Zheng

PARIS, May 28, (Agencies): Alizé Cornet was given a standing ovation and a farewell trophy after playing the final match of her long tennis career, a 6-2, 6-1 loss to No. 7 seed Zheng Qinwen in the first round of the French Open on Tuesday.

The 34-year-old Cornet is a Frenchwoman who was given a wild-card entry into the tournament. She had announced ahead of time that this would be her last season before retirement.

French tennis federation president Gilles Moretton and tournament director Amélie Mauresmo participated in a ceremony after the match at Court Philippe Chatrier.

In an emotional speech, Cornet thanked her family and French fans, expressing her gratitude for their support over the years.

"You gave me incredible emotions. It's tough to realize that it's the last time I'm feeling this," she said.

A video tribute highlighting her career, which began in 2005, was shown on the giant screens.

Cornet reached a career-high ranking of No. 11 in 2009 and is currently No. 106, after going 1-7 this season. She holds the women's record for most consecutive Grand Slam tournaments played at 69, a streak that ran from the 2007 Australian Open to this French Open.

Her career highlights include defeating No. 1 Serena Williams in the third



China's Zheng Qinwen plays a shot against France's Alize Cornet during their first round match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris. (AP)

round at Wimbledon in 2014 and one major quarterfinal appearance, at the Australian Open in 2022.

"We won't forget you. I hope you enjoy your life after retirement," said Zheng, the runner-up at this year's Australian Open.

Cornet said she decided last year she would stop playing professionally but waited to reveal the news until about a month ago. She is a published author and says she sees writing as part of the next chapter of her life.

"I wanted to have a couple more wins under my belt before I finished," Cornet said. "But it was a lot of up and downs. Definitely, emotionally, it was not easy. Some days I was really excited about retirement and some other days I was very scared and very uncertain. So overall, I feel in peace today about it, and so I'm very happy about that decision."

French tennis player Terence Atmane apologized on Tuesday for hitting a spectator with a ball at the French Open.

Atmane angrily struck a ball and accidentally hit the female spectator in the leg on Sunday. He wasn't disqualified but received a warning for unsportsmanlike conduct. Atmane lost the first-round match to Sebastian Ofner in five sets.

"This gesture was not intentional. Please forgive me for my emotional outburst," he said on Tuesday on Instagram. He explained that a broken string led to the ball flying into the stands and admitted to being too shocked to react immediately.

Atmane emphasized his desire to apologize personally to the spectator.

Atmane was not disqualified because the spectator said she was fine, tournament referee Remy Azemar told French sports newspaper L'Equipe. He added Atmane will get a "significant fine."

team event.

"To be here is like coming home, as China has become my second home over the years," Boll said of his relationship with China. "I know many players and people have a big fan base. It's always a pleasure for me to be here or play tournaments in China." The prospect of attending his seventh Olympics made him continue despite "the past years hasn't been overwhelmingly joyful." Before stepping down, one of his sport's greatest is heading for a last big goal. "It would be a perfect farewell if we manage to win a team medal at the Olympics in Paris," said the eight-times European Champion who has a 25-year career.

Boll to retire from international stage after Paris Olympics

BERLIN, May 28, (Xinhua): As Timo Boll boarded the Air China Flight CA932 this Monday evening, the 43-year-old might have started his trip to the WTT Champions tournament in Chongqing with mixed feelings.

Shortly before his departure, the two-time Olympic silver medalist announced that the Paris Olympic Games, his seventh Olympics, will be his last international appearance.

"In the past, I often talked about being a little afraid of the decision to end my international career, despite it was inevitable that this day would come," the former World No. 1 said. "Now the time has come for my

farewell on the world stage of active sport." Boll also announced to play another season for his club Borussia Dusseldorf in the national league and the Champions League. The veteran paddler is said to be around as an advisor for his German club after his last season.

"Table tennis has been my life, and I will be around in whatever function," he said.

Boll noted that he will "pay special attention to China and its people. There are so many ideas of what to do. I am sure my life will stay active and thrilling." Boll said he is thankful for his career. "But it seems enough now. My career has left its marks," he stated, referring to vari-

ous injuries over the years. "You start to extend your recovery time, find ways to explore new treatment measures, you reduce your training times to be at a competitive level when in tournaments," he told Xinhua in a recent interview.

"I have reached an age that is affecting my performance. It has been a constant fight against the pain over the past years. That's far from satisfying, and you are aware you more and more lose the fight against the pain." The first German paddler to become the world No. 1 in 2003, Boll has also clinched two silvers at Beijing 2008 and Tokyo 2020, and two bronzes at London 2012 and Rio 2016, all in the men's

LONDON, May 28, (Agencies): Chelsea are set to name Enzo Maresca as their new first team coach after the 44-year-old announced intentions to leave Leicester City on Tuesday.

