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Intense search as Iran president's helicopter missing after 'accident'

Kuwait monitoring developments, offers support • Iranian FM also on board with Raisi

Amir receives Prime Minister



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Seif Palace on May 19, 2024. — KUNA

TEHRAN: Iran launched a large-scale search and rescue effort to scour a fog-shrouded mountain area after President Ebrahim Raisi's helicopter went missing Sunday in what state media described as an "accident". Fears grew for the 63-year-old ultraconservative after contact was lost with the helicopter carrying him as well as Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and others in East Azerbaijan province, reports said. State television reported that "an accident happened to the helicopter carrying the president" in the Jofa region of the western province, while some officials described it as a "hard landing".

An Iranian official told Reuters the lives of Raisi and Amir-Abdollahian were "at risk following the helicopter crash". "We are still hopeful but information coming from the crash site is very concerning," the official told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity. State TV quoted an official as saying that at least one passenger and one crewmember had been in contact with rescuers. It also said the helicopter had been found, though Iran's Red Crescent denied this report.

Kuwait's ministry of foreign affairs said Sunday it is closely monitoring with concern reports regarding the helicopter incident of Raisi and his accompanying delegation. In a



A handout picture provided by the Iranian presidency on May 19, 2024 shows Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi and his Azeri counterpart Ilham Aliyev meeting at the site of a dam jointly built by Iran and Azerbaijan on the Aras River, ahead of its inauguration ceremony. — AFP

statement, the ministry expressed on behalf of Kuwait best wishes and safety of the Iranian president and his accompanying delegation. The ministry affirmed its support for Iran in these delicate circumstances.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei urged Iranians to "not worry" about the leadership of the Islamic republic, saying "there will be no disruption in the country's work". "We hope that Almighty God will bring our dear president and his companions back in

full health into the arms of the nation," he said in on state TV.

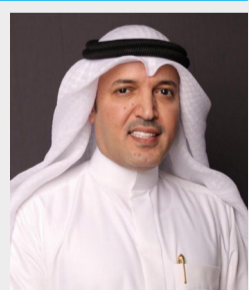
Expressions of concern and offers to help came from abroad, including Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Qatar and Turkey, as well as from the European Union, which said it activated its rapid response mapping service to aid in the search effort. Turkey is sending 32 mountain rescue specialists to help Iran in the search for the helicopter, the government's emergency

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Saudi King to undergo tests

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's King Salman is suffering from high temperature and joint pain and will undergo medical tests, state media reported Sunday. The tests will take place at a clinic at the Al-Salam Palace in Jeddah, the Royal Court said in a statement published by the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA). "The treating medical team decided to conduct some tests to diagnose the health condition and to ensure his health," the statement said. — AFP



Fahad Al-Ajmi



Waleed Al-Dagher

Dagher, Ajmi win municipal seats

KUWAIT: Waleed Al-Dagher and Fahad Al-Ajmi won seats in the sixth and ninth constituencies, respectively, for the 13th legislative term of the Municipal Council on Saturday. Announcing the results of the by-elections, head of the main committee of the sixth constituency Abdullah Al-Atal said Al-Dagher got 3,322 votes. Meanwhile, head of the main committee of the ninth constituency Nasser Al-Badr said Al-Ajmi got 10,404 votes. — KUNA

Nod to Civil Service Council, citizenship investigation panel

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Cabinet approved Sunday a draft decree forming the Civil Service Council and a decree to form a supreme committee for investigating Kuwaiti citizenship. This came during its weekly meeting at Seif Palace, presided by HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. HH the Prime Minister thanked the ministers for accepting their participation in the newly formed government, calling them to devote themselves to work and implement what was stated in the contents of HH the Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's speech.

Continued on Page 6



KUWAIT: HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs a Cabinet meeting on May 19, 2024. — KUNA

Deadly Zionist strikes hit Gaza

GAZA: A Zionist strike killed 31 people in central Gaza Sunday, the Palestinian territory's civil defense agency said, as US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan visited for talks on the conflict. Zionist troops have moved in on the Gaza Strip's far-southern city of Rafah, which the army describes as the last Hamas stronghold and where the United States says 800,000 civilians have been newly displaced by the fighting.

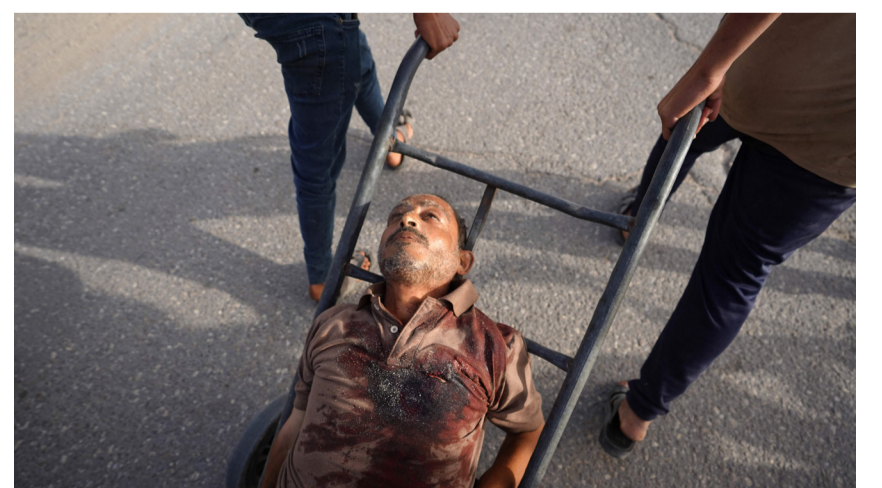
Hamas' armed wing, the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades, said it was targeting Zionist forces stationed at Rafah crossing — a vital conduit for humanitarian aid that is now closed — with mortar shells. The Zionist entity has also fought and bombed resurgent Hamas forces in northern and central areas of the coastal territory previously considered to be under army control, sparking US warnings that it could become mired in a lengthy

counterinsurgency campaign.

In the latest aerial bombardment overnight, Gaza's civil defense agency said a Zionist strike killed 31 people and wounded 20 in a home in the central Nuseirat refugee camp. Witness Yasser Abu Oula told AFP an entire residential complex "was destroyed" and "there are still bodies under the rubble".

Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to keep fighting Hamas in Gaza until the Iran-backed Islamist group is defeated and all remaining captives are released. But he has faced intense opposition and calls to announce a plan for Gaza's post-war governance — from top ally Washington and from mass street protests, and now also from members of his war cabinet.

Centrist politician Benny Gantz threatened Saturday to quit the governing hard-right coalition unless Netanyahu approves a post-war "action plan" by June 8. Amid the political turmoil, Sullivan was to meet his Zionist counterpart Tzachi Hanegbi and Netanyahu for talks on the brutal Gaza



GAZA: Palestinians transport a wounded man in Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip on May 18, 2024. — AFP

conflict and post-war scenarios, after earlier meeting Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the kingdom.

Gantz demanded steps to host Hamas, to bring home the hostages, and towards the formation of an "American, European, Arab and Pales-

tinian administration that will manage civilian affairs in the Gaza Strip". Netanyahu dismissed Gantz's comments as "washed-up words", saying they would lead to "a defeat for (the Zionist entity)" and "the establishment of

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MEW, KPTC launch energy conservation awareness

Ministry of Electricity signs contracts

In my view

What we learn from history



Dr Firyal Alshalabi

Local@kuwaittimes.com

“We learn from history that we learn nothing from history,” is a saying often repeated nowadays. Some attribute it to the playwright and political critic George Bernard Shaw, others attribute it to the German philosopher of the eighteenth century, Georg Hegel. But is it true? Do we learn nothing from history and our past? Is that why history keeps repeating itself?

The brutal extermination of Palestinians today in Gaza since October 7 looks very much similar to the extermination of Muslims in the south of Spain during the 15th century. The genocide, the burning of schools and mosques, the forced deportation, the ethnic cleansing are horrifyingly the same. Comparing Isabella and Ferdinand to Biden and Netanyahu is not far-fetched.

History keeps repeating itself. Didn't Muslims and Arabs learn something from what happened then, and many other times and places, to prevent it from happening again? There's an abundance of historical research and documents about the Spanish Inquisition. They provide so much information as to why and how the Spaniards were able to get rid of a tremendous civilization that flourished for eight hundred years in Andalusia.

How were they able to do it? Among others, two factors are the most obvious: One, the web of treachery and traitors that Ferdinand and Isabella implanted inside the Muslim empire was a powerful weapon. Traitors, playing friends on both sides, were capable of showing Muslim rulers, hungry for wealth and power, false facts as truth. Two, the disunity and disagreements amongst the rulers of the different regions of Andalusia proved most deadly. Disunity and friction ultimately pulled the Muslim empire down.

Reading historical documents can be cumbersome to many, even to avid readers. That's why historical fiction novels come in handy. They provide accurate historical narratives while entertaining readers. I'd like to recommend two historical novels by prominent authors that explain what happened to the Muslims of Spain during those dark days of history. The *Trilogy of Granada*, by the Egyptian author Radwa Ashoor, and *Badr Bin Mughira: The Shaheen of Andalus* by the Pakistani novelist Naseem Hijazi.

Professor Ashoor's knowledge of history and her literary style in Arabic is a treasure to be indulged in at all times. Her main characters, especially Mariama, and her grandson, inspire readers with hope. Her novel clearly displays that no matter the means of annihilation the occupiers use, the original plant nurtured in the soil for hundreds of years can never be extracted. Its roots will continue spreading and flourishing in different ways, and different places.

Badr Bin Mughira: The Shaheen of Andalus by the novelist Naseem Hijazi is another treasure. It is a sweeping heroic narrative, heart-wrenching yet romantic that leaves the reader with pride and hope. Readers will re-live those dark days in Al-Andalus and the agony of its characters. If you're like me, you'll see Abu Obaida in *Badr bin Mughira* and relish his bravery and honesty. Naseem Hijazi's knowledge of historical events and his extensive research of that period is astounding.

Badr Bin Mughira, sheds light on the intricacies of the situation during the fall of Muslim Spain. The bravery, the treachery, the resistance and the fall of the Muslims at the hand of Ferdinand and his troops could have been changed if only the rulers were better informed and stood united. At one point of the novel, Hijazi had Ferdinand declare that, “The primary guarantee for our successes is the disunity among the Muslims... Had they been united like us, we could not have gained victory over them.”

How true is that today? It is possible to learn from history if we set our minds on that purpose. There must be people in power out there who can learn from history and use their knowledge to prevent genocide from happening again. One can only hope. Look at the refreshing waves of thousands of students all over the world shaking the foundations of colonizing empires with their demands and power of knowledge. When people hunger for justice, they need only to unite and persist to reach that goal. So far, the people of Gaza and their supporters, are showing the world that solidarity is power, and their sacrifices will one day bring Palestine back to the map with all its glory.

NOTE: Dr Firyal Alshalabi is the author of *Summer 1990*, a novel about the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussain and its liberation. Several of her children's books in Arabic have gained wide acclaim. *Tasneem* and her *Precious Shoes* won second place in the international contest of Kuwait Awqaf Public Foundation. *My Uncle Khaled* won first place at the Rashid Bin Humaid Award for the Arts in the UAE.

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy (MEW) launched 30 public transportation buses carrying awareness advertisements to promote energy conservation in cooperation with the Kuwait Public Transport Company (KPTC). The Ministry stated in a press release that the advertisements for the “Wafer” (Conserve) campaign and the “Hafiz” (Preserve) program, which encourage the rationalization of water and electricity consumption, were broadcast.

This grants people incentives of up to 50 percent off their bills through conserving water and electricity in private residences, reflecting the ministry's belief in the importance of awareness campaigns to reduce excessive consumption of electricity

and water. The ministry explained that the national campaign will assist in updating its vision regarding the country's electricity and water needs and rationalizing their consumption, which will directly alleviate the burden on public finances and contribute to the development of the environmental system in Kuwait. The campaign aimed to change the consumption behavior of electricity and water among individuals in Kuwait.

Ministry signs contracts

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Electricity, Water, and Renewable Energy has signed contracts on Sunday for the purchase of approximately 500 megawatts of energy through the Gulf electricity interconnection network

extending from Oman to Kuwait. The undersecretary of the ministry, Haitham Al-Ali, said in a press statement that this brings technical and economic benefits to Kuwait, especially with the proximity of the offers submitted for energy purchase prices to the cost of production.

For his part, the CEO of the Gulf Electric Interconnection Authority, Engineer Ahmed Al-Ibrahim, said in a similar statement that the energy market is one of the most efficient markets in the region. He pointed out that the Ministry and the Gulf Interconnection Authority have agreed on the offers submitted for the supply of electric energy to Kuwait during the coming June so that they can be renewed during the coming July and

August according to the conditions and needs of interconnected networks from member states.

He pointed out that the trade of electric energy between the Gulf countries aims to sustain development, raise the level of reliability of supply electricity, and save electricity production costs by providing sustainable electricity at competitive prices, as well as reduce the costs of electricity production and station construction. Al-Ibrahim said that this trade enables system operators to reduce costs and operate systems more efficiently by exploiting opportunities to import or export energy at a short-term level, which benefits the electricity companies and authorities in the Gulf countries and increases the safety and efficiency of operational operations. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait's museums celebrate International Museum Day by organizing different kinds of activities under the theme 'Museums for Education and Research'. — KUNA photos



Arab League underlines museums' role in culture, education, development

CAIRO: The Arab League has underlined the significant historical role of museums in the domains of culture, education, and sustainable development, regarding them as people's living memory that links the present to the past. The remark was given by Assistant Secretary-General of the Cairo-based bloc, Ambassador Haifaa Abu Ghazala, in a press statement, marking International Museum Day (IMD), which falls on May 18.

She said that the museums reflect the civilization and history of previous generations for the sake of subsequent ones, given that they are impressive civilizations and cultural interfaces for their countries. The museums are now playing a great role in disseminating culture and contributing to the educational system and sustainable development on the basis that they are important cultural beacons, she added. Every year since 1977, the world marks International Museum Day (IMD), which represents a unique moment for the international museum community.

The objective is to raise awareness about the fact

Ministry, Bait Al-Othman Heritage Museum sign cooperation protocol

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Ministry of Information on Sunday signed a cooperation protocol with the Bait Al-Othman Museum to promote Kuwaiti heritage and nationalism. On the cooperation protocol, the Undersecretary of the Information Ministry, Dr Nasser Mhaisen, elaborated that this protocol seeks to create and apply strategies of cultural and intellectual partnerships between institutions and museums.

Through the cooperation protocol, Kuwaiti cultural events and exhibitions would be broadcast on both television and radio for everyone to experience, added Dr Mhaisen. Dr Mhaisen praised Bait Al-Othman Museum's role in setting a cultural and historical example in Kuwait for local and visiting enthusiasts. Meanwhile, Abdullah Al-Othman Heritage Center Director Anwar Al-Refai told KUNA that the cooperation agreement is a commemorative effort to highlight Kuwait's forefathers and honor their legacy, paving the way for Kuwait to flourish.

Al-Refai also praised the Minister of Information, Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, for his determina-

tion to cooperate with both the private and volunteer sectors to emphasize the importance of displaying Kuwaiti history and heritage. According to the cooperation protocol, the museum's displays will be well prepared for filming. Furthermore, the cooperation between Bait Al-Othman Museum and the Ministry of Information will result in holding events and festivities related to the national holidays of Kuwait as well as promoting cultural tourism in the country. — KUNA

International Museum Day

Meanwhile, Kuwait's museums celebrated on Saturday International Museum Day by organizing different kinds of activities under the theme “Museums for Education and Research.” The celebration of Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyah at the American Cultural Center included drawing, photography, and education activities as well as artistic workshops, in addition to storytelling for children and organizing tours to help parents discover their children's innovative skills.

Additionally, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Cultural Center's celebration included a series of distinguished programs aiming to enhance the role of museums and cultural centers in the educational and cultural process. The festival involved some other activities, including interactive workshops

and panel discussions with experts and academics in the areas of education, museums, and scientific research. Furthermore, the center had a presentation on the role of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, the 11th ruler and founder of modern Kuwait, in the cultural and educational renaissance.

The show highlighted the phases of the cultural and educational movement in the country and the key role of museums in disseminating culture and science. The center further presents interactive and interesting workshops for families and topics about the developed role of museums in backing official educational and innovative approaches, as well as the future of preserving cultural heritage. Every year since 1977, the world marks the IMD, which represents a unique moment for the international museum community.