Maresca confirmed his departure from the club he led to promotion back to the Premier League at the first attempt in a post on social media.

"It's with great emotion that I write to you today to say goodbye. In less than a year at the club, I'm proud to say we archived exactly what was needed which is coming back to the Premier League," wrote the Italian.

Maresca was a cultured central midfielder who represented a host of teams, including Juventus, Sevilla, Malaga, Fiorentina and Sampdoria, before moving into coaching.

He picked up valuable experience in the Manchester City youth system and had a brief spell with Parma before spending a year as Pep Guardiola's assistant.

Last season saw him appointed to Leicester City with the task of taking the recently relegated side back to the Premier League. Maresca did that at the first attempt, with the team finishing top of the Championship.

Chelsea had asked Leicester for

club's new co-owner and in charge of football operations, some thinking to



Manchester United's Lisandro Martinez lifts Manchester United's head coach Erik ten Hag while celebrating victory in the English FA Cup final soccer match between Manchester City and Manchester United at Wembley Stadium in London. (AP)

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permission to speak to the coach about the vacancy after the departure of Mauricio Pochettino at the end of the season. The Italian is expected to sign a five-year contract.

Liverpool has already made the change. Chelsea is closing in on its new guy. Manchester United has yet to decide whether to stick or twist.

There is unprecedented managerial upheaval in the English Premier League at the moment, with five of the top 11 teams potentially having new coaches at the start of next season and another of them having changed managers only a few months ago.

Brighton is looking for a new manager to take over from Roberto De Zerbi, while Man United is conducting a review to assess whether or not to keep Erik ten Hag, who won the FA Cup last weekend but oversaw the team's worst league season in 34 years.

As for Crystal Palace, manager Oliver Glasner has been in place for only three months after coming in for Roy Hodgson.

Here's a closer look at some of the changes that could be happening over the next few days and weeks: Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola is set to be facing off against another of his former assistants.

Guardiola is already pitting his wits against Mikel Arteta, the Arsenal manager who was at City under Guardiola from 2016-19.

Ten Hag hasn't waited for United to make a decision. He has already gone on vacation, content with winning a trophy for the second straight season in his time at Old Trafford - even if, for many, that doesn't make up for a woeful Premier League campaign that saw the team finish in eighth place.

Still, finishing the season strongly - United also won its last two league games - has given Jim Ratcliffe, the

do. Especially with the FA Cup victory coming over Manchester City, of all clubs, and perhaps swaying fans' opinions of Ten Hag.

United has been linked with De Zerbi, former Bayern Munich coach Thomas Tuchel as well as Kieran McKenna, a former United assistant coach who has just led Ipswich to the Premier League after back-to-back promotions.

McKenna has also been linked to the Brighton vacancy, with De Zerbi having already left Amex Stadium after two years in charge.

Managerial moves may yet be more interesting than those involving players during this offseason.

English clubs are having to be more careful than ever in the transfer market, given the Premier League is clamping down harder on its financial rules that limit teams to a loss of no more than 105 million pounds (\$133 million) over a three-year period.

Everton and Nottingham Forest have already fallen foul of those regulations and received points deductions last season, while the likes of Aston Villa, Newcastle and Man United might be needing to tread carefully over the next year.

In January, Premier League teams spent less than 100 million pounds (\$127 million) combined on new signings - the lowest total outlay in three years in that winter window - most probably because of the financial rules hurting their spending power.

It's not only in England where big managerial jobs are up for grabs.

Bayern Munich is looking for a new coach - and has reportedly set its sights on Vincent Kompany, the Man City playing great who recently led Burnley into the Premier League only to get relegated after one season.

In Spain, Barcelona has just fired Xavi Hernandez to leave a vacancy open.

In Italy, AC Milan and Juventus are without coaches.

Action tied to a dispute over pay

3 players quit Argentina national women's team

BUENOS AIRES, May 28, (AP): Three players quit Argentina's national women's squad Monday after a dispute over a lack of pay and conditions at a camp ahead of two international friendlies, an unthinkable scenario for the country's World Cup winning men's squad.

Goalkeeper Laurina Oliveira, defender Julieta Cruz and midfielder Lorena Benítez, all regular starters for the national team, announced their move as the squad started fine-tuning for friendlies against Costa Rica on Friday and on June 3.

"We reached a point in which we are tired of the injustices, of not being valued, not being heard and, even worse, being humiliated," Cruz posted on Instagram. "We need improvements for Argentina's women's soccer national team, and I am not only talking about finances. I speak about training, having lunch, breakfast."

Cruz and Benítez said during national squad training sessions they received a ham and cheese sandwich and a banana, which they believe is inadequate for high-performance athletes.

They said Argentina's soccer association told them they wouldn't be paid for the two friendlies because the games will take place at home in Buenos Aires.

Benítez added that on top of players not being paid, their family members were being charged 5,000 pesos (\$5)

for tickets to enter the stadium. "And there there are millions of things we have gone through," the midfielder added.

Goalkeeper Oliveros published on Instagram several pictures of her wearing Argentina's shirt.

"With a broken heart and thousands of dreams disappearing little by little. May the next generations enjoy and be happy running after the football, as we were sometime ago," she said.

Argentina's soccer association did not comment the players' decision.

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Estefanía Banini, who is considered the country's best female player ever, lent support to her three former teammates. Last year, she also decided to stop playing for the national team.

"A matter of time. Thanks for being willing to speak about it," the Atletico Madrid midfielder said on her social media channels.

Argentina's professional women's soccer championship started only five years ago, but players see the overall improvement as too little.

Argentina's women's teams usually struggle in South American competitions against rivals from Colombia and from Brazil, which will host of the 2027 Women's World Cup.

Osasuna confirm Moreno as new coach

MADRID, May 28, (Xinhua): Spanish LaLiga club, Osasuna announced Vicente Moreno as their new first team coach for next season.

Moreno has the difficult task of replacing Jagoba Arrasata, who stepped down at the end of the season after six successful years in charge at the El Sadar Stadium.

The 49-year-old coach has signed a contract for the 2024-25 campaign after a short spell at Almería at the start of the recently completed season.

He only lasted seven games at Almería as the club from the south of

Spain suffered a disastrous campaign, but the fact Almería were relegated with just three wins in a season with three different coaches, implies Moreno was not fully responsible for their disaster.

Before his brief spell in the south of Spain, Moreno was at Mallorca, who he led back to the Primera Liga with back-to-back promotions.

He then dropped back to the second division to win promotion to LaLiga with Espanyol, before a spell working with Saudi Arabian side, Al-Shabab.

Kuwait SC crowned champions of Dawri Zain



Al Shaheen and Al Khashti crown the champions, with Al Ghanim, KFA, and club board members in attendance.



Kuwait SC players lift the Dawri Zain trophy.

Zain affirms ongoing support to local sports in partnership with KFA

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Zain has joined in officially crowning Kuwait SC champions of the Kuwait Premier League (Dawri Zain) for the 2023-2024 season. The champions lifted the top-tier's trophy after the thrilling match played at Ali Sabah Al Salem Stadium in the season's closing round.

The champions were crowned

by Kuwait Football Association Chairman, Abdullah Al Shaheen, and Zain Kuwait Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer, Waleed Al Khashti. In attendance were Kuwait SC Chairman, Khalid Al Ghanim, club board members, and Zain and KFA officials.

Zain congratulates the players, technical staff, and fans of Kuwait SC for winning the league championship title for the third consecutive year. This victory solidifies Kuwait SC's dominance as the club with the most titles

in the Kuwait Premier League's history, boasting a total of 19 titles. The team secured the title in the league's penultimate round, with the crowning ceremony held during the final round of the Championship Group.

Zain also congratulates Arabi SC and Qadsia SC for securing these second and third places respectively. Additionally, the company extends its thanks to all the teams that competed in Dawri Zain, bringing excitement and joy to thousands of fans throughout the season.

Zain crowned the champions under

the umbrella of its strategic partnership with the Kuwait Football Association. The company is the Official Sponsor of the KFA's competitions throughout the 2022-2026 seasons, including the Kuwait Premier League (Dawri Zain), the Zain First Division League, H.H. the Amir's Cup, and the KFA Cup (Zain Cup).

Under this partnership, Zain recently sponsored the grand ceremony that accompanied the thrilling final match of the 62nd edition of the Amir Cup, held under the patronage and presence of His

Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Qadsia SC were crowned champions of the much-cherished cup after defeating Salmiya SC in the exciting final, where over 19,000 spectators cheered on their teams at Jaber Al Ahmad International Stadium.

As the Official Sponsor of the KFA's competitions, Zain offers over KD 60,000 worth of prizes for athletes and fans per season, which is the biggest prize pool ever to be distributed in the Kuwaiti League's history. By dedicating cash prizes for athletes, the com-

pany seeks to encourage players to pursue excellence and elevate the league's performance. Zain is set to celebrate this season's best players in its annual Excellence Awards ceremony soon.

Zain believes the private sector plays a key role in supporting the local sports and youth sectors, as well as encouraging local athletes to raise Kuwait's flag high in regional and international arenas. The company embodies this belief by consistently supporting major sports programs and local athletes all year round.