The objective is to raise awareness about the fact that museums are a key means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures, and development of mutual understanding, cooperation, and peace among peoples. The world marked the IMD for the first time 40 years ago, and more museums participate across the globe. Last year, more than 37,000 museums took part in the event in about 158 countries and territories. This year's theme, “Museums for Education and Research,” underscores the pivotal role of cultural institutions in providing a holistic educational experience. — KUNA



Director of Abdullah Al-Othman Heritage Center Anwar Al-Refai and Undersecretary of the Information Ministry Dr. Nasser Mhaisen.

Ministry approves plan for next academic year

KUWAIT: The Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Dr Adel Al-Adwani, on Sunday approved the plan of foreign missions for students with secondary education in public and private education, as registration will begin via the Ministry's website from June 1 to July 2. The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Higher Education in charge, Lamia Al-Mehlam, said in a press release that the minister approved the plan of foreign missions for the years 2024–2025, explaining that the plan was prepared in line with the requirements of government and private entities and the recommendations of the Civil Service Bureau.

The plan is diverse and includes several specialties in various countries in order to diversify the educational outputs with the requirements of the state development plan, pointing out that the Ministry has concluded new scholarship agreements in the specialty of human medicine based on the needs of the state medical specialties. The Ministry urged students applying for registration in the Ministry's foreign missions plan to review the offered specialties and the conditions for registration on the Ministry's website. The student can take the IELTS test after admission to the mission. — KUNA

Conference tackles health challenges

KUWAIT: Meeting requirements to ensure better society's health is the main challenge in the country's development plans, said Minister of Health Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi. His remarks came during the eighth internal diseases conference, organized by Amiri Hospital on Saturday, with the participation of local and international experts. The conference is key to developing the field in Kuwait and is part of the ministry's agenda to tackle different health-related challenges and different kinds of diseases, the minister said.

Meanwhile, Minister Al-Awadhi affirmed the need to study and monitor the rate of such

diseases among society's categories to determine the best methods to fight and prevent them. The event will include seminars and workshops led by consultant doctors specializing in different medical fields, the minister said, hoping that the conference will come out with important recommendations to develop medical services in Kuwait, protect patients' rights, and ensure their safety.

On his part, the head of the internal diseases department in the hospital, who also chairs the conference, Dr Wisam Al-Muhaini, said the event comes as the hospital celebrates 75 years since its establishment in 1949. The event is a great opportunity to share experience in the field, said Dr Al-Muhaini, noting that the workshops will focus on training doctors on diagnostic sonars, which are key in diagnosing diseases precisely and within a short time. — KUNA

MoCI requests data from business owners

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) said it has notified business owners via the Sahel app, requesting them to log accurate data on actual beneficiary stakeholders in a bid to improve the business environment. The move also aims to prevent suspicious transactions, including money laundering, improve the economic capacity of the state, and help the auditing agencies fulfill their mandate, according to a press release from the Ministry. Business owners are requested to disclose the accurate data of the registered stakeholders, whether the beneficiaries had previous registration at the Ministry or not. They have one week, starting from receiving a Sahel notification, to complete the process of logging the data via the following link: ereg.moci.gov.kw, the statement added. — KUNA

Local

Zain and SACGC recognize winners of National Robotics Competition

Qualified teams represent Kuwait at VEX Robotics World Championship in US



Al Aqely, Al Khashti, Al Dehani, bin Sabt and Al Jeri honor Kuwait University's team.



Awarding one of the high school teams.

KUWAIT: Zain and Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity (SACGC) – a center of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), awarded the winning students of the Kuwait National Robotics Competition (KNRC) held earlier this year. After qualifying from the competition, the students proudly represented Kuwait at the VEX Robotics World Championship 2024 held recently in the United States, where Kuwait University's team achieved the Build Award.

The awarding ceremony was hosted by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences at its headquarters in Kuwait City. In attendance were KFAS Deputy Director General for Support Programs and SACGC Vice Chairman Dr Saleh Al Aqely, Zain Kuwait Chief Corporate Affairs and Relations Officer Waleed Al Khashti, Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity General Manager Neda Al Dehani, Acting Dean of the College of Science and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at Kuwait University Dr Mohammed Hussain bin Sabt, and KNRC supervisor Dr Noura Al Jeri. The students, along with their parents and teachers, were also present.

During the event, the winning teams from middle school, high school, and university levels were awarded. The teams won at KNRC and later qualified to represent Kuwait at the VEX Robotics World Championship in the US. The awarded teams were

Kuwait University's team, American Baccalaureate School (ABS)'s team, SACGC Academy's team, Kuwait International English School (KIES)'s team, and Ibn Al Ameer School's team.

From the above, the team from the Computer Science Department, College of Science, Kuwait University, achieved the Build Award at the World Championship. It was the first university-level team from the Middle East to claim an award at the VEX Robotics World Championship 2024 (out of 15 awards). The team was among 120 university-level teams participating in the competition from around the world.

Zain, SACGC, and Kuwait University expressed their pride in all the teams that qualified from KNRC and represented Kuwait in the World Championship in the US. Reaching this international arena is a testament to Kuwaiti young people's talent and creativity and affirms the fact that they are more than capable to compete with their peers from around the globe. This international experience has also contributed to growing the students' passion for technology, and will encourage them to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). In addition, this step was a direct outcome of the fruitful partnership between the local public and private sectors to empower the next generation of innovators in Kuwait.

The Kuwait National Robotics Competition was held early this year, organized by the Computer Sci-



Awarding one of the middle school teams.

ence Department, College of Science, Kuwait University in partnership with Zain and Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, and in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. This partnership came under the umbrella of Innovation

Nation, the initiative under which all of Zain's innovation and entrepreneurship programs fall, with a focus on STEM areas. The initiative mainly targets young people and entrepreneurs and aims to foster a digitally capable generation.

Listen to me, before you diagnose me!

By Ghadeer Ghloom

KUWAIT: Some psychologists can get caught up in trying to diagnose their patient's problem with a certain illness without thorough listening sessions, which can worsen the case for both sides. Psychologist Abdullah Waleed AlManea spoke to Kuwait Times about the issue of psychologists jumping into conclusions during therapy sessions, through trying to figure out what is wrong with a patient by following basic diagnosing methods that cannot reach profound and complicated feelings of hurt and trouble.

AlManea said: "Diagnosing patients can sometimes be unhelpful because it can ignore their feelings of pain and distress. Certain psychologists can focus too much on trying to label mental illness in

their patients, which can be overwhelming. This focus on diagnosis can take away from the therapy process, turning the complex human mind into a simple checklist of behaviors based on diagnostic rules. This problem often starts with using quick and basic tools to assess patients, like questionnaires, which oversimplify years of struggles into a few easy answers. Giving a diagnosis without truly understanding the patient also adds to this oversimplified approach."

AlManea sheds light on the potential drawbacks of overly relying on diagnosing patients, emphasizing how diagnoses can sometimes overlook the emotional experience of pain. The risk of reducing the complexity of the human mind to mere labels and checklists may detract from the essence of the therapeutic process. According to AlManea the solution lies in building a strong and caring bond with the pa-



Abdullah AlManea



tient, where listening is a deep and active process. "Not just hearing about the symptoms in diagnostic books, but also picking up on subtle signs like how the patients talk, move, and feel. By paying attention to these details, psychologists can better understand the patient's pain, avoid misdiagnoses, and effectively address the real issues. This approach doesn't just help the patient's future but also protects against other factors that might seem like distress," he said. Attentive listening is the foundation for ensuring authentic addressing of a patient's issue.

'Energy security vital for growth'

CAIRO: Assistant Secretary General and Head of the Economic Affairs Sector at the Arab League, Dr. Ali Al-Maliki, underlined Sunday that energy security is vital for impacting economic growth, national security, and citizens' well-being. In a speech delivered on Al-Maliki's behalf by Director of the Energy Department at the Arab League Eng Jamila Matar, during the 12th Arab Energy Efficiency Day, Al-Maliki underscored the strategic importance of energy security in a world driven by interests and conflicting with strife.

He pointed out the challenges in ensuring energy security and transitioning to sustainable sources, encouraging a comprehensive approach that includes improving energy efficiency, developing renewable energy, protecting critical energy infrastructure, and reducing carbon emissions. Al-Maliki identified energy efficiency as crucial for energy security, aiming to provide energy services at the lowest cost without compromising quality, which involves managing energy demand through various efficiency strategies to reduce consumption in line with national development plans.

The Arab Ministerial Council for Electricity (AMCE) has been tracking energy efficiency progress in the region, developing and tracking national energy efficiency plans. They also prepared a guide on renewable energy and energy efficiency in Arab countries, providing statistical information on policies and programs aimed at improving energy production and consumption efficiency, he mentioned. Al-Maliki announced the theme for the 12th Arab Energy Efficiency Day competition: "Best Patent in Energy Efficiency," following the decision of the 38th session of AMCE to implement resolution 294, underscoring the role of intellectual property in promoting innovation and achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs).

On his side, Executive Director of the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE), Jaoud Al-Kharraz, described the day as a celebration of energy, focusing on patents due to the Arab world's lag in this area and calling for greater efforts in patent registration, research, and innovation in sustainable energy. Al-Kharraz emphasized the significant role patents play in economic development, supporting decision-making in research, innovation, and investment, stressing the need for a focus on social responsibility to improve economic, social, and cultural conditions by ensuring reliable and equitable energy supplies for all citizens in the Arab region.

Meanwhile, First Undersecretary for Research, Planning, and Authorities Follow-Up at the Egyptian Ministry of Electricity, Dr. Ahmad Mohina, discussed Egypt's achievements in energy efficiency, including high-efficiency power plants and substantial investments in electricity transmission, clarifying the urgent need for enhanced efforts in energy efficiency across the Arab world.

Approximately \$10 billion was spent on electricity transmission networks in the past 10 years, he said, noting that Egypt reduced the rate of fuel needed to produce each unit of electricity measurement by 20 percent, which saved about a billion dollars and led to a reduction in emissions harmful to the environment. The Arab League Energy Department, in collaboration with RCREEE, organized the 12th Arab Energy Efficiency Day celebration at its headquarters in Cairo, featuring a session on the best energy efficiency patent competition, won by Qatari engineer Dr. Youssef Mohammad Youssef Al-Horr for his air conditioning system project. — KUNA

Are your dreams trying to tell you something?

By Passant Hisham

KUWAIT: Every night, when people finally close their eyes and put an end to the day's events, they are transported to a different world - one that might be too fictional or just too random. Yet, it is undeniably a place where they experience a sense of liberation from their mundane reality. "A dream is a theater in which the dreamer is himself the scene, the player, the prompter, the author, the producer, the public and the critic," said Badria Al-Saeedy, a dream analyst who attributed this quote to Carl Jung, whom she fondly referred to as her "Godfather."

According to Saeedy, dreams mirror our daily reality, yet twist it into forms of images, sending iconic messages from the unconscious to the conscious mind. Delving into dreams unveils the deepest hidden causes behind our personal struggles, unlocking childhood traumas or buried memories. Hence, she explained, this made psychologists like Freud Sigmund and Carl Jung consider dreams as a potent tool for mental state analysis. "Dreams can tell you who you truly are as they have the power to guide you from darkness into light," added Saeedy.

In her contemplation of dreams, Saeedy noted, "Even the most complex concepts like 'immortality' or 'death' which our analytical minds might not fully grasp, can be easily interpreted or experienced through dreams." Viewing dreams as "a world unbounded by the physical rules of our reality," she highlighted their function as a direct window to our souls, unspoken desires, and the unknown future. "Unlike our solid reality, dreams transport us far from where our minds usually rest," she said.

"It's like another dimension to perceive life."

Sometimes, the same dreams might also be experienced by different people, as Saeedy stated the existence of universal themes in dreams. The repetition of these dream patterns is a signifier for something deeper, indicating an ongoing internal struggle for the dreamer. Referring to one popular theme - "falling from a high place," she highlighted its indication of the dreamer's relentless pursuit of control. Such dreams serve as a counterbalance, offering an opposing experience to the desired feeling, thus establishing equilibrium in emotions.

"Once this dream stops showing up, means the person is finally unshackled from one of his greatest fears," she added. Dreams are also "a blend between intuitional and analytical thinking of your subconscious," she said. As you casually spend your time during the day, your subconscious automatically stores data from your surroundings, working in harmony with your intuition to offer insights into future events, termed as "Visionary dreams."

She described these types of dreams as direct conduits to divine messages. Recognized by their association with peaceful and positive emotions, she remarked, "if you happen to have these kinds of dreams, you'll instantly identify them without question." Supported by Saeedy's experience and previous research, she confidently stated that "It's impossible to find someone who doesn't dream. Unless they are suffering from a bad memory or lack of connection to inner self."

The same goes for the person who mostly encounters too complicated or too random dreams that are hardly deciphered. She observed that individuals of this sort often endure "emotional sup-



Badria Al-Saeedy



pression," constantly escaping the confrontation of negative memories or feelings. In contrast to those who enjoy healthier relationships with themselves, they tend to experience more "vivid dreams," signaling a more engaged response to their reality.

The best way to deal with dreams, according to Saeedy, is to always look beyond their images. Instead of just seeing the scenes and symbols, try to link each theme with the emotions that might have triggered it. By doing this, you can decipher the subconscious messages and unlock a gate to deeper self-awareness.

Arabs seeking unified military terminology

CAIRO: The Arab League has stressed the importance of unified military terminology and symbols in easing joint operations and training, as well as strengthening Arab military work and unifying military visions and doctrines among Arab countries. This came in a speech by the Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Arab Affairs and National Security Sector at the Arab League, Ambassador Khalil Al-Thawadi, during the 64th symposium of the Committee for the Unification of Military Terminology and Concepts.

The committee began its work on Sunday and will be held over a period of 12 days, chaired by Iraq, with participation from delegations representing the armed forces of Arab countries. Al-Thawadi noted that this symposium comes as a continuation of the previous symposiums and is based on the recommendations of the 63rd symposium, where the current topic was agreed upon.

The symposium topic is to study military symbols of the air force, air defense, weapons of mass destruction, signals, information systems, and joint supply (supply, transportation, and medical services). He explained that the symposium aims to unify these terms and add them to the dictionary of military terminology, which includes all symbols, abbreviations, and military terms used in Arab armed forces up to the year 2024. — KUNA

Kuwait takes part in Rabat book fair

RABAT: The General Director of the International Book and Publishing Fair in Rabat, Latifa Muftaqir, said on Sunday that Kuwait's participation in the fair added cultural value to the event. In a statement to KUNA during her visit to Kuwait's National Council for Culture, Arts, and Literature (NCCAL) pavilion, Muftaqir said that Kuwait's participation has always been highly anticipated by the visitors, as it provides a wide range of publications in all of the fair's 29 editions. On his part, NCCAL's representative, Mohammad Darwish, during Muftaqir's visit to Kuwait's pavilion, praised Morocco's efforts in organizing and holding the fair and welcoming the participants. Morocco's Prime Minister Aziz Akhannouch kicked off the 29th International Book and Publishing Fair in Rabat on Thursday with 743 participants from 48 countries. — KUNA

Photo of the day



KUWAIT: Pigeons fly past the sun as it rises over Kuwait City on May 18, 2024. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Mideast aviation executives meet



Kuwaiti delegation at the Directors of Civil Aviation in the Middle East meeting. — KUNA photos



RIYADH: Directors of civil aviation in the Middle East are holding a meeting in Riyadh (on May 19–20) to swap expertise and coordinate efforts for ensuring air transportation safety globally. The meeting is organized under the umbrella of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), said Abdullah Al-Rajhi, Kuwait's acting deputy director general for aviation safety, transport, and security, in remarks to KUNA.

Al-Rajhi, who had already taken part in today's session as head of the Kuwaiti Directorate General of Civil Aviation's delegation, told KUNA that he and his conferring peers addressed issues of aviation safety and proposed strategies for the coming years, adding that recommendations were issued for the sake of enhancing safety and security.

On his part, Faisal Al-Asousi, the DGCA aviation supervisor, told the Kuwaiti news agency that

the conferees discussed recommendations and decisions that had been taken at the level of committees and technical groups of ICAO's member states. Kuwait is always interested in partaking in such meetings to contribute to international efforts for regulating the sector and staying abreast of the latest developments in aviation. Hussam Al-Rashid, the DGCA aviation safety director, also took part in the meeting. — KUNA



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Kuwait Red Crescent Society announced on Sunday the graduation of 1,000 students and honored the memorizers of the Holy Quran in the city of Gaziantep in southern Turkey. — KUNA

1,000 Syrian orphans graduate; KRCS honors Quran memorizers

ANKARA: The Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) announced on Sunday the graduation of 1,000 students and honored the memorizers of the Holy Quran in the city of Gaziantep in southern Turkey. The chairman of the board of directors of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, Dr. Hilal Al-Sayer, said in a telephone call with the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that Syrian orphan students have graduated from the kindergarten and primary stages.