Czech Republic's Tomas Soucek (center), celebrates after scoring his side's third goal during the Euro 2024 group E qualifying soccer match between the Czech Republic and Moldova, at the Andruv Stadium in Olomouc, Czech Republic. (AP)

Leverkusen trio of Schick, Hložek & Kovár in Czech squad for Euro 2024

PRAGUE, May 28, (AP): A trio of Bayer Leverkusen players who won the Bundesliga and the German Cup unbeaten headline the Czech Republic squad for the European Championship.

Forwards Patrik Schick and Adam Hložek and goalkeeper Matej Kovár were in the 26-man squad named by coach Ivan Hašek on Tuesday.

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West Ham midfielder Tomáš Souček will captain the Czechs, and picked with clubmate and right back Vladimír Coufal.

Viktoria Plzen midfielder Lukáš Červ made the squad for the first time. "I trust these players and hope the're ready to fight for us to be successful," Hašek said.

The Czechs have a training camp in Schladming, Austria, before playing two warmup matches against Malta in Grodžig, Austria, on June 7 and North Macedonia in the Czech city of Hradec Kralove three days later.

The team opens the tournament

in Germany in Group F on June 18 against Portugal in Leipzig followed by Georgia on June 22 and Turkey four days later in Hamburg.

Czech Republic:
Goalkeepers: Jindřich Stanek (Slavia Prague), Matej Kovár (Leverkusen), Vítězslav Jaroš (Sturm Graz).

Defenders: Vladimír Coufal (West Ham), David Doudera (Slavia Prague), Tomáš Holeš (Slavia Prague), Robin Hranáč (Viktoria Plzen), Ladislav Krejčí (Sparta Prague), David Zima (Slavia Prague), Tomáš Vlecek (Slavia Prague), David Jurásek (Hoffenheim), Martin Vítík (Sparta Prague).

Midfielders: Tomáš Souček (West Ham), Michal Sadílek (Twente), Antonín Barák (Fiorentina), Lukáš Provd (Slavia Prague), Ondřej Lingr (Feyenoord), Václav Černý (Wolfsburg), Matej Jurásek (Slavia Prague), Pavel Šulc (Viktoria Plzen), Lukáš Červ (Viktoria Plzen).

Forwards: Patrik Schick (Leverkusen), Jan Kuchta (Sparta Prague), Tomáš Chory (Viktoria Plzen), Mojmír Chytil (Slavia Prague), Adam Hložek (Leverkusen).

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the penultimate round after drawing with Al-Qadisiya.

This season saw remarkable achievements. Kuwait Club won the title undefeated, scoring 72 goals and boasting the best defense with only 21 goals conceded. It finished 10 points ahead of its closest rival, an improvement from the previous season's six-point margin.

Al-Arabi's Moroccan professional Hamza Khaba topped the league's scoring chart with 21 goals, just one more than Colombian Al-Nasr player Hansel Zapata. Among local players, Al-Qadisiya's Badr Al-Mutawa and Kuwait Club's Mohamed Daham were joint top scorers with 13 goals each.

Despite various significant events, the standout moment came from Al-Jahra's team manager, Abdulaziz Madloul. His reaction during the March 6 match against Khaitan, in the final round of the Al-Tajama League, left a lasting impression. Needing a win to stay in the Premier League, Al-Jahra was down until Igor equalized in the 88th minute, followed by Badr Al-Enezi's winning goal in the 90th minute. Madloul's jubilant sprint to the corner flag epitomized the emotional highs of the season.

Although Al-Jahra failed to remain in the Premier League, the passion and dedication displayed by Madloul highlighted his deep love for the club. His commitment and loyalty shone through despite the numerous challenges Al-Jahra faced throughout the season.

The 2023-2024 season was a testament to the highs and lows of football, showcasing the joy of victory and the pain of near misses.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Club President Khaled Al-Ghanim announced that Al-Abyad has signed Argentine player Sergio Vitor, formerly of Al-Qadisiya, to bolster its squad starting next season.

Vitor had an outstanding season with Al-Qadisiya, establishing himself as one of the top foreign players.

Al-Ghanim also stated that the club wants Tunisian coach Nabil Maaloul to remain as head of the technical staff next season. Maaloul has given initial approval and is awaiting the official contract.

Regarding the current foreign players, Al-Ghanim mentioned that he will meet with coach Maaloul and the vice president of the appa-

Vitor joins Kuwait Club, Maaloul set to continue

Kuwait Club, Al-Qadisiya shine, heartbreak for Al-Arabi

By Hassan Musa

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: The 2023-2024 sports season concluded recently, bringing a mix of triumph and disappointment for various clubs. The season ended on a high note for Kuwait Club and Al-Qadisiya, with Kuwait Club securing the Zain Premier League title and the Super Cup, while Al-Qadisiya claimed the Amir's Cup.

Kuwait Club and Al-Qadisiya were not the only clubs to find success. Yarmouk and Al-Tadamon also experienced a "sweet" season by earning promotion to the Premier League. In contrast, Al-Jahra and Al-Shabab faced relegation to the First Division, marking a disappointing end to their campaigns.

Al-Arabi emerged as the season's most heartbreaking club, narrowly missing out on the league title in

Al-Hilal finish unbeaten

Ronaldo sets Saudi Pro League season scoring record

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, May 28, (AP): Cristiano Ronaldo finished the Saudi Pro League by setting the season goal-scoring record on Monday.

Ronaldo scored twice in Riyadh as Al-Nasr defeated Al-Ittihad 4-2 and lifted his league tally to 35, one more than the record in 2019 by Abderrazak Hamdallah.

In the final seconds of the first half, Ronaldo, who had already had two goals ruled out for offside, chested down a long pass from Mohammed Al-Fatih and opened the scoring with a low shot from the left side of the area.

With 21 minutes remaining, the five-time Ballon d'Or winner celebrated wildly after heading home a corner from Marcelo Brozovic. He was substituted off the field five minutes later to a standing ovation from the home fans.

It ended an action-packed season for Ronaldo, who scored four hat tricks and collected one red card. He was also suspended for an obscene gesture in February at Al-Shabab fans who had been chanting the name of Lionel Messi, Ronaldo's longstanding soccer rival.

Al-Nasr finished second in the league, 14 points behind local rival Al-Hilal, which won the championship more than two weeks ago and completed the 34-round league unbeaten on Monday.

Al-Hilal was too strong even without Neymar, who joined the club in August from Paris Saint-Germain but suffered a season-ending ACL injury in October.

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Real Madrid's Lucas Vazquez kicks the ball during a training session at a Media Opening day in Madrid, Spain. Borussia Dortmund will play against Real Madrid in Saturday's Champions League soccer final in London. (AP)

ratus, Adel Oqla, to discuss future plans and preparations for the next season.

The club president also revealed that Al-Abyad has renewed contracts with five local players: Youssef Nasser, Meshari Ghannam, Sami Al-Sanea, Fahd Hammoud, and Mohamed Freih.

Al-Ghanim expressed his joy at winning the league title for the third consecutive season, saying, "I am fortunate to be the president of this esteemed club. I am proud of all the players, administrators, and officials whose efforts have placed us at the top. I hope the team continues to win titles in the future."

He praised the federation's organization of local championships, which fostered clear competition, and emphasized that developing sports is "a state project."

Team captain Fahd Al-Hajri at-

tributed its success to the hard work of various departments and the players' determination to win titles every season. He said, "We are fortunate to have a Board of Directors committed to creating an atmosphere conducive to winning."

Bahraini professional Mohammed Marhoon expressed his desire to continue with Kuwait Club for a third season, describing his experience as successful. He credited the players, technical, administrative, and medical staff, as well as the Board's support, for their achievements.

Player Ali Hussein described the club's nineteenth league title as the result of tireless efforts throughout the season, highlighting the difficulty of the matches. He stressed that Al-Abyad's consistent performance from the start of the tournament contributed to winning the coveted title.

Aleksandar Mitrovic stepped in and ended the season with a goal in the final seconds to clinch a 2-1 win over Al-Wehda. The Serbian striker, signed from London club Fulham last summer, reached 27 league goals, second only to Ronaldo.

On its way to the title, Al-Hilal went on a 34-game winning streak in all competitions, a new world record for a top tier team.

"This season has been truly exceptional for the team, arguably our best ever," coach Jorge Jesus said. "The credit goes to the immense talent within the squad and the incredible sense of unity that transcends both on and off-field interactions."

Al-Ittihad's defeat at Al-Nasr ended a disappointing season for the defending champion. Karim Benzema, signed from Real Madrid, struggled with injuries and even with N'Golo Kante and Fabinho in midfield, signed from Chelsea and Liverpool respectively, the team from Jeddah could manage only fifth place.

Poor results cost Nuno Santo his job as coach in November, and the Portuguese tactician returned to the English Premier League a month later to take over Nottingham Forest.

Al-Ahli, the fourth of the 'Big Four' clubs taken over by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund last June, finished third, 17 points behind Al-Nasr. Al-Ahli beat Al-Fayha 1-0 thanks to a late goal - his ninth of the season - from former Liverpool forward Roberto Firmino.

Ronaldo took the headlines, however, and the 39-year-old still had one more chance to end the season with a trophy when Al-Nasr meets Al-Hilal in the King's Cup final on Friday.

Best of the Rest

Brazil edge Japan: Brazil extended its winning streak in FIVB Women's Volleyball Nations League (VNL), narrowly beating Japan 24-26, 26-24, 19-25, 25-20, 15-11 here on Tuesday.