This humanitarian project comes within the programs sponsored by the association, with the aim of supporting orphan families and educating their children. He stressed the keenness of the association to help children and the most vulnerable groups. Dr. Al-Sayer said that the donors

are the main supporters in the implementation of these outstanding projects, pointing out that "the support we see today embodies the Kuwaiti role and its slogan (Kuwait is by Your Side) based on the directives of the political leadership."

For his part, the chairman of the board of directors of the Levant Society for the care and sponsorship of orphans, Mohammed Shandi, explained that this project contributed greatly to providing psychological support to the orphans and their families, praising the role of Kuwait, the government, and the people and their great efforts in supporting their Syrians inside and outside Syria.

He added that Kuwait is always proactive in supporting the vulnerable and needy wherever they are, and this confirms its great humanitarian role. It is noteworthy that the Kuwait Red Crescent Society launched a project to shelter and empower Syrian orphan families in cooperation with the Levant Association for the Care and Sponsorship of Orphans in the city of Gaziantep in 2018. — KUNA



Sri Lanka Tamils still haunted by civil war

Thousands forgotten in Syria desert camp

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Kais Saied 'above' everyone

Hundreds rally for Tunisia's president amid 'unlawful' arrests of dissenting public figures

TUNIS: Hundreds of people rallied Sunday in downtown Tunis in support of President Kais Saied amid the recent arrests of journalists, lawyers, and other dissenting public figures in Tunisia. The rally came days after an international backlash over the flurry of arrests, which the UN and the EU said were unlawful.

President Saied on Thursday blasted the international criticism as foreign "interference" and ordered the Tunisian foreign ministry to summon the ambassadors of several countries. "No to foreign interference, because we are a sovereign state," said Saber Rzigue, a protester on Sunday. "We support the Tunisian leadership, particularly President Kais Saied."

Civil society in Tunisia condemned the recent crackdown on dissent, with the country that saw the onset of the Arab Spring readying for presidential elections this autumn. Several prominent pundits, journalists, lawyers and civil society figures in the North African country have been arrested in recent days. "We are against foreign interference and against traitors, even if they are Tunisian," said Mohamed Hentati, another protester. "Today, we want to contribute to history and stand against anyone who wants to occupy our country and try to change its social fabric," he added.

Additionally, around 40 public figures including eight of Saied's political opponents, former ministers, and businessmen, are currently detained as part of an investigation into a "plot against the state security". Sunday's rally also came after a significant protest and strike by lawyers earlier in the week over police raids and arrests in the national bar association.

The head of the bar, Hatem Meziou, called for an end to "the abuse of power" and for President Saied to intervene. But Saied, who seized sweeping powers in 2021, replied on Thursday by saying the arresting of two lawyers was "in full respect for Tunisian law, which guarantees equality and the right to a fair trial".



TUNIS: Supporters of Tunisia's President chant slogans against France and lift placards during a rally rejecting foreign interference in the country's internal affairs, during a rally in Tunis on May 19, 2024. — AFP

In January, Human Rights Watch said Tunisia suffered "further regression in terms of human rights and the rule of law during 2023 in the absence of genuine checks and balances".

"The government has taken new steps to muzzle free speech, prosecute dissent and crack down on migrants and asylum seekers," it added. But demonstrators on Sunday defended the president.

"Kais Saied is above all of us," said Mahmoud, a protester who chose not to give his full name. "It is in him that we trust. He brought us security and peace." — AFP



NUSEIRAT: Palestinians rush trucks as they transport international humanitarian aid from the US-built Trident Pier near Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip on May 18, 2024. — AFP

Consequences of Gaza shortages 'apocalyptic': UN

DOHA: The stranglehold on aid reaching Gaza threatens an "apocalyptic" outcome, the UN's humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths said on Sunday as he warned of famine in the besieged territory. "If fuel runs out, aid doesn't get to the people where they need it, that famine, which we have talked about for so long, and which is looming, will not be looming anymore. It will be present," Griffiths said.

"And I think our worry, as citizens of the international community, is that the consequence is going to be really, really hard. Hard, difficult, and apocalyptic," he told AFP on the sidelines of meetings with Qatari officials in Doha.

A Zionist incursion into the southern Gaza city of Rafah, launched in the face of international outcry, has deepened an already perilous humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip. Griffiths, the UN's Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, said some 50 trucks of aid per day could reach the hardest-hit north of Gaza through the reopened Erez crossing.

But battles near the Rafah and Kerem Shalom crossings in Gaza's south meant the vital routes were "effectively blocked", he explained. "So aid getting in through land routes to the south and for Rafah, and the people dislodged by Rafah is almost nil," Griffiths added.

'Disaster'

The UN said on Saturday that 800,000 people had been "forced to flee" the Zionist entity's assault on Rafah. With fuel, food and medicine running out, Griffiths said the military action in the southern Gaza city was "exactly what we feared it would be". "And we all said that very clearly, that a Rafah opera-

tion is a disaster in humanitarian terms, a disaster for the people already displaced to Rafah. This is now their fourth or fifth displacement," he said.

With key land crossings closed, some relief supplies began flowing in this week via a temporary, floating pier constructed by the United States. Griffiths said the maritime operation was "beginning to bring in some truckloads of aid" but he cautioned "it's not a replacement for the land routes".

On Thursday, the Arab League called for a UN peacekeeping force to be deployed in the Palestinian territories and for an international conference to resolve the Palestinian issue based on the two-state solution. Griffiths said the statement from the 22-member bloc in Manama was "very important because it focused on the future".

'Angry world'

He explained there were a "number of different conferences being mooted and potentially planned" to discuss humanitarian arrangements in Gaza, including in Jordan. "I feel very strongly and I know that the Secretary-General feels very strongly that the United Nations needs to be present at the table when all these things are being discussed," the UN aid chief said.

But he cautioned on the likelihood of a UN peacekeeping force for the Palestinian territories. A proposed deployment could be blocked by a veto from permanent Security Council members, while it would also require the acceptance from the warring parties of the UN's presence.

The UN announced in March that Griffiths, a British barrister, would step down in June over health concerns. He said that in recent years he had observed that "the norms that were built up very painfully, indeed since the founding of the United Nations ... but particularly in the last couple of decades, seem to have been set aside". "There is no consensus on methods of dialogue and negotiation, or mediation, which need to be, in my view, prioritized. And so we have an angry world," Griffiths said. — AFP

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International

Sri Lankan Tamils still haunted by civil war

Emotional ceremony marks 15 years since end of war which killed thousands

MULLIVAICKAL, Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka's minority Tamil community marked 15 years since the end of the island nation's civil war on Saturday in an emotional ceremony that proceeded despite fears authorities would attempt to prevent its staging.

Public events celebrating the Tamil Tigers separatist group — which fought a no-holds-barred battle to establish an ethnic minority homeland — are illegal and authorities have blocked past memorials.

Tamils say the events are held to remember all victims of the decades-long war, which concluded in 2009 after a military offensive in the last Tigers stronghold. The operation was condemned internationally for the indiscriminate bombardment of civilians.

"Thousands died here the day before the war ended," a 41-year-old Tamil village official, who asked not to be identified for fear of reprisal, told AFP at the memorial site in Mullivaikkal. "There were lots of wounded people crying for help," he added. "This will haunt me for the rest of my life." Several thousand Tamils had travelled to the village for the remembrance, where they lit oil lamps to commemorate the dead.

'Impunity is prevailing'

Sri Lankan authorities have repeatedly disrupted similar memorials in the island's former war zones over the years and arrested participants, but Saturday's ceremony went ahead without incident.

This year it was attended by Amnesty International's global chief Agnes Callamard, the most senior foreign dignitary so far to attend a remembrance event in Sri Lanka's battle-scarred north. The rights watchdog has for years pressed Sri Lankan authorities, who have repeatedly refused to permit an international probe into wartime atrocities, to properly investigate and prosecute those responsible for abuses. "We are here to remind the international community that there are people in Sri Lanka waiting for justice," Callamard told reporters after the event.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada, which in 2022 voted to recognize May 18 as Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day, said on Saturday his country would "always advocate for justice and accountability for the crimes committed during the conflict". "Today, we honor the victims, survivors, and their loved ones, who live with the lasting pain caused by this senseless violence," Trudeau said in a statement.

Intimidation continues

Tamil residents near the ceremony site told AFP that security forces had been noticeably more ac-



MULLIVAICKAL: Tamil women grieve during a commemoration ceremony on May 18, 2024 to remember victims of the country's civil war. — AFP

tive in their communities as the anniversary neared. "There is heavy surveillance of the people, and it is intimidation," one Tamil resident said Thursday, asking not to be named for fear of harassment. Saturday marked 15 years since the killing of the Tamil Tigers'

charismatic but reclusive leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, who had led the separatist group in open rebellion against Sri Lankan forces since 1972.

His death in the village of Mullivaikkal was the culmination of the lightning military offensive that

killed at least 40,000 civilians in the final months of the fighting, according to UN estimates. Sri Lankan forces were accused of indiscriminately shelling civilians after telling them to move to "no fire zones" to clear the path of their assault. — AFP

DRC thwarts Kinshasa 'coup attempt': Army

KINSHASA, DR Congo: The DR Congo military on Sunday thwarted an attempted coup near the offices of President Felix Tshisekedi in Kinshasa involving "foreigners and Congolese", the army spokesperson said.

The coup bid took place in the early hours of the morning outside the residence of economy minister Vital Kamerhe, in the Gombe area in the north of the capital, near the Palais de la Nation which houses the president's offices. "An attempted coup d'etat has been stopped by the defence and security forces," said General Sylvain Ekenge in a message broadcast on national television.

He added that the "foreigners and Congolese ... including their leader" would "all no longer cause any harm". Shots were also heard near the Palais de la Nation at the time of the coup attempt, according to a number of sources. Ekenge did not give any more details on the coup attempt. AFP also contacted official sources but has so far received no reply.

'Shocked by the events'

"I am shocked by the events this morning and very worried by the reports of American citizens allegedly involved," Lucy Tamlyn, the US ambassador to the DRC, posted on X, formerly Twitter. "Rest assured that we are cooperating with authorities in DRC to the fullest extent possible, as they investigate these criminal acts and hold accountable any American citizen involved."

A number of people were also injured in Brazzaville, when a shell from Kinshasa fell into a neighborhood in the capital of the Republic of Congo, which sits just across the Congo river from the DRC.

"A few people have been lightly injured, one of whom has been transported to the army hospital of Brazzaville for treatment by the health service," government spokesperson and Minister of Communication and Media Thierry Mougalla said in a statement.

During the day certain streets near the Palais de la Nation remained closed to traffic, but the situation appeared calm, AFP journalists reported. Reports began to circulate on social media in the early morning of an attack on Kamerhe's home by armed men, some of whom then went to the Palais de la Nation.

There was "an armed attack" this morning at the residence of the economy minister, Japan's ambassador to Kinshasa Hidetoshi Ogawa wrote on X. Kamerhe "was not harmed ... (but) two policemen and an assailant were killed according to sources", he added. France's ambassador reported automatic weapons fire in the quarter, urging nationals to avoid the area.

Zaire flags

Videos on social media showed men in fatigues at the Palais de la Nation, brandishing flags of Zaire, the name of the Democratic Republic of Congo under the dictator Mobutu Sese Seko who was overthrown in 1997. AFP was unable to verify the videos.

Several heavily armed military vehicles drove from the Palais de la Nation towards a large intersection, also in Gombe, AFP witnessed. Construction blocks obstructed the road leading to the Palais de la Nation, while soldiers on foot blocked access to a boulevard near Tshisekedi's offices. — AFP

'Blood everywhere': Survivor recounts Afghanistan attack

KABUL: When she first heard the gunshots, French tourist Anne-France Brill thought for a split second there was a celebration in the Afghan market where she and her fellow travelers stopped to buy fruit.

But then she heard one of her companions screaming: "I realized she had blood all over her stomach." The 55-year-old had been sitting in a van during a group tour in the mountainous city of Bamiyan on Friday evening when a gunman approached their vehicles and opened fire. Brill was unhurt, but the Lithuanian woman next to her was hit. "She had gone completely white," Brill said. "She was saying, 'I'm cold, I'm cold ... I'm going to die.'"

The spray of gunfire only lasted seconds, Brill recalled, followed by long minutes of uncertainty crouching on the floor of the van, wondering what had happened, if it was over, what to do. "There was blood everywhere," Brill told AFP on the phone.

A Norwegian man in the van had also been wounded, and their driver had been killed. He was one of six gunned down: three Spanish tourists, two Afghan men working with the group and a Taliban security official who returned fire on the gunman.

Suddenly, Taliban authorities swarmed the street,

cordoning off and clearing the road. As they approached the car where Brill and the others were, they still weren't sure if they were safe. "But we didn't have a choice (but to get out) as we had wounded" in the van.

Evacuation to Kabul

The wounded were bundled into the back of Taliban authorities' trucks and rushed to the hospital in Bamiyan, and later to Kabul, around 180 kilometers (110 miles) away. Brill said her and other tourists who escaped unhurt were given a security escort overnight to Kabul, where they were taken in by a European Union delegation.

Before leaving Bamiyan, she helped gather the belongings of those killed and wounded, including from the site of the attack. "They were covered in blood, but it's so important for the families, so we tried to recover what we could," she said.

One item stuck out, the backpack of a young woman. The bodies of three Spanish victims were due to be returned to Spain on Sunday and the wounded to be transferred out of Kabul, diplomats said.

Brill and two Americans took early flights out of Kabul to Dubai, the shock taking its different tolls on the group. "I cried my eyes out in front of the conveyor belt in Dubai, my suitcase was spinning, and all of a sudden, boom," she said. "I had to let go and say to myself, 'That's it, now I'm safe'," she said, speaking from Dubai.

Fledgling tourism industry

An avid traveler drawn to places off the beaten path Brill had long thought of visiting Afghanistan, one of the scores of foreign tourists drawn to

experience the country's rich landscapes, history and culture long rendered virtually unreachable by decades of war.

More than two years after the Taliban ended their insurgency, ousting the Western-backed government, "it seemed possible", said Brill, who lives just outside Paris but whose career in marketing took her all over the world.

Used to travelling independently, she still opted for a tour group — conscious of the remaining challenges of travelling in Afghanistan, a country with poor infrastructure, dilapidated health services, tight Taliban government controls, little diplomatic presence and lingering security threats.

The attack on Brill's group was the first reported deadly assault on foreign tourists in Afghanistan since the return of the Taliban to power in 2021, the authorities encouraging travelers and a fledgling tourism sector. The group had arrived in Kabul on Wednesday, Bamiyan their first stop outside the Afghan capital to see the famed remnants of the 1,500-year-old giant Buddhas destroyed in 2001 by the Taliban during their first rule.

She and her companions had been just getting to know each other, trading tips over WhatsApp before arriving, then sharing their first Afghan meals as they looked forward to stops in the cities of Herat and Kandahar. But instead of bonding through their travels, the group is now tied together over haunting memories, their WhatsApp messages sharing word of their wounded companions. "An experience like that, when something like that happens to you, it creates bonds," she said. — AFP

Fresh floods kill 66 in northern Afghanistan

KABUL: Fresh floods killed 66 people in Faryab province in northern Afghanistan, a provincial official said Sunday, in the latest deadly flooding to hit the country. Hundreds of people have died in separate flash floods this month that have also swamped farmland in a country where 80 percent of the population depends on agriculture to survive.

The latest heavy floods hit multiple districts of Faryab province on Saturday night and "resulted in human and financial losses," said Asmatullah Muradi, spokesman for the Faryab governor, in a statement. "Due to the floods 66 people were killed," he said, adding that at least five people were injured and others were still missing.

The flooding damaged more than 1,500 houses, swamped more than 1,000 acres of agricultural land and killed livestock in their hundreds, he said. The floods came a day after provincial police said more than 50 people were killed in flash flooding in the western province of Ghor.

Just over a week ago, more than 300 people were killed in flash flooding in northern Baghlan province, according to the UN World Food Program (WFP) and Taliban officials.