Having already qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, Brazil took home four straight wins in the opening week of the 2024 VNL in Rio de Janeiro from May 15 to 19. Ranking eighth in the world, Japan needed to earn as many world ranking points as possible to get the ticket for Paris.

The two teams battled neck-and-neck from the first set, and the Japanese once took the lead with strong defensive play. But the Brazilians quickly recovered en route to secure a fifth win of the season with powerful attacking and staunch blocking. (Xinhua)

Fort signs new contract: FC Barcelona on Tuesday signed a new two-year contract with 17-year-old defender Hector Fort, who joined Barcelona at seven and progressed through the club's youth system.

Fort made his first team debut this season against Royal Antwerp in the Champions League group stage.

He has now made 10 first team appearances, showing ability to play at both right and left back. He has

also played 13 times for the club's B-team.

"I joined when I was seven years old at the lowest possible level, and since then I have continued year after year to get to where I am today," said Fort on the club's social media.

"This has been an unforgettable year for me. The year I made my debut, and I will never forget that. It's true we haven't won any titles, but I have gained experience and I hope things go better in the future," he added. (Xinhua)

Braz banned for doping: Olympic pole vault gold medalist Thiago Braz was banned for 16 months for doping and will miss the Paris Games, track and field's Athletics Integrity Unit said on Tuesday.

Braz won the Olympic title at his home Rio de Janeiro Games in 2016 and took bronze in Tokyo three years ago.

The 30-year-old Braz's ban expires in November and he has filed an appeal at the Court of Arbitration for Sport, the AIU said.

Braz claimed his positive test for ostarine was caused by a contaminated nutritional supplement and the anti-doping tribunal judges accepted by a 2-1 verdict he was not at significant fault, the AIU said. (AP)



Khaled Al-Ghanem greets his players during a league game.



Fiorentina players run during a training session at OPAP Arena in Athens, Greece. Fiorentina will play against Olympiacos on Wednesday for the Conference League Final soccer match. (AP)

Sports

Latest sports scores at — <http://sports.arabtimesonline.com>

Spotlight on Kuwait Club vs Al-Qadisiya as fans gear up for thrilling showdown

Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Handball enthusiasts will turn their attention to the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Complex in the suburb of Sabah Al-Salem for the highly anticipated summit match. Defending champions Al-Kuwait, currently leading the league standings with 32 points, will face off against Al-Qadisiya, last season's runner-up and the second-ranked team in the Premier League. The match is scheduled for 7:30 pm and is part of the fifth and final round of the first leg.

Before the main event, Al-Arabi, ranked fifth with 22 points, will play against Al-Salmiya, who are fourth with 23 points, at 4:30 pm. At 6:00 pm, Kazma, in third place with 25 points, will compete against Burgan, who are sixth with 18 points.

In the third round of the First Division League, Al-Sahel avenged its earlier defeat to Al-Tadamon by



A file photo of Al-Qadisiya and Kuwait Club players in action.

winning 31-25. Meanwhile, Al-Sulaibikhat narrowly edged out Khaitan, 35-34.

Both Al-Arabi and Al-Salmiya need victories today to improve their standings before the second leg begins. The match against Kazma is crucial as a win, combined with an Al-Qadisiya loss to Kuwait Club, could propel it to second place, tied with Al-Qadisiya but ahead on goal difference. Burgan, currently at the bottom of the standings, has little pressure as its out of contention.

The highlight of the day is the clash between Kuwait Club and Al-Qadisiya. Kuwait Club aims to

HANDBALL

extend its lead and move closer to securing the title. A win today would bring it to 34 points, 7 points ahead of the second-place team. Al-Qadisiya, coached by Croatian Slavko Klose, hopes to replicate its previous victory over Kuwait Club and close the gap.

Sameh Al-Hajri, manager of Kuwait Club emphasized the importance of today's match, highlighting goals of avenging their defeat to Al-Qadisiya and widening the point's gap with the second-place team, thus moving closer to the league title.

Kuwait Club will be missing Saleh Al-Moussawi due to a torn posterior muscle, and orange player Angel Hernandez due to a knee injury. Additionally, Yaqoub Asiri, Fawaz Abdul-Hadi, Abdulaziz Sultan, Abdullah Al-Gharabally, and goalkeeper Hassan Safar are also out.

Celtics rally late again to close out Pacers for 4-0 sweep in East finals



Boston Celtics guard Payton Pritchard drives past Indiana Pacers Doug McDermott. (AP)

Kuwait head to Thailand for training camp ahead of key qualifiers

By Khaled El Anzi

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 28: Kuwait departs for Thailand to attend an external camp lasting five days. This preparation is crucial as they head to Kolkata to face India on June 6 in the fifth round of the first group competitions within the joint Asian qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup and 2027 Asian Cup finals.