Taliban officials have warned the tolls would go up in regions impacted by flooding, as destroyed infrastructure hampered aid delivery and efforts to find the missing. The death toll from the Ghor flooding rose from 50 to 55 on Sunday, according to Abdul Wahid Hamas, a spokesman for the provincial governor. "More than 3,000 homes were totally destroyed



CHAGHCHARAN: Afghan men stand beside their belongings kept near a damaged house after flash floods following heavy rainfall in Firozkoh, Ghor province on May 18, 2024. — AFP

due to the floods" in Ghor, he added.

Videos shared on social media platform X by the WFP showed torrents of brown water crashing through walls of homes and churning through streets in Ghor.

Residents in Baghlan, Ghor, Faryab and other affected regions found themselves without shelter, stripped of their homes and livelihoods. "We were inside our home when rain started and all of a sudden, a flash flood came, we were trying to get things out but it washed away our home, our life, everything," Ghor resident Jawan Gul told AFP on Saturday.

The WFP warned that the recent floods have

compounded an already dire humanitarian situation in the impoverished country. Spring floods are not uncommon in Afghanistan, a country of more than 40 million people, but above-average rainfall this year has sparked devastating flash flooding.

Even before the most recent spate of floods, about 100 people had been killed from mid-April to early May as a result of flooding in 10 of Afghanistan's provinces, authorities said. The rains come after a prolonged drought in Afghanistan, which is one of the least prepared nations to tackle climate change impacts, according to experts. — AFP

MONDAY, MAY 20, 2024

KEO, Johnson Controls partner to lead decarbonization drive in the region

Strategic collaboration will help organizations achieve their sustainability goals



COO at KEO Greg Karpinski and General Manager for Services at Johnson Controls, GCC, Devrim Tekeli during the signing ceremony.



Signing the collaboration agreement.

KUWAIT: KEO, a leading provider of multi-disciplinary consultancy services, and Johnson Controls, the global leader in smart, healthy and sustainable buildings, have on Sunday announced a strategic collaboration aimed at delivering turnkey decarbonization services in the region.

Under the collaboration, the two companies will offer an end-to-end decarbonization action plan and a suite of engineered solutions to drive cost and carbon reductions. These will help organizations achieve their net zero goals including comprehensive target setting, providing a roadmap, to produce tangible outcomes. According to the World Green Building Council, buildings are responsible for nearly 40 percent of global carbon emissions and buildings represent one of the fastest — if not the fastest —

paths to meeting global climate targets.

With the UAE and Saudi Arabia spearheading (one of) the world's most ambitious decarbonization programs, organizations in the region will benefit from such collaborations to more quickly and effectively meet the region's goals. Founded on a shared vision and complementary expertise, this unique collaboration draws on KEO's 60 years of expertise in engineering, consultation, and advisory services and Johnson Controls 140 years transforming the built environment to reduce energy consumption and emissions, improve building efficiency, increase productivity and wellbeing, and ultimately contribute to a greener and more sustainable future.

"This collaboration represents a significant step forward in our mission to empower organizations

to achieve their sustainability goals," said Greg Karpinski, COO at KEO.

"By combining KEO's sustainability and engineering excellence with Johnson Controls cutting-edge technologies, we are uniquely positioned to deliver impactful solutions that drive real environmental change. "We understand that managing the bidding for a complex scope decarbonization project can be a challenging task for organizations, involving significant costs and efforts," remarked Greg Karpinski at KEO.

"Through our collaboration with Johnson Controls, we aim to alleviate these challenges, offering clients a hassle-free experience from start to finish." "We are delighted to initiate this collaboration with KEO, which will empower our mutual custom-

ers to achieve their net zero commitments, added Devrim Tekeli, general manager for Service GCC at Johnson Controls.

"Our comprehensive capabilities across technology manufacturing, HVAC, fire, security, controls, and connectivity via our OpenBlue digital platform are setting a benchmark in the region. These capabilities are already demonstrating tangible environmental and financial benefits. "Together with KEO, we aim to empower businesses with the tools and expertise needed to drive sustainability leadership in this region and beyond." The collaboration between KEO and Johnson Controls marks a significant milestone in the pursuit of sustainability, ushering in a new era of innovation and collaboration in the fight against climate change.

Tycoon Musk launches Starlink in Indonesia

DENPASAR, Indonesia: Tech billionaire Elon Musk launched Sunday his Starlink service on Indonesia's resort island of Bali as the country aims to extend internet to its remote areas. Millions of people in Indonesia, a vast archipelago of more than 17,000 islands, are not currently hooked up to reliable internet services.

Musk, making his first visit to the Southeast Asian nation, inaugurated the satellite unit services at a clinic in Bali's capital Denpasar on Sunday afternoon. He also signed an agreement on the health sector along with Indonesia's Health Minister Budi Gunadi Sadikin. Musk and the officials also attended a presentation by staff members from Indonesia's community clinics in Bali and Maluku provinces on the acceleration of internet speeds after using Starlink.

The internet services have been pilot-tested in three health facilities in the regions to input various data sets into the national system, such as those on immunizations, child nutrition and diabetes.

"We are very excited to bring

connectivity to places that either have no connectivity or, as you saw in the demonstration, very low bandwidth connectivity," Musk said at a news conference. "So, this can make a really lifesaver for remote medical clinics. And I think it can be transformative for education as well," added Musk, sporting a green shirt made of traditional Balinese woven fabric called "endek".

The Indonesian government is moving the capital from traffic-clogged Jakarta, where researchers say large areas could be underwater by 2050 due to rising sea levels and land subsidence to Nusantara.

After the trial, Starlink, which acquired a permit to operate in Indonesia earlier this month, could be rolled out commercially across the archipelago. Starlink is already available in Southeast Asia in Malaysia and the Philippines. Using a network of low Earth orbit satellites, Starlink can provide internet to remote locations or areas that have had normal communications infrastructure disabled.

The Indonesian government has



DENPASAR: Tech billionaire Elon Musk (second left) speaks next to Indonesia's Health Minister Budi Gunadi Sadikin (L) during a ceremony held to inaugurate satellite unit Starlink at a community health center in Denpasar on Indonesia's resort island of Bali on May 19, 2024. — AFP

allocated a budget to allow Starlink's services for 10,000 state-owned clinics across the country in the initial implementation, according to Budi.

However, he did not detail the amount, saying that despite a budget limit, the allocation is expected to be "enough to cover the Starlink's costs." Starlink's services will be trialed this month in Indonesia's new capital Nusantara on the island of Borneo, which

will open its doors in August, according to officials. According to the World Bank, about two-thirds of Indonesia's roughly 270 million people had access to the internet as of 2022.

Besides the Starlink's launch, Musk is scheduled on Monday to speak at the World Water Forum being held on the holiday island. He is also due to meet President Joko Widodo during the event. — AFP

Can we rid AI of bias?

SAN FRANCISCO: Artificial intelligence built on mountains of potentially biased information has created a real risk of automating discrimination, but is there any way to re-educate the machines? The question for some is extremely urgent. In this ChatGPT era, AI will generate more and more decisions for health care providers, bank lenders or lawyers, using whatever was scoured from the internet as source material.

AI's underlying intelligence, therefore, is only as good as the world it came from, as likely to be filled with wit, wisdom, and usefulness, as well as hatred, prejudice and rants.

"It's dangerous because people are embracing and adopting AI software and really depending on it," said Joshua Weaver, Director of Texas Opportunity & Justice Incubator, a legal consultancy.

"We can get into this feedback loop where the bias in our own selves and culture informs bias in the AI and becomes a sort of reinforcing loop," he said. Making sure technology more accurately reflects human diversity is not just a political choice.

Other uses of AI, like facial recognition, have seen companies thrown into hot water with authorities for discrimination. This was the case against Rite-Aid, a US pharmacy chain, where in-store cameras

falsely tagged consumers, particularly women and people of color, as shoplifters, according to the Federal Trade Commission.

ChatGPT-style generative AI, which can create a semblance of human-level reasoning in just seconds, opens up new opportunities to get things wrong, experts worry. The AI giants are well aware of the problem, afraid that their models can descend into bad behavior, or overly reflect a western society when their user base is global. "We have people asking queries from Indonesia or the US," said Google CEO Sundar Pichai, explaining why requests for images of doctors or lawyers will strive to reflect racial diversity.

But these considerations can reach absurd levels and lead to angry accusations of excessive political correctness. This is what happened when Google's Gemini image generator spat out an image of German soldiers from World War Two that absurdly included a black man and Asian woman.

"Obviously, the mistake was that we over-applied... where it should have never applied. That was a bug and we got it wrong," Pichai said. But Sasha Luccioni, a research scientist at Hugging Face, a leading platform for AI models cautioned that "thinking that there's technological solution to bias is kind of already going down the wrong path." Generative AI is essentially about whether the output "corresponds to what the user expects it to" and that is largely subjective, she said.

The huge models on which ChatGPT is built

"can't reason about what is biased or what isn't so they can't do anything about it," cautioned Jayden Ziegler, head of product at Alembic Technologies.

For now at least, it is up to humans to ensure that the AI generates whatever is appropriate or meets their expectations.

But given the frenzy around AI, that is no easy task. Hugging Face has about 600,000 AI or machine learning models available on its platform. "Every couple of weeks a new model comes out and we're kind of scrambling in order to try to just evaluate and document biases or undesirable behaviors," said Luccioni. One method under development is something called algorithmic disgorgement that would allow engineers to excise content, without ruining the whole model.

But there are serious doubts this can actually work. Another method would "encourage" a model to go in the right direction, "fine tune" it, "rewarding for right and wrong," said Ram Sriharsha, chief technology officer at Pinecone. Pinecone is a specialist of retrieval augmented generation (or RAG), a technique where the model fetches information from a fixed trusted source.

For Weaver of the Texas Opportunity & Justice Incubator, these "noble" attempts to fix bias are "projections of our hopes and dreams for what a better version of the future can look like."

But bias "is also inherent into what it means to be human and because of that, it's also baked into the AI as well," he said. — AFP

OpenAI disbands team devoted to AI risks

SAN FRANCISCO: OpenAI on Friday confirmed that it has disbanded a team devoted to mitigating the long-term dangers of super-smart artificial intelligence.

OpenAI weeks ago began dissolving the so-called "superalignment" group, integrating members into other projects and research, according to the San Francisco-based firm.

Company co-founder Ilya Sutskever and team co-leader Jan Leike announced their departures from the ChatGPT-maker this week. The dismantling of an OpenAI team focused on keeping sophisticated artificial intelligence under control comes as such technology faces increased scrutiny from regulators and fears mount regarding its dangers.

"OpenAI must become a safety-first AGI (artificial general intelligence) company," Leike wrote Friday in a post on X, formerly Twitter. Leike called on all OpenAI employees to "act with the gravitas" warranted by what they are building. OpenAI chief executive Sam Altman responded to Leike's post with one of his own, thanking him for his work at the company and saying he was sad to see Leike leave.

"He's right we have a lot more to do," Altman said. "We are committed to doing it." Altman promised more on the topic in the coming days.

Sutskever said on X that he was leaving after almost a decade at OpenAI, whose "trajectory has been nothing short of miraculous."

"I'm confident that OpenAI will build AGI that is both safe and beneficial," he added, referring to computer technology that seeks to perform as well as—or better than—human cognition. Sutskever, OpenAI's chief scientist, sat on the board that voted to remove fellow chief executive Altman in November last year. The ousting threw the San Francisco-based startup into a tumult, with the OpenAI board hiring Altman back a few days later after staff and investors rebelled.

OpenAI early this week released a higher-performing and even more human-like version of the artificial intelligence technology that underpins ChatGPT, making it free to all users.

"It feels like AI from the movies," Altman said in a blog post. Altman has previously pointed to the Scarlett Johansson character in the movie "Her," where she voices an AI-based virtual assistant dating a man, as an inspiration for where he would like AI interactions to go. The day will come when "digital brains will become as good and even better than our own," Sutskever said during a talk at a TED AI summit in San Francisco late last year. "AGI will have a dramatic impact on every area of life." —AFP

Burgan Bank ratings affirmed at 'A+' and 'A1' with a stable outlook

CI ratings underscore the bank's core financial strength

KUWAIT: Capital Intelligence Ratings (CI Ratings or CI) announced that it has affirmed the Long-Term Foreign Currency Rating (LT FCR) and Short-Term Foreign Currency Rating (ST FCR) of Burgan Bank K.P.S.C. ("Burgan or "the Bank") at 'A+' and 'A1' respectively. In addition, CI Ratings has affirmed the Bank's Standalone Rating (BSR) of 'bbb+', Core Financial Strength (CFS) rating of 'bbb+', and Extraordinary Support Level (ESL) of High. CI also reported that the LT FCR and BSR outlooks remain stable, with no expectation of any of external or internal credit challenges to result in any downward changes to the ratings over the next 12 months. The Bank's BSR and CFS ratings are supported by good asset quality, solid credit loss absorption capacity, and sound capital adequacy, whereby non-financial supporting factors include Burgan Bank's good business model and franchise, particularly in Kuwait, and majority ownership by the well-regarded KIPCO group.



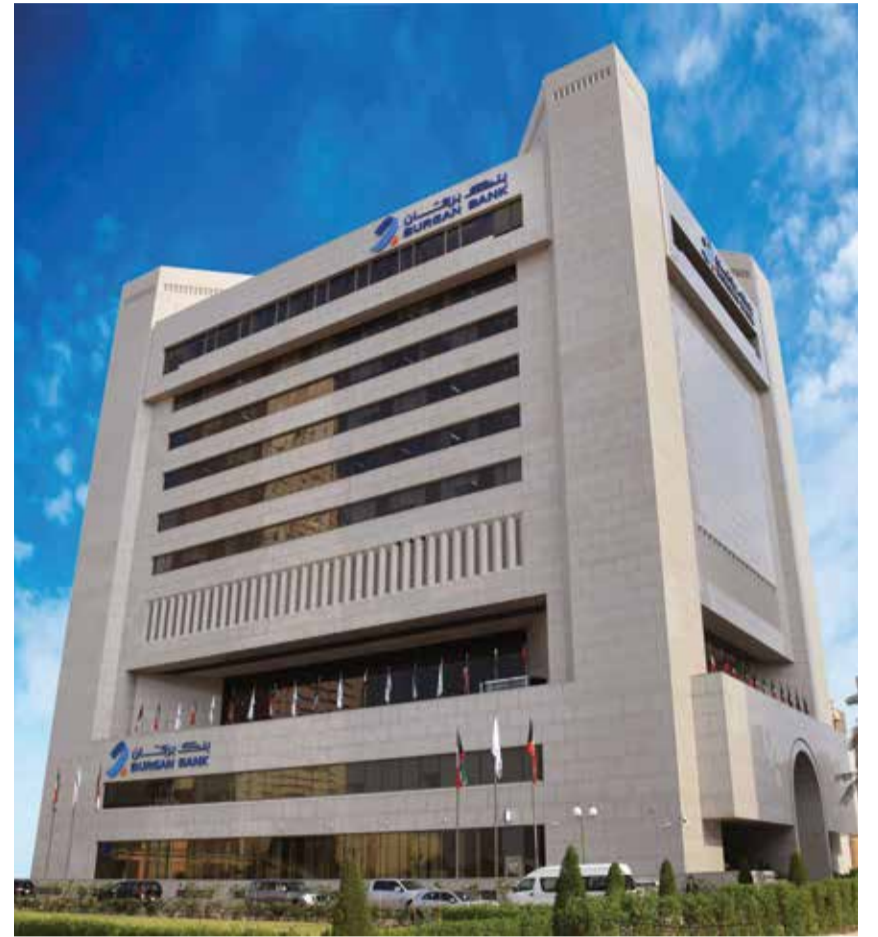
subsidaries in Turkey, Algeria, and Tunisia. Burgan's previous Iraqi subsidiary, Bank of Baghdad (BoB), was sold in February 2023. The sale was in line with the Bank's pursuance of strategic asset reallocation.

Commenting on Capital Intelligence Ratings' announcement, Khalid Al-Zouman, Chief Financial Officer at Burgan Bank, said: "We are very proud to receive CI's affirmation of our solid financial standing for yet another year. Our sound credit ratings are a reflection of the Bank's stable financial core and our steady growth momentum. This success is greatly owed to Burgan's vision, which centers on strategic priorities such as asset reallocation, digital transformation, human capital development, and sustainability. Furthermore, presenting good overall asset quality confirms our strategic success and cements Burgan's leading position in the domestic banking sector. As we continue to embark on our transformational journey, we are building on our robust financial base while accelerating growth plans: meticulously balancing market

risk with growth potential and progress momentum." Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is a Kuwait-based conventional bank with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institution sectors. From its earliest days, the Bank has significantly sought to diversify its offering to cater to its growing retail and private banking customer base.