Group A also features teams from Qatar and Afghanistan. The training camp, starting today, will continue until June 3. The team will then depart for India, returning to Kuwait the next day to prepare for hosting Afghanistan in the sixth and final round of qualifiers.

As it stands, the Qatari team leads the group with 12 points. The Indian team holds second



Kuwait coach supervises the training session.

place with 4 points, tied with Afghanistan but ahead on goal

difference. The Blue Team is in fourth place with 3 points.

Earlier, Rui Pinto has announced the 26-player list for the matches against India and Afghanistan.

The Football Association aims to enhance the team's readiness and ensure thorough preparation for the critical

SOCCER

match against India. This encounter is pivotal for advancing to the decisive round of the Asian Cup finals. The team is focused on securing victories in the upcoming matches to qualify for the final stage of the World Cup qualifiers and guarantee a spot in the Asian Cup finals.

De Cuyper the only newcomer

De Bruyne to lead Belgium at Euro 2024 with Witsel

BRUSSELS, May 28, (AP): Manchester City midfielder Kevin De Bruyne will lead a rejuvenated Belgium side including a once-retired Alex Witsel at the European Championship next month.

De Bruyne and Witsel were on the 25-man list unveiled by coach Domenico Tedesco on Tuesday. Real Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois, preparing for the Champions League final, was not.

Defender Maxim De Cuyper, who won the Belgian league with Club Brugge last weekend, was the only newcomer.

De Bruyne and Witsel are remaining members of the so-called golden

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generation of Belgian players. While De Bruyne's presence was expected, Witsel's was a surprise after Tedesco dropped him from his first squad last year. Witsel soon after announced his retirement from international soccer and did not play in qualifying.

But Tedesco said Witsel's recent excellent showings with Atletico Madrid convinced him the 35-year-old midfielder was the right choice. Tedesco also traveled to Spain to meet Witsel and discuss a comeback. There was no hard feelings, the coach said, and Witsel immediately agreed to return.

"First of all, it's about the quality," Tedesco said. "There is no doubt he is a high-quality player. We need him, he is an experienced player, he can help

the young players. Either if he is playing or not, we have a good feeling with him."

Witsel can play in midfield or defense, a versatility that increased his value.

"He has started to play as a central defender, it changed a lot," Tedesco said. "As a (number) six, probably he would not be in the squad today. I have to be very transparent."

Tedesco said Courtois was not ready for Euro 2024, which starts on June 14 in Germany, after recently returning from injury. The men have been at odds since a dispute last year, and Courtois announced in December he



Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne (second left), is challenged by Manchester United's Sofyan Amrabat during the English FA Cup final soccer match between Manchester City and Manchester United at Wembley Stadium in London. (AP)

would miss the Euros.

"Of course he knows his body the best," Tedesco said about Courtois.

Tedesco succeeded Roberto Martinez as Belgium manager in February 2023. He has yet to lose a game in charge of the Red Devils.

Belgium will face Slovakia, Romania and Ukraine in Group E. Belgium's best result at the continental tournament was runner-up in 1980.

Tedesco can still amend his squad before a June 7 deadline when teams must give UEFA a list with a minimum of 23 players and a maximum of 26. He said two extra "young" players will join the squad as training partners dur-

ing the Euro preparations.

Tedesco said he had been following the left-footed De Cuyper closely since he took over as coach but the defender had so far been overlooked because of strong competition.

"The situation changed a little bit and we are open," Tedesco said. "We have to choose the best players."

Up front, strikers Romelu Lukaku and Loïs Openda were chosen at the expense of Michy Batshuayi. Tedesco said it did not make sense to have Batshuayi in the squad knowing that Charles de Ketelaere, Dodi Lukebakio and Leandro Trossard can also cover his position.

"We did not see the necessity to take a third striker," Tedesco said.

Belgium Squad: Goalkeepers: Matz Sels (Nottingham Forest), Koen Casteels (Wolfsburg), Thomas Kaminski (Luton).

Defenders: Wout Faes (Leicester), Timothy Castagne (Julian), Arthur Theate (Rennes), Jan Vertonghen (Anderlecht), Axel Witsel (Atletico Madrid), Zeno Debast (Anderlecht), Thomas Meunier (Trabzonspor), Maxim De Cuyper (Club Brugge)

Midfielders: Aster Vranckx (Wolfsburg), Youri Tielemans (Aston Villa), Orel Mangala (Lyon), Kevin De Bruyne (Manchester City), Arthur Vermeeren (Atletico Madrid), Amadou Onana (Everton)

Forwards: Romelu Lukaku (Roma), Charles de Ketelaere (Atalanta), Jeremy Doku (Manchester City), Loïs Openda (Leipzig), Leandro Trossard (Arsenal), Johan Bakayoko (PSV Eindhoven), Dodi Lukebakio (Sevilla), Yannick Carrasco (Al-Shabab)

Brown named series MVP

INDIANAPOLIS, May 28, (AP): Derrick White stood stoically at midcourt as his teammates celebrated Monday night.