Burgan Bank has majority-owned subsidiaries, collectively known as the "Burgan Bank Group", in the MENAT region. This Group is supported by one of the largest branch networks across the region and includes: Gulf Bank Algeria - AGB (Algeria), Tunis International Bank - TIB (Tunisia), and Burgan Bank Turkey. Furthermore, Burgan Bank has a presence in the UAE through its corporate office, Burgan Financial Services Limited.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years, through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Moreover, Burgan Bank's brand has been built on a foundation of real values - trust, commitment, excellence, and progression - which serve as a reminder of the high standards to which the Bank always aspires. In fact, the Bank's core philosophy of "Driven by You" is the foundation on which its products and services are continuously developed.



Military spending pushes Russian economic growth up

MOSCOW: Russia's economy grew 5.4 percent in the first quarter of 2024, official statistics published Friday showed, as President Vladimir Putin denied military spending on his Ukraine offensive was reaching unsustainable levels.

The Kremlin has heavily militarized Russia's economy since sending troops into Ukraine in February 2022, with the vast outlays helping to power growth and cushion the blow of Western sanctions.

But it has also set off inflation and comparisons with runaway defense spending that hobbled the Soviet Union in the 1980s. The Rosstat statistics agency said the first quarter growth was up from 4.9 percent in the fourth quarter of last year. The inflation rate also picked up over the month, however, to 7.8 percent. On a state visit to China, Putin denied that Russia's vast military spending - which he said had passed eight percent of GDP - had hit unsustainable levels.

"It is not critical yet. In the Soviet Union in 1985-1986, defense spending was 13 percent" of GDP, he said. "Taking into account the state of the economy, macroeconomic indicators and budget revenue forecasts, combined defense and security spending of eight-and-a-bit percent is not critical," he added.

Earlier in the week, Putin had said Russia's military spending was a "great resource" that should be used

"carefully and effectively." He said Friday that experts believe Russia's state finances still have room to accommodate even higher expenditure. Russian troops last week launched a major new offensive on Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region. Putin has signaled he sees Moscow's path to victory on the battlefield by outpacing Ukraine and its Western backers.

The reorientation of Russia's crucial energy exports to the likes of China and India has helped it weather Western sanctions that many analysts predicted would push Russia into a deep recession. China has become Russia's most important economic ally over the last two years. Putin on Friday blasted US attempts to put pressure on Beijing over its ties with Moscow. He called US threats of sanctions on Chinese banks and companies that deal with Russia "illegitimate" and said lenders in both countries were working to overcome problems

with cross-border payments. The United States has targeted companies in third countries, including China, that it says are helping Russia purchase sanctioned goods for its military. While helping to secure strong headline growth, Russia's increased military spending has caused some economic difficulties at home.

Inflation climbed from 7.7 percent to 7.8 percent in April, Rosstat said on Friday - ahead of analysts' expectations and further from the government's official 4.0-percent target.

The central bank has hiked its key interest rate to 16 percent in a bid to combat rising prices. And parts of the economy not supported by the offensive - such as the services and IT sectors - are seeing record labor shortages. Many young men have been drafted, left the country or recruited by the booming weapons industry. - AFP



شركة الصفاة للاستثمار
AL SAFAT INVESTMENT COMPANY

KUWAIT BOURSA WEEKLY REPORT

WEEK ENDED ON 16 MAY 2024

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Market	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
Premier Market	35,674	7,827.58	1.4%	1.8%	4.7%	755,344,451	268,474,520	45,657	17.0	1.3	82.2%
Main Market	7,716	5,962.11	-0.2%	0.7%	7.0%	691,252,429	76,711,722	34,856	11.8	0.8	17.8%
All Share	43,391	7,163.23	1.2%	1.6%	5.1%	1,446,596,880	345,186,242	80,513	13.4	0.9	100%

Sector	M. Cap (KD ml)	Last Close	WTD %	MTD %	YTD %	Quantity Traded	Value Traded	No. of Trades	P/E	P/B	% of Total M. Cap
Banking	26,552	1,772.40	1.7%	2.4%	7.6%	394,759,366	170,001,452	20,485	16.7	1.3	61.19%
Basic Materials	474	840.27	-1.1%	-1.7%	12.6%	5,615,774	3,748,460	1,688	9.6	1.5	1.09%
Consumer Discretionary	1,153	1,676.12	-0.4%	-0.2%	4.5%	78,718,733	14,828,121	6,048	12.1	1.4	2.66%
Consumer Staples	261	859.29	1.5%	3.2%	30.5%	3,298,852	1,387,835	387	25.2	1.4	0.60%
Energy	222	1,060.25	0.3%	-0.1%	11.7%	9,473,502	1,033,509	582	9.7	0.8	0.51%
Financial Services	4,783	1,365.67	1.5%	2.4%	12.7%	492,273,892	67,583,779	21,822	13.1	0.8	11.02%
Health Care	224	467.69	-1.5%	-4.0%	-3.0%	196,190	147,725,301	17	12.3	1.6	0.52%
Industrials	2,571	757.97	0.7%	-1.3%	-16.5%	91,502,883	29,357,403	7,640	12.3	0.9	5.93%
Insurance	1,008	2,465.23	-0.6%	-0.9%	7.5%	20,151,282	2,474,553	1,981	8.3	1.1	2.32%
Real Estate	2,805	1,318.82	1.0%	2.6%	8.7%	307,323,326	34,603,839	14,286	15.1	0.8	6.47%
Technology	24	1,767.82	-7.3%	-7.3%	205.7%	859,088	211,910.24	211	NM	2.1	0.06%
Telecommunications	3,137	1,026.14	-1.4%	-1.7%	-7.1%	39,408,015	19,333,116	5,056	16.3	1.3	7.23%
Utilities	174	415.79	0.0%	-4.8%	-8.7%	3,015,977	474,541	310	13.5	1.3	0.40%

Top Gainers

Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
INOVEST	109	36.76%	36,603,211	3,568,267,602	1,231
WINSRE	144	21.01%	6,782,698	908,511	514
KMEFIC	79.9	13.66%	4,730,063	371,168	396
FUTUREKID	184	13.58%	34,737,127	6,250,681	1,946
MASHAER	75.8	13.13%	7,002,699	512,253	450

Top Losers

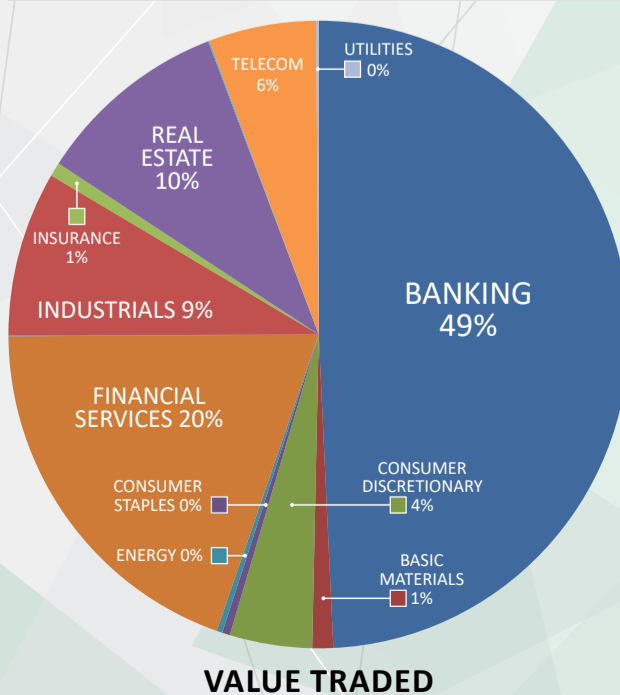
Stock	last Close	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
KUWAITRE	338	-17.36%	3,458	1,286	12
ATC	415	-13.36%	9,503	3,945	4
KGL	41.2	-12.34%	2,862,608	121,685	207
ALAQARIA	28.8	-12.20%	1,539,435	46,111	50
KFIC	74	-11.90%	20,480,740	1,596,108	846

Top Volume

Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
KFH	745	1.22%	98,216,417	73,181,436	6,994
KIB	172	4.24%	84,802,806	14,376,413	1,338
GBK	260	3.17%	74,700,120	19,532,323	2,725
AGLTY	313	2.62%	56,974,374	17,824,544	3,659
WARBABANK	182	1.11%	48,268,244	8,877,057	1,773

Top Value

Stock	Last	Change %	Volume	Value	Trades
KFH	745	1.22%	98,216,417	73,181,436	6,994
NBK	875	3.18%	42,653,079	37,659,337	4,269
GBK	260	3.17%	74,700,120	19,532,323	2,725
AGLTY	313	2.62%	56,974,374	17,824,544	3,659
ZAIN	472	-1.26%	36,648,419	17,491,769	4,072



Market Summary:

- Premier volume and value increased by 61% and 58%, while the Main market dropped by 8% for both.
- The Premier index had a significant jump, while the Main index is yet to overcome a critical resistance level.
- Technically, the All Share index closed at 7163, with support levels at 7612, 7105, and 7085, and resistance at 7178. The Premier index closed at 7827, with support levels at 7827, 7808, and 7767, and resistance at 7864. The Main index closed at 5962, with support levels at 5959, 5940, and 5925, and resistance at 5970.

Business

NBK Group Operations and Technology hosts IBG conference and staff open day for 2024

Open day a great opportunity to come together, recognize achievers and socialize with colleagues



A group photo of the Group Operations and Technology team at the NBK.

KUWAIT: In line with National Bank of Kuwait (NBK)'s overarching commitment to engage and empower employees being the cornerstone to achieving its strategic goals and furthering its success, Group Operations and Technology hosted the 5th IBG Operations and Technology Conference at NBK HQ on May 1 and 2, 2024.

The conference was attended by Shaikha Al-Bahar - Deputy Group CEO, Group Operations and Technology Management and International Banking Group Management and as well as Heads of Operations and Technology from different locations worldwide. On this occasion, Mohammad Al-Kharafi, Chief Operating Officer, Group Operations and Information Technology said, "The IBG Conference underscores our commitment to collaboration and strategic alignment across NBK's diverse international footprint. It's a platform where our employees can engage, share insights, and collectively contribute to our global vision."

"During the conference, Group Operations and Technology Management team in Kuwait presented the IBG Operations performance report, Operating model, IBG Technology Blueprint plan and Roadmap. This was followed by presentations from the Operations and Technology heads of IBG locations, who shared key achievements, roadmap, and challenges," he added.

"Group Operations and Technology play a fundamental role in serving NBK's strategy by providing cutting-edge digital banking solutions. We are always seeking to embrace innovation across all the bank's operations and business models to keep pace with the fast-paced technological advancement in the banking industry," he noted.

NBK has consistently embraced a forward-thinking approach towards international expansion, evidenced by its international branches, some of which



Chief Operating Officer at NBK Mohammad Al-Kharafi delivers a lecture.

have been operational for over 40 years. The expansion of cross-border transactions within IBG signifies a concerted effort by teams across various locations to cater to the needs of NBK's clients. Through collaborative efforts, these teams have facilitated a seamless NBK approach, ensuring that clients receive consistent and efficient service regardless of their geographic location. This collaborative approach not only enhances operational efficiency but also promotes our client-centric model, wherein client satisfaction and long-term partnerships are prioritized. By leveraging the collective expertise and resources of teams across different regions, IBG can deliver tailored solutions that meet the diverse needs of clients while upholding NBK's commitment to excellence and innovation in international banking services.

were higher than I think anybody expected" Powell added referring to recent inflation readings. Despite this, he gave a bullish outlook stating, "I expect that inflation will move back down ... on a monthly basis to levels that were more like the lower readings that we were having last year." Markets are pricing in two rate cuts by year-end.

Consumer price index

US consumer price index increased less than expected in April, where the month-over-month figure showed a 0.3 percent increase, lower than the previous figure of 0.4 percent. The year-over-year figure showed a slight decrease from the previous 3.5 percent figure at 3.4 percent for the month. Core CPI was also slightly lower for the month at 0.3 percent, in line with expectations. The majority of the increase for the figure was attributed to shelter and gasoline costs, where shelter rose 0.4 percent for the third straight month, and gasoline rose 2.8 percent following a 1.7 percent increase in March.

Retail sales

US retail sales was flat in April, with the month-over-month figure showing no change, well below expectations of a 0.4 percent increase, and below a downward revised 0.6 percent increase seen in March. The figure supports the narrative that consumer spending is losing momentum, with gasoline prices ticking higher, and consumers pulling back from spending on goods. Speculation for rate cuts continues to vary greatly among economists, while market expectations for rate cuts to begin in September increased slightly following the data release.

Unemployment claims

There's a recent rise in unemployment claims in the US, reaching the highest level since late August 2023. This could signal a shift in the previously hot job market. The Labor department data showed an increase in both new claims (231,000) and continuing claims (1.78 million) compared to the prior week. This comes after a period of strong hiring, but April's numbers fell short of expectations. Additionally, job



Shaikha Al-Bahar poses for a group photo with the Group Operations and Technology team at the NBK.

IBG's robust contribution in driving profit growth underscores NBK's forward-looking vision and the success of its diversification strategy, and emphasizes its continued dedication to increasing its presence in international markets and capitalizing on growth opportunities in the markets where it operates.

On a related note, Group Operations and Technology organized a staff Open Day at Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center (JACC). The event was attended by Shaikha Al-Bahar, Deputy Group CEO, Mohammad Al-Kharafi, Chief Operating Officer and Emad Al-Ablani, GM - Group Human Resources, along with IBG locations Operations and Technology representatives and all Operations and Technology Kuwait employees.

"The Open Day is a great opportunity to come

together, share milestones, strategy, recognize outstanding achievers, participate in team activities, and socialize with colleagues," quoted Al-Kharafi.

Additionally, Al-Kharafi presented a strategy session along with his team during the event, followed by a staff awarding ceremony, and fun games to emphasize team building. It is worth mentioning that NBK is committed to making digital and technology investments across its network, which comprises 140 branches, subsidiaries, and representative offices in 13 countries on four continents. These locations encompass major financial hubs like London, New York, Paris, Geneva, and Singapore, as well as Shanghai in China, with regional coverage extending to Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

NBK MONEY MARKETS REPORT

Dollar weakens amid better than expected inflation readings

KUWAIT: Producer prices in the US rose more than expected in April, increasing by 0.5 percent compared to a forecasted 0.3 percent rise. The increase was largely due to service prices, which jumped 0.6 percent, with increases in service costs such as portfolio management and hotel stays. This indicates that inflation remains high. The rise comes after surveys showed people expect inflation to increase, leading to less expectation of the Federal Reserve cutting interest rates in September.

While inflation rose in the first quarter due to factors like businesses raising prices and service providers catching up on increased costs, economists are hopeful it will go down again this quarter as the job market cools down. However, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell is not as confident in this prediction. Financial markets reacted to the news with stocks rising, the dollar weakening, and bond prices increasing. The chance of a rate cut in September is now seen as 60 percent, down from 64 percent before the PPI data release. Some economists believe the Fed might even cut rates in July.

Fed Chair Powell speaks

With inflation running faster than anticipated through the first three months of the year, the US Chair of the Federal Reserve Jerome Powell acknowledged that "my confidence in that is not as high as it was," but he still believes it is unlikely that the Fed would have to raise rates further, even if the likelihood of rate cuts has become less certain. "We did not expect this to be a smooth road, but these

Rates - May 19th, 2024

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.0854	1.0836	1.0878	1.0868	1.0780	1.1085	1.0917
GBP	1.2670	1.2653	1.2674	1.2699	1.2600	1.2900	1.2709
JPY	155.38	155.34	155.92	155.82	154.70	156.60	153.52
CHF	0.9093	0.9068	0.9065	0.9098	0.9089	0.9200	0.8996

openings are dropping, suggesting a possible slowdown in the job market throughout the year.

The greenback extended gains over the week, last trading at 104.670.

BoE monetary policy

The Bank of England decided to hold interest at (5.25 percent) to fight inflation. Three members wanted to raise rates further. This high interest rate environment is likely to last for a while to ensure inflation gets back down to their target of 2 percent. The Bank of England Governor emphasized that they are still focused on bringing down inflation and won't be considering lowering rates anytime soon.

Japan's producer price index

Japan's producer prices continued to climb in April 2024, rising 0.9 percent year-over-year for the second month in a row. This marks the 39th consecutive month of producer prices increases and the highest inflation rate for manufacturers since October 2023. The increase was broad-based, with most categories experiencing rising costs. Notably, transportation equipment, food and beverages, and various machinery sectors saw significant price hikes. However, there were some exceptions: chemicals and iron and steel prices continued to decline. Overall, this

data suggests ongoing inflationary pressures for Japanese manufacturers, potentially leading to higher consumer prices in the near future.

The Japanese yen continues its weakening trend, with the USD/JPY pair closing at 153.52.

China's consumer price index

CPI in China grew for the third straight month rising 0.3 percent y/y versus expectations and previous figure of a 0.1 percent growth. The reading comes amid stronger than expected Chinese imports data, indicating that local demand in the world's second largest economy is starting to pick up. Despite this, PPI continues to lag, declining 2.5 percent in April, more than forecasts of a 2.3 percent fall. Chinese business activity remains under pressure amid weak overseas demand. Additionally, volatile local consumer spending and the continuation of the property slump adds to the problems faced by Chinese policymakers despite introducing a series of easing measures to support the economy.

The USD/CNY currency pair is up on the week, last seen at 7.2219.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar
USD/KWD closed last week at 0.30655.

MONDAY, MAY 20, 2024

No-makeup makeup

MASTERING THE NO-MAKEUP MAKEUP: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

The allure of no-makeup makeup lies in its celebration of natural beauty, a testament to understated elegance. This harmonious blend of minimal makeup and dedicated skincare enhances your features subtly, perfect for the discerning beauty enthusiast in Kuwait who values sophistication and authenticity. Follow this detailed guide to master a look that's as radiant as the Kuwaiti sun.

Step 1: Prime the canvas with skincare

The importance of skincare in Kuwait's climate: In Kuwait's arid environment, where the air can strip the skin of moisture, beginning with a nurturing skincare routine is crucial.

- Cleanse gently: Start with a gentle cleanser suitable for your skin type to remove dust and impurities without stripping the skin's natural oils.
- Balance with toner: A hydrating toner can help restore pH balance and prepare the skin for further hydration.
- Moisturize liberally: Use a lightweight, hydrating moisturizer to combat the dry Kuwaiti air. Look for products containing hyaluronic acid to lock in moisture.

- Protect from the sun: A broad-spectrum sunscreen is indispensable in Kuwait to protect your skin from the intense sun, preventing premature aging and maintaining an even skin tone.

Step 2: Even out the skin tone

Opting for lighter coverage makes sense in a climate like Kuwait's, where heavy makeup can feel oppressive under the sun.

- Choose light coverage: Tinted moisturizers, BB creams, or light foundations will even out your skin tone without the weight of heavier formulas, allowing your skin to breathe.
- Conceal strategically: A lightweight concealer can address any areas of concern, such as under-eye circles or blemishes, without creating a heavy look.

Step 3: Enhance natural features

Emphasizing your natural features with a subtle touch reflects the elegance of the no-makeup makeup look.

- Subtle flush: A cream blush applied lightly gives a natural, healthy glow, mimicking the natural flush that comes from Kuwait's warm climate.



- Natural eyes: Neutral eyeshadows and a swipe of clear or brown mascara keep the eyes looking bright but natural.
- Groomed brows: Well-defined brows frame the face; use a brow pencil or gel to fill in gaps lightly, maintaining a natural appearance.

Step 4: A touch of light

In a country as sunny as Kuwait, highlighting to mimic natural light makes the no-makeup makeup look particularly radiant.

- Strategic highlighting: Apply a liquid or cream highlighter to areas where

the sun naturally hits your face. This adds dimension and a subtle glow without the need for heavy makeup.

Step 5: Finish with a natural flush of color

The final touch should enhance your lips naturally, complementing the overall minimalist approach.

- Lip care: Start with a nourishing lip balm, especially important in dry climates, to ensure your lips are smooth and hydrated.
- Choose natural shades: A tinted lip balm or lipstick slightly brighter or deeper than your natural lip color adds a healthy look without overpowering the natural beauty of your features.

Adapting to the Kuwaiti Lifestyle

Achieving the no-makeup makeup look is not only about embracing natural beauty but also adapting your beauty routine to the local climate and lifestyle. In Kuwait, where the beauty standards appreciate both innovation and tradition, this look offers a way to navigate social and professional settings with elegance and confidence. It speaks to a refined aesthetic, suitable for the office, social gatherings, or sim-

BEAUTY HOW-TO
THE NO-MAKEUP, MAKEUP LOOK

ply running errands, ensuring you look polished and poised without the need for heavy makeup.

The no-makeup makeup look is an art form that celebrates the inherent beauty in each individual. It requires practice and understanding of one's features and how to enhance them subtly. This guide, tailored for the Kuwaiti environment and lifestyle, offers a pathway to mastering an elegant, natural look that's both sophisticated and timeless. Get more inspiration by visiting our website <https://dashebeauty.com> or follow up on our beauty blog. — Dashe Beauty Kuwait

Queen Camilla pledges not to buy new fur, say activists

Britain's Queen Camilla has promised not to buy any more fur for her wardrobe, according to a letter from Buckingham Palace that animal rights group PETA released Wednesday. Camilla - a keen fox hunter before it was made illegal in the UK - follows in the footsteps of late Queen Elizabeth II, who announced she would stop buying fur in 2019. The letter, on Buckingham Palace headed notepaper, said: "I can confirm that Her Majesty will not procure any new fur garments." AFP contacted the palace for comment.



Britain's Queen Camilla reacts during a surprise appearance at the opening session of the Charleston Festival, in Sussex, south east England. — AFP

PETA founder Ingrid Newkirk welcomed the move as being "right and proper for the monarchy", and said it was in line with the overwhelming majority of British people who also refuse to wear animal fur. The activist group has been calling for years for the Ministry of Defense to end the use of bearskin for the hats worn by ceremonial guards.

The tall, black hats are worn by the elite regiments, including for the Changing of the Guard outside Buckingham Palace, and are one of the best-known symbols of the UK. The MoD has argued that faux fur alternatives do not meet their standards. Camilla's decision is the latest royal move to address animal welfare concerns, with her husband King Charles III a lifelong environmentalist. Charles and Camilla were presented this month with the "Coronation Roll", a written record of their coronation last year.

It was the first time it was written on paper rather than vellum from animal skin in its 700-year history. However, the king and queen wore ermine-trimmed capes and crowns made from stoats at the ceremony. Camilla's pledge does not require her to stop wearing fur items she already owns. — AFP



Chef Arturo Rivera Martinez prepares tacos at Taqueria El Califa de Leon restaurant in Mexico City. — AFP photos



A woman eats tacos at Taqueria restaurant El Califa de Leon.



Customers are served tacos at Taqueria restaurant El Califa de Leon.

'No secret': Modest Mexican taco restaurant wins Michelin star

A hole-in-the-wall taqueria is among the first restaurants in Mexico to be awarded a star by the prestigious Michelin Guide - an accomplishment its owner credits to "love and effort." El Califa de Leon is one of 18 restaurants given either one or two stars in the inaugural Michelin Guide Mexico unveiled Tuesday. The long-standing family business specializes in just four types of tacos and has room for only a few customers at a time in the San Rafael district of Mexico City. "This taqueria may be bare bones with just enough room for a handful of diners to stand at the counter but its creation, the Gaonera taco, is exceptional," the Michelin Guide said on its website.

"Thinly sliced beef filet is expertly cooked to order, seasoned with only salt and a squeeze of lime. At the same time, a second cook prepares the excellent corn tortillas alongside. The resulting combination is elemental and pure," it added. The Gaonera - which costs a little over four dollars - was created in honor of the celebrated Mexican bullfighter Rodolfo Gaona, whose nickname in the ring was "El Califa de Leon." The restaurant was founded more than 50 years ago by the parents of current owner Mario Hernandez.



People wait to buy tacos at Taqueria El Califa de Leon restaurant.

"My father said, 'Do you want me to tell you the secret of the meat? There is no secret,' only 'love and effort,'" the 66-year-old said outside, his voice full of emotion. Hernandez said his father taught him to always take care of quality, customer service and prices, because "life is a wheel of fortune with high times and low times."

'Well deserved'

On Wednesday, the usual office workers and other regulars were outnumbered by dozens of journalists and gastronomy experts attracted by the Michelin star. The tacos "are really delicious," said 19-year-old gastronomy student Hector Lancaster, adding that the international recognition was "well deserved." Two decidedly more upmar-

ket Mexico City restaurants were each awarded two stars. Michelin praised Quintonil for "an enticing melding of excellent local product, impressive execution, and great creativity to produce refined compositions."

"The tasting menu is constantly evolving but may reveal delights such as crab and shards of blue corn tostada arranged with a vivid pipian verde enhanced with untraditional elements like galangal, lemongrass, and makrut lime," it said. At Pujol, meanwhile, "tradition and invention go hand-in-hand in the likes of scallop ceviche with egg salad or grilled Baja coast rockfish with butternut squash puree and sherry foam," it said.

"The savory progression culminates with mole madre, an effort like no other that celebrates Mexican history and cuisine in the most profound way," it added. Tire-manufacturing brothers Andre and Edouard Michelin launched their first guide in 1900 to encourage motorists to discover restaurants around France. It has since expanded to dozens of destinations around the world. — AFP



Chef Arturo Rivera Martinez prepares tacos.



Customers are served tacos.



Customers are served tacos at Taqueria restaurant El Califa de Leon.



'MALDIVES WHAT?': SAUDI FASHIONISTAS ATTEMPT BEACH REBRAND

Saudi designer Tima Abid got her start at a time when fashion shows were taboo and tourism, apart from religious pilgrimages, was almost nonexistent in the Gulf kingdom. So she was as surprised as anyone to see models draped in her latest couture collection gliding down an overwater boardwalk connecting beachfront villas that go for nearly \$2,000 per night. The sunset show on Thursday kicked off Saudi Arabia's first Red Sea Fashion Week, pitched by organizers as a milestone both for Saudi fashion and for a nascent tourism sector whose growth is key to diversifying the economy of the world's biggest crude oil exporter.

Abid's collection of two dozen "resort wear" dresses featured flowing white and beige fabrics and only the occasional visible midriff. A second show on Friday was billed as the first to focus on women's swimwear, an envelope-pushing development in a conservative Muslim country that less than a decade ago required women to wear body-covering abaya robes.

"You may say it is boldness, but I look at it in another way: keeping pace with globalism," Abid told AFP while sur-



Models present creations of Saudi designer Tima Abid during a show at the Red Sea Fashion Week in Saudi Arabia's Ummahat Island on May 16, 2024.

rounded by models and harried, headset-wearing show producers. "The borders and restrictions that used to exist have been abolished, and this has given us an opportunity to show our creativity in a more beautiful way."

The crowd on Thursday included designers, fashion journalists and Saudi celebrities like Lojain Omran, best known abroad for her turn on the money-drenched Netflix show "Dubai Bling".

The range of designs on display demonstrated Saudi Arabia's seriousness about competing not just with Dubai but other fashion capitals, Omran said. "If you want to reach a global audience in fashion, you have to reach all types of people—the conservatives, and those who are the opposite," she said.

'Something very new'

The setting for Red Sea Fashion

Week, the St Regis Red Sea Resort on Ummahat Alshaikh island off Saudi Arabia's west coast, is accessible only by chartered boat or seaplane. It is part of Red Sea Global, one of the so-called giga-projects at the heart of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 social and economic reform program overseen by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

As doubts grow about the feasibility of the most prominent giga-project—a planned futuristic mega-city known as NEOM—officials involved in Red Sea Global stress they are making progress, opening two resorts last year and preparing to launch 14 more hotels by the end of next year. Since debuting a general tourism visa in 2019, formerly closed-off Saudi Arabia has tried to dispel the notion that it is one giant desert, showcasing mountains in the south and securing hosting rights for the Asian Winter Games in 2029 in a region of NEOM known as Trojena.

Beach developments are seen as major potential attractions, and Red Sea Fashion Week was partly intended to highlight what is already in place, said Burak Cakmak, chief executive of the Saudi Fashion Commission. "Obvious-

ly logistically we are trying something very new. We are on a remote island that takes half an hour by boat to get to... There are many limitations on being able to do shows here," he said. "I would love everybody not (only) to explore Saudi designs, but also explore Saudi as a destination." Taking in preparations for Abid's show, Saudi designer Alanoud Badr of Lady Fozaza compared the kingdom favorably to a more established island locale. "It's just something you would never expect, and honestly all I can say is, Maldives what?"

Differences among countries

Model Beatris Resende said that growing up in Brazil, she often thought of the Middle East as a single place that was not depicted very flatteringly. Only through travelling and modelling in the region has she come to appreciate differences among countries. "I'm going to be honest. I really want people to stop looking at countries as the stereotype and actually get to know the places," she said. —AFP



Models present creations of Saudi designer Tima Abid during the Red Sea Fashion Week in Saudi Arabia's Red Sea resort of Ummahat Island. — AFP photos

Six fashion moments on the Cannes red carpet

The show stopper on the red carpet at the Cannes Film Festival so far this year is without a doubt an anonymous dog in a puffy yellow train dress. But humans turned heads too. Here are some of them.

Naomi Campbell

The 53-year-old super model turned back time when she slipped into a sequined black Chanel dress she first wore 27 years ago for the premiere of "Furiosa".

Anya Taylor-Joy

The star of the Mad Max saga prequel gave a modern take on the 1950s with a tight chignon and corset, red lips

and a floor-sweeping sparkling champagne Dior dress.

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan

Miss World 1994 received mixed reviews for her glimmering turquoise and silver gown. One fan said it looked like the Iron Throne in HBO hit "Game of Thrones", while others thought it was more "peacock".

Eva Green

The British actress, and member of the Cannes jury, injected an elegant moth vibe into her gothic palette of black with a sculpted translucent dress by Dutch fashion designer Iris van Herpen.

Iris Mittenaere

The French model and 2016 Miss Universe received praise for a tight black Schiaparelli dress with a golden coral-reef like sculpture encrusted on its front and back.

Yseult

Vogue gave a nod to the French singer and model's black and white Chanel outfit at the "Megalopolis" premiere, calling her "one of the most unpredictable but stylish presences on the Croisette". But critics said the style was just a copy of Dior's "New Look" of 1947. —AFP



French model Iris Mittenaere



French actress and member of the Jury of the 77th Cannes Film Festival Eva Green.

'Historic': Saudi stages first swimwear fashion show

Saudi Arabia held its first fashion show featuring swimsuit models on Friday, an envelope-pushing step in a country where less than a decade ago women were required to wear body-covering abaya robes. The poolside show featuring the work of Moroccan designer Yasmina Qanzal included mostly one-piece suits in shades of red, beige and blue. Most models had exposed shoulders and some had their midriffs partially visible. "It's true that this country is very conservative but we tried to show elegant swimsuits which represent the Arab world," Qanzal told AFP.

"When we came here, we understood that a swimsuit fashion show in Saudi Arabia is a historic moment, because it is the first time to have such event," she said, adding it was "an honor" to be involved. The show took place on the second day of the inaugural Red Sea Fashion Week at the St Regis Red Sea Resort, situated off Saudi Arabia's western coast.

The resort is part of Red Sea Global,

one of the so-called giga-projects at the heart of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 social and economic reform program overseen by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Shouq Mohammed, a Syrian fashion influencer who attended Friday's show, said it was not surprising given Saudi Arabia's attempt to open up to the world and grow its fashion and tourism sectors. The fashion industry in 2022 accounted for \$12.5 billion, or 1.4 percent of national GDP, and employed 230,000 people, according to a report published last year by the official Saudi Fashion Commission.

"It's the first time to have a swimsuit fashion show in Saudi Arabia, but why not? Seriously why not?" Mohammed said. "It's possible and we have it here." Raphael Simacourbe, a French influencer who also attended on Friday, said there was nothing risqué to his eyes but in the Saudi context it was a major achievement. —AFP



A model presents a creation from the summer beachwear collection by Moroccan designer Yasmina Q, during the Red Sea Fashion Week in Saudi Arabia's Red Sea resort of Ummahat Island. —AFP

Lifestyle

‘CAN I KILL SOMEONE?’: RICHARD GERE’S DILEMMA IN ‘OH, CANADA’

As one of the West’s most famous Buddhists, and a close friend of the Dalai Lama, Richard Gere has thought long and hard about the moral quandary at the heart of his new film “Oh, Canada”. Gere plays Leonard Fife, a revered documentary filmmaker with a murky past, who is hailed as a hero for his refusal to fight in the Vietnam War. “Whether it is a just or unjust war, can I kill someone? What do I do to defend our family?... We all ask ourselves that question,” Gere said at Cannes Film Festival on Saturday. According to his Buddhist studies, “from an absolute point of view, if you either are to be killed, or kill someone else, better that you be killed,” he told AFP.