He saw Jayson Tatum toss the ball high into the air, Al Horford run toward the coaching staff and looking for his son long before Jaylen Brown hoisted the Eastern Conference finals MVP trophy. Even coach Joe Mazzulla shared the moment with his wife.

White, meanwhile, seemed ready to get back to work after making the tie-breaking 3-pointer with 43 seconds left, giving the Boston Celtics a 105-102 victory and their second trip in three years to the NBA Finals with a 4-0 sweep over the Indiana Pacers.

"Great shot. We work on that all the time, two-on-one reads," Brown said after scoring 29 points, grabbing six rebounds and blocking a key shot with 65 seconds left to preserve the



Boston Celtics guard Jaylen Brown celebrates at the end of Game 4. (AP)

lead. "Before that, I told D White just to stay ready and that was a big shot, a big shot to send us to the finals."

White scored just 16 points and made just 1 of 8 3s before making the decisive shot from the corner. Until then, he seemed to have taken a back seat to Brown, Tatum, who had 26 points, 13 rebounds and eight assists, Jrue Holiday and even the 37-year-old Horford.

But when the Celtics needed a basket to chase the 18th NBA title in franchise history, the poised White delivered with a shot that will be remembered forever in Boston.

"We feel confident, we feel comfortable in any type of game, and we feel we've got answers for anything at us," White said. "We've just got to find the right ones."

BASKETBALL

Boston's victory came exactly one year after White's tip-in rallied from the Celtics from a 3-0 deficit to tie the conference finals against Miami - only to lose Game 7 at home. This year, they've won seven straight playoff games, are 6-0 on the road and are 3-0 in elimination games.

It certainly wasn't easy against the Pacers, who were a perfect 6-0 on their home court before ending the season with two straight losses at a sold out Gainbridge Fieldhouse. Indiana lost three times in the series despite holding leads or being tied in the final minute. It happened again Monday as Boston pitched a shutout for the final 3 1/2 minutes.

Coach Rick Carlisle promised his team would fight hard to extend its season - and, as usual, this young roster didn't disappoint.

Temper flared briefly in the third when Pacers center Myles Turner knocked guard White to the ground, Brown, who was named the MVP of the series, grabbed Turner's shoulder and Turner shoved Brown away.

Best of the Rest

Union stay in touch: Joaquin Mosquera and Jeronimo Domina scored in each half as Union Santa Fe rose to fifth in Argentina's Primera Division standings with a 2-0 home win over Barracas Central.

Mosquera opened the scoring at Estadio 15 de Abril with a long-range free-kick and Domina doubled the advantage in second-half stoppage time by poking home from inside the six-yard box after Mauro Diale's headed flick.

The result leaves Union with seven points from three games, behind leaders Racing Club on goal difference. Barracas Central are 17th in the 28-team standings, three points further back.

"It's the first time this season that we clicked in every aspect," Union manager Cristian Gonzalez told a news conference.

"The first half was particularly pleasing. Our pressure and intensity meant that they [Barracas] played badly and that in itself deserves praise. I help that we can maintain the form that we showed tonight." In only other Primera Division fixture, Atletico Tucuman were held to a 1-1 home draw by Platense. (Xinhua)

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Emery signs deal until 2029: Aston Villa coach Unai Emery has signed a new five-year contract after leading the club to qualification for next season's Champions League, it was confirmed.

Emery has completely changed Villa's fortunes after replacing Steven Gerrard in October 2022 when they were just one place above the bottom three of the Premier League. The 52-year-old quickly brought results and Villa finished seventh last season to qualify for the Conference League, while this season they got to the semi-finals of the European competition and finished fourth in the Premier League.

Emery's previous contract still had three years to run, but now the club has assured his long-term future after rumors of interest from other big clubs in Europe. (Xinhua)

Turner was called for an offensive foul as he and Brown each drew technical fouls.

There was another scary moment when Brown's hand hit T.J. McConnell in the face, sending him crashing to the ground. The refs ruled it was a common foul following a replay review. But the two frays didn't change the back-and-forth tenor of this game - or this series - and the Pacers never backed down.

"Our guys embraced it," Carlisle said of his team's effort without Haliburton and throughout the playoffs. "Give them (the Celtics) credit for the stuff they pulled off at the end of the last two games. They simply made more plays."