But “it’s very hard to exist that way”, Gere admitted. As the film opens, Leonard is frail and at death’s door. Determined to unburden himself of his past deceits, he agrees to be interviewed about his mysterious past. It soon emerges that his entire, successful life has been built on a series of lies. His true reasons for fleeing from the United States to Canada as the Vietnam War raged are just the tip of the iceberg. Based on the novel “Foregone” by Russell Banks, “Oh, Canada” is Gere’s second film with Paul Schrader, the screenwriter of “Raging Bull” and “Taxi Driver”.

‘Freaky’

It comes more than four decades after Schrader launched Gere into Hollywood’s A-list by casting him in “American Gigolo”. If that role was responsible for positioning Gere as a



US actor Richard Gere plays with a photographer camera during a photocall for the film “Oh Canada” at the 77th edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

world-famous sex symbol, his appearance in “Oh, Canada” could not be further removed from that glamour. The film finds Gere sporting blotched skin, restricted to a wheelchair, and carrying a urine drainage bag. “It was kind of freaky when we going through the process of ageing,” said Gere. “I saw myself some years from now, what

I’m going to look like. It’s a very odd thing.”

The actor drew on his own father, who passed away recently. In the film, it is never clear whether the memories Leonard is recounting are accurate, or the warped result of his guilt, powerful cancer medication, and the lengthy passage of time. “I saw that with my

father when he was dying. He had memories that were completely false, that he was absolutely certain they happened,” he recalled.

The film jumps between the present and past. Modern-day heartthrob Jacob Elordi, of television’s “Euphoria,” portrays a younger Leonard. But even in the flashbacks, Gere

sometimes appears on screen as his younger self, adding to the sense that our narrator may not be reliable. “Things are all over the place. I think you’d take a couple of screenings of this to make more sense of it,” said Gere. “It’s a complicated piece.” — AFP

Rare sequel to ‘My Neighbor Totoro’ to play at Cannes

Four rare short films from Japanese animation’s Studio Ghibli, including a sequel to “My Neighbor Totoro”, will be screened at the Cannes Film Festival, organizers said Saturday. The screenings will be part of an “unprecedented event” this Monday, as the legendary animation group becomes the first collective to receive an honorary Palme d’Or. The accolade is typically bestowed on individuals.

Three of the four short films have never been screened outside of Japan, and come “straight from the Ghibli Museum in Mitaka,” said an official Cannes press release. Among the films is 2002’s “Mei and the Baby Cat Bus,” billed as a “mini-sequel” to Ghibli co-founder Hayao Miyazaki’s 1989 classic “My Neighbor Totoro”.



Hayao Miyazaki, 83, will not personally attend the French festival, but his son Goro Miyazaki will take the stage for the ceremony on Monday afternoon, organizers said.

Hayao Miyazaki makes few public appearances. Despite announced his retirement more than once, he continues to work, and was back in cinemas last year with “The Boy and the Heron”. The Oscar-winning Studio Ghibli, founded 40 years ago, is beloved worldwide for its masterpieces like “My Neighbor Totoro”, “Spirited Away” and “Howl’s Moving Castle”. “My Neighbor Totoro” follows two sisters who move with their

father to the countryside where they come across Totoro and other forest creatures.

With its whimsical pastels and post-war Japanese countryside setting, the movie made its debut in 1988 and became an instant classic. The film’s characters have become cultural icons with the eponymous wood spirit Totoro serving as the mascot for Studio Ghibli. The other three short films set to be screened Monday are “House Hunting”, “Boro the Caterpillar” and “Mr. Dough and the Egg Princess”. — AFP

Disturbing video shows Sean ‘Diddy’ Combs assaulting partner

Disturbing surveillance video published Friday shows Sean “Diddy” Combs physically assaulting his then-girlfriend Casandra Ventura, corroborating allegations she made in a now-settled lawsuit late last year. Combs is the target of several civil lawsuits that characterize him as a violent sexual predator who used alcohol and drugs to subdue his victims, and his homes were raided this year by federal agents. The 2016 footage, which was obtained and published by CNN, shows the rap mogul hitting, dragging and kicking the singer known as Cassie, who in her recent lawsuit said Combs subjected her to more than a decade of coercion by physical force and drugs, plus a 2018 rape.

In the video, Ventura leaves a hotel room after which Combs, appearing to wear only a towel, chases her before throwing her to the ground and assaulting her. “The gut-wrenching video has only further confirmed the disturbing and predatory behavior of Mr. Combs. Words cannot express the courage and fortitude that Ms. Ventura has shown in coming forward to bring this to light,” read a statement from her lawyer Douglas Wigdor.

Ventura sued Combs in federal court last fall, a bombshell suit that was settled out of court but succeeded by a string of similarly lurid sexual assault claims against the hip-hop star. Ventura met Combs when she was 19 and he was 37, after which he signed her to his label and they began a romantic relationship. Combs has vehemently denied all accusations against him. His lawyer did not immediately respond to a request for comment from AFP. In March armed agents entered Combs’ sprawling luxury properties in Miami and Los Angeles, a heavily publicized bicoastal operation that suggested an investigation into the rapper is underway. — AFP



Sean Combs attends the “Lawless” Premiere during the 65th Annual Cannes Film Festival at Palais des Festivals in Cannes, France.



Iranian director Mohammad Rasoulof poses on May 19, 2017 during a photocall for the film ‘Lerd’ (A Man of Integrity) at the 70th edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

Film director Mohammad Rasoulof fled Iran on foot: Guardian

Film director Mohammad Rasoulof made an “exhausting and extremely dangerous” walk across a mountainous borderland in order to avoid being jailed in Iran on national security charges, he told the Guardian newspaper. Rasoulof said Monday he had fled Iran after a court sentenced him to eight years in jail, of which five were due to be served, over his new film “The Seed of the Sacred Fig”. The leading Iranian film-maker, often a target of the country’s authorities, told the Guardian in an interview published Friday that he had found shelter in Germany and was hopeful he could attend the film’s Cannes premiere next week.

The film tells the story of a judge’s struggles amid political unrest in Tehran. Rasoulof told the UK newspaper that he had “no choice” but to leave, although he expects to return home “quite soon”. “My mission is to be able to convey the narratives of what is going on in Iran and the situation in which we are stuck as Iranians,” said Rasoulof. “This is something that I cannot do in prison. I have in mind the idea that I’ll be back quite soon, but I think that’s the case of all the Iranians who have left the country,” he added. Rasoulof has already served two terms in Iranian jails over previous films and had his passport withdrawn in 2017.

Having decided to leave, Rasoulof told the newspaper he cut all communications via mobile phones and computers and made his way by foot on a secret route to a border crossing. “It was a several-hour long, exhausting and extremely dangerous walk that I had to do with a guide,” he said. After staying in a safe house, he contacted German authorities who provided him with papers that enabled him to travel to Europe. — AFP



(From left) British casting director Lucy Pardee, British producer Lee Groombridge, Irish actor Barry Keoghan, British director Andrea Arnold, German actor and dancer Franz Rogowski, British producer Tessa Ross and Irish cinematographer Robbie Ryan attend a press conference for the film “Bird” during the 77th edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP photos

Brit drama ‘Bird’ brings grit, fantasy and tunes to Cannes

“Bird”, featuring Barry Keoghan as a young dad, is an early frontrunner at the Cannes Film Festival with its tough but sweetly fantastical tale of working-class England. Irish actor Keoghan is one of Hollywood’s most sought-after stars following hit film “Saltburn” and his Oscar nomination for “The Banshees of Inisherin”. But it’s 14-year-old newcomer Nykiya Adams who carries the movie, dealing with a world of gang violence, poverty, teen pregnancy and abusive parents -- and who finds support from an otherworldly character called Bird (played by German actor Franz Rogowski).

Keoghan said there were “a lot of similarities” to his tough upbringing in the Summerhill neighbourhood of Dublin and he could easily relate to his character, Bug: “A pure chancer, a pure charmer.” “I’ve been saying in interviews since 2015 that I wanted to work with Andrea Arnold and then the opportunity came. I wasn’t even given a script... I’d do anything she makes,” said Keoghan, who will soon star as the Joker in “The Batman Part II”. “Bird” director Arnold is one of Britain’s most acclaimed directors, with an Oscar for short film “Wasp” and three

Jury Prizes at Cannes for “Red Road”, “Fish Tank” and “American Honey”.

She said she wanted to capture the rich life of Gravesend, a working-class town an hour from London, close to where she grew up. “There’s a load of life, probably because it is so working-class. I grew up in a working-class family and they were definitely not afraid to express themselves,” she told AFP, laughing. She said they found their young star by asking schools in the area for “their naughtiest kids”. “Interestingly Nykiya wasn’t quite the kid I had in mind, but she really struck me as having this presence,” Arnold said.



British producer Lee Groombridge looks on as he attends a press conference for the film “Bird”.

‘Always been a dancer’

As always with Arnold’s films, there is an ultra-cool soundtrack featuring bands such as Fontaines DC, Sleaford Mods and Burial. “I’ve always been a dancer,” Arnold revealed. “At age 13 I was out four or five nights at clubs. I’d get in for free because I always started the dancing. I’d go wearing flat shoes and really comfortable clothes. I was straight on the dance floor and I was there all night.” In typically understated fashion, she first met Keoghan in a cafe and they immediately hit it off.

“I just loved him. I love the way he looks and he feels very real to my world. It was Halloween and I think he was very amused because I gave him a toffee apple and some pumpkin,” Arnold said. The Hollywood Reporter called “Bird” a “warmhearted fable”, while Deadline said it’s “a jolt of culture shock that makes way for universal human truths”. It is one of 22 entries for the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival, which concludes with its awards ceremony on May 25. — AFP

Sports

Arsenal's title dreams dashed despite last-day win over Everton

Gunners almost flawless in 2024 but forced to settle for second place

LONDON: Arsenal's dreams of a first Premier League crown in 20 years were dashed as their 2-1 win against Everton was rendered irrelevant by Manchester City's title-clinching victory over West Ham. Mikel Arteta's side had gone into the last day of the season needing to beat Everton at the Emirates Stadium and hope City drew or lost in Manchester if they were to steal the title in miraculous fashion.

But the Gunners were forced to settle for second place after relentless champions City beat West Ham 3-1. Idrissa Gueye put Everton in front late in the first half before Takehiro Tomiyasu quickly equalised. By the time Kai Havertz scored Arsenal's winner in the 89th minute, City were already well on course to retain the title.

Arsenal had been almost flawless in 2024, with 16 wins and one draw, away to City, in their 18 league matches. However, one costly slip-up in a 2-0 home defeat to Aston Villa last month proved decisive in denying them a first title since Arsene Wenger's 'Invincibles' in 2004.

They finished two points behind City, who have won an unprecedented four successive titles and six in the last seven years. Arsenal staff were seen rehearsing a mock title presentation at the Emirates on Saturday, complete with replicas of the trophy and medals, as well as signs emblazoned with the slogan 'Premier League champions'.

But there would be no genuine title party in north London as Arteta's heart-broken players were forced to accept their fate. Arsenal fans had strolled down the sun-baked Holloway Road towards the Emirates more in hope than expectation of seeing a title-winning team.

Some even wore West Ham shirts rather their own club's in a nod to the favour required from their London rivals 200 miles to the north. A raucous rendition of the club's 'North London forever' anthem before kick-off took the atmosphere to fever pitch.

Silence in the stands

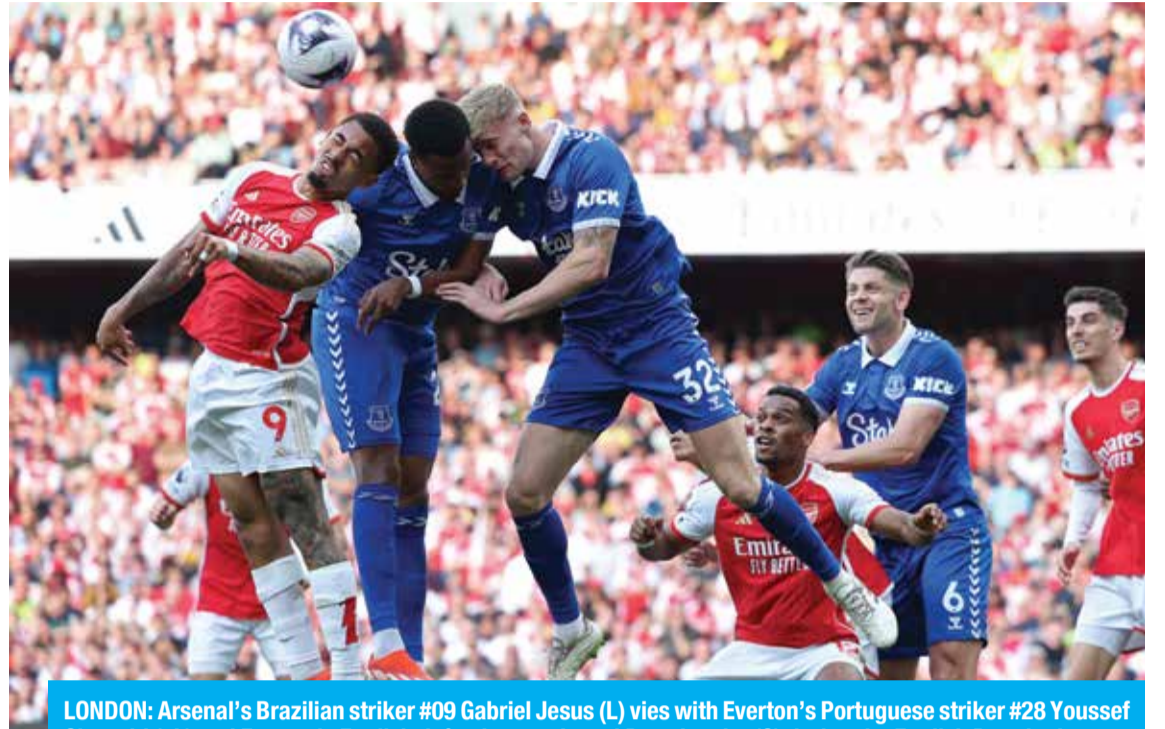
Despite the absence of injured star Bukayo Saka, Arsenal should have been ahead in the opening moments when Tomiyasu nodded wide from close-range. However at that exact second, the atmosphere went completely flat as news filtered through of Phil Foden's second minute opener for City.

A resigned hush settled over the sell-out 60,000 crowd, but Arsenal did their best to refocus. Foden's second goal in the 18th minute rendered the Arsenal faithful mute as Everton fans taunted them with chants of "you nearly won the league".

Everton took the lead in the 40th minute when Gueye's free-kick took a wicked deflection off Declan Rice's head as he jumped to block the ball, looping past wrong-footed Arsenal keeper David Raya into the far corner.

To their credit, the Gunners refused to surrender, equalising just three minutes later when Tomiyasu met Martin Odegaard's pass with a fine finish that whistled past Jordan Pickford from just inside the area.

Arsenal fans let out a defiant roar when they heard Mohammed Kudus had reduced the deficit for West Ham late in the first half. They were briefly celebrating again after a false rumour spread that West Ham had equalised. Dragged from despair to hope and back again within seconds, Arsenal were



LONDON: Arsenal's Brazilian striker #09 Gabriel Jesus (L) vies with Everton's Portuguese striker #28 Youssef Chermiti (2L) and Everton's English defender #32 Jarrad Branthwaite (C) during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Everton at the Emirates Stadium in London on May 19, 2024. — AFP

four points behind City in the 'as it stands' table at half-time.

Arsenal's players gathered in a huddle as they prepared to make one final push in the second half, but Havertz wasted two chances to give them life, nod-

ding wide and then heading against the bar. Rodri's 59th minute goal for City was met with silence in the Emirates stands. And when Havertz stabbed home in the closing stages, Arsenal had already come to terms with the end of their title hopes. — AFP

Verstappen resists Norris attack to claim victory at Imola

IMOLA: Three-time world champion and series leader Max Verstappen returned to winning ways on Sunday when he resisted a late charge by Lando Norris to take a dramatic victory for Red Bull at the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix. After being beaten in Miami, where friend and rival Norris claimed his maiden victory for McLaren, the Dutchman resisted him to come home 0.725 seconds ahead of the Briton who mounted a rousing final attack in vain.

Charles Leclerc finished third for Ferrari ahead of Oscar Piastri in the second McLaren. Carlos Sainz in the second Ferrari and seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton and his Mercedes team-mate George Russell. Sergio Perez was eighth in the second Red Bull ahead of Aston Martin's Lance Stroll and RB's Yuki Tsunoda, in his Faenza-based team's home event.

Verstappen's hard-earned win, after a difficult two days of practice, was his third at Imola, his fifth of the season and the 59th of his career, lifting him 48 points clear of Leclerc in the drivers' title race. "We did a great race considering how it started and I had to work hard for that," admitted Verstappen. "The whole race I pushed flat out to make a gap."

"I felt quite strong on mediums, but on the hards, it was more difficult to manage and the last 15 laps I had no grip and I was sliding a lot. "I could see him behind me and I am super-happy to win here today." Norris said: "It's frustrating! This feels more pain-



IMOLA: Race winner Red Bull Racing's Dutch driver Max Verstappen holds his trophy on the podium of the Emilia Romagna Formula One Grand Prix at the Autodromo Enzo e Dino Ferrari race track in Imola. — AFP

ful. It hurts me to say so, but with one or two more laps I think I'd have had him." Leclerc, whose podium finish for Ferrari in his heartland was acclaimed by masses of tifosi, said: "At least a podium! Of course, I wanted to win and I didn't make it."

"They were incredibly quick at the end, but it's looking good for us for the rest of the season. Monaco is going to be special."

'I'm pushing'

On a very warm Spring day all but Perez began on medium tyres, the Mexican choosing 'hards' to go long after a desultory qualifying left him 11th on the grid. Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso started from the pitlane after late suspension changes while Pi-

astri was fifth, penalised from second for obstructing Kevin Magnussen on Saturday.

As the lights went out, Verstappen surged clear while behind him Hamilton and Perez made up places during an incident-free opening as the world champion built an early advantage. Verstappen's relentless pace took him five seconds clear by lap 16 ahead of Norris who led Leclerc by 1.3 with Sainz fourth, resisting Piastri. The Mercedes' pair were sixth and seventh ahead of Perez.

Russell was the first of the leading group to pit after 21 laps, having complained his tyres were shot. Norris was next in on lap 23, coming out behind Perez, followed by Piastri and then Verstappen, on lap 25, shortly after the Dutchman was shown a black-and-white flag for exceeding track limits. One more offence would bring a five second penalty.

Verstappen re-joined fourth behind Leclerc. Sainz and Hamilton with Norris behind him, having passed Perez, before Leclerc pitted and Sainz inherited the lead briefly before pitting with Hamilton, who had run off at Acque Minerali.

This left Verstappen back on top at half-distance with a lead of 6.2 seconds on Norris, Leclerc and Piastri. Having eased off to preserve his tyres, Norris mounted a late charge and trimmed Verstappen's lead on successive laps to put him under intense pressure. With seven laps to go, he was only two seconds adrift and closing in. "I'm pushing as hard as I can mate," said Norris on team radio when encouraged to hunt a second victory. Hard as he tried to turn the screw Verstappen scraped home on the day Formula One remembered the late great Ayrton Senna, who died in a crash at the circuit three decades ago. — AFP



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's German manager Jurgen Klopp (L) embraces Liverpool's Colombian midfielder #07 Luis Diaz as he leaves the pitch substituted during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Wolverhampton Wanderers at Anfield in Liverpool. — AFP

Klopp receives emotional farewell tribute from fans

LIVERPOOL: Jurgen Klopp was given a heartfelt reception by home fans at Anfield as he walked out for his final match as Liverpool manager on Sunday. The German is bringing down the curtain on his nine-year reign in charge of the Merseysiders following their last Premier League game of the season against Wolves.

He established himself as a club great by winning the team's first Premier League title for 30 years in 2020, a year after leading the team to Champions League glory. Klopp also lifted the FA Cup and the League Cup during his time at the club. The charismatic 56-year-old has a strong bond with Liverpoolians, who embraced his passionate personality and this was reflected in the embraces he exchanged with staff while waiting in the tunnel on Sunday.

As he took the pitch, Klopp received a standing ovation from Liverpool fans, who used cards to create a "Jurgen" mosaic, with many holding scarves bearing his image. Fans held aloft cards making a heart shape in the colours of the German flag and Klopp stood in silence as supporters sang "You'll Never Walk Alone".

When Klopp made the bombshell announcement of his decision to leave in January, his side were chasing a quadruple. Liverpool won the League Cup final against Chelsea in February, but crashed out of the FA Cup against Manchester United and the Europa League at Atalanta. Their Premier League title bid also faded quickly but they are guaranteed to finish third which brings a place in the Champions League next season. — AFP

Haaland wins Premier League Golden Boot

MANCHESTER: Erling Haaland won his second Premier League Golden Boot in as many seasons in England on Sunday as Manchester City beat West Ham 3-1 to win a fourth consecutive title.

The Norwegian striker was absent for two months of the season through injury and struggled to match the heights of his debut campaign at City when he struck 52 times in all competitions, including a Premier League record 36.

The 23-year-old failed to add to his 27 Premier League goals on the final day but still proved decisive in the run-in to help City secure an unprecedented fourth consecutive English top-flight crown.

Haaland scored nine times in his final seven Premier League appearances of the season to help City edge Arsenal to the title by two points. Chelsea's Cole Palmer, who himself started the season at City, was second in the top scorer standings with 22 goals, one ahead of Newcastle striker Alexander Isak. — AFP

Campana's late goal gives Miami victory over DC

MIAMI: Leonardo Campana came off the bench and scored a stoppage time winner as Inter Miami beat D.C. United 1-0 in Major League Soccer on Saturday. Despite the return of Lionel Messi to the starting line-up, after he missed the 0-0 draw at Orlando on Wednesday, Miami struggled to create chances against a very well organized D.C. defense.

Ecuador international striker Campana, who has lost his starting place to Luis Suarez this season, was brought on in the third minute of stoppage time and scored with his first touch. Campana made a darting, diagonal run across the D.C. back line and was picked out by Sergio Busquets, bringing down the lofted pass and then blasting an unstoppable shot past Alex Bono.

It was a cruel end to the game for Troy Lesesne's team, who look vastly improved on the performances they produced under Wayne Rooney last term. With the win, league leaders Miami clinched their ninth victory of the season - matching their total for last season after just 15 games.

The start of the game was delayed by 25 minutes due to lightning and 15 minutes after the game began there was a torrential downpour. Miami enjoyed the vast majority of possession in the opening 45 minutes, with the visitors appearing happy to concede the ball while keeping their shape and aiming to counter. That approach almost paid off, after the break, but Jared Stroud missed a glorious opportunity, poking hesitantly wide from close range. Messi had been restricted to two free-kick efforts, which both struck the wall, and the Argentine—who missed the midweek game with a knee injury—was well below his best.

D.C. grew into the game and Matti Peltola flashed a shot just wide in the 69th minute. Two minutes later, Messi found space in the inside-left channel, bringing a high ball down with his chest but he blasted his shot just over the bar.

United had a chance to win the game in the final moments of regulation after a smart move but Cristian Dajome's meek shot was parried away by



FORT LAUDERDALE: Inter Miami's Uruguayan forward #09 Luis Suarez (C) fights for the ball with DC United's Swedish defender #97 Christopher McVey (L) and DC United's US defender #15 Steve Birnbaum (R) during the Major League Soccer (MLS) regular season football match between Inter Miami CF and DC United at Chase Stadium in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. — AFP

Drake Callender. Then came Campana's instant impact to extend Miami's unbeaten run to nine games after a night where little had worked for Gerardo Martino's team. Campana had only been able to enter because a concussion substitution for D.C. allowed Miami coach Gerard Martino to make one more change, and he conceded that his team had barely deserved the win.

Sluggish

"I think this game should have been a 0-0 draw. We weren't sharp in this match but I don't want to take away merit from all the good things the opposition did, especially defensively...we weren't good in our build-up," play he said. "(The win) was the product of an individuality. A minute earlier Drake had saved us and we could have lost. We were very sluggish, we lacked dynamism in our movement," the Argentine coach said.

In the "Hudson River derby," New York City FC emerged triumphant over the New York Red Bulls at Citi Field after Algerian Mounsef Bakrar grabbed the 64th minute winner. Italy international Federico Ber-

nardeschi scored a hat-trick for Toronto FC as they crushed Montreal 5-1 in their all-Canadian clash.

Diego Rossi, Christian Ramirez and Jacen Russell-Rowe were on target for defending champions Columbus Crew as they won 3-1 at the Chicago Fire. Western Conference leaders Real Salt Lake trailed 3-2, with five minutes of regulation remaining in their Rocky Mountain derby at home to the Colorado Rapids, but sensationally struck three late goals to win 5-3. Cristian Arango levelled in the 85th minute, with his second of the night, before Andres Gomez put RSL ahead, also giving himself a brace, before Anderson Julio added the fifth deep in stoppage time. Hungary international Daniel Gazdag scored twice for the Philadelphia Union in their 3-0 win at the New England Revolution.

Phil Neville's troubles at Portland continued with the English manager seeing his team slump to their seventh loss in 14 games after a 2-1 loss at Minnesota. Portland had led 1-0 but the home side, managed by former Manchester United coach Eric Ramsay, took the points after an 82nd minute winner from South Korean Jeong Sang-bin. — AFP

Fodens fires City to record fourth Premier League title

No side in the history of English top flight has ever won four successive titles



MANCHESTER: Manchester City's English defender #02 Kyle Walker holds aloft the Premier League trophy during the presentation ceremony following the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and West Ham United at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, north west England, on May 19, 2024. Manchester City created English football history on Sunday, beating West Ham 3-1 to win an unprecedented fourth straight Premier League title. — AFP

MANCHESTER: Manchester City won an unprecedented fourth consecutive Premier League title on Sunday as Phil Foden's double inspired a 3-1 victory over West Ham. No side in the history of the English top flight had ever won four successive titles, but City have become accustomed to rewriting the record books under Pep Guardiola. The Catalan coach has masterminded six Premier League wins in the past seven seasons.

In four of those years, City have also surpassed 90 points. They were pushed this season to deny Arsenal a first title since 2003/04. The Gunners celebrated a 0-0 draw at the Etihad last month that kept them one point in front of City with nine games to play.

But the champions were relentless in the run-in, winning their final nine league games, scoring 33 goals. Guardiola conceded City had felt the pressure in a nervy 2-0 win at Tottenham

in midweek that kept the destiny of the title in their own hands.

In the same scenario two years ago, they needed a remarkable late fight-back from 2-0 down to beat Aston Villa 3-2 on the final day. There was far less drama as West Ham melted under the baking Manchester sun in David Moyes' final game in charge of the Hammers.

Foden was recently crowned the football writers' player of the year for his best-ever goalscoring season and ended any suspense after just 79 seconds. The England international arrowed a blistering drive into the top corner to ensure there was no nervous wait for the title party to get started.

Foden doubled City's lead inside 20 minutes with another cool left-footed finish from Jeremy Doku's cross for his 27th goal of the season. City should have been out of sight before half-time as Alphonse Areola denied Kevin De Bruyne and Erling Haaland failed to turn in from

point-blank range. Out of nowhere, there was a twist in the tale of the first half when, from a West Ham corner, Mohammed Kudus' outrageous overhead kick flew high past Stefan Ortega.

Haaland claimed his second Golden Boot in as many seasons in the Premier League despite a day to forget in front of goal. The Norwegian missed a huge chance to restore the home side's two-goal cushion when he spooned over another inviting Doku cross.

City swiftly restored order at the start of the second period and fittingly it was Rodri, himself a player of the year contender, who delivered the knockout blow to Arsenal's title hopes. The Spaniard has not been on the losing side for club or country since March 2023.

City's only three Premier League defeats came in the three games the 27-year-old was suspended. This time Areola should have done better as the Frenchman failed to turn Rodri's tame

effort round the post. City could cruise to the finish line and extend a remarkable 35-game unbeaten streak in all competitions from open play.

The only blip on that run was a penalty shootout defeat to Real Madrid in the Champions League quarter-finals that denied Guardiola's men the chance of back-to-back trebles. They can make it double next weekend when Manchester United have the unenviable task of stopping their local rivals in the FA Cup final.

By achieving a degree of league dominance never seen before, City have made their case to be considered the greatest side English football has produced. There was an anti-climactic end as City players had to tell fans to get off the pitch before the full-time whistle. Thousands of supporters poured onto the field at the end despite pleas from the club to stay off the playing surface. — AFP



Alexander Zverev

Zverev beats Jarry to claim second Rome Open title

ROME: Alexander Zverev won his second Rome Open title after beating Nicolas Jarry in straight sets 6-4, 7-5 in Sunday's final. World number five Zverev, also Foro Italico champion in 2017, comfortably won his sixth Masters 1000 title in the last major tournament before the French Open, which gets underway next weekend.

The 27-year-old succeeded in his 11th Masters final which equalled Boris Becker's record for the most by a German since the series began in 1990. He comfortably beat Chile's Jarry, who could not repeat his quarter- and semi-final heroics against Stefanos Tsitsipas and Tommy Paul, in one hour and 41 minutes.

Zverev claimed his first title of the year and first since winning at Chengdu in September at the end of an unusual men's tournament in which a host of top names were either eliminated early or dropped out before the start of the event.

Six-time Rome champion Novak Djokovic was dumped out in the third round by Zverev's semi-final opponent, journeyman Alejandro Tabilo. Last year's winner Daniil Medvedev was stopped at the last-16 stage while Italian world number two Jannik Sinner and third-ranked Carlos Alcaraz both missed the tournament with injury.

Earlier, Sara Errani and Jasmine Paolini gave Italian fans something to cheer after beating Coco Gauff and Erin Routliffe to the women's doubles title. Unseeded Errani and Paolini made the Foro Italico crown roar by beating reigning US Open singles champion Gauff and Routliffe 6-3, 4-6, 10-8. Home supporters had been denied the chance to see Sinner and Matteo Berrettini play, with the former Wimbledon finalist also not fit enough to take part in his home city. — AFP



Faisal Al-Rajhi during the race.

Kuwait's Al-Rajhi qualifies for 400m T54 final

TOKYO: Kuwait's national team player Faisal Al-Rajhi finished third in the men's 400 meters T54 heat 1 at the Para Athletics World Championships on Sunday, qualifying for the final due on Monday.

Al-Rajhi finished in 49.17 in his preliminary round, behind the winner Australia's Samuel Carter and Britain's Nathan Maguire, with the top three runners automatically advancing to the final in the event in the western Japanese city of Kobe.

On Saturday, Al-Rajhi won the gold medal in a 5,000-meter race. Held in East Asia for the first time and serves as a qualifier for the upcoming Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, the Kobe World Para Athletics Championships has attracted some 1,000 athletes from 100 countries and regions, according to the organizer. — KUNA

Hyderabad finish second after IPL match washed out

HYDERABAD: Sunrisers Hyderabad ended the IPL league stage in second behind table-toppers Kolkata Knight Riders after they beat Punjab Kings by four wickets on Sunday. Former champions Hyderabad, led by Pat Cummins, edged out Rajasthan Royals for second spot on net run-rate after the final league match between Rajasthan and Kolkata was abandoned due to rain without a ball being bowled in Guwahati.

Chasing 215 for victory, Hyderabad, who are already among the top four teams to have made the play-offs, depended on Abhishek Sharma's 66 to reach the target with five balls to spare at their home. "We've had a lot of fun and played some really great cricket," said Cummins. "It's satisfying and exciting (to be in the play-offs)."

Kolkata and Hyderabad will face each other in the first qualifier on Tuesday with the winner moving to the final on May 26 in Chennai. The loser will have another shot at making the final when they play the winner of the eliminator in the second qualifier.

Third-placed Rajasthan, who have been winless in their last five matches, will play Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the eliminator on Wednesday in Ahmedabad. Left-handed Abhishek, who has been a breakout young Indian star in this edition with 467 runs including three half-centuries, took charge after Travis Head departed for a first-ball duck. — AFP